

events of Osrhoene to be roughly 26 years out of place. Furthermore, Luther's reconstruction relied heavily on his assumption that Elias' chronology was absolutely correct in every point (and that the chronicle of Zuqnin must thus be wrong), while at the same time some of the reigns he adopted from the chronicle of Zuqnin were argued to have duplicated regnal years so that the information would fit his model. But Luther did not seem to be aware that Elias actually had several entries on the wrong years, like the Jewish uprising in northern Mesopotamia in late Trajanic period, which Elias had dated to the Seleucid year 425 (i.e. 113/114 CE) which is two years too early, or the reigns of Domitian and Nerva, which are both placed one year too early. Although Luther's research has some merit, especially for the first century history of Osrhoene, there is no reason to accept his arguments for the second century, where the chronicle of Zuqnin clearly provides a more detailed version of events. Clearly there is a need for more in-depth research on the Aramaic chronicles and their common chronological misunderstandings, but as of now, much of what Sommer has to say about the history of Osrhoene must be rejected, as it is based on inaccurate research.

In the first paper of the last section ("Variations and Alternatives"), Jean-Baptiste Yon (pp. 229–40) discusses the lack of kings in Palmyra and the social structure of the desert town. In this paper, the author stresses the rather unique conditions in Palmyra, including its dependence on trade and the complicated relations between the local tribes, which in part explains why the town did not grow into monarchy in a similar fashion as other urban centers at the edge of the desert and the Steppe. The last and the longest paper is that by Ulf Scharrer (pp. 241–335), which explores the development of nomadic culture on the edge of the Roman territories. Although the approach to the subject matter is a bit more anthropological in comparison to the other papers in this collection, it does provide an insightful view of the nomadic groups, and of the growth of nomadic confederations in the Syrian and Arabian deserts until the fourth century, while at the same time offering a good introduction to some more specialized research fields, such as Safaitic inscriptions, for those unfamiliar with this kind of evidence. What makes this paper a quite refreshing read is its tendency to point out every controversy and dispute in the academic discussion it covers, instead of presenting hypothetical theories as historical facts.

At the end of the book (pp. 337–453), a general bibliography covering all the papers, an index of sources, a list of contributors, a list of figures, and numerous plates related to the articles are provided. Many of the papers in this collection do offer important additions and new points of view to the various subjects that they deal with. As such, they contribute to the larger on-going debate that has continued ever since the days of Antiquity, namely how the Near Eastern societies reacted to the arrival of Rome, and also how the Romans perceived their new allies and subject peoples.

*Kai Juntunen*

CRISTINA ROSILLO LÓPEZ: *La corruption à la fin de la République romaine (II<sup>e</sup>–I<sup>er</sup> s. av. J. -C.). Aspects politiques et financiers*. Historia Einzelschrift 200. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2010. 276 pp. ISBN 978-3-515-09127-5. 276 pp. EUR 60.

Cristina Rosillo López's book is based on her dissertation. It is a fascinating study of a complex phenomenon of corruption which discusses how should one define it and the forms that phenomenon

took in Roman society. In general, López's research has been systematic and the author has thoroughly explored her sources including what has been done in the social sciences.

In the introduction (pp. 15-48) the author presents the sources of her research material and explores the different definitions to corruption in modern and Roman time (pp. 16-23). It seems that the most cited definition to corruption is composed by J.S. Nye (1967): "Corruption is behavior which deviates from the formal duties or a public role because of private rewarding (personal, close family, private clique), pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private rewarding influence" (pp. 16-17). As for Rome, the author assures us that there was a lot of corruption during the Republic, although some scholars would apparently not agree. The discussion of terminology is also comprehensive. In the chapters which follow Cristina Rosillo López examines in detail four aspects of corruption: electoral, political, juristic and financial.

The second chapter (p. 49ff) covers electoral corruption during the third and second century AD in the Republic. The author explores the different kind of forms that the corruption emerges in the Roman society after the Second Punic War. Several ancient authors such as Varro, Livy and especially Cicero, are quoted and used as a source material in this chapter. The author shows that *according to our sources* electoral corruption was not only limited to isolated cases. Corruption was as evident in elections as it was in political life in general. Indeed, the following chapter (p. 87ff) explores the corruption in political life. Main themes in this third chapter are the forms of corruption (p. 88ff), the prevention of the corruption (p. 107ff) and the legal measures against political corruption (p. 115ff). The author also considers aspects of who were the people that were corrupted (p. 136ff) and with what they were corrupted with (p. 143ff). The fourth chapter (p. 155ff) focuses on corruption in the Roman courts. According to the author, especially during the years 122-70 BC, the Romans were aware of corruption in the courts and tried to prevent it in various ways (p. 155ff, 163ff). These two chapters (3 and 4) seem to be the most important ones in the book and they both include several subdivisions.

Chapter five (p. 179ff) draws attention to the financial sector. An interesting discussion concerns the senators' ability to finance their lifestyle and political life. In this chapter, Rosillo López turns to the classical question: Roman senators and their relationship to commerce and money. This chapter also explores from another angle the needs and demands of the circulation of money, and, of course, the emergence of monetary culture in general. It also presents some aspects of the history of the credit culture. In chapter six (p. 231ff) Rosillo López comes to the conclusion that monetization of Roman World in third and second century BC fostered corruption, in electoral, political and financial life. Corruption emerges especially during turbulent times in financial sector, and the Romans were aware of this phenomenon and problems that it caused.

In conclusion, here and there I would have preferred to see more analysis, and there are places and details were I disagree with the author. However, the book does cover almost every angle of corruption in Rome in the chosen period. It is well -written, the author systematically presents her evidence in a systematic way, and her references are most informative. Rosillo López's book covers an interesting aspect of Roman antiquity.