

The Double-Basilica at Thasos (Alikí)

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Entry tags: Basilica, Christian Traditions, Religious Group, Religious Place

The double basilica at Alikí is an elusive and unprecedented ecclesial complex on the island of Thasos. Its history as a structure in a seemingly constant state of expansion or reconstruction has led to much speculation, ambiguity and contradiction in analysis of its various architectural and archaeological programs and function(s). Notably, scholars have struggled to address various fundamental issues, from the chronology of its building phases, (contextual) influences from other structures on the peninsula, to the practices of the local Christian community. Therefore, this entry strives to illuminate the general questions and theories postulated by past research, proposes possible solutions and offers some avenues for future exploration and consideration of the site, with marked emphasis on the rationale for constructing the twin ecclesial structures and what the architecture of the site suggests vis-à-vis the early Christian community on Alikí, particularly in terms of baptism ritual(s) within the complex.



Date Range: 350 CE - 500 CE

Region: Early Christianity and Ancient Judaism

Region tags: Europe

Early Christianity and Ancient Judaism

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

General Variables

Sources and Excavations

Print Sources

Print sources used for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean: Architecture, Cult, and Community by Ann Marie Yasin
- Source 2: Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture by Richard Krautheimer

Has this place been the focus of excavation (pre-modern, illicit, or scientific):

Answer 'Yes' for each period or type of excavation.

— Yes



Type of excavation:

— Pre-modern

↳ Years of excavation:

— Year range: 1856

Reference: Georges Daux undefined. Guide de Thasos. Aux editions E. de Boccard.

↳ Name of excavation

— Official or descriptive name: Georges Perrot Excavation

Notes: A member of the French school, Georges Perrot was the first to note ruins on the site in 1856.

— Yes

↳ Type of excavation:

— Pre-modern

↳ Years of excavation:

— Year range: 1850s-1860s

↳ Name of excavation

— Official or descriptive name: Conze & Miller Excavation

Notes: After Perrot in 1856, Conze and Miller, also of the French school, transferred an inscribed column to the Louvre.

Reference: Jean Servais. Alik i: Les Deux Sanctuaries. Ecole Francaise D'Athenes.

— Yes

↳ Type of excavation:

— Scientific

↳ Years of excavation:

— Year range: 1907

↳ Name of excavation

— Official or descriptive name: John ff. Baker-Penoyre

Notes: Principal figure in the documentation and excavation of the double basilica complex.

— Yes

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↳ Type of excavation:

– Scientific

↳ Years of excavation:

– Year range: 1960s-1970s

↳ Name of excavation

– Official or descriptive name: Jean-Pierre Sodini

Notes: Principal figure in the documentation and excavation of the double basilica complex. Made multiple statuary and architectural finds - most notably the Kouros of Istanbul.

Reference: Jean-Pierre Sodini , K. Kolokotsas , Luc Buchet. Alikí / II, La basilique double. Athènes : École Française d'Athènes.

– Yes

↳ Type of excavation:

– Scientific

↳ Years of excavation:

– Year range: 1964-1970s

↳ Name of excavation

– Official or descriptive name: Francois Salvait

Notes: Found multiple marble structures on the site of the double basilica

Topographical Context

Is the place associated with a feature in the landscape

– Water source

– Other [specify]: Small peninsula attached to mainland island of Thasos. Historically has served as a natural port & source of marble.

Notes: The island of Thasos is surrounded by the Thracian Sea.

Does the place involve human-made features besides structure:

Other features might be ground clearing, terracing, other modifications of the local environment.

– Yes

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↳ Type of feature

- Other [specify]: Grotto of caves, marble quarry, double-sanctuary/temple (separate from the double basilica)

Is the place situated in an urban or significantly urbanized area:

– No

Notes: Today the area is scarcely inhabited, however evidence of inhabitation, the need for a double basilica, along with the presence of the city of Thasos on the mainland suggests the area may have been considered urban during the double basilica's heyday.

Is the place situated in a rural setting:

– No

Notes: The island of Thasos and the Alikí region would be better described as coastal villages, as opposed to rural. While Alikí today is scarcely inhabited, the island may have been more densely populated and thus considered more "urban" during the construction & use of the double basilica.

Is the place situated far removed from non-religious places of habitation:

– I don't know

Structures Present

Are there structures or features present:

Instructions: Answer once for each structure/feature or group that can be differentiated.

– Yes

↳ A single structure

– Yes

↳ The structure has a definite shape

- Other [specify]: Double basilica on abnormal axis.

↳ A group of structures:

– Yes

↳ Are they part of a single design/construction stage:

– No

Notes: There were likely several stages in building the the double basilica itself, let alone the building complex it appears to be a part of. The southern basilica was most likely built before the northern basilica because an original foundation of the southern

basilica can be found buried beneath the current standing northern aisle.

↳ Is it part of a larger place/sanctuary:

– Yes

Notes: The double basilica appears to be part of a larger building complex including a grotto of caves, another double sanctuary/temple, a quarry, and a burial site.

↳ What is the function of the structure/feature or group:

Answer "Yes" once for each distinct function

– Worship

↳ Worship:

– Communal

– Other [specify]: Burial ground

– Sacrificial

Notes: Offerings for saint pilgrimage purposes perhaps.

↳ Is the structure/feature finished:

– Yes

↳ Was the structure/feature intended to last beyond a generation:

– Yes

↳ Was the structure/feature modified through time:

– Yes

Notes: Please reference the attached graphic for a suggested chronology for the building of the Double Basilica at Alik.

↳ Was the structure/feature destroyed:

– No

Notes: The structure wasn't destroyed persay, but it was abandoned, which wreaks havoc in terms of deterioration over time.

↳ Has the structure/feature been reconstructed:

– No

Notes: The basilica as it was originally built was reconstructed in ancient times to form the currently standing, double basilica. However, the double basilica was abandoned in ancient

times and has not been reconstructed since - it currently exists as ruins.

Reasons for Creation/Construction/Consecration

Is the place used for the worship of/communication with non-human supernatural beings:

– Yes



Dedicated to a supernatural being:

– Yes [specify]: Traditionally late antique churches such as the double basilica at Alikí, would have been dedicated to a saint(s).

Notes: "Since the altar consistently served as the primary focal point of architectural programs, when it became spatially associated with the bodily remains of saints, the relics also became increasingly central to the architecture and institution of the church. As early as the construction of St. Peter's...saints' memorials began to serve as the central, organizing focal points of monumental Christian architecture" (Yasin 2009, 152).

Reference: Ann Marie Yasin. *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean*. Cambridge University Press. isbn: 9781107411630.



Dedicated to more than one supernatural being:

– Yes [specify]: There is a possibility that relics were preserved on site, which indicates that saints were perceived as supernatural.

Notes: "When over the course of the late antique period, church altars began to incorporate the remains of saints with growing frequency, the site of the culmination of ritual also became a locus of material sacrality, containing or marking the holy in the sense of "sacred center" (Yasin 2009, 151).

Reference: Ann Marie Yasin. *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean*. Cambridge University Press. isbn: 9781107411630.

Is the place used for the worship of a semi-divine human being:

– I don't know

Notes: Depending on the beliefs of the early Christian group that worshipped at the double basilica in Alikí, it is possible that they regarded Jesus as semi-divine, or the saints as semi-divine (as opposed to other groups who may consider the former and/or the latter as fully divine). In early Christianity, there was considerable debate and diversity of thought on how divine Jesus and other venerated figures were.

Reference: Bart Ehrman D.. *The Diversity of Early Christianity*. (Bart Ehrman D.), *The New Testament: a Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.6-11

Is the place used for the worship of non-divine ancestors:

– No

Was the place commissioned/built by an official political entity:

A political entity is a local power structure that leverages a workforce.

— I don't know

Notes: Presumably, the basilica, or at least the earlier, burial ground portion, was commissioned by a wealthy patron. The remains excavated at the burial ground were endogamous, which could suggest that those buried were related to the individual who sponsored the construction of the northern basilica, and the remodeling of the southern basilica. "In the late antique centuries, Christian votive inscriptions and Church benefactions were a consistently widespread form of monumental writing" (Yasin 2009, 101). "Such private benefaction for the greater communal good would seem to fit comfortably within the ancient phenomenon we call euergetism, and indeed church building is often written about as the natural descendant or last chapter, of ancient euergetism" (Yasin 2009, p. 102). "...elites continued to give away their money but increasingly channeled it in new, and decidedly Christian directions -- from public works and civic structures....to church buildings, monasteries, xenodochia, alms, and charity" (Yasin 2009, 109).

Reference: Ann Marie Yasin. *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean*. Cambridge University Press. isbn: 9781107411630.

Were the Structures built by specific groups of people:

— I don't know

Was the place thought to have originated as the result of divine intervention:

— I don't know

Was the place created to mark or commemorate the birthplace of a supernatural or human being:

— Field doesn't know

Was the place created as the result of an event:

— Field doesn't know

Was the creation of the place sponsored by an external financial/material donation:

— I don't know

Notes: Presumably, the basilica, or at least the earlier, burial ground portion, was commissioned by a wealthy patron. The remains excavated at the burial ground were endogamous, which could suggest that those buried were related to the individual who sponsored the construction of the northern basilica, and the remodeling of the southern basilica. Other potential sponsors may included the congregation themselves, a wealthy bishop, or government officials. "In the late antique centuries, Christian votive inscriptions and Church benefactions were a consistently widespread form of monumental writing" (Yasin 2009, 101). "Such private benefaction for the greater communal good would seem to fit comfortably within the ancient phenomenon we call euergetism, and indeed church building is often written about as the natural descendant or last chapter, of ancient euergetism" (Yasin 2009, p. 102). "...elites continued to give away their money but increasingly channeled it in new, and decidedly Christian directions -- from public works and civic structures....to church buildings,

monasteries, xenodochia, alms, and charity" (Yasin 2009, 109).

Reference: Ann Marie Yasin. *Saints and Church Spaces in the Late Antique Mediterranean*. Cambridge University Press. isbn: 9781107411630.

Was the establishment of the place motivated by:

- Other [specify]: While the intention for the initial construction of the church is unknown, it is likely that the remodel into a double basilica structure resulted based on the desired dual functionality of the church in addition to the desire for the church design to meet the larger, more separated Constantinian church model popularized in the fourth century.

Reference: Richard Krautheimer undefined. *Constantinian Church Building*. (Richard Krautheimer undefined, Slobodan Ćurčić, Ed.), *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*. United Kingdom: Yale University Press. p.40

Was the place built specifically for housing scriptures/sacred texts:

- No

Notes: The double basilica doesn't appear to have been built with any special modifications for this function - although this isn't to say that sacred texts weren't housed here.

Design and Material Remains

Overall Structure

Is the place made up of multiple built structures:

- Yes



Are any of the structures attached to or associated with a landscape feature:

- Field doesn't know

Notes: Some scholars argue that the double basilica is connected and has an unconventional orientation due to the narrow peninsula on which it is located.



Are any of the structures attached to other structures:

- Yes

Notes: The northern and southern basilicas are connected.



Is there a hierarchy among the structures:

- No

Is monumental architecture present:

Monumental architecture is defined here as a built structure that surpasses average human proportions and in general is larger and more complex than is necessary to fulfill the structure's utilitarian function(s).

Examples of monumental architecture include Mesopotamian Ziggurats, Egyptian Pyramids, Greek and Roman temples, Mesoamerican Pyramids, North American and Aegean burial mounds, etc.

– Yes

Is the structure/feature made out of natural materials:

Answer [Yes] for each material type

– Yes

↳ Earth
– I don't know

↳ Sand
– I don't know

↳ Clay
– I don't know

↳ Plaster
– I don't know

↳ Wood
– Field doesn't know

Notes: It is possible the northern basilica could have utilized a wooden mensa - an altar used for Eucharistic commemoration of a martyr's death.

↳ Grass
– No

↳ Stone
– Yes

↳ Is this material sourced locally:
– No

Notes: In spite of there being numerous marble quarries located in Thasos, it has been confirmed that significant remaining pieces of marble at the Double Basilica are not from Thasos. This could hint at the strategic trade conducted in Ancient Thasos, or suggest that different types of marble were sourced for different purposes.

- ↳ Is this material lacking in the local natural environment:
– No

Iconography

- Are there distinct features in the places iconography:
– No

Beliefs and Practices

Funerary Associations

Is this place a tomb/burial:

- Yes

Notes: There are several tombs in the western segment of the Northern Basilica. Endogamous remains of 124 children and 23 adults have been identified. Currently, no graves have been found to predate this area, suggesting that it served as a burial ground or martyrium.

Is this a place for the worship of the dead:

- No

Notes: There is no indication that the bodies buried in the northwestern segment of the northern basilica were being worshipped. In other areas of the church, relics - i.e. the human remains of saints, were potentially stored, but relics are notably venerated, as opposed to worshipped.

Is this a place for treatment of the corpse:

- I don't know

Are co-sacrifices present in tomb/burial:

Co-sacrifices are animal/human sacrifices prompted by the death of the primary occupant of the tomb/burial.

- No

Are grave goods present:

- No

Are formal burials present:

- Yes

↳ As cenotaphs:

– No

↳ In cemetery:

– No

↳ Family tomb/crypt:

– Yes

Notes: All of the burials in the northern basilica were determined to be endogamous, which suggests that the basilica may have served as a family tomb, potentially for the donor/sponsor of the double basilica structure. However, there is no definitive evidence that the individuals buried in the northern basilica are related to the donor, whose identity is currently unknown.

↳ Domestic context:

Interred beneath floors of house, or in areas of domestic activity

– No

Supernatural Beings

Is a supreme high god is present:

– Yes

↳ Are they anthropomorphic:

– Yes

Notes: Jesus, if viewed as one in the same with God the Father, was perceived as human, regardless of whether or not this particular community viewed him as being literally human or not. Furthermore, most Christian communities viewed Jesus/God the Father/Yahweh (Jewish God) as single entity and there are numerous anthropomorphic references to Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible as well. Ex. " They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden" (Genesis 3:8, NRSV)

↳ Are they sky deity:

– No

↳ Are they chthonic (underworld)

– No

Notes: God in the Hebrew Bible has a connection to Sheol/Hades/Underworld in that He has the ability to banish people there, but it does not appear that he presides over it persay. "The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up" (1 Samuel 2:6, NRSV).

↳ Are they fused with king/kingship role (king = high god)

– Yes

↳ Are they the monarch is seen as a manifestation or emanation of the high god:

– I don't know

Notes: The monarch in Ancient Israel was not viewed as a manifestation or emanation of the high God. There is evidence to suggest that Constantine, the first Roman emperor to embrace Christianity, did view himself as such, following in Roman tradition (Krautheimer 1986, 39). Jesus/God in the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament are often referred to as monarchs. For examples, please see below: Hebrew Bible: "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth". (Isaiah 37:16, NRSV). New Testament: "Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign forever and ever" (Revelation 11:15, NRSV).

↳ Are they kin relation to elites:

– No

↳ Are they other type of loyalty or connection to elites:

– No

↳ Are they unquestionably good:

– Yes

Notes: "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever" (1 Chronicles 16:34, NRSV). "The Lord is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made" (Psalm 145:9, NRSV).

Does the supreme high god communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is evidence that some early Christians spoke in tongues, which is a practice of speaking in a manner that is incomprehensible to the average listener due to possession by the Holy Spirit; one element of the supreme high god of Christianity. There is no evidence indicating whether or not the Christian congregation at the double basilica in Aliko partook in this custom.

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.369

Are previously human spirits present:

– No

Do human spirits communicate with the living at this place:

– No

Are nonhuman supernatural beings present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is evidence that some early Christians spoke in tongues, which is a practice of speaking in a manner that is incomprehensible to the average listener due to possession by the Holy Spirit; a nonhuman supernatural element of the Trinity. There is no evidence indicating whether or not the Christian congregation at the double basilica in Alikì partook in this custom.

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.369

Do nonhuman spirits communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: There is evidence that some early Christians spoke in tongues, which is a practice of speaking in a manner that is incomprehensible to the average listener due to possession by the Holy Spirit; a nonhuman spiritual element of the Trinity. There is no evidence indicating whether or not the Christian congregation at the double basilica in Alikì partook in this custom.

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.369

Are mixed human-divine beings present:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The human/divine nature of Jesus was disputed by Christian leadership throughout the 4th century. It is unknown which specific Christian rituals the congregation at the double basilica in Alikì partook in. If speaking in tongues (i.e. possession by the Holy Spirit) was practiced, and the group believed in the Trinity, and/or the both human & divine nature of Jesus, and/or the oneness of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, then one could conclude that this congregation considered the human-divine presence of Jesus/the Holy Spirit to be present in the basilica when one was speaking in tongues. If this congregation partook in the practice of the Eucharist, which was perhaps one of the most predominant early Christian practices, and the group considered Jesus to be both human & divine, then one could also ascertain that the congregation considered the human-divine presence of Jesus to be present in the basilica upon partaking in the Eucharist.

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.369

Reference: Eucharist

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.6-11

Do mixed human-divine beings communicate with the living at this place:

– Field doesn't know

Notes: The human/divine nature of Jesus was disputed by Christian leadership throughout the 4th century. It is unknown which specific Christian rituals the congregation at the double basilica in Alikì

partook in. If speaking in tongues (i.e. possession by the Holy Spirit) was practiced, and the group believed in the Trinity, and/or the both human & divine nature of Jesus, and/or the oneness of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, than one could conclude that this congregation considered the human-divine presence of Jesus/the Holy Spirit to be communicating with individuals in the basilica when one was speaking in tongues.

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.6-11

Reference: Bart D Ehrman. The New Testament. New York: Oxford University Press. isbn: 9780190909000. p.369

Is the supernatural being/high god present in the form of a cult statue(s):

— No

Notes: While statues of divine figures such as Jesus, or of venerated figures such as The Virgin Mary, saints, etc. exist, the Hebrew Bible specifically admonishes against statue/idol worship. "You shall make for yourselves no idols and erect no carved images or pillars, and you shall not place figured stones in your land, to worship at them; for I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 26:1, NRSV). "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (1 John: 5:21, NRSV).

Supernatural Interactions

Is supernatural monitoring present:

— I don't know

Do visitors communicate with the gods or supernatural beings:

— Yes



Do visitors communicate with gods:

— Yes

Notes: Christian liturgy and prayer is seen as speaking to and giving praise to Jesus/God the Father/The Holy Spirit.



Do visitors communicate with other supernatural beings:

— Yes

Notes: While it is unknown what specific practices the Christian congregation at Aliko partook in, it is possible that they engaged in intercessory prayer to saints -- i.e. the practice of praying to the saints to petition Jesus/God the Father/The Holy Spirit for attention to their prayers.

Ritual and Performance

Sacrifices, Offerings, and Maintenance

Are sacrifices performed at this place:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: While there is no definitive evidence that sacrifices did not occur at the Double Basilica at Thasos, it is highly unlikely given what we know about the traditions of early Christians. Christians were thought to no longer be beholden to ancient Jewish law, which did involve animal sacrifice, and early Christians were diametrically opposed to many aspects of Pagan religion, including human sacrifice. Paul writes, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1). This quote indicates the transition of the notion of a living sacrifice (i.e. animal/human slaughter offerings) to spiritual sacrifice in early Christianity (with the obvious exception of Jesus himself). Sacrifice in this context is understood to be synonymous with offerings, as opposed to the more general definition that means "to surrender or give up, or permit injury or disadvantage to, for the sake of something else" (Dictionary.com).

Reference: Oxford University Press. The NRSV Bible. Oxford University Press, USA. isbn: 9780195282634.

Are there self-sacrifices present:

— No

Notes: Not literally. Paul writes, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Romans 12:1).

Reference: Oxford University Press. The NRSV Bible. Oxford University Press, USA. isbn: 9780195282634.

Are material offerings present:

— Field doesn't know

Is maintenance of the place performed:

— No

Notes: Presumably when the basilica was functioning it was maintained, but it was abandoned and potentially even buried by the 5th century CE. Now the ruins/archaeological site are maintained by the city for excavation, research, and tourism.

Pilgrimage and Festivals

Is this place a venue for feasting:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: While there is no explicit evidence of feasting occurring at the Double Basilica at Aliko, Richard Krautheimer states that by 200 CE, "The common meal had been relegated to rare occasions: meals offered to the poor (agapai), or funeral and memorial banquets (refrigeria) held in cemeteries near sites hallowed by martyrs" (Krautheimer 1984, 26).

Reference: Richard Krautheimer, Slobodan Ćurčić. Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture. Yale University Press. isbn: 9780300052947.

Are festivals present:

— No

Divination and Healing

Is divination present:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: The practices performed at this specific site of worship are mostly unknown. Generally speaking, divination has a very negative connotation in the Torah/Hebrew Bible. "When you come into the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you must not learn to imitate the abhorrent practices of those nations. No one shall be found among you who makes a son or daughter pass through fire, or who practises divination, or is a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or one who casts spells, or who consults ghosts or spirits, or who seeks oracles from the dead" (Deuteronomy 18:9-11, NRSV). However, prophecy is considered to be distinct, and of a different nature than divination, and is listed among the gifts of the Spirit in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. "To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongue" (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, NRSV).

Reference: Oxford University Press. The NRSV Bible. Oxford University Press, USA. isbn: 9780195282634.

Is healing present/practiced at this place:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: The practices performed at this specific site of worship are mostly unknown. However, Jesus was associated with performing healing, and the gift of healing is listed among the gifts of the spirits in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. "Then Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.' Jesus said to him, 'Go; your faith has made you well.' Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way" (Mark 10:51-52, NRSV). "To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongue" (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, NRSV).

Reference: Oxford University Press. The NRSV Bible. Oxford University Press, USA. isbn: 9780195282634.

Do rituals occur at this place:

Rituals are visibly enacted behaviors by one or more people for the purposes of religious observance.

— Yes

Notes: The practices performed at this specific site of worship are mostly unknown. However, there is evidence of a baptisery and baptismal font at the site, indicating the practice of baptism at this site. The baptismal font is also especially small, which may indicate infant baptisms, and potentially even baptisms of dead infants. By the later 5th c. and early 6th, "chiefly under the influence of Augustine,"

(Paxton 1990, 35). infant baptism became prevalent in many Christian communities. Additionally, one of the earliest rituals of the Christian church known as communion or Eucharist administration, was also probably practiced at this site. Communion is the practice of consuming wine (thought to either be literally or metaphorically the blood of Jesus) and breaking bread (thought to either be literally or metaphorically the body of Jesus). The practice was adopted in honor of the Lord's Supper, which is found in all four gospels, and referenced in Paul's letters as well. "While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread, and after blessing it he broke it, gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, and all of them drank from it. He said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many'" (Mark 14: 22-24).

Reference: Frederick S. Paxton. *Christianizing death: the creation of a ritual process in early medieval Europe*. Cornell University Press. isbn: 0801424925.

Institutions and Scriptures

Religious Specialists

Are religious specialists present/in charge of this place:

Religious specialists are individuals who's primary duties within a population group are not concerned with subsistence or craft production but the maintenance of the religious landscape and culture of the group.

— Field doesn't know

Notes: Currently, the Double Basilica of Thasos exists in ruins, and is protected by the Ministry of the Interior as a designated historical/archaeological site. Presumably when the basilica was operational, there were religious leaders that administered worship, rites, rituals, etc. References to church leadership are found in several of Paul's letters, including but not limited to Romans and Phillipians. Two examples are provided below: "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phillipians 1:1, NRSV). "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae" (Romans 16:1, NRSV).

Reference: Oxford University Press. *The NRSV Bible*. Oxford University Press, USA. isbn: 9780195282634.

Does this place incorporate a living space for religious specialists:

— Field doesn't know

Notes: It is unclear based on the existing ruins whether or not there was living space for religious specialists at the Double Basilica at Alikí. However, excavations of common household items such as Corinthian pottery and drinking pots, along with the the existence of living quarters for clergy adjacent to other remaining late antique churches suggest that living quarters for religious specialists adjacent to the Double Basilica at Alikí may have existed. "Churches and baptisteries in Syria were rarely isolated in the middle or on the edge of a village or town. As a rule, they were accompanied by domestic structures, living quarters for the secular clergy, for monastic congregations, or pilgrims" (Krautheimer 1984, 144).

Reference: Richard Krautheimer, Slobodan Ćurčić. *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*. Yale University Press. isbn: 9780300052947.

Are there formal institutions for the maintenance of the place:

Institutions that are authorized by the religious community or political leaders

— Yes

Notes: Presumably when the basilica was functioning it was maintained, but it was abandoned and potentially even buried by the 5th century CE. Now the ruins/archaeological site are maintained by the local government for excavation, research, and tourism.

Public Works

Does this place serve as a location for services to the community:

— Yes

Notes: The basilica would have served primarily as a place of burial in its original capacity, and then as a place of worship and other church functions for the Christian community at Alikí. Examples of community service would have included meals offered to the poor (agapai) and collection for the poor (Krautheimer 1984, 26).

Reference: Richard Krautheimer, Slobodan Ćurčić. Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture. Yale University Press. isbn: 9780300052947.

Writing/Scriptures

Is non-religious writing stored at this place:

Economic documents, records etc.

— Field doesn't know

Notes: There is no evidence of non-religious writing stored at the Double Basilica however it is likely that administrative documents pertaining to the administration of the basilica were stored at the basilica.

Are there scriptures associated with this place:

— Yes

Notes: The New Testament.

↳ Are they written:

— Yes

↳ Are they written at this place:

— No

↳ Are they oral:

— No

Notes: Oral tradition may have factored into the practices and beliefs of the Christian community that built and worshipped at the Double Basilica at Alikí but there is no physical

evidence of oral tradition.

↳ Is there a story associated with the origin and/or construction of this place:
– Field doesn't know

↳ Are there religious specialists in charge of interpreting the scriptures:
– Yes

Notes: Presumably church leaders (priests, deacons, bishops, elders, etc.) would have been in charge of interpreting The New Testament, although the specific practices of this community at Alikí are unknown.

↳ Are the scriptures part of the building/place:
– No

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