

Nettuno in età imperiale inoltrata (p. 126; cf. anche p. 135 su un "nucleo abitativo viciniore diverso dalla *colonia Antium*"), mentre altrove (p. 128) l'autrice sembra condividere l'opinione communis che la tesi sostenuta dagli studiosi locali dell'esistenza in Nettuno di un insediamento antico non trovi possibilità di diretto riscontro. E infatti a Nettuno va attribuita senza dubbio un'origine medievale.

2) Il tentativo, presentato a due riprese (pp. 87-115), di attribuire ad Anzio anziché a Roma una "antiqua pictura", un'incisione di P. S. Bartoli nella famosa opera del Bellori, *Fragmenta vestigii veteris Romae ex lapidibus Farnesianis* (1673, p. 1), è francamente più che avventuroso. Come mai in una piccola città come Anzio potevano esistere tutti quei monumenti enumerati nel disegno di Bartoli, monumenti ben noti a Roma, come il *templum Apollinis*, il *forum* (non *forum!*) *boarium*, la *portex Neptuni*, il *forum (h)olitorium*, il *bal. Faustines* (CIL VI 29830 cf. 36613)? Tale strana supposizione va contro ogni buon senso.

3) L'autrice sbaglia non di rado nell'interpretazione di documenti epigrafici. Eccone alcuni esempi: p. 31: dell'abuso dell'iscrizione di Vedennius si è già detto, mentre l'altra iscrizione ricordata nella nota 120 non proviene da Anzio e non dice niente a favore dell'origine di Vedennius(!). P. 81, nt. 391: le due inedite sono state lette molto male (la prima finisce [---]clo dul[ci---]; la seconda suona *d. b(onis?) m. Aprae bene merenti f. Sotericu[s]*). P. 86, nt. 422: l'autrice ha completamente frainteso CIL VI 9458 che non ha niente a che fare con Anzio. P. 87, nt. 426: mal letta questa inedita: si legga *M. Aurelio M. f. Quir. [Call]isto*; nel lato all'inizio *natus III Id. Iul.*

*Heikki Solin*

*Arco di Costantino tra archeologia e archeometria*. A cura di PATRIZIO PENSABENE e CLEMENTINA PANELLA. *Studia archaeologica* 100. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 1999. ISBN 88-8265-036-7. 228 pp., 3 pls. EUR 137.

*Arco di Costantino* is one of the latest offerings to the understanding of this significant monument, summarizing the work of more than a decade by the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma and the Università di Roma "La Sapienza". It was accompanied by a seminar at the German Archaeological Institute at Rome in September 1998, and later by an exhibition. I had the great opportunity to attend the seminar and the rather tense atmosphere of the seminar is also present in this book.

The volume is by no means a synthesis or a complete history of the building nor an excavation report on the fieldwork. Besides being a publication of various types of research on the arch, it is mainly a response to the work by the Istituto Centrale del Restauro, which also studied the monument, excavating on its southern side while the La Sapienza team was working on the northern side in connection with the excavation of the Meta Sudans. Two years after the publication of this book, the Istituto issued its own version of the events, *L'Arco di Costantino. Le due fasi dell'arco nella valle del Colosseo* (Rome 2001).

The title of the Istituto's book gives a clue to the problem at hand. There are two theories concerning the building of the arch. One is that it is the original product of the Constantine period reusing earlier marbles. The La Sapienza team represents this theory.

The other theory was presented by Arthur Frothingham in the 1910s (in series of articles entitled "Who built the Arch of Constantine?", *AJA* 16 [1912] 368-86; *AJA* 17 [1913] 487-503; *AJA* 19 [1915] 1-12, 367-85), who maintained that it was built by remodelling an earlier Flavian arch. The theory was re-introduced by the Istituto team leader Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro and Angela Maria Ferroni in 1996 ("Chi costruì l'arco di Costantino? Un interrogativo ancora attuale", *RPAA* 66 [1993-1994] 1-60; excavation evidence presented in another article by Dora Cirone, "I risultati delle indagini stratigrafiche all'Arco di Costantino", *RPAA* 66 [1993-94] 61-76). The most significant change was dating the original arch to the Hadrianic instead of the Flavian period.

This confrontational situation is not presented very clearly in the introduction nor in the articles of the book. The articles proceed from material and techniques to ideas about design and then through architectural details and archaeological evidence to the history of restoration. The pictorial material is of excellent quality and truly abundant, supporting the texts very well. The order of the articles is logical, apart from the articles concerning the scientific analyses of the marble, which have been placed almost at the end instead of after the actual article on the materials.

In the first article, Patrizio Pensabene explores the way in which the arch was designed and constructed. The article studies the availability of such a large quantity of marble for building the monument at the same time presenting the processes of recycling materials. Pensabene also writes about the use of different types of white marble and how the late antique way of mixing different whites differs from the earlier use of one type of white marble only.

A clearer picture of the opposing opinions is presented in the second article written by Clementina Panella which concerns construction techniques. Her criticism of the work of the Istituto team is quite sharp and she argues her own approach in a fairly convincing manner, pointing to the reuse of materials, to the possibilities and problems of inserting new pieces into an existing arch.

The history of the Frothingham theory is first outlined in the third article by Mark Wilson Smith, whose main topic is the geometrical analysis of the monument. He has studied the various proportions of the arch and the modules of its design, also comparing them to the modules found in other monuments of late antiquity.

Marina Milella's article on architectural decorations presents the varieties in the *kymatia* of the central arch, and Sandra Zeggio's article is on the excavation by the foundations of the arch and the analysis of the structures and deposits. Zeggio presents the evidence from the necessarily relatively small excavation areas, managing to make the quite confusing structures and deposits comprehensible.

The next three articles, one by Pensabene alone; by Mathias Bruno, Carlo Gorgoni and Paolo Pallante; and by Bruno, Panella, Pensabene, Maria Preite Martinez, Michele Soligo and Bruno Turi concern the white marbles of the arches of Constantine and Septimius Severus. Both arches were studied macroscopically as well as with archaeometrical methods trying to find out the provenances of the marble types. The arch of Septimius Severus is relatively uniform when the isotope contents of the marbles are examined, whereas the arch of Constantine clearly has various types of white marble. Again more evidence for the original construction theory.

The last article by Rosaria Punzi presents the restoration history of the arch of

Constantine, also exploring the attitudes of the restoration periods. The main part of the material concerns the early 18th century work but the 19th century restorations are also discussed.

The original design and construction theory is powerfully supported by the entire volume. But in order to get a full picture, I would advise any reader to look up the Istituto publications and perhaps also the original excavation reports by the La Sapienza team. The discussions of the material are more comparative and interpretative than descriptive and so sometimes it is difficult to form an opinion of one's own based on this book alone.

I am persuaded to believe the La Sapienza argumentation, but at the same time I am sure that the re-use theory will continue to live. Its current resurrection has actually paved the way for a need to better argue both theories and therefore, it has also advanced our knowledge in a meaningful way. The dispute also shows one of the more important characteristics of archaeological research: the evidence is there for everyone to see, but there can be more than one interpretation of it and each interpretation can be equally plausible.

*Eeva-Maria Viitanen*

FRANCISCA FERAUDI-GRUÉNAIS: *Ubi diutius nobis habitandum est. Die Innendekoration der kaiserzeitlichen Gräber Roms*. Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Rom, Palilia 9. Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden 2001. ISBN 3-89500-076-0. 248 pp., 159 figs. EUR 35.

This study is based on the observation that almost no scholarly work on funerary decoration still in situ in Rome (stucco, paintings, mosaics) has been done. This is partly because a considerable number of decorations, paintings in particular, are very badly preserved, which has made them rather unattractive objects for research. This being so, F-G has bravely undertaken the composition of a catalogue of all the untransferable funerary decorations from the city of Rome. The registration of this evidence is accompanied by information on other (movable) finds inside the tombs. The decorative pieces are usefully catalogued not only within the context of individual tombs but also in relation to entire funerary edifices and adjacent cemeteries. This means that the material, divided according to the *viae* leading out, provides the opportunity to evaluate the decorations as expressions of various funerary infrastructures, social, mental, economic.

In the second part of the work (149-200), an account is given of the epigraphic evidence and the architectural elements, the former being important for the establishment of the social conditions of the deceased and their families. This section also includes a study of the themes chosen for the decorations (mythical figures and representations, people in various scenes, other motifs).

The concluding chapter, also dealing with previous Sepulkralforschung, focusses on the role and meaning of funerary decorations in Roman society. Particular attention is given to decorations as a means of self-representation of those who commissioned the monuments. F-G observes, unsurprisingly, that the quality and value of the external architecture of a tomb normally corresponds with the internal decoration. Regarding the chronology, most of the existing decorations may be dated to the second century A.D.,