

and the need to study the hoards in light of the epigraphic evidence. Iakovidou and Kremydi take a broadly chronological approach in their comparison of hoards from southern Greece and Macedonia; their approach bears fruit in their ability to show how the role of provincial bronzes changes over time from nearly exclusively local circulations to wider regional circulation. This immediately raises questions about whether this same trend can be traced in other regions over the same historical periods. Bonchev brings in just such a cross-regional comparison to explain patterns in the hoarding of provincial Bronzes in Moesia. Goldman uses the example of Palestine to provide empirical evidence that major political conflicts and mass violence do indeed result in a spike in unrecovered hoards.

The final section of the volume, called ‘Longevity of Circulation’, contains a series of papers all deeply individually valuable but less directly connected to the overall theme of hoarding and of a very different character to the preceding chapters. Woytek’s chapter on restored denarii is a much needed and up-to-date overview in English of the phenomenon. Likewise Hobbs’ contribution on silver plate and its role in late antique *largitio* challenges numismatists to think of objects often classified as luxury or decorative arts as potentially having a denomination system and playing an integral role in the monetary economy. Neither chapter draws extensively on hoard data, but may change how the readership thinks about hoards and hoarding in the respective time periods. Von Heesch and Hellings separately tackle long-standing questions in the field, namely the so-called big problem of small change and methods of measuring historic coin supply and estimating the longevity of circulation. Both make good use of newly available data and provide smart interventions into the state of our knowledge.

This volume overall is a testimony to the success of Linked Open Data initiatives under the auspices of Nomisma.org in not only connecting disparate digital humanities projects, but also in its ability to support further academic research by making vast amounts of new data from the ancient world accessible to us all. Along with my recommendation of this edited volume to you, I strongly urge you to explore alongside it *Coin Hoards of the Roman Empire* (chre.ashmus.ox.ac.uk), a masterpiece of design and utility, and the repository for the vast majority of the data underlying the scholarship in this book.

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RICHARD C. BEACHAM and HUGH DENARD, *LIVING THEATRE IN THE ANCIENT ROMAN HOUSE: THEATRICALISM IN THE DOMESTIC SPHERE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. Pp. xxx + 515, illus. ISBN 9781316510940. £120.00.

Roman wall painting and domestic architecture are a pair of topics inextricably linked. Most of the extant paintings were discovered in houses and villas. Meanwhile, the loss of many movable objects, furnishings and elements of decoration that filled these homes in antiquity makes their brightly painted walls a crucial source of information about Roman domestic decoration and room function. A similar dynamic couples the study of Roman wall painting to that of Roman theatre. Surviving mural iconography abounds in theatrical masks, figural scenes of actors and architectural motifs that invite comparison to stage buildings. These designs, in turn, form an essential corpus for the study of theatrical activities and the settings in which they took place. The combined force of these phenomena — through which extant paintings are so often recovered in domestic contexts and so frequently contain theatrical imagery — has left a strong impression that the Roman house was, in some sense, a theatrical space. A product of decades of research, *Living Theatre in the Ancient Roman House* amasses and presents textual and archaeological sources that support and extend this claim. The volume is synthetic in the best sense, integrating insights from across Roman history, art history, archaeology, and theatre and performance studies. The result is an essential reference work that guides readers from the rudiments of these subjects,

through academic debates and into fresh hypotheses concerning the social and cultural significance of theatre on the Bay of Naples.

A rebuttal to the very premise of this monograph (well anticipated by the authors) holds that, across Roman culture and art, theatrical imagery, analogies and frames of thought were so pervasive that actors painted on walls or tragic masks grimacing from floor mosaics could offer at best only dull stimulus to the imagination, and that, regardless of the effect, homes could hardly have been unique in courting such associations. As a first step to combatting this view, the book's introduction proposes a terminological dichotomy: the diffusion of elements and ideas drawn from the theatre into every sphere of Roman life is 'theatricalism', and the more pointed use of theatrical imagery (theatricalism's 'self-conscious face'), 'theatricality'. With this in mind, the authors argue that the overtly theatrical images and forms prevalent within Roman homes (attributable to 'theatricality') constitute the material counterpart to a Roman textual discourse configuring the home as a theatre. Early chapters of the book, including 'Theatrical Life at Pompeii' and 'Politics and Patronage at Pompeii', build incrementally towards this central thesis through a series of introductions to relevant topics.

Assumptions about domestic activity that guide the remaining chapters of the book are outlined in ch. 5, 'Theatricalism and the Roman House'. There, the authors delineate the layout of the Roman house, condensing and explicating the substantial body of scholarship that examines how Roman domestic design facilitated and directed movement and access among inhabitants and guests. Following the pathbreaking work of Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, the Roman house is frequently described as theatrical (Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (1994), 26–7). The authors, galloping through literary testimony at a fast clip, offer a wide-ranging and emphatic argument for why this is so.

Across the subsequent four chapters, the book offers a broadly chronological survey of the development of 'skenographic' wall paintings (those that resemble stage backdrops or buildings) in Roman Italy, a phenomenon first identified by H. G. Beyen (*Die pompejanische Wanddekoration vom II bis zum IV Stil* (vol. 1: 1938; vol. 2: 1960)) and hotly debated in the decades thereafter. The authors' substantial, and indeed pioneering, use of digital reconstructions (3-D visualisations) to recreate ancient stage sets from such paintings is judiciously coupled, in this book, with a healthy scepticism regarding the documentary value of the exercise. The authors, drawing upon the concept of intermediality and foregrounding the 'ceaseless play of fantasies and allusions' (207) through which the meanings of skenographic paintings take shape, instead encourage readers to put as much stock in the accuracy of 3-D visualisations as sophisticated ancient viewers might have done in that of the paintings themselves. These four substantial chapters, which meticulously and lucidly explicate complex images and environments, are avowedly not art historical, but rather focus on the social and cultural impact of the home as a space of lived experience. The authors juxtapose detailed descriptions of pictorial compositions with a variety of drawings, computer models and photographs taken from multiple angles, in order to simulate the experience of moving through domestic spaces decorated with complex, large-scale paintings. The book culminates in a chapter on the *triclinium* as the domestic theatrical space *par excellence* and concludes with an analysis of the House of Marcus Lucretius Fronto as a masterwork of theatricalising imagery and sightlines.

Assuming little prior knowledge, *Living Theatre in the Ancient Roman House* will be accessible to students at a variety of levels. This refreshingly approachable and magnificently illustrated volume allows readers to appreciate the close association of the domestic and the theatrical in Roman culture more fully than ever before.

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