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Cover: see Fischer in this volume, p. 323, *Fig. 22b*.

Guy De la Bédoyère, *Cities of Roman Italy: Pompeii, Herculaneum and Ostia* (Classical World Series), London, Bristol Classical Press, 2010, 123 pp., 45 figs (plans and photos). ISBN 978-1-85399-728-0.

Guy de la Bédoyère is a British historian who has written on a variety of topics from modern history to Roman archaeology in Britain as well as Italy and Egypt. He has also appeared regularly on *Time Team*, the archaeological television series on Channel 4, and he teaches at Kesteven and Sleaford High School in Sleaford, Lincolnshire, specializing in Modern History and Classical Civilization.

The aim of Guy De la Bédoyère's book is to present a short introduction to Pompeii, Herculaneum and Ostia for school and university students and it "has been written to provide a starting point for those studies, by integrating all three sites into a discussion that covers general aspects of Roman city life as well as selected individual buildings" (p. 7).

The first chapter, 'The background to the cities: History and development' (pp. 9–20), comprises overviews of each city's background in the light of Rome's expansion. The descriptions circle around themes like prestige, public display and visualizing status in the ancient Roman city. The high tide of the Roman Empire is the chronological horizon whereas the Greek, Etruscan and Samnite origins and influences in Pompeii are only touched upon, as is the Late Antique development of Ostia. There is an updated description of early Pompeii, with its prehistory as well as the earliest buildings (the Doric Temple at Forum Triangularum and the remains under the Temple of Apollo) and of the "old town discussion" of the city core. Herculaneum is described as a coastal resort, although it is emphasized that, due to the limited excavations and the fact that modern Ercolano overlies the remains, we cannot know its full extent. Ostia's dependency on Rome and its elite is emphasized while Pompeii and Herculaneum are described as local power structures reliant on the influence of Rome, but within self-governing economic and political spheres ("local landowning interests, local politics and local concerns", p. 13) based on the local economy of land, trade and transport.

'Government and social structure' (Ch. 2, pp. 21–38) is a short and efficient description of the social structures and government within the Roman Empire, with a clear focus on the social, economic and political elite. The social and political arenas of the "free citizens, Latin citizens, provincials, freedmen and slaves" (p. 23) are touched upon, as well as the institutions of civic government (from *aediles*, *duoviri*, *decurion*, and *ordo decurionum* to *pontifex maximus*) and the social life (from *familia*, the *patron* and *client* to commercial guilds, *collegia*). This information is essential for visualizing the wealth and status in society as treated in the following chapter, 'Public

institutions and identity' (Ch. 3, pp. 39–60), which deals with the aspect of identity through the financing of public buildings connected to entertainment, leisure and in service of the state; political, as well as religious. Focus lies on the persons initiating or financing the building projects. In Pompeii, the Forum and its attendant buildings (the basilica and Eumachias building), the entertainment and recreation areas (the palaestra, the theatre, the odeion and the amphitheatre), and the religious institutions are treated in length, as are Piazzale delle Corporazioni (II,VII,4) in Ostia and the baths of all three cities. Further, in Ostia Caserma dei Vigili (II,V,1–2) and Grandi Horrea (II,IX,7) are given special attention to illustrate the difference in the structure and organization of the cities in close proximity to Rome.

In 'Private expressions of social identity' (Ch. 4, pp. 61–85) the private and semipublic spheres of the *domus* and *insula* are treated as expressions and the consequence of status; the atrium house in Pompeii and its deviation in Herculaneum are discussed, as is the development of *domus* and *cenaculum* in the *insulae* of Ostia, including architectural structure, wall paintings and mosaics.

The graves of the men, and women, that built Pompeii, Herculaneum and Ostia, and their prestige in the afterlife, as a reflection of the activity in life, are discussed in *Status and prestige in death* (Ch. 5, pp. 86–94). Included in the discussion are the different burial types and individual tombs, in addition to the commemorative and prestigious inscriptions (some included at the end of the book) and decorative reliefs on the large tombs.

'Destruction, excavation and preservation' (Ch. 6, pp. 95–102) is a brief description of the sequence of the volcanic eruption and how Pompeii and Herculaneum were destroyed. The history of the excavations is followed by selected remarks concerning the substantial problems with restoration and maintenance of the remains, a discussion that in recent years has achieved a magnitude that even reaches a political level in Italy.

The book also comprises a glossary of Latin terms and a collection of texts and inscriptions in translation. Included are the famous letters of Pliny the Younger and inscriptions on buildings and graves bearing witness to the practice of prestigious donations and public displays of the Roman elite. For more illustrations and plans, the author refers to online resources, described in the end of the book (p. 117) together with some advice on how to contact the authorities for booking group visits to houses and how to travel with local transportation.

The general theme in the book is about the public and private milieus in Pompeii where "status was eagerly sought and proudly displayed" (p. 53) and this line is followed accordingly—under the banner of "identity"—in the public and private buildings and in the display and spatial organization

of the cemeteries. The aim to integrate all three sites into the discussion, however, falls flat since the focus is largely on Pompeii. Today Pompeii dominates the scene almost entirely, both in research and in the number of books produced and, thus, a new general book on Pompeii is in this sense not necessary.

The first two chapters (1–2) constitute almost one third of the book (pp. 9–38). Efficiently articulated, they provide the reader with all the essential information necessary for understanding the historical background and political machinery mentioned. The chronological matters are less emphasized, though it makes the description of the functions of social and political apparatus clear and sound.

The selection of buildings leans towards the grand designs, i.e. the houses and public buildings that you would visit as a tourist. Significant effort is spent on the ownership of some of the houses, which in the larger scope of the book, is less important.

Though well written and describing the life of the public elite, the book leaves no room for the everyday life of the inhabitants in the small houses and *tabernae*, nor for the socio/economic/cultural differences that existed within the city walls. However, the author briefly touches upon the topic of *suburbanus pagus*, the area outside the towns, where the archaeological information is particularly limited.

The description of the first excavations and tunnellers is very vague and, I would say, the weakest chapter in the book: the grand Kingdom of Naples is not mentioned, with the early Bourbon explorers' search for prestigious objects and the way it has affected our interpretations and views of the material preserved. This is an essential aspect in the process of creating the archaeological park and the research objects that are presented at Pompeii and Herculaneum today. The word "tunnellers" was used both by robbers and by the first explorers and, although the technique of digging and the search of valuables are similar, it is not entirely accurate to mix them together.

The lack of city plans of each city, necessary for the overview of the locations of the buildings and structures described, is a serious imperfection. There are plans of the harbours in Ostia, the Forum of Pompeii and certain individual buildings and houses, though this does not reflect the intricate internal layout of blocks and townscapes developed during centuries.

There are some minor facts to question. The water supply (p. 64) is said to have been cut off in the earthquake in AD 62, though the evidence suggests that only some areas of the town were without aqueduct water after the earthquake.⁸ The mention of lava (p. 95) in the eruption context is not correct

since a lava flow was not a significant feature in destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the Plinian eruption of AD 79.⁹

There are some issues with the disposition of the book: the history of excavations in Pompeii from 1748 is essential for understanding the appearance and restoration of the remains, and should, in this reviewer's opinion, be mentioned earlier. Further, the labelling system for Pompeii invented by Giuseppe Fiorelli could have been described in the introduction, since it is used throughout the book, and not in the last pages. Also, Museo Nazionale in Naples is mentioned for the first time in the very last paragraph.

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Silvia Ferrara, *Cypro-Minoan Inscriptions, Volume I. Analysis*, Oxford University Press 2012, 326 pp., 41 illustrations, 26 tables and 13 charts. ISBN-978-0-19-960757-0.

In the introduction to her book, the first of two volumes dedicated to Cypro-Minoan (CM) inscriptions (the second volume, *Corpus*, is still in press), Silvia Ferrara states her aim: to "focus on ways of understanding an un-deciphered script without attempting to decipher it" (p. 1). In the book, based on her PhD thesis, she manages to present a sophisticated and detailed study of the diverse components of this second millennium BC script, in use for about 500 years, attested to on Cyprus and at the Syrian coastal site of Ugarit-Ras Shamra. The signary, palaeography, epigraphy and contextual associations are all thoroughly examined. During the course of Ferrara's research, both Joanna Smith's edited volume, *Script and seal use on Cyprus in the Bronze and Iron Ages* published in 2002 and Jean-Pierre Olivier's *Édition holistique des textes chypro-minoens (HoChyMin)* from 2007 appeared. In relation to these two studies, Ferrara's independently global approach is decidedly a complementary and contrasting contribution.

The book is divided into three parts. Eight appendices provide a list of CM inscriptions, information on settlement data, archaeological contexts of the Enkomi material, the complete repertoires of signs and finally signs that are peculiar to the CM3 subset.

The first part, *Function object and context*, discusses literacy within the concept of Late Bronze Age Cypriot society, the script as an ideological symbol and the political geography. Ferrara provides an outline of the history of Cypro-Minoan

⁸ A.-M. Leander Touati 2010. 'Water, well-being and social complexity in Insula V 1', *OpAthRom* 3, 105–162.

⁹ G. Luongo et al. 2003. 'Impact of the AD 79 explosive eruption on Pompeii, I–II', *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research* 126, 169–200, 201–223.