

Henri Lavagne, *Recueil Général des Mosaïques de la Gaule. III: Province de Narbonnaise 1. Partie Central, X^e supplément a 'Gallia.'* Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1979. 169 pp., 72 illus.

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While such aesthetic concerns are important for contemporary architects, their packaging in this book is fraught with spurious inferences. Entrepreneurs are in the business to make money, not indigenous culture. American architects may have to make the best they can of their society's rampant materialism; others are not obliged to do so. People's needs are not represented by consumer ads but by far more complex prospects and dreams. The architect's role is to help form social values, not to reduce them to their lowest common denominator. *White Towers* is a deceptively simple and seductively elegant book. For Canadian readers who do not come from Detroit, Philadelphia, or New York, it should be labelled 'Imported produce - Handle with care.'

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HENRI LAVAGNE *Recueil Général des Mosaïques de la Gaule*. III: Province de Narbonnaise 1. Partie Central, x^e supplément a 'Gallia.' Paris, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1979. 169 pp., 72 illus.

This volume is the third part of a series dealing with the mosaics of Gaul. Part I, Province de Belgique, and Part II, Province de Lyonnaise, consist of three fascicules each. The first fascicule of Part III (Province de Narbonnaise) is entitled 'Partie Central.' The intention of the series, and of this text in particular, is to bring the old publications up to date. There is very little actual *new* material here (i.e., discoveries since 1909, the date of previous publications). But those past publications have been scattered, inadequate, and frequently inaccurate. For example, the old *Inventaire* for Narbon listed 44 entries. The new one lists 223. However, only 75 of these are fully documented, the rest being only incomplete notes of mosaics which have since been lost or destroyed. And of the 75 only 35 are actual preserved specimens. The other 40 are known only from drawings or photographs.

There have been considerable confusion and many omissions in

the earlier publications, and M. Lavagne has included a concordance of old and new inventory numbers in an attempt to eliminate this problem. The reader can clearly identify the new additions, and the several instances of one mosaic having two or more numbers have been rectified.

The author describes three phases of mosaic production in Gaul. The first phase, in the first century A.D., is represented only in Besançon, but is the best preserved. The second phase, leading to the mid-third century, has far fewer examples, to be found mainly in Lyon; the third phase, which extends from the fourth to sixth centuries, is represented at St-Paul-Trois-Châteaux (Fig. 5) with very few examples. The first group is mainly black and white, retaining the early Italian forms as late as the beginning of the second century. The second series, with the introduction of floral motifs sprinkled amongst the geometric forms, demonstrates the birth of a distinct 'Gallo-romaine' style. (The question of when and how such a style arose was dealt with in the Introduction.) The third phase is believed to show the influence of eastern mosaics, in spite of the barbarian invasions.

There are also ten Medieval mosaics listed, of which only two are extant. One of these, found in a baptistry and in a very fragmentary condition, may not belong in the Medieval category. It shows two leopards attacking a deer; the animals are set on white squares within guilloche frames. Having noticed that each animal extends beyond the boundaries of its individual frame, some scholars have attributed this mosaic to the eleventh century, choosing to identify this stylistic element as a particularly Medieval phenomenon. As Lavagne has very clearly pointed out, however, this type of subject matter was very popular in pavements of the sixth century, and there is another example of a sixth-century mosaic with animals stepping out of their frames (M. Avi-Yonah, 'Relations entre la mosaïque juive et la mosaïque classique,' *Colloque du Mosaïque Greco-Romaines*, 1, Paris, 1963, p. 33, fig. 5).

In an appalling number of cases the catalogue entry is followed by 'détruite,' 'perdue,' or 'disparue-



FIGURE 5. Mosaic Pavement at St-Paul-Trois-Châteaux. From Lavagne.

non décrite; occasionally, a mosaic, having been taken to the supposed safety of a museum, is 'aujourd'hui introuvable.' However some information has survived, hence the necessity for the catalogue entry. That information may be very sparse indeed, such as the passing reference to 'mosaïques riches' in unpublished travel notes or correspondence. Such documents, fortunately, often contain detailed descriptions and drawings. The author quite rightly includes every mosaic known to have existed; much of this information may not be of much use to the mosaic specialist, but such as there is does help to fill out the picture of the social and economic history of the area, giving evidence at the same time for Roman civilization.

With each entry there is a section on 'observations.' This includes an annotated bibliography, summarization of any previous discussions of dating or interpretation, and some recent *comparanda* where the dating must be done stylistically. (This latter point is one on which there is not universal agreement amongst the publishers of mosaic *corpora*.) The illustrations are large and clear, only one or two to a page, and the details are easily visible. Wherever possible there are reconstruction drawings of the whole floor. In the text section there are several town or city plans showing the locations of mosaics.

My criticisms of this volume are only two and minor. The first is that a map of the whole area to which the fascicule is dedicated would have been helpful. Secondly, after each catalogue entry, which is amply spaced and in large type, there follow the bibliography, observations, and dating, all in densely-packed small print, sometimes continuing for two pages with barely a change of paragraph, and little or no indication of where bibliography ends and observations begin. But the minor irritation this causes is quickly assuaged by the enormous amount of information so tightly packed into this space.

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LEOPOLD D. ETTLINGER *Antonio and Piero Pollaiuolo*. Oxford, Phaidon Press, 1978. 183 pp., 162 illus., \$90.00

Antonio Pollaiuolo stands out as a leading contributor to the investigation of the depiction of landscape and the human figure in the last half of the quattrocento. Probably trained as a goldsmith, Antonio became the head of a workshop which executed works in a variety of media, including sculpture, painting, engraving, and jewellery. On several occasions he collaborated with his younger, less talented, brother Piero, who was trained as a painter. The work of these two brothers has presented art historians with a variety of problems, particularly in attribution, where their respective contributions to joint projects have remained elusive. Dating has also posed difficulties, since few firmly established dates exist, and the changing media of the Pollaiuoli's *œuvre* have made it difficult to determine chronological sequence.

While the Pollaiuoli have been the subject of numerous studies in the last half-century, including several Italian monographs, Leopold Ettlinger's new book is the first major work in English since Maud Cruttwell's study of 1907. In his preface, Ettlinger states three goals of his work: to reassess the extent of

the brothers' output, to reconsider the artists within their era, and to re-examine the works of Piero. The evolution of the Pollaiuoli's work is traced in an introductory, unfootnoted essay. A critical catalogue includes further discussion of individual works as well as measurements, provenance, documents (in both the original language and in translation), and sources.

The author begins with a brief biographical survey in which he examines the various records – tax returns, Vasari's *Vite*, and earlier accounts – to trace the brothers' lives. He stresses Antonio's role as a goldsmith and designer in various media and Piero's career as a painter, working to his own designs or in collaboration with his brother. Touching on themes he will subsequently pursue in greater detail, Ettlinger notes the difficulties in attribution caused by the close collaboration of the brothers. He suggests that while Piero was less famous and talented, given the nature of the commissions he received, he still enjoyed a considerable standing in his time.

Ettlinger's Antonio, a 'bright, open-eyed artist of his period,' found inspiration in the older Gothic tradition and in the new realism of Renaissance Florence. This stylistic mingling is evident in his early metalwork and the twenty-seven embroidery designs from the life of St. John the Baptist for a set of church vestments. On the basis of their stylistic and comprehensive narrative qualities, Ettlinger argues for viewing the embroidery designs not in the context of decorative art but of quattrocento painting, specifically the monumental fresco cycles of Uccello, Gozzoli, and Filippo Lippi. Ettlinger's point is well made, as Antonio's designs, whether for embroidery, sculpture, or painting, have the capacity of being expanded or reduced without losing any of their power. At the same time, given the placement of the embroideries on church vestments, the luxurious qualities of these pieces cannot be denied.

Disagreeing with earlier scholarship, Ettlinger places the designs in two different time periods and gives them all to Antonio. His contention that differences in quality in the designs are due to execution by assistants and not to the assistants'

intervening in the design process is cogent. Increasingly, we realize that a cycle of this sort, whether embroidery, sculpture, or mural painting, is the result of a co-operative effort, and any attribution to a master necessarily implies the participation of assistants. In the case of the embroideries, the fabrication of the pieces by embroidery-workers does not eliminate the right of the designing artist to his work.

Another question relevant to understanding how workshops functioned is the use of patterns or motifs, whether compositions or single figures, in various works and at different stages of an artist's career. Ettlinger provides a detailed and workmanlike discussion of artistic formulae and stock models in the Pollaiuoli workshop, such as the similar arrangement of figures in the two small panel paintings of *Hercules and the Hydra* and *Hercules and Anteus* in the Uffizi, the bronze group of *Hercules and Anteus* in the Bargello, and, presumably, the lost *Hercules* paintings for the Medici. Another major example is the figures of the *Virtues* first seen in the plaques of the silver reliquary cross for the Florentine baptistery which recur with slight variations in Piero's paintings of the *Virtues* for the Mercanzia and again in the reliefs of the same subject on the two papal tombs of Sixtus IV and Innocent VIII.

Ettlinger's conclusion that the famous engraving of the *Battle of the Ten Nudes* is an elaborate example of a model sheet is likely to prove more controversial. Pattern sheets usually recorded single, often unconnected motifs in order to preserve and transmit those images. While the systematic posing of the figures in the engraving has certain general similarities to earlier examples of model sheets, the integrated actions of the figures, the unusually large size of the print, its highly finished background, and its signature all argue against its being a pattern sheet. As well, Antonio's juxtaposition and reversal of figures are due to his detailed, systematic observation of the human body in action. Nor are they uncommon in mid-fifteenth-century art as witnessed by his own painting of the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian* and works by Andrea del Castagno and Piero della Frances-