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Edward KASINEC,*M. Phil., Columbia; M.L.S., Simmons College, США***THE KYIV CAVES MONASTERY'S ROYAL DOORS:
CONTEXT, FUNCTION, AND DISPLACEMENT
(TO BE DELIVERED IN UKRAINIAN)**

Едвард Касинець. Царські врата Києво-Печерського монастиря: контекст, функція та переміщення. За радянської влади Києво-Печерський монастир був підданий численним пограбуванням у 1920-1930-х роках, після того як впродовж століть був глибоко шанованим святим місцем Русі-України, Московії та Російської імперії. Одним з таких пограбувань була конфіскація і продаж багатьох його релігійних і мистецьких скарбів з метою отримання закордонної валюти для безгрошового режиму. Серед предметів розпорошених у такий спосіб були двоє монументальних царських врат XVIII ст., виготовлених із срібла і золота, конфіскованих з двох найвідоміших монастирських церков. Автор прослідковує історію і перепетії переміщення цих царських врат впродовж п'ятдесяти років.

Ключові слова: царські врата, Києво-Печерський монастир, радянська влада, пограбування.

Эдвард Касинец. Царские врата Киево-Печерского монастыря: контекст, функция и перемещения. При советской власти Киево-Печерский монастырь был подвергнут многочисленным ограблением в 1920-1930-х годах, после того как на протяжении веков был глубоко почитаемым святым местом Руси-Украины, Московии и Российской империи. Одним из таких ограблений была конфискация и продажа многих его религиозных и художественных сокровищ с целью получения зарубежной валюты для безденежного режима.

Среди предметов распыленных таким образом были двое монументальных царских врат XVIII в., изготовленных из серебра и золота, конфискованных из двух самых известных монастирских церквей. Автор прослеживает историю и перипетии перемещения этих царских врат в течение пятидесяти лет.

Ключевые слова: царские врата, Киево-Печерский монастырь, советская власть, ограбления.

Edvard Kasynets. The Sanctuary doors of Kiev Pechersk Lavra: context, functions and movement. During the Soviet times Kiev Pechersk Lavra was repeatedly robbed in 1920-1930 after being deeply respected holy site of Ukraine-Rus, Moskovia and Russian empire for several centuries. During one of the robberies many religious and art treasures were confiscated and sold in order to get foreign currency for a non-monetary regime. Among the lost objects were two Sanctuary doors of XVIII century made of silver and gold and confiscated from two of the most famous minsters. The author tracks the history and relocations of these Sanctuary doors during 50 years.

Key words: Sanctuary doors, Kiev Pechersk Lavra, Soviet regime, robbery.

I'm honored to be here and to be able to share with you the truly remarkable story of the sale by the Bolsheviks, the subsequent peregrinations, and "displacement" of the Kyivan Lavra's Royal Doors..... [1,2]

My first visit to Ukraine and the "Stauro-pegiat Kyivan Lavra-Monastery of the Caves, in honor of the Dormition of the Mother of God" – its official name – took place in the Winter of 1971. In that period of high stagnation (zastoi) the Monastery was a museum complex dedicated to the propaganda of Scientific Atheism.

Two years later (1973/4), and back in the States, I found myself in LA and the galleries of its County Museum. Tucked away in one of the starkly appointed, darkened alcoves of the museum's decorative arts gallery were displayed a dazzling two pairs of gilded silver [SLIDES, 4, 5] Tsarskie vrata (bramy), which had just been placed on deposit as part of a larger collection of silver and gold objets of vertu from Arthur Gilbert (later "Sir" Arthur) , a local businessman and collector. Then—PERHAPS AS NOW—I did not have the prerequisite 'resources' to properly situate what I was viewing. Still, the memory, the impressions remained and over the subsequent now forty plus years, the story of these gates, as well as the broader narrative of the Soviet Ukrainian and Russian sale of antiquities—diamonds, gold, silver, paintings, Faberge, MSS and books, AND SACRED ART such as these doors—the personalities involved, and their present location in the west would be one to which I would return many times.

The Ukrainian and Russian Revolutions –and like many previous periods of military and political turmoil—caused great dislocation, destruction, and dislocation—to objects of art, both sacred and secular, as well as to objets that might easily be monetized by "the victors" in the political struggle. In the immediate post-revolutionary years, museum repositories, palaces, religious shrines, and estates were nationalized, their erudite and patriotic old cadre curators dismissed, some being later executed in the late 30s. By the conclusion of the Civil War in 1921, the Soviet regime sought the financial means to fund the renovation of its devastated infrastructure, and later in the decade, embark on an ambitious drive towards transformation of the economy. Motivated by an admixture of practical financial considerations and Bolshevik ideology, figures in the Soviet government, hit upon the idea of turning the contents of religious museums, imperial palaces, and libraries into cold hard cash. Typically, Western representatives with such organizations as :

NARKOMPROS....GLAVNAUKA

Mezhkniga

GOS/KHRAN

VNESTORG

Antikvariat

Armand Hammer, Kenneth Snowman, Lord Duveen, the Berlin Auction House of Lepke/Krieger, The Dorotheum, Christie's, Wartski's, and the American Knoedler Galleries were among the most prominent names in the sale of paintings, furniture and items of decorative arts. With the possible exception of the precious metals collections of the Kremlin Armory, many of these sales were well-advertised and documented in their time. In the period from 1922-1937 many objects

of Faberge were sold to Royal collections in England and to private collections on the Continent and North America. Old Master and Renaissance paintings were sold to the American financier Andrew Mellon and subsequently donated to the National Gallery in Washington DC (6, 7, 8-10)

In addition to paintings and decorative arts, thousands of rare books, manuscripts, original photographs and collections of illustrated books made their way (through Simeon Bolan, Israel Perlstein and others) to the West during this period, principally into the hands of institutional buyers—most notably The New York Public Library, the Library of Congress, Harvard University Libraries, the Hoover Institution, as well as a host of Western European research libraries [11, 12, 13]. While the principal sales of rare books (Romanov, extra-illustrated, and old Slavonic mss and printed texts) books took place in a relatively brief period between 1921-1935, the re-sale of these books continued well into the war years and into recent years. Not surprisingly, Orthodox Sacred art was especially vulnerable to depredation. [15, 16, 17]

3. THE LAVRA'S GILDED ROYAL DOORS-18th-early 20th

For more than a millennium, The Kyiv Lavra has been regarded as one of the principal religious—cum cultural centers of Rus'/Ukraine/Muscovy Russia and the Eastern Orthodox world of which it was a part. By the time of the Ukrainian Revolution, the monastery complex was spread over more than 55 acres and contained dozens of 'altars' in both of the two principal parts of the Lavra, the Upper and Lower (the Caves).[18-24] The sacristy or tresor of its principal votive church, the Cathedral of the Dormition –which was destroyed during WWII and now rebuilt—and well as the furnishings of its many other churches were rich in benefactions from pious (and impious) rulers, religious and lay people.

On March 11, 1784, the Archimandrite (and Maecenas) of the Kyivan Monastery of the Caves, Zosim (Valkevich) (1719-1793) [r. 1762-86] , assisted by the Hiero-monakh and Keeper of the Caves, Vitalii solemnly consecrated an imposing pair of silver gilt royal doors [SLIDES 25-27] for the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God (Rizdvo Bohoroditsy, built 1696)), at the entry to the Lower (Far) Caves of the Lavra. The doors was a masterpiece of the Ukrainian Baroque silver work and were designed and crafted by the known master Hryhorij Chyzhevskiy. The weight as given in the cartouche as an imposing 74 lbs. and 9 oz. of silver and silvergilt (2 puds, 6/8 lot, 66 foreign chervonets) and were 91 ½ inches (232.2cm) in height and 40 ½ (102.9 cm.) inches in width.

Three months later, on June 9th, yet another set of even larger [SLIDES 28-30] silver gilt doors were blessed by Zosim and the Keeper of the Nearer Caves, Markian for the nearby Church of the Elevation of the Noble Cross, Nearer (Upper) Caves (Vozdvizhenie Chestnogo Kresta Gospodnia (KhrestoVozdvizhenskoj), built 1700). The legend engraved in the lower band states that more than almost 89 pounds (2 puds, 17 fount, 2 lot 95 chervonets used; 106 ", 269.2cm; x 49 ½, 125.1 cm) of silver was used for their embellishment. The larger of the two, the Exaltation Gates are approxima-

tely 9x3 feet and are comprised of several lightly gilded plates of silver screwed to iron rods. Much of the surface of the gates are sereated with dots, perhaps better to catch the light. Floral patterns predominate. According to the archival findings of Alla T. Hall, these doors were the work Oleksei T. Ishchenko (?-d.1811).

Both of the gates contain a narrow frame along the bottom containing a traditional legend commending the Russian imperial family, in this case Catherine II, the archimandrite of the Lavra, and the keeper of the respective peshchera.

There are three sujets on each of the two panels of the Nativity doors. They are highly Latinate, Western and consist of four cameos of the evangelists and their traditional symbols (ox, lion, eagle, winged seraph) [SLIDES 31-33] and two motifs taken from the NT: the Sacrifice of Isaac and the Entry into Jerusalem Exaltation Gates Program: [SLIDES 34-35]

Both masters of the Royal Doors had for their use in designing the narrative program, the rich resources of the Lavra's great library and collections of engravings, including works by native and foreign artists of the previous century [SLIDES 36-37], among them

Piscator Bible
Leontii Tarasevyc...
And Others:-
Christoph Weigel
Claes Jansz. Visscher
Johannis D Hertz
Sebastian Le Clerc

For the following 150 years, the doors remained as they were first installed and consecrated. They were often commented on and admired by both visitors to the Lavra and historians of its artistic treasures, most prominently, Samuil Mislavskii (1783-96), Evgenii (Bolkhovitinov, 1767-1837), Metropolitans of Kiev and antiquarians and others later in the century

3. THE 1920s and their WANDERINGS (SLIDES 38-42) In 1922, the Lavra was closed and its territory declared a museum. Only in recent years, have scholars in both Ukraine and abroad been able to set the broader context of the pillaging of the Lavra's sacred art in the period of the late 20s-early 30s. With the coming of Soviet "power" to Ukraine in 1922, many religious institutions of all denominations were closed and their more valuable objects subject to confiscation by the government and their more monetarily valuable, negotiable objects made subject to confiscation by the government. As early as May, 1922, the Assumption Cathedral (Upper Lavra) was visited by the a 'requisitioning' commission with the goal of assessing the precious stones and metals contained in its sacred art. The riza of the "wonder-working" Dormition icon attracted their special attention, and here I quote from a report that appeared in the Moscow Pravda (ch.101, May 9, 1922, p.4) :

The expert-appraiser who had carefully examined the revetement of the icon, contended that it had 292 carats of diamonds....13 carats of pearls, as many rubies, and many other types of stones.The gold revetement itself weighed more than six pounds.

The appraiser was very possibly the Kievan jeweler Jakiv A. (Jacques) or Moisei Zolonitskyi. As the months

progressed, the Requisition Commission inexorably turned its attention to the Lavra's other properties: gold and silver threated vestments, gospel covers, Eucharistic vessels, Slavonic printed books and illuminated mss. The commission entered the territory of the lower Lavra, its catacombs and the two churches which served as sentinels to the nearer and farther caves, the Church of the Exaltation of the Cross and the Church of the Nativity of the Mother of God. Because of their position as guardians of the the 'holy relics' contained in the caves, the churches were especially well furnished to receive and impress the tens of thousands of pilgrims who flocked to the Lavra each year to venerate the relics of the ugodniki and saints that rested in the caves. The eyes of the "commissioners" quickly came to rest on the remarkable Royal Gates, that formed the fulcrum of the large, multi-tiered rood screen. According to the Lukomskii, the gates remained in situ till at least 1923.

According to the findings of Hall, sometime in the late 1935 the doors were sold to the antiquarian firm of Baron [J.S]. Goldschmidt-Rothschild in Berlin, and from them to the American collector, W.R. Hearst. In early 1936 both royal doors were trans-shipped on the SS Nebraska from London to Los Angeles and then further by train to Hearst's storied hilltop estate on the California coast, San Simeon (aka "Xanadu"), midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. For the next quarter century the gates were never displayed in any of homes on the mountaintop, but rather remained sequestered in the original shipping crates in one of Hearst's principal storage areas on the shores of Pacific coast. When Hearst's fortunes began to wain, his collecting ceased and much of his art dispersed in sales that began as early as the 1940s.

In 1960, the Hearst corporation sold the gates to the Chicago dealers, Ruby and David Black their London associates, the silver dealers S.J. Phillips and shipped to London. The first public notices of the Gates -albeit with inaccuracies-began to appear in the art journals. Unfortunately at this point, the Gates were separated, the "Elevation Gates" were acquired and held (Nov. 61-Dec. 72) by Peter Moores (b. 1932), the master of the Parbold Hall in Lancastershire; while the "Nativity Gates" by (owner from January 62-May 72) Francis Stonor. In 1972/1973 the Gates were reunited thru their purchase by Arthur Gilbert (d.2001, later 'Sir'), a British born entrepreneur then residing in Los Angeles and in the winter of 1973/74 placed as a promised gift on view at LACMA. promised gift. However in 1996 Gilbert decided to give the collection to his native country, after a disputewith LACMA regarding his collection's placement and display. In 2000 it went on public display as "The Gilbert Collection" in a suite of seventeen galleries in historic Somerset House in London. The exhibition was fitted out under the supervision of the silver expert Timothy Schroder, and continued until 27 January 2008-2009 when the collection was incorporated into the Victoria and Albert Museum. In early 2011, fifty objects, including the Exaltation Gates from the Collection were returned, by the provisions of a long-term loan, to LACMA.

4. Preservation, Displacement, and CHANGE IN SIGNIFICANCE (SLIDES 43-48]

Other major religious sites in Kyiv suffered similar depredations at the same time. In 1934 Morton D. Day, heir to the May Department Store fortune and at that time a student at Dartmouth, purchased twenty three vestments in Kyiv, perhaps from the Sofiiskii Sobor. His collection was given to the City Art Museum of St. Louis in 1949. A second group of vestments, also bought in "Russia" (Ukraine) in 1935, was given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1960. These vestments were accompanied by typewritten labels on the lining: "Made at the expense of the Lavra in 1877," or stamped "Cathedral of Saint Sophia, Kiev."

During a significant part of what I lightly call "my career," the Soviet sale of art and books to the west was a forbidden topic for discussion. It is only in the post-Soviet period that researchers in Ukraine, Russia, and their counterparts in Europe and America have begun to look with unfettered interest at one of the saddest episodes in the cultural and book history of the 20th century, namely the confiscation, nationalization and "displacement" of thousands of objects of Ukrainian and Russian secular and most especially sacred art. Although the Kyivan Royal Doors were mercifully not subjected to a melt down into their bullion value, they are displayed without context and "religious significance," not as gateways to a Eucharistic Sacristy. They doors continue to impress with both their size and the wealth and imagination of their decoration. Without doubt they are the largest of all the objects in the Gilbert collection and may be the sole examples of such pieces sold from any Soviet museums

Abstract

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The Kyiv Caves Monastery's Royal Doors: Context, Function, and Displacement (delivered in Ukrainian)

Edward Kasinec

The Kyiv (Kiev) Caves Monastery underwent many depredations at the hands of Soviet authorities in the 1920-1930s, after having been revered for centuries as one of the great sacred spaces of Rus'-Ukraine, Muscovy and the Russian Empire. One of these was the confiscation and sale of many of its religious and artistic treasures, to raise foreign currency for the cash-strapped regime.

Among the items thus dispersed were a pair of monumental silver-gilt 18th century royal iconostasis doors from two of the Monastery's best-known churches. Edward Kasinec's richly illustrated [45 PP slides] remarks trace the history and tortuous movements of these royal doors over five decades.

During this time they passed through the hands of Baron Von Goldschmidt-Rothschild, the collector William R. Hearst ("Citizen Kane"), and the dealers S.J. Phillips, among others. Both magnificent doors were eventually purchased by Sir Arthur Gilbert and since then divided once more, between the galleries of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

The path through the Twentieth century of these two masterworks also serves as a prism for examining broader questions of cultural heritage and the displacement of art.

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