

*Lambert Schneider: Die Domäne als Weltbild. Wirkungstrukturen der spätantiken Bildersprache.* Franz Steiner Verlag, Wiesbaden 1983. 289 S. 50 Abb. DM 80.—.

The present work deserves particular attention, not only for its merits but also because it is a (slightly modified version of the) *Habilitationsschrift* by L. Schneider, who together with other colleagues, called the “Hamburger Schule”, aim to introduce new methods and terms into classical archaeology (W. Raeck in *Gnomon* 8[1985] 357—363 with reference). There is a danger that an attempt to use a more accurate terminology will diminish the readability and the understanding of the text, as Raeck has pointed out, but this is for the most part avoided in this work. It is relevant, however, that the analysis of the treated motifs and their use in the art of late antiquity brings their interpretation to a new level by making them an understandable part of a *Bildersprache* which, as is shown, has to be seen as part of the so called *Domänensystem*, defined as “der Lebenszusammenhang des großen Gutsbetriebes mit seiner reich ausgestatteten Villenarchitektur im Zentrum ausgedehnter Ländereien, wie er sich auf spezifische Weise in der Übergangsgesellschaft von der Antike zum frühen Mittelalter auch als gesellschaftliches Leitbild ausgeformt hat.” (p.1). Concrete evidence is supplied for the often postulated interrelation between art and society. This interrelation is, of course, not a novelty (we need only refer e.g. to R. Bianchi Bandinelli’s studies) However, the influence of the landowners and their world picture has, as far as I am aware, not yet received the attention which it merits, as Schneider’s work shows in a very illuminating way.

In first part of his book the “Analyse der einzelnen Bildkomplexe” (p. 5—84) the emphasis is on certain objects from the 3rd century AD, the decoration of which serves particularly well as evidence for Schneider’s views. Under the heading “Die Präsenz der Domänenwelt in Kleinod: der Silberkasten der Proiecta” (p. 5—37) the chest from the famous Esquiline treasure receives a detailed analysis. The chapters “Herren und Diener in Aufwartungszeremonielle: Grabkammer in Silistra” (p. 39—55), “Venus und der Reichtum der Gewässer: Venusmosaik aus Djemila” (p. 56—67), and “Die Villa und ihre Ländereien: Das Dominus-Iulius-Mosaik aus Karthago” (p. 64—84) follow. In fact many other monuments are also mentioned and there is a welcome index to these (p. 266—279). Together with the partly very detailed and extensive notes (p. 175—252) we have a well documented and useful reference section.

Schneider gives only a pragmatic value to the traditional division of visual sources according to various genres and/or branches of art. Single motifs and objects are, according to Schneider, not to be studied in isolation but as parts of their context, not only of the single complex of decoration and further, as in this case, the whole decoration of a villa, but also as parts of the *Bildersprache* referred to. The important question is how they are used in it. Indeed, the motifs and their use are not only reflections of various relations to and in the society — they in fact represent a pseudo-reality (p. 166) — but also elements of conscious manipulation, a kind of pictorial propaganda: “Unser Interesse gilt somit nicht der Aufdeckung irgendeines inneren Sinns von Werken, sondern ritualisierten gesellschaftlichen Akten, in denen bestimmte Bilder einen Part gespielt haben” (p. 1). These issues are summed up in the second part in which are treated the “Bildübergreifende Zusammenstände” (p. 85—174) under the headings “Visualisierung eines Bedeutungsgeflechts” (p. 85—99), “Natur als

Naturalie" (p. 100—123), "Klassifizierung und Mythisierung von Natur" (p. 124—157) and "Die Domäne als Weltbild und Handlungsrahmen" (p. 158—174). Though neither the interpretation of single motifs as part of their context is a novelty, the way Schneider understands and uses the context offers a new, and evidently fruitful approach.

On the other hand, the explanation offered by Schneider is so attractive that it, though and because so all-embracing raises the doubt of "too good to be true", or perhaps better — to quote another musical phrase — "it ain't necessarily so". The motifs can be "read" in the way Schneider does, but is this sufficient to show that they all indeed were? Schneider is convincing especially when he presents also literary sources which support his observations. But still a more general reservation remains: the many possibilities of interpreting the manifold content of the motifs used in ancient art, and in the art of late antiquity especially, may lead us to overinterpretation and a forgetfulness of the "autonomous" life of well established motifs for whose use the most significant reason was tradition and/or their decorative value (cf. K. Schefold's "readings" of Pompeian wall paintings and the respective critics). I am for example not quite convinced that the "syntax" of the use of various motifs is so intentional in all details as in Schneider's interpretation. To show whether these doubts are justified or not, further studies are needed where also the question of the development of the features studied by Schneider, in other words their introduction into ancient art should be taken into account. Schneider's work is at any rate an excellent basis and stimulus for further studies. It has significantly furthered the discussion, which too seldom is the case.

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*Hierapolis. Scavi e ricerche. Vol. I. Tullia Ritti: Fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche. Vol. II. Francesco D'Andria — Tullia Ritti: Le sculture del teatro. I rilievi con i cicli di Apollo e Artemide. Archaeologica 53 & 54. Giorgio Bretschneider, Roma 1985. XII, 152 p. 24 tav. & XXVIII, 200 p. 53 tav. Lit. 230.000 & 250.000.*

Der erste Band, auf den ich mich konzentrieren werde, hat den Titel 'Fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche'. Die vorliegende Beurteilung dieses Bandes ist unter dem Eindruck entstanden, den ich durch den Titel von dem Inhalt des Bandes bekam. — Die literarischen Quellen werden — ohne Platz zu sparen — ziemlich vollständig (s. aber S. 43) angeführt, was natürlich erfreulich ist; besonders viel Interessantes gibt es aber nicht dabei, und die literarischen Erwähnungen von Hierapolis wird wohl nur der heranziehen, der eine Geschichte o.ä. der Stadt schreiben will. So kann ich sogleich zu dem epigraphischen Teil der Arbeit übergehen. Was nun die epigraphischen Quellen betrifft, so finde ich den Titel des Bandes etwas irreführend. Man würde ja zunächst eigentlich erwarten, daß der vorliegende stattliche Band ein Corpus der Inschriften von Hierapolis enthalten würde, aber dies ist keineswegs der Fall. Ganz im Gegenteil scheinen die Inschriften, die nicht einmal durchwegs numeriert sind, gelegentlich fast eine untergeordnete Rolle zu spielen. Dies ist eigentlich schade; denn obwohl der Forschung das alte Corpus der hierapolitanischen Inschriften von W. Judeich im Rahmen des bekannten Werkes 'Altertümer von Hierapolis' (1898) zur Verfügung steht, wäre ein neues Corpus dennoch sehr willkommen gewesen, zumal seit der