

non solo ha svolto un ruolo egemone sulle aristocrazie locali, ma è stato strettamente legato alla famiglia reale epirota-macedone. In questa ottica, risulta altamente suggestiva la proposta di individuare nel monumentale "cratere a mascheroni" (raffigurante, come pare, la nota scena iliadica dell'ambasceria di Oineo a Meleagro) un programma politico-figurativo con allusione al re epirota Alessandro il Molosso. Spicca inoltre l'indiscussa ideologia filomacedone che promana dall'iconografia del corredo, insieme con alcune singolari coincidenze quali la stagione della cremazione e il cranio rinvenuto senza corpo: non solo la morte del Molosso si colloca fra il tardo autunno e l'inverno iniziale degli anni 331–330 a.C., ma la tradizione tramandata da Livio vuole che il suo corpo sia stato lacerato con le parti staccate successivamente sepolte in più località dell'arco ionico. In estrema ipotesi, quindi, potrebbe il titolare della tomba non essere Alessandro il Molosso, sepolto dal partito filomacedone che ancora credeva nel progetto di conquista dell'Occidente? Ciò potrebbe essere pura fantasia, come l'autrice ben sottolinea (p. 177), ma l'idea rimane attraente lo stesso.

Mika Kajava

DIANA SPENCER: *Roman Landscape: Culture and Identity*. Greece & Rome New Surveys in the Classics 39. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2011. ISBN 978-1-107-40024-5. XVI, 236 pp. GBP 14.99, USD 21.99.

Roman landscapes have been discussed from various points of view over the past few decades. Archaeologists tend to concentrate particularly on the problems of understanding and reconstructing settlement patterns from survey and excavation materials. Historians also participate in those discussions commenting on both literary and archaeological sources. Scholars concentrating on literary studies usually try to decipher the intended meaning of literary descriptions of landscapes – what was the effect aimed at when the text was composed? Diana Spencer has written a concise introductory book on the basics of analysing literary landscapes, which seeks to explore theories and methodologies for studying ancient landscapes mostly based on ancient texts. Chronologically the main emphasis is on the Roman Republic and early Principate and geographically on Central Italy.

The book consists of an introduction followed by five main chapters and ending with a short envoi. The densely annotated introduction affords a breathtakingly wide perspective on landscape theories in various disciplines from sociology to art history to architecture. It is followed by a survey of some key themes concerning particularly the Roman world such as ethnoscapes, *locus amoenus* and the political uses of landscape. The next three chapters discuss such themes as aesthetics, labour and time in relation to Roman ideas of landscape. The fifth chapter is the core of the volume and concentrates on literary case studies. In the last main chapter, the emphasis is on material culture case studies, landscape paintings, architecture and its relationship to the topography of the sites explored. The envoi reflects on ancient and modern experiences based on a visit to Hadrian's Villa at modern Tivoli.

The landscapes discussed by the various Roman authors in Chapter 5 start with Cicero and questions of Roman identity. Cicero looks for, buys and sells estates himself and discusses similar transactions by his peers. The seemingly financial transaction is also significant for purposes of memory (like finding the place for Tullia's tomb) and ethnicity (references to Greek

landscapes). The story continues with Varro's agricultural guide which does not really discuss production as much as it discusses aesthetics and *otium*. Italy is presented in more utopian and idealistic terms than as a real, cultivated landscape. Italia has become completely Roman and questions of identity and ethnicity are still contested topics. The next topic is Columella's description of an ideal estate as well as characteristics of Roman Italy in the 1st century A.D. His habit of making rich cultural references on almost every aspect is fascinating. Statius's poems in *silvae* bring luxury and pleasure to the foreground, which was not really acceptable before the Flavian period. Pliny's descriptions of his villas evoke architectural spaces approaching natural landscapes and again relate to history, memory, mythology and social status.

In Chapter 6, Spencer uses archaeological evidence to study landscapes and turns to villa architecture and landscape paintings on walls. Her first example is the Villa Farnesina site and its large hemicyclic space opening towards the Tiber. She considers it as a landmark in its region and suggests possible lines of sight even to the other side of the river, maybe all the way to Augustus's Mausoleum. Although the idea is fascinating, the large public buildings between the villa and the northern part of Campus Martius would probably have blocked the view. Another example used is the garden room in Livia's villa near Rome, which brings the outdoors deep inside the architectural space. The third section is on the *porticus* built by Pompey and the sculptural displays in the *horti* on the outskirts of ancient Rome, both bringing *rus in urbe*.

Spencer intends the books as a starting point – a survey – for future work for other scholars rather than as the end point of her own. The examples are familiar and usually have already been widely discussed, but adding a more general theoretical framework to the treatment of landscapes in literary sources gives coherence and structure to the textual analysis. Spencer manages to create an easily understandable, concise and yet comprehensive volume for students and scholars alike.

Eeva-Maria Viitanen

KATHERINE E. WELCH: *The Roman Amphitheatre. From Its Origins to the Colosseum*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2007. ISBN 978-0-521-809443 (hb). XXII, 355 pp. GBP 55.

Besides the Olympic Games, it is surely the gladiators and the amphitheatres, which most fascinate modern readers in the field of ancient agonistics. Since the year 2000 books have been, if not flooding onto the market, at least regularly published on this subject. To name a few, D. L. Bomgardner in 2000 for Routledge, A. La Regina in 2001 for Electa in connection with the Rome exhibition, L. Jacobelli in 2003 for "L'Erma", K. Hopkins – M. Beard in 2005 for Profile Books, G. G. Fagan in 2011 for CUP from the social-psychological point of view, and above all K. E. Welch in 2007 also for CUP from the origins of Roman amphitheatre to the Colosseum.

K. E. Welch takes as her starting point the previous scholarly literature. She points out how much and how long L. Friedländer's magnum opus from the late 1880s affected our picture of gladiators and Roman morals. It was only in 1970 that the Roman spectacles were first analysed in ancient Roman terms, and in 1983 that arena and its spectacles began to be seen as a reflection of the bellicose spirit of ancient Rome, a substitute for warfare and a venue for political expression at a time when few Romans had personal experience of battle. Ever since the