DE NOVIS LIBRIS IUDICIA


Not long after the publication of Esercito e marina di Roma antica (Mavors vol. 5, 1992) which includes most of the papers by Forni dealing with the Roman army, and for which Forni himself (who died prematurely in 1991) had furnished addenda, this is now a second part of a series of volumes intended to collect Forni's writings. The two volumes include all kinds of papers, also some which come under the heading "esercito e marina", but the papers dealing with the Roman tribus, a favourite subject of Forni's, have been omitted since there is going to be a further volume on tribus referred to (on p. xxvii) as Le tribù romane IV. Scritti minori and said to be "in corso di stampa". On the same page one finds the information that volumes I and II of Le tribù romane are also on their way (vol. III on the "pseudo-tribes" came out in 1985). This should be the work which at last replaces Kubitschek's book of 1887; both volumes have, however, the somewhat disquieting subtitle "I tribules", as if they had been conceived simply as lists of people with tribes which does not seem an excellent idea. But possibly I am interpreting the title incorrectly.

Be that as it may, the volumes under inspection here certainly contain most useful papers (some of substantial length, e.g. no. 5 of almost 150 pages) on a remarkably varied field from Manius Curius Dentatus to the legacy of the ancient world, papers on subjects such as those classified under "istituzioni politiche e religiose", "ordinamento militare" and "demografia" coming in between, not to mention the many papers on inscriptions (for Forni's wide interests one should also have a look at the bibliography of his work on p. xv-xxvii). Much of the material included in these volumes is well known to those working on related subjects. There are addenda by the author here and there (e.g. on p. 382 and 683), but in general the papers have retained their original form. All have, however, been reset, which gives the volumes a unified outward appearance, but which is in other respects a procedure not beyond discussion, at least if (as is the case in this book) references to the original page numbering have been omitted. Obsolete (such as many of the epigraphical editions quoted on p. 182ff.) or otherwise useless information (e.g. the editors of the journal Apulum saying something in Rumanian on p. 665) also seems less awkward if the original publications are rendered as such. And of course the resetting of all the papers may have had effects on the price of the book.

There can be no doubt that all those working on a subject touched upon by Forni will find the publication of this set of volumes extremely useful; however, Forni's work can be recommended to any student or scholar especially because of Forni's tendency to present his material as clearly as possible, often with the use of tables which much clarify
difficult subjects (e.g. on p. 25. 36f. 352f. 524). Forni’s bibliographical references are also in general mines of information (cf. e.g. the bibliography on the Roman army on pp. 315-34). The papers, being designed for the serious scholar rather than for the interested amateur and often of a rather austere appearance, in general stick to the essential and to the non-speculative; it is only in some papers of a more general nature that Forni drifts into saying something like "Cesare andò contro montagne, fiumi, paludi, foreste e mari come se si trattasse di muovere una guerra contro gli elementi" (p. 470; cf. e.g. p. 311 on Romans and the sea).

But whatever the uses of a work like this, without proper indices it would remain only a torso. Luckily, this is not the case with this book, for at the end of vol. If one finds an absolutely remarkable set of indices of no less than 140 pages, prepared by several authors. The advantages of this are so obvious that I need not point them out.

Olli Salomies


Christer Bruun