

triangle that engages with the many other ways to “make sense of” this dynamic, using critical theory emerging from or adjacent to Lacanian psychoanalytic theory—particularly the work of Eve Sedgwick and other queer theorists. The blind spots of Lacanian accounts of desire are particularly noticeable here, perhaps the more so for the (very) brief nod Scala gives to the “latent homoerotics” (72) of the scene in Venus’s grove.

This is one of several key readings in the book that raise unanswered questions about the Lacanian framework’s own tendency (like any other hermeneutic) to generate “mis-readings”: that is, to resituate the signifier within an interpretive context different not only from those of its medieval readers, but also different from those of many modern critical readers who are using other theoretical lenses. This comes down to the same vexed question of the nature of “we” in this book. Scala has ably defended psychoanalytic criticism elsewhere (most notably in her important 2002 article) on the charge of anachronism (that is, of bringing to medieval texts an interpretive framework that no medieval audience would have used), and the introduction to *Desire in the Canterbury Tales* reiterates her defense against this objection to her theoretical approach (15–24). However, there is little here that engages head-on with the question of readerly desire and identification that, as the above example shows, underpins Scala’s discussion of the circulation of desire within the *Canterbury Tales*, or with the prolific debate in critical-theory circles and in medieval studies over the last two decades, for example, Dinshaw (1999), Rohy (2006), Freccero (2006), Watson (2000 and 2010), and Traub (2013). Psychoanalytic criticism cannot—and does not—exist in a theoretical vacuum. The questions this book asks are current, cogent, and exciting, but the answers it offers miss an opportunity to engage in dialogue with parallel theoretical work that could have both enriched its readings and made it more crucial and interesting to readers working with other theoretical frameworks.

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CHARLES ANTHONY STEWART, THOMAS W. DAVIS, and ANNEMARIE WEYL CARR, eds., *Cyprus and the Balance of Empires: Art and Archaeology from Justinian I to the Cœur de Lion*. (American Schools of Oriental Research, Archaeological Reports 20; CAARI Monograph Series 5.) Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2014. Pp. xviii, 268; many color figures and maps. \$74.95. ISBN: 978-0-89757-073-2.

Table of contents available online at <http://www.oxbowbooks.com/oxbow/cyprus-and-the-balance-of-empires.html> (accessed 20 July 2016); doi:10.1086/687882

This is a strikingly well-produced conference publication with a mix of important new materials and surveys, and an underlying attempt to change the paradigms of the interpretations of the archaeology and art history of Cyprus. This latter ambition was stimulated when the conference planned by the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute was delayed to January 2011, but then therefore overlapped with the celebrations for the fifty-year anniversary of the Republic of Cyprus in 2010. This led to a number of revisionist papers surveying the historiography of the Byzantine period, notably Thomas Davis and Charles Stewart, “A Brief History of Byzantine Archaeological Research on Cyprus,” and Charles Stewart, “The Development of Byzantine Architecture on Cyprus.” Although justifiably criticizing the “colonial” interpretations of some British (in particular) writers, at times these papers engage in hyperbole and overstate the case for the creative role of Cyprus. So George Jeffrey, writing in 1916 that the (then unrestored) Cypriot Byzantine frescoes displayed “rude decoration in crude primary colours,” is countered with the statement (20) that “we consider these some of the greatest masterpieces of all time.” One extreme to another! Annabel Wharton (109) is criticized (in part as “colonialist”) for thinking of Byzantium and Cyprus in 1988 in the binary terms of center and region. Yet

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the aim of her book was in fact precisely to problematize the binary concept. Against her and other researchers, a passage of the twelfth-century Constantinopolitan writer, Nicholas Mesarites, is quoted (128). This is optimistically interpreted: "Cyprus is mentioned amongst the truly great schools of medieval architecture." Actually the empirical, detailed treatment of architecture in this useful survey paper by Stewart is much more nuanced than this and gives plenty of new perspectives, for example with Georgian architecture.

Several of the papers are elegant presentations of new materials from Cyprus and deserve highlighting for their wider interest. Demetrios Michaelides describes a rescue dig in the area of Yeroskopou, which succeeded over several seasons in revealing early Christian tombs and parts of a basilica with mosaic flooring with (misspelled) inscriptions from the Psalms. Also from this period (dated to the early seventh century), and much better preserved, is an extensive excavated site on the Akrotiri peninsula. The paper of Eleni Procopiou, "The *Katalymata ton Plakoton*: New Light from the Recent Archaeological Research in Cyprus," compares the ground plan of the monumental Basilica A here with the martyrion of Saint Menas near Alexandria and persuasively identifies it as the "divine church" founded between 617 and 619 by John, patriarch of Alexandria, and dedicated to house the relics of Saint Stephen and Saint James. The historical context is that in the face of the Persian invasion of the Holy Land in 814, priests and others fled from Jerusalem to Alexandria and took relics with them for safekeeping, but with the arrival of the Persians in Egypt in 617 the next place of refuge was Cyprus, where Patriarch John was born. Procopiou brings all these strands together in her analysis of the church, as so far excavated, and its liturgy. Her conclusions have broad-reaching implications for the study of other churches, as, for example, the functions of the pilgrimage church of Saint Demetrios at Thessaloniki.

A helpful paper by Sophocles Sophocleous on "Cypriot Icons before the Twelfth Century" updates our knowledge of early portable icons on the island and their parallels outside, while Maria Parani, "The Stuff of Life: The Material Culture of Everyday Living on Middle Byzantine Cyprus (11th–12th Centuries)" offers an equally rich but also brief paper on objects from the home. Her conclusion is that, in this period, it is hard to find local traditions and practices; instead she sees "a predominant orientation toward metropolitan Byzantium," an interesting observation in view of other opinions in this volume. Annemarie Weyl Carr contributes a longer illustrated paper, "The Program of the Panagia Pergaminotissa: A Narrative in Perspective," on a painted church in the north of Cyprus near Akanthou, which has so far escaped proper consideration among the better-known eleventh- and twelfth-century monuments—understandably, though, as the surviving sanctuary frescoes (in two layers, eleventh and early twelfth century) were only cleaned and consolidated in 2009. The archangels of the twelfth-century layer are described as the closest iconographic parallels to the 1148 apse mosaics of Cefalu in Sicily, while the paintings of the Infancy of the Virgin are compared with the recently cleaned cycle at Pskov in north Russia, probably of the 1140s. She emphasizes significant differences of style with Asinou and other frescoes on Cyprus of around 1100. Their precise dating seems therefore an issue.

This volume contains an extensive bibliography, but it does not include the invaluable Louvre exhibition catalog, *Chypre entre Byzance et l'Orient IVe–XVIe* (Paris, 2012). Taken together, these two publications substantially advance Cypriot studies.

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