

are provided as examples for a certain aspect, date from the Imperial period, such as on p. 115 where the centre paragraph begins with a phrase mentioning Imperial-period contexts, yet the examples date from the 4th century BC and 2nd/ 1st centuries BC.

In conclusion, K.'s book delivers even more than it promises in the title. It is not only about athletics and literature but about identities, ideals, (self-)representations in the Roman Empire approached with a careful and insightful analysis of the ancient sources on athletics. A final positive remark concerns the Greek: it is very considerate to provide both the English translation and the original text of the cited Greek passages and delightful to read the Greek terms in transliterations, i.e., *gymnasion* and not *gymnasium*, *stadion*, not *stadium*.

Marjaana Vesterinen

Religion and Law in Classical and Christian Rome. Edited by CLIFFORD ANDO and JÖRG RÜPKE. Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 15. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 2006. ISBN 3-515-08854-7. 176 pp. EUR 42.

The idea of this volume of the *Potsdamer Altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge* is to examine the relationship between religion and state through developments in Roman law from the late Republic to late antiquity. A thematic book such as this one serves both novices and initiates in the field. For the novices, it provides an excellent introduction into some of the most important existing source material and ever-interesting questions concerning Roman legislation; for the initiates, it offers new perspectives on the very same questions.

Before going into a more detailed analysis of the chapters, I should, however, give credit to the excellent introduction written by the editors. In the introduction, the editors list some of the most interesting *loci* from ancient literary corpus (be it law or commentaries on law) that illuminate how and what the Romans thought about *sacra* in legal terms. The first impression is indeed how little the theme seemed to have bothered Roman jurists and how vague the formulations concerning religious matters were in comparison to the meticulousness in other fields of law. The state did not bother about *religiones* as long as the *religiones* did not bother the state.

The editors also introduce – almost nonchalantly – insights that should – no doubt inspire further studies about the cultural role of Roman legislation. They say (p. 7): "... the Romans themselves naturalized the dynamism and instability of their world by advocating adherence to an enormous cultural conservatism", law being one of the cornerstones of this attitude. Clifford Ando elaborates this point in his article 'Religion and *ius publicum*' (Chapter 8) when saying: "... the reliance of both late-antique codifications of the *edictum perpetuum* testifies the unwillingness or inability of their compilers and the authors of their contents alike to imagine a whole-scale restructuring of the legal basis for social order" (p. 133). Despite the fact that the world had changed from 'pagan' to 'Christian' (or so we think), Roman law reflected changes in social order with only minimal adjustments.

Karl Leo Noethlichs' article 'Revolution from the top? "Orthodoxy" and the persecution of heretics in imperial legislation from Constantine to Justinian' (Chapter 7) explains partly why Ando's point based on social theory makes so much sense. As long as religious strifes did not threaten to crumble the social basis for functional governance of the empire, emperors did

not interfere. When they did threaten, emperors showed more willingness to negotiate Christian doctrine, label heresies and enforce orthodoxy – matters that they saw even then mostly in pragmatic terms. As Noethlichs says, Christianity being given a priority in the Roman Empire, 'social order' and 'true worship' were in constant conflict (p. 119). Noethlichs also points out that at least in the fifth century the battle between orthodoxy and heresy was so hot that theological struggles momentarily displaced "the more strictly political desire for law and order" (p. 120). Emperors were urged to throw in a theological word, but only after their initial campaign for social quiet had been hopelessly lost. On the other hand, preventive measures had been taken, e.g., in *Cod. Theod.* 16,4,2, published in June 388, forbidding any public debate on questions of faith (p. 124).

Dorothea Baudy's article 'Prohibitions of Religion in Antiquity: Setting the Course of Europe's Religious History' (Chapter 6) serves as a good summary on religious conflicts in the Roman Empire to students of ancient history. The second half of her title remains, however, mostly unaddressed, apart from a long introduction into the topic.

Andrew S. Jacobs argues in his article "'Papinian Commands One Thing, Our Paul Another': Roman Christians and Jewish Law in the *Collatio Legum Mosaicarum et Romanarum*" (Chapter 5) that the *Collatio* could be interpreted as "a Christian attempt to seize exegetical control of the mass of legal materials" used by contemporary Jewish religious authorities (p. 93). Jacobs' conclusion sounds ingenious: the kidnapping of Jewish legal material by Christians allowed them to speak with the authority of ancient Jewish Law against pagans (i.e., Romans), while at the same time "claiming solidarity with Rome in speaking *adversus Iudaeos*" (p. 97).

Elizabeth DePalma Digeser makes also an interesting case in her article 'Religion, Law and the Roman Polity: The Era of the Great Persecution' (Chapter 4) when saying that Neoplatonist philosophy implanted itself as a political theory in the imperial court for some time in the beginning of the fourth century. Neoplatonists claimed that Christians were dangerous to the empire. Christians' teachings jeopardized the Neoplatonists' big plan to "divinize the citizen body" as Christians did not believe in the "path of *political virtue*" (p. 78, my italics). This ideology was exhausted by both Roman "persecuting" emperors and the "first Christian" emperor, Constantine. For Constantine, true divinization came through the divine law of God's heavenly city, of which he himself, being emperor, was keeper (p. 82).

John Scheid continues in his article 'Oral tradition and written tradition in the formation of sacred law in Rome' (Chapter 1) along the lines of argumentation that have become his trademark in the previous years, yet again in a new context. According to Scheid, Roman religious tradition consisted of two elements: "a ritual *savoir-faire*?, orally transmitted from father to son, from public officer to public officer, relying on written formulas of prayer and orally-enacted calendar" and "isolated decisions adapting these ritual rules to new situations" (p. 19) (cf. his article 'Quand croire c'est faire' which made the characterization of Roman religion as ritualism blatantly clear to modern historians of religion). Scheid forces modern readers to accept the fact (which many generations of scholars persistently refused to do, as Scheid illustrates in pp. 15–17) that Roman religious tradition was mainly oral and never systematized into a corpus.

Jörg Rüpke tackles similar issues in his article 'Religion in the *lex Ursonensis*' (Chapter 2) when explaining what the *lex Ursonensis* said about *sacra*. It consisted of rituals such as *ludi circenses* (games), *scaenici* (plays), *gladiatores* (gladiators), *sacrificia* (sacrifices) and *pulvinaria* (meals prepared for the statues of the gods), i.e., rituals that depended on public

authorities and public financing (p. 37). As Rüpke concludes, in the *lex Ursonensis*, legal techniques were used to limit the possibilities of independent religious action, but without interfering with time-honoured religious traditions of Rome (p. 45).

J. B. Rives' article 'Magic, Religion, and Law: The Case of the *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis*' (Chapter 3) discusses in what ways and for what reasons certain concepts and phenomena related to magic were made legally defined terms and legally sanctioned actions in the Roman empire. He deals separately with the definition of *veneficium* (poison), *carmina* (chants), *devotiones* (promises of an offering to the gods of the underworld in return for the fulfilment of a request, e.g., that something bad would happen to an enemy) and *mala sacrificia* (rituals meant to consign people to the gods of the underworld and thus destroy them), and finally with *magi* and *ars magica*. Rives' article is full of interesting examples, and his conclusion ties up the threads with legal developments. He says that the *lex Cornelia* was not necessarily the basis for Roman legal actions against magic and magicians and suggests that "the new criminal category of magic" as religious deviance was actually employed more freely in the provinces, neglecting the word of law in the *lex Cornelia*.

This book shows that, in ancient Rome, religious traditionalism and ritualism reduced the need for religious legislation and departures from convention (such as Christianity and magic) increased it. Roman religious laws were reactive and pragmatic. This study neatly deflates the old myth of Roman law as something carved in stone, unchangeable.

Ulla Lehtonen

VALERIE M. WARRIOR: *Roman religion*. Cambridge introduction to Roman civilization. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006. ISBN 978-0-521-53212-9 (pb). XVIII, 165 p. GBP 11.90.

There has been a considerable increase in general introductions to Roman religion published over the last ten years. Mary Beard, John North and Simon Price started the boom with their *Religions of Rome 1–2* in 1998 (Cambridge University Press). Just to mention a few other works on Roman religious life, there is a collection of republished articles titled *Roman Religion* edited by Clifford Ando (Edinburgh University Press, 2003), Jörg Rüpke's *Die Religion der Römer* (C.H. Beck, 2001), Robert Turcan's *Rome et ses dieux* (Hachette littératures, 1998) and James B. Rives' *Religion in the Roman Empire* (Blackwell, 2007).

Valerie M. Warrior continues the trend with *Roman religion* in the series *Cambridge introduction to Roman civilization* that is marketed at students without prior knowledge of the classical world. The aim of the series is to offer clear, jargon-free language. For a researcher it is not easy to write without jargon but Warrior successfully avoids it. Warrior also published *Roman religion: A Sourcebook* in 2002.

Roman Religion consists of ten chapters in which different aspects of Roman religious life such as deities, rituals, family, state, war, festivals and games, foreign cults, magic, emperor cult, Jews and Christians are discussed. Both public and private aspects of Roman religion are surveyed. Warrior writes about the rituals in family life and surveys the cults of women in particular. She explains the pragmatism of Roman religion as well as the close connection between religion and politics in Rome – aspects that may feel strange to a modern beginner.