

siderable amounts of information, some of which is unpublished. As a result, Mertens' vast personal knowledge blends with that of his colleagues and numerous local archaeologists.

As a starting point for the book a very useful introduction sheds light on the situation in the motherland as well as in the new territories. The second chapter deals with the founding of the colonies, the third with the first peripteral temples in stone and the established urban plans of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. Another chapter is about the coming of the Ionic order and local impulses, and then the large flourishing cities of the fifth century both in Sicily and south Italy are treated. One chapter is dedicated to the cities affected by Hippodamean ideas and the apex of classical architecture. The last chapter is about the tension created both by the Carthaginians, the rise of Syracuse and the Italic tribes. The book ends in the period when the temples lost their value as monuments of identity and were replaced by theatres and other pieces of architecture, which rather reflects personal interests, such as private dwellings and funerary monuments.

The disposition is explicit; the text is supported by a vocabulary that includes both familiar terms and more rare ones. The extensive bibliography is followed by a useful index of both place names and their respective monuments.

The exquisite illustrations are present on almost every page – only the syntheses are without them – in both black and white and colour. The many drawings and plans were especially made for this book. There are both detailed and general pictures, and even the smallest ones are of high quality. The inner covers are equipped with simple and good maps of Sicily and South Italy with rivers, cities and contours clearly marked.

In 1990, R. J. A. Wilson published his overview of the Roman province of Sicily. Mertens' magnum opus is about the archaic and classical periods. On purpose he leaves out the hinterlands of the cities, the knowledge of which is quickly expanding and object of many changing theories. While digesting the enjoyable and pleasant text of the current book, one feels a growing urge to know about the late classical and Hellenistic Magna Graecia and Sicily.

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*La mosaïque gréco-romaine IX, voll. 1–2. Actes du IX<sup>e</sup> Colloque international pour l'étude de la mosaïque antique (Rome, 5–10 novembre 2001),* édités par HÉLÈNE MORLIER avec la collaboration de CHRISTOPHE BAILLY – DOMINIQUE JANNETEAU – MICHÈLE TAHRI. Collection de l'École française de Rome 352. École française de Rome, Rome 2005. ISBN 2-7283-0690-7 (éd. complète). XXXV, 1398 pp., ill. EUR 190.

I due volumi, pesantissimi – anche in termini di valore e autorità –, raccolgono gli Atti del IX Colloquio internazionale per lo studio del mosaico antico e medievale (l'ultimo colloquio, l'undicesimo a partire dal 1963, è stato organizzato a Bursa nel 2009). I numerosi contributi sono ricchissimi di materiali e discussioni interessanti. Sono presenti, qua e là, anche alcune iscrizioni musive che forse meritavano un trattamento proprio speciale, preferibilmente nella sezione "La mosaïque, document d'histoire". Tra i tanti testi segnalo il primo, interessantissimo, sul famoso mosaico nilotico di Praeneste, firmato da Antero Tammisto. Peccato, però, che l'autore del bell'articolo non abbia potuto prendere in considerazione il recente e animato

dibattito, tutt'ora in atto, sull'autenticità del cd. papiro di Artemidoro (chi scrive è propenso a ritenere che probabilmente si tratta di un documento falso).

Mika Kajava

RABUN TAYLOR: *The Moral Mirror of Roman Art*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2008. ISBN 978-0-521-86612-5. XIII, 274 pp. GBP 52, USD 97.99.

Mirrors are magnetic, as stated by Rabun Taylor; they attract the gaze in their reflected world full of paradoxes, being at once Self and the Other, true and deceptive, beneficial and baneful, surface and depth, active and passive. Such a complex cultural construct, the mirror image in antiquity has attracted and continues to attract persistent scholarly attention. Comprehensive catalogues of the phenomenon of the reflected image in Roman art were compiled already in 1940 by Lilian Dreger and in 1990 by Lilian Balensiefen, and they still serve as a base for the present study. The volume also participates actively in the ongoing discussion on the themes with such scholars as Shadi Bartsch, Nancy De Grummond, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroix, Willard McCarty and Jean-Pierre Vernant. The author, assistant professor in the Department of Classics at the University of Texas, Austin, has earlier dedicated volumes to different aspects of Roman construction, in particular water distribution and control. In this interdisciplinary study too, water is strongly present, but this time as a surface for reflection, with profound cultural meanings embedded. The main emphasis, as suggested by the title of the volume, is on Roman art, particularly on Campanian wall paintings of the Imperial era, although the images discussed range from Attic and Italic red-figure vases to late antique mosaics and reliefs. The meanings of mirrors and reflections in ancient written sources are also explored throughout the volume.

Taylor begins by proposing (p. 1) his initial dilemma: why is reflection in ancient art almost never casual? The author observes how reflection was very rarely used as a simple naturalistic prop, suggesting that it was too important a discursive tool for casual decorative use; the metaphorical potency of reflection would be safeguarded by reserving its use for special genres of myths. According to Taylor's initial proposition, the mirror is not an artifact of everyday use, but a coded device, first and foremost the "moral mirror", a teacher, *praeceptor*. Reflection, in fact, rather than the mirror, should be the key word of the volume, as physical mirrors constitute a minority of the material under examination, the main part being reflections on water, shields, or metal bowls.

This erudite and eminently readable quest of the author after moral, religious, ritual and social meanings intertwined with the reflected figure is divided, besides a general introduction, into five main chapters, each concentrated on a cycle of myths with the mirror image in a crucial role, and a sixth chapter of conclusions. A separate appendix on Medusa and the Evil Eye, a bibliography and an index are included as well. The Introduction (pp. 1–18) sums up previous research on the subject, concisely presenting the ancient mirrors as artifacts and giving five "mnemonic associations" to characterize the active Roman mirror image, the subject of his study: it is magic, metamorphic (i.e., assisting personal inner or outer transformation), metaphorical, magnetic (i.e., a captivating force), and moral.

The first chapter, The Teaching Mirror (pp. 19–55), examines the various roles of reflec-