



Review

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Source: *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 102, No. 2 (Apr., 1998), pp. 456-457

Published by: Archaeological Institute of America

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/506498>

Accessed: 19-06-2016 11:40 UTC

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these, as Maguire shows, are full of detail and incident, whereas others are schematic and abbreviated, and may even lack elements vital to the hagiography of the saint. A particularly illustrative example is the depiction of St. Nicholas giving a dowry to the poor man's daughters, an event central to the hagiography of the saint. In many visual renderings of this story the daughters are not shown. The image is stripped of much of its content, but by deemphasizing the specifics of the narrative, the scene becomes a generalized image likely to appeal to a wide range of viewers. Depictions of the Virgin also throw light on Byzantine conceptions of narrative imagery and highlight the different narrative registers Byzantine artists employed. In the illustrated sermons of James Kokkinobaphos, for instance, scenes of the early life of the Virgin are full of detail, whereas events from the early life of Christ are devoid of incident and almost repetitive in nature. The detailed scenes are the less important ones because they focus on human beings, whereas the scenes relating to Christ's infancy deal with the mystery of the divine, and thus carry a much higher status.

This is a lavishly illustrated book containing a profusion of examples to support the author's argument. Maguire's avowed aim in his exploration of Byzantine sacred portraiture is to address the role that society had in the design of icons. It is a book, as he states, that is "not about art in society but about society in art" (196). It remains debatable, however, to what extent the role of art in society and the effect of society on art are separable.

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A CATALOGUE OF THE LAMPS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM IV: LAMPS OF METAL AND STONE, AND LAMPSTANDS, by *Donald M. Bailey*. Pp. xii + 192, pls. 192, figs. 10. British Museum Press, London 1996. £70. ISBN 0-7141-2206-8.

LAMPES ANTIQUES DU DÉPARTEMENT DES MONNAIES, MÉDAILLES ET ANTIQUES 3. FONDS GÉNÉRAL: LAMPES CHRÉTIENNES, by *Catherine Trost* and *Marie-Christine Hellmann*. Pp. 163, pls. 40, fig. 1, maps 2. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris 1996. 490 FF. ISBN 2-7177-1956-3.

One of the more encouraging developments in lamp studies in recent years has been the undertaking by a number of major European museums to publish, or in some cases republish, extensive collections of Greek and Roman lamps, some of which, one suspects, have been gathering dust in museum storerooms for more than a century. The scale of such projects should not be underestimated. The work involved may take many years and the resulting

publications are likely to run to several volumes. Such is the case here. Each of these lamp catalogues forms a new addition to an established multivolume series that began to appear more than a decade ago. In each case the new volume succeeds well in maintaining the high standards set by the previous volumes in the series.

Bailey's volume forms the fourth and final installment of his monumental catalogue of lamps in the British Museum. The study of metal lamps, as Bailey himself has pointed out (*JRA* 4 [1991] 51–62), has until recently been a relatively neglected field of lamp study, and the current volume goes a long way toward providing a solid anchor for future studies. For those more familiar with the study of pottery lamps, this new volume serves as an impressive reminder of the great variety of alternative lighting apparatus that existed in the Graeco-Roman world. Collected together here is a great assortment of metal objects: lamps, lampstands, lanterns, lamp glass holders, lamp lids, candlesticks, and other such items, all presented and discussed with unerring precision and with superb bibliographic documentation. The high quality of the text is matched by that of the illustrations, mostly drawings, the clarity of which does much to enhance the volume. There is, wisely, no attempt to establish a typology of the metal objects discussed. As the author points out, the extraordinary variety of shapes and forms renders such a task quite impossible.

The material is arranged broadly according to function and, as far as possible, according to date. However, the author repeatedly emphasizes the difficulty of assigning accurate dates to objects that, for the most part, lack archaeological contexts and, even where these are known, are of very uncertain longevity. Thus, while many of the objects are known to be from the cities destroyed by Vesuvius, the date of their actual manufacture can often only be guessed. In some cases findspots are given—as, for example, the bronze lantern Q3943, said to be from one of the excavated villas at Boscoreale. By way of comparison, the author notes the discovery of two similar lanterns in the press-room of another Boscoreale villa. This reminds us that the use of these sophisticated, and no doubt expensive, lighting devices was not restricted to the luxury apartments of rich *oppidani*. Other objects, notably the series of fine Late Antique "polycandela" or metal lamp-glass holders, are identified as probable church furnishings. Such items appear repeatedly in the lists of papal donations to the Early Christian basilicas of Rome (see, e.g., R. Davis, *The Book of Pontiffs (Liber Pontificalis)* [Liverpool 1989] 39, §48: *fara canthara qui pendent ante altare*). Bailey catalogues several ornate examples, including one in silver with a control mark dating to the reign of Justin II. It would perhaps have been helpful to add an illustration of the kind of lamp glasses that these elaborate devices were designed to hold.

One of the more difficult questions that arises when discussing metal lamps is that of the relationship between these metal objects and their ceramic counterparts. This question is touched upon several times here but, perhaps not surprisingly, no simple answer emerges. Bailey argues, for instance, that clay *Firmalampen* were derived from bronze models (37), but elsewhere he suggests that the copying process went the other way: that the metal versions of a Broneer type XXI lamp (45) and of North African Hayes

type I lamps (65) were probably copied from clay models. This challenges the commonly held view that products in cheap materials normally imitate those in more expensive materials (see, e.g., D. Gill, in M. Vickers ed., *Pots and Pans: A Colloquium on Precious Metals and Ceramics in the Muslim, Chinese and Graeco-Roman Worlds, Oxford 1985* [Oxford 1986] 23). Clearly, this whole question needs further study, but in the meantime Bailey's careful observations do much to focus attention on some of the important issues. The volume concludes with a section devoted to corrections and additions to the first three volumes of the British Museum catalogue. One or two items stand out, not least a magnificent 12-nozzled African Red Slip lamp from Tunisia (Q1835) recently purchased by the museum.

Trost and Hellmann's volume, which is devoted largely to the so-called "Christian" lamps of North Africa, comes as the third in a series of more modest publications of lamp material housed in the Bibliothèque nationale de France. Most of the lamps are from Tunisia, but a few Egyptian and Levantine lamps are also included. The book is divided into two sections, beginning with a detailed synthesis of research to date on the main types of ARS lamps. This is followed by the catalogue itself, comprising more than 200 entries, many deriving from late 19th-century excavations at Carthage. In assessing this material, the authors depend heavily on the work of Anselmino and Pavolini (*EAA: Atlante delle forme ceramiche* I, Rome 1981). They give somewhat less attention to other recent work, in particular to the results of the latest American and British excavations at Carthage. The most recent items discussed in the synthesis are Mackensen's valuable study of ARS kiln sites at El Mahrine (M. Mackensen, *Die spätantiken Sigillata- und Lampentöpfereien von El Mahrine (Nordtunisien)*, Munich 1993) and Peacock's survey of central Tunisian kiln sites (D. Peacock, F. Bejaoui, and N. Ben Lazreg, *JRA* 3 [1990] 59–84). Studies such as these are now moving the focus of lamp research in North Africa away from its traditional Carthage base. Trost and Hellmann rightly emphasize the need for further work in the Tunisian hinterland, pointing in particular to Oudna (54) as a site where much important ceramic material remains to be studied. In this context, the publication of lamp finds from other North African sites currently under investigation, such as Leptis Magna and Leptiminus, is eagerly awaited.

Broader issues of trade and commerce, including the continuing debate over the level of the export trade in lamps (and other ceramic products) from Vandal North Africa, are dealt with only briefly (32 n. 88). Opinions will vary as to whether in-depth discussion of such issues belongs within the scope of a museum catalogue of this kind or not. Certainly, the main aim of this volume is to provide a systematic and carefully documented record of an important museum collection, and, by and large, this is an aim well achieved.

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MYTHES GRECS AU FIGURÉ: DE L'ANTIQUITÉ AU BAROQUE, edited by *Stella Georgoudi* and *Jean-Pierre Vernant*. (Le temps des images.) Pp. 240, color figs. 8, figs. 48, plans 2. Gallimard, Paris 1996. 160 FF. ISBN 2-07-73910-4.

This stimulating collection brings together prominent French interpreters of ancient Greek culture with scholars from other nations and disciplines to consider Greek mythic iconography and its afterlife in the art of Rome, the Baroque period, and the 18th century. While some of the essays present these later reworkings as multiforms of the myths themselves, others historicize the later versions, raising interesting questions about why this frankly pagan material was useful or even acceptable to a Christian world. The theme of metamorphosis subtly haunts the volume, and it is no surprise that many of the essays address the powerful influence of Ovid, which tends to overshadow other ancient traditions in the post-classical imagination.

In an overview of the ancient and modern meanings of myth, Jean-Pierre Vernant usefully reminds us that although the Greek *muthos* changed its meaning over time, it never coincided exactly with the modern concept of "myth." Moreover, he argues that the commonly drawn distinction between myth and history (i.e., the fabulous vs. the facts) does not correspond to ancient usage, according to which mythic time is not qualitatively different from our own, but merely too far away to be subjected to the scrutiny of the historian. Finally, Vernant insists on the aesthetic and social context of myth, drawing on Bourdieu's notion of distinction to explain its continuing allure.

Stella Georgoudi's essay on the Twelve Gods draws on inscriptional, iconographic, and textual evidence to show that this time-honored concept is far more fluid and less canonical than once thought. Her material ranges from Hermes' sacrifice in the Homeric Hymns to Neo-Platonist views of the cosmic significance of the number 12. Although her conclusions come as no surprise, she has assembled a useful, well-illustrated dossier.

Mary Beard, writing on Roman uses of myth, encourages us, compellingly, to see Roman renderings of the Greek material not as crude copies, but as interpretations of the myth in their own right. She offers the intriguing example of the appearance of Hercules in the Roman baths in grotesque and comic form, which she argues constitutes at one and the same time a version of the myth and a self-ironizing commentary on Roman ideas of masculinity.

François Lissarrague elegantly traces the history of representations of Danaë in Greece and later. Ancient Greek images highlight this theme in two critical moments of Danaë's story—her impregnation by Zeus (as a shower of gold) while imprisoned by her father, and her expulsion with her son in a coffer put to sea. In the hands of Roman and later artists, the encounter with Zeus becomes an erotic tableau or emblem of female venality. In the medieval *Ovide moralisé*, Danaë is radically reinterpreted as a prototype of the Virgin Mary. Later painters, whatever characterization they choose, generally present her as an object of the erotic gaze. Only for Burne-Jones is Danaë herself an observer, watching the construction of the tower that