

soltanto nel 1940; tuttavia i risultati delle indagini eseguite non furono mai resi noti.

L'autrice offre nel volumetto, dopo l'introduzione, un Catalogo dei reperti, tra cui una trattazione della Tabula Rapinensis (Vetter 218), seguito da qualche conclusione relativa al contesto storico. Auguriamo alla collana un buon proseguimento.

*Heikki Solin*

MARGHERITA CATUCCI – LORENA JANNELLI – LUCIA SANESI MASTROCINQUE: *Il deposito votivo dall'acropoli di Cuma*. Corpus delle stipi votive in Italia 16, Regio I, 2 = Archaeologica 138. Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, Roma 2002. ISSN 0391-9293; ISBN 88-7689-202-8. 124 pp., 28 tav. EUR 180.

Un ulteriore volume della collana delle stipi votive. I materiali analizzati nel presente lavoro appartengono a un deposito votivo scoperto a Cuma nel 1911 durante indagini archeologiche condotte sulla terrazza inferiore dell'acropoli, rimaste inedite e pubblicate ora nel presente volume. All'introduzione segue il Catalogo, a cura di tutte e tre le autrici; il libro finisce con considerazioni sulla topografia dell'area sacra e sulla tipologia del culto dalla mano di Jannelli.

*Heikki Solin*

MARINA DE FRANCESCHINI: *Ville dell'Agro Romano*. Monografie della Carta dell'Agro Romano, 2. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 2005. ISBN 88-8265-311-0. 568 pp., 100 ill. b/n, 70 ill. col., tav. f.t., 1 pianta b/n. EUR 300.

The countryside around Rome is currently experiencing a very lively research period. Many excavations and surveys provide new archaeological information on old and new sites, and even literary sources concerning the area have been reanalyzed. One of the most important types of ancient monuments found in the area is definitively the Roman villa, which has been documented in great numbers since the Renaissance period. We are getting close to the point where synthetic work is possible and even necessary. Marina De Franceschini (MDF) has in her catalogue of one hundred excavated villas found inside the borders of the modern city of Rome also tried to create a synthesis of the data she presents. She has a history of writing catalogues concerning Roman villas (*Villa Adriana: mosaici, pavimenti, edifici* from 1991, see also website: <http://www.villa-adriana.net/> and *Le ville romane della X Regio (Venetia et Histria): catalogo e carta archeologica dell'insediamento romano nel territorio, dall'età repubblicana al tardo impero* from 1999). Thus, she is an expert in collecting and organizing data, which is also evident in the volume at hand, which has better organized, referenced and indexed information than is usually available in publications of this kind.

The book has been divided into three major parts. The first part contains the catalogue of the villas and it covers a little over half of the whole. The second consists of ca. 45 pages of short, analytical and synthetic chapters drawing some conclusions on various aspects of the villas. The third deals more or less with the same matters as the second part as it provides the indices for various materials and finds as lists – not in prose text as in the previous part. The book ends with a large section of colour plates reproducing the ground plans with

various aspects (e.g., presence of cisterns, water channels, porticoes, building phases) highlighted in color. The catalogue part is naturally equipped with a great number of photographs, drawings and maps. The locations of the villas have been presented only on a 1:80,000 scale map attached to the volume.

The aim of the book has been defined as the reconstruction of the typology and evolution of the villa in the territory of Rome (p. xiii). In order to achieve this aim, MDF has selected one hundred sites based on two criteria: location inside the modern city of Rome and existence of a sufficiently detailed ground plan. MDF considers the fairly limited number of such sites as a sufficient sample of all types of villas found in the area, but does not argue her case statistically. Additionally, the completely artificial limitation of the research area has little to do with the realities of ancient *villeggiatura*. She does not comment on the total numbers of known sites and the state of research in the area except to lament the poor state of excavation and documentation. This is a pity, as she has had to plough through a great deal of literature and archival material, and would have thus been in a perfect position to comment on the possible needs for further research. She could also have drawn conclusions on the formation processes of the sites, the way in which the material has come about, having read through a great quantity of excavation reports. These kinds of insights would have added greatly to our knowledge and understanding of the archaeology of this important area. The chapter presenting the principles and methods consists only of 3.5 pages of very general text, which I think is not sufficient.

The catalogued villas are presented in a consistent manner – one of the strengths of the book. There is a section for general information such as name, location, research history and date. This is followed by a description of the building techniques, installations connected to water, baths and agricultural production, decorative elements and finds. Then the text continues with a description of the building phases as well as conclusions on the character and structure of the whole site. Each entry finishes with a bibliography. The plans are, in general, reproductions of published ones with a minority of original plans. The maps seem to have been scanned and partially treated with some kind of computer-aided drawing program. Some of the scans are quite smudgy and difficult to read and the situation is not helped by MDF's overlaid highlights by particularly in the black and white text section. The situation is better in the color plates. Most of the plans have been printed with north towards the top of the page, but there is also plenty of variation to this, which sometimes makes connecting plans to each other a bit difficult. The photos rarely contain any kind of information on direction and sometimes lack references to room numbers. Bibliographical data also show some gaps, particularly when it comes to integrating survey data with the excavated finds. MDF has not always bothered to check the survey records – which almost invariably exist at least in the eastern part of her research area (e.g., sites 17 and 33, among others). Despite these shortcomings, the general quality of the text is mostly better than in the original excavation reports due to the author's insight based on her wider view of the data set.

What I would have perhaps wished to see in the descriptions is a more accurate system of indicating location. The way this data is given in the current Italian system is by using place names derived from roads, houses, farm names, etc. The exact location is indicated by distance along the road, by house/plot numbers and sometimes by direction and distance from major buildings. These are all unsatisfactory, as all can change and be forgotten. I would think that the hundreds of archaeological and epigraphical pieces found in

*vigna* this or that, whose location has already been unknown for centuries would have raised a need for more accurate ways of indicating location. Now, if the general location map attached to the volume disappears, the only way to locate the sites is to find another copy of the book with the map still included or to remake the map oneself by finding and using the original publication or other documentation of each villa. This also applies to all the basic archaeological survey publications, e.g., the *Forma Italiae* series. One answer to the dilemma could be the use of national grid coordinates derived from the *Istituto Geografico Militare's* topographical plans. These would also be an independent means of checking the location information in addition to the verbal descriptions. The volume at hand features sites such as, e.g., the *Villa della Cecchignola* (Nr. 84) which was excavated in the 1930's and the exact location of which is quite uncertain. It should also be noted that the sites Nr. 56 and 85 are inaccurately placed in MDF's general map: Nr. 85 is actually *Villa dei Centroni* (Nr. 56) and *Villa di Casal Morena* (Nr. 85) is located south of it. This is by far the most serious mistake in the locations of the villas.

The second part of the book features the synthetic and statistical part. As mentioned earlier, MDF does not discuss the statistics for the whole settlement archaeology of the Roman countryside and so the representativity of her sample remains unknown. The *Forma Italiae* and *Latium Vetus* series cover most of her research area and even territories outside the city of Rome. If areas included in both MDF's book and in the survey reports are considered, ca. 1000 sites that can be classified as villas are known and this figure excludes all *aree di frammenti fittili* (scatters of tile and pottery), which are also potential settlement sites. Slightly more than half of the sites listed by MDF are from that particular area, which would mean that they represent ca. 5–6 % of the known sites. When certain classes of material are discussed, comparative figures would have also been quite informative. For example, MDF cites productive spaces or installations for ca. 80 % of her sites whereas the same figure is ca. 10 % or slightly higher when all settlement sites are included. Considering the amount of space she uses to discuss villa economics in the synthetic section (ca. 8 pages), it might have been a good idea to consider the representativity of the sample more carefully. Excavated material is, of course, more detailed and informative than most survey materials, but it would also be very important to compare it to the known survey material. Distribution maps and a simple table with figures of the different features might have also been more efficient in illustrating the material than the many lists she produces in notes and in the *Repertorio* section.

MDF's insights, particularly concerning the development of the building types and their various parts, are very worthwhile and they will be important for future research. Her lengthy economic synthesis mostly repeats what has been said by others. The book will certainly be an important reference volume for many years to come, but I feel that many of the conclusions presented need to be considered as working hypotheses to be tested with more representative materials. The *corpus* of excavated and published villas from the surroundings of Rome is much larger than the one hundred sites featured here and their number increases all the time.

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