



To those who might be interested...

“The Brothers of the Orient”

An Initiatic journey through early Eastern R+ symbols and related sacred sites still functioning in the East (Greece)

Preface

*For decades the scholars of esoteric history, based on the well-known Manifests by Yohan Valentin Andree, believed that the Rosicrucians were a Brotherhood firstly appeared sometime in the early 17th century in central Europe. This, if true, refers to the West. What about the East? According to the oral eastern Tradition, John, the beloved disciple of Christ, was guided by his Master to combine the ancient Initiatic Tradition, represented by the Rose, with the new revelation given by the Teaching of Christ, represented by the Cross. From this combination a unique and powerful esoteric “tool” appeared in the East: the new Tradition of the **Rose and Cross (R+)**.*

Both St John in Ephesus, as well as St Peter in Rome spread this new Tradition during the 1st c. AD, to those who were ready to receive it. Thus a secret Brotherhood started to grow. In the East, their influence eventually resulted in the recognition of Christianity as equal to all other religions, by Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, after his vision, in 312-313 AD.



Early Christian symbol with the combined Greek letters X & P, i.e. the first 2 letters of the name of the Lord in Greek (ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ), as well as symbols for the words: Rose & Cross. This is one of the first symbols of the new R+ Tradition and includes the Greek Letters A & Ω in a reverse position (meaning from the Cosmos back to the Spirit - reintegration).

Christian Catacombs in Rome: 3rd c. AD.

Not many decades after the new Church of Christ became official throughout the Roman Empire, the Brothers who had worked for this recognition were considered by the emerging clergy to be heretics and were obliged to continue their work under cover, mostly in Orthodox monasteries, in locations close to their 3 main Centers of activity: Ephesus, Constantinople and Attica (Greece).

*Life in monasteries has always been ascetic and this perfectly matched to the Brothers' own attitude and way of living. Nevertheless, in times when certain emperors were open to their ideas (e.g. Justinian A' / 6th c. AD, Alexius Comnenus / 11th c. AD, John and Constantine the Palaiologians / early 15th c. AD), the **R+** Brotherhood had the opportunity to work openly and flourish. After the definitive fall of the eastern Empire (Byzantium), in 1453, to the Ottomans, the Brothers of the Orient had to return to silence once again, or move to the West, as confirmed in published researches by scholars and academics.⁽¹⁾*

Prof. G.L.Prokopiou & Dr L.Stilianoudi, “Symbols of the R+ of the Orient in Byzantine Art”, Motibo publ. Athens: 2026.

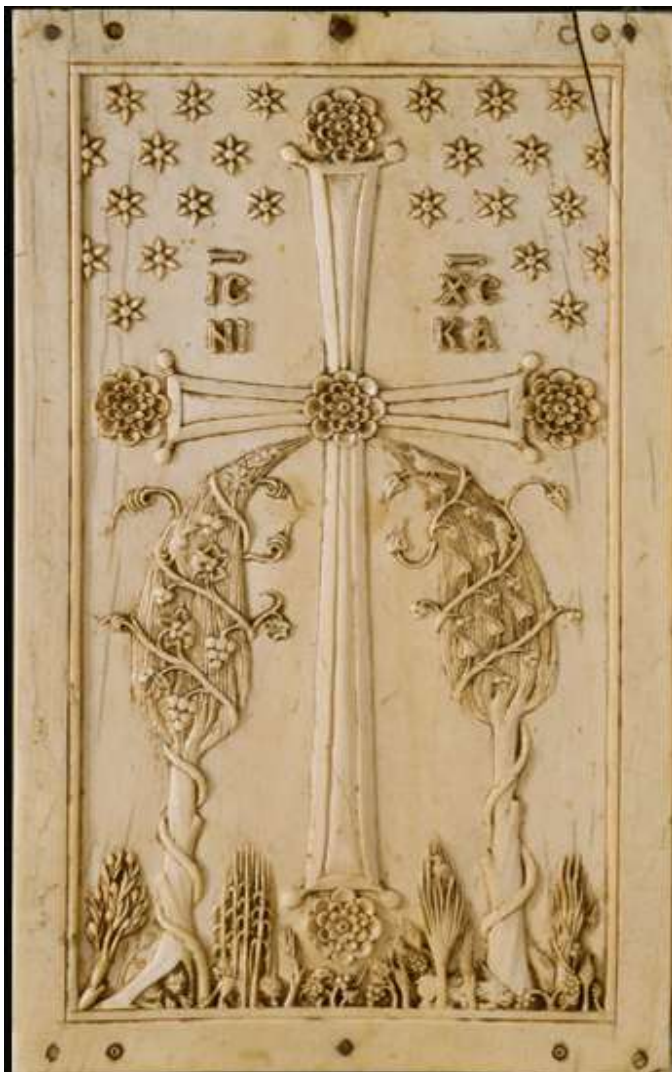
Symbols

Below please consider a few examples of symbols studied and published by researchers and archaeologists, from both the times of secrecy as well as from the times of the Brotherhood's open work.



A 6thc. AD stone relief (thorakio) found in the ruins of the Episcopal Basilica in Sandanski Bulgaria.

It depicts the early Christian & possibly R+ symbols, with the combined Greek letters X & P. It also includes the Greek letters A & Ω, meaning from the Spirit to the Cosmos.



Central theme on an ivory triptych, depicting a cross the four arms of which end in roses, while in the center of the cross a 5th rose appears.

Above the horizontal arm of the cross the initials of the famous "Jesus Christ conquers" invocation are seen. Below, two cypresses are leaning towards the cross, a symbolic representation of the Crucifixion with John and Virgin Mary on either side of the crucified Lord. This is a typical symbolic R+ depiction at the peak of the 2nd, glorious period of the Brotherhood of the Orient (9th-15thc. AD.)

Work of Art from a Greek workshop in Constantinople, 11thc. AD, today exhibited in the Louvre museum, Paris, France.



Another similar example of fine art on ivory, among many, created by a Greek workshop in Constantinople. The cross bears a large rose in its heart: early 11th c. AD. Today exhibited in the Vatican, Italy.



Central marble relief (thorakio), depicting two crosses and a most imposing crowned rose in the middle. Two snakes subordinate their earthly energies to the supreme powers of the rose and the cross(es).

South facade of the main church of Hosios Lucas Monastery in Livadia,



Marble relief (thorakio) from an early Christian church (4th-7thc. AD), today incorporated in the stonework of St Demetrius church, in the old town of Thebes, Boeotia, central Greece.

It depicts a central cross over the horizontal arms of which two simplified roses are seen. Below, the Greek letters Ω & Α, are placed in the known R+ position.



Stone relief (thorakio) from a demolished church in the area of Boeotia, central Greece.

It depicts a central cross and two roses above the horizontal arm of the Cross.

This work of Art dates from the late 10thc. AD and today is placed in the yard of St George's chapel of Lacca Kyriakiou, close to Ossios Lukas Monastery, Boeotia, central Greece.

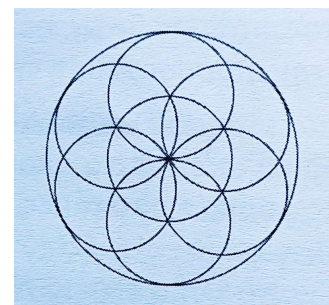


Small marble relief depicting a cross the four edges of which end in simplified lilies. Over its horizontal arm there are two small roses. Below, two flourishing lilies can also be discerned. Both the roses and the lilies combined, represent the old and the recent Tradition of the East and are often seen in the western alchemistic symbolism as well. The whole synthesis appears to be in a ciborium.

This is an 11thc. AD work of art built in the stonework of the front facade of the church of Virgin Mary Monastery, in Kaisariani, Athens, Greece.

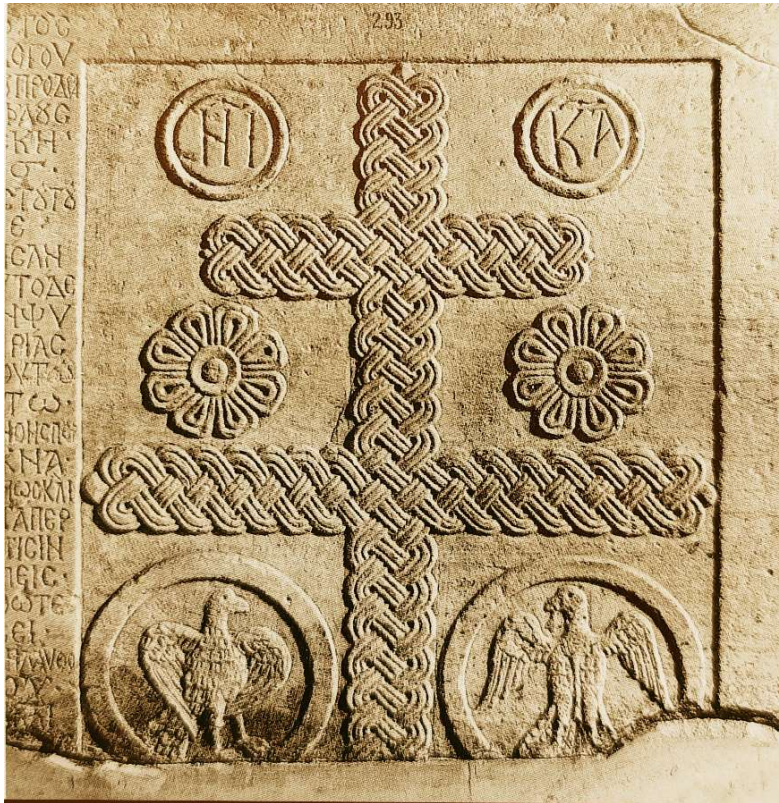


(a)



(b)

Marble relief, part of the marble screen of iconostasis in the Church of Kaisariani Monastery, 11thc. AD. It presents the perpetual movement of Life (a). In the middle, one can recognize the central circle of an abstract rose composed by 8 circles (b). It is inscribed in a square with four loupes representing the four Elements and the different kingdoms of earthly life, among others symbolic meanings.



Marble relief, part of the screen of iconostasis of the demolished church of St John the Baptist (Maghoutis) in Athens: 12th c. AD. It depicts a central cross with 2 horizontal arms, in the middle of which two roses are seen. Over the upper horizontal arm the famous invocation "Jesus Christ Conquers" is seen. At the lower area there exist two standing eagles in round medals.

Today exhibited in the Athens Byzantine Museum, Greece.



Marble relief from St Anargyroi Kolokynti church, a dependency of the Holy Sepulcher in Athens, dating from the early 16th c AD. It depicts a carved cross with 2 roses over its horizontal arm and below two cypresses leaning towards the cross, under a ciborium. The apse contains 11+2 smaller roses.

Today exhibited in the Athens Byzantine Museum in Greece.

The evidence from the above symbols “speaks loudly” of the continuous existence of the Brothers of the Orient (the R+ of the East), much earlier than is generally believed, as derives from the official dating and documentation by science of the above -among many others- works of Art, exhibited in Greece and elsewhere in Europe.

Questions that need an answer

The date of first appearance and the true origin of the Brothers of the Orient, however, is not the only issue to think about. There are a few more...

- *What was those Eastern Brothers' initial Goal?*
- *What were their original Teachings?*
- *Did they pass on their Tradition?*
- *Do their heirs still work today, possibly under cover and in a different form? ⁽²⁾*
- *What might be their Principles and Goals nowadays?*

Dear brothers and sisters around the Globe, contemporary people have trained their minds to swallow endless information, often without really investing the time necessary to process and “digest” it...

Let us be sincere: we think we are erudite and wise, but in reality our vast knowledge often turns us into selfish individuals... Isn't this true?

This unfortunate fact is particularly true for some among us who seek esoteric Teachings but do not equally care for an esoteric change of the quality of our soul...

Are the teachings to be blamed? No, we don't believe they should be.

We believe instead it is a lack of patience and persistence for an in depth understanding and, above all, for sufficient implementation of the teachings in one's everyday life, that should rather be blamed...

So, what really becomes of us when we store innumerable teachings in our mind but often we remain suffering from passions and vices and rush all day long claiming our shellfish pursuits?

Please allow me to venture a reply: our soul remains impure, our concepts are grounded and our prayers are hardly heard by the entities of the Higher Planes.

We wonder: where have Love and humility, main Teachings of the Lord (and of the ancient R+ Brotherhood) gone? And how one dares to believe he/she may be occupied with Theurgy and similar occult objectives, without a long and proper purification of one's inner self?

Let us try to think of something truly good that our soul has experienced and was thus reborn, any time in the past. Did this experience provoke a deeper understanding, dedication, faith, cooperation? Did it motivate positive decisions and actions?

If yes, we have already approached the pathway we believe we all should follow. If no, every moment of our everyday life is a new opportunity for such an experience.

Personal inner experience leading to esoteric change is the key! This is the way we believe one should work with the Teachings and evolve.

This way, however, demands a relative training...

Sites

The following are some of the sites in Greece that bear proof of, or are in a way related to, the passage of the Brothers of the Orient. Few of them are still in operation today.

Why early Orthodox monasteries? Please look again at the last paragraph of our Preface...

1. A. Prokopiou, “Les Racines et les Fleurs du Martinisme” <https://geimme.gnsd.eu/> , Bulletin No 22 -4, 2009.



Hosios Loukas Monastery, Livadia, Boeotia, central Greece: 11thc. AD.



The west façade of Virgin Mary's church, Kaisariani former Monastery close to Athens, Greece: 11thc. AD.



St John the divine Monastery & Castle, Patmos Island: 11thc. AD (close to St John's cave of Apocalypse: 1stc. AD.)



The meadow of the monks' beach, Patmos Island, Greece



St George's former Monastery, on top of Lycabettus hill in Athens: 18th- early 20th c. AD. A late R+ Masters' meeting place.

The Concept

Dear Brothers and Sisters around the Globe, seekers of the spiritual treasures which can make the difference within you, bring peace in your soul, light to your spirit, happiness and prosperity in the world...

You are welcome to visit sites related to the origin of the Brothers of the Orient in Greece, and experience these site's aura!

You are advised, however, NOT to undertake this journey, unless you are truly interested in the issue under discussion with a quite different approach from that of just collecting information through texts, books or trips.

This different approach we believe should derive from:

- a. Your sincere wish for having an inner experience on the R+ past, in surviving establishments in the East still operating today, plus examine with your physical presence some of the above presented symbols.*
- b. Your true interest in meeting with men and women initiated in the contemporary Teaching which contains the ancient R+ Tradition.*
- c. Your inner desire to find out how it is possible for a sincere seeker, "a man of desire", to follow the example of those remarkable men of the past and become a servant of God's Plans in the tough reality of today...*

Please examine sincerely your deep motives, using the above three criteria, before contacting us...

In order to participate, you will be asked to send us an email describing briefly your goals and expectations from the proposed journey.

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We understand that all above statements and ideas presented, may arise questions. Please feel free to ask what you need to understand further, and we will do our best to satisfy your true needs. There are things, however, we believe one should prefer to experience by one's self...

You are welcome to make a contact with us using the following e-mail: info.brorient@gmail.com

May God bless you!

The Journey...

We are proposing a one week trip to Greece, for two groups every year, of not more than 10-12 persons each, in late spring and early autumn, in order for those interested to be guided in the above mentioned locations (Patmos Island by ship or plane, Levadia & Thebes - Central Greece, Athens - monasteries & museums etc.).

The trip will include morning visits and evening gatherings for discussion and exchange of experiences, meditation in Nature, free time for relaxation and enjoying the Greek sea when possible, plus meeting with brothers and sisters with experience in the eastern way of esoteric work. The final outcome is up to you to evaluate...

All bookings will be done directly by you or through a Greek travel agency, on a transparent and cost-basis way.

Specific trip details will be available to those who will finally decide to participate.

Notes:

- *For those who “at the end of the day” would be motivated and feel the need for “something more”, there will be the option for an open communication and collaboration with us through the web.
The true journey begins then!*
- *The services we are ready to offer to you **are free of charge**. We do not expect any kind of compensation for them, **neither now nor in the future**.*

Athanassios

