

supported by Dio 55.10.15. But Velleius 2.100.4 cites Iullus Antonius as the sole individual to be put to death. To complicate matters further, another of the participants, Sempronius Gracchus, was indeed executed, but much later, following a long exile and the succession of Tiberius. In such cases the student needs more guidance, through notes and references, to the complexities that can underlie seemingly simple assertions.

The study of Imperial women is, of course, overshadowed by the problem of the sources, whether it be the almost complete absence of literary evidence for much of the third century, or the relatively copious but highly contentious sources for the Julio-Claudians. Eck provides an excellent brief introduction to the difficulty of developing a methodology, intended for his own chapter but with some modifications applicable generally. He observes that to reject the ancient writings on Roman women as male-written texts is a totally negative process, allowing no theoretical basis for knowledge. He also notes the danger of revisionism, which will tend to select and reject those passages that are critical, while accepting those that are favourable. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the individual contributors are not uniform in the faith they place in their sources. Eck is perhaps the most liberal. While generally suspicious of the hyperbolic portraits that have come down from Suetonius and Dio and the like, he is willing to concede that sometimes the characters might have been as odd as they are depicted, and is prepared to entertain the possibility that, say, Caligula did in fact marry his sister Drusilla, or that Messalina's willingness to go through the bizarre and fatal marriage with her paramour was indeed prompted by an excess of passion. On the other side Bleckman is highly skeptical, and since he is largely dependent on the *Historia Augusta* it is perhaps not surprising. But the consequence is that in Bleckman's judicious section women tend to be relegated to very limited exits and entrances. It would have been useful, for instance, to have heard more of Julia Domna's philosophical circle, and the lay reader would surely have been interested to hear such stories as Origen's delivering a sermon to Julia Mamaea, probably totally apocryphal but a nice illustration of how some of these women were viewed by later antiquity. Clauss achieves this in his chapter, where he devotes a whole section to the legend of Helena and the True Cross.

The final impression that the book leaves is perhaps not encouraging, through no fault of the authors. Although there were occasional exceptions, such as Agrippina the Younger or Theodora, for the most part imperial women, like the general run of royal wives of later history, were not main players, but rather little more than pawns, *Legitimationstützen* (p. 234), in a larger political game. But, that said, anyone wanting a broad introduction to the subject would be hard pressed to do better than this intelligent and highly readable volume.

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GERMANICUS AND PISO

G. ROWE: *Princes and Political Cultures. The New Tiberian Senatorial Decrees*. Pp. ix + 195. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002. Cased, US\$49.50. ISBN: 0-472-11230-9.

Within no more than the past twenty years there have been major advances in our understanding of the early principate in general, and of the rôle of the senate in particular. Serious attention has at last been devoted to the latter's workings as a

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corporate body, and this rewarding new line of approach has been boosted by two astonishing epigraphic finds in Spain, the *Tabula Siarensis* (which overlaps with the *Tabula Hebana*, known since the 1940s), and the *SC de Cn. Pisone patre*. These *tabulae* between them record honours proposed for Germanicus following his premature death in 19, and are matched by fragments (known for the past century and more) recording similar honours for Drusus in 23. The SC, passed in December 20, is the senate's published record of its findings in the case brought against Cn. Piso for Germanicus' murder, and of measures stemming from the trial. Rowe's concise, lucid book takes this set of materials as a lens through which to probe shifts in Rome's political culture over the seventy years or so between Octavian's establishment of sole control and the accession of Claudius. The idea is a creative one, and the results are rewarding. Moreover, the range of vision is wide, extending beyond the senate to the equestrian order, the urban plebs of Rome, other citizen communities and Greek cities with special reference to Pisae and Mytilene respectively, and finally the army. The book ends with a Conclusion, followed by an appendix summarizing the personal status of each of the 'princes' around whom the discussion is framed. In the main text, all sources are quoted in English, but documents are reproduced in Greek or Latin at the end of the relevant chapter.

Any scholar who sets out to detect change is liable not just to find it, but also to overstate its significance. For all the acuteness and sensitivity of Rowe's insight, I think it may fairly be asked whether this is the case in at least two of the 'constituencies' (p. 173) he investigates. As he must surely be right in showing, under Augustus Rome's urban plebs acquired the characteristics of a corporation that was organized and above all loyal to the new regime. It seems more dubious, however, to believe that at the same time mass demonstrations, even violence, were merely 'part of the show' (p. 100), and to argue that 'the absence of police force against protests . . . may reflect the plebs' inviolability, or it may indicate that they acted as loyalists, kept within acceptable limits, and never stormed the Palatine' (p. 101). Traditionally, unless a tribune or other magistrate would take the desired lead, the urban plebs itself had no 'proper channel' at its disposal to press wishes or concerns: in frustration, it turned perforce to heckling, demonstrating, smashing up magistrates' chairs, and worse. Under the principate, its predicament was little different. In the late 20s B.C., for example, the repeated insistence that Augustus occupy a visibly powerful office was no mere charade, even though the authorities might prefer to portray it so. Equally, the panic that led Claudius to be pelted with crusts (and, much later, Antoninus with stones) was genuine. It was not confidence in the plebs that deterred Augustus in particular from using force against demonstrations, but revulsion against perpetuating the Triumviral period's ugly reliance upon a fickle military. Even in the teens A.D., the fear of a return to the horrors of that period remained close to the surface. With his attention focused on the confidence and unity projected by the new order (in truth, still a fragile growth), one feature of the *SCPP* underemphasized by Rowe is its reflection of the degree to which Piso's behaviour had revived the supposedly unthinkable prospect of renewed civil war: the shocking blunt assertion that this is what he had sought to stir up (p. 12) is nowhere singled out for specific citation.

In the case of the senate, I am bound to wonder whether the contrast drawn between honorific decrees as a 'normal' item of business under the principate and an 'exceptional' one during the Republic (p. 42) is overstated (as the curious insistence upon classifying them as 'sources of law' on p. 64 certainly is). To be sure, notable changes did occur in the procedures for recognition and the forms it took, but it may be misleading to create the impression that the Republican senate had been little

preoccupied with *personalia*: in fact there were always commanders and envoys to thank, for example, as well as individuals' requests to consider for every conceivable distinction, exemption, and enhancement of status. Equally, it seems excessive to claim that Augustus took the *tribunicia potestas* as 'in practice, a power for controlling Senate proceedings . . . whatever its traditional political connotations' (p. 54). Even though the few attested instances of the power being exercised all happen to relate to this context (pp. 50–1, reading 'Nero' for 'Tiberius' under A.D. 58), that hardly justifies dismissal of the links with its historic popular associations (acknowledged in a footnote, p. 54 n. 41). Everywhere that Augustus' name and TRIB POT title appeared, on every coin and on countless monuments, it was these associations that would have resonated; how exactly he used the power, if at all, would have mattered far less than the conspicuous and reassuring fact that he possessed it.

Chapters 2 and 5 are perhaps the most satisfying. Both trace striking lines of development from republic to principate. The former's survey of equestrian corporate acts, in the theatre especially, is invaluable, even if the formulation of these collective expressions still eludes us. Important, too, is the perception that within the broad class of *equites* lay a tangle of sub-categories, finely gradated, each with its own distinct identity and perquisites. No less impressive is Chapter 5's demonstration—through skilled exploitation of epigraphic testimony—of how Mytilene's history was shaped by its relations first with Rome, and later with the Julio-Claudians; the formative rôle that came to be played by the imperial cult and the opportunity that it presented to ambitious members of the local élite are keenly appreciated. Remarkably, Mytilene can be claimed to offer us more honorific inscriptions to the Julio-Claudians than any other Greek city (p. 132). Last but not least among the book's satisfying features is the fact that it coheres effectively as a whole. Overall, Rowe succeeds in demonstrating that the 'constituencies' he examines interlock in a hierarchy, and that the changes which each underwent as the new regime grew created a sense of enhanced corporate identity and importance (albeit now as loyal subjects), and for some even the illusion of greater authority. His study is to be highly recommended, therefore, as a penetrating enhancement of our understanding of Julio-Claudian rule and of the values it sought to inculcate in the light of major recent epigraphic finds.

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THE JEWISH REVOLT OF A.D. 66–70

A. M. BERLIN, J. A. OVERMAN (edd.): *The First Jewish Revolt. Archaeology, History, and Ideology*. Pp. xii + 258, map, ills. London and New York: Routledge, 2002. Cased, £50. ISBN: 0-415-25706-9.

This collection of essays by some of the most accomplished of modern scholars, meant for a specialized audience, offers new insights on specific aspects of the First Jewish Revolt against Roman power (66–70 C.E.).

An introduction by the editors enlightens the complexity of this revolt and its impact on the development and shape of Judaism and Christianity. Then M. Goodman surveys current scholarship in four main areas—the debate about the value of Josephus's history as a source, the status in Jewish society of the leaders of the rebellion, the ideology of the rebels, and the aftermath of the war—assessing with

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