

summaries: 'Historical Geography', 'Transport and Communication', 'Urbanism', 'Human Remains', 'Coins', 'Rural Settlements', 'Fortifications', 'Houses', 'Monasteries', 'Churches', 'Rock-cut Architecture', 'Funerary Archaeology', 'Ceramics' and 'Small Finds'. Notes on wider themes such as societal trends or trade are to be found scattered in the volume. The level of detail and, therefore, length of text, varies from chapter to chapter. This imbalance has to do with the availability of the evidence – unsurprisingly, the chapter on churches by Buchwald and Savage is one of the longest. Several of these contributions, such as the one on urbanism by Niewöhner, push the chronological boundaries of the work into the Roman and late Byzantine period; only a few, for example that on ceramics by Vroom, step out of Anatolia to contextualise the evidence.

The section on 'Case Studies' includes twenty-four chapters and is dedicated to the history and archaeology of a selection of relevant sites, most of which being urban settlements. The majority of contributions in this section present the most notable remains of each site from the oldest to the latest. The focus is mostly – but not solely – towards architecture, *in primis* churches, but also city walls and dwellings. The book concludes with a bibliography and two indices on sites and natural features mentioned in the text.

Overall, this is an invaluable contribution to the history of Anatolia and Byzantine archaeology. The book is written with an eye towards non-specialists, therefore unusual terms are followed by a full explanation and complex phenomena are described in a clear and concise way. Yet, the experienced archaeologist working in Asia Minor or adjacent regions will find this book an equally invaluable companion. The chapters are written by authoritative scholars in the field and also include data on recent or ongoing fieldworks as well as well-drawn plans and photographs of artefacts and excavations. Because of the diverse array of themes covered by the book and the wide use of written sources, historians will find this work equally useful.

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**Sharon E. J. Gerstel (ed.). *Viewing Greece: Cultural and Political Agency in the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean* (Studies in the Visual Cultures of the Middle Ages 11). pp. 364, colour illustrations. 2016. Turnhout: Brepols. ISBN 978-2503-56643-6 paperback €75.**

The present volume is a collection of essays resulting from a number of events (conferences, classes, lectures) that took place in parallel to the exhibition *Heaven and Earth: Art of Byzantium from Greek Collections* (2013–2015). The exhibition was first presented in Washington, DC, then in Los Angeles, and finally, a reduced version travelled to Chicago.

This publication contains thirteen substantive essays that explore a variety of subjects, focusing on the art, architecture, and topography of medieval and early modern Greece, through the use of an equally wide range of approaches. They offer a nuanced view of objects, some of which were also presented in the Washington/Getty exhibition, exploring the meaning of those objects to people and providing new approaches to the study of Byzantine Greece. The material studied in the essays ranges in date covering the whole period of Byzantine artistic production. Nevertheless, contrary to the exhibition itself, which moves between objects of religious and secular importance, there is an apparent predominance of articles in this book examining works of religious use. As such, objects of secular importance are poorly represented in this volume and the readers do not enter into the spaces of everyday life.

The introduction, written by the editor, Sharon E. J. Gerstel, provides the reader interesting keys to a better understanding of how this book related to the aims of the exhibition and how the essays derived from the events. It also offers an excellent summary of the articles. The thirteen contributions brought together for this volume, written by Greek and international authors, are separated into five clusters that revolve around a similar theme, echoing the volume's title.

The first chapter encompasses three essays offering important insights into the ideological roots of religious art through its interaction with hymnography and philosophical writings, as well as through the examination of aspects of materiality. Father Maximos Constas seeks to re-approach the theoretical meaning of the bilateral icon of the Man of Sorrows and Virgin Hodegetria, proposing a conceptual link between

the icon and a collection of ecclesiastical poems known as the Stavrotheotokia. This relationship offers a fresh approach to the interaction between Middle Byzantine poetry and religious art. The Stavrothorakia, as the author argues, constitutes a literary analogue of bilateral icons. Carr's paper explores the materiality of icons and the reflections of the urban cult of icons on regions beyond Constantinople, through the importance of mimesis. Combining a careful reading of texts and a critical approach to religious objects, the author investigates the interaction between the core and periphery and illustrates the role played by replicas in the diffusion of images of the Virgin, as a medium of the Miraculous. Maguire's essay, the title of which echoes the exhibition's title, investigates the influence of the philosophical writings of Pseudo-Dionysios on religious architecture and the later Byzantine authors. It offers an insightful approach to the churches' interior space in order to locate the place of the terrestrial and heavenly realms. By beautifully combining a closer look at floor pavements, wall mosaics and written sources, Maguire suggests that the decoration of the lower parts of the church reflects terrestrial creation while the upper parts of the building illustrate the greater splendour and the transcendence of heaven.

The second chapter seeks to shed more light on aspects related to workshops in two important urban centers of the Greek lands, Thebes and Thessaloniki, offering regional overviews. The two papers of this section focus on different periods of Byzantine history and on various types of objects that unearthed through rescue excavations. Apart from the examination of local workshop practices, both studies explore the society that produced the objects. Gerousi-Bendermacher offers a new interpretation of a mosaic pavement from Thebes through the analysis of the inscriptions and the preserved representations, as well as based on comparative material and legal sources. Although there is some limited but extremely important information about local workshop practices, this study mainly discusses the technical, artistic, prosopographic and cultural aspects of the mosaic. Antonaras and Gerstel reconstruct the history of two objects of high artistic value from Thessaloniki – an enameled gold bracelet, and an embroidered textile – dated to different centuries of the Byzantine period. Through a fresh and tantalizing approach, based on written sources, comparative material and historical information, they present a charming time travel from objects' manufacture, and their period of use up to their afterlives and their discovery during modern times. As such, this

paper touches upon a vast range of issues, such as urban life and transformation in different periods of time, artistic and social networks, local workshop practices and the relations between Thessaloniki and other regions.

The third chapter contains two papers that leave aside traditional views of byzantine iconography and propose new synthetic approaches exploring relations between the core and periphery. Parani discusses the late 13th century wall painting of the procession of the icon of the Virgin Hodegetria in Constantinople represented at the katholikon of the Blacherna Monastery (Arta). Through a new reading of the dresses of the represented figures, she considers the 'historicity' of this famous mural and integrates it within the local and wider historical and social context that produced it. This paper offers valuable insights into issues of social stratification, gender studies, cultural and artistic networks, and political and ecclesiastical agency. Kappas examines the relations between core, namely the local centers of Monemvasia and Mystras, and periphery, analyzing wall paintings, sculptural decoration and architecture of the churches of the medieval village of Kastania. Convincingly and making interesting proposals and comparisons, he highlights the evolution of this relationship during the 13th and 14th centuries through the existence of artistic and cultural networks. He also highlights issues associated with local workshop practices such as the movement of painters and patterns. This reconstruction of cultural geography contributes to better understanding the ways in which small communities express their local responses to decisions that have been made in the centres.

Tracing political, military and economic networks, the next chapter focuses on the islands, through the interaction between Western Europe and Greece in the Early Modern period. However, one would have expected a closer look at the small islands and an insight into insular communities during the Byzantine era. Della Dora's essay explores island books, the so-called *insularii*, integrates them into their historical and political context, and offers the reader insights into the circumstances that led to their production. Islands are considered as interpretative tools for redefining Venetian identity in a rapidly changing world. Fortini Brown explores the role of the Venetian Loggias on the islands of Crete, Corfu and Cyprus. She views these public structures as living spaces with a multipurpose character (political, commercial, and social) and as spaces of interaction that linked Venice with its colonies. Roberts' essay examines the role of the

island of Rhodes in the early modern visual culture through the study of prints. The author explores how the different narratives that connected Rhodes with Western Europe influenced the printed books for antiquarians and travellers.

and multicultural empire by viewing Byzantium through its different compartments.

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The last portion of this publication contains the three essays of the final chapter, written by the curators, which directly connect this volume with the exhibition. McMillan Arensberg discusses the background of the exhibition, the various challenges for the organizers, the criteria for the selection of the works of arts to be lent to the exhibition, its organisation and thematic structure. She also presents the installation of the exhibition in the National Gallery's West Building and how Heaven and Earth interacted with the permanent collection. Hart discusses the exhibition hosted by the Getty Villa, focusing on the different challenges for the organizers, compared to the National Gallery, as well as the different proposed solutions to overcome the obstacles. Despite the different museological approaches, the curators agree that the fundamental concern of both the National Gallery and the Getty Villa was to offer the viewers the opportunity to experience Greece's Byzantium with all their senses. Cormack, based on his own experiences of curating, discusses issues concerning the 'success' of an exhibition. Comparing Heaven and Earth with previous exhibitions related to Byzantium, demonstrates its different starting point, questions, challenges, obstacles, and aims. As such, he places Washington/ Getty exhibition into a broader discussion on how the large-scale history of Byzantium can be presented (multicultural or national perspective) and how Byzantine art is experienced by viewers, the public and the specialist. Furthermore, he focuses on four objects that reflect the aims of the exhibition.

In sum, the volume under review provides a useful collection of essays which are faithful to the exhibition's focus on Greece's Byzantium and simultaneously they are not based solely on the objects presented in the Washington/ Getty exhibition. In this respect, this publication fulfils its original aim to expand the scope of the exhibition. The essays consider the Greek lands as an integral component of Byzantium's historic development, which played a key role in the making of the Byzantine idiom. This book offers a regional approach to Byzantine art and architecture, viewing Greece as a dynamic space that was part of wider commercial and political networks and acted as core and periphery at the same time. This perspective contributes to better understanding a multi-ethnic