

funerary function for the first church, though the idea that the so-called *skeuophylakion* to the north of St Sophia might originally have been a mausoleum is of interest. They had productive access to this circular building, which they date (based on the size of bricks) as a 5th century rebuilding (with later alterations) of a 4th century structure.

More substantial is Chapter Three on Justinian's church, which covers the buttresses (which have many rebuilding and changes, the vestibules (all four argued to be original with the church), the access ramps (with new observations from the recent clearing of some of the walls), colour photographs of some uncovered fresco fragments and some mosaics in the south-west buttress, the suggestion that white marble cladding was extensive on the exterior of the church, important information on the Patriarchal palace and the structure at the south-west corner of the church, the Baptistery on the south side of the church (perhaps originally part of the Patriarchal palace, and later used as a Baptistery (though this interpretation requires more examination)), the proposed identification of a Great Baptistery to the north of the church, and information on courtyards around the church. The chapter concludes with useful remarks on the physical setting of the liturgy in the church.

Chapter Four discusses changes made to the structure after Justinian. This revisits all the structures mentioned in the previous chapters, but tracks changes made to them in the course of time, such as the Patriarchal palace and the buttresses. It also looks at the additional buttresses. The significant value of the changes described in the church is, as the authors convincingly argue, the provision of chapels and other more private devotional areas, adding all sorts of additional kinds of worship to the collective Sunday liturgy. The final chapter has observations on the historical significance of St Sophia in the city and its symbolic role in Orthodox identity.

In all, an important read for those who want as much information as possible about the whole complex of the church. Less essential for those who are interested in the interior and how it works, except for information about the windows and lighting. Despite the claims, the findings do not significantly change the interpretation of the interior architecture of St Sophia, but it does emphasise that the church is part of a larger surrounding set of structures, including the Patriarchal Palace. The text is discursive and not always easy to follow, and the plans and photographs could be explained more fully. It would have been helpful to have listed with greater clarity

the new information gained and what conclusions are solid rather than speculative. I am not sure how many will persevere to go through all the detail, with it being necessary to piece together the whole structural history from evidence scattered through the book. It is difficult to get a clear picture of their observations without referring at the same time to the systematic account of the challenges of building St Sophia given by the structural engineer Roland Mainstone in *Hagia Sophia. Architecture, Structure and Liturgy of Justinian's Great Church* (London, 1988). Some of his observations must be revised in view of the new information now available from the recent stripping of plaster. The message of Dark and Kostenec is that more of the structures in and around St Sophia belong to the original Justinianic period than some commentators have thought. This is a helpful comment for the southeast buttress staircase, which when I went down years ago with Ernest Hawkins, we assumed it was the route by which the emperor and others could descend or ascend between the ground floor and the south gallery, enabling them to use the high-level passageway between the palace and the door at the east end of the south gallery. Their new evidence for dating the staircase supports this assumption. This book is certainly an essential guide in understanding the amenities available to the clergy of St Sophia.

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Sharon E.J. Gerstel, *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium: Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography*. pp.xvi, 207, 124 ills, 3 maps. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0-5218-5-1596, hardcover £95.

The purpose of a colloquium that took place in the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) Annual Meetings in 2019 in San Diego, titled 'The Medieval Countryside: An Archaeological Perspective', was to examine various archaeological approaches to the medieval and post-medieval rural landscape, focusing predominantly on the contribution of regional archaeological surveys in mainland Greece and the Aegean region.¹ As Bintliff commented,

¹ The papers presented at this colloquium along with some added ones to broaden the geographical coverage were

this kaleidoscope of distinctive archaeological approaches when aided by the contribution of historians (and I would also add anthropologists), is an important and positive move towards further high-quality studies of the post-Roman landscape in the eastern Mediterranean region, an area of research that still lags behind compared to elsewhere in Europe.² To this end, Sharon Gerstel's *Rural Lives and Landscapes in Late Byzantium: Art, Archaeology, and Ethnography* is a pioneering example of an integrated study, utilising different forms of evidence (historical, archaeological, anthropological) in order to reconstruct and bring to life selected aspects of the Byzantine village and what the author recognises as continuity to post-medieval and modern times, in the geographically defined region of modern Greece. Using case studies from mainland Greece, the Peloponnese, Crete, and the Aegean, her focus is on people and space, providing a voice to individual men and women of different occupations and backgrounds, both secular and religious, with an emphasis on their daily interactions as part of a village community. Throughout the book, Gerstel succeeds in balancing her own personal experience and sensitivities regarding the rural countryside and its people (both medieval and modern) with scholarly professionalism and respect to her subject matter that reflects a unique and humanising understanding of landscape.

The book is divided into six chapters, preceded by an introduction, where the author sets her book within the framework of the Greek village in the later Middle Ages, defining what that actually means, and describing her methodology and the use of various sources of evidence, including archaeological (survey and excavation), art historical (in the form of architecture and ecclesiastical paintings), historical/archival (tax assessments, medicine handbooks, obituaries, property contracts, and inscriptions on buildings and monuments), and anthropological drawn from ethnographic studies and folklore (oral information, epic songs and poems, and popular art). While referring to other important studies focusing on peasant society (providing an adequate and-up-to-date bibliography on the subject matter), Gerstel draws a distinction to her own book by utilising a variety of different sources and focusing on "medieval Orthodox people of extremely modest means" within the space of the village and of "their surroundings, their churches, and their devotional patterns" (p. 2).

subsequently published in *JGA* 5, 2020. Colloquium: The Medieval Countryside in the Aegean and Anatolia: An Archaeological Perspective, edited by E. Athanassopoulos: 367-541.

² Bintliff, J., 2020. Medieval landscapes of Greece and Turkey: a post-colloquium commentary, *JGA* 5: 535-541.

In chapter 1, Gerstel introduces us to the Byzantine village and its main characteristics. Quoting a legal treatise in the Biblioteca Marciana, she defines "the Byzantine village, the *chorion*, as a place where people live together and where houses are situated in close proximity to one another", while the *agridion*, is defined as a smaller settlement built on uncultivated land counted within the fiscal district of the *chorion* (pp.10-11). Attempting to consider legal sources together with archaeological evidence, the author emphasises the difficulties in identifying these settlements in the archaeological record. In the absence of concrete archaeological criteria, she resorts to identifying villages by size, proposing a rough measure of 1 to 8 hectares based on ceramic finds, closeness to water sources, presence of paved paths (*kalderimia*), churches and cemeteries, as well as their chronological duration based on the evidence from coins and ceramic wares (p. 11). Aided by estate registers and inventories, imperial chrysobulls and episcopal acts with details of property holdings, important information is retrieved on population numbers, demographics, rural economy, agricultural labour and livestock. Given the limited evidence from excavations (Panakton and Neochoria are offered as the two best studied late medieval villages in Greece) and from intensive surveys (in the form of catalogues that include location and describe features and finds—mostly pottery), as well as the plans from various architectural surveys (A. Vasilios, Veloukovo, Ayia Triada of Parparis, Mt. Tsalika, and various settlements in the Morea), Gerstel argues for the need for more comparative studies.

At the same time, based on ethnographic studies that focus on modern Greek villages, she also recognises the need for a more fluid model for rural settlements in order to interpret relationships between villages and temporary shelters (*kalyvia*) (p.14). Concerns of definition and the archaeological imprint of settlements have been the concern of many of us who work on medieval and postmedieval landscapes in Greece. Also recognising how the function of settlements can change over time and how they can be redefined, reused, repopulated, depopulated, abandoned, and rediscovered is crucial in understanding their diachronic development.³

³ Tzortzopoulou-Gregory, L., and T.E. Gregory 2021. Ayios Dimitrios (Paliochora) and Georgadika in Kythera: Abandoned settlements in a historically abandoned environment, in Seifrid, R. and D. Brown (eds) *Deserted Villages: Perspectives from the Eastern Mediterranean*. Digital Press of The University of North Dakota, Digital Press Books 19: 101-151; <https://commons.und.edu/press-books/19>. Caraher, W.R. and D.K. Pettegrew forthcoming. Life in an Abandoned Village: The Case of Lakka Skoutara, in D. Brown and R. Seifried (eds) *Deserted Villages: Perspectives from the Eastern Mediterranean*. Digital Press of the University of

Nevertheless, Gerstel is comfortable enough with the evidence from domestic buildings, churches and their decoration and inscriptions, cemeteries, and the road networks that connect them to subscribe to the emerging model of small, dispersed settlements in the Middle Byzantine period (farmsteads) and the move in the late 13th century to large, fortified villages (*kastra*) possibly due to political and civil unrest resulting in the need for increased security (e.g., Polyphengi in Nemea). However, the validity of the model may come into question, especially with regards to church data, and the idea that the location of churches on the landscape may be used to determine the location of villages. Although it is possible that churches are found in what may have been villages at one point in time, there are overlooked regional examples of churches intentionally built outside settlements for various reasons, including a connection to miraculous events or on private land. While Gerstel acknowledges the importance of the individual household and family hearth, she focuses on the communal significance of the village churches as sacred spaces where individuals gathered as a community for their spiritual needs. The role of the family, both nuclear and extended, in the undertaking of private church construction in certain parts of Greece, especially those characterised by a feudal agrarian system, is overlooked. For example, on the island of Kythera, it is being argued that the numerous churches found both within and without villages, other than those serving the village as a community, may have been constructed as landscape markers for families, demonstrating land ownership and control of an agrarian territory.⁴ It has also been argued that many of these churches, based on their prominent location were used as a system of defense (watchtowers or *viglae*) during the Late-Byzantine and Venetian periods.⁵

The significance of the village church as the heart of the individual's and the community's spiritual experience is explored in more detail in Chapter 2. Here, Gerstel offers a compelling view of both the

villagers who used these churches and the local artists who created the paintings and dedicatory texts found in them. Stating that the images are signs for words and the words are signs of images, she delves into the physiognomy of the individual participants and the significance of the church imagery impressing into their visual memory, with the texts acting as chanted prayer within the performance of church ritual. Thus, her analysis of both text and image provides interesting insights into the intersecting roles of written, oral, aural, and visual modes of communication within the Late Byzantine village (p.49). While she draws a clear distinction between the painting programmes of urban /monastic churches and the village churches, she views the latter as fulfilling the needs of local, in large part illiterate, village communities, providing them with devotional aides in corporate worship and community identity during ritual performance and participation. Gerstel provides an interesting hypothesis about the physiology of the villagers and its correlation with the size of the churches and their painted decoration (making the images more accessible to the height of the viewer) based on excavated skeletal evidence from Panakton (p.53). What is surprising, however, is the limited discussion she offers on the painting style of the churches and the painters themselves. While emphasizing their artistic attribution and intention and rejecting their characterization as "provincial, primitive, folk, archaizing, conservative and "crude" (p.52), she provides cross-cultural comparisons of the paintings, but misses the opportunity to discuss them in terms of regional cultural interactions and connections with each other within the geographical limits of Greece. Even if the identity of the individual painters of village churches is unclear, and the accepted notion that they were local villagers is quite valid (although most probably they were required to have church or theological connection), one should not dismiss the existence of styles or schools of painting that may have transcended local village boundaries, with qualified artists most probably travelling to different villages and even different regions to offer their services.⁶ Even though Gerstel briefly mentions the close connections between the Mani and the island of Kythera, giving as an example the representation of St. Theodore of Kythera in the church of St. Peter in Gardenitsa (p. 63), there is no further discussion as to how painting programmes

North Dakota; Digital Press of The University of North Dakota, Digital Press Books 19: 269-317. ; <https://commons.und.edu/press-books/19>. Gregory, T.E. and L. Tzortzopoulou-Gregory 2020. Archaeological survey and understanding the rural landscape in Byzantine Greece: some specific examples. *Journal of Greek Archaeology*, . 5: 514-527.

⁴ Gregory, T.E. 2003 Churches, Landscape, and the Population of Northern Kythera in Byzantine and Early Modern Times, First International Congress of Kytherian Studies. Kythera: Myth and Reality. 1 219-36.

⁵ Research thesis: Crum, M.S. 2015. The Churches of Kythera: How the People of Northern Kythera Used Churches as a System of Defense during the Late-Byzantine and Venetian Periods. Department of History, The Ohio State University <https://kb.osu.edu/bitstream/handle/1811/68902/Thesis.pdf?sequence=1>

⁶ In Kythera, for example, besides distinct local church art, the influences of Mani and Crete are quite striking. Chatzidakis, M. and I. Bitha, 2003. *Corpus of the Byzantine wall paintings of Greece. The Island of Kythera*. It is difficult to know whether the artists were locals who were trained in the specific styles, or whether they were outsiders invited on commission.

in village churches, or the veneration of certain saints, can also be used to illuminate possible interconnections, interactions, and mobility between communities, villages, and whole regions. For example, the rich painting programmes in Palaeologan churches on Kythera found in a rural context throughout the island shows a sophistication that compares with Constantinopolitan art and art from Monemvasia, and explained possibly by the arrival of refugees after 1204.⁷ Expanding this further, by omitting discussion on the broader implications and associations within its regional context, Gerstel, almost certainly unintentionally, presents the Byzantine village as a stand-alone, independent entity, with no connection to the outside world beyond its territorial boundaries, and with its inhabitants interacting with each other as a community in isolation.

The strength of Gerstel's book, however, lies in the following chapters, where she successfully populates the village and its agrarian environs with real people. In Chapter 3, we are provided with a detailed and sensitive view of the role and activities of village women and the way they negotiated their presence and control in a dominantly patriarchal society. Utilizing the limited skeletal evidence from excavated sites such as Panakton, and Polystylon, we are presented with information about their physiology and health, as well as their daily activities and labour as farmers, homemakers, child carers, and domestic duties including spinning and weaving. Life expectancy was less than for males (between 40 and 45 years), and while their nutrition was relatively adequate (a diet of both meat and vegetables), the harshness of daily labour and repeated childbearing resulted in lasting deformations and chronic pain (dental abscesses being a common issue). Recurrent pregnancies caused an extra strain on their bodies, and childbirth was the most common cause of death. The frequency of burials of mothers alongside their newborn attests to high infant mortality. The case of the woman from Corinth who died in agony while trying to deliver her baby and whose remains and that of her unborn fetus were found by archaeologists 700 years later, is quite telling, especially considering how common these occurrences must have been (p. 76-77). Equally disconcerting is the story found on a legal treatise of 16-year-old Theodora from Asia Minor who died of the plague five hours after giving birth to her premature baby daughter, whose fate was also probably not favorable (p.88-89). Obviously, many young women died this way, but there is

also evidence of a significant number of women outliving their husbands. Widows are frequently mentioned in tax registers where they are listed as heads of household or living with their adult children, indicating that they formed a large part of the rural community, one that likely increased substantially in times of war. Gerstel draws a picture of them as independent women, with similar fiscal obligations as their male counterparts, with the added responsibilities in the domestic sphere and child rearing. By examining the images inside churches, the Byzantine woman emerges as a pious individual, almost an equal to males, with the frequency of female saints and scenes related to childbirth, childcare, and protection of family reflecting their main concerns. At the same time, some women appear to also play a role as donors in the founding and construction of churches, as indicated in dedicatory inscriptions. At the same time, depictions of sinners in Hell show that women could be transgressive, too, not attending church regularly or not participating in church ritual, talking during church service, indulging in gossip, and worse of all, as practitioners of magic and of herbal medicines to control their fertility and aid abortion. Married women who avoided having children and those who refused to breastfeed their children, as well as prostitutes, were also depicted amongst the sinners.

Chapter 4 follows a similar structure as Chapter 3, and here we are presented with the role of village men and their activities as seen through a combination of skeletal evidence, written texts (mainly tax assessments), and images from church paintings. The average life expectancy of rural men at 40-50 years of age is contrasted with that of urban men at 29 years when comparing skeletal remains from Panakton and Polystylon with those at Sarçhane in Istanbul. Gerstel infers that this evidence confirms Byzantine texts that claim that people accustomed to toiling the land were more vigorous and robust than urban folk. At the same time, the hardships of rural life are evident on the musculoskeletal evidence, signs of continuous strenuous activity from a very young age. Economic stratification within rural communities is emphasised, especially in terms of church donations, where the wealthier landowners offer land (including threshing floors) for the construction of churches, while peasants provide the fruits of their labour (olive trees and oil). However, both rich and poor suffered from the same conditions from strenuous activity reflecting the hardship and toil of agricultural labour, as indicated in both burials from inside the church (where the wealthy were buried) and those from outside the church (where peasants were buried). The male

⁷ See Knipp, D. 2013. Patrons and Paintings on the island of Kythera in the early Palaeologan Period. *Byzantion* 83: 161-200.

saints depicted in village church iconography are predominantly those associated with calendar cycles of agricultural activities (St. Demetrios marking the beginning of winter activities and St. George the beginning of harvest)⁸ and the protection of crops and yields (St. Polykarpos and St. Tryphon) and those protecting livestock (St. Blasios and St. Mamas). Archaeological evidence is also mentioned in the form of agricultural tools found in excavated houses, such as plowshares, horseshoes, iron blades, knives, which are also depicted in church imagery, especially in relation to male sinners involved in improper farming practices (ploughing over border lines, harvesting other people's fields, and falsifying measurements of grain) and in stealing livestock. As Gerstel points out, the protection of field boundaries was a serious matter and more than just a moral issue, protected also by legislation (she mentions the Farmer's Law of the 7th and 8th century and agricultural laws of the 14th century). Other male sinners included in these images are tax collectors, tailors, tavern keepers, murderers, millers, and those involved in prostitution and promiscuous sexual activities. Gerstel argues that the church paintings thus provided a visual reminder of behaviours that undermined social stability and the repercussions of these on the soul, with the church itself used as a vehicle to provide order in the community (p. 127).

In Chapter 5, we are presented with the role of the village priest as a representative of the village before God, a church founder, spiritual leader, as well as a family man and farmer, working side by side with his practitioners. Utilising inscriptions in churches, and donor information along with ethnographic evidence, Gerstel emphasises his importance in the community; many priests were most probably from prominent families in the village, and although their level of literacy varied, they were able to read and write, and many probably oversaw the painting programme of churches. From research we have conducted on the island of Kythera utilising 18th and 19th century census records and church registries, we can see several priests appearing in each parish, and the importance they played in providing information about births, deaths, and baptisms.⁹ Although these documents are more recent in date (with about 300-400 years difference),

they demonstrate how certain families within the parish produced priests over several generations, and how they were expected to know enough writing to maintain the church registries. Despite their standing in society, Gerstel draws attention to examples of priests depicted as sinners, suggesting that they were not above the village's scrutiny. The chapter also explores the function of village monasteries and the role of monks and nuns as members of the village and monastic communities in a limited way, given that evidence for them is scant. Although they did exist, it is difficult to recognise isolated churches in the countryside as possible monastic complexes through architecture alone, and Gerstel resorts to evidence provided in church painting programmes and inscriptions. An interesting (and highly problematic) text that provides some insights into monastic life in the 14th and 15th centuries is the *Chronikon* of Cheilas, which, surprisingly, Gerstel does not include in her analysis. Written in 1457 by the Kytheran monk Cheilas, it recounts in prose the events in the monastery of Agios Theodoros in Kythera. It is written in quite wordy language, in which are grafted various local idioms, and contains many autobiographical elements. The most interesting elements in this account are those on ownership squabbles between the women who claimed to be the heiresses of the abandoned monastery and the newcomer monks who tried to restore it. It also hints at the co-existence of monks and nuns in the same monastery.¹⁰

In the final chapter, Gerstel presents the church as a place for healing, hope, and commemoration for those departed. In the absence of hospitals in the countryside, and the difficulty in accessing those in urban centres such as Korinth, the church served as a place of hope, where healing saints depicted in the paintings were believed to provide cures to those afflicted by all sorts of diseases, including incurable ones such as plagues, which commonly affected Byzantine populations. The chapter opens with the example of the commemorative portraits of the Bardoanes family in a church in Rhodes, with the inscriptions indicating the loss of Maria, one of the three children in the family who died of the plague. It then moves on to discuss the various healing saints depicted in church paintings, of which the most common ones include St. Therapon, St. Panteleimon, St. Kosmas and Damian, and St. Anastasia, and the medieval and later compendia

⁸ Although both are warrior saints, providing military protection and defense against invaders, Gerstel here emphasizes their agricultural significance in rural communities.

⁹ Tzortzopoulou-Gregory, L., and T.E. Gregory 2021. Ayios Dimitrios (Paliokhora) and Georgadika in Kythera: Abandoned settlements in a historically abandoned environment, in Seifrid, R. and D. Brown (eds) *Deserted Villages: Perspectives from the Eastern Mediterranean*. Digital Press of The University of North Dakota, Digital Press Books 19: 101-151; <https://commons.und.edu/press-books/19>

¹⁰ Carl Hermann Friedrich Johann Hopf (ed.) 1873, *Chilas Chronicon monasterii S. Theodori in Cythera insula siti, Chroniques greco-romanes: inedites ou peu connues*, Librairie de Weidmann, Berlin: 348-353.

(*iatrosophia*), in providing cures to ailments that plagued an agrarian population through practical healing. Viewed from our modern perspective, such practices demonstrate the ambiguity that existed between Christian religious beliefs and folk superstitions. The chapter ends with death and burial both inside and immediately outside of churches, where the performance of commemoration rituals was important in connecting the living with the dead. This section touches a personal chord in my own research of modern Greek rural cemeteries and commemoration, where I argue for a continuity of practice from Byzantine times and as recently as the middle of the 20th century, with many of the same village churchyards used as burial grounds for generations of villagers in the same location, until the enforcement of legislation to move cemeteries outside settlement boundaries.¹¹

In her conclusion, Gerstel sums up the Byzantine village as “a site of ritual order and ritual subversion”, and “alive with people and noise”. She also sees its presence in the Greek village today, making it clear that although significant changes have taken place in terms of technological advances in agricultural practices, in education and health, “in its fundamental structuring (both physical and familial) and its belief systems, many aspects of village life are still deeply rooted in Byzantine foundations.”¹² She urges us to look at the abundance of material available for the study of the Late Byzantine village beyond the available written texts, such as paintings, archaeological remains, and ethnographic testimony. In this regard, Gerstel’s book, written eloquently and with sensitivity and respect to her subject matter, is a significant contribution to Byzantine scholarship, providing a seminal synthesis of data and analysis to recreate the medieval countryside where individual people lived, worked, prayed, loved, sinned, died,

¹¹ Tzortzopoulou-Gregory 2008. Cemeteries in the countryside: An archaeological investigation of the modern landscape in the eastern Korinthia and northern Kythera. In L.J. Hall, R. Scott Moore, and W.R. Caraher (eds) *Archaeology and History in medieval and post-medieval Greece: Studies in method and meaning in honor of Timothy E. Gregory*. Ashgate: 307-344.

¹² [Editorial comment. It would however be a mistake to see the majority of contemporary Greek villages as standing in an unbroken continuity with Byzantine villages. In large regions of the Mainland, Byzantine villages were abandoned in the 14th century AD as a consequence of the Black Death and incessant warfare, and were replaced by incoming Arvanitic (Albanian) settlements, which predominated over surviving ethnic Greek villages. During the 20th century these medieval colonisers, who had been invited to repopulate an almost abandoned countryside by the final Frankish then subsequent Ottoman rulers, became almost completely assimilated culturally and linguistically into mainstream Greek society (cf. Bintliff, J.L. 2012. *The Complete Archaeology of Greece, from Hunter-Gatherers to the Twentieth Century AD*. Oxford-New York: Blackwell-Wiley)].

and found salvation as members of a family and a community that survived for generations. This book is inspirational; it paves the way for future interdisciplinary research not only in studies of Byzantine society, but of rural societies of any period or geographical setting, encouraging us to look at the relationship between people and landscapes in a refreshing and meaningful way.

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Anastasia G. Yangaki, *Ceramics in Plain Sight: The Bacini of the Churches of Crete. “Reflections” of the Late Medieval and the Early Modern Material Culture of the Island. Vol. 1. The Regional Unit of Chania.* pp. 352, 311 figs. Athens: Institute of Historical Research, National Hellenic Research Foundation, 2021. ISBN 978-960-7905-70-3, paperback €40.

This volume is the first in a series presenting data collected for a large and commendable undertaking that preserves the memory of medieval and later glazed ceramics immured in the churches of Crete. The exercise is necessary because they are gradually being destroyed, thus removing from the record primary evidence for the society of rural Crete and its contacts with the outside world. *Bacini* is simply the Italian word for bowls, belying where the main studies of this curious practice have been undertaken. There is no written explanation of why bowls, normally glazed and decorated, were set into the walls of numerous churches. Yangaki has wisely not attempted to explain ‘why *bacini*?’ but rather has presented all the available data painstakingly collected over a number of years without prejudice to an historical agenda.

The author points out that with one notable exception, previous studies of *bacini* in Greece have concentrated on individual buildings in contrast with the numerous studies of multiple churches with immured bowls in Italy. The practice of immuring bowls was much more common in Italy, so that there are many more *bacini* to study. Yangaki’s investigations have revealed that there are many churches with multiple immured bowls all over the island of Crete, many more than ever suspected. Bringing this to wider academic attention alone