

L'ÉLEVAGE EN GRÈCE (FIN VE–FIN IER S. A.C.): L'APPORT DES SOURCES ÉPIGRAPHIQUES

BY CHRISTOPHE CHANDEZON (SCRIPTA ANTIQUA 5). PP. 463, FIGS. 14. AUSONIUS, PARIS 2003. €48. ISBN 2-910023-34-6 (PAPER).

Research into animal exploitation in classical antiquity has a long history but was until recently based principally on literary (hence, mainly Roman) and to a lesser extent iconographic sources. Chandezon, by contrast, explores herding in the ancient Greek world primarily (but by no means narrowly) from the perspective of epigraphy. The availability of relevant inscriptions dictates emphasis chronologically on the late fifth to the late first (esp. the fourth–third) centuries B.C.E. and geographically on the Greek mainland (mainly the regions that supported poleis rather than *ethne*), the Aegean islands, and coastal Asia Minor. The monograph, reworked from a Paris doctoral thesis, is divided into two parts of unequal length: (1) a collation of and commentary on relevant inscriptions, organized geographically; and (2) a shorter but substantial evaluation and interpretation of the evidence, focusing especially on the scale and economic importance of animal husbandry and on the degree of integration between herding and arable farming.

The first four chapters of part 2 make clear the nature of the available evidence as well as Chandezon's interpretation of it. Chapter 1 considers livestock and land use. A broad picture, geographically diverse but mostly related to large holdings (far exceeding the putative norm for a hoplite), may be gleaned for two private individuals (one sale of confiscated property and one "gift" to a sanctuary) and three sanctuaries (leasing of land). Detail is provided where it needs to be spelled out (e.g., capital items including numbers of vines are enumerated, but cereal growing is merely implied by references to granaries and mills or to payments in grain—this is not decisive evidence, as recent counterexamples show). Similarly, livestock

may be inferred from references to stalls, to pasture or meadow, and to the prohibition of grazing *by third parties*. Rare references to numbers of animals yield far more sheep and goats than cattle, and suggest fairly modest herds for even quite wealthy men (e.g., the four oxen, four cows and their calves, 84 sheep and their lambs, and 67 goats and their kids confiscated from Panaitios after the mutilation of the herms in late fifth-century Athens). Epigraphically attested income from livestock, to individuals or sanctuaries, includes hire of draft animals for public works, sale of wool and cheese, sale of livestock for breeding or secondary products, and sale of animals (including pigs) for slaughter (esp. sacrificial). Epigraphic silence on pig *rearing* perhaps indicates that, as recently in rural Greece, this was widely undertaken on a small scale by households too modest to register in sources biased toward large landholders. Otherwise, Chandezon plausibly concludes, exploitation of these large holdings took the form of a more or less diversified combination of polyculture (cereals, olives, vines) and animal husbandry. Details of the location of animal stalls and of rights to or restrictions on access to pasture indicate grazing both on arable land (stubble and fallow fields) and off it in proportions presumably related, at least in part, to availability.

Livestock also provided income to Greek cities in the form of grazing fees, customs dues, and taxes on animals or their produce, but these are usually documented in the context of exemptions granted and shed little light on what was due or how this was assessed (ch. 2). For one city, however, a *probatikon*, paid seasonally and so presumably levied on movement of animals or access to grazing, made up 22% of the combined recorded income from this

source and from taxes and stone (quarries?). Further insight into movement of animals is afforded by a relatively large corpus of inscriptions recording the granting of grazing rights to neighboring cities or, in recognition of services rendered, to citizens thereof (ch. 4). More indirect evidence in the same direction is furnished by a series of inscriptions dealing with the resolution of territorial disputes (ch. 3), for the most part over mountainous or marshy areas or small rocky islands, marginal for crops. In these inscriptions, which include scant references to settlement (though several rural sanctuaries are cited), herding, mainly of sheep and goats, is sometimes specified or implied, but wood cutting, cultivation, and fishing are also attested.

Moving on to the thorny problem of transhumance (ch. 5), Chandezon reminds us that skepticism as to its antiquity is nothing new and rightly notes that inconsistent use of this term has done much to cloud debate. If transhumance entails long-distance movement of large numbers of animals (394), the famous story in Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* is the sole clear literary "evidence" thereof for Greece in the period under review. Epigraphic evidence is inconclusive (contra Georgoudi), as agreements on grazing rights between neighboring polities might relate to local territorial disputes rather than large-scale displacements of livestock. Chandezon is more impressed by the reciprocal granting of grazing rights between Cretan Hierapytna and Praisos, as their territories may have been separated by those of three other cities. One might note, however, that some recent herders in northern Greece moved their flocks not only between seasonally complementary pastures at different altitudes but also adjusted their choice of lowland or upland grazing area from year to year in response to inevitable variation in pasture quality. The latter rationale for mobility might account for some of these treaties.

In conclusion, Chandezon places his epigraphic evidence in the context of other sources. Literary accounts of owners of large herds who specialized in particular breeds or products may not be wholly fictional, but remind one of the paintings in English "stately homes" of impossibly fat cows with bellies that would flatten even short grass. He is rightly wary of ignoring geographical variation in animal management and tentatively suggests three regional patterns: (1) in Attica, the Cyclades, and south Ionia, scarcity of pasture enforced

close integration of livestock with arable farming; (2) in the Peloponnese, central Greece, and north Ionia-Aeolia, the wealth of mountain pasture favored removal of livestock (and their manure) from the arable sector, though a multiplicity of interpolis boundaries impeded the development of extensive transhumance; and (3) in northwest Greece and Macedonia, similarly abundant mountain pasture may have been more accessible to large-scale and long-distance herding, thanks to the prevalence of more extensive political units (*ethne* and kingdoms).

The contrasts between these zones in physical and political geography are clear enough, but the reader should bear in mind that large-scale transhumant exploitation of mountain pastures in 19th-century C.E. mainland Greece was heavily dependent on the availability of large blocks of complementary winter grazing, often on the fallow fields of *tsiftlik* and monastic estates; the practice of alternate fallowing, too, was mainly characteristic of large landholdings in the recent past. Realization of the contrasting potential of zones 1 and 2 may thus also have depended on the pattern of landholding (size and fragmentation of large estates) and on the related issue of cropping practices in the lowlands (field vs. tree crops; rotation vs. fallowing; collective coordination of rotation zones). Chandezon is no environmental determinist, however, and he thoughtfully argues that the third–first-century B.C.E. growth of large estates was more marked in zone 2, enabling greater use of mountain pastures by wealthy landowners. Nonetheless, greater seasonal use of mountain pasture need not have reduced inputs of manure to the arable sector, if (as is quite plausible) longer-distance mobility allowed significantly larger herds to be maintained. For zone 3, in the absence of epigraphic evidence for extensive herding, Chandezon cites the ninth–fourth-century B.C.E. cemeteries and related settlement at inhospitable Vitsa, in the Pindos mountains, where flimsy houses are associated with imports from central Greece and a scarcity of coinage. None of these finds is necessarily linked to herding or seasonal mobility, however, and the site nestles among fields cultivated until recently by sedentary mixed farmers.

The epigraphic evidence reviewed is sufficiently fragmentary and ambiguous that proponents of both large-scale mobile herding and small-scale mixed farming may feel vindicated—the latter, surely, with greater

justification. As the author takes care to point out, inscriptions relevant to ancient Greek animal exploitation are derived, like the literary “record,” from a restricted range of social and economic contexts, with evident bias to large landowners, sanctuaries, and civic institutions, and to relations between neighboring polities or between polities and rich individuals. Epigraphy is thus inherently likely to exaggerate the scale, mobility, and importance of animal husbandry. Either way, such large-scale animal husbandry as emerges from the inscriptions seems to be in the hands of wealthy arable farmers and so differs strikingly from that practiced recently by specialist pastoral communities, such as the Sarakatsani or Vlachs. This contrast is doubtless due in part to the small scale of ancient Greek polities and resulting multiplicity of frontiers, emphasized by

Chandezon and others, but the size of market for pastoral products is surely another factor.

Chandezon is a less critical consumer of archaeological than epigraphic and literary evidence, but then again this (zoo-)archaeologist reviewer is not regularly consulted on classical inscriptions. This volume collates and subjects to thoughtful commentary and synthesis a complex corpus of inscriptions and will be invaluable to scholars interested in animal exploitation in classical antiquity.

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