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COMPTES RENDUS

Évhémère de Messène, *Inscription sacrée*. Introduction et annotation par S. MONTANARI. - Texte et traduction par S. MONTANARI, B. POUDERON. - Paris : Les Belles Lettres, 2022. - CII+230 p. : bibliogr., index. - (Collection Fragments, ISSN : 1632.3041 ; 23). - ISBN : 978.2.251.45373.6.

PHILIPPE BORGEAUD (p. 183-186)

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MARCO BELLINI (p. 187-191)

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RODOLPHE LE PENRU (p. 192-196)

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BASIL L. P. NELIS (p. 197-199)

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Gela. Il Thesmophorion di Bitalemi. La fase arcaica. Scavi Orlandini 1963-1967. - A cura di M. ALBERTOCCHI, prefazione P. PELAGATTI. - Rome : Giorgio Bretschneider, 2022. - LX+800 p. : bibliogr., index, ill., 210 pl. h. t. - (Monumenti Antichi, ISSN : 0391.8084 ; 82, serie miscellanea ; 27). - ISBN : 978.88.7689.336.0.

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CHRISTIAN MANN (p. 248-251)

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THIBAUD LANFRANCHI (p. 257-263)

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FRANÇOISE DES BOSCS (p. 264-269)

BERRENDONNER (CL.), *Le peuple et l'argent. Administration et représentations du Trésor Public dans la Rome républicaine (509-49 av. J.-C.).* - Rome : École française de Rome, 2022. - 588 p. : bibliogr., index. - (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, ISSN : 0257.4101 ; 404). - ISBN : 978.2.7283.1559.8.

MARIANNE COUDRY (p. 270-274)

RICHOUX (N.), *L'armée romaine, première armée moderne*. - Paris : Éditions Pierre de Taillac, 2022. - 144p. - ISBN : 978.2.36445.212.1.

FRANÇOIS PORTE (p. 275-281)

Évergétisme et architectures dans le monde romain (II^e s. av. J.-C. – V^e s. ap. J.-C.). - F. DES BOSCS dir. - Pau : Presses universitaires de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, 2022. - 256 p., bibliogr., ill. - (Archaia, ISSN : 2258.8612 ; 5) – ISBN : 978-2-35311-111-4.

NICOLAS MATHIEU (p. 282-287)

STRASSER (J.-Y.), *Mémoires de champions. Corpus des palmarès, d'Octavien à Valentinien I^{er}*. - Athènes : École française d'Athènes, 2021. - 840 p. : bibliogr., pl. h. t., index. - (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, ISSN : 0257.4101 ; 395). - ISBN : 978.2.86958.553.9.

Jean-Yves Strasser (henceforth S.) is a well-known expert in the field of Greek festivals, in numerous articles he has discussed important inscriptions and agonistic terminology. In his new, monumental book, which goes back to a thèse de doctorat (Université de Nanterre), he presents a corpus of «palmarès». This is not an established category in the field and needs a definition, which is given right at the beginning, with welcome explanations for non-Francophone readers: S. defines palmarès as those texts that praise the careers of athletes, artists or horse owners by giving a complete or selective list of victories. Testimonies that mention only local successes, for example ephobic inscriptions, are not counted among the palmarès, and also excluded are texts that sum up agonistic victories as only one achievement among many others. The aim of the book is to discuss, in a first step, the palmarès piece by piece and then, in a second step, to compile a synoptic history of the genre. To say it in advance, S. has mastered this task impressively.

Apart from a definition of the topic, the «introduction» (p. 1-17) provides other preliminary remarks that are necessary to understand the outline of the book. The most important discussion concerns periodization. As far as the history of agonistic institutions is concerned, previous scholars have often stressed the continuities between the Hellenistic and the Roman imperial period, sometimes both epochs are

merged into one.¹ S., in contrast, emphasizes the caesura that accompanied the Roman conquest of the entire Mediterranean, with heavy effects also on Greek *agones*: with Rome's comprehensive control over all important festival sites, political influence on agonistic structures grew in dimension. Roman emperors were able to establish a new *agon* with the highest prestige, as can be traced for the first time in the foundation of the *Aktia* by Augustus. A little earlier, with the re-foundation of Corinth as a Roman *colonia* and the return of the Isthmian Games, S. begins his investigation, its end being defined by the disappearance of the genre in the 4th century AD. To enable readers to follow the agonistic history in these centuries, S. provides a concise historical sketch with a table of the most important dates.

The largest part of the book is taken up by the catalogue (p. 23-534), which comprises a total of 276 items. The lion's share is made up of the 174 firmly dated palmarès («datables avec précision») and the 57 palmarès of uncertain date («d'époque impériale de date incertaine»). The distinction is not obvious in all cases, since even the palmarès of the first group

1. S. refers to Louis Robert and Michael Wörle; one could also refer to the following recent contribution: H.W. PLEKET, « Sport in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor » in P. CHRISTESEN, D. G. KYLE eds., *A Companion to Sport and Spectacle in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, Malden-Oxford 2014, p. 364-375.

often leave a wide chronological range. But they provide indications for the date in the text, for example by naming the emperor or by referring to the first *Kapetolia*, or by giving the name of a champion who can be dated by external evidence. For the palmarès of uncertain date, on the other hand, more general criteria such as letter forms are to be used for the dating. Smaller groups in the catalogue are formed by palmarès whose affiliation to the imperial period is uncertain, inscriptions whose affiliation to the palmarès is open to discussion, and unpublished pieces.

The overwhelming majority of palmarès are stone inscriptions, but the genre itself is not defined as purely epigraphic. That is why the catalogue also includes a mosaic, a papyrus and an epigram preserved in the *Anthologia Graeca*. Variety is visible on many other levels as well: most of the palmarès are written in Greek, but there are also some in Latin; there are prose texts as well as epigrams, the length of the texts varies greatly, while some are complete and others only preserved in fragments. Most of the people praised in the palmarès are men, but there are also some women among them. Palmarès were written for gymnastic athletes and musical artists, with only a few for hippic victors. Furthermore, we find dedications in the catalogue as well as honorary inscriptions, gravestones, and sarcophagi.

Throughout the catalogue, the edition is of a high standard: all pieces are introduced with a short heading referring to the hometown of the athlete, to *agones* or disciplines. The basic data on the object is followed by a list of previous editions and a detailed bibliography. Particularly reader-friendly

are the hints, given in brackets, to which aspect the respective article is relevant. All palmarès are given with Greek text and translation. The subsequent discussions vary in length; in some cases, S. analyses in detail other inscriptions that are not palmarès themselves but important for the understanding of a palmarès. At the end of each catalogue entry, one finds the date of the object and the basis for the dating.

The catalogue is a real treasure trove. Although one has already seen some of the inscriptions in Moretti's collection,² the commentaries presented here clearly go beyond Moretti (and the many scattered commentaries by Louis Robert). The inscriptions from Miletus and Didyma for a very successful runner of the early imperial period (nos. 4 +5) might serve as an example. S. is able to dispel the doubts that were raised against a chronological order of the victories; in his view, only the Olympic victory breaks out of the sequence and is mentioned first because of its prestige. S. provides convincing explanations of why the victories that are mentioned in the inscriptions were selected from the certainly much longer list of the runner's successes. S. discusses in detail whether Deinosthenes, mentioned in *Anthologia Graeca* 6.350, should be identified with the runner of these inscriptions; S. argues against this, with a modification of the Greek text worth considering. Another example of thorough analysis is the complicated inscription no. 164, with a reconstruction of the athlete's

2. L. MORETTI, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche*, Rome 1953.

career. In general, chronological questions take up much space in S.'s commentaries.

In view of the aforementioned heterogeneity of the palmarès, it is not surprising that they have not yet formed a category in epigraphic corpora or studies on Greek agonistic festivals. The genre is defined with this book, and accordingly the task of the second part («Deuxième partie: synthèse», p. 535-709) is to prove that it is a genre that opens up new insights when studied in its entirety. S. poses his questions in many separate chapters, always remaining within his genre; other inscriptions are consulted now and then, the literary tradition only in exceptional cases. In this review, it is not possible to go into all 17 chapters, so only a few insights will be singled out.

Quantitative analyses (p. 537-544) make the start: when the palmarès are sorted in chronological order, the influence of the *Kapetolia* becomes clear as many palmarès refer to their first staging in 86 AD. Another interesting fact is that the numerous new foundations of *agones* in the first half of the 2nd century, especially under Hadrian, apparently did not translate into an increased production of palmarès. Rather, the peak is reached in the 50 years from 160 AD onwards. The statistics of disciplines offers an insight into their popularity. It is striking here that among the gymnastic disciplines, *pankration* is by far the most frequent one, while boxing is much rarer. And palmarès for artists are fewer in numbers than those for athletes; S. considers to what extent the *agones* were still attractive to, for example, *tragodoi*, who could also participate in lucrative non-competition shows.

With regard to the geographical distribution (p. 545-553) the dominance

of the province of Asia is striking. Almost half of the palmarès come from there, while Macedonia, for example, is nearly absent. Very helpful is S.'s investigation of the principles that underlie the order of the festivals in the texts (p. 561-589), a standard problem for the understanding of inscriptions of this kind. S. distinguishes between different schemes: if the arrangement was according to prestige, the palmarès provide insights into the ranking of the *agones*. What is exciting here is the result that Roman foundations like the *Aktia* or the *Kapetolia* were mentioned frequently and as major festivals right after their foundation, but gradually fell back in prestige behind the traditional *agones* in the Greek mainland. Palmarès giving the victories in chronological order allow conclusions about the succession of the festivals in the four-year cycle, and the results are presented in neatly arranged tables (p. 572-578). Regarding the language of the palmarès, the change from the accusative to the genitive for indicating age classes is emphasized by S. (p. 651-660) because this change occurred in Flavian times, which formed a caesura in many respects. The closing formulas also changed in the same period, becoming more stereotypical (p. 661-668).

The studies in the second part of the book, carried out with scrutiny and enriched with tables and graphics, prove the usefulness of an integrated analysis of the texts defined as palmarès. Their common features, independent from their status as dedication, honorary inscription or epitaph, are made evident. The value of the category «palmarès» will depend on which historical question one pursues; what becomes particularly clear in S.'s analysis is the

transformation of the agonistic world in the Roman imperial period: the establishment of the *Kapetolia* in particular led to a radical change, as can be seen in many details. Now, the monograph of Bram Fauconnier, already announced by S. (p. 9 note 42) but published recently³, demonstrates the importance of the Roman emperors from another perspective, taking into account the *synodoi* of athletes and artists. And a first comprehensive monograph on Hellenistic athletes is in print,⁴ which will make the caesura between the Hellenistic and the Imperial period that is stressed by S. even more apparent.

Greek agonistic festivals thus form a field of study where great progress is taking place, and S.'s book is a most important contribution. The last time when a genre of agonistic texts was studied so thoroughly was Joachim Ebert's monograph on athletic epigrams.⁵ The present book, which is also ideally suited as a reference work due to the numerous detailed indices, will certainly have at least as great an influence on future research; it will hold a firm place on the desktop of each scholar interested in Greek *agones*. The author deserves admiration and thanks for his thorough investigation.

CHRISTIAN MANN
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3. B. FAUCCONNIER, *Athletes and Artists in the Roman Empire. The History and Organisation of the Ecumenical Synods*, Cambridge 2023.

4. S. SCHARF, «*The Very First of the Citizens*». *Agonistic Cultures and the Self-Presentation of Hellenistic Athletes*, Cambridge forthcoming.

5. J. EBERT, *Griechische Epigramme auf Sieger an gymnischen und hippischen Agonen*, Berlin 1972.



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