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Architects of Piety: The Cappadocian Fathers and the Cult of the Martyrs. By Vasiliki M. Limberis. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. xvii + 232 pp. \$74.00 cloth.

The present volume demonstrates convincingly how Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus used the cult of the martyrs in a highly elaborate manner to promote popular piety and to assert their episcopal authority in the fourth-century Cappadocia. In doing so, it complements the earlier theological presentation of the theme in Basil by Mario Girardi (*Basilio di Cesarea e il culto dei martiri nel IV secolo* [Bari: Istituto di Studi classici e cristiani, Università di Bari, 1990]), while drawing on the more recent work of Raymond Van Dam and Philip Rousseau that evinces the social context of the world of the Cappadocians.

The volume opens up with an examination of the interplay between the historical context and the enduring mythos of a saint's own story. After examining the various liturgical holidays present in the fourth-century calendar, some of which were introduced by the Cappadocian Fathers themselves, the first chapter focuses on the *panegyris* (festival assembly) as a transformative event that leads the faithful to participation in the martyr's holiness and the ways in which the Cappadocian Fathers used the martyrs in their preaching, scriptural exegesis, and calls to Christian morality. Limberis emphasizes how such strategies ensured episcopal control over the cult of the martyrs.

Chapter 2 deals with how the Cappadocian Fathers materialized the martyrria for their audiences. In particular, it focuses on how Gregory of Nyssa deploys his rhetorical skills to dramatically describe the difficulties encountered in building a martyrrium for Theodore the Recruit in order to urge his audience to participate in the holiness of the saint. Limberis draws an imaginative comparison between Gregory's homily and the extant ruins of the martyrrium of St. Philip in Hierapolis to help the reader understand the importance of such a rhetorical exercise for promoting popular piety.

In the opinion of this reviewer, chapter 3 is by far the most interesting in the book, as it deals with the theme of the imagined spiritual or near blood kinship between the Cappadocians and various martyrs as a way to promote piety and to assert their episcopal control over the cult of the martyrs and over the region. In their sermons, treatises, and eulogies, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus exploited successfully their elite social status as bishops and members of wealthy families to embed their own families (beginning with Emmelia, Macrina, Nonna, Gorgonia, Caesarius but ending with the Cappadocian Fathers themselves, as subsequent history has shown) in the larger "family" of martyrs of the region, such as Thecla, Julitta, the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia, Theodore, and Gregory Thaumaturgus. In Limberis's

opinion, that strategy helped them fight off charges of heresy, sanctify their families, and solidify their episcopal power. Both here and in other chapters, Limberis relies on the theories of Peter Brown and Raymond Van Dam that present the saints as powerful “patrons” who provided protection and comfort for their “clients.” As authoritative friends and spiritual relatives who are already the friends of God, the martyrs can provide comfort and succor for the faithful during difficult times.

Chapter 4 analyzes the issue of gender and martyrdom in the cultural, social and ideological contexts of fourth-century Cappadocia, concluding that an ambiguity is present in the Cappadocian representation of gender and its transformation and transcendence, due to the duality of living one’s life in the local community and the eternal world of God, but also to the upholding of the social roles demanded by rules of the fourth-century Cappadocian elite mentality.

This outstanding contribution to the knowledge of fourth-century Cappadocia is a welcome addition to the study of some of the most enduring and beloved figures of Christianity. The volume can be used successfully in a graduate class dealing with the Cappadocians. Its interdisciplinary methodology (historical, literary, artistic, cultural, gender attentive, theological, and hagiographic) renders the book appropriate for use with multiple student audiences.

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The Eucharist in Pre-Norman Ireland. By Neil O’Donoghue. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011. xv + 352 pp. \$48.00 paper.

As the title suggests, this is a narrowly focused study. Neil O’Donoghue has two goals: the first is to study what Irish texts and *realia* (grave monuments, church buildings) indicate about the Irish veneration and use of the eucharist, especially as *viaticum* for the dying; the second is to demonstrate that Irish eucharistic practices did not differ significantly from those in Britain and on the continent. He chose the pre-Norman period, that is, from the fifth to the late twelfth centuries, because the conquerors from England introduced continental religious orders and Norman bishops who imposed a new order on the church in Ireland.

Following a clear historical introduction, O’Donoghue provides a seriatim listing of sources, divided into written, archaeological, and iconographical.