1974

Review of *Southern Italy: An Archaeological Guide*, by Margaret Guido

Brunilde S. Ridgway  
*Bryn Mawr College*, bridgway@brynmawr.edu

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The author of this extensive work has a very definite purpose: to study developments in the third millennium Aegean, particularly the Cyclades, and "to explain them" without recourse to diffusionist hypotheses (Preface). A theoretical framework for the inquiry is established in the Introduction. Part I, about one-third of the book, is a description of the physical evidence for the Aegean in the third millennium B.C. Part II, the remainder of the book, attempts to relate this evidence to the theoretical framework and to explain the "culture processes" at work.

Renfrew has already contributed greatly to Cycladic archaeology in articles on obsidian, metallurgy and figurines. His present book is the most comprehensive study of the topic ever produced, and it is bound to be of great interest to the Aegean specialist. The Gazetteer of Cycladic sites at the end, many of which he has visited and some of which he discovered, testifies eloquently to his energy in the field.

The interest of the book for the non-specialist lies mainly in its method of approach. The material is arranged in accordance with the theoretical framework as a sort of paradigm of cultural change. Some very good points are made—e.g., that by what Renfrew calls the "multiplier effect," change in one field of activity sometimes favors change in another and that the second change may then reinforce the first (chapters 3, 21); and that the receptiveness of a culture to innovation is very important, not just the availability of innovations (pages 27-28). A few criticisms also come to mind—e.g., although a number of specific "cultures" of the Early Bronze Age are defined in Part I, we are not shown how they worked individually in Part II; rather Renfrew refers again and again to the third millennium of the Early Bronze Age as a whole. What purpose is there then in defining the specific "cultures" so closely (and in my opinion so artificially) ? Furthermore, it is difficult to see how Renfrew's approach is new and refreshing in a field dominated up-to-now by more traditional approaches and that his originality of thought is everywhere apparent. It is rare that a book can be at the same time so informative and so provocative as this.

John E. Coleman
Cornell University
showing the divisions into chapters, the modern regions (roughly comparable to the American States), and the main highways, with the warning, however, that new roads are constantly being built and recent maps should be consulted. There is no single historical summary, but brief chronological notes introduce and explain the various phases and events; a Glossary and short Bibliography are at the end. Photographs and plans accompany the text, but one could wish for more. There is, for instance, no mention or illustrations of the buildings at Foce del Sele, which, as a site, is cited only for the metopes displayed in the Paestum museum. Some plans (e.g., that of Ceres/Athena at Paestum) do not conform with some recent publications. Finally, Guido only occasionally points out the peculiarities which distinguish the Magna Graecian structures from their Greek counterparts, to the disadvantage of the uninstructed traveler. All in all, however, this is a very useful and up-to-date account which will easily fit into a packed suitcase or handbag and is sturdy enough to last the trip.

BRUNILDE SISMONDO RIDGWAY
Bryn Mawr College

Mosaics in Roman Britain

This is not a book about mosaic pavements, their function, styles of decoration, symbolism and artistic merit, but simply a gazetteer of the pavements found in Britain. There is a brief introduction of five and a half pages and at the end an illustrated glossary of terms. The Foreword states that the book "has been prepared for interested amateurs who have no classical background . . ." but adds that it may be of value to serious students. Apart from the strange implication that amateurs are not serious, it is not easy to see precisely what any student would obtain from the book, apart from the bare facts it presents. The descriptions of the mosaics are very brief, and there is no discussion, not even a hint of the irony behind the Lullingston inscription or the special historical significance of that at Aldney Park. An amateur lacking a classical background may well be left wondering what significance these depicted myths had for the Romanized Britons. The social aspects of the scenes receive no mention, even in the introduction. The note on the book jacket states that it is a catalogue "of all the known Romano-British mosaic pavements in Britain," but the list is far from exhaustive; for example, there are records of more in London. The book is well illustrated and the plates chosen with care to cover most of the better known examples, but the index is so scant as to be almost worthless. The book is only useful to anyone requiring a list of mosaics with references; its value beyond this is very limited.

Graham Webster

City of the Stargazers: The Rise and Fall of Ancient Alexandria

This book promises "to take the facts and figures out of the vacuum in which they are usually given," but unfortunately, it does not succeed in bringing the ancient world to life. It does not approach the vivid and stimulating picture created by the French popular work, Alexandrie la grande, which, though listed in the bibliography, has not been absorbed by the author.

Although the book evidently is intended for young and ignorant readers, it is really just too slight to interested most keen young scientists. A half-hearted appeal to sensationalism in the garish cover and in the titles of the chapters, such as The Cadaver is Questioned, fails to use such obvious material as the story of Cleopatra or the early voyages of Alexandrians to India, carrying a cargo of doctors, dancers and singing boys returning laden with gems and pepper. More serious, the true nature of the Alexandrian accomplishment is not made clear. Alexandria was never "a city of stargazers." Greek astronomers, let alone citizens, did not have the means to gaze seriously at the stars as modern astronomers do. They took over from the Babylonians a great body of careful records made over long periods by accurate and orderly priests. But these priests did not look deeply behind the facts and figures; it was the curiosity of the Greeks that developed, in Alexandria, the early forms of astronomy and of astrology. This analysis, made by Dr. Otto Neugebauer and his colleagues, has rewritten the history of astronomy, but it is not crisply indicated by the author.

The book is carelessly made. The illustrations are haphazardly chosen, with far too many Mediaeval prints. The photographs are poorly reproduced. The map of the city is drawn from a fanciful sketch in 1838 and the only astronomical manuscript, a Hellenistic papyrus with diagrams, is shown upside down. It is a pity that a good publisher should permit an ill-qualified writer to undertake a bit of serious history (even or particularly for readers who are not knowledgeable) in thisjournalistic and dull style. Today popular books are usually richer in material.

Dorothy Burr Thompson
Princeton, New Jersey

ANNOUNCING TWO NEW VOLUMES PUBLISHED BY AMERICAN SCHOOLS
of ORIENTAL RESEARCH

JOINT AMERICAN EXPEDITION TO IDALION, CYPRUS
First Preliminary Report: Seasons of 1971 and 1972
edited by Lawrence E. Stager, Anita Walker and G. Ernest Wright

Published with the Aid of a Grant from the Fairchild Foundation

RECONSTRUCTING COMPLEX SOCIETIES
edited by Charlotte B. Moore for the organizers and conveners of the colloquium held at M. I. T. on April 29-30, 1972

Colloquium organized for the Cambridge Archaeological Society by Miranda C. Marvin Lawrence E. Stager Anita Walker

Scheduled for publication in the Summer of 1974
American Schools of Oriental Research
126 Inman St., Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

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