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## REVIEWS

Nancy Patterson Ševčenko and Christopher Moss, eds., *Medieval Cyprus. Studies in Art, Architecture, and History in Memory of Doula Mouriki*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1999) 306 pp., 32 color ill., 250 b/w, index.

A Mediterranean island, home in the Middle Ages to cultures as divergent as Muslim, Slavic, Greek Orthodox, as well as Westerners of the Latin rite from Northern Europe and Italy, Cyprus offers a rich array of visual and textual work which continues to engage historians, art historians and architects. *Medieval Cyprus* is a striking collection of fourteen articles spanning a variety of questions, elicited by perhaps the most complex island of the medieval Mediterranean. The central premise of the book is to study art from this area not as a provincial offshoot of the Byzantine capital of Constantinople, but as work reflective of its own regional context (xxvii). While references to art produced in Constantinople and Mistra appear to be unavoidable, *Medieval Cyprus* as a whole succeeds in removing Cyprus from a provincial argument. However, rather than emphasizing Cyprus as an insular region, what emerges from these studies is Cyprus as a site of coexistence and convergence in the Middle Ages.

Early medieval coexistence of Christians and pagans on Cyprus is explored through the shared use and reuse of cemeteries and tomb forms in Charalambos Bakirtzis's article, "Early Christian Rock-Cut Tombs at Hagios Gerogios, Peyia, Cyprus." The most poignant periods of cultural contact on Cyprus are found when the island was under the Latin rule of the Lusignan (1191–1489) and the Venetians (1489–1570). Melita Emmanuel considers three dated fresco cycles in Cyprus from the end of Lusignan rule in "Monumental Painting in Cyprus during the Last Phase of the Lusignan Dynasty 1374–1489." In the author's discussion of frescoes from the Royal Chapel at Pyrga, the narthex of Saint Herakleidios in the monastery of Saint John Lampadistes, and the Church of the Archangel Michael at Pedoulas, two stylistic trends are identified and both associated closely with late Palaiologan art produced in Mistra. This connection is explained through the presence of the queen of Cyprus, Helena Palaiologina, niece of the Byzantine emperor, daughter of the despot of Mistra and an Italian princess. While the stylistic assessment of the mural paintings is informative, the article leaves the relationship of "official" Byzantine painting styles and Western, particularly Gothic, iconographic traditions undefined (244). Efthalia Constantinides also approaches the questions of cultural convergence in "Monumental Painting in Cyprus during the Venetian Period 1489–1570." The author considers the eighty-year span of Venetian rule and its evidence in post-Byzantine art on Cyprus by examining the historical circumstances and offering two primary examples: the Church of the Panagia Podithou at Galata, and the so-called "Latin chapel" in the katholikon of the monastery of Saint John Lampadistes.

Another important contribution *Medieval Cyprus* offers is the publication of new findings and interpretations of recently recovered and under-studied works of art and architecture. Susan Boyd offers insight into workshops of *champlevé* carving, a technique that creates a relief in marble, which is then filled in with colored resin, mimicking more expensive *opus sectile* decoration. Excavations

on Cyprus in the last thirty years have encouraged new research into this unique method of wall revetment. Anthanasios Papageorghiou's article, "The Paintings in the Dome of the Church of the Panagia Chryseleousa, Strovolos," is a highly descriptive article that considers the basic iconography, style and ornament of these frescoes, in order to date them to the late thirteenth century. While this article may initially appear lacking in deeper historical context, the study is an essential foundation for the interpretation of these paintings, only fully recovered in 1991. Panayotis L. Voctopoulos also presents a largely stylistic analysis of unpublished icons of the thirteenth century and places them comparatively among Cypriot examples. Slobodan Ćurčić and Irmgard Hutter explore new interpretations of the contexts for architecture and illustrated manuscripts from Cyprus. Ćurčić counters the predominant view of Cypriot architecture as provincial and conservative by showing that regional concerns, including a response to local earthquakes, contributed to the shape of medieval buildings on Cyprus. Departing from earlier examinations of the Oxford, Magdalen College gr. 3 manuscript, Hutter compares the large single figure drawings not to Western models, but to Cypriot icons. She finds that a close stylistic relationship can be found among these drawings and Cypriot icons from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Hutter concludes that the Magdalen College manuscript must have functioned as a model book, and given the rare survival of model books from Byzantium, her research provides important insights into an area that still requires considerable work.

If the above comments have not already testified to the incredible diversity of topics and issues addressed in *Medieval Cyprus*, there are still further examples that attest to the breadth of scholars' interests in Cyprus. Vera von Falkenhausen considers the numerous bishop-saints celebrated on Cyprus in contrast to the small number of local martyrs and monks. She explores this through hagiographic texts and attributes the lack of attention to local monks to historical circumstance, including the Arab raids and control of the island in the ninth century. Henry Maguire's article, "*Abaton and Oikonomia*: St. Neophytos and the Iconography of the Presentation of the Virgin," uses the written word from the saint's sermon to interpret the image of the presentation of the Virgin as a symbol of universal salvation. He considers the placement within a church of examples of this iconographic type from Cyprus, as well as comparisons from the Byzantine empire and the West. The article encourages further research into the reception of this type of imagery by medieval Cypriots including those not familiar with the saint's sermon. Carolyn L. Connor also writes on monumental painting and chooses to track one type of image, female saints, over an extended period of time, from the eleventh through the sixteenth century. This survey of fifteen churches is valuable for the information that emerges on the number of holy women shown, the pairs of saints highlighting local customs, and the issues surrounding donors as they reflect Cypriot society. Demetra Papanikola-Bakirtzis offers us a look at ceramic workshops from the early thirteenth century. Although her title suggests attribution to individual artists, the author's stylistic analysis leads to associations with groups of artists or workshops. Of course the topic of icons is also well represented in *Medieval Cyprus*. In addition to Voctopoulos's article, Mary Aspra-Vardavakis presents three icon busts of Saint John the Baptist from Sinai copied from a Cypriot

model. In addition to stylistically connecting the Sinai examples with Cypriot prototypes, consideration is given to the location of these icons within the iconographic program of the church.

While *Medieval Cyprus* is not intended to be a general introduction to the art and history of Cyprus, it does provide a clear chronological approach to many of the issues, and evidence from the region. The articles are heavy on stylistic analysis and description, particularly in the first half of the book. This can be frustrating for those looking for context and more theoretical approaches to the material. Yet, it is a testimony to the continuing work of simply uncovering and publishing much of the material from Cyprus and, perhaps, of material from the Middle Ages and Byzantium in general. The book is a collection of enormous variety, and the notes comprise an immense bibliography on Cyprus; however, citations are limited to publication prior to 1996. An editor's note in the introduction attempts to rectify this by providing references to two recent exhibition catalogues and one new article. *Medieval Cyprus* is an important resource for those studying Cyprus as well as the outlying areas of Frankish Greece and the Crusader States. It is a lavishly illustrated work with a large section of beautiful color images and an extensive number of high-quality black and white photographs.

*Medieval Cyprus* is a work in tribute to Doula Mouriki, a scholar who had particular interest and insight in the diversity and complexity of Cyprus. The articles of *Medieval Cyprus* are based on papers given at a conference in her honor at Princeton, 13–15 May 1994. Many of the articles presented in this volume elaborate on questions and topics of Doula Mouriki's own work and reflect her varied interests in history, art history, and archeology. Of further value is the first article, an insightful commentary on the extraordinary achievements of Doula Mouriki, written by Charalambos Bouras, and followed by a comprehensive bibliography of her work. *Medieval Cyprus* is an important addition to the scholarly research on Cyprus and encourages further research elaborating on Doula Mouriki's own significant contributions to this field.

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