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_
