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ANDREA OLSEN LAM – ROSSITZA SCHROEDER (eds.), The Eloquence of Art: Essays in Honour of Henry Maguire (Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies s.n.). Abingdon – New York: Routledge 2020. xxxvi, 437 pp. – ISBN: 978-0-8153-9459-4 (hardback, £ 96.00), 978-1-351-18559-2 (ebook, £ 29.59)

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'Henry has made *many* important contributions to art history', emphasises a contributor to this *Festschrift* (p. 131). Quite so. Professor MAGUIRE is a towering figure in our field. It is hard to match the elegance and lucidity of his thought. His sharp eye has found in many an image revealing details that no one before him noticed. With unparalleled rigour, he has brought Byzantine texts to bear on the interpretation of Byzantine visual culture. Twenty-three essays now pay homage to this leading scholar. The choice of contributors, just a couple of whom work outside the United States, must have been limited by circumstance and in no way reflects the extent of the honorand's intellectual influence. A smaller catchment area has made the collection more homogeneous. Most chapters focus on a single monument or on a cluster of interrelated ones. The approach is invariably contextual, meaning that all authors seek to throw their chosen objects into relief by placing them against some kind of historical background.

As a whole the volume is marked by that 'honest clarity' to which one of its editors aspires (p. 318) – very seldom does one stumble upon a truism, an obscure phrase, or some combination thereof.[1] While summarising cannot do justice to any of the essays, it can at least outline their topics. Portrayals of King David on the wall of the Dura synagogue stress the peaceful aspect of his reign because after the defeat of Bar Kohba's revolt most Jews reconciled themselves to Roman rule (pp. 300–317). Depictions of Judas's

1. 'Byzantine imperial costume would be highly unsuitable for sleep or battle' (p. 136); 'within medieval culture, which is everywhere and always marked by typological gymnastics, materialistic and positional components distinguish the analogies of the Latin Kingdom' (p. 194); 'while the evil of Judas is accentuated, the act of suicide is not used as a literary or artistic device by which to characterize him as such' (p. 127); 'Byzantine images after Iconoclasm frame the visual field with figure that channel the act of contemplation' (p. 279).

death appeared in response to the emerging Christian condemnation of suicide as a mortal sin (pp. 115–130). The wings of archangels have peacock feathers since peacocks were traditionally associated with Paradise (pp. 350–365). Floral motifs in Byzantine decorative art sometimes play on the symbolically charged contrast between softness and solidity, transience and permanence (pp. 162–187). Contrapposto combines traits of immobility and of movement; an early icon of St John the Baptist uses it, accordingly, as a sort of rhetorical device similar to antithesis (pp. 18–28). The originally non-funerary iconography of the apse mosaic in the Church of St David, Thessalonica, was later transferred to funerary contexts because legend associated it with the death of a pious monk (p. 146–162). In ninth and tenth-century Byzantium, the names of Christ and of the Virgin were not always written next to their portrayals in monumental art; this omission, unusual for the period, is probably due to the artists' reproducing earlier, uninscribed models (pp. 366–386). The manner in which Christ's passion was depicted in ivory reliefs ca. 950 can be usefully compared to church music composed at roughly the same time (pp. 267–282). The enamels added in Western Europe to an originally Byzantine reliquary changed that object's visual identity (pp. 131–145). Islamic motifs were selectively appropriated in twelfth-century Byzantium in order to signal the empire's superiority over the Seljuq Sultanate (pp. 387–406). In the medieval Near East, where conflict between Christians and Muslims was frequent, St George was often shown saving a boy from Muslim captivity (pp. 188–203). Byzantine artists would associate the Virgin Mary with the Garden of Eden because they thought of her – in the words of the popular church hymn *In Thee Rejoiceth* – as 'spiritual paradise', παράδεισος λογικός (pp. 407–424). An amorous couple painted on the ceiling of a cave church in Apulia probably signifies the sin of lust (pp. 283–299). Two Gospel lectionaries copied at the Hodegon Monastery in 1373 and 1378 reproduce the text of an earlier lectionary given to that monastery in 1336 (pp. 218–250). A particularly delightful chapter tells the story of two giraffes that were brought, at different points in time, from Egypt to Constantinople (pp. 336–349).

Most contributors revisit topics already studied in the past, and a few summarise earlier work at some length (pp. 21–23, 131–132, 291–292). There is even a pure example of meta-history, dealing with a pioneering study of Byzantine enamels: the front cover and title page of a monograph published in 1892 are described in loving detail (p. 31) but we are not told much about the book's sponsor Alexander Viktorovich Zvenigorodskii, about

its author NIKODIM PAVLOVICH KONDAKOV, or about the latter's methodology. (Information about these is easily available elsewhere.) The weight of older research sometimes has the curious effect of distancing scholars from their object of study. The protagonist of one of the essays, a 'lady' whom an icon shows kneeling behind the heels of St George (pp. 71–72), remains unidentified as a nun, even though black headgear and black clothing mark her religious status.[2] The same icon carries a longish inscription which, hard to read because of damage, is ignored outright. Elsewhere, a single phrase inscribed on two different images is variously translated, depending on what secondary literature the author consulted, with either 'He will give rest to this house' (p. 152) or 'He will give us rest and hospitality in this house' (pp. 153–154) – the latter patently does not match the Greek δώσει ἀνάπαυσιν τῷ οἴκῳ τούτῳ (p. 160n.31, p. 160n.33). Another essay argues (pp. 318–335) that Gentile Bellini portrayed Sultan Mehmed II with the features of his Byzantine predecessor, Emperor John VIII Palaeologus – but the face we now see in Bellini's portrait has been fully repainted in the nineteenth century, while X-ray photographs show just how little of the original fifteenth-century work survives underneath. The performative aspect of a Byzantine pastiche (CPG 3059) from Euripides is discussed (pp. 204–212) without once referring to that text's manuscript copies – upon checking the oldest three, I found no gloss other than the names of *dramatis personae*.[3] Such annotations do show that the work was subjected to 'performance, whether noetic, rhetorical, or theatrical' (p. 207), i.e. that it may have been read on one's own, recited in public, or actually staged. The chapter's author herself speaks all at once (p. 210) of 'some kind of performance', 'some kind of oral delivery', and 'a performance that never happened except in the mind'. Her essay demonstrates that small details cannot affect the validity of a broadly conceived argument.

In a similarly broad vein, several contributors survey large bodies of visual material. One examines the iconography of St Polyeuktos, whose portrayal was not standardised and who could therefore be shown either with or without a beard (pp. 91–114). Another author studies representations of the city of Thessalonica in icons of St Demetrius, assuming – all too readily, to my mind – that they are topographically accurate (pp. 4–17). A third chapter observes that because women occupied a subordinate position in Byzan-

2. Cf. Sinai, Greek MS 61, a. 1274, f. 256v, where the donor is expressly named Θεοτίμη (μον)αχή.

3. Paris, BNF, Grec 2875, s. XIII/2, ff. 12v–56r; ibid., Grec 2707, a. 1300/1301, ff. 94r–106v; ibid., Grec 1220, s. XIV/1, ff. 288r–308v.

tine society, Byzantine artists represented female figures as less active than male ones (pp. 47–70).

I list a couple of rare misprints not because they are serious but because they are mildly amusing:
'I have a rudimentary understanding of Byzantine pneumatic notations' (p. 272) – '*neumatic* notations';
'I explore how the Byzantines, and consequently the Venetian-born Gentile Bellini…' (p. 318) – 'the Byzantines, and *subsequently*…';
'Kurt Wessel' (p. 140) – '*Klaus* Wessel'.
Fig. 14.5 shows not the Ascension of Christ but a theophany (the image deserves further study).

By no means the least interesting part of the volume is its short introductory section, which outlines the honorand's career and lists his abundant bibliography.[4] Clearly no one over the past fifty years has done so much for the study of Byzantine art as Professor MAGUIRE. The fine array of essays put together by two of his students now forms a small but fitting pendant to his own work.

Keywords
Byzantine art

4. Information about Professor MAGUIRE's early years must have been supplied by his wife Eunice or by another member of his family.