
_Antero Tammisto_


The "morceaux choisis" of this catalogue consist of some 150 South Italian red figure and Gnathia pottery fragments selected from a large private collection of Attic and Italiote pottery. The exhibition in Geneva and its accompanying catalogue are the first opportunities for a wider public to examine the collection that earlier has only been accessible to a few scholars and only partially exhibited and published.

The study of Italiote pottery, produced between 430–275 in the Greek colonies of Magna Graecia, is only now beginning to catch up with the voluminous research on its Attic counterpart. The fascination and interest in the South Italian pottery is not in the elegance of composition or design, but in the richness of iconographic detail, as has once more been stated by the authors of the book. One of them, Alexandre Cambitoglou, Professor Emeritus of the University of Sydney, has earlier contributed greatly to the systematic publication of South Italian red-figured pottery together with A. D. Trendall, to whose memory the catalogue is dedicated. Cambitoglou is responsible for the attributions of the pieces to various painters and further stylistic comments in the book, while Jacques Chamay, an expert on iconography, has furnished the descriptions of the subject matter of each painting.

The volume is basically a catalogue of pottery and excellent as such: it contains a broad and detailed description as well as large and clear photographs of each of the 150 exhibits. The book is divided in sections according to the production centres of vases and also arranged in a broad chronological order, yet not all groups of Italiote pottery are equally represented. Paestan and Sicilian pottery do not figure at all, and early Lucanian pottery is represented by 12 pieces. Apulian ware is the most voluminous – as also in reality – and Apulian pieces have been divided in three sections, early (Cat. nos. 13–61), middle (62–87) and late (88–110). The Campanian section contains only one piece of uncertain origin 112–129. Late Apulian i.e. Gnathia pottery is separated as the final section of the catalogue (130–148). The separate section of profile drawings at the end deserves a laudatory comment as does the good chronological table of painters. The index of iconographic subjects in a book which is mainly dedicated to details of subject matter could be larger to be truly useful.

The text is restricted to a short and general overview of Italiote pottery and a brief description of the characteristics of each fabric in the beginning of the section.
As noted by the authors, sometimes a sherd of Italiote pottery is more easily accessible than a whole vase which overwhelms the observer by the overt richness of detail. Thus one of the merits of the volume is to draw the attention of the reader to the particularities of iconography and painting technique from a closer distance.

Ria Berg

This volume presents the results of a Marburg-Colloquium held in 1995 to celebrate 125 years of studies on Roman sarcophagi. It was in 1870 that Friedrich Matz the Elder was given the charge of collecting and listing the innumerable Roman sarcophagi preserved from Imperial times. Ever since then Germany has remained the pioneering country in the study of Roman sarcophagi, the result of which can be seen in a number of excellent corpora published over the past century, and already for some time the city of Marburg has been the centre of the great sarcophagus project. Not only the collaborators of the Corpus were invited, but also many others who work on sarcophagi. The 29 contributions deal with sarcophagi from all over the Roman Empire which means that besides the central places of production (Rome and Athens), many local groups in individual provinces are also dealt with. The great variety of themes represented on the reliefs is naturally reflected by a wide range of iconographic discussions (e.g. children, funeral meals, hunting, office-holders, various mythological items, Christian material, etc.). Some papers concentrate on technical questions and the dating of sarcophagi. Though epitaphs are not the theme of this book, the inscribed pieces discussed are nonetheless numerous. Fortunately, however, apart from some minor misunderstandings, there seem to be no serious flaws in their interpretation. On the whole, the volume is a collection of highly interesting studies in the world of ancient sarcophagi, and it certainly ennobles the long and illustrious history of German studies on the subject.

Mika Kajava
