

ELKE HARTMANN: *Ordnung in Unordnung. Kommunikation, Konsum und Konkurrenz in der stadtrömischen Gesellschaft der frühen Kaiserzeit*. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2016. ISBN 978-3-515-11362-5. 255 S. EUR 52.

Elke Hartmann's new book is a study of the urban culture in Rome of the first century of the Empire. Hartmann has chosen a thematic, even cultural-historical, approach, where her focus is on the social practices by which the social standing of an individual was established, improved, and lost. This book is not a study of original sources. It is an interpretation of early Imperial Roman society based on a wide selection of recent research combined with an interpretative reading of contemporary literature, especially Martial, Juvenal, and Seneca. Hartmann's attention is as much as possible on the lower classes, in practice limited to the *equites*, but for the overall argument of the book this is an excellent choice. The highest senatorial elite hardly needed to establish their social standing to the extent it was vital for the representatives of the lower strata of the society.

Hartmann herself calls her chosen approach a "change in the research perspective from social history to a history of social and cultural practices" ("Von der Sozialgeschichte zur Geschichte der sozialen und kulturellen Praktiken", p. 24). This new approach is surprisingly fruitful, for it allows the author to leave behind the limits of a structural analysis, where each practice and person must be seen as a representative of a bigger structure, and to focus on the various practices available for individual negotiation of the structurally limiting and defining factors in society. Hartmann is not quite as interested in defining and limiting the places and positions for members of various social and demographic groups as she is in analysing and understanding how these definitions and limitations could be negotiated, circumvented and even manipulated to one's own advantage.

The book is structured around seven themes which are all treated in a similar matter: first introducing the current stand of research on the theme, then furthering the discussion on selected sub-themes, and finally adding some interesting elements discovered in the literary sources in order to illustrate how these structures were put to use. The chosen approach is interesting and provides a good read. The reader is offered a vivid interpretation of the urban culture of the early imperial period, especially from the point of view of the freedmen and *equites* struggling to have a position and perhaps even a career. The chosen themes reflect different spatial environments where this performance took place.

The creation of social hierarchies in the theatre is the first main theme. The attention here is not only on the traditional order of seating but also on questions such as the requirements for proper attire and the responses of the audience present to the social spectacle on display. Also, a detailed discussion of *lex Roscia theatralis* is offered, as well as a discussion on the role of theatrical entertainment in general in the Roman urban culture. The focus is very much on how the members of the audience presented themselves, and the actual substance of the plays is not of importance here.

A smaller chapter discusses the theme of the kiss as an expression of social ties. It is especially the imperial kiss that Hartmann interprets as a "relational barometer", and the discussion is an interesting take on the minor gestures of social play. This discussion brings the book naturally to its next theme, the changing role of the patron-client relationship in the early Empire. The Emperor had become the sole real patron. Hartmann's argument is that the traditional role of the client diminished in importance as the system developed from a vertical to a horizontal structure,

leading to a disruption of the ties that connected the levels of the society with each other. Instead of securing favours from and offering services to the *patron*, the aspiring man always could turn to the *matron*, as is described in the next chapter, devoted to the practice of "hunting for inheritances". The phenomenon is not quite as one-sided as the literary sources often imply, for as Hartmann shows, it is closely connected to the question of why the Roman elites had so few children and also to the wider value system of the times. Hartmann discusses partly similar changes that had taken place in the previously discussed role of the clients, these two chapters seem to form the "social-historical core" of the book.

The nature of the conspicuous consumption of the newly enriched freedmen in particular is also a natural continuation of the discussion, and brings it back to the public spaces and places. Here Hartmann aptly displays the difference in consumption habits between the old elite and the new rich. The division between the old and the new, as well as the receding public status of the senatorial elites, is also the theme of the discussion on public bathing habits, where Hartmann argues that this social practice was also mostly for classes other than the senators, who instead retired behind both the moral code and the walls of their villas.

The last theme Hartmann discusses is the rise of the *delatores* and the public denunciation of crimes, especially against the *maiestas* of the emperor. Although this is a logical addition to discussions on the role of clients and the hunt for inheritances, it somehow does not seem to be placed in the right place; perhaps the explanation is in the title of this chapter, where denunciations are seen as the expression of the lack of social order ("Denunziationen als Ausdruck gesellschaftlicher Unordnung").

The thematic narrative thus constructed is interesting, and even if the chapters with their separate themes seem only loosely connected, the book actually carries with it an argument. Contrary to what one might expect from looking at the table of contents, this does not seem like a collection of essays previously written for other purposes, but a thought-out whole that was written in the form it was planned.

The book is very carefully written with detailed references and a good bibliography. Its merit is in the totality of its view, and a full read of this relatively thin book can be recommended.

Harri Kiiskinen

KLAUS JUNKER: *Interpreting the Images of Greek Myths. An Introduction*. Translated by ANNEMARIE KÜNZL-SNODGRASS – ANTHONY SNODGRASS. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012. ISBN 978-0-521-72007-6. XIV, 225 pp. GBP 55, USD 95 (hb), GBP 17.99, USD 32.99 (pb).

Klaus Junker's *Griechische Mythenbilder. Eine Einführung in ihre Interpretation* (2005) has for some time been available in an English translation in both paperback and hardback formats. This notable contribution can be viewed alongside other recent overtures to the study of ancient pictorial representations of mythological subjects, namely those of Susan Woodford, Jocelyn Penny Small, and Luca Giuliani, all published in 2003, to which Junker promises to add his own text as "the first to focus solely on the contextual meaning of images of Greek myths" (p. xiii).