

territorio; C. Mengarelli, Monte Castellaccio, Analisi topografica e aspetti cronologici della fase medievale; AA. VV., Velitrae antiquissima Latii urbs.

Il volume contiene sia delle novità sia delle sintesi di carattere generale. Tenuto conto del pubblico presente al convegno e dei lettori del volume vorrei sottolineare un aspetto positivo; almeno a me piace questa caratteristica tipicamente italiana, l'intersecarsi cioè degli interessi di un colto pubblico cittadino con quelli di studiosi di interessi vari e vario livello. Tuttavia ho la sensazione che parecchi contributi ci avrebbero guadagnato da un approccio più approfondito. Debbo anche dire che l'alto prezzo del volume può spaventare i cittadini pur illuminati di Velletri e quelli di altre città limitrofe.

Non è qui il caso di discutere sul contenuto e fare osservazioni critiche. Dico solo che il contributo sull'epigrafia antica di Velletri poteva essere un poco più approfondito; proprio tenuto conto del livello dei lettori l'a. avrebbe potuto allargare la sua scelta di epigrafi con iscrizioni di grande interesse e importanza esistenti nel museo veliterno o anche in altri musei, soprattutto a Napoli e nei Vaticani, e renderle più accessibili al pubblico con spiegazioni più estese (anche le traduzioni dei testi epigrafici, ora relegate nelle note, avrebbero potuto figurare nel corpo del testo stesso). – Nella presentazione del Museo Diocesano di Velletri nessun accenno viene fatto alle iscrizioni paleocristiane, che pure non sono prive di un certo interesse.

Heikki Solin

RABUN TAYLOR: *Roman Builders: A Study in Architectural Process*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2003. ISBN 0-521-00583-3. 303 pp. GBP 19.99 (pb).

Roman architecture is perhaps one of the most interesting and fascinating aspects of ancient Roman culture. The sheer mass and volume of the buildings such as the Colosseum or the Pantheon make the viewer ask "How was this possible 2000 years ago?" Many books have been written which describe the buildings, but fewer have concentrated on the building process and its requirements. One of the exceptions is Janet DeLaine's 1997 volume *The Baths of Caracalla: A Study in Design, Construction and Economics of Large-Scale Building Projects in Imperial Rome* (Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplement XX), which has perhaps been an inspiration – and an important source – for Taylor's book.

Instead of concentrating on a single building or on the general technological aspects of Roman building, Taylor seeks to map the process of building from the point of view of design: for example, what things had to be taken into consideration when designing the whole building process of the Pantheon? This theme, at least superficially, resembles the main idea of C. F. Giuliani's 1990 book *L'edilizia nell'antichità* (La Nuova Scuola Scientifica, Roma). However, Giuliani is more interested in the practical matters and general aspects of Roman building techniques, and so these two books complement each other in a very interesting and informative manner.

Taylor's book starts from the drawing table and proceeds to treat each aspect of the building from the foundations and drainage to the roofs and decorations. Each of the

six main chapters features an actual example from a vast selection of Roman public buildings. The main featured buildings are the baths of Caracalla, the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and the temples of Baalbek, but many others are referred to as well. In the section treating complex armatures and roofing and vaulting, Taylor also seeks to present new interpretations concerning the building of the Colosseum and the Pantheon and is also quite convincing in his argumentation.

Taylor's text is clear and enjoyable to read and, in most cases, the content fulfills the back cover promise of its being the "first general-interest book" to address the way in which architectural ideas were carried out in practice. Especially in the lengthy discussion of the Colosseum and the Pantheon, Taylor slightly slips from the "general interest" towards specialist scholarship. Despite this perhaps understandable lapse, the generalizing tone is maintained well. The many photographs and drawings support the text in an excellent manner and further enlighten the reader on matters that are sometimes hard to grasp.

It is delightful that the studies of Roman architecture have proceeded so far that books like this can be published: from a description of buildings to interesting and sound interpretations of the whole building process. Despite its aim at being a general-interest work, Taylor's book should be obligatory reading for students and researchers of Roman buildings. In order to better understand the details, we have to know where they fit in the large-scale process.

Eeva-Maria Viitanen

*Horti romani. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Roma, 4–6 maggio 1995. A cura di MADDALENA CIMA ed EUGENIO LA ROCCA. Bollettino della Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma. Supplemento 6. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 1998. ISBN 88-8265-021-9. 480 pp., ill. EUR 207.**

(Contents: A. Wallace-Hadrill, "*Horti* and hellenization", pp. 1–12; T. P. Wiseman, "A stroll on the rampart", pp. 13–32; M. Beard, "Imaginary *horti*: or up the garden path", pp. 23–32; J. H. D'Arms, "Between public and private: the *epulum publicum* and Caesar's *horti trans Tiberim*", pp. 33–43; E. Papi, "*Domus est quae nulli villarum mearum cedat*" (Cic., *fam.* 6,18,5). Osservazioni sulle residenze del Palatino alla metà del I secolo a.C.", pp. 45–70; M. T. Boatwright, "Luxuriant gardens and extravagant women: the *horti* of Rome between Republic and Empire", pp. 71–82; C. Häuber, "'Art as a weapon' von Scipio Africanus *Maior* bis Lucullus. *Domus, horti* und Heiligtümer auf dem Esquilin", pp. 83–112; E. Talamo, "Gli *horti* di Sallustio a Porta Collina", pp. 113–170; G. Bevilacqua, "Graffiti gladiatori sui fregi a girali dagli *horti* Sallustiani", pp. 171–174; M. Moltesen, "The sculptures from the *horti* Sallustiani in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek", pp. 175–188; H. Broise & V. Jolivet, "Il giardino e l'acqua: l'esempio degli *horti* Luculliani", pp. 189–202; E. La Rocca, "Artisti rodii negli *horti* romani", pp. 203–274; C. Vorster,

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