

and ultimately deals with an issue of great importance. It demonstrates Wickham's willingness to tackle structural history with the requisite level of detail. While the work is important for the challenge it poses to the narrative of Rome, it is even more relevant to the study of proto-communes and socio-political structures throughout Italy.

Wickham, C 2015. *Sleepwalking into a New World: the emergence of Italian city communes in the twelfth century*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ

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*Westminster: the art, architecture and archaeology of the royal abbey and palace. Vol I: The Art, Architecture and Archaeology of the Royal Abbey*. Edited by TIM TATTON-BROWN and WARWICK RODWELL. 250 mm. Pp 428, ills (some col), facsimiles, maps and plans. Brit Archaeol Ass Conference Trans, xxxix (Part 1), Maney Publishing, Leeds, 2015. ISBNs 9781910887257 (hbk); 9781910887240 (pbk). £108 (hbk); £49 (pbk).

*Westminster: the art, architecture and archaeology of the royal abbey and palace. Vol II: The Art, Architecture and Archaeology of the Royal Palace*. Edited by TIM TATTON-BROWN and WARWICK RODWELL. 250 mm. Pp 280, ills (some col), facsimiles, maps and plans. Brit Archaeol Ass Conference Trans, xxxix (Part 2), Maney Publishing, Leeds, 2015. ISBNs 9781910887271 (hbk); 9781910887264 (pbk). £85 (hbk); £39 (pbk).

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In the summer of 2013 the British Archaeological Association held its annual conference at Westminster, making its first visit to that part of the capital for a century, and taking as its theme the art, architecture and archaeology of the royal abbey and palace. The conference was a landmark event in that it was heavily oversubscribed, necessitating a ballot for places. Hardly less of a landmark is the publication of its proceedings, for such was the number of papers offered that for the first time they have had to be published in two volumes: one dealing with the abbey, the other with the palace. The papers fall into three

broad categories. The first consists of those that report on conservation work recently undertaken on the two sites; the second, partly overlapping with the first, those that attempt reconstructions of either fabric or decoration now lost; and the third those that offer broad surveys or reinterpretations.

The two principal pieces dealing with the outcomes of conservation are both found in the volume on the abbey. Warwick Rodwell discusses the restoration of the Cosmati pavements in 2008–10, using new discoveries to offer a fresh account of topographical arrangements in the presbytery and Confessor's Chapel. Helen Howard and Marie-Louise Sauerberg discuss the medieval polychromy in the abbey, analyse the pigments and painting techniques used and argue, from the materials identified, that a fluid and flexible labour force was assembled for the projects.

The various articles devoted to the reconstruction of lost work are concerned mainly with the early history of the two sites. In the volume on the abbey, Martin Henig uses the evidence of a fourth-century sarcophagus and funerary statue, excavated at Westminster School, to suggest that there was a Roman burial complex in the area, later identified as a *martyrium* and perhaps incorporated into a Saxon church. In the same volume, Stuart Harrison and John McNeill jointly examine the surviving fragments of Romanesque sculpture, arguing for a constant programme of renewal and upgrading of the monastic buildings in the course of the twelfth century. In the volume on the palace, Roland Harris and Daniel Miles offer a reconstruction of the elevations and roof of William Rufus's great hall, rejecting the view, often expressed, that it had aisles. Complementing this contribution comes a piece by Edward Impey that attempts a similar reconstruction of the *Echiquier*, the very similar royal hall at Caen, which, he argues, was likewise built by Rufus. Later in the volume there is a meticulously researched piece by Christopher Wilson arguing, in opposition to Paul Binski, that the Old Testament paintings in the Painted Chamber were all executed in Henry III's reign, not in that of his successor Edward I. Last of all comes John Goodall's brilliant evocation of the appearance of the lost St Stephen's Chapel, accompanied by an assessment of its place in architectural history.

Most of the other pieces in the volumes revisit extant fabric or decoration, subjecting it to new scrutiny and offering new insights into it. Among the many contributions devoted to medieval topics in the abbey volume, Francis

Woodman reassesses the form of the east end of the Confessor's church, suggesting that it had an ambulatory with chapels, similar to the arrangement at Rouen Cathedral; Pamela Tudor-Craig examines the iconography of the sculpture of Henry III's church, arguing that the angel imagery was inspired by the pseudo-Areopagite, which Henry had probably read; Paul Binski and Emily Guerry offer complementary perspectives on the use of space in the abbey church, specifically with reference to the muniment room and the presbytery sedilia; Tim Tatton-Brown maps out the late medieval building works at the abbey; and finally Jane Spooner argues that the Chapel of the Pew was built as a single space, not two, before being taken over by Richard II, who was simultaneously responsible for commissioning the white hart in the muniment room, which he intended the monks should see as they emerged from the sacristy. In a very different vein, Richard Mortimer, reflecting on the monks' intermittent attempts at chronicle writing, suggests that their literary endeavours were concerned principally to emphasise the abbey's privileges and not to record national history. In the complementary volume on the palace three medieval pieces stand out. These are: John Crook's imaginary tour of the palace, which revises previous accounts of its topography on points of detail; Virginia Jansen's account of Henry III's works on the main apartments; and Julian Munby's analysis of Hugh Herland's hammer-beam roof over the great hall. Among the pieces on the post-medieval period in the same volume the following are especially noteworthy: Jeremy Ashbee's discussion of the Jewel Tower, which carefully balances conflicting views on its purpose and history; Mark Collins' account of the changing topography of the palace between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth; and Steven Brindle's lively account of the building of the new palace after 1834. Among the post-medieval pieces in the abbey volume, mention should especially be made of Steven Brindle's surprisingly favourable account of George Gilbert Scott's work as Surveyor of the abbey; Richard Foster's reconstruction of the tangle of streets and buildings on the north side of the abbey; and Eddie Smith's description of the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century buildings of Westminster School.

If such are the principal contents of the two volumes, how may we assess their worth as a whole? Inevitably, as in every set of conference proceedings, there is a certain unevenness in coverage with some topics thoroughly discussed, and others hardly at all. In both volumes, however, the editors have made a commendable attempt to do justice to the full chronological

range and to include most aspects of the archaeology and architecture of the two sites. Of the two volumes, it is perhaps the one on the palace that comes across as the more satisfying, offering as it does a comprehensive coverage of all the main developments on the site. A weakness sometimes associated with volumes of this sort, which focus on a particular place or area, is that they become tunnel-visioned, concentrating on the place in question and ignoring the comparative dimension. This is a danger which is for the most part successfully avoided here, with constant reference made by contributors to works at other royal sites, such as Windsor, and to points of similarity or contrast with royal ceremonial and administrative centres elsewhere in Europe. As we have seen, there is actually a paper devoted to the great royal hall at Caen, a building very similar to that at Westminster. At the end, the strongest impression left by the volumes is just how much there is still to be learnt about Westminster. Although the great complex of buildings may be among the most familiar and best studied in Britain, it never loses its capacity to yield new secrets. In that case, where might investigations into the palace and abbey go from here? One period in Westminster's history that still appears highly elusive is Henry II's reign. Works on the palace are documented in the 1160s, and the first chapel on the site is recorded in 1184. Henry himself appears fleetingly in these pages, and the subterranean remains of his buildings are periodically referred to. Yet his contribution to Westminster's development remains shrouded in mystery. Perhaps there might be more to report if the BAA were to return to Westminster after another hundred years.

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*Conservation and Discovery: Peterborough Cathedral nave ceiling and related structures.* Edited by JACKIE HALL and SUSAN WRIGHT. 310mm. Pp xvi + 193, 202 ills (chiefly col). Museum of London Archaeology, London, 2015. ISBN 9781907586392. £25 (hbk).

Between 1997 and 2003, the nave ceiling at Peterborough Cathedral underwent a systematic programme of inspection, cleaning and conservation, coupled with chemical analyses of the