Roman art, it belongs to a gradual transformation over the last century. But the revisionists surely offer something more concrete than this. Some of them are contributing to an enduring new comprehension of the subject—a genuinely better understanding of how Roman art worked, on anyone's terms—just as Furtwängler did in his day. This extends beyond the attempt merely to 'dignify the production of repetitious imagery of the Roman era' (p. 9). For my part, I do not really mind whether Roman art is good or bad, creative or stale and derivative; as long as we try to understand better what it is.

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SALVAGED VASES

V. Smallwood, S. Woodford: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. Great Britain Fascicule 20, The British Museum Fascicule 10. Fragments from Sir William Hamilton's Second Collection of Vases Recovered from the Wreck of H.M.S.* Colossus. With a contribution by J. C. Quinton. Pp. 141, maps. London: The British Museum Press, 2003. Cased, £85. ISBN: 0-7141-2236-X.

This *CVA* fascicle publishes that which remains fit and useful to print of the recovered fragments of part of Sir William Hamilton's second collection of Greek and South Italian vases. They were being shipped from his ambassadorial posting in Naples to avoid the advancing army of Napoleon, and went down with the *Colossus* off the Isles of Scilly in December 1798. Between 1975 and 1979 the surviving fragments were recovered from the seabed, and acquired by the British Museum. The authors of this fascicle and their colleagues, to whom they pay a warm tribute, have since been engaged in a project of conservation and interpretation of nearly 31,000 sherds. This volume features 115 which can be reconciled usefully in print with the plates in Hamilton and Tischbein's publication of the collection in 1791–5 (or perhaps 1793–1803).

The fascicle is a substantial one, not least because its introduction reports on the recoverable and complex history of Hamilton's acquisition of the second collection, and the *raison d'être* of its publication with Tischbein's plates, as well as the decision to translate it back to England, and the relationship between what was shipped and what survived intact, was sold elsewhere, and is traceable back to the collection via Tischbein and other records. There is also an account of the recovery exercise, and of the extensive conservation undertaken by the British Museum conservation department. This is impressive in itself, but it is when we reach the plates and catalogue we see something of the size of what has been achieved, even with the tiny fraction of the total which responded to the *CVA* treatment.

Tischbein's plates, in keeping with the fashion of the time, illustrate the scenes on the vases as flat art—it was intended that the plates could be removed by connoisseurs from the volume and hung on the wall. At least part of the originators' expressed intention was that they could be used as exemplars for artists learning to draw. That said, the plates as published have considerable fidelity, particularly in their details, to the original vase-scenes, despite their origins on a three-dimensional object with a surface curved in two directions, which is not itself usually recorded on the plate. This,

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of course, makes relating the scene to the shape on which it appeared a problem. No real attempt was made then to imitate the original painting technique—though there is some half-hearted shading to indicate colour differences—which is an added obstacle to identification. Plates A–H therefore really are a minor miracle: they show, in colour, and on the same scale, a selection of the fragments laid on the Tischbein plates which illustrate the vase scene from which they come. The ingenious black and white plates, by the photographer John Heffron and draughtswoman Candida Lonsdale, assemble associated fragments opposite or next to a meticulous drawing; if there is a related Tischbein plate, it appears there too. The authors' catalogue text is, I think rightly, allowed greater length than usual, so as to accommodate the description of what is there and its condition, but also to allow for some judicious interpretation, and extended attribution commentary and parallel-citation, all of which is particularly revealing and constructive in this context.

This review could be read, if you like, as another report from the *CVA* front, on a volume which broadens the frame of reference of the series yet again, and certainly contributes to current debate about its purpose, content, and format. This volume is in some ways an extreme version of many of the characteristics which have evolved in the history of the series, in that its contribution to collection studies is presented more explicitly and deliberately than in many fascicles for well-established assemblages. Its extended introduction gives us not only the history of the collection, but also the history of its afterlife, its recovery, and the specific job of reconstructing a collection in more than one sense, and records a major piece of research and conservation work. In many ways its priorities mirror those of Hamilton and Tischbein in their original publication of the collection—not only connoisseurship, but dissemination, education, history, and an aid to the acquisition of technical expertise. That makes this fascicle an impressive volume, quite apart from its evident glamour.

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VASES IN MANNHEIM

F. UTILI: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. Deutschland* [Band 75]. *Mannheim, Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen, ehemals Reiss-Museum. Band 2*. Pp. 89, ills. Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2003. Cased, €80. ISBN: 3-406-50565-1.

This is the second *CVA* fascicule of Mannheim vases (the first was Greifenhagen's in 1958). The introductory foreword gives a brief history of the collection: as with many in Germany, it was founded by an energetic eighteenth-century collector, in this case the electoral prince Karl Theodor. It continued to grow through the nineteenth century, and the first catalogue was begun in 1882 by K. Baumann, using numbers prefixed by Cg (*céramique grecque*) for Roman items as well as Greek; these inventory numbers are the vase-references used in the fascicule, as are those prefixed with Bg (*bucchero grecque*). The collection was badly damaged in WW II when the Mannheim Schloss was bombed, but was recovered in large part from the rubble. The old arsenal building which housed the vases after the war came to be known as the Reiss-Museum after the family whose donation paid for the building's restoration,

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