
Reviewed by ROBIN CORMACK
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SEVERAL PAPERS IMPEL THE FACT OR AT LEAST THE CURRENT CONSENSUS THAT THE MARBLE QUARRIES OF PROCONNESOS ALL CLOSED DOWN IN THE MID-SIXTH CENTURY, AND THAT SUBSEQUENT MEDIEVAL MARBLE USAGE DEPENDED ON THE REUSE OF PRIOR PIECES. C. BOURAS WRITES ON UNFINISHED ARCHITECTURAL MEMBERS IN MIDDLE BYZANTINE GREEK CHURCHES, AND ACCEPTS THAT DURING THE PERIOD OF CONSIDERABLE SCULPTURAL ACTIVITY IN GREECE BETWEEN THE TENTH AND THIRTEENTH CENTURIES, THE WHITE MARBLE USED WAS ACQUIRED ALMOST ENTIRELY FROM ANCIENT BUILDINGS THAT HAD FALLEN INTO RUIN AND WERE SELL-RAISED FOR 'QUARRYING'. HIS UNDERSTANDING, THERE WAS NO TRADE IN MARBLE; IT WAS CARRIED AND SOLD BY SMALL WORKSHOPS IN TOWNS (BY SUCH MEN AS NIKITAS AND GEORGIOUS WHO ARE RECORDED AS MARBLE WORKERS IN THE MANI). D. DELIYANNIS IN 'PROCONNESIAN MARBLE IN NINTH CENTURY RAVENNA' CONCLUDES THAT NO PROCONNESIAN MARBLE WAS IMPORTED INTO RAVENNA AFTER c. 550, BUT THAT THE MATERIAL EVENT AGNELUS, IN HIS FOUR USES OF THE WORD IN THE LIBER PONTIFICALIS EXCELSUS RAVENESATVS (BETWEEN 830 AND 869) DIDALLY CONFIRM THE RECOGNITION OF THIS TYPE OF MARBLE AND ITS SOURCE IN THE REGION OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

THE BOOK INCLUDES A NUMBER OF STUDIES OF MEDIEVAL CHURCHES, NOTABLY THE MONASTIC CHURCH OF ZARAKA AT SYMPHILLA IN GREECE (BY H. GROSSMAN), A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY GHESICERIAN MONASTIC CHURCH; THE BORGOOREDA LJEVIKA AT PRIZREN IN KOSOVO (BY S. CURIĆ), BUILT AND DECORATED BETWEEN 1306 AND 1314, WHOSE PAINTINGS WERE LARGELY DESTROYED BY AN ARSON ATTACK IN 2004; A DISCUSSION OF THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH OF S. BARTOLOMEO ALL'ISOLA AT ROME AND ITS SHRINE OF ST BARTHOLOMEW IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY (D. KINNEY); THE BUILDING CHRONICLE OF REGIS CATHEDRAL (A. PRADE); THE NORMAL CHURCH OF NOUARE-DAME AT JUMÉVES (J. MORGANSTERN AND M. KERT); AND THE CAST-IRON BULGARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SVITI SVETAN OF 1888 IN ISTANBUL AND ITS WESTERN AND EASTERN FEATURES (K. RHEIDT). ITS PARTS (WEIGHING FIVE HUNDRED TONNES) WERE PREFABRICATED IN VIENNA AND TRANSPORTED BY SHIP DOWN THE DANUBE AND AROUND THE BLACK SEA.


Reviewed by JULIAN M. LUXFORD
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THIS VOLUME, A MAJOR COLLECTION OF ESSAYS BY LEADING SCHOLARS, ADVOCATES THE REINTERPRETATION OF THEOLOGY AS AN ART-HISTORICAL DOMAIN BY CHALLENGING THE WAYS IT HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN APPROACHED BY ART HISTORIANS. IN THE INTRODUCTION, JEFFREY HAMBURGER ASSERTS THAT 'THEOLOGY' AND 'THEOLOGICAL' ARE TERMS WITH LITTLE CRITICAL CURRENCY. THEY ARE CHARACTERIZED AS ASPECTS OF A HISTORICAL MAINSTREAM DISTANCED IN RECENT YEARS BY THE SCHOLARLY PURSUIT OF THE PARAOUTSTANDING OF THE ANTHOLOGY, FOR WHICH SOCIOLOGISTS AND LITERATURE THEORISTS ARE ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE. THIS, IT IS IMPLIED, HAS GONE TOO FAR: ART HISTORIANS WOULD BENEFIT BY ENGAGING SERIOUSLY WITH CONVENTIONAL THEOLOGY, NOT LEAST BECAUSE THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION URGES IT. FOR THEOLOGY TO STAND UP IN AN ACADMIC ENVIRONMENT THAT IS RAPIDLY DIVERTING ITSELF FROM POSTMODERNISM, INVOLVES SUBSTITUTING ITS TRADITIONAL CONNOTATIONS OF MONOLITHIC TRUTH, HERMETIC UNITY AND RIGID ORTHODOXY WITH A FLUID AND RESPONSIVE AWARENESS OF THE CONCEPT. IN PARTICULAR, SCHOLARS MUST BE ALERT TO THE NUCLEUS OF ITS PHASEOLOGY AND CONTEXT. WHILE THEORETICAL STATEMENTS OR IMPLICATIONS ABOUT ART MAY FACILITATE UNDERSTANDING, THEY CAN NEVER SATISFANGFULLY EXPLAIN IT. HOW EXCESSIVE WAS EXPANDED; ITS RECEPION AND ITS CAMPAIGNS MAY BE MORE INFORMATIVE ABOUT THE WAYS IN WHICH ARCHITECTURE IS UNDERSTOOD. IF THIS ELEVATION OF THEOLOGICAL SPIRIT OVER LETTER REPRESENTS A NEW PROJECT, IT IS NOT A NEW IDEA. MOST OF THE SEVENTEEN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE VOLUME HAVE BEEN WRITTEN IN A SIMILAR VENUE FORReducer and their offspring will be familiar to many readers, but this book provides a fresh statement of intent that helps to codify a large body of existing literature, and to propose it as a foundation upon which others may build.

In any multi-authored book the theory is likely to come in an applied rather than a pure form, and to vary according to author's specialisms. However, by large the essays clearly illustrate the goals set out in the introduction, and a combination of tight editorial control and a strong contributors list has resulted in high-quality offerings. The topics chosen are amenable to the reframing that Hamburger has in mind. They also facilitate critiques of other art-historical approaches, and overarch ing concerns emerge which, while related to the central theme of theological deconstruction, are essentially distinct from it. The use of the term 'art' is placed under the microscope by several contributors (Hamburger, Speer, Schnitt). More significantly, criticism of academic preoccupation with difference here accompanies a re-evaluation of 'hysistic' art history. This is implied by the high-minded subject-matter of the individual papers (Suger's Saint-Denis, the celestial ladder, the character