

HEIDRUN SCHULZE-OBEN, *Freigelassene in den Städten des römischen Hispanien. Juristische, wirtschaftliche und soziale Stellung nach dem Zeugnis der Inschriften*, Bonn, 1989, 268 p.

Studying the social-economic history of the Roman provinces Dacia and Moesia Inferior and the freedmen's place and role (including the imperial freedmen) have been sometimes ignored by our historiography. Excepting one chapter dedicated to the freedmen in the book about the history of the slavery in Roman Dacia by D. Tudor (Tudor, 1957, 177-239), there is no work (concerning the analysis of the economy and the society in the above mentioned provinces) which intended to systematize the information regarding the freedmen. That's why the studying of these facts means a beginning-work for the Romanian researchers.

Because of the absence of a large Romanian bibliography concerning this problem, the papers on this topic, published abroad, are very useful for us, even if they refer to other Roman provinces than those we are directly interested in. Heidrun Schulze-Oben's work about the freedmen from Hispania's towns represents for the Romanian researcher a very valuable work instrument. On the other hand, it is a remarkable book in the international historiographical field, the freedmen's problem being studied more and more in the last decades, which led to the confirmation of some great specialists in this domain (Duff, 1958; Chantraine, 1967; Boulvert, 1970; Weaver, 1972).

From a methodological point of view, the German researcher grounds her demonstration on the studying of the way in which certain general rules are or are not applied in the case of the province Hispania. This method offers clearness and efficiency. In order to exemplify, Heidrun Schulze-Oben speaks from the very beginning about the forms of *manumissio* existing in the ancient laws of Rome. The collective liberations from the Republican period (Hispania was organized as a Roman province from 198 B.C.) are also mentioned. The inscriptions discovered in the towns of this province show the great number of freedmen from this period. The collective liberations usually took place during the conquest of the Hispanic territory by the Romans (conquest which finishes during Augustus' reign) and they represent a part of the „civilizing” measures through which the Romans supported their military expansion. As the French professor Jacques-Henri Michel showed in a general study (Michel, 1978, 166-185), these liberations have an important role in the juridical integration of the provincials in the Empire. Otherwise, the motivations are presented by the author, too.

Manumissio vindicta represents the most frequent liberation form in the Republican period. Even if in the municipal documents from Hispania, the form of liberation is not specified, it can be easily recognized because the other type of *manumissio* (*per censu*) was not possible outside Rome. *Vindicta* persists also during the Principate being established by the *lex Ursonensis* from the Flavian dynasty; it coexisted with the most widespread type of liberation, by testament. *Manumissio testamento* represents the classical liberation form, which stipulates all the duties of the freedman towards his master. The author of the book noticed a liberation form which was seldom used in Hispania – the liberation through *fideicomis* (a master sets his slave free through his testament and, after his death, the slave becomes the freedman of his former master's successor). Some local laws (*lex Iritana*, *lex Salpensana*) prove also the liberation of those

servi publici (belonging especially to the towns), which took place in three stages: the proposal made by the magistrates (*duumviri*), the decree given by *ordo decurionum* (voted with a two third's majority) and the agreement of the province's governor.

Then the researcher deals with the freedmen's engagement in commercial and handicraft activities. H. Schulze-Oben asserts that the relationships between freedman and master are more of a personal nature than of economic one, although some freedmen remain near their master to administrate their fortune. The inscriptions reveal only the respect they had towards their masters, and not their economic dependence. A classical case of one freedman's ascension is that of L. Licinius Secundus, the freedmen of the famous Trajan's general, L. Licinius Sura, who was also Hispania's governor. L. Licinius Secundus was the governor's *accensus*: he obtained fortune, influence and had excellent economic relationships both with the Hispanian merchants and with those from Rome.

Being more interested in the imperial freedmen's activity, we shall insist especially on this aspect. The affirmation of this category of freedmen as one of the most prosperous (from an economic point of view) which existed at that time in the Empire, is proved with incontestable epigraphical documents. In Baetica and Lusitania (senatorial provinces), there were seven imperial freedmen in each of them, and in Tarraconensis there were thirty-three imperial freedmen. The large majority worked in the administration of gold and silver mines, the principal riches of Spain. The functions the imperial freedmen had between the 1st and the 3rd centuries A. D. were, as in all the Roman provinces, only administrative ones: *procurator*, *subprocurator*, *tabularius*, *a commentariis*, *arcarius*, *vicesimarius*. These jobs conferred them wealth and influence. Many honorific inscriptions made by the autochthonous for the imperial freedmen prove the fact we have mentioned before. From the epigraphic material concerning the marriages of the *libertorum Augustorum*, only one inscription (of fourteen) mentions a slave or a freedwoman as wife. That is a new proof of the freedmen's prestige, not only in Hispania, but in the whole Empire.

Finally, the German scientist offers a statistics regarding the freedmen who penetrated in *ordo augustales*. From the whole number of mentioned *augustales*, one third is represented by the freedmen (most of them – freedmen of private persons). Their duties towards the masters were very reduced, and their function represented one of the few possibilities of the freedmen to take part in the municipal life.

The author's intention to expose systematically the freedmen's names, no matter of the category they belonged to, is praiseworthy; she indicates using tables, the inscriptions list (*corpus*) in which these names are mentioned, their provenience place, their functions, the datation of the monuments etc. We suggest that, perhaps, it would have been more adequate to present a complete *supplementum epigraphicum* in the end, including the texts of the inscriptions (translated), even if the volume would have been much bigger.

Being published as a reference book, which systematizing the knowledge concerning the slaves and the freedmen in Roman Hispania (Mangas-Manjarrés, 1971), Heidrun Schulze-Oben's work represents the continuation of the researches of the Spanish professor, regarding both the topic and its quality.

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