

**Bryn Mawr College**  
**Scholarship, Research, and Creative Work at Bryn Mawr**  
**College**

---

Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology Faculty  
Research and Scholarship

Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology

---

1969

## Review of *L'arte della Grecia*, by Paolo E. Arias

Brunilde S. Ridgway  
Bryn Mawr College, [bridgway@brynmawr.edu](mailto:bridgway@brynmawr.edu)

[Let us know how access to this document benefits you.](#)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://repository.brynmawr.edu/arch\\_pubs](http://repository.brynmawr.edu/arch_pubs)

 Part of the [Classical Archaeology and Art History Commons](#), and the [History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology Commons](#)

---

### Custom Citation

Ridgway, Brunilde S. 1969. Review of *L'arte della Grecia*, by Paolo E. Arias. *American Journal of Archaeology* 73:85-86.

This paper is posted at Scholarship, Research, and Creative Work at Bryn Mawr College. [http://repository.brynmawr.edu/arch\\_pubs/37](http://repository.brynmawr.edu/arch_pubs/37)

For more information, please contact [repository@brynmawr.edu](mailto:repository@brynmawr.edu).

rated with vertical murex shells, and some small decorated stirrup vases (Sh. 65c and d, especially nos. 411, 412, 809, figs. 391-92). Of the last, especially, one wishes that all had been illustrated in the larger drawings accorded some less interesting specimens (figs. 393-94), since they ought to make possible some correlation of the date of destruction with one of the three destructions now postulated for Mycenae (cf. Desborough, *The Last Mycenaeans*, 73-74). Blegen believes the latest pottery belongs to the period of transition "when pottery of Myc. III C was beginning to be made and to displace the wares of III B" (p. 421), but one may ask whether there is any indubitable III C ware at Pylos. Of the krater bowls no. 576 has an open pattern; nos. 813, 862, and 1150 have simple panel patterns not later than Myc. III B:2; only nos. 593 and 808 have the antithetic spiral loops which begin in III B but continue as an important feature of III C:1. The dark-glazed kraters, nos. 594, 677, 1172, are suggestive of the Granary class, but ought not to be so described, since they are local in style and not exactly matched either in shape or decoration in the material from the Granary at Mycenae. More significant for dating purposes is the absence of the Close style, which at Mycenae was the immediate successor of the latest III B (being found in the Granary but not in the Citadel House). The nearest approach to the Close style is the curious tripod jar (Sh. 68, figs. 395-96), which ought to be an import from the Argolid (or the Dodecanese?). Thus, the relative date of destruction appears to be somewhat later than that of the Citadel House at Mycenae, but considerably earlier than the burning of the Granary. The end of Myc. III B, or about 1200 B.C., proposed by Blegen, and followed by Desborough and Älin, cannot be far wrong.

Having determined the date, one may well ask who caused the destruction, and for what reason, since the despoilers did not remain to inhabit the palace. Blegen, following the ancient Greek tradition, wishes to connect the destruction with the Descent of the Herakleidai, or the Dorian Invasion, which according to that tradition took place two generations after the Trojan War; and since he dates the destruction of Troy VIIa to the mid-13th century, there is time enough for Nestor to return to Pylos and be followed on the throne by two successors before the palace went up in flames. Other scholars have proposed different theories: a piratical raid (Mylonas, *Mycenae and the Mycenaean Age*, 227), a sack of the palace stores by commoners driven by famine (Carpenter, *Discontinuity in Greek Civilization*, 52-53), or an invasion of people who did not stay but were subsequently followed by the Dorians (Desborough, *op.cit.*, 224-25). All we know for certain is that at Ano Englianos, a site referred to as Pylos on more than fifty tablets from the Linear B archives, there was a great Mycenaean palace which flourished during the Myc. III B period, and which in its archives and its stores of pottery, oil, and other commodities typifies the bureaucratic administration of such a

palace; that when the palace was sacked (?) and burned, neither its inhabitants nor its destroyers lingered, for this catastrophe was part of the general destruction that visited the Mycenaean world at the end of the 13th century. Professor Blegen has given us a complete and objective record of his excavations, and for this he is to be warmly commended.

SARA A. IMMERWAHR

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
AT CHAPEL HILL

L'ARTE DELLA GRECIA, by *Paolo E. Arias*. (Storia Universale dell'Arte, vol. 2:1.) Pp. ix + 951, figs. 1073, pls. 12. Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, Turin 1967. Lit 15,000.

A reviewer's task should be first to determine for which audiences a specific book was written, and then to criticize it accordingly. It would be unfair to complain of generalizations in a work meant for the general public, or of excessive detail in one meant for the specialist. Yet this time I am at a loss to classify Arias' book. It is far too scholarly, comprehensive and well illustrated to be called a "popular work," but its faults cannot fail to arouse impatience in the informed reader.

Judged by "general" standards, the book is too complex. It satisfies some of the requirements for "popular works," in that it is attractive in format, printed on excellent paper, written in the fluent style of the trained scholar. But the photographs, though so numerous that they illustrate almost every monument mentioned in the text, have not been given that importance which characterizes picture books. They are scholarly documentation rather than the main attraction. The text, in turn, is so packed with information as to overwhelm the general reader. The presentation of several problems is so succinct as to be confusing and sometimes even confused. Some statements will be almost meaningless to a public without sufficient background.

Judged by "specialized" standards, the book is frustrating. Remarkably up to date in many respects, it sometimes retains outmoded theories or dates. Generally well informed, it presents inexplicable omissions. Authoritative in many ways, it contains several contradictory or inaccurate statements. Even typographical standards are not at the usual high level of the UTET, and many misspellings, inconsistencies and errors, especially in the bibliography, should not have escaped the proofreader's eye. Some books have been given the wrong title, some titles have been given the wrong author, some authors have been given the wrong initials, and *Gruben* is consistently deprived of its final consonant both in the figure credits and in the bibliography. A few illustrations have received a wrong caption or are connected with a different reference in the text; in some cases works have been attributed to the wrong museum (besides those mentioned in the Errata on p. 951).

It would be useless to compile here a longer list, but the following points are important enough to deserve mention: in the list of abbreviations, p. 893, *eco* should be aligned with *Enciclopedia dell'arte classica e orientale*, while *EUA* corresponds to *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte*; the Bibliographical Notes on p. 901 should be divided between chapters 4 and 5, with the break occurring after the fifth paragraph; in the text, p. 28 penultimate line, *abbondanti* should read *abbandonate*; p. 37 line 15, *posteriore* should be *anteriore*; p. 161 line 3, the second *femminili* should be *maschili*; p. 417 last line, the first *ionico* should be *dorico*; p. 737, line 5, *a.C.* should be *d.C.*; p. 810, last line, *frutti* should read *putti*. The careful reader will easily make the other corrections himself.

The author's oversights are less easy to identify and would obviously escape the novice. This is all the more regrettable in that many students of archaeology, Italian and otherwise, could find Arias' book invaluable for a general survey of Greek art. The ground is vast enough for a first-year introductory course, the focus is judiciously distributed among the various manifestations of Greek culture, the architectural views are actually outnumbered by plans and line-drawings, and sculpture and vase painting rate some first-class photographic details. But all these advantages, to my mind, are marred by a few inaccurate definitions, loose terminology, vague laudatory descriptions, ambiguous and confused statements. As random examples I may cite the definition of apoxygma (p. 386: "un rigurgito della stoffa alla cintura"); the reference to the Erechtheum frieze (p. 430: "l'architrave . . . era ornato di un fregio figurato"), the three doors of its east façade (p. 427), the "almost crossed" legs of the Demeter of Cnidus (p. 666); the attribution to the Rhamnous temple of the sculptures found in the Athenian Agora and usually assigned to the Hephaisteion pediment (pp. 476-477).

The book follows chronological order, from the Neolithic to the end of the Hellenistic period. Obviously such a vast span of time cannot be covered without occasional omissions and unevenness of treatment, but why should the entire Early and Middle Helladic periods be dismissed without mention, and Lerna be cited only with reference to the Neolithic levels? Why include Nea Nikomedia and Kea, but not Grave Circle B (which appears only in the bibliographical notes)? Indeed one may almost suspect that unwelcome cuts were imposed on the author, since at times the bibliography refers to monuments or theories not included in the main text, and some statements appear as non sequiturs. Some topics are imperfectly covered: from the few gravestones mentioned in Ch. 7 one would hardly visualize the enormous fourth century output of funerary art; Cypriote sculpture makes sporadic and inconsistent intrusions; and discussions of jewelry are so erratic as to appear almost as afterthoughts.

My criticism may seem picayune or ungrateful, especially in view of the magnitude of the task the book attempts to perform. My only justification lies

in the fact that were it not such a scholarly enterprise, the work would not prompt such close scrutiny. Demand is commensurate to expectation, and we expect much from scholars of Arias' caliber and publishers such as the UTET. This is perhaps why these expectations could not be unreservedly fulfilled.

BRUNILDE SISMONDO RIDGWAY

BRYN MAWR COLLEGE

CORINTH, Vol. I, Part VI, THE SPRINGS: PEIRENE, SACRED SPRING, GLAUKE, by *Bert Hodge Hill*. Pp. xix + 235, pls. 18. The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Princeton, New Jersey, 1964. \$35.00.

The text of *Corinth*, I: VI, records the results of the excavation and of the post-excavation examination of three of the most important monuments of Ancient Corinth, along with affiliated structures and surroundings. Chapter I deals with the spring of Peirene, chapter II with the Sacred Spring, chapter III with the fountain house of Glauke. Although the publication date for this volume is 1964, the bulk of the work had been accomplished in the first years of the twentieth century: the text of Peirene was finished in the mid-thirties, the text of the Sacred Spring was completed in its basic form by 1906, the text of the Glauke chapter was published by George Elderkin in *AJA* 14 (1910) 19-50. Because of the early date of excavation and of the manuscripts it must be remembered that much of the pottery that today is securely dated was unrecognized for its precise chronological import at the time when the monuments were excavated. It must also be realized that the site of Ancient Corinth was not surveyed and equipped with datum points for exact elevations above sea level until 1946 (H. S. Robinson, *Hesperia* [1960] 236-240). Before that time the important elevations were noted in relation to the stylobate of the archaic temple. For the convenience of readers of chapter II, The Sacred Spring, I include the following list of absolute elevations above sea level (in meters).

Drain A, top of cover slab immediately north of fountain house, 73.36. Drain C, bottom of channel before it enters basin, 76.24; at 28 m. farther east, 76.35. Preserved top of circular altar within apsidal temple, 76.77. Preserved top of monument 5, 77.03. Preserved top of monument 31, 76.99. Sockle of triglyph wall I, 75.85; top of wall, 76.91. Sockle of triglyph wall II, 75.49; top of wall, 76.57. Sockle of triglyph wall III, 75.22; preserved top, 75.97. Cement landing west of triglyph wall II, at stairway (fig. 89) 74.78; at point against fountain house, 74.68. Paving of façade of fountain house, first period, 73.32. Topmost preserved point of wall V, upper course (step at north), 74.18. Topmost preserved point on wall VI, 76.38. Topmost preserved point of wall VII, 75.96 at west, 76.12 at east near propylaea; wall VIIa, 75.49 at west, 75.38 at east near propylaea. Topmost preserved point of wall XIIa, 76.17.