

have been utilised in the chapters that follow. Chapters 3–5 focus on archaeological evidence and case studies designed to describe different offering practices and their changeable nature. The case studies are presented meticulously. The third chapter deals with the offerings in their archaeological context and their placement in the cult sites. This chapter focuses especially on structures identified as offering tables, their use and location, while also discussing banquets and banquet rooms in sanctuaries, the deposition of offerings in the cult of Demeter in Acrocorinth, and rites of foundation. The chapter is elaborated with images and floor plans of the discussed structures.

The fourth chapter discusses altars and different ways of using them. Patera compares animal sacrifice and deposition of offered objects/foodstuff, sacrificing with and without fire, and traditional altars and chthonic *escharai*. She re-examines the notion of *eschara* as a definitive chthonic element, and the difference between the formation of sacrificial deposits and deposits of offerings. This chapter ends with a paragraph on the use of a sacrificial pyre in Eleusis. The fifth chapter continues by differentiating deposits of offerings from sacrificial deposits. The discussion mainly consists of case studies concerning *bothroi*, pits and other sacrificial deposits. Patera questions the notion that *bothroi* and pits were only used in chthonic cults, as well as the division of cults into chthonic and Olympian. The chapter ends with a discussion of the changeable nature of the term *megaron* which can, according to Patera, imply various kinds of structures.

Patera's work does not seem to offer a lot of new or groundbreaking information, but this was presumably not the author's aim, nor is it an overview on offering in ancient Greek religion. The shift in the focus after the second chapter comes, as mentioned above, as a surprise to the reader; the author should in my view either have pointed out that the study consists of two parts, or the two parts should have more dialogue with each other. The strength of Patera's work, on the other hand, lies in the meticulous case studies dealing with the multitude of local offering practices, and the differences in those practices over time. Patera's work also rightly questions some traditional notions of offering as too simplistic, and encourages us to look at offering on a case by case basis. It also recognizes the ambiguity and complexity both in Greek vocabulary and in the modern terms used of offering. The emphasis on small non-perishable objects as sacrificial offerings is an interesting perspective and worth further study.

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GARY FORSYTHE: *Time in Roman Religion. One Thousand Years of Religious History*. Routledge studies in ancient history, 4. Routledge, New York – London 2012. ISBN 978-0-415-52217-5. XIII, 207 pp. GBP 90, USD 145.

Gary Forsythe, the author of e.g. *A Critical History of Early Rome: From Prehistory to the First Punic War* (2006), offers in this book, his most recent, a collection of six short studies on various subjects loosely connected by their association with the Roman calendar. Chapter 1, entitled "Preliminary Examination of the Roman Calendar", consists of an introduction to the Pre-Julian Roman calendar and its early Hellenization starting from the regal period. Chapter 2, "The After Days and Other Curiosities", discusses the 'after days', *dies postriduan*i, in connection with the dates of some famous military defeats. Chapter 3 deals with the "Rites of the *Argei*" and chapter 4

with the "Origins and History of the *Ludi Saeculares*" in the Republican and Augustan era. Chapter 5 is dedicated to "Magna Mater and the *Taurobolium*". The sixth and last chapter, "Non-Christian Origins of Christmas", offers a detailed analysis on how the 25<sup>th</sup> of December became the birthday of Jesus, explaining *inter alia* the crucial parts that the cults of Sol, Mithras and Sol Invictus played in the process.

I start with the book's merits by commending Forsythe's command of the ancient sources: in the six chapters he utilizes an impressive variety of Roman literary, epigraphic (e.g. ch. 5) and even numismatic (e.g. ch. 4 pp. 74-76) material from the Republic and Imperial periods. The author's analysis of his sources seems insightful. The specificity of the book's chosen subjects greatly limits its possible target group, but in my opinion any student or scholar studying these subjects will benefit from the book.

However, I would not recommend to anyone the use of Forsythe's book alone when being introduced to these subjects, as the book, although new, is completely out of date: Forsythe does not use almost any modern research from the last 15 years. Instead, he refers mainly to studies from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> and even from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and apparently does not take into account research that is more recent than 1990.

For example, in the first chapter Forsythe does not include in his discussion on the Roman calendar the most recent relevant publications, e.g. those of Jörg Rüpke (*Kalender und Öffentlichkeit: Die Geschichte der Repräsentation und religiösen Qualifikation von Zeit in Rom*, 1995) or Denis Feeney (*Caesar's Calendar: Ancient Time and the Beginnings of History*, 2007). Also, in chapter 3 Forsythe uses Frazer's commentary from 1929 on Ovid's *Fasti* without even mentioning e.g. Littlewood's commentary from 2006. In chapter 4, which is otherwise a very impressive study of the *ludi saeculares*, Forsythe again ignores Feeney's study of the same subject and moreover, in contrast to his tendency to ignore more recent research, states (in Ch. 4 n. 1) that "the author has been unable to obtain Schnegg-Köhler 2002" (i.e. *Die augusteischen Säkularspiele*). This tendency can also be observed in details; a good example might be Forsythe's uncritical acceptance of Buchner's theories from 1976 concerning Augustus's *horologium* and his failure to consider the debate on the subject that followed and which is still ongoing (see, e.g., L. Haselberger, "A debate on the Horologium of Augustus: controversy and clarifications", *JRA* 24 (2011) 47–98). Even though more recent publications do not seem to be discussed, at least many of them are mentioned in the bibliography, so that the reader can look them up for themselves.

In short, *Time in Roman Religion* studies six highly interesting subjects, but does so in a disappointing way, without any discussion of more recent research. The book does, however, have its merits, and I would recommend to anyone interested in these subjects to have a look at it alongside of other recent publications. But someone who is looking for an up-to-date introduction to these subjects should look elsewhere.

*Jasmin Lukkari*