

Ways of navigating by use of various aids, such as landmarks, seamarks, skymarks, and what Tartaron names “phenomenology of the voyage” are discussed, as well as the transmission of this knowledge from generation to generation. He concludes that short- and medium-distance social and economic sea travel normally would have carried on with little or no palace interference, while long-distance trade involving high-status goods would more likely have required palace involvement. He also treats the evidence from Linear B and iconography as well as the Homeric epics, and concludes that the information which can be drawn from the *Odyssey*, for example, is not new for the Iron Age, but must reflect—at least partly—older traditions of building phenomenological itineraries. He analyses the factors which affected communication by sea—an analysis which is also of interest for studies of human interaction with the natural environment in the wider region. Tartaron’s conclusion that the local networks were more stable and permanent than the long-distance connections is convincingly argued.

The discussion of navigation and landmarks in Chapter 5, ‘Coasts and harbors of the Bronze Age Aegean’ (139–181), puts the light on the coastal landscape. The author’s discussion of the coasts and their geomorphology over time also includes anthropogenic contributions through, for example, the construction of harbours. The section on methods of reconstructing the landscape and detecting Bronze Age harbours is informative and also useful for people working with the historical environment in general in the area. The chapter ends with a model for a systematic approach to detecting Bronze Age harbours.

Chapter 6 (182–211) deals with the concepts relating to the coastal worlds of the Mycenaean period—for example, maritime cultural landscape, coastscapes, etc. The term “small world” is often applied to mean a type of social network, but it is used in different ways in different fields. Tartaron defines his use of the term clearly, and that makes it possible for him to refine the discussion of such local worlds within the region in question, into a more coherent picture of everyday activity, and define the factors that influenced it. These local networks are then reflected against the evidence for long distance trading in order to explore the connection between various levels of networks. He also criticizes the more quantitative network models that have been presented for the Aegean Bronze Age; he prefers qualitative models of the maritime networks. Neither is wrong, if well and carefully applied, but it is true that Tartaron’s case studies on the Saronic Gulf, together with what he names “potential coastscapes and small worlds”, i.e. Miletos and Dimini, enable him to weigh various types of evidence against each other and present his ideas on the small-scale world in depth. His case for the existence of a handful of larger nodes of what he calls “maritime connectivity” and

the fluctuations between cohesion and fragmentation in this maritime cultural landscape in the Saronic Gulf is well and convincingly argued throughout. The discussions are also situated in a larger regional framework, which adds to the value of the book.

The illustrations are adequate even if some photos are rather dark (e.g. 3.5). There is a useful index and an impressive list of references.

The book is well written and the author’s engagement with and knowledge of his subject is evident in the text. There are of course points that can be criticized, but those are minor and do not detract from the value of the volume. This is a book that fills a gap in our discussion of the Aegean Bronze Age world.

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*Kunst von unten? Stil und Gesellschaft in der antiken Welt von der »arte plebea« bis heute (Palilia, 27)*, eds. Francesco de Angelis, Jens-Arne Dickmann, Felix Pirson and Ralf von den Hoff, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Rom. Wiesbaden 2012. 184 pp. ISBN 978-3-89500-915-0.

In June 2007 a group of distinguished scholars participated in a colloquium held in Rome, in celebration of Paul Zanker’s 70th birthday. The theme discussed at the event was the relationship between the form, content and social position of images in the ancient world. The inclusion of the concept “*arte plebea*” in the colloquium’s title emphasizes the importance of Zanker’s teacher, Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, within this line of research, especially the latter’s groundbreaking article of that same title, published in the first issue of the *Dialoghi di archeologia* in 1967. Zanker soon paid heed to Bianchi Bandinelli’s call for studies that approached ancient art from a historical and sociological—as opposed to a purely aesthetic—point of view. This is most clearly the case in two of his articles published during the 1970s, and dealing with the funerary reliefs of freedmen (*JdI* 90, 1975, 267–315) and decorations in Pompeian houses (*JdI* 94, 1979, 460–523). The fact that all contributors to the present volume are among the leading scholars in their respective fields is a testament to Zanker’s lasting influence on the study of Roman art. When viewed as separate entities, all articles included in the reviewed book are of the quality that one would expect from such distinguished scholars.

A brief introduction sets the agenda for the volume, and includes the usual summaries of the contributions. For some unintelligible reason, these summaries are not presented in the same order as the articles appear in the volume, something that adds an unnecessary element of confusion. The contributions are collected under three different headings: ‘Begriffe und Methode’, ‘Pompeji’ and “*Arte colta*” versus “*arte plebea*”. The contributions written by Baldassarre and Hölscher constitute the section regarding concepts and methods, and both present reconsiderations of Bianchi Bandinelli’s notion of an “*arte plebea*”.

Ida Baldassarre, in ‘*Arte plebea. Una definizione ancora valida?*’ (17–26), presents a close reading of Bianchi Bandinelli’s article of 1967. It is often assumed that Bianchi Bandinelli considered the “*arte aulica*” and the “*arte plebea*” as static sociological classifications, governed by the social standing of the patrons of art. To the contrary, Baldassarre emphasizes that Bianchi Bandinelli did consider these different aspects of Roman art to be more dynamic. She moves on to illustrate how this more dynamic notion of the “*arte plebea*” can be used, in a study of the mosaics that embellish the Tomba della Mietitura on Ostia’s Isola Sacra.

In ‘*Präsentativer Stil im System der römischen Kunst*’ (27–58), Tonio Hölscher takes the opportunity to build upon his highly influential notion of Roman art as a semantic system (*Römische Bildsprache als semantisches System*, Heidelberg 1987). Even if Bianchi Bandinelli’s static correlation between social standing and forms of visual representation may be flawed, Hölscher argues that the different modes of representation noted by Bianchi Bandinelli can instead be tied to the different messages that the images were made to communicate. Hölscher argues that the visual traits usually tied to the “*arte plebea*” (frontal representation, for instance) should rather be seen as a “presentative” (“*präsentativ*”) mode of representation. This mode was deemed fit for conveying individual success and as such it was, as Hölscher demonstrates, evidently used by persons from different social strata. Hölscher’s thoroughly theoretical approach, as well as his wish to make observations valid for Roman art in general, makes his contribution particularly valuable. Due to these traits, this article stands out among the other contributions, which generally present less wide-ranging observations based on a relatively small set of examples.

For those interested in representations created by, and for, the lower social strata, the provincial Roman town of Pompeii provides a treasure trove of material. As mentioned above, Pompeian houses received the attention of Zanker in the 1970s, and so it is hardly surprising that Pompeii is the focus of one of the reviewed collection’s three subdivisions.

Mario Torelli, in “*Arte plebea. Una verifica nella pittura pompeiana*’ (61–76), uses the abundant contextual evidence

available in Pompeii in order to single out a series of wall paintings that are, due to their placement, likely to have been commissioned by plebeians. The frescoes discussed include the well-known depiction of the riot at the amphitheatre from the Casa della Rissa dell’Anfiteatro (I, 3, 23) and the bread salesman from the Casa del Panettiere (VII, 3, 30). Most of these wall paintings can be seen as adaptations of official (i.e. “high”) art; the scene with the bread salesman can, for instance, be compared with the *liberalitas* panel from the Arch of Constantine. Thus, Torelli’s contribution is one of several to point out that the art of the *plebs* and that of the court should not be seen as two unrelated strands within Roman visual culture.

Pier Giovanni Guzzo, in his contribution ‘*Statuto e funzione delle pitture erotiche di Pompei*’ (77–91), instead looks at Pompeian frescoes depicting erotic scenes, excluding those that represent mythological characters. Among the 40 depictions analysed, most are stereotypical representations of the sexual act, devoid of any element that may have added a narrative quality to the scene. Arguing that the characters depicted are prostitutes and their clients, Guzzo states that the images can be seen as expressions of the successful business undertaking of the brothel owner, or pimp: i.e. also these erotic scenes can be counted among the visualizations of personal achievements among Roman entrepreneurs—the most well-known category of depictions traditionally identified as “*arte plebea*”.

Richard Neudecker, in “*Felix et tu. Bilder aus Kneipen und Lokalen in Pompeji*’ (93–108), directs his attention to the frescoes that decorated two Pompeian *cauponae* (VI, 14, 35–36 and VI, 10,1). As opposed to the erotic scenes scrutinized by Guzzo, the scenes rendered in these *cauponae* tell vivid narratives of what went on in the premises: wine is delivered, guests are depicted drinking, gambling and even being thrown out due to a (presumably drunken) fight getting out of hand. The wish to express a stirring narrative is also manifested in the inclusion of captions. As Neudecker points out, these crude paintings visualize the daily round, without expressing the “*Stilwollen*” that Bianchi Bandinelli tied to the “*arte plebea*”.

With the title “*Arte colta*” versus “*arte plebea*”, the last section is the most vaguely defined among the three, and it alone includes half of the volume’s contributions.

H. Alan Shapiro’s contribution ‘*Anonymous heroes. Reinterpreting a group of Classical Attic votive reliefs*’ (111–120) is the only one that does not deal with Roman art—to which the notion of an “*arte plebea*” is generally applied. There is no denying that the article does come off as somewhat misplaced in this particular volume. Shapiro discusses three Classical Attic votive reliefs depicting a female pouring libation for an armed warrior, in the presence of one or two worshippers. Shapiro convincingly argues that there is not much credibility to the earlier interpretations of the main figures as Aphrodite

and Ares. They are more likely to represent a cult hero (perhaps Kodros) with a female consort. In an almost apologetic manner, the article's last two paragraphs mention that these marble reliefs cannot be considered folk art, but that there is a popular aspect tied to their function because, as Shapiro would have it, the average citizen felt an especially close religious connection to their local heroes, and that the general viewer could therefore identify him- or herself with the worshippers depicted in the reliefs.

Filippo Coarelli, in his contribution 'Libitina e i sepolcra publica dipinti dell'Esquilino' (121–132), emphasizes the danger of connecting depictions to persons of a specific social standing, by merely observing the style and artistic quality of the depictions. To ascertain this point, Coarelli discusses the Tomba di Fabio and the Tomba Arieti in the Esquiline necropolis. Due to the style of their frescoes, it has been assumed that these graves cannot have belonged to members of the Roman elite. Coarelli emphasizes that the discussed frescoes seem to have been placed on the graves' façades, and that they were therefore meant to address a general public. Thus, the simplistic composition of these reliefs could be explained by the wish to make the depicted scenarios "readable" for a general viewer—even if the graves did, in fact, belong to members of the social elite.

Adolf H. Borbein's article 'Augustus/Romulus. Italische Reminiszenzen in der augusteischen Bildsprache' (133–155) is, in essence, rather a reaction to the strong influence of Zanker's studies on Augustan iconography, than a contribution to the study of the societal position of Roman art. He argues that research has placed too much emphasis on the Hellenistic influences on Late Republican and Early Imperial art and culture. In order to balance the scales, Borbein presents examples that show the strong influence of Etruscan visual culture: for instance the restoration of Etruscan temples, the use of Etruscan-styled tombs and the symmetric compositions used for the so-called Campana reliefs. This point is well worth making, but with regard to the publication's overall theme, Borbein's article is, as is that of Shapiro, somewhat off the mark.

The next contribution is by Henner von Hesberg, 'Individualisierung innerhalb der Bilder an römischen Gräbern' (157–170). Using provincial grave reliefs as his examples, von Hesberg argues—as have several other contributions in this volume—that there was no separate system of communication used by plebeians: i.e. there was no "*arte plebea*" in the sense envisioned by Bianchi Bandinelli. Regarding funeral reliefs, it has been noted that members of the Roman military generally preferred simple designs for these monuments. But even so, von Hesberg argues that the iconography used for funeral reliefs was not primarily governed by the patron's social standing.

R.R.R. Smith's 'Monuments for new citizens in Rome and Aphrodisias' (171–184) is the volume's last contribution. Smith compares funeral monuments commissioned by new citizens of the plebeian classes in Rome and Aphrodisias, with a certain emphasis on the monuments from the latter city. Smith stresses that the funeral monuments traditionally labelled as "*arte plebea*"—those depicting work scenes—are a clear minority in Rome. He also notes that these rare scenes, where prosperous new citizens showed how they had reached their level of financial dignity, were hardly intended to be viewed by Rome's senatorial aristocracy. In Aphrodisias there are, however, no funerary monuments depicting work scenes: thus, in a sense, the "*arte plebea*"—as it is known in Rome—is absent here. This is, according to Smith, due to the fact that Aphrodisias constituted a smaller social world, a world that was to a greater extent than Rome dominated by the ideals and values of a conservative elite. In an effort to participate in this high social stratum, also the new citizens (i.e. the plebeians) fashioned their funeral monuments in the same manner as the elite.

To sum up this review, I would like to quote Tonio Hölscher, who begins his contribution with the following personal reflection: "Es hat den Reiz des Paradoxes, dass eine Gruppe jüngerer Forscher die Generation ihrer Lehrer zu einer wissenschaftlichen Frage zusammenruft, die zu deren Jugendzeit aktuell gewesen war." With this notion in mind, it is tempting to point to another paradox that governs this publication: meant as a tribute to Paul Zanker, the theme chosen for the colloquium constantly directs the attention to *his* teacher, Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli, and the latter's definition of the "*arte plebea*". Unfortunately, Zanker's contributions to this field of research are never discussed at length in this book, produced in his honour. This weakness aside, the theme as such is an important one: as all contributors agree, the concept "*arte plebea*" needs to be reconsidered, if it is to have any bearing on future studies of Roman art. Hopefully the reconsiderations presented in this volume will leave their mark on subsequent studies within this fascinating field of research.

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