



## PRIMARY SOURCE

**BOX 1.2** Hopkins, K. 1978. *Conquerors and Slaves* (Sociological Studies in Roman History, 1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, x.

One objective is to experiment with methods borrowed from sociology in order to gain new insights into changes in Roman society—not new facts, but a different way of understanding the relationship between various changes . . . Throughout this book I try to explore some of the long-term consequences of repeated actions, for example, the consequences of importing slaves into Italy during the period of Rome’s imperial expansion, or of allocating colonial plots to emigrant Italian peasants. I want to explore the consequences of these actions independently of the intentions of individual actors . . . The ancient source, if we are lucky, tells us only what an ancient author thought was happening and how he felt about it, or how he thought that others felt about it. That is obviously important, but partial. In the face of this difficulty, we have to look out for other methods by which we can validate analyses . . . That is where sociological methods can be helpful. And that is why these two books make use of sociological concepts and arguments, set out explicit hypotheses, and seek to support those arguments with models, figures and coordinates, as well as with quotations from the sources.