THE REALITY OF SLAVERY

L. SCHUMACHER: *Sklaverei in der Antike. Alltag und Schicksal der Unfreien*. Pp. 368, ills. Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2001. Cased, DM 68.50. ISBN: 3-406-46574-9.

Schumacher's stated goal in this book is to examine how we might see the 'oppressive reality of slavery' in the material culture available to us from the Graeco-Roman period. The aim is ambitious, since slavery above all ancient social institutions is the most difficult to discern in the archaeological record. Compared with the significance of slaves in the ancient economy and their probable numbers, the evidence is disparate, indirect, and relatively scant. For the most part, S. succeeds. The result is a concise, clearly written survey, with a judicious selection of evidence used to good effect. With admirable economy he has managed to survey the underlying principles of both Greek and Roman slave systems, giving them a shape easily grasped by the German lay audience he targets. Although by necessity superficial, his synthesis affords learning with a light touch, abetted by ample illustrations (137 in all).

After a brief discussion of types of slavery in the ancient world, the book is divided into three major chapters: (i) slave supply and the slave trade; (ii) categories of slave labour; and (iii) social issues surrounding slavery. Favouring external sources of supply over domestic slave breeding, S. outlines how slaves became integrated into the ancient economy. In tracing the literal movement of human property he draws on a range of sources, from slave lists on Linear B tablets, to the Delian Agora of the Italians (now recognized as a slave market), to the handful of figural scenes of chained slaves. To evaluate the visual evidence for slavery, S. suggests five criteria for the identification of slaves: (i) epigraphic declarations of status; (ii) the depiction of individuals on a smaller scale; (iii) marginal figures in domestic contexts; (iv) work scenes; and (v) figures with caricatured features indicating an ethnic, non-Italian origin. S. rightly allows himself qualification on (iii) and (iv), acknowledging the possible presence of the free poor, but offers none on the final point, as if to suggest that all, or even most, representations of individuals belonging to 'visible minorities' must by definition be servile, which is surely an oversimplification. Furthermore, given his own emphasis on warfare and piracy as the major sources of slavery, it is odd that he excludes entirely from consideration scenes of captives, thereby eliminating a major genre of evidence in Roman art. The more prudent course would see the inclusion of captives as a sixth criterion, with the admission that some were imprisoned or executed rather than enslaved.

The heart of the book lies in the large central chapter on slave labour. Dividing work into primary, secondary, and tertiary production, S. rapidly covers the major forms of work done by slaves, from agriculture to construction and the production of ceramics, textiles, leather, and metalwork, and to trade, administration, household tasks, and entertainment. Throughout he uses a variety of kinds of evidence, from the well-known commentators (e.g. Greek orators, Roman agricultural writers) to less familiar sources (e.g. the workers' list of the Erechtheion) to convey the profound integration of slaves into all levels of ancient manufacturing. In all areas, the Roman evidence outweighs the Greek, especially in the tertiary sector (commerce, military involvement, domestic work, education, and medicine), which receives the fullest treatment. Still, S. is able to identify distinctions between the two. In ancient banking, for example, Greek slaves had far more independence than their Roman counterparts, who, despite the trust they engendered, were little more than agents for their masters.

© The Classical Association, 2003

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.1.170 Published online by Cambridge University Press

In Greece, architects and entertainers were never slaves, while in Rome they generally were. In the third chapter, S. enters the obscure and slippery area of slave experience, and tries to characterize their attitudes and feelings by examining the evidence for affective ties, engagement in cult and ritual, their treatment in law, and physical punishment. Again, as he admits, the Greek evidence is a pale shadow to the Roman, and the chapter focuses almost entirely on the latter, relying on the wealth of details derived from the juridical sources and funerary commemoration. The caution which underlies this chapter limits it to a somewhat dry recounting of facts, suggesting a reluctance by the author to explore this dimension of slave life in a more meaningful way, as others have done (e.g. K. R. Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome* [Cambridge, 1994]).

Several other weaknesses should be pointed out, although, given the scope of the project, they are easily pardonable. More could have been made of freedmen, their own values and their rôle in the social hierarchy at Rome, in seeking aspects of the slave mentality and general attitudes toward them. Although material culture is claimed as his entryway to ancient slavery, S. relies more heavily on conventional historical sources such as prose historians and inscriptions, sometimes rendering the archaeological angle more marginalized than necessary (e.g. the discussion of rural slavery, images of household slaves). There is also a tendency to put particular emphasis on images, mostly funerary stelae, which are now located in German museum collections at the expense of evidence from Italy or other provinces. Many of these, however, will be unknown to the non-specialist, and their reproduction here brings them deserved attention. Although the detailed content and scholarly method might be thought too learned for a general book, S. never dwells too long on any one aspect to risk the charge of pedantry. The book has much to offer the non-specialist academic or graduate student, indeed enough to make one wish for an English version for undergraduate teaching.

McMaster University MICHELE GEORGE

ROMAN WARFARE

C. M. GILLIVER: *The Roman Art of War*. Pp. 192, ills. Stroud: Tempus, 1999. Cased, £18.99. ISBN: 0-7524-1422-4.

This engaging survey of the Roman art of war from the middle republic to the late empire (p. 11) is arranged in five chapters. The organization of the army is well set out (pp. 12–31), although it is not made explicit that Polybius set his legion in the second Punic war (p. 16), and the idea that Livy just retrojected and complicated the Polybian legion gets no mention (p. 17). Evidence for the army on the march is covered next (pp. 32–62) and includes useful diagrams (Figs 11–17). The chapter on campaign camps (pp. 63–88) restates G.'s plausible theory that the stakes carried by legionaries formed not a fence but a series of giant caltrops around the camp (pp. 77–8), and includes a speculative attempt to apply Ps.-Hyginus' hypothetical arrangement of an army to the archaeological data from the camps at Res Cross and Durno (pp. 82–6). The penultimate chapter on pitched battle (pp. 89–126) features a reprise of G.'s view that the use of auxiliaries in the frontline did not stem from 'a desire to preserve the legions at the expense of non-citizen troops but the versatility of the auxiliary units and their strength as a fighting force' (p. 114). The final chapter on siege warfare (pp. 127–60) includes the striking argument that until the fourth century A.D. towns were not summoned to surrender because the initiative was

© The Classical Association, 2003

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.1.170 Published online by Cambridge University Press