Notices of Archaeological Publications

Theodore Fyfe & P. M. Johnston

To cite this article: Theodore Fyfe & P. M. Johnston (1910) Notices of Archaeological Publications, *Archaeological Journal*, 67:1, 204-212, DOI: [10.1080/00665983.1910.10853148](https://doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1910.10853148)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00665983.1910.10853148>

Published online: 17 Jul 2014.

Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)

Article views: 2

View related articles [↗](#)

Notices of Archaeological Publications.

THE THOUSAND AND ONE CHURCHES. By Sir W. M. RAMSAY, D.C.L. and Miss GERTRUDE L. BELL. 9 x 5½, pp. xiv + 580, 4 maps and 386 photographs and line drawings. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909. 20s. net.

Sir W. M. Ramsay and Miss Gertrude Bell are to be congratulated on the expeditious appearance of this volume, giving the results of their quite recent researches in Central Anatolia. Without suggesting for a moment that the work shews signs of hurry, it is inevitable that it should have the character of a particularly workmanlike first publication of results rather than a matured and final study of the architecture of the Kara Dagħ. It is satisfactory, however, to have such a preliminary survey so quickly brought forward. In archaeology, preliminary surveys and reports are essential, and, value apart, one has to consider that in these days of enterprise in research, one never knows who is next going to be in the field.

If not literally first and last, the book is, virtually, a record, with a somewhat busy commentary, of architectural remains, and, therefore, as Sir W. M. Ramsay himself points out, is mostly the work of his collaborator. Apart altogether from her wide knowledge and proved literary gift, Miss Bell has essayed a difficult task, that of writing clearly, and at the same time technically, about architecture; for it is as material in the history of architecture that her work must ultimately stand or fall. From this point of view, to the dispassionate observer, this work of hers, dealing with an obscure but to her important phase of an epoch in building, as yet little known, must either contain in itself or be ultimately given, that perspective which alone will place it in true relation to the large body of fact, already well known and accepted, in the history of the origins of western styles in building.

It may be said at the outset, that Miss Bell slips at once into her task with a directness which almost disarms criticism. Resolutely and systematically, piece by piece, she examines the material of her forty-eight churches and the various other buildings which form her specific subject-matter.

So far, her work is a record of fact, for the most part admirably explained and illustrated. She might do well, however, in a future edition, to condense some of her writing on architectural detail, and, either by herself, or with the help of an architect, take the wider view of her subject as *design*, not merely as building. One misses, generally speaking, this wider view, an examination of the traditional detail of building as part of a great (and to some extent perhaps, purposeful) progression in living structure. Let it be admitted, however, that it would be unfair to say too much on this head in the present instance. Miss Bell might quite reasonably reply that she had set herself the task, to begin with, of chronicling the building fact as so much material to be sifted and turned over in the future by herself

and others, and that she has not had time as yet to more than begin the work; or, moreover, that not being an architect, she left other aspects of the work to be taken up by other minds. She may not be ungrateful, however, if an example is pointed out where a recognition of a wider principle is at the outset essential, if such studies as these are to take their proper place in the history of building. In what Miss Bell terms the "stone niche" treatment in fig. 348, the blind arcade immediately under the actual lintel of the motive is of essential value to the design in that position. The effect of the actual lintel has been reduced by an ornamented band which virtually renders it an architrave in two fasciae, so that the lintel, already somewhat weak in relation to the supports, *demands* a strong reinforcing band immediately below. This the designer must have felt. It is the recognition of such principles as this which constitutes true tradition in architecture. Threads like this are innumerable in the history of building, and as yet, perhaps, are hardly given their proper place, but one cannot insist too strongly on their importance. Referring generally to niche treatment, Miss Bell states on p. 455, "on the whole it must be admitted that the wall space is treated pretty much as a flat surface to which the niche decoration is applied without reference to structural considerations, and the same is as true of Ravenna (with all deference to Rivoira, who claims for the architects there a more definite purpose) as it is of Asia." No designer could ever feel that this is true.

In part iii of the book, Miss Bell enters into the discussion of plan types, such as the basilica, churches with a single chamber, cruciform churches, and the octagon. She is very well qualified to speak on such a subject, as probably no one in this country has a wider personal knowledge of ecclesiastical architecture in the Nearer East. As a student and disciple of Strzygowski, she adopts his subdivisions of type in the main, and she also quite clearly adheres to his views on the importance of Asia Minor as against Rome in the development of the higher forms of building, such as the vault and the dome. There is a great deal that is extremely interesting and suggestive in this part of the book, which cannot be touched upon here; such remarks as (p. 309), citing Strzygowski, that the stone basilica of the East shews no Roman influence; p. 311, "the basilica and barn church of the Kara Dagh are alike far removed from any relation with the antique;" p. 317, that "the horse-shoed form for arches and apses (the latter both in plan and elevation) is another of the many proofs of the markedly oriental character of the Anatolian plateau;" pp. 347, 349 and 430, the importance of the martyrion (or martyr-church, dedicated to one of the innumerable saints or martyrs of the early Church, a cult which followed that of the pagan gods), on the hilltops, as a T-shaped, cruciform, round, or octagonal plan, though only of the two latter forms in Western Europe; and p. 397, citing Millet, that the cross-in-square church is found, in germ, in the basilica of Maxentius and the baths of Caracalla. Miss Bell points out (p. 319), that "colour, and not the plastic arts, was counted on to adorn these buildings." This is as true of Rome as of the East (witness Pompeii) and in fact, is largely true of work round the entire Eastern Mediterranean, from the very earliest times. Miss Bell is much more probably right than Choisy in saying that the vault in "some early form was known to the first monumental builders of Anatolia" (p. 436).

On the larger issue, the relative importance of Asia Minor (and Syria) on the one hand, and Rome on the other, on Byzantium and the future art of the West, there is not space to say much here; nor does Miss Bell say much about it herself. But as architecture, or as a permanent influence on future work, one must not attach too great importance to the buildings treated in this book. They are, without exception, small, and therefore cannot be mentioned for a moment with any of the great formative works of Rome, such as the basilica of Maxentius or the baths of Caracalla. It might seem absurd to even mention this, were it not that the value of *size* (surely a quite obvious point but none the less a vastly important one), seems to be getting lost sight of in the mass of talk about Byzantine origins.

One can concede a great deal of oriental influence, perhaps nearly as much as Professor Strzygowski would, but the fact of chief importance must remain that side by side with the oriental influence which assisted in developing the full Byzantine style, there was the classic influence of Imperial Rome impregnated with eastern detail, perfectly exemplified in the vast palace of Diocletian on the Adriatic and numerous buildings in Syria¹, and that this eastern classic or Roman influence (and Roman it must be called at the bottom), exercised much the profounder influence on all that constitutes surface architecture on Romanesque and Renaissance work in Italy, France and Germany. The chief value of the buildings illustrated by Miss Bell, archaeology apart, lies in the spontaneity, charm and soundness of their stonework, and the suggestiveness of some of the plans. Many of them are thus well worth recording architecturally, and all are interesting from the point of view of development.

Before concluding with a note on Sir W. M. Ramsay's part in the book, a few criticisms of Miss Bell's method of describing the architecture might not be out of place here.

On p. 54, "flat" or "flat, somewhat elliptic" would be a better term than "shallow" in describing the relieving arch in church 3. By a shallow arch an architect would mean an arch that does not go deep into the wall. The moulding in fig. 22° should be described as "mitred": according to the drawing this term would appear to be more correct than Miss Bell's "fish-tail" in the angle, on p. 60.

Also on p. 60 it might be mentioned that the west door of church 4 is of the usual Greek pattern: "decorated with very shallow mouldings" seems hardly sufficient, where the jambs and lintel are so clearly of classic design.

On p. 42, the description "nine small double columns" in church 1 is distinctly misleading with such an insufficient plan of them as is given in fig. 2. One would infer they were columns coupled deepwise, but the illustration, fig. 6°, rather shews them as piers with rounded ends, though no plan is given. On pp. 50 and 53 Miss Bell gives a lengthy description of ornament which is pretty well shewn by photographs, and one would prefer rather some note on the character of the ornament in comparison with similar work in other lands.

On p. 358, the architectural character of the mouldings in fig. 282 is not well described: one of them seems remarkably Greek. The descrip-

¹ See Butler, and Miss Bell's *The Desert and the Sown*.

tion of the very interesting archivolt in fig. 293 contains no mention of its marked resemblance to Celtic work.

It is somewhat disappointing also to find no reference to the fine architectural character of St. Amphilochus at Konia, illustrated in figs. 329 and 330, and such a meagre notice of the very interesting plan of church 8, shewn in fig. 55. It would be better if the remarks on mouldings on pp. 475 to 480 had references to figures in the text: there seems to be only one such reference.

Sir W. M. Ramsay's part of the book consists of chapters at the beginning and the end, the former a general survey of history and topography, and the latter a note on the "other monuments, chiefly inscriptions, of the Kara Dagħ." The first chapter is vital in relation to Miss Bell's more detailed study.

The illustrations are generally excellent. The following might be mentioned: fig. 42; figs. 88 and 89 (which shews rather a fine motive, though it would have been better if the jambs of the doorway had been plain); the font in fig. 90; the "Gothic" arch, reminiscent of Syria, in fig. 134; fig. 141 (with the fine plinth, in detail, on fig. 144); the window in fig. 204; the masonry in figs. 205 and 219; the structure generally in fig. 308; the doorway in fig. 362; and the fortress in fig. 367.

There are two indexes, one a short classification of the principal types of building described, and the other one of place and church names.

THEODORE FYFE.

LOMBARDIC ARCHITECTURE, ITS ORIGIN, DEVELOPMENT AND DERIVATIVES. By G. T. RIVOIRA: translated by G. McN. RUSHFORTH, M.A. 2 vols. 12 x 8½, x + 250 + 368 pp, over 800 illustrations. London: Wm. Heinemann, 1910. £2 2s.

These two sumptuous volumes, models of good printing and beautiful illustration, supply for English readers a long-felt want. About nine years ago Signor Rivoira published his great work in Italy, and its cosmopolitan importance was immediately recognized by students of architecture throughout Europe. Nevertheless, it remained, except to Italian scholars, unknown and unappreciated by architectural and archaeological students in England, who have always lacked a comprehensive work of this nature in which is traced the rise and progress of the round arched style called Lombardic. For the general get-up of these volumes we have nothing but praise, saving for a groan as to their terrible weight, due to the unusually stout paper, which it must be presumed was chosen for the sake of the "process" illustrations interspersed in the text, an arrangement very convenient in itself, but involving the use of plate paper throughout.

The plan of the work is admirable: waiving all tedious and needless preliminaries as to the classical styles, Signor Rivoira commences with the Romano-Ravennate and Byzantino-Ravennate styles, in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era, tracing their course with a conciseness which is set off by delightful excursions into points of detail, an altogether admirable conjunction for serious students, and one which we would remind archaeologists is finding an ever-increasing appreciation from the general public. Would that all technical writers recognised this, and while giving us "broad

views," seasoned them with the *minutiae* that give so much point to the subject in hand.

After tracing his origins with a satisfying fulness, the author comes to the kernel of his work, the great Lombardic style, the product of the Comacine or Lombard gilds, from the close of the sixth century, a style occupying a middle place between the Romano-Ravennate and Byzantino-Ravennate and those later ramifications of the Lombardic, which we are accustomed to class as Romanesque generally, with such national and local varieties, or developments, as Saxon, Norman, etc. He demonstrates very satisfactorily the direct connexion between these Lombard architects and their gilds with the succeeding phases and styles of architecture, throughout Western Europe, during some six or seven centuries. Very fascinating is the following out of the pedigree, both in types of plan and constructional developments, and, to instance but one point of detail, in the forms of capitals.

One or two omissions in the general scheme of the work strike us as disappointing, although perhaps inevitable from exigencies of space. These are the entire ignoring of the highly interesting and valuable series of early and late Romanesque churches in Spain, and the work of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. If Signor Rivoira is tempted to take up his parable again we commend these national developments to his pen and camera.

With such an enormous field as is covered by these volumes, it is impossible to select more than a few points of detail for notice and criticism.

In vol. i, pp. 93, 94, we are given illustrations of a double-splayed window in a second-century villa in Rome, an interesting anticipation (if indeed it be not a direct progenitor) of the same feature commonly met with in our native Saxon Romanesque.

In the course of his account of the Pre-Lombardic style (vol. i, pp. 112-150), the author gives a good description (p. 145) of the carving of the Comacine gilds of the eighth century, who, "drawing their inspiration from Etruscan, Roman and Ravennate art . . . diffused it throughout Italy and along the eastern Coast of the Adriatic, acquiring, as time went on, in the different countries, a special character derived from the traditions of the school, local influence, etc. . . . In fact, though we may find in previous works the prototypes of the decorative elements which appear in carvings of this kind, the grooved bands, interlaced, knotted, and twisted in various ways; the compartments of different shapes, enclosing fanciful objects of all sorts: stars, crosses, lilies, bunches of grapes, leaves, sun-flowers, daisies, roses, whorls, bosses, birds, etc.; arcades; intersecting arches; cauliculi and the bead and reels; doves, generally pecking at something; peacocks drinking at a vase or fountain, with sometimes a serpent biting the crest on their heads; fishes, animals, birds, griffons, etc. following, facing, attacking, and biting one another, these elements are very often combined in such a way as to form absolutely new motives and compositions, which, though not very refined, are still original, rich, varied (sometimes even restless to the eye), and actually pleasing."

It is a tremendous sentence, typical in itself of the author's power of pursuing a great plan of architectural development, yet gathering up as he goes all the wealth of detail that lies in his path. Such vivid "picture-

writing" will delight and instruct the student of decorative carving and surface ornament, whose researches lead him alike to illuminated manuscripts; the interlaced patterns on early stone crosses, etc. in Ireland, Scotland and England; and that wonderful phase of early art known as Anglian, which so vividly recalls the work of these Comacines and its earlier prototypes.

In passing, it is interesting to find our fellow-countryman, Mr. T. G. Jackson, R.A. cited (vol. i, pp. 157-160) in regard to the churches of Dalmatia, with which, as architect and archaeological writer, his connexion is so well-known. Similarly in vol. ii, due regard is had to the researches of Prof. Baldwin Brown into the arts in Early England, although the conclusions of this eminent writer do not always appear to meet with the author's acceptance. The late Mr. J. T. Micklethwaite's well-known papers on Saxon church building in this Journal are also quoted.

We question the very early date (1032) given to the gallery of San Flaviano, Montefiascone (vol i, p. 214), where the arches are of *two* orders. The twelfth century seems a much more likely period for this super-structure, although the details of the church below are quite consistent with the earlier date.

Volume ii will, perhaps, appeal doubly to the English reader, as no less than 141 pages are devoted to "Ecclesiastical Architecture in England from Constantine to the Norman Conquest," "The Lombardo-Norman Style in England," and "The Early Christian Monuments of Ireland." These three chapters, indeed, occupy more than a third of the volume, which contains also "The Beginnings of the Lombardo-Norman Style in Burgundy," "The Lombardo-Norman Style in Normandy;" and two very important concluding chapters on "The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Germany," and "The Lombardo-Rhenish Style." It is in this connexion that our lament above applies, as to the entire omission of Spain and the Scandinavian countries, not to speak of the Netherlands and Switzerland, from such a comprehensive survey.

Space will not admit of our doing anything like justice to these sections, packed as they are with a bewildering wealth of interesting theories as to the pedigree of plan, construction and ornament.

We will content ourselves by pointing out statements that appear to us to be incorrect in the chapters dealing with England and Ireland.

The author's arguments as to the well-known Saxon tower of Sompting (pp. 189-90) are startling, and we cannot bring ourselves to accept them. He actually goes so far as to put it in the early part of the twelfth century, a pronouncement that no serious English student would for a moment accept, and this partly on the strength of his own misreading of the curious string-course above the ground story. Signor Rivoira describes this as a "course of billets" (a well-known Norman ornament), whereas it really consists of a series of vertical reeds and hollows; some with arched heads, in two rows, and is quite *sui generis*. The triangular-headed openings, the mid-wall shafts, with their "pulvins" (or corbel-capitals as we should prefer to call them), the tower-arch with its Corinthianesque capitals and cornucopiae, the rounded vertical shafts on the outside, having "Corinthian" and "Ionic" capitals: above all, the remarkable four-gabled spire, unique in England: all these absolutely un-Norman features

the author brushed away quite calmly, to enable him to reach his extraordinary conclusion. After this we are quite prepared to be told (p. 174) that the well-known St. Lawrence's chapel, Bradford-on-Avon, is of the reign of Edward the Confessor, "or, perhaps, with greater likelihood, the first years of the reign of the Conqueror." There is, in truth, not a tittle of architectural evidence in support of this hypothesis, which also runs counter to the well-known statement of William of Malmesbury. Signor Rivoira would upset all our established views as to the dating of such churches as Wing, Escomb, Worth, St. Michael's (Oxford), and St. Benet's (Cambridge), and such an unmistakable stone-rood as that remaining at Langford. He does not apparently know of the companion roods, with Mary and John, found at Headbourne Worthy (Hants), and Breamore, in the same county, although, quaintly enough, he illustrates the latter church (with its unique inscription on the transept arch), and assigns to it a tenth century date.

To jump for a moment to the Irish chapter, we are met with a comical instance of wrong dating in the west door of the little oratory, hard by Killaloe cathedral. The illustration shows us the triply recessed arch-orders, the foliated capitals and, *mirabile dictu*, the billet moulding round the hood, on the strength of which imagined ornament the author had relegated Sompting tower to the twelfth century: yet here, in text and illustration, the precise date of 1007 is assigned to this door. We personally know the little building in question, and it is undoubtedly of the early years of the eleventh century, but the west doorway is of course an insertion of the middle of the twelfth century. What, however, is of greater moment is the singular omission of any reference in this chapter to the interesting inscription relating to the burial, in Christchurch cathedral, Dublin, of "John, the master-builder of the brotherhood of Parma, and dame Ramez Perez of San Salvador of Asturias," the former probably the Italo-Spanish architect, c. 1170, of the quire and transept. If only by way of dissent, one might have expected a reference to the late Sir Thomas Drew's theory in this connexion, laid before the Dublin meeting of the Institute in 1900, and published in the *Journal*.¹

We might multiply instances of wrong dating in the chapter devoted to our Anglo-Norman work; such as in regard to the Chichester bas-reliefs, assigned to the last decade of the twelfth century, but, as most English authorities agree, of a date within the eleventh, if not actually pre-Conquest;² the Southwell tower capitals, surely of late eleventh century date; and a scalloped capital in the crypt of Gloucester cathedral church, which is certainly half a century later than the date assigned (1089-1100). We are grateful for the illustration, though taken from inaccurate drawings, of the remarkable chapel of St. John in the Tower of London. Some allusion might have been made to the T-shaped cross that appears in so many of the capitals, which occurs also in the eleventh-century work of Westminster Abbey, and in some of the crypt capitals of Canterbury cathedral church. To

¹ lvii, 295-296.

² They are wrongly described as marble panels, whereas they are of Caen stone. Mr. E. S. Prior, in his *Mediaeval Figure Sculpture* (*Architectural Review*, xii, 16, 17)

dates these remarkable bas-reliefs, which he ascribes to the Winchester School of the Saxon renaissance of Dunstan's time, on what appears to us to be sound comparative evidence, at c. A.D. 1000.

insist on these small blemishes and omissions, due as much as anything to the enormous field covered by this monumental work, would be unprofitable and ungracious. It is a book for which, once more, we would express our warm praise and deep gratitude to Signor Rivoira : and we would include in this tribute his translator, Mr. G. McN. Rushforth, who has acquitted himself of a difficult task most creditably, although we wish he had not given us *lesenas* for our homely "pilaster-strips."

P. M. JOHNSTON.

LE CHATEAU SAINT-ANGE. Par E. RODOCANACHI. 13 × 10, 292 pp, 40 plates. Librairie Hachette et Cie, Paris. 1902.

The Castel Sant' Angelo is in many ways as interesting a building as Rome has to show ; and it may fairly be called an epitome of the city's history since Hadrian built it as his last resting place in A.D. 136, constructing at the same time the bridge which still leads to it, the Pons Aelius, now the Ponte Sant' Angelo. It was completed by his successor Antoninus Pius three years later, and served as the imperial mausoleum down to the time of Caracalla. At what period it was first fortified as a *tête-de-pont* is uncertain : it was so used when the city was besieged by the Goths under Vitiges, and it was then that the troops of Belisarius threw down upon the besiegers the statues with which the exterior was adorned, some fragments of which have been found in the fosse. In 890, while Rome was being devastated by a pestilence, Gregory the Great saw the archangel Michael sheathing his sword above the castle, and in consequence of this miracle Boniface IV, some twenty years later, erected the chapel of Sanctus Angelus inter Nubes on the summit of the building, which thus acquired its present name.

During the struggles between the great families of Rome in the early middle ages, the castle became the chief stronghold of the party in power, but from the time of Boniface IX onwards it was held by the popes, who constructed a covered passage, known as the Passetto, to it from the Vatican, leading along the top of the wall by which Leo IV had encircled the Borgo and the Vatican, the so-called Leonine City. Nicholas V added four circular towers, one at each angle of the square base of the monument, and Alexander VI a larger round tower, commanding the bridge ; while the popes of the early sixteenth century, and especially Julius II, Clement VII and Paul III devoted their attention to its internal decoration : the two last especially caused the papal apartments to be adorned with beautiful stuccoes and frescoes, representing mainly classical subjects. In the meantime the former, during the sack of Rome in 1527, was besieged within the castle by the troops of Charles V ; so that it served both as a fortress and as a summer residence, and also it must be added, as a prison, a purpose for which it continued to be used even into the middle of the nineteenth century.

In most respects the work of the past few years has added immeasurably to our knowledge of the building, which is now being thoroughly and most tastefully restored by Colonel Mariano Borgatti : the internal decorations of the rooms already alluded to were hidden under whitewash before his

labours began ; and, more important still, he has added much to our knowledge of the structure of the original mausoleum, having demonstrated in particular the antiquity, as far as the very top, of the square tower which rises from the centre of the solid circular concrete core forming the tomb itself (the square base, which still surrounds this to a certain height, is not solid). The edifice, with various other buildings adjacent to it, is to be used for the so-called Mostra Retrospettiva of 1911, which will deal with the mediaeval and renaissance periods, and is to include sections devoted to Roman topography, costume, arms, armour and the like. As this exhibition is intended to serve as the foundation of a permanent exhibition and library, it may be hoped that Castel Sant' Angelo will become the home of the mediaeval museum which Rome does not yet possess. From what has been said, the importance of the subject dealt with by the book before us may be gathered. The treatment is chronological ; the first chapter is concerned with the Roman period, and is contributed by M. Albertini, formerly a student of the French School of Rome ; and it is a good treatment of the subject, though the author (p. 5) does not seem to have realised that Colonel Borgatti, as we have seen, had already discovered that the square central tower in the upper portion belonged to the Roman period, so that the highest part cannot have been cylindrical, as was hitherto supposed. The rest is the work of M. Rodocanachi himself : a good deal of it rests on researches in the archives of the castle, now forming a part of the state archives in Rome, and the subject is interestingly treated ; though the author has not that familiarity with the history of the building itself and its various transformations which Colonel Borgatti possesses in such a degree as to make us hope that after 1911 he may find time to publish a new and enlarged edition of his work on Castel S. Angelo, which appeared so long ago as 1891. The illustrations of the book before us, too, though good in themselves, are not well arranged ; many of them are taken from renaissance drawings and engravings of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but the sources are not as a rule indicated, either on the plates themselves or in the text. The illustrations are not as a rule adequately described, nor are the points of importance which they possess brought out. Two of the former on pl. 13, which are taken from the famous Codex Barberinianus of Giuliano da San-Gallo (now Barb. Lat. 4048) are somewhat unfortunately described as "*gravures*." They are, too, badly placed in relation to the text : thus, it is obvious from the footnote to page 37 that plate 4, which is as a fact opposite page 28, should have been placed opposite to it ; and we find reproductions of parts of Nolli's plan of Rome of 1748 placed opposite the text on page 37 dealing with the year 1378 without, as it seems, any adequate reason. But on the whole the work is one of considerable interest to the student and lover of Rome ; for, as we have pointed out, the history of the Castel Sant' Angelo is bound up with that of the Eternal City.