



Review

Reviewed Work(s): Landowners and Tenants in Roman Egypt. The Social Relations of Agriculture in the Oxyrhynchite Nome by Jane Rowlandson

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mung oder Konservierung übergeben worden waren oder gar in Händen Dritter zur Bearbeitung für eine Publikation ruhten. Dem Rezensenten wird der Eindruck vermittelt, daß hier nur ein Bruchteil der tatsächlich vorhandenen Fundmünzen der römischen Zeit in Württemberg vorgelegt wird, der aber noch vorhandene aktuellere Rest wegen organisatorischer Gründe und – wie es zwischen den Zeilen zu lesen ist – Unstimmigkeiten weggelassen wurde bzw. werden mußte.

Neu in den Nachträgen sind naturgemäß Korrekturen zu den FMRD-Ausgangsbänden. Hierbei konnte Stribrny auf Notizen von Elisabeth Nau und Ulrich Klein zurückgreifen. Der Band 'Abteilung II, Band 3 (Südwürttemberg-Hohenzollern) Nachtrag 1' wird von dem Fundort Rottweil, dem römischen 'Arae Flaviae' dominiert (S. 45–219). Nach Erscheinen des FMRD-Ausgangsbandes 1964 hat Elisabeth Nuber, Arae Flaviae IV, 1988, 235 ff alle Rottweiler Fundmünzen bis einschließlich 1981 neu bearbeitet und publiziert. Diese Fassung wurde für den vorliegenden Nachtrag vollständig übernommen (45–202) und um die Neufunde von 1982 bis 1992 ergänzt (202–219). Einer größeren Anzahl von Fundmünzen aus Rottweil wurde also die Ehre zuteil, zum dritten Mal publiziert zu werden. Dennoch ist es verdienstvoll, daß wenigstens dieser bedeutende Fundkomplex vollständig in den Nachtrag 1 eingegangen ist. Dies gilt aus oben genannten Gründen nicht für Gammertingen (223) oder Rottenburg, wo man lesen muß: «Aus Rottenburg fehlen mindestens 36 Fundmünzen aus der Grabung beim Martinshof, die für den Nachtrag nicht zur Verfügung standen» (231). Sucht man in dem Band nach größeren Schatzfunden, so findet sich nur ein einziger, um 230 schließender Hort mit 44 Denaren aus Sigmaringen (224–227). Und ausgerechnet bei diesem 1963/1964 vom Landesdenkmalamt ergrabenen Schatz ist der Verbleib nicht mehr zu ermitteln. Von Bedeutung ist schließlich noch der Nachtrag von 177 Einzelfunden aus Sulz am Neckar (22–36), von wo bisher nur 17 Stücke bekannt waren.

Der Band 'Abteilung II, Band 4 (Nordwürttemberg), Nachtrag 1' verdankt sein Material den zahlreichen Streufunden und den Neufunden innerhalb bekannter römischer Siedlungen und Anlagen. Wiederum ist es ärgerlich zu erfahren, daß dem Bearbeiter vorhandene Informationen nicht zugänglich waren und die hier abgedruckten Nachrichten aus archäologischen Fundpublikationen

zusammengestellt werden mußten, darüber hinaus, daß Lese- und Grabungsfunde seit 1972 (!) für eine gesonderte Publikation vorbereitet werden und Stribrny nicht zur Verfügung standen (43 unter Köngen). Ein Schatzfund ist in diesem Band besonders zu nennen: Es sind 615 Denare und Antoniniane mit Schwerpunkt ab 195 und Schlußmünzen 247, gefunden 1967 in Köngen (71–122). Bei der Auflistung des Fundinhaltes wurde, nur hier und abweichend von der FMRD-Praxis, auch das BMC-Zitat (Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, London 1923 ff) angegeben.

Die beiden FMRD-Nachträge bieten, allen Mißhelligkeiten zum Trotz, neues und wichtiges Material zur Untersuchung des Geldumlaufs in einem grenznahen Bereich des römischen Reiches, einem Gebiet, dessen Fundmünzenbestand auch der Rez. bereits mit Gewinn in seine Betrachtungen einbezogen hatte (F. Berger, Untersuchungen zu römischerzeitlichen Münzfunden in Nordwestdeutschland, Studien zu Fundmünzen der Antike, Bd. 9, Berlin 1992, 122–129, 152–156). Es wäre jedoch wünschenswert gewesen, wenn vor der Aufnahme und Drucklegung Einvernehmen zwischen dem Bearbeiter und den Verantwortlichen vor Ort erzielt worden wäre.

Frankfurt

Frank Berger

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Jane Rowlandson: *Landowners and Tenants in Roman Egypt. The Social Relations of Agriculture in the Oxyrhynchite Nome.* Oxford: Clarendon P. 1996. xiv, 384 S. 3 Ktn. (Oxford Classical Monographs.) 45 £.

The study of the management of agricultural land in Roman Egypt has made enormous strides in the last decade, with the publication of Dominic Rathbone's 'Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third-Century A.D. Egypt' (Cambridge 1991) and Dennis Kehoe's 'Management and Investment on Estates in Roman Egypt during the Early Empire' (Bonn 1992) (I have reviewed Rathbone's book in JRS 83, 1993, 237–39 and Kehoe's in BASP 30, 1993, 127–35). With the publication of Jane Rowlandson's book, the third part of a triptych is available. Where Rathbone concentrates on a single, archaically-attested large estate in the Fayum which

was directly managed by employees of the owner, and Kehoe surveys a variety of estates spread over four centuries and many parts of Egypt (but all documented in family archives), R. concentrates on the Oxyrhynchite nome and largely non-archival sources to try to draw a sketch of how landowners of varying wealth managed their holdings. These three books do not by any means exhaust the topic, but with them a body of accurate data, acute analysis, and usable theoretical frameworks now exists to guide further study. All three books, moreover, are attentive to the use of their results for wider discussions of the Roman economy and thus make a substantial contribution to integrating papyrological studies into larger historical discussions.

Most of R.'s book is devoted to laying the foundations for the detailed discussion of private tenancy in chapter 7. These foundations are of great value in their own right and will enable the book to double as an introduction and handbook for land and agriculture in Roman Egypt, something long needed. The appendix of tables by itself provides a wealth of analytical documentation on such matters as the relative sizes of villages, types of land, tax rates, references to public land, wills, dowries, land prices, and an extremely useful list of Oxyrhynchite land leases; since to this appendix is added a good bibliography (current to 1995) and full indexes, it can fairly be said that there is finally a current work to which anyone may be directed for a reliable introduction to the extremely complex subject of land.

The foundation chapters must be summarized briefly here. The introduction sets out the character of the Oxyrhynchite papyri, most importantly their urban origin, which leads to a view of the rural economy from the viewpoint of the city (unlike the case in the Arsinoite); there is no Oxyrhynchite Demotic material from the Roman period. «Much of this book is in fact concerned with exploring the means by which, and the extent to which, the prosperity of the urban population was derived from their ties with residents of the villages of the nome» (4).

Chapter 1 gives a careful description of the nome and its neighbors, supported by sketch maps. R. notes the increasing use of irrigation machinery from the 3rd century onward, coupled with more mentions of canals. She estimates that the nome included in all some 800 km², with a rural population of

perhaps 100,000 and urban of 20,000–25,000. The textual documentation of villages roughly corresponds to their relative sizes. The documentation is, however, shallow for any one village. Wheat and barley were dominant, but there were also fodder crops, vineyards, and flax, as well as sheep and goats.

In chapter 2 we get a judicious description of categories of land, particularly of the sources of the development of private land in the Roman period. Most private land was taxed at 1 artaba per aroura, substantially less than public land. R. argues that the high – compared to the Fayum – proportion of private land found in the fourth century had probably always been characteristic of the nomes of the Nile valley. Chapter 3 turns to public land, relatively poorly documented in the Oxyrhynchite. Tax rates are shown in table 3: although minutely graded over a considerable range (roughly 2.75–5.75 art./ar. for all-wheat rents), half of all cases are in the 3.5–4.5 range, plus extra charges totalling 15 percent for wheat, 20 percent for barley. It is not clear how much flexibility in public land rents there was: not a great deal, R. thinks. Private leases thus offered more adjustability over time. Public land may have been the mechanism society used to adjust to the fact that some farmers did not have sons and others had too many – an intergenerational means of redistribution. The absence of mention of public farmers in the Oxyrhynchite (outside the Fayum, actually) may be evidence that over time «there was a tendency for public land to be taken from the control of people who used it as a means of subsistence, and to pass into the possession of those wealthy enough to live from the income of those and other properties» (101).

Chapter 4 discusses landowners and their properties. The evidence does not allow quantification like that derived from the fourth-century Hermopolite registers; instead a considerable number of specific cases are analyzed in detail, particularly of large landowners (R. concludes that we probably know the names of most of these). The level of fragmentation of landholding seems (as elsewhere) very high. But larger owners tended to have some larger plots, and often fragments were not far distant. Fragmentation fits into the Egyptian pattern of partible inheritance, treated in chapter 5. Along with it goes a relatively equal distribution of property to female children (the old Egyptian tradition of a double share for the oldest son

is only rarely demonstrably in play). Wills were not necessarily normal, but neither was testacy limited to the rich, and other instruments, like *donationes mortis causa*, were also used for testamentary purposes. The evidence for succession shows a high incidence of female ownership. R. gives a long discussion of dowry law, with the conclusion that the dowry was not used mainly for transmission of land, that being done separately, most commonly by parental apportionment. This method left the land-ownership in the hands of the woman, not of her husband. The fragmentation produced by partible inheritance was not entirely bad, as it helped reduce agricultural risk, and in any case the division of land could be countered by various strategies: continued holding of an inheritance undivided for agricultural operations and consolidation through intra-family sales.

Sales occupy chapter 6. Women are heavily represented in sale documents, but these otherwise show no noteworthy concentration of status; in particular, there is no consistent predominance of sellers or buyers in the metropolis or the village. Most sales are of small amounts: two-thirds are for fewer than 10 arouras, and a half fewer than 5 ar. R. rejects with a lengthy and convincing argument the old thesis that the third century saw a wave of land-buying speculation against inflation. She also sees little sign of an active 'commercial' market in land. Rather, sellers and buyers were usually meeting specific needs (e.g., providing land for marrying daughters, adjusting family holdings) and tended to sell to family members and neighbours. «Far from serving as a major vehicle for social change, as the notion of large-scale investment or speculation in land would imply, the sales seem primarily to have assisted in maintaining the predominant pattern of small-scale, highly fragmented landownership, by giving it greater flexibility» (198). Mortgages of land may reflect extraordinary expenditures and the financial distress of the borrower, to judge from the substantial default rate.

And so we are prepared for chapter 7, about leasing. Before the middle of the first century AD, leases are mostly short-term contracts, often of sizable amounts of land to be subleased by relatively high-status entrepreneurs. Such leases continue throughout the Roman period. From the mid-first century on, however, the Oxyrhynchite also develops a characteristic pattern of multiyear leases, often in-

volving crop rotation, and most often linking metropolitan landlords and village tenants. The land is usually a small plot, not a whole farm; both landlords and tenants diversified their relationships, and tenants are presumed already to have a base of operations and the necessary equipment. R. emphasizes the difference between this pattern and the Italian model, supposed in the legal sources, of the lease of an entire farm with its equipment. Rents are most typically in wheat, but land planted in cash crops (fodder, hay, flax) often has a cash rent. R. argues that typical yields on good land exceeded 10 artabas per aroura, and she thinks that the rise of rents visible in the second-century papyri is genuine and reflects landlords taking a larger share of the yield. These leases disappear in the late third century, but R. argues from other evidence (accounts, mainly) that the widespread use of longterm leasing by urban landowners continued, although perhaps managed by on-the-spot agents. One does wonder if there may not have been considerable regional variation in the use of written leases in the fourth century and later.

The lessors in these leases are mainly urban residents; women appear in about a quarter of cases, not greatly out of line with their ownership of land. Few landlords seem to be distant absentees, but this could well be a reflection of the fact that the papyri were found in Oxyrhynchos, not Alexandria. What is important is that the phenomenon is not simply a matter of those landlords for whom other management models would have been impossible, like institutions, minors, and the distant. Nor does passing investment and risk to tenants appear to be more than a modest element in the preference for leasing (in this respect R. differs from Kehoe's view). Leasing thus appears as a fundamental part of the creation of a metropolitan landed elite, free from day-to-day involvement in farming and able to lead a leisured Hellenic life in the cities, and its development in the first century of Roman rule corresponds to the general picture of the Romanization of the elite found elsewhere in the papyri. The disappearance of the leases may reflect the growing distance of that elite from their estates and perhaps also some increase in the concentration of wealth and tenant dependency.

Beyond any one pattern, however, R. emphasizes that we see in leasing a tool by which a variety of landowners could modulate their adaptation to circumstances and

choose how they wanted to live and make their living. Her conclusion is very much in line with contemporary tendencies in history to describe society neither in deterministic nor in purely individualistic terms, but rather to look to how people made choices about their lives within the range of constraints and options open to them.

Even this inadequate summary gives, I hope, a sense of the riches of this careful, intelligent, and levelheaded work, in which the nature and limits of the documentation are almost always kept in view, but allowed to enrich rather than to paralyze generalization. With it, our understanding of the complex ways in which the distinctive society of Roman Egypt was formed is greatly advanced.

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J. A. S. Evans: *The Age of Justinian*. The Circumstances of Imperial Power. London/New York: Routledge 1996. XIV, 345 S. 2 Kartentaf. 45 £.

Der Verf., Professor of Classics an der University of British Columbia (Kanada), Papyrologe und Verfasser von Büchern über Prokop von Kaisareia (1972) und Herodot (1991), legt hier das vierte in einer Reihe von neueren Büchern in englischer Sprache vor, welche die Epoche Justinians im Überblick behandeln.¹

Der einleitenden Feststellung «The definitive history of Justinian has not yet been written» kann man beipflichten, wenn man das Wort «definitive», das E. selbst alsbald kritisch in Frage stellt, durch 'fundamental' ersetzt. Am ehesten fundamentalen Charakter hat bislang wohl noch die sorgfältig dokumentierte Darstellung von E. Stein,² hinter der auch das inzwischen zweibändige Werk von B. Rubin,³ obwohl im minutiösen Detail durchweg genauer, wegen seiner weitgehenden Fixierung auf die Kriege und seines stellenweise schwer erträglichen Stils zurückstehen muß. Eine umfassende Darstellung, die u. a. auch die Gesetzgebung Justinians erschöpfend auszuwerten hätte, steht also noch aus; sie müßte wohl das Lebenswerk eines Kenners der Epoche sein, der nicht zuletzt auch Sozialhistoriker ist.

Wenn E. in der Einleitung ferner ein Gibbon'sches Verfallsmodell ablehnt und auf

«change» setzt, hofft man bei der weiteren Lektüre Grundlegendes über den epochalen Wandel im Zeitalter Justinians zu erfahren, zumal in einem Eingangskapitel die Entwicklung vor Beginn der Herrschaft Justinians recht ausführlich behandelt wird. Doch es entsteht eher der Eindruck, daß E. diese Frage nicht durchgehend in den Griff bekommt und oft bei der Beschreibung stehenbleibt, mögen auch hier und da Entwicklungen erkennbar werden.

E. stellt die Epoche in vier Themenkreisen dar: Kap. 2 behandelt die Regierungszeit Justinians bis zum Nika-Aufstand 532, Kap. 3 seine Kriege gegen die Vandalen, die Goten und die Perser; Kap. 4 ist innenpolitischen Fragen gewidmet, Kap. 5 den letzten zehn Jahren bis zum Tod des Kaisers (565); es klingt aus mit einigen Bemerkungen zum Geschehen nach dem Tod Justinians und einem enttäuschend kurzen Abschnitt 'Conclusion and assessment', aus dem man im wesentlichen nur folgendes erfährt: Justinians große Kriegsunternehmen dienten im Osten der Sicherung der Grenzen und waren im Westen von dem Traum der Reicherneuerung bestimmt. Für diese Kriege, für z. T. gigantische Bauprojekte, für Zeremoniell und Zirkusspiele verschwendete er die unter Kaiser Anastasius angehäuften Finanzen, womit er u. a. seine niedere Herkunft zu kompensieren versuchte; er förderte zwar auch klassische Bildung, aber persönlich interessierte ihn eigentlich nur Theologisches.

Der an dieser Stelle erwartete Vergleich der Epoche mit der vorausgehenden, also ein zusammenfassender Beitrag zum Thema 'change', bleibt aus. Wer zum Epochenwandel neueste solide Information wünscht, soll-

¹ J. W. Barker, *Justinian and the Later Roman Empire*. Madison/Wisconsin 1966; R. Browning, *Justinian and Theodora*. London 1971, 1987; J. Moorhead, *Justinian*. London 1994.

² *Histoire du Bas-Empire*, II. De la disparition de l'Empire d'occident à la mort de Justinien (476–565). Paris/Bruges 1949 (postum), Ndr. Amsterdam 1968. Das Werk wird von E. in Anmerkungen gelegentlich zitiert, aber nicht in der sonst reichhaltigen 'Bibliography'.

³ *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, I. Berlin 1960 (von E. zitiert); II, postum hrsg. von C. Capizzi. Berlin 1995 (konnte E. noch nicht bekannt sein).