



Book Reviews

Archaeology in Architecture: Studies in Honor of Cecil L. Striker. Edited by Judson J. Emerick and Deborah M. Deliyannis. 216 pp. incl. 8 col. + 158 b. & w. ill. (Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein, 2005), €65. ISBN 978-3-8053-3492-3.

Reviewed by **ROBIN CORMACK**
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THIS Festschrift contains papers that reflect an interest in the meeting of archaeology and architectural history. C.L. Striker's own work has centred on Byzantium and in particular on his entrepreneurial excavations (1966–78) in and around the Kalendarhane Camii at Istanbul which he published with Dogan Kuban (Mainz 1997). That urban excavation involved the consolidation of the monument and the study of its ceramic and coin finds as well as establishing its archaeological history. From the art-historical point of view the importance of this exploration of a Byzantine church, converted into a mosque after 1453, was its lessons about the complications of Byzantine building practices with continual recycling of materials and other alterations, and the discovery of a pre-iconoclast mosaic of the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* and of a fresco cycle of St Francis which Striker has demonstrated belongs to the period of the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople and dates before 1261.

The papers capture the same spirit of archaeological description and material analysis, and often evoke the methodology of Richard Krautheimer, who was Striker's teacher, as well as that of others in the volume. T.F. Mathews contributes an ongoing defence of Krautheimer's concept of an architectural type of the centrally planned palace church – against those who deny that the church of SS. Sergius and Bacchus was any such thing in sixth-century Constantinople. But the issue remains whether a palace church is a reasonable notion at this time in Constantinople and if the concept depends on the topographical placement or liturgical functions of the building so designated.

Several papers impinge on 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 earlier 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 fair game for 'quarrying'. In his understanding, there was no trade in marble; it was carved and sold by small workshops in towns (by such men as Nikitas and Georgios 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 historian-priest Agnellus, in his four uses of the word in the *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravenanatis* (between 830 and 846), did indeed correctly recognise 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 Stymphalia in Greece (by H. Grossman), a thirteenth-century Cistercian monastery church; the Bogorodica Ljeviska at Prizren in Kosovo (by S. Curčić), 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 chronology of Reims Cathedral (A. Prache); the Norman church of Notre-Dame at Jumèges (J. Morganstern and M. Kerr); and the cast-iron Bulgarian Orthodox church of Sveti Stefan of 1898 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.

K. Kourelis looks at the differences between elite and non-elite houses in the medieval Peloponnese. R. Hodges discusses his excavations at S. Vincenzo al Volturno as giving evidence of the character of the artistic workshops of this Benedictine monastery in the ninth century. Although the site was damaged by an earthquake in 848 and entered into decline after a fire in 881, the archaeology uncovered evidence of workshops where skilled craftsmen once worked on enamels, ivories, fine metalwork and glassware which, it is suggested, were intended as gifts to attract donations to the monastery.

One paper of broader historical sweep is by J.J. Emerick and somewhat opaquely entitled 'Altars Personified: the Cult of Saints and the Chapel System in Pope Paschal's S. Prassede (817–19)'. This study nicely documents the religious politics in Rome from the fifth century to the ninth, how the sacred topography of the city changed over this period through the building of papal basilicas like S. Maria Maggiore and the shift in the emphasis on the cult of St Peter which undermined the importance of the Lateran in favour of the Vatican. The essay tracks the changes through the patronage by a series of popes of lavish liturgical furniture and memorials. Emerick emphasises how changes in the housing of relics and in rituals encouraged the development of the reliquary altar. A major turning point is suggested as the building of an altar on top of Peter's grave in the basilica of St Peter between 588 and 604, and the consequent development of reliquary altars and the enhancement of the special status of the celebrant at the altar during the mass. This is a volume to be noted for its precise and well-illustrated studies and for the new empirical information it records.

The Mind's Eye. Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages. Edited by Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché. 464 pp. incl. 198 b. & w. ill. (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2005), \$49.95/£32.50. ISBN 978-0-691-12476-0.

Reviewed by **JULIAN M. LUXFORD**
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THIS VOLUME, A MAJOR collection of essays by leading scholars, advocates the reassessment 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 characterised as aspects of a historical mainstream distanced in recent years by the scholarly pursuit of the anomalous, for which sociologists and literary theorists are ultimately responsible. This, it is implied, has gone too far: art history would benefit by engaging seriously with conventional theology, not least because the current geopolitical situation urges it. For theology to stand up in an academic environment that is rapidly divesting itself of postmodernism involves substituting for its traditional connotations of monolithic truth, hermetic unity and rigid orthodoxy a fluid and responsive awareness of the concept. In particular, scholars must be alert to the nuances of its phraseology and context. While theological statements or implications about art may facilitate understanding, they can never satisfactorily explain it. How exegesis was expounded, its reception and its catalysts may be more informative about the ways in which architecture is understood. If this elevation of the theological spirit over letter represents a new project, it is not a new idea. Most of the seventeen contributors to the volume have been writing in a similar vein for some time, and their offerings 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 each author's specialisms. However, by and large the essays clearly illustrate the goals set out in the introduction, and a combination of tight editorial control and a strong contributor 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 overarching 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, Schmitt). More significantly, criticism of academic preoccupation with difference here accompanies a re-evaluation of 'demotic' art history. This is implied by the high-minded subject-matter of the individual papers (Suger's Saint-Denis, the celestial ladder, the character