CrossMark

then, the idea of the sack of Rome itself bears much responsibility for ensuring that Rome remains – thus far, at least – eternal.

JAMES CORKE-WEBSTER

King's College London, UK
james.corke-webster@kcl.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0017383521000115

Art and Archaeology

For many, the era of COVID-19 has been short of colour. All the more reason, perhaps, to welcome this round-up's starter for ten: a multihued survey of polychromy in Roman portraiture.[1] *Facing the Colours of Roman Portraiture* is a book that really does lend itself to being judged by its cover: as we turn the volume from back to front, a marble portrait magically metamorphoses between battered original and technicolour reconstruction.

Skovmøller's volume makes for a timely contribution in other ways, besides. The polychromy of ancient sculpture has generated a whole scholarly industry in recent years, much of it spearheaded by the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen. Skovmøller's monograph is the latest intervention within this 'thriving academic milieu' (ix). It also derives from the author's 2015 doctoral project, a collaboration between the University of Copenhagen and the Glyptotek's School of Conservation. Fourteen Glyptotek case studies, dating from between the first and third centuries AD, and the subject of a detailed catalogue appendix (276–98), provide the dataset. Skovmøller exploits a 'more detailed knowledge' (14) of these painted materials to enrich cultural historical interpretation – to ask questions about not just 'how' Roman marble portraits were painted, but also why their 'fully polychrome' (268) appearance might matter.

The discussion proceeds in three parts. After a historiographical prologue and introduction, Skovmøller begins with painted bodies, looking at nine full-body marble portraits from the first century AD, once displayed in a single room at the Diana Nemorensis sanctuary. The second section then homes in on painted portrait heads and hairstyles, turning this time to five third-century AD busts. The third and final part of the book puts the two preceding sections together, focusing on issues of environment and display. This discussion of 'painted marble portraits in context' sketches the larger take-home, focused around two concerns: on the one hand, 'the environments in which the painted marble sculptures performed and engaged with their audiences'; on the other, 'how an understanding of the production and consumption of painted marble sculptures ultimately comes down to a question of physical, situational and spatial contexts' (231). There is much at stake here – both for rethinking scholarly approaches to Roman portraiture (where 'a focus on form, iconography and typology has tended to dominate', 26), and for wider issues of 'museum display and curating' (202). For all the pain[t]-staking analyses of its case studies, or for that matter its

[1] *Facing the Colours of Roman Portraiture. Exploring the Materiality of Ancient Polychrome Forms*. By Amalie Skovmøller. Image & Context 19. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2020. Pp. xi + 361. 198 colour illustrations. Hardback £118, ISBN: 978-3-11-056366-5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

glorious cover, the book is rightly sceptical about reconstructing the 'colours of Roman portraiture': 'reconstructions are experimental', since 'visualizing exactly what the original would once have looked like is – at this stage – impossible' (18; cf. e.g. 203, 267). There are also some well-timed – and hugely important – reflections on skin colour: the insistence on 'the diversity of white marble skin tones' (267), for example, puts paid to 'white-lie' ideologies of race, themselves bound up with post-Enlightenment (neo)classical ideals.[2] As we have come to expect from De Gruyter's 'Image and Context' series, the design and colour illustrations do justice to Skovmøller's polychrome subject. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of De Gruyter's copy-editing: punctuation errors and typos abound (e.g. 'The marble portraits of the Roman Empire where fully polychrome', 265; 'For i discussion', 316, n. 12; 'Sculpting and painting. . .developed symbolically over timem complementing and expanding on eachother's potential. . .', 262, etc.). One may understand why publishers must charge exorbitant prices for specialist scholarly monographs. In return, though, we should expect a basic level of proofing, not least with books written in an author's non-native language.

Does Skovmøller deliver on her promise that 'the fragments of paint call for new ways of *seeing* ancient marble sculpture' (269)? Overall, I found the book better at empirical analysis than larger cultural historical questions. The author is well aware that her discussions are centred around a selective set of case studies. She is also explicit in framing her project as a spur for further research, proposing 'new ways of analysing ancient Roman white marble portraiture that should be tested in future' (231). To be sure, the interest in the psychology of colour perception, and not least its cultural determinacy, lays the ground here. But I was left pondering two issues in particular.

The first has to do with the recurrent assumption that colour necessarily renders a sculptural subject more 'lifelike'. Fundamental to Skovmøller's argument is the idea that colour enriches mimetic effect, adding to (rather than subtracting from, or perhaps better reframing) what she calls 'the animated image' (243–5).[3] Particularly relevant is her eighth chapter, on 'Colours in Context'. Here we read how the polychrome surface forms part of an 'enchantment of technology' (245)[4] – something rather summarily discussed in relation to Platonic and Senecan notions of 'idea' and 'form'. Fundamental is the premise that polychromy 'animates': 'the dematerialization of the marble stone through texture and paint potentially created *trompe-l'oeil* effects, intentionally producing visual and cognitive dissonance between what the ancient viewers were looking at and what they actually saw' (245). But what often strikes me about modern reconstructions is their potential to pull in the opposite direction. Rather than simply make objects more lifelike, might the addition of paint not also underscore elements of artifice, facture, and fabrication?[5]

[2] In this connection, it is worth noting one forthcoming book in particular: W. Fitzgerald, *The Living Death of Antiquity. Neoclassical Aesthetics* (Oxford, 2021).

[3] The main debt here is to S. Bussels, *The Animated Image. Roman Theory on Naturalism, Vividness and Divine Power* (Leiden, 2012).

[4] The author here refers to an earlier contribution: A. Skovmøller and B. Hildebrandt, 'Multi-Sensory Encounters: The Aesthetic Impact of Roman Coloured Statues', in E. O'Brien and H. Hunter-Crawley (eds.), *The Senses and Visual Culture from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (London, 2019), 53–5.

[5] For the point, in the context of a statue that is given key programmatic significance in Skovmøller's introduction (15–20), see M. J. Squire, 'Embodied Ambiguities on the Prima

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

My second reflection has to do with categorical – or indeed 'epistemological and ontological' (246) – distinctions between the spheres of sculpture and painting in the Graeco-Roman cultural imaginary. In Copenhagen, and now in classical archaeological circles more widely, new modes of conceptualizing the interstices between sculpture and painting are beginning to dominate. I understand the revisionist rhetoric: the argument that 'sculpting and painting performed in symbiotic relationships' (264) speaks to a residual tendency to treat the two media in isolation. But to what extent does this modern segregation have its origins in antiquity? What is missing, in my view, is a more nuanced analysis of ancient literary texts, which so often distinguish between the affordances of three-dimensional sculpture and two-dimensional painting. Is this solely a rhetorical or figurative distinction? And if so, what purpose did it serve? I am thinking here of someone like Pliny the Elder, who famously framed his discussions of painting and sculpture around the respective natural resources of different media. More programmatically, perhaps, one might cite the Elder Philostratus, whose proem to the *Imagines* claims an intrinsic difference between the 'many forms' of sculpture and the 'colours' of graphic painting (Praef. 2, my translation):

Now, there are many forms of sculpture: moulding itself, mimesis in bronze, those who carve white or Parian stone, ivory, and by Zeus sculptural engraving. Painting, however, is composed from colours, yet it does not accomplish only this, but it also displays more ingenuity from this singular quality than the other kind of craftsmanship does from many. For it displays shadows, and it knows the look, whether of the person who is raving, or suffering, or rejoicing. The sparkles of the eyes, such as they really are, a sculptor cannot manufacture at all, but graphic art knows the 'blue-grey' the 'light blue' and the 'black' eye, and it knows hair 'fair', 'fiery' and 'sunny' – and the colour of clothing and arms, and rooms and houses and groves and mountains and springs and the ether, in which these things are.

Such extant literary discussions are understandably beyond Skovmøller's remit. But if we are really to understand 'painted marble portraits in context', we need to engage more sensitively with ancient literary texts. Only then, perhaps, can scholarship paint a more polychrome picture.

The intersections between ancient visual and literary cultures are a particular bugbear of this reviewer. But the theme also brings together a run of other recent monographs. Take two new CUP monographs, both adapted from US doctoral theses. The subjects of these monographs differ – the one dedicated to Early Imperial poetry and painting, the other to the 'rhetorical' underpinnings of Hellenistic visual culture. At the heart of both projects, however, is a related rallying cry: that we need to consider 'art' and 'text' in more closely related cultural historical terms.

Hérica Valladares' *Painting, Poetry, and the Invention of Tenderness in the Early Roman Empire* has been much awaited, deriving as it does from the author's 2006 Columbia

Porta Augustus', *Art History* 36 (2013), 242–79, esp. 263–4. In the context of polychrome Archaic Greek sculpture, see N. Dietrich, 'Framing Archaic Sculpture: Figure, Ornament and Script', in V. J. Platt and M. J. Squire (eds.), *The Frame in Classical Art. A Cultural History* (Cambridge, 2017), 270–316.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

doctoral dissertation.[6] It is a proudly interdisciplinary project – originally 'nurtured' (xviii) by the late Talie Kampen. Valladares' essential argument is twofold. On the one hand, the book proposes that the Early Imperial period spurred a new sort of romanticism ('the emergence, crystallization, and diffusion of a tender, heterosexual amatory ideal that had its roots in the countercultural fantasies of Latin love elegy', 187): as the Roman Republic morphed into an empire, we find the new 'characteristics of a *Roman* ideal of romantic tenderness, which grows out of and in response to certain social, political, and cultural changes' (4, emphasis in original). On the other hand, Valladares demonstrates how these emerging 'amatory codes' found mutual expression in both contemporary art and literature, discussed here with particular reference to Latin poetry and Campanian wall-painting. If this study grows 'from a desire to offer a more nuanced account of early imperial erotic art and literature, which thus far have tended to be treated separately' (8), its thesis is that both the forms and subjects of painting were 'deeply influenced by Latin love elegy' (185).[7] For all its focus on single thematic case studies, the book pulls no punches about its larger stakes:

> the images of lovers that appear on the walls of Roman houses beginning in the Augustan period reveal how the elegists' countercultural romantic fantasy was quickly deradicalized and incorporated into a conservative familial ideology – one, however, that from this moment on would be laced with elements from the elegiac discourse on love, making intense, mutual affection between spouses a desired component of conventional, lawful marriages. (28)

Readers will quickly detect the conceptual debt: here, as elsewhere, Kampen's inspirational influence shines through.[8]

This is rich and scintillating volume, and one that rewards close reading. Valladares tops the book with a wide-ranging methodological introduction, and tails it with an epilogue extending into the Flavian period ('By the time cities such as Pompeii and Herculaneum were destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE, the ideal of a sensuous, emotionally fulfilling private conjugal life had lost its edge', 30). Discussion is structured around three case studies, effectively organized into two sections. First, Valladares examines the *pinax*-panels of the Villa Farnesina, relating their supposed 'emphasis on domesticity' (64) to a series of Pompeian comparanda. Second, she analyses the 'period's trend toward creating tender retellings of well-known myths' (140), focused around two figures in the second and third chapters: on the one hand, the 'transformation of Polyphemus into an urbane elegiac lover' (130); on the other, 'sympathetic' painterly treatments of Medea, with emphasis on the 'strong emotional pull' (172). To be sure, not everything here will convince everyone: quite apart from the

[6] *Painting, Poetry, and the Invention of Tenderness in the Early Roman Empire*. By Hérica Valladares. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xviii + 247. 92 b/w illustrations, 8 colour plates. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-108-83541-1

[7] Fundamental on this relationship (and perhaps underplayed in Valladares account?) is A. Grüner, *Venus Ordinis. Der Wandel von Malerei und Literatur im Zeitalter der römischen Bürgerkriege* (Paderborn, 2004).

[8] Strangely, Kampen's last monograph goes without reference in the book: N. B. Kampen, *Family Fictions in Roman Art. Essays on the Representation of Powerful People* (Cambridge, 2009).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

definition of 'tenderness' around which Valladares centres her study ('The Latin language offers no precise equivalent to our English term', 2), questions remain about the ancestry of the characteristics discussed – whether in the earlier Republic (touched upon only in passing), in the Hellenistic world (see e.g. 8–9, 142–53), or for that matter in Etruscan visual culture. The crucial issue, in other words, boils down to the claim of 'invention'. But to determine whether or not Valladares' grand claims stand requires situating them against a longer backdrop, both literary and epigraphic (consider the elegiac epigrams of classical and Hellenistic Greek funerary *stelai*), and visual and iconographic (for example, Etruscan precedents for the 'conjugal' motif of the Pedana Altar – the object with which Velladares concludes at 193–8).

A second book looks not to Rome but to the Hellenistic world, replacing Valladares' talk of 'invention' with the language of 'innovation'.[9] Again, the monograph revolves around three case studies (a winning formula for US doctoral theses, it seems – in this case, descended from a 2009 Berkeley dissertation). Like Valladares' book, Seaman's discussion takes its cue from the dialogue between literary and visual materials: 'establishing a clear association between art and text confirms a dynamic relationship between forms of cultural production and their contributions to Greek culture' (133).

For Seaman, it is rhetorical education that explains the interstices between Hellenistic visual and literary cultures. The importance of rhetoric for studying the forms of ancient art, no less than ancient 'emic' modes of viewing it, has emerged as a major topic in recent years: fundamental is an edited 2014 volume on *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (which puzzlingly goes unmentioned).[10] In exploring the similarities and differences between the art of the classical period and the Hellenistic world ('the most dynamic period of Greek cultural production', xi), Seaman posits that rhetorical training holds a key sociological importance: 'new practices in Greek rhetorical education informed the students who went on, as adults, to produce the innovative visual and textual culture that is associated with the Hellenistic courts' (xi). If Pergamon and Alexandria dominate, Seaman centres analysis around three particular 'focal points' (30), each discussed in relation to a specific rhetorical trope: the Telephos Frieze of the Great Altar of Pergamon (analysed in terms of *diegema* or 'narrative' – and strangely heralded as 'the only preserved instance of a continuously told story in Greek art', 55); the Archelaos Relief (with its interest in rhetorical *prosopopoiia* or 'characterization'); and Sosos' *asarotos oikos* or 'unswept room' mosaic (supposedly indebted to Hellenistic practices of ekphrastic 'description').

Let me say outright that this is a welcome and timely contribution. The wide-ranging references reveal an author as well versed in classical philology as in classical art and archaeology. Scholars from a range of backgrounds will want to consult this book for themselves.

That said, I have three major reservations. First, I worry about Seaman's underpinning assumptions about Hellenistic 'artists' – that is, the uncritical notion (at once the book's premise and conclusion) about 'agency' (133), whereby 'many Greek artists

[9] *Rhetoric and Innovation in Hellenistic Art*. By Kristen Seaman. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. xv + 186. 49 b/w illustrations, 8 colour plates, 1 map. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-108-49091-7.

[10] J. Elsner and M. Meyer (eds.), *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Cambridge, 2014).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

were prominent, wealthy, educated, and intellectual' (13). We are in the territory of the author's closely related editorial project, *Artists and Artistic Production in Ancient Greece* – a project that has not been without controversy.[11] To put the point simply, I see no compelling evidence for relating the 'codification of rhetorical techniques' (20) to the training of Hellenistic *technitai* in stone, painting, or mosaic: the premise that these rhetorical techniques were something that 'artists', along with other 'educated Hellenistic patrons. . .and viewers would have first learned as children' (99) is at best unsubstantiated conjecture, at worst wilful modernist fantasy. Second, and related to such risks of anachronism, is the issue of chronology. When it comes to the Imperial period and so-called 'Second Sophistic', we are on a surer footing about the workings of rhetorical education. But Seaman's thesis projects that later picture back on to the very different social and cultural landscapes that precede it in the third to first centuries BC. This leads to some pretty shaky arguments ('Although the earliest surviving handbook likely dates to the first century CE, *progymnasmata* appear to have been part of educational practice by the very start of the Hellenistic period', 10).[12] Perhaps inevitably, key cultural shifts associated with the Second Sophistic are in turn rendered 'Hellenistic', sometimes in deeply troubling ways: consider Seaman's turn to Philostratus' famous distinction between *mimesis* and *phantasia* (*VA* 6.19), bizarrely labelled 'perhaps the ancient world's clearest articulation of the agonistic nature of *ekphrasis*' (128), and related back to Sosos' lost mosaic of the second century BC.

Chronology takes me to a third reservation, this time about Seaman's reconstructions. What motivates this book is the attempt to recover a historical Hellenistic aesthetic. But while the Roman mediation of so many extant materials, both literary and archaeological, is essentially written out of the analysis, Seaman indulges in some pretty wild speculations about her lost Hellenistic 'originals'. To summon up the figure of Sosos' mosaic, the book risks cooking up a hypothetical feast from throwaway morsels: so it is that the 'most probable' context of Sosos' *asarotos oikos* mosaic is said to be 'Room I in Palace V' at Pergamon (113) – which Seaman goes on to reconstruct, both physically (114–19) and in relation to 'competitive festivities of Eumenes II's symposia' (130); likewise, in the third chapter, she speculates that the Archelaos relief is a copy of a lost painting, like the Praeneste Nile mosaic ('very similar in conception', 79), originally displayed at the royal court of Ptolemy IV at Alexandria ('perhaps even in a portico of the Mouseion or Library', 79). In all this, there can be no doubting the rhetorical innovation. Ultimately, though, I wonder whether the residual positivism of the discipline wins out.

'Image and text' is a theme that can also introduce my next pair of offerings, albeit only indirectly. First is a compact history of the Etruscans, written by an archaeologist acutely aware of the lack of written testimonia ('since the early modern period. . .we have always been told, by ancient Greek and Roman writers, what and how to think

[11] K. Seaman and P. Schultz (eds.), *Artists and Artistic Production in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 2017). For discussion, see my review in *G&R* 67.1 (2020), 103–7.

[12] Note here that some have doubted even the first-century AD date for Theon's *Progymnasmata*: for an argument for a late antique date (cited at 136, n. 21), see M. Heath, 'Theon and the History of the *Progymnasmata*', *GRBS* 43 (2002), 129–60.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of the Etruscans, of their beliefs and traditions', xiii).[13] The book is the latest in Bloomsbury's 'Short History' series, which seeks to combine authoritative overview with searching analysis. In so doing, an unspoken aim is to give OUP's 'Very Short Introductions' a run for their money; not for nothing does the preface begin with a nod to OUP's corresponding title (xiii).[14] The books are longer than their 'Very Short Introduction' counterparts. They are also more heavily referenced, and targeted to 'university students and their teachers' alongside 'general readers and history enthusiasts' (i). Corinna Riva more than rises to the challenge. Her six chapters combine thematic overview with chronologically organized survey, starting with the scholarly historiography, and then proceeding from the Bronze Age to the first century BC and beyond. Particularly compelling is the conceptual framing of the book, especially in the preface, first chapter, and epilogue ('From Globalization to New Questions'): bemoaning 'the circumspection, if not resistance and outright rejection, of the use of concepts deriving from our own contemporary world upon Etruscan antiquity' (194), Riva makes the case for a 'comparative Mediterranean perspective' (195). She concludes that:

> we can turn the legacy of classical archaeology in Italy upon Etruscological research to our advantage. In the current research climate that privileges big comparative, global histories, Etruria can provide the detail and the micro-scale of larger processes at play all the way from the Mediterranean to continental Europe, precisely because of that overwhelming attention by antiquarians, historians and archaeologists that has produced so much rich material from the Middle Ages onwards. (196)

The book comes highly recommended: at just under £15, it provides a wonderful introductory survey for a new generation of Etruscan archaeologists.

The 'lack of a direct literary tradition' (2) that Riva diagnoses in the case of Etruria also pertains to the study of Aegean Bronze Age art and archaeology – the subject of my second title.[15] With 'various kinds of prehistoric art', Carl Knappett begins, 'by definition we will not have any kind of interaction between art and text to consider' (1). Our views of Aegean Bronze Age visual culture are not only skewed by later ideas of the 'major' and 'minor' arts. They are also compromised by 'the rather limited view of ancient art that comes from regarding it as so closely tied to text' (2): 'Working in this protohistorical context we are faced with a particular relationship to art, finding no dialogue with texts but challenged by a prolific and abundant corpus' (203).

For many in the late twentieth century, this scenario made an impossibility of talking meaningfully about Minoan 'art' as opposed to 'archaeology'. Not for Knappett. The author has no reservations in discussing 'aesthetic creativity' (202) in Aegean

[13] *A Short History of the Etruscans*. By Corinna Riva. Short Histories. London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Pp. xx + 261. 77 b/w illustrations. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-1-7807-6616-4; paperback £14.99, ISBN: 978-1-7807-6615-7.

[14] C. Smith, *The Etruscans. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2014). I wonder what the author would make of Riva's dismissive summary that the book was 'written by an ancient historian' (xiii).

[15] *Aegean Bronze Age Art. Meaning in the Making*. By Carl Knappett. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. xvi + 248. 90 b/w and colour illustrations. Hardback £34.99, ISBN: 978-1-108-42943-6.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

prehistory; it is also necessary, he argues, to explore how such creativity could wax and wane at different times and places. Having confronted his 'assumptions about the art-historical dimensions of Aegean material culture' (xi), above all in the context of teaching Bronze Age materials within his Art History department at Toronto, he speaks of 'new interpretive possibilities' (3) – the opportunities that come from combining different disciplinary perspectives. The book, in short, sets out to 'use the evidence from the Aegean Bronze Age to show how it can very usefully disrupt some assumptions about ancient art' writ large (3).

The result makes for one of the most stimulating, creative, and thought-provoking studies of Aegean visual culture published for a generation. Using a panoply of conceptual approaches informed by art history, archaeology, and anthropology, as well as by contemporary philosophy, cognitive science, and cultural psychology, Knappett urges us to 'pay serious attention to materialities' (29). There can be no denying the 'materialist turn' underpinning his analysis. But the perspective leads to five wholly original analyses of particular material processes in Bronze Age art, structured around the thematic categories of 'modelling', 'imprinting', 'combining', 'containing', and 'fragmenting': such processes 'emerge as bases upon which semiotic processes piggyback or are scaffolded' (29). What really stands out here is the combined analysis of selected case studies with visual comparanda from other times and places, not least works by modern and contemporary artists. Typical is the fifth chapter's discussion of 'containers', moving from containment as a 'psychological facility', through 'ethnographies of containment' and 'containing in art history' (with discussions of, *inter alia*, Roman sarcophagi, medieval reliquaries, and a Mongolian chest), and on to Minoan *pithoi*, stirrup jars, *rhyta*, and domestic spaces. In all this Knappett succeeds in crossing both (sub-)disciplinary divides and period segregations, with major ramifications for 'thinking through how meaning is "made" in acts of production and use' (xi). It is gratifying, too, to see CUP rising to the occasion: given the excellent colour illustrations, integrated throughout the volume, one wonders why the same production standards cannot be applied to CUP's other art and archaeology titles.

Knappett would make for a brilliant interlocutor within a recently founded series, this time published by Oxford. 'Visual Conversations in Art and Archaeology' (edited by Jaś Elsner, in association with the Chicago Center for Global Ancient Art) is not in fact new: the first title, dedicated to *Images of Mithra*, was published back in 2017.[16] But the last two years have witnessed the appearance of three innovative volumes, each designed (as the series description puts it) 'to foster a new model of comparative inquiry in the history of ancient art. . .across Eurasia, Africa, Australasia, and the Americas'. Particularly relevant to Knappett's fifth chapter is Claudia Brittenham's edited volume on *Vessels*: four authors discuss different sorts of objects as 'containers' – Attic pots, Roman cosmetic caskets, anthropomorphic Mayan vases, and 'ritual vessels in a fourth-century BCE Chinese tomb'.[17] Two other series titles are no less scintillating. A related

[16] P. Adrych, R. Bracey, D. Dalglish, S. Lenk, and R. Wood, *Images of Mithra* (Oxford, 2017).

[17] *Vessels. The Object as Container*. Edited by C. Brittenham. Visual Conversations in Art and Archaeology. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 178. 97 b/w and colour illustrations. Hardback £30, ISBN: 978-0-19-883257-7.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

set of disciplinary perspectives – and the same quattuorvirate of contributors (Richard Neer, Jaś Elsner, Claudia Brittenham, and Wu Hung) – resurface in both, dedicated respectively to *Conditions of Visibility*,[18] and *Figurines. Figuration and the Sense of Scale*.[19] Taken together, the volumes make a persuasive case for how to go about 'global art history' in the twenty-first century. 'Truly to globalize the discipline requires globalizing the skill sets of researchers, and that is no mean feat', as Neer ends his introduction to *Conditions of Visibility*. If disciplinary 'diversification' risks compromising requisite expertise, 'More feasible, perhaps, is a comparativism of methods and research programs.'[20] 'That is what the Chicago's Center for Global Ancient Art undertakes and what these papers exemplify: a triple comparativism as a way to produce an art history that is cosmopolitan in method and global in scope, to establish new ways of seeing – new conditions of visibility for – shared objects of study' (5). The comparativist turn to 'figurines' allows me to shoehorn in one other book along the way: Langin-Hooper's *Figurines in Hellenistic Babylonia* explores not only the 'powerful social agency' of miniature figurative sculpture within a 'broader social imaginary' (50), but also the different sorts of 'cross-cultural interaction' (12) that they embody.[21]

Time now for some news in brief. First, two highly recommended books mentioned only in passing, and with a declared conflict of interest (I am involved with both relevant series): on the one hand, a brilliant analysis of 'meta-pictures' in Roman wall-painting;[22] on the other, a scintillating account of seeing and reading late antique mosaic inscriptions.[23] Next, a major new survey of *Roman Architecture and Urbanism*:[24] brevity is perhaps the best means of doing justice to Fikret Yegül's and Diane Favro's co-authored book – 'in preparation for thirty-nine years for one of us and thirty-one years for the other' (vii). Weighing in at 4 kilograms, and covering materials from the length and breadth of the empire, this is a volume for any self-respecting research library, not least given the quality and quantity of illustrations. From the monumental to the miniature, I also mention a study of Roman gems in the Late Republic and Early Empire – or more specifically, their functioning 'as a means of

[18] *Conditions of Visibility*. Edited by R. Neer. Visual Conversations in Art and Archaeology. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 150. 66 b/w and colour illustrations. Hardback £30, ISBN: 978-0-19-884556-0.

[19] *Figurines. Figuration and The Sense of Scale*. Edited by Jaś Elsner. Visual Conversations in Art and Archaeology. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xvi + 189. 79 b/w and colour illustrations. Hardback £30, ISBN: 978-0-19-886109-6.

[20] For a related recent interrogation of the point, see the essays in J. Elsner (ed.), *Comparativism in Art History* (London, 2017).

[21] *Figurines in Hellenistic Babylonia. Miniaturisation and Cultural Hybridity*. By Stephanie M. Langin-Hooper. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020. Pp. xii + 320. 109 colour and 12 b/w illustrations, 1 map. Hardback £75, ISBN 978-1-108-48814-3.

[22] *Painting, Ethics, and Aesthetics in Rome*. By Nathaniel B. Jones. Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xviii + 291. 74 b/w and 15 colour illustrations. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-108-42012-9.

[23] *Inscribing Faith in Late Antiquity. Between Reading and Seeing*. By Sean V. Leatherbury. London, Routledge, 2020. Image, Text, and Culture in Classical Antiquity. London, Routledge, 2020. Pp. xv + 366. 96 b/w and 30 colour illustrations. Hardback £120, ISBN: 978-1-4724-5918-3.

[24] *Roman Architecture and Urbanism. From the Origins to Late Antiquity*. By Fikret Yegül and Diane Favro. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 897. 828 b/w illustrations, 32 colour plates, 7 maps. Hardback £230, ISBN: 978-0-521-47071-1.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

propaganda' (14; see also 328–9).[25] Gołyźniak's book is based on his 2019 PhD dissertation at Krakow, and 'deals with small, but highly captivating and stimulating artworks' (v). Those doctoral origins are conspicuous in the book's structural organization (with its sub-sub-sub-chapters: '9.3.2.9', etc.). But the chronologically arranged catalogue and colour images (330–445) are a particularly helpful resource. Importantly, the volume is also freely available online, thanks to an impressive open access initiative.[26] Modern technology looms large in Emma Payne's monograph, too – hot off the press at the time of writing.[27] The subject lies in plaster casts of the Parthenon marbles – and the 'lost details' (4) that emerge from painstaking 3D-images of nineteenth-century materials. While arguing that casts are at once 'archaeological objects' and 'important objects in their own right', Payne demonstrates 'how difficult it can be to unwrap and distinguish separate layers of meaning' (3); there are also some provocative discussions of casts alongside other sorts of archaeological resources (especially in the sixth chapter, on how 'our understanding of authenticity can shift', 182). Although the book steers clear of debates about repatriating the originals, Payne demonstrates how 3D-imaging of Parthenon plaster casts might inform discussion about the British Museum's stewardship. Those who claim that the original marbles suffered major damage in London take note: 'These results…indicate that the impact of the 1930s cleaning on the surface morphology of the Parthenon sculptures was minor' (156).

Let me add a short note, too, on two volumes received from France and Germany. On the one hand, I mention an edited French volume dedicated to a single Roman musical instrument: the *cornu*.[28] Christophe Vendries has amassed an expert team to discuss not only the five 'gladiatorial' examples found in Pompeii during the nineteenth century, but also iconographic echoes in Roman art and the scholarly historiography more broadly; a highlight comes in the metallurgical analyses of René Caussé, Benoît Mille, and Margaux Tansu, which gives rise to discussion of pitch and acoustic range (79–98). On the other hand, Silvia Leone has provided an important survey of portraits erected in the Athenian Agora between the early first century BC and the late third century AD – the latest addition within De Gruyter's 'Urban Spaces' series, edited by Susanne Muth, Jennifer Trimble, and the late Ulrike Wulf-Rheidt.[29] Quite apart from the extensive catalogue of 106 examples (mostly fragmentary inscriptions: 153–248), the volume examines the changing spatial, economic, and social role of

[25] *Engraved Gems and Propaganda in the Roman Republic and under Augustus*. By Paweł Gołyźniak. Archaeopress Roman Archaeology 65. Oxford, Archaeopress Publishing, 2020. Pp. viii + 606. 1015 (mostly) colour illustrations, 52 maps, 29 charts. Hardback £90, ISBN: 978-1-78969-539-7.

[26] See <http://archaeopress.com/ArchaeopressShop/Public/displayProductDetail.asp?id=%7BF81E84A2-AEA8-4EBF-A141-8E57469A3E07%7D>, accessed 22 June 2021.

[27] *Casting the Parthenon Sculptures from the Eighteenth Century to the Digital Age*. By Emma M. Payne. London, Bloomsbury, 2021. Pp. xii + 212. 93 b/w illustrations. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-3501-2034-1.

[28] *Cornua de Pompéi. Trompettes romaines de la gladiature*. Edited by Christophe Vendries. Rennes, Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2019. Pp. 124. 60 b/w and 74 colour illustrations. Paperback €32, ISBN: 978-2-7535-7895-2.

[29] *Polis, Platz und Porträt. Die Bildnisstatuen auf der Agora von Athen im Späthellenismus und in der Kaiserzeit (86 v. Chr.–267 n. Chr.)*. By Silvio Leone. Urban Spaces 9. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2020. Pp. x + 276. 133 b/w illustrations. Hardback £109, ISBN: 978-3-11-065283-3.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

the Agora, not least in relation to the Acropolis. Following the integration of Athens within the Roman Empire, practices of honorific portraiture point to both similarities and differences in the spatial functioning of the Agora (145–7) – a sense of cultural autonomy and local tradition, balanced by the conspicuous prominence of Roman statesmen (and not least the looming presence of the Roman emperor himself).

I round off this survey with two volumes associated with museum exhibitions. The first takes us to Troy – and to the museological display of Trojan artefacts in late nineteenth-century England.[30] By happy accident, the publication of Abigail Baker's *Troy on Display* coincided with a landmark exhibition here in London ('Troy: Myth and Reality'): the British Museum show closed shortly before the first British COVID-19 lockdown in spring 2020, and was accompanied by a richly illustrated catalogue.[31] The subject of Baker's book lies less with the archaeological 'reality' of the city than with the 'myth' of Troy at a particular historical moment: it deals with the early reception of Heinrich Schliemann's excavations in Victorian England. More specifically, Baker charts responses to the first major exhibition of Trojan antiquities: a temporary exhibition of almost 4,500 objects, staged in 1877, and displayed in the South Court of the South Kensington Museum (known today as the V&A).

Baker organizes her book into fourteen chapters and five overarching sections (cf. 9–12: 'Introduction'; 'Putting Troy on Show'; 'Schliemania'; 'Troy's Place in History'; 'Troy's Legacy'). A primary concern lies in the 'gap between Schliemann's Troy and the public imagination' (5); above all, the volume demonstrates how archaeological materials posed probing questions about the origins of European art, religion, and culture, placing 'the roots of classical culture in a very unclassical context' (5). The most original research comes in the discussions of 'how Schliemann displayed his treasures' (above all in the fourth chapter). Here Baker reconstructs the rationale of Schliemann's arrangement, including his decision to arrange materials according to type rather than purported chronology: 'Schliemann needed to communicate a complex archaeological site through decontextualized objects which (contrary to his boasts) did not speak for themselves' (45). After showing how Schliemann exploited both stratigraphy and photographs to peddle a particular interpretive agenda, Baker maps the arrangement of twenty-five cases: both the 'layout and juxtapositions of objects allowed Schliemann and his collaborators to shape visitor experiences' (62).

A topic like this, rooted in archival research, might quickly have turned fusty. Throughout, though, Baker breathes intellectual life into her project. For all its microscopic reconstruction of particular details, the book never loses sight of the bigger picture – above all the 'tricky epistemology of material culture' (12), especially when it comes to Trojan 'myth and reality': 'Troy's difficulties make public conversations about epistemology and the difficulties of reading archaeological evidence inevitable' (204). The result will be essential reading for anyone interested in the reception of

[30] *Troy on Display. Scepticism and Wonder at Schliemann's First Exhibition*. By Abigail Baker. London, Bloomsbury, 2020. Pp. xi + 263. 39 b/w illustrations. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-7883-1358-2.

[31] A. Villing, L. Fitton, V. Donnellan, and A. Shapland (eds.), *Troy. Myth and Reality* (London, 2019). Other recent relevant titles include N. Mac Sweeney, *Troy. Myth, City, Icon* (London, 2018), and J. Haywood and N. Mac Sweeney, *Homer's Iliad and the Trojan War. Dialogues on Tradition* (London, 2018).

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

classical antiquity in Victorian England, with topics ranging from racial and cultural identity (especially in Chapter 11: 'Who Were the Trojans?'), to Victorian attempts to chart the historiography of Western art (especially in Chapter 6, on 'how the idea of "primitive" art gave Troy a distinctive appeal as a way of thinking through the relationship between ancient and modern, self and other', 118). Importantly, the subject also returns us to the intersections between archaeology and ancient literary texts: 'Troy is not a text, but it is (perhaps more than any other archaeological site) shaped by relationships with text; primarily the *Iliad*, but also all the numerous ancient and modern texts that deal with the Trojan War' (26). Given the important role of this literary legacy, my only disappointment is the book's errors when discussing ancient testimonia. The few times that ancient Greek is introduced, breathings and accents tend to be mangled (e.g. 75). It is unfortunate, too, that the Elder Pliny is credited with a *Historias Naturalis* (208, n. 37; 222, n. 20).

Baker's book takes us to a blockbuster of the Victorian museum. But for those seeking a landmark exhibition in 2021, perhaps the most important event has been staged at the Musei Capitolini in Rome: 'I marmi Torlonia: collezionare capolavori' ('The Torlonia Marbles: Collecting Masterpieces'). The show has recently been extended, and (at the time of writing) is due to close in late June 2021. Given the series of international lockdowns that have intervened since the exhibition's 'opening' in October 2020, one hopes that this run might be lengthened further. In any case, readers unable to make it to Rome can take consolation in the accompanying catalogue.[32] The book gives a tantalizing glimpse into what we missed: how the curatorial team brought together 92 rarely seen pieces, selected from over 620 objects formerly displayed in Rome's Museo Torlonia (on the Via della Lungaro, just east of the Orto Botanico in Trastevere, and one of the world's most important private collections of ancient statuary). As we have come to expect of Electa, the book includes exquisite photographs of all the pieces on display (see 134–297). Each receives an expert discussion, accompanied by a wide range of additional thematic essays. Highlights include discussions by the two editors on the Torlonia Museum as a 'collection of collections', and the 'last Roman collection of antique sculpture' (20–29; 30–47). No less compelling is the chapter by David Chipperfield, discussing how he went about designing the exhibition space in the Villa Caffarelli (298–301). There is also a scientific report on the conservation carried out before the objects went on display (302–15: 'The restoration of part of the sculptures that constitute the Torlonia collection was concluded just as this text was published', 302).

There are many reasons to look forward to lockdown ending. For classical art and archaeology enthusiasts, however, one overarching thought will be the opportunity to travel – and the hope of catching this exhibition before it ends. In the first major catalogue of the collection, published in 1876, Pietro Ercole Visconti described the Torlonia collection as 'an immense treasure of erudition and art accumulated in silence, over the course of many, many years' ('Un immenso tesoro d'erudizione e d'arte…andato ammassando nel silenzio, durante il corso di molti e molti anni').[33] This

[32] *The Torlonia Marbles. Collecting Masterpieces*. Edited by Salvatore Settis and Carlo Gasparri. Milan, Electa, 2020. Pp. 336. Colour illustrations. Hardback €39, ISBN: 978-88-918-2925-2. The catalogue is also available in Italian, along with a bilingual 'guida breve' (*non vidi*).

[33] P. E. Visconti, *Catalogo del Museo Torlonia di Sculture Antico*, third edition (Rome, 1880), 6.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press

catalogue succeeds in making the treasures speak once more – about ancient sculptural traditions, but also about the long and chequered afterlives of the antique.

MICHAEL SQUIRE

King's College London, UK
michael.squire@kcl.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0017383521000127

Philosophy

David Conan Wolfsdorf has done a great service in putting together the thirty chapters (only a handful by women) that make up the new collection *Early Greek Ethics*.[1] As he notes, ethical thinking prior to Socrates has generally been neglected or, in some cases, simply denied. Wolfsdorf's classification of 'early' as the 'formative period' (late sixth to early fourth centuries BCE) prior to Plato's and Aristotle's major ethical works allows him to bring together a rich and diverse group of individuals and topics. He himself acknowledges that different people will feel different kinds of lack within the collection, but he is explicit that its aim is to be 'quite', rather than entirely, comprehensive. He is also clear that his aim is to focus on Greek 'philosophical ethics' (as he understands it) rather than the sort of significant ethical thinking we might think can be found in Greek tragedy, for example.

The collection is divided into three parts. The first consists of twenty chapters on specific individuals or texts, beginning with a survey of the evidence for the Pythagorean *acusmata* and working through various early Greek Philosophers, Sophists, and Socratics (including Socrates and early Plato) in chronological order. There is real value in seeing Socrates and his circle considered in this ethical context, as opposed to the more common approach of working back from Plato. The second section presents seven chapters on specific topics or themes, including the place of ethics in Greek medicine and early Greek ethnography, and the themes of friendship, the afterlife, and justice. A 'Coda' contains three chapters on post-fourth-century thinkers such as Diogenes of Sinope and Aristoxenus. Many of the chapters provide useful introductions and thus fill a notable gap in the literature – I have already gratefully employed John Palmer's chapter on Empedocles and Monte Ransome Johnson's on Democritus in my own undergraduate teaching. One notable and welcome feature of the volume is the variety of approaches to early Greek ethics that it offers, from close study of individual texts to broad summary. It is to be hoped that this book serves to stimulate more interest in this area and, indeed, more awareness of its existence.

Another wonderfully diverse and interesting recent collection is *Plato's Academy*, which brings together a fascinating group of papers on various aspects of the history and function of Plato's school.[2] Paul Kalligas' introduction presents a useful brief history of scholarship on the Academy and makes clear the volume's aims: to show

[1] *Early Greek Ethics*. Edited by David Conan Wolfsdorf. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xxi + 799. Hardback £110, ISBN: 978-0-19-875867-9.

[2] *Plato's Academy. Its Workings and Its History*. Edited by Paul Kalligas, Chloe Balla, Effie Baxiotopoulou-Valvani, and Vassalis Karasmanis. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press,

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383521000127 Published online by Cambridge University Press