

Throughout the book, S. makes repeated references to similar finds from other parts of the Roman Empire for comparative purposes, stating clearly that not all such examples show the same stylistic and technical characteristics as those from Italy. The finds from the Vesuvian plain are thereby put into a wider context, enabling the reader to appreciate the diversity of such equipment. This is further emphasized by S. stating that each individual bridle was manufactured specifically for a particular horse, in order to have an optimum effect on the animal.

It is through the analysis of the use patterns and physical effects of ancient bridles on horses that S. demonstrates a high degree of knowledge and understanding of this topic. It becomes clear that S. has had extensive experience with horses herself and that she understands the physiology and mentality of horses in great detail. This is facilitated by the description and illustration of various reconstruction attempts, some of which were conducted by S. herself. In doing so, awareness is also shown as regards possible mistakes in such reconstructions, thereby allowing the reader to gain an insight into the development of reconstruction ideas.

The rather shorter third chapter of the book provides a brief discussion of the way Roman bridles were used and worn on the horses themselves. Having previously provided references to equine skeletal finds, primarily from grave sites, S. acknowledges that the study of these finds, along with epigraphic evidence from tombstones and other monuments, are the only ways to truly indicate the exact use of a particular type of bridle.

The fourth chapter represents a short case study, namely the attempt to locate the workshop of a particular craftsman, believed to have made horse bridles, by analysing the locations of numerous metal stamps found in Pompeii. Whilst generously including illustrations of the known stamps affiliated with the craftsman in question, S. acknowledges that the finds are too widespread and too seldom accompanied by other indicators to enable the identification of the house or workshop of this craftsman. Whilst it is regrettable that this study did not reveal the results hoped for, the methodology applied is certainly one to be viewed favourably.

A more comprehensive discussion is offered in the following chapter, in which S. considers the possibility of identifying individual bridles for civilian or military use. Whilst offering valuable insight into the interpretive methods which can be applied, such as the assumption that decorated bridles found in or around the atrium of a house served more of a decorative function, S. acknowledges that no bridles can be definitively attributed to a military context. Complementary to this analysis, ch. 6 provides an extensive presentation of the reconstruction of some of the houses in which bridles were found, meticulously arranged according to the numeration applied to Pompeian houses. The final two chapters, not counting the multi-lingual summary, consist of a short analysis of the various areas of employment of equines in Pompeii, followed by a discussion of the osteological analysis of equine bones, which points out that most such finds cannot be assigned to either horse, mule or donkey.

Throughout this book, frequent references are made to illustrations in a separate catalogue section and to plates at the back of the book. Whilst this is certainly a very welcome addition to this study, the coding of the plates and illustrations is not always very clear and can be confusing when viewed in the main text. This does not diminish the fact that this book, with its plates, in-text illustrations and reconstruction drawings, constitutes a highly desirable addition to our knowledge of ancient Roman horse bridles.

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D. ESPOSITO, *LA PITTURA DI ERCOLANO* (Studi della Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei 33). Rome: 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 2014. Pp. 227, illus., plans. ISBN 9788891306746. €300.00.

R. OLIVITO, *IL FORO NELL'ATRIO: IMMAGINI DI ARCHITETTURE, SCENE DI VITA E DI MERCATO NEL FREGIO DAI PRAEDIA DI IULIA FELIX* (*Pompei, II, 4, 3*). Bari: Edipuglia, 2013. Pp. 292, illus., plans. ISBN 9788872287019. €70.00.

Domenico Esposito's book is a long-awaited synthesis of the wall-paintings from Herculaneum. This important study is a revision of the author's doctoral dissertation (Università degli studi di Napoli

“Federico II”, defended in 2006; accessible at: http://www.fedoa.unina.it/1085/1/Tesi_Esposito_Domenico.pdf) and provides a systematic overview and comprehensive analysis of the wall-paintings from Herculaneum. Following on from his socio-economic analysis of painters’ workshops in Pompeii (*Le officine pittoriche di IV stile a Pompei: dinamiche produttive ed economico-sociali* (2009)), E. provides an integrated analysis of the wall-paintings which discusses the distinctiveness of the wall-paintings as well as the socio-economic dynamics of painters’ workshops in Herculaneum.

E.’s book is organized in three parts and is followed by a conclusion (a fourth part). In the first, E. distinguishes public from private buildings and analyses the decorative programme of both in relation to their architectural context. Previous studies have focused on houses to explore the relation between the function of rooms — including their private and public nature — and their decoration, but no study has undertaken similar analyses of wall-paintings in public buildings. The recent study of Greek and Roman temple paintings by Eric Moormann (*Divine Interiors: Mural Paintings in Greek and Roman Sanctuaries* (2011)) marked a shift in that respect and E.’s analysis of the wall-painting decoration of the public buildings in Herculaneum (Basilica Noniana, ‘Sacello degli Augustali’, *Augusteum*, ‘Palaestra’, Theatre, and the *Area sacra suburbana*) corroborates Moormann’s conclusion regarding the close connection between Greek and Roman temple paintings and contemporaneous domestic decoration (Moormann 2011, 203–6). There are no distinctive decorative schemes for the public buildings in Herculaneum (58–9).

In his analysis of the wall-painting decoration of the houses of Herculaneum, E. focuses on a selection of houses to consider the ways in which the location and layout of these houses affected painters’ choices in their wall-painting decoration. He not only takes into account the spatial hierarchy of the rooms within a house, the function of the rooms — including those on the upper floors — and the architectural typology and urban location of the houses, but also the surviving remains of furniture, pavement and roof decoration. Herculaneum was encased in compacted layers of volcanic material and for this reason upper floors are better preserved than in the neighbouring city of Pompeii. Against conventional views (A. Maiuri, *Lezioni sulla casa romana e pompeiana* (1946)), E.’s analysis shows that upper floors were also residential, featuring richly decorated rooms affording panoramic views of the bay, and not just service quarters. Confirming the analyses of Daniela Scagliarini Corlaità and Antonella Coralini, E.’s incisive and comprehensive examination shows that the houses of Herculaneum present more refined decorative schemes (in comparison to Pompeii) that were exploited to accentuate the architectural organization of the house.

The second part of the book tackles the chronology of the wall-paintings in Herculaneum. The city preserves all four ‘Pompeian Styles’ and E. examines the principal examples of wall-painting to determine their chronology. The transition from the Third to the Fourth Style, as well as the chronology of the Fourth Style, have long occupied scholars in their efforts to classify Roman wall-painting. E.’s contribution to this debate is critical, as he discusses with great clarity the problems ensuing from the rigid classification of the phasing of the ‘styles’ and by analysing examples from both Herculaneum and Pompeii shows that the ‘styles’ are not static. There is a fluidity in the transition between the Third and Fourth Styles and, if Herculaneum illustrates this fluidity better than Pompeii, it does not mean that we need to assume the existence of a unique ‘Herculaneum Style’.

In the third part of the book, E. addresses the organization of painters’ workshops in Herculaneum. This part is a substantial addition to his thesis, in which he had made some preliminary remarks on the topic. E. employs the methodology of his study of the organization of the painters’ workshops in Pompeii in order to clarify the chronology of the wall-paintings in Herculaneum and address the socio-economic dynamics between clients and workshops. There is evidence for one prominent workshop in Herculaneum — the ‘workshop of the Casa dell’Atrio a Mosaico’ — which conducted work in almost all the grand *domus* of the city, but also in less affluent houses. In contrast to Pompeii — where two painters’ workshops adapted to the taste of the high and low commissions respectively — in Herculaneum, one workshop (the Casa dell’Atrio a Mosaico) served a more diverse clientele, diversifying its decorative repertoire. E. concludes his study by addressing the several features distinguishing the wall-paintings in Herculaneum from those in Pompeii (for example, the scarcity of the First and the Second Styles; the fluidity in the transition between the Third and Fourth Styles; a higher quality of painting by comparison to Pompeii) to conclude that while there is no unique ‘Herculaneum Style’, there is overall evidence

for élite commissions, also evidenced in architecture and sculpture, which reflect the élite composition of society in Herculaneum.

Riccardo Olivito's book on the frieze decorating the atrium of the *praedia* of Julia Felix in Pompeii — the author's revised 2012 doctoral dissertation (Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa) — is a fresh approach to a well-known representation of daily activities in the Roman forum. The Fourth Style frieze (H. 0.60 m) started at a height of about 2.40 m from the Second Style pavement and was part of a wall-painting renovation of the room following the earthquake of 62 C.E. Amongst a series of honorific equestrian statues on bases, a series of activities that would take place in a public space such as the forum is represented in front of a colonnade, in between the columns of which festoons are hung. Numerous studies have examined the fragments of this frieze, which was detached from the atrium of the *praedia* of Julia Felix during the eighteenth-century excavations and whose pieces were erroneously joined and now remain disconnected. O.'s inclusive study of archival evidence related to the excavation of the complex and the removal of the wall-paintings, his concise analysis of the representation itself together with a thorough examination of the architecture and archaeology of both the *praedia* and the Forum of Pompeii (which he convincingly argues to be the one represented in the representation) as well as related epigraphic and historical sources provide a wide-ranging study of this important wall-painting.

After assessing the history of the scholarship, examining the precise conditions of the detachment of the wall-painting and analysing the architecture of the atrium and the *in-situ* remains to indicate the missing parts (ch. 1), O. offers a detailed description of the eighteen surviving fragments of the wall-painting (sixteen in the Museo archeologico nazionale di Napoli [MANN] and two *in situ*; ch. 2). The analysis of the fragments is thorough, reviewing previous interpretations and related iconographies, and providing an insightful overview of the activities represented. Whereas previous scholars have mostly stressed the idealized character of the representation — daily activities in a generic Roman forum — in chs 3 and 4 O. argues persuasively that it is the Forum of Pompeii being represented here in an idealized manner. He first analyses the architecture of the Forum of Pompeii (ch. 3) and then proceeds to address the similarities and dissimilarities between the representation and the Forum. The similarities are just too many to be ignored — even if the frieze does not reproduce faithfully the architectural details (ch. 4). Following the suggestion of Emilio Magaldi ('Il commercio ambulante a Pompei', *Atti dell'Accademia Pontaniana* 60 (1930), 61–87), O. offers an exhaustive analysis of textual, legal and epigraphic sources to substantiate his thesis that the frieze represents the weekly market day (*nundinae*). The combination of commercial, administrative and religious activities, together with the operation of a school, again suggests that the frieze represents the *nundinae* taking place in the Forum of Pompeii (ch. 5).

This, in turn, leads O. to discuss the frieze in relation to other representations of ordinary life, in the context of the scholarship on so-called *arte popolare*. O. stresses that the extraordinary character of the frieze — which presents activities beyond the limits of ordinary life and could be perceived as élite (for example, the school scene) — is intended to relate to the diverse clientele of the *praedia*. Taking into account the socio-economic analysis of painters' workshops by Domenico Esposito, who attributes the paintings to the workshop of the Via di Castricio (Esposito 2009, 134), O. suggests that the unique character of the painting, which presents an idealized view of everyday life in the Forum of Pompeii, represents a commission for the atrium of the *praedia*, the public part of the property (ch. 6).

In the final chapter, O. uses a *dipinto* (CIL IV 1136) — a rental notice for the baths, shops and apartments of the estate — on the façade of the *praedia* on the Via dell'Abbondanza together with inscriptions which imply professional activities (CIL IV 10150 and 10152a, from the east façade of the insula) to examine the private and public nature of the *praedia*. He explores the possibility that the *praedia* was the seat of a professional *collegium*, as suggested by M. Torelli ('Il nuovo affresco di "arte popolare" dell'agro Murecine', *Ostraka* 15 (2006), 135–54). The frieze then would be a special commission to represent real events experienced by people frequenting the building. This is an interesting proposition which needs to be explored further in relation to other *collegia* and their architectural and decorative programmes (cf. B. Bollmann, *Römische Vereinshäuser* (1998); and recent studies of M. Trümper on the architectural characteristics of associations on late Hellenistic Delos). O.'s book concludes with an examination of the proposed reconstructions by S. Nappo and C. Parslow, while the author makes some cautious suggestions on a possible reconstruction (which he does not attempt due to the fragmentary nature of the frieze).

Both publications exemplify novel approaches to wall-paintings of a younger generation of scholars, who go beyond the classification of the ‘styles’ to contextualize Roman wall-painting by addressing the architecture of the buildings in which they feature, and tackling the social and economic – and more broadly cultural – implications of their commission, execution and perception.

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J. NICOLS, *CIVIC PATRONAGE IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE* (Mnemosyne Supplement 365). Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2014. Pp. xvii + 344. ISBN 9789004214668. €125.00/US\$162.00.

C. RAPP and H. A. DRAKE (EDS), *THE CITY IN THE CLASSICAL AND POST-CLASSICAL WORLD: CHANGING CONTEXTS OF POWER AND IDENTITY*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xiii + 265, illus. ISBN 9781107032668. £60.00/US\$95.00.

The *imperium romanum* was a curious entity. From a city that acquired an empire, it developed into an empire that wanted to be, or at least, desired to present itself as, a city – but it could also be imagined, and, over time, increasingly *was* imagined, as a ‘nation’ (*patria*), or a (Christian) *oikoumenē*, as Claudia Rapp and Hal Drake argue in their introduction to *The City in the Classical and Post-Classical World*. During the fourth century C.E., as Bryan Ward-Perkins, a contributor to their volume, notes, the empire became a stranger beast still, effectively ‘losing’ its imperial centre for the better part of a century, as emperors spent almost all of their time with their armies on or near the Rhine-Danube and Mesopotamian frontiers. Yet the empire proved resilient, enduring for centuries. Both books under review here in effect contribute to the ongoing debate concerning the cause(s) of Rome’s remarkable imperial longevity.

John Nicols’ study of civic patronage offers a perfect illustration of the fact that it was not just ideologically plausible to view the empire as one big city (for example, Aristides, *Roman Oration* 36), but that civic structures and institutions *did* actually dominate the day-to-day operation of the Roman empire to an extraordinary degree. Roman personal patronage (*patrocinium*) originated in the citizen-community of the Roman *civitas*, but during the Republic it was adapted into an instrument that could also be used to regulate relationships between powerful Romans and outside communities. Patronage of a community (*patrocinium publicum*) could be achieved by the successful Roman general who had accepted a defeated foreign state into alliance (this was *mos maiorum* according to Cicero, *Off.* 1.35; but some scholars doubt whether such ‘patronage through conquest’ has much basis in fact, see, for example, Claude Eilers, *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (2002), with the review by Koenraad Verboven, *BMCR* 2003.06.19), but was also ascribed more informally to leading Roman politicians with *clientes* among provincial élites, whose communities were then assumed to be part of the Roman patron’s *clientela* as well. In addition to this, from the late Republic onwards we have evidence for a more formal procedure of initiating a patron-client relationship between an individual Roman and a civic community, in the form of (references to) so-called *tabulae patronatus*: that is, contracts/agreements in which the formal co-optation of a member of the Roman élite as patron by a civic community through a decree of its city council is recorded. Acceptance of the city’s offer by the prospective patron meant that he (or, occasionally, she; see 255–7) officially ‘received the community into his/her *fides clientelaque*’ (4).

N.’s main thesis is that from the late Republic onwards, civic patronage provided the Romans with an important instrument to manage their empire, and that particularly in the Latin West (the primary focus of his study) civic patronage contributed to urbanization and functioned as a vehicle for Romanization (which N. accepts as an unproblematic term), chiefly through the benefactions patrons conferred upon their client-communities (contributions to civic amenities, but also legal representation and administrative services; see 257–73). *Contra* Eilers, N. does not think that civic patronage declined under the Empire. Instead, he detects a broadening of the social profile of patrons, as equestrians and *decuriones* became increasingly involved in addition to senators.

A great merit of N.’s study is that he thoroughly exploits all the different categories of evidence for civic patronage. Thus we have chapters on ‘Civic Patronage in the Late Republic’ (focusing *inter alia*