

Piero Bigongiari

GREECE IN ITALY, OR A GREAT SILENCE (Sections I-IX)

Translated by Theodore Ell

I – *Towards Barletta*¹¹

Little walls nibbled at by time and overhead the great Baroque skies of the Tavoliere.¹² Cerignola, an encampment dominated by a pointed dome. Long wave landscape, with light olive trees mingling among cypresses. The rain showers on the horizon recall with the columns of light through the gloom the appearance of God to Saul on the road to Damascus. The cypresses live among the olive trees when these are light, as in Tuscany: they are absent when the olive trees are dark, as on the Tyrrhenian slope of southern Italy, as in Calabria. Already here one senses the Orient, and immediately the plain unleashes fantasy, in the colours of the houses and in the sky which rests like a dome all around the flat horizon, so that at once the mind is lightened, uplifted by the sky's games, when man seeks on the horizon something to limit or liberate himself. The cathedral of Trani, standing on the shore, beside the iron-grey sea, and high above there are the crows with their compact and slow flying, cawing now and then, waiting for the ancient crusades. Meeting us as we head for the South, on fields of red earth, we find great olive trees contorted, rickety, twisted like Bernini's columns of the canopy of St Peter's. The Salento¹³ has an air both tragic and content, with this scrub of olive trees along centuries-old paths: true smoke clouds after an explosion; and it seems for a moment you are deaf. In some the red earth climbs the gnarled trunks as though to parallel, with its indistinct centuries of fertility, the rising from the abysses of time of that colour which is now becoming lighter, but which is only ever a reflection of the original flame.

III – *Metapontum*

Today to the west of Taranto a low, desolate land covers the memory of the ancient fortunes of Metapontum. The Achean city began, like its rival Tarantum, towards the middle of the Eighth Century B.C., between the Basento and the Bràdano.¹⁴ Around these parts was perhaps the edge of the legendary Italy, where today a few people roam with the signs still in their flesh of a malaria vanquished but not destroyed. We arrive there in the evening, in a magical silence. Wheat has covered everything. But these are supernatural fields. The wind that rustles the wheat and wrests a desolate bleating from the sheep, lets out a never-ending lament to which nobody listens. And darkly one understands why. Underground, all around here, without even knowing its size, there is an immense ancient city. Here Pythagoras came for refuge and the metempsychosis that he preached makes us believe for a moment that life has transformed into death and yet kept all its attributes. All around here lives a death that is all ears. Death speaks aloud around the few columns still standing of the temple that was perhaps Apollo's or Athena's, but which no longer has a name for us; it is the temple of death, and the wind robs it of words. The ancient inhabitants of Metapontum speak no more, they no longer confess love, weakness, rage, hatred. They have transformed into a being with many eyes, this deserted death which runs with a tremor in the wheat and barley to the moorland and the shore of a sea determined not to be seen behind the dunes, and likewise turbid with a vitality both menaced and menacing. Here the Ionian is not blue as it will be further south, it has no mythical colour: it is a sea defending itself, darkly enraged even when calm.

Here the Bràdano, descending from the ravines of Matera, snakes and eats away ever more closely, mute and deep, what once was the temple of Apollo. These ancient cities, which were born on the mirage of a river (Metapontum is "the city between the waters"), now have a river biting at their guts, and later its torrential bed creeping imperceptibly. Over centuries this imperceptibility becomes confused space, dead space imperiously imposed by a restless vein of water. Just as it is on the Sele beside the sanctuary at Paestum, in a bed of salts, so this Bràdano snakes across the middle of the heath bringing baleful water to the dead, who are drained of all liquid humour, to the dried-out bodies of the dead, the Alibantes of legend.¹⁵

Further on, in an enormous pit that hides them from the plain, we came upon the purplish remains of the temple of Apollo Lyceum, on rocks corroded even more by the evening than by the millennia. Further on again, in the furrows amongst the wheat, there emerged, for the first time, squared stones. But wheat should be respected. Was not an ear of wheat Metapontum's symbol? In some places the wheat compels itself to grow on very little ground. Stone, worked stone, square-cut, lies immediately beneath. There are glimpses of coins, bones, fragments of pottery funereally striped in black and red. Amongst the wheat we can pick up pebbles from some past shattering that now has the slightly deaf lightness of the wind.

[...]

IV – *Sybaris*

As well as their civilisation, which when fused with local elements bore the proud fruits we have begun to see, the Greeks also imported into Magna Graecia their fatal disagreements. As in Greece, each *poleis* enclosed within itself a world that was potentially hostile to others, so that on the Italic shores of the Ionian the borders of one city's territory with another were dangerous points of contact and friction. Between the Agri and the Sinni,¹⁶ Heraclea arose because Tarantum had brought there the inhabitants of Siris, which Sybaris in union with Metapontum had destroyed. Metapontum and Sybaris were the pincers which ground down the city in between. And Heraclea, in the middle of the gulf of Taranto, was a hinge for Tarantine might, at the expense of Siris, which, on the mouth of the Sinni, with its fortune, its opulence and its disgrace, typified and foretold the parable of Sybaris itself.

[...]

The disgrace of Siris signalled the pinnacle of the expansion of Sybaris. Situated between the Crati and the Coscile,¹⁷ Sybaris was the meeting point between Ionia and the Etruscans: a nerve centre for relations between these two mysterious, sophisticated entities of the ancient Mediterranean. Between Oriental luxury and

the bewitched, slightly funereal luxury of the Etruscans, Sybaris was the intermediate ring. Cutting the Bruzzio¹⁸ with internal roads, and avoiding navigating the sea roads and thus the control of the Chalcidians stationed in the Strait of Messina, Sybaris created on the Tyrrhenian the colonies of Posidonia, Laos and Scidrus. At Sybaris, Milesian clothes, Ionic fabrics, Persian carpets met with Etruscan mirrors, gold and silver. There are tales of Sybarites retreating behind armour-plating made of gold and encrusted with gemstones. The young girls of Sybaris who did not have a husband by the age of sixteen had to choose a lover. And to allow ladies to prepare their clothes for public banquets, invitations were sent a year in advance. Who could fail to see symbolised in such tales the Sybarites' desire to conquer space and time in an extraordinary "dérèglement de tous les sens" which for us has the morbid fascination of an historic collective suicide?

V – A great silence

A great silence occupies the Calabrian coast between the Crati, Capo Trionto and the Neto,¹⁹ with the Sila²⁰ which spreads its last branches towards the sea and, one following another, deserted plains, dunes, grey marlstones, meadows, scrubland, olive groves run wild. It is an ancient silence, which time has given severity. A sound; the depth of time returns it. The silence has mysterious dimensions because, more than space, it occupies a limitless time. Here Magna Graecia impressed upon us, its latecoming inquirers, its most subtle fascination. As we got out of the car every so often, we realised, stupefied, that not even a breath of wind was moving in the thick, dark olive trees, which grappled with a reddish earth: chthonic olive trees, run wild, with all the violence expressed in them from deep down. It is a very ancient land and yet it seems a virgin land: and in effect it has acquired its virginity from its Orphic origins. It is an absorbed land, which has witnessed furies of mysticism. Such lands – and one thinks of Umbria – preserve a stupefied profundity, something grave in the air, they have no limits. Here, this Greek Calabria has no limits in its chthonic depths. Not for nothing do the Orphic communities of these parts, with their surges of mystical renewal, call to mind the Umbrian flagellants. Both groups saw with enraptured eyes the approach of a telluric dawn, and did not wish to be caught unprepared.

[...]

In Magna Graecia, from the middle of the Sixth Century B.C., Orphism was the origin of that great moral transformation which broke decisively with the mythical conceptions of Homer and prepared men for the astonishing discovery of the immortal soul.

Already Alcmaeon, pointing to the stars in the skies of Croton, compared their motion to that of the soul caught in an eternal turning. Pythagoras of Samos, having wandered far around the eastern Mediterranean, disembarked at Croton in around 532 B.C.²¹ and proceeded to spend twenty years here: here, on this strip of land which in Greece proper was surrounded by a legendary halo of prosperity, he found the conditions in which the seeds of his discoveries could grow, spread, set vibrating in a metaphysical tremor the human terrain which Orphism had already prepared and stirred. In this sense, Pythagoras attempted nothing less than substituting Dionysus, the god of contradictions, with Apollo, the god of number and harmony. But it was Dionysus who presided over the birth of Greek tragedy. The density of problems agitating it is Dionysian. The soul perceived within itself the sense of guilt and sought a purification. It was, in Magna Graecia, Orpheus who pronounced the word which gave rise to the greatness of Greek thought. The world beyond opened wide here, where today the traveller is met with a mysterious, fateful silence. Here the people of the sixth century B.C. felt within themselves the guilt of the Titans who had torn to pieces and devoured the son of Zeus and Persephone, who as a babe had been made lord of the world. Under various guises he had hidden from their hatred, but in the shape of a bull he had not succeeded in escaping them. Saved by Athena, the young God was reborn from his own heart, and meanwhile out of the fulminating Titans emerged the human race, guilty and divine at once, feeding as it did on the God's immortal flesh. Here, beside this blue-grey Ionian, there flashed before man a first glimmer of the idea of original sin, he felt within his body more violently the stigmata of guilt. Within the body, the soul felt itself imprisoned to serve its sentence.

[...]

As we move on from Sybaris we also move away from the Orphic epicentre of Magna Graecia. Croton is where the aristocratic sublimation of Orphism triumphs, its Apollonian idealisation, the Pythagorean number. The struggle between Croton and Sybaris, which ended with the violent destruction of the latter, as well as the fight for political supremacy between Achaeans of the same stock, appears to us as a sort of triumph for the Pythagorean aristocracy over Orphic irrationality and mysticism. Not for nothing was it that precisely during Pythagoras' residence at Croton, Sybaris was attacked. It was the change from an insurgency in religious order, into a philosophy: and it does not matter if the philosophy that emerged was permeated with a mysterious superstition. It would be later philosophers who would free from local totemism what this thought was beginning to perceive. The old Pythagoras seemed a patriarch shrouded in those same mystical hazes that his thought potentially opposed: he vanished into them; but the exigency he had posited remained. In effect, it was through this complex ordeal, deriving from contact between the Greeks and the Italic population, that great Greek thought was born, directed towards a definition of transcendence, which hitherto had been the preserve of a mythology which had aggravated, and certainly not healed, the contradiction between the Gods and men. Rationally systematised in their Olympus, the Gods had become too distant from men. The wave of lyricism which rocked the central and eastern Mediterranean between the Seventh and Sixth Centuries B.C., from Mytilene of Sappho or Alceus to the Himera of Stesichorus and the Reggio of Ibycus, proves well the growth of a sentiment for which reason was no longer enough. Rumbling along the arc of this land between Sybaris and Croton and Locri was the great mystical backwash of Orphism, clearly denouncing an unsustainable state of things. Not for nothing is the question arising from Greek tragedy: "What must I do?", at the point in which the action culminates: a decisive action in the thought of an entire people as well as in the destiny of the protagonist involved in the drama.

Empedocles, still pursuing something of the Pythagorean intentions in his poetic dream, would sing:

For before now I have been at some time boy and girl.
And bush and bird and silent fish tossed by the waves.

But already Sappho, from Lesbos heading towards Sicily, in exile, perhaps might have perceived in a Mediterranean island her own pausing like a grace in the eternal returning of nature: and she would have overcome her own drama calling things by their names, the hours by their particular graces. The height of these Mediterranean lyrics is given by an enchantment, static and lightning fast, between two raging moments. Things have the grace of a vision precisely because they are moved by a long, sorrowful preparation: discovered, they shine all the more intensely with their essence.

One heir to the poets of Lesbos was Ibycus. They say that he moved away from Reggio²² to avoid becoming its tyrant. Cicero saw in him the Greek poet in whom love had burned most fiercely. Through an Aeschylan *gravitas*, that stalwart individual sentiment shines from the deep to make all equal. Just as on our journey we have seen fragments of painted vases emerging through the earth, so through time ancient springtimes come back to us in stanzas, saved by the gaze of a poet. Because Ibycus “sees”.

The myrtles and the violets, the golden apples
and the roses and the tender laurels.
On the leaves highest up
perch the piebald lustrous wild ducks
and kingfishers long in the wing.

VI – *Croton*

Famous for its athletes – the most famous of whom was Milo – for the beauty of its women and above all for the medical school of Alcmaeon and Democedes, today Croton preserves few traces of its old fortunes.

“Do not be deceived: in writing of invisible and eternal things I offer you nothing but conjectures. Around and about them, the Gods alone possess an eternal certainty.”²³

Yet meanwhile Alcmaeon, who had been operating here before the coming of Pythagoras, was shifting little by little away from anatomy and physiology towards psychology and more and more uplifted his thought towards a universe which was uncertain, yes, but already sustained by the first certainties of experimental

method. Alcmaeon proposed to Pythagoras the possibility of descending from the general to the particular, from the numerical cosmos to man, having already elevated it from man, indeed from the human cadaver, through researches worthy of a Leonardo, in that hypothetical cosmos.

Capo Colonna is the ancient promontory of Lacinium, the easternmost point of the Calabrian peninsula, and in the south-west closes the Gulf of Taranto. Now a lighthouse sweeps through the night over the Ionian. We saw it yesterday evening approaching Croton, having crossed over the Neto, and we had the illusion that a great city was still there to welcome us. The winds still breathe out from Greece, from Notus to the Sirocco,²⁴ but no red or white sail is carried on what is now a malignant sigh around the limbs that come through it relaxed. We are level with Epirus and Acarnania. When this wind breathed, to come from Greece to Magna Graecia must have been like leaving behind even the darkest hint of time, thinking towards a legendary land that was to them as America was to us in the West.

[...]

Heading out of Croton to the south, in the direction of Locri and Reggio, we cut diagonally across the peninsula which between the gulfs of Taranto and Squillace reaches out laden with olive trees and meadows. The Lacinio promontory²⁵ is its easternmost outreach. This morning, while from the rocky Castello,²⁶ where the acropolis once stood, we were alone and admiring the comings and goings of the crows high above the harbour and the sheets hung out to dry [...] between some worn out columns (Greek, they told us, but re-erected, so we thought, to hold the washing lines), they told us that towards Capo Colonna were the ancient Crotonian sanatoria, the Pythagorean communities. And they appeared to us, those ancient progenitors of ours, overhead, bathed in the light of metaphysical health freaks...

VIII – *Towards Locri and the strait*

[...] Aspromonte²⁷ is close upon us. This is no longer the realm of wheat-heads but fruit trees. [...] In those meadows the Orphics found the troubled sign of

their silence: out there they sought to listen to the answer – the natural answer – to the incipient sense of sin: and Persephone again consoled them with the illusion of spring. In its sacred incoherence unhappy mortals sought protection, while attempting an accord with the rhythm, at once apparent but not tangible, between life and death: sin was the key which still would not turn in that lock.

Between the territory of Locri and that of Reggio, in this extreme outreach of Italy, a wide river flat, the Halex, served as a border. It is night when we cross it, and the eager ones among us say they can already see the lights of Sicily. The night is utterly serene.

Here, on this river, Heracles arrived exhausted, and the cicadas would not let him go to sleep: Zeus, in answer to prayers, silenced them. The ancients said that on the right bank, that is in the territory of Reggio, the cicadas have remained silent ever since, and on the left, which was the land of Locri, they sang with throats roaring. It could go that far, Hellenic factionalism, even in myth: the border of the sphere of influence of a *polis* was also a mythological limit. But perhaps it also kept them from getting lost.

“Between the light of day and the complete absence of light which in Greek is called Erebos, there is the night.” Here on the strait, as we speed through the night towards Reggio, we think over the curious fringing of the sea and land in Hesiodic thought, still part of the maternal sphere which gave birth to the world. “The roots of the Earth and the Sea would be visible to the Titans of Tartar, if the complete darkness known as Erebos did not reign there.” But here, with Sicily a luminous blossoming in the night on the other side of the Strait, this Orphic land calls us back from Erebos into the starry night.

IX – *Taormina*

Between Greece proper and Western Greece – as Magna Graecia could be called along with Hellenic Sicily – relations did not always involve the peaceful exchange of goods and ideas. But above all for Sicily, which in Syracuse came to have a centre of attraction and very strong dominion over the Greekness of the West, relations with Athens became in the Fifth Century B.C. a matter of tense competition, head to head, to the point that they flared up into a war which signalled the decline of Athenian power. The political development of the Italiots and of

the Siciliots up until the Persian Wars was almost totally independent of the motherland. Greece seems to have been endowed with two great wings, the Eastern and the Western, which upheld the flight of its ancient civilisation: except that Ionia had to turn back to the motherland in order to save itself from the Persian threat which had beleaguered it, while Sicily managed on its own against the extremely grave peril of the Carthaginians raging in from the west. Not for nothing did ancient pride make two great days of triumph over the barbarians coincide in 480 B.C.: Salamina and Himera. There is a magnificent passage in Herodotus, where the two champion powers of Greekness, Sparta and Athens on one side and Gelo of Syracuse on the other, are brought head to head in the face of the imminent threat from Persia.

“But thou, O Gelo, who hast great power and enjoyeth a not unremarkable portion of Greece, being Prince of Sicily, bring thou help unto those who procure the freedom of Greece, and defend it with them.”

And when their accord proved impossible, the great Gelo declared that for Greece “spring had been torn from the year”: thus he defined the Siciliot force that Greece, in its pride, went without, for the sake of prestige.

The eastern coast of Sicily was the nerve centre for just such a boiling over of passions. Here at a certain point a city became a symbol of union and the place to which arose the terrorised invocations of Greek cities exposed to the death and destruction coming from Africa, when the Carthaginians ferociously destroyed Selinus in 409 B.C., Himera the next year, Agrigentum in 406. As we climb towards Taormina along a coast illumined by sea foam, at evening, this destiny returns to mind. Magna Graecia by contrast is less tragic and less fervent. Here in Sicily thinkers threw themselves into volcanoes, Eleatic thought gives way to Sophism. Indeed, Gorgias is from Leontinoi, that is, from this part of Sicily. And indeed it was Gorgias who attempted to demonstrate the inexistence of being, after having declared its inconceivability and incommunicability. These are the very words of Gorgias:

“The word is the great overlord which, with an infinitely small and invisible body, knows how to accomplish the most divine of things; verily it assuages fear, illuminates pain and excites joy and inspires mercy... And that persuasion, joined with the word, serves to leave upon the soul the mark that it desires, is taught us above all by the discourses of astronomers, who, substituting hypothesis for hypo-

thesis, destroying one, constructing another, bring before the eyes of fantasy the incredible and the incomprehensible . . .”

Here Etna, between snow and fire, with lava thrown down in the middle of meadows, and the breath of Africa that arrives panting with the Sirocco, prolongs the sense of an extraordinary life, which dangers and beauty bring into ever greater relief on the dark folds of death. Stability is only momentary, but all the more beautiful for its nearness to falling; something shrivels away unawares in the silence, the keening of the shepherds sounds out to enchant an expectation that will prove tragic, the outcrops are violent, steep, but covered in indescribable flowers which seem to suck out of the rock itself the violence of their colours.

Only high Pindaric sophism, Pindar's absolute belief in the blazing red word which creates everything, in words as “darts which speak unto the wise alone”, can stand as equal with these beaches browned by lava, but on which, bluely, arrives the most beautiful Homeric sea, to be silent. But here myth, having pervaded space, giving it an infinite fullness and suspension, has disappeared into its positivity: a sunlit pessimism dominates along the arc of this Ionic Sicily overshadowed by Etna. Not for nothing did Pindar find sanctuary here with Hieron I of Syracuse: here where life and death coincide in a sense of suspended catastrophe from which none can escape, save through the persuasion of the word.

At night at Taormina, from a window high above the sea, we gazed at the voiceless, unmoving expanse of the waters on which the moon revealed forgotten creases. Something drew us to the window, it would not let us sleep. Here is where the heart of Greece beats most fleetingly, imperceptible: but it is here that it has left its most immense void: its archaic smile hovers more imperiously here. It is like pressing a conch to the ear and listening for words: there is nothing to hear but a sigh of vanity, a wind worn out. Here Greece sang like a cicada all the summer of its great Fifth Century, and now we, in late autumn, gather up its pitiable shell. Not far from here was Naxos, the first Greek city in Sicily, on Capo Schisò, which closes on our right the arc of the beach of Taormina and which the moon now titillates in shadow. Turning our gaze deeply downwards we imagine before us the auburn coasts of the Peloponnese: we are level with it. From here we can measure in time the different phases of Greek colonisation in Sicily: in the space of a century and a half, from 735 to 580 before Christ, we see emerge, bead by bead, the rosary of the Siciliot cities: Naxos, Syracuse, Zancle, Leontinoi,

Catana, Megara, Mylai, Gela, Akrai, Himera, Kasmene, Selinus, Kamarina, Agrigentum...²⁸ From Naxos the Chalcideans and other Ionians spread southwards as far as Catana and Leontinoi. We are further down in the zone of Corinthian-Megarese colonisation, that is, Doric, which from Megara Hyblaea and Syracuse spreads along the south-western coasts of the island, while at Gela, the “wild” Gela of Virgil,²⁹ there arrived Rhodian and Cretan sailors, on a hill which rises in the immense flat and lunar coast of the Meridione,³⁰ for those who climb up from Pachino.

The Greek theatre, perched on rocky heights above the sea, now offers, across what seems a limitless stage to whoever sits among the tiers, the unmoving spectacle of Etna: but I believe more that whoever fixes their eyes on that far-off sight does so to see more clearly into themselves. Spectators from every nation, high up here, stay sitting for hours and hours to listen to the most perfect silence on Earth. And here we seem only its tip-toeing guests. When Etna is ablaze, at night, we must stay here to watch the raging of the clouds. And if we go down into the town, for a cool drink, in the quiet air, it seems we are refreshing ourselves at the source of an ancient and a touch sophistic vital fury: we feel tired by what we have not done, which it is not in us to do. Tonight we will fall asleep with a sense of uselessness. There would be nothing left but to make jokes or to turn to calling up things from our own pasts, and slightly pretend to be ourselves: that is what makes *A* and *Z*; but that does not work with me, I can be a spectator only with difficulty, and so I prefer to slip into discrete silence, and listen, or pretend to listen. Yet this is beautiful, because, in effect, at a certain point, one hears again the keenings of childhood, those voices with no cause.

1952

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ENDNOTES

- 1 Henry James, "The Saint's Afternoon," in *Italian Hours* (New York: Grove Press, 1979), p. 353-354.
- 2 Johann Joachim Winckelmann, "On the Imitation of the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks" (1785), in *Writings on Art*, ed. David Irwin (London: Phaidon, 1972), p. 85.
- 3 Piero Bigongiari, "Il corvo bianco," in *Tutte le poesie: 1933-1963*, ed. Paolo Fabrizio Iacuzzi (Florence: Le Lettere, 1994), 213-214.
- 4 The suite was originally published in eight instalments in the newspaper *Il nuovo corriere*. See *Il nuovo corriere*, Florence, 18 January, 28 January, 1 February, 8 February, 15 February, 20 February, 1 March and 5 March 1953, all page 3.
- 5 Henry James, "A Roman Holiday," in *Italian Hours*, pp. 142-143.
- 6 Eugenio Montale, "Sulla Via Sacra," in *Prose e racconti*, ed. Marco Forti (Milan: Mondadori, 1995), p. 483. My translation.

- 7 The difference in timing makes it obvious that *Greece in Italy* was not intended to dispute with Quasimodo. Indeed, in a sign that he had some regard for Quasimodo, Bigongiari quotes from Quasimodo's Italian translation of the Cyan passage of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in Section X. Whether this regard survived Quasimodo's remarks in the *Discorso sulla poesia* is a matter of conjecture.
- 8 For a description of Quasimodo's personal myth of Sicily, see Gilberto Finzi, "Nota introduttiva," in Salvatore Quasimodo, *Dalla Sicilia* (Modica: Centro Nazionale di Studi su Salvatore Quasimodo, 1989), pp. 9-15.
- 9 Martin Heidegger, *Sojourns: The Journey to Greece*, trans. John Panteleimon Manoussakis (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), p. 9.
- 10 A few quotations are also unattributed.
- 11 A town on the coast of Puglia, north-west of Bari.
- 12 The tableland which makes up much of Puglia.
- 13 The outermost reach of Puglia, the end of the "heel" of Italy.
- 14 In Latin sources these rivers are known as the Casuentus and the Bradanus.
- 15 *Alibantes*, meaning 'the dried-out ones', was a term used by Plutarch to describe certain characters in *The Odyssey* who perished in a drought.
- 16 In Latin sources, these two rivers are known as the Aciris and the Siris.
- 17 The modern name of the river Crati derives from its ancient name Cratheis. In antiquity, the Coscile shared the name of the city of Sybaris.
- 18 In Latin, Bruttium – the furthest reaches of the "toe" of Italy.
- 19 The Crati and Neto are rivers, Capo Trionto a promontory in the coastline.
- 20 The Sila is the last range of the Appenines, extending down to the tip of the Calabrian peninsula.
- 21 In section III, Bigongiari cites Pythagoras' arrival as taking place "around 530."
- 22 Bigongiari uses the modern name, but to Ibycus the city was Rhegium.
- 23 These are the words of Alcmaeon.
- 24 Notus was the Greek god of the ferociously hot south winds of midsummer. The milder Sirocco blows from the south-east.
- 25 Known in Latin as Lacinium.
- 26 By this Bigongiari must mean a more recent fortification.
- 27 The last great mountain on the Calabrian peninsula.
- 28 Zancle is now Messina; Leontinoi, Lentini; Catana, Catania.
- 29 See XI: The oranges of Gela, in the next issue.
- 30 The expanse of the southernmost coastline of Sicily.