

The latter half of the book is dedicated to more specific discussion of money as a physical object, of coin hoards, minting and the circulation of coins, as well as to the analysis of coinage in a wider historical context. This part demands a lot from the reader (many figures and tables being offered to make the rather technical discussion more clear, but unfortunately for a non-professional they are sometimes more confusing than clarifying), but on the other hand reading selectively, i.e. the conclusions of each chapter, one gets a very good picture of the problems concerning money and money supply.

What makes this monograph especially attractive, is the great number of answers to practical and down-to-earth questions, for instance of who had money, where it came from and how it was used. This book should, of course, be read by every scholar who wants to familiarise herself/himself with the economical questions in imperial Rome as illuminated by numismatic evidence. But it is also most useful and even enjoyable to anyone who has ever had to consider money in the ancient world.

*Tiina Puroola*

RAIMUND FRIEDL: *Der Konkubinat im kaiserzeitlichen Rom. Von Augustus bis Septimius Severus*. Historia Einzelschriften 98. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 1996. ISBN 3-515-06871-6. 417 S. DEM 140.

A new monograph on Roman concubinage is, perhaps surprisingly, not superfluous. As Friedl rightly concludes in his critical overview of earlier scholarship (13–21), many of the existing works (including the classic treatments by Meyer and Plassard) are totally obsolete while others are restrictive either in their choice of source material or in their subject matter.

F. has undoubtedly managed to produce the most comprehensive study so far on Roman concubinage in the early imperial period. His thorough familiarity with secondary literature (up to 1993) on e.g. law, epigraphy, onomastics, and social history is amply attested in the notes. In fact, it might have done little harm to save space by omitting some of the less important references. F's analysis of the primary material is sound and useful. He includes inscriptions not only from Rome (earlier studies on quasi-marital unions have concentrated on CIL VI) but also from Italy and the western provinces. This is a clear advantage, as in the imperial period the inhabitants of Rome by no means form a representative sample of "Roman society". North Africa, the Balkans, and the whole of the Greek East are excluded, though. I can understand the reasons but it means that there is still need for further investigation.

I am somewhat less satisfied with two other limitations. Firstly, F. excludes (111–2) all unions where at least one member is a slave (in legal terms *contubernia*). As F. himself shows (94–101, 218–20), the word *concubina* was not clearly defined in Roman everyday language, and in addition, many unions which could later be defined as *concubinatus* may have begun as *contubernia*. Thus, the exclusion is based entirely on formal juridic criteria, corresponding neither to the conceptual (from the Roman lay point of view) nor to social reality. This is potentially dangerous in a study which attempts to explain why people chose to live in concubinage.

Secondly, F. pays little attention to evidence after the early third century. Although I can appreciate his fear that the scope of the book might have expanded beyond control,

the limit again seems rather technical and not justified by his theme. The sources in late antiquity discuss the circumstances of concubinage much more often than those of the principate. It may at least partly be due to the keen interest of the church fathers in sexual matters but, as the bishops so often complained, the sexual behaviour of contemporary men as such had hardly changed from pagan times. Consequently, this evidence might help us to clarify the motives for quasi-marital relationships.

F's main findings often confirm the impressions gained from earlier studies. Concubinage is not very often directly attested in inscriptions, less in Italy than in Rome, and still less in the western provinces. F. tentatively connects these differences with the degree of Romanization and the number of slaves in different regions. However, as F. frequently notes, peculiarities of the epigraphic habit remain a crucial unknown factor. Concubinage between two freeborn people is almost nonexistent in the epigraphic material, and that between *patronus* and *liberta* much less frequent than one would expect. In general, the relations between well-to-do men and lowborn women, so familiar from legal and literary sources, are not mentioned in the inscriptions. This may be explained by the relatively small number of upper-class people in the total population (see p.184) or, as the habit was evidently not confined to the aristocracy, perhaps even better by a reluctance to advertise such temporary arrangements in epitaphs. I am, in any case, convinced that the seeming absence of premarital concubines in the principate is a delusion caused by the indifference of our sources. However, as they were often slaves, they would (unfortunately) have fallen outside F's study anyway.

Inscriptionally attested quasi-marital relationships are concentrated in the freed population (this suggests but perhaps does not automatically guarantee that the partners were socially equal, cf. 199). F. argues that concubinage was almost never a conscious choice of the couple but rather a necessity imposed on them by *patroni* who for financial reasons did not wish their freedpeople to have legitimate offspring. However attractive this hypothesis may seem, I am personally not convinced that it could be the universal explanation for concubinage in the lower levels of Roman society.

A few minor points: The arrogation of illegitimate children may for most people not have been quite as easy as F. claims (131), given the very difficult procedure. The assertion that the inscriptions studied date from the first or early second century (212, cf. 105) would need somewhat more explanation. I am also not sure that the lack of *praenomen* suffices to date an inscription to the third century (404). It might have been helpful to include in *Anhang* VII.5 also cases of concubinage between *patronus/a* and *liberta/us*, which now have to be sought elsewhere. The titles of *Anhang* VII.5.2.3–4 (378) are obviously wrong (should be *patrona – libertus*). The author of *Demography and Roman Society* is not Rankin but Parkin (319 and *passim*). Indices are missing.

In sum, this is a valuable collection and judicious assessment of the evidence. It will not be the last word, mainly because the uncertainties of the Roman commemorative practice will always allow alternative interpretations: Only a small portion of quasi-marital unions were ever recorded in epitaphs. But F's book is at any rate a good step forward.

*Antti Arjava*