

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.

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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.,

especially to its latter half. Figurative representations as well as myths are also most commonly found in this period, though mythical scenes do occur inside tombs as early as the late first century B.C., i.e., more than one hundred years before they began to appear on sarcophagi and marble urns. It is also interesting to note with F-G that the majority of the subjects represented (mythical figures, allegories, etc.) are also well known outside the funerary context. In fact, it was the dominant practice to decorate tombs with motifs deriving from private houses and villas, even public buildings. It was only later, from the second century A.D., that the domestic context as a source for funerary decorations, including altars and urns, was replaced by sarcophagi which then assumed the role of iconographic and thematic models. Whatever was represented, it served to evoke the idea of serene existence and life without turbulence; scenes from everyday life were either completely avoided or they were displayed in an abstract context. This was the way preferred by the *humiliores*. Representations of domesticity and peace, wrapped in allegory and myth, are not likely to be encountered in the tombs of upper-class Romans (in the extant evidence, there seems to be only one case where the funerary monument of a senator is decorated inside, that is, the pyramid of C. Cestius with a painted inner chamber, see pp. 135 ff.).

The reader is pleased to find out that not only the inner decoration of the tombs is treated with admirable competence; questions concerning the names and status of those recorded in the *tituli, tabellae* and other inscriptions are also generally discussed with great expertise. While in a number of cases, something more could have been said on the epitaphs and their contents, one may note that a thorough discussion of such matters with a full documentation of the epigraphic evidence is forthcoming: see the preliminary observations by F-G, "Sepulkrale 'Selbstdarstellung' von Unterschichten. Beobachtungen zu Inschriften in stadtrömischen Grabmonumenten der Kaiserzeit", in: G. Alföldy – S. Panciera (eds), *Inschriftliche Denkmäler als Medien der Selbstdarstellung in der römischen Welt* (HABES 36), 2001, pp. 121 ff. Moreover, I should mention F-G's contribution "Grabinschriften im archäologischen Kontext. Komplementarität von Schrift und Bild?", in: M. Heinzelmann & al. (eds), *Römischer Bestattungsbrauch und Beigabensitten in Rom, Norditalien und den Nordwestprovinzen von der späten Republik bis in die Kaiserzeit, Kolloquium Rom 1998* (Palilia 8), 2001, 203 ff.

Mika Kajava

GAETANO MESSINEO: *La tomba dei Nasonii*. Studia archaeologica 104. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 2000. ISBN 88-8265-067-7. 88 pp., 83 figs. EUR 62.

The Tomb of the Nasonii (thus called from inscription *CIL* VI 22882, now in Perugia), was discovered on the Via Flaminia in 1675. Regrettably, the structures and the unique frescoes with mythological themes suffered considerably before the restoration of the complex began in 1982. The repairs, and the study of the frescoes in particular, have benefited from the engravings made by Pietro Santi Bartoli in the seventeenth century. Messineo's book well illustrates the whole story surrounding the Tomb from the time of its discovery. An interesting detail (pp. 17 f.) is that some of the frescoes have been reproduced among the decorations of the Palazzo del Drago alle Quattro Fontane in