

PRESS RELEASE
“Byzantium and the Arabs”

The Museum of Byzantine Culture under the cooperation framework of the five museums of Thessaloniki “5M Movement”, participates in the 2011 3rd Biennale events with the temporary exhibition entitled *“Byzantium and the Arabs”*.

Focusing on the revelation of aspects of both the Byzantine and Arab cultures, the exhibition *“Byzantium and the Arabs”* will present the relations and interactions between Byzantium and the Arabs from the 7th c. A.D. till 1453 (capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans).

The identity of the Arabs, the birth of the new religion of Islam and the caliphates, the great expansion outside their peninsula, the sieges of Constantinople and the capture of Thessaloniki by them in 904 will all be represented in topics of the exhibition. The fights between Byzantines and Arabs and the emergence of the tradition on the “Akrites” and especially Digenis Akritas will also be among the topics of our exhibition.

Alongside the wars, the interactions of both civilizations in the fields of letters, science and art will also be represented.

The exhibition will be comprised of over a hundred objects, such as icons, manuscripts, jewelry, coins, ceramics and sculptures from the collections of the Museum of Byzantine Culture, as well as from collections of public and private museums and Ephorates of Antiquities in Greece and will be supported by visual material. The exhibition will be open from September until December 2011.

During the duration of the exhibition they will be held lectures by historians, educational programmes for primary school pupils, concerts with arabic music, film screening etc.

This exhibition *“Byzantium and the Arabs”* is part of the project “Thessaloniki: Crossroads of Civilizations” organized by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The project’s topic for the year 2011 is Middle East.