

M.I. FINLEY



THE
ANCIENT
ECONOMY

Updated with a new foreword by Ian Morris

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Foreword

Introduction

HISTORIANS LOVE an anniversary. Twenty-five years have now passed since the University of California Press published Moses Finley's *The Ancient Economy*, which is based on the forty-third series of Sather lectures that he gave at Berkeley in 1972. No book this century has had such a great influence on the study of Greek and Roman economic history, and so it is only fitting that the Press should reissue this classic for a new generation of readers. In this foreword, I want to introduce new readers to this book by giving a sense of its intellectual roots, how it advanced the study of the ancient economy, and how its arguments stand up after a quarter century of scrutiny.

Ancient economic history is a relatively young field. August Böckh published a monumental study of Athenian political economy as long ago as 1817, but economic questions only entered the mainstream of classical scholarship much later. In 1893, Karl Bücher, applying an influential general theory of economic evolution to European history, suggested that Greece and Rome were characterized by very simple, small-scale, closed household economies aimed at self-sufficiency and engaged only in very limited exchanges with other households. The Middle Ages saw the rise of larger city economies, and the sixteenth century the emergence of integrated national economies. Some professional ancient historians, most notably Eduard Meyer, were outraged by this theory and insisted that Bücher had it all wrong: ancient economies were in fact much like those of the modern world, just rather smaller. Meyer claimed that "in the history of Greece, the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. correspond to the fourteenth and fifteenth in the modern world, the fifth corresponds to the sixteenth."¹

Scholarly debate can only take place when academics agree on

which questions they should be asking. It is not a criticism of the scholars involved in the primitivist-modernist debate, as it came to be known, to point out that it narrowed the discussion down to the single issue of where to place Greece and Rome along a continuum from self-sufficient households to contemporary industrial nations. In the 1890s, this struck German classicists as a real and important issue, and in the first half of the twentieth century, scholars from other countries joined in. On the whole, they concluded (1) that this was indeed the most important question to ask, and (2) that the modernists had the better of it. In 1933, Mikhail Rostovtzeff, a Russian writing in America and the greatest ancient economic historian of his age, even echoed Meyer in stating that “by the Hellenistic period the economy of the ancient world was only quantitatively, not qualitatively, different from that of modern times.” And there things stayed until the 1950s.²

Scholarship tends to change direction not through the gradual accumulation of details in well-established frameworks but in sudden spurts. Like all research programs, the primitivist-modernist debate ignored a wide range of phenomena. Historians of scholarship have found that revolutions in thought tend to happen when scholars (often newcomers to the field or those on its margins) start to feel that the anomalies that “normal science” does not explain have accumulated to such an extent that the conventional models do more harm than good. Some scholars respond not by offering new answers to the old questions but by throwing out the old questions altogether in favor of new ones that seem more compelling—what Thomas Kuhn christened a “paradigm shift.”³

Such shifts are rarely, if ever, the result of an individual genius confronting a misguided world. Usually it begins with a group of scholars. If their concerns are valid and they present them well enough, they will communicate their sense of unease with the prevailing wisdom to others. If the revolution takes off, there will be a rush to map out new research programs that answer the questions now deemed important. The old agenda may simply be forgotten. Finley, at first very much a marginal figure, worked with like-minded scholars in the 1950s (particularly Karl Polanyi at Colum-

bia and A. H. M. Jones at Cambridge) to establish new questions. He did not create the “Finley model” out of nothing; but by the 1970s he was the central figure in rethinking ancient social and economic history, and *The Ancient Economy* cemented the new structure. In essence it redefined the terms of the debate.

Finley's Ancient History

Finley came to ancient history in an odd way.⁴ Something of a prodigy, he earned an M.A. in public law in 1929 at the tender age of seventeen. This was a period when classical historians learned their craft through training in philology, but after gaining his law degree, Finley entered the field by serving as a research assistant in Roman law at Columbia University. He then enrolled as a graduate student in Columbia's history department. He was deeply involved in the intense intellectual life of 1930s New York. He held part-time jobs working for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* and the Frankfurt School's Institut für Sozialforschung, where he cut his teeth as a historian on the German exiles' critiques of Hegel, Marx, and Weber.

Like those of so many of his generation, Finley's career plans were derailed by the Second World War. Finley worked for war relief agencies before returning to ancient history in 1947. His social-scientific interests made him eccentric in classical circles, as he was well aware,⁵ but in 1948 he found a position at Rutgers University. He had still not finished his Ph.D., but teaching in New Jersey meant that he could keep his ties to Columbia. For the next five years he was a regular member of Karl Polanyi's economic history seminar there.

Polanyi was a Hungarian émigré who had gained sudden prominence in 1944 with the publication of *The Great Transformation*. As interested in economics, sociology, and anthropology as he was in history, he did not fit easily into established university departments, and upon his appointment at Columbia in 1946 created an interdisciplinary group that explored some of the implications of his argu-

ments. In *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi proposed that capitalism and communism were not the only ways to run a complex modern economy. Neo-classical economic theory did not produce immutable laws; rather, its generalizations applied only to a particular type of modern society, which, he believed, could be replaced by an ethically preferable system that combined the principles of socialism and Christianity.⁶

Polanyi argued that before around 1800 in western Europe (and long after in much of the rest of the world), economic activity had not been an independent sphere of life governed by its own rules. Instead, production and exchange had been embedded in other institutions and attitudes. Polanyi never denied that the profit motive had been strong in earlier societies, but he insisted that profit had been a means to other ends and not an end in itself. He argued that goods and services had circulated through mechanisms of reciprocity and redistribution rather than through impersonal markets. Social relationships, not abstract laws of supply and demand, fixed values; and these relationships made the rational choices of the maximizing isolated actor of economic theory irrelevant in most societies. He called his model *substantivism*, as distinct from conventional economic *formalism*, the belief that an economic sphere always exists outside and independent of social relations.

Polanyi created the Columbia group because he saw that his political agenda depended on historical and anthropological arguments. He suggested that because disembedded, price-setting markets were a relatively recent development in world history, it ought to be possible to re-embed economic markets in other social relationships, subordinating profit to more humane concerns. He accepted that “more than once in the course of human history have markets played a significant part in integrating the economy,” even suggesting that Athens in the age of Aristotle was one such case.⁷ But the most important point was that early markets, even in Athens, “never [operated] on a territorial scale, nor with a comprehensiveness even faintly comparable to that of the nineteenth-century West.”⁸ While Athens was only one of many historical examples Polanyi explored, it was an important one for him, because most ancient historians

since the 1890s had assumed that the classical Athenian economy ran along much the same lines as modern economies, even if on a smaller scale. Against the modernists, Polanyi asserted that the Greek economy had little in common with modern capitalism, but against the primitivists he asserted that this was because economic interests were subordinated to or absorbed within concerns with politics, honor, and war and *not* because of the scale of economic activity. From this perspective, the primitivist-modernist debate about where the ancient economy fell on the continuum from simple to complex was going nowhere.

Finley had serious reservations about Polanyi's interpretation of Greece,⁹ although we can hardly doubt that the discussions at the Columbia seminar greatly influenced his thinking. But ancient historians sometimes allow Polanyi's influence to overshadow the ways in which both Polanyi and Finley drew on the ideas of Max Weber, the founding father of modern sociology. Polanyi rarely cited Weber, but Finley referred to him as early as 1935 and cited Weber's "Agrarverhältnisse im Altertum" (but none of Polanyi's work) in the bibliography of his dissertation. In his later works he made his debt to Weber very clear.¹⁰

Weber and Polanyi had very different political views,¹¹ but they agreed on some of the main questions. Weber thought sociology should be about understanding modernity, and like Polanyi, placed the historical roots of modernity's economic institutions and thought at the forefront. Polanyi and Weber also agreed on the need for comparative work. Weber wrote about China, India, Reformation Europe, and the Roman empire; Polanyi wrote about Dahomey, the ancient Near East, and classical Athens. And the conclusions they reached were not dissimilar. For Weber, the most important category for analyzing nonmodern societies was *status*. He explained that

"Status" (*ständische Lage*) shall mean an effective claim to social esteem in terms of positive or negative privileges; it is typically founded on

- a) style of life, hence
- b) formal education, which may be[:]

- α) empirical training or
- β) rational instruction, and the corresponding forms of behavior,
- c) hereditary or occupational prestige.

In practice, it expresses itself through

- α) conubium,
- β) commensality, possibly
- γ) monopolistic appropriation of privileged modes of acquisition or the abhorrence of certain kinds of acquisition,
- δ) status conventions (traditions) of other kinds.

Status *may* rest on class position of a distinct or an ambiguous kind. However, it is not solely determined by it: Money and an entrepreneurial position are not in themselves status qualifications, although they may lead to them; and the lack of property is not in itself a status disqualification, although this may be a reason for it . . .

A “status group” means a plurality of persons who, within a larger group, successfully claim

- a) a special social esteem, and possibly also
- b) status monopolies.

Status groups may come into being:

- a) in the first instance, by virtue of their own style of life, particularly the type of vocation: “self-styled” or occupational status groups.
- b) in the second instance, through hereditary charisma, by virtue of successful claims to higher-ranking descent: hereditary status groups, or
- c) through monopolistic appropriation of political or hierocratic powers: political or hierocratic status groups.¹²

Status groups are by their nature fluid, open to challenge and reinterpretation. They are what sociologists nowadays would call contested categories. New groups are constantly created and old ones redefined in a competitive process, and Weber observed that “in this case stratification is purely conventional and rests largely on usurpation.” However, he went on, “the road to legal privilege, pos-

itive or negative, is easily traveled as soon as a certain stratification of the social order has in fact been ‘lived in’ and has achieved stability by virtue of a stable distribution of economic power.”¹³ In Athens and Rome, male citizens made the transition from “self-styled” status group to a legally defined order with important privileges, such as exclusive intermarriage with one another’s daughters, control of the land, monopolies on political rights, legal defenses against exploitation (particularly debt bondage), and occasionally commensality. In doing so, they created other orders defined largely by their negative privileges—particularly the women they considered their dependents, chattel slaves, freedmen, and resident aliens.

Ancient man, Weber felt, was a *homo politicus*, interested in economics and profits chiefly as ways of promoting the political/military success of his city-state, conceived as a “guild of warriors,” and his own ability to take a leading role in it. Modern man is a *homo oeconomicus*, pursuing gain wherever it might lead him.¹⁴ What made Greece and Rome interesting was how they differed from medieval Europe. For good or for evil, the status structures of the latter created the spaces within which *homo oeconomicus* grew up; those of the former did not. That demanded explanation.

Weber contrasted status groups to class groups, explaining that

In our terminology, “classes” [unlike “status groups”] are not communities; they merely represent possible, and frequent, bases for social action. We may speak of a “class” when (1) a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, insofar as (2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income, and (3) is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labor markets. This is “class situation.”¹⁵

He filled out this typology by saying that

always this is the generic connotation of the concept of class: that the kind of chance in the *market* is the decisive moment

which presents a common condition for the individual's fate. Class situation is, in this sense, ultimately market situation . . . According to our terminology, the factor that creates "class" is unambiguously economic interest, and indeed, only those interests involved in the existence of the market.¹⁶

Weber concluded that

As to the general *effect* of the status order, only one consequence can be stated, but it is a very important one: the hindrance of the free development of the market . . . The market is restricted, and the power of naked property *per se*, which gives its stamp to class formation, is pushed into the background . . . where stratification by status permeates a community as strongly as was the case in all political communities of Antiquity and the Middle Ages, one can never speak of a genuinely free market competition as we understand it today.¹⁷

Weber suggested that market relationships, with their characteristic forms of modern rationality, came to dominate some parts of Europe in the nineteenth century, making class more important than status and creating situations in which class-based action was a constant possibility. Like Polanyi, he believed that the market and class had not played the same roles in earlier societies.

Weber had effectively discredited the primitivist-modernist debate by the time of the First World War, but ancient historians simply did not read him. The exception that proves the rule is Johannes Hasebroek, whose two books on the Greek economy were summarily dismissed.¹⁸ To a great extent, the paradigm shift that Finley spearheaded between the 1950s and the 1970s could be called a neo-Weberian revival.

In *Studies in Land and Credit in Ancient Athens*, Finley—like Weber, Hasebroek, and Polanyi—suggested that although the Athenian economy had been large and complex, it could not be called a market economy. To prove his point, he collected the evidence of the *horoi*, or inscribed mortgage stones. Whenever a stone recorded the

reasons for the mortgage, it was always for consumption rather than production: Athenians mortgaged land to pay for weddings and funerals, not to create capital for investment. As such, their economic activities were driven by status concerns, and there was little trace of the rationalistic, economizing mentality that Weber and Polanyi saw as a precondition for capitalist relations. Finley suggested that there was no genuine land market in Athens, just some rich men raising money for conspicuous consumption. Nor, he concluded, was there a proper credit market. The characteristic way for Athenians to raise cash was through *eranos* loans, contracted through groups of *philoi*, or “friends,” not normally involving interest payments. A good citizen should help out his friends and should never under any circumstances profit from another citizen’s misfortunes. Athenians wanted to be rich, but status considerations always dominated market concerns. Although Finley did not use this terminology, his vision of the Athenian economy was consistent with Polanyi’s redistributive model.¹⁹

By 1953, Finley perhaps felt that he had provided an adequate account of the nonmarket workings of the Athenian economy, for he then turned to trying to explain where this social system had come from. He quickly wrote a second book, the classic *The World of Odysseus*, in which he explicitly took over Polanyi’s categories. He suggested that after the collapse of redistributive Mycenaean economies around 1200 B.C., heroic gift economies emerged. As in the classical Athenian system, reciprocity was the basis of interactions, but instead of creating a unified, homogeneous male citizen body, in Homeric times (which Finley put around 900 B.C.), gift exchange was competitive and functioned to create hierarchy. The heroes were calculating supermen struggling against common enemies and against one another in a Hobbesian war of all-against-all, forming complex webs of political alliances, gifts, counter-gifts, and marriages, where might was right and the price of weakness was destruction.²⁰

By 1954 Finley was under considerable pressure at Rutgers for his and his wife’s political connections with radicals. As a serious student of Weberian sociology, Finley would have made a strange

communist, but he and his wife, Mary, decided to emigrate to Britain. There he found a post at Cambridge among a group of classical scholars headed by Jones, who took social history, and even Marxism, seriously. In this more sympathetic setting, Finley confronted the new problem that his interpretation of Homer had raised: how did Greek society move from the hierarchical reciprocity of the heroic age to the egalitarian reciprocity of the classical citizen polis? In 1959, he published the first of a series of essays giving his answer: slavery.²¹

Weber had suggested that crises over debt were among the few situations in which genuine class conflicts could emerge in antiquity.²² Finley followed this view, suggesting that archaic social revolutions triggered by resistance to debt bondage, like that leading to Solon's reforms at Athens in 594, had swept away the Homeric system of graded statuses. Through violence or its threat, the poor refused to be reduced by debt to dependency on the households of the great and created the idea of the city-state as a community of equal men. Men (women are conspicuously absent from Finley's story) were polarized into two groups, one of free citizens practicing reciprocal exchange, alienating exploitation onto the other, of imported chattel slaves. The parameters of economics were set by status considerations: only reputable sources of wealth were acceptable, which ruled out direct exploitation of fellow citizens and inhibited the development of price-setting markets in land, labor, or credit. Only outsiders should be exploited, in the extreme but common case through commoditizing their very bodies as chattel slaves.

As Weber, Hasebroek, and Polanyi had seen, ancient economic history was thus a subject for the historical sociologist, not the economist. Finley followed Weber in seeing the history of the ancient world as the history of the construction of status groups. He suggested that we could sum up the whole period from 1000 B.C. though A.D. 500 in terms of

[a] highly schematic model of the history of ancient society. It moved from a society in which status ran along a continuum towards one in which statuses were bunched at the two ends,

the slave and the free—a movement which was most nearly completed in the societies which most attract our attention for obvious reasons. And then, under the Roman Empire, the movement was reversed; ancient society gradually returned to a continuum of statuses and was transformed into what we call the medieval world.²³

Nine years later, *The Ancient Economy* provided a book-length exposition of this model.

The Ancient Economy

The Ancient Economy is quintessentially Finleyan. The prose style is discursive: it reads well and draws the reader in. Finley does not wear his learning, whether it be substantive or comparative, on his sleeve; he chooses his ancient examples carefully and eschews extended theoretical discussions. For readers used to either conventional classical scholarship, with its mass of references to secondary literature and detailed discussion of specific passages in ancient texts, or for those coming from the social sciences, where explicitly stated propositions are the norm, this can indeed be (as Shaw and Saller put it) “unconventional, puzzling, and even disconcerting.”²⁴ It is notoriously difficult to find a sentence or two in Finley’s articles and books that serve to sum up his whole argument. There are such passages in *The Ancient Economy*, but they rarely leap out at first-time readers from the overall smoothness of the text.

The core thesis of Finley’s book is that we can build a coherent model of a single ancient economy, which sums up the important features of the whole Graeco-Roman Mediterranean from 1000 B.C. through A.D. 500, but excludes the ancient Near East, at least until its incorporation into Macedonian kingdoms and then the Roman empire. Finley recognized the diversity of economic arrangements within this huge slice of time and space, but as in all his work, insisted that “we must concentrate on the dominant types, the characteristic modes of behaviour” (page 29). The model had to be

qualitative not quantitative, because the ancients kept no usable statistics; but that fact in itself is significant. Their failure to collect systematic numerical data is not just an empirical problem for us, or evidence of their intellectual shortcomings, but a sign that the ancients did not see economic activity as a distinct element of life. In short, the ancient economy was embedded.

The analytical heart of Finley's model is status. In chapter 2 he explains why we should prefer order and status to class as conceptual categories. His definition of status is typically low-key. In a discussion of wealthy slaves and freedmen in the Roman empire, he says that "for such distinctions I suggest the word 'status', an admirably vague word with a considerable psychological element" and adds that Greeks and Romans "were, in the nature of things, members of criss-crossing categories" (page 51). Throughout the book he uses these ideas in the Weberian sense, but he prefers to let the sense he gives them emerge gradually, from the examples he gives, over presenting a formal sociological typology. Much of chapter 2 is taken up with Cicero's thought about status and wealth, which neatly illustrates Finley's method. At the end of the chapter Finley explains that "I chose Ciceronian Rome for special analysis precisely because that was the period when the status-based model appeared to be nearest to a break-down. It did not break, however, it bent, it adapted, by extending the choices in some directions, not in all; in directions, furthermore, which can be seen to have followed logically from the very values that were being threatened and defended" (page 61). And what we learn is very Weberian: in both Athens and Rome, "the citizen-élite were not prepared, *in sufficient numbers*, to carry on those branches of the economy without which neither they nor their communities could live at the level to which they were accustomed . . . They lacked the will; that is to say, they were inhibited, as a group (whatever the responses of a minority), by over-riding values" (page 60).

In the rest of the book he elaborates on three key areas in his model: first, rural life (divided into chapters on unfree labor and the peasantry), then the place of cities, and finally the place of the economy in politics. Finley's vision comes through very clearly in

these chapters. Ancient social and economic history is above all rural history, the history of peasants, although in two vital cases—beginning in Greece around 600 B.C. and Italy around 200 B.C. and ending in both after A.D. 200—the creation of “true” slave economies made free citizenries possible. This was a world in which family came first and nearly everyone aimed for economic self-sufficiency. Trade generally took place on a small scale and was conducted over short distances. Most fortunes were made from rents and control of the machinery of taxation. Only rarely did traders or industrialists make good, and when they did, they were eager to invest their gains in land. There were economic changes—in particular, the steady concentration of land in fewer and fewer hands in the Roman empire, and with it the blurring of the boundary between free and slave—but there was little economic growth to speak of. There were, of course, exceptions, such as the super-cities like Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, or, in a smaller way, classical Athens. These cities needed permanent grain imports to feed their citizens and housed substantial nonagricultural groups. But they remained exceptions: even in the high Roman empire, the truly urban population was never more than one-twentieth of the rural. It would be a mistake to call Graeco-Roman civilization urban, although its ruling classes certainly were. They showed little interest in the countryside so long as they could get enough food from it, and there was rarely (if ever) anything we could call state economic policy.

This model does nothing to help us with the older questions of the primitivist-modernist debate. We cannot place Greece and Rome on a continuum from simple to complex economies, because their economies do not belong on such a continuum. They were qualitatively different. As Weber had foreseen, the ancient economy, unlike the medieval, did not contain the seeds from which *homo oeconomicus* could grow: contrary to Polanyi’s somewhat confused account of Athens, there were no forces acting to disembed the economy, to allow class and the market to override status. Finley’s ancient economy was a functioning, coherent system, which came to an end not because of its internal contradictions but because of the interaction between Roman social structures and the exogenous force of in-

creasing pressure on the frontiers: "There, if one wishes, is an economic explanation of the end of the ancient world" (page 176).

When one reads *The Ancient Economy* alongside Finley's other writings, five consequences of the ancient civic status structure seem to loom large. First, for Finley, as for Weber, the most important thing about Graeco-Roman concepts of status was the way they acted as a brake on the development of markets in land, labor, and capital and therefore on technology and trade. Demosthenes and Cicero's conceptions of appropriate behavior were different, but both sets of attitudes functioned to embed economic activity in a broader network of social relationships. Neither the Athenian nor the Roman orator was comfortable with admitting to lending at interest, investing heavily in profitable long-distance trade, or defining their identities in terms of wealth-producing activities. In one essay Finley collected a whole group of stories about ancient failures to exploit the commercial potential of technological developments and suggested that the status structure was once again responsible.²⁵

Second, the triumph of citizen status severely limited the opportunities for the rich to persuade poor citizens to provide labor power, leading to "the advance, hand in hand, of freedom *and* slavery."²⁶ Finley argued that when three social facts coincided—the existence of concentrations of land in private hands, the existence of external markets for the produce of the land, and the unavailability of an internal labor supply—the conditions were ripe for the creation by the rich of large-scale chattel slavery. He saw the social struggles of archaic Greece and Rome as fulfilling the third (negative) condition, so that the ancient economy was the world's first true slave economy.²⁷

Third, the status concerns of citizens tended to push even profitable activities to the margins of society. Foreigners, women, and slaves were unusually prominent in trade and finance. Some rich citizens generated their wealth from selling agricultural staples grown mainly by slaves on their estates or from selling their shares in crops grown by dependents or rents paid in kind, but they would try to have noncitizen agents carry out the actual transactions.

Fourth, Greeks and Romans tended to pursue wealth through legal

and political channels rather than through what we would call economic avenues. Finley suggested that ancient cities were consumer rather than producer cities, exploiting the countryside through taxes, tribute, and rent rather than by selling urban goods to rural consumers.²⁸

Fifth, the need to push exploitation outside the citizen community and the preference for political solutions may have given Graeco-Roman society a particularly powerful socioeconomic motive for war and imperialism, making these natural ways to acquire wealth. In his final book, Finley showed that despite the many studies of wars, hardly any ancient historians have treated war as a structural feature of ancient societies.²⁹

The Ancient Economy After Twenty-Five Years

Thomas Kuhn insisted that the humanities and social sciences do not experience the same kind of paradigm shifts as do the natural sciences. In the latter, once a new framework gains acceptance, rival ways of seeing things are quickly driven from the field by being denied access to funds and therefore students. There is no room for the old-fashioned in science. But in the former fields, the champions of older models, secure in their positions, do not go away. Their influence can remain strong for decades, with the result that we normally speak of “schools of thought” rather than of “paradigms.”

The influence of Finley’s work took root gradually. Not surprisingly, it was felt most strongly in Cambridge. Even before Finley’s arrival there, Jones was making the economy central to a particularly Cambridge approach to ancient history, and many of the students they taught between the 1950s and 1980s went on to champion this approach. But outside Cambridge, Finley’s impact on English-language scholarship developed more slowly. British scholars like to joke that the journey from Cambridge to Oxford is longer than that from Cambridge to anywhere else in the world, and at first Finley stimulated the most interest on the European continent. He had more interest in and contact with eastern Euro-

pean Marxist scholars than did most Westerners, and continental classicists ranging from Dutch social historians to French and Italian neo-Marxists found his Weberianism reasonably consistent with their own interests.³⁰

What is more surprising is that for some years his ideas had more of an impact on Romanists, sociologists, and anthropologists than on Hellenists, among whom they generated not so much resistance as studied neglect.³¹ This had changed by the time of Finley's death in 1986, and as early as 1983, Keith Hopkins was already speaking of "a new orthodoxy . . . masterminded by A. H. M. Jones and Sir Moses Finley."³² In the last ten years there have been more books and articles exploring and expanding Finley's insights than I could possibly list here.

But a quarter of a century is a long time in historical scholarship. As Finley came of age as a historian in the 1930s, American "New Historians" like Charles Beard and James Harvey Robinson and French Annalists like Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch were, for the first time in a century, challenging the idea that proper history was about political narratives. These historians wanted to analyze social structures and economic forces and even to borrow the methods of the social sciences. When Finley delivered the Sather lectures in 1972, this approach was positively mainstream in modern history—so much so that in the 1980s social and economic history came under attack from a movement of "new cultural historians." This group drew much of their inspiration from literary criticism. In introducing a collection of essays called simply *The New Cultural History*, Lynn Hunt explained that for these historians, "Economic and social relations are not prior to or determining of cultural ones; they are themselves fields of cultural practice and cultural production—which cannot be explained deductively by reference to an extracultural dimension of experience."³³ By the 1990s, many social and economic historians feel themselves under siege as the materialist consensus of the 1970s crumbles.

Ancient historiography has developed differently. Ancient historians are still found chiefly outside university history departments, in classics departments in north America, or in ancient history depart-

ments in Europe. They tend to go to different conferences than the ones attended by modern historians, to publish in different journals, and almost to speak a different language. As late as the 1970s, the vision of historiography as the handmaiden of philology still dominated the field. In engaging with Weber, Marx, and functionalist social science, Finley had been in a distinct minority since his graduate school days. The growing influence of *The Ancient Economy* did more than anything else to put the questions he had been asking for thirty years on the agenda for the main body of ancient historians. But paradoxically, by the time this was happening in the 1980s, those ancient historians whose interests lay closest to literary criticism were already picking up on the new cultural history.

Ancient historians effectively skipped the stage in the development of modern historiography when social and economic questions dominated the agenda and moved straight from philology and politics to cultural poetics. Most history departments contain a substantial group of (now aging) radical economic and social historians hired in the 1970s and early 1980s who defend their turf against the cultural historians. The slow spread of ancient economic and social history, the small scale of most ancient history programs, and the demographic structure of the profession—which made the 1970s and 1980s lean years for new appointments—combined to create a situation in which very few classics departments hired in social and economic history.

One result of this dearth of social and economic historians is that the shift toward cultural history in classical studies has been defined not against social and economic history but against more traditional philological scholarship.³⁴ If anything, there has been more interest in social and economic history in the late 1990s than at any other time. This development may have much to do with ancient historians' continuing interest in *The Ancient Economy* and in its twenty-fifth anniversary. There have been conferences and seminar series devoted to it in Cambridge, Leiden, Liverpool, Paris, and Stanford, all destined for publication.³⁵ It is hard to imagine that American historians will respond in this way to the twenty-fifth anniversary of a classic such as Fogel and Engerman's *Time on the*

Cross, due out in 1999, let alone that they will want the book reissued.³⁶ Just when economic and cultural historians' inability to communicate is causing alarm among modernists, more ancient historians than ever are confronting Finley's arguments.

The price (indeed, the clearest sign) of success is criticism, and in the 1990s Finley's model came under sustained attack.³⁷ In his last book, Finley observed that "ideologies change, and so the writing of history undergoes constant 'transformation,'"³⁸ so this would not have surprised him. We might break the responses down into three broad types. The first is the *empiricist*, which has many continuities from the pre-Finleyan philological history. Its champions try to show that Finley's general model of the ancient economy cannot account for the details of particular parts of the Graeco-Roman world between 1000 B.C. and A.D. 500 or even that in trying to make his model work, Finley committed factual errors.³⁹ Empiricist studies tend to foreground details at the expense of formal argument and methodological exposition, drawing attention to the richness, variety, and irreducible uniqueness of individuals, institutions, and states in the ancient world.

Although these critiques are valuable, they tend to be undertheorized. As Weber explained, there is always an inverse relationship between the general applicability of a model and its ability to accommodate reality: "The more sharply and precisely the ideal type has been constructed, thus the more abstract and unrealistic in this sense it is, the better it is able to perform its functions in formulating terminology, classifications, and hypotheses."⁴⁰ The best ideal types work to highlight certain features of reality and allow us to simplify and make sense of vast quantities of empirical detail. We need different models for different jobs. Finley and Polanyi, driven by radical political agendas, wanted very high-level models that would help them think about the differences among ancient, medieval, and modern European economies. Most ancient historians seem happier with low-level models of one period, region, or town. Their models are likely to be more realistic, in the sense that they account for more data and are contradicted by fewer facts, but they are also less likely to interest the large communities of social scien-

tists and comparativists that Finley, Polanyi, and Weber reached. Decisions about appropriate levels of generalization are driven by what we think ancient history is *for*: they are philosophical, aesthetic, and ultimately political. Mid-nineteenth-century historians like Grote and Marx were happy to talk about these questions, but historians of our own day generally are not.

The philosopher of science Richard Levins suggests that “there is no single, best all-purpose model . . . it is not possible to maximize simultaneously generality, reality, and precision.”⁴¹ The failure to recognize this vitiates many of the empiricist critiques of *The Ancient Economy*. But that being said, there certainly are empirical grounds for evaluating models within a community of historians who more or less agree on the appropriate level of generalization. We should judge a model by how helpful it is in making sense of the data. At a certain point, which some historians reach sooner than others, the number of cases that cannot be accommodated within a model reaches a level at which the model clearly does more harm than good. Finley had harsh words for the practitioners of local histories, what he called the “tell all you know about X” school of historiography,⁴² but they become important for Finley’s own questions when they start to suggest that he, like Hasebroek in the 1920s, was guilty of systematic omissions or errors. The most common argument has been that Finley consistently underestimated the scale of ancient trade, industry, banking, and other nonagricultural economic activity, so that his substantivism, the idea that economic activities were embedded in other social relations, in fact slid over into crude primitivism, the belief that ancient economies were basically household economies.⁴³ The issue is muddled by the way some critics are unable to tell the two concepts apart, but it is a serious problem, bringing us to the next category of criticism.

I take my second and third categories of critiques from the sociologist Mark Granovetter’s discussion of Polanyi. Granovetter suggests that discussions of Polanyi’s work can be divided into two types, those that see it as “oversocialized” and those that see it as “undersocialized.”⁴⁴ The *oversocialization critics* hold that Weber and his intellectual heirs exaggerate the amount of sociological “fric-

tion” that status generates and consequently also exaggerate the extent to which noneconomic considerations, however defined, can suppress market relationships. Finley could then be accused of taking the ancient sources too much at face value: Cicero may talk as if what Romans really cared about was status, but this may be mere ideology (in the sense of false consciousness) masking deeper economic realities. Rather than starting from what the ancients say, we might do better to construct formal economic models, or models that seem rational in light of cross-cultural comparisons. We could then explore why what ancient writers say in their texts fails to match these models and we could also read the sources against the grain to find places where economic realities peep through the masks of culture.⁴⁵

Those historians who think that Finley underestimated the scale of the ancient economy tend to accuse him of oversocialization. This argument is particularly common among Romanists. Keith Hopkins, for instance, drawing much more heavily on formal economic thought than Finley ever did, and testing his conclusions against archaeological evidence from shipwrecks for the scale of long-distance trade, argued that there was significant economic growth in the empire between 200 B.C. and A.D. 200. David Mattingly reached much the same conclusion after conducting a survey of rock-cut oil presses in Roman North Africa. He argued that oil production happened on a scale far larger than what the local population needed, which could only be explained by assuming that farmers were heavily tied to an export market. It now seems to be generally accepted that the vast market in food, wine, oil, lumber, bricks, and so forth created by the growth of Rome to a population of about one million by the first century B.C. stimulated production and went some way toward disembedding economic activity.⁴⁶

Oversocialization critiques have made less headway among Greek historians but have nonetheless raised important issues. The most significant is Edward Cohen’s discussion of how Greek orators distinguished between a visible (*phaneros*) and an invisible (*aphanes*) economy, with banking and other financial activities falling into the latter. Rich men tried to conceal their involvement in the invisible

economy, which was—contrary to Finley's interpretations—very large. Cohen argues that rich Athenians made a considerable part of their fortunes like this, and that in this sphere economics were disembedded from conventional status concerns, with foreigners, women, and slaves playing large roles.⁴⁷

As with the Romanists, archaeology has also played a part. Since the 1970s, intensive surface surveys in the Greek countryside have been indicating a change in settlement patterns in the fifth and fourth centuries. In an effort to explain this, and also to account for how so many people made their living off such small territories, historians and archaeologists have begun to sketch a “new model” of classical agriculture, which involved far more production for the market than Finley's vision would have it.⁴⁸ This model remains highly speculative, given the quality of the surface remains, but it would explain much of the data.

Whether Hellenists or Romanists, archaeologists or close readers of texts, the oversocialization critics try to read through the evidence to reach underlying economic structures. Whatever the sources may say, we know (within certain parameters) that Rome would have needed a certain amount of grain each day, and Athenian aristocrats would have needed to generate a certain amount of cash. Given this information we can move beyond the texts.

Finally, Finley's model also has its *undersocialization critics*. This line of thought draws much of its inspiration from the new cultural history of more modern periods and focuses on the hegemonic discourses in ancient literature and the complexities involved in the construction of ideology. Rather than beginning from sociological categories and looking at how they structured ancient literature, the critics claim that we should instead look for how such categories were created and contested in the discursive practices of knowledgeable actors.⁴⁹

This approach to the ancient economy is largely restricted to Hellenists⁵⁰ and to literary scholars. Sitta von Reden, for example, has criticized Finley for “his complete elimination of the ideological negotiations about the meaning and limits of the institutions he analyzed—such as slavery, landownership, citizenship and credit.”⁵¹

To some extent, Finley would have sympathized with this, even though he would have resisted the implications von Reden draws from it. Weber had insisted that “for a science which is concerned with the subjective meaning of action, explanation requires a grasp of the complex of meaning in which an actual course of understandable action thus interpreted belongs.”⁵² In the same vein, Finley suggests that “My justification for speaking of ‘the ancient economy’ lies . . . in the common cultural-psychological framework” (page 34). He devoted much of *The Ancient Economy* to arguing that Greeks and Romans imagined “the economic” as a dimension of status relations rather than as a separate sphere of life. But the new cultural historians take things much further. Finley, like Weber, always explained economic discourse in terms of nondiscursive realities of social stratification, exploitation through tax, rent, and slavery, agricultural technology, or military issues. Greek economic discourse was part of a larger sociological picture. The new cultural historians, however, bring discourse itself to the fore in their analyses, so that extracultural dimensions of experience begin to disappear altogether.

For example, in *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens*, Josiah Ober followed Finley to a large extent in identifying the most important questions to ask about Athenian democracy as how did it avoid stasis for two centuries and how did it function without a ruling elite. Ober, however, came up with very different answers. He passed quickly over imperialism and slavery, which Finley had emphasized, and instead focused on political discourse. He argued that in fourth-century Athens, “public rhetoric not only *revealed* social tension, it was a primary vehicle for *resolving* tension.”⁵³ Generalizing from this, he suggested that in classical Athens, “discourse is an aspect of social practice, and, as such, not only reflects beliefs, but brings into being social and political realities.”⁵⁴ Rhetoric was “the most important form of ongoing communication between ordinary and elite Athenians” and “the demos ruled, not so much because of its ‘sovereignty’, as because of its control over significant aspects of the symbolic universe of the Athenian community.”⁵⁵

Ober argued that the generally wealthy litigants who drama-

tized their feuds in front of the generally poor jurors exposed themselves to many dangers. As a result, the men who wrote our texts did not simply distort realities; they constructed alternative, context-dependent realities. Litigants tried to draw their audiences into shared fictions so that speakers could forge bonds of identity with the jurors. They did not just tinker with details: they stepped into dramatic personae in much the same way as actors do. Ober suggested that “theater-going citizen ‘learned’ to suspend disbelief . . . This ‘training’ helped jurors to accept elite litigants’ fictional representations of their own circumstances and their relationship to the Athenian masses. The complicity of speaker and audience to create and accept dramatic fictions regarding social status was an important factor in the maintenance of Athenian social equilibrium.”⁵⁶ We can identify conflicts of belief and values within Athenian culture, but it would be a great mistake to assume that we can read away the rhetorical construction of reality to figure out how the economy “really” worked. In more recent studies, some Greek historians/literary critics (the boundary rapidly blurs) extend these arguments even to the most supposedly “economic” of categories, such as coinage and food, reinterpreting them as elements in the struggles over meaning through which the Greeks created their city-states.⁵⁷

Conclusion

A quarter of a century after it was published, *The Ancient Economy* is still squarely at the center of debate. Finley showed decisively that philological/empiricist history could not make sense of ancient economic phenomena. A great deal of very good work is still being done in this style, but on the whole it has more to say about the debates of the 1890s than about the new orthodoxy. *The Ancient Economy* stands midway between deterministic, economic approaches and postmodern literary explorations. Both undersocialization and oversocialization critics must engage seriously with Finley’s work if they are to make any headway.

Weber believed that true sociological understanding called for two kinds of research, one oriented toward formulating abstract ideal types and the other toward contrasting these with the evidence for people's actual behavior and beliefs.⁵⁸ Ideally, the same person would conduct both activities at different moments. The result would be a constant tacking back and forth between generalized structures and the experiences of individual actors, which is precisely what Finley does in *The Ancient Economy*. Inevitably, newer studies mean that we need to modify many of Finley's conclusions, such as those on the scale of Athenian banking, the location of the market in the Roman economy, and economic growth in antiquity, but *The Ancient Economy's* humane vision of the Greek and Roman past will remain at the center of our arguments for the foreseeable future. Any informed discussion of these phenomena has to start with Finley's model of the centrality of the egalitarian citizen group and its interrelations with large-scale chattel slavery. For many of us who came to ancient history in the 1970s and 1980s, reading *The Ancient Economy* was a formative experience. This new edition extends the same opportunity to a new generation of students.

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September 1998

NOTES TO FOREWORD

1. Quoted from Michel Austin and Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Economic and Social History of Ancient Greece* (rev. ed., London 1977) p. 5. Their first chapter provides the best summary of the history of the scholarship.

2. The original essays are available in Moses Finley, ed., *The Bücher-Meyer Controversy* (New York 1980). Rostovtzeff is quoted in S. C. Humphreys, *Anthrobology and the Greeks* (London 1978) p. 42.

3. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (2nd ed., Chicago 1970).

4. This section owes much to Brent Shaw and Richard Saller, "Editors' Introduction," in Moses Finley, *Economy and Society in Ancient Greece* (London 1981) pp. ix-xxvi.

5. As Finley reveals in a letter of December 11, 1947, to Fritz Heichelheim,

published in Brent Shaw, "The Early Development of M. I. Finley's Thought: The Heichelheim Dossier," *Athenaeum* 81 (1993) 183–84.

6. Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston 1944) p. 234. S. C. Humphreys, *Anthropology and the Greeks* (n. 2 above) 31–75 gives a perceptive discussion of Polanyi's work and its influence on ancient historians.

7. Karl Polanyi, "Aristotle Discovers the Economy," in *Trade and Market in the Early Empires*, ed. Karl Polanyi, Conrad Arensberg, and Harry Pearson (Glencoe, Ill., 1957) 64–97.

8. Karl Polanyi, *The Livelihood of Man*, ed. Harry Pearson (New York 1977) 43. This flawed manuscript, dated May 1951, was published posthumously. Finley tried to persuade Pearson to omit the Greek material; see David Tandy and Walter Neale, "Karl Polanyi's Distinctive Approach to Social Analysis and the Case of Ancient Greece: Ideas, Criticisms, Consequences," in *From Political Economy to Anthropology: Situating Economic Life in Past Societies*, ed. David Tandy and Colin Duncan (Montreal 1994) 25 n. 6.

9. Moses Finley, "Aristotle and Economic Analysis," *Past and Present* 47 (1970) 3–25, reprinted in *Studies in Ancient Society*, ed. Finley (London 1974); also *The Use and Abuse of History* (London 1975) 117.

10. Polanyi, *Great Transformation* (n. 6 above), 45–46; Finley, "Emporoi, naukleroi, and kapeloi: Prolegomena to the Study of Athenian Trade," *Classical Philology* 30 (1935) 320–36. Finley completed his dissertation in 1951 and published it as *Studies in Land and Credit in Ancient Athens, 500–200 B.C.* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1952; reprinted New York 1979; New Brunswick 1985). The bibliography of significant works is on pp. 304–8. Later comments on Weber: "The Ancient City: From Fustel de Coulanges to Max Weber and Beyond," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19 (1977) 305–27, reprinted in Finley, *Economy and Society* (n. 4 above) pp. 3–23; *Ancient History: Evidence and Models* (London 1985) pp. 3, 52, 60–61, 88–108. In a conversation in February 1984, he told me that he thought that Weber had been the single greatest influence on his thought and that he planned to reread all Weber's major works in the next few years.

11. The best accounts of Weber remain H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, "Introduction: The Man and His Works," in their *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York 1946) pp. 3–74; Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (New York 1960), and Guenther Roth, "Introduction," in Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (2 vols., New York 1968, reissued Berkeley 1978; translated from German original of 1922, collecting many of Weber's earlier writings) pp. xxxiii–cx.

12. Weber, *Economy and Society* (n. 11 above), pp. 305–6.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 933.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 1354, 1359.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 927.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 928.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 937.

18. Johannes Hasebroek, *Die imperialistische Gedanke im Altertum* (Stuttgart 1926); *Trade and Politics in Ancient Greece*, transl. L. M. Fraser and D. C. MacGregor (London 1933, from German original of 1928). On the dismissal of Hasebroek, see Paul Cartledge, "Trade and Politics' Revisited: Archaic Greece," in *Trade in the*

Ancient Economy, ed. Peter Garnsey, Keith Hopkins, and C. R. Whittaker (Cambridge 1983) pp. 2–5.

19. Finley, *Studies in Land and Credit* (n. 10 above); “Land, Debt, and the Man of Property in Classical Athens,” *Political Science Quarterly* 68 (1953) 249–68, reprinted in Finley, *Economy and Society* (n. 4 above), pp. 62–76.

20. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (New York 1954; rev. ed. 1979).

21. Finley, “Was Greek Civilisation Based on Slave Labour?” *Historia* 8 (1959) 145–64; “The Servile Statuses of Ancient Greece,” *Revue internationale des droits de l’antiquité*, 3rd ser., 7 (1960) 165–89; “Between slavery and freedom,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 6 (1964) 233–49; “La servitude pour dettes,” *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 4th ser., 43 (1965) 159–84. The papers are reprinted in Finley, *Economy and Society* (n. 4 above), pp. 97–166.

22. Weber, *Economy and Society* (n. 11 above), pp. 303–4, 931.

23. Finley, “Between Slavery and Freedom” (n. 21 above), 249 (*Economy and Society*, p. 132).

24. Shaw and Saller, “Editors’ Introduction” (n. 4 above), p. xviii.

25. Finley, “Technical Innovation and Economic Progress in the Ancient World,” *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., 18 (1965) 29–45 (*Economy and Society*, pp. 176–95).

26. Finley, “Was Greek Civilisation Based on Slave Labour?” (n. 21 above), 164 (*Economy and Society*, p. 115).

27. Finley, “Slavery,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York 1968) 14: 307–13; *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (London 1980) pp. 11–92; and pp. 62–94 below.

28. Finley, “Ancient City” (n. 10 above).

29. Finley, *Ancient History* (n. 10 above) pp. 67–87.

30. E.g., Harry Pleket, “Economic History of the Ancient World and Epigraphy,” *Akten des VI. Internationalen Kongresses für griechische und lateinische Epigraphik* (Munich 1972) pp. 243–57; Willem Jongman, *The Economy and Society of Pompeii* (Amsterdam 1988); Pierre Vidal-Naquet, “Économie et société dans la Grèce ancienne: l’oeuvre de Moses I. Finley,” *Archives européennes de sociologie* 6 (1965) 111–48; and the general discussions of Finley’s work in the Italian journal *Opus* vols. 1 (1982) and 6–8 (1987–89). Finley’s account of the International Historical Congress at Stockholm in 1960 in *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (n. 27 above) pp. 60–62 is very informative.

31. I single out particularly Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire* (London 1987); Dominic Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third-Century A.D. Egypt* (Cambridge 1991); C. R. Whittaker, *Land, City and Trade in the Roman Empire* (Aldershot 1993); Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge 1988); *Cities, Peasants and Food in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge 1998). For the social scientists, see Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* (Cambridge, Mass., 1982); Maurice Godelier, *The Mental and the Material* (London 1986, translated from French original of 1984).

32. Keith Hopkins, “Introduction,” in *Trade in the Ancient Economy*, ed. Garnsey et al. (n. 18 above), p. xi.

33. Lynn Hunt, “Introduction,” in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Hunt (Berkeley 1989) p. 7.

34. See particularly Carol Dougherty and Leslie Kurke, "Introduction," in *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece*, ed. Dougherty and Kurke (Cambridge 1993) pp. 1–12.
35. The Paris papers have already appeared, in *Annales Histoire Sciences Sociales* 50 (1995) 947–89.
36. Robert W. Fogel and Stanley Engerman, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery* (2 vols., Boston 1974). Stanley Elkins, in *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (3rd ed., Chicago 1976) pp. 267–302, gives an excellent account of the shift from social and economic to cultural questions in American slave studies.
37. Finley responded to criticisms of *The Ancient Economy* published up to 1984 in a postscript to the book's second edition (pp. 177–207).
38. Finley, *Ancient History* (n. 10 above), p. 5.
39. The best-known example is Martin Frederiksen, "Theory, Evidence and the Ancient Economy," *Journal of Roman Studies* 65 (1975) 164–71.
40. Weber, *Economy and Society* (n. 11 above), p. 21. Cf. Finley, *Ancient History* (n. 10 above), pp. 60–1.
41. Richard Levins, *Evolution in Changing Environments* (Princeton 1968) p. 7.
42. Finley, *Ancient History* (n. 10 above) p. 61.
43. See Edmund Burke, "The Economy of Athens in the Classical Period: Some Adjustments to the Primitivist Model," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 122 (1992) 199–226.
44. Mark Granovetter, "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness," *American Journal of Sociology* 91 (1985) 481–510.
45. Thomas Rawski explains this in more detail in his essays in *Economics and the Historian*, ed. Rawski (Berkeley 1996) pp. 1–59.
46. Keith Hopkins, "Economic Growth and Towns in Classical Antiquity," in *Towns in Societies*, ed. P. Abrams and E. A. Wrigley (Cambridge 1978) pp. 35–79; "Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980) 101–25; "Models, Ships and Staples," in *Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity*, ed. Peter Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, supp. vol. 8 (Cambridge 1983) 84–109. Hopkins's incisive summary of the Jones-Finley orthodoxy at pp. xi–xii of his introduction to *Trade in the Ancient Economy*, ed. Garnsey et al. (n. 18 above), concentrates almost entirely on what he calls "the cellular self-sufficiency of the ancient economy" rather than on Finley's substantivism. David Mattingly, *Tripolitania* (Oxford 1995). For the new consensus, see William Harris, ed., *The Inscribed Economy*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, supp. vol. 6 (Ann Arbor 1993); Nigel Morley, *Metropolis and Hinterland* (Cambridge 1996).
47. Edward Cohen, *Athenian Economy and Society: A Banking Perspective* (Princeton 1992).
48. Particularly Paul Halstead, "Traditional and Ancient Rural Economies in Mediterranean Europe: Plus ça change?," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 107 (1987) 77–87; Stephen Hodkinson, "Animal Husbandry in the Greek Polis," in *Pastoral Economies in Classical Antiquity*, ed. C. R. Whittaker, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, supp. vol. 14 (Cambridge 1988) pp. 35–74; "Imperialist Democracy and Market-Oriented Pastoral Production in Classical Athens," *Anthropozoologica* 16 (1992) 53–60; John Cherry, Jack Davis, and Eleni Mantzourani, *Landscape Archaeology as Long-Term History* (Los Angeles 1991) pp. 333–46; Michael Jameson,

Curtis Runnels, and Tjeerd van Andel, *A Greek Countryside* (Stanford 1994) pp. 383–94; Victor Hanson, *The Other Greeks* (New York 1995).

49. Roger Charter, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations* (Ithaca 1988) is a particularly good introduction to this line of thought in modern French history.

50. There are some important equivalent studies of Rome, however, such as Catharine Edwards, *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge 1993) and *Writing Rome* (Cambridge 1996), and Emily Gowers, *The Loaded Table* (Oxford 1994).

51. Sitta von Reden, *Exchange in Ancient Greece* (London 1995) p. 5.

52. Weber, *Economy and Society* (n. 11 above), p. 9.

53. Josiah Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton 1989) p. 308; Finley, *Democracy Ancient and Modern* (London 1973; 2nd ed., London 1985).

54. Josiah Ober, *The Athenian Revolution* (Princeton 1996) p. 8.

55. Ober, *Mass and Elite* (n. 53 above), pp. 45, 338.

56. *Ibid.*, 153–4.

57. Sitta von Reden, “Money, Law and Exchange: Coinage in the Greek Polis,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 117 (1997) 154–76; James Davidson, *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens* (New York 1997); Leslie Kurke, *Coins, Bodies, Games, and Gold: The Politics of Meaning in Archaic Greece* (Princeton, forthcoming).

58. Weber, *Economy and Society* (n. 11 above), pp. 20–1.