

die erläuterten italienischen Termini auch bei ihrem jeweiligen Auftreten in der Übersetzung (in Klammern) genannt werden. Denn in der jetzigen, rein deutschen Fassung können Unsicherheiten entstehen: So muß der Leser etwa meinen, die Begriffe „Erfahrung“ und „geistige Idee“ in Vasaris Beschreibung seines Gemäldes der ‚Hochzeit von Esther und Ahasverus‘ (2005, S. 60) gäben die originalen Begriffe „pratica“ und „idea“ wieder, wie im Glossar expliziert – in Wirklichkeit aber spricht Vasari von „studio“ und „conchetto“. Und vielleicht ließen sich in einigen zukünftigen Bänden trotz des knappen Raums für Einleitung und Kommentar noch zwei Aspekte weiter ausführen: Gerade mit dem Cinquecento wird die ‚Selbststilisierung‘, der Entwurf eines eigenen ‚Image‘ (sei es in Form von Selbstbildnissen, Schriften, von besonderem Auftreten etc.) schon für die Künstler selbst zum zentralen Problem. Zu fragen wäre also auch, wo Vasari deren Vorgaben fortschreibt und wo er sie einem eigenen Konzept einpaßt. Andererseits schlägt sich die ‚persona‘ des Künstlers in dessen Stil nieder, weshalb Vasari parallel zu seinen Viten eine Sammlung mit Zeichnungen der Künstler anlegte (diese würde man sich, so im Einzelfall vorhanden, jeweils als Abbildung wünschen). Durch eine kurze Analyse dieser natürlich nicht immer gleich evidenten Beziehungen von Lebens- und Werkstil wäre eine zentrale Kategorie der Wahrnehmung von Kunst in der Renaissance wiederzugewinnen. Dagegen dürfte sich im Rahmen einer Publikationsreihe von Einzelviten (und Kommentaren) das Problem, wie sich diese zu übergreifenden Ideen und impliziten Überzeugungen Vasaris verhalten, kaum lösen lassen – auch eine Lektüre der Proemien muß Vasaris vorgegebenen (kunsttheoretischen) Bahnen folgen, wogegen sich Fragen wie die nach biographischer Wahrheit und Fiktion, nach politischen Intentionen oder nach auktorialen Strategien erst dann erhellen, wenn das (gesamte) Material ‚gegen den Strich gebürstet‘ wird. Vielleicht läßt sich das Projekt ‚Vasari‘ ja mit einem Sammelband gleicher Aufmachung abschließen, der vier, fünf dieser verbindenden Fragen und Perspektiven in schlanken Essays entfaltet?

Es bleibt die Hoffnung, daß von dieser erfolgreichen Neuübersetzung der Vasari-Viten ein entscheidender Impuls für eine neue und intensive Beschäftigung mit der frühneuzeitlichen Kunstliteratur insgesamt ausgeht – nicht um der Quellen-Forschung, sondern um einer methodisch und inhaltlich angemessenen Kunstgeschichte der Zukunft willen.

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R. Ross Holloway: Constantine and Rome; New Haven & London: Yale University Press 2004; 224 S., 122 Abb.; ISBN 0-300-10043-4; £ 25,-

The first half of the fourth century can surely be considered as a very dramatic era in the history of European civilisation as well as in the history of Christianity. Economic decline of the Roman Empire was gradually undermining the existing system, leader-

ship was even less accepted than in the centuries before, and on top of all that the rise of Christianity was undeniable. The position of Constantine, the first Christian emperor, was very fascinating in more than one way. The roman emperors immediately preceding him had to fight more than one battle, since their position was constantly disputed and threatened by rivals; the economic decline seriously eroded the infrastructure of the empire and when for one reason or another one of the emperors felt threatened by Christians, he persecuted them seriously. The tetrarchy was an interesting new concept of leadership, introduced by Diocletianus at the end of the third century: two emperors both called augustus each had a sort of vice-emperor, who were both called caesar. East and west had their own rulers this way, who had to cooperate carefully in order to keep the balance of power intact. But of course both caesars had their own ambitions as well and both were striving to reach the top. And not all emperors were suited to cooperate with another augustus of equal rank. It was in this constantly changing era that Constantine grew up as the son of Constantius Chlorus, who died in 306 as augustus. From then on Constantine would somehow find himself in the epicentre of the battle for power, since his fathers' soldiers declared him to be his successor as augustus.

Constantine had a necessary but somewhat problematic relationship with the city of Rome, which gradually began to loose its once overpowering position. Given the absolutely interesting historical material of the first half of the fourth century, a book with the title *Constantine and Rome* would seem interesting enough. A new vision on Constantine's connection with Rome, perhaps focussing on other elements than for instance John Curran has done in his *Pagan City and Christian Capital*, would always be a welcome part of the ongoing scholarly debate. A serious setback of Holloway's book however is the lack of a more or less clear position in most issues raised in the book. Nowhere does the author explain what the purpose of the book is, or what should be argued by means of this book. This implies that the reader is more or less left on his own to find out where Holloway wants to lead him, since the remark that Constantine was both pagan and Christian does not come as such a surprise that it can serve as a guiding principle for the reader. The first chapter called „Constantine and the Christians“ adequately places Constantine in the changing society of the late third and early fourth century, where Christianity became an important force. In the next chapter, Ross Holloway then dives into the material of Roman architectural monuments of the time of Constantine, first of all the Arch of Constantine in the centre of Rome, as well as of the arch at Malborghetto, some 20 km north of Rome. The famous arch near the Colosseum in Rome is described in detail, which is not very easy given the ongoing debate between two (or even more) sides of scholars, focussing on the question whether or not the arch was built as a new monument for Constantine. Crucial elements are still debated: the date of arch, the reason why spolia had been used for many of the relief sculptures, the interpretation of the scenes on these relief sculptures, to name the most important of these questions. That most of the building material as well as the relief sculpture of the arch as we know it, are spolia is not questioned by most scholars. But an interesting point of view is taken up and fiercely

defended by a group of scholars, who have argued, that the Arch of Constantine is basically the result of the reworking of an older arch, originally built for emperor Hadrian, almost two hundred years earlier. This debate is difficult enough in itself, but Holloway doesn't make it any easier for his readers by anticipating his own summary of this discussion, and in doing so mentioning yet another idea: according to Holloway the arch was erected to honour Maxentius! Since this hypothesis is not sustained by any argument, he leaves his readers in confusion.

Ross Holloway brings the discussion down to the material the Arch of Constantine is standing upon. The supporters of the Hadrianic hypothesis believe that a foundation (on the south side) from Hadrian's time underneath part of the arch gives the date for the original arch as well. The opposite camp did some archaeological research on the north side and argues convincingly that there a fourth-century foundation exists. Holloway then comes up with his own solution: the foundation for a monument for Hadrian was never used until an arch in honour of Maxentius was built. In his view the monument was then subsequently finished and partly reworked to transform it into the Arch of Constantine. By introducing Maxentius the discussion is not brought closer to an end, but seems to be unnecessary complicated. After mentioning Maxentius briefly, this opponent and rival of Constantine isn't mentioned at all anymore in the rest of the book. Without positive and more detailed arguments this idea isn't useful at all.

The Arch at Malborghetto and the much more famous Janus Quadrifrons in Rome are briefly discussed, without however reaching any conclusion about either of them. The arch at Malborghetto dates from the time of Constantine. The structure of this intriguing monument still exists, even though almost all the marble decorative elements have disappeared. Situated in the area immediately north of Rome between the famous *saxa rubra* and the Pons Milvius, it seems very likely that this arch was built in connection with the battle fought here by Constantine against Maxentius. Holloway mentions the theory which was brought forward almost hundred years ago and which is still plausible, that the arch was built at the campsite where Constantine had his famous dream (or vision).

In the third chapter the Christian basilica's from Constantine's time in Rome are discussed. Several important basilica's and predecessors like the *domus ecclesiae* underneath SS. Giovanni e Paolo are discussed, leading Holloway to state, that the functionality of the basilica as a building type should be considered as the main reason why the Christians adopted this type in the first half of the fourth century in Rome. Nothing new or suprising here. Very problematic on the other hand is the way Ross Holloway interprets the archaeological and documentary evidence on the early Christian St. Peter's. Nave and four side aisles were used several years earlier in S. Giovanni in Laterano as well, but an important element generally considered to be new and different is the transept of St. Peter's. The „revolutionary rethinking of the evolution of the plan of S. Pietro (...) by Carpiceci and Krautheimer“ (p. 79) has led the author in a swampy area. First of all it should be noted, that the two articles with the names of both Carpiceci and Krautheimer as authors, were published by Carpiceci after Ri-

chard Krautheimer's death. The reconstruction mentioned has thus been an invention of Carpiceci and should not at all be attributed to Krautheimer, since the most important elements of this view contradict all of Krautheimer's publications on old St. Peter's. This is rather important, since Holloway accepts the reading and the interpretation of the material by Carpiceci: in this view the transept of early Christian St. Peter's was originally built as the mausoleum for the apostle Peter, and only by adding the nave and aisles somewhat later this element would have been turned into a transept. Since this element proved useful in the church it became „an integral feature of basilica design“ (p. 79). Unlike Holloway's conviction mentioned in a footnote (n. 52, p. 165), this idea about the genesis of the early Christian St. Peter's has not at all become standard, but on the contrary isn't accepted by scholars at all, and rightly so. This is a serious mistake of Holloway, who completely misjudged the value of Carpiceci's reconstruction. The consequences of Carpiceci's contentions aren't even mentioned in Holloway's brief account. The typological deviation, implied by the claim that the transept originally was a mausoleum, should have necessitated the author to explain more than just a few elements in early Christian architecture, a plea which is completely lacking however. Because this is not a reliable summary of the modern literature at all, Holloway puts his readers on a completely wrong track; apart from that it doesn't encourage the well-informed reader of this book to tend to accept Holloway's views on other early Christian buildings.

The second part of the third chapter discusses the interesting group of six basilicas with an ambulatory around the apse. All these basilicas were built on imperial property just outside the walls of Rome. Most of them are accompanied by a mausoleum, which in some cases predates the basilica itself however. These basilicas seem to be dating from either the time of Constantine or that of his children, although the date of S. Lorenzo fuori le mura is repeatedly challenged by Geertman. For a date of the large basilica with ambulatory of S. Lorenzo in the fifth century instead of the first half of the fourth, Geertman published convincing arguments, mentioned by Holloway only in a footnote, omitting the relevant literature. Holloway discusses several solutions seeking to explain the peculiar ground plan of these basilicas, and concludes that the ambulatory around the apse was first used in SS. Pietro e Marcellino on the Via Labicana. The mausoleum built at the short end of this church may have been intended for Constantine, but was later used as the mausoleum for his mother Helena. According to Holloway this sufficiently explains the use of the ambulatory as an initially imperial architectural element in the other basilica's. Even though this may well have been an important factor, the situation remains more complicated. The possible later date of S. Lorenzo as argued by Geertman, coincides with the date in the fifth century of S. Maria Maggiore, which originally had an ambulatory as well. But that discussion is avoided by Holloway. Also open for debate remains the question why the apse with ambulatory was such an interesting architectural feature to be used in imperial churches.

The fourth and last chapter deals with the tomb of St. Peter and the archaeological research undertaken in the twentieth century to find that tomb. This part is dealing

more with the reasons why archaeological research was done and how difficult the interpretation of the results have been, than with Constantine and Rome. A conclusion of the whole book is missing however.

Two main elements thus completely undermine Holloway's text. One is the general lack of arguments in almost every discussion of any of the monuments. This invariably leaves the reader empty handed. What Holloway makes of all these monuments, what discussing them results in remains unknown to the reader. The second element of course is the grave error made in the reconstruction of the evolution of the early Christian St. Peter's. Even though that building doesn't exist anymore, the documentary and archaeological evidence are such, that scholars agree upon the essential elements of the reconstruction, with which Carpić's view stands at odds. That makes it very hard to take other parts of *Constantine and Rome* seriously. Since Holloway hasn't formulated his goals in an introduction, at the end of his book there aren't any questions left to be answered or problems to be solved, which explains the lack of a conclusion. Unfortunately, the title of the book is more promising than the contents of it.

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Klaus Gereon Beuckers, Johannes Kramer und Michael Imhof (Hrsg.): Die Ottonen. Kunst – Architektur – Geschichte; Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag 2002; 384 S., 592 Abb., davon 237 farbig; ISBN 3-932526-91-0; € 39,80 (zugleich Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgemeinschaft 2002)

Nicht zuletzt der tausendjährige Abstand, der Anlass für verschiedene Jubiläen lieferte, rückte die Zeit der Ottonen in den vergangenen Jahren verstärkt in den Fokus der Betrachtung von Ausstellungspublikum wie Wissenschaft. Als jüngste große Publikation zum Thema erschien 2002, also, wenn man so will, zur tausendjährigen Wiederkehr des Amtsantritts Heinrichs II. (1002), der hier vorzustellende Sammelband, der mit nicht geringem Anspruch „Die Ottonen“ getitelt wurde, in der Unterzeile „Kunst-Architektur-Geschichte“, die seinen Inhalt etwas näher spezifiziert. Die thematische Gewichtung der insgesamt 23 Einzelbeiträge ist jedoch nicht, wie der Untertitel vermuten ließe, paritätisch, was die Herausgeber selbst in ihrem Vorwort nicht vergessen anzumerken. Mit zwölf Aufsätzen weit mehr als ein Drittel des Gesamtumfangs einnehmend, liegt ein deutlicher Schwerpunkt auf Aspekten ottonischer Architektur. Die übrigen der insgesamt 384 Seiten teilen sich hauptsächlich Beiträge zu Ikonographie, Buchmalerei und Schatzkunst.

Die historischen Ottonen hin oder her, die mit dem Tod Heinrichs II. als Herrscherlinie 1024 erloschen; es bleibt, wie üblich und zu Recht, auch in diesem Band die frühsalische Kunst nicht ausgespart, die in ihren Entwicklungslinien von der ottonischen Kunst nicht abzutrennen ist. Der behandelte Zeitraum entspricht damit eher