

In his book Menichetti proposes to offer a systematic study of the motifs illustrated on the famous Praenestan "ciste", a series of bronze boxes dating from the fifth to the third century B.C. The author shows that the scenes, themes and the iconography depicted on this material can be taken as reflecting the system of values prevailing in mid-republican Praeneste. One of the most conspicuous themes visible in the decoration of the boxes is matrimony and the education of the woman, both vital elements for the continuity and survival of any society. Another central element is *virtus* which for men meant sport, war and triumph, while the female *virtus* was characterized by *pulchritudo* (*mundus muliebris*), seduction, and matrimony with potential offspring. The *virtus*, or courage, is comparable to the one we know from the elogium of Scipio Barbatus, where it appears together with *forma* (*quoius forma virtutei parisuma fuit*). This clearly recalls the old Greek idea of *kalos k'agathos*.

*Mika Kajava*

CARMELA BONANNO: *I sarcofagi fittili della Sicilia*. Studia archaeologica 91. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 1998. 411 p.; ill. ISBN 88-7062-993-7. ITL 400.000.

With this systematic study of all the known fictile sarcophagi known to be preserved in museums and private collections in Sicily and Lipari, it is possible for the first time to have a picture of the diffusion of this type in the Sicilian graveyards from archaic Greek times through the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Bonanno also studies the areas in mainland Greece and Asia Minor where fictile sarcophagi are attested so as to discuss the introduction into Sicily of the habit of burying people in that particular way. What is interesting is that the eastern findings of fictile sarcophagi would mostly seem to come from northern Greece, Rhodes, and some localities in Asia Minor (pp. 249 ff.). The major conclusion is that the use of fictile sarcophagi was imported to Sicily by the Greek colonists. Though the production of sarcophagi varied locally, and new techniques and ways of decoration were introduced, the fact remains that the genre itself was oriental. After the Catalogue of 74 pieces, Bonanno discusses the typology, chronology and style of the sarcophagi, and presents important observations on some technical questions. In an appendix T. Mannoni provides a mineralogical study of the clay used for the sarcophagi.

*Mika Kajava*

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The significance of this volume, which contains the papers delivered at the seventh Architektur-Referat Colloquium, lies in what was defined as the general approach to the theme: not only should architectural monuments be studied as individual objects, but also as testimonies to (complex) relationships between city and countryside. The indisputable fact