

# A 13th-Century Jewellery Hoard from Thessalonica: A Genuine Hoard or an Art Dealer's Compilation?

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## Introduction

In the early 20th century, an ensemble of Byzantine gold jewellery was purchased from an art dealer by the Greek collector Hélène Stathatos, whose collection is now kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens.<sup>1</sup> The hoard, which is described in this paper, comprised a pair of bracelets (cat. no. 1), a pair of earrings (cat. no. 2) and 14 finger-rings (cat. nos 3–16) decorated with precious stones, enamel and niello, and was said to have been found in the region of Thessalonica, Greece. The objects were supposedly found with coins of the Byzantine Emperors Isaac Angelos (1185–95) and Alexios III Comnenos (1195–1204),<sup>2</sup> thus providing a *terminus post quem* for the burial of the jewellery.

If the dealer's information was correct, the hoard contained some of the very rare key pieces for the evaluation of not only Byzantine goldsmiths' work from the 12th to the first half of the 13th century, but of jewellery in particular. However, coming from the art market, their provenance is questionable, and they have not had the attention from researchers that they deserve. Apart from their uncertain provenance another reason for this is that the catalogue of the Stathatos Collection (illustrated in black and white), in which Coche de la Ferté published the treasure in 1957,<sup>3</sup> is rather rare today. Coche de la Ferté's studies<sup>4</sup> were very thorough and are still valuable, but half a century has passed in which much new research has been undertaken and many more archaeological finds have come to light. This makes a fresh look at the jewellery necessary.

In this paper arguments will be delivered for two hypotheses: first, that the jewellery originally belonged together and actually formed a hoard as sold by the art dealer, and second, that the stylistic, iconographic, epigraphic and palaeographic evidence corresponds with the date provided by the coins. The comparative objects presented in this paper suggest that the non-homogeneous pieces of the Thessalonica hoard date to a time frame of the 12th and 13th centuries, as opposed to Coche de la Ferté's dating to the 5th to 14th centuries. However, it is problematic that most of the pieces lack Byzantine parallels; it is, therefore, essential to look for comparisons amongst other genres of Byzantine art, as well as the art of other cultures, such as Islamic or Kievan art.

In the following, the pair of bracelets, the earrings and the 14 finger-rings will each be described and then compared to other objects in order to obtain evidence for their dating.

## The objects of the Thessalonica hoard

### **Cat. no. 1. Pair of gold bracelets with embossed clasps (Pls 1–2)**

The pair of gold bracelets consists of several round wires, probably a complex loop-in-loop construction.<sup>5</sup> Two heart-shaped plates<sup>6</sup> connected by hinges serve as clasps. They are worked in *repoussé* and show two addorsed birds with crossed

tails flanking a tree of life.

There are no exact parallels in Byzantine jewellery for this type of bracelet. A gold bracelet in the same collection has a hoop made from two twisted wires, but has two unconnected semi-circular finials, which are decorated in relief with Christ and the Virgin Mary. This bracelet was dated tentatively to the 11th–12th centuries based on the figures general resemblances to contemporary coins.<sup>7</sup> Of similar proportions to cat. no. 1, it differs in the simpler plaiting of its hoop and the shape of its finials, as well as being penannular. Two bracelets from a treasure found in Samsat, Turkey, were found with coins suggesting they could not have been buried before the middle of the 11th century.<sup>8</sup> An example found in the region of Silistra in Bulgaria also has a hoop of complex plaits but much smaller drop-shaped finials that are unattached (dated to the 11th century).<sup>9</sup> Other penannular bracelets are in the National Museum of Damascus, Syria: one made of a solid hoop ending in heart-shaped plaques,<sup>10</sup> and others with plaited hoops but different clasps,<sup>11</sup> dated without corroborative evidence to the 12th–13th centuries.<sup>12</sup> According to these parallels, bracelets with plaited hoops can be roughly dated to the 11th–13th centuries. The type seems to have survived well into the 14th century in the Balkans, with rounded or spatula-shaped finials decorated with large granules.<sup>13</sup>

Further clues can be gained from analysing the heart shape of the embossed plates. This motif was probably derived from ivy leaves and was used in enamelled depictions of garments from the 11th century onwards, as on the famous 'Monomachos Crown' in Budapest (1042–50).<sup>14</sup> In his work on the so-called 'Artukid Bowl'<sup>15</sup> in Innsbruck, Steppan classified the motif as both a 'courtly ornament' and a 'stylistic criterion of courtly enamels'.<sup>16</sup> In architecture, the heart appears as a filler for pendentives between arches from the 12th century onwards, and possibly as early as the 11th century.<sup>17</sup> However, the precise origin of the motif is uncertain. Ousterhout assumed that despite its imprecise shape it was probably a heraldic symbol of the Comnenian dynasty, beginning with the introduction of chivalric practices under Manuel Comnenos (1143–80).<sup>18</sup> Ousterhout's conclusion was that a 12th-century date would correspond with the earliest appearance of the heart as an independent design motif.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, as the heart shape is an integral design element of our bracelets, a date before the 12th century seems rather unlikely.

This dating is corroborated by the iconography: the addorsed birds flanking a tree of life appear in Islamic, Kievan, western Medieval, as well as Byzantine art in the 12th to 13th centuries. The majority of the comparative pieces, discussed below, cannot be dated with precision, but do at least hint at a likely time frame. Those drawn from Kievan art can at least be dated on historical grounds to before the early 13th century when the Tatar invasions of the 1230s marked the end of Rus'.

Addorsed birds appear on Islamic textiles, ceramics and metalwork from the 12th century at the latest.<sup>20</sup> Almond-shaped amulets made in bronze and gold, probably from Anatolia or Iran, and dated to the 12th to 13th centuries<sup>21</sup> serve as examples of medieval mass-production, repeating a then well-known motif which saw variations in Islamic art in the form of addorsed harpies and sphinxes.<sup>22</sup> A late example is a tile from Kashan, Iran, in the British Museum, dated to around 1300.<sup>23</sup> In Kievan Rus' the motif of addorsed birds, as well as sirens, also enjoyed great popularity, for example on enamelled temple pendants,<sup>24</sup> though often without the crossed tails or the tree of life in the centre. The motif also appears in other genres of Kievan art, such as ceramics, metalworking and fresco painting.<sup>25</sup> A 12th-century bowl that might have been a Byzantine import even combines addorsed griffins, sirens and lions. It was found in Tchernigov and was probably buried in 1239 during the Tatar attack on the city.<sup>26</sup> How widespread the general motif of addorsed animals was in the arts of the 12th and 13th centuries all over Europe and the East, is proven by examples from Britain, such as a harness plaque with similarly addorsed lions from Salisbury which dates to the late 12th or 13th century.<sup>27</sup> Regarding this plaque, Stratford stated that 'heraldic compositions with two animals or birds flanking a central tree were common currency in the 12th century through their popular dissemination on textiles....'<sup>28</sup>

However, the best – and datable – comparison is found in the Byzantine capital itself, in the Pantocrator monastery in Constantinople, which was an imperial building of the Comnenian dynasty and their burial place. Addorsed birds decorate the cornice of the north church's dome (Pl. 34).<sup>29</sup> The north church belongs to the earliest building phase of the monastery commissioned by Emperor John II Comnenos (1118–43) and his wife Eirene (d. 1124). The north and the south church were erected between 1118 and 1136 (date of the *typicon*).<sup>30</sup> The birds on the cornice are very similar to the birds on the Stathatos bracelets<sup>31</sup> and show that the motif was in the iconographic repertoire of Byzantine craftsmen in the capital. Later, addorsed birds grouped around a tree of life appear in the church of Christ Antiphonitis in Kalogrea in Cyprus (east of Kyrenia). The frescoes are dated to the end of the 12th century (c. 1190) and reflect the Comnenian style of the capital.<sup>32</sup> Interestingly, they are surrounded by a beaded circle as well as a row of small trapezoids, motifs reminiscent of the ornamental bands on cat. nos 5–7.

Given the date of the initial appearance of the motif one can assume that the Stathatos bracelets were produced some time in the 12th–13th centuries. However, the addorsed birds in the Pantocrator monastery, with its imperial background, seem to be the best clue for dating the Stathatos bracelets.



**Plate 34** Cornice of the north church's dome, Pantocrator Monastery, 1118–36, Constantinople

The monetary value of the jewellery was clearly substantial and suggests that the hoard probably belonged to a member of the nobility or to a courtier. Given the loss of territory and the contraction of the economy in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods, it seems probable that precious metals were rarer and more valuable than in the preceding Early Byzantine period. To gain an idea of the value of gold, the jewellery and diadem plaques from the 10th-century Preslav Treasure can serve as an example.

These objects most likely formed a diplomatic gift from the Byzantine emperor to the Bulgarian tzar.<sup>33</sup> They weighed c. 640g, the equivalent of two Byzantine *litra* (one pound – *litra* – equals c. 319–320g).<sup>34</sup> According to the 10th-century *Book of the Eparch* (probably finished in 912) that sets out the rules and regulations for the office of the eparch of Constantinople,<sup>35</sup> a large building was worth more than one pound of gold.<sup>36</sup> The Stathatos bracelets weigh 81.1g and 83.2g respectively, representing almost precisely half a Byzantine *litra*. The time difference – at least 200 years later than the *Book of the Eparch* – makes it difficult to judge whether the relationship, however imprecise, between one pound of gold and a large building was still valid. It is difficult to judge how much the pair of bracelets were worth, but Morrisson and Cheynet's study of the sources gives us some idea. In 1143, for example, a lamp for the Holy Sepulchre weighing 20 gold pounds had the price of 1440 *hyperpyra*.<sup>37</sup> Taking this roughly contemporary information as a basis for valuing the Stathatos bracelets, it can be estimated that their cost would have been approximately 36 *hyperpyra*. A year before, in 1142, a vineyard in Macedonia was sold for 17 *hyperpyra*.<sup>38</sup> Another source dated to 1155/6 states that ten cows were sold for one *nomisma*<sup>39</sup> (between 1092 and 1204 one *hyperpyron* equalled 4/5 *nomisma*<sup>40</sup>). In the late 12th century a pair of oxen was priced at seven *hyperpyra*.<sup>41</sup> These price comparisons only provide a hint as to how much the gold bracelets were worth, but they show that they were surely far beyond the spending capacity of an average person.

The comparisons mentioned above suggest that the prototypes of the motifs employed on the bracelets are possibly to be sought in imperial contexts such as the Pantocrator monastery, and that the heart shape might well be interpreted as a heraldic symbol if Ousterhout's argument is accepted.<sup>42</sup> A 12th-century date for the Stathatos bracelets seems plausible on these grounds, although a 13th-century date cannot be excluded judging from the iconographic parallels.

### **Cat. no. 2. Pair of gold earrings with animal finials (Pls 3–5)**

The earrings, one of which is incomplete, consist of hollow openwork hoops ending in unidentifiable animal heads (mythical beasts?). Their eyes and ears are inlaid with round garnet (or red glass) cabochons and almond-shaped turquoise glass respectively.<sup>43</sup> The two rings in the mouths of the animals held lost loops. The earrings would probably have been originally decorated with rows of pearls on wires held by small gold rings on the outside.

Jewellery with animal-head terminals is well known, not only in the Bronze Age and the Greek and Roman periods, but also in the Middle Ages in both western and Scandinavian art.<sup>44</sup> Animal-head terminals, however, appear rarely on medieval earrings and therefore it is difficult to determine the prototypes for our pair. The round eyes and drop-shaped ears

on an animal head appear, for example, on a bracelet inlaid with garnet found in a Merovingian grave in France dated to around 500.<sup>45</sup> However, there are no close *comparanda* for the earrings in Byzantine jewellery. Animal finials appear on simple Middle Byzantine bronze bracelets from Bulgaria and northern Greece,<sup>46</sup> but not frequently on earrings. The best comparison is a 12th- to 13th-century silver earring from a burial in Ohrid, although it has a plainer design.<sup>47</sup>

Again we have to look to other areas for comparative pieces. A bracelet finial from 12th-century Kievan Rus' is very close with regard to the proportion and overall design of the animal head.<sup>48</sup> A pair of bracelets from Persia, dated to the 11th to 12th centuries, provide a particularly close parallel, as they incorporate not only the animal heads, but also inlaid stones.<sup>49</sup> On the Islamic bracelets these are of turquoise, whilst the Stathatos pieces are only decorated with glass inlays of the same colour. Middle Byzantine jewellery is never embellished with genuine turquoise,<sup>50</sup> although the colour was often copied in glass, particularly in enamel. Two other features point to Islamic prototypes for the Stathatos earrings: not only are the hoops pierced,<sup>51</sup> but the resulting holes are surrounded by what seems to be an imitation of beaded wire or linear granulation. This surface treatment is unique for Middle Byzantine jewellery. It seems as if a particular filigree wire technique, typical of Fatimid goldsmiths' works, may have been imitated. A Fatimid earring in the Benaki Museum, Athens,<sup>52</sup> shows how this characteristic Fatimid filigree was made: two twisted wires were bent to form scrolls, whilst rows of granules, looking like beaded wire, were placed in the grooves between the wire. The back was then stabilised by strips of sheet gold. Perhaps this pierced surface appearance, with raised parts with a granulated surface, served as the general prototype.

This comparison with Islamic filigree, albeit hypothetical, as well as the comparison with the Kievan and Islamic bracelets with animal finials, suggest a date for the Stathatos earrings of not before the 11th century, and probably rather later than that. The dating to the 10th–11th centuries suggested by Coche de la Ferté<sup>53</sup> is not impossible, but seems rather too early.

### Finger-rings (Pls 6–31)

The finger-rings of the Thessalonica hoard are equally difficult to classify and date because they again lack parallels within the corpus of Byzantine jewellery. A total of 14 rings can be sorted into four discrete groups:

1. Six cast gold rings, of which four form two groups (cat. nos 3–8).
2. Four gold rings with thin hoops and set with stones (cat. nos 9–12).
3. Three hollow gold rings engraved or decorated with niello (cat. nos 13–15).
4. A small ring, the hoop decorated with a pair of hands (cat. no. 16).

#### GROUP I (Pls 6–17)

The six gold rings of Group I (cat. nos 3–8) share a common feature in that they are all hollow-cast. They differ, however, in their decoration: one ring has a monogram on the bezel and plain shoulders (Pl. 6), one is nielloed (Pls 7–8), and the other four are enamelled (*Grubenschmelz*) (Pls 9–16). Nevertheless their proportions and method of production suggests that they



**Plate 35** Gold ring with monogram, (first half of?) 13th century, London, British Museum

come from the same workshop. There are hardly any Byzantine parallels for these rings.

The plainest ring of Group I (Pl. 6; cat. no. 3) has an engraved monogram that was dated by Coche de la Ferté to the 5th to 8th centuries,<sup>54</sup> and which subsequently led him to believe that it was the oldest piece within the hoard. However, Seibt, on the basis of the letter shapes, in particular the alpha and omega, has recently dated it to the end of the 12th or the 13th century, probably to around the mid-13th century at the latest.<sup>55</sup> This dating is in agreement with the coins supposedly found together with the hoard.

The second ring (Pls 7–8; cat. no. 4) has an octagonal bezel with concave sides. The bezel is engraved with a head enclosed by nielloed decoration which is continued on the shoulders and sides. This piece has a close parallel in a ring in the British Museum with an engraved Greek monogram on its bezel (Pl. 35),<sup>56</sup> thus proving its Byzantine provenance. This ring has been dated to the Late Byzantine period based on its monogram, of which different readings have been offered: Dalton read the name as that of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1348–1425)<sup>57</sup>, but Entwistle considered this unlikely and dated the ring more generally to the 13th to 15th centuries.<sup>58</sup> Zaleskaya suggested reading the name as that of Manuel Kantakouzenos (reigned 1349–80) and an attribution to the Despotate of Morea, perhaps Mistra.<sup>59</sup> However, Seibt has convincingly dated the British Museum ring on the basis of epigraphic parallels to the 13th century, possibly the first half.<sup>60</sup> Because of the striking similarities between this ring and cat. no. 4 it can be assumed that they came from the same workshop and should be dated to the same period.

Unlike the first two rings, which are singletons, the remaining four enamelled rings form two groups (cat. nos 5–8). Two have square bezels (cat. nos 5, 6), the other two lozenge-shaped bezels (cat. nos 7, 8). Even though they have the same general shape and shoulder decoration in common, they bear different designs: the bezels show respectively two standing figures (Pls 9–10), a lion (Pls 11–12), a two-bodied mythical creature with one head (Pls 13–14) and an abbreviated scene known as the *Ascent of Alexander* (Pls 15–16).

The profiles of the latter two rings are unique amongst Byzantine jewellery. However, the rings with square bezels can be paralleled on a Byzantine ceramic dish from Corinth, probably dating from around the middle of the 12th century (1130–60; Pl. 36).<sup>61</sup> The ring held in the beak of a bird on this plate looks similar to cat. nos 5 and 6, differing only in the more exaggerated flaring terminals.<sup>62</sup> However, for further comparisons one is forced again to look outside the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire. The two rings with square bezels (cat. nos 5, 6) can be widely compared to some Islamic rings with regards to their shape, although these are made in filigree.<sup>63</sup> One of these Islamic rings even has a similar bezel design to cat. no. 5 of two standing figures (Pl. 37). The ring in the



**Plate 36** Byzantine ceramic from Corinth, first half of 12th century (1130–60)

Benaki Museum in Athens was probably produced in '12th-century Iran'.<sup>64</sup> Apart from these Islamic comparisons, a Byzantine bronze ring in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection, which was dated to the 13th century on the basis of a comparison with the Stathatos ring, is engraved with two similar figures;<sup>65</sup> it differs, however, in the hexagonal shape of its bezel.

Interpreting the two figures on cat. no. 5 is difficult as they lack identifying inscriptions and are not nimbed. One is dressed like a soldier, the other like a civilian.<sup>66</sup> Paired saints, such as Sergios and Bacchos or Theodore and Demetrios, often appear in Byzantine art.<sup>67</sup> However, they are usually both depicted in military attire, whereas the figures on the Stathatos ring are not. Coche de la Ferté suggested they were St Nicholas and St Demetrios on the grounds of comparisons with lead seals from the 11th to 12th centuries:<sup>68</sup> a seal of Georgios, bishop of Phtia in Thessaly, shows the same arrangement of figures, but the accompanying inscriptions are unfortunately almost illegible; a further seal of the *curopalates* John Triakontaphyllos shows two figures and has complete inscriptions naming St Nicholas and St Demetrios.<sup>69</sup> Assuming that these two saints are the figures actually depicted on the Stathatos ring, this would fit well with a supposed find-spot for the hoard in the region of Thessalonica. The city was an important port with at least five churches dedicated to St Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors. St Demetrios was the patron saint of Thessalonica whose relics were kept in the Church of St Demetrios. However, this interpretation cannot be proven due to the lack of identifying inscriptions.

Some clues for dating the Group 1 rings can be elicited from the double-bodied creature, probably a lion, on one of the rings with a lozenge-shaped bezel (cat. no. 7). Double-bodied

sphinxes and harpies appear, *inter alia*, on stone reliefs from Persia (probably early 13th century),<sup>70</sup> on a bronze mirror from Persia or Asia Minor (13th century),<sup>71</sup> and on a bronze bowl from east Persia, dated to the end of the 12th century.<sup>72</sup> The double-bodied lion can be found especially in Saljūq art, for example on stucco reliefs. Baer has argued that they were guards of the royal palaces and had an apotropaic function.<sup>73</sup>

Although many of the comparative pieces are derived from Islamic art, the best parallel for the ring with the lion (cat. no. 6) is a ring purchased in Austria as 'coming from the Balkans?' (**Pl. 38**). Lacking an archaeological context it has been dated on stylistic grounds to the second half of the 12th century.<sup>74</sup> The Austrian ring is made from silver, but the engraved depiction of the lion with its S-shaped tail, the raised front paw, the turning of the head and the same degree of stylisation are all comparable to the Stathatos ring. Apart from this, the nielloed decoration found on the silver ring matches the designs on some of the rings of our Group 2, with a triangular pattern around the raised bezel (cat. nos 9, 11) which will be discussed below. The motif of the lion as such should not be relied upon as a dating tool, particularly as the Austrian ring is not dated reliably. Nevertheless it is worth pointing out that similar depictions of lions with S-shaped tails and raised paws appear, for example, in relief on a finger-ring in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Sicily, 12th century)<sup>75</sup> or as ornaments on Romanesque book-bindings from London and Durham dated to c. 1170–80 and c. 1185 respectively,<sup>76</sup> parallels which support the dating of the ring from Austria.

Cat. no. 8 bears a depiction of a scene known as the *Ascent of Alexander*. As this is the only narrative scene found on Middle Byzantine jewellery, the ring is of great interest. In this case the scene is reduced to the essential elements: the ruler sits on a folding chair, indicated by two crossed lines, referring to the *sella curulis* of the Roman magistrates. The chair is flanked by two animals. Alexander the Great (d. 323 BC) was in his lifetime a famous military leader. After his death he became a role model for succeeding rulers because of his conquests and military strength. Between the 3rd century BC and the 3rd century AD the myths and legends surrounding Alexander were set down in a text known as the *Alexander Romance*, with a first Latin translation in 330.<sup>77</sup> The text was popular in the Middle Ages and was translated into many languages. It is preserved in 18 manuscripts from the 11th to 16th centuries.<sup>78</sup>

The *Ascent of Alexander* is a common subject in Byzantine art.<sup>79</sup> The scene, mostly with griffins, or rarely, eagles drawing the chariot, appears throughout western Medieval and Middle Byzantine art, on textiles, stone reliefs and metalwork,<sup>80</sup> hence the motif itself cannot be used for dating. Depictions of the scene appear on three Middle Byzantine goldsmiths' works,



**Plate 37** Gold ring with filigree and granulation, Persian, 13th century (?), Athens, Benaki Museum



**Plate 38** Silver ring with niello inlays, purchased in Austria (perhaps found in the Balkans), second half of 12th century, Haedeke Collection, Germany

which pre-date the preserved manuscripts: on a diadem plaque from the Preslav Treasure (probably 927),<sup>81</sup> a gold ring in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (11th century)<sup>82</sup> and the so-called 'Artukid Bowl' in Innsbruck, Austria, dating from the 12th century.<sup>83</sup> These examples show Alexander's chariot drawn by griffins as described in the *Alexander Romance*, while the animals on the Stathatos ring flanking Alexander's chair seem to be a mixture of griffins and eagles.<sup>84</sup> These objects are made from gold, most of them with enamel. They seem to belong to an imperial context as the diadem plaque from the Preslav Treasure<sup>85</sup> formed the centre of a diadem that was probably part of a gift from the Byzantine emperor to the Bulgarian Tzar. That the *Ascent of Alexander* is part of the vocabulary of imperial iconography has been emphasised by Steppan in his studies on the 'Artukid Bowl'.<sup>86</sup> The former owner of the Stathatos ring should, therefore, be sought in the nobility or courtly circles.

Further clues for dating can be obtained from comparative decorative ornament. Although ornament in general is not considered to be a reliable indicator for dating, as Restle has recently reiterated, some forms and types of ornament seem to have been 'common currency' in the 12th to 13th century.<sup>87</sup> The row of circles around the bezels of two of the rings with square bezels (cat. nos 5, 6) can be found in book illuminations from the 11th to 13th centuries,<sup>88</sup> and on metalwork as exemplified by a 12th-century copper plaque with St George.<sup>89</sup> The early 13th-century mosaic floor of the Church of St John in Ravenna – 'son style est dû à l'influence byzantine consécutive aux Croisades'<sup>90</sup> – also shows that this ornament was fashionable in this period over a large area.<sup>91</sup>

Another framing motif is the angular meander along the edge of the bezel which encloses the *Ascent of Alexander* (cat. no. 8). A similar band appears on an enkolpion in Sofia, Bulgaria, dated to the 12th century.<sup>92</sup> In both cases, the same technique – *Grubenschmelz* – and colours were used: green, red and blue.

In summary we can say that the six rings of Group 1 probably come from one workshop, which also probably produced the example in the British Museum. The date of its monogram, 13th century, perhaps the first half of the 13th century, and the date of the monogram on the gold ring cat. no. 3, late 12th to 13th centuries (probably around the middle of the 13th century at the latest), provide some evidence for the dating of the whole group. The comparative objects discussed above do not argue against this time frame. On the basis of the Greek monograms on cat. no. 3 and the British Museum ring we can assume that the whole of Group 1 is of Byzantine origin.



**Plate 39** Gold ring with cut down and re-used Middle Byzantine jasper seal depiction of St Theodore, London, Victoria & Albert Museum

#### GROUP 2 (Pls 17–23)

Although the rings from Group 1 seem to be Byzantine because of their Greek monograms, most of the comparative objects for Group 2 (cat. nos 9–12) are drawn from western Medieval art. Their common feature is a thin round gold hoop and a bezel in the shape of a *frustum*, a truncated cone or an octagon made of sheet gold and stabilised with a filler. The bezel profiles vary from round to rectangular and octagonal. The four rings are set respectively with a ruby (or tourmaline), an amethyst (or ruby), an antique carnelian gem<sup>93</sup> and a glass paste. Three of the four have niello decoration on their bezels.

Rings with *frustum*-shaped bezels are a common Gothic type that appears in the first half of the 12th century and can be found in the West until the middle of the 13th century.<sup>94</sup> The only slightly similar ring found in the Byzantine Empire that I know of is a bronze ring from Corinth that was dated to the 11th century on the grounds of its archaeological context, although it might be rather later.<sup>95</sup> The Corinth ring differs from the Stathatos rings in material, proportions and in the shape of the bezel. A better parallel is a gold ring in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Pl. 39),<sup>96</sup> which is set with a jasper depicting St Theodore,<sup>97</sup> and which appears at first glance to account for the appearance of this ring shape in Byzantium.<sup>98</sup> However, according to Spier,<sup>99</sup> this particular Middle Byzantine gem was a Middle Byzantine seal that was later cut down, and hence is used as a *spolia* in the gold ring. Therefore, it could have been set in the gold ring either in Byzantium or the West.

The majority of comparative rings come from England, France and Germany. Some of the rare dated pieces formed part of the Lark Hill hoard from Worcester, which was buried probably in 1173/4 (Pl. 40).<sup>100</sup> It consists of seven finger-rings,



**Plate 40** Rings from the Lark Hill hoard, Worcester, probably buried 1173/4, London, British Museum

six made from silver, one from bronze, 208 English coins from the reign of Henry II (1154–89), struck between 1158 and c. 1170, as well as 21 foreign coins, most of them from France.<sup>101</sup> Even though the hoops of the Lark Hill rings are flat, they share the truncated bezels and similar proportions with the Stathatos rings, as well as the band of engraved bars at the junction of hoop and bezel.

These features also appear on a number of other similar rings datable on the basis of their archaeological context: the earliest datable example has been ascribed to the Bishop of Durham, Ranulf Flambard (1099–1128);<sup>102</sup> two gold rings with square truncated bezels set with a small ruby (from Belgium, province of Hasselt, first half of 12th century)<sup>103</sup> are similar in proportion to cat. no. 11; a ring with rectangular bezel and a sapphire from the grave of Albero of Montreuil, Archbishop of Trier, Germany (1131–52);<sup>104</sup> a ring again with similar proportions to cat. no. 11, but engraved with a flower motif, from the grave of Arnold I of Walencourt, bishop of Trier (1169–83);<sup>105</sup> and finally, a ring set with a green plasma cabochon from the grave of Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury (d. 1205).<sup>106</sup> A square gold ring set with amber from a grave in the St Petri Cathedral in Bremen and which can probably be dated to the second half of the 12th century<sup>107</sup> is similar to cat. no. 10, although it has semi-circular openings at the bottom of the truncated bezel and a decorated hoop. A round ring with an undecorated oval bezel similar to cat. no. 9 comes from a grave in the same Cathedral and was dated to around 1200.<sup>108</sup> These parallels all point to a 12th- or early 13th-century date for this ring type.

The majority of the comparative objects of the 12th and 13th centuries cannot unfortunately be dated with greater precision. For example a gold ring in Pforzheim, Germany, resembling the smallest of the Stathatos rings of Group 2 (cat. no. 11), although without the nielloed decoration, was dated to the 13th century and labelled 'French' without explanation.<sup>109</sup> A bronze ring set with an almandine (garnet), dated to the 12th century,<sup>110</sup> has a flat hoop like the rings in the Lark Hill hoard but has a similar square truncated setting to cat. no. 10, as well as the characteristic small bar between hoop and bezel. A similar gold ring with a round hoop in a private collection was dated to the 12th century.<sup>111</sup> Another gold ring, dated to the middle of the 13th century,<sup>112</sup> has an oval bezel comparable to cat. no. 9, which is, however, decorated with petals. It also has the characteristic bar and, like cat. no. 9, a re-used Roman gem.<sup>113</sup>

Three other silver rings in a private collection in Germany<sup>114</sup> have the same typical truncated bezels, but differ in having hoops of D-shaped cross-section. Set in one of them is a square metal plate (instead of a stone) engraved with a lion (Pl. 38). This ring, mentioned above in the context of its iconography, was purchased in Austria and probably comes from the Balkans.<sup>115</sup> It is comparable to the Stathatos rings in more than one respect, and it is therefore even more regrettable that the piece does not have a datable archaeological context. As already mentioned it has nielloed decoration in the form of triangles that is comparable to cat. nos 9 and 11.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, it creates a connection between the otherwise very different ring Groups 1 and 2, by first having a flat metal bezel which is characteristic for Group 1 and second, by showing a lion that is very similar to the lion on cat. no. 6 also of Group 1. A third



**Plate 41** Silver ring with rock crystal and animal heads on the shoulders, found in Norfolk, 12th century, Haedeke Collection, Germany

silver ring from the already mentioned private collection in Germany again combines features of our ring Group 2 with other objects in the Thessalonica treasure: the silver ring with a rock crystal, found in Norfolk and dated to the 12th century, has a hoop that ends in animal heads on both sides (Pl. 41).<sup>117</sup> This feature is comparable to the earring terminals of cat. no. 2.

The chronological framework for rings with truncated stone settings is corroborated by rings from an entirely different geographical and political area: Kievan jewellery of the 12th to early 13th centuries proves that conical settings were common there as well. A temple pendant with stones set in octagonal settings with concave sides (probably 12th century)<sup>118</sup> resembles cat. no. 12. Very similar settings are also found on three enamelled medallions from a necklace (probably 12th to early 13th century).<sup>119</sup> A Kievan ring from the early 13th century even shows similar niello decoration to some of the Stathatos rings (cat. nos 9, 11, 12).<sup>120</sup>

To summarise one can say that the general shape of the rings in Group 2, and in particular the shape of the settings, as well as the niello decoration, appears in the 12th and early 13th centuries in a wide area from France to Kiev, and it remains unclear whether the Stathatos rings were imported or produced locally. However, looking at the lion ring purchased in Austria (Pl. 38), which combines features of ring Groups 1 and 2, as well as the ring from Norfolk (Pl. 41), which combines features of ring Group 2 and the earrings with animal-head terminals, it is possible that they might have been produced locally. It remains to state that the general ring shape is not typical for Middle or Late Byzantine jewellery. At this time in Byzantium, a rather massive ring shape with the bezel emerging from a broadening hoop was preferred.<sup>121</sup>

### GROUP 3 (Pls 24–29)

This group shares the typological features of a hollow bezel and hoop, with the bezel and shoulders decorated with niello (cat. nos 13–15). Between the bezel and the hoop is a raised and engraved moulding. The rings have either a rectangular or hexagonal bezel or a hexagonal bezel with concave sides.

Again, close Byzantine parallels are almost entirely lacking. A gold ring in a private collection similar to cat. nos 14 and 15, but much less carefully executed, might come from Bulgaria and is dated to the 13th–14th century.<sup>122</sup> It shares the features of a hexagonal bezel, the underside of which has an alternating concave and convex profile, and a similarly decorated bezel with a central rectangular element with flared

ends flanked by two drop-shaped elements, each containing four crosses.

One of the Group 3 rings has a Latin inscription (cat. no. 14), so it is not surprising that some of the most convincing parallels, at least for some of the details, are found in the West. Analogous features appear on a ring in the Louvre, which is, however, set with a stone. It was found in a church in Paris and dated to the 12th–13th century.<sup>123</sup> The elongated leaves on the corners of its bezel are particularly close to cat. nos 13–15. The engraved and nielloed decoration of another ring in the Louvre is also comparable with regards to the leaf-decoration on its underside (and also to the shoulder decoration of cat. nos 5 and 6). This piece of jewellery was very likely one of the pieces found in Notre Dame in Paris in the 19th century. It was dated for stylistic reasons to the second half of the 12th century (last quarter?) and probably belonged to the bishop of Paris, Eudes de Sully (1197–1208).<sup>124</sup> Similar leaves on the corner also appear on a ring that has already been mentioned as a comparison for ring Group 2 as it has a truncated bezel, namely the ring of Bishop Arnold I of Walencourt (1169–83).<sup>125</sup>

Some of the features of Group 3 can again be found on Kievan jewellery, like the moulding on the shoulders of the hoop, which appears in a slightly different fashion on two Kievan silver rings in the British Museum. They belong to a hoard that was probably buried in the 1230s due to the threat of the Tatar invasion.<sup>126</sup> Coche de la Ferté also mentions parallels for the ring with the hexagonal bezel (cat. no. 15) from Kievan Rus', which were found together with Comnenian coins.<sup>127</sup> He assumed that the rings were Byzantine and copied in Kievan Rus', as well as in the West.<sup>128</sup> Perhaps cat. no. 14 with its Latin name was such an imitation?<sup>129</sup>

Again, the decoration supports a date range of the 12th–13th centuries: the scrolls and palmettes with the rather pointed leaves, especially on cat. no. 15, appear, for example, on a ceramic plate from Corinth (late 12th–early 13th century),<sup>130</sup> a plate fragment from Thebes (second half of the 12th century)<sup>131</sup> and a plate from Iran (12th century).<sup>132</sup> Similar pointed leaves are also found on jewellery and book illuminations of the 12th and 13th centuries.<sup>133</sup> A very close and dated comparative piece is the head reliquary of St Oswald, made in Lower Saxony, Germany, probably in Goslar, which has similar nielloed scrolls to the Stathatos ring. It can be dated to 1185–89 on the basis of its inscription.<sup>134</sup>

Group 3 is very difficult to evaluate, but none of the comparative objects cited above argue against a date in the 12th to 13th centuries. Although most of the comparanda quoted come from the West, certain features like the pointed scrolls or the moulding on the shoulders of the hoops can be found in the Byzantine Empire as well Kievan Rus'. Therefore, it is again difficult to decide on the provenance of Group 3. They might well, like Group 2, have been produced locally.

#### GROUP 4 (Pls 30–31)

The last group consists of only one piece: a small gold ring with a ruby or tourmaline cabochon (cat. no. 16). Its most striking feature is a hand on each side of the hoop. This is unfortunately no criterion for dating, for rings with hands can be found from Antiquity to modern times, especially in western Medieval, as well as Renaissance art. They are often seen as wedding, engagement or love rings.<sup>135</sup> One of the very few datable

medieval examples comes from the Lark Hill hoard, probably buried in 1173/4 (Pl. 40).<sup>136</sup> However, these examples all show conjoined hands whilst the Stathatos ring displays only one hand on each side.

The general ring shape is more revealing: it resembles the type of stirrup-shaped ring that enjoyed popularity from the 11th to 14th century,<sup>137</sup> especially in the 12th–13th century in England, but also in France and Germany, and is preserved in many examples.<sup>138</sup> The earliest seem to suggest a first appearance of this ring type around the middle of the 11th century: a gold ring set with an amethyst from a grave in the St Petri Cathedral, Bremen, Germany, can probably be ascribed to Archbishop Bezelin Alebrand of Bremen (d. 1043).<sup>139</sup> A fixed date is provided by a depiction of a stirrup-shaped ring in the inventory of St Albans Abbey (*Liber additamentorum*). This ring is dated by the initials of the donor Richard, who received it from Eleanor of Aquitaine, so it must have been in existence around 1140.<sup>140</sup> The earliest English ring comes from the grave of bishop Hilary of Chichester who died in 1169.<sup>141</sup> A large gold ring set with a sapphire found at Wittersham in Kent represents the largest example of this type; it is dated to c. 1200 and is now in the British Museum.<sup>142</sup>

The small stirrup-shaped ring from the Thessalonica hoard would, therefore, have been made between the middle of the 11th and the 14th century, probably sometime in the 12th or 13th century. The question must be raised as to whether it was an imported piece or made locally. Given the lack of Byzantine comparanda, an import seems more likely.

#### Dating, find-spot and ownership

In summary one can say that the only object of the Thessalonica hoard with internal evidence for its dating is the gold ring (cat. no. 3) bearing a cruciform monogram of the end of the 12th to 13th century – probably the middle of the 13th century at the latest. The rest can only be evaluated on the basis of comparisons with other objects. As we have seen these date from the 11th to the 14th century, with most dated for various (and admittedly not always reliable) reasons to the 12th and (early) 13th century. However, datable pieces like the British Museum's monogram ring (13th century, probably first half) support the chronology provided by the monogram ring from the Thessalonica hoard.

This correlates with the coins, the latest of which was minted during the reign of Alexios III Comnenos (1195–1204). Therefore, one can assume that the jewellery was buried after 1195. The dating of the two monogram rings makes it likely that the jewellery was buried at some time in the first half of the 13th century.

The first half of the 13th century was a turbulent time for the region of Thessalonica and provides some dates at which the hoard could have been buried.<sup>143</sup> In 1204 Thessalonica was taken by Boniface of Montferrat during the Fourth Crusade. His rule lasted only until 1207 when he died in an ambush by the Bulgarian Tzar Kaloyan. Thessalonica, however, stayed under changing Frankish rule until 1224.<sup>144</sup>

Perhaps the treasure was hidden in 1224 when Thessalonica was captured by Theodore Comnenos Doukas, or in 1246, when it was reincorporated into the Byzantine Empire by John III Doukas Vatatzes. After this date there is no suitable historical occasion for burying such a valuable treasure because

Thessalonica remained under Byzantine control.<sup>145</sup> None of the pieces of jewellery or the comparative objects argue against this dating.

Of course, the dealer's information that the hoard was found in the region of Thessalonica cannot be taken at face value. However, assuming that the jewellery once belonged to a member of the Frankish Crusaders who ruled over Thessalonica from 1204 to 1224, this would solve some of the problems of the heterogeneity of the treasure - the rings mostly show signs of wear and cannot have formed part of a goldsmith's stock for sale.

Therefore, the most likely date for the burial of the Thessalonica treasure is 1224, even though 1246 cannot be excluded. Some pieces could have been made in Thessalonica, such as the finger-rings of the clearly Byzantine Group 1, and also perhaps the finger-ring Groups 2 and 3, whilst others might have been imported such as the stirrup-shaped ring decorated with hands (Group 4).

### Conclusion: a genuine hoard

The evidence discussed above supports the interpretation of the Thessalonica jewellery as a genuine hoard. It seems highly unlikely that a dealer more than half a century ago would have managed to compile such a convincing hoard from different sources given the then state of research and available objects for comparison, such as the monogram ring (cat. no. 3), dated by the first researcher of the hoard to the 5th–8th centuries, and which has just recently been re-dated to the 12th to middle of the 13th century. The Thessalonica hoard still leaves many questions open, such as the identity of the former owner of the jewellery (P. Susen?), but in the meantime it represents the only reliable and dated Byzantine gold jewellery hoard of the period between the 11th and 15th centuries and is hence an invaluable source for the evaluation of high-status Byzantine goldsmiths' work and Byzantine art in general.

## Catalogue

### 1. Pair of gold bracelets with heart-shaped clasps (Pls 1–2)

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ504a/b.

Gold; hammered sheet gold, *repoussé*, punched, chased, granulation, probably drawn wire.

Measurements: 1a: 8.1 x 6.8cm, Wt 81.1g; 1b: 8.2 x 6.7cm, Wt 83.2g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), nos 14, 15; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 116.



Plate 1 Cat. no. 1b (left) and 1a (right)

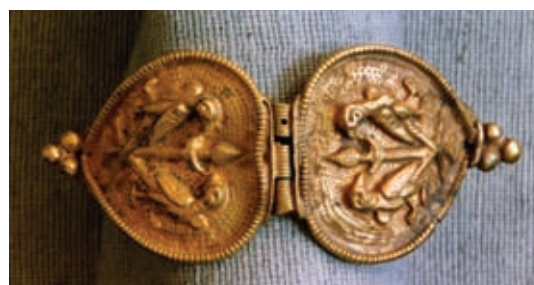


Plate 2 Cat. no. 1a

### 2. Pair of gold earrings with animal finials (Pls 3–5)

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ 494.

Gold, turquoise coloured glass, red glass (or garnet); pierced and engraved.

Measurements: 2a: W. 5.5 x 5.0cm, Wt 25.4g; 2b: W. of preserved part 2.0 x 4.9cm, Wt (today) 23.3g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), nos 16, 17; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 73.



Plate 3 Cat. no. 2a





Plate 4 Cat. no. 2a, detail of finial



Plate 5 Cat. no. 2a, detail of finial

**3. Gold finger-ring (Pl. 6)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ466. Gold; cast, engraved, punched. Measurements: 2.13 x 2.30cm, Wt 4.4g. Monogram (Greek, inverted): ΙΩΑΝΝΗ ('of John').

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 31; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 138.



Plate 6 Cat. no. 3

**4. Gold finger-ring (Pls 7–8)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ470. Gold, niello; cast, embossed, punched, engraved. Measurements: 2.2cm x 2.6cm, Wt 17.5g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 22; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 202.



Plate 7 Cat. no. 4, front of bezel



Plate 8 Cat. no. 4, profile

**5. Gold finger-ring (Pls 9–10)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ469. Gold, enamel (*Grubenschmelz*); cast, embossed, punched, engraved. Measurements: 2.7 x 2.7cm, Wt 18.5g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 73–4; *idem*, 1957 (n. 2), no. 23; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 193.



Plate 9 Cat. no. 5



Plate 10 Cat. no. 5, detail of shoulder

**6. Gold finger-ring (Pls 11–12)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ468. Gold, enamel (*Grubenschmelz*); cast, embossed, punched, engraved. Measurements: W. 2.6 x 2.6cm, Wt 17.6g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 74–5; *idem*, 1957 (n. 2), no. 25; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 194.



Plate 11 Cat. no. 6



Plate 12 Cat. no. 6, profile

**7. Gold finger-ring (Pls 13–14)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ467. Gold, enamel (*Grubenschmelz*); cast, embossed, punched, engraved. Measurements: 2.6 x 2.7cm, Wt 19.1g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 75–6; *idem*, 1957 (n. 2), no. 24; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 196.



Plate 13 Cat. no. 7



Plate 14 Cat. no. 7, profile

**8. Gold finger-ring (Pls 15–16)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ475. Gold, enamel (*Grubenschmelz*); cast, embossed, engraved, punched. Measurements: 2.7 x 2.7cm, Wt 18.2g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 76–9; *idem*, 1957 (n. 2), no. 21; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 195.



Plate 15 Cat. no. 8



Plate 16 Cat. no. 8, profile

**9. Gold finger-ring (Pls 17–18)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ 472. Gold, niello, carnelian. Measurements: 2.2 x 2.3cm, Wt 9g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 28; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 235.

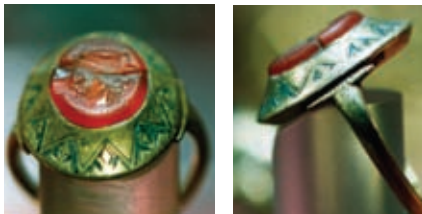


Plate 17 (left) Cat. no. 9  
Plate 18 (right) Cat. no. 9, profile

**10. Gold finger-ring (Pls 19–20)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ464. Gold, amethyst or ruby. Measurements: 1.9 x 2.5cm, Wt 5.0g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 18; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 237.

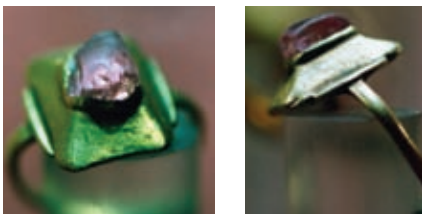


Plate 19 (left) Cat. no. 10  
Plate 20 (right) Cat. no. 10, profile

**11. Gold finger-ring (Pl. 21)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ466. Gold, niello, pink stone. Measurements: W. 2.03cm, H. 2.4cm, Wt 2.3g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 19; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 239.



Plate 21 Cat. no. 11

**12. Gold finger-ring (Pls 22–23)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ 471. Gold, niello, glass. Measurements: 2.1 x 2.4cm, Wt 4.5g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 27; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 240.



Plate 22 (left) Cat. no. 12  
Plate 23 (right) Cat. no. 12, reverse of bezel

**13. Gold finger-ring (Pls 24–25)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ476. Gold, niello (?); engraved. Measurements: 2.2 x 2.3cm, Wt 4.5g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 26; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 192.



Plate 24 Cat. no. 13



Plate 25 Cat. no. 13, detail of shoulder

**14. Gold finger-ring (Pls 26–27)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ473. Gold, niello; engraved. Measurements: 2.4 x 2.2cm, Wt 7g. Inscription (Latin): •P•SVSEN.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 30; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 199.



Plate 26 (left) Cat. no. 14  
Plate 27 (right) Cat. no. 14, profile

**15. Gold finger-ring (Pls 28–29)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ 474. Gold, niello; engraved. Measurements: 2.3 x 2.4cm, Wt 9.1g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 29; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 200.



Plate 28 Cat. no. 15



Plate 29 Cat. no. 15, profile

**16. Gold finger-ring (Pls 30–31)**

Athens, National Archaeological Museum, Stathatos Collection, inv. no. Στ465. Gold, pink stone; engraved. Measurements: 1.8 x 1.9cm, Wt 1.4g.

Published: Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 20; Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 95), cat. no. 250.



Plate 30 Cat. no. 16, profile



Plate 31 Cat. no. 16, detail of hand

## Notes

- 1 Many thanks to the director of the National Archaeological Museum, Dr Nikolaos Kaltsas, who generously allowed me to study and publish the objects of the Thessalonica hoard, as well as many more pieces for comparison. My studies were morally supported with great patience by Dr Niki Prokopiou whom I would also like to thank. I was able to study the objects of the Thessalonica hoard extensively in 2000, except for cat. nos 9, 10 and 14, which could not be taken out of their cases.
- 2 E. Coche de la Ferté, 'Sur quelques bagues byzantines de la Collection Stathatos', *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres. Comptes rendus des séances* (1956), 72; E. Coche de la Ferté, *Collection Hélène Stathatos 2: les objets byzantins et post-byzantins*, Limoges, 1957, 29.
- 3 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2).
- 4 In addition to the catalogue of the Stathatos collection he published a short essay on two pairs of the finger-rings from the hoard (cat. nos 5–8: Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2).
- 5 Even though I had the opportunity to study the bracelets intensively, it was difficult to determine the number of wires employed.
- 6 The motif is surely derived from ivy leaves so their description as 'heart-shaped' is not strictly speaking correct: see U. Koenen, 'Die Artukiden-Schale als Zeugnis der "Grenzgänge"', in U. Koenen and M. Müller-Wiener (eds), *Grenzgänge im östlichen Mittelmeerraum. Byzanz und die islamische Welt vom 9. bis 13. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden, 2008, 121–46, 140.
- 7 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 32.
- 8 N. Özgüç, 'Sümeysat Defininesi', *Belleten* XLIX (1985), pls 23, 24.
- 9 M. Vaklinova, *Mittelalterliche Schmuckstücke aus Bulgarien (6.–14. Jahrhundert)*, Sofia, 1981, no. 22, found with coins.
- 10 Damascus, National Museum, inv. no. 8966.
- 11 Damascus, National Museum, inv. nos 8967, 8989, 7483.
- 12 Two further comparable penannular bracelets with heart-shaped finials are in a private collection in New York: one has a solid hoop, the other a hoop made from plaited wires. They have been labelled 'Islamic' and dated to the 12th–13th centuries by comparison with the Stathatos pair which does not, therefore, help in the dating of the Stathatos bracelets: B. Deppert-Lippitz, *The Gift of the Gods. Jewelry from the Ancient World. Catalogue of the Fortuna Fine Arts Ltd. New York, New York*, 1998, nos 182, 183.
- 13 For example, Vaklinova (n. 9), no. 30 ('14th century').
- 14 M. Bárány-Oberschall, *The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos* (Archaeologia Hungarica 22), Budapest, 1937; N. Oikonomides, 'La couronne dite de Constantin Monomaque', *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), 241–62; H.C. Evans and W.D. Wixom (eds), *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era A.D. 843–1261*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1997, no. 145 (H. Maguire); E. Kiss, 'The State of Research on the Monomachos Crown and Some Further Thoughts', in O.Z. Pevny (ed.), *Perspectives of Byzantium and its Neighbours (843–1261)*, Yale, 2000, 60–83. The authenticity of the 'Monomachos Crown' has been questioned by Oikonomides. However, Kiss has responded to Oikonomides' essay by gathering many, in my opinion, good arguments for the authenticity of the 'Monomachos Crown'. One of the exceptional features of the enamelled *Senkschmelz* plaques is that they are made only of one sheet of gold as opposed to the usual two sheets with different alloys (compare the diadem plaques of the 10th-century Preslav treasure made of two sheets, probably in Constantinople in 927 (?); M. Puhle (ed.), *Otto der Große. Magdeburg und Europa* (Kulturhistorisches Museum Magdeburg), Mainz, 2001, vol. 2, no. VI.58b (A. Bosselmann); A. Bosselmann-Ruickbie, 'Goldener Glanz aus Byzanz. Der Schatzfund von Preslav (Bulgarien) – Ein kaiserliches Geschenk an einen 'barbarischen' Regenten', *Antike Welt* 6 (2004), 78–9 and 80, pl. 5. David Buckton is, like Oikonomides, of the opinion that the 'Monomachos Crown' is not authentic (letter 24 September 2008 with abstract of the discussions during the Leverhulme Seminar on the 'Monomachos Crown' in 2002/3).
- 15 The 'Artukid Bowl', with its close connections to Byzantine enamel work, but with an Arabic and Persian inscription, has long been disputed with regards to its origin (Byzantine?, Islamic?). The inscription mentioning the Artukid Ruler Rukn ad-Daula Daud (1114–44) points to the 12th century; however, David Buckton is of the opinion that it must be dated later than the 12th century (letter dated 2 June 2008). Neslihan Asutay-Effenberger has recently argued for a Saljūq provenance ('Überlegung zur Datierung und Lokalisierung der Innsbrucker Artukiden-Schale', *Byzantion* 79 (2009), 37–47, with the older literature). According to her research the bowl was probably made in a Greek workshop in Saljūq Anatolia. It might have been a wedding present for Rukn ad-Daula Daud or part of the dowry of his bride, the Saljūq princess Sacide Hatun whom he married some time before her death in 1130, and the bowl should be dated accordingly.
- 16 T. Steppan, 'Die Artukiden-Schale. Emailkunst in Spannungsfeld byzantinischer und islamischer Kultur', in T. Steppan (ed.), *Die Artukiden-Schale im Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum Innsbruck: Mittelalterlicher Emailkunst zwischen Orient und Occident*, Munich, 1995, 13–35, at 27–8. See also the list of heart-shaped garment decorations on Byzantine enamels on *ibid.*, 27, n. 46.
- 17 R. Oosterhout, 'The Byzantine Heart', *Zograf* 17 (1986), 36–44, at 40.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 43.
- 20 A. von Gladiss, *Schmuck im Museum für islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin*, Berlin, 1998, 116; Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 31. The motif of opposed birds flanking a tree of life (or fountain, etc.) appears also in Early Byzantine art, for example on lunular-shaped *opus interrasile* earrings. Only a few examples show addorsed birds (A. Yeroulanou, *Diatrita. Gold pierced-work jewellery from the 3rd to the 7th century*, Athens, 1999, nos 556–61, 565–7 [peacocks]), whilst the majority show confronted birds flanking palmettes, fountains or crosses (*eadem*, nos. 488–552). The early examples are different in that their proportions are broader and that the crossed tails are lacking.
- 21 R. Hasson, *Early Islamic Jewellery, L.A. Mayer Institute for Islamic Art, Jerusalem*, 1987, nos 42–3; for similar representations of birds see: P. Ackerman, 'Jewelry in the Islamic period', in A. Upham Pope and P. Ackermann (eds), *Survey of Persian Art* 3, Oxford, 1939, pl. 1353a; E. Baer, *Metalwork in Medieval Islamic Art*, Albany, 1983, pl. 135; von Gladiss (n. 20), 116–17, no. 57, with further parallels for the motif.
- 22 For example on a lustre bowl from Cairo, dated to the early 12th century: E. Baer, *Sphinxes and Harpies in Medieval Islamic Art. An Iconographical Study*, Jerusalem, 1965, pl. 2, no. 6.
- 23 London, British Museum, inv. no. 1878.12–30.562, Henderson Bequest, unpublished, from Kashan, Iran, according to the museum register 'c. 1300'.
- 24 For example, F. Keller and G. Wolf-Keller (eds and trans.), *1000 Jahre Russische Kunst. Zur Erinnerung an die Taufe der Rus' im Jahr 988* (Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landesmuseum Schloß Gottorf, Hessisches Landesmuseum Wiesbaden), Hamburg, 1988, no. 263 (O.M. Ioannisjan, I.A. Bobrovnickaja, I.M. Martynova, I.M. Sokolova, from the excavations of the old city of Izjaslavl, 'Kiev (?), 12th/13th centuries'); *Gold aus Kiev. 170 Meisterwerke aus den Schatzkammern der Ukraine* (Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien), Vienna, 1993, no. 115 ('11th–13th century'); Evans and Wixom (n. 14), no. 212 (K.R. Brown, '11th–12th centuries'); L. Pekarska, 'Treasures from Ancient Kiev in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Dumbarton Oaks', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 32 (1997), 73–4 and pl. 4; Y. Piatnitsky, O. Baddeley and E. Brunner, *Sinai, Byzantium, Russia. Orthodox Art from the Sixth to the Twentieth Century* (The State Hermitage Museum St Petersburg, Courtauld Gallery, Somerset House, London), London, 2000, no. R2b (V. Zalesskaya, 'Kievan Rus' [Kiev], 12th century'). See also **Pekarska, this volume, Pls 1 and 3.**
- 25 Ceramic plate, probably from Kiev, 11th century: Keller and Wolf-Keller (n. 24), no. 268, pl. on 201; pendant (without the tree of life in the centre), 10th–12th centuries: B. Khanenko, *Collection B. Khanenko: Antiquités de la Région du Dniepr*, vol. 5, Kiev, 1902, 35, pl. 17, no. 366; bronze arch of an altar, Tchernigov, signed by Master Konstantin, second half of 12th century: Keller and Wolf-Keller (n. 24), no. 265, pl. on 201; fragment of a fresco from Smolensk, c. 1200: *ibidem*, no. 22, pl. on 28.
- 26 *Gold aus Kiev* (n. 24), no. 128 ('12th century, Byzantium [?]').
- 27 G. Zarnecki, J. Holt and T. Holland (eds), *English Romanesque Art 1066–1200* (Hayward Gallery, London), London, 1984, no. 295 (N. Stratford).
- 28 *Ibid.*, no. 295 (N. Stratford).
- 29 L. Rodley, *Byzantine Art and Architecture. An Introduction*, Cambridge, 1996, 210, pl. 163.

- 30 The so-called Heroon between the north and south church was, according to research by Lioba Theis, a later addition to the complex, probably dating to the Palaiologan period: L. Theis, *Flankenräume im mittelbyzantinischen Kirchenbau. Zur Befundunsicherung, Rekonstruktion und Bedeutung einer verschwundenen architektonischen Form in Konstantinopel*, Wiesbaden, 2004, 115–26, esp. 125–6.
- 31 There are only differences in details such as the three-lobed leaves growing out of the stem of the tree of life or the roots of the trees.
- 32 E. Hein, A. Jakovljević and B. Kleidt, *Zypern – byzantinische Kirchen und Klöster. Mosaiken und Fresken*, Ratingen, 1996, 148–53, fig. 158; S. and J.A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus. Treasures of Byzantine Art*, Nicosia, 1997 (2nd ed.), 469–85. The paintings 'appear to be a variant interpretation of the late Comnenian style of the capital, as it appears in the church of Panagia tou Arakou at Lagoudera (1192)...' (*ibid.*, 479).
- 33 Puhle (n. 14), vol. 2, nos VI.58a–j (A. Bosselmann); Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 14).
- 34 7th to 15th centuries, see E. Schilbach, *Byzantinische Metrologie*, Munich, 1970, 162–8; E. Schilbach, 'Maß und Gewicht in Byzanz', in C. Stiegemann (ed.), *Das Licht aus dem Osten. Kult und Alltag im Byzantinischen Reich vom 4. bis 15. Jahrhundert* (Erzbischöfliches Diözesanmuseum Paderborn), Mainz, 2001, 245–7; see also O. Mazal, *Handbuch der Byzantinistik*, Graz, 1989, 190.
- 35 Book of the Eparch, 32; P. Schreiner, 'Die Organisation byzantinischer Kaufleute und Handwerker', in H. Jankuhn and E. Ebel (eds), *Untersuchungen zu Handel und Verkehr der vor- und frühgeschichtlichen Zeit in Mittel- und Nordeuropa IV: Organisationsformen der Kaufmannsvereinigungen in der Spätantike und im frühen Mittelalter. Bericht über die Kolloquien der Kommission für die Altertumskunde Mittel- und Nordeuropas in den Jahren 1980 bis 1985*, Göttingen, 1989, 48, and n. 21 regarding the provenance of the manuscript.
- 36 Book of the Eparch, ch. 22.4, 140–3.
- 37 C. Morrisson and J.-C. Cheynet, 'Prices and Wages in the Byzantine World', in A.E. Laiou (ed.), *The Economic History of Byzantium: From the Seventh Through the Fifteenth Century* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 39), vol. 2, Washington DC, 2002, 856, table 15 (A. Meineke [ed.], *Ioannis Cinnami, Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, Bonn, 1836, 25).
- 38 Morrisson and Cheynet (n. 37), 832, table 7, (P. Gautier, 'Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator', *Revue des études byzantines* 32 [1974], no. 3).
- 39 *Ibid.*, 839, table 11 (Meineke [n. 37], 154).
- 40 *Ibid.*, 816, table 1.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 839, table 11 (J. Lefort, N. Oikonomides and D. Papachryssanthou (eds), *Actes d'Iviron 2, Archives de l'Athos*, Paris, 1990, 9).
- 42 See Ousterhout (n. 17).
- 43 Not genuine turquoise as stated by Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 32.
- 44 From the Bronze Age at the latest animal heads appear as finials of bracelets, necklaces or earrings, especially in the Hellenistic and Roman periods (with rams, bulls, snakes, antelopes, lynxes, goats, lions or mythical beasts). These prototypes were then developed by East Germanic tribes on the Black Sea coast and are found in the art of the Migration Period: e.g., M. Bertram (ed.), *Merowingerzeit. Die Altertümer im Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz*, Mainz, 1995, 45, col. pl. 19 accompanied by cat. entry (M. Bertram). For examples of rings with animal heads from western Medieval art: H. Battke, *Ringe aus vier Jahrtausenden. Aus der Sammlung Battke im Schmuckmuseum Pforzheim*, Pforzheim, 1963, no. 36 ('found in the region of the lower Rhineland, late Romanesque, end of 12th/early 13th century'); H.-U. Haedeke, *Schmuck aus drei Jahrtausenden: Sammlung Hanns-Ulrich Haedeke*, Cologne, 2000, no. 132 ('England, 12th century'). In Scandinavian medieval art animal motifs and ornaments are among the most important decorative elements: see for example, *Wikinger, Waräger und Normannen. Die Skandinavien und Europa 800–1200* (Altes Museum Berlin, Grand Palais Paris, Nationalmuseet Kopenhagen), Berlin, 1992, 176; Puhle (n. 14), vol. 2, no. VI.95 (L. Révész, '10th century').
- 45 Bertram (n. 44), 45, col. pl. 19.
- 46 For an example from Bulgaria: Preslav, National-Archaeological Museum 'Veliki Preslav', inv. no. 550, 3274 (9th–10th century, unpublished); see also, *Greek Jewellery. 6000 years of Tradition* (Ed. by Ministry of Culture and Archaeological Receipts Fund, Villa Bianca Thessalonica), Athens, no. 181 (N. Moutsopoulos), dated to the early Byzantine period (5th century?), but on the basis of comparisons with other archaeological material should certainly be dated to the Middle Byzantine period.
- 47 V. Lahtov, 'Ranosrednovekoven nakit vo srednovekovnata zbirka na Narodniot Musei vo Ohrid', *Lihnid* 1 (1957), 77–8; E. Maneva, *Srednovekovnen nakit od Makedonija*, Skopje, 1992, 176, no. 50/1. I would like to thank Natalija Ristovska for drawing my attention to this parallel.
- 48 B.A. Rybakov, *Russian Applied Art of the Tenth to Thirteenth Centuries*, Leningrad, 1971, 24, pl. 22.
- 49 *Islamische Kunst. Meisterwerke aus dem Metropolitan Museum of Art New York* (Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museum Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin), Berlin, 1981, no. 43 ('11th–12th century'); S. Bury, *Jewellery Gallery: Summary Catalogue* (Victoria & Albert Museum), London, 1982, case 11, board E, no. 7 ('Persian [Saljūq], 12th century').
- 50 In a few instances genuine turquoise is found on other Middle Byzantine goldsmiths' works: on the frame of a lapis lazuli icon in the Louvre, Paris (R. Cormack and M. Vassilaki [eds], *Byzantium 330–1453*, London, 2008, no. 200 [J. Durand]), and with other stones and pearls on the side of a cross in Tournai, Belgium (F. de Cuyper, G. Demortier and J. Pycke, *La croix du trésor de la cathédrale de Tournai*, Publications de l'histoire et de l'art et d'archéologie de l'Université Catholique de Louvain LII, Aurifex 7, Tournai, 1987, figs 16, 21, 24, 25).
- 51 However, this technique differs from the Early Byzantine *opus interrasile* found on earrings and other jewellery: see Yeroulanou (n. 20) on this technique and an exhaustive catalogue.
- 52 B. Segall, *Katalog der Goldschmiede-Arbeiten: Benaki Museum, Athen*, Athens, 1938, no. 286; see also, A. Bosselmann-Ruickbie, 'Byzantinisch, Islamisch oder 'Internationaler Stil'? Email und Korbchenohrringe aus dem östlichen Mittelmeerraum', in Koenen and Müller-Wiener (n. 6), 83–114, figs 7, 8.
- 53 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 33.
- 54 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), no. 31.
- 55 Letter from Prof. Dr Werner Seibt, University of Vienna, Austria, 26 June 2003.
- 56 O.M. Dalton, *Franks Bequest. Catalogue of the Finger Rings, Early Christian, Byzantine, Teutonic, Mediaeval and Later*, London, 1912, no. 94; D. Buckton (ed.), *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, London, 1994, no. 215 (C. Entwistle); H.C. Evans (ed.), *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, New York, 2004, no. 15 (V. Zalesskaya).
- 57 Dalton (n. 56), no. 94.
- 58 Buckton (n. 56), no. 215 (C. Entwistle).
- 59 Evans (n. 56), no. 15 (V. Zalesskaya).
- 60 Letter from Prof. Dr Werner Seibt, University of Vienna, Austria, 10 May 2001.
- 61 D. Papanikola-Bakirtzi (ed.), *Byzantine Glazed Ceramics. The Art of Sgraffito* (Museum of Byzantine Culture, Thessaloniki), Athens, 1999, no. 3 (I. Tzonou-Herbst).
- 62 The central dot within the hoop of the ring may be a compass point, whilst the striations along the inner border of the ring might be explained as an attempt at three dimensionality.
- 63 M. Jenkins and M. Keene, *Islamic Jewellery in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, 1982, no. 49b ('Egypt, 11th century'); D.J. Content (ed.), *Islamic Rings and Gems. The Benjamin Zucker Collection*, London, 1987, no. 13 ('Fatimid, early 11th century'); Segall (n. 52), no. 311 ('purchased as Persian, 13th century'); A. Ballian, *Benaki Museum. A Guide to the Museum of Islamic Art*, Athens, 2006, no. 63 ('Iran, 12th century')
- 64 Ballian (n. 63), no. 63.
- 65 M.C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection 2: Jewellery, Enamels and Art of the Migration Period*, Washington DC, 1965, no. 128 ('13th century').
- 66 Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 73.
- 67 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 41–2.
- 68 Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 73–4; Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 42.
- 69 Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 74; G. Schlumberger, *Sigillographie de l'empire byzantin*, Paris, 1884, 177–8, 710–11.
- 70 Baer (n. 22), no. 30 ('probably from north-west Persia, c. early 13th century').
- 71 *Ibid.*, no. 33 ('Persia or Asia Minor, 13th century').
- 72 *Ibid.*, no. 96.

- 73 *Ibid.*, 17, n. 67; S. Ögel, 'Selçuk sanatında çift gövdeli aslant figürü', *Belleten* XXVI (1962), 529–38.
- 74 Haedeke (n. 44), no. 133. The ring is in the private collection of Hanns-Ulrich Haedeke. He assumed that it was actually found somewhere in the Balkans (pers. comm. 17 October 2008).
- 75 Bury (n. 49), case 32, board G, no. 32.
- 76 Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), nos 471–3, 346, nos 1, 6 (London bindings), no. 474 (Durham bindings), 348, no. 13.
- 77 N.S. Trahoulia, *The Greek Alexander Romance* (Venice Hellenic Institute Codex Gr. 5), Athens, 1997, 29.
- 78 For example, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, Serbian, etc. (Trahoulia [n. 77], 29).
- 79 H.J. Gleixner, 'Alexander der Große', *Reallexikon zur Byzantinischen Kunst* I, Stuttgart, 1966, 96–9.
- 80 For example: ivory plaque: Evans and Wixom (n. 14), no. 151 (M. Georgopoulos, 'first half of 10th century'); stone reliefs: Museum of Thebes ('10th/11th century'), Constantinople ('12th/13th century'), Venice (outer wall of San Marco, '12th/13th century'), Docheiariou, Mount Athos ('14th century') and Mistra ('14th century'), all mentioned in: *Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Art* (Ministry of Culture, Byzantine and Christian Museum Athens), Athens, 1985, no. 15 (A. Bakourou); floor mosaic, Otranto, Italy ('1165'): Gleixner (n. 79), 96–9; 'Artukid Bowl', see n. 16; 'Kilian's flag': Puhle (n. 14), vol. 2, cat. no. IV.65, 280–1 (R. Schorta, '10th century').
- 81 See Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 14).
- 82 Ross (n. 65), no. 122 ('11th century'). The ring was supposedly found in Constantinople.
- 83 See n. 15.
- 84 The animals on the Stathatos ring were described as eagles by Coche de la Ferté who assumed that this depiction must have derived from Persia where the king's throne was usually flanked by animals (*ibidem*, [n. 2], 76–8). However, looking at the beasts they do indeed seem odd, but they could well be griffins rather than eagles and would hence be in accordance with the legend described in the *Alexander Romance*. The scene appears to be slightly misunderstood, for it seems as if Alexander is strangling the animals as opposed to holding out meat for them as an incentive to carry him heavenwards.
- 85 See Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 14).
- 86 Steppan 1995 (n. 16), 18. Whether the 'Artukid Bowl' itself was an imperial gift or not has been disputed (see n. 15).
- 87 M. Restle, 'Das Gunthertuch im Domschatz von Bamberg', in K. Belke, E. Kislinger, A. Külzer and M. Stassinopoulou (eds), *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag*, Vienna-Cologne-Weimar, 2007, 547–68.
- 88 I. Spatharakis, *Corpus of Dated Illuminated Greek Manuscripts to the Year 1453*, Leiden, 1981, nos 58, pl. 105 (1054, however, the circles are not connected in this example), 156, pl. 299 (1167), 199, pl. 365 (1289).
- 89 J. Fleischer, Ø. Hjort and M.B. Rasmussen (eds), *Late Antique and Byzantine Art in Scandinavian Collections* (Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek Copenhagen), Copenhagen, 1996, no. 101.
- 90 Coche de la Ferté 1956 (n. 2), 73.
- 91 *Ibid.*; Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 43 (esp. n. 1 with literature), 42, fig. 33. The precise origin of this motif is unknown, but again interesting comparisons can be made with some of the filigree ornament found on Fatimid jewellery, in particular those pieces decorated with rows of wire bent to form the number eight. These eights appear organised in rows on much Fatimid jewellery including finger-rings, bracelets, earrings, beads, hair pins and necklaces: see, for example, T. Falk (ed.), *Treasures of Islam* (Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Genf/Sotheby's), London, 1985, nos 355–6; T. Hackens and R. Winkes, *Gold Jewelry. Craft, Style and Meaning from Mycenae to Constantinople*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1983, no. 45; Jenkins and Keene (n. 63), nos 47–8; Evans and Wixom (n. 14), no. 278 (M. Jenkins-Madina); von Gladiss (n. 20), nos 22, 52; Hasson (n. 21), nos 99, 109–14. Some of the few reliably dated pieces of jewellery come from the treasure of Ifrîqiya in Tunisia, which were probably produced in Fatimid Egypt and buried around 1049/50: M. Jenkins, 'Fatimid Jewelry: Its Subtypes and Influences', *Ars Orientalis* 18 (1988), 39. This characteristic filigree of eights appears also on many basket-shaped earrings, which probably represent a Fatimid earring type: for example, P. Amandry (ed.), *Collection Hélène Stathatos 3: Objets antiques et byzantins*, Straßburg, 1963, no. 22obis; A. Gonosová and C. Kondoleon, *Art of Late Rome and Byzantium in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*, Richmond, 1994, nos 28, 30, probably also no. 29; Evans and Wixom (n. 14), no. 275 (M. Jenkins-Madina); *Greek Jewellery* (n. 46), no. 279 (N. Saraga); L. Wamser (ed.), *Die Welt von Byzanz – Europas östliches Erbe* (Archäologische Staatssammlung München), Munich, 2004, no. 625 (A. Bosselmann-Ruickbie). See Bosselmann-Ruickbie (n. 52), for basket-shaped earrings in general and their derivation, with a list of the over 50 preserved examples (86–7, n. 21–2). Perhaps the enamelled framing ornaments on the square bezels of the two rings are a stylised form of Fatimid filigree?
- 92 M. Brandt and A. Effenberger (eds), *Byzanz. Die Macht der Bilder* (Dom-Museum Hildesheim), Hildesheim, 1998, 109, no. 49, pl. 91a-b; V. Pace (ed.), *Treasures of Christian Art in Bulgaria*, Sofia, 2001, no. 44 (M. Vaklinova).
- 93 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 26, thought that the gem, which shows a mask of the new Attic comedy, could be dated either to the Hellenistic or early Roman imperial period. According to Jeffrey Spier this gem is 'a 1st century BC Roman (maybe from Italy) carnelian showing a comic theatre mask' (pers. comm. 13 February 2009).
- 94 *Das Reich der Salier 1024–1125: Katalog zur Ausstellung des Landes Rheinland-Pfalz* (Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum/Bischöfliches Dom- und Diözesanmuseum Mainz), Sigmaringen, 1992, 444, no. 26 (M. Schulze-Dörrlamm); Haedeke (n. 44), 97.
- 95 G. Davidson, *Corinth: Results of the Excavations conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Vol. XII: The Minor Objects*, Athens and Princeton NJ, 1952, no. 1827; see also, A. Bosselmann-Ruickbie, *Byzantinischer Schmuck des 9. bis frühen 13. Jahrhunderts. Untersuchungen zum metallenen dekorativen Körperschmuck der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit anhand datierter Funde*, Phil. Diss., Bonn, forthcoming 2010, cat. no. 236. The ring has today lost its (semi-) precious or rather glass stone. The dating to the 11th century does not seem entirely convincing, since similar objects were dated – mostly for stylistic reasons – to the 13th to 14th century (e.g., Haedeke (n. 44), nos 145–8). Therefore, the Corinth ring might be dated later despite the fact that it comes from an excavated context which seems to suggest that its dating is reliable. Other jewellery finds from Corinth, which were excavated in the first half of the 20th century, have already been re-dated because the dating suggested by the excavators did not seem convincing: Bosselmann-Ruickbie *ibid.*, chapter II.D.2. Grabfund aus Korinth (grave find from Corinth), see Davidson *ibid.*, nos 1821, 1830, 1927, 2030, 2036–7, 2461, finds from a grave dated by her to the 6th or 7th century, re-dated Middle Byzantine, probably 9th or early 10th century.
- 96 C. Oman, *Catalogue of Rings, Victoria and Albert Museum, Department of Metalwork*, London, 1930, no. 224; J. Spier, 'Middle Byzantine (10th–13th century AD) stamp seals in semi-precious stone', in C. Entwistle (ed.), *Through a Glass Brightly. Studies in Byzantine and Medieval Art and Archaeology Presented to David Buckton*, Exeter, 2003, 117, no. 4.
- 97 The gem shows the inverted ligature 'OA' on one side and the abbreviation 'ΘEO' on the other. This can be read as 'O A(Γ)IOC ΘEO(ΔΘ)POC' ('St Theodore'), after Spier (n. 96), 117, no. 4. Oman (n. 96), no. 224, read 'Joannis o Theologos' ('John the Theologian'), which, however, seems less convincing for the usual abbreviation 'IΘ' (for 'Johannes') is missing.
- 98 Oman (n. 96), no. 224, dated the ring to the 11th century without giving any supporting evidence.
- 99 Spier (n. 96), 116.
- 100 D. Hinton, *Medieval Jewellery from the Eleventh to the Fifteenth Century*, Aylesbury, 1982, 26, pl. 6; Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), nos 319a–r, 320a–f (N. Stratford); H. Tait, *Seven Thousand Years of Jewellery*, London, 1995 (3rd ed.), 139, nos 313–5. The Lark Hill treasure can very likely be connected with the baronial troubles of 1173/4.
- 101 Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), nos 319a–r (N. Stratford). According to Stratford the hoard 'is likely to be of local origin since the West Country mints are relatively well represented' (*ibid.*, 292). However, he also states that the foreign coins mean 'that the English origins of the Lark Hill rings can be no more than a strong presumption' (*ibid.*, 293).
- 102 Mentioned in *Das Reich der Salier* (n. 94), 444, no. 26 (M. Schulze-Dörrlamm).
- 103 *Ibid.* The two rings were found in the centre of the city of Hasselt in Belgium together with a 'Buckelfibel mit Trommelkranz' (round

- fibula with a 'drum' design around the centre). This fibula was dated by Schulze-Dörrlamm to the second third of the 11th century and according to her provides a *terminus post quem* for the burial. She mentions another datable ring from the grave of abbot Eberhard (1135–55) from the Stifskirche in Königslutter, Germany.
- 104 F. Ronig, *Schatzkunst Trier. Kunst und Kultur in der Diözese Trier* 3, Trier, 1984, no. 55c (F. Ronig).
- 105 *Ibid.*, no. 55e (F. Ronig).
- 106 Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), no. 324c (N. Stratford).
- 107 G. Jászai, *Grabungsfunde aus der Bremer Dom*, Greven, 1978, no. 7 (grave 23, 'northern Germany, second half of the 12th century').
- 108 *Ibid.*, no. 9 (grave 19, 'probably England, around 1200').
- 109 Battke (n. 44), no. 35, with a tourmaline cabochon.
- 110 Haedeke (n. 44), no. 131 ('Germany, 12th century').
- 111 S. Hindman, *Toward an Art History of Medieval Rings: A Private Collection*, London, 2007, no. 17.
- 112 *Ibid.*, no. 142.
- 113 More examples dated to the 12th/13th centuries, however, many of them with an irregular bezel shape, a supposedly later development: Haedeke (n. 44), nos 132 ('England, 12th century'), 134 ('western Europe, 12th century'), 135 ('western Europe, mid-13th century'), 136 ('England, mid-13th century'), 137 ('western Europe, mid-13th century'), 138 ('Germany, 13th century'), 139 ('England, mid-13th century'), 140 ('England, mid-13th century'), and 141 ('England, 13th century').
- 114 *Ibid.*, nos 132 ('England, 12th century'), 133 ('Europe, second half of the 12th century'), and 144 ('western Europe, first half of the 13th century').
- 115 *Ibid.*, no. 133.
- 116 The other silver ring in the private collection has four triangular motifs on the bezel, although these are simply engraved and not nielloed: Haedeke (n. 44), no. 144. The ring is dated on the basis of a comparison with the already mentioned ring in Pforzheim (Battke [n. 44], 24, no. 35) to the 13th century, although evidence for the dating is lacking.
- 117 Haedeke (n. 44), no. 132.
- 118 Rybakov (n. 48), pl. 19.
- 119 *Ibid.*, 31–4, pls 31–3.
- 120 *Museum of Historical Valuables of the Ukrainian SSR*, Kiev, 1973, 33, pl. left.
- 121 For example Ross (n. 65), no. 117; *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises* (Musée du Louvre, Paris), Paris, 1992, no. 219 (J.-C. Cheynet, C. Morrisson).
- 122 Wamser (n. 91), no. 684 (C. Schmidt).
- 123 Unpublished, pers. comm. Dr Jannic Durand, Musée du Louvre, Paris, 2001.
- 124 E. Taburet-Delahaye, 'A propos de l'anneau dit de Maurice de Sully conservé au Louvre. Quelques précisions sur les fouilles de Viollet-le-Duc à Notre Dame de Paris en 1858 et le vol dans le trésor en 1860', *Bulletin de la société nationale des antiquaires de France* (2000), 278–9. The ring was probably originally set with a sapphire or a gem instead of a carnelian: *eadem*, 272.
- 125 Ronig (n. 104), no. 55e (F. Ronig).
- 126 Tait (n. 100), 137, pl. 309.
- 127 Coche de la Ferté 1957 (n. 2), 47.
- 128 *Ibid.*, 47.
- 129 *Ibid.*, 49. According to Coche de la Ferté this inscription cannot have been executed before the 13th century.
- 130 Evans and Wixom (n. 14), no. 190 (E. Dauterman Maguire, 'late 12th–early 13th century'); Papanikola-Bakirtzi (n. 61), no. 208 (I. Tuonou-Herbst, '1180–1200').
- 131 Papanikola-Bakirtzi (n. 61), no. 48 (C. Koilakou).
- 132 Falk (n. 91), no. 218.
- 133 For example Spatharakis (n. 88), no. 175 ('1225').
- 134 C.M. Fandrey, *Das Oswald-Reliquiar im Hildesheimer Domschatz*, Göppingen, 1987, 106–8; M. Brandt (ed.), *Kirchenkunst des Mittelalters. Erhalten und Erforschen* (Diözesan-Museum Hildesheim, Hildesheim, 1989, no. 9 (M. Brandt *et al.*), especially 135 and pls 33–4; M. Brandt (ed.), *Abglanz des Himmels. Romanik in Hildesheim* (Dom-Museum Hildesheim), Regensburg, 2001, nos 4–23 (M. Brandt).
- 135 For example F. Marshall, *Catalogue of Finger Rings, Greek, Etruscan and Roman in the Department of Antiquities, British Museum*, London, 1907, nos 1004 ('13th century'), 1006 ('England, 14th century'); Dalton (n. 56), nos 1027 ('Italy, 14th century'), 1008, 1012, 1017, 1019, 1028, 1030, 1035 ('15th century'); Battke (n. 44), nos 81–3 ('16th–17th century'); Hindman (n. 111), no. 22.
- 136 See notes 100–1; for a finger-ring with hands: Dalton (n. 56), no. 1025; Hinton (n. 100), 26, pl. 6; Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), no. 320f (N. Stratford); Tait (n. 100), 139, no. 318.
- 137 According to Hinton (n. 100), 31, stirrup-shaped rings 'were probably still worn in the fifteenth [century]', but to my knowledge there are no dated examples from this period.
- 138 For example Battke (n. 44), no. 61 ('English, second half of 12th century to first half of 13th century'); B. Chadour and R. Joppien, *Schmuck I: Hals-, Ohr-, Arm- und Gewandschmuck, II: Fingerringe* (Kunstgewerbemuseum der Stadt Köln, Cologne, 1985, no. 196 ('England [?], 12th–14th century'); Haedeke (n. 44), nos 122 (two rings, 'England, 12th–13th century'), 123 ('England, 11th century'), 124 (four rings, 'England' and 'Germany', '12th–14th century'), 125 ('England, first half of the 14th century'), 126 ('England, first half of the 14th century'); Hindman (n. 111), no. 16 ('England, or possibly France, c. 1200').
- 139 *Das Reich der Salier* (n. 94), 338, case 2,1 (M. Schulze-Dörrlamm, 'probably first half of the 11th century'); Jászai (n. 107), no. 24 (grave 6, 'Bezelin?, died 1043 ... northern Germany, 11th century'), with further examples from the grave of Archbishop Aribio, Mainz, Germany (d. 1038) and from the grave of bishop Maurus, Krakow, Poland (d. 1118). For more examples see, Chadour and Joppien II (n. 138), no. 196.
- 140 Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), no. 318 (N. Stratford). The inventory was written between 1251 and 1259 by the monk Matthew Paris (d. 1259).
- 141 A. Ward, J. Cherry, C. Gere and B. Cartlidge, *Rings through the Ages*, Fribourg, 1981, no. 120.
- 142 Zarnecki *et al.* (n. 27), 291, no. 315 (N. Stratford); Tait (n. 100), 138–9, no. 312.
- 143 A date relating to the Norman capture of Thessalonica in 1185 (see E. Vacalopoulos, *A History of Thessaloniki* (Institute for Balkan Studies 63), Thessalonica, 1984 [reprint of the 1972 ed.], 42–6) seems too early given both the dates of the comparative objects and the coins found with the treasure.
- 144 *Ibid.*, 47–8.
- 145 *Ibid.*, 48–9.