

sculptures, sleeping figures, figures with infants and figures shown outdoors, as well as making effective reference to eighteenth-century tastes.

The writing style is very readable, with occasional humorous observations dropped seamlessly into the flow of clear academic prose: she observes of the Sleeping Venus' gaping mouth, 'if the hermaphrodite could make noise, she would snore' (p. 37 n. 7). Descriptions are typical of Classical art history, with detailed coverage of features such as drapery, form and expression. Following the policy she set out in the introduction, B. is sensibly cautious throughout on dating, attribution and identification with well-known statue types, given the degree of restoration. Possibilities and previous suggestions have clearly been thoroughly researched and are reported in some detail, but the dominant message is the uncertainty of such attempts.

The volume is clearly laid out and well edited. I spotted only a very few inaccuracies. Most seriously, Figure 11 is captioned as showing restorations to Ince 1, whereas it clearly represents Ince 8, an error also reflected in the placement of the figure and its reference (p. 29). These are very minor quibbles in a publication which is clearly meticulously researched, well evidenced and carefully edited. The quality of the photographs is variable, and it is a shame that not everything has a rear view. This is perhaps inevitable, given the cost of moving large scale sculpture for photography.

The long gaps between the volumes in the Ince Blundell series suggest the scale and difficulty inherent in a cataloguing and publication project such as this. It is unusual to find a regional, non-university museum service able to devote such energy and resources to the detailed academic publication of its collections. This is a praiseworthy endeavour to which Liverpool's museums and galleries have been committed over a long period, not only for the Ince Blundell collection, but across other venues and collections (E. Morris and T. Stevens, *History of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool 1873–2000* [2013], p. 145). The wider public benefit of this detailed academic research can already be seen in the excellent selection of highlights of the Blundell collection which can be browsed on the National Museums Liverpool's website, including information drawn from B.'s catalogue. As almost none of the collection is currently on public display, this online presence and the printed catalogues are even more valuable in drawing attention to its significance.

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## BUILDING WITH RE-USED MATERIAL

FREY (J. M.) *Spolia in Fortifications and the Common Builder in Late Antiquity*. (Mnemosyne Supplements 389.) Pp. xii + 222, ills, maps. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2016. Cased, €93, US\$120. ISBN: 978-90-04-28800-3.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X17001561

F.'s book, based on his doctoral thesis (*Speaking Through Spolia: the Language of Architectural Reuse in the Fortifications of Late Roman Greece*. Ph.D. Diss., U.C. Berkeley [2006]), focuses on 'the reused fragments of architecture commonly referred to as *spolia*' (p. 1), which he addresses through three case studies of late-antique fortification projects in the Roman province of Achaëa (modern Greece). The book represents a much

welcomed addition to the growing research on *spolia*, which has to date primarily been centred around sacred architecture and specific monuments (i.e. The Arch of Constantine). F.'s goal to 'encourage a consideration of other issues beyond the traditional debates over the utility, aesthetics and ideology of reuse' (p. 1) is undoubtedly achieved (and to be commended).

After a short introduction, Chapter 2, 'Themes', provides a brief survey of various concepts explored throughout the book: the study of *spolia*, agency theory in archaeology, the roles played by individuals in building projects, and the fortifications in the eastern Mediterranean. F. provides a solid review of *spolia* studies that is both clear and thought-provoking. F. places great importance on the agency of 'the common builder' in the creative use of second-hand material in building projects. On the whole, F. is persuasive in his argument that the principles of *spolia* use uncovered through the study of specific buildings may be representative of conditions in a particular region or site rather than of empire-wide *spolia* habits.

In Chapter 3, F. presents the first of his three case studies, examining the 'Inscription Wall' at the site of Kolonna on the island of Aegina. He suggests that the use by Roman builders of inscribed blocks in the wall was a local response to construction. F. uses the varied orientation of the inscriptions to argue that there was no overall plan to re-use the material and that individual builders used the second-hand material as they saw fit. F. presents his second case study – the later Roman fortifications at Sparta – in Chapter 4. In this chapter, F. investigates a section ('R') of the fortification wall that shows evidence for the careful placement of second-hand material. He uses the arrangement of this material to argue for a change in the aesthetics from the Classical to Late Roman periods in Sparta. In Chapter 5, F. examines his final case study, the late Roman fortress at Isthmia (also see by F., 'Work Teams on the Isthmian Fortress and the Development of a Later Roman Architectural Aesthetic', in E.R. Gebhard and T.E. Gregory [edd.], *Bridge of the Untiring Sea: the Corinthian Isthmus from Prehistory to Late Antiquity* [2015], pp. 311–26), which represents yet another unique approach to *spolia*. In this case, the orientation of re-used blocks suggests that the builders were actively attempting to hide signs of the blocks' previous use. Furthermore, due to the extent of the remains, F. has argued that it is possible to identify specific groups of builders based on the ways in which they used the same types of second-hand material.

F. concludes his study by noting subtle, yet unmistakable, signs of locally determined plans for each *spolia* project discussed. Importantly, it emerges that, despite their use of *spolia*, many of these local projects were constructed in the same manner as Hellenistic projects, just with second-hand material, suggesting that *spolia* provided a means of maintaining tradition as well as innovation. In addition, F. notes the importance of identifying regional trends in the study of *spolia* structures and the driving forces behind them.

In general, F.'s study points to a number of important conclusions. First, decisions and actions taken during the building process can be attributed, in certain circumstances, to both those designing structures and the everyday builders who constructed them. Second, F.'s examples add to the growing evidence for the wholesale incorporation of public buildings, which could only have occurred by authorisation of civic, regional or higher authorities. This 'official' character of *spolia* use is important to understanding the motivations behind the choice of materials for late Roman construction projects. Third, F.'s discussion of fortification walls attests to the fact that these structures were often built carefully within the urban landscape and often with carefully selected *spolia*, rather than as haphazard constructions to fend off marauding barbarians – a point that has been convincingly argued in the case of the city walls of Gaul, for example (see C. Witschel, 'Die spätantiken Städte Galliens: Transformationen von Stadtbildern als Ausdruck einer

gewandelten Identität?', in S. Diefenbach and G.M. Müller [edd.], *Gallien in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter. Kulturgeschichte einer Region* [2013], pp. 153–200).

F.'s approach provides a means of studying *spolia* that focuses on the motivation of patrons and builders – a topic of increasing interest in *spolia* studies in recent years. As a result, F. is able to present evidence of how the builders in his three study locations took markedly different approaches to the use of *spolia*, dependent upon locally determined circumstances. At the same time, F.'s study includes a much needed examination of non-descript re-use. To date, much of the research on second-hand material has focused on *visible spolia* but such re-use was by no means a general trend, as many *spolia* were used in non-visible parts of late-antique buildings. F. notes, for example, that the re-use of elements in fortification walls lacks some of the symbolic and/or aesthetic considerations of *spolia* in early Christian basilicas. F.'s pragmatic approach to pre-existing materials, however, does not exclude the importance of identifying when patrons and/or builders purposefully arranged and displayed *spolia*, such as 'section R' at Sparta.

As a whole, F.'s book is highly readable, engaging and well illustrated throughout. His three case studies are well contextualised and presented alongside detailed background information, including previous research and interpretations for each case study. His findings are based on detailed analysis and careful reading of the archaeological evidence, much of which rests on detailed first-hand analysis of the monuments themselves. As such F.'s arguments and conclusions are well thought out and on the whole convincing. His study makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the phenomenon of post-classical re-use, offering new regional evidence to the existing debate on ancient recycling.

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## GREEK AND ROMAN PROSE

GUEZ (J.-P.), KASPRZYK (D.) (edd.) *Penser la prose dans le monde gréco-romain*. (La Licorne 119.) Pp. 190. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2016. Paper, €18. ISBN: 978-2-7535-4783-4. doi:10.1017/S0009840X17001585

This is an eclectic but thought-provoking array of studies on the differing manifestations of prose literature of the late Hellenistic and early Roman imperial periods, in both Latin and Greek. The underlying premise for the volume is the assertion that the prose works which survive from this period have many of the hallmarks and functions previously reserved only for poetry, namely that these texts are just as playful, literary and self-reflective as their poetic forebears. The tension and interplay evident in the historical definitions of poetry versus prose are recurrent throughout this book. Each of the nine essays focuses not only on the literariness of key prose authors (from Cicero to Horace to Strabo to Philostratus, among numerous others), but on what these very texts have to say about the nature of the prose form in which they are written.

The arrangement of the essays follows a more or less chronological pattern, beginning with an essay on Latin (and especially Ciceronian and Senecan) prose style and ending with two studies on the Greek novel. The opening essay by F. Delarue focuses on expressions used to designate prose in Latin, and on the aesthetic implications which such terms