

mythological context? The whole topic seems ideally suited to another (swift and penetrating) study from TPW himself, naturally. The quality of these essays, and my desire to continue the argument, on several fronts, are eloquent testimony to what TPW has done to enliven and invigorate Roman studies over the last thirty years.

Nicholas Horsfall

Stanton St. John, Oxon.

Greg Rowe, *Princes and Political Cultures: The New Tiberian Senatorial Decrees*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002. 195 pp. ISBN 0 472 11230 9.

Greg Rowe's book is 'a study of how dynastic monarchy changed politics across the Roman Empire' (1), based, to a large extent, on a 'dossier of documents from the Tiberian Senate' — *Tabula Siarensis*, *Tabula Hebana*, *Senatus Consultum de Pisone Patre* and the funeral honours voted to the younger Drusus. These documents are said to show that 'what Augustus had established was the rule not of one man but of a dynastic house — a house that had a collective identity, in which women had public roles, and a house that promoted a series of young men as imperial successors'.

The Introduction sets out the 'Tiberian documents', with basic commentary touching upon some central themes of the study. This is followed by chapters dealing with the various 'key constituencies of the new order': the Senate, the *Equites*, the urban plebs, citizen communities (exemplified by Pisae and the decrees passed there in honour of Lucius and Gaius Caesar), Greek cities and the army. Each of them is described as joining the loyalist chorus that replaced free politics under the Principate. Collective expressions — formal and, increasingly, informal — of loyalty to the Emperor and the imperial house lay at the heart of the new political culture. Honorific decrees by the Senate in Rome and by local senates, equestrian parades and theatre acclamations, outbursts of popular enthusiasm for the Emperor or the princes, the rites of imperial cult in Greek cities — all this became the real stuff of public life under the Principate. The conclusion lists six basic traits of the Principate's political culture: each constituency rendered honours to the imperial family; this was often done informally; the princes' careers brought them into contact with each constituency; the dynastic principle and any dynastic changes were universally recognized; individual citizens came to dominate collectivities (especially in outlying communities that relied on diplomatic contacts with Rome); the constituencies fit together into a hierarchy.

The book provides detailed and often insightful discussions, with text and translation, of the major inscriptions of the period. The value of the most important of those inscriptions, the *Senatus Consultum de Pisone Patre*, is widely recognized; Rowe's idea of building his description and analysis of the political culture of the early Principate around these 'primary sources' (in the full sense of the term) is surely a good one. His main thesis is sound and convincing; so are his arguments on most of the particular issues he deals with. In what follows I take issue with two of his specific points. My remarks do not pertain to the main thesis of the book and do not derogate from its general assessment as a valuable contribution to the study of the political culture of the Early Principate.

In describing the way Piso's iniquities are listed in the *SC de Pisone Patre*, Rowe notes that the exact legal basis for Piso's (posthumous) condemnation is unclear, and doubts whether legal norms played any significant part in the Senate's proceedings. The Senate 'implies manifold crimes ... but cites only two statutes — and then with reference to Germanicus' imperium and to the punishment of Piso's associates ... Either the Senate did not communicate its legal standards or it did not apply any, in which case the long-standing scholarly search for the charges behind imperial trials has been misguided ...' (11-12).

Of course, the *SC* is far from being a purely legal document: throughout the text, legal charges and moralistic denunciations are intermingled, and it is not quite clear where misconduct ends and

treason starts. But I believe that Rowe underestimates the significance attached by the *SC* to legal norms. As he himself notes, the language describing the procedure is clearly that of a trial: *cum ... acta causa sit ab accusatoribus Cn. Pisonis patris et ab ipso Cn. Pisone patre, recitatae epistulae, recitata exemplaria codicillorum ... producti testes cuiusque ordinis sint* (ll. 23-25). Tiberius is praised for wishing Piso's case to be given proper hearing (*causam eius cognosci voluerit*, l. 19) despite his guilt being 'manifest'. The document clearly seeks to portray Piso as guilty of *maiestas* — not only because the praetor presiding over *maiestas* trials is instructed to interdict his *comites* and accomplices but also because the list of Piso's own misdeeds includes classic 'republican' cases of treason: waging a 'civil war' and attempting to instigate a foreign one without legal authority (ll. 37-38; 45-46). As Rowe notes (15), the case of the two accomplices is dealt with in a more precise legalistic manner, without rhetoric. This is only natural: the *comites* were simply not important enough to 'earn' the denunciations showered on Piso, and all the politically important messages had been included in the sections dealing with the main culprit. On the other hand, they were Roman citizens on whom an actual capital sentence (as opposed to posthumous condemnation) had to be passed; this required greater legal precision, at least in the actual formula of conviction and punishment.

As for Piso, the reader of the *SC* was clearly expected to get the impression that, having received a proper hearing according to the Roman standards of legal justice, he had been found guilty of capital crimes, not just of objectionable behaviour. Had the document created any other impression in the reader's mind, it would have failed to achieve its main objective — precisely as a piece of official propaganda. Deviation from legal norms could be acknowledged on the side of mercy (as regards Piso's wife and his son, spared at the request of Tiberius and Livia), but never on the side of severity. In this sense, the Senate both applied legal standards and communicated them to the public. The regime sought to portray itself as a 'government of laws' (while plainly acknowledging not just the supremacy of the Princeps but also the enormous influence of his mother). What was left uncertain (perhaps deliberately, as I have suggested elsewhere¹) was the exact relationship between the law of *maiestas* and affronts to the dignity of the imperial house.

In dealing with Augustus' *tribunicia potestas*, Rowe repeatedly seeks to dispel the notion that this power was 'popular'. 'Whatever its traditional political connotations', it 'had little or nothing to do with the plebs and popular policies and everything to do with the Senate'; it was 'adapted to allow the emperor to champion and control the Senate' (43); the 'notion that the holder of the *tribunicia potestas* was ipso facto the champion of the plebs' is false (86). Among other things, this is proved, in his view, by the fact that 'it could be extended by *senatus consultum* alone', as in the case of Augustus' *socii tribuniciae potestatis*, Agrippa and Tiberius.

It is doubtful, however, whether most modern accounts of the imperial *tribunicia potestas* ascribe to it any substantially 'popular' character beyond the symbolic value derived from its 'historic popular associations' (54 n. 41) and, perhaps even more so, from the modestly 'civic' sound of this *summi fastigii vocabulum*. But there was never any prospect of Augustus (or Tiberius) delivering rabble-rousing public speeches, carrying radical laws in the teeth of senatorial opposition, or vetoing optimate senatorial decrees. All these were things of the past. 'Popular', under Augustus, could never mean 'anti-senatorial' or 'anti-optimate'. The popular/optimate divide of the late Republic was superseded, both in practice and in theory, by the imperial autocracy and by the ideology of consensus and *concordia*. Augustus took good care of the material needs of the plebs and provided generously for its amusements. But appearing as a champion of the people could never mean, for him, presenting himself as a political opponent of the Senate, or

¹ 'The Princess of Inscriptions: Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone Patre and the Early Years of Tiberius' Reign', *SCI* 17 (1998), 220-4. See there on the significance of the phrase *neglecta maiestate domus Augustae, neglecto etiam iure publico* and on the legal basis of senatorial jurisdiction in light of the *SC*.

of some *factio paucorum* dominating it: no conflict of interest or opinion between Senate and People could be admitted to exist.

It is only natural that the *tribunicia potestas* was exercised mainly — almost exclusively — in the Senate: this is where what remained of active public life took place. Rowe's claim that the *tribunicia potestas*, conferred on Augustus himself by a law, could be bestowed on the Emperor's chosen *collega* by a senatorial decree is highly doubtful. He quotes Augustus' funeral speech for Marcus Agrippa, a fragment of which has survived in a Greek papyrus: 'the tribunician power was given to you for five years *kata dogma synkletou* [Rowe translates: 'by senatorial decree'] when the Lentuli were consuls', *P.Köln* VI, 249.

But, as E. Badian has argued, *kata dogma synkletou* renders the Latin *ex senatus consulto*, rather than *senatus consulto* (which corresponds to *dogmati synkletou*); 'the latter means that a decree of the senate is the direct instrument of action; the former, by contrast, denotes that action is taken *by someone else* "in accordance with" the decree of the Senate'. This is supported by numerous references to Roman sources. Hence 'Augustus' words mean that Agrippa received [this power] by some further action, taken "in accordance with" the decree of the Senate ... That action can only have been a vote of the People'. Moreover, the fact that Augustus 'prides himself on having always asked the Senate for a colleague' in the tribunician power does not indicate that the Senate acted alone, bypassing the Assembly; rather, it shows that, 'as was proper in his Republic, the Senate had the right to be consulted and to make the real decision'.²

Badian's thesis seems very convincing; at any rate, the opposite cannot be assumed as a matter of course, without trying to counter his arguments. Rowe himself notes, elsewhere (96), that comitial ratifications of honorific decrees are sometimes unreported (as in the case of Germanicus' funeral honours [Tabula Hebana] related by Tacitus). We know from *SC de Pisone Patre* that the *imperium* of Germanicus in the East was bestowed on him by a law (line 34), although Tacitus mentions only a *senatus consultum* (*Ann.* 2.43.1). If it was still considered important to get the popular legislative sanction for Germanicus' *imperium* under Tiberius, it seems wholly improbable that Augustus would have dispensed with it when conferring *tribunicia potestas* on his colleagues — not because it was conceived as 'popular' in some politically controversial, Late Republican sense, but because Senate and People were the legitimate sources of power in the Roman state, and Augustus had no conceivable reason to dispense with this source of traditional legitimacy.

Alexander Yakobson

The Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Ittai Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002. xvii + 398 pp. ISBN 0 19 815275 2.

Worship of the Roman emperor, either living or deceased, has often defied explanation, not least because of the hopeless attempts to make it match either of the categories created by the christianizing distinction between 'politics' and 'religion'. Since the fundamental study by S. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1984), it has become generally accepted that we should understand these categories as constituting a wider framework of imperial power. The excellent volume here under discussion, a considerably revised Oxford doctoral thesis of 1995 by a former student of Price, is the first detailed study of the

² E. Badian, 'Notes on the *Laudatio* of Agrippa', *CJ* 76 (1980-81) 100. Badian notes that, while he mentions only a decree of the Senate on the *tribunicia potestas*, in the case of Agrippa's *imperium* Augustus speaks of a law (which must also have been preceded by a *SC*). The difference may be 'a matter of style, of rhetorical balance'.