

best possible way of describing and understanding the situation. R. proceeds calmly, moving through her argument in clear stages — but at the same time, the need for careful use of language and explanation in pursuit of such a goal holds the work back and makes it feel at times over-cautious.

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I. COGITORE, *LE DOUX NOM DE LIBERTÉ: HISTOIRE D'UNE IDÉE POLITIQUE DANS LA ROME ANTIQUE* (AUSONIUS – Publications. Scripta antiqua 31). Bordeaux: Ausonius / Paris: Diffusion de Boccard, 2011. Pp. 343, illus. ISBN 9782356130419. €18.00.

Cogitore takes her title from Cicero, who in one of his characteristic moments of high emotion apostrophizes the *nomen dulce libertatis* (*Verr.* 2.5.163). Verres has just breached the rights accorded to a Roman citizen by the Sempronian laws, so Cicero may have a technical, juridical definition of *libertas* in mind. Yet by addressing the name of liberty and not liberty itself he ties his plea to literary and rhetorical tradition (a pedigree enhanced when Gellius quotes this very passage at *NA* 10.3.13). The sweetness of *libertas* adds more literary overtones while drawing particular attention to the emotional power of the concept. In this book, C. argues successfully that far from detracting from the vigour of *libertas* as a political concept, these literary and affective qualities actually enhance it.

C. is clear that analysing the literary expression of ideas contributes to the study of Roman political culture. The result, however, comes across first and foremost as a literary rather than a historical study. Large chunks of the book adopt a traditionally philological approach, tracing individual occurrences of the word *libertas* (and, to a lesser degree, its cognates) through various authors and themes. C. is justifiably reluctant to propose specific definitions of *libertas*, instead describing the various contexts in which it appears and analysing its operation in detail passage by passage. An unfortunate result of the discursive style is a certain degree of repetition, and these sections do not always make for fascinating reading. There is much useful material here, though, for those dipping into the text in search of a particular author or episode. The authors treated cover all periods from 44 B.C.E. to the Antonines, and a wide range of genres. Cicero and Livy receive particular emphasis. C. sees the Ides of March as a watershed in political usages of *libertas*, and the *Philippics* and Cicero's letters of 44 B.C.E. are key texts in her argument, while earlier Ciceronian material is not treated. The almost complete absence of the *de Officiis* therefore comes as a surprise, especially in light of Valentina Arena's work on the subject ('Invocation to liberty and invective of *dominatus* at the end of the Roman Republic', *BICS* 50 (2007), 49–74).

The book is divided into three main sections, each probing the boundaries of the semantic domain of *libertas*. The first (17–73) explores abstract concepts linked to *libertas* either by contrast or comparison, moving more or less chronologically by author. The texts invoke *libertas* again and again as something which must be fought for or defended against attacks. Indeed, its fragility is one of its defining qualities, and its appearance is often a signal of coming violence. Not only is it under attack from outside, but it contains within itself the threat of *licentia*. C. argues convincingly for the instability and risks inherent in the literary concept of *libertas*. Its expression as a literary trope contributes to its emotional charge and efficacy as a call to action.

In the second section (75–166), the organization is by topic, tracing the operation of *libertas* in literary accounts of historical episodes. C. outlines the development of a multi-faceted *libertas* which could be invoked on the one hand in discussions of the early Republic or in the immediate aftermath of the Ides of March in a simple opposition with tyranny, but on the other hand functioned in Late Republican political discourse and in Augustus' writings as a more complex political idea which combined successful government with the rights of the individual. This was not an empty concept, but an adaptable one. As she moves chronologically through imperial reigns, C. makes good use of coinage to contrast the rise and fall of *libertas* in official imagery with its appearance in literature. For the imperial period, she sketches out a transformation in which political *libertas* is co-opted for dynastic use by the emperors, while writers gradually bring together elements of freedom of speech and philosophical, inner freedom into a new *libertas* which gradually loses much of its connection with instability, violence and opposition.

In the third section (167–219), C. moves to consider important places, individuals, and other symbols tied to *libertas* in Rome's collective memory. Here the reasoning behind C.'s selection of

particular topics is more opaque; individual instances of the word *libertas* are no longer the key, and some subsections are more closely tied to the wider argument than others. The section on places tied to *libertas* (171–9) is slight, but the discussion of Brutus and Cassius as *liberatores* (191–4) makes a useful contribution, highlighting the emotional force of the word as used by Cicero.

Throughout, C. focuses on usages of *libertas* connected to internal politics, excluding passages she judges to refer solely to the legal status of slave or free or the relationship between foreign peoples and Rome. One wonders how clean such distinctions between the term's different applications can ever be, especially given how successfully the book makes an argument for overlaps and shifts in emphasis over time between concepts of political freedom and freedom of speech. By concentrating on highly charged, explicitly political moments, however, C. is able to move away from legalistic definitions and foreground the emotional and rhetorical appeal of *libertas*. The fact that *libertas* was a literary trope is not evidence that it was an empty slogan, and close analysis of its literary operation can bring us closer to understanding its political importance. Though it will not close the debate, such a re-framing of the question is welcome, and C.'s emphasis on the affective aspects of *libertas* is particularly worthwhile.

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M. B. SKINNER, *CLODIA METELLI: THE TRIBUNE'S SISTER*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xvii + 195, illus. ISBN 0195375009/9780195375008 (bound); 0195375017/9780195375015 (paper). £60.00 (bound); £17.99 (paper).

This book is part of the series 'Women in Antiquity', and as such aims to provide 'compact and accessible introductions to the life and historical times of women from the ancient world'. Marilyn Skinner lives up to these aims, writing lucidly with minimal jargon. In her introduction, she explains that biographers of Republican women face a considerable constraint in the lack of clear evidence for their subject. She defends the decision to write this book nonetheless by pointing out that such a constraint has not deterred numerous fictional accounts of Clodia's life. Her book acts therefore to readjust the balance, in establishing what is known and not known, and what is speculation and fiction.

It is not just modern fictional accounts that S. must contend with: Clodia is only known to us through the writings of contemporary males and S. highlights how most of this was written with a clear agenda of refashioning its subject. This explains why in the sub-title of her own biography ('The Tribune's Sister'), Clodia is perhaps surprisingly positioned through a male relative. With the restricted amount of evidence available, it is inevitable that any biography of a Roman Republican woman is going to cast its net more widely than a biography of a Roman male of the period. Yet, on the other hand, the necessity for situating the discussion in its historical context broadens the appeal of the analysis to a much wider audience. This book therefore is highly readable for its comments on the social and political history of the time, as well as an insight into the literary works of Catullus and Cicero. As a commentary on a key Republican family, it works as an in-depth case study of Late Republican life.

This means too that while concentrating on one woman, S. provides much information that is relevant for women of the elite class in Rome in general. So, for example, S. explores the implications of marriage *sine manu*, including the independent financial relations that existed between husband and wife and the continued affiliation of a wife with her birth family. She shows how this could prove problematic for Clodia when the claims of her husband and younger brother were in conflict as, for example, during Metellus' consulship. The translation of *sine manu* as 'free' is perhaps going a little too far, as the wife still remained under male supervision. S. justifies her translation, however, arguing that a father's control over a daughter residing in a separate household would be more limited than when she lived with him. As with all technical or contested terms, S. provides the Latin as well as the English translation.

There are limits, however, as to just how much context can be included, and some areas might need further elucidation. One such area is the definition of the elite in Rome. S. uses a variety of terms to describe the higher echelons of Roman society, including elite and governing class. She also talks in terms of the nobility and aristocracy. Both she describes as hereditary, while the nobility is described variously as patrician or plebeian. The dualism of patrician and plebeian