

LAWRENCE J. BLIQUEZ. *Roman Surgical Instruments and Other Minor Objects in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples*. With a Catalogue of the Surgical Instruments in the "Antiquarium" at Pompeii by Ralph Jackson. Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 1994. ISBN 3-8053-1677-1. 238 pages, XXVII plates. DEM 135.

Lawrence Bliquez has studied the collection of Greco-Roman surgical instruments in the Naples Museum. He has used this material also in his other studies e.g. on gynecology in Pompeii. The value of this book for further studies on the Roman surgical instruments is great, because no earlier catalogue of this rich and unreplaceable material has been published. Most of the material originates from the Vesuvian area and especially from Pompeii. Therefore it can be dated to before A.D. 79. This is a remarkable advantage, which can be used, for instance, for comparison with instruments from other sites. Bliquez presents a comprehensive catalogue of the material in Naples museum. The catalogue includes physical description, measurements, inventory number(s), provenience, condition, photograph (or a drawing) and reference to literary or photographic documents of every item. There are a total of 323 items included in the catalogue. In the catalogue of the "Antiquarium" there are a total of 59 items. Ralph Jackson from the British Museum, who is also a well known author of several studies on the instrumentaria of Roman doctors, expresses succinctly the basic reason why this type of richly documented catalogue is so valuable: it is because of "The frightening rate of decay ..." (p. 200). In the book there is also an interesting essay concerning the Hercules/Aesculapius motif appearing on surgical tools (pp. 99-106).

The main aim in the study of the material is to have as exact a provenience for each item as possible. This is valuable, for instance, in studies concerning the number, "specialty" and various activities of medical practitioners in Pompeii. The instrumentarium found in the Casa del Medico Nuovo (II) is especially valuable because, as Bliquez states, "The Casa del Medico Nuovo (II) thus represents not only the most valuable surgical site find in the city of Pompeii but, to the best of my knowledge, in the entire Roman Empire." (p. 95). Unfortunately there are many problems in evaluating the value of different places where surgical instruments have been found e.g. missing or migrating inventory numbers. Therefore the best one can conclude is that there were several physicians (two of whom might have been veterinarians) practicing in Pompeii at the moment of the eruption of Vesuvius (pp. 78-98). Gynecology seems to have been one clearly established "specialty" among these practitioners. Considering the long duration (over 250 years) of the excavations in the Vesuvian area it is perhaps not surprising that so few of the items in the catalogue can surely or probably be given a definite, exact place of discovery.

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JEAN CHARLES BALTY: *Porträt und Gesellschaft in der römischen Welt*. Trierer Winkelmannsprogramme, 11 (1991). Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein 1993. ISBN: 3-8053-1622-4. VII, 36 p., 20 pls. DEM 78.

J. C. Balty in this publication has gathered some facts and viewpoints concerning the relationship of Roman portraits to the contemporary society. The basis for this book

was provided by the "Winckelmannsvortrag" that Balty gave in December 1991 at the University of Trier.

The book is divided into 16 chapters where different aspects of Roman portraiture are presented. At the beginning, Balty criticizes the often occurring use of photos with incorrect identifications as book illustrations. The reason for this practice is the antiquated publications that the photo archives use as sources of information.

The author thinks that it is a too simple view to look for the origins of the realistic Roman portraits in the patriciate. He believes that the practice of representation was dependent on the structure of the contemporary society. Balty is also against the practice of placing the realistic Roman portraits as a counterpart to the idealistic Greek portraits. He discerns three groups in the portraits of the *nobilitas*. First, the strictly realistic portraits; second, the portraits of *virī triumphales*, which imitated the Hellenistic portraits of rulers; third, the so-called 'bourgeois type' which is moderately natural, like Hellenistic portraits. The patrician portraits were used as models for the provincial honorary portraits of freedmen. However, the 'bourgeois type' became more popular with the freedmen as a proof of the social status and was in use until the second century A.D.

During the Augustan period, the 'Hellenistic ruler type' was abandoned for a classicizing statue with a heroizing head. The honorific statues of the emperor and his family were placed everywhere and became models for private portraits. These private portraits that resemble imperial portraits became more usual over time, in all social classes and in all provinces. The hairstyle of the emperor or the empress was especially imitated in private portraits. Another new practice was to combine a portrait head with a Greek idealistic body of a hero or a god.

Balty believes that the realistic representation stayed constantly as a genre in Roman art. Balty criticizes the suggestion of K. Fittschen that the realistic representation in the Roman Empire would have been reduced to two social classes, to the followers of Greek philosophy and to the Roman officers. Balty points out that this phenomenon is much more complicated.

Chapter 13 includes discussion about realism and portraits of foreigners that Balty calls of 'ethnic' realism. These portraits include representations of Africans, Syrians, Iberians etc. In chapter 15, useful comparisons are given with the portraits from Palmyra, which preserved local features in the portraits of women and priests. A reason for this could have been that priests were considered preservers of religion and women preservers of the values that they transmitted to their children. Balty also draws our attention to the fact that spindles and spinning wheels can be seen in the Palmyrean portraits of women as well as sometimes in the characteristic portraits of women from Noricum and Pannonia. In addition, local Celtic features were added to the portraits of the Roman period in Gaul and Germany.

Balty's book provides many new ideas and points of view. It includes a good summary of the latest studies on Roman portraiture. But, of course, it cannot be a complete review of the earlier publications on this subject, and, therefore, basic knowledge of Roman sculpture and portraiture is required for the reader to be able to make the most of Balty's study.