



ASPECTS OF ROMAN SENATE DECREES

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This work brings together seven contributions resulting from research activities carried out alongside the PAROS project, the aim of which is to provide a complete and systematic study, with a commented paligenetic edition, of all decisions made by the Roman Senate between 509 BCE and 284 CE. The chapters of this work shed light on specific aspects of individual senate decrees and their contexts.

The first two chapters form the ‘Forme e tecniche’ section. C. Pellosso’s chapter, ‘Along the Path Towards *Exaequatio*. *Auctoritas Patrum* and *Plebiscita* in the Republican Age’, reconsiders the establishment of the *exaequatio* between *plebiscita* and *leges*. He re-examines the legal status of plebiscites during the period from 449 to 287 BCE, that is, between the *lex Valeria Horatia* and the *lex Hortensia*. In doing so, Pellosso inserts himself into a well-established debate, the issues and developments of which he precisely lays out. Three opinions oppose each other; one argues that the *exaequatio* came into force with the *lex Hortensia*, in 287 BCE; another shows that it was a progressive phenomenon, ‘a step-by-step *exaequatio*’, relying first on the *leges Valeria Horatia* of 449 and *Publilia Philonis* of 339 BCE; the last proposes a middle solution, ‘a two-stage equalization’ permitted by the *leges Publilia Philonis* and *Hortensia*. An extremely useful table summarises the different approaches in the history of scholarship.

Nearly 25 years after his 1996 monograph on the triumph, A. Petrucci returns to the topic with ‘Il ruolo del senato nel trionfo dalle origine della repubblica alla sua crisi’, which takes into account the latest publications on the question, and in particular work by T. Itgenshorst, J.-L. Bastien, M. Beard and M.R. Pelikan Pittenger. Petrucci bases his analysis on the triumphs of L. Postumius Megellus in 294 BCE and of Appius Claudius Pulcher in 143 BCE. For the last century of the Republic readers can reference the various works of C.H. Lange (‘The Late Republican Triumph: Continuity and Change’, in: F. Goldbeck, J. Wienand [edd.], *Der römische Triumph in Prinzipat und Spätantike* [2017], pp. 29–58, with previous bibliography).

The five other chapters, which form the ‘Fonti e contenuti’ section, are interested in *senatus consulta* and other specific issues. Gallo’s contribution, ‘Belve, giochi e competizione politica nel II secolo a.C.’, studies the importation and use of animals from Africa for *ludi* in the second century BCE as well as the consequences of this trade in political affairs. The examination is based on the *senatus consulta* of 187, 182 and 179 BCE and the Aufidius plebiscite, mentioned by Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 8.64. In the appendix Gallo includes a table summarising normative acts in the matter of games as well as an analysis of the *aedilitates magnificentissimae* mentioned by Cicero. In the following chapter F. Pulitanò studies a *senatus consultum* from 27 BCE on amphitheatres, mentioned by Tacitus, *Annales* 4.62, and examined in the past by R. Syme, A. Momigliano and T.D. Barnes. Pulitanò shows how Tacitus’ account aims to criticise the conduct of Tiberius.

The next two chapters examine extracts from Frontinus. According to the editors these studies aim to complement the two volumes on the *senatus consulta* in literary sources, published within the framework of the PAROS project (A. Balbo, P. Buongiorno, E. Malaspina [edd.], *Rappresentazione e uso dei senatus consulta nelle fonti letterarie della repubblica e del primo principato*, Acta Senatus B, Volume B.3 [2018];

P. Buongiorno, G. Traina [edd.], *Rappresentazione e uso dei senatus consulta nelle fonti letterarie del principato*, Acta Senatus B, Volume B.6 [2019]). I. Eramo's study focuses on the *senatus consulta* in the *Stratagemata*. Frontinus mentions the activity of the Senate thirteen times, always indirectly. Eramo's 'operazione di Quellenforschung' allows her to document these *senatus consulta* by studying Livy, one of the main sources of the stratagems, and Valerius Maximus. M. Guerrero more specifically examines the *praemium accusatoris* of the *senatus consultum de aquaeductibus* (Frontin, *De aquaeductu* 127). This measure provides for an open space around the aqueduct, prohibiting any construction or planting which could damage it. Failure to maintain this perimeter results in a sanction, which, as Guerrero has found, is relatively ineffective in countering bad practices.

The final chapter, by O. Licandro, is a fascinating and well-conducted study, with an up-to-date bibliography. The author focuses on an extract of a treatise from the Justinian period, *περί πολιτικῆς ἐπιστήμης*, which deals with ideal forms of government, comparing in particular Plato's *Πολιτεία* and Cicero's *De re publica*. Licandro explains that Justinian jurists saw in Cicero's treatise the description of a *forma rei publicae* centred on a *princeps / gubernator* assisted by a small number of aristocrats. The *consilium principis* instituted by Augustus is then examined by Licandro, in light of his reading of the *περί πολιτικῆς ἐπιστήμης*.

The themes addressed in the book are diverse: edilitary issues rub shoulders with reflections on Republican plebiscites, the *consilium principis* and the granting of a triumph. While the book tackles very specific subjects, the common denominator is the nature of the sources studied and the method used. The various contributions adopt a palaeogenetic perspective, which is fully in line with the objectives of the PAROS project. A valuable index of sources is included at the end, divided into two sections: manuscript sources; epigraphical and papyrological sources.

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