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MICHELE RENEE SALZMAN, *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 17)—Berkeley: University of California Press 1990 (xxii + 315 p., 107 figs.) ISBN 0-520-06566-2 \$65.00

After the prosopographical works on Roman priests inspired by T. Robert S. Broughton the Bryn Mawr College has continued to produce major contributions to the study of Roman religion. Agnes K. Michels, who wrote the best treatise on the Republican calendar available,<sup>1</sup> prompted two dissertations on calendars of late antiquity, which have been published recently. Elizabeth S. Dulabahn studied Polemius

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Silvius;<sup>2</sup> M. R. Salzman analyzes the so-called “Chronograph of A.D. 354”. It is an illustrated codex composed of a list of emperors’ birthdays, characteristics of the seven planets and their astrological effects, lists of consuls and urban prefects of Rome, deposition days of bishops and martyrs, a list of all the bishops of Rome and some other texts and illustrations. A calendar with a full page illustration for every month forms the centerpiece of the codex. It had been written and designed by the famous calligrapher Furius Dionysius Filocalus and dedicated to someone called Valentinus. This is the only Roman calendar from the fourth century. Besides the significance for the history of art,<sup>3</sup> the codex is an invaluable testimony for the religious history of Rome, half way between Constantine’s official acknowledgement of Christianity and Gratian’s and Theodosius’ total abolishment of “pagan” cult by the end of the century.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the historiographical sections of the codex are as important for their historical data as for the history of historiography in late antiquity.<sup>5</sup>

Salzman intends to analyze the codex within this historical context. The producer as well as the recipient of the codex probably are Christians. The content, however, includes information not only on the Christian church, but on political institutions and pagan rites as well. Therefore, it is necessary to interpret the calendar as a testimony of contemporary religious practices, but furthermore the entire codex has to be seen in the context of the religious climate of the 350s. After a general introduction, Salzman briefly describes all parts of the codex. The study of the illustrations of the months and the text of the calendar forms the body of the book (p. 61-189). The discussion matches the philological standards applied to such a task: The transmission of the codex in different manuscripts is meticulously discussed, variants in the illustrations are amply documented.<sup>6</sup>

In the last part, the author tries to integrate the results into a short, but dense sketch of the religious history of the second half of the fourth century A.D., finishing with a comparison of the calendar of Furius Filocalus and the one written by Polemius Silvius in A.D. 449 (p. 191-246). Here, Salzman is arguing for a new view of the 350s in Rome, a view which does not transfer the climate of conflict of the end of the century to the rather smooth process of compromise and assimilation some thirty years before.

Salzman’s methodological procedure can serve as a model for studies of individual calendars. In dwelling on controversial issues, I am not going to diminish this achievement, but rather try to stimulate discussion on the lines proposed by “On Roman Time”.

Three of Salzman’s tenets need some discussion: 1) The calendar pro-

vides information about public pagan religion (p. 3), it is essentially local in nature and is a product of contemporary religious policy (p. 20), its vast traditional background notwithstanding. 2) By including the imperial, urban and Christian past and present the codex attests to the climate of compromise of the period; furthermore recent developments that manifested themselves in the calendar constitute a sort of secularization, that functions as a bridge between pagans and Christians (p. 181). 3) Codex and calendar have a specific function within the Roman aristocracy (p. 15. 185 f.).—On a closer view, these tenets cannot be maintained in this form (the following §§1-3). In addition, any reconstruction of the ritual reality based on the calendar is highly problematic (§4).

(1) The text of the calendar of Filocalus gives a scheme of public events that is valid for Rome only.<sup>7</sup> In contrast to Henri Stern, who used material from all over the empire to interpret the illustrations of the months within widespread iconographic traditions, Salzman declares them to be designed—for the first time in the genre—for the text and to illustrate local daily life (p. 63-67). The prove is not entirely convincing. It is not sufficient to show that the representation of a whole month by one scene or figure sometimes draws on a festival (or god) mentioned in the corresponding text of the calendar, if this festival exists outside of Rome, too. This is true for November (Isis) as well as for April (*Megalensia*: this identification is convincing, see p. 86-91). The *Rosalia* are popular outside Rome and before the fourth century. In the representation of July the heap of money is not specific enough to carry the reference to the *ludi Apollinares* (cf. p. 100 f.), it is frequent in the other illustrations of the codex. The interpretation of September is problematical. The notice *Mammes vindemia* on September 5th is just not understood, the connection of *vindemiae* with the god *Liber* is attested for festivals in October only. Hence one cannot connect the iconographically unspecified scene with *Liber* and interpret this as a reference to the text of the calendar (cf. p. 105). For the March illustration there is no iconographic reference to any festival at all. The consular sacrifice on January 1st (perhaps, p. 81 f.) is not an image of distinctly urban character: After all, the New Year's date is identical for at least the Western part of the Empire, the consuls, who enter office on this day, are the eponyms who give their name to the year throughout the known world. The codex offers the first known instances of full-page illustrations (p. 66). However, this is not the prove of a new quality in the relationship of image and text. To the contrary, the opposing pages are an indicator of an integration still missing.

Salzman fails to look for differences between Rome and its surround-

ings in order to determine what might be specifically Roman. The same holds true for the historical perspective. By concentrating on the fourth century, she assumes many items to be unique in this period, which are in fact attested much earlier. She is right to stress the astrological elements of the codex; but astrology creeps into Roman calendars already in the first century (as acknowledged in another context, p. 13). The inclusion of the *praetor urbanus* in the lists of magistrates is no indication of his enhanced importance in late antiquity (p. 41): They are already included in the *Fasti Arvalium* in the first century B.C. The development of lists of consuls into a “subliterary” genre of historiography is no feature of the fourth century or due to Greek influence (p. 37 f.): It is clearly given in a lot of municipal consular *fasti* of the early Principate.<sup>8</sup> Some of the supposed additions of the calendar are just new names for old festivals (p. 122, table 2): *Iano Patri* (Jan 7) recalls the *Agonium* (Jan 9), the *natalis urbis* (Apr 22) points to the *Parilia*, Mars Ultor (May 12) was already Augustan, the *Fabarici* rename the archaic *Canaria*; the *natalis Mercuri* (May 15, 125: table 4) is old, *Vesta aperit(ur)* is indicated already in Ovid (*fast.* 6, 249 f.), the *natalis Musarum* (Jun 13) corresponds to the *Quinquatrus minusculae*, *Tiberinalia* is just another name for *Portunalia*.<sup>9</sup> The imperial cult had been paid for by the emperor from the beginning, it is no innovation of Constantius II (p. 137); public and private aspects of the cult of *Magna Mater* and *Attis* have been fused long before the fourth century (p. 169); the same holds for the importance of *Roma aeterna* (p. 184).

(2) There is no unified calendar in the codex, that would have included festivals of Isis as well as commemorative days of martyrs and birthdays of emperors. But all these elements are present in the codex and they tend to be presented in comparable formulas (p. 44; however, which alternatives to the *feriale*-type of listing would have been available?). The inclusion of the Christian material is an important argument for the Christianity of the recipient (p. 199), who—judging by the material value of the codex—must have been an aristocrat. This is granted. The argument becomes circular, however, when Salzman concludes, that the inclusion of Christian material in a codex for a typical (why?) Roman aristocrat proves the importance of the Christian church (p. 39. 197 f.): If the distorted view of a minority is said to be specific of this minority it cannot represent the majority view at the same time.

Salzman’s argument is not a simple fallacy. It is due to a more fundamental problem, the identification of the acting groups. Who is a “pagan”? The usage of the polemical Christian term entails the acceptance of the Christian categories. However, the non-Christians form no “pagan church”. Polytheism is a multiplicity of systems that allow the

establishment of several (mostly, but not necessarily) non-exclusive loyalties,<sup>10</sup> expressed in different social contexts. “Civil religion” is not an adequate methodological tool for classical societies but it points to the problems of interpreting public, official religion. To set “Paganism” against Christianity, neglects the differences within the broad spectrum of Roman cults and obscures common tendencies of the whole society or mentality. In general, Salzman stresses the common background of her two groups (e.g. p. 96). However, in dealing with public cult (and its representation) she is rather prone to detect a conscious policy of pagan accommodation towards Christianity instead of inherent developments. In such a way the author emphasizes the reduction of animal sacrifice in ritual as well as iconography (p. 115. 226 f.), interpretes the agricultural images of the months from July to October as a product of a process of secularization (p. 115), and defines the cult of the emperor as a secular rather than religious activity (p. 142). However, if there had been a new conception of the divinity of the Roman emperor—as a channel of the divine rather than as a divinity himself (p. 144)—, the new development is not visible in the festival scheme of the calendar: stress on the ruling emperor and his house had been a hallmark from start on. Nor are non-ritual representations a new feature. Representations of animal sacrifices belong to another strand of iconography altogether; they are usually not employed to embody the idea of a specific month.<sup>11</sup> A change from the exceptional animal sacrifices to routine rites, in particular to daily sacrifices of wine, milk, cakes, incense and the like, has been observed before and without any reference to Christianity.<sup>12</sup>

(3) Salzman analyzes the position of the Roman aristocracy in terms of Price’s model of “ritual and power”,<sup>13</sup> i.e. she looks for public display and spending of aristocratic wealth, which would maintain or enhance the status of the *euergetes*. The concept is useful, although one has to pay more attention to local variants—Price embarks on an analysis of Roman imperial cult in a Greek cultural context only—and especially to the exceptional situation of Rome: In a passing note Salzman acknowledges the dominating role of the emperor (p. 188). However, the calendar is not exclusively aristocratic concern, even if some of the games and temples mentioned demonstrate aristocratic liberality. *Fasti* had been put up by minor officials (*vicomagistri*) and colleges of freedmen (e.g. the *fasti Maf-feyani*) as well. Lists of consuls and bishops do attest to an interest in power (p. 57 f.), but this is not restricted to the powerful, as is attested by the same *fasti*. If the euergetic model had worked, if the games had been popular, we should analyze both sides involved. The counterpart of the aristocracy, the ordinary people, should not be neglected.

(4) This is leading to the last topic. We do not get the information about daily life that—according to Salzman—is contained in the calendar. Her research displays not much interest in the social reality of the single festivals and games. She gives (p. 118 f.) a general impression of holidays (which are not *dies fasti*, cf. p. 35), but we get no idea of which priest still performs which sacrifice, who attends or even knows of it and who pays for it.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the notion of “popularity” remains a rather vague concept. Salzman is right to point out the crucial role of the emperor in defining the contents of the official calendar (p. 164), but she does not discuss the problem of how the insertion of new festivals and the renaming or even expulsion of archaic commemorations is legally done and promulgated in practice.

A social analysis of the calendar as a genre is crucial to an investigation of the type Salzman is proposing. Religion is but one aspect of the Roman calendar. Basically the Roman *fasti* had been set up as a means of regulating judicial and political activities (in the interest of the ruling elite, one would like to add). Religious activities are listed in so far as they are important for the timing: This recognition may be due to popular attendance, but it could be a pretext as well. There is no encyclopedic tendency. The “importance” given to a date by its inclusion in the calendar is a norm, a prescription, not an historically valid description. The process of feedback is a rather complex one. The book “On Roman Time” is lacking such an examination of the status of the calendar. The relevant ideas put forward are rather problematic. The official calendar is not differentiated from—inofficial!—commentaries on the calendar, the literature *de anno Romanorum* or *de fastis*. Verrius Flaccus’ *fasti Praenestini*—a monumental calendar with large commentaries in the entries of every day, set up on the market of the small Latin town of Praeneste—is exceptional.<sup>15</sup> The idea of the *fasti* being a textbook in school, hinted at by Michels and largely expanded by Dulabahn,<sup>16</sup> is not buttressed by any testimony. Those cited are just due to the mixing up of *fasti* (calendar) and *feriale* (list of holidays/ritual occasions of a group, temple etc.).

Despite all criticism, M. R. Salzman’s study represents a valuable contribution to the examination of Filocalus’ unique codex. She pays attention to generic traditions of the elements of the codex, reflects its social setting, and takes even minutious details of every entry into account. Some of her results must be judged with caution, but this is largely due to the fact that studies of singular calendars by classical scholars and theoretical approaches by historians of religion are missing. Nearly a hundred years after Theodor Mommsen’s famous edition of the Roman

calendars in the *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum* much work remains to be done.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Calendar of the Roman Republic*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967, repr. Greenwood Press, 1978. I would like to thank Profs. H. Cancik and B. Gladigow and Regina Rüpke for discussions.

<sup>2</sup> *Studies on the "Laterculus" of Polemius Silvius*, Diss. Bryn Mawr College 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Le calendrier de 354: Étude sur son texte et ses illustrations* (Institut franç. d'archéologie de Beyrouth: Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 55), Paris: Impr. Nationale, 1953; id., "L'image du mois d'octobre sur une mosaïque d'el-Djem", *Journal des Savants* 1965, 117-131; id., "Note sur deux images du mois de Mars ...", *Revue d'études latines* 52 (1974), 70-74; id., "Les calendriers romains illustrés", in: H. Temporini (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.12,2, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1981, 431-475.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. H. Cancik, "Nutzen, Schmuck und Aberglaube: Ende und Wandlungen der römischen Religion im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert", in: H. Zinser (ed.), *Der Untergang von Religionen*, Berlin: Reimer, 1986, 65-90.

<sup>5</sup> P. L. Schmidt in: R. Herzog (ed.), *Restauration und Erneuerung: Die lateinische Literatur von 284 bis 374 n. Chr.* (Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike = Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft VIII, 5), München: Beck, 1989, 181-3. Cf. A. Demandt, *Die Spätantike: Römische Geschichte von Diocletian bis Justinian 284-565 n. Chr.* (HbDA III, 6), München: Beck, 1989, 2 f.

<sup>6</sup> With regard to the well arranged and extensive appendices it would have been very useful for the reader to print the text, at least, of the calendar. The folio editions of Mommsen and Degrassi (see below) are neither cheap nor handy.

<sup>7</sup> More interesting is the question why a lot of early imperial *fasti* (calendars) found in Italy outside Rome do provide these urban data—and only these—as well.

<sup>8</sup> For examples see A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae* 13,1.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. p. 156: Of course the god Tiberinus (not Tibur: this mistake is even reproduced in the index) is not Portunus, but the festivals continue the same tradition.

<sup>10</sup> See B. Gladigow, "XPHEΣΘAI ΘEOIΣ: Orientierungs- und Loyalitätskonflikte in der griechischen Religion," in: Christoph Elsas, Hans G. Kippenberg (edd.), *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Carsten Colpe*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1990, 237-251.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. for the imagery of sacrifice J. Ronke, *Magistratische Repräsentation im römischen Relief: Studien zu standes- und statusbezeichnenden Szenen* (British Archeological Reports International Series 370), 3 vols., London: BAR, 1987; R. Gordon, "The Veil of Power: emperors, sacrificers and benefactors", in: M. Beard, J. North (edd.), *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World*, London: Duckworth, 1990, 201-231. Cf. F. Magi, *Il calendario dipinto sotto Santa Maria Maggiore* (Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, ser. 3, Memorie 11,1), Città del Vaticano, 1972, 44, for a perspective from the history of arts.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. M. P. Nilsson, "Pagan Divine Service in Late Antiquity", *Harvard Theological Review* 38 (1945), 63-70; Cancik, Nutzen (n. 3), 73 ff.

<sup>13</sup> This is indicated by several longer quotations (e.g. p. 136. 182). S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and power: The Roman imperial cult in Asia Minor*, Cambridge: University Press, 1984. The basic ideas of the “euergetic model” have been worked out by P. Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque*, Paris, 1976; they have been employed by Gordon (see above, n. 11) as well.

<sup>14</sup> For example, there is no testimony given for the assertion that (in Rome) games in the imperial cult are organized by the imperial priests (p. 179).

<sup>15</sup> Being rather late in the rule of Augustus, it could not have been the model and instigation of the large number of Augustan calendars (cf. p. 7). Probably, Verrius is unique in expanding the form of the annotated calendar into a commentary on the calendar as a whole, thereby formulating even systematic information (e.g. legal status of the days) as entries of different days. The influence of Varro on Verrius Flaccus is neglected.

<sup>16</sup> Michels, *Calendar* (n. 1), 136; Dulabahn, *Laterculus* (n. 2), 164 ff.