

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.

JOHN E. REXINE
Colgate University

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).

