

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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

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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

1980s, much has been gained by the use of the interdisciplinary historical method, even with anthropological and psychoanalytic approaches. The amphitheatre itself as an architectural type received its first comprehensive treatment only in 1988 by J.-C. Golvin.

The author tackles its origins, monumentalization, the canonization of the building type and its dissemination in the early Empire. She analyses sensitively its development against the social and political background, and cultural circumstances in their historical setting. This is not an easy task, as the origins of the gladiatorial games were debated already in antiquity. Livy's suggestions of gladiatorial games being popular in South Italy, at least in the late fourth century BC, accords with the archaeological evidence; the indications of their connections to funerary rituals have traditionally been accepted. The first known gladiatorial show in Rome was given in the Forum Boarium in 264, and since 214 in the Forum Romanum, which seems to have been the physical setting of gladiatorial games to the end of the republican period. The beginning of regular gladiatorial combat in the middle of the third century BC coincides with the beginning of Rome's active military expansion, and was more frequent than has been supposed. Also the *venationes* extended much further back, as unusual animals began to be displayed in military triumphal contexts in the third century BC. *Damnatio ad bestias*, later the basic ingredient of amphitheatre entertainment, was known since 167 BC. The connection between the army and arena activities is indeed a strong one.

The discussion on *maeniana*, wooden balconies for extra viewing space, is fascinating reading. In the northern sector of the Forum Romanum they may date back to 338 BC, and were originally cantilevered from the upper parts of the facades of private houses, later reached out over the columns of the upper floors of the basilicas that lined the Forum. The author minutely traces the emergence of elements of later established amphitheatres, such as hypogea, stretched awnings, the oblong, or rather oval, space, and (temporary wooden) seating, that is, *spectacula*. The wooden structures in the Forum Romanum seem to have constituted the canonical type for other amphitheatres during the second century BC. Roman builders mastered wooden buildings of high technical virtuosity, long before Pompey's permanent theatre of stone was built in 55 BC. (The same carpenters were also the unsung heroes so deeply indispensable for creating the Imperial architecture in the *opus caementicium* technique).

Every chapter of this excellent and most interesting book begins with a presentation of the subject, followed by careful argumentation, supported with useful drawings, photos and reconstructions, and ends with concluding remarks. It is to be lamented that some twenty early amphitheatres are for the most part unexcavated and have not received thorough published treatment. The author presents both a list of the geographical distribution of these early stone amphitheatres, and a more detailed catalogue of republican amphitheatres in and outside Italy.

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*Pompeii. Art, Industry and Infrastructure*. Edited by KEVIN COLE – MIKO FLOHR – ERIC POEHLER. Oxbow Books, Oxford 2011. ISBN 978-1-84217-984-0. XVII, 181 pp. GBP 35.

The past two decades in Pompeii have witnessed unprecedented research activity both in the field and in libraries and archives. The results are beginning to appear in volumes of field reports, research monographs and – as in this case – collections of papers on various themes. This