

05-16. Open Context, via <http://opencontext.org/projects/02b55e8c-e9b1-49e5-8edf-0afeea10e2be>, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6078/M73J3B1J>.

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Thonemann, P. and C. Crowther, 2021. *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua Monuments from Phrygia and Lykaonia. MAMA XI Project*, via <http://mama.csad.ox.ac.uk/index.html>.

Tabula Imperii Byzantini, via <https://tib.oeaw.ac.at/>.

Medieval to Postmedieval

Charalambos Bouras, *Byzantine Athens, 10th-12th Centuries*. pp. 372, 1 col and 261 b/w ill. London: Routledge, 2017. ISBN: 978-1-472-47990-7, hardcover £96; ISBN: 978-1-315-10406-5, E-book £29.59.

Nickephoros I. Tsougarakis and Peter Lock (eds), *A Companion to Latin Greece*. pp. xii + 529, 36 col ill., 3 maps. Leiden: Brill, 2015. ISBN: 978-90-04-28402-9, hardcover €179; ISBN: 978-90-04-28410-4, E-book €179.

Joanita Vroom (ed.), *Medieval and Post-Medieval Ceramics in the Eastern Mediterranean - Fact and Fiction*. pp. 400, 84 b/w and 32 col ill., 4 tbls. Turnhout: Brepols, 2015. ISBN: 978-2-503-56512-5, paperback €95.

Joanita Vroom, Yona Waksman and Roos van Oosten (eds), *Medieval Masterchef. Archaeological and Historical Perspectives on Eastern Cuisine and Western Foodways*. pp. 400, 53 b/w and 32 col ill., 18 tbls. Turnhout: Brepols, 2017. ISBN: 978-2-503-57579-7, paperback €95.

Both the Bouras and Tsougarakis books are splendid introductions to their respective periods, Bouras on Middle Byzantine Athens, and the Tsougarakis-Lock edited volume on Frankish Greece. But the prices surely rule out owning a hard-copy of either book for almost all interested readers. At least Routledge offers a cheap online-version as a reasonable alternative access. Brill's policy of matching online price to hard copy is quite unfathomable.

Charalambos Bouras, who died in 2016 shortly before this volume on Athens appeared, was a giant in the field of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Architecture, and this volume bears ample witness to his mastery of the monuments, and in particular of their historical context. It was first published by the Benaki Museum in 2010, but has been revised for this new Routledge edition. It

is a fine accompaniment to his earlier excellent introduction to the architecture of Greece as a whole from Early Byzantine to the Early Modern era, published bilingually by the leading Athens publisher Melissa (Bouras 2006). This final work covers in immense detail the architectural record of Athens from the 6th through to the end of the 12th centuries AD, although very little indeed can be said of the first Byzantine period – the Early Byzantine, from the later 7th to the mid-9th centuries. At its core is a careful catalogue of some forty churches which can be assigned to the Middle Byzantine period (late 9th to the end of the 12th centuries).

Although as noted, there is scanty archaeological evidence for Early Byzantine Athens, Bouras suggests it was largely confined to, and focussed on, the fortified Acropolis. Amongst extramural traces are levels in the Agora dating from the 7th-10th centuries but without building complexes. The city authorities, and later the metropolitan and military commander for Central Greece, the strategos of the Hellas theme, appear also to have been based on the Acropolis (the names of later metropolitans appear as graffiti on the Parthenon). After the Middle Byzantine Empire made a great recovery following the accession of the Macedonian dynasty in the later 9th century, the city revived, flourishing especially from the 11th-12th centuries, when most of the catalogued churches were constructed. During this period of rising security and prosperity, monetisation picked up, and new residential suburbs spread outwards to the limits, and even beyond, of the 3rd century AD Valerian city wall. Yet within this wide zone outside of the Acropolis, there were also gardens, orchards, fields and other open spaces, and the plan was very irregular. The few excavated houses of this period are cheaply made and unpretentious, with no elite townhouses yet brought to light (although second stories are attested). These are mostly from the more recent excavations of the American School in Athens in the Agora. The older American Agora excavations found far more Middle Byzantine housing evidence, and the author castigates the Americans for failing to publish it, preferring to concentrate on the Greco-Roman eras. John Camp's expansion of the excavation zone in recent decades is a much happier story for Byzantine archaeology.

Workshops and industrial installations were found scattered over the city as whole, but so far no separate commercial quarters have been uncovered, in contrast to the situation in Corinth, for example. However several potential market-shop zones have been identified across the enlarged city plan. Compared to other provincial cities of the Empire,

Athens was populous, had an almost impregnable central refuge fortress, and had a quite exceptional collection of architecturally and iconographically outstanding churches. The rarity of wine and olive presses and other signs of farm processing, leads Bouras to conceive the city's economy as anything but rural, although its industries in ceramics, fulling etc., seem to have been fed primarily by local demand within the city and its hinterland. Significantly the port of Piraeus was more a convenient stop-off point for shipping rather than being an outlet for regional exports.

Despite being one of the most senior scholars of Byzantium, Bouras is also happy to challenge customary myths about Athens' past. One of the most striking observations is the real effect of the Ottoman Conquest on the Christian monuments of Athens. Rather than follow a still common legend that the Ottomans destroyed, or converted to mosques, almost every church, Bouras informs us that merely three churches were converted – the Parthenon, a church under the Fethiye mosque and a church on the south slopes of the Acropolis. All other churches, along with more than 100 post-Byzantine churches, remained Christian centres of worship. Yet sadly almost all these monuments were ruined during the highly destructive War of Independence. Even sadder, they could have been rebuilt, but according to Bouras, key figures in the new Kingdom had no appreciation of their Byzantine heritage, focussed as they were on reinstating the Classical Golden Age of Athens. Thus widespread destruction was caused in the urge to uncover the Classical levels of the city, by a lack of funds for renovation, a new imposed urban plan and changes in the status of private property. Archaeologists, foreign and Greek were in the forefront of demolishing the post-Classical monuments of the city.

Staying with the churches, Bouras has much of importance to say in a special section devoted to their typology. The Middle Byzantine period saw the growing popularity amongst their donors, of domed, cross-in-square plan churches, as this gave a symbolic form to the monument and also offered far more space for paintings. Of the churches in the catalogue, 27 belong to this form, replacing the standard Early Byzantine aisled basilica plan. These elaborate monuments have been termed 'The Helladic Style'. Bouras traces the style's origin to the two famous churches at the Boeotian monastery of Hosios Loukas, where we also see a pioneer use of fine-cut masonry and tile ornamentation in the late 10th and early 11th centuries. Due to the fact that by now the Metropolitan of Athens also controlled the religious establishments of southern Mainland

Greece, Euboea and other islands, the Helladic Style of the city could be, and was, widely imitated.

In summary this is a fine memorial to Bouras' long and distinguished career and shows a fine intelligence willing to probe obscure archaeological reports, face the challenges of interpreting Byzantine texts with their often rhetorical exaggerations, and create a well-integrated history of the city of Athens over some 600 or more years. Needless to say, the volume is well-illustrated with informative maps, plans, photographs and drawings.

The edited volume on Frankish Greece by Tsougarakis and Lock resoundingly fulfils its stated aim "to achieve two goals: taken as a whole we hope that this collection of studies will provide the newcomer to Latin Greece with a concise, accessible and up-to-date introduction to the subject and to the current state of research." This is a large and rich collection with hardly a weakspot. That has to be the variable nature of the purely black-and-white photographs, some of which are very poor in quality, especially where it matters in the chapter on painting, and in the final set of maps, where a grey scale with too many shadings leaves one unclear about territorial divisions. But on the (very) positive side, every aspect of Latin Greece is thoroughly covered in the text, with extensive bibliography by experts in their fields, revealing very many items I was totally unaware of. All areas of interest are here: from a good introduction to the political history, we proceed to chapters on society, landscape, economics and coinage, literature, art and architecture. It should be available to a wide readership and given its cheap production quality, compared to the far superior appearance of the Bouras book from Routledge, the unavailability of an inexpensive online version appears to be a marketing failure by Brill.

It is impossible to adequately comment on all the highlights of each of these topics, so it is preferable to indicate the kind of insights which the volume as a whole offers the reader. Firstly it is made clear that Latin Greece saw three geopolitical phases. In the first, 1204 AD to the 1320s, military efforts were made to sustain the new Frankish (mainly French) principalities against the remnant Byzantine powers. From the early C14th the rise of the Ottomans redirected warfare to naval actions against this new threat. In a final phase, from the later C14th into the C15th, after the Ottomans had begun to occupy European soil, land and naval actions saw a new alliance between the Latins, the Byzantines and Western powers to confront this seemingly unstoppable hostile expansion into

Eastern Christendom. Over time, as the Mainland principalities were weakened by internal and external threats, Venice stepped in to safeguard the Aegean as long as it could, and this had effects also in the economy and coinage. The orientation in the early phases of Latin rule was westwards towards the Adriatic, hence the choice of the close nexus of a town (Andravida), a port (Glarentza) and a castle (Chlemoutsi) for the Principality of Achaia (essentially the Peloponnese) in the north-west corner of the Peloponnese facing Italy and further west. One is reminded of Sue Alcock's (1993) demonstration of the reorientation of Hellenistic Greece towards Italy engineered by Augustus through the Roman colonies at Corinth, Patras and Nicopolis. In the later phases of Frankish rule, the orientation shifted eastwards to Venice's strongpoints in the Aegean.

In terms of internal power relations, the Frankish lords overrode existing Byzantine hierarchies with their own stricter feudal social order. Greek elites survived but were demoted to the lower and middle ranks of power in the rural world, and at first had little say in the towns – even if these towns were almost all in prior existence. However, given the low absolute numbers of Frankish in-migration, including Catholic clergy, over time there is clear evidence for an increasing elevation of Greek elites into all but the highest corridors of power. This was encouraged on the Mainland by elite intermarriage across the ethnic border for secular society. For the clerical world it became clear even earlier, that the religious needs of the vast majority of the populace could only be met by continuity of Orthodox institutions in the countryside. In the castle-towns of the Mainland, and in the fortified towns of the Venetian-dominated Aegean, Ionian Islands and on Crete, where the Latin population was predominantly concentrated, Catholic churches and their ministry were in the majority, although Orthodox worship survived there too, on a lesser scale, for the mixed urban populations.

If the attitude of Venice to socio-political, religious and cultural assimilation was far more hardline than for the principalities of the Mainland, even here over time it was impossible to stem, not least because of several revolts on Crete. In rural areas there is intriguing evidence throughout Latin Greece for a much greater degree of 'convivencia', to borrow the term for harmonious Islamic-Jewish-Christian interactions for some periods in Islamic Spain. To offer one of many examples, in my own research region of Central Greece, a major Frankish fiefholder, Antoine le Flamenc, paid for the refurbishment of an existing church at Karditsa

(ancient Akraiphnion), which was attached to an Orthodox monastery. It seems likely that the associated inscription over an arcosolium marks his intended burial-place.

The increasing convergence politically, in religion, and society, between the Franks and the Greeks is marked also in architecture and art. New Byzantine churches show Western features in their design and decoration, whilst Frankish art reflects Byzantine influences. The diffusion of styles was made more rapid due to the existence of regional and inter-regional schools of artists who travelled widely to decorate churches. These were mostly Greeks, but there is evidence for a South Italian workshop active in the Byzantine Despotate of Epiros and in Athens. There was something of an artistic koine within all the areas of the Eastern Mediterranean under Latin rule, combining Western architecture and art forms with those of Byzantium and a shared Roman inheritance.

Venetian Crete appears to be a special case. Firstly because of its critical strategic role on the routes to the Levant, which led to it being moulded into a more traditional form of colonial society. Westerners were predominantly confined to the main towns, indeed they were almost forced to reside there, and these cities were replanned to display the colonial power, with their Italianate piazzas and fountains, urban palazzi and the monumental offices of the state. In her chapter on the urban and rural landscape of Medieval Greece, Maria Georgopoulou offers a brief summary of her monograph on the urban architecture of Venetian Crete (2001), but is surely in error when she claims: "The vestiges of the majestic Venetian fortifications of the 16th and 17th centuries have dictated urban growth in the modern towns of the island and the preservation and repurposing of medieval and early modern structures has been a de facto priority." She needs to read Michael Herzfeld (1991) on the tensions between inhabitants and the protectors of the Venetian heritage in Rethymnon. Secondly, whilst the archival records of the Mainland principalities were almost all destroyed, the Venetian withdrawal from Crete in 1669 was well-managed and the authorities were able to take their copious archives back to the mother-city. This does tend to create an imbalance in our views of everyday life in Frankish Greece as a whole, in the same way that some 90% of Classical Greek texts emanate from Athens.

Although Frankish rule lasted longer than in the Levantine Crusader states, on the Greek Mainland its authority was short and always challenged. The C13th was indeed a time of high population

and prosperity in every indicator, but the C14th Mainland was beset by warfare exacerbated by the Black Death, and here the archaeology and monuments indicate severe decline progressively into the C15th. On the other hand at its C13th peak the economy was probably stronger than in Middle Byzantine times, with higher monetisation, the introduction of capitalist financial management from Italy, new forms of agricultural technology and cultivars, and a far greater degree of international commerce with the entire Mediterranean.

Finally I should make a brief mention of two further volumes touching on Medieval and Post-Medieval Greece, also not very recent, but we were unable to find willing reviewers, so as Editor of this Journal I would not wish them to go unnoticed in any review of post-Roman Greece. I need also to declare an interest due to the fact that the author, Joanita Vroom, is my former PhD student. Nonetheless these two collections of papers offer a fruitful overview of Mediterranean ceramics across many countries and cultures of the North and Eastern Mediterranean, including the Black Sea. One volume focusses on ceramics per se, the other on food, cooking and ceramics.

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