

sviluppo della sezione epigrafica cristiana dei Musei Vaticani), M.A. De Angelis (L'Archivio Storico dei Musei Vaticani: fonti sull'organizzazione amministrativa nell'Ottocento e documenti per le collezioni epigrafiche cristiane), M. Buonocore (Iter epigraphicum Vaticanum: una guida ai principali testimoni della tradizione manoscritta dell'epigrafia cristiana nei codici della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana), and C. Lega (Indice delle iscrizioni cristiane del Lapidario ex Lateranense).

The second main section concentrates on history, religion and habits in the light of the inscriptions produced by Christian communities. This may be regarded as the central part of the volume, considering that the majority of the contributions, mostly written by specialists, make a general survey of important issues relating to late Antiquity (I. Kajanto: Roman Nomenclature; P. Colafrancesco: the Latin epigraphic language; V. Flocchi Nicolai: Christian funerary monuments and places of cult from the third to the sixth century (to be consulted together with the topographic map enclosed in the inner back cover of the volume); C. Carletti: the emergence and development of the Christian epigraphic formulary; D. Mazzoleni: the origin and chronology of monograms; F. Bisconti: decorative figures in the Christian inscriptions of Rome; M.L. Costantini: *servus* and *libertus* in the urban epigraphic documentation from the late Antiquity; M.L. Caldelli, *D M* and *D M S* in the Christian inscriptions of Rome; C. Ricci: the presence of Italians and foreigners in Rome between the fourth and sixth century; G. Sacco: the famous blasphemous graffito from the Paedagogium in the Palatine).

Though all that has been printed in this volume will probably not be unanimously accepted by everyone, the result is nonetheless admirable. This is good reading for any epigraphist, and it is also highly recommendable to anyone interested in the world of the early Christians. The printing quality as well as that of the photographs is very good. For the fine result we should be grateful above all to Ivan Di Stefano Manzella, editor of the excellent Galleria Lapidaria volume (ISS 1), who not only undertook the tremendous editorial task but also in various ways has left his personal touch on the whole volume.

*Mika Kajava*

ALFRED SCHÄFER: *Unterhaltung beim griechischen Symposion: Darbietungen, Spiele und Wettkämpfe von homerischer bis in spätklassische Zeit*. Philipp von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein 1997. ISBN 3-8053-2336-0. 128 S., 56 Taf. DEM 110.

Alfred Schäfer has taken up an interesting and important subject: entertainment at Greek symposia. It is a generally accepted notion that symposia were central to the ancient Greek societies, at least to some of them. Thus, we find a great number of studies of themes around Greek symposia. What has been lacking, though, is a systematic study of the things which kept the symposiasts happy when taking part in a symposium, things we would call 'entertainment'. This monograph fills in a part of that gap, and provides us a good list and a thorough enough analysis of pictorial source material useful for the studies of Greek symposia.

The study consists of seven chronologically defined chapters: the Homeric period, 7th-6th centuries BC, 580/70-530 BC, 530/20-480/70 BC, 480/70-450 BC, 450-410/400 BC, 5th-4th centuries BC. These chapters are followed by some general conclusions after which comes a catalogue of the images used in the book. The solution of dividing the study

chronologically seems to be very practical. It enables a chronologically systematic treatment of the subject-matter, and is handy for readers who would like to concentrate only on a specific time period. And, for a systematic reader this kind of a division helps to call attention to the changes that happened in symposiastic entertainment over the decades. The division of chapters is based on the pictorial material, mainly vases, which is mentioned only briefly in the introduction. Other kinds of divisions would have been possible too, e.g. a division based on the type of entertainment seen or mentioned in the used source-material.

The source material is handled in detail. This includes a careful description of what happens in the painted image on a particular vase, how it relates to the imagined real-life situations, and also some literary passages which fit the time period in question. Based on this information an idea of what happened in symposia with regard to the entertainment in the period in question is formed. After every main chapter there are some general conclusions. The relevant information on a vase, or for the later periods also on a terracotta-figurine, discussed in the study can be easily found in the list of illustrations at the end of the book. There are also 56 tables of some of this material with black-and-white photographs.

The title of the book promises a lot, while in fact it should be mentioned already in the title itself, that the study is based mainly on images. What we get is an image of symposiastic entertainment based on images with an additional touch from literary passages. Thus, the conclusions are made to a large degree on the basis of the images, and the literary passages are somehow fitted into the ready-made, or at least ready-thought, picture of what happened. In other words, the images seem to be the main ingredient and the texts are used to spice up the picture. This kind of an approach is not uncommon among classical studies – one tends to concentrate mainly on the source material which one has studied more, and uses other kinds of sources, often randomly chosen, to complete the already formed picture of the subject under study. This is very natural and also acceptable as long as one does not promise to do more than one actually does. In this book, it has to be said that all the major literary passages telling about symposiastic entertainment are mentioned, and they are analysed, at least to some degree.

Some major points which I would have expected or hoped to be discussed include the possibilities of drawing conclusions from the pictorial material (e.g. whether they are seen as realistic depictions or as reflecting the painter's imagination), and how can one use and understand terms such as 'Unterhaltung', or 'griechisch' or at least how they are understood in this study. After reading the book, it can be noticed that 'Greek' equals 'Athenian', that is, this study is about the situation in Athens. But can we rightfully pass off 'Athenian' as 'Greek', in a way as to imply that the habits of Athenians would be evidence of the habits of the Greeks in general?

After all this said, I would like to conclude that in spite of some above-mentioned points, this is a very welcome study among the literature on symposia. Too rarely we have the opportunity to read this kind of professional and ambitious study on themes around the field of entertainment in the ancient world.

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