

Although all these articles are quite valuable on their own specific subject it is the three pairs of articles that provide the most interesting aspect in the publication. The sense of real debate evolving between the authors provides a deep and occasionally multifaceted image of the subject at hand.

*Kai Juntunen*

NEVILLE MORLEY: *Trade in Classical Antiquity. Key Themes in Ancient History*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2007. ISBN 978-0-521-63416-8. XIV, 118 pp. GBP 40.

In this book, Neville Morley (hereafter M.) continues with the themes familiar from his previous work. The book is an introduction to the central themes and questions in research on the ancient economy, concentrating on various aspects of trade in the classical world. The first chapter ("Trade and the ancient economy") begins appropriately with a description of a shipwreck found off the coast of Italy. This introduces the reader to M.'s theme in the chapter: the new approaches to the study of the ancient economy. Most new questions seem to arise from archaeological contexts, and these have led to redefinitions of old problems. M. questions the ahistorical nature of certain basic assumptions in modern discussions of the ancient economy, especially the assumed universality of economic rationality, and proposes alternative approaches, which he proceeds to explore in the subsequent chapters.

The second chapter ("Ecology and economics") analyses trade in the context of geographical diversity in the Mediterranean region. M. begins with the main problem of resource acquisition, which ranges from forceful acquisition by conquest to trade, and shows how the ancient sources already show an understanding of the necessities of resource distribution: everything was not available everywhere, and even though it might have been available, it might be less expensive or of higher quality elsewhere. Uncertainty and costs were the downside of the prolonged routes of resource acquisition, and M. nicely demonstrates how the need for security combined with a need for money could result in strategies that might seem primitive for us, but were still perfectly valid responses to the demands of the environment.

In the third chapter ("Commodities and consumption") M. takes this model beyond pure ecological determinism by introducing the cultural practices of consumption. This is a long chapter, as it deals with many themes, such as a) consumption as a social practice of display and competition for social status and power; b) the position of luxury items in long-distance trade in the economic theories of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and Egyptian papyri; c) the amount of resources that could be allocated to conspicuous consumption by peasant farmers; and d) the role of cities and armies as sources of demand. The chapter is by necessity quite superficial, but achieves its aim in showing the heterogeneous nature of consumption in Roman culture. M. convincingly demonstrates that consumption does not equal simply meeting basic material needs, but is a practice used to position oneself in one's culture.

In the fourth chapter ("Institutions and Infrastructure"), M. switches the focus to traders and commerce. He concentrates on the policies of states regarding commerce and the institutions needed for a functional trade system. At first, he briefly analyses ancient Athens and its commercial policy and then turns to the institutions of concern to the individual traders – the standardised and state-guaranteed weights and measures and procedures for enforcing agreements and resolving disputes. In the end, he analyses the role of institutions, both public

(state) and private, in investments in commerce. His conclusion in this chapter is that even though states did not have active commercial policies in the modern sense of the concept, they still played an important role in the development of commerce through their position as regulatory authorities, and – above all – their role as consumers and creators of demand.

The fifth chapter of the book ("Markets, merchants and morality") has a slightly misleading title, as it concentrates on the functions of markets and trade on a more concrete level. M. introduces three separate themes: the functioning of the actual market places; commercialising the surplus of villas in a elite culture dominated by a strong distaste for trade and commerce; and the relation of the elite cultures both in Greece and Rome to the new commercial practices that replaced the old, gift-exchange based redistribution of products.

The sixth chapter concludes the study with the concept of "Globalisation". M. points out the limits of this process, and how most of the Greek and Roman people still lived in near-subsistence economies. Markets did exist and surplus was traded, but this formed only a limited part of the economy of small farmers; M. argues that even though the members of the Roman state perhaps shared a surprisingly global view of themselves as members in a large Empire, this was well in advance of the commercialisation of this global identity. The limits set by the slowness of travel and cost of transport limited the globalisation of the economy to trade in luxury products and state-sponsored food staples.

In a book of this size, most of the interesting questions presented cannot be accessed with adequate detail – a deficiency which M. himself acknowledges. In fact, this is not a full-scale monograph on the subject, but – as the series title suggests – an introduction to a key theme in ancient history, and this purpose the book fulfils perfectly. Research on ancient economies has become a labyrinth of discussions, where different scholarly traditions collide, often resulting in incomprehensibility. M. has produced a book that serves as a good introduction to these collisions.

*Harri Kiiskinen*

*Greek and Roman Actors. Aspects of an Ancient Profession.* Edited by PAT EASTERLING and EDITH HALL. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002. ISBN 0-521-65140-9. XXXII, 510 pp, 2 maps. GBP 65.

This collection of 20 articles addresses the topic of ancient actors: all aspects of their art (singing, dancing, gesturing) as well as their social standing and attitudes towards actors and acting in the ancient world. The time span covered reaches from classical Athens to the Byzantine period. Approaches range widely, from the publication of new pictorial graffiti to rather philosophical essays. All writers are acknowledged experts in their field. Following the table of contents, the first pages are taken up by lists of illustrations, contributors and abbreviations as well as an informative preface by the editors and two very useful maps of the ancient Mediterranean world. Of the contributions in the first part ("The art of the actor"), each tries to answer a specific question around this fascinating and controversial profession by taking into account all possible sources of information – which is understandable as, for the most part (of what still at best remains our approximation of) the complete picture has to be put together from little bits of scattered and very heterogeneous information, especially regarding the actual art of the actor, the way he performed, gestured, moved, spoke and sang on the stage. This evidence consists