

TONIO HÖLSCHER WITH BARBARA BORG, HEIDE FRIELINGHAUS, DANIEL GRAEPLER, SUSANNE MUTH, WOLF-DIETRICH NIEMEIER & MONIKA TRÜMPER. *Klassische Archäologie: Grundwissen*. 360 pages, 180 figures, 3 tables. 2002. Darmstadt: Theiss; 3-8062-1653-3 hardback £39.90.

This book originated as a substantial lecture handout for students new to Classical archaeology at the University of Heidelberg. It is thanks to ever increasing demand for the manuscript from students and lecturers, also from other German universities, that we now hold this excellent introductory textbook in our hands. With contributions from his colleagues, this is a true 'Heidelberg production' and strongly reflects the research focus of Tonio Hölscher. However, it is much more than a mere synthesis of current research; it is a strong political statement about the direction German archaeology should take both in structure and in research foci.

Four objectives are central to this book. Localising Classical archaeology and its history within the broader subject area of humanities in Germany is the aim of Chapters 1-3. Background information on the political, social and cultural history, historiography and (art) historical phases form the content of Chapters 4-6. Chapters 7-9 introduce definitions of key terms, the methodology applied, and current theories. Main areas and key themes are presented in subsequent chapters (10-25). For the most part, Chapters 10-25 are organised according to themes (towns, sanctuaries, graves, architecture, sculpture, Roman sarcophagi, painting, mosaics, ceramics, gods, myths, dress, topography). In most cases, each chapter is further subdivided into a Greek and a Roman part, each structured according to chronology. The chapter on the Aegean Bronze Age stands out clearly from the thematic structure, highlighting the ambiguous nature

of Aegean prehistory as a strand of Classical archaeology. While lamenting the fact that Aegean archaeology is not properly incorporated into Classical archaeology, Hölscher nevertheless upholds this status quo by opting for a separate chapter and neglecting Minoan or Mycenaean remains in his thematic chapters.

The chosen structure and themes reflect the political agenda of this book. Firstly, the study of Classical archaeology at German universities should be more rigorously structured to force students to complete their studies at a faster pace, and teaching should be updated to take account of the latest research and teaching methods. Secondly, the subject of Classical archaeology should draw more heavily on other related disciplines in order to illuminate the multiple dimensions of past societies. With regard to research, Hölscher sees scope for promising topics in the following areas: the phenomenon of sanctuaries, interpretations of funerary rituals, the function of sculpture, the context of portraits, the ideological messages conveyed through Roman state reliefs, and the contextualisation of mosaics. This book is a further step towards the implementation of that agenda. In conjunction with Borbein *et al.* (2000), Hölscher has laid out the theoretical, material and methodological foundations of Classical archaeology in Germany and has provided colleagues with a framework against which to structure their teaching. His impact on Heidelberg has been substantial: new introductory courses, examination procedures and formalised student guidance have already been introduced. With regard to his research agenda, his book demonstrates that scholars have already begun to work along the lines indicated and it is hoped that future generations will continue these lines as well as opening up new worthwhile areas.

When designing concise but demanding introductory textbooks, authors have to compromise in terms of length, focus, content and presentation. This is also the case here. Given Hölscher's research focus, it should come as no surprise to find that the chapters on (Roman) sculpture, reliefs and portraits take up almost as much space as all other themes together (and contain 60 per cent of all figures). As a result, these chapters are much more detailed and stimulating in their discussion of interpretation, methodology and research foci. Other topics, such as towns, sanctuaries, graves, painting, and myths are treated more summarily – providing detailed accounts of the status quo of research with less attention to interpretation. The sections on ceramics and architecture are almost exclusively descriptive and suffer from lack of theoretical and methodological debate. Compromises also had to be made with regard to figures. While this book includes a large number of photos, drawings and plans, frequently the reader is referred to other literature (especially 'picture books'). This strong reliance on other books may make this less of a useful reference aid – undermining Hölscher's stated aim, to target both new students and the general audience by presenting key material, a synthesis of current research to enhance the knowledge to be gained through lectures, and visits to museums, exhibitions and excavations as well as general reading.

Written in German, this book will not be used by many undergraduates outside Germany. This is very unfortunate, as the book is unrivalled in its scope, clear definitions, methodological outline and presentation. English or American introductory textbooks vary in many ways; they rarely cover both the Greek and Roman periods and, rather than structured by theme, they are frequently specific to a material (*e.g.*, sculpture, ceramics). Those that are more inclusive focus on images,

not interpretation or methodology. Boardman (1993) is the closest English rival to Hölscher's excellent text. This too encompasses both Greek and Roman art and is divided into chronological periods, each section subdivided into material classes or broader themes, and each picture accompanied by descriptions and interpretation of a depth comparable to a museum's guide. It is my hope that the reviewed book will be translated into English, as it provides a wide-ranging and engaging introduction to the material, methodology and interpretations relevant to Classical archaeology – a combination uncommon in English textbooks.

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References

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PENELOPE Z. DRANSART. *Earth, water, fleece and fabric: an ethnography and archaeology of Andean camelid herding*. xvii+308 pages, 56 figures, 13 tables, 49 b&w photographs. 2002. London: Routledge; 0-415-27959-3 hardback £60.

Dransart combines an ethnography of fleece and fabric production with an analysis of prehistoric wool fabrics from northern Chile. She provides a valuable description of traditional Aymara life, and relates it to what we can know about wool production and processing in the past. For these reasons, this book is a must-read for all Andeanists (ethnographers and archaeologists). Unfortunately, the book suffers from a confused epistemological basis and limited citations of relevant literature.