

How Do Consecrated Objects “Speak”? The Rhetorical Function of Liturgical Objects and Garments in The Eastern Orthodox Church

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Abstract: In the Eastern Orthodox Church, liturgical space and liturgical objects, following the Byzantine tradition, occupy a central role. How is this liturgical significance transposed in the bishops and priests` ambon discourse? More specifically: the visible consecrated objects worn or used by the Orthodox Christian clergy while they are preaching -such as a blessing or pectoral cross, a bible, a lighted candle, a bishop`s staff and even the liturgical garments in themselves - are rhetorical? This paper, by reviewing some of the classical and modern rhetorical concepts, reveals that these specific “wearable” liturgical objects are referring mainly to the preacher`s *pre-existing ethos*, which indicates that he has a prior institutional and moral authority to address the faithful.

Keywords: Christian objects, pre-existing ethos, rhetoric, homilies, liturgical garments, religious discourse, institutional credibility, auctoritas