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Encounters in Medieval Wall Painting between the West and Byzantium: Appropriation, Exchange, and Mutual Perceptions

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Message from the Guest Editor

Dear Colleagues,

The immediate objects of our study are a series of wall paintings that derive from a very specific cultural and artistic encounter between the West and Byzantium from the 6th to 15th centuries. In every case, the precise nature of this agency and the different levels at which interchange operated should be defined. Sometimes, this entails the appropriation of a specific style or an iconographic topic for a use in a different context. The goal of this appropriation can take many forms, such as prestige, the fascination for the other or even the assumption of new identities. At other times, it is about the creation of pictorial hybrids to promote cultural fusion between Latins and Greeks. In most of these examples, either patrons or artists had to experience a process of shifting identities, in which the individual replicates in himself behaviors, tastes or skills of another (alien to his culture) in order to identify himself with the other.

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Dr. Manuel Castiñeiras
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