Review of *L'arte della Magna Grecia: Arte greca in Italia meridionale e Sicilia*, by Ernest Langlotz

Brunilde S. Ridgway
*Bryn Mawr College, bridgway@brynmawr.edu*
find of early bronzes at Hsin-cheng, frustration one encounters in this work, o us recent finds of great importance on early Chinese symbolism. Another of Alfred Salmony who also published shortly thereafter in both English and absence, notably those (among others) is his selection of material. For example, Honan, in 1923 which was published which are not well known. footnotes are provided or expected, but adequate bibliography. But even for such a work the bibliography is quite poor. While his own works are fully represented, others are conspicuous by their absence, notably those (among others) of Alfred Salmony who also published on early Chinese symbolism. Another frustration one encounters in this work is his selection of material. For example, three pages are devoted to an accidental find of early bronzes at Hsin-cheng, Honan, in 1923 which was published shortly thereafter in both English and Chinese, but he fails to mention numerous recent finds of great importance which are not well known.

In spite of the unfavorable criticism above, this book will obviously be of value to those interested in symbolism. And it will be of some use to those with a casual interest in things Chinese because it does give limited information on some sites and artifacts, including a few recent finds, ranging from the Neolithic down to the third century after Christ. But those who are seriously interested in Chinese archaeology are advised to read the works of scholars like K. C. Chang and T. K. Cheng.

RICHARD C. RUDOLPH
University of California, Los Angeles

L’Arte della Magna Grecia: Arte Greca in Italia Meridionale e Sicilia

by ERNEST LANGLOTZ. Photographs by MAX HIRMER. Revised edition 322 pages, 168 black and white plates, 20 color plates, 10 text figures. L’ERMA DI BRETSCHNEIDER, Rome, 1968 30.00 L.

There has often been a marked tendency among scholars to attribute to Magna Graecia every ancient Greek work of difficult interpretation, either in terms of style or of content. Though partly justified by the very nature of Magna Graecian art, so open to various influences and strange cults, this tendency is however largely determined by our imperfect knowledge of the Western Greeks. Any book on this particular subject therefore fulfills a very real need, and especially a book by an expert connoisseur of ancient art such as Langlotz and a master photographer such as Hirmer.

The first edition of this work, in German, appeared in 1963 as Die Kunst der Westgriechen, and immediately received wide acclaim. It was followed by an English translation by A. Hicks published in 1965 as The Art of Magna Graecia by Thames and Hudson, Ancient Greek Sculpture of South Italy and Sicily by Abrams. Three years later this Italian version saw the light, in a good though not always faultless translation from the German by Luisa dell’Orto Franchi. Because of the lapse of time from the original publication, the author has had the opportunity to revise his work, but this revision takes the form simply of additional notes appended to the introductory remarks and the comments to the plates. The basic text and illustrations remain the same, with the positive result that references to any specific piece can be tracked down regardless of the version one owns. In some cases the additional notes cite recent bibliography, but often they mention earlier publications not included in the original text, or try to answer points raised by reviewers of the German edition, most notably Prof. E. Sjöqvist in AJA 69 (1965) pp. 79-80 and W. Fuchs in Gymnasium 72 (1965) 144-147. It is perhaps in order to add further to the addenda by mentioning the issue of Palladio (N.S. vol. I-IV, 1967) entirely devoted to Sicilian architecture, and the recovery in 1966 of the stolen Selinus bronze youth (plate 81). One also regrets that even the new bibliography fails to acknowledge Prof. Cambioglu’s collaboration with Trendall in his researches on South Italian vases.

The book is by now so well known that an extensive review seems superfluous; since however it has not received previous mention in this periodical, some general comments may be of interest to Archaeology readers. By Magna Graecia Langlotz means the Greek territories in both South Italy and Sicily. The illustrations therefore present side by side works from both areas, regardless of the considerable geographical distance, historical background and ethnic substratum. These factors are instead properly stressed in the introduction and the captions and one marvels at the assurance with which Langlotz recognizes Spartan, Corinthian or Naxian influences on objects which he then attributes to various local workshops. In many cases these attributions, and the assessment of the influences at work, are difficult to follow and it is especially helpful when Langlotz points out iconographic traits typical of Magna Graecia, such as the peculiarly shaped eyes with pronounced lacrimal duct, the lines at the corners of mouth and noses, the prominent Venus rings in the necks.

Because of his larger acceptance of the term, Langlotz arranges Magna Graecian art chronologically rather than geographically. This system causes a certain unbalance, since historical reasons and the chance of the finds favor the archaic period. This impression is increased by the fact that several pieces, presumably copy, in smaller scale or cheaper medium, cult statues of earlier date. Langlotz stresses the need of the colonists to reproduce the cult image of their mother town and points out individual cases of imitation of wood or bronze, as well as the “modernization” of terracottas from earlier models with added heads in later styles.
such cases dating becomes subjective and agreement is difficult to reach. The
author also attributes several terracottas to pedimental or group composi-
tions because of marked asymmetry in their features. I hesitate in accepting
the idea that sculptured pediments were frequent in Magna Graecia before the
wave of influence from Greece after 480 B.C.; presumably asymmetries can
be explained on other grounds, espe-
cially since they appear also in single
statuettes, where it is less likely that a
specific viewpoint was intended.

Though the general comments deal
with various forms of artistic expression
(architecture, painting, bronze, lime-
stone and marble sculpture, terracotta,
coins), the plates illustrate only plastic
works, of which a large number is
naturally represented by terracottas be-
cause of the scarcity of local stone.
Whenever possible, the comments to the
illustrations mention the context in
which the objects were found and there-
fore pieces which could pass simply as precious bibelots acquire spe-
cial significance, such as the terracotta
maenad of plate x which was found
clutched in the hand of a female skele-
ton, or the statuettes of satyrs and
dancers (plates 146-148) from Taren-
tine tombs. Langlotz's remarks inevi-
tably point out how little we know about
the beliefs and cults of the Magna
Graecians, which seem so different from
those of the motherland and require
specific iconography and implements.
The author also amusingly points out
iconographic motifs which continue in
much later times or find fortuitous
echoes in modern renderings.

Some of Langlotz's statements are
most stimulating. He believes that not
all Attic vases found in Magna Graecia
were imports, but that many must have
been produced by immigrants, especially
by pupils of the Berlin and the Pan
Painters who established workshops in
Sicily after 480 B.C.; presumably asymmetries can
be explained on other grounds, espe-
cially since they appear also in single
statuettes, where it is less likely that a
specific viewpoint was intended.

The Cultural History of
Marlborough, Virginia: An
Archeological and Historical
Investigation of the Port Town for
Stafford County and the
Plantation of John Mercer,
Including Data Supplied by Frank
M. Setzler and Oscar H. Darter
by C. Malcolm Watkins. viii, 224 pages,
91 text figures, 89 line drawings, 13 appendices, map of endpapers. Smithsoni-
ian Institution Press, Washington,
D.C. 1968 $3.75

Rarely does good fortune permit the
planned and programmed investigation of an historical site to begin—in ample
time—with historical documentation fol-
lowed by informed, problem-mindful
analysis of expertly and completely ex-
cavated field evidence. In fact, it is al-
most commonplace that a site is "salv-
aged" as well and as completely as
difficult circumstances permit.

Once more we have the story of such
a site. Briefly, it is this: In 1938 T.
Dale Stuart, then Curator of Physical
Anthropology at the Smithsonian began
excavations at the Indian village site of
Patawomecke, and noted that the near-
by site of Marlborough Town, the Staff-
ford County seat which flourished fit-
tfully from 1691 through 1750, merited
excavation as a logical step beyond his
own work. By 1956 Oscar H. Darter,