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## Review of *The Arts in Prehistoric Greece*, by Sinclair Hood

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boea, and by the Cambridge/Bradford team in Boeotia will add much to our knowledge of these areas.

The LH period is most successfully treated (especially in Messenia, thanks to the efforts of the Minnesota Messenia Expedition); other periods are less well documented and one is constantly reminded of our lack of knowledge of EH I, EH III and the phases of MH. With the publications, now in preparation, of EBA and MBA material from Lerna, Lefkandi and Nichoria, we shall have a better understanding of these periods and perhaps more expertise in dealing with surface sherds.

Although Hope Simpson and Dickinson's conclusions may be tentative and one may argue with a few details (e.g., p. 23, bowl from Knossos is definitely early MH; some misprints may be misleading: e.g., p. 206, EH II settlement and cemetery at Ayios Kosmas, not EH III), this does not detract from the value of the work which is a mine of information, well-organized and thoughtfully analyzed. The *GAC* is an invaluable tool without which no one concerned with the prehistory of Greece can do research. One looks forward to similar treatment of the rest of Greece.

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THE ARTS IN PREHISTORIC GREECE, by *Sinclair Hood*. (The Pelican History of Art.) Pp. 311, figs. 237. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1978. Pb. \$12.95.

In 1962 F. Matz concluded the introduction to his handbook, *Crete and Early Greece*, by noting that one of the major tasks of the future was "the study of the art of Minoan Crete and pre-Hellenic Greece." With the publication of this volume in the Pelican History of Art Series by Hood, the task has been admirably accomplished. The format and erudition of the book set it apart from previous works in the field that are either more limited in scope and too theoretical or not generally available.

Hood has performed a special service by rising above the complex web of archaeological problems, with which he is so familiar, that surround this material in order to present a broad yet detailed view of Aegean art. This is accomplished by allowing judgments of style to be guided by archaeological fact and by subordinating historical conclusions to lucid description and comparison of objects and styles. Indeed, the principal merit of this handbook is that it focusses attention on the objects themselves: lesser known pieces are juxtaposed to better known ones, and a wide variety of styles and materials is available for ready comparison. This kind of detailed documentation and discussion invites the eye to look with care and, thanks to copious erudite footnotes, leads back to a wealth of primary and secondary literature.

After a brief, non-controversial historical introduc-

tion, the volume proceeds by chapter to the categories of art to be described: pottery, painting, sculpture, wood-shell-bone-ivory and faience, stone vases, metal vases, arms, jewelry and, finally, seals and gems. A thoughtful, brief concluding chapter considers prevailing theories and places prehistoric Aegean art in the context of the ancient Orient. Each chapter has a similar organization that begins with a brief discussion of the importance and major problems of the subject, proceeds to a chronological examination in geographic order and closes with consideration of materials and techniques. Middle and early Late Bronze Age material is often discussed as a unit, in part to take account of the Proto- and Neopalatial phases in Crete and also to facilitate discussion of the Shaft Grave and Tholos Tomb eras, natural end-products of the Middle Bronze Age. Mycenaean art is largely confined to the period of ascendancy of the Mainland in LB III. Of course the different demands of the material considered in each chapter impose some limitations on this scheme, but in general this chronologic-geographic framework is repeated in all the chapters and imparts a didactic rhythm to the study.

The quantity and variety of subject matter treated here cannot be reviewed in detail, nor is it necessary to do so, but a few brief comments on the principal merits and problems of the book may be useful.

Justice could not be done to the prehistoric pottery of the Aegean in a single chapter, and the author is to be complimented for his general picture which presents the major styles and shapes of each region and period. Some detailed comments might have been omitted: EH I and Kumtepe Ib have perhaps nothing in common (p. 33, see now J. Sperling, *Hesperia* 45 [1976] 305-64) and it is doubtful that the "dark on light surface" of Phylakopi I pottery is in any way related to the Cilician and Syrian matt-painted styles of the MB. On the other hand, the publication of Grave Circle B should have encouraged a greater acknowledgment of the Cyclades when assessing the ceramic content of the Grave Circles (p. 23, Circle B has 26, not 14, graves).

Chapter 3 on Aegean painting is a much needed and intelligible summary of the chronological and stylistic development of fresco painting according to most recent research. It is enhanced by attention to genre scenes, local style and stratigraphical observations at Knossos and elsewhere. When archaeological context is unclear, Hood relies on stylistic judgment and comparison with other dated pieces to place the paintings in order. Inevitably there is downward revision of Evans's scheme: this leads to some detailed argumentation and serves as a welcome introduction for students, presenting at the same time the material as well as its problems and copious bibliography.

The miniature style is treated as a unit: rarely quoted material is discussed (e.g., p. 62, fig. 45) and the chronological range extends from LM IA into LM II; notably the "Grandstand" and "Sacred Grove" frescoes are latest. The discussion of the miniature

ship fresco from Thera should include a reference to L. Casson's analysis in *IJNA* 4 (1975) 3-10. Likewise, C. Long's study of the Ayia Triadha sarcophagus, *SIMA* 42 (1974) should have been cited (cf. p. 70, n. 122).

Mainland frescoes are introduced with a useful list of the earliest dated fragments and comments on their stylistic proximity to Minoan work of LM Ib-II. The underlying influence of Egyptian conventions on these later Minoan frescoes and then on Mycenaean ones is stressed. Of general value to the chapter are the comparative drawings of details (hands, heads) that help to fix stylistic similarities and differences. As a consequence of this attention the author offers a much more reasonable date of LH IIIA for the newly discovered lady from Mycenae (p. 79, fig. 62) than the LHIII B/C *terminus ante quem* recorded by the excavator (*Praktika* 1970, 122-23).

The succeeding chapter on Aegean sculpture is, because of the poverty of monumental statuary and diversity of styles in many media, less coherent and less satisfactory than the preceding. Too much is made of the hypothetical effect of monumental wooden sculpture from Crete. Surely the Kea terracotta statues are sufficiently numerous and sophisticated to be evidence, along with the Petsofa fragment (p. 106) among others, of the strength of a coroplastic tradition rather than as a "cheap substitute" (p. 108) for wooden statues.

The question of the origin of sculpture in stone in the Aegean is much vexed. Here, treatment of anatomy and figural compositions as found on stone relief vases, on ivory carving, on animal rhyta and in stucco relief might have been considered to shed light on the problem. The discussion of the Shaft Grave stelai, however, is enlightening and emphasizes the iconographic relation among many media. The suggestion that the Lion Gate relief might originally have been cut for a tholos tomb is surely wrong because it belongs to the entire gate facade and forecourt which are the acme of a sophisticated local monumental masonry style, cf. the Postern Gate, the *Steintor* at Tiryns and traces of such a gate on the Larissa at Argos.

One of the many assets of this book, its thoroughness, is manifest in chapter 5 on the use of wood, shell, bone, ivory and faience for objects of art. The MM development of ivory carving is suggested for Crete; the style is not identified, especially for figurines, but its elements are alluded to in comparison with Mycenaean ivories. The importance of Cypriot and Levantine ivory work at this time is stressed throughout this section but reference to Kantor's fundamental article in *JNES* 15 (1956) 153-74, has been omitted.

Chapters 7-8, "Metal Vases" and "Arms," are immensely learned and cover the views and bibliography with commendable uniformity. The defense of the Cretan origin for some of the vessels from the Tôd treasure does not take Anatolia into account, and in focussing on Crete as a source Hood also brings in the

silver kantharos from Gournia (p. 154). This vessel and the kantharoi from the Tôd treasure have good Anatolian parallels, as Schachermeyr pointed out in 1964 (*Die minoische Kultur des alten Kretas*, 80-82, *not: Die ältesten Kulturen Griechenlands* as cited in n. 10, p. 263), and would correspond in date roughly with the penetration of Anatolian ceramic types between the Early and Middle Bronze Ages (see now E. Davis, *The Vapheio Cups and Aegean Gold and Silver Vessels* [New York 1977] 69-94). Hood's trained eye and close acquaintance with the Shaft Grave vessels and comparable ones in Crete are evident in his valuable presentation of these metal vases, one now more complemented than corrected by Davis's definitive and later appearing volume.

The consideration of seals and gems serves as a standard short introduction to the subject, its categories, historical development and bibliography. The treatment of jewelry, particularly in consideration of the Minoan and Shaft Grave material, shows a refined appreciation of regional styles. The comparison of the gold lion from S.G. III with that from Ay. Triadha is so apt as to define the quintessential differences in style between Minoan and early Mycenaean. References to frescoes amplify our understanding of the use and common application of Aegean jewelry. A contrast for the EBA would have been effected by brief mention of the material from Troy and Poliochni.

The concluding chapter introduces the reader to such descriptive terminology as "Unity" and "Torsion" and to different views of the relation of style to cultural regions. The individual character of the art of the Early Bronze Age, and in particular that of Minoan Crete and the Mycenaean Mainland, is well described, and the close kinship of the latter two is emphasized. The "Oriental" boundaries of Aegean art set by Egypt and the Near East are stressed and used to underline the gap between the arts of the prehistoric Aegean and those of Classical Greece.

Format, organization and references are clear and easy to use. A comprehensive bibliography is ordered according to an outline at the head of the section—this is to be consulted just as any other chapter of this handbook. Illustrations are extremely well selected but their quality is uneven: they should have been redrawn to uniform standards (cf. figs. 69-71, 130, 132, 145, 184-89). The photographs, however, are clear and representative; one wishes only for some color, notably to highlight the chapter on painting. But these are small deficiencies in a book that is monumental in its ambition and achievement. Both author and publisher are to be complimented for providing a work that will be a standard authoritative handbook for years to come.

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