

nature of Orthodox Christian monastic life never before realized, experienced, or understood. No student of Orthodox Christianity and no Orthodox Christian should pass this book by.

Colgate University

JOHN E. REXINE

Spiro Kostof, *Caves of God: The Monastic Environment of Byzantine Cappadocia*, Drawings by Malcolm C. Carpenter, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England, M. I. T. Press, 1972, pp. xviii + 296, 25 figures, 45 plates, \$ 18.50.

Spiro Kostof, Professor of Architectural History at the University of California, Berkeley, who was born and educated in Turkey, himself personally familiar with the monuments that he is describing in their complete context, has ventured to present a synthesis of our knowledge about Christian Cappadocia (now a province in central Turkey), the land and its mysterious and fascinating monuments. The book is particularly apt in view of current interest in Göreme, which the Turkish government has recognized as of significant archaeological and touristic interest. Professor Kostof's dual purpose involves (1) providing the interested layman with a readable introduction to the rockcut architecture of Cappadocia, and (2) providing the student of Byzantine art with a critical review of the current scholarship on the subject with the consideration of the reordering of results. The volume is neatly organized into three principal sections. The first (3-35), called «The Setting», reviews early Christianity, the land, the architecture, Islam, the Middle Renaissance, the Turks, Western travelers, and the present. The second, entitled simply «The Buildings» (43-141), surveys hermitages, monasteries, monastic centers, facades, churches, the three-aisled basilica and the one-aisled basilica, the early Christian phase, the archaic phase, the iconoclastic phase, the church with transverse vault, Tokali, cruciform churches, the triconch of Tagar, Cappadocia and the Capital, and the cross-in-square churches, while the final section (145-231) discusses intelligently and fully folk-decoration, painters, donors, the iconography of saints, cycles of the life of Christ, the iconography of the archaic cycle, the sources of the archaic cycle, an interpretation of the archaic cycle, the Ilhara cycle, Constantinople and the new look, the Middle Byzantine cycle, and concludes with a Turkish epilogue.

Very richly illustrated, magnificently documented, and appropriately supplemented by a substantial bibliographical note, *Caves of God* once again vividly brings to life for the reader the words of Gregory of Nyssa (*Letters*, VI, Migne, PG, 46, col. 1012) that «there is scarcely a place in the entire world that can boast of as many churches as there are in Cappadocia, though which the name of the Lord is glorified». More than seventy rock churches have so far been recorded and countless more undoubtedly will be re-discovered, yet still we know little of the meaning of Cappadocian Christianity and its fantastic monuments. This is, of course, partly because of the inaccessibility of the region for quite long periods of time, the large number of the monuments, and the extraordinary kinds of buildings and decorative schemes that render generalizations inadequate and misleading. Certainly, Professor Kostof's special contribution to the subject lies in architecture, and it is here that the reader will pay particular attention to the author who observes of the scooped-out architecture that «The Cappadocian carver-architect was not inhibited (as was the *builder*-architect here and elsewhere in Anatolia) by statics or the nature of materials. His structure stood, a monolith, before he started to work on it. And he could cut into this monolith quickly, effortlessly. It might take a single man about a month to carve out a large room of two to three thousand cubic feet. Loads and thrusts were negligible. One was free to try any struc-

tural symbol with little concern for structural safety. Cupolas could bubble from flat ceilings, or be placed over square bays by means of the most cavalier transition elements. No shape need be perfect: extemporaneous geometry is everywhere the rule. Wall lines sag, one half of an arch doesn't quite match the other; carefree deviations, here and there, mark the general outline of the building» (p. 45). It was certainly obvious that rock churches did not exist in the abstract but within a given physical and religious context. In wall painting, Cappadocia competes with Mistra as the most concentrated environment for Byzantine iconography, though it would not be possible to argue that Cappadocian religious painting could seriously rival that of Hosios Loukas, Nea Moni at Chios, or Daphni.

Nevertheless, Cappadocia is a veritable «museum» of Byzantine Christianity that Professor Kostof has usefully reconstructed for the contemporary student. The churches studied he has catalogued into «Early Christian and Icolonoclastic Phase»: (ca. 550-850); «Archaic Phase» (ca. 850-950); «Transitional Phase» (ca. 950-1020); «Middle Byzantine Phase» (ca. 1020-1130); and «Late Byzantine Phase» (from late 12th century).

Professor Kostof has brilliantly illuminated for us a significant period of the past and an almost forgotten area of the world by reminding us of a now lost world of Eastern Orthodox Christianity and Hellenism, an area of the world that once constituted one of the largest concentrations of Eastern monasticism in the world and the heartland of early and Byzantine Christianity. The «tuff» churches and monasteries with their paintings remain as silent but powerful testimony to a glorious but bygone era.

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John Avramantès, editor, *Οἱ Πόντιοι ἀνὰ τοὺς αἰῶνας: ἀπὸ τὰ περασμένα καὶ τὰ παρὼν* (*The Pontians throughout the Ages: From the Past and the Present*), Volume I, Athens, the Committee of the Pontians, 1972, pp. 142, Illustrated.

The collection of essays presented in this volume will be of considerable interest to students of Hellenism in Asia Minor, particularly to those concerned with Pontos and Trapezon (modern Trabzon) and the survival of Pontians and their culture in modern Greece. This volume has a threefold purpose: (1) to familiarize the Greeks of Greece with those Greeks who three thousand years ago established *Batheia Hellada* («Deep Greece») near the legendary Colchis; (2) to familiarize the younger Greek generation with the achievements of the Pontians in the East and now in the North; (3) to provide future Greece with the powerful evidence of the Black Sea Greeks that the Great Powers are not necessarily the most reliable or the most trustworthy of allies, nor really much concerned with the survival or preservation of ancient peoples.

A Committee of Pontians has worked hard to collect various papers, notices, and notes by various hands at various times which have been gathered together under ten general headings of differing proportions, quality, and worth. These headings will give the reader some idea of the topics covered in the fifty brief pieces in this collection. The ten sections are entitled «Pre-History--History», «Pontos during the Turkokratia», «National Martyr Saints after the Fall», «Hospitality and Mutual Support in Pontos», «Great National Benefactors», «The Activity of Pontian Women», «Ancestral Traditions, Institutions and Recollections», «The Activities of Pontian Societies», «Past Outstanding Pontian Folklorists», and «Outstanding Personalities of Pontos who have died in the last forty years». An encomium on the erection of a Pan-Pontian cenotaph by George Sakkas, and two letters by