

H. Broise und J. Scheid, Recherches archéologiques à La Magliana. Le Balneum des Frères Arvales. Mit Beiträgen von Cl. Brenot, R. Hanoune, E. Cibot, I. Rilliet und F. Poplin. Roma Antica, Band 1. Scuola Tipografica S. Pio X, Rom 1987. 285 Seiten, 236 Abbildungen, 3 Faltkarten, 35 Zeichnungen auf Microfiche.

The publication is the first volume in a new series, the result of a collaboration between the Soprintendenza Archeologica and the École Française in Rome. The authors refer to a coming volume concerning the general topography of the sanctuary of Dea Dia at La Magliana. Regular publications of Roman Baths are regrettably still a rarity, and any new contribution to their number must be welcomed. When such a beautiful, exhaustive and thoroughly illustrated volume as the present one, including the finds, too, is concerned, there is further reason for pleasure. The promptness of publication must also be emphasized: one often has to wait many years for regular publications, and often also in vain.

The book is divided into 3 main chapters, dealing with the history of research and of the excavation, a description of the building, and an account of the stratigraphy and the finds, respectively. The introduction (pp. 1–7) contains a discussion of the location in the suburb of La Magliana, a short survey of the research carried out, and a discussion of the mention of a *balneum* in the Acts of the Arval Brethren. The excavators emphasize the difficult working conditions, the baths being partly built upon, partly buried 3–4 m below ground. The investigation forms part of a larger scheme, involving also the rest of the sanctuary of Dea Dia.

The first main chapter (pp. 9–19) on the history of research from the Renaissance to the present day, mentions the works of important investigators, such as A. PELLEGRINI, who in 1865 identified the visible remains as the *tetrastylum*, known from the Acts, making a reconstruction entirely unfounded in fact. This identification was, however, accepted by CHR. HUELSEN in 1920, who discussed only the dating. The relevant passages of the two scholars in question are cited in 'annexes' 1–2. Pellegrini's reconstruction remained valid until the present investigations proved the building to be a bath. It was excavated from 1975 to 1981 by means of 14 trenches laid out where practicable and strategically motivated. Thus 210 m<sup>2</sup> of the total area of the baths of 623 m<sup>2</sup> were excavated. The *balneum* mentioned in the Acts from 240 A. D. is identified with this building, which is therefore to be dated before that year. Besides the investigations of the heating system and water system and of the building periods, the excavators emphasize the importance of the stratigraphical layers from the 4th–5th cent. A. D., seldom found in Rome.

Chapter II (pp. 21–146) is the main chapter of the book with a detailed description and reconstruction of the baths. The examination is based on a description of each room, following the route of the bather, thus beginning with the vestibule, 1, the best-preserved chamber. The description is made easier by the many plans and elevations and by the copious photographic material of good quality. But one regrets the lack of levels on the plans, promised on p. 24, and in too many cases the placement of the figures with elevations and photographs on the plans has been omitted. This is, for example, the case with figs. 38 and 39 and the elevation fig. 37 on the plan fig. 36, and on the plan fig. 69 the location of the elevation fig. 75 is missing. Those shortcomings are particularly regrettable on the plan fig. 112 of the complicated boiler room 15C, where the placements of figures are completely lacking. It is a pity that this kind of shortcoming occurs in a documentation material otherwise of high quality.

An element which does not really belong in a description is the designation of the chambers. As they are numbered as well it would perhaps have been better to use only the numbers, avoiding designations which are far from unambiguous, and in some cases highly controversial. This is first and foremost the case with *dstrictarium*, but also the use of *laconicum* for two of the heated rooms, and the identification of the *tepidaria* are open to discussion (*v. i.*). The fact that the baths are rather poorly preserved and the plan and position of the rooms not always ascertained makes the use of these designations all the more precarious. Their use should have been limited to the section on the interpretation and reconstruction of the building.

In connection with the description of the service area, a model has been made of the boiler room 15C, belonging to room 13, undoubtedly a *caldarium*. The reconstruction is based on baths elsewhere, especially in Ostia, for the preservation of the Arval Baths is very poor. The model seems convincing, but the boiler room appears very lofty, preventing the presence of a window in the eastern wall of the east pool of room 13, while the reconstructed window in the south wall of this pool seems dark and jammed between the high boiler room and the east wall of the southern pool. – As for *praefurnia* and boilers, it is not certain that boilers were attached to all heated pools. In many *caldaria* and *tepidaria*, pools were heated exclusively by the *praefurnium* via the *suspensura* and the tubulation, which also permitted a choice of different water temperatures. In this connection, it is quite possible that the large rectangular recess in room 9, the so-called *dstrictarium*, contained a pool heated in this way. The shape of the recess is certainly typical of pool niches, and as the levels between room and pool hardly seem to vary at all (again we miss levels on fig. 61), the apparent floor level of the recess does not hinder the placement of a pool here. – The addition of three 'annexes' (annexes 3–5 pp. 97–107) dealing with the boiler in the villa of Boscoreale, and the service areas of Terme della Trinacria and Terme Marittime in Ostia respectively, facilitates the understanding of the corresponding, but poorly or not preserved installations in the Arval Baths. The lucid description of the complicated system at Boscoreale accompanied by the schematic drawing fig. 148 is very useful.

On pages 107 ff. the background for the reconstruction of the baths as a symmetrical structure with two parallel axes, one for the cold and one for the heated section, is explained. Due to the limited excavation, the shape and function of some of the rooms are hardly known. This is the case with part of the cold section, with the two '*tepidaria*' (rooms 8 and 14), and with the entire northern part of the heated section. The authors choose to reconstruct the building as perfectly symmetrical, but might perhaps have studied the comparative material comprising baths of similar size more closely. We are dealing with a small bath, only just over 600 m<sup>2</sup>, and symmetry is not very common in baths of this size. Comparison could be made to baths with great similarity to the Arval Baths, also in not being part of an *insula*, e.g. the Small Baths in the Villa Adriana, three times the size, but not symmetrical in the heated section, and the Terme di Porta Marina in Ostia of equal size, while the almost contemporary Lateran Baths in Rome are approx. twice as large as the Arval Baths, but not entirely preserved. All those neighbouring baths can be compared with the Arval Baths, as far as the *frigidarium* with wing *piscinae* and the heated section with another axis than the cold one are concerned. But none of those buildings are entirely symmetrical. Although the reconstruction proposed for the Arval Baths does seem rather convincing, one misses the use of comparative material, especially from the vicinity, not least for the single elements and details of the plan. For example the *frigidarium* in the Small Baths of the Villa Adriana could have supported the reconstruction of the Arval *frigidarium* with two large apses in the main axis. Although all baths are reasonably alike in this period, it also seems more consistent to compare with baths from Italy rather than from Africa, as is also done with the baths in Ostia. The Arval Baths can easily be placed in the general development of baths in Italy from the Hadrianic period and thereafter. As there are some uncertainties in connection with the reconstruction of the baths, dotted lines or/and hatched walls would have suited the reconstruction fig. 11, for undoubtedly this is the plan which will be chosen for future handbooks.

As briefly mentioned above, the identification of the rooms is a problem of importance for the interpretation of the building and its function. The designations used in the publication are not motivated in detail, nor is this necessary where the *frigidarium* and the *caldaria* are concerned. For rooms nos. 8, 9, 10, 12 and 14, there is, however, no unambiguous basis for the identification. Room 8 is very slightly heated, with no directly connected *praefurnium* and a very low *suspensura*. Besides, if the reconstruction is correct, the room is very small. Therefore it seems unlikely that it could have included all the functions inherent in a *tepidarium*, e.g. anointing, washing, acclimatizing, etc. More suited for those functions is the large, directly heated room 9, on account of its central location and because the presence of a warm pool in the recess

towards the south seems probable (*v. s.*). Designating this room *dstrictarium* is unfortunate and originates, I believe, from A. Lézine's erroneous use of this word in his treatment of the African baths. The word is only known from one ancient source, the inscription from the Stabian Baths of Pompeii (CIL X 829), where it is mentioned in connection with the *laconicum*, both being added at the same time as the *palaestra* was restored. It is thus in the inscription (as well as in the Stabian Baths) connected with the sports ground, and as the function of 'scraping off' indicates, it is a room which originally belonged to the sports section of the *thermae*, used for scraping off the oil after exercise in the *palaestra*. The reason why Lézine has moved it to the heated section of the baths is probably because it is connected in the inscription with the *laconicum*, but this sweat-room was also originally a room belonging to the *palaestra*, where one sweated by an open fire or the like, and it is mentioned both in Vitruvius' chapter on baths and palaestrae (*arch.* 5,10–11). The Greek precursor for this room is the *pyriaterion* of the gymnasium. For this reason I would also prefer the name *sudatorium* when a sweat-room heated with a hypocaust is concerned, as is the case in rooms 10 and 12.

The dating of the baths rests partly on the Acts of the Arval Brethren, which gives a *terminus ante quem* of 240 A. D. for the building of the baths, partly on tile stamps found in and around the building. The latest of the dated stamps are from the reign of Caracalla, and in addition, some of the many anepigraphical stamps can be compared to stamps from the Baths of Caracalla, as appears from the well documented description of this material in 'annexe' 6 (pp. 130–146).

Chapter III (pp. 147–274) contains a description of the stratigraphy and the related finds. A stratigraphy covering the Late Antique period has been found in the service corridor 15, while the Middle Ages and modern times are documented in stratigraphies to the west of room 6. Only part of the finds are treated here, the rest will be included in the exhaustive treatment of the material from La Magliana in the forthcoming volume of the general topography of this area. In general, but especially in the description of the stratigraphies, a separate numbering of the trenches instead of the use of squares would have facilitated reading, for it is often difficult to orient oneself by the squares shown on pl. I.

The catalogue is very brief, thanks to the use of numbers for various elements such as the colours of clay and slip, a method fit to make the publishing of an excavation material a more manageable and less expensive affair, although one could wish that it had been possible to include the 56 plates with drawings of finds, now only accessible in microfiche. All the same, the catalogue wholly serves its purpose. As a result of these investigations, it has been possible to create 8 phases, each including a table with the finds conclusive for the dating. Very important dates are those of the abandonment of the baths at the end of the reign of Constantine the Great, and the demonstration of a period of activity before the destruction of the southern part of the building in the late 6th century A. D. The phases are tentatively placed in a historical context in the conclusion (pp. 275–277), where the establishment of a major period of building activity in the sanctuary of Dea Dia in Severan times is justly emphasized as one of the most important results of the investigation.

The excavators conclude the final chapter by stating that the Arval Baths and the present publication are only 'un point du départ, un pôle de référence . . .' to the further investigations. But they are too modest: this publication is an important contribution to the elucidation of the appearance of the baths and of their state of development in a welldefined period in Roman History.