

versklavter chinesischer Gefangener im Dienst der Mandschus etwa 1615–1620 sowie über 'Sklaveneinheiten' westafrikanischer Häuptlinge im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert.

H.s Studie ist zweifellos anregend. Allerdings wird in seiner 'ideologischen Perspektive' in gewisser Weise das Gesamtbild verzerrt. Seine Überschätzung des Ausmaßes der militärischen Verwendung unfreier Kombattanten und Ruderer führt ihn zu einem sehr pointierten Urteil, wenn er betont (220), daß er die Kombination eines der schlimmsten Unterdrückungssysteme der Geschichte mit dem organisierten Massenmord im Kriege thematisiert habe. Demgegenüber ist zu beachten, daß der Militärdienst für wehrfähige Bürger in Griechenland und Rom auch eine Bestätigung ihrer Bürgeridentität bedeutete und infolgedessen prinzipiell der Ausschluß der Sklaven aus den Streitkräften der Bürgergemeinschaften geboten war.

Bochum

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Carsten Drecoll: *Die Liturgien im römischen Kaiserreich des 3. und 4. Jb. n. Chr.* Untersuchung über Zugang, Inhalt und wirtschaftliche Bedeutung der öffentlichen Zwangsdienste in Ägypten und anderen Provinzen. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 1997. 401 S. (Historia Einzelschriften. 116.).

The Romans preferred to keep their permanent, professional administration small and to draw governors, however amateurish, from the ranks of the upper orders. Over the first two centuries of the empire, they developed practices in local administration in line with this overall approach. City and village governance was rotated among the better-endowed residents, while manual labor was distributed over as wide a spectrum of the male population as possible. One result was to keep stated tax rates low. Another was that because public offices brought work and financial risk, but little or no reward, they were unwelcome to most individuals. Rather than rethink the whole system, the Romans gradually made the offices compulsory. The rich then devoted their ingenuity to devising escapes from these offices and to complaining about them. In the third and fourth centuries we see these practices fully developed, most clearly in the Egyptian papyri but also in legal sources and occasionally elsewhere.

The papyrological material was the object of Friedrich Oertel's great work 'Die Liturgie' (Leipzig 1917). Since 1960, the subject has been closely linked to the name of Naphtali Lewis, who in that year began publishing a series of detailed studies on many aspects of the system of liturgies; a second edition of his 'Compulsory Public Services of Roman Egypt' (Florence 1982) appeared in the same year as Carsten Drecoll's book. The two complement one another well, for Lewis – dealing only with the papyri – offers a concise inventory of compulsory offices, a detailed discussion of nomination and appointment, and two reprinted articles on exemption from liturgy; Drecoll, by contrast, aims at a systematic historical treatment of the entire subject, embracing all classes of evidence. Such a book should certainly be most welcome to all students of Roman Egypt, but could have great value for those seeking to assess the character of the developed Roman Empire in general; for as my opening remarks suggest, liturgy is not some quaint antiquarian side-light but a fundamental aspect of how the Romans conceived of empire.

Between a brief introduction and an even briefer conclusion, D. arranges his work in three large sections: nomination and exemption; the duties of the individual offices; and the social standing and responsibilities of the liturgists. Appendixes give a bibliography and indexes of terms and sources. The work has the systematic character one expects from a dissertation (which this book was, in Freiburg, although the fact is nowhere stated; no preface or acknowledgments appear in the book – the result, according to the author, of haste in publication, of which regrettably many traces are found elsewhere as well). Inside each section or subsection, D. proceeds by analyzing first the evidence from the papyri, then that from inscriptions (where applicable), then from Libanius, finally from the legal sources. Despite his programmatic statement (11) about taking all types of evidence to-

gether, there is less interconnection between the analyses of particular classes of evidence than one might expect. In part this is because the different types of evidence tend to answer (or raise) different questions. But the thinness of the sections of conclusions (to each section, as well as final) suggests that the enterprise exhausted itself in the detailed analyses. It may also be that the limitation to the third and fourth centuries eliminated many of the most interesting questions about the liturgical system. One particularly misses any discussion of how the system came into being. By contrast, discussions of taxation itself, although often only tangentially relevant to the main theme of the book, occupy a large amount of space.

It is impossible to examine the detailed arguments and conclusions of a book of this scale in a brief review. Part 1 concludes with a factual summary and a reminder that liturgical offices were not like career posts in the administration. Financial means and residence were the main qualifications for liturgies, service in which was generally unwelcome. Exemption rested on either absence of qualification or various specific disqualifications. D. sees little difference in substance between Egypt and other provinces, but he notes that the absence of evidence for villages elsewhere makes their liturgies look (wrongly) like an Egyptian phenomenon. Part 2 leads to the recognition that it is more productive to compare duties than titles across provincial lines. When one looks at duties, the main civic magistracies in general are remarkably uniform, especially throughout the East. Tax collection is harder to compare, but D. suggests that the introduction of the *dekaprotos*, long known elsewhere, into Egypt in the third century may have marked the intrusion of the cities into village tax-collection. The big question is whether village liturgists existed outside Egypt; D. concludes that they did in Syria and Asia, but probably not in the West. He ascribes this difference to pre-Roman traditions. This is dubious; village administration certainly existed in Hellenistic times, but the entire liturgical system in the villages is a Roman creation. In Part 3, we learn unsurprisingly that civic liturgists were wealthy (D.'s 'top quarter' is indeed much too wide; top 3 percent is closer to the truth). «Die Liturgien sind also keine finanzielle Gefahr für die *decuriones* gewesen», says D. (352). It is one thing to suspect the complaining councillors of exaggeration, another to imagine that the burden was fiction. D. is surely wrong about this.

The detailed discussions do not always inspire confidence. The quality of argumentation is weak, D. frequently does not know or cite the essential literature (even my article in *BASP* 15 [1978] 9–16 on the property-holdings of village liturgists), and his handling of papyrological texts is often defective. For reasons of space I limit myself to three examples. On 112–115 D. argues that Bernhard Palme was incorrect to see the term ἀπατητής as an official position ('Amt') in the third century; rather, he thinks, it came to be a regular office and technical term only in the fourth century, while in the third it was «ein allgemeiner Ausdruck für Steuereintreiber». This evolutionary argument centers around a handful of third-century papyri, and from it one would suppose that this is all the evidence. But this is misleading, for D. simply does not engage most of the third-century evidence collected in Palme's book ('Das Amt des ἀπατητής in Ägypten', Vienna 1989). Nor (chronological blinders again) does he notice that specialized terminology appears already in the second century, with more than two hundred attestations in the Theban ostraca.

The discussion of the *epiteretai* (115–119) makes heavy weather of arguing that these officials, originally tax-farmers, had become liturgical in the third century. D. thus ignores Lewis's entry (already in the 1968 'Inventory of Compulsory Services') showing liturgical character already in the 130s from P.Leit. 11. This is one specimen of a frequent occurrence, the laborious argument to prove what was demonstrated years ago by others, who are hardly ever cited. It is most often when a misguided polemic is needed, as in the case of Palme, that the scholarly literature is brought into the picture, and in those cases the arguments are frequently misrepresented.

Examples of misused papyrological evidence are legion. On 84 D. devotes half a page of his discussion of the *gymnasiarch* to tax collection, which he correctly sees as not inherently part of the *gymnasiarch's* duties. «Dennoch gibt es Beispiele, in denen ein *gymnasiarchos* in diesem Zusammenhang erscheint», he says. But he offers just two examples, and both are wrong. In one, P.Cair.Isid. 34, Aurelius Masculinus, probably a *dekaprotos*, de-

scribes himself as γυμ( ), rightly resolved by the editors as γυμ(νασιαρχήσας), former gymnasiarch. In the other, D. alleges the first edition of a text from the Sakaon archive (P.Thead. 27) which gave a signer as Aurelius Philadelphos (again a dekaprotos) δι' ἐμοῦ Σακαπίων(ος) γυμν(ασιάρχου) κοσμη(ητού). In P.Sakaon 12 the editor declined to read γυμν and simply replaced those letters with dots for unread letters; for κοσμη he read βο-ηθ(οῦ). Now even if Jouguet's readings were correct (and D. tries in n. 268 to defend them, despite his principle [12] of avoiding papyrological readings), the nouns could be replaced with aorist participles, as Jouguet himself remarked in a note; they would then disappear as evidence. In fact neither reading is really defensible, either palaeographically or contextually (we want the assistant's title, not the principal's). There is thus no evidence at all here for the involvement of current gymnasiarchs as tax-collectors.

One is tempted to take refuge in the usual formula: This is a useful collection of information, even if it does not advance its interpretation very much. This is partly true. The book, with its numerous lists, will be a valuable starting point to anyone investigating any of the offices discussed. Unfortunately, however, no piece of evidence cited here can be assumed to be accurately rendered. D. cites editions he has not consulted (an amusing example on 99, where the cited Chrest.Mitt. 321 eliminates the ghost-name D. gives from the ed.pr.). He has frequently failed to consult the 'Berichtigungsliste', with significant consequences (e.g., misdating the reappearance of the sitologoi on 127). He presents absurdities for conclusions (e.g., 38-39, supposing that the *poros* equalled the cost of hiring a substitute to do the work). Despite its virtues, this is, in short, not the book on liturgies that we were hoping for.

It did not have to be so. Historians not trained as papyrologists have shown in recent years that they can produce first-rate works using papyrological evidence. One need think only of Joëlle Beaucamp's study of women in late antiquity, or Dennis Kehoe's investigation of estate management. But the evidence is regrettably plain that D.'s book has been written and produced without the investment of learning and patience necessary to achieve such results.

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T.G. Elliott: *The Christianity of Constantine the Great*. Scranton: Scranton UP 1996. X, 366 S. 24,95 (Ppb. 19,95) \$.

Das hier anzuzweigende Buch führt vor Augen, wie aufgrund der Problematik unserer Überlieferung und der auch dadurch möglichen Spannweite der Interpretation, aber vor allem doch die Bedeutung und geschichtliche Nachwirkung Konstantins die Diskussion über diesen römischen Kaiser auch 150 Jahre nach dem Erscheinen von J. Burckhardts, 'Die Zeit Konstantins d. Gr.' (1853), noch nicht zur Ruhe zu kommen scheint, sich speziell bei den Fragen zur Religiosität Konstantins nach wie vor die Geister scheiden und dabei auch zeitgeschichtliche Hintergründe bedeutsam erscheinen (man vgl. lediglich M. Clauss, Konstantin d. Gr. 1996 und H. Brandt, Geschichte der römischen Kaiserzeit von 284-363, 1998, 32 ff; für die von E. vielfach abweichenden Positionen des Rez. vgl. A. Lippold, Die Historia Augusta, eine Sammlung röm. Kaiserbiographien aus der Zeit Konstantins, hrsg. v. G. Waldherr 1998, bes. 30 ff. 239 ff und 245 ff, aber auch schon ZKG 92, 1981, 1 ff).

Ausgangspunkt des Buches war laut Vorwort die Erkenntnis des Verf., daß die Geschichte Eusebs von Caesarea (vita Constantini = VC 1,22 ff) über die Bekehrung Konstantins als Fiktion oder ein Mißverständnis, basierend auf Konstantins eigener Erzählung über die Weisung Gottes, das *labarum* anfertigen zu lassen, auszugehen sei. Dies habe ihn darin bestärkt, daß Konstantins Christentum einen anderen Ursprung habe als das 'Wunder' von 312. Skeptisch sei er dann auch gegenüber weiteren Ansichten der bisherigen Forschung geworden, wie etwa der Abhängigkeit Konstantins von Bischof Ossius, der Sucht des Kaisers nach Macht oder dem Wechsel seiner Politik gegenüber den Arianern und