THE POLITICS OF *TRANSLATIO*: THE VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE
TRANSLATION OF RELICS IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN AND MEDIEVAL PERIOD,
THE CASE OF ST. STEPHEN

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION


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Early Christian and medieval representations of the ritual of translatio documented the circulation of relics both within and between medieval cultures. This dissertation elucidates the ways the ritual was used for religious and secular ends from the fourth to the fourteenth century in both the East and the West. Reliquaries transmuted abject human remains into objects of veneration. Neither fully alive nor dead, the saint’s body was suspended in a state of perpetual non-decay and endowed with super-natural powers of healing and protection for the faithful. I argue that representations of translatio exploited this essentially ambivalent status of the saint’s body for religious and secular ends. The detailed iconographic program of the Trier ivory provides a provenance for this phenomenon by linking the translation ritual to its Antique prototypes: the triumph and adventus. Accepting the hypothesis that this object represents the translation of the relics of St. Stephen to Constantinople in the fifth century, I identify the ivory as a prototype of the harnessing of the motif of translatio for secular ends. Later examples such as the mural cycles depicting the translatio of the relics of St. Stephen
at San Lorenzo fuori le mura In Rome and the chapel of St Stephen in the monastery at Žiča in Serbia, reveal the further development of this pictorial tradition within a public context and its increasingly explicit conscription for secular ideological purposes.

I focus on the case of St. Stephen due to his prominent role in Christian society and the broad dissemination of his cult. As the protomartyr, Stephen was the first individual to emulate Christ’s sacrifice. Christian rulers understood that their power derived directly from Christ and therefore aligned themselves with him. As shown in the Trier ivory and the murals at San Lorenzo and Žiča, by emphasizing their ability to translate and poses his body, they hoped to establish a divine provenance for their earthly powers. Through the representation of the translatio of St. Stephen, the secular and religious leaders depicted in or associated with these objects conscripted a highly sophisticated visual rhetoric to political ends.
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INTRODUCTION

“What can I say? What shall I speak? I’m jumping with excitement and a flame with frenzy that is better than common sense. I’m flaying and dancing and flying on air and, for the rest, drunk under the influence of spiritual pleasure.”\(^1\) In these words John Chrysostom expressed his ecstatic experience when, in the company of relics, he delivered a homily circa 401 A.D. outside Constantinople. In another Homilie, Chrysostom describes a mystical energy that one feels in the presence of the body of the saint in emotionally charged terms.

If anyone approaches such a tomb, he immediately receives a distinct impression of this energy. For the sight of the coffin, entering the soul, acts upon it and affects it in such a way that it feels as if it sees the one who lies there joining in prayer and drawing night. Afterwards, one who has had this experiences returns from there filled with great zeal and [is] a changed person...This vision of the dead enters the souls of the living...as if they saw instead of the tomb those who lie in the tomb standing up...And why speak of the location of a grave? Many times in fact, the sight of a garment and the recollection of a word of the dead move the soul and restore the failing memory. For this reason God has left us the relics of the saints.\(^2\)

If, according to Chrysostom, the sight of a garment and the recollection of a word of the dead can move the soul and restore a failing memory, we can only imagine what response would be generated by the image of the body of the saint being translated.

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Chrysostome’s text reveals the power of relics, a power that was predicated on their status as authentic; the link between the relic and the saint had to be credible in order to solicit such a response. His ecstasy also reveals the power of relics to produce intense affective states in the faithful, a resource that would be tapped by the powerful social elites of church and state that secured and transported the relics and immortalized themselves doing so in the form of representations of the translatio ritual. My dissertation argues that viewed as a ritual reenactment, the visual narrative of translation allowed the reader to establish a relationship with the saint and access his beneficence.

Medieval representations of the ritual of translatio documented the circulation of relics both within and between medieval cultures. Reliquaries transmuted abject human remains into objects of veneration. Depictions of the ritual of translation charted this movement between the earthly and heavenly realms. Neither fully alive nor dead, the saint’s body was suspended in a state of perpetual non-decay and endowed with super-natural powers of healing and protection for the faithful. In the dissertation I argue that the visual representation of translatio exploited the paradoxical status of the saint’s body for political ends.

This dissertation examines the mechanisms by which the ritual of translatio was itself translated from its Antique prototypes and between contemporaneous medieval cultures. The case of the translation of St. Stephan is especially useful in this regard because of its wide dissemination and prominent role in Christian society. Traditionally considered as the first bishop, St Stephen’s authority was directly, even corporally, linked to the apostles and his translation was figured in a
variety of media and locations throughout Christendom. Stephen’s life and death were seen by early Christian and medieval theologians as paralleling or even imitating Christ’s actions and execution. Saint Stephen was differentiated from other saints by the term proto-martyr, the title he gained as the first martyr in *imitatio Christi*. Early theologians saw him as an ideal that should govern Christian behavior and be a model for future martyrs.³

Focusing on the legend of St. Stephan also highlights the prominent role and influence that the first martyr had in articulating the relation between martyrdom and patronage. Finally, this dissertation presents a new model for the study of relics in the construction of political legitimacy, providing a conceptual bridge between visual narratives of translation and the construction of ideology in Early Christian and Medieval Europe. My dissertation consists of four chapters.

Chapter one lays out the problem of interpreting representations of translation through a close reading of a plaque found in Vienne that has been interpreted as an early image of *translatio*. The highly ambiguous iconography of this damaged object raises key question for the interpretation of representations of *translatio* in general: What marks a translation as a translation and not another kind of procession such as a funeral? What makes the Vienne relief valuable is precisely the manner that the simplicity of its iconography, crude carving, and lack of provenance throws into relief: the role of indeterminacy in the process of *translatio* itself.

Translatio was a process in which bodies that could no longer move themselves were circulated due to a belief in their being imbued with a divine agency that survived material death. The visual representation of translation therefore necessarily engaged the anxious fact that there was no visible way to distinguish between an ordinary corpse and a dead saint that partook of divine power. The rhetorical solutions that literary commentators developed to connote the persistence of agency within the saintly corpse - such as the notion that the saint had 'gone to sleep' and therefore was in a state of living death - had no strict visual equivalents. The designers of representations of scenes of translation were forced to directly engage the indeterminate status of the saintly corpse. Thus, scenes of translatio reproduced in material form, the social experience of these objects and ceremonies themselves: one had to believe, despite a lack of visual evidence, that the contents of the casket or on the bier was a true, immutable substance endowed with supernatural powers and not merely a piece of decaying flesh encased in gold.

With these central questions of the representation of translatio in mind, Chapter Two explores this problematic in the case of Trier ivory. Like the Vienne relief the ivory presents a significant challenge to interpretation due to its lack of provenance and the absence of objects to which it can be compared. In contradistinction to the relief, however, the remarkably rich iconographic program of the ivory allows one to discern a great deal about the particularities of the translatio ceremony being recorded and the religious and secular ends that such a representation served.
Here, the question of the indeterminate status of the relic is shown in relation to the Roman triumphal ceremony on which the Christian ritual was based. The long-established link between *translatio* and the Triumph is explored in light of their mutual interest in liminal spaces, which I argue, functions on the ivory as a sign of change and of the role of relics to mediate between the earthly and heavenly realms. The hypothesis that the ivory depicts the translation of the relics of St. Stephen and the inclusion of individuals whose social position and identity may be reasonably be deduced allows one to consider the political function of the ritual in the East and the particular role of St. Stephen in it.

Chapter three explores the issue of the politics of representing *translatio* at the very heart of papal power by analyzing the painted cycle of martyrdom and translation of the relics of St. Stephen in the church portico of San Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome. This cycle delineates the history of the translation St. Stephen’s relics relocation to the important pilgrimage church of San Lorenzo. This work needs to be understood in relation to the issue of patronage as well as its site in Rome within a pilgrimage center at the time of the Jubilee year. I argue that these factors inform the manner in which the mural’s designers utilize the indeterminate status of the saint’s body for religious and political purposes. At San Lorenzo, these issues are also tied to the question of the visibility of the body of the saint within the broader context of the cult of St. Stephen in Rome.

My fourth and final chapter focuses on the significance of the profoundly political aspect of the representation of translation in the chapel of the coronation church in Žiča read in light of the broader Serbian cult of St. Stephen. Positioned
between East and West and strongly culturally and politically influenced from both sides, Medieval Serbia saw the development of the local royal-saint cult centered on St. Stephen as the royal patron saint. Here, as elsewhere, the representations of St. Stephen’s *translatio* engage the local cult of the royal saint as image models of public devotion and royal legitimacy. I argue that such images linked the viewer’s devotion to the saint with an apotheosis of royal power. No mere illustrations of the after-life of the saints, they were rather, ideologically inflected representations that served the political agendas of the ruling elites, which commissioned them.

My dissertation covers territories broadly designated as the East and the West. By this, I take the East as marking the territory of the Byzantine Empire, as well as those countries that were under the Byzantine control or under its strong religious and cultural influence, such as Russia and Serbia. By the term West I designate the territories that currently comprise Western Europe including England, France and Italy. Though some of these areas show evidence of a strong Byzantine influence at times, for the sake of clarity and unless otherwise specified, they will be grouped together as the West.

The historical scope of the objects and literary texts that engage with is broad. For the sake of clarity, I will set some temporally boundaries, while acknowledging that the precise beginning or end-date for such periodizations are debatable. For the sake of this dissertation I will call the period from the first up to the third century as Roman. The time between fourth and sixth century I will describe as Late Antique. The term Early Christian will define the periods between the sixth and the seventh century. At times I divide the Medieval period into three
sub-periods whose terminology is defined as follows: early-, high- and late-
medieval will cover the seventh to eighth, the ninth to twelfth, and the thirteenth to
fifteenth centuries respectively. When I use the general term Medieval I refer to the
period spanning the seventh to the fifteenth century. In relation to the geographic
location designated above as the East, the term Byzantine will be used to define the
period between sixth and the fifteenth century if not stated otherwise.
CHAPTER I

Translatio

1. Recognizing Translation/ Vienne Relief

In 1950 a fascinating object entered the collection of the Musée des Antiquites Nationales in Paris. It was immediately described as a bas-relief showing the translation of a relic (Fig. 1). Carved in the form of a rectangular plaque made of soft, poor quality limestone, the monument had suffered greatly with its upper part having entirely disappeared. The original broad frame, which presumably surrounded the central scene is now only preserved at the bottom of the surviving portion. Although the plaque is deeply carved, it is difficult to discern the content of the composition with any certainty. What is clearly visible and dominates the scene, however, is the central section showing a carpentum, a type of cart covered with a semi-cylindrical hood. A vehicle called a carpentum is claimed to have been used in the roman republican and imperial periods in both the pompa triumphalis and the pompa circensis. One of the earliest kinds of Roman carriages, Carpentum does not

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2 For the definition of carpentum see: Anthony Rich, A Dictionary of Roman and Greek Antiquities (London, 1893), 122; for the use of carpentum in processions, see: Aline L. Abaecherli, "Fercula, Carpenta and Tensae in the Roman Procession," Bollettino dell’
seem to have had an exact definition in antiquity. The word is used to describe the carriage that brought Tarquin I (Lucius Tarquinius Priscus 616 -579 BC, fifth king of Rome) and his wife Tanaquil to Rome. In addition to being a traveling carriage throughout its history this vehicle would be used for more dignified occasions such as religious and political functions where it would serve for the conveyance of those who were important in matters of state. This continued to be one of the honors bestowed upon women of the imperial family during the reign of the Flavians (69-96 AD) and thereafter. The carpentum shown on the plaque is of an elaborate type decorated with a large ornamental braid along the hood. The spokes of the single visible wheel form a cruciform motif. One of the two horses pulling the cart is shown in full profile, while the head of the other is in three-quarters profile. Although the gender of the person shown in the opening of the canopy is not clear, the overall appearance is masculine. The figure holds something in his hand but due to the losses suffered by the plaque it is difficult to identify the object. It appears to be a box, however, it could also be part of his toga or a pair of crossed arms; this is a crucial question for the interpretation of the plaque to which I will return later.

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3 Livy, Ab urbe condita I, 34, 8. Livy clames that Tarquin’s original Etruscan name was Lucumo: Sublatis itaque rebus amigrant (Lucumo and Tanaquil) Romam ad Ianiculum forte ventum erat. Ibi ei carpento sedenti cum uxore Aquila suspensis demissa leniter alis pillem aufert superque carpentum cum magnō clangore volitans rursus velut ministerio divinitus missa capiti apte reponit; inde sublimis abit, see: Titi Livi, Ab urbe condita, ed. Robertus Maxwell Ogilvie, vol. I (Oxonii : E Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1974), 49-50.

The carpentum divides the plaque’s composition into two parts. Three persons are represented in front of the cart: two adults, likely a man and a woman, and a child. The child is positioned closest to the horses. It looks as if he or she is interacting with the horses either to feed them or reaching for the bridle. In the back of the cart there is a similar group of three persons, again two adults of opposite sex and a child. According to Jacques Fontaine the adults in the composition have a posture of a meditative Attis found on pagan sarcophagi. The Attis is a figure related to funeral processions and was usually depicted with his right hand holding his left elbow while his other hand supports his cheek. The child holds something that resembles a basket, perhaps a container for food for the horse. In the background, one can make out forms resembling heads between the first group of people on the right and the cart. Although badly damaged they seem to be a group of people, likely spectators. These individuals are shown in isocephalic representation with only their heads protruding from the background; they appear to be observing the procession.

Lantier was the first to recognize the scene shown on the Vienne plaque as the translation of relics, largely basing his argument on a comparison with the image of translation found on the Trier Ivory (Fig. 2). Although he confidently identified

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the object in the hands of the person who rides in the cart as a reliquary, the provenance of the object and its dating proved less certain. Taking stylistic considerations into account, Lantier located the origin of the object in Vienne (Isere) in Eastern Gaul and dated its manufacture to the fifth century. He also enlisted the cruciform shape of the spokes of the wheel as evidence of the religious nature of the scene depicted.

Lantiner’s analysis raises a number of questions: What precisely leads him and others who have followed his reasoning to recognize the Vienne plaque as a representation of the translation of a relic? What allows one to identify images of the translation of relics and what we do know about these images? Is the cart to be read as being in movement, invoking the forward motion of a procession? Or, is the key to the meaning of the image the box in the hand of the rider? Prior to exploring these questions one must first consider what the ceremony of *translatio* was and how the ritual itself influenced artistic representations of it.

In this chapter, I identify the written and visual sources that provide us with an understanding of how representations of the translation of relics developed from the late antique to the late fourteenth century, covering both eastern and western Christianity. I also discuss the meaning and the role of the bodies of the saints in determining and forming the representation of the translations of relics.

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8 Lantier attempted to link the composition with the translation of relics occurred in Vienna in the fifth century. The translation in question is of St. Ferreol whose body was moved from the first basilica on the banks of Rhone to the new one by the bishop Mamert. This story was recorded in the letter of Sidonius Apollinaris to Mamert in 474, see: Lantier, “Un translation de reliques,” 152.
2. **What is Translatio?**

The translation of relics is a crucial element in scholarly studies analyzing the cult of the relics and their function.\(^\text{10}\) The Oxford English Dictionary defines translation as “[t]ransference; removal or conveyance from one person, place, or condition to another.”\(^\text{11}\) In relation to relics this is taken to mean the physical removal and relocation of bodily remains or objects associated with a saint.

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A letter written by the faithful of the Church in Smyrna to the Church of Philomelium in the year ca. 156 provides an account of the death of St. Polycarp, their bishop who was burned at the stake. The letter reads:

When the centurion saw the contentiousness caused by the Jews, he placed Polycarp’s body in the center and burned it, as is their custom. And so, afterwards, we removed his bones, which were more valuable than expensive gems and more precious than gold, and put them in a suitable place. There, whenever we can gather together in joy and happiness, the Lord will allow us to commemorate the birthday of his martyrdom, both in memory of those who have already engaged in the struggle and as a training and preparation for those who are about to do so.

According to this description, the relics — the bones and other remains of St. Polycarp — were moved from the place of his martyrdom and buried in a tomb, which itself functioned as a reliquary. This letter further informs us of the developing practice in late antiquity regarding the veneration of the saints and the formation of the cult of relics. Clearly, one important part of the relic cult was the translation of the saint’s body. The moving and reburial of the body of a hero or person of local importance was known from antiquity as recorded by Plutarch.

Plutarch’s Lives gives an account of the translation of the body of Demetrius (Demetr. LIII. 2), which anticipates the Christian practice that began in late antiquity and would develop over the centuries that followed. Plutarch writes:

Moreover, there was something dramatic and theatrical even in the funeral ceremonies of Demetrius. For his son Antigonus, when he learned that his remains

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12 The account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, in the form of a letter, is the earliest known history of a Christian martyrdom. According to Kirsopp Lake the martyrdom happened between 155-156, see: The Apostolic Fathers II. Translated by Kirsopp Lake (London, 1912), 309-311.

(λειψάνως) had been sent home, put to sea with his entire fleet and met them off the islands.\footnote{14 Plutarch, \textit{Lives} IX, ed. Jeffrey Henderson, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2002), 133.}

The surviving written sources regarding the translation of relics dating from late antiquity to the late fourteenth century in both the East and the West consist of different types of documents. The most prevalent ones are hagiographies of saints, which constitute a \textit{vita} or brief biographical accounting of the deeds of an individual. These may also take the more condensed form of a \textit{passio}, which focuses on the saint’s martyrdom.\footnote{15 For the literary documentation of saints’ lives see the different \textit{Bibliothecae hagiographicae}. These were lists of saints alphabetically arranged with the survey of all the literary works on their lives, translations of relics and miracles. The first published was \textit{Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca} in 1895, that was followed by \textit{Bibliotheca hagiographica latina} in 1898-1901 and \textit{Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis} in 1910. For more on the development of \textit{Bibliotheca hagiographica}, see: Flor van Ommeslaeghe, “The Acta Sanctorum and Bollandist Methodology,” \textit{The Byzantine Saint}, ed. Sergei Hackel (Crestwood, NY, 2001), 161.}

Hagiographies are often abbreviated in local liturgical calendars in the form of a \textit{synaxarion}, or \textit{menaion} organized according to each saint’s feast day.\footnote{16 The earliest surviving example is the \textit{Roman Depositio martyrum} dating from the fourth century. Most of the early calendars, both East and West are collected and published in the \textit{Martyrologium Hieronymianum} (1894, reprint 1971) or \textit{Commentarius perpetuus in Martyrologium Hieronymianum ad recensionem H. Quenti} (1931), the \textit{Synaxarium ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae et codice Sirmondiano} (1902) and the \textit{Martyrologium Romanum scholiis historicus instructum} (1940). For more on local calendars and their development, see: Van Ommeslaeghe, ”The Acta Sanctorum and Bollandist Methodology,” 160.}

The exclusive reliance on hagiographical sources raises the issue of the accuracy of the historical data since they are more of a literary genre and only rarely can they be relied upon for historical facts.\footnote{17 For more on the records of translation of relics, see: Patrick J. Geary, \textit{Furta Sacra. Thefts of Relics in the Central Middle Ages} (Princeton, 1978, 1990), 9.} Other important sources that provide us with information concerning translation are early church histories, chronicles, and annals, as well as writings of early church fathers in the form of
homilies, letters or sermons. In the ninth century the specific genre of translation narratives or *Translationes* developed. These are hybrid texts that bridge the difference between the literary *vitae* and the more historical forms of writing such as chronicles and annals. Martin Hainzelmann has pointed out that *Translationes* narratives as well as other similar hagiographical subgenres, such as those that describe the invention and elevations of relics, evolved from late classical prototypes. These hagiographical subgenres developed from sermons or panegyrics delivered for the *adventus* of an emperor in addition to Late Antique and Early Christian letters such as the one describing the remains of St. Polycarp or the letter from the priest Lucian concerning the discovery of the body of the protomartyr Stephen.

Written sources from the period between fourth and fifth centuries provide material through which one may reconstruct the early development of the translation ritual both East and West. In the Eastern part of the Roman Empire (Mediterranean) one of the earliest recorded *translatio* is that of St. Babylas (ca. 354), a bishop and martyr, from Antioch to a suburb of Daphne. The historian Sozomenus (ca. 400-450) gives a complete report of the procession as well as the

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effect of the *translatio* on the community.\textsuperscript{22} According to Sozomenus the martyred bishop was removed from his original grave and moved to a new church built by Caesar Constantius Gallus (351-4), half-brother of the emperor Julian (331/332-363), which was a former pagan temple of Apollo famous for it oracles, and located in a suburb of the city. By this act of translation Gallus wanted to purge the place of pagan superstition. The moving of the saint’s body was believed to have disturbed a demon who inhabited the temple of Apollo and who prevented any further oracles from appearing. Emperor Julian ordered that the temple should be opened and wanted the oracle of Apollo at the temple of Daphne to be consulted in the matter. He received no answer, however, and was told that this was due to the proximity of the dead body, indicating the presence of the saint. Sozomenus added further that Emperor Julian ordered the removal of the martyr’s body in order to regain the famous oracles at Daphne. This prompted the second translation of St. Babylas back to the Antioch. Upon the removal of the body of the saint a fire destroyed the temple of Apollo at Daphne, believed by Christians to be a sign of the fulfillment of the martyr’s prayers that drew fire down from heaven, which destroyed the temple and the demon.

Unlike Rome, the new capital of the Roman Empire, Constantinople, had only two local saints. The pressure to compensate for this lack of indigenous municipal

martyrs resulted in the quick adoption of the practice of relic translation. In 356 and 357 the relics of three biblical saints, first of the martyr Timothy who had been a disciple of Paul, and then of the apostle Andrew, and finally of the evangelist Luke, made their ceremonial entry into Constantinople and were enshrined in the church of the Holy Apostles. The news of this event spread throughout the Empire and was recorded by Paulinus of Nola in 405 who names Constantine as the initiator of the translation and views it as a measure to ensure the safety of the empire:

Indeed, when Constantine was founding the city named after himself and was the first of the Roman kings to bear the Christian name, the God-sent idea came to him that since he was embarking on the splendid enterprise of building a city that would rival Rome, he should also emulate Romulus’ city with a further endowment, by gladly defending his walls with the bodies of the apostles. He then removed Andrew from the Achaecians and Timothy from Asia. And so Constantinople now stands with twin towers, vying with the eminence of Great Rome, or rather resembling the defenses of Rome in that God has counterbalanced Peter and Paul with a protection as great, since Constantinople has gained the disciple of Paul and the brother of Peter.

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In 391 the Emperor Theodosius I (347-395) donned a purple robe and personally translated and deposited the head of St. John the Baptist in the new church he had built in the suburb of Hebdomon.26 His successor Arcadius (377/78-408) followed Theodosius I example and in 406 moved the relics of the prophet Samuel, first to Hagia Sophia, and then to a new church in Hebdomon in 411.27 These actions took place despite the prohibition of translation, division or dismemberment stated in Theodosius code of 438.28

Other Late Antique records on translation that give a precise description of the ritual may be found in the writings of the church fathers, usually in their letters, homilies or sermons. One example of such a text is the Homilie of St. John Chrysostom on the relocation of the remains of some anonymous martyrs from Constantinople to the church of St. Thomas at Drypia ordered by the empress

28 “Nemo martyrrem distrahat”, Cod. Theod. IX, xvii, 7; In 438 A.D. the roman emperor Theodosius II (408-450 AD) published, in a single volume, the general laws of his Christian predecessors beginning with Constantine I (306-337 A.D.). The law punished violation of the tombs that lined the roads outside the city walls. The code’s increasingly severe penalties for doing so suggest that the problem was getting worse. People were looting tombs for building materials and were digging up the bones of Christian martyrs. In 386 an imperial decree expressly prohibited the sale of these saint’s relics. Johann Karl Ludwig Gieseler, Text-book of Ecclesiastical History (Philadelphia, 1836), 285, note 94; The Theodosian Code and Novels, and the Sirmondian Constitutions, a translation with commentary, glossary, and bibliography by Clyde Pharr, in collaboration with Theresa Sherrrer Davidson and Mary Brown Pharr (Princeton, 1952), 239-240; also in more recent The Theodosian Code: Studies in the Imperial Law of Late Antiquity, ed. Harries, Jill and Ian Wood (Ithaca, 1993).
Eudoxia (d. 404) at the end of 398. In one passage, the writer reveals his fascination with the presence of the empress in the procession who would not normally participated in such an event personally:

Yet why should I speak of women or magistrates, when she who wears the imperial crown and is dressed in purple could bear to be separated not even a little from the remains for the entire extent of the journey. Rather, like a maidservant she walked one step behind the holy relics, touching the casket and the veil which covered it.

From the sixth to the tenth century, records of translation of relics were mostly incorporated as parts of the life of saints or they belonged to the historical chronicles such as the *Chronicon Paschale*, ca. 630 or the *Theophanes Chronographia* written by Theophanes the Confessor (ca. 760-818) in the beginning of the ninth century. The tenth century in the East brings us two important documents that indicate that the development of the translation of relics was part of the annual celebration of saints or particular relics. *The Book of Ceremonies* by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus informs us of the annual celebration of the translation of relics in which the imperial family was involved. The second document, the *Typicon of the Great Church*, provides details concerning the liturgical

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31 *Chronicon Paschale*, PG 92, for the partial English translation, see above, note 24.
celebration of the translation of the relics of various saints.\textsuperscript{34} This ceremony belongs to the type of rituals that would become festival processions.\textsuperscript{35} The anniversary of a translation was celebrated with annual processions and \textit{liti} accompanied by the appropriate reliquaries.\textsuperscript{36} In the case of Saint John Chrysostom, the \textit{Typicon} clearly describes the annual celebration of the translation of his body repeating the same route that the original translation in the fourth century took in Constantinople as recorded by the historian Socrates (b. 380) in his Church history.\textsuperscript{37}

The established practice of writing on the translation of a saint’s relics as part of his \textit{vita} continued between eleventh to thirteenth century. At the end of this period the \textit{translatio} was introduced and officially included as part of the process of canonization of saints. The best known examples are those of Meletios the Confessor (1209-1286)) and Gregory Palamas (d. 1359) as described by the patriarch Philotheos in his Thomos of 1368\textsuperscript{38} as well as that of the patriarch Athanasios (d. 1315) recorded by Theoktistos the Stoudite in his \textit{Logos}.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Le Typicon de la grande église.} Introduction, commentary and translation by Juan Mateos. Volume I+II (Rome, 1963).
\textsuperscript{35} Antigone Samellas, \textit{Death in the Eastern Mediterranean (50-600 A.D.)} (Tübingen, 2002).
\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Liti} or \textit{Litiya} were performed on great feasts and on days commemorating highly honored saints. The term \textit{Liti} means intensified prayer. \textit{A Patristic Greek Lexicon}, ed. G.W.H. Lampe (Oxford, 1972), 804.
\textsuperscript{37} \textit{Le Typicon de la grande église} vol. 1,212-214; For Socrates account, see: \textit{Ecclesiastical History Socrates of Scholasticus} VII, 45; for the English translation, see: \textit{A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church} vol. II. Translated and edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (Edinburgh, 1989, reprint), 177.
\textsuperscript{38} On the canonization of Meletios and Gregory Palamas see Philotheos, “\textit{Tomus contra Prochorum Cynodium}”, PG 151. 711-12.
\textsuperscript{39} Theoktistos the Stoudite, \textit{Logos}, cod. Chalc. 64, fols. 157r-199r. For the translation and commentaries, see: Alice-Mary T. Talbot, \textit{Faith Healing in Late Byzantium. The Posthumous Miracles of the Patriarch Athanasios I of Constantinople by Theoktistos the Stoudite} (Brookline, 1983).
In the West, Ambrose bishop of Milan (337/340-397) was a pioneer in discovery and translation of saint’s bodies. His documentation of two fourth-century translation ceremonies reveals their close relationship to the late antique and early Christian imperial *adventus* ceremony in its description of the translation of relics as a triumph of martyrs. The first of these ceremonies is described in a hymn that celebrates the memory of three martyrs, Felix, Victor and Nabor, who were Moorish soldiers of the garrison of Milan. ⁴⁰ They were executed in Lodi in 304, during the great persecution of Diocletian. Their bodies were returned to this city under the episcopate of Maternus between the years 316 and 328, in what was, as far as we know, the first official translation. ⁴¹

Ambrose’s second text belongs to two sermons that he delivered in Milan in 386 on the discovery of the remains of SS. Gervasius and Protasius, which were the model for his similar treatment of St. Nazarius, also in Milan, in 390. Ambrose here acknowledges that he met with criticism when he uncovered the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius and transferred them to the new basilica in 386. ⁴² Ambrose ensured that these events were major public spectacles, in the manner of the Late Antique

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imperial adventus ceremonies, characterized by public processions.\textsuperscript{43} In the case of Saint Nazarius the occasion was also marked by the revelation of the uncorrupted status of the saint’s body, initially disclosed by the grave’s giving off an odor of surpassing sweetness.\textsuperscript{44}

The writer whose work is most often cited when the relation between the translation of relics and the imperial adventus or triumphal ceremonies is discussed is that of Victricius of Rouen (393-417) and, in particular, his sermon De laude sanctorum (Praising the Saints).\textsuperscript{45} This text likely dates from the last years of the fourth century. In 396 Victricius solemnly received relics of various saints from Ambrose of Milan and Paulinus of Nola in his Episcopal City.\textsuperscript{46} He used the imperial

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{Imperial adventus in this dissertation will signify all Late Antique and Early Christian official imperial adventus ceremonies. For the adventus that formed a part of the translation ritual the term relic adventus or adventus of relics will be used.}
\footnote{Besides Ambrose’s effort, until the middle of the eighth century the great majority of the Roman martyrs were still lodged in the catacombs. Only in the 640s did the popes embrace the translation of corporeal remains. The first to do so was Pope John IV (640-2). Thacker argues that as a Dalmatian he was influenced by the more liberal attitudes of his native church. By the eighth century, the extra-urban cemeteries had lost much of their importance because of the translation of relics into churches in the city. At Rome, the instigator of these translations was Pope Hadrian, who clearly had a vision that the restored Rome should be a vigorous, Christian city. It has been estimated that Constantinople once contained some 3600 relics of 476 saints, see: Thacker, “The Making of a Local Saint,” 51; The ninth and tenth centuries certainly saw a dramatic increase in the translation of relics to the capital as a consequence of the growing successes of the Byzantine armies on the eastern frontiers. Heinzelmann, Translationsberichte, 94; Richard Krautheimer, Rome, Profile of the City (Princeton, 1980), 112-113.}
\end{footnotesize}
adventus ceremony as an analogy for the reception of the relics. Part of the sermon praised saints as heroes and moral examples for the people of Rouen.⁴⁷

Ambrose and Victricius’ model based upon the imperial adventus was adopted by sixth century historian bishop Gregory of Tours (538-594) who included numerous brief descriptions of relic transfers in his work on the saints De gloriam martyrum.⁴⁸ The reception of relics as attested to in Gregory’s writing required a ceremony and took place only in the presence of ecclesiastical dignitaries, particularly bishops. It was also accompanied by incense, candles, and the singing of psalms as in the case of translation of martyrs Agricola and Vitalis.⁴⁹

Prior to the ninth century accounts of translations were often found as part of vitae and passions of saints or in the chronicles of church historians in the East and the West. In the West, as noted above, the new hagiographical subgenre of Translationes narratives emerged between the ninth and the eleventh century.⁵⁰ They were more closely connected with the physical remains than the saint’s vitae. The new subgenre was a product of the growing need for relics which indicated translations of saint’s remains from Rome and elsewhere during this period.⁵¹ Such a demand for relics persistently increased in the West and resulted in numerous documents recording the purchase of relics from Rome and other locations.⁵² These documents provide us early examples of the use of the term adventus as a technical

⁴⁷ Victricius, De Laude sanctorum, 1, 12 PL 20:454.
⁴⁸ Gregory of Tours, De gloriam martyrum, MGM, SRM I. For the English translation, see: Glory of the martyrs. Translated with an introduction by Raymond Van Dam (Liverpool, 1988).
⁴⁹ Gregory of Tours, Glory of the martyrs, 43, 66.
⁵⁰ See above, page 15, note 19.
⁵¹ Geary, Furta Sacra, 11.
⁵² Heinzelmann, Translationsberichte, 95.
term for the arrival of relics. Legal documents from Corvey Abbey from the years 836, 864, 891, indicate the purchase of relics and their translation to the convent with the stereotypical announcement: *Adventus sancti Viti, Adventus sanctae Liuttrudis*, etc.\(^53\)

A quick overview of a relatively broad selection of written sources, referring to the translation of relics of martyrs and saints, can be accomplished in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris and the Bibliothèque Royale in Brussels. Among the hagiographic manuscripts up to and including the twelfth century, at least 341 texts of both catalogs (Paris 271, Brussels 70) make reference to the cult of relics and can be mostly attributed based on their titles related to translations in the broadest sense, which includes sermons, miracles, etc. The catalogues of both collections were created by the Bollandists at the end of the nineteenth century.\(^54\)

Late Antique sources tell us that in most cases the translation of relics reflected Late Antique and Early Christian imperial *adventus* ceremonies. Sozomenus’ description of the *translatio* of St. Babylas to Antioch in 362 describes it as mobilizing an entire city.\(^55\) The procession accompanying the coffin of St. Babylas included all of the city’s Christians assembled together, men and women, young and old, virgins and children. According to Sozomenus, they all joyfully drew the casket and encouraged one another by singing psalms “because they were transported by


\(^{55}\) For Sozomenus’ account see above, note 21.
zeal and spirit for their kindred religious belief." A similar description, as we have seen from above, is found in the record of Victricius of Rouen on the translation of relics to the church he founded. The ceremony resembled the imperial adventus where, in the words of Peter Brown, an entire community came together “in acclaiming the emperor’s presence among them.” As Brown goes on to describe it, the imperial adventus "was conceived as a moment of ideal consensus on a deeper level," that “made plain God’s acceptance of the community as a whole: his mercy embraced all its disparate members, and could reintegrate all who stood outside the previous year.” The relic adventus was integrated into the liturgical celebration of the translation of relics as part of saints’ festivals dating from the ninth century in the West. As we have seen from the Typicon of the Great Church in Constantinople, in the East, the relic translatio was an already regulated ceremony as part of the liturgical annual celebration of the event from the tenth century if not before. Unfortunately, we do not have explicit documents that describe the procession in all its phases.

Beside the relic adventus, two other important stages in the ritual of translation can be extracted from the written sources: invention and elevation. The invention

57 Victricius, De Laude sanctorum 12 454D-455A; for the full reference see above, note 45.
58 Brown, The cult of the saints, 98-100.
59 Geary, Furta Sacra, 13; Heinzelmann, Translationsberichte, 95-100.
60 See above, page 20, note 34.
61 It is worth of noting that based largely on Western written sources from the fifth to twelfth century Hainzelman, has identified four stages in the celebration of the relic adventus: first, the profectio or departure of the relics. The early use of profectio to mark the departure of relics can be found in the writing of Gregory of Tours, De gloriam martyrum, MGM, SRM I/2, 94; the second stage, the occursus or the community’s reception of the relics. The occursus usually involved the highest dignitaries, monks, as well as others. The relics were welcomed by mixtum populus, or more accurately described as by everyone (omnis
or discovery of relics denotes the revelation of the saint’s relics and, although usually a prerequisite step in the translation of a relic, it was not necessary in every case.  

The *inventio* was usually initiated by the saint himself or some other person who was in direct contact with him. This is the case with the well-documented example of the *inventio* of St. Stephen the Protomartyr’s relics. According to the *Epistola aviti ad palchonium, re reliquiis sancti Stephani, ed de Luciani epistola a se e graeco in latinum versa* from the fifth century, the saint’s body laid hidden and its invention did not occur until the year 415 or 417.  

The narrative describes a priest by the name of Lucian receiving a vision as he rested in the vicinity of Jerusalem. An old man clad in vestment-like garments appeared to the priest. He touched Lucian with a golden stick and commanded him to find and open the tomb of Stephen. The old man instructed the priest to go to John, the bishop of Jerusalem, and tell him to have the holy body transferred to a more fitting resting place. When Lucian asked...
the identity of the speaker, the old man revealed it to be Gamaliel, who saved the martyr’s body from being eaten by animals when the Jews left it outside the city walls after his stoning. He explained that St. Stephen was interred in the tomb beside his own. However Lucian, unsure of the nature of his dream, prayed to God for the dream to appear to him a second and third time if the vision were true.

This anecdote of a vision that serves to authenticate the relics is a commonplace in invention narratives. Once Lucian described his prayers, Gamaliel answered with information that would enable the priest to identify the holy bodies once they were excavated. Following his third vision Lucian was convinced that they were inspired by the saint. He traveled quickly to Jerusalem and reported all he had learned in his dreams to a certain bishop John. Lucian, John and many other bishops joined together and proceeded to the place that Gamaliel had indicated. The body was then retrieved from its original grave and taken to the church of Sion in Jerusalem.

As this example indicates, inventio was generally treated as a separate but related and essential first step in most cases of translatio. There are, however, also unusual cases of secondary invention or re-invention. This sometimes occurred when the records locating a body that had been translated were subsequently lost and the site of the saints’ relics become unknown as was the case with the translation of the body of St. Mark to Venice. The saint’s remains were first relocated from Alexandria in 828-829. After being placed in the church of St. Mark

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64 Heizelmann, Translationsberichte, 77-80; Walter, Art and Ritual, 148-150.
66 Geary, Furta Sacra, 69-70.
in Venice, however, the precise location of his body was forgotten.67 In 1063, during
the construction of a new basilica in Venice, St. Mark's relics could not be found.
Before the consecration of the new church of St. Mark in 1084/85 or 1093/1094 the
saint himself revealed the location of his remains by extending an arm from a
pillar.68 The newfound remains were elevated and placed in a sarcophagus in the
basilica. As Thomas Dale argued, this invention or rediscovery of relics confirmed
the conventional rite of passage "which renewed the saint's presence amongst his
community" and the importance of his tomb. 69

The invention of the relics of St. Mark by the miraculous pillar and their
translation to a new location in the church tells us more about another stage of the
translation of relics: elevatio or elevation. Elevatio was usually performed after the
invention of relics as the preparation for the moving of the body to a new position. It
was often performed inside the church by raising a saint from his tomb to the most
prominent position in the church. The coffin was placed on an elevated platform
behind the altar and oriented at right angles to it; the saint’s head therefore came to

67 After the 828 translatio the relics were originally placed in a corner of the Doge’s palace.
They were then translated a second time to the first church of San Marco after its
completion in 830s. The church served initially as the private chapel of the doge but would
become a state church by the eleventh century. Thomas E.A. Dale, “Inventing a Sacred Past:
Pictorial Narratives of St. Mark the Evangelist in Aquileia and Venice, ca. 1000-1300,”

68 For the construction of the San Mark church see: Otto Demus, The Mosaic Decoration of
San Marco Venice. (Chicago, London, 1988), 2-3; The story of invention was transformed by
the thirteenth century into a state miracle known as Apparitio. M. Muraro, “Il pilastro del
69 Thomas E.A. Dale, “Stolen Property: St. Mark’s First Venetian Tomb and the Politics of
Communal Memory,” Memory and Medieval Tomb, ed. Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo and Carol
lie in the west, in order that he would face Christ as He came again from the East.\(^{70}\)

In 698 Saint Cuthbert’s precious remains were translated at Lindisfarne from a grave into a, still-preserved, raised wooden coffin.\(^{71}\) The original coffin is decorated with images of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the Evangelists.\(^{72}\) Bede gives the reason for the elevation of the saint’s body being that the remains could now be “worthily venerated.”\(^{73}\)

The wooden shrine was placed on the south side of the church on the top of the stone sarcophagus in which the saint had been buried and in which the remains of his successor Eadberht were later interred.\(^{74}\)

According to the Serbian archbishop Danilo II (1324–1337) the body of the Serbian queen Helen was taken out of her tomb in the fourteenth century and displayed in a wooden coffin in front of the altar screen below the icon of Christ the Savior in the church of the Holy Virgin in the monastery Gradac.\(^{75}\) Similarly, in the church of the Savior in the monastery of Dečani the body of the Holy king Stefan

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\(^{71}\) Bede, *Hist. Ec. IV.* 30-2; Bede, *Historia ecclesiastica gentis anglorum,* PL 95 cols. 21-290; Anonymous, *Vita S. Cuthberti,* IV, 14-17.

\(^{72}\) Alan T. Thacker, "Lindisfarne and the Origins of the Cult," in *St. Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community: to AD 1200,* ed. Gerald Bonner, David Rollason, Clare Stancliffe (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1989), 103-122. For the iconography and the reconstruction of the coffin, see: Ernst Kitzinger, “The Coffin-Reliquary of Saint Cuthbert,” *Studies in Late Antique Byzantine and Medieval Western Art* (London, 2003), 672-801.


\(^{74}\) Bede, *Vita (prosaica) S. Cuthberti,* cc. 40-6; *Two lives of Saint Cuthbert; a life by an anonymous monk of Lindisfarne and Bede's prose life,* ed. and translated by Bertram Colgrave (Cambridge, 1940); see also, Thacker, “The Making of a Local Saint,”45-75; 46.

\(^{75}\) Arhiepiskop Danilo, *Životi kraljeva i arhiepiskopa srpskih.* Translated by Lazar Mirković (Beograd, 1935), 75-76.
Dečanski was removed from his tomb inside the church in the fourteenth century and moved in front of the iconostasis in a wooden coffin. This kind of solemn translation (*elevatio corporis*) was treated as outward recognition of heroic sanctity that functioned as the equivalent of canonization in the period before the Holy See in the West reserved for itself the passing of a final judgment upon the merits of the deceased servants of God.

Following the twelfth century, translations usually occurred only after official papal canonization. The opening of the saint’s tomb was preceded by a three-day fast since the clergy who were to carry out the ceremony required abundant spiritual preparation for the task ahead. Sometimes as part of the preliminaries the tomb was opened in private the night before the translation so that the bones could be inspected and old rotten garments replaced by new wrappings. In the East, official canonization required the vigorous examination of the saint and his body in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries since when we have a first record of it. According to the historian Pachymeres (1242 – c. 1310) in his *De Michaele et Andronico Paleologus* the uncorrupted relics of the patriarch of Constantinople Arsenious were translated to Constantinople in 1284 and deposited in Hagia Sophia.

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76 Though Danilo II writes only about the translation and burial of the king’s body in the monastery of Dečani, his remains were still placed in front of the iconostasis in the church. The fourteenth century wooden coffin in which the relics upon the elevation were placed is still preserved, now in the monastery treasury. Arhiepiskop Danilo II, *Životi*, 161; for more on the placement of relics of king Stefan Dečanski, see: Bratislav Pantelić, *The architecture of Dečani and the role of archbishop Danilo II* (Reichert, 2002)

77 In the early Middle Ages, bishop and synod controlled canonization. Around 1200 the pope asserted exclusive rights for the canonization of saints, see: *Christian spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. Jill Raitt in collaboration with Bernard McGinn and John Meyendorff (New York, 1987), 94.

in a coffin placed to the right of the bema.\textsuperscript{79} Pachymeres reports that the emperor, senate, patriarch and clergy sang hymns and saying panegyrics at the ceremony.\textsuperscript{80}

The removal, division and dismemberment of the bodies of the saints caused no great repugnance in the East. In the West, particularly at Rome, however, greater respect was shown to the holy dead.\textsuperscript{81} The mere unwrapping or touching of the body of a martyr was considered to be a perilous enterprise, which could only be set about by the holiest of ecclesiastics after much prayer and fasting.\textsuperscript{82} Pope Gregory the Great (540-604) was skeptical as in regards to the alleged "customs of the Greeks" of readily transferring the bodies of martyrs from place to place. He goes on to declare that throughout the West any interference with these honored remains was looked upon as a sacrilegious act and that numerous prodigies had struck terror into the hearts of even well meaning men who had attempted anything of the sort.\textsuperscript{83}

There was probably an element of self-interest in Gregory's response to these issues: it was obviously desirable to retain control of the numerous and highly regarded holy bodies with which Rome had been endowed since the time of the persecutions. In the mid third century the bodies of the apostles Peter and Paul

\textsuperscript{80} Pachymeres, \textit{De Mich.} ii. 84.18-85.14.
\textsuperscript{81} Fernand de Visscher, \textit{Le droit des tomeaux romains} (Milan, 1963), 139; also Thacker, "The Making of a Local Saint," 49.
\textsuperscript{82} "Nemo martyrem distrahat", \textit{Cod. Theod.} IX, xvii, 7; for more details on the codes, see above, note 28.
\textsuperscript{83} Joan Margaret Petersen, \textit{The Dialogues of Gregory the Great in their Late Antique Cultural Backgrounds} (Toronto, 1984), 141-145; \textit{Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne}, 2303.
appear to have been removed for a time from their original resting-place in the Vatican and on the Via Ostiense to the catacomb of San Sebastiano on the Via Appia. Moreover, fragments of bone enclosed in fifth- and sixth-century altars suggested that earlier popes had not hesitated to take corporeal material from martyrs’ tombs for use in their own city.  

Relics of saints were a powerful symbol of Christian triumph over death. As Ioali Kalavrezou has pointed out, relics “functioned as instruments of power, investiture and leadership.” The translation and elevation of relics became a principal means by which political power and policies were implemented. The authority of the person who performed the ceremony was enhanced. By offering the believer a new path to divine beneficence, relics produced concrete material rewards for their possessors. Once incorporated into local churches they were enormously lucrative for the people who controlled access to them. Most importantly, saints were vehicles of political will. The presence of the saint would lend legitimacy to the ruling regime, both in their capacity to secure the relics and in the transfer of authority and prestige by their mutual association.

84 Lietzman has made a strong argument that exhumations and translations were done as early as June 29, 258, despite prohibitions and the contradicting of Roman practices that forbade the disturbance of graves. It may be expected that imagery adorning such spaces advertised the bodily presence of the martyr in his shrine more explicitly than an original tomb, which spoke for itself; see: Hans Lietzmann, “The Tomb of the Apostles ad catacumbas,” in Studies in Early Christianity: A Collection of Scholarly Essays, ed. Paul Corby Finney (New York, 1993), 147-162.

85 Ioali Kalavrezou, “Helping Hands for the Empire: Imperial Ceremonies and the Cult of Relics at the Byzantine Court,” in Byzantine Court Culture from 829 to 1204, ed. Henry Maguire (Washington, D.C, 1996), 53-81

As translatio grew in popularity and was enshrined in the official practices of the church from the ninth century, especially in the West, the desire to obtain relics grew also, and consequently, abuses followed. The disruptions of the various barbarian invasions, the conquests of the Crusades, coupled with the lack of means for verifying all relics led to questionable attributions. Early evidence of less-than-reputable individuals preying upon the ignorant and superstitious raised the specter of counterfeits. Even as early as the end of the fourth century, St. Augustine reported the appearance of some impostors in monks habits, and describes them as making profit by the sale of not authentic relics. Pope Gregory the Great forbade the selling of relics and the disruption of tombs in the catacombs. Ultimately, the Popes or other religious authorities were powerless in trying to control the translation of relics or prevent forgeries. The Second Council of Nicaea of 787 insisted, with special urgency, that relics were to be used in the consecration of churches, and that their lack was to be remedied if any church had been consecrated without them. The link between the relics’ grave and the altar now became essential. The decision of the Second Council of Nicaea insisting on the consecration of churches by placing relics beneath the altar created a continuous

87 Geary, Furta Sacra, 28-44.
88 De op. monach. xxviii, PL 40, col. 547-582; Augustinius, Aurelius De opere monachorum, ed. J. Zycha. Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum (Vieanna, 1900).
demand that avaricious dealers were happy to meet. At the beginning of the ninth century, as Jean Guiraud had shown, the exportation of the bodies of martyrs from Rome had assumed the dimensions of a regular commerce. The prevalence of ‘forced’ translations required significant alterations to the Translationes narratives. By ‘forced’ I mean a translation undertaken without inventio, which formally acknowledged the saint’s expressed desire to be moved, with or without, the approval of the local communities where the relics were previously deposited.

In records of translations, it was usually the saints themselves who were the ones to initiate their own translatio by appearing in someone’s dream. They would also oppose any forced translatio through the exercise of their supernatural power. This was usually indicated by a crashing of the cart that pulled the saint’s body or by the stubborn refusal of the oxen or mules to move, a state of affairs believed to be caused by the power of saint. This is demonstrated in the case of the translatio of St. Stephen’s relics from Jerusalem to Constantinople. The Byzantine emperor intended to deposit them in a different church than the one designated by the saint, but the oxen refused to move. The power of the saint could also cause the death of those who decided to disturb the holy body. This was the fate of a Greek

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91 It was forbidden to consecrate a church without a relic upon the penalty of excommunication, see: Alexander Clarence Flick, The Rise of the Mediaeval Church and its Influence on the Civilisation of Western Europe from the First to the Thirteenth Century (New York, 1909), 380.
93 For the case of St. Stephen and the letter from Lucian, see above, note 21.
94 For more detail about this part of the story as well as the location in Constantinople, see: Paul Magdalino, “Aristocratic OIKOI in the Tenth and Eleventh Regions of Constantinople,” in Nevra Necipoglu, Byzantine Constantinople. Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life (Leiden, 2001), 53-69, 61-63.
priest who wanted to remove the body of St. Lawrence from his tomb in the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura in Rome without the saint’s consent.\textsuperscript{95} The issue of ‘forced’ \textit{translatio} is usually connected with military power, as was the case in the conquest of Constantinople in 1204 after which the Venetians removed many relics to Venice.\textsuperscript{96}

The need to legitimize ‘forced’ translations led religious authorities to produce provenances for the newly imported objects and rationales for their appropriation. For that reason new \textit{Translationes} narratives were created that often contradicted earlier sources in an attempt to justify the theft of relics. Perhaps the best example is the Life of St. Nicholas. Greek sources do not mention any movement of his body from his final resting place in Myra.\textsuperscript{97} Nevertheless, Latin sources assert the saint’s desire to be moved from Myra to Bari in Italy. According to the Latin legend, in 1087 a group of merchants from Bari on their way to sell grain in Antioch heard that Venetian merchants intended to steal St. Nicholas.\textsuperscript{98} Discovering the plot, the merchants from Bari decided to stop first in Myra and secure the body of the saint themselves. After almost having a fight with the congregation in the church where the body was deposited, they removed it and left for Bari. The Latin legend says that St. Nicholas did not object to the removal of his body to Bari and thus legitimized the

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{The Golden Legend}, 412.
\textsuperscript{96} Donald M. Nicol, \textit{Byzantium and Venice: A Study in Diplomatic and Cultural Relations} (Cambridge ; New York, 1988), especially 183-189.
\textsuperscript{98} Pasquale Corsi, “La translazione di san Nicola da Myra a Bari,” in \textit{San Nicola, Splendori d’arte d’Oriente e d’Ocidente}. Edited by Michele Bacci (Milano, 2006), 89-97.
'forced’ relocation of the relic. Scholars generally agree that the *translatio* of St. Nicholas was a theft and the main reason for this action was economic.⁹⁹ Geary argues that the translation was a reaction to the external threat posed to Bari’s economy by the Venetian merchants whose rivals from Bari were determined to beat them to the body.¹⁰⁰

3. The Body in Translation

The importance accorded the possession of corporeal relics and their corollary political significance brings us to the status of the body of the saint and its role in translation. The indeterminacy of saint’s corpse, its being dead but still manifesting supernatural agency, forms the central problematic of the representation of translation of relics. How does a static image distinguish between a body that is truly inert and one that, although dead, nevertheless retains agency?

The association between the saint’s venerated body being in a state of living death and the ritual of translation may be found in an alternate definition of translation in the English Oxford Dictionary where the term is defined as the “removal from earth to heaven, *orig.* without death, as the translation of Enoch?”¹⁰¹ The biblical story of Enoch tell us that: “by faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his

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¹⁰¹ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 18, 410.
translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” 102 This passage indicates that the veneration of saints’ relics and their frequent discovery in an uncorrupted state affirms that the physical world has the potential for being transfigured and resurrected, as it participates in the restoration of humanity to the beauty of the Divine Image and Likeness. The saint’s translatio and immediate resurrection or placement in the vicinity of God was often compared to the resurrection of the Virgin. There was a long-standing historical debate as to the nature of the Virgin’s resurrection that centered on the question of whether she was buried after death or whether she, as Brian Deley has put it, “remained alive” in the way that Enoch had been taken alive into heaven as described in the scriptures.103

The body of the deceased was expected to manifest its holiness by incorruptibility (i.e., to show no evidence of decay) and by the flow of myro, a pleasant fragrance, which was frequently recorded to have emanated from the tomb. The corpse would often, although not always, be found to have the capacity for miraculous healing.104 The notion that God was able to preserve the bones or the entire corpse led to the legend of the indestructible life, according to which the bodies of those martyred were miraculously restored and the bodies of certain saints remained uncorrupted.105 The phenomenon of the whole and uncorrupted body rested on sporadic cases of bodies remaining intact long after burial. As in

102 Heb. XI, 5.
104 “In the relics of the saints the Lord Christ has provided us with saving fountains which in many ways pour out benefactions and gush with fragrant ointment,” Saint John of Damascus. Writings. Translated by F. H. Chase, Jr. (New York, 1958), 368.
ancient Egypt with its mummified corpses seen as a condition of the afterlife, the integrity of the body was interpreted in the Middle Ages as a anticipatory sign of grace understood with reference to the *incoruptio* (1Cor. 15,42) that the faithful hoped to attain at the Resurrection where the soul would be reunited with the uncorrupted body.

The incorruption of the saints was understood as a sign that some of them were blessed with divine power even before they died. The power of God enabled them to foresee their future residency in heaven. As Ronald Finucane has argued:

> in the earlier Middle Ages, as such people neared death they could see over the boundary separating the worlds. Their deaths were transitions to another, higher and therefore more powerful state. This state could be anticipated: they could foresee their own deaths and other secrets of the future.\(^{106}\)

The best example of the anticipatory insight of a saint is perhaps found in the reports of the death of St. Stephen. Knowing that he will be executed by stoning, St. Stephen had a vision of the heavens open and God in glory with Christ standing on His right side. (Acts 7:55).

That the power of the saints was still active even after their death gave them a paradoxical status of being neither fully dead nor alive. This allowed them to continue to be present in everyday life. As Carolyn Bynum has observed, “saints do not decay, in life or in death,” and “appear to us in visions, whole and shining...”\(^{107}\)

Some hagiographies describe cases where dead saints sat up to revere the

\(^{106}\) Finucane, "Sacred Corpse," 51.

Eucharistic host,\textsuperscript{108} or those whose corpses would bleed in order to accuse their murderer. \textsuperscript{109} St. Cyril of Jerusalem (347 A.D.) in his \textit{Catechesis}, speaks of the inherent power within relics. After referring to the miracle wrought by the body of Eliseus, St. Cyril describes the reanimation of a corpse that the saint’s body was in contact with, declaring "that even though the soul is not present a virtue resides in the body of the saints, because of the righteous soul which has for so many years tenanted it and used it as its minister." He continues:

Let us not be foolishly incredulous as though the thing had not happened, for if handkerchiefs and aprons which are from without, touching the body of the diseased, have raised up the sick, how much more should the body itself of the Prophet raise the dead?\textsuperscript{110}

Many church fathers and theologians referred to the saint’s dying as falling asleep, confirming their ambivalent status of being in a state of living death. Saint Jerome (347-420) wrote: "The truth is that the saints are not called dead, but are said to be asleep. Wherefore Lazarus, who was about to rise again, is said to have slept."\textsuperscript{111} Paulinus of Nola considered the Saint Felix "buried, but not dead" and claimed that from his "temporary tranquil sleep" in his "gleaming" tomb, the saint monitored the courtyard of his church and delighted in the crowd who came to

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{108} Caroline W. Bynum, \textit{Fragmentation and Redemption: Essays on Gender and the Human Body in Medieval Religion} (New York, Cambridge, 1991), 266.
  \item \textsuperscript{109} Michael Camille, \textit{Master of Death: the Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illuminator} (New Haven, 1996), 179.
  \item \textsuperscript{110} \textit{Cat.} xviii, 16. For the English translation, see: \textit{The works of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem.} Translated by Leo P. McCauley, Anthony A. Stephenson, vol. 2 (Washington, D.C. 1969-1970), 106.
\end{itemize}
Some writers, as Victricius of Rouen, went so far as to apply the language of divinity to the saints, and particularly to their relics. He speaks of the saints as sharing immortality with God the Father: “si communis hereditas, communis aeternitas,” and speaks of them partaking of a united will: “Superest ut non diuisa, sed una sit auctoritas voluntatum.” According to Victricius this unity of substance is between God and the saints “not only to the souls of the sanctified in heaven, but also to the remnants of their bodies on earth.” Whichever explanation we accept for the notion of a dead-yet-living body it should, as Finucane stated, become doctrine that "saints were not altogether dead."

4. *Translatio* in Art/Images of *Translatio*

While written records most often provide clear descriptions of the translation of relics, the visual material on *translatio* is less explicit. The body of the saint forms the most important element in the scene of translation. The relic required the image to attest to its significance in a material form, forging a palpable connection between the saint and his devotees. The image was empowered by the attendant relics, which gave it a cultic and performative significance. The representations of *translatio* advertised the cult via visual cues that underscored the power and presence of the saint, as well as the mediating role of those who tended

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113 Victricius, *De Laude sanctorum* 7:64-80.
115 Finucane, “Sacred Corpse,” 52.
the cult. The body of the saint placed within a closed coffin was often used as a key identifying cue by which the viewer might recognize a scene of translation, however, it could also be easily confused with the Ark of the Covenant or a funeral scene, the iconography of the transfer of which was often strikingly similar.

Amongst the earliest surviving representations of the translation of relics are those, which originated in the fourth or fifth century in the East. One early example is a simple image showing two men approaching a gate of a city's walls (Fig. 3). They hold a reliquary box in their hands. The image is part of a single papyrus leaf on which depicts the translation of relics of St. Andrew and St. Luke to Constantinople in 336. Due to the limitation of the space on the papyrus, the image of translation is shown in its abbreviated form, similar to the schematic images of the imperial *adventus* often represented in numismatics, such as is the case with the Arras Medallion from 296 AD that shows the imperial *adventus* of Constantius I to London (Fig. 4).

Another early example of the representation of translation is found on an ivory plaque that shows the arrival of relics into a city and their procession to the church in which they will be housed (Fig. 2). The date of this plaque, known as the Trier ivory, is debatable; however, the current prevailing opinion among scholars is

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that it was most likely manufactured in the sixth century in Constantinople.\textsuperscript{118} The ivory's composition is unique in the density of its figures and the complex articulation of its architectural setting. The scene carved on the ivory shows the passage of a cart through a city or palace gate with two bishops seated in it holding a box containing relics (Fig. 5). The cart is preceded by a procession of men led by an individual dressed as a byzantine emperor. They approach a church on the left side of the composition in front of which an Empress is shown welcoming the procession. This entire scene is observed by an audience located in the background who stand in front or inside a two-story architectural structure.

The period between the sixth and the tenth centuries has left us little visual evidence of the translation of relics in the East. It is difficult to determine if this lacuna was due to iconoclasm. The tenth century saw the revival of the representation of translation of relics. The surviving examples are largely calendar illustrations from illuminated manuscripts. One dating from the early tenth century is found in the \textit{Menologion of Basil II} (Cod. Vaticano Greco 1613).\textsuperscript{119} The \textit{Menologion of Basil II} was an illustrated calendar or \textit{synaxarion} used to mark the liturgical year in the city of Constantinople. It consists of short notices and miniatures for each day between September 1 and the end of February. Liturgical processions are

\textsuperscript{118} For the detailed description of the Trier ivory and the scholarship on it, see Chapter Two. For the bibliography on the ivory, see below Chapter Two, page 64, note 13.
represented in for the days celebrating the translation of relics. The first shown is the transfer of the relics of St. John Chrysostom in 438 from Armenia, where he died in exile (Fig. 6). In this miniature the Emperor Theodosius II accompanies the Patriarch Proclus. The patriarch carries a Gospel Book and thurible. The relics have been placed in a casket and are carried on the shoulders of four men while a crowd bearing candles accompanies them. The aim of the procession is clearly indicated by the many-domed Church of the Holy Apostles depicted in the rear.

Similar iconographic elements were used for the two other illuminations from the same manuscript. One of them shows the translation of relics of Anastasius of Persia (d. 628) to a church in the city of Caesarea (Fig. 7). Here, the sarcophagus of the saint is carried on the shoulders by two men preceded by ecclesiastical dignitaries who lead the procession toward a church with open doors that is shown at the far right. Another scene of translatio from the same manuscript shows the translatio of Ignatius of Antioch (35-98 or 50-117)(Fig. 8). The iconography is similar to the previous composition with the only significant difference being that in the case of Ignatius, the saint’s sarcophagus is carried toward partially open city gates, indicating the community’s welcoming of his relics.

A simplified version of translation iconography focusing on one stage of the ceremony, usually that of the relic adventus, was used in other byzantine illuminated manuscripts up until the end of the Byzantine Empire in 1453. Often the only

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120 Il Menologio di Basilio II, 353.
121 For the description of the event, see: Socrates, Ecclesiastical History, VII. 45.
122 Il Menologio di Basilio II, 355 and 344.
significant differences in the iconography of representations of translatio in these manuscripts were the number of people who carried the casket, background details, or the location of the final depository site of the relics. The latter would indicate either the city to which the procession was headed or the particular church where the relics would find their resting place as in the aforementioned cases of translation of Ignatius of Antioch or Athanasius of Persia (Figs. 7-8).

A significant shift in iconography occurred in the so-called Skylitzes Chronicle (Madrid, Bibl. Nac. cod. 5-3, n.2) from the mid-twelfth century. In the scene depicting the translation of relics of Byzantine emperor Michael III from Chrysopolis to Constantinople (fol. 106v), the patriarch of Constantinople Stephanos is shown in the middle of the composition with his arms outstretched while being held by two men (Fig. 9). In the far left part of the composition the emperor is represented with a group of people. On the opposite side one sees two men carrying a reliquary box instead of the casket, as was usually represented in the manuscripts after the tenth century.

Important differences in iconography and medium are found in representations of the translation of relics produced in countries that were under the cultural and religious influence of the Byzantine Empire such as Medieval Serbia or Russia. During the thirteenth and fourteenth century in Serbia one usually finds images of the translation of relics in monumental fresco as part of a broader

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123 For the Skylitza manuscript, see: Vasiliki Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle of Ioannes Skylitzes in Madrid* (Leiden, 2002).
124 For the detailed description of the scene, see: Tsamakda, *The Illustrated Chronicle*, 141.
narrative cycle of the saint’s life. Another visible difference occurs in the
depiction of the saints’ bodies, which are now openly displayed to the viewer
instead of being enclosed in a casket or a reliquary box. This innovation was related
to the spread of the cult of the first royal saint in Serbia, St. Simeon Nemanja. The
first image showing the translation of his relics was painted in 1233-34 in the chapel
dedicated to him adjoined to the narthex of the main katholikon in the monastery of
Studenica (Fig. 10). The inclusion of openly displayed relics was accepted in
Russia as well.

The representation of the translation of relics in the West did not occur prior
to the ninth century as far as we can tell by the surviving material. In the East,
iconography from the tenth century on was more-or-less uniform and the medium
often limited to manuscript illuminations. The West, however, showed larger
diversity in both iconographic solutions as well as in media.

If we exclude the Vienne relief due to the inconclusive nature of its motif, one
of the earliest surviving Western examples clearly showing the translation of relics
is the ivory book cover of the Drogo Sacramentary, ca. 845 (Paris, BNF) (Fig. 11).
Though it does not explicitly show the moment of the relic adventus, one of the small
ivory plaques from the front book cover has a scene describing the last stage of
translation, the deposition of the relics in a church. The ivory represents two men

126 Danica Popović, “Srpska vladerska translatio kao triumfalni adventus,” Pod okriljem
127 On the cycle of St. Simeon Nemanja in Serbian medieval painting with the detailed
bibliography, see: Chapter Four, page 228-229, note 71-72.
128 Shalina, Relikvii, 53.
carrying relics in a box placed on a litter. They are approaching the altar underneath a ciborium on which a priest officiates.

Images of translation in the West would proliferate from the tenth century onwards, with production reaching its peak between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. While in the East, as we have seen, images of translatio often displayed only one moment in the sequence of events that made up the ceremony of the translation of relics, in the West they usually depicted all the stages in the ritual. Hence, they would begin with the invention of the relics, which would be followed by their elevation through the adventus, and conclude with their deposition. An early example of this pattern is found in the illumination in the Gospel Lectionary from Echternach, *ca.*1035 now in Brusseles, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. 9428 that shows the translation of relics of St. Stephen from his tomb to the church in Jerusalem (Fig. 12). This cycle consists of seven scenes showing the different stages of the translation ritual (Figs. 13-14). The last scene represents the deposition of the relics in the church in Jerusalem.

Great iconographic diversity is found in the ways in which scenes of translation represent the body of the saint being moved. The most common type

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130 Abou-El-Haj, *The Medieval Cult of Saints*, 48-49
openly displays the body preserved and fully dressed. This is the case in the fresco depicting the relic *adventus* of St. Clemente in the lower church of St. Clemente in Rome, which dates from the eleventh century (Fig. 15). A scene of translation of St. Magnus to Anagni from the thirteenth century depicted on the long apsidal wall in the crypt of the cathedral in Anagni shows the saint being processed in an open strigillated sarcophagus (Fig. 16). Usually the body is carried on a bier, a litter, or a sarcophagus as in the previous two cases; however, it could be also placed on a litter drawn by horses as is the case with the translation of relics of St. Stephen from Constantinople to Rome represented in the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura (Fig. 17).

Although less common, scenes of translation in the West could also show the casket or reliquary closed. Save for this essential difference, this iconography of closed-reliquary representations is similar to those that openly display the corpse. Both types show the reliquary either carried on a litter by two or more men, as in the translation of St. Amand from the Ms. 502, folio 30v from Valenciennes, (illuminated between 1066-1107) (Fig. 18), and on the capital from the Hilduin chapel in the crypt of the Church of St. Denis in Paris (Fig. 19), twelfth century or pulled by horses or oxen. Later medieval representations, from the thirteenth

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134 For more descriptive analysis of the fresco and its dating, see Chapter Three.
century on, may also include scenes showing a rider carrying the reliquary with the precious bones in one of the rider's hands.\textsuperscript{137}

The translation of relics was often represented as a part of a broader cycle chronicling the life of a saint, such as the one found in the church of St. Mark in Venice from the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{138} Here, seven scenes of the translation of St. Mark from Alexandria to Venice that occurred in 828 are depicted in mosaic in the Cappella di San Clemente flanking the choir of the church (Fig. 20).\textsuperscript{139} The cycle follows the journey of the relics according to the text of \textit{Translatio} starting with the removal of the body from the tomb in Alexandria and ending with its impressive reception in Venice and deposition under the church altar.\textsuperscript{140} A similar, though less descriptive cycle dating from the early twelfth century is represented in enamel on the altar Pala d’Oro (Fig. 21).\textsuperscript{141} In the tympanum above of the Porta Sant’Alipio, the main entrance to the church narthex, a mosaic from the thirteenth century depicts a single scene of the relic \textit{adventus} of St. Mark (Fig. 22).\textsuperscript{142} The scene shows all the citizens of Venice gathering together for the reception of the precious relics that they will escort to the church.

\textsuperscript{137} As in a miniature showing Germanus of Auxerre with the relic of St. Albanus from a thirteenth century manuscript in Dublin (Dublin: Library, Trinity College, E.1.40, fol. 55r).

\textsuperscript{138} Otto Demus dated the mosaic cycle to the first half of the twelfth century. Otto Demus, \textit{The Mosaics of San Marco in Venice} (Chicago, 1984), I:82-83; Dale has proposed a date between 1155-1180 based on the iconographic details, see: Dale “Inventing a Sacred Past,” 75-78.


\textsuperscript{140} For the text \textit{Translatio Marci}, see above, note 65.

\textsuperscript{141} Pala d’Oro was commissioned by Doge Ordelaffo Falier in 1105 for the high altar of San Marco. Sergio Bettini, “Venice, the Pala d’ Oro, and Constantinople,” \textit{The Treasure of San Marco Venice}, ed. David Buckton (Milan, 1984), 35-64; \textit{La Pala d’Oro}, ed. H.R. Hahnloser and R. Polacco,(Venice, 1994), 89-93.

\textsuperscript{142} Demus, \textit{The Mosaic Decoration}, 183.
Only sporadic attention is given to the problem of the representation of the translation of relics in studies of Byzantine, Eastern and Western Christian Art. Though Antony Lagner has argued that the iconography of translation did not change over time from its early medieval phases to its later representation in the baroque period, this point is highly debatable. One may argue that change must be broadly understood, taking into account not only iconographical shifts but ones of context and use as well.

As discussed above, in the West *translatio* was usually represented as part of a broader narrative cycle while in Byzantine iconography, it was more common for one characteristic scene to be separated out, usually that of the translation itself as is the case with the illuminations from the *Menologion of Basil II*. Erwin Panofsky noted the advantage of emphasizing a single scene from a cycle, arguing that the power of the *Imago Pietatis* was its isolation of the dramatic image from the Passion narrative. The single scene that was most frequently presented as a marker of relic translation, the *adventus*, emphasized the ritualistic character of the ceremony. The iconography of the translation of relics depicting their arrival and

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144 Shalina, *Relikvii*, 42.
145 See above, note 119.
passage through a city gate was derived from imperial *adventus* scenes that showed the entry of the ruler followed by dignitaries.\(^{147}\)

Based on written records of the translation of relics and descriptions of the imperial *adventus* ceremonies, scholars have developed a model of the ritual of translation. Working with Late Antique and Early Christian Eastern sources, Vikan and Holum have distinguished three phases of translation, identifying them with the three stages of imperial *adventus*: first the *synanthesis*\(^{149}\) or the triumphant meeting of relics on their arrival at the city; second, the *propompe*\(^{150}\) or the receiving and escorting relics to their final destination; third, the *apothesis*\(^{151}\) or the deposition of the relics in the designated church or place.


\(^{148}\) Holum and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 113-133. For more details on the imperial *adventus* ceremony, see above, note 147.

\(^{149}\) An interesting example of a double *synanthesis* is found in the case of St. John Chrysostom. The first was occasioned by the return of John to Constantinople after his exile and his reception on the gates of city, see: Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* VI, 16; PG 67, 713. The second *synanthesis* was organized to receive his relics when they were brought back to the city, Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, VII, 45, PG 67, 836. Cf. MacCormack, “Change and Continuity,” 748. There are several different terms that were used for these phase such as *hypantesis* or *apantesis*, see: Paterson, “Die Einholung des Kyrios,” 693.

\(^{150}\) Many descriptions of relic *adventus* are not explicit in their treatment of subsequent phases of the arrival of relics. The record by St. John of Chrysostom on the translation of an anonymous saint refers to the *propomptes* of Byzantine empress Eudoxia who escorted the relics through Constantinople and its suburbs, John Chrysostom, *Homilia dicta postquam reliquiae martyrum*, etc, PG 63, cols. 467-72. For other written sources on *propompues*, see: Vikan and Holum, 118.

\(^{151}\) For the early record of *apothesis* see the text on translation of St. Timothy and than St. Andrew and St. Luke in the fourth century to Constantinople. *Chronicon paschale*, see above, note 24, 542.
Vikan and Holum have attempted to identify the three stages of relic *adventus* that they have been able to reconstruct from written sources, in visual material as well. According to them, the first and most prominent phase of the ceremony of relic *adventus* would be *synantesis* or the joyful arrival of relics into the city.

Holum and Vikan recognize a scene of the translation of the relics of apostles Luke and Andrew to Constantinople in 336 depicted on a single page of papyrus dated between fourth and fifth century as an early example of *synantesis* in the East (Fig. 3). They compare this schematic relic *adventus* with iconographically related monuments such as the representation of imperial *adventus* on the Arch of Galerius in Thessalonike that shows the moment of *synantesis* (Fig. 23). They also discuss another, more familiar, type of *adventus* that served as a model for representations of *translatio*, namely the representation of Christ’s entry into Jerusalem as it is, for example, depicted on the sixth-century Rossano Gospel (Fig. 24).

According to Holum and Vikan’s model, the next stage in the relic *adventus* is the *propompe*, where locals were shown gathering around the relics and accompanying them into the city. This phase also included acclamations of psalms, lights, and censes. During this stage, the relics were preceded by high-ranking person, usually bishop or a ruler. The representation of *propompe* was often illuminated in Middle Byzantine manuscripts, the most telling examples of which are

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152 Holum and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 120-123.
153 Holum and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 117.
the illuminations in the *Menologion of Basil II*.\footnote{John F. Baldovin, “A Note on the Liturgical Processions in the Menologion of Basil II (Ms. Vat. Gr. 1613),” *ΕΥΛΟΓΗΜΑ. Studies in Honor of Robert Taft, S.J.* (Rome, 1993), 25-39; С. Дер Нерсесян, “Московский менологий,” *Византия южные славян и древняя русь западная Европа. Искусство и культура. Сборник статей в честь В. Н. ЛАЗАРЕВА* (Москва, 1973), 94-111; Nancy P. Ševčenko, “The Walters ‘Imperial’ Menologion,” *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 51 (1993): 43-64; Il Menologio di Basilio II, facsimile.} In the scene of the *translatio* of St. John Chrysostom in the initial E in the manuscript on Athos Dionysiou 587, from *ca.* 1059, fol. 144\textsuperscript{v} (Fig. 25) we have a slightly different representation of *propomus* than on the scene of *translatio* of St. John Chrysostom in the *Menologion of Basil II* (Fig. 6).\footnote{Mary-Lyon Dolezal, “Illuminating the Liturgical Word: Text and Image in a Decorated Lectionary (Mount Athos, Dionysiou Monastery, cod. 587),” *Word and Image* 12/1 (1996): 23-61, 52; Walter, *Art and Ritual*, 151; *The treasures of Mount Athos: Illuminated Manuscripts, Miniatures-Headpieces-Initial Letters*, ed. S.M. Pelekanides P.C. Christou and Ch. Tsoumis, col. 1 (Athens, 1974), fig. 259.} In the Dionysiou manuscript the emperor and bishop are already escorting the relics and there is no representation of the church in the scene.

The third and final phase of the translation ceremony as reconstructed from surviving textual accounts by Holum and Vikan is the *apothesis* or the deposition of the relics in a church. The best surviving example of *apothesis* that can be found in byzantine art showing the deposition phase of the translation of relics, is found on a miniature form the tenth century manuscript on the Athos Vatopedi 456, fol. 253. This miniature illustrates the *translatio* of the head of St. Abidos (Fig. 26). Three clerics with censers and pyxis process toward the small church; the foremost holds a reliquary in his hand. Holum and Vikan suggest that the person depositing the relics is indicated by his outstretched hands.\footnote{Holum and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 120.}
Following Vikan and Holum’s argument, Christopher Walter has discussed relic adventus iconography as derived from the imperial adventus.\textsuperscript{159} He has also proposed possible similarities with the iconography of byzantine depictions of funerals and the translation of the Ark of the Covenant.\textsuperscript{160} Walter based his arguments on a comparison between images of the translation of the Ark of the Covenant and the relic adventus such as the miniature from the Bible of Leo (Vat. Gr. 1) from the tenth century (Fig. 27).\textsuperscript{161} Indeed, if one compares this with the miniature from the Athos Dyonisyou 587 one sees only slight iconographical differences.

Irina Shalina has used arguments similar to those of Holum, Vikan and Walter to explore images of translation produced under the broader influence of the byzantine art, concentrating on ones from medieval Serbia and Russia.\textsuperscript{162} She focuses on the depiction of openly displayed bodies in medieval Serbian and Russian paintings, arguing that this new feature was a response to the change in the attitude of the church toward the incorruptibility of the body. From the fourteenth century onwards, especially in Russia, the sign of sanctity was strictly connected with the preserved body.\textsuperscript{163}

\textsuperscript{159} Walter, Art and Ritual, 145
\textsuperscript{160} The Walter adventus was used more in the early representation of translatio in Byzantine art, while later it will more dominated influence of the funeral as an iconographic model for the translatio. Walter, 150-151.
\textsuperscript{162} Shalina. Relikvii, 42-56.
\textsuperscript{163} G. Lenhoff, “The Notion of ‘Uncorrupted Relics’ in Slavic cultures in the Middle Ages. Christianity and the Eastern Slavs, (Berkley, 1993), vol. 16, 256-257; Fjodor Uspenskii, “The
Western scholars have dealt more with narrative cycles of the saints’ life and martyrdom than with the individual representation of the translation.164 Helen Toubert has discussed the origin of the depiction of the displayed body being carried uncovered during the translation of the saints.165 In the case of the translation of relics in the church of San Clemente in Rome from eleventh century, she suggested funerary elements that recall representations of the Byzantine menologii. She argues that the representation of the dousing of the body with incense after the saint’s death is shown in the illumination of the death of the saint Alexis in the Moscow Menologion (Hots. Museum, gr. 183, fol. 210)(Fig. 28). It could also be displaying the body of the saint lying in his sarcophagus during burial. She refers as well to the solemn presentation of the body of a high ecclesiastical figures or saints on a parade bed.166

Barbara Abou El Haj has argued that translations were based on the Ark of the Covenant of the Old Testament.167 She compared the representation of the translation of relics in which the body is draped or in a coffin being carried on parallel poles with the representation of the translation of the Ark of the Covenant

165 Tourbet, “Rome et le Mont-Cassin,” 19.
166 Tourbet, “Rome et le Mont-Cassin,” 19.
167 Abou El Haj, The Medieval Cult of Saints, 48-49.
as it was depicted in the San Paolo Bible of 875 showing the Ark carried by Joshua’s army around Jericho.\textsuperscript{168} According to Abou El Haj, the illumination in the manuscript, now in the Oxford library dated circa 1100-04, depicting Cuthbert’s gabled reliquary being carried through divided waters to escape William the Conqueror appropriates both the iconography and meaning of the Old Testament Ark being carried out of Egypt.\textsuperscript{169}

The body of a saint placed within a closed coffin could be easily confused with the Ark of the Covenant. This isomorphism has led, as we have seen, many scholars to argue that medieval image-makers adapted the model of the transfer of the Ark of the Covenant to the translation of relics.\textsuperscript{170} Rather than understanding \textit{translatio} scenes as being derived from Covenant imagery, however, it seems more probable that both had the same iconographic source, likely the imperial \textit{adventus}.

The textual basis for any image of the Ark is Exodus 25:10-22 in which the Lord commands Moses and the children of Israel to build the container to house the tablets of the Law. In these passages, the Ark is described as a gold-covered wooden


\textsuperscript{169} Abou El Haj, \textit{The Medieval Cult of Saints}, 49, note 81. For the images, see: Mary Evelyn Stringer, \textit{The Twelfth-Century Illustrations of the Life of Saint Cuthbert}, (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1974), 54.

container with two rings placed on either end, through which poles could be placed for carrying. In representations, however, the shape of the Ark usually does not follow Exodus’ description, but rather resembles a saint’s coffin or reliquary. By the thirteenth century, a connection between the Ark and a reliquary was firmly established. This was expressed through theological treatises in which Christ was described as having fulfilled the covenant of the Old Testament by means of his death and resurrection. The association of Christ and the Ark implied an analogous relation between the Resurrection and the translation of the relic. In other words, the prophecy of the Old Testament was fulfilled by the New Testament, and Old Law, represented by the tablets in the Ark, was superseded by the New Law, the teaching of Christ.

Later representations of the translation of relics openly displaying the body of the saint, eliminated any risk of confusion. Such is the case in the translation of the relics of St. Simeon on the reliquary shrine commissioned in 1380 by Elizabeth, wife of Croat-Hungarian King Ludwig I of Anjou (Fig. 29). In the scene of the arrival of the relics the body of the saint is displayed in an open sarcophagus as it enters through the city gate. The presence of the body of the saint is here further emphasized by the representation of the saint’s effigy on the top of the shrine’s lid.

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For medieval viewers, representations of *translatio* demarcated a liminal space that permitted a mystical exchange between the earthly realm and the heavenly sphere. They depicted a moment of suspension in the movement between life and death. These images were articulated in an iconographic tradition that likewise bridged two historical epochs: antiquity and Christianity. *Translatio* was, therefore, a particularly polysemic motif, one that slid between Christian and pagan, as well as Western and Eastern, cultures.
CHAPTER II

Trier Ivory

The Vienne relief discussed in my first chapter raises key questions as to what permits one to identify a scene as a depiction of the translation of relics. Examining the plaque, one asks oneself what signifiers indicate to the viewer that they are looking at a relic rather than an ordinary casket or coffin? One must consider how the late antique or early Christian viewer was able to recognize and comprehend scenes of *translatio*. Like the Vienne relief, the Trier ivory raises the question of how early Christian art adapted antique models and what was lost in translation. In addition, the ivory’s remarkably complex iconographic program exposes the ideological function of *translatio* as a means for the glorification of secular power.

The Trier Ivory has been the focus of intense scholarly debate for almost two centuries (Fig. 2). ¹ Cut from a single piece of ivory (13.1X 26.1 cm), the panel shows a scene placed within an architectural setting consisting of a colonnaded background and a four-sided portico on the left. This latter feature includes two stories both flanked by pilasters. The lower level has three windows on the visible side and an arched opening on the back that is partially hidden from the spectator. On the upper level of the building there is an image of a short-bearded Christ in the lunette of the facing side, as indicated by the cruciform nimbus placed behind His

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The rest of the building resembles a three-story structure where the third level appears to be an open arcaded gallery with bust-length figures set in two rows along its length. Two- or multi-storied buildings with arcades are found on some representations from the early Christian period such as the mosaic representation of Theodoric’s Palace in San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna from c. 500 (Fig. 30).

Another such structure is shown in the scene of adventus that portrays Joseph’s triumph through the streets of Egypt in the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Paris, Bibl. Nat. cod. Nouv. Acq. Lat. 2334, fol. 40r) from the early seventh century (Fig. 31).

The first floor of the building on the ivory has open arcades whose arches rest on pillars. Men stand in the openings below the arches. The second story has rectangular openings divided by colonettes. Within each opening is a half-length figure holding a censer in one hand with the other hand placed close to the face.

While Strzygowski was the first to suggest that the building in the background represents the palace of Constantinople other scholars have located the entire scene in Jerusalem rather than Constantinople.

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2 Suzanne Spain argues that the image of Christ with the short beard, long hair and a cruciform nimbus appeared in art after 550 and for that reason she gives the ivory to a post-Justinianic date. Suzanne Spain, “The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier,” Dumbarton Oaks Papers 31 (1977): 279-304, 286.


The gate-like structure with the image of Christ on it on the far left side of the composition is partially obscured with an over-scale cart pulled by two horses or mules (Fig. 5). In the carriage ride two bearded men, dressed in ecclesiastical garb while holding a rectangular object with a gabled lid, which resembles late antique and early Christian reliquaries (Fig. 32). The side of the cart is decorated with an image of three men, dressed in togas and set in a deep frame. Below this image two wheels are visible. A young man with bushy hair and a *chiton* attached to his toga with the large fibula drives the carts. On the far right side of the composition is a church in the form of a three- or five-nave basilica. The façade is represented in

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193-241 and Spain, “The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier,” 296-97; Cyril Mango has accepted Grabar’s hypothesis that the architectural background represents a basilical church in flattened-out perspective. André Grabar, *Martyrium. Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l’art chrétien antique* 2 (Paris, 1946), 352 ff.; n. 4; Cyril Mango, *The Brazen House, A Study of The Vestibule of the Imperial Palace of Constantinople,* (København, 1959), 105


6 A reliquary in the shape of a miniature sarcophagus from the Church of St. Theodore at Khirbet Beit Sila from the sixth century, see: *Cradle of Christianity,* ed. Yeal Israeli and David Mevorah (The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 2000, 2006), 76 and 217. Cynthia Hahn has argued that when medieval reliquaries are in question there is no clear connection between signifier and signified, or, in other words, there is no firmly established relationship between an actual relic and its artistic representation. The most common and suggestive early shape of reliquaries was that of the sarcophagus. It primary association is death and burial, which contradicts the status of the saint who, it is claimed, is still active in his relics. Cynthia Hahn, “Metaphor and Meaning in Early Medieval Reliquaries,” in *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Papers from “Verbal and Pictorial Imaging: Representing and Accessing Experience of the Invisible, 400-1000,”* (Utrecht, 11-13 December 2003), ed. Giselle de Nie, Karl F. Morrison and Marco Mostert (Turnhout, 2005), 239-263, 241. There is a suggestion that possible theological reason for such a shape for a reliquary can be found in the fact that that the relics of the martyrs represent their whole body. Galita Noga-Banai, *The Trophies of the Martyrs. An Art Historical Study of Early Christian Silver Reliquaries* (Oxford, 2008), 127.

three-quarter view while the apse is frontal. The basilica’s roof is gabled with the crosses affixed to its two peaks. The side aisle is indicated by the depiction of a lower roof on the side wall of the main nave. On the side of the aisle there is a partially open door and three windows on the upper level. Suzanne Spain argues that the object within the open door is actually a subsidiary chapel attached to the main basilica. The apse of the church is semicircular and has a pumpkin-shaped roof.

The architectural forms depicted on the Trier ivory frame the activities of the people that surround them. Three men are shown on the roof of the main nave of the church, two look toward the right edge of the ivory while the third faces the pair. A man on the aisle’s roof is either climbing up or off the building. The middle part of the composition is occupied with a group of people set in several registers. The first shows five people between the horses’ heads and the main door of the church on the right. One individual on the far right is positioned slightly in front of the other four. Two of them are dressed in imperial garments with crowns on their heads. The person on the far right, next to the church door, is dressed in the garb of an empress and holds a long processional cross in her left hand while making a gesture of greeting with the other. Four persons in the procession hold candles or torches in

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8 Suzanne Spain writes of the complex of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and sees the church shown on the Trier ivory as the chapel of the True Cross. For Spain, the open doors suggest the resting place for relics of the True Cross, which she argues, are what are being translated on the ivory. Spain, “The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier,” 296-97.
9 The presence of men on the church’s roof is explained as indicating that it was funded and built by princess Pulcheria. Holm and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 131; Kalavrezou, “Helping Hands,” 58.
10 Spain gives a detailed description of the empress’ clothes including possible iconographic sources of comparison. She also sees the Empress’ right hand as a sign that she is going to
their hands. Behind them in three other registers are many figures, who are mostly depicted in an isocephalic position.

The entire plaque is deeply carved, but the far right and left sides are executed in a slightly higher, more-convex relief, than the middle part of the ivory which is more concave. This undulation creates an s-curve or, as Suzanne Spain has described it, a hemicyclical plan. 11 This shape highlights the most important parts of the ivory: the gate and the church, by having them project farther from the rest of the composition, the significance of which will be discussed later in this chapter.

The ivory belongs to the treasury of the Cathedral in Trier. After being stolen during the French revolution, it was sold to the collection of Count Renesse from Coblenz and, after his death, resurfaced in St. Petersburg. In 1844, it was returned to the Trier cathedral.12 The provenance of the object prior to the French revolution is not clear, with many scholars believing that it first entered the treasury after the sack of Constantinople in 1204.13

receive the candle from the Emperor in front of her, see: Spain, "The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier," 296-97.
11 For more detailed description of the ivory, see: Spain, "The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier," 279-304.
13 The literature on the Trier ivory is voluminous. For more, see: Ernst Aus’m Weerth, Kunstdenkmäler des christlichen Mittelalters in den Rheinlanden (Leipzig, 1857), 88-89; M. Scheins, Kunstdenkmäler der Münsterkirche in Aachen nebst einigen Kunstwerken aus Trierer Kirchen (Berlin, 1876); John O. Westwood, A Descriptive Catalogue of the Fictile Ivories in the South Kensington Museum (London, 1876), 74-75; Wilhelm Lübke, Geschichte der Plastik von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart (Leipzig, 1880), 388; Charles De Linas, “Les Expositions retrospectives de Bruxelles, de Düsseldorf et de l’union centrale des beaux-arts, a Paris,” Revue de l’art chrétien 14 (1881): 119-122 Franz Xaver Kraus, Realencyklopädie der christlichen Alterthümer, volume I (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1882), 409; Rohaul de Fleury, La messe (Paris, 1883) VII, 117; Emile Molinier, “Le trésor the Trèves,”
Early scholarship on the ivory and its subject matter linked the enigmatic object with important relics from Trier. For example, in 1857 Ernst Aus’m Weerth identified it as a representation of the translation of Die Heilige Rock or a Holy Robe of Christ. He also identified the gateway as Trier’s Roman Porta Negra, and the imperial figures as Emperor Constantine and Helena, who had brought the Holy robe to her son in Trier.14 Aus’m Weerth dated the ivory according to the Image of Christ on the gate to the eleventh century.15 In 1863 John Westwood also read the woman depicted as Empress Helen[a] dressed in Byzantine costume, however he mentions only that the Empress received relics in front of Trier cathedral and does

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14 Aus’m Weerth, *Kunstdenkmäler*, 88 note 43.
15 Aus’m Weerth, *Kunstdenkmäler*, 89.
not specify their origin. Westwood dated the object between the seventh and ninth century, classifying it as work of art from the Byzantine and Carolingian period.\textsuperscript{16} Even though he was certainly not the first to write about the ivory, he declared that this “extremely interesting ivory, now for the first time described and figured, must, I think, be referred either to the period of Constantine himself, or to that of Charlemagne when so great an impulse was given to sacred art.”\textsuperscript{17}

Although agreeing that this is indeed a scene of translation, other early scholars presented conflicting readings of which relics were being moved. J. P. Martinov, in a text of 1881, suggested that it depicts the transport of St. Stephen’s relics from Jerusalem to Constantinople in 428 under Pulcheria (414-453) and her brother Emperor Theodosius II (401-450).\textsuperscript{18} Franz Kraus identified the relics as those of the Virgin Mary, which were translated to the Blachernae church in Constantinople under the Emperor Leo I (401-474) and his wife Verina (d. 484).\textsuperscript{19} Emile Molinier recognized the imperial pair as a Constantine and Helen, and the scene as translation of the True Cross from Jerusalem to Constantinople. He dated it to the fifth century based on the resemblance of the architecture with the Theodoric palace as shown in the mosaic in the church San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna.\textsuperscript{20}

\textsuperscript{16} Westwood, \textit{A Descriptive Catalogue}, 64-65.
\textsuperscript{17} John O. Westwood, “Archeological Notes Made During a Tour in Belgium, Western Germany and France,” \textit{Archaeological Journal} 30 (1863): 148.
\textsuperscript{19} Franz Xavier Kraus, \textit{Geschichte der Christlichen Kunst}, (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1896), 502; One of the most venerated relics of those which were translated by Emperor Leo I was the robe of the Virgin, see: John Wortley, “The Marian Relics at Constantinople,” \textit{Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies} 45 (2005): 171-187.
\textsuperscript{20} Molinier, \textit{Histoire général}, 74-76.
Twentieth century scholarship on the ivory has primarily focused on the identification of the individual being translated, the accompanying figures and on establishing a date for the plaque. Josef Strzygowski provided a stylistic analysis through a comparison with an ivory from the Louvre of St. Mark preaching, assigning its origin to Alexandrian workshops. He claimed that the scene represented the translation of relics of the Forty Martyrs to Constantinople on the occasion of the dedication of the rebuilt Church of Saint-Irene in 552 by Emperor Justinian (483-565) and Patriarchs of Alexandria Apollinarios (551-568) and of Constantinople Menas (536-552). Strzygowski identified the female figure as St. Irene, to whom the church would be dedicated.\textsuperscript{21} Strzygowski’s identification of the translation of relics of the Forty martyrs was accepted by André Grabar and Klaus Wessel.\textsuperscript{22} Stylianos Pelekanidis dated the ivory to the fifth century and, based upon that date claimed the scene as the translation of the relics of Joseph and Zachariah in 415.\textsuperscript{23} Spain identified it as the translation of the True Cross by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius (575-641) and his wife Martina (d. after 641).\textsuperscript{24} More recently, Gary Vikan and Kenneth Holum, have argued that it is in fact the translation of a relic into Constantinople which is being shown. Following Martinov, they claim that

\textsuperscript{21} The church in question is Saint- Irene-in-the-fig-trees [(en Sykais)] (Galatia), see: Strzygowski \textit{Hellenistische und koptische Kunst,} 77-78, but also Alexander Van Mallingen, \textit{Byzantine Constantinople, the Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites} (London, 1899), 216-217 as well in Jean Ebesolt, \textit{Sanctuaires de Byzance} (Paris, 1921), 13-15.
\textsuperscript{22} Grabar, \textit{Martrium,} 352 and note 4; Wessel “Studien,” 12-15.
\textsuperscript{23} Pelekanidis based his assumption on the text from \textit{Chronicon pascale} in which it is recorded that those two saints were translated by the eparch Ursus in the presence of the prelates Atticus and Moses. Though, Pelekanidis is aware that those texts do not mention the presence of the Empress, he concludes that the Empress in the ivory must be Pulcheria since she was proclaimed Augusta in 415 and she ruled instead of her brother Theodosius II. Pelekanidis, “Date et interpretation,” 370-371.
\textsuperscript{24} Spain, “The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier,” 298.
the ivory shows the relic of St. Stephen the protomartyr being greeted by the
Empress Pulcheria and her brother the Emperor Theodosius II in 421, just prior to
being installed in a recently completed church dedicated to the saint. Although
their marshalling of the documentary and visual evidence is, at times, forced, their
arguments are generally convincing and have been widely accepted. The main
dissenting voice is that of Laurie Wilson who argues that the ivory shows Aelia
Eudoxia (d. 404), wife of Emperor Arcadius (377/78-408) directing a procession of
relics to the shrine of St. Thomas at Drypia; the evidence in this case, however, is not
compelling. The acceptance of the notion that this scene is a translation of relics
that took place in 421 does not mean that the ivory itself must date from the early
fifth century. Though much subsequent scholarship has ignored the point, Vikan and
Holum were careful to note that the date of the event depicted has no bearing
whatsoever on the date of the carving except as a *terminus post quem*. John Wortley,
for one, has argued that the story of the 421 translation was invented long after the
fact: ignored by all fifth-century commentators, the account first appears in
Theophanes’ *Chronicle* in the mid tenth century.

Unsurprisingly, there is no agreed date for the ivory. The majority of scholars
argue for the early Byzantine period, between the fifth and seventh centuries;

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26 The difficulty with Wilson’s interpretation is that the text by John Chrysostom on the
translation of relics from a great church to the shrine of St. Thomas at Drypia, upon which
she bases her argument, claims that the Empress Eudoxia accompanied the relics, walking
with them in the procession. Further in her text Wilson points to the passage from the text
in which John Chrysostom says that Eudoxia walked by the casket, which does not
coordinate with the situation represented in the ivory. Wilson, “The Trier Procession Ivory,”
603-608.
however, as all scholars who have dealt with the Trier ivory in the last two centuries admit there are no stylistic parallels for the carving in this period. Spain has provided the most detailed assessment of the formal qualities of the ivory, noting that “[s]tylistic analysis, the alternative approach to the identification of the Translation ivory has been all but avoided,” while conceding that to “a certain extent, this is understandable, for there are no extant ivories which are readily comparable.” Spain’s comparison concentrates on the imperial vestment and regalia, technical elements, and on formal features. She has found no comparable ivories, but explored sufficient parallels within other mediums such as painting and metalwork attributed to the late sixth or early seventh centuries of Syro-Palestine origin. Leslie Brubaker has compared the Trier ivory with two Byzantine ninth century ivories, the David casket and Leo scepter, on a formal basis, pointing to similar elements such as: deep relief, the squat figures with over-large heads and hands, the roughly carved detail, and the puffy facial features.

For one scholar, the Trier ivory represents the translation of the relics of Joseph and Zachariah on 2 October 415 for another, as in case of Spain, it is the restoration of the Holy Wood of the True Cross to Jerusalem by Heraclius (575-641) after its recovery from the Persians (630). The possibilities are by no means exhausted with this brief summary of the existing scholarship. Other conjectural identifications of the event include the translation of the First Head of Saint John the Baptist by Theodosius I (347-395), or Leo I and Gennadius bringing the relics of

29 Spain, “The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier,” 290-293.
30 Brubaker “The Châlke Gate,” 275-276. For images see: page 284, fig. 4 and 285, fig. 5.
31 Pelekanidis, 370; Spain, “The Translation of Relics Ivory, Trier,” 294.
Saint Anastasia, to name but two amongst many other interpretations. As Wortley has succinctly stated: “the ivory has shown itself to be a particularly elusive work in both content and date and this point should be given its due weight.”

With this historiography in mind, our question becomes: What can be said further about the Trier ivory beyond adding to this list of more-or-less educated guesses? Holum and Vikan have suggested the roman *adventus* as the iconographic source for the scene. While many scholars have focused their efforts on the identification of the individual being translated and date, almost none attend to the formal characteristics and symbolic meaning of the scene.

The importance of relics and their translatio was recognized from late antiquity. A community would gather together in worship at the tomb of a martyr or a founding bishop, a location where past and present fused. Relic shrines provided a link back to an era of persecution and martyrdom, while at the same time indicated the historical continuity of Christian communities. The dispersion of holy shrines and places throughout the Christian world offered a topographical interpretation of Christian history, a meeting of heaven and earth. As Sabine MacCormack has remarked, "this new sacred topography spelled out not only the collective memories of Christians but also the functioning and distribution of sacred authority in

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33 Vikan and Holm, “The Trier Ivory,” 113.
Christian society." The mobility of relics, their power to generate a liminal space between earth and heaven, and the changes in sacred topography from late antiquity to early Christianity is evidenced by the Trier ivory. In this depiction of the translation of relics, the viewer is able to chart the translation of imperial ideology from the Roman period into a new, Christian articulation.

The border between internal and external space and between presence and absence is strongly underscored by the Trier ivory’s composition. First, we are shown a cart entering through a gate creating a sense of a passage between spaces or realms. The entrance to a city or a palace is shown as a physical boundary that mediates between the state and its public, functioning as a material marker of this transitional zone. The gateway to the city or palace served as a symbol that encapsulated the might and prestige of the court or state. It defined a public image of power either coming from the emperor or from some other source, such as relics. The entrance from one space to another, symbolically from one realm of reality to another, brings us to the question of to what extent the roman imperial adventus served as a model for relic adventus as part of the translatio. 36

In fact, triumphal iconographic forms pervaded Christian art, liturgy, and

processional ceremonies. Early Christianity, as a religion with an incarnate deity vanquishing mortality found Roman triumphal imagery irresistible even before Constantine. As Robert Baldwin has argued, this “made Christian history itself a vivid and miraculous triumph, a sudden rising up from below which revealed the power of the new God and his terrestrial representatives over rival deities, armies, unbelievers, Satan, sin, and death.”  

1. **Triumph**

*Translatio* elevated the saint from the earth to a more proximate position to God. Triumph was the ultimate Roman event and for that an ideal iconographic frame for *translatio*.  

The Roman triumph was a civil and religious ceremony in which a victorious general entered the city in a chariot proceeded by captives and spoils taken in war. The triumph publicly celebrated and sanctified the military achievements of a victorious commander. Emperors could award themselves triumphal processions without concern for the true nature of the victory.

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39 For the definition of the Roman triumph, see: Rich, *A Dictionary of Roman and Greek Antiquities*, 692-93.
The Roman triumph would begin in the *Campus Martius* and follow a prescribed route that lead through the Triumphal Gate, then through the Forum and would terminate on the Capitoline hill. The procession was divided into three parts. The first included the spoils carried on wagons or shoulder-high on portable stretchers (*fercula*), followed by the paintings and models of conquered territory, animals to be scarified, trumpeters and captives in chains. The second part was the group around the general himself who was in the horse-drawn chariot. The final part was made up of the victorious soldiers who were chanting the ritual triumphal cry of *io triumpe*. The procession’s original route indicates that the triumph had an apotropaic and purifying function. The procession usually took a circular course around the city, reminiscent of purificatory *lustration* rituals, which suggests a similar purificatory purpose for the early triumph as well.

A triumphator resembled an ancient hero, most likely the winner of the games and similarly constituted a highly valuable possession for his native town. As a winner he personified the power of his origin, and as a *mana*-bearer he brought luck and good fortune back to his locality and its citizens. He was considered

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41 For more on the meaning of *fercula*, see; Rich, *A Dictionary of Roman and Greek Antiquities*, 282, also, Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 81.
beneficial not merely in terms of military protection but in all aspects of life. Mary Beard has noted that the “triumph was about display and success - the success of display no less than the display of success,” and that it “re-presented and re-enacted the victory” of the triumphator. According to the Greek historian Polybius (ca. 200–118 BC) one of the functions of the triumphal procession was to bring battle victories before the eyes of the people in Rome.

The triumph ceremony culminated in the pseudo-deification of the triumphator. In this regard, the ceremony anticipated the funeral rites that were accorded the Roman emperor whose deification was proclaimed after his corpse or his wax effigy was cremated. The antique motif of apotheosis like that of the Emperor would be translated into Christian art in the scenes of Ascension, primarily, the Ascension of Christ. As Lily Ross has stated “the triumph was the closest thing in Roman state ceremony to deification.” Usually the Roman triumph was treated as the entry of a victor, originally the victorious king, who for this occasion represents the Roman god Jupiter. This entry took place through a special gate, which was opened only for this ceremony and was not used at any other time.

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44 The Homeric kingship, and later the Hellenistic king was consider as a σωτηρ, van Gennep, Les rites de passage, 158.
45 Beard, The Roman Triumph, 31, 32.
47 Versnel, Triumphus, 124; The Arch of Titus motif: the triumphal procession with spolia (candleabrum) carried on shoulders, the apex of the coffered ceiling of the arch shows an eagle, representing the soul of the emperor ascending to heaven following his apotheosis, for more on Arch of Titus, see below, page 121, note 220.
49 Versnel, Triumphus, 154.
The triumphal procession offered the opportunity for many different modes of perception. By using effigies, paintings and sculpture, the ceremony became a theatrical stage with moving scenery in which the boundary between representation and referent was blurred. When writing about the triumph, ancient authors frequently note not only spectacular images of triumph being carried in the procession, but how the overall display was staged as well. For them, the representation itself became more important than a central event. As it is the case with many ephemeral rituals the triumph was, as Beard writes:

a ceremony of image-making as much as it is one of images. It is the place where, in many written versions, representation (or mimesis) reaches its limits, and where the viewer (or reader) is asked to decide what counts as an image or where the boundary between reality and representation is to be drawn.

This blurring of the boundaries between reality and fiction, near and far, present and past would be precisely the quality of the triumph that led Christians to adapt it for the purposes of translatio. The link between triumph and translatio is most clearly evidenced by the Trier ivory. De Rossi and Grabar were the first who identified the triumphal as a crucial factor in the iconographic program of the

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51 Ovid on several occasions writes about the overall display. One of them marks the triumph of Tiberius over Illyricum around 12 A.D., see: Ovid, Pont. 2, I, 37-38; Ovid, Epistulae ex Ponto, ed. R. Ehwald and F.W. Levy (Leipzig, 1922); another account comes from the historian Appianus of Alexandria (c.95-c. 165) on the triumph of Pompey in 61 B.C., Appianus of Alexandria, Mith. 117. For more on this subject, see: Beard, The Roman Triumph, 181-185.
52 Beard, The Roman Triumph, 181.
ivory. The power of the image of *translatio* represented on the ivory replaced the desire for the experience of the historical event. As with the triumph, *translatio* was known mostly by means of representations. Images of the ceremony therefore had a wider and longer-lasting impact on their respective audiences than the actual processions. One of the chief characteristics of the triumph was that the triumphator oscillated between divine and human status through the course of the procession; he constituted both a living image of the god Jupiter himself and, simultaneously, a negation of that divine presence. This essentially ambivalent status has striking parallels with that of the body of the saint within the ritual of *translatio*.

2. *Adventus*

While the triumph became a symbol for transformation and victory in general, *adventus* marked the specific moment where the two realms of the human and divine overlapped. The Roman *adventus* designated the triumphal entry of the Emperor into the city accompanied by great pomp. The arrival of the Emperor was seen as the beginning of a new period of prosperity. *Adventus* involved a passage through a liminal space, one whose ontological status was essentially

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54 Versnel, *Triumphus*, 387.
indeterminate.\textsuperscript{56} This is true of carts transporting relics that are depicted so as to indicate their crossing of the transitional zone of the gate and penetrating into the city or palace, as represented on the Trier ivory. The ceremony of \textit{adventus} was used as a vehicle for expounding or suspending the old Roman dichotomy between earthly and heavenly rule. This was the difference between understanding an emperor as \textit{primus inter pares}, modeled after the public image of Augustus as the first among equals, and the Emperor who would aspire to the divine.\textsuperscript{57}

Under the Tetrarchs (ca. 293-313), the ceremony was described by a panegyrist in order to highlight one particular aspect: the arrival of the \textit{deus praeesen}, the Emperor able to protect his subjects because he was present and available.\textsuperscript{58} This is also the message of the narrative treatment of imperial \textit{adventus} under the Tetrarchs that survives on the Arch of Galerius from 300 A.D. (Fig. 23).\textsuperscript{59} The scene of \textit{adventus} is represented on the south pier on the north face of the Arch. As Margaret Rothman observed, the scene is not of a typical \textit{adventus} as was developed in Roman imperial art. It emphasizes the aspects of an epiphany with new details such as the city of departure, crowds that carry tapers and standards, and an equestrian bodyguard.\textsuperscript{60} Sabine MacCormack has argued that this shift in the \textit{adventus} was recorded in panegyrics describing other aspects of imperial arrival:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{56} For the bibliography on \textit{adventus}, see above, page 71, note 36.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Alföldi, \textit{Die Ausgestaltung},” 3-118; see also: Stefan Weinstock, \textit{Divus Julius} (Oxford, 1971).
\item \textsuperscript{58} \textit{Pan. Lat.}, 3, 10, 4-5. \textit{Panégyriques latins} vol. 1-3, ed. and translated in French by Edouard Galletier (Paris, 2003). The panegyrist described an imperial \textit{adventus} as the imperial epiphany and made a close approximation of gods and emperors as being welcomed. For more on this subject, see: MacCormack, \textit{Art and Ceremony}, 26-27.
\item \textsuperscript{59} See, Chapter One, page 51, note 154; A nineteenth-century study of the Arch of Galerius provides drawings which since disappeared, Karl F. Kinch, \textit{L’Arc de triomphe de Salonique} (Paris, 1890).
\item \textsuperscript{60} Pond Rothman, “The Thematic Organization,”442.
\end{itemize}
those of the revelation and the epiphany of the emperor as well as the relation between natural and supernatural orders. For MacCormack, the arches also embody “a clearly defined theory of the ultimately divine nature of imperial power, such as had not been available earlier.”

In Christian iconography, however, especially in the representation of the translation of relics, the *adventus* ceremony would be reused for expounding on the dichotomy of the earthly and divine status of the Emperor. In the Christian formulation of the translation of relics, the ambivalent status of the Emperor is echoed by the paradoxical nature of the dead saint’s body being endowed with the power of performing miracles. This indicates the soteriological character of the ceremony.

3. Triumph vs. *Adventus*

During Late Antiquity both the triumph and *adventus* were represented as dynamic occasions. Scholars have come to differing conclusions concerning the question of the triumph versus *adventus*. According to MacCormack the triumph and accession were related issues in late antiquity, both of which were formulated in the idiom of *adventus*. She holds that at the time of Constantine the triumph was in the process of being definitively transformed into the *adventus*. MacCormack’s argument is based upon on the availability of the vocabulary of the *adventus* to

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62 The focal point for the celebration of imperial triumphs and accessions in the late third century was still Rome. The tradition went back to republican and early imperial times. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony*, 34.
describe an imperial triumph, and for that reason the panegyrist who greeted Constantine in Trier in 313 could describe Constantine’s entry into Rome as an adventus.\textsuperscript{63} While the adventus was one of the vehicles for expressing imperial pietas during the tetrarchy it becomes the means for expressing imperial victory, both universal and particular, under Constantius, Theodosius and Honorius.\textsuperscript{64} By the fourth century the ceremony of adventus had altered in meaning from representing movement or a moment in a progressive series of actions to become more stationary, showing the emperor’s static presence. The presence of the Emperor was formulated as the coexistence between the Emperor and subjects in the form of the stationary, enthroned Emperor.\textsuperscript{65}

According to Kantorowicz “Triumphus and Adventus, though closely related to each other, are not the same thing.”\textsuperscript{66} Based on the depictions of adventus on triumphal arches Kantorowicz asserts that by the second century adventus was an “integral and independent element within the imperial theology of triumph and victory.”\textsuperscript{67} In art, the Adventus Augusti became almost a common element on triumphal arches from the time of Trajan (98‐117) and may be seen, for example, on the Arch of Septimius Severus from the early third century in Leptis Magna (Fig.

\textsuperscript{63} Pan. Lat., 9, 16, 1f, see: MacCormack, Art and Ceremony, 34, n. 98.
\textsuperscript{64} MacCormack, Art and Ceremony, 42.
\textsuperscript{65} MacCormack, Art and Ceremony, 55, 56.
\textsuperscript{66} Kantorowicz, “The ‘King’s Advent,’” 214.
\textsuperscript{67} Probably an arch had been built in Brindisi for Octavian to celebrate his arrival in 30 B.C., Kantorowicz, “The ‘King’s Advent,’” 214.
or more evident on the Arch of Galerius in Thessaloniki from the end of the third century (Fig. 23).

Beard confirms MacCormack’s observation that by the end of the fourth century the triumph was “in effect transformed into adventus.” She argues further that the adventus had mutated into the triumphal. According to Beard, the symbolic language of the triumph provided an apt way of representing the ceremonial arrival of a successful general or emperor. She writes: “one could almost say that the adjective tends to replace the noun: we now deal as much with ceremonies that are “triumphal” or “like a triumph” as with triumphs themselves.” This importing of triumphal forms into other rituals was particularly evident in art of the fourth century, as will be discussed at greater length below.

With the onset of early Christianity, however, the adventus was presented more and more as a static event. Ambrose’s documentation of two fourth-century translation ceremonies provides evidence that the boundaries between the adventus and the triumph became blurred in the Early Christian period.

In a hymn that celebrates the memory of three martyrs, Felix, Victor, Nabor and their translation, Ambrose gives us a description of the event, although it is difficult to say what is fact and what is the author’s invention. He describes the procession as a kind of posthumous triumph: “sed reddiderunt Hostias / raptis

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69 See, above note 59.


71 Beard, *The Roman Triumph*, 324.

72 See Chapter One, page 21, note 40.
quadrigas corpora / revecti in ora principum / plaustri triumphalis modo,” or in translation “But soon the offer was returned as on the triumphal cart of state Four-spanned, the martyrs’ body rode Back through the imperial city gate.” As Gérard Nauroy has noted, the bodies placed on a chariot drawn by four horses, recalled both the Roman triumphal chariot and the one which transported Enoch and Elijah to heaven (Gen. 5:24 and 2 Kings 2,11, commented on by Ambrose, Hel. 3,4). Nauroy also notes that the subject of a reddiderunt can only be a martyr and that it specifically refers to the return of their relics. The whole phrase reddiderunt hostias suggests the fate of martyrs who made their sacrifice voluntarily in imitation of Christ. This indicates that the corporeal relics of martyrs can be equated with the meaning of the host within the Eucharistic rite, that is, in its transformation from bread and wine into the body of Christ. The verb rapere refers to the latter, while the verb, reuehere was used in antiquity as well as in the bible (Vulgate) to describe a hero’s homecoming. This return was likened to a form of resurrection or a return from the land of the dead, or that of the quasi-divine status of the triumphator in Rome.

The use of plaustrum in the last verse in order to designate a triumphal cart is of interest. Indeed, plaustrum usually applies to a wagon on two wheels drawn by

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74 Nauroy, “Hymn X,” 479-480.
76 Nauroy, “Hymn X,” 480-481.
oxen. This vehicle was used in the countryside for heavy loads as shown on a Roman coin in memory of Agripina the Elder from 37-9 AD, which shows these type of carts on its reverse side (plaustrum). The term plaustrum was used in the Vulgate to indicate the carts that were used to transfer the Ark of the Covenant (2 Sam. 6,3) and to transport the statue of Baal or Ceres in Rome. It is also noteworthy that Ambrose calls the carts that carry the spoils (manubiae) taken from the defeated enemy in the triumph plaustra and even quadriiuga plaustra.79 According to Dufraigne the bodies of martyrs that were sometimes called tropaea could appear as spoils of Satan. In this case plaustrum would not designate the triumphal chariot of a conqueror which would be a currus or carpentum, but one of the carts that were used to transport the booty taken from the enemy in a triumphal procession. In that context the remains of the martyrs may be required as being spoils taken from the Satan in the victory over the devil.80 Ambrose considered the relics of the martyr as a trophie in the triumph but not a terrestrial one. He indicates the triumph and the martyrdom of the saints is like that of Christ, whose death is

78 For the transportation of the statue of Baal, Jas Elsner, Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph (Oxford, 1998), 218; for the statue of Ceres see, Forrer, Les Chars Culturels, 52, 94.
79 Ambr. Expos. Luc. 10. 109, currum suum triumphator ascendat, nec arborum truncis aut quadrigiis plaustris manubias de mortali hoste quaesitas, sed patibulo triumphali captiua de saeculo spolia suspendat. “Expositio euangeli secundum Lucam,” edited by Carolus Schenkl, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, V: 32.4 (Vindobonae, 1897-)
80 Dufraigne, Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi, 300.
similarly not a defeat but a victory over death. Later, in a text on the transfer of the relics and miracles of St. Stephen that was an appendix to the Augustine’s *The City of God*, probably dating from the Carolingian period and was addressed as a Latin translation of Anastasius Bibliothecarius (c. 810 – c. 878), the same word *plaustrum* denotes the cart used to transport the remains of St. Stephen to Constantinople. The *adventus* of relics described in Ambrose’s hymn indicates there was indeed a triumphal form for the translation of relics. The adjective *triumphalis* appears prominently in the last line.

Ambrose’s second text belongs to two sermons that he delivered on the discovery of the remains of SS. Gervasius and Protasius in 386, and their transfer first to the basilica of Fausta, and later to the Ambrose’s basilica in Milan, a ceremony he describes in detail. Some of his phrases evoke the atmosphere of both an *adventus* and triumph. As Dufraigne has noted, Ambrose found inspiration in a verse from Psalm 18: *Caeli enarrant Dei gloriam*. For Ambrose, martyrs partake of the glory of God; they are members of the heavenly city and he sees their bodies as "trophies of a soul sublime." The celebration of a victory of martyrs with a triumphal image of their bodies being translated as trophies is further confirmed by the verse: “Eruuntur nobiles reliquiae e sepulcro ignobili, ostenduntur coelo

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[tropaea]. Sanguine tumulus madet, apparent cruoris triumphalis notae… Succedant victimae triumphales in locum, ubi Christus hostia est, ”in which the image of trophy (ostenduntur caelo tropaea) reappears. Dufraigne correctly observed that the alliances of the words cruoris triumphalis, victimae triumphales express the paradoxical notion of a death, which is in fact a victory over death, as it was with Christ. The same word passio applies both to the Christ and the martyr.


It is debatable whether the representation of the translation of relics on the Trier ivory was derived directly from the Roman imperial adventus or if it was modeled upon Early Christian versions of this event. The absorption of the imperial adventus into the Christian pictorial vocabulary began with the development of images of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem. Ernst Kantorowicz has accepted André Grabar’s argument that the manner of communicating this theme took on an imperial aspect in the fourth century, when imperial arrivals became a motif in visual art. Grabar argued that this emerged at the time of Constantine the Great, when the influence of imperial art on artistic production was strongest. He sees evidence of this change in a series of sarcophagi depicting the Entry into Jerusalem.

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86 Ambrose, Epistolae, xxii, PL 16:1023A.
87 Dufraigne, Adventus Augusti, Adventus Christi, 301; sed ille super altare, qui pro omnibus passus est, ist sub altari, qui illius redempti sunt passione…sanguis clamat passionis triumpho.
conceived as a triumphale. Christ is here shown riding solemnly through the gate of Jerusalem while being greeted by a cheering crowd with raised arms holding palm branches. Grabar finds a model for the Christian sculptures on sarcophagi in the relief of Galerius' adventus on his arch in Thessaloniki. He argues that the relationship between the imperial adventus and the Entry into Jerusalem was particularly strong and that Christian iconography of this image has changed little since the fourth century. Grabar also pointed to a second type of Roman adventus images where the sovereign is preceded by a winged Nike and followed by a bodyguard (Fig. 35). Thus, he concludes, both variants of the solemn entry of the Emperor were used for the image of the Entry of the King of Judea into his capital.

More recently, Thomas Mathews has challenged Grabar's interpretation. He considers the imperial adventus ceremony as being analogous with Christ's Entry into Jerusalem merely in a superficial sense. Though he does not reject the notion of a triumphal and victorious Entry of Christ in the Jerusalem, he does not agree with the imperial reading of the ceremony, emphasizing instead its aristocratic origin.

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89 For the images on sarcophagi, see: Giuseppe (Joseph) Wilpert, I sarcofagi critiani antichi..., (Roma, Pontificio istituto di archeologia cristiana, 1929-36), pl. CLI, 1,2; CCXII, 2; CCXXX, 1.
90 For the Galerius' arch, see above, note 59.
91 As an visual example Grabar referred to the Coptic relief depicting Christ as a rider between two angels, one who leads His horse while the other follows, see: Grabar, L'Empereur dans l'art byzantine, 235. For the image, see: Georges Duthuit, La sculpture copte: statues--bas-reliefs—masques (Paris, G. Van Oest, 1931), pl. XV.
92 Mathews bases his argument on the absence of an adventus chariot in many Roman examples; furthermore, he notes that Christ is not dressed in an imperial garment but one that resembles those of a nobleman or philosopher. Interestingly, Mathews relates the use of palm branches, which was part of the imperial adventus ceremony, to the Jewish tradition in which branches were used in a religious ritual of purification; Thomas Matthews, The Clash of Gods. A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art (Princeton, Oxford, 1995, 1999), 23-54.
The representation of *adventus* that has come down to us from late antiquity that is the best candidate for a prototype of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem, is the one depicted on the wall of the subterranean chamber of Hypogaeum of the Aureli on the Viale Manzoni in Rome (Fig. 36). This work has been dated to the middle of the third century (ca. 220s). The scene shows a welcome reception for a rider who is about to enter a city through the main gate. The city is densely built-up inside the walls and represented in bird’s eye view. Scholars have debated the religious origin of the tomb and its patron. According to Alastair Logan the scene symbolizes a triumph over death and the promise of resurrection. Alison Poe, however, has recently rejected such arguments. Though she acknowledges its eschatological nature, seeing the city as celestial and the promised land of the next word, she refers to the representation as being part of the pagan tomb with a strong Christian influence. In many respects, however, this composition could serve as

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93 The *Adventus* scene is in the chamber C. Alison Poe provides a more correct identification of the structure, proposing that Hypogaeum is an incorrect technical term since it refers only to a sepulcher lying completely below ground, which is not the case with the sepulcher in question. For more on this question, see: Alison Poe, *The Third-Century Mausoleum (“Hypogaeum”) of the Aurelii in Rome: Pagan or Mixed-Religion Collegium Tomb*, (PhD dissertation, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, May, 2007), 4.


95 For the precise description, see: Poe, *The Third-Century Mausoleum*, 51-53.


99 Poe refers to the familiar symbol of the gate as indisputable signifier of the passageway into the land of the dead and thus casting the scene as a triumphal version of the entrance into the next world; Poe, *The Third-Century Mausoleum*, 153-155. Poe based her argument on the prevailing iconography that refers to Roman pagan art. She could not find any
preparatory study for the scenes of the Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem, which begin to appear, as we have seen, on Christian sarcophagi in the fourth century, the period when the symbolism of imperial art migrated generally from secular to religious uses.¹⁰⁰

This debate over the origin of the iconography of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem adds to our understanding of how antique prototypes were absorbed into Christian tradition and what was lost in translation. The enactment of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem within a historical context was first recorded by Egeria in the fourth century. She described the liturgical reenactment of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday by a local bishop and the involvement of the congregation.¹⁰¹ Kantorowicz has pointed out that “whenever a king arrived at the gates of a city, celestial Jerusalem seemed to descend from heaven to earth…the liturgical celebration of an Adventus reflects, or even stages, the Christian prototype of Messianic entries, that is, the Lord’s triumphant Entry as king into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.”¹⁰² Mathews has noted that Christians made use of the Entry story in the liturgy of the Eucharist based on the verse from Mt. 21:9, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” He adds further: “the Entry functioned as an

—a reference to the representation of the celestial city in pagan art and it became a standard iconographic motif in Christian art from the fourth or early fifth century. For that reason she concluded that some of the members of the Aurelii family could have integrated some aspects of Christian thought into the fresco program, Poe, The Third-Century Mausoleum, 185-195.

¹⁰⁰ Erich Dinkler, Der Einzug in Jerusalem: Ikonographische Untersuchungen im Anschluss an ein bisher unbekanntes Sarkophagfragment (Opladen, 1970).
emblem of the epiphany of Christ eternal.”¹⁰³ This passage clarifies why the
iconography of translatio could be related to the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem:
translation is presented as a kind of entry where the saint’s body is invited to meet
with God.¹⁰⁴

It is perhaps more important to recognize, as MacCormack has pointed out,
that Christ’s historical Entry into Jerusalem was described by the same technical
term απάντρησις as was his second coming.¹⁰⁵ This eschatological component was
an important part of the adventus as is attested to by a sermon ascribed to
Augustine. Here the Lord’s Second Coming is compared to the adventus of a king
entering a city.¹⁰⁶ The comparison of the Lord’s Second Coming with the adventus of
the Basileus was a popular topic of Eastern homiletics.¹⁰⁷ It is found occasionally in
homilies, most often in those of St. John Chrysostom. Chrysostom uses a comparison
with the imperial adventus in relation to both the Entry into Jerusalem and the
Second Coming of Christ. Referring to I Thessalonians IV, 16, he asks:

If He is about to descend, on what account shall we be caught up? For the
sake of honour. For when a king enters into a city, those who are in honour go out to
meet him. But the condemned await the judge within. And upon the coming of an
affectionate father, his children indeed, and those who are worthy to be his children,
are taken out in a chariot, that they may see and kiss him. But those who have

¹⁰⁴ Mathews makes a distinction between the Western and the Eastern version of Christ’s
Entry into Jerusalem. The most notable difference being that in the Eastern model such as in
the scene from the sixth century Rossano Gospel in Berlin, Christ is depicted riding side-
saddle on the donkey (Fig. 24). Mathews, *The Clash of Gods* 27-41,43. In all Western
representations that have come down to us, Christ rides astride his donkey. Mathews reads
the Eastern innovation as indicating the anti-imperial role of Christ since this is not the
military pose of adventus. However, it is interesting to note that the side-saddle position can
be associated with figures shown riding in a chariot, which is depicted in the case of
Galerius in the scene of adventus on his arch in Thessaloniki (Fig. 23).
¹⁰⁷ Kantorowicz, “The ’King’s Advent,” 225.
Though one would expect that one concept would replace another, it seems that both forms of *adventus*, historical and eschatological, blended together. These two aspects are best conjoined on the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, dated by 359 A.D. in the juxtaposed scene in the middle of the sarcophagus (Fig. 37). On the lower scene one finds a representation of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem, while above it is a representation of Christ as a ruler of the world, in his glory. The historical and eschatological character of the scenes makes it a plausible prototype for the representation of the translation of relics. At the same time, these two scenes on the sarcophagus evoke the actual event and convey a sense of what the saint’s intercessionary powers will be when the final days arrive.

The *adventus* motif developed into two distinct iconographic lineages. The first continued to depict the triumphal entry of the ruler, although now under the auspices of imperial, royal and papal patronage. A good example of this tradition is found in a fresco in the church St. Demetrius in Thessaloniki where the haloed Emperor Justinian II is depicted at his triumphal entrance into Thessaloniki in 688

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A.D. (Fig. 38), or on the earlier Barberini ivory from the sixth century (Fig. 39). Medieval entries, especially those dating from Carolingian times in the West, both princely and sacred, tend to evoke both Christ’s *advent* into Jerusalem and a Hellenistic-Roman tradition of royal advent. The fusion of Christian and imperial entry rituals was facilitated by the latter’s soteriological imagery rooted in the welcoming deities of pre-Christianity. This model, in which the *imitatio imperatoris* was blended with the *imitatio Christi* had a strong appeal for Roman popes and would be appropriated by them following the eleventh century. Christianity did not merely apply the imperial idiom of *adventus*, but retooled it.

The second thread in the development of the *adventus* motif within Christianity occurred when the *adventus* was welcomed as a model for the translation of relics embodying secular, political and religious components. This conjunction is described in two sermons John Chrysostom (398-404) delivered during the *translatio* of an anonymous martyr to the Saint Thomas martyrium at Drypia outside Constantinople. This event was particularly important because the

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112 The model of imperial *adventus* was accepted for the entry of a patriarch or bishop since late antiquity as it was recorded in the example of Athanasius. According to eulogist Gregory Nazianzus, Athanasius was welcomed in Constantinople on his return from the exile in Alexandria in 346. Gregory drew parallels with the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. Gregory Nazianzus, *Laudes Athan.* 27. PG 35: 1113; also in Theodoret, *Hist. Ec.* 2, 19, PG 82. For more on this, see: Peterson, “Die Einholung des Kyrios,” 690.
113 Elsner, *Imperial Rome*, 205.
Byzantine emperor Arcadius and the Empress Eudoxia participated.\textsuperscript{116}

In the West, the translation of relics was formulated in the manner of an imperial \textit{adventus}. This is best confirmed by the sermon \textit{De Laude sanctorum} (Praising the Saints) by Victricius of Rouen.\textsuperscript{117} In 396 Victricius solemnly received relics of various saints from Ambrose of Milan and Paulinus of Nola in his Episcopal City.\textsuperscript{118} In the sermon Victricius used the imperial \textit{adventus} ceremony as an analogy for the reception of the relics.

If one of the princes of this world were visiting our city now, every open space would at once be bright with garlands, matrons would fill the rooftops, the gates would pour forth a surge of people, every age, divided in its enthusiasm, would sing of glory and warlike deeds, would admire the brilliance of the military cloak and the Tyrian purple, would marvel at the treasure of the Red Sea and the frozen tears of monsters and indeed these things are to be marveled at if you see them, despised if you think about them, for, after all, we call them stones. These, I say, would keep people agape. But, blessed ones, when it is the triumph of the martyrs and procession of the powers that reaches our houses, why should not we be overcome with joy?

It is not eloquence which is needed here, but the pure simplicity of happiness. There is no lack of things for us to admire: in place of the royal cloak, here is the garment of eternal light. The togas of the saints have absorbed this purple. Here are diadems adorned with the varied lights of the jewels of wisdom, intellect, knowledge, truth, good counsel, courage, endurance, self-control, justice, good sense, patience, chastity. These virtues are expressed and inscribed each in its own stone. Here the Savior-craftsman has adorned the crowns of the martyrs with spiritual jewels. Let us set the sails of our souls towards these gems. There is nothing fragile in them, nothing that diminishes the greater, nothing that experiences loss. They bloom in beauty more and more; even the blood shows that they are

\textsuperscript{116} For more about the translation of St. Thomas, see: Paul Elliot Kimball, \textit{The Shadow of the Future: Ritual and Eschatology in the Early Byzantine City (AD 394-404)} (PhD, Dissertation, The State University of New York at Buffalo, 2004).

\textsuperscript{117} Victricius, \textit{De Laude sanctorum}, 1, 12 PL 20:439. For the full bibliography see: Chapter One page 22, note 45.

\textsuperscript{118} Hunter, “Vigilantius of Calagurris,” 401-430; Clark, “Translating relics,” 161-177.
presented as signs of eternity, the blood which is still the sign of the fire of the Holy Spirit in the very bodies and relics of the limbs.\textsuperscript{119}

As Gillian Clark notes, Victricius here drew upon the familiar image of the \textit{adventus} with the earthly ruler and his reception followed with a ceremony and panegyric, with his sermon functioning as the panegyric.\textsuperscript{120} Victricius saw the \textit{adventus} of relics as part of triumphal relic translation. He did not neglect to draw a distinction between war booty and saintly relics in his comparison between ancient and Christian triumphs. His contemporary, Ambrose, comparing the \textit{translatio} and triumph declared: "the palms of the martyrs are the triumphs of Christ our prince."\textsuperscript{121}

The saint became the protector of a city as the Emperor had once been. The arrival of a saint was perceived as a high moment in which it was possible, as MacCormack has stated, "to precipitate that ever-elusive elixir of Late Roman politics, the \textit{consensus universorum}."\textsuperscript{122}

5. Triumph-\textit{Translatio}

The general image of translation that was anticipated in Victricius text as a triumphal \textit{adventus}, recalls the Vienne relief discussed in chapter one (Fig. 1). The scene represented on the plaque could equally be identified as a representation of

\textsuperscript{119} Victricius, \textit{De Laude sanctorum}, 1, 12 PL 20:439; for more on this text and its other editions, see: Gillian Clark, "Victricius of Rouen: Praising the Saints," 365-99.
\textsuperscript{120} Clark "Translating relics," 173.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Christi enim nostri principis triumphi sunt martyrum palmae}. Ambrose, \textit{Exhort. uirg.} 1 PL 16:336-337.
\textsuperscript{122} MacCormack, \textit{Art and Ceremony}, 67.
the triumphal departure to the afterworld, of an *adventus* of a dignitary, or of a translation of relics as determined by Lantieri. The essential indeterminacy of this scene marks it as an ideal framing device for the issues encountered in the representation of the triumph and the translation of the body of a saint.

Both triumph and translation explicitly engage themes of transformation and liminality. While the triumph represents a ceremony in which the role of triumphator is indeterminate, placing the triumphator in the position between the human and the divine, the translation of relics focuses on the body of the saint and its ambiguous status as being suspended in a form of living death. To be able to identify the subject of a particular scene it is necessary to have a clear symbol that will determine the subject of the composition. Due to the poor condition of the Vienna relief, it is difficult to discern if the person on the cart holds a reliquary or not. If one compares it to urns from Volltera, the scene strongly resembles a funerary scene, depicting the dead’s triumphal departure to the underworld. At the same time it could also represent the abbreviated adventus scene.

The indeterminate nature of the contents of the casket that is carried in both the Vienne relief and the Trier ivory, the uncertainty of its containing fragments of a dead material or a living relic, reflects a fundamental problem of representations of *translatio*. An image of an immobile body is visually indistinguishable from a dead one. That no iconographic convention was developed to signify the ambivalent life-in-death status of the relic is telling. As with the triumphator, the ambivalent status of the relic was a key feature of both the ritual of *translatio* and its representations. One should not, therefore, view the absence of such a sign as a lack, but rather an
indicator that this very ambivalence was an integral part of the efficacy of these objects. This is to argue that this absence of a sign is being used to signify by conveying the indeterminacy that sat at the heart of the *translatio* ritual itself. For late antique, medieval, or indeed, contemporary viewers, this lacuna produces a sense of tension akin to the uncertainty of whether the triumphator was receiving due praise as a civic hero or hubristically usurping the position of the supreme deity. In a Christian context, this uncertainty becomes the suspension of doubt known as faith. Reliquaries themselves functioned as framing devices that transformed abject human remains into vehicles of divine agency. Representations of *translatio* similarly framed the movement of relics in a manner in which this abject-precious, man-god, dead-living uncertainty is preserved and productively deployed in order to produce an affective response in the viewer.

The ceremony represented on the Trier ivory resembles that of the triumphal *adventus*. The people have gathered around those they consider their protectors and whose relics appear as trophies of victory. Trier ivory equates the greeting of the relics with the *adventus* of a sovereign where the city was adorned with wreaths and hosted masses of spectators. In contrast to the triumph of the ruler, the *adventus* of the saints takes the form of a triumph of the martyrs and a parade of their virtues: *martyrum triumphus pompa virtutum* in which material wealth is transformed into spiritual richness.\(^{123}\)

\(^{123}\) Victricius, *De Laude sanctorum*, 1, 12 n. 26.
transported to a basilica that will house them. The Empress’ hand gesture welcomes them into the church (Fig. 40). Victricius similarly welcomed the relics in the sanctuary where their indeterminate status would resonate with the enactment of the Eucharist.

Beyond its explicit theological concerns, the ivory served a political agenda. Just as the triumphator brings prosperity, spolia and wealth the ivory presents the empress and emperor as leaders who, along with the bishops, will provide not only protection to the city but hope of ultimate salvation, of a personal *translatio* into the heavenly realm. They delivered new spolia to the city in the procession of *translatio* and in the process created a new, visual rhetoric that reinscribed their political power. Jas Elsner has correctly noted that Christianity did not have spolia, visual or architectural, through which it could recall its spiritual past, but rather that its “only spolia were the bones of its dead.”

6. **Triumphal Arch**

The cart shown on the Trier ivory enters the city or palace through a gate positioned in the far left side of the panel (Fig. 5). A church is shown on the right side. Both objects frame the scene, demarcating the representational plane of the ivory as a liminal or transitional zone. The relics are prominently placed in front of the gate. Leslie Brubaker and other scholars have concluded that this represents the

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124 Jas Elsner, “From the Culture of Spolia to the Cult of Relics: The Arch of Constantine and the Genesis of Late Antique Forms,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 68 (2000): 149-184, 159.
Chalkē gate in Constantinople.\textsuperscript{125} The two structures share a similar four-sided portico. The Chalkē gate was a main gateway to the imperial palace and as such, in Brubaker words, was a “physical boundary that mediated between the state and its public - it was a material marker of a transitional space - and perhaps for this reason the Chalkē was constructed by Byzantine authors both as an emblem of imperium and as a site of imperial transformation.”\textsuperscript{126} That Chalkē was a liminal site that encapsulated transformation and change is indicated by Byzantine records from which we know that emperors and empresses could hear the voice of God at this location.\textsuperscript{127} This exchange with supernatural power is also indicated in the Trier ivory by the passage of the body of the saint, which will thereby be transformed from a corpse into a body with supernatural powers.

The triumphant \textit{adventus} ceremony showed not only the power of the Emperor but also brought prosperity to the city and empire thanks to the spolia of war, one of the most important elements of the \textit{adventus} procession.\textsuperscript{128} Despite their importance, the spolia also had an ambiguous status. Won through the infliction of misery to the vanquished, they testified to the glory and prosperity of the victor.\textsuperscript{129} The \textit{adventus} procession functioned as a cleansing process that

\textsuperscript{125} Brubaker, “The Chalke gate,” 271 and note 44.
\textsuperscript{126} Brubaker, “The Chalkē Gate,” 259. The early description of the gate comes from Prokopius after it was restored in the sixth century, \textit{Prokopius, Buildings} I.x.11-20 (ed. Loeb VII, 84-87); See also, Mango, \textit{The Brazen House}, 30-34.
\textsuperscript{129} For more on spoils of war, see: Östenberg, \textit{Staging the World}, 19-128.
allowed these objects, contaminated by their violent past, to signify success and bring joy and prestige to the victor. Similarly, the ritual of translation, allowed a corpse liable to decay and corruption to be transformed into the incorruptible body of a saint, one that will bring power and prosperity to the community. An illuminated manuscript from the twelfth century, the Acta translationis Sancti Mercury Martyris in the Bibliotheca Giovardiana Lectionarium, tells the story of the translation of relics of Saint Mercury of Caesarea (died c. 250) in 768 to Benevento (Fig. 41). According to the script the saint’s relics were translated from Aeclanum to Benevento and brought to the city on a cart through the “Gold Door.” The initial letter T from the manuscript, folio 15r, shows a scene of the translation of relics that is going through the Arch of Trajan (ca. 117 A.D.) (Fig. 42). In the illumination, the arch is represented in the simplified form of a large open door, stripped of its Roman decoration; however, the original monument, which has survived relatively intact,

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130 Since the rise of the ethnological branch of the study of religions the passage through the Porta Triumphalis has been explained as a lustration or expiation rite. It was thought that the army, on returning home, had to be purified of the stains of war, death and blood. Hendrik Wagenvoort, Roman dynamism (Oxford, 1947), 3.

131 For the manuscript, see: Elias A. Loew, The Beneventan Script. A History of the South Italian Minuscule. Second edition enlarged and prepared by Virginia Brown, vol. 2 (Rome, 1980), 170-171; For the eighteenth century redaction of the manuscript by Victorio Giovardi, see; Victorio Giovardi, Acta passionis et translationis sanctorum martyrum Mercurii ac XII. fratum, necnon lectiones pro solenni basilice Sanctae Sophiae Beneventi dedicatione : Ex antiquo membranaceo codice ejusdem ecclesiae eruta ac notis illustrata, nunc primum in lucem prodeunt (Rome, 1730).

132 Relics of St. Mercury were introduced to the West by Aréchis II, the Duke of Benevento, who translated the relics to the church of St. Sophia in Benevento in 768, and had the saint’s Greek passion translated into Latin. Laura Alandis Hibbard Loomis, Adventures in the Middle Ages: a memorial collection of essays and studies (New York, 1962), 188; Stéphane Binon, Essai sur le cycle de saint Mercure, martyr de Dèce et meurcier de l’empereur Julien (Paris, 1937), 1-10.
bears a frieze with scenes of the triumphal adventus that include spolia (Fig. 43). The arch was incorporated into the city wall that was constructed by the Lombards immediately after the occupation of Benevento between 570 and 571. Instead of relics on a cart, here one finds a representation of the living saint entering the city, indicating his omnipresence and linking the realms of the earthly and the heavenly. Furthermore, the saint is welcomed by a figure, likely Aréchis II himself, who offers him the keys to the city. In this way the protection of the city is symbolically translated, transferring it from earthly ruler to heavenly protector.

The symbolic importance of triumphal arches and gates and the rituals associated with them in antiquity have been subjects of considerable scholarly debate. Harald von Petrikovits looks upon the gate as a boundary between two sacral provinces, domi and militia. While for Frederick Müller the porta is a boundary between the realms of life and death, Georges Dumézil speaks of a furor, which Horatius had to be cleansed of by passing through a gate before entering the city. For Hendrik Wagenvoort this is the real function of the gate: “it draws mana-either good or bad-from him who passes underneath it.” He continues by noting that “the criminal’s mana must be diverted, which here is effected by transitus which

134 On the history of the wall in Benevento, see: Rotili, L’Arco di Traiano, 5-8; see also: Hans Belting, Studien zum beneventanischen Hof im 8. Jahrhundert,” Dumbarton Oaks Papers 16 (1962): 141-193, especially note 1 with the older bibliography on this topic.
often takes place of contactus respectively contagio: hence, the gate.”\textsuperscript{137} Versnel repeats Wagenvoort and Huth’s shared view that the ianus was the gate through which the army will leave the city and after the war will return into the city. Citing Wagenvoort, Versnel writes:

\begin{quote}
Now, marching out for war is a momentous start needing a ‘threshold rite,’ not as a symbol but for increasing the strength of the men marching to war, for transference of warrior-\textit{mana}(…)ianus(…) imparts the particular strength of which the warrior stands in need, and he takes it away at their return.\textsuperscript{138}
\end{quote}

Samson Eitrem has argued that the cult of Ianus extended the cult of the gateway to include the entrance of the city.\textsuperscript{139} Change in general was the primary function of the arch whether it was in terms of its apotropaic function, in its lending greater power to the triumphator, or in terms of its presenting a symbol of the transition between the terrestrial and celestial.\textsuperscript{140}

The gate in the Trier ivory may also be understood to provide a bridge between antiquity and Christianity. The arch is embellished with the classical architectural order in the form of tetra pylon such as found on the gate of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna from the late third century A.D. (Fig. 44). As we have seen above, the gate structure in the ivory has been identified with the Chalkê gate in

\textsuperscript{137} Wagenvoort, Roman Dynamism, 155-157.
\textsuperscript{138} Versnel, Triumphus, 139-140.
\textsuperscript{139} Samson Eitrem, “A Purification Rite and Some Allied \textit{Rites de passage},” \textit{Symbolae Osloenses} 25 (1947): 36-53, 40. Janus was one of the oldest Gods in the Roman mythology. He was the god of all beginnings and of passages such as doors, gates and bridges. He was the one who opened the gates of heaven at dawn and closed them at dusk. For more about Janus, see: David R. Fideler, \textit{Jesus Christ, Sun of God: Ancient Cosmology and Early Christian Symbolism} (Wheaton, 1993), 259.
\textsuperscript{140} For Versnel the triumph is a ritual of bringing “health and wealth” into the city through the victor which implies, necessarily, the presence of the gate. In that way the good will be kept inside the city. Versnel, Triumphus, 139-154.
Constantinople. The Byzantine sources are not clear about the image of the Christ on the gate. One of the earliest that Brubaker mentions is the *Theophanes Chronographia* from the beginning of the ninth century.\(^{141}\) Theophanes writes of the sixth-century Byzantine emperor Maurice who saw himself in a dream at the gate by the image of the Saviour. \(^{142}\) In the Trier ivory, Christ’s presence in the gate’s tympanum allows the arch to function as an authenticator, a device that could certify a ceremony that transformed dead flesh into a body endowed with divine agency.

The Chalkê Gate’s prior decoration is of interest in relation to its role as symbol of both transformation and victory. Prokopios (500-562) described the gate as a large four-sided structure covered by a dome. The four-sided shape of the gate on the ivory is clearly depicted in inverted perspective in order to emphasize its side openings. The dome inside the Chalkê gate had mosaics that depicted the emperor, members of the senate and scenes of war and victory.\(^ {143}\) Later descriptions of the gate from ca. 780 mention portraits surmounted by a cross as a symbol of victory and triumph.\(^ {144}\) The gate is represented as a mediator between God and the emperor, a “site of imperial change.”\(^ {145}\) According to the writing of John of Antioch from the seventh century, emperor Maurice (582-602) had a dream that he was

\(^{141}\) For more on the *Chronographia* and its translations, see Chapter One, page 19, note 32.
\(^{142}\) Brubaker, “The Chalkê Gate,” 266.
\(^{143}\) Prokopius, *Buildings* I.x.11-20.
\(^{144}\) The text is from Parastaseis Syntomai Chronikai and credits Emperor Justinian for the decoration of the gate, see: *The Parastaseis Syntomoi Chronikai*, 94-95, 120-123, 158-159; Another report of the cross on the gate is given by Theodore the Studite in a text dated to 815 and 819 called *Refutatio poematum iconomachorum*, PG 99, 437C, see: Mango, *The Brazen House*, 122, note 59.
\(^{145}\) Brubaker, “The Chalkê Gate,” 259.
standing at the porphyry stone of the Chalkê gate when God asked him, “where dost thou wish me to give thee thy due, now or in the future?” After having this dream, Maurice decided to abdicate. As Brubaker rightly concluded, the Chalkê Gate here becomes “a locus of divine interaction with the emperor or empress, and... a symbolically charged site of imperial transformation.”

The Chalkê gate was also used for the triumphal entry of the emperor when he did not enter through the Golden Gate. This circumstance was witnessed by Constantine Porphyrogenitus (905-959 A.D.) in the Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions from the mid tenth century, when he observed: “As the emperor enters the Chalkê, the admissionalios stands there with a protiktor and the triumphator, and calls out the triumphal salute; and the magistros ordered this to take place (at this point), since the emperor did not enter via the Golden Gate.” Constantine also testified in his treatise that booty and trophies were “paraded triumphally along the Mese from the Golden gate to the Chalkê of the palace.”

The capacity to enact change and transformation within the translation ceremony is underscored in the iconographic program of the scepter of the Byzantine emperor Leo VI (750-780) (Fig. 45). The ivory is carved on all four

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146 Excerpa de insidiis, ed. De Bor, 148. Translated by Cyril Mango in Mango, The Brazen House, 111.
147 Excerpa de insidiis, ed. De Bor, 148.
149 Constantine Porphyroogenitus Three Treatises on Imperial Military Expeditions, 141-143.
sides, each of which has an architectural setting. Of particular interest here is the side that shows Emperor Leo VI being crowned by the Virgin in the presence of the archangel Gabriel. All three figures are set inside the grand tympanum, which is filled with the large central niches with windows, clearly indicating a church apse and two small side niches. An inscription is placed around the tympanum, spreading across two arches and two lintels. The arches on either side read: “Lord in Your power the emperor Leo will rejoice”/and in “Your salvation he will exult exceedingly” (Ps. 20:2).” The inscriptions on the lintels read: “By the prayers of the disciples, Lord, help your servant,” and “Strive, prosper, and reign [Ps. 45:5] lord Leo.” The positioning of the arches in the ivory scepter, one inside the other, indicates a double transformation: one that represents the earthly adventus in state and the other that bestows divine power upon the Emperor. As noted by Corrigan, the source of the Emperor’s authority is established here by the inscription: “Lord in Your Power.”

Gates are structures that produce desire and anxiety. By creating a division in social space, a gate creates two groups: those within and those without. This splitting instills a sense of desire on one side of the gate that is matched by an opposing force on the opposite side. The inability to be present and participate on both sides at the same time generates a desire to cross over the boundary between them. Even if the triumphal general or funerary cortege, did not actually pass through the triumphal arch or Porta Triumphantis they remained symbols of such a

passage. As Ross Holloway comments: “the freestanding arch in itself contains a message.” For the medieval spectator, passing through the gate and entering a city, monastery, or simply a church presented the opportunity for greater prosperity. On the Trier ivory this hope for a better life is presented in the form of the relics and the institution of the church, the latter being embodied by the two bishops who accompany them. By placing them on the same axis as the image of Christ on the arch, the makers align institutional and liturgical authority. The entrance of the relics on the cart into the enclosed, urban space through a gate bearing the image of Christ indicates the elevation of the relics from their worldly status to a more saintly position, and therefore, to their new talismanic function as protectors of the city, country or dynasty.

Moreover, the journey of the relics did not end when they passed through the gate. Their final resting place would be underneath or on the altar of the church. On the way to the deposit site the relics will pass through another kind of portal, the church door. In many cases they would then pass through a kind of triumphal arch that separated the main nave from the apsidal part of the church. Entering through that gate, the relics would find their final resting place. From their new

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152 The *Porta Triumphi alos* should not be confused with the triumphal arches, which were erected as a monument for emperors and generals.


location, they would now begin their role of symbolically anticipating resurrection and the final victory over death that is reenacted during the Eucharist in the liturgy. The body of the saint would now be associated with the body of Christ on the altar. Through this proximity to Christ the relic would receive the validation that Victricius of Rouen described as being as a Christianization of the body. In the Trier ivory, their depository site is indicated by the frontal representation of the church apse directly opposite the coffin containing the relics. The elaborate apse, carved almost in the round, resembles the rotunda of the church of Anastasis, or the tomb of Christ, as it was represented in an ivory from Milan around 400 (Fig. 46).

The triumphal arch in churches was a border between the profane and sacred, between the earthly and heavenly Jerusalem. Every time the rite of the Eucharist was performed at the altar from the early Christian times, with its ceremony of the Great Entry and the introduction of the consecrated bread and wine, Christ’s Second Coming was anticipated. Eusebius described the Christian sages who explained to Constantine the Great that "the sign which had appeared was the symbol of immortality and the trophy of that victory won over death [by Christ]." Pagans believed military victory contributed to a successful afterlife as evidenced by Roman sarcophagi. Baldwin has argued that Constantine’s victories

155 Clark, “Translating relics,” 177.
156 On Milan’s ivory, see: Danielle Gaborit Chopin, *Ivories du Moyen Age* (Fribourg, 1978), 80, note 111.
validated the new Christian deity and sanctioned the extensive militarization of the
cross and the liturgy.  Such liturgical politics were represented on the triumphal
arches flanking the altars in Christian basilicas founded by Constantine. The
inscription on the triumphal arch in St. Peter’s, for example, confirms this in its
blunt assertion: "Constantine the victor set up this temple."  

One may argue that two adventi are, in fact, represented on the Trier ivory:
one celebrating the relics entering the city or palace and the other the empress and,
by association, the imperial family. The presence of the empress and the emperor on
the ivory suggest a new type of adventus, one that MacCormack describes as an
adventus in state or “the eternal presence” model that developed during the fourth
century. Once the emperor came to be identified with the capital city, the
ceremony of the adventus achieved its next evolutionary step. Now, the procession
of the emperor was replaced by his presence. As MacCormack writes, “(t)he imperial
presence was epitomized in the second stage of the ceremony of adventus, that of
the coexistence between emperor and subjects.” This new model of adventus
became dominant in the art of the Theodosian age when emperors were frequently
represented as a stationary presence, enthroned among his subjects.

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159 Baldwin, ‘I slaughter barbarians,’ 228.
160 Hanc Constantinus victor tibi condidit aulam, see: Baldwin, ‘I slaughter barbarians,’ 228.
161 MacCormack, Art and Ceremony, 55-61.
162 MacCormack, Art and Ceremony, 55-56.
163 An example of this is the base of Theodosius I (378-392 AD) obelisk in Constantinople
erected on the Hippodrome during the late fourth century (Fig. 47). The base contains four
relief panels with the south face showing the Emperor in state (Fig. 48). The figure of the
Emperor is both elevated and frontal, and as Richard Brilliant has written, his “very
eminence is hieratically charged, revealing the abstract ideological structure of the concept”
of the Emperor. In the east side relief the Emperor is represented offering a laurel to the
victor of the games in the Hippodrome (Fig. 49). Brilliant has argued that because we do not
see the victor in the scene, the program of the relief implies that all the victories or victors
On the Trier ivory, the Emperor is part of the procession (Fig. 50). The Empress who greets the procession, however, although not enthroned, is clearly depicted as a stationary presence associated with the city, and specifically the church. Scholars have considered the presence of the Empress in light of her role as the likely donor of the chapel or a church located behind her, which, according to them, is dedicated to saint Stephen.\textsuperscript{164} One may argue that her role as a triumphator is of even greater importance. Holding the cross as an imperial attribute, a feature of contemporary coinage as well, she is identified as a Christian triumphator whose palladium of victory recalls Christian triumph over death.\textsuperscript{165}

In some early Christian and medieval representations, Christ is shown at the Resurrection or Ascension with a long cross over his shoulders stepping toward heaven. An early example of a Resurrection/Ascension on a marble plaque from Ravenna from the sixth century shows Christ being lifted by the hand of God toward

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\text{are channeled through the person of the Emperor. Richard Brilliant, “‘I Come to You as Your Lord;’ Late Roman Imperial Art,” in Artistic Strategy and the Rhetoric of Power. Political Uses of Art from Antiquity to the Present, ed. David Castriota (Carbondale, 1986), 27-37.}\]


\textsuperscript{165} For coins with a representation of the empresses holding the cross see: Leslie Brubaker, Helen Tobler, “The Gender of Money: Byzantine Empresses on Coins (324-802),” Gender and History 12/3(2002): 572-594; Suzanne Spain has argued that using the cross as an attribute of the Empress reflects not only contemporary coins, but also that the cross is intended to recall Helen, mother of Constantine the Great who discovered the True Cross, see: Spain, “The Translation of Relics,” 300; Holm and Vikan rightly concluded that the cross should not be understood as an attribute of rank or sainthood. They further claim that the presence of the cross identifies the scene of adventus as a triumphant event “partaking in the ultimate victory of Christ on Golgotha.” They place the cross in its historical context, comparing it to processional crosses, such as the so-called cross of Constantine that existed in Constantinople in the fourth century. Holm and Vikan claimed that according to some written sources, Pulcheria and Theodosius II “introduced this cross in the palace to serve as a palladium of victory, a physical guarantee that Christ’s victory on Golgotha would be repeated in the warlike undertakings of Theodosius and his sister.” Holm and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 123, 129.
heaven from a raised platform (Fig. 51). In the initial of the letter C from the Drogo Sacramentary, ca. 845 (Paris, BNF) (Fig. 52), Christ is perched triumphantly on the top of a hill holding a long cross in one hand while in the other He clasps the hand of God, which reaches down from the sky. Similarly, on the Trier ivory, the Empress indicates the way to heaven by holding a cross in one hand and pointing toward the reliquary with the other. Here the cross symbolizes not the personal victory of the Empress but the victory of the saint confirmed by his *translatio*.

The so-called reliquary of SS. Julitta and Quiricus that was most likely produced in North Italy at the beginning of the fifth century bears a triumphal image of Christ. The reliquary shows Christ carrying a triumphal cross as ascending toward heaven. In architecture we have an example from Milan, where Ambrose began the first Western cruciform basilica dedicated to the Holy Apostles in 380. The basilica was placed along the official route of Roman triumphal processions and Ambrose dedicated it with an inscription stating, "the temple is in the form of a cross ... a triumphal image [which] marks the place with the sacred victory of Christ." The ivory could be understood as a metaphorical *translatio* of power from the saint to the imperial family, who now take on the role of protectors of the city.

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167 Christe, *La Vision*, 49.


and the states. Jörg Rüpke has argued that the triumph originated in an epiphany in which human and divine met.\textsuperscript{171} A similar borrowing of authority was implemented by scenes of *Traditio Legis* in which Christ, standing in heaven, is flanked by Peter and Paul. Peter usually holds a long processional cross with the one hand, while receiving the Law from Christ with the other. This type was likely developed in Rome after the reign of pope Damasus (366-384). There is general agreement that the scene is derived from Late Antique images of imperial *majestas*.\textsuperscript{172} In this case, Christ is represented as a triumphant commander addressing troops while Peter and Paul represent *duces in militia Christi*.\textsuperscript{173}

The alignment of *translatio* triumphal imagery with the rhetoric of a liturgical triumph unites secular and sacred powers. *Translatio* was used as to fuse a new, Christian state-sponsored ideology with the Roman imperial propaganda of the triumph that had been inaugurated by Augustus. Now, however, this Roman tradition was embedded within the new Christian message of crucifixional triumph over death. This liturgical-eschatological victory was routinely enacted on the altar and symbolically indicated in the Trier ivory by the rendition of the church apse. The translation of relics on the ivory represents a triumph of the saint and his body and the promise of resurrection through the mediation of the saint and the intervention of the earthly ruler. The cross parallels another Roman cross-form, the

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Jörg Rüpke, *Dom militiae : die religiöse Konstruktion des Krieges in Rom* (Stuttgart, 1990), 233.
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trophy (Fig. 53). This cross-shaped wooden frame that held-up the armor of defeated tribes was ubiquitous in triumphal processions and public places. It was represented on arches, gateways, and coins such as representations from Pompeii showing Romulus as *tropheophore*.

There are numerous literary sources that make analogies between the trophy and the cross. Early writers in particular liked to compare the two and to emphasize the triumphal aspect of Christianity. Paraphrasing Justin Martyr (*ca. 100-ca. 165*), Tertullian (*ca. 160 – ca. 220*) declared:

“But you also adore Victories, and in all trophies the cross is the inner structure of the trophy...Those hangings of your standards and banners are but robes upon crosses.”

John Chrysostom in the Homily 85 on John 19.16-20.9 wrote:

...and that Jesus set up His trophy over death in the place where death had begun its rule. For He went forth bearing His cross as a trophy in opposition to the tyranny of death, and as is customary with conquerors, He also carried in His shoulders the symbol of His victory.

As we have seen, the cross becomes a triumphal symbol used in art and architecture. That the Roman trophy originated in a tree trunk with a horizontal crosspiece only made it easier for it to fuse over time with the victorious Old Testament's tree of life and thus to become associated with resurrection and everlasting life. In the case of the Trier ivory and translation ritual generally, the death of the saint initiated the triumph.

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174 Christe, *La Vision*, 47, see note 1, and fig. 73.
The body of the saint, functioning as a trophy in the triumph over death passed into the church, and through the triumphal arch to find its place under or on the altar. Placed under the altar, the body of the saint incorporated the cult of the martyrs into the sacramental and liturgical practice performed within the church's public space.  

According to Ambrose, “He who suffered for all shall be upon the altar, those redeemed by His passion beneath it.” The association of the saint’s relics with the altar on which Christ’s sacrifice is celebrated is reflected in the decorative programs on the triumphal arches found in some early churches. Instead of Roman trophies, they bear representations of the cross. Einhard's Arch (Fig. 54), which dates from around 820, is a silver crucifix base, now lost, in the form of a triumphal arch, provides another example. The object was given by Einhard, a friend of Charlemagne, to the abbey of Saint Servais in Maastricht. The base of the arch was decorated with figures executed in a repoussé technique on three registers. Einhard’s dedicatory inscription was located on the attic area on the reverse of the Arch: "Einhard the sinner undertook to erect and dedicate to God this arch for bearing a trophy of eternal victory." Next to the inscription were two standing

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180 In Rome, the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura, end of sixth century. For more references on the church of San Lorenzo, see: Chapter Three, page 138, note 14.

angels holding scepters. An enthroned Christ gesturing toward twelve apostles was depicted in the attic area of the front and along both sides. The cross on the top of the arch, Einhard’s, “trophy of eternal victory,” was aligned with the enthroned Christ and apostles. This revival of imperial Roman imagery reflected Einhard’s role within the larger sphere of Charlemagne’s political ambitions. The cross carried by the empress on the Trier ivory served similarly as political statement of the union of secular and religious power.

The notion of a transitional or liminal space whose borders should be crossed in search of prosperity, or in the case of Trier ivory, salvation, is further emphasized by some of the ivory’s details (Fig. 40). The far right side, as we have seen, exhibits a church in the form of a basilica whose south side aisle has a door standing half-open. Many scholars have recognized open doors as welcoming relics that are going to be deposited in a church or a chapel. On the ivory the partially open doors indicate the future placement of the relics inside the church.

The iconography of the open door connotes Christian beliefs concerning the afterlife. There is a representation on an ivory plaque, the so-called Ivory of Passion in London (ca. 420-430), that shows Christ’s tomb with an open door, as a foreshadowing of the resurrection of Christ and the unique passage from life to

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183 Third-century sarcophagi often depict a gateway with double doors where one is left slightly ajar to suggest life after death. The pagan sarcophagus from Velletri from the second century A.D. bears this motif, which forms part of a cycle of scenes illustrating this life and the next (Fig. 31). Bernard Andreae, Studien zur römischen Grabkunst (Rome, 1963), 34,35.
death, and then from death to eternal life (Fig. 55). When placed on funerary stele, the open door referred to another realm, just as on the Trier ivory, it was intended to evoke the promise of salvation through the power of relics.

7. Funeral-Triumph

The link to ancient funerary markers suggests another possible iconographic source from antiquity that could be used in conjunction with the relic adventus ceremony. The triumphal funerary procession has been neglected in the past as a possible visual source for the iconography in the Trier ivory.186

In a brief article, Angelo Brelich has emphasized many similarities between funerals and the triumphal procession, which became evident in the funus imperatorium or imperial funeral.187 He recognized the elements common to both ceremonies such as the presence of music and great pomp, the wearing of wreaths by the participants, and the use of torches and other forms of illumination, as formal signifiers. Robert Heidenreich has drawn parallels between representations of the pompa triumphalis and funebris.188 In both cases the triumphator or the deceased is distinguished from the other figures. Heidenreich, like Brelich, also mentions the

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185 Wolfgang Fritz Volbach, Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters, (Mainz am Rhein, 1976), 82, plate 116.
186 On the triumphal funerary procession, see: Mario Torelli, “Quel funerale così simile al trionfo Funus triumpho similimum (Sen. Cons. Marc. 3,1),” in Trionfi romani, ed. Eugenio La Rocca and Stefano Tortorella (Milano, 2008), 84-89.
other elements shared by the funus and triumph. Versnel, however, only accepts formal similarities between funus and triumph and suggests that there are probably more conceptual elements that these two ceremonies shared as well. 189

Representations of the funus take largely stereotypical patterns as to form and composition.190 They often feature on the sarcophagi or funerary urn a two-wheeled chariot drawn by two or, as in the case of Vienne plaque and the Trier ivory, four horses. The latter is the case with an Etruscan cinerary urn showing a funeral procession that dates from around the first century B.C. (Fig. 56).191 The cart was followed by a winged demon of whose body on the urn only the upper part is visible. On other examples, mostly from Etruscan tombs, especially from Volterra and dated from the third century B.C. or later,192 Charun would sometimes be shown behind the cart with his hammer, but could also be positioned leading the horses by the reins.

It was common in Etruscan paintings and sculpture for the deceased to be represented on a carriage drawn by two or four horses, followed by a group of people. Often, these compositions featured an arch that played an important part in

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189 Versnel, Triumphus, 129.
192 On Volterra urns, see: Heinrich Brunn and Gustav Körte, I rilievi delle urne etrusche (Berlin and Rome, 1870-1916), with the drawings of most of the urns; Urne volterrane, Corpus delle urne etrusche di età ellenistica vol. 1, ed. Mauro Cristofani [et. al.], (Florence, 1975); Winfried Weber, 102-109; For other visual material, see: Mario Torelli, “Quel funerale così simile al trionfo Funus triumpho similimum (Sen. Cons. Marc. 3,1),” in Trionfi romani, ed. Eugenio La Rocca and Stefano Tortorella (Milano, 2008), 84-89.
the symbolism of death.\textsuperscript{193} A fresco in the Tomba del cadinale in Tarquinia (known through the watercolors of Adolfo Ajelli) includes several representations of a gate-like, freestanding structure in front of which a cart with a female occupant is shown being drawn by horses, symbolizing the passage from life to death (Fig. 57).\textsuperscript{194} On the tomb of the Haterii, c. 100-110 AD, there is a representation of the Triumphal arch next to the bed on which is an image of the tomb’s owner (Fig. 58). The same person is shown naked underneath the main opening of the arch, likely indicating a passage to the next life.\textsuperscript{195} Some arches were even erected exclusively in

\textsuperscript{193} See images in Torelli, “Quel funerale cosi,” 87; G.A. Mansuelli and other scholars have discussed the representation of arcus-shaped gates in Etruscan sepulchral monuments. Guido A. Mansuelli, “‘Fornices’ Etruschi,” Studi Etruschi 23/2 (1954): 435-440; The tomb was discovered in 1760 and then forgotten to be rediscovered in 1786 by Cardinal Garambi, bishop of Corneto, see: Frederik Poulsen, Etruscan Tomb Paintings, Their Subject and Significance (Oxford, 1922), 58-59, figs. 44-46; also for the reproduction of the painting, see: Fritz Weege, Etruskische malerei, mit 89 textabbildungen und 101 tafeln (Haale, 1921), figs.29-34; also Christine W Laidlaw, The main frieze of the Tomba del Cardinale, Master thesis (Columbia University, New York, 1961).

\textsuperscript{194} Versnel, Triumphus, 121. More about the images of the triumph in the funerary context, see: Emilia Talamo, “La scenografia del triionfo nella pittura funeraria,” Trionfi romani. Edited by Eugenio La Rocca and Stefano Tortorella (Milano, 2008), 62-71; There are numerous examples of representations of arches in funerary sculpture such as that found on the sepulchral stele of Quinto Cornelio Saturnino, now in the Louvre, see: Lehmann-Hartleben, “L’Arco di Tito,”Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale in Roma 62 (1934): 89-122, 110.

remembrance of a person who died, rather than on the occasion of a triumph, such as the monuments of the Sergii at Pola (Fig. 59), the arch of Giulii at St. Remy or Gavii at Verona, which date from the Augustan or a later Roman period.

The only known exemplar of a funerary passage through the Porta Triumphalis took place exclusively at the funus of Augustus. Beard has noted that Dio describes the cortège at Augustus' funeral as having passed through the triumphal gate. The emperor was dressed in triumphal costume and an image of him was carried in a triumphal chariot. Bread notes: “the triumph was here providing a language for representing (even if not performing) an imperial funeral and the apotheosis that the funeral might simultaneously entail.” Of greater significance is, that in both the case of the funeral and the triumph, we may speak of an apotheosis. As Versnel has argued: “the deceased will from now on belong to the di parentes, and the triumphator is, for one day, Iuppiter.” The apotheosis of the Emperor clearly shows the two facets of death and triumph, which parallel the death and translation of the saint.

The writings of some church fathers and historians of the early Christian period evidence that the triumphal adventus and funus imperaticus blended together

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196 It has been pointed out that some triumphal arches are sepulchral monuments, and there have been scholars who thought they recognized the Arcus Triumphalis in the symbolism of death of, particular Etruscan graves, Lehmann-Hartleben, “L’Arco di Tito,” 110-119.
197 Versnel argues the possibility that these arches “have been inspired by the ideology of the triumph,” Versnel, Triumphus, 121.
200 Versnel, Triumphus, 116.
in a ceremony that signified change and transformation in a way that was essential
for the *translatio* ritual as well. The ceremony of imperial burial as described by
Gregory of Nazianzus provided the basis for an understanding of an emperor’s reign.
In his second oration against Julian, Gregory recounts the imperial funeral
processions of Constantius II and Julian, who had died while absent from
Constantinople:

[The body of Constantius] was sent forth with universal acclamations and solemnity, with our religious observances, such as singing throughout the night and torchlight, which are the rites with which we Christians think it right to honour a holy death. Thus the carrying forth of the corps is an occasion for solemn rejoicing mingled with mourning...And also this has been heard by many, that, when the body passed the Taurus mountains, to be brought to its home city...there was a voice from the mountain-tops which was heard, as of beings singing and sending [Constantius] forth, the voice, I think, of angelic powers, a reward for his piety, and an offering for his funeral.\(^{201}\)

From this description it is clear that the funeral procession is described as an
*adventus* leading to the emperor's final resting-place. Gregory has conceived the imperial funeral in the most traditional terms, those of the *avdentus*. This was, however, still not a heavenly *adventus* in Ambrose’s sense, but rather, an earthly one.\(^{202}\)

By the late fourth century the funerary ceremonial of the Roman Empire had become Christian. According to MacCormack imperial ceremonials in late antiquity were a means of achieving consensus between ruler and subjects. Imperial funerals became part of the Roman body politic.\(^{203}\) Ambrose of Milan clearly described the funeral procession of the Emperor Theodosius as a triumph, not only in terrestrial

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202 See above, page 83, note 85.
terms but celestial as well. The function of the ceremony is described as being to consign the departed emperor to his place in heaven, where heaven is being understood in explicitly Christian terms. In his rendition of the funeral procession Ambrose leaned heavily on the triumphal imagery of the imperial funerary procession of the early empire. The triumph, as described by Ambrose, was other-worldly and Christian:

Do not be afraid that the triumphal relics [of Theodosius] will be received with less than conspicuous honour, wherever they arrive. This is not the sentiment of Italy, which has witnessed his spectacular triumphs; ...Yet now Theodosius is returning there more powerful, more glorious: a company of angels escort him, a throng of saints accompanies him. Constantinople, you are surely blessed, you who are receiving a citizen of paradise, and will possess in the august lodging of his buried body an inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven.

Theodosius was escorted in his last triumph not by terrestrial powers but by angels and saints in the heavenly city. Throughout this passage Ambrose compares the resting place of the Emperor in Constantinople with heaven, paralleling the earthly capital to heavenly Jerusalem and making the link between the city of God and the city of men in a more direct form.

The adventus of Theodosius, both in Constantinople and in heavenly Jerusalem, was a triumphant one. While the funeral of the pagan emperor showed that it was possible to overcome death, Christian imagery formulated this victory differently. According to MacCormack “it was an agnostic victory, the prototype of

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which was the death of the martyrs.” She quotes from Corripus and Claudian who described the funeral procession as an *adventus* with people of all ages attending, carrying gold and silver candlesticks, burning incense while accompanied by priests and nuns singing. Others watched the procession from the windows and housetops. The principal innovation here is the mourning of the participants. Their association brings the Trier ivory immediately to mind. As Mary Bread has written, however, “what makes one ritual seem similar to another is just as complicated as what makes them different.” It is not clear if the ivory presents a funeral procession, the ritual of translation, or an amalgam of the two. Both ceremonies had a triumphal character and participants whose emotions vary between sorrow and joy.

This mixture of sorrow and joy is indicated by the hand gesture of the participants in the procession placed on the second floor of the building who hold the hanging censers. This gesture has been taken to indicate singing. Alfred Hermann has identified them as *psaltai*. Most scholars have accepted this assumption based upon a comparison made by Hans Hickmann to gestures those of

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singers from Egyptian reliefs or representations of contemporary Coptic singers.\textsuperscript{210} Neil Moran recognized a similar gesture amongst the representations of singers in the Skylitzes manuscript that shows a scene of translation of relics of the emperor Michael III (Fig. 9) but also in Slavonic manuscripts such as Akathistos cycle of the Tomic Psalter fol. 295, \textit{ca.} 1360, and frescoes in Staro Nagoričino (\textit{ca.}1318) and Dečani (fourteenth century).\textsuperscript{211}

Henry Maguire has argued that the sign of raising one’s hand to one’s head represented in Byzantine art often expressed an inner, brooding sorrow.\textsuperscript{212} Sometimes a hand gesture can denote sorrow or to express joy. As Maguire sums up: “some of these variants had distinct shades of meaning, but others cannot be distinguished from each other in their significance since Byzantine artists seem to have used them interchangeably in the same contexts.”\textsuperscript{213} The sign of raising one’s hand to one’s head occurred with the greatest frequency in scenes of mourning for the dead in classical, medieval and Byzantine art.\textsuperscript{214} This gesture was usually represented in scenes of Crucifixion as in the mosaic from the Hosios Lukas in Phocis of the eleventh century (Fig. 60)\textsuperscript{215} or in the Cross Berlinghiero from the thirteenth\textsuperscript{216} where John the Evangelist made a hand gesture as a sign of sorrow.

\textsuperscript{211} Neil K. Moran, \textit{Singers in late Byzantine and Slavonic painting} (Leiden, 1986), 156.
\textsuperscript{213} Maguire, “Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art,” 142.
\textsuperscript{214} Shorr, “The Morning Virgin,” 61-69.
\textsuperscript{215} Nano Chatzidakis, \textit{Hosios Lukas}. Translated by Valerie Nunn (Athens, 1997).
\textsuperscript{216} Gigetta Dalli Regoli, \textit{Il Gesto e la mano. Convenzione e invenzione nel linguaggio figurativo fra Medioevo e Rinascimento} (Leo S. Olschki Editore, 2000), fig. 7.
(Figs. 61). More interesting perhaps is the example of an ivory panel from the ninth century, now lost, showing the Crucifixion in which the gesture, similar to those represented in the Trier ivory, are made by the personifications of the Sun and the Moon instead of John the Evangelist (Fig. 62). Whether this is an indicator of sorrow or joy for the forthcoming resurrection of Christ is difficult to determine.

The gesture of raising one’s hand to one’s face is most closely approximated in the representation of the singers from the Moran’s examples of Slavonic manuscripts. Most of the scenes represent singers during the service for the dead. However, as Henry Maguire has written, interchangeability in meaning could play a significant role in understanding gesture in the Christian art and especially in the case of Trier ivory. Here, one could argue that this gesture indicates singing but at the same it could represent a meditation upon the dead saint or be an expression of joy at his triumphal entry. This interchangeability reflects the intermediacy of the composition’s iconography and its falling between funerary procession and that of a joyful triumph. Of course, these interpretations are not mutually exclusive: one could follow one another. That the border between sorrow and joy could be blurred is demonstrated by the sermon by Emperor Leo VI, which was devoted to the Ascension and not a work of art. Maguire quoted Leo VI when he describes the scene as

a most joyful spectacle, because of the promise of the Paraclete, but also bringing gloom, I think, to the disciples, because the sweet presence and company of the Master was no longer to be with them in the flesh. For even if they had dissociated themselves to the furthest extent from all human feelings, I would not

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218 Maguire, “Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art,” 132.
maintain that they did not experience a sharp grief thrusting through their insides...

The deep carving of the ivory and its concave composition has led to a comparison with the relief from the Arch of Titus in Rome from around 82 A.D. (Fig. 63). The relief’s compositional solutions extend the representational space to include the spectator.\(^{220}\) This connection is not coincidental. By creating a trompe l’oeil effect, one may argue that the designers of the Trier ivory sought to absorb the beholder within the scene of translation. The creation of illusory space in the ivory is aided by the fact that the panel, even when it was part of a bigger object, presented itself to the viewer as self-contained unit. The curves behind the cart and the church throw them into relief, emphasizing the importance of the event (Figs. 64-65).

The viewer of this object would have been familiar with the pictorial vocabulary of *translatio* and triumphal processions. The composition on the panel is represented in what Franz Wickhoff calls “complementary visual narration.”\(^{221}\) Consecutive episodes of a story have been incorporated into a singular visual presentation. This scene fuses together three moments into a single image: the scene of passage of the carts through the gate, the procession of the emperor with

\(^{219}\) *In Dominicam Assumptionem*, PG 107: 117A-B; for translation, see: Maguire, “Sorrow in Middle Byzantine Art,” 150.


\(^{221}\) Michael Gubser, *Time’s Visible Surface. Alois Riegl and the Discourse on History and Temporality in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Detroit, 2006), 117.
his retinue, and the reception of the procession by the empress. The framing used in the Trier ivory provokes modes of perception that alternate between the physical and the imaginative. By positioning the gate and the church on the edges of the panel, two buildings that symbolize the transformation of the relics, participants, and observers, the designers also gestured to imaginary spaces beyond its literal borders. This emphasized the liminal aspect of *translatio*.

Other details of the ivory also speak to the creation of liminal spaces, particularly in its many secondary framing structures. The three toga-clad enframed figures depicted on the cart carrying the bishops who hold the reliquary casket form a representation within the larger representation. This framing symbolically appropriates antique motifs. The toga-clad figures on the cart are positioned in a manner found on many Roman funerary steles, furthering the transformation of the iconography of the *funus* into that of the Christian *translatio*. The compositional framing further resonates with the progression from microcosm to macrocosm demonstrated by the architectural imagery. The designer has nested a sequence of spaces one inside the other, moving from the reliquary, to the church, to the courtyard and finally to the city outside the gates, each space sitting inside the other like a series of Russian dolls. This same kind of representational play between inside and outside is found with the male figures on the second story of the colonnaded building. Their dangling censors transgress the limit of the window frame, locating their owners in the position, both inside and outside the structure

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222 On the image of the clothes and their antique origin, see: Margaret Bieber, "Roman Men in Greek Himation," 374-417.
simultaneously. The censes heighten the sense of spiritual significance of the composition, separating the sacred from the profane by the implied presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Trier ivory was likely part of a larger ivory container, probably a reliquary. It is impossible to know how the object was used and displayed. It could have, for example, been placed on or underneath a public or private church or chapel altar. The material chosen for the object adds to its significance and the meaning of the scene. Ivory symbolized purity and moral fortitude. Ivory was compared to Christ as it reflected his uncorrupted body with its white color and dense structure. As Jas Elsner has noted, ivory “suggests a transgression of natura by ars and vice versa.”

By taking the sensual experience evoked by the ivory and the medieval viewer’s response into consideration, one may discover new, under-explored lines of inquiry. Indeed, the proliferation of figures found in the crowd both in and on top of the buildings (note the absent busts/heads on the top of the colonnade) has received relatively little notice in the secondary literature. The large number of figures compressed into a small space may have been intended to generate an


empathetic encounter between the viewer and the ivory. Thus, the object may have
preformed a function similar to the ritual itself, as a kind of a public spectacle, one
with specific political and religious purposes.

8. Saint Stephen’s role

Holum and Vikan plausibly argue that *translatio* depicted is that of the right
hand of St. Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople in 420 or early 421 under the
supervision of Empress Pulcheria. Their argument, which is widely accepted
among scholars, is largely based on the narrative of the chronicler Theophanes
Confessor (ninth century) who noted that the relics of St. Stephen were translated to
Constantinople as a gift from the archbishop of Jerusalem. This move was initiated
by the “blessed” Pulcheria and by a large donation to Jerusalem by her brother
Emperor Theodosius. According to Theophanes, Pulcheria founded a chapel in the
imperial palace where the relics of St. Stephen were deposited.

John Wortley challenged this argument by questioning how is it possible that
such an important historical event in the life of Pulcheria was not recorded by the
historian Sozomonus. This lacuna is particularly surprising given that he was
particularly “fond” of including descriptions of the invention and translation of

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226 Holum and Vikan, “The Trier Ivory,” 126-133.
relics in his texts. Why would Sozomenus omit an undoubtedly the most significant event of Pulcheria’s life, given that he was both her contemporary and admirer?  

The early sources that mentioned the translation of the relics of St. Stephen to Constantinople cited by Wortley originated with the fifth century writers Theodore the Lector and Marcellinus. While Theodore the Lector noted that the relics of St. Stephen were translated later in 439 and deposited in the Martyrium of Saint Lawrence, Marcellinus added that the one who brought the relics was Eudocia, wife of the Emperor Theodosius. Wortley, however, does not mention the encomium of St. Stephen given by Proclus of Constantinople that said: “Stephen/ the victory crown is in the palace, for the virgin empress has brought him into her bride-chamber.” This verse does not prove that the translatio was of the saint’s dextria, it does, however, underscore the greater significance of St. Stephen.

The earliest source of the St. Stephen legend, as we have seen, is that of the translatio of St. Stephen from Jerusalem during the reign of Emperor Theodosius and by his wife Eudoxia. Theophanes Confessor, introduced in the story of the “blessed” Pulcheria as a main initiator of the translatio, pushes the event back to 421. The relics of the saint were invented in 415 in Jerusalem and from then on spread all over the Christian world. Empress Eudocia was the one who built the

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231 Dictionnaire d’archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie, ed. Fernand Cabrol (Paris, 1922), 624-672; Victor Saxer, “Aux origines du culte de saint Étienne proto-martyr. La préhistoire de la revelation de ses reliques,” in Les miracles de saint Étienne : recherches sur le recueil pseudo-
church in Jerusalem in honour of St. Stephen to house his relic, the church where she would be buried. The legend of the *translatio* of St. Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople received a new twist in the fifth century. This legend would circulate widely and, as Paul Magdalino would say, surreally includes Constantine the Great in it.  

In short, the legend says that a senator of Constantinople by the name of Alexander traveled to Jerusalem along with his wife Juliana where he died and was buried in the church of St. Stephen *ad sanctos*. Seven years later, his wife Juliana, wished to return to Constantinople with her husband’s body. The bishop, after many prayers, presented her with two silver coffins and explained that he did not know which one contained her husband’s remains and which held the holy relics of the saint. She threw herself on one of the caskets and assured the bishop that she knew the proper container. When the relics arrived to Constantinople, Juliana realized that she made a mistake and explained everything to the emperor Constantine the Great. The emperor was very pleased with the event and asked that the relics be conveyed to the imperial palace. The relics were placed on the carriage and disembarked in the Zeugma. When they reached the Constantiniae, according to the legend, the mules refused to pull the carriage with the saint’s body any further, being held back by his powerful will. A church was therefore erected at the spot to fulfill the wish of the saint. The church at the Constantiniae was the most important church dedicated to the protomartyr in the city. The Typikon of the Great church

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from the tenth century indicates two major celebrations of the saint: one procession took place on the 27th of December starting from the Great Church via the Forum, and the other was related to the translation of his relics on the 2nd of August and the procession traced the original route of the translation.  

If the Trier ivory depicts the historical event of the translation of St. Stephen’s relics from Jerusalem to Constantinople, the representation gains significance because this saint was the first to follow the example of Christ in becoming the first martyr, the first witness to Christ, and was often directly linked to the apostles and the life of Christ. As the protomartyr Stephen became an exemplar how a Christian should live, testify, pray and die for the faith. He was the one who witnessed Christ’s presence at the right hand of God. The typology linking him to Christ made St. Stephen one of the most important saints in the life of Byzantine emperors.

St. Stephen’s position as a first martyr in the Christian world, one linked to the apostles and the one saw Christ on the right side from the Father resonates with theme of the triumph and victory over death expressed in the iconographic program of the Trier ivory. More than any other saint, St. Stephen was connected to the Byzantine imperial family. His church was built adjacent to the Augusteus inside the imperial palace in Constantinople.  

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233 *Le typicon de la Grande église*, I 162, 358.
234 According to Kalavrezou the church was one of the two oldest structures built in Daphne, dating from the fifth century. She also argued that the church was built to house the relics of St. Stephen’s right hand. Kalavrezou, “Helping Hands,” 55 and 57.
that was directly associated with the coronation ceremony. It was also used as a permanent chapel for imperial weddings. The reason for the dedication of the church to St. Stephen is self-evident. The name Stephanos (crown, wreath) associated the saint with heavenly victory and with imperial office. St. Stephen was the king of the martyrs in the sense that he was the first martyr under the New Testament. This figuration of the saint, within the Byzantine Empire with its famous predilection for symbols, would have reinforced Christian doctrine with a familiar symbol of secular authority and absolute power. St. Stephen underwent a judicial trial. He testified and confirmed the absolutes of the Christian faith under great torture. He was the first Christian to see heaven and the promise of salvation made good, and therefore could provide testimony for his Christian audience. As Kalavrezou would add: “The emperor, like Stephen, was chosen by God; he was another apostle who, like them, was enlightened through the Holy Spirit and was the keeper and defender of God’s Law.” All of these factors rendered St. Stephen a perfect intercessor and role model not only for the Byzantine imperial house, but also for many royal houses in medieval Europe, which will be discussed further in my last chapter.

By combining the mode of historical representation of translatio with the politically charged themes of the Emperor-as-triumphator, the designers of the Trier ivory conscripted a highly sophisticated visual rhetoric to imperial ideological ends. Here, form and content complement one another in order to present the emperor in not only a terrestrial triumph, but a sacred one as well.

CHAPTER III

San Lorenzo fuori le Mura

As Quintilian (ca. 35-100) noted, dramatic visual aids can affect an audience in ways that words cannot. Specifically, he pointed out that in court cases great emotional reactions could be produced by displaying sensational objects related to crimes such as “bits of bone taken from wounds, and the bloodstained clothing of the victim.”¹ He gives the example of the display of Julius Caesar’s bloody garments at his funeral and the power it had on the beholders. The famous riot culminating in the spontaneous cremation of Caesar’s corpse seems to have been sparked by the exposure of Caesar’s bloody clothing and a wax effigy of his body covered with wounds. Quintilian’s observation provides insight into the effect that the display of St. Stephen’s martyrdom and the *translatio* depicted in the monumental mural cycle on the portico of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura would have had on the devout masses of medieval Rome. The decision to present St. Stephen’s brutalized body with its still-weeping wounds suggests that designers of the cycle understood Quintilian’s lesson and were well aware of such an image’s affective power.

The cult of St. Stephen in Rome was closely connected with the *Translatio sancti Stephani protomartyris Romam* legend and the church of San Lorenzo. The San Lorenzo portico paintings are the earliest surviving depiction of the legend showing the cycle of his martyrdom and the history of the relics of St. Stephen in Rome,

dating from the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. Rome was identified as the place chosen by St. Stephen himself. Though the cult of the saint gained an international reputation soon after the revelation of his relics in 415 in Caphar Gamala, the relics first arrived in Rome via Constantinople in the fifth century. The legend claimed that the same Byzantine emperor who translated the relics from Jerusalem to Constantinople, Theodosius II, decided to send the saint’s body to Rome in order to save his daughter Eudoxia who was thought to be possessed by a demon. The legend further explained that pope Pelagius and the Byzantine emperor made an agreement that they would exchange the relics of St. Stephen with those of St. Lawrence, one of the most venerated early martyrs in Rome. When the body of St. Stephen was brought to the princess, but before he expelled the demon, he spoke through the evil spirit and requested to be laid beside St Lawrence in his tomb in the church of San Lorenzo fuori le mura. The demand was granted; however, when the Greek monks came to retrieve the body of St. Lawrence they died while attempting to remove the body from the tomb.

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2 The tomb of St. Lawrence in which the body of St. Stephen would be placed has never been archaeologically examined and its original position remains a subject of scholarly dispute, see: Debra Israeli, The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura at Rome, PhD Dissertation (Bryn Mawr College, August, 1984), 262-280; there is no information about the site of his tomb in the earliest references to the death and burial of St. Lawrence. Hans Leitzmann, Die Drei ältesten Martyrologien, Kleine texte für Theologische und Philologische Vorlesungen und Übungen, II (Bonn, 1911), 4; Louis Duchesne, “A propos du Martyrologe hieronymien,” Analecta Bollandiana, XVII (1898): 421-427; The vita of Pope Sixtus II in the Liber Pontificalis mentions that St. Lawrence was interred in the cemetery of Ciriacca on the Verano plain, in a crypt with many other martyrs. “Quo vero sepultus est in cymiterio Calisti, via Appia; nam VI diacones supradicti sepulti sunt in cymiterio Praetextati, via Appia; supradictus autem beatus Laurentius in cymiterio Cyriaces in agrum Veranum, in crypta, cum aliis multis martyribus.” Israeli, The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building, 74; A passage in the vita S. Sylvestri recounts that the emperor Constantine built a basilica dedicated to St. Lawrence, located above the crypt to which he provided two sets of steps leading to the tomb. The Emperor also added an apse, see: LP I, 187, 197.
Over centuries, different translation reports were absorbed into the corpus of hagiographical legends of the Latin church, which would be assembled by Jacobus de Voragine in his thirteenth century *Legenda Aurea*. This text served as the source for another painted cycle in Rome of the paired saints of Stephen and Lawrence. The two saints began to be compared to one another beginning as early as fourth century. Literary and patristic sources frequently mention the two saints, both of whom were martyrs and deacons, together. Ambrose and Augustine connected them with the apostle sovereigns and accorded them almost equal rank.

Written and visual sources do not provide information as to the existence of a double burial of St. Lawrence and St. Stephen in San Lorenzo fuori le Mura prior to the eleventh or beginning of the twelfth century. There is an inscription *in situ* dating from the twelfth century construction at San Lorenzo located above the *fenestrella* facing east on the tomb inside the present confessional. The inscription speaks of a remodeling of the tomb of St. Lawrence: “This work was done for [C]encius [Savelli] while he was Cancellarius. At his own expense he made this for

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3 On the Golden Legend and its development, see below note 23; for another painted cycle of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence in Rome, see below note 13.
4 Ambrose links these names in *De Officiis ministrorum*, I, 41, PL 16: 85, and also Pope Leo I, *Sermo* LXXXV, PL: 437.
6 Although we have information regarding the church of Saint Stephen consecrated in Verano by pope Simplicius (468-483) and of a donation to the monastery in Verano also dedicated to Saint Stephen by Pope Leo III in 806, this still that does not give us enough evidence to assert that the body of St. Stephen was deposited in the church of San Lorenzo in LP I, 249; Richard Krautheimer, Wolfgang Frankl, Spencer Corbett, *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*. The Early Christian Basilicas of Rome (IV-IX cent.) vol. 2, (Vatican City, 1937-1970), 9, 12; and also Israeli, *The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building*, 59.
you, Lawrence and Stephen.” Cencius Cancellarius became Pope Honorius III in 1216/1217.7

The first mention of St. Stephen in relation to this site comes from the Liber Pontificalis, which informs us that Pope Simplicius (468-483) “dedicated...a basilica of St. Stephen, near the basilica of St. Lawrence.”8 Interestingly, the pilgrim guide Epitome de Locis Sanctorum from the mid-seventh century notes the cult of St. Abundius and his relation to St. Lawrence. It is stated that St. Abundius’s tomb site was under the same altar as the relics of St. Lawrence.9 There is, however, no evidence of the early existence of the relics of St. Stephen in the church. The only indication of his presence in the early life of the church is the sixth century mosaic on the Triumphal Arch from the time of Pelagius II (579-590) (Fig. 66) that depicts St. Lawrence and St. Stephen flanking Christ.10 Their presence on the triumphal arch of the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura can be explained only by a typology drawn from literary sources since, as we have seen, there are no early written

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7 LP II 453; the remodeling of the tomb by Cencius Savelli occurred in 1191/1192. Isreali 241; Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae, 139; An inscription confirming the presence of the relics of St. Stephen, painted presumably in the ninth century was discovered in the course of Vespignani’s excavation on the north face of the northeast corner pier in the eastern nave. The inscription was dated by De Rossi based on the meter of the verses and their manner of execution in alternating red and black pigment. Giovanni Battista De Rossi “Dello scavo fatto nell’Antica basilica di S. Lorenzo per collocare il sepolcro di Pio IX, e dei Papi quivi depositi nel secolo quinto,” Bullettino di archeologia cristiana ser. 3 VI (1881): 86-93.

8 [Simplicius] dedicavit...basilicam sancti Stephani, iuxta basilicam sancti Laurentii,...” LP I 249.


10 For the mosaic on the arch, see: Guglielmo Matthiae, Mosaici medioevali delle chiese di Roma, I, (Rome, 1967), 149-150; N. Baldass, “The mosaic of the triumphal arch of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” Gazette des beaux-Arts 49 (1957): 1-18; also for the twelfth century reconstruction of the mosaic, see: in Serena Romano, “Riforma e tradizione 1050-1198,” in Maria Andaloro and Serena Romano, La pittura medievale a Roma 312-1431 Corpus e Atlante, vol. IV (Rome, 2006), 298-301.
sources describing the double burial or of the presence of the relics of St. Stephen in the church. One would expect that early pilgrimage guides would emphasize information relating to the presence of such an important relic and of the double burial in San Lorenzo, but there is no mention of it in the Notitia Ecclesiaru Urbis Romae (625-638) or other early guides.11

While the saints would be depicted together in a several places in Rome prior to the representation in San Lorenzo’s portico, most of these images show only the figures of the saints, except in the case of the Sancta Santorum where one finds a representation of their martyrdom.12 The only paired cycle of these two saints in Rome besides the one in San Lorenzo is the cycle in the Cappella Niccolina in Vatican built by Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455) and painted by Fra Angelico in 1448.13

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11 According to Israeli the pilgrim’s guides are earliest catalogues of saints and martyrs venerated in the Pelagian church. Notitia Ecclesiaru Urbis Romae (625-638) and Epitome de Locis Sanctorum (628-648) provide the first notices for the presencet of other saints in the vicinity of San Lorenzo, Israeli, The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building, 61; Pollio indicates the possible existence of earlier images showing the two saints together. One of the oldest visual representations of two saints was, according to the sixteenth century antiquarian Panvinio, located in the now destroyed chapel of Santa Croce, which was added to the baptistery of San Giovanni in Laterano in the fourth century. Another representation of the pair is recognized on a gilded glass, dated around the mid-fourth century, now in the Vatican museum. The glass has an image of St. Stephen identified by titulus, however, the image of another saint on the glass cannot be identified due to the damage, see: Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 151-153; The first information on the mosaic in the Santa Croce chapel in Lateran comes from Pope Hilarius (461-468), see: Philippe Lauer, Le palais de Lateran (Paris, 1911), 467; Franca Zanchi Roppo, Vetri paleocristiani a figure d’oro conservati in Italia (Bologna, 1969); Charles R. Morey, The Gold-Glass Collection of the Vatican Library (Vatican city, 1959), table XXII. Three figures are represented on the glass. Two of them are recognizable by the inscription: Christ and St. Stephen. The third have been identified as St. Lawrence by Raffaele Garrucci, Raffaelle Garrucci, Vetri ornate di figure in oro trovati nei cimiteri cristiani primitivi di Roma (Rome, 1858), 45, table XX, fig. 3.


13 Fra Angelico and the Chapel of Nicholas V, ed. Innocenzo Venchi, Renate L. Colella, Arnold Nesselrath, Carlo Giantomassi and Donatella Zari (Vatican City State, 1999).
In this chapter I will discuss the effect of the fresco cycle from the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura on the medieval beholder, which depicts the martyrdom and translatio of the relics of Saint Stephen. I will also argue that placing the cycle of the translation of his relics and displaying images of the saint’s body in the most prominent position in the church portico was a way of advertising access to St. Stephen’s intercessory prayers in the court of Heaven through the actual relics deposited within the church. The cycle of St. Stephen was designed to instruct the eye of the medieval beholder in perceiving the signs of salvation. Furthermore, it alludes directly to the ideology of papal control not only over the Eastern Church, but also its dominant position in the Western Empire. The cycle pays tribute to the pope’s role in providing the precious body of the first martyr and making it available for the community of Rome as well as to all Christians.

The church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura is situated at the Porta Tiburtina, and according to the Liber Pontificalis was a Constantinian foundation (Fig. 67).

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14 The book of the Popes (Liber Pontificalis) vol. 1. Translation with an introduction by Louise R. Loomis, (New York, 1916), 61-62; the earliest description of the church of San Lorenzo prior to the LP, the Vita Sanctae Melaniae Iunioris, ca. 397-402 tell us that around 400 there was an altar at the tomb of St. Lawrence. It also confirms that the basilica and martyrrium were nearby, see: Israeli, The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building, 37. Precise identification of the building phases of the church, especially the identification of Constantine’s building, have been debated since the sixteenth century when Onofrio Panvinio identified the present west basilica with the church built by Constantine and proposed that the eastern church had been built by Pope Pelagius II, see: Onofrio Panvini, De praecipuis urbis Romae sanctioribusque; basilicis, quas septem ecclesias vulgò vocant, liber (Roma, 1570), 226-32. Giovanni Ciampini argues that the eastern part of the present church was the Constantinian structure, which was later renovated by popes Sixtus III (432-440) and Pelagius II (579-590). He identified the western section as an ex novo construction by Pope Honorius III (1216-1226/1227), see: Giovanni Giustino Ciampini, De sacris aedificiis a Constantino Magno constructia (Roma, 1693), 114; Carlo Fea and later on Antonio Nibby assumed that the Constantinian basilica (the eastern church) was restored by Pelagius II, and enlarged to the west by the Pope Hadrian I. The church is mentioned as a basilica maior for the first time in the LP vita of Hadrian I, see: Carlo Fea, Descrizione di Roma vol. II (Rome, 1790), 350
The basilica ad corpus s. Laurentii or ad martyrium s. Laurentii was an important pilgrimage station. It is one of the five papal churches in Rome where the Pope alone may officiate at the High Altar. It was first grouped with the churches of the Apostles at Rome in the *LP* vita of Sixtus III (432-440) who gave three gold goblets, “unum ad Sanctum Petrum...ad Santctum Paulum,...[et] ad beatum Laurentium.”

The early structure of the basilica was renovated by Pelagius II (579-590). It was


15 It was one of the seven great pilgrimage churches in the city. Israeli, *The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building*, 1; the introduction of monks, the libraries, baths, and the *praetorium* as well, represent the establishment of a pilgrimage center. Israeli, *The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building*, 58.

16 *LP* I, 233-34.

17 In the *Liber Pontificalis* vita of Pope Pelagius II (579-590) there is a reference dedicated to the church: “Over the body of St Laurence he built a basilica from the ground up and decorated the martyr’s tomb with silver panels.” “Hic fecit supra corpus beati Laurenti martyris basilicam a fundamento constructam et tabulis argenteis exornavit sepulcrum eius.” *LP* I, 65; *The Book of Pontiffs*. Translated by Raymond Davis (Liverpool, 1989), 61.
further enlarged by Honorius III (1216-1227) who built the western basilica and the portico.18

1. The Painted Cycles

Prior to the present decoration there was a painted brick wall in the portico.19 The narrative program of the portico decoration consists of three interrelated cycles (Figs. 68). According to Jens Wollesen the paintings were executed by a family workshop and are signed but not dated (PAULOS hec...ET PHILIPPUS FILIUS. EIUS. FECERUNT HOC. OPUS.)20

The entrance to the basilica inside the portico is flanked by two painted cycles: the left represents the martyrdom and *translatio* of St. Stephen and the right

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19 It is interesting that the presence of the earlier porticos in San Lorenzo furi le Mura was noted during the eighth century in the vita of Pope Hadrian I (772-795) in *Liber Pontificalis*. “...And by all means, [Hadrian I] newly constructed the portico which leads to the sacred place of Lawrence outside the walls, from the city gate all the way to the same basilica.” “Immo et porticus quae ducit ad sanctum Laurentium foris muros a porta usque in eadem basilicam noviter construxit.” LP I 508. As Israeli suggested, the portico was probably used for defensive measures, being constructed for the protection of pilgrims. She compares it with the function of the porticos of Saint Peter and Saint Paul which existed by 537. Their purpose was to protect pilgrims from natural as well as human threats. Israeli, The Sixth Century (Pelagian) Building, 223.

shows episodes from the life of St. Lawrence (Figs. 69). The left adjacent wall once illustrated the so-called Legend of the Belt of St. Lawrence also known as The Miraculous Vision of a Sacristian of San Lorenzo (Fig. 70). There are no copies of this cycle preserved: it was no longer legible by the seventeenth century; however, a set of drawings by Antonio Eclissi from 1639 give a full account of the other frescoes, which were subsequently overpainted and altered by Virginio Vespignani, 1857-1865 who was advised by Giovanni Battista de Rossi (Fig. 71).21 The right wall expands the legend of St. Lawrence by depicting his posthumous intervention in favor of a certain count Henry, who was identified with Emperor Henry (Heinrich) II (1002-1024)22

The primary medieval narratives relating to the discovery and translation(s) of the relics of St. Stephen have been assiduously collected by the Bollandists, a Jesuit society known for their ongoing work in hagiography and especially the collection of the *Acta Sanctorum*. While much of the information related in the

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The restoration was supported by Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) and later damaged in bombing in the Second World War; Israeli, 92; Muñoz, 7, 13-17; *Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae*, 19. Antonio Eclissi was in the employ of Cardinal Francesco Barberini, nephew of Urban VIII, and has left two volumes of drawings of roman mosaics, frescoes and inscriptions, signed and dated 1639 and 1640 respectively, *Pitture della Basilica di S. Lorenzo*. Many of these drawings are copies of monuments, which are also reproduced in the Del Pozzo collection. If we compare this copy (Windsor collection) with that in the Del Pozzo collection, the identity of handling is so apparent that we are forced to conclude that Eclissi was the author of both drawings, and was employed by Cassiano del Pozzo as well as by Barberini, see: Rufus C. Morey, *Lost Mosaics and Frescoes of Rome of the Mediaeval Period, a Publication of Drawings Contained in the Collection of Cassiano dal Pozzo, Now in the Royal Library, Windsor Castle* (Princeton, 1915).

documents on Stephen is contradictory, a general story had emerged by the mid-fifth century. Most scholars agree, however, that the literary source for the two main cycles originates with the compilation of texts in the *Legenda Aurea* written by the Genoese bishop Jacobus de Voragine (1230-1298) around 1260. The presence of the life of St. Stephen in the thirteenth century *Legenda Aurea* testifies to the widespread knowledge and celebration of the protomartyr’s cult in Western Europe as originally compiled by Avitus, Lucian, and Gennadius. *The Golden Legend* enjoyed great popularity and there are over five hundred manuscripts of the text still extant.23 The first printed Latin edition appeared in the 1470s, which initiated more than one hundred and fifty editions and translations.24 *The Golden Legend* not only tells the story of the life of St. Stephen and the invention of his relics, but also provides insight into the implementation of his cult in the liturgical calendar of the thirteenth-century church.25


25 The feast of St. Stephen was placed on December 26, the day after the Nativity of Christ. The assignment of this day to Stephen was hardly coincidental. According to the December 26 entry of *The Golden Legend*, there was a two-fold reason that the church placed the celebrations of John the Evangelist, Stephen, and the Holy Innocents just after the Nativity of Christ. First, the Church wished to place those saints close to Christ. Second, the Church obviously tried to group the three kinds of martyrs close in proximity to the birth of Christ, see: Kara Ann Morrow, “Ears and Eyes and Mouth and Heart...His Soul and Senses:” *The Visual St. Stephen Narrative as the Essence of ecclesiastical Authority*. PhD dissertation (The Florida State University, 2007), 36; the invention and the translatio of the protomartyr’s relics was celebrated on August 3, the date believed to be that of his martyrdom. According to De Voragine there is another reason for moving the date of the Feast of Invention. Since the Invention was joyous, a more somber feast was necessary to celebrate Stephen’s
The cycle of St. Stephen at San Lorenzo consists of sixteen episodes presented in three horizontal registers. The highest register almost reaches the height of the main door and consists of six scenes. Since the frescoes went through significant restoration in the nineteenth-century and again after World War II, one must compare the fresco currently visible in Rome with the drawings of Eclissi.

The first episode on the left-hand side of the scene shows the trial of St. Stephen by the Sanhedrin (Supreme Court) for blasphemy against Moses and God as described in Acts 6:11 (Fig. 72).26 The scene is ambiguous, showing St. Stephen standing on the left, flanked by a ciborium-like structure. In his left hand he holds a book resembling a codex, while his right is raised in a gesture of speech addressed to the figures seated opposite him. Despite his anachronistic tonsure, St. Stephen is dressed in a deacon’s ornate dalmatica.27 He preaches to a group of seated people dressed in togas, two of which have been identified as bearded Jews due to their headgear. They gesture with their hands in a manner indicating surprise and disagreement. The saint’s hand creates a physical link between the codex and the Jewish men’s hands that work to refute his words. This scene relates to St. Stephen’s trial before the Jewish council described in Acts 6:11 and 13-14. The charges

martyrdom. Thus the Church moved the feast day closer to that of the Nativity, see: The Golden Legend, 57.

26 The Great Sanhedrin was the supreme court of ancient Israel. In total there were 71 members. The term Sanhedrin is Greek (συνέδριον, synedrion, "sitting together) and dates from the Hellenistic period, but the concept is one that goes back to the Bible. In the Torah, God commands Moses to "Assemble for Me ["Espah-Li"] seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the people’s elders and officers, and you shall take them to the Tent of Meeting, and they shall stand there with you." (Numbers 11:16); New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 12 (San Francisco, Toronto, London, Sydney, 1967), 1052.

27 By the thirteenth century Stephen was consistently depicted with the tonsure. According to Morrow, it was an anachronistic detail, see: Morrow, 'Ears and Eyes and Mouth and Heart', 47.
brought against him were that he blasphemed God, the Temple, Moses, the Law, and spoke out in favor of changing Jewish customs. St. Stephen did not defend himself at his trial so much as give a sermon on Old Testament history. He attempted to proclaim the truth about Jesus in a way people could understand. St. Stephen is rendered with a youthful, clean-shaven face, which contrasted with the images of the mature, bearded Jews. This contrast is reflected in the *Golden Legend*, which gives an etymology of his name, stating: “Stephen comes from *strenue fans anus*, he who speaks with zeal to the aged.” Morrow noted that St. Stephen’s debate with the council recalls the appearance of the youthful Jesus before the doctors of the synagogue symbolizing the new covenant before the old (Luke 2: 46-50). The theme of the new law versus the old is also indicated by the scrolls that the Jews hold in their hands in contrast to St. Stephen’s codex. The scroll is traditionally the attribute of Old Testament prophets who foretold the coming of Christ.

The backdrop of the scene is very simple. On the left side behind the saint we find a ciborium-like structure supported by Corinthian columns. A simple colonnade with an entablature on top is shown behind the group of Jews. Similar compositions showing a saint preaching before rabbi or Jews were frequently placed in a prominent position on Romanesque and Gothic portals, especially in France. On the southern transept portal in the cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris (ca. 1258), for

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28 The saint argued for some points of Jewish history that the Sanhedrin and other Jews may not have considered, namely that God had never confined Himself to one place (like the temple) and that the Jewish people had a habit of rejecting those God sent to them.  
30 Morrow, 'Ears and Eyes and Mouth and Heart', 89.  
31 Ljubica D. Popovich, “Prophets Carrying Texts by Other Authors in Byzantine Painting: Mistakes or Intentional Substitutions?” *Zbornik radova vizantološkog instituta* 44 (2007): 229-244.
example, St. Stephen is represented both as sitting and standing while he is preaching to the Jews. Here, however, he is not surrounded with any architectural features as at San Lorenzo (Fig. 73). The present state of the scene in San Lorenzo is virtually identical to the one depicted in Ecclisi’s drawing, with the only change being the form of the roof of the ciborium next to St. Stephen, which in the new version has a small cupola.

The next episode on the basilica portico represents the saint’s martyrdom: death by stoning (Fig. 74). The scene of the lapidatio of St. Stephen is described in Acts 7, 58-59. At San Lorenzo, St. Stephen is represented in a kneeling position in the same liturgical dress as in the previous scene. He has raised his hands in a praying position toward a group of people in front of him, but this gesture could also be read as being directed toward the segment of sky in the upper right-hand corner. Beside St. Stephen there are four other figures. The saint’s persecutors stand in front, dressed in short tunics with boots. They are poised, ready to launch the stones they hold in their right hands save for the one whose is firmly grasped in his left. Two men look up, but not at the saint. Behind the saint, approaching from the ciborium-like object are two other figures. One of them strides toward him with a stone in his hand ready to let fly. Half of his body remains inside the building while he steps towards the kneeling saint. The last figure appears inside the building, beneath the ciborium.

St. Stephen’s gesture of raising his hand toward the segment of sky can be explained by the description from Acts 7:60, which states: “And he kneeled down,
and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had
said this, he fell asleep.” The phrase ‘fell asleep’ could be understood as marking the
moment of the saint’s death, but also, metaphorically, as his translation into heaven
or immediate resurrection.¶ Its also implies that the saint is not really dead. This
ambiguity was noted in the commentaries of the early church fathers.¶ Voragine
commented on the words from Acts saying: “A right and true expression: for the
saint did not die, but ‘fell asleep’ in the hope of resurrection.”¶ The saint’s
indeterminate living-dead status was also underscored by Augustine whose writings
on St. Stephen had an enormous impact.¶ Augustine explained Stephen’s
supplication to Christ in a prayer addressed to his persecutors, as that of an ideal
intercessor: St. Stephen repeats Christ’s words on the cross. Augustine further
presented St. Stephen as a role model for those who felt incapable of directly
following Christ’s example, writing: “But it’s too much for me to imitate the Lord, By
the grace of the Lord, then, imitate your fellow servant, imitate Stephen....”¶

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¶ This is similar to the case of the Virgin as it was described in the first chapter, see Chapter
One page 37, note 103.
¶ The Golden Legend, 55.
¶ Augustine promoted Stephen’s cult by acknowledging the discovery and translation of the
martyr’s relics and revealing the miracles and conversions accomplished by the saint’s body
throughout Christian North Africa. Augustine not only preached and commented on the cult
of St. Stephen in various sermons but also extensively influenced the later exegetical
treatises and medieval sermons. Augustine was particularly focused on Stephen’s invention
of the relics, some of which were translated to Hippo and the surrounding areas in northern
Africa during Augustine’s episcopate. He emphasized the association of Stephen and his
relics with episcopal authority; Augustine of Hippo. A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-
Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. vol. 2, ed. and translated by Marcus Dodds and Philip
Schaff (Grand Rapids, 1983); Augustine of Hippo, The Works of Saint Augustine: A
¶ Augustine of Hippo, “On the Birthday of the Martyrs Marianus and James,” Sermon 284,
The Works of Saint Augustine, 93, also Augustine, Sermones suppositii de scripturis, sermo
CCLXXXIV,”In natali martyrum Mariani et Jacobi,” PL 38: 1288-1293.
The segment of the sky to which St. Stephen directs his prayer is part of the green boundary that frames the composition where the representation of Christ is located. Christ is shown bending over the green frame, offering a book or a blessing to St. Stephen and giving the impression that He comes from another realm. This section has been damaged and, unfortunately, is not very clear. The Eclissi drawing preserved in the Vatican in the Barberini manuscript does not show Christ here (Fig. 71). The manuscript in Windsor RL 8982 shows a figure sketched in graphite over the paint.\(^{38}\) The figure has a nimbus and observes the scene, leaning over the white border. It is not clear which vision of Christ is being represented. Before his stoning, St. Stephen witnessed Christ’s presence at the right hand of God in heaven. Augustine saw this as a reinforcement of the Christian belief in the resurrection and the opening of the gates of heaven, which was anticipated in the saint’s status of being asleep, but not dead.\(^{39}\) In St. Stephen’s vision, Christ stands next to God. In painted scenes of the lapidation, however, Christ is usually represented in bust-format watching over the saint. One of the early examples of this composition is the scene from the Gospel Lectionary from Echternach, \textit{ca}.
1035 now in Brusseles, Bibliothèque Royale, Ms. 9428 (Figs. 75).\(^{40}\) Here, Christ is represented in a segment of the sky painted in prismatic colors. He is beardless, but has curiously grey hair, an interesting combination of a representation of Christ and God the Father. Christ looks at St. Stephen, who directs his agonized gaze toward the Savior. Blue wavy


rays connect the two figures. Augustine’s sermons explain Christ’s position at the second coming as follows: “the reason he was standing, and not sitting, is that standing up above and watching from above his soldier battling down below, he was supplying him with invincible strength, so that he shouldn’t fall.”

A ninth century representation of St. Stephen’s lapidation from the church of St. John in Müstair shows the hand of God protruding from a section of sky, which is depicted in the form of the arms of a cross (Fig. 76). The hand forms a gesture of blessing. This could also be explained, as in Augustine’s sermon, as God sending his blessing as an “invincible strength, so that he (Stephen) shouldn’t fall.” The stoning of St. Stephen is represented in a similar fashion in an ivory from the Walters Art Museum ca. 1100 where all that is visible is the hand of God traversing the frame (Fig. 77). The chasse of Saint Stephen from the church of Saint-Pardoux at Gimel-les-Cascades dated ca. 1160-1170 shows the hand of God in a segment of sky depicted in an array of prismatic colors (Fig. 78).

Christ is included in the scene of lapidatio in a fresco decoration from the mid-fourteenth century at the church of San Stefano is Spoleto. This scene is part of the larger cycle depicting the Vita Fabulosa Sancti Stefani protomartyris and the

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Passio legend of St. Stephen (Fig. 79). Here Christ is represented half-length, leaning on the edge of the portion of the sky with one hand blessing the dying saint. This time, however, one finds a representation of God the Father next to Christ. God is shown in a bust format with gray hair and a beard, holding a book in His left hand while giving a blessing with His right. The composition is executed in continuous narration, showing different moments of the narrative within the same scene. The first is the stoning with the saint looking toward the sky in prayer. A second representation has him covered with stones with his head bowed toward the ground with closed eyes. Above the figure of the saint are two angels holding a small fabric from which arises a baby-like, naked figure with a nimbus and a pair of praying hands; this is the soul of Saint Stephen, a motif rarely represented in scenes of his martyrdom.

The figure that appears in the scene inside the building, beneath the ciborium is likely a representation of Saul, who was present during the execution of and who later took the name Paul. Acts 7: 58 mentions Saul as a young boy at whose feet witnesses laid down their clothes so they could stone St. Stephen more freely. This scene is significantly damaged, however, and it is hard to tell if there are clothes at

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46 The earliest manuscript with the texts of the Vita Fabulosa Sancti Stefani is preserved in the Abby of Monte Casino; Michael Berger and André Jacob, La chiesa di S. Stefano a Soleto, (Lecce, 2007), 55-64.

47 Later medieval interpretations do not follow either the Acts of Apostles or Voragina’s text, usually showing Christ on the throne next to the God. This is the case in the Book of Hours of Etienne Chevalier by Jean Fouquet from the fifteenth century, see: The Hours of Etienne Chevalier by Jean Fouquet. Preface by Charles Sterling. Introduction and legends by Claude Schaefer. Translated from the French by Marianne Sinclair (New York, 1971); Les Heures d’Etienne Chevalier par Jean Fouquet : les quarante enluminures du Musée Condé. Text by Patricia Stirnemann, Marie-Thérèse Gousset, Claudia Rabel and Emmanuelle Toulet (Paris, 2003).
Saul’s feet or not. The Eclissi drawing clearly shows some fabrics lying beside Saul’s feet. He is also dressed in long tunic, wears a short beard, and raises his right hand in the direction of the saint.48

In the present-day version in San Lorenzo, Saul is represented as upright and being in motion, appearing almost as a participant in the execution. Acts is not very precise concerning Saul’s role in this event. The text of Acts is also not precise if Saul was sitting or standing while the stoning took place. His active participation in the execution can be explained by the comment of Voragine who pointed out that Saul was guarding “the garments of those who were stoning Stephen in order to aid them in their business,” an act that can be considered as a contribution to the lapidation.49

Another standing Saul is depicted in the Gospel Lectionary from Echternach, Ms. 9428, where he is represented as a red-haired man with a long beard and a short tunic (Fig. 75). He holds a stick or a cane similar to the sticks used by pilgrims. Some stylized waves of red and blue pigment are located beside his foot. These marks may symbolize the clothes of Stephen’s persecutors who are dressed in blue and red. In most cases, however, Saul is represented as a seated man with the clothes of the witnesses next to his feet. In the Müstair image he is depicted in the far-left corner of the composition, almost sitting on the clothes (Fig. 76). In the scene he is pointing with his right hand toward the saint, urging-on the figures next to him. In the ivory from the Walters Art Museum, Saul is shown on the far-right side of the composition, sitting on a rock that looks as if it is covered with clothes (Fig. 77). At

48 Today we can see some changes in the figure of Saul. He has a bigger beard but less hair. His cloak is larger and almost completely encloses his body. He is painted as if in motion, stepping towards the saint.
49 The Golden Legend, 55.
the same time, there are some folded clothes next to his legs, which he points to with his right hand. Saul is frequently represented in a seated position on the façades of gothic churches in France, such as examples in Paris or in Bourges, as well as on reliquaries such as the chasse of St. Stephen from Saint-Pardoux.50

The third scene of the same horizontal register of San Lorenzo shows the burial of the saint (Fig. 80). Acts 8:2 describes devout men carrying Stephen to his burial and making a great lamentation over him. Voragine writes that Saint Gemaliel and Nicodemus buried the saint in a plot belonging to Gemaliel without detailing how many people were at the burial or whether the plot was in the city of Jerusalem or nearby.51

The fresco at San Lorenzo shows a group of people gathered around the large, stone sarcophagus. The saint's body lies upon a sheet and is being lowered into the sarcophagus, which dominates the scene not only by its size but also by its plain features and bright color. Behind the sarcophagus we see the representation of the ciborium with the pointed roof. On the right side of the ciborium is a church. On the left side one finds the representation of an arch and next to it, a structure that resembles a belltower. This indicates that the burial is taking place outside the city gate. Most of the men who attend are dressed in short tunics with long sleeves; some have cloaks over their tunics.

50 For the façade in France, see: Morrow's dissertation, especially appendix C, Morrow, *Ears and Eyes and Mouth and Heart*, 170-199; for the Limoge chasse from Saint-Pardoux, see: above note 46.
This composition was a common format for representing a burial during the Middle Ages. At Müstair (Figs. 81-82), the scene of St. Stephen’s burial is more developed. One section shows the body of the saint being laid on a bier carried by two men in a manner that echoes scenes of *translatio*. One significant difference is that here the saint is carried with his head forward. This is usually the case in scenes of burial, an issue that will be discussed further in the following chapter. Another attendant in the Müstair image adjusts the cover over the saint’s, clearly naked body. Other men are positioned near the open sarcophagus waiting for the body to be lowered into it. A tonsured deacon stands closest to the open sarcophagus. A liturgical service is indicated by his holding an *aspergillum* while the man next to him holds a processional cross and *situla*. The name of St. Stephen is written both on the inner side of the blanket that covers his body and on the inner side of the sarcophagus.

The scene of burial on the San Lorenzo fresco is followed by the invention of the saint's body (Fig. 83). The description of the invention is virtually identical in most redactions of the hagiography, whether Greek or Latin, and is based on the letter of the priest Lucian described in the first chapter. The basic story says that

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53 Müstair, 258-259.

54 For Greek manuscripts on the *Revelatio* and *Passio*, see: BHG 1648 and BHG 1649. For a Latin version of the same, see: Avitus Presbyter (first half of 5th c.), “*Epistola aviti ad palchonium, re reliquis sancti Stephani, ed de Luciani epistola a se e graeco in latinum versa,*” PL 41: 805-808 and BHL 7848-7851; Lucian presbyter Caphamargala (second half of 6th c.), “*Epistola Luciani ad omnem ecclesiam,*” PL 41: 807-817 and BHL 7851-7856. For the redactions of Greek and Latin texts on *inventio* and *translatio* of relics, see: *Dictionnaire D’archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie*, 632-642 and François Bovon, “The Dossier on
St. Stephen’s body lay hidden and its invention did not occur until the year 415. Upon the discovery of the body, it was retrieved from its original grave and taken to the church of Sion in Jerusalem, where Stephen served as the archdeacon.

In San Lorenzo the scene of invention is abbreviated (Fig. 84). The donor of the frescoes likely felt that the part that described Lucian’s dream was not of primary importance and, as will be discussed below, wanted greater emphasis placed on the representation of the saint’s body. The scene of the finding of the relics is located in a landscape with three mountain peaks in the distance. Two hills are also shown, closer to the main event where two men are digging. Both are dressed as monks with tonsures. On the right side of the composition there are two square objects of different sizes that resemble sarcophagi. Eclissi’s drawing indicates that formerly two doves were painted in the space that is currently occupied by the mountain peaks. This discrepancy, however, could also be a mistake due to damage that Eclissi was not able to decipher. The Eclissi drawings also show the sarcophagi lying close to one another, creating forms that resemble houses.

The scene of the invention of St. Stephen as well as the other episodes from the legend of his *translatio*, were not often depicted as a complete cycle in art prior to the church of San Lorenzo. One of the rare examples is found in the Echternach

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55 In Voragine’s text the year of invention is 417, the seventh year of the reign of Honorius, *The Golden Legend*, 408.

56 See Chapter One, pages 26-27.
Gospel Lectionary, Ms. 9428 (Fig. 75).\textsuperscript{57} This illumination follows the written legend closely, showing both bishop John and the priest Lucian in the scene as well as all four sarcophagi, which are unusually placed one on top of each other.

Whereas the designers of the San Lorenzo cycle abbreviated the invention scene, the episode that follows, the elevation and display of the relics, goes beyond what is described in the legend. In the elevation, the saint’s body is depicted with no visible traces of decay (Fig. 85). He is wrapped in the same sheets as he was in the scene of the burial. An ecclesiastic dressed in elaborate clothes holds the part of the sheet close to the saint’s head. Behind him tonsured men are dressed in tunics. The scene is placed in a landscape different from the invention scene with the high mountain peaks in the background. The central area contains a sarcophagus. A figure in front of the sarcophagus and closest to the observers helps elevate the saint’s body.

The last scene in the upper register represents the saint laid on a table (Fig. 86). The upper left part of the scene is damaged, so we cannot see the head of the ecclesiastic but he is recognizable by the specific ornamentation of the bishop’s clothes still visible in the scene. Eclissi’s drawing also indicates that behind the group of people with the ecclesiastic person at its head was an architectural structure in the form of a square ciborium, now missing. A bed containing the saint’s body is located in the middle of the composition and behind it is a round open structure with a cupola sitting atop a set of columns. The person that was standing inside the round ciborium structure and the saint’s bed is now missing. While in

\textsuperscript{57} See above, note 40.
today’s composition the blanket covers the saint’s bed completely, Eclissi’s drawing reveals legs that resemble those of a table. What is not depicted in the drawing, but has now been reconstructed, is the far-right part of the composition, which includes three figures standing by the feet of the saint and looking toward either his face or the group of people on the opposite side.

St. Stephen’s relics did not remain in Jerusalem for long. The protomartyr’s remains would soon be bound for the East. The middle register of the San Lorenzo fresco consists of six episodes of St. Stephen following his tranlastio from Jerusalem to Constantinople as well as the story of the princess as described above in Chapter Two above. Voragine mentions that the story of the translatio to Constantinople had been related by Augustine.58

The first scene in the second register depicts the Juliana’s request to return the body of her husband Alexander from Jerusalem to Constantinople (Fig. 87). In the composition there is a large architectural structure in the background consisting of a round middle part with a cupola and two square side wings. There are five people in the scene in total. The men on the right side raise their hands toward the sarcophagus while the man on the left side lifts a box out of it. The box is depicted with a curious middle divider, clearly alluding to separation. Presumably this is intended to represent two sarcophagi: one of St. Stephen and another belonging to

58 For a description of the scenes of translation from Jerusalem to Constantinople and the story of the princess, see: Chapter Two, page 126-127. See also, The Golden Legend 408-411; Anastasius Bibliothecarius (c. 810-879), Epistola ad landuleum, “De scriptura translationis protomartyris Stephani, quam e graeco in latinum vertit,” PL 41: 817-818; and, “De translatione s. Stephani, scriptura de translatione sancti Stephani de Jerusalem in urbem Byzantium.” PL 41: 817-822 and BHL 7857-7858. For the Augustine influence in formation of the legend, see: The Golden Legend, 408.
senator Alexander. That this is the case is confirmed by the female figure, likely Juliana, who looks into the sarcophagus from an almost kneeling position. Much of this must, however, be an invention of the nineteenth century restoration or a subsequent intervention, as none of it exists in the Eclissi’s drawing.\(^59\) The only remaining part visible in his drawing is an upper corner on the right hand side where we see a man looking behind his shoulder and in the opposite direction to the spectator. Behind him is a group of architectural buildings. In the middle was a structure that looks like a rotunda with a cupola. Next to it is a square ciborium followed by a high tower with openings indicating three levels.

The story of the legend continues with the senator’s wife and the body of the saint onboard a ship destined for Constantinople. The true nature of her cargo was revealed at sea when a sweet smell spread through the air. The trip was not, however, peaceful. Demons, tormented by the saint’s presence, conjured a storm. Frightened sailors beseeched for the saint’s help and St. Stephen appeared to them and calmed the sea. Regardless of this intervention, the demons tried to destroy the cargo by setting the ship on fire, but angels prevented it by drowning the devils in the sea. The last part of the story, the battle between demons and angels, is not represented in the cycle.\(^60\)

The following segment in the second register is a well-preserved maritime scene showing the first part of this narrative and agrees with the Eclissi’s drawing. In the middle of the composition we see a rowboat with five rowers (Fig. 88).

\(^{59}\) See note, above 21.

\(^{60}\) De translatione s. Stephani, scriptura de translatione sancti Stephani de Jerusalem in urbem Byzantium. PL 41: 817-822 and BHL 7857-7858.
Behind them are two figures of uncertain gender. One points toward the side of the composition. In the boat behind the rowers we see the coffin carrying the saint’s body. In the distance a city is represented on top of a hill, indicating that it is on the far shore. The most peculiar feature of this composition is the figure of a fisherman depicted in the lower right-hand corner. It looks like as he sits on the bottom of a hill at whose top is the city in the background. The figure of the fisherman resembles a similar figure from the cycle in the portico of the church Tre Fontane in Rome from the late thirteenth century, as well as one in the mosaics in the portico of Old St. Peter in Rome, the so-called *Navicella* (ca.1298-ca. 1307-08 or 1312-13) (Fig. 89). It is debatable if this figure has any specific meaning in this composition, or is simply a picturesque detail.

The translation of the body over the sea in the boat is not a rare composition in the iconography of the *translatio* of relics. It usually indicates the original overseas location from which relics were acquired. In most cases it is part of a longer narrative of a saint’s *translatio* legend. Such is the case in the *translatio* of St. Mark to Venice from Alexandria as it is represented in the enamel *Pala d’Oro* from

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62 According to Maria Andaloro, the fresco is attributed to Giotto. The image is now destroyed and the only record of it is the watercolor from the Codex dating in 1633 now in Vatican library Barb. Lat. 2733, fols. 146v-147r. Maria Andaloro, “Giotto tradotto. A proposito del mosaico della Navicella,” in *Frammenti di memoria: Giotto, Roma e Bonifacio VIII*, ed. Maria Andaloro, Silvia Maddalo, Massimo Miglio (Rome, 2009), 17-37; see also, Salvatore Sansone and Silvia Maddalo, “Ideologia e tradizione di soggetto iconografico prima e oltare Giotto,” in *Frammenti di memoria: Giotto, Roma e Bonifacio VIII*, ed. Maria Andaloro, Silvia Maddalo, Massimo Miglio (Rome, 2009), 37-53.
the early twelfth century now in the church of St. Mark in Venice (Fig. 21). Another *translatio* from overseas is that of the translation of St. Nicholas from Mira to Bari. Another *translatio* from overseas is that of the translation of St. Nicholas from Mira to Bari. The scene of the *translatio* of St. Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople from the oratory of St. Stephen in Lentate su Sèveso (ca. 1375-1400) does not show a coffin in the ship but the body of the saint itself.

The next episode of the San Lorenzo fresco cycle shows the arrival of the saint’s body in Constantinople (Fig. 90). This is the point at which the story differs between the Greek and the Latin redactions of the legend. While the Latin text said that the body of St. Stephen was deposited in one of the churches after its arrival at Chalcedon, the Greek text is more precise. The latter states that when the body arrived in the port it was placed on a cart driven by mules to the designated church. At one point in Constantinople the mules refused to carry the relics any further into the city.

The composition of the scene shows a distinct division between left and right sides. On the left we have two men shown carrying the coffin and behind them is a group of people lead by a bishop or patriarch of Constantinople. On the right side we find a representation of a city in front of which the emperor stands with a group of people.

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63 On the *translatio* of relics of St. Mark to Venice and its iconography, see: Dale, “Inventing a Sacred Past,” 53-104; Dale, “Stolen property,” 205-223. On Pala d’Oro see: Bettini, “Venice, the Pala d”oro, and Constantinople,” 35-64; on the legend of the *translatio* of St. Mark, see Chapter one, note 65.

64 On the legend of the *translatio* of Saint Nicholas, see Chapter one, note 97.


66 PL 41: 817-818.

soldiers. One of the soldiers holds a shield. The Emperor raises his right hand and points toward the approaching saint in the closed coffin. This gesture brings to mind that of the Byzantine empress on the Trier ivory (Fig. 40). The Emperor’s head is surrounded by the arch of a main gate creating a kind of halo that distinguishes him from the other men in the group. As explained in the first chapter, since the tenth century in the East, the translatio of relics would usually be represented with a simple coffin carried by men approaching the city gate, church or welcoming group.⁶⁸

The cycle continues with the legend of the translation of St. Stephen to Rome, which begins when the Byzantine emperor Theodosius’ daughter, Eudoxia is possessed and tormented by a demon that is shown in the fourth frame of the middle register (Fig. 91). The Emperor ordered that the princess be brought to the relics of St. Stephen so that she might touch them and be cured. The Devil in her announced that it was the will of the saint to have the relics moved to Rome and that if this was not done, the Devil would not be dislodged. From this scene onwards, we follow a specifically Western version of the narrative. No Greek sources speak of the translation of relics to Rome; according to them, St. Stephen’s last stop was in Constantinople. The Western version of the legend is unquestionably informed by papal ideology.

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⁶⁸ This is true of several scenes from the Menologion of Basil II, as well as the scene from the Mataphrast menologion Gr. th. fol. 1 in Oxford from 1322-1340, fol. 50 representing the translation of St. Stephen. For more on Menologion of Basil II, see Chapter One, page 42, note 119; For the Mataphrast Menologion, see: Corpus der byzantinischen Miniaturenhandschriften, Band 2/II (Stuttgart, 1978), 29; also Pavle Mijović, Menolog (Beograd, 1973), 210-218.
The scene shows a princess, dressed in a simple robe that resembles a sleeping gown and there are no signs that she is of a noble origin. A man in roman military costume holds the princess. Behind the soldier are two women, likely part of her retinue, pointing in the direction of the princess. In front of the possessed woman, on the right side of the composition, is a group of four tonsured monks. One extends a finger while a monk behind him holds his hands in a praying position. The scene takes place in front of a group of elaborate buildings. On the right side is a structure that has the features of a three-aisle basilica, while on the far left is an architectural form with an aedicule on the top. Both structures are connected in the middle of the scene by a large gate from whose arch a curtain hangs. While the right group of ecclesiastics stand in front of the church, the left is positioned in front of a vernacular building, likely a palace. The princess possessed by the demon, no longer part of either group, appears alone in the middle of the composition. She has been placed directly in front of the void created by the arch of a gate, distinguishing her from the others. In the present composition, behind and above the soldier on the left side one sees a red drapery that looks as if it is floating in mid-air. When one compares the scene with the Ecclisi drawing, we notice that instead of the drapery we see a woman wearing a veil with her hands raised to her face as if she is covering or rubbing her eyes.

The next scene shows a Pelagian legate with the message that was sent to the Byzantine emperor to obtain St. Stephen’s body (Fig. 92). On the right-hand side there is an elevated throne surmounted with a square ciborium on which is enthroned an emperor dressed in the chlamis. The right side of the throne shows
three men, only one of which is represented full-figure. They wear what appears to be phrigian headgear on their heads. The composition shows the city with its large gate.69 A man holding a white horse passes through the gate. In front of them is a male figure handing the emperor a paper, which according to the legend, is a papal emissary delivering a letter to the emperor. The story continues with the emperor agreeing with the clergy in Constantinople and with Pope Pelagius to trade the relics of St. Stephen from Constantinople for those of St. Lawrence from Rome.70

The next episode shows the emperor arranging for the relics to be removed from their depository shrine in Constantinople and sent to Rome (Fig. 93). The image is damaged and is now missing most of its middle as well as the upper right-hand corner. What remains is the lower-middle part of the composition, which contains a sarcophagus-like object. On the left side is a group of four men. The three of them closest to the sarcophagus are dressed in gowns of high-ranking ecclesiastics. The first one has extended his arm as if to place his hand inside the sarcophagus, the others appear to be pointing towards it with one of them making a gesture indicating surprise. The last man from the group is dressed as a monk. Behind the group of men we see buildings, indicating an urban settlement.

The final episodes of the cycle are painted in the lowest register and present the images most accessible to the viewer. Instead of six scenes, this lower register offers four. All show the story of the *translatio* of St. Stephen’s body to Rome and its deposition in the church of San Lorenzo.

70 *The Golden Legend*, 411.
According to the legend cardinals were sent east to escort the proto-martyr to Rome. Greeks traveled with them to retrieve the relics of St. Lawrence. Finally, the party arrived in Rome. When St. Stephen’s escorts tried to cross the threshold of the church of San Pietro in Vincoli (St. Peter in Chains), which was the relics’ resting place, the carts could not progress any further. The Devil, still possessing Eudoxia, notified the entourage that Saint Stephen was to be placed beside Lawrence in his tomb. As soon as the relics were deposited in the church, the princess touched them, and the Devil left her body. Lawrence, as if awakened from the sleep, moved to the other side of the tomb, making room for the proto-martyr. When they attempted to seize the body of St. Lawrence in order to take it to Constantinople, the Greek monks fell to the ground almost lifeless. Despite much praying, they all eventually died. The Latin authorities, which had consented to Lawrence’s removal, fell ill but were cured the moment the plan for the removal of St. Lawrence’s body was abandoned and Stephen and Lawrence were left to rest together in the single tomb.

The first scene in this register shows the arrival or adventus of the saint’s body in Rome (Fig. 94). The iconography used here is taken from the text in the Greek version of the translation to Constantinople, and the saint’s body is placed on carts pulled by oxen. This time, however, the body of St. Stephen is visible to the beholders. The composition is divided into two parts. The right side depicts the church of San Lorenzo and its portico created during the rule of Honorius III. The left side is dominated by the cart bearing the saint’s body and a group of people led

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71 The Golden Legend, 411-412.
72 The Golden Legend, 412.
73 See above note 23; The Voragine’s version refers to bearers of the body who sought to carry it to the church of Saint Peter in Chains in Rome. The Golden Legend, 411.
by a pope. The group is hidden behind the cart except for the figure of the pope who is represented full-length. The people in the group closer to the pope are dressed as bishops and monks. The saint’s body is covered with an elaborate purple blanket. Only the saint’s head with its bloody wounds is visible. The trees in the background bow in the same direction of the movement of the cart, in a gesture of reverence.

The episode that follows represents the exorcism and healing of the princess possessed by a demon (Fig. 95). The most prominent feature of the composition is a bed in which the saint’s body lies. It is covered with the same blanket as in the previous scene. Behind the saint, on the right side, is a group of bishops accompanied by the pope who stands closest to the saint’s body. The group is positioned between a church on the left side and the bell tower on the right. The princess kneels beside the saint’s feet as the demon exits her mouth. Behind her stand a group of four women with covered heads, who are likely part of the princesses’ retinue.

The third scene in the lower register shows the death of the Greek monks who tried to remove the body of St. Lawrence (Fig. 96). A large apse is shown in the background flanked by a tower on the right and an architectural structure with two arches and a roof on the left; the wall of the apse appears to be covered with a curtain. In front of the apse is an open, square sarcophagus in which the body of St. Lawrence is visible. In front of the sarcophagus are two lifeless bodies of Greek monks dressed in long chitons with hats on their heads. On the left side is a group of Latin monks dressed in a similar fashion as the Greek monks but in brighter colors.
The last episode of the death and translation of St. Stephen is the scene of the deposition of his body in the church of San Lorenzo (Fig. 97). Unfortunately almost two thirds of the scene was damaged and reconstructed in the nineteenth century. What is left of the original composition is the group of people on the left side. Probably the first among them is the pope, who is followed by two bishops and a monk. The scene is supposed to represent the placement of the body of St. Stephen in the tomb of St. Lawrence. In Eclissi’s drawing the pope is shown as he is stretching his hands toward the center of the composition. In the reconstruction that place is occupied by the tomb of two saints that is being sealed by the pope.

The iconographic program of the portico cycle of San Lorenzo has never received a detailed discussion in relation to its context. Wollesen pointed to the potentially propagandistic nature of the paintings and he related them directly to cult practice and to the self-promotion of the reformed Benedictine monks who were in charge of the church during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.\footnote{J. Wollesen, \textit{Pictures and Reality}, 13. Wollesen was not very explicit about the reformed Benedictin’s monks and their stragal against the dominating Franciscan order who enjoyed special Curial protection.}

Giorgia Pollio has connected San Lorenzo and the cult of St. Stephen with the coronation of Pier de Courtenay in 1217.\footnote{Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 141-157.} De Courtenay was crowned as a Byzantine emperor under the Latin occupation. The death of Henry of Flanders required a coronation of a new ruler in the Latin East or what was left of the Byzantine Empire. Since Henry did not have any male heirs, he was to be succeeded by Pierre de Courtenay, husband of Yolande, Henry’s sister. Before taking over the vacant throne of Byzantium, the French dignitary wished to receive the crown from
the pope himself. He marched to Rome at the beginning of 1217. Arriving in the capital of the Christian West, the pretender to the throne found himself confronted with some resistance by Pope Honorius III. He was reluctant because he feared that such an initiative would offend both the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Holy Roman emperor Frederick II, who at that time had not yet been crowned Emperor of West. The pope also saw a good opportunity to prove his power both over the West and the East. In April 9, 1217 in the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura Pierre de Courtenay and his wife were solemnly crowned by Honorius III. On the 17th of April, the new imperial couple left Rome for Brindisi. Pierre de Courtenay reached Durres by sea with a ship lent by the Venetians. He would never return from this trip.

Honorius III was the patron of the coronation and, as noted above, was also likely the developer of the massive extension of the ancient basilica. He rebuilt the western part of the church, replacing the old apse and incorporating the sixth century building into the new extension. Pistilli believes that his intervention in the basilica should be correlated with the extensive reconstruction of the entire

77 Silva de Blaauw, Cultus et décor. Liturgia e architettura nella Roma tradoantica e medievale: Basilica Salvatoris, Sanctae Mariae, Sancti Petri II (City of Vatican, 1994), 742.
78 Rennell Rodd, The Princes of Achaia and the Chronicles of Morea, a Study of Greece in the Middle Ages (London, 1907), 90-91.
79 On Honorius III’s building activities in San Lorenzo, see above note 7; Peter Cornelius Claussen, the most recent investigators of the monument, underlines that there is an absence of documents that would allow us to define the details of this historical site. This prevents establishing with certainty whether the ceremony took place in the old church, or whether, instead, works were already so well advanced. Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 142.
Tiburtino complex begun by the erection of a cloister by Pope Clement III (1187-1191) and continued by Popes Celestine III (1191-1198) and later by Innocent III (1198-1216). However, Daniela Mondini has opposed Pistilli's hypothesis by offering new evidence showing that the west basilica was built during the time of Honorius III and that this construction was probably due to its planned use as a second church for the imperial coronation. As argued by Gregorovius and later supported by Mondini and Pollio after the Latin conquest of the Byzantine Empire in 1204, Honorius III's wanted to underscore the coronation of 1217 in order to reaffirm Rome as the center of the reunited Orbe Christiano.

Giorgia Pollio rightly raises the question of why, as Ostrogorski would say, “a more modest church” than St. Peter's would be used as a place for an elaborate coronation of the Eastern emperor. According to her, St. Peters could not have been used, as it was the coronation church of the Western Roman emperors. San Giovanni in Laterano could be excluded as a candidate for the cathedral church of roman popes for similar reasons. San Giovanni in Laterano was the location of the coronation of Lotar III (1075-1137) in 1133 as the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. In St. Paul, located outside the walls of the city, continuing work on the apsidal mosaic would likely have been difficult to cover with curtains. Pollio

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81 Mondini, “S. Lorenzo fuori le Mura in Rom,” 18.
82 Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 145.
85 Pistilli, L’archittetura, n. 6, 30-31.
further suggested that a strong motive for Pope Honorius III to choose San Lorenzo fuori le Mura as the coronation church was the presence of the relics of St. Stephen. As we have seen, while he was not even a cardinal, Pope Honorius III was involved in the reconstruction of the tomb leaving an inscription concerning the double burial of two saints.\textsuperscript{86} Accounts of the translation date back roughly to the second half of the eleventh century. Bruno of Segni (d. 1123) wrote a Translatio sancti Stephani protomartyris Romam in which the author refers to an earlier draft of the same story by an unidentified Archdeacon Lucio.\textsuperscript{87} According to Mondini, Bruno wrote the Translatio between 1087, when he was awarded the post of bibliothecarius of the Roman curia, and 1107, when he became abbot of Montecassino.\textsuperscript{88} The spread of the legend is confirmed by the Vita Reginardi episcopi Leodiensis, written by Rainerio, a monk in San Lorenzo of Liegi, who died in 1182. Listing various places of worship dedicated to St. Lawrence in Rome, he informs us that the saint’s body was buried in the Verano basilica along with the body of St. Stephen.\textsuperscript{89}

Another source, this time pictorial, can help us locate the earliest possible date of the legend of the translatio of St. Stephen from Constantinople to Rome and the double burial in San Lorenzo. During the campaign of the nineteenth-century

\textsuperscript{86} See above, page 136, note 7.
\textsuperscript{87} More on the edition of Translatio by Bruno di Segni, see: Polio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 150 note 29.
renovation of San Lorenzo, copies were made of the frescos the originals of which have not survived. The copies are preserved in the collection Raccolta Lanciani in Rome (Fig.98).\textsuperscript{90} One of the copies shows three scenes that were probably part of the larger fresco illustration of the legend of the \textit{translatio} of St. Stephen. Both Mondini and Pollio believe that the frescoes occupied the south portico along with another cycles dedicated to St. Lawrence.\textsuperscript{91} Helene Toubert has dated them to the end of the eleventh century.\textsuperscript{92} Maria Andaloro, however, suggested that the frescoes occupied the north wall in the north aisle of the Pelagian sixth century basilica. She also dates them to the first half of the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{93} Both dates correspond with the early record of the legend in the written sources, as was indicated in the case of Bruno de Segni (d. 1123).

The first scene shows the removal of a corpse, most likely of St. Stephen, from his sarcophagus. The casket is decorated with floral motifs, indicating its antique origin. Two persons are lifting the saint’s body wrapped in linen. The middle

\textsuperscript{90} Raccolta Lanciani, BIASA (Biblioteca di Archeologia e Storia dell’Arte), Roma. XI.45.III, fol. 30.
\textsuperscript{91} Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 150-151.
\textsuperscript{92} At the end of the eleventh century, the cardinal priest who held the title of San Clemente was Ranerius. He was in the favor of the pope Gregory VII who appreciated qualities of his character and who would appoint the cardinal and made him one of his closest advisers. Ranerius will himself become pope in 1099 when he would take the name of Paschal II. He was undoubtedly a builder-pope. The \textit{Liber Pontificalis} enumerates the many restored and consecrated churches during his pontificate. Even before he became pope he commissioned works. One of these apparently was in San Lorenzo fuori le Mura. Ranerius was abbot of the San Lorenzo. Helen Toubert compares the painting in the south portico (now lost) with the one painted on reinforcing pillars in lower church of San Clemente from the eleventh century. Toubert, “Rome et le Mont-Cassin,” 1-33. For more on the San Clemente painting, see: Cristiana Filippini, “Functions of Pictorial Narratives and Liturgical Spaces: The Eleventh-Century Frescoes of the Titular Saint in the Basilica of San Clemente in Rome,” in \textit{Sharpening Sacred Space and Institutional Identity in Romanesque Mural Painting. Essays in Honour of Otto Demus}, ed. Thomas E.A. Dale and John Mitchell (London, 2004), 122-138.
\textsuperscript{93} Maria Anadloro, \textit{La pittura medievale a Roma 312-1431}. Atlante percorsi visivi (Viterbo, 2006), 81; also in Serena Romano, “Riforma e tradizione 1050-1198,” 302-303.
register shows two figures. One in ecclesiastical garb stands next to a coffin or stretcher on which the body of a saint lies. The other is dressed like a monk and tonsured. A female figure is positioned close to the far edge. Pollio has suggested that this represents an episode in the translation of the remains of St. Stephen, perhaps the moment where the procession stops in front of San Pietro in Vincoli and that the woman could be princess Eudoxia.94 The last scene depicts two saints being buried in the sarcophagus, a portrayal of the double burial of Saints Stephen and Lawrence. Next to them stands a person with a censer, who is likely intended to indicate a liturgical service.

As we have seen, before the coronation of Pierre de Courtenay there were two representations of St. Stephen in the church of San Lorenzo, about which some documents have survived.95 After the coronation of 1217, a mosaic frieze was placed in the architrave above the portico ca. 1225 during the reign of Honorius III (1216-1227).96 The central position in the frieze is occupied by Christ with St. Stephen and St. Ciriaca placed on either side (Fig. 99)97 The other mosaic from the same architrave shows the titular saint, Lawrence, as the intercessor for the donor, Pope Honorius III, being witnessed by a figure kneeling beside the Pope (Fig. 100).

Another representation of St. Stephen in the church of San Lorenzo prior to the cycle of his martyrdom and translatio in the portico was on a now-lost fresco in the tomb

94 Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 151.
95 See above, pages 136 and 167-168.
96 On mosaic, see above, page 140, note 18. The mosaic was destroyed together with the portico by a bomb in 1943 and partially rebuilt after the World War II.
97 While Pollio and Andaloro identified figure next to Christ as St. Ciriaca, according to Eclissi and his drawings the figure is identified as the Virgin. Pollio, “San Lorenzo fuori le Mura,” 153; Andaloro, Atlante, 82; Early Christian and Medieval Antiquities, 28.
of Cardinal Guglielmo Fieschi (d. 1256.) that was set against the west interior wall of the church.\textsuperscript{98} St. Stephen was depicted as a mediator for the donor, Cardinal Gugliemo, who the saint presented to Christ. On the opposite side of Christ was another intercessor, this time St. Lawrence, who similarly presented the cardinal's uncle, Innocent IV (1195-1254), to Christ.

If we accept the theory that the eleventh century cycle of \textit{translatio} of St. Stephen was depicted in the south portico, next to the cycle of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, the question arises as to why anyone would repeat the similar program in the west portico if the previous one was still in a good condition. I would suggest that possible motives could be the strong tradition of the cult of St. Stephen present in this church as well as the connection of his relics with Jerusalem and Constantinople. Definitely, whoever commissioned this cycle had a strong political agenda.

There is no documentation as to the date of these portico frescoes. According to Wollesen they were executed in the 1290s during the pontificate of Nicholas IV (1288-1292). He based his argument on Nicholas IV's activities in establishing a number of new church feasts and indulgences stressing the role of Rome as the apostolic center and attracting crowds of pilgrims and visitors.\textsuperscript{99} Other scholars, with some exceptions, agree with the dating of the frescoes in the last decades of the

\textsuperscript{98} Eclissi also left the record on this image both in the Windsor collection and in the Vatican manuscript. The fresco was destroyed during the World War II; \textit{Early Christian and Medieval Antiquities}, 188-189.

\textsuperscript{99} Wollesen, \textit{Pictures and Reality}, 80.
thirteenth century. I, however, would like to push it further forward to the time of Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) for several reasons that will be explained later. It is difficult to date the painting according to its stylistic characteristics due to restorations that likely destroyed the original color and forms. A better avenue of investigation would be to discuss the position of the paintings and their pictorial vocabulary in the context of the re-establishment of Rome as a center of pilgrimage that occurred at the end of the thirteenth century.

Wollesen has rightly noted that attracting crowds of pilgrims and visitors could be a main reason for depicting this cycle in the portico of San Lorenzo, a practice found in other important pilgrimage churches in Rome. Pilgrims believed that prayers offered at the saint’s tomb would secure the saint’s intercession, easing their suffering and opening a road to salvation.

Collections of textual accounts of miracles advertising the power of a particular saint and the translation of his relics were one vehicle for expanding interest in particular holy sites. Images of saints and their lives were another. Promotional tactics such as these were necessary not only for smaller pilgrimage centers; even the largest pilgrimage sites suffered from lack of interest and would, at

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101 Though Serena Romano writes about the painting in San Lorenzo as if it was executed during the pontificate of Bonifacio VIII, she never explicitly explains the reason for her argument. See Romano, *Eclissi di Roma*, 10-15 and 25-35.
times, be forced to augment their holdings in order to increase their draw. By the twelfth century pilgrims seem to have wanted more than to simply pray at the tomb of a saint or martyr. Relics were often hidden and some began to question their existence and authenticity. Pilgrims desired closer contact with the objects themselves: they wanted to be able to see and touch and have verification of their existence and authenticity.

The decrease of Roman pilgrims was paralleled by the growth in popularity of other pilgrimage sites, especially the Holy Land. The main attractions that pilgrims could find in Rome were the bodies of two apostles Peter and Paul. By visiting their places of martyrdom and tombs, they were able to experience pilgrimage ad limina apostolorum or to the threshold of the apostles. Travel to the Holy Land, however, gave the opportunity to follow in the footsteps of Christ Himself and, as Paulinus of Nola said, one “could see and touch the places where Christ was physically.” Interest in pilgrimage to the Holy Land steadily increased from the seventh to the twelfth century.

Pilgrimage and pilgrims were the power that reaffirmed the importance of a particular shrine and brought it prestige. Medieval cities were urged to advertise

\[102\] Although Jonathan Sumption claims that pilgrimage in Rome “underwent a serious decline” in the thirteenth century, there is evidence that this trend was already well under way before the thirteenth century, see: Jonathan Sumption, Pilgrimage. An Image of Medieval Religion (London, 1975), 226-227.


their saints and to renew interest in forgotten ones. It is no coincidence that the
growing popularity of Bari with pilgrims after the *translatio* of the body of St.
Nicholas (1087) led to the Venetians’ sudden rediscovery of their patron, St. Mark
(1094).107 The conquest of Constantinople in 1204 brought so many important
saints’ bodies to Venice that it became one of the most desired pilgrimage sites.108
Rome needed popes who would vigorously promote the city as a pilgrimage
destination. Some like Calixtus II made efforts in this direction. He attempted to
promote Rome’s links with St. Peter by renewing the high altar in the basilica, which
he consecrated in 1123.109

During the thirteenth century historical events worked in Rome’s favor in its
attempt to reestablish its position as the most popular pilgrimage site. In 1244
Jerusalem fell to Muslim forces. In 1268 Antioch was destroyed, followed by the fall
of Tripoli in 1289 and Acre in 1291.110 While travel to Jerusalem and the Holy Land
became more difficult, Roman pilgrims knew that they would find relics not only of
two of the apostles and other saints like the first martyr St. Stephen, but also, most
importantly, those related to Christ such as the fragments of the True Cross. Many
popes in the thirteenth century were keen to encourage and to promote pilgrimage

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107 Was rediscovered in 1094, see Chapter One page 28. P. Geary, *Futra Sacra*, 102-103; Dale
109 Jocelyn Toynbee, John Ward-Perkins, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations*
to the city and did so through the issuing of indulgences, which increased in number and value throughout the course of the century.111

In 1300 pope Boniface VIII proclaimed a Jubilee Year (the Holy Year). Equally significant in this context was his decision to grant a plenary indulgence. Indulgences were originally issued as a reward for crusaders to Jerusalem. By granting indulgences to pilgrims traveling to Rome, Boniface VIII equated Rome with Jerusalem.112

Parallel with this increased interest in promoting pilgrimage to Rome and the city’s primacy was an increase in building activities and especially in the construction of porticoes and façade decoration.113 The tradition of decorating church facades in Rome dates to early Christian times. Early mosaics were placed on the façade of St. Peter’s basilica for example.114 Church façades and porticoes became the most desirable pictorial real estate, becoming what one might consider the billboards of the Middle Ages. Renovations included Pope Gregori IX’s (1227-1241) mosaics on the façade of old St. Peter’s, which represented the Adoration of the Twenty-four Elders. It included images of the Virgin Mary, St. Peter, as well as

113 Wollesen, Pictures and Reality, 8; Romano, Corpus IV 372-374; Maria Andaloro, “L’orizzonte tardoantico e le nuove immagini 312-468,” in La pittura medievale a Roma, 312-1431. Corpus I, ed. Maria Andaloro and Serena Romano (Rome, 2006), 416-418.
114 The façade of old St. Peter’s was likely executed in the fifth century, see: Andaloro, Corpus I, 416-418; Herbert L. Kessler, “Real Absence: Early Medieval Art and the Metamorphosis of Vision,” in Morfologie sociali e culturali in Europa fra tarda antichita e alto medioevo, Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull’Alto Medioevo, 45(1997) (Spoleto, 1998), 1157-1211.
the Pope’s portrait placed beside the enthroned Christ.\textsuperscript{115} The new mosaic recapitulated the old one that had been given by the Consul Marianus and his wife between 423 and 428. According to Kessler this mosaic signified or, as I would describe it, advertised, to those entering old St. Peter’s not only that the \textit{ecclesia Romana} was modeled according to the heavenly Church, but most importantly, that the Pope was appointed by Christ as his representative on earth.\textsuperscript{116} Apart from this restoration of the early Christian apostolic basilica, there also were decorations \textit{ex novo} such as the frescoes at the Vatican portico front (Fig. 101). This cycle was devoted to apostles Peter and Paul’s Roman mission, martyrdom, and death, as well as their posthumous activities. It is believed to have been painted by the end of the thirteenth century by Jacopo Torriti during the administration of pontiff Nicholas III (1277-1280).\textsuperscript{117} The political agenda of the program is clearly attested to by the inclusion of scenes of the building and consecration of old St. Peter’s.\textsuperscript{118} Wollesen


\textsuperscript{116} Kessler \textit{Old St. Peter’s}, 2.

\textsuperscript{117} There are two baroque series of pen and ink drawings that documented this cycle in old St. Peter’s that were executed before the demolition of the old church portico in the seventeenth century. These drawings are presented in Domenico Tassalli’s album (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. A 64 ter) and Giacomo Grimaldi’s \textit{Instrumenta autentica} (Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Cod. Barb. lat. 2733); see: Giacomo Grimaldi, \textit{Decorazione della basilica antica di S. Pietro in Vaticano, codice Barberini latino 2733}, ed. R. Niggl (Vatican City, 1972), also, Kessler, \textit{Old St. Peter’s}, 12 and Wollesen, \textit{Pictures and Reality}, 52.

\textsuperscript{118} The new ideology of the Republic of St Peter was based on the Donation of Constantine, a forgery produced in the mid-eighth century. The document attested Constantine the Great’s decision to transfer authority over Rome and the western part of the Roman Empire to the pope. The Donation confirmed papal supremacy over all eastern patriarchates. This document not only confirmed papal supremacy over the religious matters over all
explained that the original connection to the Legend of St. Sylvester was replaced by a Roman apostolic topic in which Pope Sylvester is introduced as *spiritus rector* and Constantine is represented as a founder of the basilica.\(^{119}\) As Wollesen has noted, frescoes or mosaics found on Roman basilica façades and inside the porticos of the Duecento convey and interpret history in the form of abbreviated narratives, which oscillate between typology and reality.\(^{120}\) They were designed to project spectators’ future expectations and desires into narrative-typological terms. The basilica’s exterior decoration was intended to be used for public festivities and religious and ecclesiastical spectacles.\(^{121}\)

Wollesen has suggested further that for the pilgrims who were about to enter the basilica and visit Saint Peter’s tomb, the image of Pope Sylvester could be typologically connected to the building program of Nicholas III (1277-1280) and at Christendom, but his secular power over Rome, Italy and the West as well. The Donation of Constantine was based on the earlier romantic version of Constantine’s conversion written in *Lagenda sancti Silvestri* in the late fifth century. The legend tells the story of how pope Sylvester I cured Constantine of leprosy by the virtue of the baptismal water. In gratitude, the emperor, confirmed supremacy over all other bishops, resigned his imperial insignia and walked before Sylvester's horse holding the pope’s bridle. Constantine abandoned Rome to the pope and took up residence in Constantinople. The legend symbolically anticipated papal ideology that will be fully developed in Donation. For the text of the legend, see: Bonino Mombrizio, *Sanctuarium seu vitae sanctorum*, ed. H. Quentin and A. Brunet (Paris, 1920), 508-531; for the Republic of Rome, see: Walter Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages: a Study in the Ideological Relation of Clerical to Lay Power* (London ; New York, 2010), 60-62. For the discussion on the Donation of Constantine, see: Ullmann, 74-86; Thomas F. X. Noble, *The Republic of St. Peter: the Birth of the Papal State*, 680-825 (Philadelphia, 1984), 135-137; Krautheimer, *Profile of a City*, 114; Erik Thunø, *Image and Relic: Mediating the Sacred in Early Medieval Rome* (Rome, 2002), 158-159.


\(^{120}\) Wollesen, *Pictures and Reality*, 2.

the same time parallel his potestas with Sylvester’s ecclesiastical power.122 A similar message may also be conveyed by the portico mosaics in the Lateran basilica (San Giovanni in Laterano) from the twelfth century that were also commissioned by a pope in order to attract as many pilgrims as possible and behind which also lay a strong political agenda; these mosaics are now known only through seventeenth century drawings (Figs. 102-103).123 Though the portico mosaics in the Lateran were older than those in old St. Peter’s both cycles contained scenes from the legend of St. Sylvester.124 Christopher Walter has argued that one historical scene from the cycle, which included profane elements as well, could be related to Byzantine palace decorations.125

A similar advertising technique was achieved on the façade of S. Maria Maggiore in the late thirteenth-early fourteenth century.126 While the lower façade zones illustrated the history of the basilica within the context of its relics and advertised it as a principal Marian shrine as Erik Thunø has argued, the upper part shows the ultimate goal for every Christian pilgrim: Christ in majesty accompanied


123 For the reconstruction of the portico in Lateran basilica, see: Giovanni Giustino Ciampini, De sacris aedificiis a Constantino Magno constructis (Rome, 1693), pl. I, II; also in Romano, Corpus IV, 372-374; for the drawing of the portico mosaic done by anonymous, see: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. lat. 4423, ff. 14-19.

124 The date of the Lateran mosaic is debatable, A. Frothingam suggested that mosaics were executed during the reign of the Pope Alexander (1159-1181); A.L. Frothingham, “Notes on Christian Mosaics, II, the Portico of the Lateran Basilica,” American Journal of Archaeology 2 (1886): 414-423. Philipe Lauer, is more inclined to date it towards the time of the Pope Clement III (1187-1191); Lauer, 181-185.


126 For the most recent dating and detailed explanation, see. Erik Thunø, “The Façade Mosaics of S. Maria Maggiore in Rome,” Analecta Romana Instituti Danici 23 (1996): 61-82.
by the Virgin and St. John the Baptist as intercessors, indicating resurrection and salvation (Figs. 104-105). The pictorial rhetoric of the mosaics increased the significance of the church. The monumental scale of church decoration and the pictorial rhetoric of the images allowed the lay public to easily grasp their meaning.

Similarly, the goal of the painting program on the façade of San Lorenzo was not only to refer to the history of the basilica or to tell the story of their titular saints but also to emphasize a complex political-religious agenda. The importance of the church as a pilgrimage center was one of the main motives for the pope’s decision to embellish the church portico with an extensive cycle of two Christian martyrs.

Where the passio is the focus of the story of St. Lawrence, the pictorial account of the Legend of St. Stephen concentrated on the history of his relics. The frescoes celebrate and document their invention in Jerusalem and translatio to Rome via Constantinople. The shift from the narrative cycles of the saint's life to more specific images representing passio and translatio reflects changes that occurred in the cult of the saints during the twelfth and thirteen centuries. According to Barbara Abou-El Haj, during the period ranging from the eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries there was an expansion of a new class of hagiographical art aimed at renewing and enlarging the cult of the saints in the hope of generating pilgrimage. This renewal and expansion increased the role of images in both private and public spaces and

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127 Thunø, 63 and 66-67.
128 The church of San Lorenzo was recorded from the fifth century as an important pilgrimage site when a habitacula pauperum was built around the church, not only as a shelter for local poor people, but primarily as a pilgrim’s hostel. Numerous manuscripts dating from the fifteenth century indicate that the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura was one of the seven major churches on the pilgrimage to Rome. See above note 11.
emphasized contemporary forms of veneration.\textsuperscript{129} A disproportionate number of pictures depict not the saints’ lives, but their posthumous biography from the time their cults were instituted.

In Rome, the church of San Lorenzo clearly played a significant role both in the lives of the popes and in the broader Christian community. By depicting the journey of the body of St. Stephen to Rome in a public space, the patron responsible for the cycle wanted to advertise the role of the saint as a first martyr, his link with Christ, and the saint’s intercessory powers; however, he wanted above all to bask in the reflected glow of the prestigious relics by associating himself with their relocation. The cycle sent a clear message that resurrection and final salvation was possible only through the church.

Wherever possible, the painters of the portico frescoes in San Lorenzo tried to maintain a sense of pictorial continuity between space and time. Scenes, which according to the legend take place at the same location, show identical or similar settings. This is the case of the translation of relics to Rome and the healing of the princess where the basilica of San Lorenzo is repeatedly depicted. Despite the abbreviated architecture, they try to convey an idea of the actual location of the events. For example, the Arrival of the relics of St. Stephen required a location in front of the basilica San Lorenzo in Rome. The portico of the basilica is characterized by the extraordinarily high pedestals of its columns and high bell tower on its right side. In episodes that take place inside the church, the painters show both its interior and exterior, which are represented with a large apse and the bell tower

\textsuperscript{129} Abou El Haj, \textit{The Medieval Cult}, 13-33.
respectively. The realism of the dresses of the deacons, popes, bishops, the emperor, soldiers and monks, as well as the pagans, is remarkably detailed.

As we have seen the portico frescoes of San Lorenzo did not just follow the lines of an established textual source. Instead, the painters created a pictorial narration that emphasized certain parts and reduced ones they viewed as less important. While many Greek and Latin early Christian theologians such as Augustine added layers of meaning and interpretation to the legend of St. Stephen, their words are always grounded in the New Testament and emphasize the protomartyr’s role as a type of Christ. As the protomartyr, Stephen is depicted as an exemplar that demonstrated how a Christian should live, testify, pray, and die for the faith. His repeated *translatio* was to indicate *thesis*, the way to personal salvation and the resurrection of the body.

The individual who commissioned the painting in the portico in San Lorenzo wanted to advertise the message of resurrection and salvation through the physical presence of the body of St. Stephen. The painters achieved this by placing images in small, cartoon like episodes and exposing the saintly body to the gaze of the beholder throughout. In his argument concerning the two modes of pictorial narrative, Hans Belting likens the painting in the upper church at Assisi with its

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130 See above note 37.
details and topographic specificity, to a painted movie.\textsuperscript{132} The framing of the San Lorenzo cycle aids the viewer, generating meanings in both horizontal and vertical directions. Cynthia Hahn has pointed out that frames control both the unfolding of the narrative and the perception of the beholder, writing: “Our desire as readers frames the hagiographic narrative and in effect induces its production, while also driving every aspect of the narrative.”\textsuperscript{133} The reader’s desire can unfold another narrative inside the frame.\textsuperscript{134} In the case of San Lorenzo, the viewer’s desire for resurrection and salvation would facilitate an identification with Saint Stephen, allowing them to empathetically experience his martyrdom and \textit{translatio}.

The designer of the San Lorenzo cycle chose to establish a continuity between a unit of real time and a unit of narrative time - past, present, and future. This was accomplished by depicting the body of Saint Stephen with wounds, which although now difficult to discern, were clearly noted in Eclessi’s drawings. Similar examples can be seen in the fifteenth century representation of the translation of St. Stephen from French tapestries depicting the life of Stephen from the cathedral in Auxerre (Fig. 106).\textsuperscript{135} Wounds on the saint’s head indicate his martyr’s death by stoning, referring to his violent end. The invention of his body and its \textit{translatio} to the church with the same wounds makes a connection between this episode and the


\textsuperscript{133} Cynthia Hahn, \textit{Portrayed on the Heart} (Berkeley, 2001), 44-45.

\textsuperscript{134} Evelyn Birge Vitz, \textit{Medieval Narrative and Modern Narrathology: Subjects and Objects of Desire} (New York, 1989), 141.

\textsuperscript{135} More on the tapestries and dating see: Laura Weigert, \textit{Weaving Sacred Stories: French Choir Tapestries and the Performance of Clerical Identity} (Ithaca, 2004).
present. Through these traces of past violence the painters denote the saint’s martyrdom and his place in the heavenly court, connecting the past through the present to a promised future within the beholder’s imagination.

Historians and art historians have focused on the structural and narrative devices employed by hagiographers, both literary and visual, which defined sanctity for martyrs and saints. Establishing the recurring pattern that provides the first interpretation of a saint’s life is fundamental for deciphering the meaning of hagiographic narratives. Only when this original model is understood can one then attempt to identify the variations and omissions in subsequent visualizations of the stories of the saints. As at San Lorenzo, these patterns often served to emphasize the saint’s likeness to Christ, whose life and death were reflected in the deeds and experiences of the saints, as was especially true in the case of St. Stephen. The repeated image of the closed casket that reappears throughout the fresco cycle in San Lorenzo is deliberately interrupted by the representation of the saint’s uncovered body. The significance of the *translatio* from Constantinople to Rome was underscored by the new emphasis on the body of the saint being on display, in contrast to the former depiction of a closed coffin that kept the relic from sight.

At San Lorenzo even when the artists arrange their images in strict horizontal registers, viewers are free to choose how and in what sequence to

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136 For Quintilian’s discussion of the power of such imagery, see page 133, note 1.
137 According to Heb. 10:11, 22-23 all things are purged with blood and without it there is no remission. All scenes of the martyrdom of St. Stephen show the saint being stoned and bleeding but only from the head wounds. For that reason the saint would be commonly represented in medieval iconography with a stone on his head or with the blood dripping from the top of his head. For more on blood and wounds of St. Stephen, see: Michael P Carrol, *Catholic Cults and Devotions. A Psychological Inquiry* (Kingston, Ontario, 1989), 67-68 and 183-184.
experience them. According to Richard Brilliant “an artwork is far from being a simple symbolic code.” Scholes and Kellogg have noted that unlike in the case of literary narration with words fixed in a written text, visual images have an almost infinite capacity for verbal extension. The viewers become their own narrators, re-arranging the images into a personal narrative. Visual narratives may be thought to have three narrators: the first is the artist, the second is the protagonist of the story presented in a series of images, and the third is the viewer. The eye’s passage from frame to frame in a complex work of visual narrative, or from place to place within a frame, may track the line of temporal succession in unbroken continuity as it moves stage by stage. The artist has created connections between the outer, real world and the inner, pictorial one. The frames, open architectural structures, gates, and figures placed in liminal spaces on the San Lorenzo St. Stephen cycle, mirror the real architecture of the building itself. The portico serves as liminal space linking representation and reality and the profane and the sacred world, the latter of which is here symbolically represented by the church building.

Franciscans developed the use of elements of a pictorial cycle for ideological purposes in the thirteenth century, when they largely employed panel painting to portray scenes of St. Francis’ life. The choice of specific scenes and their arrangement was governed by a Franciscan agenda. A similar approach may be detected in the murals at San Lorenzo where the narrative was not the main

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purpose of the ensembles but served as a contextual frame. The thirteenth century saw the ascendancy of Franciscan power, which would achieve its peak with the election of Franciscan Pope Nicholas IV at the end of the century. When the frescoes were executed, the church of San Lorenzo was under the control of the reformed Benedictines who were struggling with the growing power of the Franciscans. The group was fighting to regain primacy in Rome and may have employed the same pictorial model as the aspiring Franciscans in a bid to regain prominence.\footnote{On the role of Benedictins in Rome, see: J. Wollesen,} \textit{Pictures and Reality}, 13.

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The decision to place the body of St. Stephen on display in the narration of the translation of relics from Constantinople to Rome that is presented in the lowest register closest to the beholder may have reflected the personality of Pope Boniface VIII. Boniface VIII was a controversial pope.\footnote{T.S.R. Boase,} \textit{Boniface VIII} (London, 1933); Agostion Paravicini Bagliani, \textit{Boniface VIII, Un pape heretique?} (Paris, 2003).

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We have seen that the cycle dedicated to St. Stephen is largely focused upon the representation of the \textit{translatio} of the saint’s body, first in Jerusalem, then Constantinople, and finally, its transport to Rome. Significantly, this is the earliest representation of St. Stephen’s translation to Rome, and, to my knowledge, the only

other one in Italy is from the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century in oratorio of St. Stephen in Lentate sul Sèveso. In the cycle of St. Stephen in Lentate sul Sèveso, however, the emphasis is more on the *translatio* of the saint’s body from Jerusalem to Constantinople than from Constantinople to Rome. The latter stage is depicted only with the scene of the reception of the relics at the port of Rome. The emphasis is not so much on the translation as an event significant for the community that will immediately benefit from the saint’s actual presence, but on the confirmation of the ‘deified’ body of the saint and assurance of his presence in the heavenly realm.

Before the *Unam Sanctum* Pope Boniface VIII issued another important bull the *Detestande feritatis* on September 27, 1299, prohibiting the dismemberment of the body. The pope specifically forbade the procedures of dismembering a corpse that were needed if a deceased person was to be buried far from the place of death. From the beginning, Boniface VIII called this practice "atrocious." For him, postmortem dismemberment was a deplorable use of violence that had become a despicable habit of some Christians. Instead, he proposed, one must wait until the flesh separates from the bones in a natural way before the bones could be transported to the desired gravesite. Boniface VIII uses words like "horrible, horrible, inhuman," at least thirteen times in his statement. Scholars have assumed

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145 See above, page 158, note 65.
147 The dismembering and boiling a corpse in order to extract the bones for transport is attested to from documents dating from the tenth century in northern Europe, especially Germany. This is likely the reason that Boncompagno labeled it *mos Teutonicus*. These procedures were applied to the remains of most emperors or noble people; Brown, “Death,” 226, note 11.
that this is an expression of strong emotion and that the bull was motivated for personal reasons, probably out of concern for his own body.149 Did the Pope’s attitude toward the power over the living and dead or his concern over the integrity of the body, influence the appearance of the representation of the open display of the body of St. Stephen and the new emphasis on his wounds? Despite the appeal of such a proposition, it remains speculative.

Showing the saint’s body displayed on a cart during the *translatio* is peculiar to the Western iconographic tradition. There are no surviving depictions of saint’s bodies on display in Byzantine art. In the West, this tradition started with the revival of the hagiographic genre in the eleventh and the twelfth century. The earliest known example of a *translatio* with a fully exposed body of a saint is one from the lower church of San Clemente in Rome that dates from the late eleventh century (Fig. 15).150 In the cycle of St. Stephen in San Lorenzo, his *translatio* to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Constantinople is represented according to the Byzantine iconographic tradition of the closed coffin.151 The arrival of the relics in Rome and their display in the church is, however, stressed by the display of the uncorrupted body. This gesture forcefully advertised the power of the saint’s intact body and his ability to intercede before God for those who pray for resurrection with their body intact. This also demonstrated that resurrection was possible only through the institution of the Church with the pope as its leader.

150 See Chapter One, page 47, note 132.
151 More on Byzantine iconography of *translatio*, see Chapter One, pages 41-44.
The thirteenth century was rich with discussion among the church and its theologians about the value of the body. Starting in 1215, its importance was confirmed at the Fourth Lateran Council in Lyon when it declared that a human being is composed of a rational soul and material body. Referring to this definition, Thomas Aquinas concluded that the soul was the part of the body and after the body died the soul would suffer until after resurrection when it will be reunited with its own glorified body. Aquinas was not interested in the corpse so much as the risen body, and denied that the body is an entity composed of a form of bodiliness (*forma corporeitatis*). He proposed a new solution to the problem; expounding his theory of formal identity, he wrote: “It is more correct to say that soul contains body [*continet corpus*] and makes it to be one, than the converse.”

Aquinas’ theory was that the rational soul was the survivor and carrier of identity. His exclusive concern with ultimate resurrection and not the physical corpse spurred fervent debate amongst theologians and scholars. The intensity of the debate increased at the end of the thirteenth century and focused particularly on the problem of the saints, their relics, and the division of corpses.

Just how important the issue of resurrection and the question of the body was in the thirteenth century is attested to by an event that took place in Paris during Easter 1286. Three prestigious masters, Henry of Ghent, Godefroid of Fontaines and Gervais Mont-Saint-Eloi, took part in a debate during which they discussed the decision of King Philip the Fair to challenge the will of his father,

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Philip the Bold who died in Perpignan on October 5, 1285, concerning his burial.\textsuperscript{155} None of them condemned the division of the body, but all claimed that the burial of a whole body was preferable. Godefroid was the only one to insist on the need to safeguard the integrity of the body. He stated emphatically: "Men want to be buried as completely as possible", and insisted that the body was a unit and the separation of its different parties opposed "good nature (\textit{bon nature})".\textsuperscript{156} Given that a body is naturally composed of all its members and was intended for resurrection, its unity should be preserved. Moreover he described the division of the body as atrocious and inhuman, terms similar to those Boniface VIII would use in his bull. In his distaste for the division of the body, Godefroid added a passionate defense of its integrity. Even if God has the power to collect separate body parts, the body should be preserved intact and not suffer unnatural division at the hands of humans. Nature alone gives a body identity.\textsuperscript{157}

The relationship between corporeal integrity and the resurrection of the body plays a central role in theories of aging, which Roger Bacon (1267-1268) mentions in all of his major works that he sent to the pope Clement IV.\textsuperscript{158} Elizabeth Brown has argued that Boniface VIII was influenced by Roger Bacon and Boniface's own physician Arnold of Villanova. Both Bacon and Villanova were sympathetic to Godefroid's ideas regarding the body. After the death of Boniface VIII his opponents charged that he was a heretic whose concern for the preservation of cadaver

\textsuperscript{155} Bynum, \textit{The Resurrection}, 236-243.
\textsuperscript{156} Bagliani, \textit{Boniface VIII}, 235.
\textsuperscript{157} \textit{Les Quodlibet cinq, six et sept de Godefroid de Fontaines}, M. de Wulf ... et J. Hoffmans (Louvain, Institut supérieur de philosophie de l'Université, 1914), 29-30.
\textsuperscript{158} Bagliani, \textit{Boniface VIII}, 237; see also, Brown, "Authority," 824.
expressed disbelief in resurrection.\textsuperscript{159} Caroline Bynum has suggested that Boniface did not deny resurrection but that “his concerns made resurrection natural, not supernatural.”\textsuperscript{160}

Boniface VIII’s horrified response to the dismemberment of the body is symptomatic of anxiety about death and the inevitable dissolution of the flesh. We know that at the time of the first promulgation of the bull, his health was precarious for several months.\textsuperscript{161} After his death, Boniface VIII was accused by the King of France Philip the Fair of idolatry. The accusations were based on the fact that pope had commissioned silver statues of himself to be placed in the churches so that men could worship him.\textsuperscript{162} Perhaps the pope’s commission of a sculpture of himself that could be considered idolatrous should be viewed in light of these circumstances. These commissions seem to reflect an inordinate concern with images of himself. They could also be viewed as a literal interpretation of Augustine’s metaphor of the

\textsuperscript{159} Brown, “Authority,” 824-25, see also: Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, “Scienca della natura e cura del corpo alla corte di Bonifacio VIII,” in Bonifacio VIII anno 1300 il primo giubileo e il suo tempo (Milano, 2000), 61-65.
\textsuperscript{160} Bynum, The Resurrection, 323.
\textsuperscript{161} Boniface VIII issued his bull again February 18, 1300, without making any changes.
\textsuperscript{162} For the accusation of Boniface VIII, see: Boniface VIII en process. Articles d’accusation et deposition de témoins (1303-1311), ed. J. Coste. Studi e documenti d’archivio 5 (Rome, 1995). There are several other commissions of statues of Pope Boniface VIII of which only two can be identified as ordered by the Pope himself. Other sculptures of Boniface VIII that were publicly displayed in the cities of Orvieto, Florence, Bologna and Anagni were probably aquired by these cities to show their gratitude for the special attention that they received from the Pope. For the sculptures of Boniface VIII, see: Anna Maria D’Achille, “The Tomb of Boniface VIII and the Sculpted Images of the Pope,” in Rome, The Pilgrim’s dream, ed. Gloria Fossi (Rome1998), 142-156; Julian Gardner, “Patterns of Papal Patronage circa 1260-circa 1300,” in The Religion Roles of the Papacy: Ideals and Realities 1150-1300, ed. Christopher Ryan (Rome, 1989), 439-456; Julian Gardner, “Boniface VIII as a Patron of Sculpture,” in Roma anno 1300: atti della IV settimana di studi di storia dell’arte medievale dell’Università di Roma "La Sapienza" (19-24 maggio 1980), ed. Angiola Maria Romanini (Roma, 1983), 513-521. For the Roman tradition of placing sculpture of emperors in the teaters, or gates, see: Elisabeth R. Gebhard, “The Theater and the City,” in Roman Theater and Society. E. Togo Salmon Papers I, ed. William J. Slater (Ann Arbor, 1996), 113-127.
resurrection of the body as the reassembly of statues. Bynum describes Augustine’s notion of resurrection as that of a “restoration of bodily wholeness or integrity with incorruption added on.”

The Pope’s statues were placed in civic buildings and on the façade of the gates, like the one in the Porta della Rocca in Orvieto emulating the Roman tradition of placing the emperor’s sculptures on the gates or theatres. Though many of the sculptures were not directly commissioned by the Pope, they were erected during his lifetime and, according to Julian Gardner, the Pope was the one who stimulated the production of the statue of himself. The decoration of the San Lorenzo portico and its frescoes may have been a product of this urge to advertise and promote himself as well as avoid damnatio memori. By representing the uncorrupted body of a saint the pope advertised his attitude against the division of the body. This agenda is confirmed by the words of Boniface’s doctor Villanova, cited in Brown, when he hypothesized that Boniface might have been driven “by hope that after his death ‘the whole man’ would live in memory of men.”

The establishing of the Pope’s supremacy over life and death, or in the words of Brown, his being motivated by a desire to ensure that his body and the bodies of others will be in the best state of preservation at the time of resurrection is also found in Boniface VIII’s writings from May 15, 1300. The Pope here argues that the Roman Pontiff is the vicar of Christ on earth, that is, "the one who is the judge of the

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163 Bynum, The Resurrection, 95.
164 For the sculptures of Boniface VIII, see above, note 162.
165 Gardner, "Boniface VIII as a Patron of Sculpture," 515.
living and the dead” and, therefore, that "every soul must submit to the supreme chief of this militant church, and all the faithful, whatever their status or dignity, must lower their necks.”

In the bullAuscula filii (December 5, 1301), he even says that the Pope has a judiciary power over the dead, that Peter received the "keys of the kingdom of heaven and was made by God judge of the living and the dead.”

This explicit extension of papal power over the dead, remarkable in itself, also suggests that Boniface VIII forbade the division of the body because he thought his legal purvey extended beyond the limits of mortal existence to include the dead and their bodies.

The San Lorenzo cycle also focuses on the history of the relics. It stresses their existence in the Holy Land, transfer to Constantinople and their arrival at their final destination in Rome. During a time of the conflict with the King of France as well as a struggle over the primacy of the Curia, this emphasis on the history of the translation of St. Stephen’s relics had distinct political ramifications. Relocating the relics of the first martyr who saw Christ in heaven to Rome sent a clear message that although Jerusalem and Constantinople were at one time temporary centers of the Roman Empire, it was now papal Rome. The translatio of the relics of St. Stephen was transformed into translatio imperii. This was confirmed with the placement of both saints, the roman St. Lawrence and the first martyr St. Stephen under the control of the Pope.

Paralleling the translatio imperii emphasized the old desire

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167 Bagliani, Boniface VIII, 240.
168 Bagliani, Boniface VIII, 240.
of the popes for the *imitatio imperii*. With this cycle the pope announced himself as an ecumenical leader and not only the sole authority on earth, but also for the afterlife.

In 1297 Boniface VIII gave an indulgence of a year and forty days to all who made a Lenten visit to Rome’s Stations, which included the church of San Lorenzo. The Jubilee Year in this sense helped to restore his primacy among the sovereigns of the world. There were about 200,000 pilgrims in Rome in 1300 according to Giovanni Villani (1276 or 1280–1348) who was an eyewitness. Boniface had always shown interest in the ceremonies and cults of the church. Cardinal Jacopo Stefaneschi (c. 1270 – 23 June 1343) described the coronation of the pope in 1294 in his *Opus Metricum* as a true triumph. Stefaneschi spent four hundred verses on the event, which he describes in terms evoking the triumphs of ancient emperors: “the coronation took place before the portico of the basilica under the sky, which the tiny land is subject to the great square that lies before the basilica where it is easy to see the crown of the lord.” That we can speak of a symbolic *translatio imperii* here

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174 Bagliani, *Boniface VIII*, 106. There is even a miniature representing the coronation of Boniface VIII on the first page of the *De Coronatione* from 1298-1299 by Jacopo Stefansechi, see: Vat. lat. 4933, f. 7v. More on the Vat. lat. 4933, see: Silvia Maddalo, “Traces of a Myth Between the 1300’s and 1400’s. Illuminated Rome, Frescoed Rome,” in *Rome, The Pilgrim’s dream*, ed. Gloria Fossi, (Rome1998), 118-133, and note 2.
175 Bagliani, *Boniface VIII*, 106.
is confirmed when the pope appears among the Romans with splendid imperial emblems, exclaiming, “I am Caesar, I am the emperor.”

The frescos in San Lorenzo depicting the double translatio indicate that Rome was the site of ultimate power in the Christian universe. When we observe the vertical arrangement of the episodes closest to the entrance of the church, the viewer sees the abbreviated history of the translation of the relics of St. Stephen. The relics did not stay in Jerusalem, or Constantinople, but were brought to Rome to be sealed in a tomb under the altar by the Pope. That act confirmed the translatio of power as a translatio imperii that did not divide divine history from worldly power. In the last scene and next to the entrance to the church the pope is represented beside the tomb of two saints: one, the protector of Rome, and the other, the first Christian martyr, both in the apse of the same church (Fig. 97). There is no title or any kind or inscription that identifies the pope. Only the representation of the Roman pontiff sealing the tomb of two saints conveys the message of that he is the universal leader in both life and death as appointed by God. The Pope is recognizable only by his tiara, which at the time of Boniface VIII became not only the symbol of temporal power given by Constantine to Pope Sylvester, but

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178 According to the Eclissi’s drawings many of the scenes had tituli describing simple actions in simple words mostly starting with QUANDO FUIT. Whether the tituli were original or Eclissi’s invention is hard to determine; however, there are no tituli that identify the participants in the episodes.
also the symbol of his spiritual force.\textsuperscript{179} In 1301 Boniface VIII added a second crown to the tiara at the time of the confrontation with Philip the Fair, King of France, to show that his spiritual authority was superior to any civil authority.\textsuperscript{180} The tiara represented not only the symbol of power, both spiritual and profane but also the Resurrection of Christ.\textsuperscript{181} Unfortunately the last episode on San Lorenzo was damaged even before Eclissi’s time so it is difficult to see what kind of tiara was on the head of the painted figure of the pope. Eclissi first drew a high tiara, characteristic for that time, and then changed it to a short one. In the scene of the healing of the princess, however, the pope standing by the body of St. Stephen has a high tiara. Eclissi’s drawing shows traces of the possible double-crown, which could relate to the time of Boniface VIII or later.

On the power of Boniface VIII Gregorovius observes, “he was the last pope who boldly conceived the thought of an all-ruling hierarchy.”\textsuperscript{182} To legitimize his pontificate and to show his ecumenical power and spiritual dominance, the Pope issued a bull \textit{Unam Sanctam} on 18 November 1302.\textsuperscript{183} The bull reiterated in dogmatic terms that:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{179} Originally the tiara had conical or bee-hive shape and only one crown at the bottom. It had come to be venerated as the tiara of Pope Sylvester and was invested with the prestige of Constantine’s Donation and symbolically emphasized the temporal authority over the West by the addition of the crown to the tiara. Ronald W. Lightbown, \textit{Carlo Crivelli} (New Haven, 2004), 91, 92; Gerhart B. Ladner, “Der Ursprung und die mittelalterliche Entwicklung der päpstlichen Tiara,” in \textit{Tania Roland Hampe zum 70. Geburtstag am 2. Dezember 1978 dargebracht} (Mainz am Rhein, 1978), 449-481.
\item \textsuperscript{180} Bruno Heim, \textit{Heraldry in the Catholic Church} (Gerrards Cross, 1981), 50.
\item \textsuperscript{181} Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, \textit{La cour des papes au XIIIe siècle} (Paris, 1995), 225.
\item \textsuperscript{182} Gregorovius, \textit{History of the City of Rome},” vol. V-2, 597.
\item \textsuperscript{183} Bagliani, \textit{Boniface VIII}, 242; for the entire translation of the text of the bull, see: \textit{A Source Book of Mediæval History: Documents Illustrative of European Life and Institutions From the German Invasion to the Renaissance}, ed. Frederic Austin Ogg (New York, 1908), 383-389; see
\end{itemize}
in this Church and in its power are two swords; namely, the spiritual and the temporal. For when the Apostles say: 'Behold, here are two swords' [Lk 22:38] that is to say, in the Church, since the Apostles were speaking, the Lord did not reply that there were too many, but sufficient. Certainly the one who denies that the temporal sword is in the power of Peter has not listened well to the word of the Lord commanding: 'Put up thy sword into thy scabbard' [Mt 26:52]. Both, therefore, are in the power of the Church, that is to say, the spiritual and the material sword, but the former is to be administered for the Church but the latter by the Church; the former in the hands of the priest; the latter by the hands of kings and soldiers, but at the will and sufferance of the priest.  

The bull also refers to the notion that spiritual power must command and judge temporal power. In his Unam Sanctam the pope described most of the opponents to the Holy See as:

The Greeks and others who pretend that they are not subject to Peter and his successors, by that same claim they affirm that they are not members of the flock of Christ. For there shall be one fold and one shepherd.

This statement referring to Greeks as opponents to his exclusive rule is typical of the general opinion of Greeks as enemies of the Western powers, particularly in spiritual matters. It is also a claim for papal sovereignty. As discussed above, in his story on St. Stephen, Voragine illustrates an episode concerning the delegation of monks from Constantinople that accompanied the body of St. Stephen and planned to take the body of St. Lawrence back to Constantinople in accordance with the

185 A Source Book of Mediæval History, 387.
186 A Source Book of Mediæval History, 386; Jean Rivière, Le problème de l’église et de l’État au temps de Philippe le Bel; étude de théologie positive (Paris, 1926), 405-423.
agreement between the Emperor and the Pope. What is striking in this episode is that when the Greek monks wanted to remove St. Lawrence’s body, the power of the saint rendered the Latin and Greek monks unconscious. Notably, the Greek monks later died. This episode was clearly intended to position Rome as a center of power that even a saint did not want to leave. This anecdote insists that Greeks are schismatic sinners being punished by the saint himself.

The emphases on Rome as the center of Christian religious and secular power that would reclaim its ancient glory under Boniface VIII’s rule, is apparent in the painting commissioned for the Jubilee Year in the Loggia della benedizioni that formed part of the larger cycle from ca. 1297 (Fig. 107).188 The Pope is depicted here with the various symbols of his station and power, being shown giving a solemn benediction to a crowd from a raised marble pulpit. As Maddalo has pointed out “the fresco was intended as a political manifesto for the program of theocratical affirmation of Boniface VIII.”189 It has often been argued that this painting bears a similarity to one of the reliefs from the base of the Theodosian obelisk in

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189 Silvia Maddalo uses Stefaneschi’s *Opus Matriculum*, a hexameter poem, as a main source for the frescoes program and its interpretation; Maddalo, “Traces”, 120 and Maddalo, “Bonifacio VIII,” 129-150.
Constantinople (Fig. 49). The obelisk relief is an example of the *translatio* of antiquity. The scene can be read in the iconographic language of the ancient *adventus* ceremony representing *deus presence* or what MacCormick describes the “stationary” ruler, as in the case of the Trier ivory where the Empress is shown in the position typical of the second phase of *adventus*, which predominated art from the fourth century. As on the Trier ivory, the *adventus* of relics parallels the *adventus* of the Empress, the last episode of the St. Stephen cycle can be read similarly, as a triumphal *adventus* or the last phase of the *translatio* of St. Stephen’s relic and the *translatio imperii* as well.

*Unam Sanctam* makes the pope not only the ultimate ruler of the spiritual world, but the corporeal one as well. In a bull Boniface VIII would refer further to the divine origin of his power and his inheritance of the throne and the power of Saint Peter: “This authority, however, (though it has been given to man and is exercised by man), is not human but rather divine, granted to Peter by a divine word and reaffirmed to him (Peter) and his successors by the One Whom Peter confessed, the Lord saying to Peter himself, 'Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in Heaven' etc., [Mt 16:19].” He would conclude with the words: “Furthermore, we declare, we proclaim, we define that it is absolutely necessary for salvation that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pontiff” giving the confirmation of the purpose of the bull. Henry of Cremona wrote a tract *De

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192 See Chapter Two, pages 105-106.
potestate papae in 1302 defending the pope’s Unam Sanctam. He provided most of the then-accepted spiritual proofs explaining that just as the body is under the soul, and as the pope has authority over all souls, all bodies fall under the pope’s dominion. 194

That idea that resurrection and the path to salvation may be achieved through the intercession of a saint is also represented in adjacent cycle of St. Lawrence, which similarly emphasizes the role of the saint’s body. The cycle is positioned next to the main church doors and shows the saint’s funeral that occurred within. The juxtaposition of two cycles of martyrs next to the main door gives pictorial guidance to the viewer looking for the path to salvation.

The location of both cycles near the main entrance is similar to the design of a ninth century silver altar in Milan, which shows the life of St. Ambrose and the life of Christ (Fig. 108).195 Like the cycle in San Lorenzo, the altar consists of three horizontal registers. Most of the scenes devoted to Christ are represented facing the viewer, while those regarding St. Ambrose are on the back of the altar. The scenes in the front of the altar are separated in the middle by the large cross that occupies the entire middle section of the altar on the back (Fig. 108). The central part of the altar has doors belonging to a very large fenestella (Fig. 109). Cynthia Hahn referred to these doors as “gates of Justice (Ps. 118:19) and the entry to Paradise.” Furthermore, she has pointed out that “rather than being an image or a place, the sacred center thus consists of space and movement-space for the devotion to the

194 Boase, Boniface VIII, 320.
saint, and movement of the soul toward God through the intervention of the saint."196 This remarkable innovation of the Milan altar resonates with the cycle in the portico of San Lorenzo, which similarly divides the two mural cycles depicting the respective exploits of the two deacons buried behind the main door.

The main doors are therefore not only a physical passage to a more spiritual space, closer to the holy relics, but also create a border between a represented world and one of real presence. In the Trier ivory the gate represents not only the border line between two different realms, but also indicates a space of change and transformation. At San Lorenzo the entrance to the church anticipates the transformation that will affect any Christian who comes into proximity to the saints. The bodies of the saints that are represented at eye level give a foretaste of the pleasure the pilgrim will have upon entering the church and drawing close to the actual relics. At the same time, by passing through them one moves along the path toward salvation and personal triumph, which is initiated with the Eucharist that was regularly performed on the main altar over the relics of St. Lawrence and St. Stephen. The imagery confirms the liminal status of the door as a border zone between two realms.

The way the faithful passed from the painted cycle in the portico of San Lorenzo to the real presence of the saint at the altar area resembles a simplified version of what will be developed later as a staged liturgical drama. Tapestries of the life of Stephen made between 1478-1513 originally created for the cathedral in Auxerre, illustrate St. Stephen’s martyrdom, the invention of his relics and their

subsequent translation, first to Jerusalem and then to Constantinople and Rome.\textsuperscript{197}

They were hung and displayed along the rows of the stalls of the clergy creating a stage for a liturgical drama. As the celebration of the saint started, the clergy would move along the path framed with the tapestries to the center of the choir. As they progressed, a service written for this occasion would be read and the clergy would follow a series of steps tracing St. Stephen’s martyrdom and translation. Weigert comments that: “at each of these festivals the procession of St. Stephen’s body in the tapestry seemed to transport these relics from the three capitals of Christendom into the choir.”\textsuperscript{198} Following the path of the saint and his relics in this \textit{imitatio martiri} also indicated the way of salvation and path to final resurrection.

Observing the San Lorenzo portico as a whole, it is worth noting the existence of an adjoining cycle, which shows St. Lawrence’s belt and indicates its possible connection to the exercise of papal power. The story concerns the vision of a Cluniac monk that likely occurred around 1062.\textsuperscript{199} In the vision the monk was approached by the procession of a group of holy people consisting of the Virgin Mary, apostles, and martyrs, amongst which were St. Lawrence and St. Stephen. As a proof that the monk saw this event, St. Lawrence gave him his belt. After the monk presented it to the pope, it gained the reputation as being able to revive dead people.\textsuperscript{200} Wollesen has suggested an attractive thesis that the belt being handed to the monk in San Lorenzo by St. Lawrence is identical to one that played a prominent

\textsuperscript{197} Weigert, \textit{Weaving Sacred Stories}, 81-103.

\textsuperscript{198} Weigert, \textit{Weaving Sacred Stories}, 82.

\textsuperscript{199} For the legend’s text, see: Giovanni Severano, \textit{Memorie Sacre delle sette chiese di Roma e di altri luoghi, che si trovano per le strade di esse} (Rome, 1630), 666.

\textsuperscript{200} Wollesen, \textit{Pictures and Reality}, 86.
role during the enthronement ceremony in the Lateran palace, so called cingulum. Wollesen notes: “for the second part of this ceremony, which was highly profitable to the public, the pope was legitimized by the Belt of St. Lawrence.”

The cycle of the translatio of relics of St. Stephen could be understood as a didactic pictorial narrative. It serves to train the Christian public, especially lay people. St. Stephen’s martyrdom, the translation of his uncorrupted body, and the pope’s depositing of his relics in the church, are clear signs that will mark the path that every Christian will have to take in order for resurrection and final salvation.

The separation of Stephen’s body and soul through a violent, tortuous death advertises the presence of the protomartyr’s relics inside the church in emotionally powerful visual rhetoric, while promoting his role an intercessory saint in the court of heaven. At the point of death, Stephen prays for his persecutors who hover close to his body with the instruments of the martyr’s execution prominently displayed. By emphasizing the martyr’s pain and execution, the iconographers at San Lorenzo created a composition that conveyed a heightened awareness of Stephen’s victory through death to the viewer.

For members of the congregation the large painted fresco cycle on the façade next to the main church entrance was a reminder of the proto-deacon’s role in their salvation and his literal presence within the reliquaries that lay just beyond the doors immediately in front of them. Because even a minuscule piece of a saint maintains the efficacy of the entire individual, the tiniest part of the saint’s relics provided a link between the supplicant and the divine. Furthermore, the cycle was a

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201 Wollesen, *Pictures and Reality*, 89.
reminder for all Christians who came to visit the church that all this would not be possible without the power of the church and its leader the pope.
CHAPTER IV

Žiča monastery

Chapel of St. Stephen

The importance of the cult of St. Stephen in Serbia was closely connected with the emergence and formation of the Serbian medieval state and the Nemanjić dynasty in the twelfth century.¹ St. Stephen was the protector of the Serbian medieval state and its ruling dynasty and therefore closely linked with the person of the ruler. The ruler’s veneration of the state protector was an integral component of medieval monarchical ideology and religious life in Serbia. The pairing of the patron saint and ruler served to give the king’s secular rule a divine provenance.² The strong relationship between St. Stephen and the Serbian ruling dynasty is born out by the fact that his image is found on the reverse side of the state seals and coins.³ The arenga of many royal official charters mentions the First martyr as one of the saints interceding in the succession to the throne and his name is invoked in the charter sanctions. St. Stephen was routinely found in the prayers of the rulers asking

² Smilja Marjanović- Dušanić, Sveti kralj, Kult Stepfana Dečanskog (Beograd, 2007).
for assistance in earthly affairs; they expected him to intercede on their behalf in the other world.\footnote{Stanoje Stanojević, \textit{Studije o srpskoj diplomatici} (Beograd, 1928), 161-188 and 302-340; Vladimir Mošin, Sankcija u vizantijskoj i južnoslovenskoj čirilskoj diplomatici, \textit{Anali Historijskog instituta JAZU u Dubrovniku} 3 (Dubrovnik, 1954): 34-47; Mирјана Љубинковић-Ђоровић, "Одраз култа св. Стефана у српској средњовековној уметности," \textit{Старинар н.с.} 12 (Београд, 1961): 45-60; Marjanović-Ђуšanić, \textit{Vladarska ideologija Nemanjića} 39-41; Vojvodić, 'Prilog proučavanju ikonografije,' 554-551.} St. Stephen had a similar function of protector in the Carolingian court where his relics were venerated in the Palatine chapel in Aachen, and in the Byzantine court where his cult was related to corronation and weding ceremonies. In Serbian texts and iconography, however, he was explicitly conscripted as a source of secular authority being connected with the Nemanjić as a state and dynastic saint.\footnote{For the veneration of St. Stephen in the Carolingian court and the presence of his relics in Aachen see: Ernst Kantorowicz, "Ivories and Litanies," \textit{Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes} 5 (1942): 56-81, especially 79-80; for the cult in Byzantine Empire, see Chapter Two, pages 124-128.} All ruling members of the Nemanjić dynasty begining with Stephen Nemanja (1113-1199) bore his name as part of their title. The veneration of the cult of St. Stephen is envinced by the dedication of numerous churches and chapels to the saint. Furthermore, images of him were prominently positioned next to the iconostasis in nearly all early Nemanjić churches.\footnote{For the list of churches and chapels dedicated to St. Stephen, as well as for the representation of the saint in the Serbian churches, see: Vladimir Petković, Pregled crkvenih spomenika kroz povesnicu srpskog naroda (Belgrade, 1950), 309-310; Vojvodić, 'Prilog proučavanju ikonografije,'552-554.}

In this chapter I will argue that relics of St. Stephen and of the first Serbian royal saint Simeon Nemanja were used as a visible sign of a promised resurrection in the formation of the cult of a royal Serbian saints and thereby served as a means of legitimating dynastic rule.
There is scholarly debate about the influence of the cult of St. Stephen in Serbia. Mirjana Ćorović-Ljubinković and Gábor Klaniczay generally agree that the cult of St. Stephen was probably introduced to the rulers of the Nemanjić dynasty through their strong family connections with the Hungarian dynasty. There was a prominent cult of St. Stephen of Hungaria, the first Christian king of Hungary who founded the dynasty in the eleventh century. St. Stephen of Hungary's biography, written by bishop Hartvic between 1112-1116, says that his mother had a vision in which St. Stephen the protomartyr came to her and told her: "Woman, trust in the Lord, and be assured, for you will give birth to a son, to whom first from this people a crown and kingdom is due; and give him my name." Kinship ties are likely to have played a key role in the story of the impact of the Hungarian royal cult of St. Stephen in Serbia. Hungary's King Bela II the Blind (1131-1141) had married Helena Nemanjić, daughter of the Serbian Grand Duke (župan), Uroš. The Grand Duke Stephen Nemanja and all his descendants would keep the name Stephen as part of the title and as confirmation of their belonging to the newly established holy dynasty. Acknowledging that the cult was venerated by ruling dynasties in the West, such as that of Hungary, Dragan Vojvodić accepts the idea of a Western influence in Serbia; he is, however, more inclined to see the Byzantine Empire as the source of the cult of St. Stephen in Serbia. His argument is based upon an iconographic analysis of representations of St. Stephen in Serbia. Vojvodić claims

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9 Klaniczay, Holy Rulers, 149.
that the Serbian tradition derives from Byzantine art, especially from Constantinople where the cult was established, as discussed in Chapter Two above, dating from the fifth century.\textsuperscript{10}

The development of ideologically founded relic programs in medieval Serbia coincides with the Nemanjić struggle for independence from the Byzantine Empire at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.\textsuperscript{11} St. Sava (St. Saba, 1175-1235/36), the architect of the reform movement was the first archbishop of the Serbian autocephalous church. In the early thirteenth century, he and his brother Stephen Prvovenčani (the First Crowned, d. 1228), Serbia’s first king, commissioned a large-scale building program in Žiča that of the cathedral and coronation church (Fig. 110). The south chapel of the \textit{katholikon} in the Žiča monastery is dedicated to St. Stephen, and the south wall depicts his \textit{translatio} (Fig. 111). The fresco is currently dated 1309-1316 and, according to many scholars, reproduces an original of 1219.\textsuperscript{12}

The chapel of St. Stephen is divided into three horizontal registers. The fresco decoration is poorly preserved due to the destruction of the church roof that was

\textsuperscript{10} Vojvodić, ‘Prilog proučavanju ikonografije,’ 543.


open for centuries until the first reconstruction in the 1856. The east wall of the
chapel has an apse bearing a representation of a standing Virgin, presumably of the
Blachernitissa type, whose upper part is destroyed. The Virgin is flanked with the
two angels. Below the Virgin, in the lower register four church fathers are depicted:
St. Gregory, St. Basil the Great, St. John Chrysostom and St. Atanasios of Alexandria.
On the east wall is a representation of the Annunciation in the upper register, while
the lower one is occupied with images of two deacons, St. Lawrence and St. Aviva.
The middle register of the walls of the chapel was reserved for four scenes depicting
the cycle of St. Stephen’s life. The upper register was likely devoted to scenes from
the life of Christ.

On the south wall, in the upper register is the representation of the
Crucifixion (Fig. 112). In the middle register one finds a large scene of the translatio
of St. Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople as indicated by the inscription.
Below this composition are four standing figures of St. Mitrophane, St. Gregory of
Nyssa, St. Demetrius and St. George. They are grouped in pairs separated by a
window. The west wall, just above the entrance from the exonarthex into the chapel
displays fragments of the cycle of St. Stephen. In the door lunette is the bust of an

13 Milanka Todić, “Žiča- Motivi likovnih predstava, fotografija i razglednica (Žiča-A Motif on
Works of Art, Photographs and Post-Cards), in Manastir Žiča. Zbornik radova (Kraljevo,
2000), 323-328.
Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milano, 2000), 79-89;
Representations of the Virgin in Byzantine Art, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milano, 2000), 139-155;
Robert Cormak, “The Mother of God in Apse Mosaics,” in Mother of God. Representations of
the Virgin in Byzantine Art, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milano, 2000), 91-105; Euthymios
Tsigaridas, “The Mother of God in Wall-Painting,” in Mother of God. Representations of
the Virgin in Byzantine Art, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Milano, 2000), 125-137.
unknown saint. Two standing figures of St. Procopius and St. Arthemius are represented next to the door and toward the south wall. The middle register of the north wall shows two scenes from the life of St. Stephen. The one closer to the west wall represents the stoning of St. Stephen; next to it is the scene of St. Stephen before the judges. In the lower register are representations of four standing figures; moving from west to east they are: St. Nicholas, St. Stephen, St. Tarasius and an unknown church father. In the lunette above the doors that leads to the west bay of the main nave of the katholikon is the bust of St. John Kalivit. The upper zone of the chapel and the cupola were destroyed. Two fragments of paintings of unknown prophets are preserved in the south-west pendentive that suggest that Old Testament prophets may have originally been depicted in the cupola.

The fresco depicting the translation of St. Stephen’s relics from Jerusalem to Constantinople in the south chapel of Žiča is part of an abbreviated cycle of the saint’s life. Like the saint’s cycle in San Lorenzo fuori le mura in Rome, this cycle focuses more on his passion and translation of his relics than his life and miracles. The scene is divided compositionally and physically into two parts by the insertion of a middle window. The right part of the scene shows the departure of the relics includes the city of Jerusalem and some church dignitaries, priests and deacons who carry a coffin or reliquary with the saint’s body. The upper body of St. Stephen and his head are protruding from the closed sarcophagus (Fig. 113). On the left side one finds a representation of the city of Constantinople with the Byzantine emperor, the patriarch and their retinue. Together they welcome the body of the saint. The

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15 See Chapter Three, page 140 following.
connection between the two parts of the composition is established with the representation of kneeling lay people, who are placed underneath the actual window.

The iconography of the translation of relics that includes a representation of the saint’s body protruding from a sarcophagus found in Žiča was unique in medieval art as far as I have been able to establish based upon the preserved evidence. The question therefore presents itself as to what the intention of the creator of this singular iconographic program was and what was this body to signify. Was this a mistake or misinterpretation of well-established iconography? Does this fourteenth century scene repeat iconography of the thirteenth century? How is the iconographical program in Žiča related to the establishing of the royal saint cult in Serbia? I will argue that this innovation was intended to reflect the saint’s body’s paradoxical status: as being neither fully alive nor completely dead, and, as was the case with the Trier ivory and the San Lorenzo cycle, this living-dead ambivalence of the saint here serves ideological ends. Prior to trying to explore these questions, however, it is important to first understand the development of the cult of a royal saint in Serbia and its visual manifestations.

It is clear that Sava’s decision to dedicate the chapel to St. Stephen was intended to align the saint with the cult of royal saints in Serbia. According to Vojislav Djurić the idea to dedicate the side chapels in Žiča to St. Stephen the protomartyr in the south, and St. Saba (Sava) of Jerusalem in the north, belonged to
Sava of Serbia. Subsidiary chapels were not a novelty in Byzantine and medieval architecture of the thirteenth century, however, their dedication to particular saints is unique and is related to the role of Sava as the instigator of the project.

Archbishop Nikodim (1317-1324) wrote in the fourteenth century in the introduction to the translation of the Typikon of the Holy Lavra at Jerusalem that Sava modeled Peć’s church of the Holy Apostles (early thirteenth century) on churches in Jerusalem, namely those of St. Sava of Jerusalem and the church on Mount Sion in which the relics of St. Stephen were translated in 415. The same idea was realized earlier in the katholikon of the Žiča monastery where one chapel was dedicated to St. Sava of Jerusalem, one of the founders of monasticism in the East, and the other to St. Stephen the Protomartyr. It is indicative that the katholicon in Žiča was built as a coronation church, the headquarters of the Serbian Orthodox church, and the mausoleum of the first Serbian king Stephen Prvovenčani. Stephen Prvovenčani received a crown from the pope Honorius III, the same one who


17 The dedication of the side chapels was a personal decision of the founder or the individual who was in charge of the construction of the building. Djurić, “Sveti Sava i slikarstvo njegovog doba”, 249; more on subsidiary chapels, see: Gordana Babić, Les chapelles annexes des églises byzantines; fonction liturgique et programmes iconographiques (Paris, 1969); Slobodan Ćurčić, ”Architectural Significance of Subsidiary Chapels in Middle Byzantine Churches,” Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 36/2 (1977): 94-110; Ida Sinkević, ”Western Chapels in Middle Byzantine Churches: Meaning and Significance,” Starinar 52 (2003): 79-91.

18 Djurić, “Sveti Sava i slikarstvo njegovog doba,” 257.
renovated the tomb of St. Lawrence and St. Stephen in the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mura in Rome.\textsuperscript{19}

Placing the chapel dedicated to St. Saba of Jerusalem, who was a monastic role model for archbishop Sava, in Žiča indicates Sava’s wish to stress the function of Žiča as the seat of the independent Serbian church. At the same time Sava began to realize his intention of creating a holy Nemanjić dynasty by closely associating St. Stephen, as a dynastic and state protector, with the coronation of Serbian rulers through the dedication of the south chapel to the saint. Since the south chapel was repainted in the fourteenth century, confirmation that in the thirteenth century the chapel was dedicated to St. Stephen is found in the church’s thirteenth century charter.\textsuperscript{20}

Though the church in Žiča was famous for its relic of the True Cross, amongst other treasures, we do not have any written sources that can confirm the presence of the relics of St. Stephen in the church.\textsuperscript{21} The only trace that they once were in Serbia, are the records of the Chilandary monastery on Month Athos that date from the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{22} These documents mention that the relics of St. Stephen had been sent in a container covered in silver as a gift to the Russian emperor Ivan the

\textsuperscript{19} See Chapter Three, page 140, note 18; for more information on the correspondence with the Pope Honorius III, see: Thomas Archidiaconus, \textit{Historia Salonitana}, ed. Franjo Rački (Zagrabiae, 1894), 91; Istorija srpskog naroda vol. 1 (Beograd, 1994), 301, note. 12.
\textsuperscript{20} For the chrysobull, see: \textit{Monumenta serbica, spectantia historiam Serbiae, Bosniae, Regusii}, ed. Fr. Miklosich (Vienna, 1858),11; Babić, \textit{Les chapelles}, 134, 145.
\textsuperscript{21} Popović, “Sacrae Reliquiae Spasove Crkve u Žiči,” 17-33.
Terrible in 1550. This could be the same relic that once belonged to Žiča, whose treasure was moved in the thirteenth century due to the invasion of the Cumans.23

In the thirteenth century the side chapel in the newly built exhonarthex from 1233/34 in the monastery Studenica was dedicated to the first Serbian royal saint Stephen Nemanja, known as St. Simeon Nemanja, who was also the founder of this monastery (Fig. 114). The chapel was decorated with scenes of the death and translation of St. Simeon Nemanja’s relics (Fig. 10). The first Serbian royal saint will be soon paralleled with St. Stephen when chapels dedicated to these two saints were built and decorated with the cycles of their translations in the church of the Saviour in the Sopoćani monastery in 1276 (Fig. 115). This church was built by King Stephen Uroš I, great grandson of St. Simeon Nemanja. The pairing of St. Stephen and St. Simeon Nemanja likely occurred because by the end of his life Nemanja was not only the founder of the now heredity holy dynasty but also he was considered as one of the founders of Serbian monasticism.24 This informs us of the significance of the cult of St. Stephen the Protomartyr not only as a protector of the state but also as a protector of the holy royal dynasty. Linking chapels dedicated to St. Stephen the First martyr and to St. Simeon in Sopoćani, emphasized the significance of the monastic vows that Nemanja took by the end of his life, paralleling monastic asceticism with martyrdom.

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23 Žiča was probably devastated by Cumans in 1253 when the archbishop’s seat was moved to the Monastery in Peć. See, István Vásáry, Cumans and Tatars: Oriental Military in the Pre-Ottoman Balkans, 1185-1365 (Cambridge ; New York, 2005), 100.
As elsewhere in the Christian world, the cult of relics in medieval Serbia was polyvalent in its function. In addition to its religious role, the body of the saint often played an important political one. Central to the cult was the idea of a holy ruler, a concept, which demands to be viewed in a broader, European context. Through archbishop Sava’s efforts, the notion of the holy ruler in medieval Serbia was promoted by means of the canonization of the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty and his father, Stephen (Stefan) Nemanja (1113-1199). From that time on, this became an essential component in Serbian royal ideology. The cult of royal relics was scrupulously elaborated in all of its prescribed details: theological, ritualistic, liturgical and artistic.

The concept of the meticulously developed and realized ideological program of the royal saint was accorded to his son, prince Rastko. Rastko, the youngest son of Nemanja, took monastic vows in 1193 and adopted the name Sava. Sava of Serbia was not only a monk and later the first Archbishop of the autocephalic Serbian

25 See below, note 33.
church, he was also a successful diplomat who intervened in both secular and religious matters. For that reason and his vast theological knowledge, Sava was widely renowned in the Orthodox world. Being fully aware of the theological and hagiological conceptions of the cult of the saints as well as its strong political implications as indicated by the dedication of the south chapel in the coronation church to St. Stephen, Sava was able to create a complex model of the saint and a strong dynastic cult.

The Grand Duke (župan) Stephen Nemanja who ruled Serbia throughout much of the second half of the twelfth century (1168-95), liberated himself and his country from vassalage to the Byzantine emperor, Manuel I Comnenos (1118-1180). In the last years of his life, Stephen Nemanja abdicated from the throne and took monastic vows in 1197 at the Studenica monastery, which he had founded in 1183. Nemanja, now monk Simeon, did not start his monastic life in Serbia. He traveled to Mount Athos to prepare for his earthly death. After spending a year at the Vatopedi monastery, Simeon, joined by his son Sava, founded a new religious community at the site of an abandoned Byzantine monastery known as Chilandary.

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28 For more on Sava and his diplomatic influences, see: Dimitri Obolensky, Six Byzantine Portraits (Oxford, 1988), 115-172; Francis Dvornik, The Slavs in European History and Civilization (New Brunswick, 1962), 96-103.
30 About Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) and his time, see: Paul Magdalino, The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos (1143-1180) (Cambridge, 1993).
Simeon died there in 1199 and was buried in the church dedicated to the Presentation of the Virgin.\textsuperscript{32}

At the time of Stephen Nemanja’s rule Serbia was both, geographically and culturally, positioned on the border between the East and the West. At the turn of the century the Serbian ruler fought for independence and looked for allies on both sides of Christianity. The central geographical location of Medieval Serbia brought a complex mixture of cultural, political and religious influences from both sides of the Christian world. This cross-cultural influence is reflected in the Sava’s ideological program of St. Simeon Nemanja. He created the cult of his father and later the Nemanjić dynasty based on the threefold model of ruler, monk and saint. Within the royal saint cult Stephen Nemanja was presented as an ideal example. He was viewed as a warrior who fought not only for the liberation of his own state, but for the faith as well. As an ideal ruler he was a God-chosen head of the state with all the accompanying attributes that pertained to such a figure, understood according to literary models such as the Mirror of Princes.\textsuperscript{33} On the other hand, his equally important attribute as a monk drew upon the Byzantine hagiographic legacy.\textsuperscript{34}

The model of medieval royal sainthood was translated from the ancient tradition of sacred and divine attributes of Hellenistic rulers and Roman emperors.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{33} Wilhelm Bergers, \textit{Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters} (Stuttgart, 1952).
\textsuperscript{35} Andreas Alföldi, \textit{Die monarchische Repräsentation im römischen Kaiserreich} (Darmstadt, 1970); Ernst Kantorowicz, \textit{The King’s Two Bodies; a Study in Mediaeval Political Theology},
This model was mostly developed and used in the West. Though many of the emperors were almost divinized, there was no officially canonized emperor-saint in the Byzantine realm. Royal sainthood incorporated several important Christian ideas into the developing the cult; for example, the adoption of the values of the rex iustus. This was the king who converted his people to Christianity, supported church institutions, waged war for the right faith and usually received a martyrs’ death.

According to Robert Folz and the Bollandist tradition, there were three main royal saint types: martyr, confessor, and miracle-worker (thaumaturge). Folz sorted these types chronologically. The first to develop in the Early Middle Ages was the holy martyr king. From the eleventh to the thirteenth century, a new type arose: the saint confessor, which would be very popular with royal saints. The last type emerged from the thirteenth century onwards and was related to the phenomenon of healing miracles worked by rulers.

The beginning of the formation of the model of a holy king in the West can be traced from the seventh century and it is related to Anglo-Saxon royal sainthood. The Anglo-Saxons created cults based on the model of holy kings who abdicated and became monks, usually used among the Merovingians. According to Gábor Klaniczay by the eleventh century the cult of the royal saint was an established method of

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(Princeton, 1957); Simon R.F. Price, Rituals of Power. The Roman Imperial cult in Asia Minor (Cambridge, 1984);
Evegii Golubinskii, Istoriia kanonizatsii sviatykh’ v’ russkoï tserkvi (Moscow, 1903), 264-270.
Robert Folz, Les saints rois du Moyen Age an Occident (IVe-XIIIe siècles), Subsidea Hagiographica 68 (Brussels, 1984), 19-27.
“providing religious support for royal power.”

Hugh of Saint Victor (1096-1141) sees the formation of royal sainthood as a counterweight to the papal ascendancy in political theory. The cult of the royal saint was often used as a weapon in dynastic struggles or to defend against the claims of pretenders. Folz provides a complex review of all the topoi related to the formation of the royal saint cult, describing the extension of the dynastic royal saint cult and its claims of sanctity to include whole dynasties. Folz identifies an important aspect of the political function of the cults of royal saints as legitimization.

The Serbian model of the royal saint was centered on the ruler-monk-saint triad. These three components were incorporated into the Life of Saint Simeon written by his two sons, Sava and the future first Serbian king Stephen, earlier in the thirteenth century, and would be reiterated by the monks Domentijan (c. 1210-1264) and Teodosije (1246-1328) in the second half of the century.

The model ruler-monk-saint encompassed a number of prescribed virtues and duties defining the ruler as a victorious warrior, protector of the church and orthodoxy, rex iustus. It therefore followed the western model described by Folz and Klaniczay. In Stephen Namanja’s biography, Sava describes his father as an ideal ruler who came to power and rule by God’s will. This reflects the emulation of the Byzantine imperial model. Byzantine theory of imperial authority was a mainspring

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40 Klaniczay, The Uses of Supernatural Power, 83.
42 Folz, Les saints rois du Moyen Age, 67, 137-146.
44 Sveti Sava, Sabrani spisi, 97-98.
of the Byzantine political ideology, according to which the emperor is chosen by God, called to rule by Divine Providence, and fulfills Divine Will by reigning over an empire protected by God. The state is also divided into a hierarchical order of social ranks. The Emperor, as the omnipotent ruler of the Romans, was the only legitimate emperor on earth. After achieving political independence, as Serbia did, countries that were formerly part of the Roman orbis, would never be of equal standing with the empire. As Ostrogorski has pointed out: “even when some countries enjoyed political independence from Byzantium and became more powerful than the empire itself, from an ideological point of view, the Byzantine empire still held a more elevated position as the sole legitimate empire on earth.”

Stephen Nemanja insisted that his power was an extension of God’s will and that he was chosen by God like the Byzantine Emperor, but he was fully aware that there was only one empire and one emperor in the Christian world. Although Nemanja fought the Byzantine state and expanded the territory of Serbia at its expense, Byzantine political ideology was so powerful that he and other rulers of independent countries continued to recognize the supremacy of the Byzantine emperor.

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The monastic was the second aspect of the triadic ruler-monk-saint paradigm adopted in Serbia. According to Popović, “viewed within a broader European framework, the monastic component is one of the most striking peculiarities of the “holy king” cult in Nemanjić times.”\footnote{Popović, \textit{Pod okriljem svetosti} (Under the Auspices of Sanctity) (Beograd, 2006), 19.} Taking a monastic vow and living the life of an earthly angel, as Sava is described in St. Simeon Nemanja’s biography, seems to have been the best way of attaining sanctity.\footnote{Sveti Sava, \textit{Sabrani spisi}, 20.} After Nemanja’s abdication, the adoption of the angelical guise became a monastic ideal that would be followed by most of his offspring either by their taking monastic vows on their deathbed or by exercising commendable ascetic virtues during their lifetime.\footnote{Popović, \textit{Pod okriljem svetosti}, 19.} In St. Simeon’s biographies the monastic ideals and virtues are described by means of an established repertoire of commonplaces familiar in most saint’s hagiographies. The first moment describes the stages of his life of ascetic self-denial. Then follows Nemanja’s taking on a monk’s habit and his pursuit of an ascetic existence on Mount Athos. The next stage was his death, which is described in detail. Nemanja, according to Sava’s writing, was well prepared when he went to God. He had specified the circumstances of his death, commanding his son Sava:

\begin{quote}
When the twelfth day of that month came he (Simeon) said to me ‘My child, bring near to me the very holy icon of the Virgin Mother because I have made a vow to die near her. ‘And when this command had been fulfilled and when it was evening he said ‘My child, I pray you to put on me the robe which is for my funeral, and make all the ritual preparations so that I may be as I shall lie in the tomb, and lay a rush mat on the ground and put me on it, and
\end{quote}
place a stone under my head so that I shall lie thus until God comes to take me away from this place.’ And I fulfilled all that he commanded me to do.51

Another account of the death of a ruler in a monk’s habit is found in the account given by Niketas Choniates (1150-1215-16) on the Death of Manuel Comnenus.52 Interestingly, this is the Emperor that Nemanja fought in order to expand Serbian territory. In one respect the account given by Niketas and Sava is similar: they were both powerful monarchs who died as monks. The difference is that Niketas views the case of the Byzantine emperor ironically, while Sava’s elicits respectful sorrow.

In Sava’s description of Nemanja’s death we can find a parallel to the death of St. Stephen. While dying, St. Stephen saw Christ next to God the Father. Similarly, Simeon Nemanja had a vision of Christ into whose hands he was hoping to be transported

When morning came and service began his visage at once lighted up and he raised his arms to the Heavens and said ‘Praised be to God in all His Glory. Praise be to the strength of His Power.’ And I said to him ‘Whom do you see that you speak so?’ And he looking at me replied ‘Praise be to Him for His Power, and for His Almighty Kingdom.’ And having spoken thus, he immediately gave up his Holy Soul and fell asleep in God.53

Before the removal of Simeon’s body from his tomb and its translatio to Serbia, a monk, probably from the Chilandary monastery, wrote another text related to the death of Stephen Nemanja where he gave a detailed account of his death and his

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53 Sveti Sava, Sabrani spisi, 182; Winfield, “Four Historical Compositions,’ 252-253.
vision.\textsuperscript{54} These two biographical texts unquestionably contributed to the formation of the \textit{post mortem} cult of the new royal saint. St. Stephen was the first martyr and St. Simeon Nemanja was a devoted monk was considered a martyr of ascetic denial.\textsuperscript{55}

Post-mortem miracles were very important in the establishing of a saint’s cult. St. Simeon Nemanja was a royal saint \textit{traumaturgos} or wonder maker, whose holiness was first revealed on his tomb in the monastery of Chilandary eight years after his death\textsuperscript{56} when a sweet smelling oil started to flow from his tomb. The sign of the flowing myrth was only described in the monk’s record of Simeon’s death.\textsuperscript{57} The flow of myrth was merely a sign of the revelation of his holy status. Next came the \textit{elevatio} of his relics from the tomb in Chilandary monastery.\textsuperscript{58} Sava wrote little about this event except noting that he opened his father’s tomb to find his body undamaged.\textsuperscript{59}

The next and most important stage in the process of canonization was the \textit{translatio} of Simeon to Serbia and deposition at Studenica, Simeon’s burial church.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{54} Dimitrije Bogdanović, “Kratko žitije svetog Save,” \textit{Zbornik Matice srpske za književnost i jezik} 24/1 (1976), 5-32.
\item \textsuperscript{55} Simeon Nemanja was often represented dressed as a monk of a Great Schema (\textmu\textgamma\textalpha\lambda\omicron\sigma\chi\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma) as on his donor portrait over the tomb in Studenica from 1208-09 that was repainted in the sixteenth century. The Great Schema is the final stage in monasticism achieved when the abbot feels that the monk has reached a high level of spiritual excellence. The degree of asceticism necessary to become a Great Schema is very strict and not something of which everyone is capable. On the dates of the painting, see: Sava Mandić, “Otkrivanje i konzervacija fresaka u Studenici,” \textit{Saopštenja} 1 (1956): 38-40; for the repainting and repeated composition, see: Svetozar Radojičić, \textit{Portreti} 13, Popović, \textit{Srpski vladarski grob}, 35.
\item \textsuperscript{56} For the most recent study about the formation of the cult of St. Simeon Nemanja, see: Popović, “O nastanku kulta svetog Simeona,” 4-73.
\item \textsuperscript{57} Popović, “O nastanku kulta svetog Simeona,” 30.
\item \textsuperscript{58} For more on the role of \textit{elevatio} in the process of canonization, see Chapter One, page 30-31.
\item \textsuperscript{59} Sveti Sava, \textit{Sabrani spisi}, 47-48.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Fig. 114). Studenica was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the first dynastic mausoleum of the Nemanjić. The final revelation of sainthood was followed by miracles in Studenica, confirming his holiness at the tomb. This signaled the fulfillment of the saint’s new role of securing the prosperity of the holy dynasty of the Nemanjić and the Serbian state.

This brings us to the last component in the triadic ruler-monk-saint model. In the course of the establishment of the Serbian ruler saints, the hagiological-liturgical texts in the service of the cult were gradually created and received their final form in the Service to St. Simeon Nemanja. In addition to the four thirteenth century hagiographies, as a part of the canonization of a saint, St. Simeon Nemanja also received an official liturgical service. Sava likely composed this text following the revelation of St. Simeon’s vision and the miracles that occurred in Studenica. According to Danica Popović, the celebration of Simeon Nemanja as a saint was modeled on the eastern Christian manner of celebrating saints or anagnoristi. It differs from the formal proclamation of sainthood, or avakiriksis, which resembles Roman Catholic canonization.

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In addition to the hagiographical and hymnological components that were important for liturgical veneration there were additional elements in the formation of the cult of royal saints whose ultimate purpose was the sacralize and legitimize the state. One of predominating aspects that served the ends of political and dynastic propaganda was ritual. Such rituals marked the formal and public inauguration of a new national saint and were recorded in forms of visual propaganda. Popović has argued that although the ritual elements in the formation of St. Simeon Nemanja’s cult, namely the progressive stages of the elevatio, translatio and depositio of the relics, were based on a Byzantine hagiographic model, they were in fact closer to Western examples in their function. As Popović has pointed out, the culmination of the formation of the cult of St. Simeon was achieved, in “the triumphal adventus.” Translatio would be translated into pictorial language with the representation of the saint’s body, which would become one of the most forceful aspects of the celebration of the cult of St. Simeon in the medieval Serbia.

1. Translating the Royal Body

“Lenin” and “Death these words are enemies. “Lenin” and “Life” are comrades...
Lenin
Lived.
Lenin
Lives.
Lenin

Will live. (Vladimir Maiakovsky's poem “Komsomolskaia”)

The figuring of Lenin as Christ or as a saint were powerful images employed in the eulogies that marked his death. One, published on the day of his funeral by Lev Sosnovsky, expressed the duality of Ilich the man and Lenin the immortal. This dualism imitates that of Christ as well as that of the medieval Russian tsar in his ideal form: humble in his human persona and immortal in the majesty of his office.

From the moment of his death, the remains of the leader were invested with life and power in official propagandist publications: “… even in silence he continues to do that with which he was busy his entire life: he organizes, rallies, calls people to the struggle again and again.” Imitating the Christian cult of the saint and relics, the most powerful symbol of Lenin’s sanctity and immortality was his uncannily preserved body that was placed on permanent display in his marble mausoleum and that became the principal pilgrimage site for his cult. In the Russian historical imaginary, this established him as a certified saint with visibly incorruptible remains. As in the Christian church, Lenin’s canonization was evident not only in the flesh, but also in the biographies that described his life in terms of his prophecies and political miracles. This sanctification is evidenced by a poem published in Siberia in 1924, which explicitly describes him as being in a state of living death:

...He, having given up his immeasurable burden,
He has not died, but merely sleeps:
Our tired leader is resting

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66 *Pravda* January 26, 1924, 168
Under his granite tombstone.  

Lenin’s embalmed body provided a visible symbol for the ongoing veneration of the dead leader. It would be a constant reminder of his presence and marked him as an oddly modern mixture of saint, tsar, and revolutionary martyr.

The formation of the cult of Lenin through his body in the second decade of the twentieth century continues to operate up to the present day. Stalin would receive a similar communistic canonization. One contemporary icon depicting him in the company of the Blessed Matrona of Moscow (1885-1952) was displayed in the church of St. Olga outside St. Petersburg until 2008 when the church authorities requested its removal as blasphemy (Fig. 116).

This modern-day damnatio memoriae confirms the persistence of the model of political ideology that formed around the role of the saint’s body within the dissemination of papal ideology in the late Middle Ages. For the medieval Christian the body was both an external sign and an internal hierarchy. The individual, from the Latin individuum, “undivided one,” was in fact divided metaphysically into body and soul. The Church was the link between these two selves and two worlds, and it placed the human body at the centre of its beliefs about subjectivity and faith;

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68 Father Yevstafy Zhakov, priest of St. Olga’s Church in the town of Strelna in the region of St. Petersburg, recently put up a painting in the form of an icon showing Stalin standing before the Blessed Matrona of Moscow, a 20th-century saint. According to legend a Russian saint Matrona Nikonova, was a blind Russian woman canonized for, among other things, her frequent conversations with Stalin during which she gave him advice on how to defeat Nazi Germany in World War II. THE MOSCOW TIMES - Wednesday, December 10, 2008.
69 See Chapter Three, pages 188-192.
within the rituals of the Church, the venerated body of the saint operated within discourses of authority, authenticity, place and power.

The most important element of the propaganda relating to the royal saint cult in medieval Serbia was the visual representation of the *translatio* of the body of St. Simeon Nemanja from Monastery Chilandary on Mount Athos to the Studenica monastery. There are three fresco cycles known to us, in Studenica, Sopoćani and Gradac, of which the last one is no longer visible. The oldest cycle was painted for the chapel of St. Simeon in the monastery Studenica. As mentioned earlier, Studenica was built by Stephen Nemanja as his mausoleum church in 1186. It is a single-nave church of the so-called Raška plan with the nave, narthex and exonarthex. The later was added to the church by the King Radoslav, grandson of Stephen Nemanja. Scholars generally agree that it was built between 1233-1236 when it was also decorated with frescoes. The exonarthex was used as a funeral site but there are no indications that the King Radoslav was buried there. Subsidiary chapels were built on both sides of the exonarthex, dedicated to St. Nicholas (north) and St. Simeon Nemanja (south). For this inquiry the most interesting is the south chapel dedicated to St. Simeon Nemanja. The fresco scenes in the chapel are heavily

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71 The fresco cycle of *translatio* of Simeon Nemanja from the south chapel in the Gradac monastery was visible until the beginning of the twentieth century but due to the missing roof, the fresco become unreadable. For the old photographs, see: Gabriel Millet, *La peinture du Moyen Âge en Yougoslavie* (Serbie, Macédonie et Monténégro), Album, Vol. II (Paris, 1957), pl. 49-67.


damaged and it is possible to identify some scenes only by comparison with a similar cycle from the Sopoćani monastery, which is better preserved.

The east wall of the chapel has a small niche under the window in the lower part, which depicts a Virgin of the Blachernitissa type with her hands in a praying position and the Christ child in a medallion on her chest (Fig. 117). She stands in front of a throne. A similar Virgin Blachernitissa is represented in a marble panel, presumably from twelfth century Constantinople, and now in the church of Santa Maria Mater Domini, Venice (Fig. 118). Another example is found on the Jasper Panagirion from the Chilandary monastery at Mount Athos dating from the tenth to eleventh centuries (Fig. 119). Two bishops carrying unfurled scrolls flank the apse. A deacon in full-frontal view completes the row of the standing figures in the lower register of the south wall. The standing figures on the south and on the part of the west wall represent portraits of members of the Holy Nemanjić dynasty (Fig. 120).

Next to St. Simeon Nemanja who is dressed in his monk’s garb we find a kneeling figure of an abbot, probably that of the Studenica monastery. On the other side of St. Simeon Nemanja is Stephen the First Serbian king, who is also in monastic garb, and shown accompanying his son, King Radoslav, the founder of the exonarthex. King Radoslav is presenting the model of his building to the first Serbian royal saint with his wife is shown at his side. In the donor composition, King Radoslav offers his

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75 See above, note 14.
77 According to the reading of Gordana Babić, see: Babić, Les chapelles, 142.
earthly gift to his saintly grandfather, thereby soliciting the protection of his ancestors in the world to come.

The upper register of the chapel shows a hagiographical cycle, a novelty in Serbian medieval painting. This series illustrates the life, death, and translation of saint Simeon Nemanja’s relics from Chilandary to Studenica. The cycle starts on the east wall where two scenes are depicted. Both have suffered severe damage. The first likely shows the departure of Stephen Nemanja to Month Athos. The only preserved part of the composition is the left-hand corner. Here one sees several figures led by a nobleman who are grouped around a town building or a gate with a gabled roof. They appear to be wishing farewell to someone who, based upon what remains of the lower part of the garment, was dressed as a monk. According to Djurić’s reading, the next scene represents Nemanja’s arrival to the Holy mountain (Month Athos). Two horses formerly stood in the left part of the composition, now known only through drawings of Svetislav Mandić.78

The cycle continues on the south wall where the upper register contains a representation of Nemanja’s arrival at Mount Athos. Though the composition is almost entirely effaced, traces of what look to be hooves indicate the presence of a horse and, likely, a rider. By analogy with the similar cycle from the Sopoćani monastery, one can conclude that this scene represents the arrival of Stephen Nemanja to Mount Athos and the Vatopedi monastery. The composition on the west wall is completely destroyed, but again, based on the Sopoćani cycle, one may safely assume that this was the scene of St. Simeon’s Nemanja’s death.

The lower register of the north wall exhibits portraits of other important members of the royal family and the Serbian church. Close to the west wall is a representation of hieromoines Sava who would become the third Serbian archbishop. Next to him is the image of Arsenije I, the second Serbian archbishop and successor of Sava I on the throne of the church. He is followed by a portrait of the Serbian first archbishop Sava I who is depicted next to the door. On the other side of the door, on the north wall, is a small niche with a bust-length representation of Christ. Above the niche deacon-angels, as Gordana Babić has defined them, are painted. The upper register of the entire north wall is reserved for the most important composition from the cycle of St. Simeon Nemanja, the *translatio* of his relics to Serbia.

The scene of the *translatio* on the north wall is bisected by the icon of the Virgin placed above the entrance that leads from the exhonarthex into the chapel (Fig. 10). This compositional arrangement is very similar to the representation of the *translatio* of St. Stephen in Žiča’s chapel. The right side of the composition has a building in the background, which resembles the monastery of Studenica. The main building represents a single-nave church, with a gabled roof and marble façade. It prominently features a red dome covered with lead, which resembles the roof of the church of the Virgin Mary at Studenica. Evidence has been found indicating that the dome was originally built out of brick and, after having been restored, now appears

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79 Hieromoines was a monk who received the holy orders; Caesarius Tondini, “The Future of the Russian Church I,” *The Catholic world* 20/118 (1875): 544-557, 555.
identical to the one in the fresco.  

The represented church is surrounded by a crenellated wall with towers, which probably symbolizes the walls of the Studenica monastery.

In front of the monastery’s wall a large group of people is painted of whom all those visible are bearded and wear purple, white or red monk’s cowls or koukoulion. The other members of the welcoming delegation are dressed as deacons with tonsures on their heads.  

The groups are connected by two principal figures standing in the foreground, one of which wears the vestments of a bishop while the other appears to have only a plain white robe. Both of them carry books, presumably the Gospel, in their left hands. The bishop makes a gesture of greeting towards the approaching body of the saint with his right hand, which recalls the similar iconographic program of the Trier ivory. This resemblance is underscored by the use of half-open doors on the church of the Virgin Mary that lies behind the walls, indicating the final resting place of the holy relics.

The remaining portion of the left side of the composition shows a group of people carrying the body of St. Simeon Nemanja. The best preserved is the front bearer of the bier who is dressed in an elaborate costume with bands of jeweled decoration. Judging by costume, another individual of noble origin assists him. The legs of St. Simeon Nemanja on the bier are only partially visible as are the legs of the

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81 Čanak-Medić and Bošković, Arhitektura Nemanjinog doba, 79-118
82 Winfield has argued that they appear to be deacons of the Serbian Church since they have roman tonsures and beards. He reads tonsures as a sign catholic influence, which enters Italian painting in the thirteenth century but is rare in the Eastern Church outside of Serbia. The fresco of the Serbian St. Sava show him as having a Roman tonsure. The Roman tonsure does appear in Russia in some figures from the church of our Saviour at Neredici near Novgorod, see: Winfield, “Four Historical Compositions,” 251-278.
other participants in the *translatio*. What connects the two sides of the composition is the icon of the Virgin Mary, positioned exactly above the doorway into the chapel. The image of the Virgin is above an image of Christ placed on a painted *mandilion* in the door’s lunette. The icon belongs to a series of representations of the Mother of God holding a scroll, a type of mediatrix. She functions here as an intercessor between earthly and divine realms, anticipating the position of St. Simeon Nemanja who, by passing through the gate of the Studenica monastery will enter a new, divine realm. The Virgin intercedes on the behalf not only of St. Simeon Nemanja, but the entire ruling family. Ivan Djordjević and Miodrag Marković have reconstructed the text on the scroll according to a similar one preserved in the Sopoćani fresco. The intercessory text was reduced to a single sentence due to the lack of a space; it reads: “Accept, o Lord, the petitions of those praying to Thee.”

The designer of the program of the frescoes successfully accommodated the compositions to an irregular, small space but ingeniously positioned the icon of the Virgin Mary in the composition of the *translatio* so that she would be located above the doorway. By doing so, he laid out a path for the relics of St. Simeon, which would find their final resting place inside the church by passing through that door. It is interesting to compare this to the example of the Virgin mediatrix from the mosaic composition on the south face of the north pier of the church of St. Diemetrios in

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Thessalonike from seventh to ninth century (Fig. 121). Here, the Virgin holds a scroll while standing beside St. Theodore who is shown in an attitude of supplication. Behind them one finds a pair of half-open doors and above them, the figure of Christ is shown in a segment of the sky, blessing. Vines and flowers protrude through the open doors, indicating the heavenly realm. It is clear that in St. Demetrious as in Studenica, St. Theodore and St. Simeon cross the threshold to the promised life with the Virgin’s assistance. Furthermore, the placement of the icon above the doorway in the Studenica chapel effectively instructs the beholder that their prayers will only be fulfilled through the intersession of the new royal saint aided by the Virgin Mary and Christ. Her position suggests that this will only occur by entering the chapel and visiting the relics within. This notion is underscored by the position of the baptismal font in front of the chapel. The location of the font not only references St. Simeon Nemanja as a model of a true saint who should be emulated, but also implies that salvation and final rest may only be found through baptism into the true Christian faith. This recalls the Trier ivory (Fig. 2), which, as discussed above, depicts relics triumphally entering a city or palace through a gate, indicating the transformation and sanctification of the saint’s body.

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85 There is debate among scholars about the date of the mosaic. N. Kondakov, Iconografii, 365-368 dates it in the ninth century, which agrees with V. Lazarev’s dating in his Istoria vizantiiskoizhivopisi (Moscow, 1986), 41; Christopher Walter argues for the later date only for the figure of the Virgin as part of the eleventh century restoration. Christopher Walter, “Two notes on the Deësis,” Revue des etudes Byzantines 26 (1968), 323. The earliest dating in the seventh century is by A. Xyngopoulos and K. Weitzmann, A. Xyngopoulos, The Mosaics of the Church of St. Demetrius at Thessaloniki (Thessalonike, 1969), 24-27; Kurt Weitzmann, The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, the Icons (Princeton, 1976), 22.

86 See Chapter Two, pages 95-111.
Once established, the iconographical program depicting the life and death of St. Simeon Nemanja would be repeated in other royal mausoleum churches of the Nemanjić dynasty in the thirteenth century. The best-preserved example comes from the Sopoćani monastery, constructed by the King Stephen Uroš I between 1270-1276 (Fig. 115). As in the Studenica, the cycle in Sopoćani was located in the south subsidiary chapel off of the nave of the catholicon church dedicated to the Savior. The north chapel, as I have mentioned above, was dedicated to St. Stephen which contains scenes from his passion and translation, similar to those in Žiča. Unfortunately, only fragments of the cycle are preserved today.

The cycle of St Simeon Nemanja in the Sopoćani follows an iconographic schema, which echoes that of Studenica. The scenes of the saint’s last days on Mount Athos, death and *translatio* are represented in the upper register of the chapel.

The upper register of the south wall used to contain two scenes from the life of St. Simeon Nemanja of which only traces remain. It is clear that there were once two scenes because the red border that divided them is still visible. The left one likely showed St. Simeon Nemanja’s departure to Mount Athos, the scene that was represented on the east wall in Studenica. In the neighboring image one can see evidence of parts of two riders: one on a white horse and the other on a dark one. Djurić claims that this was the arrival a scene composed on the model of Christ’s Entry into Jerusalem or a Roman *adventus*. It is thanks to these remains that it was possible to identify the damaged composition of the arrival scene in Studenica.

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88 Djurić, “Istorijes kompozicije,” 87.
The west wall’s upper register was reserved for the death of St. Simeon Nemanja (Fig. 122). As opposed to the Studenica example where we don’t have any trace of this composition, it is relatively well preserved in the Sopoćani version. The dominant feature of the image is a wooden mat placed on a stone plaque, on which the dead body of St. Simeon Nemanja has been laid out. Three figures in monk’s cloaks lean over his body while one figure, whose head is now missing, is located near the head of the saint. According to Sava’s description of his father’s death, this probably represents Sava kissing his father’s corpse, which was a common manner for representing the death of a monk. Another example of this motif is preserved in the monastery of Stylos dedicated to Paul on Mont Latmos and dated between the twelfth and thirteenth century (Fig. 123).\textsuperscript{89} Here one finds the Dormition of the titular saint Paul, whose body is shown laid out on a wooden mat. People surrounding the body participate in a liturgical service while his soul, in the form of a baby, is transported to heaven by angels.

The \textit{translatio} of St. Simeon Nemanja at Sopoćani is represented in the upper register of the north wall (Fig. 124). As in Studencia, the scene is divided into images of a procession and the reception of his relic. The main part of the composition shows a bier bearing the saint’s body whose front end is being carried by a nobleman dressed in an elaborate garment with a red cloak decorated with patterned gold trim fastened centrally by a large, round, bejeweled clasp. Next to him are several figures of whom only the heads are visible. On the opposite side, another noble person dressed similar to the leader supports the bier. He is surround

\textsuperscript{89} Gustav Kühnel, \textit{Wall painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem} (Berlin, 1988), 202; Babić, \textit{Les Chapeles}, 103, fig. 69.
by a group of people one of whom holds his arm. This figure has a long gray beard and is dressed in a purple garment. These two bearers are clearly noble figures and very likely represent the King Stephen Prvovenčani and his brother Vukan. The bier itself is covered with a long reddish fabric on top of which the body of St. Simeon Nemanja has been laid. His arms are crossed at his chest. He wears a monk’s clothes and has a nimbus around his head. The body is turned in a position such that he faces the icon of the Virgin and the reception scene. A final peculiarity of the bier is that the body of St. Simeon lies on it with no covering of any kind. This raises questions about the significance of the body of the first royal saint in Serbia and the origin of such iconography in Serbian medieval painting.

The body of St. Simeon Nemanja had a twofold function in the construction of the ideology of the royal saint and the establishment of the holy Nemanjić dynasty. As we saw earlier, St. Simeon Nemanja revealed himself after his death by the flow of myrth from his grave. This was a sign of his holiness and a warning that he should be taken from his tomb and be relocated to a more prominent position. According to the Life of St. Simeon Nemanja written by his son Sava, Vukan and Stephen First-crowned (Prvovenčani) asked him to bring the body of their holy father back to Serbia. At this time a civil war had erupted between the two brothers over the Serbian throne. After his abdication, Simeon Nemanja decided to leave his crown to his younger son Stephen, which went against the unusual practice of the eldest male inheriting his father’s position. He left some provinces under the jurisdiction of his

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90 Djurić, “Istorijske kompozicije,” 81.
91 See above, page 224.
92 Sveti Sava, Sabrani spisi, 117.
first son Vukan. Sava obviously approved his father's decision, but also wanted to assure peace between the brothers. For that reason he decided to use the body of Simeon Nemanja as a means by which to establish a new line of inheritance to the throne. As Peter Brown has argued: "high prestige objects as relics can play an important role in deeply divided communities." Brown continues, "(d)isagreements and conflicts within society may be expressed, even conducted through disputes over the identity and value of such objects." The effect of Sava's political agenda is reflected in the representation of the translatio of St. Simeon where one finds a scene showing both brothers at peace, carrying the saint's body together. In this case the scene of translatio served to legitimate a change on the throne and to advertise the establishment of a new royal patrimonial lineage.

The practice of using of the royal saint cult and the bodies of rulers or relics for political purposes was not new. As seen above and discussed by Foltz, the legitimation of usurped positions was one of the prime uses of the royal saint cult. This practice has been employed up until our present day in a variety of forms as we saw in the example of Lenin's body. The cult of the relic of the right hand of St. Stephen I of Hungary (970-1038) is another example. This relic belonged to the founder of the Hungarian medieval state who Christianized Hungarians and became synonymous with Hungarian unity and identity. In the 1938 at the celebration of the nine hundredth anniversary of St. Stephen of Hungary's death, the hand was first put on a boat and then on a specially built train and transported throughout the

93 Boško I. Bošković, Kraljevstvo i svetost. Politička filozofija srednjovekovne Srbije (Beograd, 1999), 141
94 Brown, The Cult of the Saints, 222.
95 Foltz, Les saints rois, 28.
country in what one could describe as a twentieth-century version of a triumphal procession. This pseudo-*translatio* mobilized the entire country as the hand moved through all the territories founded by the first Hungarian royal saint, St. Stephen I. This was a state-programmed propaganda campaign aimed at the unification of all Hungarians under one national rubric.

Another example of use of the royal bodies as a vehicle for the unification of the country may be identified in France during the late Middle Ages. King Louis IX, the future Saint Louis, decided to exhume and bring together all the bodies of kings and queens at the basilica of Saint Denis in 1263-1264. As Jacque le Goff has written: “the essential thing for Louis IX was to affirm the continuity between Carolingians and Capetians.” The French monarchy affiliated itself with the most important figure of medieval monarchical ideology, Charlemagne. Louis IX used royal bodies from different dynasties to establish the legitimacy of the Capetian dynasty. He not only regrouped the bodies but put them on display, elevating them from their tombs and placing them in sarcophagi above the ground. The bodies were now exposed to the viewers in the form of sculpted effigies or *gisants* placed on the individual tombs. As Le Goff adds, this was “an artistic program [that] expressed and reinforced the ideological program.” When we think about Simeon Nemanja and his exposed body in the scenes of *translatio* of his relics with these examples in mind, we may reasonably conclude that one of the reasons for such an

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iconographical device was the legitimization of the inheritance on the Serbian throne.

Another reason for such an iconographic solution could be a shift that occurred between eleventh and thirteenth centuries as to the perception of the body, especially the bodies of saints.99 There was a change in people's attitudes toward the dead in the West and, as Le Goff has pointed out, the new recumbent statues are attributable to this shift.100 The transition from one realm to the next, the notion of the trespassing of mortal boundaries, evoked images of a lengthy corporeal progression that was no longer seen to end in a totally disincarnated, stellar world. If there is a perceptible point of convergence between the earthly and the heavenly, it was the material body's traversal of the buffer zone between life and death out of which would spring a supernatural renewal. The body was not understood only as the vehicle for the soul and that should be left to decay. The body, especially that of the saint, now became a visible and desired object worthy of being represented and publicly displayed. The body was redeemed by being purified of death. Nadia Tazi has written: “The bond with heaven may manifest itself in a supernaturally preserved corpse, but only a body endowed with a particularly rarefied texture can earn the Kingdom of God.101

100 Le Goff, Saint Louis, 216.
There is a record of the *elevatio* of St. Simeon’s body from the tomb in the Chilandary monastery, which is described in detail by his son Sava.\(^\text{102}\) After eight years Simeon’s tomb was opened and the body was discovered intact. As Golubinski notes, the word intact does not necessarily mean uncorrupted but that the skeleton was complete. Moreover, the word intact describes the situation of the body as we would call it today *in situ.*\(^\text{103}\) His other son, Stephen the First-crowned (Prvovenčani), along with another of the writers of St. Simeon Nemanja’s Lives, describes the remains as relics and a victorious body that gave off off a pleasant odor but does not going into detail about the stage of preservation of the body. \(^\text{104}\)

Approximately two decades after this event, the biographer of St. Simeon Nemanja, Theodosije described the body of St. Simeon as dried bones, an expression, which is not used in any other medieval Serbian hagiography.\(^\text{105}\) That the body of St. Simeon was not uncorrupted, as Popović concluded, is also evident when we compare the lives and *elevatio* of other Serbian royal saints, such as St. Sava and St. Stephen the First-crowned, who were described by the same authors, namely Teodosije and Domentijan.\(^\text{106}\) In his report on the opening of the tomb of St. Stephen the first Serbian king in Studenica Teodosije mentioned that the body was intact. In a literary translation, he says the body was untouched or unhurt, which could be

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\(^\text{103}\) Popović, *Pod okriljem svetosti*, 34.
\(^\text{104}\) Stefan Prvovenčani, *Sabrani Spisi* 88-89.
\(^\text{105}\) Teodosije, *Žitija* 152-153.
\(^\text{106}\) Popović, *Pod okriljem svetosti*, 35.
understood as untouched by corruption. Another of the saint’s biographer, Domentijan, later used the same term to describe the condition of the body.

According to his biographers, the body of St. Simeon was not uncorrupted. The question therefore arises as to why in the case of St. Simeon Nemanja the Byzantine model of *translatio* which represented the sarcophagi or reliquary closed, was abandoned, in preference for the open display of the uncorrupted body, which was largely a Western tradition. The first narrative cycle of the *translatio* of a single saint in Serbian medieval painting was that of St. Stephen from the Žiča monastery. Scholars, like Djurić and Babić, see the possibility that the iconographic origin of the cycles of *translatio* of St. Simeon Nemanja in Studenica, Sopoćani and Gradac, was found in the Žiča chapel of St. Stephen. This was the earliest representation of *translatio* in Serbia that we know of and it predates the Studenica cycle by two decades. Žiča could serve as a model of the openly displayed body or a transitional stage between the enclosed, hidden body and the fully revealed one. As we have seen the representation of the displayed head of St. Stephen in Žiča was unique in the iconography of the translation of relics both in the East and West. The difficulty for contemporary interpreters is that the painting that has come down to the present-day dates from the beginning of the fourteenth century, though scholars agree that it must repeat the earlier cycle. We can only speculate, however, as to how closely the later painting repeats the first iconographic program.

110 Scholars generally agree that the painting of the fourteenth century must follow the previous one from the thirteenth century, basing their arguments on the arrangement of the
We saw in the first chapter that there were significant differences in iconography between Eastern and Western *translatio* scenes.\textsuperscript{111} The most relevant iconographic precedents for the St. Simeon Nemanja translations in Studenica and Sopoćani and the St. Stephen in Žiča are those that show the *translatio* of the body of the saint exposed to the beholders. One early example of this iconography overlaps with the new ideas of the reception of body in the Middle Ages in the period between eleventh and the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{112} The fresco in San Clemente in Rome painted *ca.* 1085 depicts the translation of St. Clement or St. Cyril with his body completely covered except for the head (Fig. 15).\textsuperscript{113} The scene is located on the wall of the narthex to the left of the main entrance. The middle of the composition focuses on the representation of the saint on a bier covered by a blanket. The bier is carried by three figures dressed in pink ecclesiastical garments. The fourth one is missing due to a heavy restoration in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{114}

Toubert has discussed the origin of the depiction of the displayed body being carried uncovered during the translation of the saints. In the case of San Clemente, she noted similarities with the now-lost cycle from the church of Santa Maria in Pallara in Rome as well as in the scene of Christianus Bringing Sebastian to Burial *ca.* 999 known through a set of seventeenth century drawings.\textsuperscript{115} Here one finds a

\textsuperscript{111} See Chapter One, pages 41-59.
\textsuperscript{112} See above, page 240-241.
\textsuperscript{113} On the discussion whose body is represented, see: Filippini, *The Eleventh-Century Frescoes*, 198.
\textsuperscript{114} Filippini, *The Eleventh-Century Frescoes*, 199.
\textsuperscript{115} Toubert, “Rome et le Mont-Cassin,” 18; also Filippini, *The Eleventh-Century Frescoes*, 204.
representation of a burial scene in which the dead saint is carried in an open sarcophagus. As discussed in Chapter One, Tourbet has suggested that elements in San Clemente recall Byzantine representations of funerals (Fig. 28).\textsuperscript{116} She also refers to the lying in state or the “lits de parade.”\textsuperscript{117} This indicates the solemn presentation of the body of a high ecclesiastical figure or saint on a parade bed. The origin of this motif can be traced to ancient funeral processions as represented on the bas-relief discovered in 1847 in Rome that belonged to the Haterii family (Fig. 125). This plaque shows a funeral scene with a body lying in the middle of a room surrounded with mourners.\textsuperscript{118}

There is another example from Italy that more closely resembles the translatio of St. Simeon Nemanja in that the body is displayed on a bier without any additional cover. In the crypt of the cathedral of Anagni there is a hagiographic cycle in the central apse dedicated to the passion and translations of the patron saint of Anagni, St. Magnus ca. 1200 (Fig. 16).\textsuperscript{119} As Bagnoli has argued, the pictorial narration of this cycle follows the written text closely.\textsuperscript{120} The story of Magnus’ translations is depicted along the apse wall. In the first pictures of the apse, the martyr’s body is brought in procession from Fondi to Veroli. The body of St. Magnus is completely exposed in a fashion similar to the body of St. Simeon Nemanja.

Bagnoli concludes that the scene of the translation of relics was also associated with

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{116} Tourbet, “Rome et le Mont-Cassin,” 18 pl. 121, 186 and pl. 3, 83.
\item \textsuperscript{117} Torbet, “Rome et le Mont-Cassin,” 18, pl. 125, 134.
\item \textsuperscript{118} Dictionnaire des antiquites Grecques et Romaines, ed. Ch. Daremberg and Edm. Saglio, (Graz, 1969), 1389, fig. 3360.
\item \textsuperscript{119} Bagnoli, The Medieval Frescoes, 94-96; Alessandro Bianchi, Il Restauro della Cripta di Anagni (Roma, 2003); Lorenzo Cappelletti, Gli affreschi della cripta Anagnina iconologia (Roma, 2002), 200-208 and 227.
\item \textsuperscript{120} Bagnoli, The Medieval Frescoes, 94.
\end{itemize}
a funeral at Anagni. She based her argument on the lack of a substantial procession behind the sarcophagus of Magnus, which recalls images of civilian obsequies such as that in the Sacramentary of Ivrea.  

In the Anagni crypt there is another representation of the *translatio* of St. Magnus in continuity with the previous one (Fig. 126). A bishop wearing a miter and holding his pastoral occupies the forefront of the composition. A group of tonsured clerics stands to the left holding processional crosses and a censor. Bagnoli noted that the iconography of the burial of saints was usually modeled on the burial of Christ in order to stress the similarity between Christ and the saint.  

She referred to the illustration of the burial of St. Secondina in the left apse in the Anagni crypt (Fig. 127). In this composition St. Secondina’s body is carried in a manner similar to the *translatio* of St. Magnus, on an open litter and she is lowered inside the tomb, wrapped up in cloth. The scene of Magnus’ burial is, however, different. Here the saint lies in a sarcophagus, similar to the Byzantine funerary examples Tourbet proposed.  

The sarcophagus is surrounded by clerics holding candlesticks and a priest reading a prayer. According to Bagnoli “the image of Magnus’ burial is the re-enactment of a contemporary burial ceremony, when the clerics come to stand

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121 Luigi Magnani, *Le miniature del Sacramentario d’Ivrea e di altri codici warmondiani* (City of Vatican, 1934); Bagnoli, *The Medieval Frescoes*, 100.


123 See Chapter One, page 54.
around the sarcophagus while the bishop sprinkles the incense repeating the Kyrie Eleison.”  

As in many cases of the representation of translation such as that of the Vienne relief discussed in my first chapter, it can be extremely difficult to differentiate between images of *translatio* and those of the burial. Funeral scenes from Byzantine art analyzed by Tourbet, do not include funeral processions but refer to the last moment of the funeral: either the service in front of the body or the laying of the body in the sarcophagus. The latter may also be easily mistaken for scenes depicting the depositing of the body of the saint in representations of *translatio*.

Unfortunately, few literary sources describe medieval funeral practices in detail. According to Dorothy Abrahamson, Byzantine documents from the tenth to thirteenth century usually reference the preparation of the body, its being wrapped in a winding sheet, being placed on a bier, and being carried in a funeral procession. She further notes that most authors mention only those elements of a funeral that are essential to the establishment of sanctity. These include the presence of a large group of monks and laity bearing tapers and incense, and the singing of psalms, hymns and open mourning. Additionally, a funeral procession of monks and laity bearing the corpse on their shoulders, accompanied by funeral hymns, are frequently mentioned.

\footnote{124 For the Latin text, see Bagnoli, *The Medieval Frescoes*, 105.}
\footnote{125 Dorothy Abrahamson, “Rituals of Death in the Middle Byzantine Period,” *Greek Orthodox Theological review* 29/2 (1984): 125-134.}
\footnote{126 Abrahamson, “Rituals of Death,” 132.}
Iconography connected with funeral processions emerged in the Byzantine period, specifically depicting the transport of the body to the grave starting from the tenth century. This is where we find a possible overlap with images of translation and especially in the case of the translation of St. Stephen in Žiča. Byzantine iconography made a clear distinction between these two scenes. In funeral scenes, the body was carried on a bier similar to those of *translatio*, with, however, an important difference. The bier is now turned in the opposite direction from the procession, so that the dead person is carried with his head pointing forward.

Scenes of funeral processions are mostly known from illuminated manuscripts. In the manuscript Homilies of Gregory Nazianzus, Paris, BN Cod. Gr. 510, fol. 104r from the ninth century has a funeral procession of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (Fig. 128). The body of the saint is placed on a bier being carried by a small group of people. Behind the bier is a group of others that belong to the funeral procession. Together, they head toward the church represented in the far right, similar to representations of *translatio*. The important difference, as in the previous two examples of the funerals, is that the saint’s body is turned in the opposing direction to the procession.

Other examples of this reversal of the direction of the saint’s body occurs in some Old Testament scenes showing funerals such as the burial of Abner (2 Samuel 3:31-32; 1 Kings 2:3) from the Book of Kings, Vat. Cod. Gr. 333, fol. 43 v from the

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eleventh-twelfth century (Fig. 129). Here Abner is shown being carried on a litter by a group of people who are preceded by mourners and followed by David. This is similar to a composition from the Mount Athos manuscript of John Climacus’ Heavenly Ladder, twelfth century, Cod. 418 fol. 177r. Here the body of the deceased lies on a bed being carried in a funeral procession on the shoulders of two boys. The procession is led by a group of people carrying crosses and lighted candles. The head of the young man on the bed is turned in the opposite direction to that of the procession.

Typically, Byzantine funeral scenes displayed the corpse openly while being carried with their heads pointing forward. Similar iconography was common in scenes of the burial of Christ, where His body would usually be represented wrapped in linens and placed in the rock-cut tomb or sarcophagus with his head forward. This is true of an eleventh century manuscript from Mont Athos, Cod. 587m, fol. 16r. In the depiction of the burial of Christ, in this manuscript Nicodemus holds Christ’s feet while on the right Joseph is grasps his head. They appear to be carefully placing the body into the tomb with His head forward.

When one looks for pictorial examples of funeral representations in the West, this situation is more ambiguous. As we have seen in the case from the crypt in Anagni, the funeral procession of St. Secondina resembles the translatio of St. Magnus from the same crypt (Figs. 127, 126). St. Secondina’s body is placed on a bier without any covering and transported with her feet forward. St. Magnus’s body

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130 *The Treasures of Mount Athos*, fig. 201.
is translated in a similar fashion, although he was placed in a sarcophagus instead of on a bier. That there was no fixed iconographic model for the funeral procession in the West is indicated, however, by an example from the crypt of the cathedral in Velletri from the end of the thirteenth century (Fig. 130). Here we have a representation of the translatio of two saints. They have been placed together on a bier and are being carried headfirst toward a church on the right side of the composition. There is another relevant burial scene from the Bayeux tapestry from the eleventh century (Fig. 131). In the scene of King Edward’s 1066 funeral, his corpse is brought to the church of St. Peter the Apostle. The image shows a group of people carrying a bier resembling a sarcophagus on top of which we see the completely wrapped body of the king. Only from the body’s contours can one guess that the head is turned toward the direction of the procession. Behind the bier is a group of people with tonsures, probably monks. Two of the clerics hold an open book and one of them carries a bishop’s crozier. The clergymen behind them are singing with open mouths.

The representation of the translation of Simeon Nemanja more closely emulates the Western model of translation. The iconography of the Žiča cycle, however, shows more Byzantine influence in its representation of a closed sarcophagus. Notably, Žiča introduces the new, important detail of the protruding head of the saint. Also noteworthy is the fact that the body of the saint in Žiča being wrapped in the linens as if prepared for a funeral according to the Byzantine

131 Romano, Eclissi di Roma, 120-127.
iconographic tradition in which the body is carried headfirst. Representing St. Stephen’s body wrapped as Christ was for his entombment adds to the significance of the martyr’s *imitatio* Christi by anticipating His resurrection. This iconography reminds us of the paradox of the saint being dead but still considered alive and endowed with power. St. John of Damascus (676-749) wrote of the relics of the saints as if they are alive:

> The saints must be honored as friends of Christ and children and heirs of God, as John the Theologian and Evangelist says: ‘but as many as received him, he gave them the power to be made the sons of God.’ ...For the death of the saint is rather sleep than death, since ‘they have labored unto eternity and shall live unto the end,’ and ‘precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints (Ps.48.9,10; 115.15).’ ...In the Law anyone who touched a corpse was accounted unclean (Num. 19.11). But these of whom we speak are not dead. Because Life itself and the Author of life was reckoned amongst the dead, we do not call these dead who have fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection and in the faith in Him.133

According to Paul Binski, the Christian belief in saints who had ascended to Heaven but remained physically present on earth through relics or fragments of their physical bodies ensured that the worlds of the living and the dead were increasingly intermingled at shrines.134 Responses to images of the dead body can be powerfully ambivalent. At once fascinating and repulsive, such images variously associate the body with notions about the social, the sacred, and the political depending upon their historical context and their position within wider image repertoires. The representation of the body of a saint was a sign, denoting a dead person; however, it also connoted a body with the power to link two realms, human and divine. Within medieval Christian thought, the conceptualization of the saint’s

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134 Paul Binski, 70-123.
body was organized around two sets of conflicting ideas: it formed both a site of impurity and decay while, at the same time, was considered a site of the holy and incorruptible.\textsuperscript{135}

The body of St. Stephen in Žiča does not provide a clear indicator that this is a scene of \textit{translatio} since it suggests a funeral procession. The saint’s head is turned away from the spectators, both those inside and outside the chapel. St. Stephen is facing the upper zone in which we find a representation of the crucifixion, a sign of salvation. The dead body of the saint highlights the passage of time and the inevitability of physical transformation. It thereby acts as a powerful reminder that the bodily self is subject to change. The saint is positioned such that he is sandwiched between the figures of the martyr-saints who were the founders and pillars of the earthly church, and the upper crucifixion with its promise of the afterlife.

The composition in Žiča is bisected in a manner similar to that of the Trier ivory. One side depicts the saint being carried in the coffin. The other side represents the reception party with the Emperor and Church dignitaries one of which holds a long processional cross. While earthly power is represented on the left side in the form of the emperor and church dignitaries, the golden reliquary indicates the heavenly power that they wish to associate themselves with. The reliquary acts as visual testimony of the metamorphosis of the dead body into that of a saint, as does the painted cycle itself. The link between these powers are the lay people, the faithful, who expect that the power of the saint’s relics will help them to

\textsuperscript{135} Bynum, \textit{Fragmentation}, 183-187.
achieve eternal life as promised directly above them in the form of Christ's crucified body and Adam's skull. As Mary Douglas has argued, there is a cultural logic through which the unclean becomes sacred, and therefore, powerful.\textsuperscript{136} This logic can be seen at work in the medieval context where images of the crucifixion display Christ's dying body as a source of sacred power.

An important change in the cult of both saints, St. Stephen and St. Simeon Nemanja occurred in the late thirteenth century during the reign of king Stephen Uros II Milutin (1253-1321). King Milutin was not only a great and successful warrior but also a great founder of churches.\textsuperscript{137} He had pretentions to the Byzantine throne which reflected not only in his conquest of the Byzantine territories, but also in his adoption of their lifestyle and interest in their culture.\textsuperscript{138} In architecture, he abandoned the previously dominant Raška style plan of churches having two western subsidiary chapels.\textsuperscript{139} This change was coincident with the exclusion of painted cycles of both St. Stephen and St. Simeon Nemanja from Serbian churches.

King Milutin was a younger son of King Stephen Uroš I. He ascended to the throne through a decision of the Council of Nobles that had forced his older brother Dragutin to abdicate.\textsuperscript{140} The council also declared, however, that King Milutin's crown would be inherited by Dragutin's offspring. In order to legitimate his own

\textsuperscript{137} During his life time, it was recorded that he built over forty; Arhiepiskop Danilo. \textit{Životi kraljeva}, 77-121.
\textsuperscript{138} King Milutin married the Byzantine princess Simonida and become the son-in-law of the Byzantine Emperor Andronicus II, see: Ostrgorski, \textit{History of the Byzantine State}, 489.
\textsuperscript{139} Slobodan Ćurčić. \textit{Gračanica. Istorija i arhitektura}. Beograd-Priština, 1988, 87-106.
rulership and reverse the decision of the council so his son could inherit the throne after his death, King Milutin again siezed a powerful weapon: art. As with many rulers before him, he used the royal saint’s body to achieve his political goals. He clearly would not wish to use the old model of the translation of St. Simeon Nemanja's body established by Sava. He therefore legitimizied his power and the right of his son to inherit his throne by inventing the new iconographic model of so-called Tree of Nemanja. Milutin adapted the iconography of the Tree of Jese known in Byzantine monumental art in the thirteenth century, to emphasize the body of the first royal saint Nemanja as the foundational source of the holy dynasty.141 The representation of the Tree of Nemanja painted in the monestary of Gračanica (1314-1317) that Milutin founded, depicts a body of St. Simeon from which a tree grows with branches bearing portraits of members of the dynasty (Fig. 132).142 The main tree trunk is reserved for the ruler in the direct line of inheritance, showing Milutin and his offspring. From the time of Milutin, the Tree of Nemanjić would be represented in royal buildings in the fourteenth century such as Dečani, Matejča, and in the exonarthex of the patriarchal church in Peć.143 There are indications that in all three churches, there was a baptismal font placed in front of the location.

141 George Stričević, “The Roots of the Tree of Nemanja,” Eighteenth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference, Abstract of Papers (Urbana-Champaign, 1992), 45-46
142 The only exception was his mausoleum church in Banjska, see: Slobodan Ćurčić, Gračanica.
143 For the Monastery Dečani, see: Pantelić, The architecture of Dečani; for Matejče, see: Elizabeta Dimitrova, Manastir Matejče (Skopje, 2020); for Pećka Patrijaršija, see: Djurić, J. Vojislav, Ćirković, Sima, Korač, Vojislav. Pećka Patrijaršija (Belgrade, 1990); see also, Slobodan Ćurčić, Architecture in the Balkans from Diocletian to Süleyman the Magnificent (New Haven, 2010).
where the Tree of Nemanjić is depicted. This recalls the fact that the first cycle of the *translatio* of St. Simeon Nemanja in Studenica had a baptismal font placed in front of the chapel dedicated to him (Fig. 133).

The importance of the body of St. Simeon Nemanja and his saintly status is emphasized through this new iconography as it was in the translation images. By using the body of the saint as a root from which an evergrowing vine germinates the royal iconographers indicated its power and saintliness. At the time, it was widely believed that a grapevine grew miraculously from both the Chilandary tomb of Simeon Nemanja and the one in the Studenica monastery. According to Djordje Stričević, this must have inspired the fourteenth century writers who began to refer to the founder of the Nemanjić dynasty as the “the good and holy roots” This transformation of the saint into living, organic material further confirmed the status of the saint as not being dead but asleep.

St. Stephen played a significante role in the life of King Milutin. He built a mausoleum church at Banjska dedicated to him, the first such dedication in the Nemanjić dynasty. This would be the only church of King Milutin built in the old tradition of the Raška plan established with the Žiča and Studenica churches. The importance of St. Stephen was not only recorded in King Milutin’s prayers in official charters, but was also visualized in the fresco painting from the narthex of the Chilandary monastery. The scene represents King Milutin receiving a chrysobul from the Byzantine emperor Andronicus II Palaiologos (1259-1332), who was

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146 Popović, *Srpski vladarski grob*, 95-100.
Milutin’s father-in-law (Fig. 134).147 St. Stephen is depicted standing next to the king, acting as his personal protector. The King and the Emperor are shown hieratically equal, which provided visual confirmation of King Milutin’s power achieved with the help of the saintly protector.

King Milutin’s ambition toward the Byzantine Empire is reflected in his appropriation of the Byzantine motif of the closed casket and its combination with the Western iconographic tradition of the exposed saintly body. Milutin thereby positions himself between the two Christian worlds, claiming both as his own in a new visual articulation of *translatio*. The innovative iconography of depicting St. Stephen’s body protruding from his casket in Žiča could have been invented by archbishop Sava III (1309-1316) on the request of King Milutin. Sava III organized the repainting of the church in the fourteenth century under the King Milutin.148

Following the old iconographic tradition of the translation of St. Stephen’s relics, Sava III probably introduced the new symbolic detail of the coffin with the visible body of the saint. With this shift in pictorial iconography, the king is being symbolically represented as a Byzantine emperor anointed by God’s power as his vicar on earth; however, the new emphasis on the visibility of the body also reminds the viewer of his earthly nature. This double meaning of the partially exposed body of the saint reminds us of the role of the ruler in the roman triumph. The body of the


148 Branislav Todić, *Serbian Medieval Painting, the Age of King Milutin*. Translated by Jelena Erdeljan (Belgrade, 1999).
saint has therefore been conceptualized as a potent symbolic resource that could covertly signify Nemanjić imperial ideology.

Images of the dead being contemplated by the living were intended to trigger self-reflection in the viewer, asking them to identify with the faithful, and thereby inviting them to enter into a parallel state of personal meditation. The body of St. Stephen as represented in his *translation*, however, presented more than a saintly role model and intercessor for the good Christian; he also served to embody the secular ambitions of the royal Serbian dynasty.
CONCLUSION

Early Christian and medieval representations of the ritual of *translatio* documented the circulation of relics both within and between medieval cultures. This dissertation has elucidated the ways the ritual was used for religious and secular ends from the fourth to the fourteenth century in both the East and the West. As shown by one of the earliest surviving examples, a relief found in Vienna and now housed in Paris, *translatio* presented a particular challenge: how does one represent a body that is dead and yet believed to have supernatural agency. The saint’s body had an indeterminate status both in the ritual of *translatio* itself and in representations of the ceremony. Being neither fully alive nor dead it was understood to be in a state of perpetual non-decay and endowed with super-natural powers of healing and protection for the faithful. Representations of *translatio* exploited this essentially ambivalent status of the saint’s body for religious and secular ends. The detailed iconographic program of the Trier ivory provided a provenance for this phenomenon by linking the translation ritual to its Antique prototypes: the triumph and *adventus*. The ivory also provides a prototype of the harnessing of the motif of *translatio* for secular ends. Later examples such as the mural cycles at San Lorenzo and Žiča reveal the further development of this pictorial tradition within a public context and its increasingly explicit conscription for secular ideological purposes. No mere illustrations of the after-life of the saints, they were rather, ideologically inflected representations that served the political agendas of ruling elites.
Images of the transport of relics attested to their significance in a material form, forging a palpable connection between the saint and his devotees. For early Christian and medieval viewers, representations of *translatio* functioned as reenactments of a ceremony few would have had the opportunity to observe, allowing them to establish a virtual relationship with the saint's relics and thereby access his beneficence. Their formal construction reflected this function. These images often presented relics traversing boundaries and included pictorial elements that emphasized transition and movement such as carts, gates, doorways windows, permeable structures, and partially open containers or portals. Through such iconographic stratagems, representations of translation demarcated liminal spaces that facilitated a mystical exchange between the earthly and heavenly spheres for the viewer.

In the East, artists such as those who designed the Trier ivory evoked the ambivalent status of the saint's body by showing the relics being transported within a closed coffin. Western representations demonstrated more diverse iconographic solutions. Notably, the image of the closed casket that reappears throughout the fresco cycle in San Lorenzo is interrupted by a representation of St. Stephen's body in an open cart. The viewer's desire for resurrection and salvation that led them to this pilgrimage site enabled an identification with the saint, allowing them to empathetically experience his martyrdom and *translatio*. The revealing of his remains on the exterior wall of the church provided them with visual evidence of what would be denied within the church itself: a view of the miraculously preserved body of the saint.
Positioned geographically and culturally betwixt Rome and Constantinople, Serbia developed a model for the representation of *translatio* that drew upon both traditions. Žiča shows the influence of the triumphal iconography established with the Trier ivory and the exposed body of the saint that was favored in the West and demonstrated at San Lorenzio. The Vienne relief and the Trier ivory present the relics within an opaque container and thereby evoke the enigmatic status of the saintly body. Where the San Lorenzio mural depicts Stephen’s body both exposed and concealed in distinct scenes, however, the designers of the Žiča cycle synthesized these two alternatives by depicting the saint in a closed casket from which the his head emerges. When understood within the iconographic development of representations of *translatio*, this hybrid solution is indicative of the dual influences of Eastern and Western iconography. Rather than an iconographic curiosity, the innovative semi-transparency of the Royal patron saint’s casket depicted on the wall of the coronation church was an overt attempt to signify the indeterminacy of the saint’s body within a space dedicated to the legitimization of dynastic rule through religious means. The visual rhetoric’s of Žiča asserted that if the body of St. Stephen was a bridge to the divine, the ruling family manned the tollbooth that led to it and the price of passage was the acceptance of Royal authority.

Given his role in Christian society and the broad dissemination of his cult, the translation St. Stephen was a particularly useful vehicle for political propaganda. As the protomartyr, Stephen was the first individual to emulate Christ’s sacrifice. He was often directly linked to the apostles and the life of Christ. On his death, Stephen
was believed to have witnessed Christ’s presence at the right hand of God. He was therefore, an ideal of the *imitatio Christi* for all subsequent believers. He became an exemplar how a Christian should live, testify, pray and die for the faith. This made him a highly desirable protector and intercessor in both Eastern and Western Christendom. The name Stephanos (crown, wreath) associated the saint with heavenly victory and imperial office. St. Stephen was the king of the martyrs in the sense that he was the first martyr under the New Testament. His proximity to Christ and his function as a role model heightened the reflected glory of those who controlled access to his body and made him a particularly strong candidate for ideological appropriation. The leaders who secured his relics bathed in the auratic glow of his sacred corpse but also emphasized their earthly power as the secular rulers who could secure the relics and enable their transport.

Despite its significant heuristic value for understanding the representation of *translatio*, the crude execution and lack of provenance for the Vienna relief make its political meaning impossible to determine. The greater pictorial sophistication of the Trier ivory however, provides evidence of a political agenda despite the obscurity of its origins. The reasonable hypothesis that the it depicts the translation of the relics of St. Stephen from Jerusalem to Constantinople and the inclusion of individuals whose social position and identity may be deduced allows one to consider the political connotations of the ritual in the East and the particular role played by St. Stephen. The ivory presents the empress and emperor as rulers who delivered new sacred *spolia*. They, along with the bishops, will provide not only protection to the city but hope of ultimate salvation, of a personal *translatio* into the
heavenly realm. Just as the relics will sanctify the newly constructed church that will house them, they will contribute to the general sacralization of Constantinople and, by association, the ruling couple.

The cycle of St. Stephen in the portico of San Lorenzo in Rome alludes directly to papal control not only over the Western Church, but also to the pope’s aspiring to a similar position in the East. The cycle pays tribute to his role in providing the precious body of the first martyr and making it available for the community of Rome as well as to all Christians. Having the relics of the first martyr in Rome sent a clear message that although Jerusalem and Constantinople were at one time centers of the Empire, it was now papal Rome. This cycle advertised the pope’s position as global ecumenical leader; he was to be recognized not only as the sole authority on earth, but in the afterlife as well.

In Žiča, the creation of a new iconographical model of the translation of St. Stephen emphasized the saint’s role as a protector of the Serbian state but also of the ruling family. Using the visual representation of translation as one of the most significant tools in establishing a new cult, Medieval Serbia saw the development of the dynastic cult of Simeon (Stephen) Nemanja based upon St. Stephen as a royal patron saint. By representing the translation of the Serbian national saint, Simeon Nemanja, and publicly exposing his body, these images linked the viewer’s spiritual devotion with an apotheosis of royal power.

Christian rulers understood that their power derived directly from Christ and thereby aligned themselves with St Stephen whose death was taken as a promise of resurrection. As shown in the Trier ivory and the murals at San Lorenzo and Žiča, by
emphasizing their ability to translate and posses the body of the saint, they hoped to establish a divine provenance for their earthly powers. St. Stephen was figured as the key link in an emulative chain that led from the viewer to the ruler, saint, and Christ. Combining the historical representation of the *translatio* of St. Stephen with that of the secular and religious leaders depicted in or associated with these objects conscripted a highly sophisticated visual rhetoric to their political ends. Here, form and content complement one another in order to present the ruler in not only a terrestrial triumph, but a sacred one as well.
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17 Rome, San Giovanni in Laterano. I. Ciampini’s reconstruction of the facade (1693).

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