

Susan A. Boyd und Marlia Mundell Mango (Hrsg.), *Ecclesiastical Plate in Sixth-Century Byzantium*. *Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection*, Washington, D. C., 1992. 243 Seiten, 130 Abbildungen.

The importance of silver in the churches of early Byzantium has long been obvious from the historical sources. Huge quantities of silver were to be found in these buildings, in the form of furniture revetments and objects. We are told, for example, that in 537 the emperor Justinian installed 40,000 lbs of silver in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (PROK. aed. 1, 1, 65), while in 622 Chosroes II and his Persian army removed 120,000 lbs of silver from the cathedral and other churches of Edessa in Mesopotamia – modern Urfa in eastern Turkey (Michael the Syrian, II, 403; Chronicle of 1234 II, 180, 230). But can such sources be believed? One test would be to examine the surviving treasures. There are very few, perhaps no more than sixteen; but they are very dispersed, and perhaps more importantly, the will to undertake the task has been missing, as has the awareness that the evidence is important.

All this changed in 1986. The twenty papers in this book were presented at an international symposium held in Baltimore and Washington, coinciding with exhibitions of the two largest treasures of early Byzantine ecclesiastical silver to have survived from antiquity, the 7th-century Kaper Koraon treasure from Syria, and the 6th-century Sion treasure from Turkey. There was previously no adequate modern publication of the Kaper Koraon treasure; but that was remedied at the time of the exhibition by Marlia Mango's invaluable book and catalogue (M. M. MANGO, *Silver from early Byzantium: the Kaper Koraon and related treasures* [1986]), which catalogued and placed in context not only the Kaper Koraon treasure but also most of the related material. What was lacking was a publication of the Sion treasure and a setting in context of both treasures at greater length. This book fills that gap.

Six papers describe and discuss the Sion treasure adequately for the first time, while the others examine more general questions. The first group, devoted to the Sion treasure, includes: S. A. BOYD, A 'Metropolitan' treasure from a church in the provinces: an introduction to the study of the Sion treasure (including as appendices a checklist of the Sion treasure, a concordance of accession numbers [with locations] and checklist numbers, a list of the objects donated by Bishop Eutychianos, and a list of stamped objects); I. ŠEVČENKO, The Sion treasure: the evidence of the inscriptions; E. CRUIKSHANK DODD, The question of workshop: evidence of the stamps on the Sion treasure; H. HELLENKEMPER, Ecclesiastical silver hoards and their findspots: implications for the treasure found at Korydalla, Lycia; M. E. FRAZER, Early Byzantine silver book covers; R. NEWMAN and H. LIE, The technical examination and conservation of objects in the Sion treasure. – The second group is concerned with the historical and economic context of ecclesiastical silver treasures. It covers, first, church silver in Syria: G. TATE, *Prospérité des villages de la Syrie du Nord au VI^e siècle*, C. MANGO, *Aspects of Syrian piety*, and C. METZGER, *Nouvelles observations sur le 'vase d'Émèse' et la 'plaque de saint Syméon'*; second, the formation and significance of cult treasures: F. BARATTE, *Les trésors de temples dans le monde romain: une expression particulière de la piété*, M. MUNDELL MANGO, The monetary value of silver revetments and objects belonging to churches, AD 300–700; and, third, the state control of silver: two papers on silver in the Byzantine and Sasanian states – PH. GRIERSON, The role of silver in the early Byzantine economy, and P. O. HARPER, Evidence for the existence of state controls in the production of Sasanian silver vessels, four papers on the mining and processing of silver – K. ASHNAV YENER, Byzantine silver mines: an archaeometallurgy project in Turkey, P. MEYERS, Elemental compositions of the Sion treasure and other Byzantine silver objects, T. DRAYMAN-WEISSER, Altered states: changes in silver due to burial and post-excavation treatment, and C. E. SNOW, From ingot to object: fabrication techniques used in the manufacture of the Hama silver, and three papers on the stamping of silver plate – M. MUNDELL MANGO, The purposes and places of Byzantine silver stamping, E. CRUIKSHANK DODD, The location of silver stamping: evidence from newly discovered stamps, and J. W. NESBIT, Some observations on Byzantine control stamps.

All the papers are of high quality; but it is the first substantial publication of the Sion treasure that will give the book its longest-lasting value. The objects of the Sion treasure, estimated to number between 53 and 58, were found in 1963 in south-western Turkey, outside the village of Kumluca, several kilometres inland from the Lycian coast. They are divided between the Archaeological Museum in Antalya, the Dumbarton Oaks Collection in the United States, and private collections in Britain, Switzerland and possibly Turkey. Their ownership is the subject of legal and diplomatic activity, and the only piece which has been exhibited to the general public outside Washington and Antalya is one of the patens, 73.8 cm. in diameter and weighing 11.2 kg., which was shown in the much discussed exhibition *Art of the Ancient World* from the Collection of George Ortiz (in Britain at the Royal Academy, 20 January – 6 April, 1994). The objects of the Kaper Koraon treasure, found about 1908 (and known until recently as four separate groups: the Hama, Stuma, Riha and Antioch treasures), are similarly dispersed and now to be found in public and private collections in Baltimore, Bern, Istanbul, Jerusalem, London, New York and Washington. These legal and geographical problems make all the more remarkable the achievement, principally by the two editors and principal authors of this book, Susan Boyd and Marlia Mango, of bringing together in 1986 all the most important Byzantine ecclesiastical silver objects of this period, the 6th and 7th centuries, either in the exhibition at the Walters Art Gallery or at Dumbarton Oaks. With the publication of the two books the objects are now made available more permanently, at least on paper, and for wider study.

Now that the work has been started, quite new perspectives have emerged. The 55 objects and one revetment in the Kaper Koraon treasure were not gifts to a prestigious shrine of the 6th and 7th centuries, such as that of St. Sergius in Rusafa, but relatively cheap imitations of prestige objects, weighing about 80 Roman lbs, made for a village church. The Sion treasure is of a similar size, including more than fifty objects and revetments; but by contrast the weight of these objects is nearly 500 lbs. The quality of the Sion objects is superior, and many of them were given by one individual, the Bishop Eutychianos, while the Kaper Koraon gifts were made by three generations of about five different local families. For the first time we appear to have hard evidence of how two churches of contrasting status differed, both in their objects (patens, chalices, fans, book-covers), and in their fittings (altar coverings, architectural revetments, lamps), but also of how they gleamed with silver.

At the same time, not all the problems have been solved, and they will not be for some time to come. Nevertheless, a few will be considered here, not pretending to present solutions, but to give a feel of the complexity of the study. What, for example, is the internal chronology of the treasure, what is the date of its deposition, does the treasure really come from a single church, and, if it does, where was that church?

The main evidence for dating is provided by stamps on about thirty objects. DODD reports (p. 57) that she was permitted to study all the objects with stamps in Dumbarton Oaks, Istanbul and Antalya, as well as those in private collections, and that since 1981 her text on them has been ready for publication. The original permission was part of an agreement of the late 1970s, between Dumbarton Oaks and the Archaeological Museum in Istanbul, that all the stamps in the Sion Treasure would be published, both in a Turkish publication and in a Supplement to her Byzantine Silver Stamps [1962]. The original agreement foundered, and so one understands why the two publications have not appeared. What is difficult to apprehend, however, for someone outside this dispute, is why it should appear unreasonable at least to publish the Dumbarton Oaks stamps. DODD's words (p. 57) are: "Because interpretation of the stamps on the Sion Treasure depends on the interconnected evidence of objects in both Antalya and Dumbarton Oaks, it does not seem reasonable to publish only the Dumbarton Oaks stamps". I do not understand the logic of this sentence. I do not see what is to be lost by the publication now of factual reports of at least the Dumbarton Oaks stamps, and I do not understand the reason for suppressing this part of the evidence on the grounds that the remainder is unavailable, particularly when we have been told that all the evidence is recorded and ready for publication. We are meant to accept, I suppose, that some unspecified diplomatic damage would be done if full publication took place, and that a final agreement would be delayed further. These sentiments, however, seem contrary to the spirit of openness pervading the rest of this publication of the treasure, where very little, if anything, seems to have been held back.

None of this means, of course, that we do not have a reliable interpretation of the evidence of the stamps, for this comes from the pen of Professor Dodd whose magisterial authority in this area is universally accepted. What she tells us is that the Sion stamps are consistent with other known imperial stamps. The span of the stamps, which occur only on objects given by Eutychianos (though not on all the objects given by him), falls into the second half of the reign of Justinian, and the sets of stamps cover the period of office of Εὐσέβιος, as well as of Ἀδδεύς (perhaps the Praetorian Prefect of 551) and Ἰωάννης (perhaps John of Palestine, who was finance minister in 546) as *comites sacrarum largitionum*, and she suggests that the dates when they held this office lie between 550 and 565.

BOYD (pp. 11–12) suggests that, in addition to the objects on which Eutychianos is named, a number of other objects belong to the same group because they are closely related in style, craftsmanship and method of manufacture, and because their inscriptions all follow the same formula: "For the memory and repose of [the soul of . . .]"⁴. This group includes a pair of patens, several pairs of book covers and a jug. These objects increase to about forty the number of objects connected with Eutychianos and thus dating around 550–65.

A group of about half a dozen chalices, however, is quite separate. The lettering and formulas of their inscriptions differ markedly from those of other objects in the treasure. None of them seems to have been stamped, and they are lighter in weight and simpler in design and decoration than other objects in the treasure. If these chalices belong with the main part of the treasure, how are they to be dated? One possible scenario suggested by BOYD (pp. 13–14) is that the gifts of Bishop Eutychianos and his friends did not include chalices because the church already possessed this set. If she were right, the chalices would be earlier than the other vessels, though by how much we have no means of judging. There is no means of knowing, however, whether the chalices really are earlier, or whether they might be later. Thus, while the bulk of the Sion Treasure can be accepted as dating from somewhere between 550 and 565, the chalices and a paten donated by Maria the Illustrious (no. 6; + ΥΙΙΕΡ ΜΝΗΜΗC ΜΑΡΙΑC ΛΑΜΠΡΟΤΑ (της) +) are not dated precisely, and they might well fall outside the bracket given by the stamps. For most purposes, then, the whole treasure may be regarded as belonging mostly to the third quarter of the sixth century; but readers of this volume and of the eventual full catalogue and report must remember that the outside limits of the dating are at present simply not known.

This uncertainty of dating of the objects adds to the difficulty of identifying a reason and date for the deposition of the hoard, although the stamps of course give a *terminus post quem*. BOYD (p. 7) is cautious and suggests that, while Arab raids of the 7th century have been suggested as a cause, the possibilities should be

borne in mind that both the silver might have been salvaged because its church had been abandoned because of some natural disaster such as earthquake or drought, and that it might have been flattened for easy transport and because it was destined for refashioning later. But it is difficult to think of any documented case to support her arguments. A political event seems a much more likely cause for such a treasure to be hidden. For Lycia itself, HELLENKEMPER points out (pp. 68–69, picking up Cyril Mango's suggestion in E. AKURGAL/C. MANGO/R. ETTINGHAUSEN, *I tesori della Turchia* [1966] 98) that no such event is known before the seventh century, when the Arabs, advancing west, in June 655 crushed the Byzantine navy in the famous "Battle of the Masts" in the bay of Phoinix (Finike), some 15 km. offshore from Korydalla, the findplace of the Sion treasure. Not only was the battle in the immediate vicinity of Korydalla, but the Arab fleet had to land at least after the victory to acquire water and provisions for the return journey, and this alone would have been a more than sufficient occasion for the people of Korydalla to abandon their houses, hide or take their belongings and those of their churches and to flee if they could to the mountains. Some will never have escaped and some will never have returned. In the light of such events on the very findspot of the Sion treasure, a very strong case indeed has to be made out if we are not to treat the events of 655 as the cause of the hiding of the treasure.

The nature of the Sion treasure is apparently straightforward. BOYD (p. 5) describes the treasure as, "remarkable not only for its high quality, but because of the number and variety of its contents, which appear to represent a significant portion of the silver furnishings of a single church". We cannot be sure that the treasure represents all the objects unearthed in 1963. BOYD (p. 8) reports a story of the late 1960s, for example, that a baptismal font, allegedly from the same find, was on the antiquities market in Europe, and because the lamps, polycandela and patens appear to have been made in pairs, it is possible, though not certain, that two openwork lamps and a paten are missing. In spite of these uncertainties, however, BOYD is of course right that the large number of surviving objects can be divided into altar implements and architectural elements. The altar implements include patens of exceptional size (58 to 77.5 cm. in diameter) and made in sets of two or three, a silver asterisk (which fits within the border of paten no. 3), two censers, a variety of chalices, several pairs of book covers, two large amphorae and a ewer. On the other hand, the "liturgical paraphernalia" (to use BOYD's phrase, p. 6) of spoons, strainers, ladles or other utensils commonly found in other church treasures are absent. But what distinguishes this from other church treasures is the remarkable revetments for various kinds of fittings and architectural elements: silver sheets to cover an altar table, sheathings for columns of two sizes and for a capital and a column base. All this forms persuasive support for BOYD's proposition.

Nevertheless, is BOYD's interpretation, leading to her conclusion (p. 8) that what was found, more than fifty objects, "reflects better than any surviving church treasure the nature and contents of a relatively prosperous sixth-century church", the only possible one? There is no doubt that much of it is from a single church, because Bishop Eutychianos commissioned a large part of the treasure – 29 objects out of more than fifty. For the revetments, chalices and one of the patens, however, the argument is not so certain (ŠEVČENKO, p. 50). There is no epigraphic evidence to show that the revetments belong with Eutychianos' gifts and the church of Sion. And the chalices differ from the other objects in their inscriptions, weights, and manufacture (BOYD, pp. 9–14, esp. p. 13). Moreover, the one mention of a church in their inscriptions refers specifically to one in an unrelated town: ΕΚΛΗΧΙΑC TECCWN (presumably meaning "[property] of the church of Tessai (?)", ŠEVČENKO, p. 50, although he reports in note 85 Cyril Mango's suggestion that the reading might be ἐκ κ>λησίας τες [= τῆς] Cιών and that the object might be connected with Sion after all). Finally, the largest of the patens, that donated by Maria the Illustrious (no. 6), differs in form, decoration and lettering from the others.

There must on this evidence be a possibility that the treasure is derived from a number of churches. Support for this, though not proof, comes from the fact that, except for large flat objects like the patens and polycandela, most of the treasure was crushed and flattened or rolled up. This might imply that the treasure was prized, not as a collection of ecclesiastical silver from a single church, but for the value of the metal, perhaps to be used as loot or bullion or ransom. In this case, whoever hid the hoard will have assembled the metal from whatever source came to hand, going if necessary from place to place (and from church to church) until he had sufficient for his purpose. On the other hand, a telling argument (again, not proof) that the objects came from a single church is that the functions of the various groups of objects do not for the most part overlap with each other. It is difficult to imagine that a looter acquired all the patens (except

perhaps one) and censers and no chalices from one church, and that he then did the opposite at another church. Thus BOYD's theory becomes attractive, when she suggests (pp. 13–14) that, while Eutychianos' gift includes a reasonably complete set of liturgical vessels, the reason that it lacked the most important vessels, the chalices, may be that the church already possessed them. Nevertheless, the point being made in this review is that, however attractive a particular theory, the nature of the Sion treasure, like of that of almost every other surviving silver treasure, is surrounded by uncertainties and that the basic assumptions must be kept under constant review in the light of new discoveries or reassessments.

Let us suppose, in spite of this uncertainty, that the Sion treasure does come from a single church. ŠEVČENKO (p. 47) points out that the lay donors of the treasure, lady Maria, λαμπροτάτη, and a man, Rouphinos, "of illustrious memory" (τῆς λαμπροῦς μνήμης) and so perhaps also *clarissimus*, are "poor matches" socially for Megas, the donor of the Riha paten and two large ewers in the Kaper Koraon treasure (MANGO *op. cit.* [1986] nos. 35, 37, 38); but the Sion treasure, which weighs more than 500 lb (= 2000 solidi) is much the heaviest and implies great prosperity. And BOYD (p. 5) tells us that, "to judge from the high quality of the craftsmanship and the substantial weight of the individual objects, the church would seem to have been of some importance". Just how prosperous, however, was the church compared to other churches? Of the wealth owned by churches M. MANGO's study in this volume (pp. 123–136) is the most comprehensive account. The documentary sources, of course, tend to record quantities of gold and silver which were remarkable for their own day and subsequently. In Rome, for example, Constantine gave the Lateran, the cathedral of Rome, more than 160 liturgical vessels of silver, weighing about 1000 lb (the equivalent of 4000 solidi), and silver lighting equipment weighing more than 4000 lb (16,000 solidi), while Valentinian III gave the new church of S. Lorenzo in Lucina 60 lb of gold objects (4320 solidi) and 45 silver objects weighing 285 lb (1140 solidi). Outside Rome, totals of silver objects in Italian churches recorded in the Liber Pontificalis (183–6) range from 100 to 300 lb (400–1200 solidi): Albanum 112 lb (448 solidi); Capua 264 lb (1056 solidi); Naples 290 lb (1160 solidi); Ostia 266 lb (1064 solidi) (MANGO p. 133); but the weight of 54 lb (216 solidi) recorded at Tivoli in the fifth century falls below this range (MANGO *op. cit.* [1986] 264). In the early seventh century two churches in Auxerre were given silver dinner services weighing 540 lb (2160 solidi) (J. ADHÉMAR, *Rev. Arch.* 4, 1934, 44–54; MANGO p. 134). The churches of Edessa had between 1500 and 5000 lb each (6000 to 20 000 solidi), depending on whether the foundation was a monastic church or one of the major churches (BOYD p. 17; MANGO in: F. BARATTE [éd.], *Argenterie romaine et byzantine: Actes de la table ronde*, Paris 11–13 octobre 1983 [1988] 161; MANGO p. 134). The archaeological evidence of wealth, in particular silver plate, owned by churches, on the other hand, gives lower figures: Water Newton 12 lb (48 solidi), Phela 11 lb (44 solidi), Gallunianu 5 lb (20 solidi), Beth Misona 4 lb (16 solidi), Kaper Koraon 82 lb (328 solidi), and Sion 500 lb (2000 solidi) (MANGO *op. cit.* [1986] nos. 61–66 [Phela], nos. 77–82 [Gallunianu], nos. 57–60 [Beth Misona], nos. 1–56 [Kaper Koraon]; MANGO [1988] p. 171). Thus, if one ignores imperial gifts, the Sion treasure, compared with figures in the documentary record, is less valuable than the treasures of major and monastic churches in Edessa and the two churches in Auxerre, but more valuable than both the treasures of churches in Italy mentioned in the Liber Pontificalis (Naples, Ostia, Capua and Albanum) and also that of Tivoli. Alternatively, if one compares the Sion treasure with those church treasures that actually survive, it is very much more valuable than those of Water Newton, Phela, Gallunianu and Beth Misona, and indeed it is about eight times more valuable even than the next largest church treasure, from Kaper Koraon. Thus there is ample justification for BOYD's judgement that the Sion treasure comes from a church "of some importance"; but at the same time the very small number of available figures quoted above and the obvious uncertainties which lie behind them make it clear that there is the greatest difficulty in interpreting "importance" in this context, and greater certainty based on the evidence of silver will come only when a great many more treasures have been found, if ever.

The problem of the size and quality of the treasure leads on to the last question to be considered here, namely where the treasure may have come from. The findplace, as BOYD (p. 51 and n. 94) relates, is Büyükk Asar, ancient Korydalla, a hill outside the modern village of Kumluca, in south-western Turkey, now about six kilometres inland from the Lycian coast. ŠEVČENKO, however, draws attention (pp. 49–50) to the basis evidence for the argument, that a number of objects in the treasure either display the words ἅγια Ciών, "Holy Sion", combined with the name or monogram of Eutychianos, or contain the name of Eutychianos alone. ŠEVČENKO (pp. 50–51) goes on to suggest an identification of the original home of the treasure as the Lycian church and monastery bearing the name of Sion, and known from the Life of Saint Nicholas, abbot of Holy Sion, as ἡ ἅγια Ciών or ἡ ἅγια καὶ ἔνδοξος Ciών. That Sion was situated somewhere in the moun-

tains above the metropolis of Myra, and M. HARRISON (*Anatolian Stud.* 13, 1963, 117–51, esp. 150, and *Yayla* 1, 1977, 10–15) identified it at Karabel, high up in the mountains above Myra. E. KITZINGER (*Gatherings in Honor of Dorothy E. Miner* [1974] 3–17) and C. FOSS (*Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, forthcoming, cited by ŠEVČENKO p. 51) follow Harrison in this; but ŠEVČENKO would prefer Nicholas's *Sion* to be in the mountains near Manastir, north of Ernez.

H. HELLENKEMPER (pp. 65–71) sees things differently. Like N. FIRATLI (*Akten VII. Internat. Kongr. Christliche Archäologie, Trier*, 5–11 September 1965 [1969] 523–25), Hellenkemper prefers to connect the treasure with Büyük Asar, and in particular with a church of which the ruins are only 20–30m from the findplace of the treasure. He argues (pp. 66–67) that the very few church treasures with exact findspots have been found in or near the churches in which they were used, for example at Luxor and at Resafa, and that this is supported by literary evidence for Seleucia and the shrine of Thekla during attacks by the Isaurians c. 430, and for Jerusalem and Alexandria during the Arab invasions during the first half of the seventh century. Why, he asks next (p. 69), would such a heavy and sumptuous treasure have been brought from the monastery at *Sion*, which lay more than 40km by land to a more vulnerable location near the coast? The journey would, moreover, have moved the treasure from the See of Myra to the See of Korydalla, making the silver an unlikely gift from the bishops of Myra to a church outside their jurisdiction. ŠEVČENKO (pp. 51–2), on the other side of the argument, points out that the name *Holy Sion* is rare. He cites it (p. 52 and n. 97) as the name c. 1060 of a monastery in Georgia, and reports a roughly contemporary occurrence of the name, when the monk Strategios of *Holy Sion* signed after the fourth session of the Ecumenical Council in 787; but ŠEVČENKO conjectures that Strategios may have been abbot of the Lycian monastery. Against his own argument ŠEVČENKO quotes an inscription on a sixth-seventh century censer in the Ashmolean Museum (no. 1980.17), reported to him by Marlia Mango: + θυμιατήριον τῆς Ἁγίας Σιών Ζέντρον – "censer [belonging to] the *Holy Sion* at *Zentron*". *Zentron* must be an unknown place and is a parallel for Hellenkemper's supposed name of the church at Büyük Asar. This supports the possibility of Hellenkemper's two other hypotheses, that pilgrimage of Lycian clergy and laymen to Palestine would have resulted in the dedication of a number of churches in Lycia to the names of each of the holy sites in Jerusalem, with the result that there could easily have been a church of *Holy Sion* in Korydalla, or that the inscription *ἁγία Σιών βοήθει* might be not a link to a monastery or church of *Holy Sion* but an early formula denoting the *Christian Sion*, a pervasive source of power that could work miracles and be involved anywhere in Lycia (ŠEVČENKO p. 51, quoting Dr. Gary Vikan). Each author in the end concludes, not with a dogmatic solution, but by emphasizing modestly that this discussion is not a solution but rather an attempt to formulate the problems. The reader is presented with all the currently available evidence and must make up his own mind – if he can.

These problems of the *Sion* treasure have been treated at some length in order to demonstrate to the reader that the discovery and preliminary publication of this magnificent treasure raise more questions than solutions for the subject as a whole. This publication, however, which ranges far more widely than can be discussed in detail here, is a major contribution to knowledge, and for many years it will be an indispensable starting point for anyone interested in religious silver, whether pagan or Christian, in churches, or in early Byzantium.

Oxford

Kenneth Painter