

Deborah Kamen, *Status in Classical Athens*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013. XIV + 144 pp. ISBN 978-0-691-13813-8. \$35.00 / £24.95.

This concise and lucid book is a long needed contribution to the study of Athenian society, and not just because, as stated on the inner jacket, it is the first comprehensive account of status in ancient democratic Athens. Although recently scholars have started questioning the rigid, ideologically based, tripartite classification of Athenian society into slaves, metics, and citizens,¹ K.'s book is the first comprehensive account of *all* (or most) statuses in classical Athens.

Embracing Moses Finley's spectrum of statuses, from the chattel slave at one extreme to the full citizen at the other, K. describes and analyses ten statuses in Athens between 451/0 and 323 BCE — that is, between Pericles' citizenship law and the Lamian War. The book's aims and methodology are expounded in the Introduction (1-7), followed by ten chapters, each devoted to a different status: chattel slaves (8-18), privileged chattel slaves (19-31), freedmen with conditional freedom (32-42), metics (43-54), privileged metics (55-61), bastards (62-70), disenfranchised citizens (71-78), naturalized citizens (79-86), full citizen-females (87-96), and full citizen-males (97-108). In the Conclusion (109-115), K. recaps and expands her main arguments. An *Index Locorum* and a General Index help readers to navigate the complex map of Athenian statuses.

As mentioned, K. adopts Finley's idea of a spectrum of statuses, as well as his definition of status (which she takes to refer to both legal rights and social standing) and methodology, and sets out to examine the privileges and liabilities of all status groups in all areas of life. I fully agree with K. that this method allows 'a unique and ... unprecedented view of the complexity of status in classical Athens' (6). K. succeeds in demonstrating the intricacies of Athenian statuses and rightly argues that the lines between these groups were not clear-cut, and that in addition to some degree of over-lapping, social mobility was possible — both ways. Other status groups or subgroups might perhaps be added (see below), but, overall, K.'s selection displays well the complexity of Athenian social reality and the gaps between the latter and ideology.

K. admits that her taxonomy is not exhaustive nor the only possible one. Indeed, her decision to discuss only one group of women — female citizens — is questionable. Since a status is any group which, she states, 'possesses [a] sufficiently unique "bundle" of privileges and liabilities to render it a distinct category' (7), female slaves and metic women seem to fit this definition. Female and male slaves had similar liabilities and restrictions, but unlike male slaves there were no "privileged female slaves"; moreover, female slaves were more likely male slaves to be manumitted if ties of affection developed between them and their masters or if they bore their children. Female metics differed from male in that they were under the supervision of a *kyrios* (as were female citizens) and paid half the sum of the *metoikion* if they had none; yet they differed from female slaves in being free and in having religious rights, and from female citizens in their legal position. In the present book the discussion of female slaves and metics is dispersed throughout.

Discussing chattel slaves (Chapter One), K. states her intention to focus on the basest of them — 'that is, those performing the basest forms of labor, like working in the mines or mills' (10). However, except for a brief mention on p. 15, mining slaves are not discussed in this chapter. Instead K. sets out the legal and social status of chattel slaves working in other fields, such as

¹ The pioneer and model for K.'s book, is Moses Finley (see below) in a series of studies, e.g. 'The Servile Statuses of Ancient Greece', in: B.D. Shaw and R.P. Saller (eds.), *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece*, London 1981, 133-49 (first published in *RIDA* 3rd ser. 7, 1960, 165-89). See more recently K. Vlassopoulos, 'Free Spaces: Identity, Experience and Democracy in Classical Athens', *CR* 57.1 (2007), 33-52; Id., 'Slavery, freedom and citizenship in classical Athens: beyond a legalistic approach', *European Review of History — Revue europeenne d'histoire* 16.3 (2009), 347-363.

domestic slaves and, presumably, slaves working in workshops, whose social if not legal status was better than that of mining slaves. Although we know very little about the latter category the difference should have been pointed out. Also doubtful is K.'s discussion of privileged chattel slaves as a distinct group, and her own definition of status (see above) seems to belie such distinction. Such slaves did not differ from other slaves in whatever legal rights they had, and their better social standing dependent on their owners' goodwill.

It is perhaps inevitable to use testimony from other places to fill gaps in our knowledge of Athenian slavery, but readers should be warned that the evidence presented is *not* Athenian and might *not* be relevant to Athens. For example, K. refers to non-Athenian Hellenistic and Roman inscriptions when discussing possible familial relationships among slaves in classical Athens without clearly saying so (15), and again at greater length (37-38) when discussing conditionally freed slaves in Athens (see also p. 40). Another example is K.'s allusion to inscribed lead tablets from Dodona, recording slaves consulting Zeus' oracle (16). There is no attestation of Athenian slaves among the consultants, so this evidence should be treated with caution. Again, K. refers to temple slaves in Athens, but the only Athenian example is a fictitious one — Ion in Euripides' play of the same name (30 and n. 58).

The spectrum of statuses may be very confusing, especially when one reads the forensic orations. I assume that this is why Nikomachos, one of the *anagrapheis* appointed to rewrite the prevailing laws at the end of the fourth century BCE, is described by K. as *dēmosios*, a public slave, but also as a privileged chattel slave (that is, *privately* owned slave) hence possibly indicating 'that certain privileged slaves may have had the right to vet laws in some fashion' (27, see also p. 28); however, the text on which she relies actually ascribes *dēmosios* status to Nikomachos' father (Lysias 30.1, 29-30). Later in the book (81-82) K. assumes that Nikomachos was a freedman who eventually was granted citizenship, because he appears as a citizen in the same oration (30.5, 27).²

Another confusion arises when K. discusses privileged slaves who themselves owned slaves (28). She gives as an example *IG II² 1570*, lines 78-79 (one of the entries in the inscriptions called the *phialai exeleutherikai*), where a *dēmosios* whose full name is not preserved is mentioned as the prosecutor of his freedwoman Krateria. This cannot be correct, since slaves could not file a *dikē apostasiou* (the category of lawsuit apparently referred to in these inscriptions), let alone other suits, as K. herself admits further on the same page; she later suggests that someone else prosecuted Krateria on behalf of that *dēmosios* (29).

On p. 23 Lampis is stated to be a slave, but on p. 29 K. says that his status is not entirely clear. Again, on pp. 44 and 53 wealthy metics are presented as liable to the *eisphora* (the property tax), but on p. 59 the payment of this tax is described as one of the privileges that non-citizens could be granted by the polis. In this case I guess that the confusion arises because K. does not clearly distinguish metics' rights and duties from the privileges granted to non- or temporarily resident foreigners, such as exiles. Wealthy metics were obliged to pay the *eisphora*; temporary residents were granted this right for as long as they stayed in Athens. In this respect the *proxenia*, another honour granted to non-citizens (58-59), was also a privilege conferred on foreigners who were not permanent residents. K. notes (58) that by the fourth century *proxenoi* were spending more time in Athens; but these were usually exiles and merchants, who in any case could activate the *proxenia* only outside Athens even if they did not have to reside in their mother cities.

² True, in section 5 the speaker calls Nikomachos '*dēmosios*', but also blames him for not having submitted to an audit (*euthyne*) during his prolonged time of office — an obligation imposed on *citizens* serving in official magistracies. See also E. Carawan, 'The Case against Nikomachos', *TAPA* 140.1 (2010), 71-95, esp. 88-89.

There are also some inaccuracies. Neaera's owners offered to let her buy her freedom not because 'they tired of her' (25) but because they were about to marry. The statement that phratries are clans (63) is misleading; despite much perplexity concerning their exact nature in the classical period, there is no clear evidence that their members were, or claimed to be, of common descent (they were more probably fictional kinship groups). In *agōnes atimētoi* the mandatory sentence was *not* the death penalty (75); this was mandatory only for high treason, while for other offenses a fine could be imposed — at least according to Demosthenes, 21.90. The Greek word for the right of access to the Council and the Assembly is *prosodos*, not *prosodon* (58, 61, and in the General Index). The Greek citation from [Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 42.1 (97) is missing a word (*kata*). The Greek word on p. 98, first line, should be *eleutheros*, not *eleutheron*. The *genos*' name is Kerykes, not Kerkyes (105 and n. 47).

These comments notwithstanding, this is a stimulating and important book. It will prove indispensable reading for anyone interested in ancient Athenian society and an essential item in reading lists for academic courses. K. takes a fresh look at the texture of Athenian society, and given the breadth of material covered she does an excellent job in demonstrating its multifarious nature in a clear and accessible style.

Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz

Tel-Aviv University

Matthew R. Christ, *The Limits of Altruism in Democratic Athens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. ix + 215, ISBN 978-1-107-02977-4.

Having exposed the Athenians as litigious, military service dodgers, liturgy avoiders and generally 'bad citizens',¹ Matthew Christ (henceforth C.) carries his program of reviving the 'pessimistic view' of Athens one step further.² This time, his target is the ideal image that the Athenians had allegedly drawn of themselves 'as a compassionate and generous people who rushed to the aid of others in distress, at home and abroad' (1). This image, argues C., is deceptive. C. contends that we must penetrate the smoke screen of false ideologies that the Athenians created to mislead others, and perhaps even themselves, into believing they were generous and compassionate. In fact, it turns out that they were a rather selfish bunch of narrow-minded people who only helped family and friends. In the few cases when they did help citizens in general or peoples of other states, they did it from expediency (2). This proclivity was built into their social system. Insofar as co-operation outside the circle of kinship and friendship was concerned, Athens retained the norms and practices of the pre-democratic society from which it sprang; 'the Athenian democracy does not appear to have altered this significantly' (177).

The research strategy that C. chooses to drive home this thesis is 'a close examination of our sources' (13). Examining — selectively, as I shall argue — a series of cases spread out over various fields of activity (e.g. helping fellow soldiers, aiding the poor, nursing the sick), C. contends that scholars have erred in assuming that the passages in question reveal a great degree of generosity and compassion and a small degree of self-interest and calculation on the part of the Athenians. In fact, he sees it the other way round: as revealing a great degree of self-interest and calculation and a small degree of generosity and compassion on the part of the Athenians. To

¹ Matthew R. Christ, *The Litigious Athenian*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998; *The Bad Citizen in Classical Athens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

² His disclaimer, which recurs with monotonous regularity in his previous works as well, that 'my goal is not to paint a dark picture of the Athenian character but rather to come up to a more nuanced understanding of it' (2), is not worth the penny.