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Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean After 1204 **(Review)**

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Reviews

BENJAMIN ARBEL, BERNARD HAMILTON, and DAVID JACOBY, eds., *Latins and Greeks in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*. London: Frank Cass, in association with the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies and the Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East, 1989. Pp. vii, 245; black-and-white figures. Distributed by Rowman & Littlefield, 8705 Bollman Pl., Savage, MD 20763.

Accommodation between Latins and Greeks after 1204 is one of two major themes in this collection of papers from the March 1988 Symposium on Byzantine Studies at the University of Nottingham. Reading the articles by David Jacoby, Jean Richard, Michael Angold, Anthony Luttrell, Michel Balard, and Benjamin Arbel, one discovers that the Fourth Crusade was not an unmitigated disaster. Romania, as the formerly Byzantine territories came to be called, became more prosperous as it was more closely integrated into the Western market economy. Areas under Venetian control such as Crete were likely to see state prerogatives maintained. But knights imposed a feudal-manorial regime, characterized by privatization of state functions, on most mainland districts. The Orthodox church, particularly its monastic clergy, could usually maintain its status, especially where the Byzantine aristocracy—the *archontes*—retained their estates and social position. With the exception of the friars and the Cistercians, few Latin monastic orders even attempted to establish themselves in Romania. Despite attempts at rapprochement by Pope Innocent IV, Orthodox and Catholic higher clergy largely kept their distance. While Nicaea remained mostly hostile, Epirus often allied with the Latins. In short, patterns both of permanence and adaptive change emerge. Historians tend to emphasize the latter because, as David Jacoby puts it, “Continuity does not make headlines.”

Attitudes in the late Middle Ages form the second leitmotif of this volume: Malcolm Barber, Elizabeth Zachariadiou, and Robert Irwin’s articles are concerned with Western attitudes to Frankish Greece, Turkish attitudes toward jihad, and the image of Byzantines and Franks in Arab popular literature, respectively. Attitudes are also a secondary theme in some of the pieces mentioned earlier, notably that of Angold, who observes that the horror and bitterness against “beef-eating Latins” by refugees from Constantinople were not necessarily shared by provincials under Western rule. Some friars ingratiated themselves by learning Greek and studying the Eastern church fathers. Barber holds that other than the popes (especially Innocent IV) and the friars, the West was uninterested in Romania. What little crusading fervor remained was more appropriately directed at the Holy Land. Zachariadiou partially defends the old Wittek thesis that the early Ottomans defined themselves, not tribally, but as *ghazis*, warriors who fought the traditional Muslim jihad against the infidel. In contrast, Irwin maintains that jihad held little interest for late-medieval Arabs. Byzantines and Franks appeared in popular literature mostly as plot devices, for example, as exotic princesses who became Muslims, were imprisoned by outraged Christian relatives, then rescued by heroic Muslim lovers. Slave-buying guides stereotyped Byzantines as intelligent and trustworthy, “Franks” as treacherous and stupid. Prices varied accordingly. (Irwin should know of similar guides in the early-modern Americas. One, by James Grainger [1721–67], is in verse!)

Two complaints: First, editors should edit. This means consistency in such matters as whether “data” is a singular or a plural noun. Second, the authors seem at times unfamiliar with Western medieval scholarship, underestimating social mobility among Latins around 1200 and not noticing the similarity of the friars’ dealings with both Byzantine Christians and Western Jews.

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