

# Reviews of Books

N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia*; Vol. I, *Historical Geography and Prehistory*, Oxford Clarendon Press, Maps 23, Figs. 20, pp. 469.

The first part of this volume is concerned with laying the foundations of a historical geography of Macedonia. The information is culled from the classical literature and from the reports of early travellers and from the author's extensive personal acquaintance with the area. Partly because of the inadequacies of the data the result is uneven. It is odd for example that in spite of abundant evidence to the contrary, anyone who has seen the lake of Ioannina should believe that it was not in existence in Classical or Hellenistic times (its maximum extent has been well dated to *circa* 17,000 years ago), and that the erosion and degradation of the drier areas should not be seen in perspective as a natural phenomenon, a process which has been only marginally affected by the human factor. But in general the picture presented is a confusing one of political entities related at times to economic entities which are related loosely to physiographic entities in no particular order and with no particular theme.

However, in spite of this, and probably due to the author's personal experience of the area, a theme can be perceived and what might be regarded as a series of apparent historical accidents take shape and form. Macedonia has a great variety of powerful environmental factors which have greatly influenced its peoples throughout history and prehistory, and many of their activities can be seen as minor variations upon this theme, while others persist throughout, given the technology of the time, as unavoidable responses to physiographic factors. It is a significant contribution when the author notes that in one respect Macedonia was more closely connected with Albania, Thessaly and Epirus in the past when pastoral life was more important than it is today, and the instance is given of massive movements of sheep and transhumants between Prilep and Thessaly. But it is not developed.

The second and greater part bears little relationship to the first. The first is to serve only as a backcloth against which the human play is to be enacted. The traditional palaeoethnographic approach whereby artefactual styles are used to form a basis for the hypothetical determination of races, peoples and tribes is used. By this means, unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, and as the author is aware there often is, movements and changes of artefacts are taken to indicate movements of peoples. In consequence this interpretation of the data leads to invasion after invasion and indeed so much is this so that one may wonder if the detection of invasions may not be a primary purpose of the volume. It is however worth noting that palaeoethnography no longer remains unchallenged as the principal concern of prehistorians and the culture people hypothesis now seems of dubious validity in the light of wider and more searching considerations. Many supposed «invasions» in prehistory have come to be regarded as at the best slender hypotheses and some have been abandoned.

The author's compilation of the data is comprehensive. It is unfortunate that much Palaeolithic evidence has come to light since this book was written and that this evidence indicates that as early as the Old Stone Age, there existed a network of communications arising out of the distribution of resources, which preceded and equalled the subsequent routes of the nomadic pastoralists; even those of the present day. If this had been known it might have given the key to a better method of considering the dispersion of artefactual styles in Macedonia. For example if transhumants passed from Prilep to Thessaly in historic times, may this not have been a better explanation of pottery connections between these two areas, than an invasion hypothesis? And of course many other pottery dispersions need to be considered

in a similar way. Nor will many archaeologists feel at ease with the form of imaginative historical narrative which recounts that the Neolithic peoples of Thessaly were expelled, exterminated or absorbed by new peoples from Anatolia. It makes good reading, the reviewer is not competent to state whether or not it is good history, but it is not now good archaeology.

Professor Hammond's scholarly book is of great value to historians and pre-historians alike in its careful compilation of data and in its logical interpretations. But with his knowledge and his experience a rare opportunity has been missed, to consider the substance of the human record in Macedonia rather than the froth of the multitudinous variables of pre-history and history.

E. S. HIGGS

Bernard Ashmole, *Architect and Sculptor in Classical Greece*, Phaidon, London 1972, pp. 218 + Figs. 220.

In this volume Professor Bernard Ashmole has brought together six lectures «on the major Greek monuments of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.», given at the New York Institute of Fine Arts upon the invitation of Mr & Mrs Charles Wrightsman.

As he himself observes at the beginning of his first lecture (which has become the first chapter of his book), it seems at first «impossible to say anything new on subjects which have already been so much and often so admirably discussed». Nevertheless he has at his disposal a long and intimate acquaintance with Greek plastic arts; the questions he asks are straightforward but soundly chosen —the fruit, I believe, of British Empiricism invigorated by the sap of logical positivism, a recent grafting on an ever-productive tree; in his lectures (and in the corresponding chapters of the book) he has combined these factors with sensitivity to achieve an admirably lucid account of the most relevant problems posed by the sculptures of three monuments, each of which marks a new stage in fifth- and fourth-century BC architecture.

The first three chapters have the general title, «The Temple of Zeus at Olympia»; of these, the first bears the subtitle, «The Project and its Fulfilment». In this first chapter the author poses a few simple questions that, very often, occur to all of us but which we do not regard as sufficiently important to warrant a fully worked out answer. Why, for example, did the Elians decide to build a temple to Zeus? (p. 2) Exactly what was it that they wanted to construct? From what materials would the temple be built? How much would it cost? Where would they find the money? Who would be the architect and how would he organize the job? What work-schedule would be followed? (He) proceeds along these lines to an account of these practical matters, a knowledge of which is pre-supposed as the secure basis of a correct evaluation of the work.

He discusses, for example, the problems of the cost of the stone and its transport, matters known only to the experts who, however, often forget to *discuss* them when discussing and confronting the work of art. In this way he reaches the conclusion that the artist who carved the sculptures must have worked for a lengthy period on Paros, where the marble blocks were quarried and given their first rough dressing. He concludes further on with a highly significant verdict: «I should guess that there was not a single man in the western Peloponnese who could carve a life-size statue in marble» (p. 20). Here he rejects the theory that attributed the pediment sculptures and the metopes to a local workshop as a means of getting around the difficulties provoked by their stylistic individuality. Many historians of