

Alexei Lidov

The Creator of Sacred Space as a Phenomenon of Byzantine Culture

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The aim of this paper is to pose a question of the cultural phenomenon long neglected. I will argue that in our discussion of Byzantine artists and donors one might find some room for a specific group of makers - the creators of sacred spaces who were responsible for an entire project of sacred space realised in a particular church, or any other environment. This figure should not be identified with the artisan making concrete art objects like walls and vaults, sculptural decorations and paintings, liturgical vessels and textiles. Either his role cannot be limited to the financial support of the project. It is noteworthy that this form of activity had a very powerful artistic aspect as well. In a sense, the creator of sacred space is the artist whose role seems comparable with contemporary activity of film directors conducting the efforts of various 'artisans'. From this point of view, the creator of sacred space might be discussed in the art-historical context. At the same time, it seems important to emphasize that he belongs to a particular field of creativity, which has been recently named the Hierotopy¹.

¹ Alexei Lidov Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces as a Form of Creativity and Subject of Cultural History, in *Hierotopy. The Creation of Sacred Spaces in Byzantium and Medieval Russia*, ed. A.Lidov. Moscow, 2006