# The French construction of Byzantium: reflections on the Louvre exhibition of Byzantine art

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Between 3 November 1992 and 1 February 1993 visitors to the Louvre (and there were many) could see a dazzling exhibition entitled *Byzance. L'art byzantine dans les collections publiques françaises*. The exhibition was popular, busy and full; it was supplemented by a series of lectures (to be published) and a (literally) heavy scholarly catalogue. Both for the organization of the exhibition and for the production of a significant catalogue, we are particularly indebted to the work of Jannic Durand, keeper of the department of *Objets d'art* of the Louvre. There are 400 items covered in the catalogue, their scale ranging from large silks to coins.

The present paper arises out of this exhibition, and might have reacted to any of the several roles of a major art exhibition. Such an event can for the public be an occasion to discover undervalued artistic achievement. It can offer a reassessment of some less well known artist – as seems to have been a consequence of anniversary exhibitions of El Greco. Or it may reassemble the dispersed production of some famous artist or centre. It can, at another level, be the context for scholarship to reappraise material, to see new juxtapositions, or simply to discover the unknown. In other words, exhibitions are self-conscious attempts to promote dialogue and to stimulate reactions.[1] This dialogue would ideally take place in the exhibition gallery itself in the presence of the objects; but the production of an effective catalogue can prolong the forum.[2] This paper is one attempt to prolong a particular dialogue stimulated by the Paris exhibition and which will be revived by the exhibition of Byzantine art in British collections which will be held in London in 1995 with a related spring symposium on the *British Construction of Byzantium.*

The Paris exhibition ranks as one of the major showings of Byzantine art in the twentieth century, although the list of such substantial exhibitions is longer than often realized. The last comparable large exhibition in Paris was as long ago as

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Miniature Mosaic 14th c.
**St George**

*Paris* *Musée du Louvre*
Diam. 22 cm

1931; but in between these two shows Byzantine works have been exposed quite extensively. The most obvious highlights in the public display of Byzantine art (together with scholarly catalogues) were at Baltimore (1947), Edinburgh and London (1958), Paris (1958), Athens (1964), Venice (1974), New York (1977), Brussels (1982), Istanbul (1983), Athens (1985), Moscow (1991) – and this is only a selection.[3] The conceptual framework within which the choice of objects was made for Paris 1992-3 can be precisely described. The objects on show were all works which were made in Byzantium and which have ended up in public collections in France. The highly successful aim of the Louvre was to bring together in one place as many such items as possible.[4]

Of all the questions which might be raised, one alone will be pursued in this discussion: how can the material objects produced by one culture but collected in another society be analysed as a way of understanding the historical perception in the collector's mind of the 'other'? In the case of France, we are faced with all sorts of problems about the relation between the acquisition of material objects and broader cultural attitudes. Everyone is aware of the role of the 'collecting' (if not systematic expropriation) of foreign art, including Antique art, in the construction of the imperial image of Napoleon. The case of the acquisition of Byzantine art in France is far more complicated, as it occurred over a considerably longer period and diverse circumstances. One aspect of the present enquiry is therefore to investigate the related empirical questions about how and when the objects arrived in France. This limitation of aim is not an attempt to avoid confronting the whole scenario of the French construction of Byzantium. It is simply an attempt to be practical. It is to argue that, if we can at least begin to appreciate the motivation and interpretation of the collecting and viewing of art, we might be able to move on to a better understanding of the broader cultural ideology. The French view of Byzantium, as much as the British one, might without much reflection be thought to be solely attributable to the intellectual consequences of the Enlightenment. This was essentially the 'banal' conclusion reached in the important historiographical study by J.-M. Spieser: that nineteenth-century discussion of Byzantine art was embedded in the intellectual and political discourse of the period.[5] I will suggest that the information contributed by this Paris exhibition allows us to refine, if not undermine, this conclusion; and it offers a far broader and more complex conception of the relation between the collecting of Byzantine art in France and the French perception of Byzantium. Although Spieser has usefully collected together scholarly statements about Byzantium, analysis of the groups and individuals

whose *mentalités* led to the presence of Byzantine art in France reveals something more than an academic discourse conceived in terms of 'Hellenism' and its continuities and decadence.[6] Montesquieu and Gibbon will certainly be making their obligatory appearance in this paper, but only as minor characters.

The method followed in this paper will therefore be to approach the question of how Byzantine art was perceived in France *through* the evidence of its historical acquisition and collection. The value of the Louvre exhibition and its accompanying documentation is that we can begin to *quantify* the French experience. This enables us to refine what must be the initial reaction of every visitor to this particular exhibition, French or not: that Byzantine art reflects a medieval culture dedicated obsessively to the collection and embellishment of Christian holy relics. If one object might be said to sum up the conception of Byzantium created by the exhibition it is the pair of exquisite twelfth-century silver gilt plaques which came from the church of the Pharos in the Great Palace of the Byzantine emperors at Constantinople and which were made to cover and display a relic of the stone of the Sepulchre of Christ, the material proof of the Resurrection. The reliquary (catalogue no. 248; references to the catalogue are given hereafter in square brackets by number only) represented the Marys at the Tomb and a gemmed cross, and encased a piece of rock; its authenticity was guaranteed by appropriate inscribed Gospel texts. As befitting a reliquary displayed in the innermost and most holy treasury of the palace, the workmanship is superb, but the atmosphere created might be described by some as 'the triumph of superstition'. By the dominance of such objects as these, the Paris exhibition guides the viewer to understand Byzantine artists and their patrons as narrowly dedicated to the production of exquisite detailed miniaturized objects – especially gems, medals, ivories and metalwork. It is only by studying the character of the historical acquisition of these objects in France and the ways that their presence might introduce bias into an understanding of Byzantium that this impression can be revised and reinterpreted. We also need to contextualize religious material historically in order to escape the squeamish rationalist reactions towards relics and their enhancement which is still encountered in some writings on Byzantium and the Middle Ages.

Considerable information is given in the Paris catalogue, both in the individual entries and in the introductory essay by Jannic Durand, about the French provenance of the material, its dating and its character. The quantification attempted in this paper depends on this information. There are of course a number of obscurities in the documentary evidence and no doubt there are some deliberate

evasions – the history of collecting is seldom a straightforward and open book.[7] In arriving at figures in any category, there are arbitrary decisions to be made. First I have decided to exclude glass weights and coins from my count, as they bias the categories too much, and in the case of coins (on which more later) the exhibition was, naturally, highly (and judiciously) selective - there are more than 6000 coins in the Cabinet des Médailles de la Bibliothèque Nationale, and large collections in other cities to choose from. This means that I have excluded 53 items from the total 400: we are dealing then with a total of 347 items. Secondly, I have decided to divide the phases of collecting into only four categories. This means that they are chronologically arbitrary and of different lengths; I have decided not, at this stage, to break down the categories into shorter, perhaps more significant, phases. (For example, it would obviously be instructive to separate materials in the Middle Ages which were acquired solely through looting in and after 1204 from those which arrived through more regular channels, such as diplomatic gifts or commerce. But this would require a fuller documentation than is presently available.)

In this paper four categories are set out for the analysis of the French acquisition of Byzantine art, and the totals for each category of the 347 items involved are given below:–

1. *Items acquired in the Middle Ages.* 75

2. *Items acquired between 1453 and the French Revolution* 79

3. *Items acquired in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries up to 1945* 146

4. *Items acquired since 1945* 47

With these figures before us, however crude they may be considered, we can begin to ask more precisely documented questions about the reception of Byzantine art in France, and to consider how the visual experience was a distinctive part of the development and intellectualization of the French construction of Byzantium. They show us immediately that exposure to Byzantium was something which had substantially occurred in France before the Enlightenment; indeed the figures show that before the considerable confiscations of property that took place in 1793 the French royalty and aristocracy and the Church had in their possession not much less than half the items subsequently acquired by the state and other

collectors since 1800 (154 items as against 193). This proportion would in fact be increased if coins had been taken into account, for these were a favourite interest of the kings of France. A magnificent collection of late imperial and Byzantine coins was built up by Louis XIV, and these were included in the publication of two thousand coins and medals in two volumes (subsidized by the King) which appeared in 1718 compiled by the scholar-monk and Byzantinist from Croatia, Matteo Bandur. He had come to France in 1702, invited by the famous monk of the Benedictine house of Saint Maur at Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Bernard de Montfaucon (1655-1741), whose own great work *L'Antiquité expliquée et représentée* appeared in its first edition in 1719. Montfaucon did himself focus on antiquity – 'la belle antiquité'– and ended his artistic survey with the column of Theodosius in Constantinople.[8]

The French experience is therefore seen to be significantly different from the British exposure to Byzantium. This is not to deny that Byzantine works of art arrived on British soil - the contents of the coffin of St Cuthbert and the Sutton Hoo ship burial are but two gauges of Byzantine penetration, and later in the artistic production of Winchester in the twelfth century we have indications of the existence of the knowledge of Byzantine materials. But France, consistently throughout the Middle Ages, had far closer contacts with Constantinople. In the second half of the sixth century the emperor Justin II sent a reliquary of the True Cross to Poitiers – though mysteriously the True Cross reliquary which is still there is an eleventh-century Byzantine production and not the original casing [241].[9] Several of the magnificent silks used for the wrapping of the relics of medieval saints in France likewise came from Constantinople. But when the twelfth or thirteenth-century Byzantine gilt reliquary of the True Cross reached the church of Jarcourt (Aube) in the fourteenth century, it was preciously re-set between angels made by French artists in memory of Marguerite d'Arc (died 1389). Such a reception of a Byzantine object shows an active and creative partnership between eastern and western Christianity [249]. A similar internationalism is exhibited in the manuscript of the works attributed to St Dionysios the Areopagite which was produced in Constantinople between 1403 and 1405 and sent in 1408 as a present to the Abbey of St Denis by the emperor Manuel II Palaiologos [356]. The archives of St Denis still also hold the papyrus roll containing a letter of the iconoclast emperor Theophilos sent to Louis the Pious around 839 from the imperial chancellery at Constantinople [125]. Indeed the fabulous Byzantine holdings of the Abbey attracted still more treasures: two cameos (one twelfth-century St John

the Baptist [202] and one thirteenth-century Archangel Michael [204]) were given by the Duc de Berry to St Denis in 1401 for the reliquary-bust of St Benoît. Their further afterlife is equally remarkable for the French manipulation of Byzantine art. The cameos were of course confiscated for the State among other holdings of the Abbey of St Denis in 1793; but in 1804 these cameos were taken and remounted on the crown of Napoleon.

Even the objects which reached France in the Middle Ages as a result of theft and plunder were clearly valued by both rulers and churchmen for their symbolic and actual religious and imperial powers – not just for their aesthetic or material value. The reliquary of the Sepulchre of Christ from the Pharos church in the imperial palace at Constantinople (mentioned above [248]) was duly transferred to the virtually equivalent monument in Paris. It was brought to Paris by St Louis IX in 1241 and became, together with the Crown of Thorns and the True Cross, part of the treasury of the Saint-Chapelle. The reliquary was transferred to the Abbey of St Denis in 1791 and became part of the state collection in 1793 (now in the Louvre). The Byzantine attitudes which had led to one of the functions of the church of St Sophia in Constantinople and the chapels of the imperial palace being repositories of the most famous relics of Christendom, making Constantinople a sacred city and a second Jerusalem, were duplicated in France in the late Middle Ages. Robert de Clari deposited 54 relics from the imperial palace of the Boucoleon at Corbie in 1213; and Wallon of Sarton brought the relic of the head of St John the Baptist now at Amiens [240] which he found, together with the head of St George, hidden in the church of St George of the Mangana. Indeed the energies of the French in the acquisition of relics led to the remarkable duplication of some pieces (several relics of the foreskin of Christ for example, although the relic was itself considered allowable as one of the few legitimate types of relic of Jesus, like his milk teeth) as well as the manufacture of other relics along a Byzantine model, such as the notorious Turin Shroud (which offended even some high officials of the church as soon as it appeared in France in the fourteenth century).[10]

Sufficient objects which entered French society in the Middle Ages directly from Byzantium have been mentioned to show that the Orthodox world was not then perceived as the remote or inaccessible 'other'. European Christianity was linked in many overlapping interests even before the period of the Crusades. Academic interest in the rise of 'humanism' in Italy may well have exaggerated the differences between the pious attitudes in Christians in Europe before the Reformation. One way of measuring late medieval piety might be through an analysis

of the active interest in collecting and displaying Byzantine relics and works of art. The objects in this first category which I have isolated from the display in the Paris exhibition allow us to appreciate the initial character of the French perception of Byzantium.

My second category is equally substantial in number – 79 items from the period after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 to the social and political changes in France caused by outbreak of the Revolution in 1789. (We should again remember that coins are not included in this figure, although coin collecting was a major occupation of the intelligentsia in this period, coins and busts being considered windows into the personalities of the past.) It is worth exploring how some paradigmatic examples in this category came to be in French possession. The two clearest groups of collectors in this period were the French royalty and the Church, and their motivations are divergent.

Perhaps the most conspicuous of all the French royal collectors of Byzantine objects was Louis XIV (reigned 1643-1715), and no doubt in part his taste in things Byzantine (coins, medals, cameos – one of jasper [188], manuscripts and luxury pieces) connects with a perception of Byzantium which conformed with his political ambitions. He acquired Byzantine manuscripts from the Seraglio library [266, 351], from agents in Constantinople (such as the famous Monk James of Kokkinobaphos illuminated homilies [272] which has a not-quite-identical twin version in the Vatican Library cod. gr. 1162), and from elsewhere [354].[11] But the most extraordinary set of objects from the holdings of the Sun-King is the group of eleven precious vessels, some made of sardonyx, some of agate [42, 43, 206, 208-15]. These literally palatial objects would certainly have evoked the splendour of the environment of the Byzantine emperors in their new incarnation at Versailles.[12] Their aura would fit the appellation of Louis, *'monarque de l'univers'* as 'a new Constantine'.[13] There are, however, difficulties in the interpretation of these pieces which mostly now have rich French metalwork mountings. The catalogue tentatively attributes the manufacture of two to the seventh century and another nine to the tenth to twelfth centuries and all to Byzantine workshops, but it must be admitted that provenance and date are not entirely certain. There are some similar vessels in the Treasury of San Marco in Venice which were more clearly taken from Constantinople by the Venetians after 1204. These objects, however, have ninth or tenth century Byzantine mountings and are likely to be antique pieces which somehow survived the centuries in family or imperial vaults in Constantinople. The French pieces, which are described in the inventory of the

King's collection, have a less clear provenance, though three seem documented as coming from collections in Italy and one from Germany. Of course, the actual provenance may be less important for their visual impact than their supposed origins.

The French royal collections of Byzantine antiques, with their exoticism and richness, have their own particular period flavour: the character of the pieces fits into the developing seventeenth and eighteenth-century concept of the princely 'cabinet of curiosities' (which could be a *Wunderkammer* of the natural world or a *Kunstkammer* of the fine arts) or the larger scale gallery or museum.[14] Byzantine art took its place in such carefully displayed collections which focused on antiquities, because they were conceived of as 'Roman'. Although some of these displays were on a larger scale, such as the Uffizi, the idea of small-scale collections was encouraged by the production of specially designed furniture cabinets or the development of special rooms and cases – spaces where an invited intimate viewing audience could be controlled, impressed and educated. The development of the educative visual display of art owed much, sometimes directly, to the thinking of Montfaucon: 'nothing is more instructive than paintings of the same period [as the events that they portray]'.[15] The Uffizi gallery of the collection of the Grand Duke of Tuscany was certainly arranged by 1700 when Montfaucon was in Florence, although it only became particularly popular with foreign visitors from the 1720s. They record that images of Roman rulers were displayed in chronological order. Montfaucon's influence is clear in the eighteenth-century displays of antiquities at Verona and Turin.[16] Both Montesquieu and Gibbon visited and avidly viewed the Uffizi display; Gibbon followed there in 1764 the 'progress and decadence of the arts'.[17] Gibbon was much impressed by the King's cabinet of curiosities in Turin, which he also visited in 1764, a year after its opening in a room in the university. These museum visits of Gibbon in Italy had been preceded by a visit in 1763 to the *cabinet des medailles* of the King of France; he was accompanied by the numismatist the Abbé Barthelemey.[18] In the event, neither of these two historians made much use of the visual arts in their works *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romaines et de leur Décadence* (1734) and *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776-88). Gibbon was clearly very well informed about art from his first-hand and painstaking study; but he was gradually led to the sceptical conclusion that the evidence about historical characters offered by portrait sculpture and coins was too incomplete and ambiguous for the historian to trust. It is perhaps not surprising if he found

Voltaire's scholarship unattractively cavalier, although one can hardly call Gibbon's writing pedestrian![19] While the similarities between the French and British Enlightenment constructions of Byzantium are significant, so are the differences. With hindsight, of course, any visitor to the Paris exhibition might now point out the limited uses of visual evidence conceived of by these historians - conceived of as a tool either to deduce the personal character of those portrayed or to evaluate the relative decadence of art and life in the Middle Ages.

The Paris exhibition equally opens up questions about the character of ecclesiastical perceptions in France and the church possession of Byzantine art in the period before the French Revolution. At first sight, to enter the French Gothic cathedral is to inhabit a different world from the luxurious environment and royal accoutrements of the king and court. Yet the exhibition reveals that the selection of Byzantium received by the church is 'distorted' in much the same ways: it is most often again the small-scale and exquisite product, so suitable for the scale of a *cabinet des médailles*, that has come to represent Byzantium. There are, however, two striking pieces of this kind in the exhibition which, although we know that they represented a medium which was highly to the taste of the Renaissance clergy in Italy, did not arrive in France through the church but from Italy in the hands of later collectors. These are the two miniature mosaics ([279] (Transfiguration) [364] (St George), both somewhat restored). Thanks to a papal document (the inventory of 1457 of the Palace of St Mark at Rome) we have an insight into the taste of an Italian Pope: in addition to Byzantine cameos and icons there were, remarkably, no fewer than 25 Byzantine miniature mosaics in the possession of Pope Paul II (1464-71). This now dispersed collection of miniature mosaics (of which the majority were no doubt from the late period of Byzantine art when the medium was perfected) must represent the source of a high proportion of the known examples of the medium today.[20]

But the more important consideration in respect to the Byzantine objects which the Church acquired, either in the Middle Ages or in the period before the Revolution, is how they functioned and how they were viewed as part of the ritual experience of the French. A conspicuous feature of the Byzantine objects in France is the relatively high proportion that were – even still are – in the ownership of the Church, despite the upheavals of the Reformation, Counter-Reformation and French Revolution. There is a considerable contrast here between Continental France and Britain: whether or not it is the combination of distance and iconoclasm that has resulted in the poor British ecclesiastical legacy, the French experience

certainly resulted in the preservation of significant materials. There is of course considerable historical documentation of the character of late medieval piety and the linked fate of artistic objects during the Reformation in the two countries.[21] For one English parish church, for example, we are fortunate to have a strikingly evocative set of primary documents detailing what actually happened to the works of art it possessed over the crucial decades in the sixteenth century.[22] In England under Henry VIII it was the official position that from 1538 the use of relics, images and candles was condemned as 'that most detestable offence of idolatry'. But the cleansing of churches only began in earnest under Edward VI (1547-1553), and the position was temporarily reversed under Mary (1553-58) until Elizabeth came to the throne. From the church of the Holy Trinity at Long Melford, one of the rich Suffolk wool towns, we have a full account of its images and how they functioned (in a nostalgic account written by Roger Martin, a churchwarden under Mary and Catholic recusant under Elizabeth). The archive also includes several inventories of the church and its financial transactions (those between 1541 and 1580 in the *Black Book of Melford*). The records of transactions in the key period of iconoclasm in 1547-8 show precisely what actually happened in this parish. The rich gentry bought back the artistic donations which their families had made to the church; for example, a member of the family which had been its richest Catholic benefactor, Sir William Clopton of Kentwell Hall, purchased more goods than anyone else, often naming his own price and often buying cheaply – such as 'the greateste image about the chyrch and chappelle, of alebaster' for three shillings. His motivation was clearly preservation of the relics and images, possibly expecting a reversal of attitudes. At any rate the fifteenth-century alabaster of the Adoration of the Magi has survived – it was found unbroken under the church floor in the nineteenth century. I mention this rich documentation both for the contrast with Reformation France, and for the light which it casts retrospectively on the probable procedures during Byzantine iconoclasm: it does something to explain how pre-iconoclast works of art were no doubt similarly saved and preserved by purchase and concealment at that period also.

The equivalent French town to Long Melford is perhaps the wool town of Meaux, where in the 1520s there were notorious and radical attacks on the *cultus divorum*.[23] But the course of iconoclasm in France was altered on 21 January 1535 in the face of a successful grandiose public display of relics, which included Byzantine objects such as the True Cross and the Crown of Thorns from the Sainte Chapelle – an object still so powerful that it made people's hair 'stand on end'.[24]

The combined stand of king and Catholic Church prolonged the existence of many of the objects which are included in the exhibition. Their next greatest trial was in June 1792 when the Revolutionary Government declared that all works of art which reflected the history or 'vanity' of the monarchy were to be destroyed.[25] Fortunately, several of our pieces survived to enter the *Museum Nationale*.[26]

The perceptions of Byzantium exhibited in the acquisition of pieces during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are no less complex – there are 146 pieces up to 1945 and 47 from recent times. One factor in this complexity is the wider spectrum and diversity of attitudes of the collectors; furthermore, the range of sources from which objects were available was greater after the Greek War of Independence and in the face of the decline of the Ottoman Empire. One strategy to explain the various attitudes towards Byzantine art and its acquisition would be to explain the influence on individuals of such movements as romanticism, medievalism, orientalism, or philhellenism; this would need to be combined with a documentation of their personal critical opinions and beliefs (religious and otherwise).[27] All sorts of attitudes were shown by French travellers in Byzantine lands – from the archaeological approaches of Texier, Bayet and Millet to the more romantic interpretations of the power of the dominating church over the creative artist which Didron deduced from his discovery in 1839 of the Painter's Guide on Athos.[28] For breadth of scholarship in the field Paris produced one of the great modern books of Byzantine cultural history in Rambaud's *L'empire grec au dixième siécle, Constantin Porphyrogénète* (1870). But the aim of this paper is to suggest that a full understanding of the French construction of Byzantium requires a knowledge not simply of the social and intellectual traditions and fashions within which the texts were read, but also a sense of the available visual world of actual Byzantine art in which French attitudes to the eastern Mediterranean were formed.

This brings us to the present day – a category marked by 47 pieces acquired since 1945. It is easier to see these as filling gaps in an already defined 'precious' construction of Byzantium. This might be said for example of the eleventh or twelfth-century niello cross from Turkey in the Cluny Museum which was purchased at Christie's in 1987 [243]. But what the viewer of the 1990s is now likely to remark is the virtual absence of icons from the French experience of Byzantine art. Such an omission supports the argument that the French historical construction of Byzantium cannot be complete but represents a special national perception.

**NOTES**

1 See the reviews by J.Lowden, *Burlington Magazine* 135 (1993) 48-9 and C.Barber, *Medieval World* 8 (1993) 16.
2 In the case of the Paris exhibition a series of weekly lectures supplemented the exhibition. I wish to thank the Louvre for inviting me to lecture and for assistance in visiting the exhibition with my colleagues Dr E. James and Dr B. Zeitler and postgraduate students from the Courtauld Institute of Art.
3 The catalogue of the Baltimore exhibition of *Early Christian and Byzantine Art* indicates that the choice was made from American owners, and makes a few remarks about the character of collections in the USA. On American scholarly attitudes towards Byzantium see K.Weitzmann, 'The Contribution of the Princeton University Department to the Study of Byzantine Art' in S. Ćurčić and A. St. Clair (eds), *Byzantium at Princeton. Catalogue of an Exhibition* (Princeton, 1986) 11-30.
4 In the event the catalogue includes slightly more items than the final exhibition; but the success rate was very high. These items are included in my count.
5 J.-M. Spieser, 'Hellénisme et connaissance de l'art byzantine au XIXe siècle', in S. Said (editor), *Hellenismos. Quelques jalons pour une histoire de l'identité grecque, Actes du colloque de Strasbourg 1989* (Strasbourg 1992) 337-62. This study is helpful for its references not simply to French but to other western European attitudes.
6 Interestingly, the work of André Grabar, to whose memory the catalogue is dedicated, is conspicuous among his generation of Byzantine art historians for its not being based in its critical attitudes on the values of classical art; his work remains refreshingly positive in its appreciation of medieval art.
7 A surprising number of objects, for example, in the Byzantine Museum in Athens are said to have a provenance in Thessaloniki, when one would have expected them to have come from elsewhere in Greece.
8 F. Haskell, *History and its Images. Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven and London 1993) esp. 131-2 and 168.
9 For impressions of the character of cultural attitudes in Gaul in the sixth century, see especially P. Brown 'Relics and Social Status in the Age of Gregory of Tours' reprinted in P. Brown, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity*, (London 1982) 222-50; R. van Dam, *Leadership and Community in Late Antique Gaul*, (California, 1985); and G. de Nie, *Views from a Many-Windowed Tower. Studies of imagination in the work of Gregory of Tours* (Amsterdam 1987).
10 A fascinating, but far from complete, listing of items in France is to be found handily in J. Sumption, *Pilgrimage. An Image of Mediaeval Religion* (London 1975). For the relics of Constantinople, see G. P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington 1984).
11 The Kokkinobaphos manuscript, Paris gr. 1208, was sent to the Royal Library in 1688 from Constantinople; the Vatican *exemplum* was in the Vatican at the latest by 1475: see the catalogue of the exhibition of Vatican manuscripts in Köln, October 1992-January 1993 – *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. Liturgie und Andacht im Mittelalter* (Erzbischöfliches Diözesanmuseum Köln 1992).
12 For the political motivation of royal collections of antiquities in pursuit of legitimation, see S. Stewart, *On Longing. Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (reprint of 1984 first edition, Duke University Press, 1993), esp. 140ff.
13 See P. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV* (New Haven and London, 1992) esp. 192-3 on the Byzantinism of Louis XIV.
14 For a review of the recent literature on this phenomenon in Italy and northern Europe and an analysis, see S.M. Pearce, *Museums, Objects and Collections: a Cultural Study*, (Leicester and London 1992) esp. 91ff. For more detailed information see E. Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London 1992).
15 Quoted by Haskell, *History and its Images* 161-2.

16 Documented and discussed by Haskell, *History and its Images* 162ff.
17 Edward Gibbon, *Journey from Geneva to Rome: his Journal from 20 April to 2 October 1764*, ed. G.A.Bonnard (London 1961) 166.
18 Edward Gibbon, *Miscellanea Gibboniana* (Lausanne 1962) 98.
19 In addition to Haskell's consideration of Gibbon in respect to his use of visual evidence, there are among other critical evaluations notably G.W. Bowersock, J. Clive, and S.R. Graubard, eds., *Edward Gibbon and the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. (Cambridge, Mass. 1977) and R.Porter, *Edward Gibbon: Making History* (London 1988).
20 See E. Müntz, *Les arts à la cour des papes pendant le XVe et le XVIe siècle*, vol 2, Paul II (Paris 1879), esp. 143 and 203-5.
21 See in particular C.M.N. Eire, *War against the Idols. The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin*, (Cambridge, 1986) and E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven and London 1992).
22 D. Dymond and C. Paine, *The Spoil of Melford Church. The Reformation in a Suffolk Parish* (Ipswich 1989).
23 V. L. Blourilly (ed), *Le journal d'un bourgeois de Paris sous le regne de François I (1515-1536)* (Paris 1910) esp. 233.
24 See Eire, *War Against the Idols* 191-2.
25 See S.A. Brown, *The Bayeux Tapestry. History and Bibliography* (Woodbridge Suffolk, 1988) esp. 8ff.
26 For the gradual development of state museums in Paris, see especially the case study of the Cluny Museum by S. Bann, *The Clothing of Clio* (Cambridge 1984).
27 David Buckton (British Museum) is in course of documenting some collectors in Paris, reconstructing the exact pieces which they obtained.
28 See A. Didron, *Manuel d'iconographie chrétienne grecque et latine, avec une introduction et des notes ... traduit du manuscrit byzantin Le Guide de la Peinture par le Dr. Paul Durand* (Paris 1945). This publication was dedicated to Victor Hugo. On French scholarship of this period, see Ch. Diehl, 'Les études byzantines en France au XIXe siècle', *Etudes byzantines* (1905) 21-37 and J-M. Spieser, *Hellénisme et connaissance de l'art byzantine.* We might wish to contrast French travellers with the expression of British colonial attitudes we have in travel accounts of the collector Robert Curzon, *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant*, (London 1849).