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reliefs of three sarcophagi pieces found within the complex as well as several stray materials and spolia immured in the walls, shedding light on their reuse in later phases of the complex. Nevertheless, the chapter feels somewhat like an appendix, an impression reinforced by its placement at the end of the book.

While the chapters are well written and engaging, the overall arrangement of the book could have been more cohesive. An introductory chapter at the very beginning might have provided useful context before diving into the detailed architectural treatise. The second chapter, which covers the history of the monastery, does offer some of this context; placing it earlier in the book might have provided a stronger introduction, helping acquaint unfamiliar readers with the archaeological site. The use of separate footnote numbers for each chapter is practical, though a more consistent approach to the photos across chapters would have helped avoid potential confusion. Additionally, some minor inconsistencies in citations and translations suggest that the chapters were written somewhat independently, which could have been addressed through more unified editorial oversight. The book further offers a rich array of Turkish sources, which is commendable, but the emphasis on Turkish translations of well-known works, like Cyril Mango's *Byzantine Architecture*, might present a challenge for international readers.

These minor observations do not in any way diminish the value of the authors' efforts or the importance of this publication. While the book would have benefited from a more cohesive structure and some editorial adjustments, it represents a significant achievement in the study of the Stoudios Monastery. The book's comprehensive research, impressive visual materials, and valuable insights into both the Byzantine and Ottoman periods make it an essential resource for scholars interested in the history of the complex, as do its detailed exploration of the site's architectural, historical, and sculptural aspects and its examination of monastic traditions and the Sufi community's impact. The work of the authors is certain to inspire new perspectives, opening new avenues for research and advancing our understanding of this invaluable site. At the same time, it will serve as an important historical record of the complex before the anticipated reconstruction to accommodate its use as a mosque once again.

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1 Muhâfaza-i Âsâr-ı Atîka Encümen-i Dâimîsi in Ottoman Turkish.

2 For example, the discussion on the Panagia Acheiropoietos in Thessaloniki on pages 78–79 would have benefited from references to additional relevant literature on this building and recent developments in the field, as well as to important sources such as Raymond Janin, *La géographie ecclésiastique de l'Empire byzantin*, part 1, *Le Siège de Constantinople et la Patriarcat œcuménique*, vol. 1, *Les églises et les monastères* (Paris: Institut français d'études byzantines, 1969 [1953]), and Vasileios Marinis, *Architecture and Ritual in the Churches of Constantinople: Ninth to Fifteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), both of which are referenced elsewhere in the book.

Silvia Pedone, *Bisanzio a colori: La policromia nella scultura bizantina*. Atti dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Memorie, series 9, vol. 44, fasc. 1. 416 pages, with 303 illustrations and 5 plans. Rome: Bardi edizioni, 2022. ISBN: 9788821812248

Over the past decade or so, renewed interest in Byzantine sculpture has led to the publication of several bird's-eye studies on sculpture in the middle and late Byzantine periods.[1] Silvia Pedone's volume enriches this growing body of literature with its comprehensive examination of the use of polychromy in Byzantine sculpture from the fourth to the fifteenth century. Her work complements previous studies by offering an overview of the different ways of making polychrome sculptures from Asia Minor to Greece and reflecting on past and present methodologies for tackling the issue of color in Byzantine society. In doing so, it imparts a theoretical breadth to the field of Byzantine sculpture, wading explicitly into debates about perception and the construction of space in Byzantium. This is a significant achievement, for while the contributions of icons, light, and sound have been successfully integrated into the field and analyzed against written sources, sculpture has until now tended to be left aside, perhaps because of a lack of shared interpretative tools.

The volume is written in Italian, and it is organized into five chapters, guiding the reader from theoretical debates to case studies. Chapter 1, "Historical Colors and Historians of Color," addresses the historicity of colors and their treatment by historians. The author critically retraces the nineteenth-century debate arising from the discovery of rich polychromy on Ancient Greek, Roman, and Sasanian marble and stone sculpture and the apparent lack of a corresponding richness in the Homeric vocabulary about color. In retracing this debate, Pedone underlines that many of the questions to which it gave rise are still very much alive, and that the methodology employed in addressing them is crucial to allowing us to even talk about colors on ancient sculptures. While she discards outdated evolutionary theories suggesting that the ancient eye was physically unable to perceive certain colors, she continues to engage with historical approaches and their limits (e.g., Michel Pastoureau) in her analysis in the following chapter.

Chapter 2, "The Byzantine Eye," addresses the issue of perception by distinguishing between "historical

perception" and the "historicity of perception." The term "perception" is used here to address the sensory experience of color, as distinct from the cultural interpretation of that sensory experience (i.e., its "conception") and the act of making it lexically explicit (i.e., naming it). This clarification helps explain the discrepancy noted above between Ancient Greek texts and sculpture, and it applies to the Byzantine case as well—whereas the vocabulary used by the Byzantines to talk about colors was mainly about light and shine, the actual use of colors on Byzantine sculptures also illustrates choices of tonal contrasts and shades.

For Pedone, the variety of colors that our contemporary eye can physically perceive (even if it does not name them) is the same as it was in the medieval era. While this does not allow us to see (culturally) as a Byzantine did (because we live in a different society), it does allow us to identify some of the mechanisms involved. As Pedone stresses throughout the book, this is a precondition for discussing colors in historical societies. On this basis, she challenges Liz James's suggestion that Byzantines focused mainly on the shine, sparkle, and gleam of colors rather than identifying single tones and shades.[2] As a case study, she examines Christ's garment in the Anastasis mosaic scene at the Nea Moni in Chios. There, Christ's chiton and himation are both depicted in dark tones, but one is red and the other blue. The mosaicists used red and blue tesserae consistently, even though both could fall under the Byzantine terminology used for "purple" (which could encompass colors from dark red to dark blue), and their brightness was the same.

But Pedone is not interested solely in historical conceptions of colors and the vocabulary used to describe them; rather, her main concern is to postulate the possibility of talking about visual effects in Byzantine sculpture at all. This she accomplishes by underlining the distinction between perception and conception, a distinction critical to understanding the mechanisms of *poikilia* in Chapter 3 (discussed below). But before moving to that, Chapter 2 continues by analyzing polychromy through materials, particularly ivory and gold.

Ivory was highly appreciated in Byzantine culture and described in texts using terms again connected to the reflection of light. The discovery of colors applied to Byzantine ivory artifacts led scholars to wonder about the original extent of this polychromy. Here, Pedone agrees with Anthony Cutler that artisans used several means to enhance the luminosity of carved figures (e.g., burnishing and painting certain areas). Gold, meanwhile, is the element zero of Byzantine colors for Pedone. The application of gold to materials such as ivory and marble could aim either at transcending their materiality (when it covered them completely, as in the capitals of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople) or at beautifying them (when applied to specific areas); it was also the preferred means of suggesting the presence of God in the apses of Constantinian churches. As a rare, incorruptible metal that could also demoralize the human soul, gold had strong cultural value. However, it was also appreciated because the beauty of its color attracted the eye (p. 65). Its glitter, shine, and reflectiveness appealed directly to the senses of the Byzantine viewer, creating an aesthetic experience that Pedone argues ought to be acknowledged in addition to gold's cultural meanings.

On this last point, Pedone suggests viewing the application of gold as a way of enhancing certain features through graphic effects (e.g., in the sarcophagus of Aurelia Kyrilla, fig. 27). But the examples she offers in support of this argument can, in my opinion, suggest something else as well: that gold was applied to non-human characters (the aforementioned sarcophagus) and non-human experience (e.g., the gold background in the Annunciation of Daphni, fig. 25; the supernatural scene in the sarcophagus of Aurelia Kyrilla). When present on architectural elements, it mainly underlined transitional elements traditionally identified as a connection to heaven (capitals as a transition to the dome or vaults) or symbol of heaven (canopies in the steatite icons, figs. 28–29). While gold has an undeniable graphic visual effect, it nevertheless seems to me that its use in most cases followed specific rules related to its cultural meaning.

Chapter 3, "Byzantine Sculpture: Color and Multi-materiality," combines the work of Bissera Pentcheva, Adeline Grand-Clément, and Nadine Schibille to present a synthesis of the meanings of *poikilia*, from the lexical to the experiential.[3] The experience of *poikilia* was one of awe, a sense of amazement that set the eye wandering and made it impossible to fix one's gaze on anything. This experience of turning the gaze and directing it through awe (*thauma*) is present even on early Byzantine pendants, as Stephanie Caruso has recently suggested, identifying a visual representation for this experience.[4] Understanding the full meaning of *poikilia* is crucial for comprehending how sculpture participated in this experience. The term *poikilia* was also used to refer to anything multiform, varied, iridescent, and speckled. Moreover, it conveyed an idea of complexity and dynamism as well as versatility, wit, illusion, and deceit. Stone and marble sculptures were colored in various ways that softened their borders and enhanced their skeuomorphic appearance through the use of inlaid marble and techniques common to other arts such as jewelry (champlevé, cloisonné, and niello) and painting (colors applied in layers, wax-based pigments). Here, both wit and illusion are evident. After that, the chapter brings us to another crucial aspect of Byzantine aesthetics: the search for uniformity through variety.

The use of colored sculpture next to wall paintings, marble, and textiles created a homogeneous visual environment. Colors were variously used to help the eye discern an element of decoration (especially interlaces, figs. 50–51); to help a relief stand out from the background (e.g., blue background and gold relief, figs. 38–39); to divide a continuous motif (e.g., a vine scroll) into smaller segments (e.g., groups of two spirals) by alternating colors to create a visual rhythm independent of the carved decoration (figs. 30–33); and to create naturalistic effects on

figurative sculptures through the application of several layers of paint (fig. 37).

Chapter 3 continues by advancing an argument first presented by Sergio Bettini, that Byzantine art ultimately aimed at the two-dimensionality of painting.[5] Pedone's main arguments involve inlaid, champlevé, and cloisonné sculptures, where the surface was generally flat. Nevertheless, I believe that this observation can be further explored chronologically to see whether a closer relation between painting and sculpture gradually developed over time, as also suggested by Catherine Vanderheyde.[6]

Chapter 4, "Space, Color, and Light in Sacred Buildings: Some Case Studies," employs a rich array of examples to discuss the use of colors in Byzantine churches over time and in different geographical areas. The most interesting part is the section about Constantinople, where Pedone analyzes monuments in dialogue with various written sources. While most of the case studies discussed here have already been published (except for the polychromies of the *proskynetaria* from the Kalenderhane Camii), the strength of this section is its comprehensive scale, which gives a sense of the variety and development of polychrome sculpture from Constantinople's foundation to the Ottoman conquest. One clear example is the Kariye Camii, where polychrome effects were created with inlaid marble and champlevé in the Komnenian period, while painted marble and gilding were preferred in the Palaiologan period.

Chapter 5, "Polychromies from Asia: Hierapolis, Sebaste of Phrygia, Amorium," draws on Pedone's extensive knowledge of Asia Minor acquired throughout her career to provide close insight into the use of encrusted sculpture in Phrygia. This chapter exemplifies the potential of a systematic study of colored sculpture to identify workshops as well as trends that changed over time at a regional level. The use of well-dated pieces (whose dates have been confirmed through archaeological excavations, context, and historical sources) makes her study valuable as a chronological indicator against which undated sculptures in nearby regions can be tested. The chapter closes by addressing an issue raised throughout the volume: who was responsible for the color of sculpture? The answer to this question is far from obvious, as it involves the study of the stratification of a building site's workforce, the organization of its members, and the nature of their skills. Whoever applied the color as a pigment or mastic had skills not too different from painters and jewelers. However, these materials could also be available to sculptors on a building site when they were working side-by-side with other professionals. The possibility that there were some painters of marbles, as there were in medieval Europe, remains a fascinating hypothesis which requires further exploration, as Byzantine artisans were more laconic about their identities than their European peers. One pedantic observation concerns a reference to the Andreas sculptor recorded by Lawrence Butler in the Hagia Sophia, which does not in fact refer to a stucco worker, as Pedone claims (p. 325), because the reference in question was located on the marble apse cornice.[7]

The volume as a whole is an impressive book, not only for its discussion of the meaning of color in Byzantine sculpture but also for its methodological reflection on sculpture as part of the construction of Byzantine architectural spaces. Because of the broad timespan it addresses, the arguments about the visual effects obtained through colors and about artisans' identities may seem to give the impression that little changed from the fifth to the fifteenth century. This is not the volume's intent. Instead, it aims to provide tools to better understand Byzantine visual culture, and it does so through a class of material too often neglected: sculpture. The volume should therefore be of interest to scholars and more advanced students of both architecture and sculpture, as well as, thanks to its methodological reflections, scholars in the fields of philology and cultural studies.

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1 See, for example, Nicholas Melvani, *Late Byzantine Sculpture* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013); Catherine Vanderheyde, *La sculpture byzantine du IXe au XVe siècle: Contexte, mise en oeuvre, décors* (Paris: Picard, 2020).

2 Liz James, *Light and Colour in Byzantine Art* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

3 Bissera V. Pentcheva, "Hagia Sophia and Multisensory Aesthetics," *Gesta* 50, no. 2 (2011): 93–111; Adeline Grand-Clément, "Poikilia: Pour une anthropologie de la bigarrure dans la Grèce ancienne," in *Anthropologie de l'Antiquité: Anciens objets, nouvelles approches*, ed. Pascal Payen and Évelyne Scheid-Tissinier (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 239–262; Grand-Clément, "*Poikilia*," in *A Companion to Ancient Aesthetics*, ed. Pierre Destrée and Penelope Murray (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 406–421; Nadine Schibille, *Hagia Sophia and the Byzantine Aesthetic Experience* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

4 Stephanie R. Caruso, "Redirecting Gazes: The Design and Reception of a Late Antique Pictorial Motif" (PhD diss., New York University, 2019).

5 Sergio Bettini, "La sculpture," in *L'art byzantin, art européen: Neuvième exposition sous l'égide du Conseil de l'Europe* (Athens: Palais du Zappeion, 1964), 127–130.

6 Vanderheyde, *La sculpture byzantine*, 74–87.

7 Lawrence E. Butler, "The Nave Cornices of Hagia Sophia, Istanbul" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1989), 165, block U111, figs. 50, 52.