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Russian Pilgrims in Constantinople

GEORGE MAJESKA

In anno domini 1200, Dobrinia Iadreikovich, scion of a wealthy Novgorod merchant family (and soon to be archbishop of Novgorod under his new monastic name, Anthony), visited Constantinople, as he puts it, “by the grace of God and with the aid of St. Sophia, that is to say, of Wisdom, the ever-existent Word” (so states his record of his visit to the city).¹ His detailed record of his pilgrimage fills thirty-nine printed pages and records his visits to some seventy-six shrines in the “city guarded by God,” as well as another twenty-one in the city’s suburbs. His list of relics preserved in and around the city rivals in size the lists of sacred booty exported to the West in the wake of the Fourth Crusade, which saw the looting of the city just four years later.² Although it is quite possible that Anthony’s trip to Constantinople was not purely for spiritual refreshment (his subsequent appointment as archbishop of Novgorod, the second see of the Church of Rus’, suggests that he was probably involved in some ecclesiastical politics at the Patriarchate), his *notes de visite* are clearly of a pilgrim nature, and, indeed, the work he authored has come down to us under the title *Kniga Palommik*, “Pilgrim Book.” In fact, Anthony’s description of the shrines of the Byzantine capital is the most complete such medieval work preserved. Unfortunately for those interested in the topography of Byzantine Constantinople, however, Anthony’s notes seem to be in no recognizable order,³ suggesting that the author made only brief on-site notes and wrote up his “Pilgrim Book” later, perhaps after returning to Russia (leading at least one scholar who has studied this text to suggest that the pages of the prototype manuscript must have somehow gotten out of order⁴). Despite its geographical imprecisions, Anthony’s text stands as a marvelous catalogue of what at-

¹ *Книга паломник, сказание мест святых во Цареграде Антония Архиепископа новгородского в 1200 году*, ed. H. M. Loparev, PPSb 51 (St. Petersburg, 1899), 1. On the biography of the author see *ibid.*, “Introduction,” i–vii ff. See also K.-D. Seemann, *Die altrussische Wallfahrtsliteratur* (Munich, 1976), 213–21.

² Cf. P. Riant, *Exuviae sacrae constantinopolitanae*, 2 vols. (Geneva, 1877–78); F. de Mély, *Exuviae sacrae constantinopolitanae. La croix des premiers croisés—la sainte lance—la sainte couronne* (Paris, 1904); A. Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*, AOC 8 (Paris, 1965). I am currently preparing a new edition of the Old Russian text of the “Pilgrim Book” of Anthony of Novgorod with English translation and commentary. In the meanwhile, on the relics recorded in Constantinople by this Russian visitor, see G. Majeska, “Russians and the Relics of Constantinople,” *Восточнохристианские реликвии* (Moscow, 2002) (in press).

³ Except for the opening and closing sections of the narrative which treat St. Sophia and the Imperial Palace churches, and the shrines of the outlying suburbs, respectively. See recently on this subject A. Berger, *Untersuchungen zu den Patria Konstantinupoleos*. *Poikila Byzantina* 8 (Berlin, 1988), 160–61.

⁴ See J.-P. Arrignon, “Un pèlerin russe à Constantinople: Antoine de Novgorod,” in *Toutes les routes mènent à Byzance*, ed. J. Baschet et al. (St.-Denis, 1987), 36. In *Книга Паломник*, “Introduction,” cxxxi–cxxxii (but see

tracted pilgrims to this sacred city. Studying Anthony's list of holy shrines and pious relics along with more or less contemporary works of Western pilgrimage should give us a good idea of exactly what it was that attracted pilgrims to the Byzantine capital in the century or so before the Latin conquest.

If one compares the Russian Anthony text with the original Mercati Anonymus text, the longest and most detailed of the three extant contemporary Western descriptions of the shrines of Constantinople, one finds that the Latin text includes only twenty of the seventy-six religious shrines mentioned by the Russian enumeration.⁵ The two other contemporary Latin descriptions are much, much shorter.⁶ The Russian pilgrim text is obviously much fuller in detail.

The Great Church, the church of the Holy Wisdom (Ἁγία Σοφία) was clearly the central and most important religious edifice in the city, to judge from both the Russian text and the three Latin descriptions of Constantinople preserved from approximately the same period. All of these texts mention visiting St. Sophia; it was normally the first stop on the pilgrims' holy rounds. St. Sophia was, of course, the patriarchal and imperial cathedral for the whole Byzantine Christian world, and a veritable treasure trove of relics could be seen there. But, interestingly enough, the church itself, as a building, seems also to have been an object of devotion to the pilgrims. Unlike the churches of the other great pilgrimage centers of the Christian world (the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, St. Peter's in Rome, and the cathedral of St. James at Compostela, for example), the religious value of the building was not a specific single relic (Christ's tomb, Peter's or James's body), but was actually the sacred edifice itself. Thus Anthony of Novgorod begins his description of the shrines and relics of Constantinople with the phrase, "First we venerated St. Sophia," just as a fifteenth-century Russian pilgrim, the monk-deacon Zosima, begins, his recital of a visit to the city with the words, "First I venerated the holy Great Church of Sophia," and only then begins his litany of miraculous images and holy relics.⁷ The description of the church of St. Sophia with its relics makes up by far the longest section in Anthony's text, listing forty-six sacred relics, only ten of which the Mercati text notes (although the two shorter Western texts from this period add three more).⁸

also *ibid.*, xxviii–lxiv and 43–69), on the other hand, the editor, Khrisanf Loparev, attempts to establish the author's itinerary by rearranging posited leaves in the original manuscript.

⁵ And twenty-four not noted by Anthony, including three Latin establishments. See the newly edited expanded, fuller, and probably original, Mercati text, "Une description de Constantinople traduite par un pèlerin anglais," ed. K. Ciggaar, *REB* 34 (1976): 211–67 (hereafter "Description anglaise"). The editor is clearly correct (*ibid.*, 211–38) that the text is a translation from Greek, albeit the work of a Westerner interested in the holy sites of the city; see Berger, *Untersuchungen*, 155–59.

⁶ But include three more shrines not noted by Anthony. See "Une description anonyme de Constantinople du XIIe siècle," ed. K. Ciggaar, *REB* 31 (1973): 335–54 (hereafter "Description anonyme"), and "Une description de Constantinople dans le *Tarragonensis* 55," ed. K. Ciggaar, *REB* 53 (1995): 117–40 (hereafter "Description tarragonne").

⁷ *Книга паломник*, 2; G. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, DOS 19 (Washington, D.C., 1984), 183.

⁸ For an analysis of the relics recorded by the Russian visitors to Constantinople, see Majeska, "Russians and the Relics of Constantinople" (in press). The Mercati text also lists ten relics not mentioned by Anthony. On the church of St. Sophia, see W. Müller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls: Byzantion—Konstantinopolis—Istanbul bis zum Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen, 1977), 84–96, and R. Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'empire byzantin*, I. *Le siège de Constantinople et le patriarcat oecuménique*, 3, *Les églises et les monastères*, 2d ed. (Paris, 1969), 455–70 (hereafter *Églises CP*).

The longest section in the Mercati Anonymus, on the other hand, is that dealing with the imperial palace's Pharos church of the Mother of God, where most of the Passion relics of Christ were shown. Here the relic list of the Mercati work is much longer than that of Anthony (fifty compared to twenty-three), and, although the Mercati text lacks six of the twenty-three sacred objects listed by the Russian source, it includes thirty-three not mentioned by Anthony.⁹ The availability of a relic inventory of the church's treasury, like the one penned by Nicholas Mesarites ca. 1200,¹⁰ to which both pilgrim catalogues bear some resemblance, would explain the unexpected similarity of the two texts and the detailed nature of the English work. In the nearby Nea church in the palace, to the contrary, Anthony records thirteen sacred relics of various sorts; the Mercati text mentions only four of them.¹¹

This latter general pattern of recording relics is preserved in the two texts' treatments of the other sanctuaries of the imperial city: Anthony listing more relics than the Western texts do.¹² At the Stoudios monastery, for example, the Mercati text records five of the eight relics listed by Anthony.¹³ A similar ratio holds for the monastery of St. George at the Mangana.¹⁴ The church of the Holy Apostles held seventeen important relics according to Anthony of Novgorod, but the Mercati text lists only eleven.¹⁵ On the other hand, both narratives record the same three saints interred at the shrine of the Prophet Daniel.¹⁶

There are, of course, several ways to analyze these data. One can argue that these religious institutions (along with several others mentioned by both Russian and Western texts, such as the church of Sts. Sergios and Bacchos, the monastery of Sts. Kosmas and Damianos, the martyrion of St. Euphemia, and the monastery of St. John the Baptist at Petra) held an ecumenical attraction in the period before the Fourth Crusade. One might also be tempted to differentiate between Eastern and Western tastes in Constantinopolitan shrines, but it is equally possible that the differences between the number of shrines visited and relics catalogued in the texts from different cultures might reflect nothing more than the level of tour the authors took, with Anthony on the "personalized special deluxe tour" (and seeing both more shrines and more relics in each shrine) and the Mercati author, for example, cataloguing only the regular tour (and visiting fewer shrines and seeing fewer relics at each shrine). But militating against such a prosaic analysis is what the two

⁹ *Книга паломник*, 18–19; "Description anglaise," 245–46. On the Θεοτόκος τοῦ Ἰσάριου church, see Janin, *Églises CP*, 232–36.

¹⁰ Cf. A. Heisenberg, *Nikolaos Mesarites: Die Palastrevolution des Johannes Komnenos*, Programm des K. Alten Gymnasiums zu Würzburg (Würzburg, 1907), 29–31.

¹¹ *Книга паломник*, 19–21; "Description anglaise," 246. On the Νέα church, see Janin, *Églises CP*, 361–64.

¹² Major exceptions to this rule are two important shrines of the Mother of God visited by both Anthony and the Mercati Anonymus, the Chalkoprateia and Blachernai sanctuaries, where both texts record the same number of relics, but not necessarily the same relics: *Книга паломник*, 21; "Description anglaise," 250–55, 260. On these churches see Janin, *Églises CP*, 237–42, 161–71.

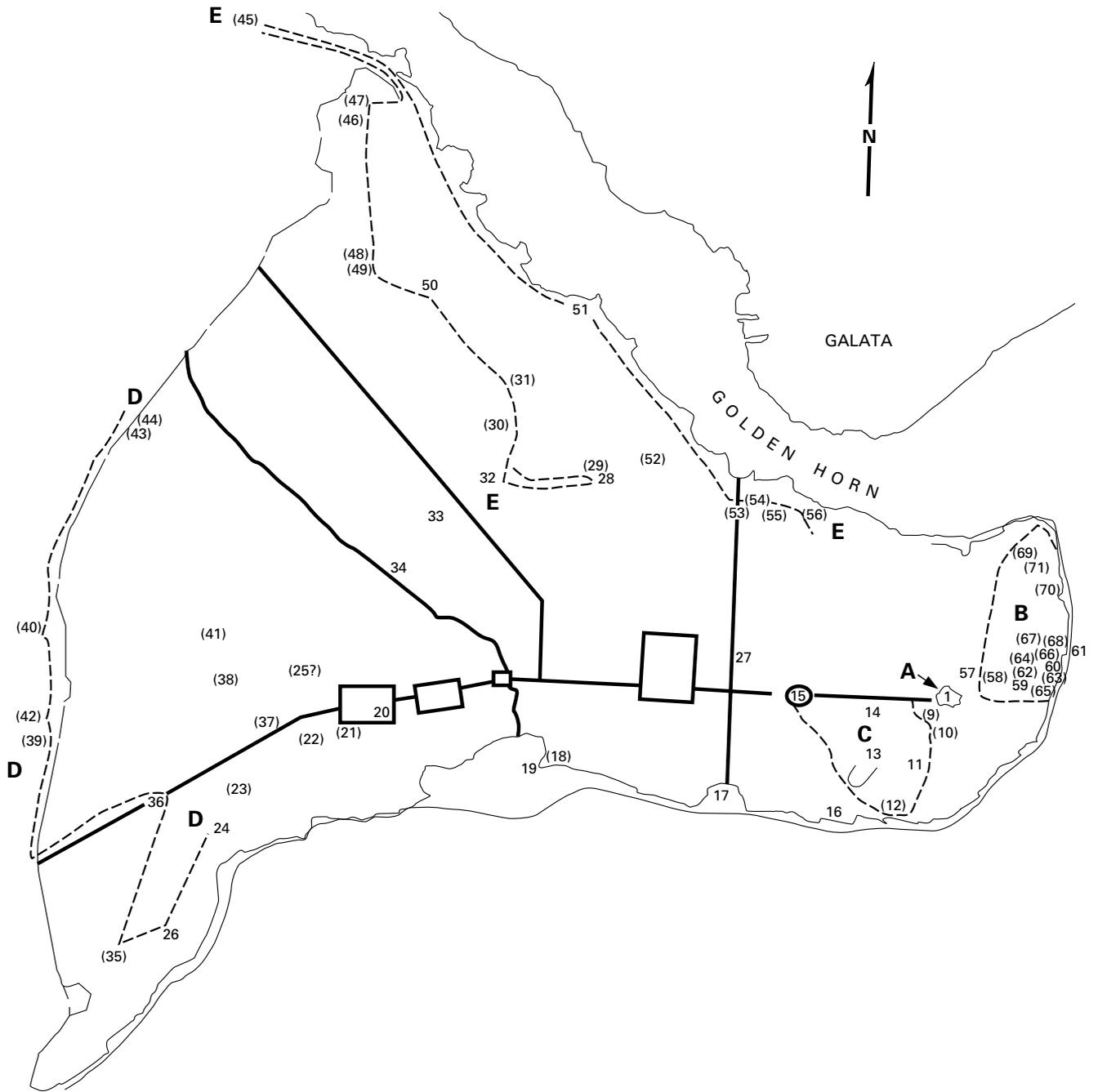
Note that although Anthony lists relics that are known to have been in both shrines, he incorrectly assigns them all to the Blachernai church (further evidence that he did not write up his notes "on the spot").

¹³ *Книга паломник*, 22; "Description anglaise," 262; on the Stoudios monastery, see Janin, *Églises CP*, 430–40.

¹⁴ Anthony three; Mercati two; *Книга паломник*, 23; "Description anglaise," 250; on the Mangana monastery of St. George, see Janin, *Églises CP*, 70–76.

¹⁵ *Книга паломник*, 24–25; "Description anglaise," 258; on the Apostles church, see Janin, *Églises CP*, 41–50.

¹⁶ *Книга паломник*, 27; "Description anglaise," 262; the Russian work, however, also notes minor relics there. On the Prophet Daniel shrine, see Janin, *Églises CP*, 85–86.



KEY TO MAP
SHRINES IN CONSTANTINOPLE VISITED BY RUSSIANS
DURING THE 14TH AND 15TH CENTURIES

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 St. Sophia Church | 40 St. Euphemia's body |
| 9 Justinian Column | 41 "τὰ μικρὰ Ῥωμαίου" convent |
| 10 Imperial Palace Chalke Gate | 42 Pege monastery |
| 11 Great Palace | 43 Prophet Daniel's tomb |
| 12 Palace Nea Church | 44 "τὰ Κύρου" Church |
| 13 Hippodrome | 45 SS. Kosmas and Damianos monastery |
| 14 St. Euphemia Martyrion | 46 Blachernai Shrine |
| 15 Constantine Column | 47 St. Nicholas Blachernai Church |
| 16 SS. Sergios and Bacchos Church | 48 St. Nicholas Petra convent |
| 17 Kontoskalion Harbor | 49 St. John Baptist Petra monastery |
| 18 St. Demetrios monastery | 50 Pammakaristos monastery |
| 19 Jewish Gate on the Propontis | 51 St. Theodosia Church |
| 20 Arcadios Column | 52 St. Stephen Shrine |
| 21 St. Athanasios monastery | 53 Basilike market |
| 22 Secular Church | 54 St. Nicholas Basilike Church |
| 23 "Righteous Judges" statues | 55 Basilike Frankish Church |
| 24 Peribleptos monastery | 56 Guarantor Savior |
| 25 <i>Povasil'ias</i> convent (?) | 57 St. Eirene Church |
| 26 Stoudios monastery | 58 <i>Iterapiotica</i> convent |
| 27 St. Anastasia's relics | 59 Hodegetria monastery |
| 28 Pantokrator monastery | 60 St. George Mangana monastery |
| 29 <i>Apolikaptii</i> monastery | 61 Φιλάνθρωπος Mangana Church |
| 30 St. Constantine convent | 62 <i>Perec</i> convent |
| 31 Kecharitomene convent | 63 τῆς Παναχράντου monastery |
| 32 Holy Apostles Church | 64 τῆς Παντανάσσης convent |
| 33 Kyra Martha convent | 65 St. Lazaros monastery |
| 34 Lips convent | 66 St. Cyprian the Sorcerer monastery |
| 35 St. Diomedes Church | 67 St. Andrew Salos monastery |
| 36 St. Andrew in Krisei convent | 68 St. Panteleemon's Head convent |
| 37 St. Andrew Salos monastery | 69 Mighty Savior convent |
| 38 St. Eudokimos convent | 70 St. Stephen Mangana monastery |
| 39 St. Tarasios's relics | 71 St. Barbara Church |

Note: Key numbers in parentheses on the map indicate a nonspecific location at the site.
Map and key numbers after G. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984)

TABLE 1. PILGRIMAGE SHRINES AND RELICS OF THE 12TH CENTURY
AS NOTED BY ANTHONY AND WESTERN VISITORS

1. Shrines

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| *** | Church of SS. Gourias, Samonas and Abibus |
| St. Sophia | Hodegetria monastery |
| ** | Tomb of Prophet Isaiah |
| Holy Apostles Church | St. John the Baptist Petra monastery |
| Blachernai Church | Tomb of St. Juliana |
| Pharos Church | Nea Church |
| * | Pantokrator monastery |
| Church of St. Anastasia | Church of St. Photina |
| Chalkoprateia Church | Church of St. Procopios |
| SS. Kosmas and Damianos monastery | Church of the Resurrection |
| Shrine of Prophet Daniel | Oratory of Samson |
| Martyrion of St. Euphemia | Church of SS. Sergios and Bacchos |
| Church of the Forty Martyrs | Stoudios monastery |
| St. George Mangana monastery | |

2. Relics

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| *** | Veil of the Mother of God | Wooden cross made from Noah's ark |
| True Cross | Table of Abraham | Head of St. Paul |
| Crown of Thorns | Body of St. Andrew the Apostle | Hand of St. Procopios |
| Holy lance | Head of St. Babylas | Body of St. Romanus |
| Sandals of Christ | Body of Emperor Constantine | Tomb of Symeon the Prophet |
| ** | Body of Daniel the Prophet | Body of St. Timothy |
| Basin of Christ's foot washing | Sheepskin of Elias the Prophet | Body of St. Theodore Stoudites |
| Swaddling clothes of Christ | Cranium of St. George | Relics of St. Theodore Tyron |
| Gold of Magi | Body of St. Gregory Nazianzen | Tomb of Zacharias |
| Stabbed icon of Christ | Body of St. Helen | * |
| Nails from Crucifixion | Tomb of St. James the Apostle | Boards of Christ's tomb |
| Holy reed of Christ | Bust of St. John the Baptist | Cross the height of Christ |
| Purple robe of Christ | Right hand of St. John the Baptist | Seals of Christ's tomb |
| Scarf of Christ | Body of St. John Chrysostom | Stabbed icon of Mother of God |
| Sponge from Crucifixion | Body of St. Joseph Stoudites | Icon of Mother of God, speaking to St. Mary of Egypt |
| Sudarion image of Edessa | Body of St. Luke the Apostle | Trumpets of Joshua |
| Tunic of Christ | Rod of Moses | Blood and milk of St. Panteleemon |
| Wellstone of Samaria | Body of St. Niketas | |
| Girdle of Mother of God | | |
| Robe of Mother of God | | |
| Staff of Mother of God | | |

Note: Number of asterisks denotes number of mentions by Western visitors.

TABLE 2. POPULAR PALAIOLOGAN PILGRIMAGE SHRINES WITH RUSSIAN VISITORS

| Shrine | Mentioned by | |
|---|--------------|---------------------------------|
| | Westerners | Armenian Anonymous ¹ |
| 1. 5 Russian visitors | | |
| St. Sophia | 4 | yes |
| Holy Apostles Church | 3 | yes |
| Blachernai Church | 4 | yes |
| Monastery of Christ Φιλάνθρωπος | | |
| Shrine of the Prophet Daniel | | yes |
| Hodegetria monastery | 2 | yes |
| St. John the Baptist Petra monastery | 2 | yes |
| Pantokrator monastery | 4 | yes |
| Peribleptos monastery | 2 | yes |
| Stoudios monastery | 2 | |
| 2. 4 Russian visitors | | |
| SS. Kosmas and Damianos monastery | | |
| St. George Mangana monastery | 3 | yes |
| Kyra Martha monastery | | |
| Church of St. Theodosia | | |
| Monastery of the Virgin τῆς Παναχράντου | | yes |
| 3. 3 Russian visitors | | |
| Column of Constantine the Great | 3 | yes |
| St. Lazaros monastery | | yes |
| τὰ Μικρὰ Ῥωμαίου monastery | | |
| Pammakaristos monastery | | |
| Monastery of the Virgin τῆς Παντανάσσης | | yes |
| Pege Shrine of the Virgin | | |

¹ Mentioned four other shrines that cannot be identified.

Note: Several other shrines that were not listed by Russian visitors or otherwise identified exist.

TABLE 3. MOST VENERATED RELICS OF THE PALAIOLOGAN ERA

| Relic | Times mentioned by Palaiologan visitors | Location |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Passion relics | 12 | Prodromos Petra, Mangana, Pantanassa, and St. Sophia |
| Constantine's tomb | 9 | Holy Apostles |
| Stone of Anointment | 9 | Pantokrator |
| Martyrs' gridiron | 8 | St. Sophia |
| Column of the Flagellation | 8 | Holy Apostles |
| Hodegetria icon of the Virgin | 7 | Hodegetria |
| Left hand of St. John the Baptist | 7 | Peribleptos |
| Body of St. John Chrysostom | 6 | Holy Apostles |
| Tomb of the Prophet Daniel | 6 | Prophet Daniel |
| Body of Patriarch Arsenios | 6 | St. Sophia |
| Column of Peter's weeping | 6 | Holy Apostles |
| Relics of St. Gregory Nazianzen | 6 | Peribleptos |
| Table of Abraham | 5 | St. Sophia |
| Body of St. Spiridon | 6 | Holy Apostles |
| Right hand of St. John the Baptist | 5 | Prodromos Petra |

authors chose to record when they visited the same building. Both texts list carefully the relics connected with the earthly life of Christ: the swaddling clothes, the gold of the Magi, the Passion relics, the wellhead of Samaria, the basin in which Jesus washed his disciples' feet, relics of John the Baptist, and, of course, relics of the Virgin Mary, along with Old Testament relics such as Abraham's table and Elias's sheepskin, and relics of a few well-known saints. These relics, then, can be accounted the major attractions for Christian pilgrims in a Constantinople become a sacred city. To these sacred treasures of ecumenical interest, Anthony's text adds mention of the relics of many saints popular mainly in Eastern Christianity, as well as miraculous icons, stories about which the author had doubtlessly heard at home (images that bled when stabbed, that spoke, etc.). Apparently such things were not objects of devotion for Western Christians ca. 1200, but were special objects of piety in the Eastern Christian sphere.¹⁷

It would seem, then, that by using these pilgrim accounts one can create a list of the most important Christian shrines in Constantinople in the twelfth century¹⁸ and the most highly revered relics in those shrines for Christians, both Eastern and Western. The methodology employs a kind of "law of citations" so that the shrines and relics mentioned most often in the four texts from this period (Anthony and the three Western descriptions) qualify as the most important. These objects of devotion are what drew pilgrims from around the Christian world to the city on the Bosphoros.

The crusader sack of Constantinople in 1204 changed, among other things, the sacred physiognomy of the city. Holy places were destroyed, or desecrated, or disappeared during Latin rule and seem to have been resurrected only partially when the Byzantines took back the city. Thus, while Anthony of Novgorod visited fully ninety-seven religious shrines in the city and environs in 1200, the five Russian travelers of Palaiologan times who left records of their trips all together mention only fifty-eight sanctuaries. Although it is possible that Anthony had more time to spend in Constantinople than did the later visitors, or was a more assiduous sightseer, it is also clear that there were far fewer Christian sites to visit and relics to venerate after the sack accompanying the Fourth Crusade.¹⁹

What was pilgrim Constantinople like after the Byzantine restoration in 1261? The Russian travel tales from the Palaiologan period contain much information about pilgrimage in Constantinople in the period after the Byzantine reconquest. The five preserved texts all date from a compact period of seventy years (1349–1419) and form a surprisingly homogeneous group, despite the diverse backgrounds of the travelers—two lower clergy, one petty official/merchant, and two visitors of unidentified background (but one of the last-mentioned texts, the so-called "Russian Anonymus," might rather represent a recital derived from a guidebook rather than from a visit to the city).²⁰

¹⁷ See Majeska, "Russians and the Relics of Constantinople" (in press).

¹⁸ Although it is certainly odd that, unlike the shorter Mercati text ("Description anglaise," 258, 259), Anthony makes no mention of the important church of St. Stephen where the saint's body was preserved; cf. Janin, *Églises CP*, 474–76, and Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 351–53.

¹⁹ On the relics venerated before and after the sack of Constantinople in 1204 (or, perhaps better, available for veneration), see Majeska, "Russians and the Relics of Constantinople" (in press).

²⁰ As is the case with the Mercati Anonymus (see above, note 5); cf. Seemann, *Altrussische Wallfahrtsliteratur*, 235–36. On the authors and their texts, see Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 15–20, 48–57, 114–21, 156–58, 166–70, and Seemann, 221–60.

All of the later Russian pilgrims, not surprisingly, record visiting the Great Church, that is, St. Sophia, as their first order of business in Constantinople, and they spend considerable space listing the relics and wonders that they saw there, not unlike the pilgrims before the Latin occupation. All of the later Russian pilgrims visited nine other shrines besides St. Sophia: the Holy Apostles church, the Blachernai shrine of the Virgin, the monastery of Christ Philanthropos, the shrine of the Prophet Daniel, the Hodegetria monastery, the monastery of St. John the Baptist at Petra, the Pantokrator monastery, the Peribleptos monastery, and the Stoudios monastery. Adding to this number the five shrines listed as visited by four of the five later Russian pilgrims (the monastery of Sts. Kosmas and Damianos, the monastery of St. George at the Mangana, the Kyra Martha monastery, the church of St. Theodosia, and the monastery of the Virgin Panachrantos) provides, one would assume, a relatively accurate listing of the Constantinopolitan shrines of most interest to the later Russian pilgrims to the city. Five preserved non-Russian travel descriptions of the sacred wonders of Constantinople from the same period can be combined with the Russian sources to provide a more ecumenical picture of the most popular shrines of the city. The most extensive of these comes from an Armenian visitor to the city in the early years of the fifteenth century.²¹ This text is uncannily close to the Russian lists of popular shrines, suggesting a specific Eastern Christian predilection for certain shrines in the period, a predilection apparently not shared by Western Christians (see Table 2).²² The other four include two important Western descriptions of the relics of the city that were penned by diplomatic visitors from the Iberian peninsula in the first half of the fifteenth century, Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo y Clavijo and Pero Tafur.²³ Also included in this number are two much briefer Western descriptions of the city from the same general period, those of the Italian traveler Buondelmonti and of the Frenchman de la Broquière.²⁴ Cataloguing visits by the five later Russian travelers and by the Armenian pilgrim, as well as reports from the four Western visitors, provides a reasonable approximation of the most visited pilgrimage sites in Constantinople in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Allowing for the fact that eleven churches visited by Anthony and the earlier Western pilgrims are not mentioned by the postconquest visitors (most of these sanctuaries can be assumed to have perished or been abandoned during the Latin occupation²⁵), this list is quite reminiscent of the set of pilgrim stations recorded before the Latin conquest (see

²¹ S. Brock, "A Medieval Armenian Pilgrim's Description of Constantinople," *REArm*, n.s. 4 (1967): 81–102.

²² Thus the Armenian pilgrim visits the tomb of the Prophet Daniel and the monasteries of the Mother of God tes Panachrantou and tes Pantanasses, shrines that no Palaiologan Western visitors discuss.

²³ Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo y Clavijo, *Embajada a Tamorlán*, ed. F. Lopez Estrada (Madrid, 1943); Pero Tafur, *Andanças e Viajes*, ed. M. Jimenez de la Espada (Madrid, 1874).

²⁴ "Le Vedute di Costantinopoli di Cristoforo Buondelmonti," ed. G. Gerola, *SBN* (1931): 247–79; Bertrandon de la Broquière, *Le Voyage d'Outremer*, ed. C. Schefer (Paris, 1892).

²⁵ These shrines include the fabled Pharos church of the Mother of God in the palace where, among other things, the relics of Christ's Passion had been preserved. It apparently lay in ruins by the 14th century, its treasures dispersed in the West and elsewhere in the imperial city; Janin, *Églises CP*, 232–36, and P. Magdalino, "L'Église du Phare et les reliques de la Passion à Constantinople (VIIe/VIIIe–XIIIe siècles)" (forthcoming). The major Passion relics, of course, are widely reported in the West after the Fourth Crusade; see Riant, *Exuviae sacrae*, passim; de Mély, *Exuviae sacrae*; Frolow, *Les reliquaires de la Vraie Croix*; and J. Durand and M.-P. Lafite, *Le trésor de la Sainte-Chapelle* (Paris, 2000), esp. 18–95. At the same time, however, Passion relics were also shown in Constantinople's monastery of St. George at Mangana, the monastery of St. John the Baptist in the Petra quarter, and the convent of the Virgin τῆς Παντανάσσης in the First Region (see Majeska, *Russian Trav-*

Table 1); only three of the churches visited by a quorum of the later travelers were not on the “must see” list of Anthony and at least one of the earlier Western pilgrims (two small monasteries of the Virgin on the slope of the first hill of the city—τῆς Παναχράντου, τῆς Παντανάσσης—and the monastery of Kyra Martha, which had yet to be founded when the earlier travel tales were penned²⁶). This fact is, indeed, eloquent testimony to the essentially conservative nature of Constantinopolitan pilgrim goals. Once again the basic similarity in the lists of sanctuaries visited by the Russians and by non-Russian contemporary visitors is striking, despite the fewer shrines visited by the Western visitors.²⁷

What drew the travelers to these specific shrines during the period 1261–1453? Whether the visitors chose to visit these sanctuaries on their own or whether their choice was dictated by a guidebook or a regularly guided itinerary, the important question is what was special about these buildings that would make them (or the visitors’ hosts or guides) think that they were especially worthy of a visit. Although at the practical level the pilgrims might have visited these sacred establishments because they were on a “package tour” (as certainly the fourteenth-century Spanish diplomats did), or because the sites were listed in a widely used guidebook, the more fundamental answer is *numenosity*, the sacred power with which certain objects (relics, images, holy water, etc.) were imbued. Such holy objects were available for veneration at the locations discussed here. Again, as with the list of shrines visited, one sees a general consensus among pilgrims from East and West as to what were the most venerable and powerful objects in Constantinople; the list, as was the case in the twelfth century (see Table 1), is dominated by objects connected with the life of Christ and with personages known from the scriptures.²⁸

Thus not only did Russian pilgrims share costume and accoutrements with West European pilgrims of the Middle Ages (bell-shaped cloak, pilgrim staff, sack [scrip], and the broad-brimmed “hat of the Greek land”),²⁹ but for the most part they also frequented the same shrines and venerated the same sacred relics. One senses a common pilgrimage ethos shared by Eastern and Western Christians, but perhaps not by the Byzantines, who had no need to undertake a long journey to venerate them.

elers, 368–70, 342–43, 377–79), but these were apparently lesser relics; see Majeska, “The Relics of Constantinople after 1204” (forthcoming).

The other sanctuaries that appear to be no longer on the prime pilgrim circuit by the 14th century are: the churches of the Forty Martyrs and of the Resurrection, and the oratory of St. Samson, all three of which continued to exist in the Palaiologan period (Janin, *Églises CP*, 485–86, 20–22, 561–62), and the churches of St. Anastasia, of the Forty Martyrs, of Sts. Gourias, Samonas, and Abibus, the shrines of the Prophet Isaiah and of St. Juliana, the churches of St. Photina and of St. Procopios, about which nothing is known in the Palaiologan period, a fact that would suggest that they had disappeared during Latin rule (Janin, *Églises CP*, 25–26, 485–86, 80, 139–40, 260, 499, 444).

²⁶ Janin, *Églises CP*, 324. On these three shrines and their histories, see *ibid.*, 214–15, 215–16, 324–26, and Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 375–77, 377–79, 276–83.

²⁷ Although the shrines visited by Eastern Christians but not by their Western counterparts might once again just as easily reflect the smaller number of places the Westerners had time to visit.

²⁸ For a fuller treatment of the holy relics shown in Constantinople in the Palaiologan period, see G. Majeska, “St. Sophia in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries: The Russian Travelers on the Relics,” *DOP* 27 (1973): 69–87, and *idem*, “Russians and the Relics of Constantinople” (in press).

²⁹ I. Sreznevskii, “Русские калки древнего времени,” *Записки императорской академии наук* 1 (1862): fasc. 2, 195–205.

ITINERARIES IN THE CITY

It cannot be purely accidental that the travelers all visited pretty much the same sites and venerated the same religious treasures, but particularly interesting is the fact that to a significant degree the post-Latin conquest Russian visitors did it in the same order. Unlike Anthony of Novgorod's Pilgrim Book, these later texts have a discernible topographical order in their entries. There is, in fact, an uncanny similarity in the sequence in which the later Russian pilgrims chose to view the sacred wonders of Constantinople. Although it is perhaps possible that these similarities of itinerary derive from the simple fact that there was a generally recognized set of important sanctuaries and relics in the "city guarded by God," it would seem much more likely that a guide of some sort (a person or text) dictated the pious pilgrim's movements in the imperial city, at least in the case of the Russian pilgrims of Palaiologan times.³⁰

It is not surprising that all five later Russian visitors first went to St. Sophia, a treasure hoard of relics and a building of mythic renown; nor is it surprising that while there some stopped to see neighboring objects of interest like the Justinian Column outside the church and the Chalke Gate of the Palace across the Augusteon plaza. But unexpectedly, four of these five Russian pilgrims next describe visits, not to a famous church such as Holy Apostles, but rather to a set of churches and monastic foundations east of St. Sophia on the slope leading down to the Bosphoros, the area normally spoken of as the "First Region," a neighborhood little spoken of. The exception to this rule (and to most of the generalizations about later Russian pilgrim itineraries in Constantinople) is Ignatius of Smolensk, who seems to have been in no hurry to do the pious tourist circuit and rather visits shrines at the rate of only one or two per day, probably because he will be in the city for more than two years.³¹ After visiting St. Sophia, however, the other four Russian visitors record going to the various shrines in the First Region area, most notably the Hodegetria monastery of the Virgin, the monastery of St. George at the Mangana, the monastery of Christ Philanthropos, and the Panachrantos monastery of the Virgin.³² (But among them they list some twelve ecclesiastical establishments in that neighborhood.³³) Although they for the most part speak of the same shrines, they do not discuss them in the same order. Apparently they did not all follow the same route through this area. However, these ecclesiastical establishments (some quite large, others very small) were cheek-by-jowl on this hillside, so that the efficient way to visit them would be to wander around; and this is apparently what the Russian pilgrims did.

If St. Sophia is counted as "Itinerary A" for Russian visitors to Constantinople, the galaxy of shrines on the hill leading down to Seraglio Point should be deemed "Itinerary B," denoted by the four anchor establishments noted above and shrines in close proximity to them (see Map).³⁴ "Itinerary C" (which might actually be the conclusion of "Itinerary

³⁰ There is not enough material in the later Western descriptions of visits to the city or in earlier pilgrim recitations to determine if viewing the city shrines in a set order was a more common phenomenon.

³¹ On the length of Ignatius' visit, see Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 53, 56–57.

³² On these shrines and their locations, see Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 362–66, 366–71, 371–74, 375–77, and Janin, *Églises CP*, 199–207, 70–76, 527–29, 214–15.

³³ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 361–87.

³⁴ The earlier Mercati Anonymus follows the same general order of listing religious sites (but starting with the imperial palace chapels [in disrepair since the Latin occupation], duplicating the order of the "topo-

B”) included the Imperial-Palace Nea church, the Hippodrome, the Column of Constantine, and the martyrion of St. Euphemia.³⁵ Again, these neighboring shrines (see Map) seem to have been visited in no set order.

“Itinerary D” started in the neighborhood of the monastery of Peribleptos in the southwestern section of the city and continued southwest to the Stoudios monastery; next the Russian visitors took advantage of being in that area to visit shrines near the land walls farther north, most notably the tomb of the Prophet Daniel, where pilgrims received their “seal for the road.”³⁶ Actually, only Stephen and the Russian Anonymus consistently follow this itinerary; Deacon Zosima begins his third excursion in this fashion, but then (rather than continuing on toward Stoudios in the city’s southwest corner) turns north after going part way and takes instead the north branch of the Mese (the main street of the city) and visits the shrines in the geographic center of the city, the area around the church of the Holy Apostles (no. 32); he then goes up to the northwest corner of the city to visit Blachernai (no. 46; see Map).³⁷ These holy sites would normally be part of “Itinerary E” (see below). Indeed, judging from the recorded visits to shrines that Zosima’s text lists after this entry, he no longer seems to be following anything that looks like a rational itinerary, but rather makes a series of separate visits to discrete neighborhoods. Like Ignatius of Smolensk (who specifies what he saw each day), Zosima seems now to be visiting individual sites one by one; he has apparently decided to spend considerable time in the city and is no longer rushing about with some sort of excursion bureau.³⁸ The clerk Alexander, on the other hand, had only a few days in Constantinople, and so, after visiting St. Sophia and the First Region (“Itineraries A” and “B”), he seems to abandon a set itinerary and visits Holy Apostles (no. 32) in the middle of the city, and then he too heads northwest toward Blachernai (no. 46) and from there south to the Tomb of Daniel near the land walls (no. 43; doubtless for his pilgrim token).³⁹ In what seems to be his final tour (his is a very short text), Alexander tries to fill in what he has missed, going farther south to Peribleptos (no. 24) and Stoudios (no. 26), and from there northeast to Kyra Martha (no. 33) and then southeast to “downtown,” to Sts. Sergios and Bacchos (no. 16) and the Hippodrome (no. 13), before heading back to the First Region again to visit the Lazaros monastery (no. 65; see Map).⁴⁰ Perhaps Alexander’s unusual wandering in the city was because on certain days some of these churches were having special services that he wanted to attend; or perhaps he had somehow missed these sanctuaries on his first visit to these neighborhoods.

graphical recension” of the “Patria”; see Berger, *Untersuchungen*, 155–59. The Russian texts diverge from this earlier order after discussing the First Region, however.

³⁵ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 247–50, 250–58, 260–63, 258–60.

³⁶ On this pilgrim token, see G. Majeska, “A Medallion of the Prophet Daniel in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,” *DOP* 28 (1984): 361–66. The sights listed in Itinerary D by both Stephen and the Russian Anonymus include the monasteries of the Mother of God Peribleptos and of St. John the Baptist-Stoudios, the convent of St. Andrew in *Krisei*, the body of St. Euphemia, the convent of the Mother of God τὰ μικρὰ Ῥωμαίου, and the shrine of the Prophet Daniel; see Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 276–83, 283–88, 314–15, 319–21, 321–25, 326–29.

³⁷ That is, he visits the sanctuaries of the Holy Apostles, the Pantokrator, and *Apolikaptii* monasteries, the convent of St. Constantine, and the Kecharitomene monastery of the Mother of God, before arriving at the Blachernai shrine; see Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 184–87, 299–306, 289–95, 295–96, 296–98, 298, 333–37.

³⁸ Or, perhaps, that he wrote up his travel notes after leaving the city.

³⁹ See above, note 36.

⁴⁰ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 160–65; on these last sights, see *ibid.*, 306–9, 264–65, 250–58, 379–81.

Note that with Ignatius and Zosima making individual forays to specific religious sites rather than following “sensible” routes, and with Alexander cramming everything important into a few precious days, there are, in the end, only two texts that reflect the posited “Itinerary D” and, in fact, also the final tour, “Itinerary E.”

“Itinerary E” (followed only by Stephen and the Russian Anonymus) starts from near Holy Apostles and heads northwest toward the Virgin shrine at Blachernai and the monastery of Sts. Kosmas and Damianos (in the Kosmidion suburb northwest of the city),⁴¹ and then returns, following the shore of the Golden Horn southeast, passing a number of shrines, including the church of St. Theodosia (no. 51; where Stephen ends this tour)⁴² (see Map). The Russian Anonymus continues along the shore to a series of shrines (nos. 53–55) at Perama (the “Ferry,” modern Odunkapi).⁴³ Stephen’s last noted excursion revisits the First Region (although not shrines visited previously),⁴⁴ while the final shrines in the list of the Russian Anonymus are in the central northwest part of the city (Pantokrator, Pammakaristos, Lips, and other shrines in the Lykos valley⁴⁵ [nos. 28, 50, 33, 34; see Map]). The last sites mentioned in those texts would seem to be shrines the pilgrims had not seen previously, a pair of, as it were, “fill-in tours.”

GUIDES

The texts of the later Russian travelers to Constantinople include only one clear reference to the use of guides in Constantinople. In summing up his experiences in the Byzantine capital, Stephen of Novgorod notes that, “Entering Constantinople is like [entering] a great forest; it is impossible to get around without a good guide, and if you attempt to get around stingily or cheaply you will not be able to see or kiss a single saint unless it happens to be the holiday of that saint when [you can] see and kiss [the relics].”⁴⁶ It would seem safe to assume, then, that Russian pilgrims in Constantinople employed the services of guides, amateur or professional, whenever possible.⁴⁷

The fact that Stephen (in Constantinople during Holy Week in 1349, or possibly 1348⁴⁸) uses the first person singular in the first line of his narrative and then shifts to the first person plural for the remainder of his description⁴⁹ suggests that he was moving around with a group, as well as, it would seem, with a professional guide (note the emphasis on money in his statement on guides in Constantinople). Indeed, most of the Russian pilgrims seem to have visited the shrines of the city in groups.⁵⁰ Alexander the Clerk

⁴¹ On the suburban monastery of Sts. Kosmas and Damianos, see Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 331–33.

⁴² See Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 346–51, on this church. V. Hrochová, “Les itinéraires des pèlerins russes à Constantinople,” in *Ἡ ἐπικοινωνία στὸ Βυζάντιο. Πρακτικὰ τοῦ Β' Διεθνoῦς Συμποσίου τοῦ Κέντρου Βυζαντινῶν Ἐρευνῶν* (Athens, 1993), 600–601, outlines grosso modo Stephen’s itinerary.

⁴³ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 150–52.

⁴⁴ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 44–45.

⁴⁵ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 152–53.

⁴⁶ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 44–47.

⁴⁷ On guides for Russian pilgrims in Constantinople, see D. Ainalov, “Примечания к тексту <Книга Паломник> Антония новгородского.” *ZhMNP* 1906, fasc. 6: 234–36.

⁴⁸ On the date of the visit, see I. Ševčenko, “Notes on Stephen, the Novgorodian Pilgrim to Constantinople in the XIV Century,” *SüdostF* 12 (1953): 165–72.

⁴⁹ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 28–47.

⁵⁰ Ainalov, “Примечания,” loc. cit.

also shifts from the first person singular to the first person plural after the opening lines of his recital (although his account is largely written in the impersonal third person).⁵¹ Similarly, Ignatius of Smolensk's description of the shrines of the city is in the first person plural ("we saw," "we venerated," etc.) from 28 June 1389 until 17 December of the same year (one of his last touring entries), when he abruptly switches to the first person singular.⁵² His group seems to have broken up when a new metropolitan of Rus' was dispatched from Constantinople, probably taking back to Russia with him the Russians who had come to Constantinople with Ignatius in the train of the previous Muscovite metropolitan and who had been his companions.⁵³ Deacon Zosima, on the other hand, begins and ends his description of the wonders of Constantinople in the first person singular, but writes everything in between in the impersonal third person ("Near this monastery is a convent"), giving no hint of whether or not he traveled with a group in the city.⁵⁴

The "Russian Anonymus" text might, as suggested earlier, in fact reflect a translation of a written guidebook used by Constantinopolitan guides. As handed down to us, the text is preserved only as part of a pastiche pilgrim tale with massive pieces of the travel tale of Stephen of Novgorod added to it, and, separately, as the topographical foundation for a *faux* dialogue on the wonders of Constantinople and the blessings of pilgrimage to the Byzantine capital.⁵⁵ The text outlines "Itineraries A–E" discussed above, probably exemplifying a standardized religious tour of Constantinople. The text's introductory and concluding sections (and added dialogue elements) aside, it reads in fact very much like a guidebook. The verbs are neither in the first person (singular or plural) nor in the impersonal third person, but rather in the infinitive form: a kind of generalized imperative ("Go east from there to . . .") with specific directions to various shrines and wonders, albeit, interestingly, assuming that the reader possesses a basic knowledge of the layout of the city. The text also includes the kinds of fantastic stories that guides seem to like to tell about the places they are showing. Moreover, the two different versions of the Old Russian text used in the two works preserving it seem to reflect two separate translations, assumedly from the Greek (although there are few clear Graecisms in the text), for although the two versions essentially "say the same thing," they tend to say it in different forms grammatically—something that would be quite odd in a normally transmitted pilgrim narrative. Very likely the compiler of the pastiche narrative (probably the author of its introductory and concluding paragraphs) used one translation of a Greek original text, while the dialogue editor used a different translation of the same text. One can even argue that the text was translated by Novgorodians both times, for both versions show heavy traces of northwest Russian dialect.⁵⁶ The basic text, however, must have reflected a standard tour of the city in order to find real-life echoes among the Russian travelers to Constantinople.

⁵¹ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 160–65.

⁵² Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 76–133.

⁵³ See Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 98–101.

⁵⁴ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 176–95.

⁵⁵ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 114–21.

⁵⁶ Majeska, *Russian Travelers*, 119–21. But note that Greek guidebooks to Constantinople were rare; see E. Kislinger, "Sightseeing in the Byzantine Empire," in *Ἡ ἐπικοινωνία στὸ Βυζάντιο* (as above, note 42), 464–65, and G. В. Роров, "Древнейший русский лицевой проскинитарий," *Иерусалим в русской культуре*, ed. A. Batalov and A. Lidov (Moscow, 1994), 86. That they did, in fact, exist, however, is evidenced by the background of the text of the "Description anglaise" (see above, note 5).

We may conclude, then, that Russian pilgrims (and probably other Eastern Christians, to judge from the fourteenth-century Armenian Anonymus) were attracted to Constantinople basically by the same relics as were Western visitors both before and after the Fourth Crusade, and visited essentially the same shrines in the city. Beyond the shrines and relics of general Christian interest in Constantinople, however, the Russians (and Armenians and other Eastern Christians?) visited other shrines and venerated other relics, probably because these sacred places and objects coincided with their specifically Eastern Christian tastes.⁵⁷ The Russian pilgrims, at least, seem to have followed a basic general itinerary in viewing the holy sites of the city; non-Russian visitors might have also followed these routes, but the available material does not allow for a judgment on this question.

University of Maryland

⁵⁷ Or, less likely, because they spent more time in the city.