

- Find in the display case the lead seal of Patriarch Michael Cerularios



Side A (front side)



Side B (back side)

Did you know?

Patriarch Michael I Cerularius (1043-1059) was a descendant of the senators. When Constantine IX the Gladiator ascended to the throne, Cerularius became his advisor and later Patriarch. He remains known in history because during his time the Schism between the Catholic and the Orthodox church occurred. Remember Michael I Cerularius when you reach the corresponding chapter of the history book.

- Observe the front side of the lead seal. What faces can you distinguish?

- On the two sides of the seal the inscription says «ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕ ΒΟΗΘΕΙ ΤΩ ΣΩ ΔΟΥΛΩ ΜΙΧΑΗΛ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΡΩΜΗΣ», meaning «Virgin help your servant Michael Archbishop Constantinople New Rome». Can you read it and distinguish which part is written in which side?

Side A:

Side B:

- What could be the content of the letter sealed with this specific seal?



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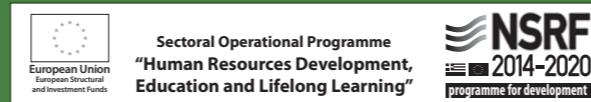
Learning about byzantine seals

from boullae to IPs

WORKSHEET 2



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Gallery 4

“From Iconoclasm to the splendor of the Macedonian and Komnenian dynasties”

What were the lead seals?

Lead seals (or lead bullae in Greek) were personal seals used for sealing documents in the Byzantine Empire. Byzantines in this way ensured a) the confidentiality and security of correspondence b) the authenticity of the signature of the sender c) a document's validity. From lead seals information regarding the owners can be obtained (e.g. name and title).

► Nowadays, in which ways do we ensure the confidentiality and validity of documents?

(mark all the correct answers)

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> stamp | <input type="checkbox"/> seal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> signature | <input type="checkbox"/> digital signature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> envelope | <input type="checkbox"/> sealing wax |

► Find in the display the lead seal of Patriarch Fotios



Side A (front side)



Side B (back side)

Did you know?

Patriarch Fotios (857-867 & 877-886) initially was a high-ranking official. In 858 he became the Patriarch of Constantinople. His name was linked with the Christianity of the Slavs. In 860 he sent brothers Cyril and Methodios to the Slavs, who preached Orthodox Christianity and created the Slavic alphabet. He was a noteworthy scholar. One of his most important works is the Myriovivlos, a literature encyclopedia. Remember Patriarch Fotios when you reach the corresponding chapter of the history book.

► Look at the lead seal to see what is depicted on each side:

Side A:

Side B:

► On both sides of the seal the inscription writes «ΥΠΕΡΑΓΙΑ ΘΕΟΤΟΚΕ ΒΟΗΘΕΙ ΦΩΤΙΩ ΑΡΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΩ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΡΩΜΗΣ», meaning «Most Holy Mother of God, help Photios, Archbishop of Constantinople New Rome».

Try to read it and distinguish which part is written on each side

Side A:

Side B:



Folded document with a lead seal ensuring its authenticity. Vlatades Monastery Collection.

Did you know?

The title of the Patriarch evolved over the years. Even before Constantine the Great founded New Rome (Constantinople) in 330, the Patriarch was called “Bishop of Byzantium”.

After reading the above information, answer the following questions:

► How was Patriarch Fotios called?

► Which city was the “New Rome”?

Did you know?

Byzantines used materials other than lead for seals, such as gold, silver and wax. Golden seals were only used by the emperors and for exceptionally important official documents, named chrysoboulla in Greek.

Preserved gold seals are rare and even rarer are the silver ones. Silver was only used by the kings of Epirus and the Peloponnese. Wax seals were quite common, but few of them have been preserved.

► Why have many wax seals not been preserved?
