

Virgin Cornelia and the way that her rejection of his claim to exercise moral authority inherited from the censors exposed the ambiguity of all claims to be acting in a historically-legitimized manner. In this, G. reveals the way that those emperors, such as Domitian, who drew attention to the personal rôle of the emperor as an arbitrator in the negotiation became identified as repressive.

A distinguishing feature of G.'s examination of the Principate's engagement with its Republican past is the way it presents six case studies each focusing on a different locus of negotiation: political ideals (*libertas*), architecture, religion, senatorial rhetoric, literature, and coinage across a fifty-year period. This provides the work with both its major strength and its main weakness. At its best, in its focus on specific points of negotiation and moments of potential crisis, it adds significantly to our understanding of these moments and demonstrates the way that critical theory can be well used to examine the ancient world — in this case by examining memory and cultural knowledge. However, as the author himself states, the time-frame of the book was selected because of the wealth of material available rather than out of a conviction about the importance, uniqueness, or specific issues of the period (8). He acknowledges the problem that this causes near the end of the book, commenting that, 'Although it may be true to say that the memory of the republic underwent significant transformation during the period examined in this book, such a claim is meaningless without sufficient contextualization' (250). Each individual study reveals the way nostalgia for a past that was in itself unstable and dependent upon a similar process of negotiation with its own history created a continual threat of breakdown and failure. However, the text as a whole does not provide a holistic picture of the way the process of memory negotiation worked across the Principate, and whether certain tensions and conflicts recurred in the process of negotiating its corporate memory.

This is frustrating, given the strength of G.'s ideas and the quality of the studies, and one wishes to get further than his final conclusion that, 'The multiplicity of contexts in which the Republican past could be remembered contributed to the basic incoherence of the "republic" itself as an object of Roman memory' (251). Early on, the author notes the way that Augustus' diplomatic regard for tradition and legitimacy in order to ensure stability meant there was no radical shift in ideology, which might have made acceptance of the monarchic elements of the Principate easier in the long run (31). The idea that Rome essentially lived in a state of hypocritical self-denial under the Principate is intriguing, and it would be interesting to explore the ways in which this failure to bite the ideological bullet meant that Rome's political culture essentially fossilized in its own history, and how this affected its stability and the longevity of would-be dynasties.

Given the fact that the difficulties and tensions in negotiating history and memory, and the tendency towards nostalgia for a past that was not really *that* past are hardly limited to ancient Rome, the reader might like to be able to take their reflections upon G.'s detailed studies further, adding his thoughts to the work that he is using. However, the relative lack of the bigger picture in *Remembering the Roman Republic* limits its ability to drive such ruminations. We should not demand that works are written with an eye to the opportunity to apply the lessons of the past to the present, but it is a shame, given the quality of his reading of the past, that G.'s choice of focus limits the potential for it.

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doi:10.1017/S0075435813000191

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J. GERING, *DOMITIAN, DOMINUS ET DEUS? : HERRSCHAFTS- UND MACHTSTRUKTUREN IM RÖMISCHEN REICH ZUR ZEIT DES LETZTEN FLAVIERS* (Osnabrücker Forschungen zu Altertum und Antike-Rezeption 15). Rahden/Westf: VML, Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2012. Pp. 433, illus. ISBN 9783896467362. €74.80.

The present monograph was originally presented as the author's PhD thesis at the University of Osnabrück in 2010/2011 and has now been published in the well-known series 'Osnabrücker Forschungen zu Altertum und Antike-Rezeption'. Gering's main aim is a re-evaluation of the traditional view of Domitian as *vir malus*, established by classical historiography and only partially challenged by modern scholarship. Indeed, there is still no consensus as to how credible our anti-Domitian testimonies may be and if Domitian's principate represents either a revolutionary break or rather a continuation with previous dynamics. In order to achieve this goal, G. insists on the necessity of not focusing our understanding of Domitian's rule on his

individual personality, but rather on a longitudinal analysis ('Längsschnittuntersuchung') which places his policy in the context of long-term continuities and discontinuities within the broader evolution of the first- and second-century principate (35).

After a very short preface and an introduction (7–9), G. discusses the credibility of our main sources (10–27), such as Martial, Statius, Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny, Juvenal, Frontinus, Suetonius, Cassius Dio and others. A systematic discussion of other than literary sources (i.e. the epigraphic, numismatic and archaeological material), however, is reduced to only a few lines (25–7), though in what follows the author thoroughly exploits these sources. A further introductory chapter deals with the history of modern research on Domitian since the nineteenth century and expounds the method proposed by G.

Then follow the three main chapters of the book. In the first (39–200), G. investigates the legitimation and representation of power during the rule of the Flavians. Only a few pages are devoted to the origins of the Flavian principate (39–56), whereas the majority of the chapter deals with the importance of the 'dynastic principle' for each of the three emperors involved (57–116). G. stresses that Vespasian's ability to exhibit two adult sons may have helped to stabilize his rule after the civil war and also deconstructs the alleged enmity between Titus and Domitian. He insists on the smooth transfer of power between the different members of the family, but also on the fact that the absence of an adult successor in A.D. 96 may have hastened Domitian's end and the downfall of the dynasty. There follows an investigation of the religious facets of imperial legitimacy which deals with Domitian's association with Minerva, evaluates the alleged importance of Isis and questions the supposed official use of the title *dominus et deus*. As the formula does not exist in contemporary epigraphy and is only attested through isolated examples of a panegyric character, G. denies that Domitian ever imposed the title as an official form of address, though he may not have discouraged its individual use (117–39). G. then focuses on the representation of power, presenting numismatic evidence, titles, statues and images and analysing the reception of Domitian's rule in contemporary literature and provincial coinage (140–92).

A further chapter deals with the concrete exercise of imperial power under Domitian (201–305), looking first at Rome and Italy (201–31), where G. deals with topics such as Domitian's social measures concerning the *plebs urbana*, his agricultural reforms in Italy and his building programme. G. further underlines that Domitian's adoption of the title of *ensor perpetuus* was a novelty, but that our sources do not suggest a decidedly anti-senatorial use of the right of the *lectio senatus*. Concerning the rôle of equestrian officials within the imperial administration, G. sees no evidence for a major break with the politics of Domitian's predecessors resulting in the disadvantaging of the traditional élite. As for the provinces (232–305), G. sketches the portrait of a successful and realistic administrator and politician who also managed a long-term stabilization of the Roman frontiers in Britain, on the Rhine and on the Danube.

G.'s attempt to show Domitian's anchoring in Flavian traditions as well as his competence in exercising power calls for an explanation of his downfall and subsequent maligning. Accordingly, G. devotes the final chapter of his book to the 'senatorial opposition' (author's apostrophes) (306–48). He first presents the three attested occurrences of opposition, i.e. the banishment of a certain number of Stoic senators which G. sees as an isolated event, the usurpation of Saturninus in A.D. 88/9 which seems to have been an initiative unrelated to any institutional opposition, and finally the assassination of the emperor, also not expressly related to the senate (306–31). Having thus refuted the thesis of widespread senatorial opposition, G. has to explain why the senate immediately proclaimed the emperor's *damnatio memoriae* and why all subsequent writers revelled in the decrying of the deceased emperor. G. therefore discusses, though very briefly (332–48), Domitian's interaction with the senate. He first insists that Domitian's efforts to attenuate the rivalry between the Flavian *adlecti* and the other senators by either slowing down individual careers (e.g. Agricola) or multiplying and thus weakening previously prestigious offices (e.g. the *consules suffecti*) may have been interpreted as interference with traditional career patterns and violation of the division of power between emperor and senate. Also, the inevitable increase of the monarchical aspects of the principate, the adoption of the title of *ensor perpetuus* and the assumption of more extravagant forms of representation (338: 'Stilfehler'), will have contributed to the development of a negative image of Domitian. Finally, G. insists that the dynastic change after A.D. 96 will have amplified the need for Nerva and above all Trajan to construct their own legitimation on the rejection of Domitian, and even more so as Trajan might have wanted to oppose the imperial ambitions of the governor of Syria, Curvatus Maternus, the highest-ranking Domitianic general.

The book closes with a short conclusion (349–58) organized around three theses: (i) Domitian based his legitimation and representation on continuity with his predecessors and by no means wished to transform the principate into a monarchy following the Hellenistic example; (ii) Domitian was an ambitious, serious and successful politician; (iii) there is no evidence for Domitian's conscious wish to abandon the consensus between emperor and senate by provoking the latter; diverse appendices follow (359–433).

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doi:10.1017/S0075435813000208

J. RÜPKE, *RELIGION IN REPUBLICAN ROME: RATIONALIZATION AND RITUAL CHANGE*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. Pp. vi + 321. ISBN 9780812243949. £45.50/US\$69.95.

This is a very valuable book, bringing together Jörg Rüpke's views on significant changes in the Republic, written with his usual erudition and his usual eye both for detail and for bigger pictures. Although it initially appears to contain relatively little that is new, in that all but three of the chapters are based on publications that have already appeared in German or English between 2001 and 2012, it makes some of these more accessible than before and is, moreover, much more than an edited or updated collection of earlier essays. Although individual readers will welcome the opportunity to revisit with R. his thoughts on particular topics (chapters on the triumph, the *lex Ursonensis*, Ennius' *fasti* and Fulvius Nobilior's temple, and Varro's tripartite theology are amongst those that stand out), the book is a single, coherent work, and as such presents an interpretation to be pursued from beginning to end for proper appreciation. It is possible to gain much from reading individual chapters, but the book's deeper value lies in its overall methodology and the approach it offers to understanding change in the period as whole.

R. sets out to do what Wallace-Hadrill did in 1997 for 'politics, philosophy, grammar and rhetoric' (179) for 'religion' – a term that R. rightly and often notes has no Latin/ancient equivalent, and for which he here adopts a relational definition, as 'an ensemble of practices, institutions, habits, and beliefs, of which no internal coherence or consistence is to be expected' (13). He suggests that many of the changes in Roman religion 240–40 B.C. can be best understood by using as a heuristic tool a Weberian approach to rationalization. This perspective allows R. to identify the abstraction from current practice of principles that were then made into the object of specialized discourse, a discourse that itself then guided and contributed further to future changes. In other words, he begins by exploring 'religion' in public arenas as a vehicle for rationalization, and as such as an important participatory creator of such public arenas, in which R. sees religion as a – indeed 'the' – crucial medium for control of aristocratic competition. Religion is then gradually explored as the *object* of consequent processes of rationalization.

To have treated in a little over two hundred pages, plus relatively compact endnotes, a very important and fast-changing two hundred years (240–40 B.C. emerge as central, although the significance of the crucial period from the late fourth to early third century is not underestimated) is in itself a remarkable achievement. The brevity is attained for the most part through a very welcome focus on processes, on interaction and on communication, rather than on institutions or anachronistic reifications like the 'state'. It is also occasionally and regrettably gained at the price of rather dense prose, although this stems in part from the sheer range of contributions that R. has already made in relevant areas, which means that he can frequently point the reader back to a more detailed treatment of particular issues.

The real strength of the work lies in the focus on processes and the impressive range of genres and kinds of evidence that R. explores, including drama, historiography, epic, legal texts on bronze, *fasti* and their monumental settings, antiquarian writing, and philosophy. This provides a vitally important and rounded approach to the processes that R. examines. The thesis emerges in R.'s own words from 'the multidimensional contextualization of religious change within the other areas of Roman republican society (...) – that is, the political, economic, and juridical arenas' (2). One potential difficulty with an approach that both acknowledges the difficulties of the category 'religion' and seeks to trace the emergence of a field that increasingly credibly deserves such a name (82) is the quasi-teleological isolation or highlighting of strands in the earlier periods in particular. A number of examples might be addressed here, including the games which (rightly)