

PAGAN SCULPTURE

KRISTENSEN (T.M.) *Making and Breaking the Gods. Christian Responses to Pagan Sculpture in Late Antiquity.* (Aarhus Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity 12.) Pp. 297, b/w & colour ills, b/w & colour maps. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2013. Cased, DKK349.95. ISBN: 978-87-7124-089-4.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X14002212

This is a beautiful book, well bound, nicely laid out and brilliantly illustrated in colour. It is also an important book due to its second and longest chapter on 'The Semantics of Christian Response: Pagan Sculpture in the Sacred Spaces of Egypt'. Two points of general significance emerge: first that the written sources give an incomplete picture, as they tend to focus on destruction, whereas the archaeological record testifies to numerous other ways in which Christians responded to pagan sculpture. Second that these responses varied from region to region, as they depended on local traditions. For example, in the Nile Valley pagan reliefs often remained in place after their faces and their feet had been mutilated, foot whipping being a common punishment in late-antique Egypt.

Both points are confirmed by comparison with case studies from Palmyra, Scythopolis, Caesarea Maritima, Caesarea Philippi and Hammat Gader that add up to a third chapter on 'Re-Imagining Idols: Christian Responses to Pagan Sculpture in the Urban Spaces of the Near East'. The volume is rounded off with a conclusion, an index, an introduction on the Demeas inscription at Ephesus, and a first chapter on 'Making and Breaking the Gods: from Roman Visual Practices to Christian Response' that recounts the Roman tradition and discusses the evidence of the written sources.

The book may be described as a collection of case studies organised to make the above points and to fulfil the requirements of a Ph.D. thesis. Comprehensiveness is not attempted, and wisely so, as ongoing archaeological research is constantly turning up new evidence, for example at Aphrodisias, Ephesus, Miletus and Sagalassos, to name a few sites in Anatolia, outside the main focus of the volume. (Evidence from North Africa has recently been summarised by A. Leone, *The End of the Pagan City. Religion, Economy, and Urbanism in Late Antique North Africa* [2013]. See also D. White and J. Reynolds, *Extramural Sanctuary of Demeter and Persephone at Cyrene, Libya. Final Reports 8. The Sanctuary's Imperial Architectural Development, Conflict with Christianity, and Final Days* [2012].) In order to compare the various cases, some typology would help, possibly along the following lines that appear to emerge from K.'s informal sample and from the Anatolian evidence.

Pagan sculpture could be mutilated, incised with crosses, buried, dumped, reused as building material, or destroyed either in part or completely. Whilst careful erasure of the genitals may simply reflect a changed sense of modesty (pp. 227–8), crosses are obviously a Christian response (pp. 126–7) and mutilation of eyes, noses, mouths, ears, faces and/or feet would also appear to have been informed by superstitious beliefs (pp. 95–104). Genital mutilation can often be linked to continuous display in a conservationist or museum-like fashion (pp. 225–6, 248–51), which suggests that the sculptures were still appreciated as historic works of art, for example alongside a rebuilt colonnaded street at Sagalassos or in the renovated Baths of Faustina at Miletus. (R. Bol, *Marmorskulpturen der Römischen Kaiserzeit aus Milet* [2011], pp. 11–12; O. Dally, 'Bild–Raum–Handlung. Die Faustinathermen in Milet', in O. Dally, S. Moraw, H. Ziemssen [edd.], *Bild–Raum–Handlung. Perspektiven der Archäologie*' [2012], pp. 215–39; I. Jacobs and M. Waelkens, 'Five Centuries of Glory. The Colonnaded Street of Sagalassos in the

First and the Sixth Century AD', *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* 63 [2013], 219–66.) Burial of mythological marbles at Miletus around the turn of the fifth century appears to have been linked to the closure of a sanctuary and may have served to deconsecrate and/or protect. (P. Niewöhner, '2013 Milet Çalışmaları', *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* 36 [2014], in press.)

Dumping is attested variously (pp. 221–4), for example in front of the Sebasteion at Ephesus, where cult images were smashed first, indicating general rejection and disinterest. (J. Auinger and M. Aurenhammer, 'Ephesische Skulptur am Ende der Antike', in F. Daim, J. Drauschke [edd.], *Byzanz. Das Römerreich im Mittelalter. Teil 2, 2. Schauplätze* [2010], pp. 663–96, at 690.) The latter appears also to account for the reuse of statues as building material (p. 225), for example in the late antique and Byzantine city walls of Miletus. (T. Wiegand, 'Zweiter vorläufiger Bericht über die von den Königlichen Museen begonnenen Ausgrabungen in Milet', *Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 38 [1901], pp. 903–13, at 910–1; T. Wiegand, 'Vierter vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen der Königlichen Museen zu Milet', *Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse* 25 [1905], pp. 533–48, at 535.) Partial destruction is particularly well published in the case of the Sebasteion in Aphrodisias, where pagan figures were obviously erased to meet Christian objections, yet remained recognisable through their outlines. (R.R.R. Smith, *The Marble Reliefs from the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion* [2013].) Complete destruction is presented as the early Christian response par excellence by some written sources (pp. 85–9, 119–25, 129–31) and is also suggested by later lime kilns, demonstrating indifference towards the ancient heritage.

All this could affect imperial sculptures, too, if they were associated with the Imperial cult and therefore treated as pagan cult images (pp. 93–4, 126–7). Other secular sculptures, which in some important and traditional cities like Aphrodisias and Ephesus continued to be used and newly carved, were normally not incised with crosses, but might also be mutilated, dumped, reused as building material or destroyed on account of superstitious fears and/or indifference. By elaborating on the regional specificity of certain responses to pagan sculpture, K. demonstrates the need for and the potential of similarly circumspect investigations into the archaeological evidence from other regions. Long-term objectives include a more precise distinction between anti-pagan, unspecifically superstitious and indifferent responses as well as their chronological development (pp. 9–22, 248–51). This volume is bound to become a central point of reference for much scholarly discussion and many more publications.

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ROMAN ARCHITECTURE

ULRICH (R.B.), QUENEMOEN (C.K.) (edd.) *A Companion to Roman Architecture*. Pp. xxiv + 589, ills. Malden, MA and Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2014. Cased, £120, €144, US\$195. ISBN: 978-1-4051-9964-3.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X14002388

Part of Blackwell's series of Companions to the Ancient World, this welcome volume delivers much of the promise of its jacket notes in presenting an up-to-date overview of critical