

into both British and Italian research. The book is copiously illustrated throughout, though the quality of some images is poor.

Through the collation of a mass of detail and its location in its historiographical context, the volume provides a solid platform for future research on the Sabina tiberina. However, there are also some limitations and weaknesses. For example, the criteria for inclusion in the gazetteer are never explicitly stated. An introductory chapter to spell out the selection criteria, and S.'s more general aims, would have strengthened the volume, as would further elaboration of the all-too-brief conclusions. The dense networks of senators, knights, and freedmen attested, stretching from Britain to Africa and Baetica to Bithynia, serve as a microcosm of the local/global links which structured the Empire. However, the material is never set in its wider context (e.g. *suburbium*, Italy, Empire, etc.) and so the typicality or uniqueness of its character and development is never fully revealed. Overall, S. could have drawn both more and wider conclusions from the material.

Another issue concerns use of the term 'Romanization'. Much-debated in the Anglo-Saxon world, and if not always rejected then certainly used with advised caution, the term continues to thrive in Italy. S. provides no explanation of her understanding of the term, though it is clearly framed by historical events and materialized through epigraphy and villa-building. This perhaps misses an opportunity — on the doorstep of Rome, but lacking the urban heritage of Etruria or Latium, the Sabina tiberina offers a particularly interesting area in which to investigate what it was to be(come) Roman. In conclusion, S. provides a sound description of the monumental and epigraphic landscape of the Sabina tiberina and its discovery, but fails to explain how and why this region developed as it did.

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L. B. VAN DER MEER, *MYTHS AND MORE ON ETRUSCAN STONE SARCOPHAGI* (c. 350–c. 200 B.C.). Louvain/Dudley MA: Peeters, 2004. Pp. 181, illus. ISBN 90-429-1499-8. €70.00.

Van der Meer's book is the third volume in the series, *Monographs on Antiquity*. Since it is one of the few in-depth studies that address a variety of issues relating to the Etruscans' stone sarcophagi written in the English language, it is a welcome and important contribution that significantly updates R. Herbig's 1952 study of this material; it will also especially aid undergraduate students with a limited knowledge of Italian, French, and German. In addition, because the book is not just a catalogue of the sarcophagi and their decorations but also includes discussions of the imagery within the larger context of Etruscan history and culture in the fourth and third centuries B.C., it will appeal to anyone interested in this important Italic civilization.

After a brief introduction, which lays out the author's main goals, the text proceeds with a short discussion of the historical situation in Etruria from 350–200 B.C., a period characterized by dramatic political changes in Italy. Following this are a chronological survey, an analysis of find-spots, a brief discussion of the patrons' status and age, and a summary of coffin and body length. The bulk of the text (chs 7–8) is taken up with analyses of the types of mythological and non-mythological representations found on the sarcophagi. Ch. 9 then focuses on whether the symmetrically-oriented motifs found on sarcophagi from Tuscania to Chiusi were merely decorative or imbued with meaning, while a short ch. 10 summarizes the most up-to-date information M. has concerning children's stone sarcophagi. Following a short conclusion, there is a lengthy catalogue that not only synthesizes and updates data from Herbig, K.-P. Goethert, and M. Moretti/A. M. Moretti Sgubini, but also includes a number of additional sarcophagi not published in the two German catalogues.

M. groups the sarcophagi by mythological/thematic content, thus allowing for both visual and iconographic comparisons. In his analyses, he considers the decorations in their entirety, rather than as separate scenes that have no relationship with each other: 'coffin-sides may be related, presenting to the viewer an iconographical programme coherent with an ethical, religious or political message' (2). In addition, he provides excellent summaries of past interpretations from a range of scholars, while also assessing these ideas and offering alternative ways to approach the material.

With respect to the sarcophagi that show mythical themes, M. not only points out how limited the repertoire of myths actually is, but he also argues that the ones that were selected show a definite and overt shift in terms of the treatment and use of Trojan heroes. He believes that since

these characters were being claimed by the Romans as their ancestors, they were out of favour with the Etruscans, who thus consciously selected scenes that emphasized the demise of Troy (e.g., the sacrifice of the Trojan prisoners, the sacrifice of Polyxena, Achilles's desecration of Hektor's corpse) as a way to create 'thinly veiled anti-Roman propaganda' (49). Following previous scholars, he supports the idea that contemporary historical events, such as Alexander's destruction of Thebes and conquest of the Persian empire, are reflected not only in the élite's use of Achilles as a triumphant hero and metaphor for Alexander but also in the choice of certain Theban themes that emphasized the city as a place of bad luck (e.g., the stories of Niobe and Aktaion). Since many Amazonomachy scenes depict the female warriors who came to the aid of the Trojans more often defeating their Greek opponents than the other way around, M. also proposes that 'the Etruscans did not consider the Amazons as allies of the Trojans or put them on a par with Trojans. The choice of the Amazonomachy theme [also] does not seem to be related to the sex of the deceased, but rather to be dictated by the respect aroused by the deeds of these fearless mythical women' (38). Likewise, in his analysis of a Celtomachy showing the Gauls in a losing position, he wonders if this indicates that the owner fought on the side of the Romans at the Battle of Sentinum in 295 B.C. (106).

In considering why myths disappeared from the sarcophagi produced in the third century B.C., M. argues that this phenomenon is best understood within the larger context of contemporary Etruscan history: 'the local elites did not want to offend the new authority, by whose grace they ruled' (6), although he also offers, as a second possibility, the idea of the decline of 'mythological knowledge ... as the elite lost contacts with the Greeks in Southern Italy'. Given the prevalence for mythical subjects on terracotta urns produced in Northern Etruria during the Hellenistic period, his second hypothesis makes little sense. Later in the text, he also writes that 'it cannot be excluded that the visualization of Greek myths, which could be used for anti-Roman propaganda, had been forbidden' (117). Given the political climate in Southern Etruria at this time, he supports the idea that the popular procession scenes 'display the political, high-ranking office of the deceased' (75) and that the presence of lictors indicates the influence of Roman ideas: 'as the local Etruscan aristocracy ruled in the name of Rome, it may have adopted ceremonies from Rome' (77). At the same time, he does not believe that the prevalence of the non-mythological themes, in general, is indicative of overt Romanization: 'rather ... they show emphases and changes due to political events. The phenomenon has to be interpreted as a sort of passive Romanization' (123).

In his discussion of motifs sometimes considered purely decorative, such as the *Tierkampf*, the ketos, the patera, etc., M. rightly supports the idea of symbolic content. He suggests, for example, that the *Tierkampf* could 'represent death, the transitoriness of life, and the survival of the fittest[.] Although the victim dies, the predators live on: the animal's blood is the other animal's life' (59). Likewise, with respect to the very popular images of paterae and craters, he supports the idea that their frequent use 'may be explained by the belief in Fufluns as a soteric god' (116) and that their disappearance from the sarcophagi could be related to 'the *Senatusconsultum de Bacchanalibus* of 186 BC, which outlawed Bacchic cults in Italy' (118).

All in all, M.'s book contains a great deal of information about the representations on Etruscan stone sarcophagi produced during the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. Since it includes a wide range of interpretations, the book is an excellent resource for anyone interested not only in this particular art form but also in this fascinating period of Etruscan history.

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P. L. DALL'AGLIO and I. DI COCCO (EDS), *PESARO ROMANA: ARCHEOLOGIA E URBANISTICA* (Studi e scavi, nuova serie 4). Bologna: Ante Quem, 2004. Pp. 180, 11 col. pls, 99 illus, 1 fold-out plan. ISBN 88-900972-8-0. €21.00.

This volume is a joint venture by the Dipartimento di Archeologia of Bologna University, the Comune of Pesaro, and the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici delle Marche: in brief it provides a valuable city study, examining the archaeological and related data for the compact Roman colony and port of Pesaro — *Pisaurum* in Le Marche province, founded in the early second century B.C. and still active even after the traumas of the Gothic-Byzantine wars of the sixth century A.D. The volume surveys and summarizes old and new excavations and finds from the town and, in part, the territory, and concisely provides a coherent and informative review of a town through time. It is divided essentially into two parts: Part I outlines in four sections the coastal setting (19–22), the documentary and archaeological context of Pesaro (23–6), the plan