

Monika Frass (ed.), *Kauf, Konsum und Märkte. Wirtschaftswelten im Fokus – Von der römischen Antike bis zur Gegenwart*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013. 253 pp. ISBN 978-3-447-06864-2.

The volume under review publishes papers presented at an international symposium titled “Purchasing, Consumption and Markets”, which took place in Salzburg in October 2011. The symposium assembled specialists in history, ancient history and modern economics, with the aim of creating an interdisciplinary environment for innovative scholarly discussion. The goal of the conference, as declared by its organizer who also edited the volume, was for historians to benefit from modern economic theory, and for economists to benefit from the history of economic and social institutions, allowing a better understanding of modern patterns of behavior (p.7). The underlying logic of the latter claim, as put by Neville Morley in his contribution to the volume, is that modern economics ‘rests on implicit historical claims such as a belief in an unchanging human nature, and that means that, at certain times, ancient economic history can contribute to contemporary debates’ (p. 119).

The volume opens with an article by Jesper Carlsen (University of Southern Denmark), which outlines the involvement of freedmen in the production and distribution of wine in Italy in late-Republican and early-imperial times. Carlsen’s analysis offers ‘a re-examination of some rather well-known paragraphs in Book Fourteen of Pliny the Elder’s *Natural History*’ (p. 16), augmented by the relatively little documentary evidence there is, with the outcome of a general overview on the economic-related environment of Italian vineyard activity.

Kai Ruffing’s (University of Marburg) contribution, too, centers on Roman wine markets, focusing on auctions in Ostia. After considering different types of market exchange, the paper outlines the methodological principles set by New Institutional Economics (NIE) and presents the institutional advantages of auctions, namely lowering transaction costs. Ruffing examines the operation of the *forum vinarium* in Ostia, seeing the ‘specific market system’ (p. 222) of auctions as an example for the connection between economic cooperation and social networks. He argues that the advantage of such an NIE-based theoretical framework is its applicability to different human societies (p. 225).

The historian Christian Dirninger (University of Salzburg) also presents a detailed description of methodology in its theoretical context. Dirninger analyses what he refers to as ‘the economic theory of antiquity in the light of modern market-economics’. He takes relevant statements of Aristotle as inseparably linked with issues of business ethics and the importance of market-based definitions, distinguishing between two conceptual dimensions: a regulatory-institutional dimension and a market-functional one.

Neville Morley’s (Bristol University) contribution is perhaps the most theoretical one. It starts with some insights into the historiographical and cultural reasons for why the study of ancient economic history often avoids questioning the role of the “Market” as a major organizing formation of socio-economic interaction in Classical Antiquity. After pointing out themes on which consensus had been reached, as well as underlying ongoing disagreements among scholars, Morley gives some definitions for “Market” and describes possible directions for new developments in the field. These, he hopes, might better explore the existence, or lack thereof, of impersonal market interactions, and estimate the degree to which the “Market” was a dominant form of exchange.

The economist Helmut Eymannsberger (University of Salzburg), too, deals extensively with economic theory and contemporary experience. Eymannsberger stresses that trade, precisely because of its particular socio-economic significance, serves as a mirror to society. He then identifies four universal (i.e. applicable to every human society) functions of trade: distributive function; economic function (quality of goods, pricing); communicative function (information, advice, promotion, advertising); service function (recycling or disposal, adaptation to individual customer needs).

All four functions of trade appear in the contribution of Nicholas Rauh, Caroline Autret and John Lund (West Lafayette University), which studies the distribution patterns of Roman amphorae in the *longue durée*, in order to investigate ‘whether there was a connection between the design of ancient transport amphorae and their marketing from the Hellenistic era through to late antiquity’ (p. 145). Archaeological evidence is analyzed with the help of modern market-psychology strategies, e.g. advertising effectiveness, functions of packing and packaging design and its influence on consumption behavior of ancient customers. The writers conclude that while Hellenistic amphorae functioned as advertising tools in an “economy of abundance”, Late Roman amphorae better fit an era of sustained conflict (p. 166).

Peter Herz (University of Regensburg) takes a broad institutionalized view on Markets in antiquity in the *longue durée* (p. 73), with the term “Market” referring not just to its localized or periodical manifestations, but to its broader meaning as a mechanism by which ‘ein Austausch von Waren oder eine Übergabe von Waren gegen Geld’ takes place (p. 71). Herz examines a variety of themes based on different types of evidence in order to demonstrate how people in antiquity operated via the framework of Markets, arguing that ancient commercial activity was much more differentiated than we often imagine (p. 79).

The historian Christian Rohr (University of Bern) also promotes a *longue durée* perspective. Rohr focuses on late medieval and early modern eras, studying consumer behavior in the face of natural catastrophe. He lists parameters for determining catastrophic mentality triggered by extreme natural phenomena, e.g. lack of labor force, direct or indirect shocks, unexpectedness vs. everyday routine, accumulation of severe natural events over a short period, symbolic connotations and a general sense of crisis. He then examines case studies: management of repeated flooding in 14th to 16th century in the Austrian town of Wels (pp. 189-199) and in the 16th century city of Krems (pp. 200-203), and dealing with plagues of locusts in the Eastern Alps in the 14th to 17th century (pp. 203-208). His analyses focus on control systems applied in times of crisis, either through bans (e.g. on exporting resources considered essential), or adaptation of a “Riskokulture” that may reduce impact on supply and demand. Lessons from these historical examples, Rohr cautiously suggests, could be applied to other catastrophes or radical occurrences in different periods (pp. 183-184).

Ingomar Weiler’s (University of Graz) contribution studies the trade in slaves from a comparative perspective. Because slavery treats humans as a commodity to be bought and sold, its ancient and modern manifestations may be compared. The paper starts by stating the relevance of the theme and moves to a historiographical overview of the comparisons between ancient and modern slavery. It then presents major comparative analyses in the study of slavery. Lastly, it highlights specific scenarios of slave trade in ancient markets, associating it with price-performance criteria that allow insight into supply of and demand for slaves in antiquity.

Daniele Mattiangeli (University of Salzburg) analyses the Roman contract of sale (*emptio venditio*) from an institutionalized perspective. He focuses on the Roman division into real- and consensual-contracts, which allowed separating the moment of creating a binding legal obligation from that of the actual transfer of object(s). He argues that the mandatory consequence of Roman consensual sale was that it did not concern the conveyance of ownership. This distinctive Roman legal creation, separating sale from transfer of ownership (p. 89), did not originate from the old *ius civile*. In the latter, ownership passed by delivery (*traditio* in the case of *res nec Mancipi*, *mancipatio* in that of *res Mancipi*), and was simultaneous to the transfer of objects; whereas in classical Roman sale the seller’s obligations did not include passing ownership rights.

Dominic Rathbone’s (King’s College, London) contribution combines papyrological evidence with numismatic analysis. It focuses on two day-by-day lists of expenses from the office of the *grapheion* of Tebtunis, written in AD 45-46 by Kronion, son of Apion (p. 125). Rathbone’s analysis offers a reevaluation of monetization and market exchange in AD 40s Roman Egypt, based on the principles of NIE. Assuming that associations supported economic activities of individuals, and that obligatory registration of contracts provided security to weaker parties,

Rathbone argues that at a petty level Tebtunis ‘fits better with a free market model than, say, a “bazaar” economy’ (p. 140). His approach is novel not least for its focus ‘on private transactions rather than public charges’, but also for interpreting ‘Kronion’s accounts against the background of the coins in circulation at that time’ (p. 129), i.e. prior to Nero’s issue of new copper *drachmae* (so-called *chalkinê*). His stimulating observation concerns the coexistence of several monetary standards of reckoning — that of the state, alongside a range of private ones — all used simultaneously, based on the nature of the transaction and the status and relation of the parties involved.

To sum up, the volume under review looks at market interaction in the Roman world and beyond. It encourages a re-examination of the notion of “Market” within the study of Classical Antiquity, and as such is a welcome contribution. The volume gathers studies based on a wide and varied basis of evidence, from literary and legal sources, to papyrology, epigraphy, archaeology and numismatics. Although the studies derive from different scholarly traditions, the quality of articles remains consistent. In dealing with the methodological problem at the heart of scholarly dispute, namely the ‘unavoidable dependence on prior interpretative frameworks’ (Morley, p. 109), the volume supports the current trend in Economic History of Antiquity of following the theoretical framework offered by NIE. The general agenda arising from many of its contributions favors some applicability of universal principles, which allow comparison between ‘economies of historical societies without transferring concepts of specific institutions from one particular society to another’ (Ruffing, p. 225). Overall, this is a worthy contribution to the debate on the Roman economy and a useful example of how the field may develop beyond the long-existing dichotomous debate between “primitivists” and “modernists”.

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Tønnes Bekker-Nielsen, *Space, Place and Identity in Northern Anatolia*. Geographica Historica 29. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2014. 271 pp. ISBN 978-3-515-10748-8.

Historical geography has always been a default mode for studying Asia Minor in antiquity, and the tradition can be traced through classic works from W.M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (1890), through Louis Robert, *À travers l’Asie Mineure* (1980), to David French, *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor*, which has been published in seven major on-line volumes between 2012 and 2014 (<http://biaa.ac.uk/publications/item/name/electronic-monographs>). It is entirely appropriate that the studies assembled here appear in the series *Geographica Historica*, edited by Eckhardt Olshausen, himself the contributor of a useful paper ‘Pontos: profile of a landscape’ (pp. 39-48). The book’s title cautiously prefers the neutral name northern Anatolia to that of Pontus, as ancient Pontus was a notoriously protean monster, changing shape and evading definition according to different usages and perspectives. There is no agreement among the participants about what the entity “Pontus” was, although the focus is on the Anatolian region rather than the Black Sea basin as a whole. Bekker-Nielsen in his editorial introduction groups the papers by Brian McGing, Olshausen, and Marco Vitale as discussions of regional spaces. Olshausen accepts Strabo’s definition of the region’s boundaries, but projects them back to the supposed foundation of a Pontic kingdom c. 300 BC (p. 47); McGing, in an excellent survey of cultural identity in Mithridates’ kingdom which has previously appeared in a Russian version, prefers the view that the regional definition of Pontus was largely determined by Pompey’s organisation of part of Mithridates VI’s kingdom into a province in 63 BC (pp. 21-22); Vitale emphasizes the fragmentation and diversity of all the evidence for Pontic *koina*, and the many meanings and usages of the term Pontic which defy any systematic classification (p. 61). These are justified grounds for the editor’s preference for northern Anatolia.

None of the papers in the volume is concerned with the western, Bithynian end of the Anatolian Black Sea region, but it does include three extraneous papers, a short essay by Nicola