

N. K. SANDERS, *Prehistoric Art in Europe*, second editions, 1985, Penguin Books, in "The Pelican History of Art" series, 508 pages and 387 illustrations.

A synthesis of prehistoric art in Europe covering all the periods (to the first century B.C.) and the whole continent is, no doubt, a daring undertaking, and this is the reason why such syntheses are extremely rare. On the other hand, the reviewer who would wish to dwell on all the subjects treated in such a survey, and on all the interpretations provided by its author, is faced with a difficult task, because it is practically impossible to consider them all in the few pages allotted to a review. That is why we see ourselves compelled to choose a few general questions and to make a few remarks on how the prehistoric art of Romania is reflected in this volume.

First of all we must say that there is very little difference between this second edition and the first one, published in 1968, although the seventeen years separating them saw important discoveries and contributions which deserve to be taken into account. The division of the material into chapters and sections is almost identical; only here and there was a paragraph modified, or a short new paragraph added. If we are not mistaken, the only really new section is the one that closes Chapter 4 and is entitled *Chalcolithic Varna. Copper and Gold* (pp. 217–218).

The author does not say — either here or in the first edition — why she was concerned until about 8000 B.C. with "the whole of Europe" after which — i.e. after the beginning of the Neolithic — she took "leave of peninsular Greece and the Greek islands", and during the last millennium B.C. she left "Italy to the Etruscans and Greek colonists", and "Spain to Carthaginians and Iberians". If it was natural for her not to be concerned with Greek and Carthaginian colonies, it does not seem normal to us that the entire Italian Bronze Age (except the rock engravings at Val Camonica) and Iron Age should be missing from the book. The Italian Peninsula is known to have produced valuable art, even if we leave out the Etruscans. On the other hand, one can only speak of Etruscans, Carthaginians and Greeks in Italy from the second quarter of the first millennium B.C.: the preceding centuries and all the preceding millennia cannot be omitted from a survey of the prehistoric art of Europe. One is equally puzzled by the exclusion of peninsular Greece and the Greek islands, since the prehistory of these regions is part and parcel of the prehistory of Europe. These omissions may be due to the fact that Penguin Books published, in the same series, volumes on prehistoric Greek art and on Etruscan art, but, if so, the author might have said it.

Nor can we be satisfied that "the eastern boundary (of Europe) through Russia is not well defined". The author includes "the Palaeolithic of the Ukraine and the 'Neolithic' rock-engravings of the far north", yet she is not concerned with "the copper-working and bronze-using people of the Caucasus" and "with Scythians and their relatives" except briefly "when they impinge on Central Europe". Her reasons for these omissions (which, we think, are not justified), i.e. that having to cover a time-span of some 30,000 years, "fair treatment and justice to all are impossible", and that "to refer to all the art even of the European Bronze Age would mean a mere cataloguing of names", do not seem good enough to us. The very title of the book demanded a survey of *all* parts of

Europe in *all* the periods; instead of describing various objects, sometimes minutely, she might have summed up the characteristic traits of art in the various countries or regions of our continent and in the various periods.

Given the year when this new edition was published, it is surprising to see that the rock paintings in the cave at Cuculati (northern Transylvania), reported as early as 1970, are not even mentioned.

As regards the beginning of the Neolithic in Europe, it is currently placed in the eighth, not in the sixth, millennium B.C. on the basis of the uncalibrated Carbon 14 dates from Nea Nicomedia. Furthermore, if we know for sure that the true potter's wheel was introduced in Europe as late as the sixth century B.C., we also know now that the Cucuteni potters of the fourth and third millennia B.C. used a footed round table to mould their ware on. The supposition that "the ovens in the earliest houses of South-East Europe were probably used to bake the finer pots" does not resist scrutiny, because these indoor ovens were modest in size, and also because the baking of pots requires temperatures over 700–800°C and both the roof and walls of houses would have caught fire at such temperatures. Also in connection with ovens, one cannot say that "farther north and west / that is, north of the Balkans / ... ovens are not found", for, besides hearths, ovens have been found in many houses, not to speak of large outdoor kilns designed for firing pottery.

The proto-Sesklo group of Yugoslavia and Romania (= Gura Baciului—Circea) is not mentioned among the earliest cultural groups of South-East Europe.

Neolithic and Chalcolithic tells are known not only south of Rhodope and the Pindus, but north of the Danube as well.

As for the view that "from the middle of the fifth millennium for over a thousand years, Eastern Europe was the centre of an extraordinary development in the potter's art and in the modelling of free-standing figures" and that before there had only been "some rather tentative beginnings", is unfounded, for the pottery of South-East Europe already had outstanding qualities in the Early Neolithic.

Figurines of the Starčevo culture (Yugoslavia) and of the Criș or Körös culture are compared, which implies that they are regarded as two distinct cultures, even if the author does not say this expressly. And we cannot agree with her that the "persons" represented by Vinča statuettes suggest a *genius loci* rather than a god, let alone that animal figurines are toys! Also, we cannot agree that some (if not all) heads are real portraits, even though she may see one "grinning over a beer-mug".

In view of the fact that the Gumelnița marble figurines from Romania and Bulgaria have been dated, no connection can be established today with the Cycladic figurines from the Aegean, which are much later.

And we cannot understand why the note on the thinker from Tîrpești refers to a paper of Makkay and not to our works!

The seated woman found near Novi Bečej (Voivodina, not Serbia) holding a bowl on her knees "as though profering

milk or water" is compared with "the Mesopotamian goddess with the flowing vase", while the anthropomorphic pot from Gabarevo (Bulgaria) is "perhaps an agricultural fertility spirit with ... the conventional phallic gesture like the colossal Egyptian figures of Min".

The settlement at Kodjadermen is *not* in the valley of the Maritsa, but north of the Balkans.

Although the houses with painted walls from Bulgaria are mentioned, the shrine with similar walls from the late Boian level at Căscioarele is not, and the shrine model from the Gumelnița A level at the same site is regarded merely as a "screen" with "façades of four buildings", though the four buildings are fully modelled.

We do not know wherefrom the author took her information that only a very small amount of sherds was found in the earliest Neolithic settlements of South-East Europe, and that the ware was too badly broken to give an idea of the form of pots, especially as she reproduces whole Starčevo and Karanovo II vessels from the early Neolithic. And it is regrettable that a Romanian researcher's unfounded opinion that the Bug-Dniester culture influenced the early Neolithic pottery of Romania was accredited in the book. A division of the decoration into metopes is not the rule in phase B of the Cucuteni culture, let alone in phase A-B, and the design in illustration 192B (typical of phase A-B) cannot be considered to have lapsed "into a chaos of loops and squiggles" for it is derived from the running spiral in the other section of the same vessel. We shall not dwell here on the many aesthetic and philosophical speculations on the shape of pots, such as "the most constantly pleasing pots are those which stand somewhere between the geometrical beauty of an egg and the rococo idiosyncrasies of a pineapple" (p. 203), *a.o.* Although we do not believe that one may speak of continuity from the Palaeolithic spirals of southern Russia to the designs of the Neolithic potters of South-East Europe, we agree that the best specimens of painted Cucuteni ware have no match anywhere in Europe. As for the likeness between the human and animal figures on some Cucuteni vessels and those on fourth-millennium pots from Susa and Sialk, we recall that it was pointed out by Vladimir Dumitrescu more than fifty years ago.

The author shares the opinion that much potting was done by women and that "it is fair to say that the housewife made her own pottery" (p. 216), but the specialized potters of Crete in the 1960s, mentioned by the author herself, prove that such specialists must have existed in the Neolithic and Chalcolithic too, for otherwise the identity of vessels discovered hundreds of kilometres from one another could not be accounted for. As far as the modelling of clay figures is concerned, the author has to admit specialization, on account of the very large number of specimens discovered in various settlements. However, soon afterwards she says that the many activities of men and women did not allow for specialization in their society, and then again she suggests the appearance of "part-time specialists" in flint-mining and stone-axe making (why not in making other stone, mainly flint, tools and weapons?).

We shall not offer an opinion on the author's speculations on religious practices and especially on her suggestion that "every house-holder performed some priestly offices" (p. 217), but we will point out that "the number of household shrines" does not suggest this, for it is very small. On the other hand, we think that the author is right in underlying the great difference between the grave-goods from Varna and in assigning the richest ones to "chieftains", which implies some social stratification, even though she does not clearly say this.

Further on, after the sections devoted to other parts of Europe, the section entitled "Gods and Emblems" contains the strange assumption that "any male figure /is/ a fertility god" (p. 216), although it is common knowledge that female figures are considered representations of the mother-goddess of fertility, while the male ones are only the, obviously necessary, male counterpart. And Mrs Sanders may not agree that the worship of the Neolithic and Chalcolithic mother-goddess was replaced in the Bronze Age by an entirely new cult — the

Ouranian cult of the Sun — but archaeological discoveries point definitely to this direction.

Chapter six, devoted to Bronze Age art between 2000 and 1200 B.C., begins by saying that, notwithstanding the copper and gold objects, in the Chalcolithic "the pattern of life remained that of the 'Neolithic' farming community" (p. 249). We must add, however, that maternal descent had certainly been replaced by paternal descent, and the tribes or communities were ruled by chieftains, which makes all the difference.

We will not comment on the statement that "the noble weapons of illustrations 260 and 261 /two bronze swords from Denmark, and one from Hungary, the latter of the Aps type/ had their names and were sung by the minstrels of the time". Furthermore, the suggestion that "there was from the start... a difference in the status of the metal-worker in Europe and in the Near East", based on the situation in "primitive societies today", is contradicted by the fact, pointed out by the author herself, that nothing is known about the social status of the first smiths in Mesopotamia, whereas later, in the complex civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia, it appears that they were of little account... (p. 256).

The "sort of heroic society" found "by the mid-second millennium within the Carpathian ring, and on the Hungarian plain" existed south and east of the Carpathians as well, in the other parts of present-day Romania. One of the most relevant examples is the Monteoru culture with its fortified settlements, which actually contradicts also the assumption that "only in the Carpathian ring, on the Hungarian plain, and in a few favoured sites round the Mediterranean did men live in security behind walls..." (p. 260), precisely because at Sărata Monteoru, for example, stone fortifications were found, while other settlements were protected by deep ditches.

Pointing out the rich decoration of the Gîrla Mare-Cirna pottery in what she suggests could be called the "embroidered style", the author says that "one or two rather complicated motifs... are repeated so often that they should rank perhaps as emblems like the 'Cappadocian symbol' or Hittite 'Royal Sign'" (p. 263—264), a connection which does not seem justified, for these motifs are found on all types of pots and, what is more, they are not identical (according to the author too). And the identity of the pattern on a Sighișoara—Wietenberg shallow dish with second-millennium seals from Alişar and Beycesultan in Anatolia (Fig. 244) cannot be "repeating an ancient /Neolithic/ dependence" (even though some similarities exist between burnt clay seals from Neolithic South-East Europe and from Anatolia), for there are no Anatolian elements in the Sighișoara—Wietenberg culture. Hence we cannot agree that "the use of similar motifs in Romania... in Hungary, and in Hittite Anatolia certainly looks like contact" (p. 265). Asian seals are inexistent north of Rhodope not because they were "lost", but simply because they did not get farther north.

The author indicates the great similarity between the spiral decoration of a Wietenberg hearth and the "later Mycenaean style" yet denies that the geometric spirals used by Wietenberg potters may be "tied to any one source" on the ground that they are "too common". But the recurrence of the spiral and its flourishing in Bronze Age pottery north of the Danube can only be the result of contact — documented also by other finds (Mycenaean rapiers, *a.o.*) — with the Mycenaean world. That is why we do not think that the source of Bronze Age spirals is still mysterious.

Cirna figurines were not "often" broken before they were buried in graves, for most of them were found intact; more surprising, however, is the description of their surface as being "covered with a sort of handwriting that is both decorative and communicates information through particular designs and through the repetition of motifs like those on the pots and on some metal-work" (p. 267). The very fact that these motifs were used to decorate pottery, metal-work, and figurines proves that they cannot be regarded as handwriting!

Speaking about the representation of the wheel — together with the water-bird and the god (the statuette from Duplajaja) — the author agrees now that "the conception of

the sun is probably not far distant" (p. 269). As regards the 'M', or 'W', motif, considered a symbol, she says that "whatever its meaning, it must have stood for some great power, or it could be that the very contrary is the case, . . . that the symbols are stripped of ancient powers and can be safely exploited for decorative ends". The latter explanation is the only valid one.

Although metal-working within the Carpathian ring, in Transylvania, is extensively treated, none of the gold hoards found there is even mentioned or illustrated, and nothing is said about the gold, and bronze, vessels, the most splendid of which is the pot from Biia.

In Chapter 7 ("Ferment and New Beginnings: 1200–500 B.C.", p. 293 ff.), "the tribal groups later known as Illyrians, Celts, and Germans" are mentioned, whereas the Thracians and the Getae are omitted; why? Given the changes in bronze-working and decorating techniques, the author believes that they did not evolve independently in Central Europe, but were due to influences from the Aegean and the Levant. And wondering what happened then to the Transylvanian and Carpathian workshop style and its masters, she surmises that some at least migrated and found employment on the Baltic (p. 295), among the wealthy and warlike tribes in that region, in the thirteenth and first half of the twelfth century, whereas other craftsmen may have moved west into Switzerland and beyond in the twelfth century. We wonder why the author explains the presence of bronze artefacts in the Transylvanian–Slovak–Hungarian style on the Baltic and in Switzerland through the migration of craftsmen – of which there is no evidence whatever – and does not attribute it to trade, linked, in part at least, also to the well-known amber-way on which this resin reached South-East Europe?

Proceeding to the Iron Age ("Iron and Orientalizing", p. 316 ff.), the author points out rightly that iron came to Europe from Cyprus, Greece and Anatolia, the earliest iron objects found in Greece dating from the end of the eleventh century B.C. (there are, however, authors who maintain that iron metallurgy developed in Greece as late as the eighth century B.C.) and those in Italy from the end of the ninth century. Nevertheless we do not think that by the end of the Hallstatt every village may have had its workshop (p. 317). Orientalizing models were brought to Western Europe by Phoenician and Greek colonists, while "Eastern Europe was open to an independent orientaling current which was linked, . . . to certain people whom the Greeks called Cimmericians, the Assyrians Gimmirai, and the Hebrews Gomer". The opinion commonly held now denies that iron was introduced in Romania, for example, by the Cimmericians, because some iron objects are much earlier than the legendary invasion of those people. Although many researchers today do not believe that the Scythians crossed the Dniester in large numbers and settled

permanently west of that river, we must say again that Scythian art should not have been left out from a book on pre- and protohistoric art in Europe.

The chapter on the Hallstatt period omits also the pottery produced by the Basarabi and Ferigete cultures of Romania, while the chapter on Celtic art (p. 341 ff., illustrations 341–401) does not even mention the splendid helmet from Ciunesti. Similarly, although the Thracio-Getic art from the fifth-third centuries B.C. is described very briefly and illustrated only by four objects (three from Bulgaria – including a plaque from Lelnița and a greave from Vratisa – and the helmet from Poiana Coșofenești), almost all the Romanian studies are missing from the notes. About this art the author says: "In the late sixth century, and still more in the fifth, a new school of decorative metal-working in Romania and Bulgaria began to turn out much ornamental gold-, silver-, and bronze-work, most of it attempting to imitate motifs from Greek Black Sea colonies and from oriental sources. The connection of this rather naïve style, which combines barbaric grandeur with provincial clumsiness, is not with Achaemenid metropolitan workshops, but through that common substratum of loosely related societies which was spread across Anatolia to north-east Persia, which accounts for similarities with much earlier and more advanced work in the Elburz (Marlik and Amlash). It is essentially a popular art, bypassing the great centres, both Greek and oriental" (pp. 390–391). There follows the description of the illustrated objects, the conclusion being that "the Thracian or Thracio-Getic style had great powers of survival, outlasting the impact of Greeks and Persians. It was still being produced in the first century A.D. but probably . . . not in the Balkans at all, but in Denmark" (p. 393). To document this conclusion, the author describes the "cauldron from Gundestrup" where she sees Celtic elements, a neoclassical element, and a Nordic one. The object is attributed to contact of the Celts with life in the Balkans, after which the former had to return to their Central European homeland and "refugee metal-work" thus found its way to the North. Petre Alexandrescu's research of the Thracian hoards found north of the Balkans might have been useful to the author, for he defined the time and area of that group of finds, and the Scythian, Greek and Persian influences on that art.

No reference is made to the Geto-Dacian silver-work prior to the Roman occupation, and the Dacian shrines of Romania are not even mentioned.

We conclude this rather long review by expressing the hope that, in a future third edition, the author will take into account our remarks, at least as far as prehistoric art in Romania is concerned.

Silvia Marinescu-Bilcu

*Atti del Convegno „La Valpolicella nell'età romana”, Centro di Documentazione per la Storia della Valpolicella, S. Pietro Incariano, 27/11/1982, 106 S..*

Es ist in Italien schon zu einer Tradition geworden, verschiedene *convegni, settimane di studi* usw. zu veranstalten, die den Fragen eines geringen Gebietes gewidmet werden. Da die Beiträge in kurzer Zeit publiziert werden, stellt man sofort der wissenschaftlichen Welt wertvolle Abhandlungen zur Verfügung, die den Zweck verfolgen (und erreichen), ein kleines geographisch und historisch umschriebenes Gebiet einer intensiven Untersuchung zu unterziehen. Hierzu gehört auch der vorliegende Band, auf den wir uns im folgenden die Aufmerksamkeit lenken werden.

Die Beiträge werden von einem Vorwort von Prof. Franco Sartori eingeleitet, der zusammenfassend den Inhalt der einzelnen "in un'atmosfera amicale e nel segno di un'ospitalità generosa, alla presenza di non pochi studiosi [. . .] e di molti studenti" gehaltenen Vorträge darlegt. Als allgemeine historische Einleitung darf der zusammenfassende Aufsatz von Bianca Maria Scarfi, *Problemi emergenti dell'archeologia*

*romana nel Veneto* (S. 11–14) betrachtet werden, der an erster Stelle auf die Fragen antworten möchte, ob „si può affermare che esiste una romanità veneta, cioè con caratteristiche peculiari della regione" und wenn ja, ob diese letzteren auf örtliche Wurzeln oder auf fremde Einflüsse zurückzuführen sind. Wenn die Antwort auf die erste Frage positiv ist, so daß man überzeugenderweise den Begriff von *romanità veneta* vorschlägt, bedarf die Frage nach den südlichen Einflüssen einer näheren Untersuchung archäologischer Natur. Demnach bleibt vorläufig auch das Problem ungelöst, ob die äußeren Einflüsse direkt oder durch Roms Vermittlung gewirkt haben (S. 14).

Die darauffolgenden Aufsätze mag man in zwei Gruppen einteilen: Epigraphik und Archäologie. Zu den epigraphischen Forschungen ist vor allem die Einheit der Untersuchungen zu bemerken: es geht um die bessere Kenntnis der administrativen Struktur, der Personennamen und des religiösen Lebens des *pagus Arusnatum*. Zunächst macht Lanfranco