

As shown by L. Capogrossi Colognesi and M. Tarpin and most recently E. Todisco (*I vici rurali nel paesaggio dell'Italia romana* (2011)) *pagi* and *vici* were non-hierarchical Roman institutions related to the administration of conquered territory. S. then in ch. 7 considers all the implications of this reinterpretation of the *pagus-vicus* model for the rôle of sanctuaries in the Italian countryside.

Finally, in chs 8 and 9, S. turns to rituals in Rome connected with *pagi* and *vici*: *Paganalia* and *Compitalia*. Rather than traditional festivals imported into Rome from the countryside, these were rituals exported to conquered territories for the administration of communities living under Roman rule. He also speculates that *Compitalia* may have been celebrated at Italic sanctuaries. The important implication is that the continuity in cult places between the pre-Roman and Roman periods, indicated by archaeological discoveries, may mask profound political and cultic changes at sanctuary sites. Thus, in these last chapters the discourse is shifted to Roman, rather than local initiative. No doubt some of S.'s views will raise discussion and debate, but it is exactly his provocative approach, as well as the breadth of his analysis, that make this book essential reading for any graduate course on the History and Archaeology of Republican Italy.

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J.-C. LACAM, *VARIATIONS RITUELLES: LES PRATIQUES RELIGIEUSES EN ITALIE CENTRALE ET MÉRIDIONALE AU TEMPS DE LA DEUXIÈME GUERRE PUNIQUE* (Collection de L'École Française de Rome 430). Rome: L'École Française de Rome, 2010. Pp. 400, illus. ISBN 9782728308286. €63.00.

The study of religion and ritual practices in ancient Italy, and changes therein after the Roman incorporation of the Italian peninsula, has recently gained momentum. In part this is due to an increased interest in cultural contact and the rôle of religion and ritual within it. More specifically for ancient Italy, it can be related to the deconstruction of previous approaches to Roman and Italic religions that typically tended to emphasize similarity over difference, merging Roman and Italic evidence to construct a unitary model. Together with a general scarcity of evidence, this situation poses formidable methodological challenges, especially regarding the robustness of reconstructions for single contexts without filling the gaps with evidence from elsewhere, and regarding diachronic developments in both Roman and Italic contexts.

One of the most important virtues of *Variations rituelles* — which focuses on the period of the Second Punic War but often refers to later developments — is that it offers a research framework that allows precisely these issues to be addressed. Lacam rigorously structures his work by first discussing the evidence for Rome itself, and then separately the Italic areas, evaluating similarities and differences in place and time. This approach, L. states, should also allow the detection of the first signs of 'un éventuel processus d'unification religieuse de tous ces peuples sous les coups d'une «romanisation» et d'une «hellénisation» grandissantes' (15). Roman religious patterns, Italic religious patterns, and a discussion on the eventual convergence of the two, correspond to the three parts that make up the book. The main axes along which L. gauges Roman and Italic religious patterns are ritualism, communitarianism and the structuration of the involved deities, all largely from a textual perspective. Because the bibliography is sometimes outdated I will suggest some addenda on the way.

Part I, on Rome, deconstructs the idea that Roman religion was in crisis during the Hannibalic War and sketches the main characteristics of Roman religious practice. Discussing previous interpretations of the proliferation of prodigies, disasters and the enhanced ritual responses to these, L. argues that the religious apparatus was not weakened: for him, the vitality of religious response rather points to the opposite. As the book in general, this analysis is almost entirely based on textual sources. The extensive use of the 'eye-witness' Plautus stands out here, although a critical discussion of his works and their context would have helped in assessing their significance (e.g. the work of M. Leigh). L. recognizes elements of change in the tendency towards more personal expressions and experiences of religiosity; in enhanced dramatic settings of rituals; and in newly established value deities (cf. A. J. Clark, *Divine Qualities. Cult and Community in Republican Rome* (2007)), as well as in the flexible ways of hierarchization of different deities according to different contexts. Discussion on the latter, analysing theonyms and their derivatives, is one of the strongest points of the book. L.'s final verdict is that Roman religion remained largely

unaltered: if circumstances called for action, measures were taken, but this action was not structurally different from before. This part establishes the baseline against which the Italic case is evaluated in Part II.

Arguably the richest textual source for Italic religious ritual is formed by the Iguvine tablets, but they have equally often been discussed by conflating it with Roman evidence. L. builds a good case against this tendency, and underlines many particularities of the religious ritual at Gubbio compared to Rome: for instance the absence of the long Catonian *praefatio*, the interspersing of the *mola salsa* after the killing (rather than before it), and the emphasis on repetition, silence and murmuring. In other respects, however, L.'s emphasis on differences between Italic communities and Rome does not always seem warranted. For instance in the discussion (207–10) on oaths and in particular the Samnite oath at Aquilonia. If historical, this is certainly an extraordinary ritual and aimed at the élite legion only. Moreover, de Cazanove has recently argued that the described place refers to a Roman military camp, not a sanctuary. The same goes for the archaeological evidence. The set of sanctuaries that is regularly cited reflects a thoughtful and deliberate choice to include different types of Italic cult places; but to use the same sample to argue that the architecture of Italic cult places is varied overlooks neat regional patterns. However, this does not affect L.'s main conclusion that Italic, including Roman, religious configurations should be understood as homologous, not identical systems which could operate autonomously.

The last part, 'Vers une nouvelle harmonie religieuse?', seeks to investigate to what extent Roman religious patterns became a model for the rest of the peninsula, and the rôle of Hellenistic influences in the process. On the whole, L. follows recent downplaying of direct Roman intervention (not all arguments are beyond discussion, e.g. the definition of *tota Italia*, 273). The discussion on the spread of anatomical votive terracottas, often seen as indicators of Roman expansion (275–9), should now be read along with the criticisms of M. D. Gentili and especially F. Glinister. At the same time, this reviewer's analysis of the 'precocious romanization' of the Marsi might actually support L.'s case, that 'la romanisation des dieux et des pratiques ne précède pas l'établissement des lois ni l'octroi de la citoyenneté romaine' (272). In his conclusions, L. justly argues that the adoption of Hellenistic elements in both sacred performances and architecture should be understood as a locally-driven and conscious choice. Whether religious ritual remained basically unchanged cannot, however, be established on the basis of the evidence presented: 'changing to remain the same' is itself a form of change.

In the end, the largely text-based *Variations rituelles* is more successful in showing the homology of Italic (including Rome) broader religious *patterns* than in tracing cultural convergence or other diachronic or geographic developments in religious *ritual* as such. The building of this framework is an important accomplishment, although the significance of inter-Italic dynamics risks being minimized in this dual structure. Whereas the main strength of the book lies in discussion of ritual texts, little archaeology is used, and discussion of it tends to be less informed (for instance at 281, where two different sanctuaries with similar developments are noted at Casalbare and Macchia Porcara> Casalbare, loc. Macchia Porcara is one sanctuary; 297: Matese> Majella; the choice of Tricarico at 282 to illustrate 'la persistante vitalité religieuse des Osco-Umbriens' is unfortunate: this is a very exceptional and complex site). A major challenge now is therefore to reconstruct precise ritual actions using archaeological evidence to test, complement and refine the framework.

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TESSE D. STEK

A. BOWMAN and A. WILSON (EDS), *QUANTIFYING THE ROMAN ECONOMY. METHODS AND PROBLEMS*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. xvii + 356, illus. ISBN 9780199562596. £79.00.

This is the first volume published by the Oxford Roman Economy Project (<http://oxrep.class.ox.ac.uk>), directed by A. Bowman and A. Wilson, and it sets out to present their research agenda and discuss the methodological problems involved. By 'collecting and analyzing quantifiable documentary and archaeological evidence' (12), the project is aiming to examine the performance of the Roman economy in four key 'diagnostic areas': demography and urbanization, agriculture, trade, and, finally, metal supply and coinage (6). For this first volume, the editors have invited a