

A *hostis*-declaration could be useful for those aspiring to honours, such as triumphs and trophies: since the defeated men were enemies of the state, it was easy to claim that the war was an external rather than a civil war. Cicero, for example, was given a *supplicatio* by the Senate, which was normally only granted in the case of external wars. He furthermore suggested that since Catiline had been declared an enemy, a triumph might have been appropriate as well. Caesar on other hand never declared the Pompeians *hostes*, probably because it did not fit his policy of *clementia*. The term *hostis* could also be used as a rhetorical tool, in order to emphasize the danger presented by certain people. Thus Cicero in his *Philippics* repeatedly called Antony *hostis*, in order to pressure the Senate into starting a war against him.

The book contains a useful catalogue of all known and supposed *hostes*, with detailed bibliographical details on each man. A. also investigates in each case why someone was declared *hostis* and the effects on their future career. This catalogue in itself shows the flexibility of the concept: in many cases the declarations were quickly withdrawn and the men reintegrated into political life. It is clear from this well-written book that the *hostis*-declaration was a useful tool in the civil wars, but that its usefulness was limited in periods of public chaos, and that other methods of removing opponents (for example, proscription or exile) were more effective. The book has a clear layout and only a few typographical errors; the modest price makes it well worth buying for anyone interested in the political and legal history of the late Republic.

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V. ARENA, *LIBERTAS AND THE PRACTICE OF POLITICS IN THE LATE ROMAN REPUBLIC*. Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. ix + 324, illus. ISBN 9781107028173. £60.00/US\$99.00.

Valentina Arena's book examines 'the conceptualisations of the idea of *libertas* and the nature of their connection with the practice of politics in the late Roman Republic' (1). Ch. 1 defines the Roman concept of *libertas* as 'a status of non-subjection to the arbitrary will of another person or group of persons' (6). Ch. 2, 'The Citizen's Political Liberty' deals with specific arrangements ensuring political liberty: *suffragium*, the tribunes' powers, *provocatio*, and the entire legal and judicial system. Ch. 3, 'The Liberty of the Commonwealth', examines two different concepts of political liberty — the 'optimate' and the 'popular' one: these shared a common ground in accepting the need to protect the citizens' liberty from domination and arbitrary power, but offered different ways of doing so. Ch. 4, 'The Political Struggle in the First Century BC', examines the way *libertas* was invoked by both sides on three specific issues: *imperia extraordinaria*, 'the so-called *senatus consultum ultimum*' and agrarian laws. Ch. 5, 'The Political Response and the Need to Legitimacy', elaborates on the way *optimates* justified their positions in terms of *libertas* — especially on the 'emergency decree of the senate'. On this issue, the optimate rhetoric ended up undermining, according to A., the traditional notion of the rule of law as a bulwark of Republican liberty — in favour of a 'higher legality' of saving the commonwealth from grave danger. This, as she argues in the Epilogue, would eventually help pave the way for Octavian.

The book makes an important contribution to the elucidation of a concept central to Roman political culture; it, and its political rôle in the period in question, are analysed comprehensively, learnedly and with a good theoretical underpinning (ancient and modern). The essence of Republican *libertas* is defined aptly, which helps to analyse the way this notion functioned politically in the late Republic. *Libertas*, to which everyone had to appeal, was not, as the author rightly stresses and convincingly demonstrates, a mere empty slogan; it had a serious political content and imposed real constraints on participants in political debates. *Populares* and *optimates* are defined as two rival 'discourses', 'intellectual traditions', or 'families of ideas' (5, 7). A.'s treatment of this subject seems to strike the right balance, avoiding both the danger of presenting the Roman *partes* in a too-rigid, semi-formalized fashion, something that was more common in the past, and of minimizing the political significance of those terms or dismissing it altogether, as is sometimes done nowadays.

A. argues that in the optimate tradition, ensuring liberty required a 'mixed constitution' in which no political institution or social element would be fully dominant; in practice, the *optimates* upheld the authority of the senate while conceding the ultimate sovereignty of the people. For the *populares*, on the other hand, liberty required the preponderance of popular assemblies, with political equality

between citizens and even, as A. argues, some element of economic equalization. This framing of the popular/optimate divide is interesting and attractive. While Cicero's adoption of Polybius' 'mixed constitution' in *De republica* should not necessarily be taken as representing *the* optimate point of view, it is important to stress, as A. does, that no optimate politician could afford to espouse, in public, a full-fledged 'senatorial Republic', denying the ultimate supremacy of the people. On the other hand, the *popularis* position, as portrayed by the author, seems at times too 'democratic'. What *populares* espoused is perhaps also best defined as some sort of a 'mixed constitution' — naturally, a more 'popular' version of it.

Some matters relevant to the actual 'practice of politics in the Late Republic', and to the specific implications of broad political and moralistic statements, give rise to objections. Thus, A. regards the Pseudo-Sallustian *Second Letter to Caesar* (accepting it as an authentic mid-first-century text) as part of the optimate tradition on the grounds that, despite some features that seem *popularis* 'at first sight', it is concerned with a 'morally strong senate' (with increased numbers) playing a leading rôle in public affairs (99 and 112). But this is contradicted by a string of clearly *popularis* proposals, including an equalizing reform of the *comitia centuriata* (an idea attributed to Gaius Gracchus), secret voting in the senate and handing over the juries to the entire first property-class (compared to popular courts in Rhodes), as well as what the letter's author says about Caesar's 'spirit which from the very beginning dismayed the faction of the nobles [and] restored the Roman plebs to freedom after a grievous slavery' (2.4). Nor is there a reason to assume that a typical *popularis* would not support, when it suited him, a morally strong senate playing a leading rôle in public affairs.

On the 'SCU' paving the way to Octavian, the argument fails to convince. The precedent might conceivably have been used to justify some sort of senatorial dictatorship unauthorized by statute. Octavian 'saved the Republic' in 44 B.C. as a *privatus*, relying rhetorically on a tradition much older than the SCU. After his 'election' as consul in 43 B.C., he never again lacked statutory authority (except, apparently, briefly in 32 B.C.) — least of all as triumvir; as Princeps, senate and people would vie with each other in conferring powers on him. Despite such objections, this study is an impressive accomplishment and will from now on be an important point of reference in all discussions on Roman *libertas*.

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S. HIN, *THE DEMOGRAPHY OF ROMAN ITALY: POPULATION DYNAMICS IN AN ANCIENT CONQUEST SOCIETY, 201 BCE–14 CE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xiv + 406. ISBN 9781107003934. £65.00.

From the early debates between David Hume and Robert Wallace, efforts at macro-scale reconstruction of the Roman population have been marked by the wildest divergences. Fundamental disagreements still abide between 'high-counters' and 'low-counters', who offer not just different interpretations of Republican and Augustan census figures but entirely irreconcilable visions of the trajectory, scale and nature of Roman development. Saskia Hin's *Demography of Roman Italy* is a remarkable contribution in many ways, but above all in that it is the only compelling attempt, in over two centuries of research, to offer a comprehensive middle way. Indeed, she provides the reader with a memorable handle for her reconstruction: the middle count.

Although her interpretation of the census figures is likely to generate the most controversy and discussion, the value of this book goes well beyond its case for a middle count. The structure of the book is revealingly divided into three parts. A first section surveys the economic and environmental context of the ancient population. A second analyses in turn mortality, fertility and migration. Only in the third section does H. approach the problem of total population size. The reader will note a contrast in emphasis between H.'s methods and other recent contributions to which this volume is inevitably to be compared, such as L. de Ligt, *Peasants, Citizens, and Soldiers* (2012) and A. Launaro, *Peasants and Slaves* (2011). While H.'s book is acutely sensitive to the technical details of the ancient written and archaeological sources, her interpretation foregrounds interdisciplinary and comparative demographic theory. Especially in the second section, she makes sophisticated use of the literature to expose the sometimes flimsy assumptions that have lurked in the study of ancient populations.