

Boin on Steuernagel, reviewing Douglas Boin, *Ostia in Late Antiquity*

I was both pleased and thankful that the *Ancient History Bulletin* decided to review my book, *Ostia in Late Antiquity* (2014, 11–14), so quickly after its release. At this point, however, I would like to address three of the reviewer’s points which mis-represent my work.

1. When discussing the longevity of traditional religious practices at the Sanctuary of Magna Mater in the fifth century, the reviewer claims that “[t]he author fails to explain why he assumes a lasting visibility of this and other statues” (p. 12). In fact, I explain my assumptions quite clearly by pointing to a forthcoming study in the *Papers of the British School at Rome* (2013) and provide a summary of that contribution (Boin 2013, p. 184.)

2. The reviewer states “Boin is claiming the existence of [an] early Christian *domus ecclesiae* at Ostia” (p. 13). I do not use the phrase “*domus ecclesiae*” at all. In fact, I myself find this term grossly anachronistic. As closer readers of my text will have understood, in Chapter 4 I challenge the assumption that Christians gained property in Ostia’s city center only after a local apartment building was demolished (Boin 2013, 158–64). I suggested, in contrast, that we should consider the possibility that Christians purchased the property and renovated it themselves with local financial support.

3. Readers of the review are informed about Ostia’s “pagan festivals” (p. 12, twice), its “pagan...religious calendars” (p. 13), and others “elements” of “pagan” life (p. 14). Nowhere, however, does the reviewer alert readers to the important fact that I forcefully and thoroughly reject any and all use of this derogatory term—“pagan”—in my own study (Boin 2013, p. 10–11, 37–39). The fact that so many of my own important methodological cautions were largely ignored is thus not only unfortunate. It entirely distorts my scholarly contribution.

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