

ily regulated and, to use an anachronistic expression, there was very little in the way of a free market. To continue on the Egyptian example, much of the grain was acquired through the levying of the grain tax, which was roughly 10 % on private property and between 30–40% on public lands. In addition to the grain tax, grain was also bought, but even here the government regulated the price of grain and authorized acquisitions. Thus if a city wished to buy grain, it had to first get permission to do so.

Because of the political and social dimensions, the grain market was not purely a matter of economics, if such a thing even exists outside the imaginations of economists. Thus Erdkamp's approach is valid from a perspective of general significance. The second point validating this approach is the lack of consistent data for the making of statistical analyses, consider, for example, the patchy information from which scholars have attempted to deduce the fluctuations of grain prices.

The book is divided into six main chapters which follow the natural course of the food stuffs, beginning from the producer and ending up in the urban markets, from the small-scale local production to the long-distance mass transportation. Erdkamp considers food production issues from land tenancy to crop yield, small scale farming and its dynamics, the relationship of the peasants to merchants and the contracts with which the grain was sold. The great regional variations in crop yields and yearly price-cycles made the market incredibly volatile, offering both possibilities of serious market failures to the extent of famines as well as making huge profits with the well-timed storage and sale of grain. Because of the economic, social and eventually political disturbances this produced, there were constant efforts by the Roman regional and state officials to control the market by storing grain and imposing prices.

On the whole, the book is a carefully researched and judicious attempt at a holistic approach to the important and complex issue of the grain supply in the Roman Empire. While it offers a good survey of the various methods of grain supply and their respective issues and attempts to solve them, the respective parts are at times not interlinked and do not lead to an overarching synthesis. Caution is a virtue, of course, but in this case it is debatable whether the limitations of contemporary observers are really transcended. Nevertheless, the book is essential reading for every student of Roman history and hopefully will lead to further studies in this vital and relatively understudied field.

*Kaius Tuori*

*Est enim ille flos Italiae... Vita economica e sociale nella Cisalpina romana. Atti delle Giornate di studi in onore di Ezio Buchi, Verona 30 novembre – 1 dicembre 2006. A cura di PATRIZIA BASSO – ALFREDO BUONOPANE – ALBERTO CAVARZERE – STEFANIA PESAVENTO MATTIOLI. Qui Edit, Verona 2008. ISBN 978-88-89480-51-9. 617 pp. EUR 30.*

Ecco il volume in onore del noto storico romano di Verona Ezio Buchi, un vero monumento alla sua attività e al suo insegnamento. Una buona parte degli autori sono suoi allievi o comunque colleghi. La grande varietà e l'alto numero dei contributi rende impossibile un loro apprezzamento più approfondito nel breve spazio concessomi dalla redazione di Arctos. Molti di essi sono di grande interesse e importanza, altri però meno – un comune tratto di opere di questo genere.

A mo' di esempio, menziono solo alcuni contributi che mi sono apparsi di particolare interesse – ma confesso che la loro scelta è soggettiva. A. Buonopane, "Un dux ducum e un vir egregius nell'iscrizione di Porta Borsari a Verona (*CIL* V 3329)" offre una nuova interpretazione in base al restauro dell'iscrizione eseguito nel 1981 e alla scoperta di un'iscrizione in Algeria dedicata allo stesso personaggio. Tra l'altro appare l'espressione singolare *dux ducum*, il cui vero contenuto è difficile appurare, ma forse si potrebbe vedere qui un genitivo dell'aumento del tipo *rex regum* o crist. *servus servorum*, senza che in essa fosse insito un preciso significato amministrativo. Di sfuggita noto che *dux* appare in questo modo in Seneca *Med.* 233 *ducem ... ducum*. – G. L. Gregori, "Da Minturnae a Sabbioneta? Un'ipotesi per *CIL* V 4087 = I<sup>2</sup> 753 (ager Mantuanus)" ha dimostrato, a mio vedere, in modo convincente, che la detta iscrizione proveniva da Minturnae. – Nel suo contributo "Un testimone inedito (o quasi) della silloge epigrafica di Giocondo" l'instancabile *scriptor Latinus* e Direttore Sezione Archivi della Biblioteca Vaticana M. Buonocore tratta di un testimone della terza recensione della silloge giocondiana, da lui ripescato da un codice colocciano di Apianus e Amantius. L'analisi dettagliata condotta da Buonocore dimostra, tra l'altro, quanto lavoro resta ancora da fare nella ricerca degli studi epigrafici dell'Umanesimo e Rinascimento. Magari un giovane studioso si prendesse l'impegno di rifare il noto trattato di Ziebarth, che oltre ai molti pregi possiede anche numerose debolezze.

Heikki Solin

HERBERT HOFFMANN: *Divergent Archaeology*. Verlag Franz Philipp Rutzen, Mainz – Ruhpolding 2007. ISBN 978-3-938646-12-0. XXXII, 304 pp. EUR 48.

*Divergent Archaeology* is a collection of sixteen essays spanning 1963 until 2007, all written by Herbert Hoffmann (with one piece written with Stella Lubsen-Admiraal). The essays reflect the author's changing and evolving interests, but the common factor is an interdisciplinary scope and an attempt to detect and decode symbolism in art. The starting point is often a single vase or decorative motif, but from there Hoffmann expands onto themes such as Greek religion, beliefs, and philosophy. Some essays stray from art history completely and deal with Parmenides and the Delphic mores. Hoffmann began his education and academic career in art history, but later studied and became increasingly interested in social anthropology. As such, the title of the publication is apt, although it remains ambiguous: Hoffmann's analysis features leaps most archaeologists would feel uncomfortable making.

The first few essays are short descriptions of ceramic artefacts, but "Hahnenkampf in Athen" introduces Hoffmann's interest in symbolism – what cockfights represented in art – and his interdisciplinary interests: he looks at the reality of cockfights as well as the literature on them. "Sexual and Asexual Pursuit: A Structuralist Approach to Greek Vase Painting" attempts to find a coherent and cohesive system in the decoration on askoi. "In The Wake of Beazley" from 1979 stands as a watershed in the monograph: in the essay, Hoffmann calls for interdisciplinary cooperation and looking at artefacts as remnants of cultures and people, not as mute entities to measure and list.

The remaining ten essays argue first for, then against, dualism. Hoffmann looks at decoration on rhyta, kantharoi, and the Hyakinthos Vase in Vienna as representations of a dualism