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## The Dikerion and Trikerion of the Byzantine Pontifical Rite: Origins and Significance\*

The Byzantine hierarchical “blessing-candles” known as the “trikerion” (τρικήριον / τρίκηρον / τρικέρι), a three-branched candelabrum,<sup>1</sup> and “dikerion,” (τὸ δικήριον / τὰ δικήρια) a two-branched candelabrum,<sup>2</sup> present a formidable challenge to the student of liturgy, since their origins, as yet insufficiently researched, have remained something of a mystery to liturgiologists. In this study I shall attempt to trace the precursors of today’s pontifical “blessing-candles” with the help of their liturgical functions in the Byzantine pontifical rite today — *benedictional*, *processional*, *honorific*, *supplicatory*, *reverential*, and *epiphanic* — which offer a valuable clue to the enigmatic origins of both the trikerion and the later dikerion.

### I. *The Dikerion and Trikerion in Today’s Pontifical Divine Liturgy*

In today’s celebration of the Byzantine pontifical Divine Liturgy according to Russian and Greek Orthodox usage,<sup>3</sup> the lighted dikerion and

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<sup>1</sup> L. Clugnet, *Dictionnaire Grec-Français des noms liturgiques en usage dans l’Église Grecque*, Paris 1895, 151-2; C. du Fresne du Cange, *Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae Graecitatis*, Graz 1958, 646; cf. also A. Jacob, “Le chandelier a trois branches de l’évêque Pantoléon,” *BBGG* 53 (1999) 187-199, here 192ff.

<sup>2</sup> Clugnet, *Dictionnaire* 35-36; Du Cange, *Glossarium* 645-6; H. Hunger (ed.), *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität besonders des 9.-12. Jahrhunderts* [hereafter LBG] (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaftler, Phil.-hist. Klasse Denkschriften 238 etc., Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Byzantinistik VI/1), Vienna 2001, 388.

<sup>3</sup> Since the Russian editions of the Archieraticon give the most detailed rubrics, I follow here the *Чинovníкъ Архіерейскаго Служенія*, Moscow 1982, and S. Diomidov, *Указатель порядка архіерейскихъ служеній*, Samara 1915, 25-61. On the current differences between Russian and Greek practice cf. M. Želtov’s observations in “Архіерейское богослужение,” *Православная Энциклопедія*, vol. III, Moscow 2001, 566-574, here 570-573, and D. Guillaume, *Grande Euchologe et Arkhieratikon*, Parma 1992, 604-630. Cf. also the “Directions for Clergy-Servers at the Archiereical Celebration of the Liturgy” in F. Kovalchuk, *Abridged Typicon*, Youngstown 1974, 86-112.

trikerion first appear at the hierarch's entrance into the church, when they are brought out of the sanctuary by the deacons. Thereafter during the service we see the candles employed as follows:

1. The archdeacon, holding the trikerion, accompanies the bishop as the latter venerates the icons before vesting.
2. The bishop blesses in four directions with the dikerion and trikerion after vesting.
3. As the hierarch receives the lighted dikerion and trikerion after vesting, the archdeacon intones a paraphrased version of words said by our Lord to the Apostles (Mt 5:16): "So shall your light shine forth before men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven."
4. The hierarch blesses in four directions with the dikerion and trikerion at the beginning of the Little Entrance, then proceeds to the sanctuary and blesses the people two additional times before entering the Holy Doors.
5. The hierarch is escorted by the archdeacon holding the trikerion during the censuring of the altar after the Little Entrance, while the dikerion is held either by another deacon (in Greek practice) or by the hierarch himself (in Russian practice).
6. The lesser ministers carry the dikerion and trikerion in the Little Entrance procession.
7. During the singing of the Trisagion the bishop makes the sign of the cross over the Gospel with the dikerion. In Greek practice, he also blesses the Gospel with the trikerion.
8. During the Trisagion the bishop blesses the people in three directions, holding the dikerion and a cross [in Greek practice: the dikerion and trikerion] while reciting the "Prayer of the Vine," Ps 79: 14-15a: "O Lord, look down from heaven and behold, and visit this vine, and perfect that which Your right hand has planted."
9. In Russian practice, after ascending the synthronon the bishop blesses the concelebrants with the trikerion alone; in Greek practice, he blesses the people with both hands.
10. After the reading of the Gospel, in Russian usage the hierarch blesses the people with both candelabra instead of with the Evangelary as in the Greek rite.
11. The lesser ministers carry the dikerion and trikerion in the Great Entrance procession.
12. In Russian practice the bishop blesses the people with the dikerion and trikerion after the Great Entrance, at the beginning of the Anaphora, after Communion, and immediately after saying the Apolysis or dismissal of the Divine Liturgy. In Greek practice the bishop blesses the people with both dikerion and trikerion after

the Great Entrance; he blesses with the dikerion after the Anaphora; after the Apolysis of the Divine Liturgy he blesses with the trikerion.

These twelve enumerated liturgical functions of the “blessing-candles” in today’s pontifical celebration can be described as follows:

- a. *benedictional* — they confer the hierarch’s blessing on the people and concelebrating clergy (2, 4, 8-10, 12);
- b. *reverential* and *supplicatory* — with these candles the hierarch venerates the Gospel lying on the altar and prays (7-8);
- c. *processional* and/or *honorific* — in the pontifical rite the presider is sometimes accompanied by an archdeacon carrying the trikerion as a special liturgical honor, underlining thereby the hierarchical dignity of the main celebrant (1, 5); the “blessing candles” carried in the Little and Great Entrance processions have the same meaning (6, 11);
- d. *epiphanic* — all the appearances of the *two* and *three* lighted candles offer a trinitarian and christological theological vision to the people and celebrants (1-12), symbolizing the Holy Trinity and the two natures of Christ.<sup>4</sup> The verse of Mt 5:16, “Your light shall shine forth...,” intoned when the hierarch receives the dikerion and trikerion after vesting, articulates an additional symbolic meaning of the lighted candles, that of the hierarch’s good deeds *shining forth* to the glory of God (3).

## II. Origins in Imperial Ceremonial

Today’s two hierarchical “blessing-candles” accomplish the functions of several different candles we encounter in witnesses to Byzantine imperial ceremony, thereby reflecting their historical origins.

Lights carried before emperors, found among the imperial ensigns since Roman times,<sup>5</sup> are abundantly attested in both imperial and hierarchical processions in Byzantium: the 10<sup>th</sup> c. *Book of Ceremonies*

<sup>4</sup> See note 50 below.

<sup>5</sup> J. Legg, *Church Ornaments and Their Civil Antecedents*, Cambridge 1917, 19-20. Cf. also A. Golubsov, *Соборные Чиновники и особенности службы по нимъ*, Moscow 1907, Appendix III, «О предносной архіерейской лампадѣ» 251-258, here 254, note 2.

mentions *processional* candles (τὰ μανουάλια τῆς λιτῆς / τὰ λιτανίικια κηρία)<sup>6</sup> carried when the emperor took part in stationary liturgies. The imperial ceremonial also includes *reverential* or *supplicatory* candles (κηρία τῆς προσευχῆς)<sup>7</sup>: before greeting the patriarch at the beginning of both stationary and non-stationary liturgical celebrations, the sovereign lighted candles, then prayed and venerated the cross and Gospel.<sup>8</sup> The emperor also venerated sacred objects with lighted candles inside the nave and sanctuary of Hagia Sophia upon entering the church for Divine Liturgy.<sup>9</sup> A later source, the 12<sup>th</sup> c. canonist Theodore Balsamon († after 1195) noted an imperial *blessing with candles*, telling us that the emperors “as the anointed of the Lord” entered the sanctuary and, having censed, would “bless with the trikerion like bishops” (καὶ σφραγίζουσι μετὰ τρικηρίου καθὼς οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς).<sup>10</sup> Elsewhere Balsamon mentions that sovereigns also bless with a “dikerion” (καὶ μετὰ δικηρίου σφραγίζουσι).<sup>11</sup>

Balsamon does not mention whether the sovereign blessed *the people* with candles. We do, however, have a curious 10<sup>th</sup> c. example of the emperor blessing the people *with his chlamys* or vestment. The *Book of Ceremonies* describes the emperors blessing the crowds at the hippodrome with the edge of their vestments (κατασφραγίζουσιν μετὰ τὸ ἄκρον τῶν χλανιδίων αὐτῶν) in three directions — first the people in the center, then the “Blues,” and finally the “Greens.” As the emperors thus blessed, the crowds exclaimed “Ἄγιος, Ἄγιος, Ἄγιος.” The imperial cantors then proclaimed “Πολλά, πολλά, πολλά,” and the crowds responded, “Πολλά ἔτη εἰς

<sup>6</sup> *De Cerem.* I, 39 (30): A. Vogt (ed.), *Constantin VII Porphyrogénète. Le livre des Cérémonies. Texte*, 2 vols., Paris 1935, 1939, here I, 153-4; cf. also Id., *Constantin VII Porphyrogénète. Le livre des Cérémonies. Commentaire*, 2 vols., Paris 1935, 1940, here I, 75.

<sup>7</sup> D. Beljaev, *Byzantina. Очерки, материалы и заметки* II, St. Petersburg 1893, 241-2, note 2.

<sup>8</sup> Before stationary processions the sovereign lights candles and venerates the Gospel and cross apparently *with candles in hand* (... καὶ ἅπας κηρός καὶ ἐξήμενος, προσκυνεῖ τὸν τίμιον καὶ ζωοπτόν: *De Cerem.* I, 26 (17), Vogt I, 95; I, 27 (18), Vogt I, 103; I, 37 (28), Vogt I, 146. When greeting the patriarch immediately before entering Hagia Sophia for the Divine Liturgy, the emperor *hands away* the lighted candles before venerating the Gospel and cross: I, 1, Vogt I, 11; I, 9, Vogt I, 58-59; I, 10, Vogt I, 69; I, 26 (17), Vogt I, 95; I, 27 (18), Vogt I, 104; I, 32 (23), Vogt I, 122; I, 35 (26), Vogt I, 134-5; I, 37 (28), Vogt I, 146; I, 39 (30), Vogt I, 154.

<sup>9</sup> He venerates a cross in the apse holding candles and making three prostrations (διὰ τῆς τρισσῆς μετὰ τῶν κηρῶν προσκυνήσεως): I, 1, Vogt I, 12; he similarly prostrates with candles when venerating the holy reliquary in the north bay of the church (I, 1, Vogt I, 25 and I, 39 [30], Vogt I, 154-5), and when venerating the tombs of Constantine, Nikephoros, and Methodios (I, 10, Vogt I, 69).

<sup>10</sup> *In Can. LXIX Conc. in Trullo*, PG 137, 753.

<sup>11</sup> *Meditata sive responsa*, PG 138, 1017A (= Rhallis-Potlis IV, 544).

πολλά.”<sup>12</sup> Although the cited text does not mention candles, the striking similarities between this imperial ceremony and the hierarch’s blessing of the people in *three* directions during the *Trisagion* in today’s pontifical rite are obvious. The acclamation “Eis polla...” during other pontifical blessings of the people — for example, after the hierarch’s vesting before Divine Liturgy, also seems inspired by earlier imperial ceremonial.

## II. Earliest Liturgical Witnesses

Epigrams referring to “three-branched candlesticks” are not rare in Byzantine literature of earlier periods, as Jacob has pointed out: for example, the epigram of St. Theodore Stoudites (†826) “On the Lamps” (εἰς τὰς φάνας) addresses a three-branched candelabrum ( Ὁλαμπαδοῦχε τοῦ τριλαμποῦς ἡλίου...).<sup>13</sup> But this tells us nothing about if or how these candlesticks were used in the pontifical rite. The earliest liturgical witness to pontifical “triple” candelabra of any kind is the 10<sup>th</sup> c. Typikon of the Great Church, which has the patriarch accompanied by either three “μανουάλια” (candelabra)<sup>14</sup> or simply by “μανουάλια” of unspecified number when entering Hagia Sophia, though there is no mention of the hierarch *blessing anything* with these clearly processional candles.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the “three μανουάλια” referred to here are apparently *separate candelabra*, probably not unlike the processional “cross, two candles, and one lamp” carried before the Jerusalem Patriarch in the 10<sup>th</sup> c. rite of *Codex Jerusalem Stavrou* 43 (AD 1122), a Typikon of the Anastasis Church in Jerusalem.<sup>16</sup> The cited evidence, then, attests to the “three-candle” *symbolism* of the trikerion, though not to its present-day form.

The earliest pontifical I know of to mention the hierarch *blessing with candles* is the late-11<sup>th</sup> c. Praxapostolos *Dresden 104* (AD ca. 1080), which has the patriarch enter the Great Baptistry of Hagia Sophia during the rite of baptism on Holy Saturday and bless with candles after accom-

<sup>12</sup> *De Cerem.* II, 78 (69), Vogt II, 123. Cf. Also Vogt II, 129.

<sup>13</sup> P. Speck, *Theodoros Stoudites. Jamben auf verschiedene Gegenstände. Einleitung, kritischer Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Supplementa byzantina 1) Berlin 1968, No. CII, 267. See this and other references in Jacob, “Chandelier” 193.

<sup>14</sup> LBG 971.

<sup>15</sup> On Holy Saturday evening the patriarch enters with “μανουάλιον γ’”: J. Mateos, *Le Typicon de la Grande Église*, 2 vols. (OCA 165-166), Rome 1962, 1963, here II, 84; on January 5 he is accompanied by “μανουάλια” of unspecified number (ibid. I, 182), though Mateos assumes that in this case there are also three (ibid. II, Index liturgique, 306).

<sup>16</sup> A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Ἀνάλεκτα ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς σταχυολογίας*, vol. 2, St. Petersburg 1894, 189. On the date of this ms see G. Bertonière, *The Historical Development of the Easter Vigil and Related Services in the Greek Church* (OCA 193), Rome 1972, 13ff.

plishing the incensation.<sup>17</sup> I unfortunately have access only to Dmitrievskij's Russian rendition of this text and cannot cite it with more precision. However, an almost identical rubric describing the same baptismal rite is found in Arranz's Greek edition of the 13<sup>th</sup> c. so-called "Codex Bessarion," Grottaferrata Γ. B. I, which informs us that the patriarch "σφραγίζει εὐχόμενος μετὰ κηρῶν τρίτον" (prays and blesses thrice with candles).<sup>18</sup> The cited texts are not clear as to *whom* or *what* the patriarch is blessing with these candles. An additional early witness to a pontifical blessing "with candles" is the 12<sup>th</sup> c. *Codex British Library Add. 34060*, which describes the 11<sup>th</sup> c. pontifical rite of the Great Church. Here the patriarch blesses the center of the altar with "candles" (τὰ πηνία) of unspecified number<sup>19</sup> after the Little Entrance (II, 8), but blesses the people without the candles toward the end of the Trisagion (II, 18) and during the Ektene (IV, 6).<sup>20</sup> In the 11<sup>th</sup> c. rite of the Arabic pontifical edited by Bacha,<sup>21</sup> the hierarch expressly blesses the sanctuary "with three candles" in three directions after the Little Entrance, but blesses the people after ascending the synthronon before the Epistle not with the candles, but with a cross.<sup>22</sup> Hence the "sealing" or "blessing" of sacred objects with candles in the cited 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c. sources can be categorized as *reverential* and *supplicatory*, as primarily directed to sacred objects.

<sup>17</sup> A. Dmitrievskij, *Древнейшие патриаршие типиконы святоградский и иерусалимский и Великой Константинопольской Церкви*, Kiev 1907, 161. Dmitrievskij renders the text as reading "and blesses *them* with candles," intimating that the candidates for baptism are the objects of the blessing. However, the Greek text cited below casts some doubt on this rendition.

<sup>18</sup> M. Arranz, *L'Euclologio constantinopolitano agli inizi del secolo XI*, Rome 1996, 182. On the most recent dating of this ms see S. Parenti – E. Velkovska, "A Thirteenth Century Manuscript of the Constantinopolitan Euchology: Grottaferrata Γ. B. I, Alias of Cardinal Bessarion," *BBGG III* s. 4 (2007) 175-196.

<sup>19</sup> LBG 1299. *Pace* Fr. Taft's supposition that τὰ πηνία "are undoubtedly the dikerion and trikerion": R. Taft, "The Pontifical Liturgy of the Great Church According to a Twelfth-Century Diataxis in Codex *British Museum Add. 34060*", *OCP* 45 (1979) 287, note 25; cf. Jacob, "Chandelier," 196-8; Goar, 499.

<sup>20</sup> Taft, "Pontifical Liturgy" I, 288-89, 295. The numbers in parentheses refer to the divisions of the text in this edition. In *Paris Coislin 213* (AD 1027) the patriarch repeatedly "blesses the people toward the front three times" (σφραγίζει τρίτον ἐπὶ τὸ ἔμπροσθεν μέρος) during a stationary liturgy, but there is no mention of candles (ff. 81, 83v): Duncan 12, 124-125; Dmitr. II, 1010-11; Arranz, *Euclologio* 133, 136; Goar's edition is missing the cited rubric, but has the hierarch bless the people thrice several times, 640.

<sup>21</sup> C. Bacha, "Notions générales sur les versions arabes de la liturgie de S. Jean Chrysostome suivies d'une ancienne version inédite," *ΧΡΥCOCTOMIKA*, Rome 1908, 410-469. The Arabic text edited and translated by Bacha is an exact reproduction of a 13<sup>th</sup> c. ms, the rite of which Jacob dates to the 11<sup>th</sup> c.: A. Jacob, *Histoire du formulaire grec de la liturgie de Saint Jean Chrysostome*. University of Louvain, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Louvain 1968, 297-300.

<sup>22</sup> Bacha 449, 451.

### III. From “διβάμπουλον” to *Dikerion*?

There is evidence of two candles or more being attached to certain Byzantine figural crosses,<sup>23</sup> but a connection between these crosses-with-candles and today’s *dikerion* or *trikerion* is untenable: there is no evidence that the bishop ever handled these “illuminated crosses” himself, nor that they had specifically *pontifical* functions, nor that the number of candles on these crosses was ever fixed to the point of acquiring any symbolic significance.

The earliest evidence of pontifical candles resembling the *candelabrum* known today as the “*dikerion*” is not to be found until the 13<sup>th</sup> c.<sup>24</sup>: the historian George Pachymeres (1242-ca. 1310) reports that at ordination along with a patriarchal staff the patriarch received from the emperor a two-branched *candelabrum*, called “διβάμβουλον” or “διβάμπουλον” (*duplex ampulla*), as a special patriarchal honor.<sup>25</sup> It was indeed an imperial honor, since Pseudo-Kodinos’ *De Officiis* (1347-1368) tells us somewhat later that on certain festive occasions the emperor himself was escorted with a “διβάμπουλον.”<sup>26</sup>

It is difficult to understand what exactly is meant by the term “διβάμπουλον,” since according to Pseudo-Kodinos’ description, this “two-branched *candelabrum*” had *only one* large lighted candle: the “διβάμπουλον” was painted red on the edges and decorated with gold-leaf in the middle, with red crosses depicted in circles on the gold-leaf.<sup>27</sup> Balsamon († after 1195) seems to have been referring to the same “διβάμπουλον” when he wrote over a century earlier that the emperor’s “lamps” differed

<sup>23</sup> The fifth-century historian Sozomenos mentions that St. John Chrysostom used “silver crosses under lighted wax candles” of unspecified number in liturgical processions to detract his flock from processions organized by the Arians (*Historia Ecclesiastica* 8, 8, 4). The sixth-seventh c. “Moses Cross” at Sinai has two spikes on the upper side of its crossarms, designed to hold candles. Kurt Weitzmann, who studied the cross, noted that the third spike on top of the cross was also possibly intended as a candleholder, though he could not be sure. Weitzmann was sure, however, that the cross was *not* processional as it was too large (K. Weitzmann – I. Ševčenko, “The Moses Cross at Sinai,” *DOP* 17 (1963) 385-398). Cf. also the fresco of a cross with two burning candles attached to the upper side of its crossarms in the Catacomb of Pontianus in Rome (*ibid.*, Plate 10).

<sup>24</sup> The *Vita S. Nicephori*, written by Ignatius the Deacon († after 845), chapt. 69, PG 100, 129B, refers to “two candle-lamps” lighted by St. Nikephoros, Patriarch of Constantinople († 828). This witness, however, refers to a non-liturgical, private vigil held by the patriarch in the katechoumenon or galleries of the church and provides no information on the *liturgical* functions of « two candle-lamps » at that time. Cf. Du Cange 646.

<sup>25</sup> A. Failler (ed.), *Georges Pachymères. Relations historiques*, vol. III, Paris 1999, 206-7; *ibid.*, vol. I, 162-163.

<sup>26</sup> J. Verpeaux (ed.), *Pseudo-Kodinos Traité des Offices*, Paris 1966, 190-1, 198.

<sup>27</sup> “... ἥς δὴ λαμπάδος τὰ μὲν ἄκρα εἰσὶ διὰ κινναβάρεως βεβαμμένα, τὸ δὲ μέσον διὰ πεταλίου κεχρυσωμένον ἔχοντος σταυροῦς ἐντὸς κύκλων κοκκίνους.” *Ibid.* 191.

from the “lamps” of both the patriarch and empress in that the emperor’s lamps were encircled with *two* golden “crowns,” signifying the emperor’s civil and spiritual authority, while those of the patriarch and empress had only one.<sup>28</sup>

Although it is difficult to fathom exactly how the *two*-branched, yet *single*-candle “διβάμπουλον” was designed, it is clearly distinct from another, single-branched patriarchal lamp called the “μονοβάμβουλον” or “μονάμβουλον.”<sup>29</sup> Regardless of the number of *lighted candles* on these candelabra, the base of the “διβάμπουλον” apparently resembled two branches, whereas the base of the “μονοβάμβουλον” was comprised of a single piece; the two distinct lamps differed, in any event, in that one represented *one* of something, while the other represented *two*. And in this sense, insofar as the “διβάμπουλον” somehow represented the number *two*, it could be seen as a precursor of the dikerion and its symbolism. In any case, with the decline and fall of the Byzantine Empire, the hierarchical “double-branched” candle was no longer distinguished from the imperial candle, which ceased to exist, while Greek hierarchs under the Turkish yoke acquired *double* authority, both civil and spiritual. Although the hierarchical “double” candle acquired a new christological symbolism, as we shall see below, it appears to have retained elements of the imperial candle: the elaborate decoration of the imperial “διβάμπουλον,” particularly the “crowns” or gold-leaf circles, may have inspired the present-day decorations attached by the Greeks to their dikeria and trikeria: I refer to the circle often embroidered with a cross surrounded by lace or gold frills, attached to the middle of the dikerion and trikerion with ribbons in Greek Orthodox pontifical celebrations.

This, however, does not sufficiently explain the connection between the “διβάμπουλον” and the dikerion, not recognized by Golubcov, Du Cange, or Clugnet.<sup>30</sup> It remains to be shown how the “dikerion” and “trikerion” mentioned by Balsamon in the 12<sup>th</sup> c. merged with these decorated processional candelabra. When Balsamon writes of the “dikerion” *with which the emperor blessed*, and of the “trikerion” with which both the emperor *and patriarch* blessed, he is evidently referring simply to *candles*, and not to the lavishly decorated *candelabra* that he calls “lamps.” Yet in today’s rite we have the hierarch blessing with a

<sup>28</sup> “... αἱ λαμπάδες μὲν τῶν βασιλέων διττοῖς διαχρῦσοις περιζωννύονται στεφανώμασι, τῶν δὲ πατριαρχῶν καὶ τῆς αὐτοκρατορίας ἐνὶ κατακυλοῦνται θριγγώματι”: *Meditata sive responsa*, PG 138, 1017D-1020A (= Rhallis-Potlis IV, 545).

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Du Cange, 300-02 on the terms “διβάμβουλον” and “μονοβάμβουλον.” Cf. the overview of the various possible meanings of these terms in Golubcov, *Sobornye Činovniki* 255-6.

<sup>30</sup> Golubcov, *Sobornye Činovniki* 255-6; Du Cange 300-02, 645-46; Clugnet, *Dictionnaire* 34-36.



“dikerion” and “trikerion,” which have both the outer form and liturgical functions of processional *candelabra*. Thus Balsamon evidently witnesses to the beginning phases of the development of the “blessing-candles”: they are not yet mounted on lavishly decorated candelabra, although the symbolic numbers *two* and *three* already adumbrate the present-day candelabra known as the dikerion and trikerion. As the liturgical functions of pontifical “blessing-candles” developed, it seems only natural that the candles were eventually mounted on candelabra, making their constant liturgical use more convenient.

This was in any event the case in the development of the Russian pontifical rite: Muscovite hierarchs employed a simple “two candles” and “three candles” in their celebrations, adopting the Greek candelabra or “dikerion” and “trikerion” only in the course of the mid-17<sup>th</sup> c. Nikonian reforms. The earliest Slavonic pontifical, *JMZ (Jaroslav'skij Muzej Zapovednik) 15472 (AD 1328-1326)*, has the hierarch hold “two candles” as he incenses the altar after the Little Entrance and reads the Prayer of the First Hour (O Christ, true light...) (f. 16v); in another early Slavonic pontifical, *GIM (Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Muzej) Synod 600 (348) (AD 1400)*, after the Little Entrance the bishop raises his hands and says the Prayer of the First Hour (воздѣвъ руцѣ молился ...), holding “two candles” (f. 18v); he then does the same holding “three candles,” saying three additional prayers, the Prayer of the Vine, “Let Your hand be upon the man...,” and “All-Holy Trinity...” (ff. 19v-20). The earliest Muscovite pontifical to have the hierarch bless with the “dikerion” and “trikerion” together, under their Greek names, and evidently presuming the *form* of the Greek pontifical candelabra is the Greek rite composed upon Patriarch Nikon's request by Constantinopolitan Patriarch Athanasius Patellarius (†1654) in 1653-1654, during the latter's stay in Muscovy. This pontifical rite, translated into Slavonic with some minor changes, was officially introduced into Russian Orthodox practice by the Moscow Council of 1666-1667 and remains practically unchanged to this day.<sup>31</sup>

The resulting two candles mounted on a “two-branched candelabrum” (= διβάμπουλον) of today's *dikerion* evidently made the earlier “διβάμπουλον” superfluous: just as the “διβάμπουλον” was a two-branched pontifical candelabrum for Pachymeres, so has a “δικήριον” been just that for the past few centuries: a two-branched pontifical candelabrum. “Words are words, and things are things,” according to the Taftism.

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<sup>31</sup> Дьянія Московскихъ Соборовъ 1666 и 1667 годовъ, second edition, Moscow 1893, f. 45. On Patriarch Athanasius Patellarius see V. Shapran, “Афанасий III Пателларий,” *Православная Энциклопедия*, vol. IV, Moscow 2002, 20-21.

#### IV. *The Separate Beginnings of the Trikerion and Dikerion*

I have not found direct evidence of a *trikerion* also being granted to hierarchs as an imperial honor, but the evidence cited from the *Typikon* of the Great Church, the Arabic pontifical rite, and Balsamon leaves no doubt that already in the 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c. *three* candles played a visible role in hierarchical ceremony. The *trikerion* is further attested on the Byzantine periphery in the 13<sup>th</sup> c. inscription of George of Gallipoli in the Salento at the heel of the “boot” of Italy.<sup>32</sup>

In any case, when Balsamon († after 1195) informs us that not only patriarchs but also lesser bishops and metropolitans received by the emperor’s concession the honor “of patriarchal lamps” (λαμπάδι δε πατριαρχική κυδαινόμενον),<sup>33</sup> it is quite possible that he is referring not only to the “διβάμβουλον,” but also to the *three* candles / candelabra we see in the cited sources. We do not have explicit evidence of pontifical *two*-branched lamps anterior to Pachymeres (1242-ca. 1310), so it may be that by Pachymeres’ time the two-branched imperial candelabrum or “διβάμβουλον” had been conferred on patriarchs as an additional honor after all hierarchs had already long enjoyed the privilege of celebrating with *three* lamps or candles.

The “double-branched” candelabrum or *dikerion* was in any event slower to enter the pontifical rite than the *trikerion*: the *dikerion* is absent in some pontificals even in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. The abovementioned rite of Patriarch Athanasius III Patellarius (†1654), for example, instructs the bishop to bless with a *dikerion* and *trikerion* after vesting, *unless there is no dikerion*. “If there is no *dikerion*,” writes Patellarius, “he blesses with his left hand,” holding the *trikerion* in his right (аще же нѣсть дикирь благословляеть лѣвою рукою).<sup>34</sup> Patellarius provides a different solution for blessing the Gospel during the Trisagion: “[the bishop] puts out one candle of the *trikerion* if there is no *dikerion*” (гасить едину свѣшу отъ трикирий аще нѣсть дикирия).<sup>35</sup> The Antiochian archdeacon Paul of Aleppo also notices only *trikeria* at pontifical celebrations during his travels in both Constantinople and in Muscovy in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> c.,<sup>36</sup> just as his con-

<sup>32</sup> Jacob, “Chandelier,” 187-199.

<sup>33</sup> *Meditata sive responsa*, PG 138, 1017C (= Rhallis-Potlis IV, 545).

<sup>34</sup> *Дьянія* f. 45.

<sup>35</sup> *Дьянія* f. 48v.

<sup>36</sup> Paul of Aleppo, *Путешествие Антиохийского Патриарха Макария в Россию в половине XVII века*, transl. G. Murkos, Moscow 2005, 37, 352, 383.

temporary, the Russian pilgrim Arsenij Suxanov, notes only a trikerion in his description of the hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Jerusalem.<sup>37</sup>

### V. *Evolving Liturgical Use and Meaning*

The *epiphanic* function of imperial “lamps” is described by Balsamon, who typically claims that the sovereigns use lavishly decorated gold and silver candelabra not out of vanity (οὐκ ἀποσεμνόνονται), but to illustrate the shining light of Orthodoxy.<sup>38</sup> Pseudo-Kodinos (AD 1347-1368) attests to an additional symbolic meaning of the emperor’s processional candle. After describing the imperial vesting rite, Pseudo-Kodinos indicates that the lamp (τὴν λαμπάδα) was carried before the sovereign in remembrance of the Lord’s words (Mt 5:16), “Thus shall your light shine forth before men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven.”<sup>39</sup> Theodore Balsamon mentions these words in reference to bishops, but with no clear connection to candles,<sup>40</sup> and Pseudo-Kodinos does not say that they were intoned aloud. But the fact that they are mentioned immediately following the emperor’s vesting, just as they are proclaimed in today’s hierarchical rite immediately after the vesting of the hierarch, confirms the common origins of the imperial and hierarchical liturgical insignia.

Somewhat later in the early 15<sup>th</sup> c. we find the same Gospel verse intoned after a rather different vesting rite — that of the monastic tonsure. St. Symeon of Thessalonica († 1429) tells us that after the newly-tonsured monk is vested in his new monastic clothing, he is handed a lighted candle with the words, “Thus shall your light shine forth...”<sup>41</sup> St. Symeon is the earliest witness to this verse in the then developing rite of monastic tonsure: the custom of handing the newly-tonsured monk a lighted candle is attested to by the 14<sup>th</sup> c., while the Gospel verse first appears in the cited passage of St. Symeon.<sup>42</sup> But significantly, it does not appear in any of his descriptions of the pontifical rite. I have not seen the verse in any pontifical anterior to Arsenij Suxanov’s mid-17<sup>th</sup> c. description of the hierarchical Divine Liturgy in Jerusalem.<sup>43</sup> So it

<sup>37</sup> N. I. Ivanovskij (ed.), *Проскинитарій Арсенія Суханова, 1649-1653 гг., Православный Палестинский Сборник* 7 (1899), вып. 3, 249-279.

<sup>38</sup> *Meditata sive responsa*, PG 138, 1017B (Rhallis-Potlis IV, 544).

<sup>39</sup> Chapter IV, Verpeaux 202.

<sup>40</sup> *Meditata sive responsa*, PG 138, 1017A (Rhallis-Potlis IV, 543).

<sup>41</sup> *De Pœnitentia* 274, PG 155, 194C.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. M. Wawryk, *Initiatio monastica in liturgia Byzantina* (OCA 180), Rome 1968, 153.

<sup>43</sup> Ivanovskij, *Проскинитарій* 254-5.

seems to have entered the pontifical rite via the monastic tonsure, a rite not unfamiliar to the Byzantine hierarchy, which after the victory over Iconoclasm in 843 was dominated by monastics. The verse is included in the pontifical of the aforementioned Athanasius Patellarius (AD 1666), whence it entered the Russian pontifical rite.<sup>44</sup> Thus the *epiphanic* significance of the Byzantine emperor's processional lamp was inherited by the hierarchical candelabra, which had firmly crystallized into the "dikerion" and "trikerion" by the 14<sup>th</sup> c.

## VI. *The Dikerion and Trikerion as a Pair*

Although both the dikerion and trikerion appear together in 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> c. Greek pontificals, the hierarch uses them separately, not together as in some instances today. The pontifical diataxeis of *Gemistos* (AD 1386), of *St. Andreas Skete* (15<sup>th</sup> c.), and the pontifical rite described by St. Symeon of Thessalonica (†1429) have the hierarch bless the Gospel with the "dikerion" after the Little Entrance, then with the "trikerion." In *Gemistos*, after the Little Entrance the bishop first blesses the Gospel with the dikerion, reciting the Prayer of the Vine, Ps 79: 14-15a<sup>45</sup>; he blesses the Gospel again with the trikerion during the singing of the Trisagion, reciting again the same Prayer of the Vine.<sup>46</sup> In the pontifical of *St. Andreas Skete* the hierarch blesses the altar with the dikerion after the Little Entrance, then during the Trisagion he blesses the Gospel with the trikerion, reciting the Prayer of the Vine.<sup>47</sup> St. Symeon of Thessalonica likewise has the bishop bless the Gospel with the dikerion after the Little Entrance, then with the trikerion during the singing of the "Glory to the Father..." at the Trisagion. Symeon also mentions that the bishop prays "for this to be restored *like a living vine*" (ὡς ἄμπελον ζῶσαν), which probably refers to the Prayer of the Vine, though it is not clear exactly when the bishop recites this.<sup>48</sup> *Gemistos* and Symeon present us with the earliest examples of the *benedictional* function of pontifical candles, having the bishop bless the people several times throughout the Divine Liturgy

<sup>44</sup> Дьянія f. 45.

<sup>45</sup> A. Rentel, *The 14th Century Patriarchal Liturgical Diataxis of Dimitrios Gemistos*. Edition and Commentary, unpublished Dissertatio ad Doctoratum, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome 2003, 206.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. 208.

<sup>47</sup> Dmitrievskij I, 169-70.

<sup>48</sup> *De sacr. lit.* 98, PG 155, 293. English translation from S. Hawkes-Teeple, *The Liturgical Commentaries of St. Symeon of Thessalonika (†1429)*. Diplomatic Edition of the text in Zagora Manuscript 23. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome 2002, 72 (in press).

with the trikerion alone,<sup>49</sup> while the *St. Andreas Skete* pontifical diataxis still has no blessing of the people with candles. St. Symeon articulates the symbolic meaning of the *number* of candles in the dikerion and trikerion, noting that the hierarch “seals” the Gospel first with the dikerion, then with the trikerion, “because the Trinity is of three persons and one in nature. And the Gospel has brought to light the knowledge of the twin natures of the incarnate one of the Trinity like light in the world.”<sup>50</sup>

## VII. Hagiopolite Influence?

It should be mentioned that Baumstark intriguingly suggested another possible influence on the development of the pontifical blessing-candles, the hagiopolite Light-Ceremony of Holy Saturday.<sup>51</sup> According to the mid-5<sup>th</sup> c. Armenian lectionary in ms *Paris 44*, the hierarch would light three lamps in the Anastasis before distributing the Holy Flame to the rest of the clergy and congregation — as distinct from the earlier Armenian lectionary in ms *Jerusalem 121*, which had the hierarch light only one candle.<sup>52</sup> While Baumstark suggested a hagiopolite influence on the Byzantine trikerion, Renoux presumed the opposite, hypothesizing that the change to *three* lamps was later added to the younger Armenian lectionary under Constantinopolitan influence.<sup>53</sup> Renoux was then convincingly disputed by Bertonière.<sup>54</sup> Be that as it may, we lack conclusive evidence to establish a direct connection between the hagiopolite paschal candles and the Byzantine trikerion in either direction.

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<sup>49</sup> In *Gemistos* the hierarch blesses the people with the trikerion at the end of the Trisagion (Rentel 208-9), during the Ektene (Rentel 221), and after the transfer of the gifts (Rentel 233). Symeon mentions the bishop’s blessing of the people with the trikerion after the Gospel (*Expositio de divino templo* 71, PG 155, 725, Hawkes-Teeple 40) and after the transfer of the gifts (ibid. 82, PG 155, 732, Hawkes-Teeple 48).

<sup>50</sup> *De sacr. lit.* 98, PG 155, 293, Hawkes-Teeple 72.

<sup>51</sup> A. Baumstark, *Comparative Liturgy*, Westminster 1958, 148.

<sup>52</sup> A. Renoux, *Le codex arménien Jérusalem 121. II. Édition comparée du texte et de deux autres manuscrits*, (PO 36), Brepols 1971, 297.

<sup>53</sup> Id., *Le codex arménien Jérusalem 121. I. Introduction*, (PO 35), Brepols 1969, 95.

<sup>54</sup> Bertonière, *Easter Vigil* 30-31, note 71.

VIII. *Conclusion*

Thus the earliest 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c. witnesses show the development of Byzantine pontifical “candles,” “candelabra,” or “lamps” beginning in imperial, then patriarchal ceremonial. Regardless of the outer form of these various “lights,” it is clear that the hierarchical dikerion and trikerion inherited from imperial ritual the *processional*, *supplicatory*, *reverential*, and *epiphanic* functions of the various imperial candelabra mentioned above. The *benedictional* function of present-day hierarchical “blessing-candles” cannot be traced to specific imperial candles, as far as I could discern. Nonetheless, today’s hierarchical *blessings of the people* accompanied by the acclamation “Eis polla...” or the Trisagion appear to be inspired by imperial ceremonial.

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## SUMMARY

The article traces the origins of the Byzantine dikerion and trikerion — the hierarchical blessing-candles — to Byzantine imperial ceremony. The relation between various candles/candelabra of Byzantine emperors and those of Byzantine hierarchs is confirmed by 10th-15th c. witnesses to their common liturgical functions.