Rupes loquentes. Atti del Convegno internaziole di studio sulle Iscrioni rupestri di età romana in Italia (Roma – Bomarzo 13.-15.X 1989). A cura di Lidio Gasperini. Studi pubblicati dall'Istituto Italiano per la storia antica LIII. Roma 1992. Pp. 614. ITL 200,000.

This interesting publication is the result of another "convegno" which, to judge from the detailed description of the programme (p. XIff.), one should not have missed. There are about 25 papers dealing with "iscrizioni rupestri", the papers covering much of Italy (including Sardinia and Sicily) from the north to the south. Some of the papers have been conceived as definite inventories of the material in some more extended part of Italy (e.g. that of C. Letta on Regio IV – although, in fact, despite the title, only a part is taken into consideration – that of H. Solin and M. Kajava on *Latium adiectum* and that of G. Manganaro on Sicily), whereas other papers deal with smaller areas and some with individual inscriptions (some of which do, however, not seem to merit an attention as thorough as that accorded here).

I must say that, taken as a whole, the book is extremely useful, and I have read the papers with much profit. But not everyone will have the time to read the whole, and a less agreeable thing about this book is that it has no index at all, although costing a considerable sum. Of course I know that this is not the only publication of its kind without indexes, but the omission of them is really a very bad habit which I think should be abandoned.

Truthfully, I cannot help thinking, from time to time, about the relevance of studies like these which concentrate on the material rather than on the contents of inscriptions. To me many of the texts seem otherwise absolutely normal (e.g. the inscription from Ferentinum dealt with at some length by A. Pasqualini, p. 385ff.) and could equally well have been inscribed on statue bases and the like, and so I would very much have liked to find a paper on "iscrizioni rupestri" as a general phenomenon with information, for example, on what kinds of texts one is dealing with and pointing out differences – other than purely technical – and similarities between them and "normal" inscriptions etc.

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