

army, crafts, trades, industries, household life, personal objects, public and social life, religion, death and burial, Christianity, coinage), with abundant illustrations (both drawings and photographs). The main body of text is followed by appendices, a critical catalogue of museums with archaeological material in Britain, topo-chronological tables of events, fine wares, Samian and mortaria potters, brooch types, a survey of coin denominations, coin legends, obverse titles on coins, a bibliography and useful indices.

*Outi Merisalo*

*Rivista di Studi Pompeiani*, vol. I. Associazione Internazionale Amici di Pompei. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 1987. 232 p. 219 ill. ITL 150.000.

Just as we can call Pompeii and its surroundings a sort of "must" for anyone interested in classical studies, likewise this series under review has all the possibilities of becoming an equal "must" among the various publications. This is not a minor achievement considering the increasing flood of information and specialization and that every word of welcome for a new publication is shadowed by the question of whether it really is needed. Because of the outstanding importance of Pompeii and this piece of research which it inspired the answer is undoubtedly positive. The more so if the series achieves its aim, which was formulated by Baldassare Conticello as follows: "La rivista vuole essere la *sede neutrale* presso la quale possa essere condotto un civile dibattito di idee, prima di tutto sui vari aspetti della *pompeianistica* in senso lato, ma anche, più generalmente, sulla scienza dell'antichità classica nei suoi diversi aspetti, non relativi alla sola Campania." (p. 7). We can only hope that the series will establish itself with more success than its predecessors (the first "Rivista di Studi Pompeiani" published by Emilio Magaldi in 1934-46, followed by the "Cronache Pompeiane" in 1975-79 and the only volume of "Pompei, Ercolano, Stabia" in 1983).

The first section is the "nucleo centrale della rivista" and consists of various independent articles. This volume contains ten articles altogether (pp. 11-130) occupying about one half of the total 227 pp. It is useful to have articles on Pompeian studies in one review, and one cannot but wish that future editions will contain at least the most important contributions in this field. Equally important – and in this volume just as extensive as the first section – is the second section consisting of a "Notiziario" (pp. 131-199) and of "Discussioni e recensioni" (pp. 201-227). Particularly welcome is the "Notiziario", which contains reports on the various

"Attività dell' Ufficio Scavi" of the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei as well as of other scientific field work. It includes reports from 1984-86 on work in Pompeii and its suburbs, Oplontis, Stabiae and Herculaneum. This is an excellent means of keeping the various friends of Pompeii – often far away from the site itself – up-to-date about the work done. In this respect, it is essential that the review be published annually, and that it contain as recent news as possible. Although such information is inevitably preliminary, there is no doubt about its usefulness.

This is also true of the articles (in the first section), most of which are, in fact, preliminary reports of larger work such as the "The Australian expedition to Pompeii" by J.P. Descoedres and F. Sear, or "Human Bones at Herculaneum" by S.C. Bisel. Some minor finds of more general interest are presented in brief contributions such as those by M. Conticello De Spagnolis and Ernesto De Carolis on bronze lamps from Pompeii and Oplontis respectively, or that by L.A. Scatozza Höricht on the origin of the Roman glass found in recent excavations in Pompeii. Epigraphists will be interested in Antonio Varone's "Nuovi *tituli picti pompeiani*". Promising "advertisements" of studies to come include P. Depoto's "Circolazione monetale a Pompei. Cenni su problemi di economia", and F.P.M. Francissen's "A Century of Scientific Research on plants in Roman mural paintings (1879-1979)". As this reviewer is preparing a study on the birds in Romano-Campanian mural paintings, it was a particularly happy surprise to see that the numerous plants are now receiving the scientific attention they undoubtedly deserve. Although it is a systematic study, Tatiana Warscher's "Flora Pompeiana" (D.A.I., Rome 1942) deserved at least a footnote in Francissen's presentation on earlier studies in the field.

In my opinion, one of the most interesting single contributions in the volume is Inge Weitzer's article "Diesmal keine Pygmäen. Die Zwergfiguren und ihre Partnerdarstellungen in der Casa del Labirinto" (pp. 51-74). The portraits under discussion are in the Second style wall paintings of the cubiculum (n. 46), which have long been well known, as is the fact that such a combination has no parallels in Romano-Campanian wall paintings. Surprising as it may seem, their singularity has so far been devoid of any convincing explanation. Wintzer now offers one, showing that the series of portraits of midgets, amorines and female figures refer to astrological beliefs originating in the belief in Hermes Trismegistos. The "Egyptian connection" in these paintings has already been pointed out by M. de Vos, *Egittomania in pitture e mosaici romano-campani della prima età imperiale* (1980), pp. 89-90, but Wintzer succeeds in showing that the midgets which have so far been called pygmies (or *grylloi*) derive from Ptah-Pataikos-representations and that they are often twelve in number: these apotropaic figures refer to the 12 *Stundenschutzgötter* and to the

Zodiac. The 11 amorines also have an astral meaning (emanation of Venus) as do the 10 female figures referring to the planets and decans.

Wintzer does not discuss these paintings in relation to those in the adjacent oecus (n. 43): considerable differences in execution suggest different painters and perhaps also another date. Nor does Wintzer mention the possibility that the so far unique Horus-falcon statues represented in the Third style garden painting in the calidarium of this house might also go back to the same or similar beliefs deriving from Hellenistic Egypt. Two minor inaccuracies need to be corrected here: the naval ships in the socle have not been ignored as Wintzer states (p. 52): they were mentioned by M. de Vos, *Egittomania*, pp. 89-90. The Second style painting now in the Museo Nazionale di Napoli (inv. 8594) comes from house VII 17,41 as shown by A. Allroggen-Bedel, and not from the Praedia di Iulia Felix, as Wintzer states in note 111.

It was indeed time for the work done in Pompeii and its surroundings to be presented and followed in a forum worthy of its importance. No longer do the friends of Pompeii have to rely only on the legendary guest book at the hostaria *Donnarumma* to see what has been done. The first volume makes a very promising start and one cannot but agree with the "Saluto" by Carlo Vizzini in which he states "La qualità degli articoli, la ricchezza del notiziario e la veste tipografica qualificata, nonché la vasta circolazione internazionale assicurata dalla Casa Editrice "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, fanno questa nuova rivista una delle più significative promesse fra le pubblicazioni archeologiche italiane." This is indeed a "significativa promessa".

*Antero Tammisto*