

It is a book every classicist should be familiar with and one that can provide the layperson with authoritative information and a sure guide to an appropriate appreciation and understanding of ancient Egypt.

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M. I. Finley, *Ancient History: Evidence and Models*. Peregrine Books [Elisabeth Sifton Books]. New York: Penguin Books, 1987. Pp. x (unnumbered)+131. Paperback, \$6.95.

M. I. Finley, *The Use and Abuse of History*. Revised Edition. Peregrine Books [Elisabeth Sifton Books]. New York: Penguin Books, 1987. Pp. 253. Paperback, \$8.95.

The late Arnaldo Momigliano, himself one of the most important ancient historians of our day, has called Moses Finley «the most influential ancient historian of our time» and his work «the most valuable writing on ancient history written since 1945» (referring specifically to *The Use and Abuse of History*). The profession will certainly miss the highly perceptive and forthright criticism of the profession made by this late Professor of Ancient History at the University of Cambridge, Fellow of Jesus College, and Master of Darwin College (died 1986), but his numerous publications will serve to remind us of the special contribution that he made to the examination and practice of historiography. Both books briefly reviewed here were originally published previously in 1985 (Great Britain) and 1986 (U.S.A.) and 1971 (Great Britain) and 1975 (U.S.A.) respectively and are collections of essays, most of which were published in various British and European publications. Their availability in convenient format together makes their accessibility much greater for all interested.

Ancient History makes a number of key points, among which are: (1) that the study of history is in no significant sense a science; (2) the historian's evidence –whether in the form of documents, literary texts or objects– proposes no questions; (3) the long tradition that sources written in Greek or Latin are immune from the canons of judgment and criticism that are applied to all other documents is not justified and constitutes an impediment to any proper historical analysis; and (4) the first question to be asked of any written source are why was it written and why was it published. These observations are of primary concern in the six essays reproduced here, namely, «'Progress' in Historiography»; «The Ancient Historian and his Sources»; «Documents»; «How it really was»; «War and Empire»; and «Max Weber and the Greek City-State». Finley himself makes it clear in his Preface that «This is a book about the study and understanding of the history of the Greeks and Romans; about the evidence that is available to the historians and its severe limitations; about the practices of historians in dealing with the evidence, and about alternative procedures that might be attempted; in sum, about what we can know and what we are unlikely ever to know». His conclusion is that «The models would have to be dynamic, so as to reveal the direction, the limits and the tempo of change, the important variations according to origin, period, political authority and so on... The objective, in the final analysis, is one paradoxical one of achieving a more complex picture by the employment of simplifying models» (p. 108).

The older book, *The Use and Abuse of History*, which is, in some ways, more technical and more specialized, contains twelve essays on «Myth, Memory and History»; «The Ancestral Constitution»; «Generalizations in Ancient History»; «The Historical Tradition: The *Contributi* of Arnaldo Momigliano»; «Archaeology and History»; «Anthropology and the Classics»; «The Ancient Greeks and Their Nation»; «The Problem of the Unity of Greek Law»; «The Alienability of Land in Ancient Greece»; «Sparta»; «Utopianism Ancient and Modern»; and «The Heritage of Isocrates». What these essays have in common is the place or uses of the past, not only in academic circles but also in past and present cultural life, and in the narrower field of politics and political argument. Some of the essays are programmatic and didactic; others are more substantive, and deal with particular institutions and societies. All can be read by the nonspecialist. The central theme is never lost sight of, namely, how do people think about their past and what difference does this make to them. In the process we have an investigation of how the Greeks understood the past (myth and history); how lawmakers used and abused history to justify their own actions; how each generation reinterprets the past; and how modern historians are influenced (sometimes quite badly) by their own preconceptions (misconceptions?).

There is really no need for an extended review of Finley's *Ancient History* and *The Use and Abuse of History*, which have been on classicists' shelves for a number of years. What is important is to remind readers of their reissuance in convenient, fairly inexpensive format, for students, scholars, and the general public alike, and Finley's legacy to all that «The past must be deconsecrated, freed from cult, and converted into a living past... a relevant past. High culture must be anchored again, in new ways, to the search for, and the preservation of, values of the present and for the future» (*The Use and Abuse of History*, p. 213).

Whether one agrees or not with Moses Finley's particular intellectual stance, what he has to say is always worth listening to and considering in any analysis of ancient Greek and/or Roman History.

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Chester G. Starr, *Past and Future in Ancient History*. Publications of the Association of Ancient Historians I. Lanham, MD., New York, and London: University Press of America, 1987. Pp.x+70. Paperback, \$ 7.25. Library Binding, \$16.25.

Chester G. Starr, *The Influence of Sea Power on Ancient History*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. Pp. xii (unnumbered)+105. Hardcover, \$12.95.

Chester G. Starr, longtime professor of ancient history at the University of Michigan and prolific author of twenty-one books, many articles and reviews, continues to publish as Bentley Professor of History Emeritus, the founding president of the Association of Ancient Historians, and Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

At the 1985 annual meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians, it was decided to inaugurate a series of occasional publications, one of whose chief aims was to further the teaching of and research in Ancient History in the United States