

important phase of Rome's development will fit, the chronological format does not allow for looking forwards. The ascent of Augustus, and his and Agrippa's building projects, are never mentioned. The only clue comes from the very last word, isolated as a sentence. Explaining the architectural honours awarded to Caesar by the Senate in terms of a deliberate attempt to push him into an inescapable corner, D. reveals them as the saviours of their Republic — 'Momentarily'.

University of Bristol
shelley.hales@bristol.ac.uk

SHELLEY HALES

doi:10.1017/S0075435819000698

C. NERVI, *IL PAESAGGIO DI NORA (CAGLIARI – SUD SARDEGNA): STUDIO DEI MATERIALI ROMANI E TARDOANTICHI* (BAR International Series 2833). Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2016. Pp. vi + 462, illus. ISBN 9781407315225. £74.00.

Cristina Nervi's book, focused on the study of Roman to late antique pottery from the hinterland of the Phoenician to late antique coastal town of Nora in southern Sardinia, fills a gap in the archaeology of Sardinia's Roman landscapes. Most systematic survey projects carried out on the island have been mainly interested in earlier periods throughout the first millennium B.C., exploring Phoenician colonialism, Punic hegemony and Roman republican rule.

Based on the author's doctoral dissertation (Università di Genova, 2015), this book stems from a ten-year-long (1992–2001) survey project which covered an area of about 50 km² in the hinterland of Nora. Methodologically, this was a benchmark project for Sardinia's landscape archaeology, as along with another survey project launched in the same year — the Riu Mannu survey (<https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/research/archaeologyresearch/projects/sardinia/riumannu/>) — an intensive and systematic survey strategy was adopted on the island for the first time. This then triggered the development of further regional projects to explore the island's countryside, most recently the LASS (<https://landscapearchaeologyofsouthwestsardinia.wordpress.com/>) and SAP (<https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/sinis-archaeological-project/>) projects. Important publications arose from the Nora project (e.g. M. Botto *et al.* in C. Gómez Bellard (ed.), *Ecohistoria del paisaje agrario* (2013), 151–86), which set the basis for wider reconstructions of Sardinia's landscapes throughout the first millennium B.C. (e.g. A. Roppa, *Comunità urbane e rurali nella Sardegna punica di età ellenistica* (2013)).

Because these earlier publications did not provide detailed quantitative data, and did not focus on the Roman to late antique period, it was with great expectations that I took up this book, which were, I fear, disappointed. The reason for my disappointment is in fact already evident in the organisation of the volume, in five chapters. Ch. 1 (1–4) is concerned with archaeological and literary sources on the case study area. Geography and geomorphology are presented in ch. 2 (5–8). Ch. 3 (9–26) deals with the survey methodology. In ch. 4 (27–392), the collection areas and pottery recovered are listed and described. In ch. 5 (393–454), N. discusses the data and draws conclusions. In other words, out of the 462 pages which make up this book, a substantial part — 377 pages (16–392) — is given over to catalogues of the sites identified by the survey, and to descriptions and drawings of the pottery collected. Another large part (413–54) is composed of tables and dating profiles of all the sites identified. Excluding the bibliography (455–62), the reader is left with a text of about thirty pages that has to include both the introduction and all the interpretive archaeology. This unfortunately results in a book which is clearly tilted towards the presentation of raw data as opposed to their interpretation.

However, its organisation is only a minor shortcoming of this book. The first three chapters rehearse topics which had already been treated in much more detail by the archaeologists working at Nora and in its hinterland, and do not add anything substantial to previous research. Worse, misleading data are added, as in ch. 1, where it is reported that Giovanni Francesco Fara wrote about Nora in 1538 (2). He was born in 1543, and his works were edited and published in 1835. In ch. 2, the section on orography (5) is seriously imprecise. Also, a good part of ch. 3 (16–26) is dedicated to the elaboration of a typological repertoire for ceramic common ware. I

appreciate the effort, but it is needless to say that such an attempt, based on survey data only, necessarily lacks any chronological precision and foundation.

In ch. 4, collection areas are described on the basis of data provided by the survey field forms. Finds are closely associated with collection areas, which are illustrated on maps and provided with coordinates. The typological descriptions and drawings of 1,429 ceramic finds follow. This results in endless lists of diagnostics, especially redundant when fragments pertain to the same typology. Why such detail for the presentation of survey material? Most diagnostics are well known for this period: a few drawings would suffice, and the data could be condensed into more readable tables.

In ch. 5, settlement patterns are discussed. There is no explanation why some concentrations of surface finds are interpreted as 'sites'. One would expect that functions assigned to sites would result from the study of ceramic assemblages, but these are not discussed, and site-functions pop up out of the blue in the dating profiles (figs 436–72) at the end of ch. 5. Not a word is dedicated to comparing settlement patterns in Nora's hinterland with other areas on Sardinia or the wider Mediterranean. Moreover, part of the graphic documentation in this chapter is either redundant or puzzling. Why are thirty-eight pages devoted to the dating profiles of each site, when none of them are discussed in detail or compared? Fig. 434, showing the chronological distribution of all sites, would have sufficed. Frankly bewildering is the chronological periodisation that N. uses for dating profiles (figs 436–72), and for the diachronic representation of the number of sites in the landscape (fig. 435): to quote just one example, on the basis of which arguments does N. wish to explain the appearance of six sites in 140–134 B.C.?

The volume is not helped by the numerous typos, and the many bibliographic entries which are wrong or incomplete. What is the aim of this book? If it aims at studying pottery and trends in settlement patterns, as stated in the abstract (vi), then one must say that only the former is satisfactorily achieved.

Università di Padova
andrea.roppa@unipd.it

ANDREA ROPPA

doi:10.1017/S0075435819000273

R. RUSSO, *THE RBW COLLECTION OF ROMAN REPUBLICAN COINS*, with the collaboration of A. De Falco; with historical notes by D. Vagi; edited by A. McCabe, A. Russo, G. Russo and C. Hallgarth. Zürich and London: Numismatica Ars Classica, 2013. Pp. xxvii + 407, illus. ISBN 9788877948359. US\$150.00.

This volume is a catalogue assembling the 1,860 Roman Republican coins of the RBW collection which were auctioned in three separate sales: in the Triton III Sale, December 1999 and the Numismatica Ars Classica Sales 61, October 2011 and 63, May 2012. The first one included the bulk of RBW's gold coins and the two others the silver and bronze coins, as well as some gold coins that were in the Triton Sale. The catalogue brings together a remarkable collection of material. Although surpassed by a few older collections, e.g. the collections of Baron d'Ailly (now at the BnF, Paris) and of Max von Bahrfeldt (now in the Museum August Kestner, Hanover), for silver, the Haeblerlin collection and the Charles A. Hersh collection (now in the British Museum, London), and for bronze, the Goodman collection sold in various Sales by CNG, the RBW collection is likely to be the most outstanding and complete collection of Republican coins to be sold in public sales. The collection is thoroughly illustrated with colour pictures of high quality, with many specimens also in 2:1 scale in addition to the standard 1:1 scale.

Each coin is fully described with references to Babelon, Sydenham and Crawford's *RRC*, and to *Historia Numorum*³ *Italy* for the early series. For each coin there is also a reference to the original source from which it was acquired and the prices in the RBW auctions. Numismatic scholars will appreciate the degree of accuracy but regret the omission of die-axes. A number of entries are supplemented by brief commentaries by the editors, and sometimes also by RBW, on the coins and their chronology or attribution to a mint.

The collector was Rick Witschonke (1945–2015), a successful businessman and distinguished connoisseur of Roman Republican coinage, who also became a benefactor, and later a curatorial staff member, of the American Numismatic Society, New York. He had not only the taste and