

RelBib

Bibliography of the Study of Religion

<https://relbib.de>

Dear reader,

This is a self-archived version of the following article:

Author: Rüpke, Jörg
Title: "Between Rationalism and Ritualism: On the origins of religious discourse in the late Roman Republic"

Published in: Archiv für Religionsgeschichte: ARG
Berlin: de Gruyter

Volume: 11 (1)
Year: 2009
Pages: 123 - 143
ISSN: 1868-8888
Persistent Identifier: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110208962.2.123>

The article is used with permission of [de Gruyter](#).

Thank you for supporting Green Open Access.

Your RelBib team

EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN



UNIVERSITÄTSBIBLIOTHEK

Between Rationalism and Ritualism: On the origins of religious discourse in the late Roman Republic¹

Jörg RÜPKE

1 Topic and Method

The final two centuries of the Roman Republic (about 240–40 BC) manifest an urban society experiencing rapid change in several areas (social, political, juridical, economic, religious) in connection with a large political and economic expansion and massive cultural imports, especially of Greek culture.² This process has been described in terms of escalating conflict in the political arena and as a (partial) modernisation in the cultural arena, but most often as a decline of traditional culture and Hellenisation, in sum, the end of the republic and a breakdown of republican Roman religion.

The considerations presented here constitute an attempt to approach this process, especially in the area of religion, using the tools provided by Weber's concept of rationalisation and his typology of rationality. By means of this approach, it is possible not only to use changes in the religious realm as the point of departure for this analysis, but also to concentrate investigation intensively on the connections or lack of connection between various developments and social groups. The following observations contextualise, that is, provide a communicative situation for those texts that seem to characterise intellectual and religious change during the late republic. Further, these observations also analyse the communicative function of religious practices which are made the object of discourses. My basic hypothesis is that the respective Greek precedents for rational discourse about religion did not simply gain acceptance because of their rationality, but that their success was dependent on an audience that was open to rationality. Thus an approach through institutional history, briefly framed by considerations of rationality, and through

-
- 1 Work on this article started while fellow of the Max Weber Centre in 2003/4 and could be broadened and completed due to a grant of the German Science Foundation (DFG). I should like to thank Andreas Bendlin, Wolfgang Spickermann, Darja Šterbenc Erker and Katharina Waldner for intensive discussion and Julia Carls for her critical reading.
 - 2 For an historical overview: G. Colin, *Rome et la Grèce de 200 à 146 avant Jésus Christ*, BEFAR 94 (Paris, 1905). E. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, 2 vols. (Berkeley, 1984).

the formation of public audiences will be central. Religion, seen as the central medium of political communication for the Roman nobility, will act as a leitmotif.

Two concepts inform my approach. The first investigative tool for the development just outlined is the concept of rationality and the rationalisation arising out of it which is the basis of Max Weber's socio-religious studies. Although it was precisely the texts of the Late Republic – especially Cicero and Varro (the latter of whose works were only preserved in fragments after late antiquity) – which delivered that synthesis of classical Greek thought which, because of their Latin language, were highly influential in European thought up to the early modern period, the particular characteristics of western rationality are not of primary concern here. Instead, following Wolfgang Schluchter,³ I take Weber's socio-religious studies as part of research on typology and developmental history, whose implicit and explicit⁴ conceptual tools can be used for the analysis, as well as for the comparative classification, of the development of specific societies. The fact that Weber's conceptual system proceeds from assumptions of contemporary religious studies which are today considered outdated⁵ does make caution necessary when applying Weberian concepts, but does not exclude their use as an interpretive framework, as long as their implications are viewed critically.

What advantage is there in the attempt to approach developments of the late Roman Republic with the tools of Weber's concept of rationality, especially the assumption of diverse types of rationality?⁶ The sources themselves imply that the development of religious practice and reflection on religion played a key role. That does not constitute a basic affirmation of Weber's hypotheses in his sociology of religion, but an historical constellation which owes its existence to the textual tradition, the contingent transmission of texts, and to the central role of religious media in the political communication of the Roman aristocracy,⁷

3 W. Schluchter, *Religion und Lebensführung 1: Studien zu Max Webers Kultur- und Werttheorie; 2: Studien zu Max Webers Religions- und Herrschaftssoziologie* (Frankfurt a. M., 1988) 1,101. 104.

4 See *ibid.*, 2,22–42.

5 See H. G. Kippenberg (Ed.), *Max Weber, Gesamtausgabe I,22: Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Die wirtschaftlichen und die gesellschaftlichen Ordnungen und Mächte. Nachlaß. Teilband 2: Religiöse Gemeinschaften* (Tübingen, 2001), e. g. 1,43 f. and *passim*.

6 For an attempt at systematisation see W. Schluchter, *Religion und Lebensführung* (see note 3) 2,38 f.; cf. T. Ekstrand, *Max Weber in a Theological Perspective*, Studies in Philosophical Theology 21 [Diss. Univ. Uppsala 2000] (Leuven, 2000) 103–107 following R. Brubaker, *The Limits of Rationality: An Essay on the Social and Moral Thought of Max Weber* (London, 1984).

7 See K.-J. Hölkeskamp, *Die Entstehung der römischen Nobilität* (Stuttgart, 1987); J. Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum*. Potsdamer altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 12/1–3 (Stuttgart, 2005) 1419–1440.

visible in the analyses of the first chapters. This role of religion remained contingent and in need of repeated evaluation in different periods. Placing changes in this area in the centre of our assessment while contextualising them using the multi-factorial approach of Weberian religious sociology has the potential to develop a picture of late Roman republican society which can move beyond the current interpretation of aristocratic practice with its implied polarities, i. e. as paradox, cognitive dissonance, or hypocrisy. The fact that the *pontifex* Cotta, a participant in the (fictional) philosophical discussion in Cicero's dialogue "On the Nature of the Gods" (*De Natura deorum*), simply ignores all philosophical scepticism in his priestly activities,⁸ is itself merely Cicero's literary solution to the problem. Such splitting does not provide an adequate description of the behaviour of the aristocracy, who experience the practical success of rationalisation at first hand.

My point of departure for the late Roman Republic is the presence of highly developed practical and theoretical rationalisations: practical in the form of instrumental rationalisation, i. e. solutions to technical problems, and the rationalisation of values, theoretical in the form of causal, for example intellectual, rationalisation in epistemological theory and world-views. These rationalisations are present in the form of Greek schools and texts. Especially in view of the presence of such rationalisations within the framework of a culture which was considered highly attractive – Roman aristocrats competed to equip their villas with Greek art, Greek culture dominated on the stage – my primary focus will be on the development of 'insular' rationalisations, segmental systematisations, and their evaluation and successes.

Despite their "insular character", the historical instances thus reviewed, were not mere attempts but successes. This I would like to emphasise. Even if such rationalisations must first be attached to formal criteria, primarily to systematisations in the mode of the language, the question of the problem-solving capacity of such formal rationality – in the eyes of contemporaries – cannot be ignored. On that basis this article will expand upon Claudia Moatti's original and convincing attempt to locate the "birth of rationality in Rome" in Cicero's generation, that is, in the first century BC, through a gestational history and through differentiation of her concept of rationality.⁹ This opens up a new perspective on a culture which, located chronologically between the axial

8 See e.g. R. J. Goar, *Cicero and the State Religion* (Amsterdam, 1972); P. A. Brunt, "Philosophy and Religion in the Late Republic", in: J. Barnes – M. T. Griffin (Eds.) *Philosophia togata: Essays on Philosophy and Roman Society* (Oxford, 1989) 174–198; more differentiated H. D. Jocelyn, "The Ruling Class of the Roman Republic and Greek Philosophers", *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 59 (Manchester, 1976/77) 323–364.

9 C. Moatti, *La Raison de Rome: naissance de l'esprit critique à la fin de la République* (Paris, 1997).

breakthrough of the Greek “discovery of the mind” and the secondary axial developments of Christianity and late antiquity, has been seen as a mere transition culture and has not had any originality ascribed to it.¹⁰ It is precisely the opportunity to investigate the process of the diffusion of rationality and its acquisition,¹¹ the clash of rationality and the mythological world-view (to use the hackneyed characterisations) in a pre-modern culture which constitutes the attraction of my topic.

The metaphorical discussion of islands and conflicts leads us to the second concept which informs my approach, namely the concept of the audience. A few years ago, Karl-Joachim Hölkeskamp published a study on the origins of the public in early Greece.¹² His basic idea is the juxtaposition of the symbolic self-representation of the society in the assembly and the place of actual decisions: the same thing which was constructed as decidable through debate was then decided in the same institution that the debate took place. The connection to a single location – the *agora* – and its architectural development in Greek cities is seen as an important factor in the process of institutionalisation. In this sense Hölkeskamp’s concept of the public does not go beyond that of Jürgen Habermas’ ‘political public’, which was developed as a counter-model for the merely representative public of medieval societies. In view of particular developments, such as the Athenian democracy, however, this concept cannot be generalised.¹³

On the other hand, Egon Flaig completely avoids the concept of the public in a monograph on the political semiotics of the Roman Republic published in the same year. He consistently describes the institutional structures in terms of the interactions between social groups.¹⁴ In so doing he avoids the problem of the normative implications of the concept of the public audience, which does not just observe communication but also evaluates its relevance for the self-determination of the community, that is, for political life. As a consequence of this approach, Flaig draws a series of hard conclusions about the social structure

10 The interest of Hubert Cancik (in H. Cancik, *Antik – modern: Beiträge zur römischen und deutschen Kulturgeschichte*, ed. by R. Faber, B. von Reibnitz, J. Rüpke (Stuttgart, 1998)) in the history of rationality attests to exceptions. For the notion of axiality see S. N. Eisenstadt (ed.), *The origins and diversity of axial age civilizations* (Albany, 1986)

11 See J. Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns 1: Handlungsrationalität und gesellschaftliche Rationalisierung* (Frankfurt a. M., 1981) 103 f.

12 K.-J. Hölkeskamp, “Institutionalisierung durch Verortung. Die Entstehung der Öffentlichkeit im frühen Griechenland”, in: id. – J. Rösen – E. Stein-Hölkeskamp – H. T. Grütter (Eds.), *Sinn (in) der Antike. Orientierungssysteme, Leitbilder und Weltkonzepte im Altertum* (Mainz, 2003) 81–104.

13 J. Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchung zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt a. M., 1990) 56 f.

14 E. Flaig, *Ritualisierte Politik: Zeichen, Gesten und Herrschaft im Alten Rom*. Historische Semantik vol. 1 (Göttingen, 2003).

and uses a strong typifying of communicative situations in order to be able to make the interaction between symbols and symbolic practices plausible.

In contrast to this, changes in individual argumentation and slippage in plausibility structures are of particular interest for my approach, along with formation and change in theatres of communication, in which arguments are formed or are able to take effect, critical reflection on institutions and the increased institutionalisation arising from there. Thus the term 'public' is not a precisely differentiated analytical term but rather a heuristic one. Particularly as an anachronistic term, which is coloured by modern ideas of participatory decision-making processes, it raises the question of arenas of communication which indicate 'audiences' beyond themselves in the realm of the entire society. In this sense 'public' in the singular represents an arena of communication which includes open, general communication and association, *publicité* and *communauté*.

At the end of this analysis we will have a view more of the limits rather than of the effects of Roman processes of rationalisation which involves the relationship between rationalism and ritualism.

2 The Origins of the Public from the Middle Republic

When we regard developments in Rome from the end of the fourth century BC, we are already dealing with a complex society which must have had a multifaceted system of communicative space, to which upper-class banqueting¹⁵ belonged just as much as the formation of professional or neighbourhood clubs,¹⁶ Dionysian cultic clubs,¹⁷ and patrician or plebeian special organisations, as well as family or client associations.¹⁸ With the equalisation of the patrician and plebeian classes, which can be connected especially with the *Licinian-Sextian* laws and with the patrician-plebeian consulship, a unified nobility arose during the second half of the fourth century. Their formulation of values and in

15 See N. Zorzetti, "The Carmina Convivalia", in: O. Murray (Ed.), *Symptica: a symposium on the symposion: records of the 1st symposium on the Greek symposion*, Balliol College, 4–8 September 1984 (Oxford, 1990) 289–307.

16 See E. Gabba, "The collegia of Numa: problems of method and political ideas", *Journal of Roman Studies* 74 (1984) 81–86; F. M. de Robertis, *Il fenomeno associativo nel mondo romano: dai collegi della repubblica alle corporazioni del Basso Impero* (Napoli, 1955; reprint Rome, 1981); id., *Storia delle corporazioni e del regime associativo nel mondo romano*, 2. vols. (Bari, 1974).

17 Thus T. P. Wiseman, "Liber: Myth, Drama and Ideology in Republican Rome", in: C. Bruun (Ed.), *The Roman Middle Republic: Politics, Religion, and Historiography c. 400–133 B. C.* Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 23 (Rome, 2000) 265–299.

18 B. Linke, *Von der Verwandschaft zum Staat: die Entstehung politischer Organisationsformen in der frühromischen Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1995).

particular their orientation to external affairs (aristocratic competition was channelled into extensive imperialistic activities) lead to increased dynamism in the overall process of change,¹⁹ which expressed itself in rapid expansion, increasing internal social differentiation and rising affluence. With the first Punic War from 264 to 241 BC, Rome had risen from being a regional power to dominance of the Mediterranean. That role was challenged in the second Punic War from 218 to 201 BC, but the challenge was rejected. This continuing process constitutes the framework for the specific changes analysed below.

2.1 The Senate

The centre of political communication was the Senate, an assembly of the three hundred leading men, old men (*senes*). Even if this institution was old, it only gained the stability which made it into the focus of republican decision-making processes and the efficient counterpart of ever more powerful magistrates around the year 300 BC. This stability was provided by basically life-long membership and regulated admission after being in office, structures which led to a composition of the Senate in which the principle of seniority completely dominated the regulation of the right to speak and the order in which votes were cast.²⁰

The centralisation of the upper-class public in this committee is connected in the textual tradition with the censorship of Ap. Claudius Caecus in 312 BC, who consistently applied the rules for admission to the Senate which had been developed previously. His resistance to the expansion of the priestly colleges according to proportional representation of patricians and plebeians gives rise to the suspicion that alternatively institutionalised ‘publics’ were feared. The publication of a list of days suitable for court sessions (*fasti*), which was among the priestly duties of the pontifex, was probably intended to serve the same purpose.²¹ General availability of the information reduced the influence of wide-ranging institutions. Writing is the medium of publication.

19 Detailed K.-J. Hölkeskamp, *Entstehung* (see note 7); J. Rüpke, “Wege zum Töten, Wege zum Ruhm: Krieg in der römischen Republik”, in: id. – H. von Stietencron (Eds.), *Töten im Krieg*. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Historische Anthropologie 6 (Freiburg, 1995) 213–240.

20 Extensively on the Senate: M. Bonnefond-Coudry, *Le sénat de la République romaine de la guerre d’Hannibal à Auguste: pratiques délibératives et prise de décision*. Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome 273 [Diss. Sorbonne, Paris 1986] (Rome, 1989); R. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton, 1984).

21 See J. Rüpke, *Kalender und Öffentlichkeit: Die Geschichte der Repräsentation und religiösen Qualifikation von Zeit in Rom*, RGVV 40 (Berlin, 1995) 248 f.; Michel Humm, *Appius Claudius Caecus. La république accomplie* [BEFAR 322] (Rome 2005).

Another early innovative political use of writing is connected to the name of Ap. Claudius. His speech opposing peace with Pyrrhos in 280 has long been accepted as the oldest surviving speech.²² This is more than a bit of trivia of cultural history. A quarter of a century after his consulship (307 BC), Claudius must have belonged to the most senior and highest-ranking senators. The written dissemination of his speech – calling it a ‘private publication’ would give a false impression of the number of copies in question – emphasises his dissent from the results of the deliberations of the Senate, namely the decision to accept an offer of peace from the victor, Pyrrhos. The publication produced a ‘public’, no matter how small and diffused, which is outside of the rules of how senatorial consensus is reached. Without knowing its contents, it was not possible to discern whether Appius intended to bolster his arguments or his own person: what we see here is a break with tradition, but not a trend.²³

Probably in the following decades, the Roman *pontifices maximi* began to produce not only written minutes, but also to publish excerpts of these on a white-washed wooden board.²⁴ Documentation procedures in the Senate probably provided the precedent for such written minutes, but this remains speculation in view of our lack of knowledge of both types of text in this period. ‘Publication’ remains an ambiguous term, as we know neither the intended nor the actual readers. The gesture of assumed literacy and of addressing a public of undefined size may have been decisive: public representation ensured institutional independence and significance.

These acts of publication must be evaluated in view of contemporary use of writing: the central political usage was in the preservation of resolutions on bronze copies and placed to allow general access. This had been the case in the codification of the Twelve Tables. In how far the later canonical text accurately reflects traditions of the fifth century or is the result of a process of collection and commentary may remain an open question here.²⁵ Where a contemporary public audience was actually wanted, people were required to be present in high numbers. This is true of the ‘hundred man court’, which in historical times consisted of three people from each of the thirty-five Roman *tribus*,²⁶ and also

22 Thus Cicero, *Brutus* 61 and subsequents.

23 In order to avoid anachronistic notions it should be stressed that even by the time of Cicero published speeches were not seen or read as instruments disseminating political “ideas”; see A. Eich, *Politische Literatur in der römischen Gesellschaft. Studien zum Verhältnis von politischer und literarischer Öffentlichkeit in der späten Republik und frühen Kaiserzeit* (Köln, 2000) 162–164.

24 J. Rüpke, *Fasti* (see note 7) 1493–1497.

25 Cf. J. Rüpke, 2003. “L’histoire des fasti romains: aspects médiatiques et politiques,” *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 81 (2003) 125–140.

26 *Fest.us* 47, 13–18 Lindsay, see C. Paulus, “Centumviri”, in: *Der Neue Pauly* 2 (1997), 1064–1066.

for the quorum of at least one hundred senators which was needed for authorisations after the Senate resolution on the Bacchanalia.²⁷

2.2 Public Assemblies

The *comitia* and *contiones* were both large public assemblies. Recent research in ancient history has made clear that the complicated voting procedures of the *comitia* served to obscure the fact that the assembly did not play a significant role in legislative decision-making (elections were a separate issue²⁸). The magistrates leading the assembly put laws to the vote which already had the support of the Senate without further debate. The potential to reach a specific resolution was not being tested here: it was a ritual which signalled basic consent. The main motive for participating in the assembly was probably primarily the opportunity to play out one's role as a part of the structured *populus Romanus*.²⁹ The 'arguments' supporting the law consisted of respect for the elected magistrate, the monitoring of the casting of votes by patrons, or the previous decision of higher decision-making bodies.

In contrast, the *contiones* did have an advisory function and were dedicated to the presentation of candidates or the explanation of planned laws. The final decision was still open, and speakers were concerned to determine or produce specific preferences. The alternatives were signalled orally, but as Jean-Michel David has shown, we must not neglect further aspects of argumentation.³⁰ Demonstrating support by wearing mourning clothes, the status of friends and the size of the clientele, but also the readiness with which social distance could be overcome through gestures of personal intimacy, self-abasement through a gesture of supplication,³¹ were all decisive factors in a competition in which the coherence of the arguments were only one level of evaluation.³² Even if such manoeuvres were passed down as tips, they only receive minimal systematic

27 Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (*CIL*) 1² 581.

28 See briefly G. D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republic Rome* (Cambridge, 2007) 12–25.

29 For that purpose see the work of Jehne, e.g. M. Jehne, "Integrationsrituale in der römischen Republik. Zur einbindenden Wirkung der Volksversammlungen", in: K.-J. Hölkeskamp – J. Rüsen – E. Stein-Hölkeskamp – H. T. Grütter (Eds.), *Sinn* (see note 12) 279–297; E. Flaig e.g. *ibid.*, *Politik* (see note 14) or K.-J. Hölkeskamp, "Greek Styles and Greek Art in Augustan Rome: Issues of the Present versus Records of the Past", in: J. I. Porter (Ed.), *Classical Past: The Classical Traditions of Greece and Rome* (Princeton, 2006) 237–259.

30 For this see E. Flaig, *Politik* (see note 14) 102.

31 *Ibid.*, 117 f.

32 Stressed by Jehne.

treatment in textbooks on rhetoric. The rationalisation of values remained fragmentary, limited by the interest in individual system.

2.3 Rituals

Political assemblies were neither the most frequent nor the most attractive occasions for convening large numbers of people in Rome. Holidays and large rituals more often provided such an opportunity. It is precisely in this connection that we can observe the most significant changes in the period under consideration here. This applies firstly to the frequency of holidays. From the final years of the fourth century, a rush of temple-building spread through the third century. These building projects were the occasion for intensive conflicts between the founders, who in most cases had gained wealth as generals, and the Senate. They are also associated with huge dedicatory festivities and permanently institutionalised holidays on the anniversaries of the foundation. Specific cults gained in value through connection to games (*ludi*), a process which began especially in the second half of the third century. Traditionally the games consisted of races and athletic competitions. Dances were also an ancient element of the games, which probably were professionalised under Etruscan influence and augmented by background scenes and slap-stick dialogue. Games including dramatic plays on a Greek model (*ludi scaenici*) were, according to later Roman self-image, a resumption of these.³³ For the years 240 and 235 we have evidence of performances of plays by the first two dramatists whose names are known to us, namely the 'half-Greek' Livius Andronicus, possibly from Tarent, and Cn. Naevius from Campania.³⁴

There was an explosion of opportunities to perform tragedies as well as comedies within a few decades. By the end of the third century eleven,³⁵ and by

33 Central is Livy 7.2.1–3 and Valerius Maximus 2.4.4; on this see P. L. Schmidt, "Postquam ludus in artem paulatim verterat. Varro und die Frühgeschichte des römischen Theaters," in: G. Vogt-Spira (Ed.), *Studien zur vorliterarischen Periode im frühen Rom*. Script-Oralia 12, Reihe A, Altertumswissenschaftliche Reihe 2 (Tübingen, 1989) 77–134; F. Bernstein, *Ludi publici. Untersuchungen zur Entstehung und Entwicklung öffentlicher Spiele im republikanischen Rom*. Historia, Einzelschriften, H. 119 (Stuttgart, 1998) 119–129.

34 For the dating Cicero, *Brutus* 72 (for the late dating of Accius *ibid.*, 72 f.) and A. Gellius, *noctes Atticae* 17.21.44 f.

35 W. Suerbaum, *Die archaische Literatur von den Anfängen bis Sullas Tod: Die vorliterarische Periode und die Zeit von 240 bis 78 v. Chr.* Unter Mitarbeit von J. Blänsdorf u. a. Mit einer Einleitung in das Gesamtwerk von P. L. Schmidt. Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur der Antike 1 (München, 2002) 99.

the end of the second century around thirty days for games³⁶ had grown up out of the ritual framework of the *ludi Romani*. The two canonical genres were, after a few initial attempts in 173, augmented by the establishment of the mime at the annual Ludi Florales, which then marginalised the other dramatic genres in the Imperial Period.³⁷ The dramatic aspect increasingly overtook the circus-like aspect of the games.³⁸ But that's not all. Triumphal processions and extra games on the occasion of military victories were also celebrated in most years, not to mention holidays without games, such as the Saturnalia, which increased to three and then finally to five days, as well as events for expressing supplication or gratitude, the *supplicationes*, when people took part in banquets in old Roman temples.

When changes in public communication can be found, then they are found in connection with these rituals. Sacrifices and feasts celebrated in families or with neighbours were at the centre of traditional popular holidays, in contrast to the 'weekly' holidays of the Nundines or Calends, Nones and Ides were often celebrated in alternating locations or outside the city centre. This also applies to the Neptunalia, a sort of Feast of the Tabernacle, the Parentalia celebrated at the graves, the Matronalia and Poplifugia in the Field of Mars or the drinking contest in the cult of Anna Perenna on the banks of the Tiber, and similarly for the Parilia, the purificatory fire in April, while the Saturnalia in December were more of a domestic holiday. It is not possible to determine the degree of popularity of the old horse races of the Equirria or the Consulia or the Equus October.³⁹

The *supplicationes* also followed this pattern. As supplications or thanksgiving holidays they were initially crisis rituals which were intended to mobilise the entire population to visit the temple and celebrate in the streets. We do not know to what degree the twenty and fifty-day thanksgiving holidays which were resolved on the occasion of Caesar's victory in Gaul could be differentiated from everyday life. The resolution was certainly simpler than the actual holiday, for

36 J. Blänsdorf, "Voraussetzungen und Entstehung der römischen Komödie", in: E. Lefèvre, (Ed.), *Das römische Drama* (Darmstadt, 1978) 91–134; 115 counts 28 annual days of games reserved to theatre by the end of the second century BC, not including extraordinary opportunities. In detail L. R. Taylor, "The Opportunities for Dramatic Performances in the Time of Plautus and Terence." *TAPA* 68 (1937) 284–304.

37 For Mimus: Rieks, Rudolf 1978. "Mimus und Atellane", in: E. Lefèvre (Ed.), *Das römische Drama* (Darmstadt, 1978) 348–377; L. Benz (Ed.), *Plautus und die Tradition des Stegreifspiels: Festgabe für Eckard Lefèvre zum 60. Geburtstag* [3. Latinistisches Symposium vom 10. bis 12.11.1993 in Freiburg]. *ScriptOralia* 75, Reihe A 19 (Tübingen, 1995).

38 See F. Bernstein, *Ludi* (see note 33) 245 f.

39 J. Rüpke, "Equus October and ludi Capitolini: Zur rituellen Struktur der Oktoberiden und ihren antiken Deutungen", in: C. Walde et al. (Eds.), *Meta-Mythologien: FS Fritz Graf zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin, 2009).

which no public funding at all was made available. In any case everyday life was synchronised with significant military victories in this manner, and the person in whose name the gods were being thanked was a topic of conversation throughout the city.

The other type of new ritual is characterised by just the opposite, total synchronisation and spatial centralisation of symbolic actions. The core elements of these rituals were processions (*pompae*) and the actual games. Typically, the procession began at a temple and ended at a circus. Even dramatic performances took place on improvised stages in the large circuses, including the Circus Maximus and, from the end of the third century BC, also in the Circus Flaminius on the Campus Martius. While the actual ritual space – the path of the procession and the circus – could be used in various ways and thus remained architecturally underdetermined, it was framed by several means.⁴⁰ A large number of temple buildings were concentrated in the area around the circuses and the most important paths for processions to and from the Capitol and the Forum Romanum were lined by statues, columns, and victory arches. Thus a specific ‘public’ space was created from the rather bland architecture of political assembly areas – the *comitium*, *rostra*, *curia* – which was increasingly monumental and which could be related to the success of the community attributed to the individual. Statues built in honour of the individual victor and especially sacred buildings served as primary media, so that the characteristics of the *ludi* and the *supplicationes* meet in their architectural expression.

How was communication carried out within this framework? The default stance is one of passivity. The Roman citizen found himself in the role of a spectator. This is true first of all for processions: taking part in the triumphal parade of Aemilius Paullus meant standing on the side of the street for three days and admiring the display of booty. The victorious soldiers could march in the procession, the senators could hail the parade and join it, but the centre of attention belonged to the victor and his display of booty, both living and dead. Agents without citizenship dominated the *pompa circensis*. While the magistrate sponsoring the games and hierarchically organised Roman youth led the parade, they were followed by chariot-drivers, dancers, musicians, and clowns. Even the gods were mere Roman citizens. On the one hand they were taken along at the end of the procession. The sacrifice, when the procession had arrived at its goal, was dedicated to them. Primarily, however, they were spectators of the games and competitions following the procession. They had a first-row seat, so to speak, if the games were not carried out in front of a temple anyway. They were the intended primary target audience of the ritual, and the Roman spectators

40 T. Hölscher, *Staatsdenkmal und Publikum. Vom Untergang der Republik bis zur Festigung des Kaisertums in Rom*. Xenia. Konstanzer Althistorische Vorträge und Forschungen (Konstanz, 1984).

were only second-class spectators. The latter point is clearly indicated by the fact that, unlike in Greek festivities, general participation in the sacrificial feast was not the norm. Only in very rare exceptions did the public as a whole get anything to eat. The variously integrated *epula* were, like the *lectisternia*, meals for the gods, in which specific groups of priests and the senators could participate.

Such multifaceted communication is typical of religious communication and should not be passed over too quickly. The games were sponsored as an effective means of alleviating tensions in relations with the gods and preventing further catastrophic military defeats or plagues. For this end the very best was just barely good enough. The spectators could observe this process taking place in increasing extravagance and professionalisation of the agents involved which went hand in hand. Authors formed an official Roman club (*collegium poetarum*) in the second half of the third century, and even before that professional troupes of actors could be won from the more intensely Hellenised areas of Italy. Similar processes of professionalisation can be observed among the chariot drivers, even though evidence for the cult of the winner of chariot races can only be found in the Imperial Period. Scattered and mostly late sources for the Late Republic indicate these professionals functioning as the groups to whom the spectators turned with their expressions of approval or disapproval.

I emphasise this point for a particular reason. Recently interactions within the audience, such as the observation of the senators, applauding or booing individual senators within a space which was increasingly divided according to social status,⁴¹ had been set in the foreground on the basis of George Ville's study on gladiators.⁴² I would by no means deny these factors, but the assumption that secondary functions could, instead of primary intentions, explain the enormous proliferation of the institution 'games' unsatisfactory. Beyond that, we must be reminded of the fact that the competitions, especially the chariot races, were the most successful element of the games in the long term. Chariot races completely dominated the games in the Imperial Period and into late antiquity. Their attraction probably arose not out of the unified opinion of the spectators, but from the differing preferences for specific drivers or parties. One could win points for supporting one's girlfriend's favourite driver, even if he was sure to lose. This is admittedly hypothetical, but one can

41 See especially E. Flaig, *Den Kaiser herausfordern: Die Usurpation im Römischen Reich*. Historische Studien vol. 7 (Frankfurt a. M., 1992); *ibid.*, *Politik* (see note 14).

42 G. Ville, *La gladiature en Occident des origines à la mort de Domitien*. Bibliothèque des École françaises d'Athènes et Rome 245 (Rome, 1981); see E. Flaig, "An den Grenzen des Römerseins. Die Gladiatur aus historisch-anthropologischer Sicht", in: W. Eßbach (Ed.), *wirlihrisie – Identität und Alterität in Theorie und Methode* (Würzburg, 2000) 215–230.

imagine the satisfaction of proving one's instinct and winning over against a patron's bet.

3 The Content of Religious Communication

This leads to the necessity of addressing the content of organised communication. The entire spectrum of Italic and Greek production was received, starting with statues and paintings. If we consider the triumphal processions, Greek statues and other works of art achieved entertainment value, albeit torn out of any functional context. This goes for Greek libraries as well. Roman aristocrats were enthusiastic about the technique of bronze casting already at the end of the fourth century.⁴³ The gods were offered more than just exotic animals as entertainment. Dramatic performances of every kind were translated or adapted, such as the Oscan *Atellana*, New Comedy, tragedies with topics from Greek mythology as well as, soon enough, Roman history. The latter, the *Praetexta*, was a genre which was destined to play a subordinate role and which mostly disappeared with the Republic.⁴⁴

Surviving titles and texts from the late third century allow for a more precise view of their contents. Specific contemporary relevance or a close connection to the respective holiday do not at first view play any significant role. This differentiates this type of drama clearly from that of fifth century Athenian theatre. The titles and the few remaining fragments from the two earliest dramatists already mentioned in Rome, Livius Andronicus and Naevius, reveal mostly mythological material drawn from traditional Greek mythological cycles. The series of known titles of tragedies for Livius Andronicus are: *Achilles*, *Aegistus*, *Ajax mastigophorus*, *Andromeda*, *Antiopa*, *Danae*, *Equos Troianus*, *Hermiona*, *Ino*, *Tereus* and for Naevius: *Aesiona*, *Danae*, *Equos Troianus*, *Hector proficiscens*, *Iphigenia*, *Lycurgos*. Naevius also staged plays with clearly Roman topics, such as *Clastidium sive Marcellus* about a recent victory over the Celts and a *Lupus* and *Romulus*. Thirty-five titles are known from Naevius' numerous comedies, beginning alphabetically with *Acontizomenos*, *Aigtatoria*, *Agrynuntes*, *Appella*, *Ariolus*, *Astiologa*, *Carbonaria*, *Clamidaria* and *Colax*.⁴⁵ The surviving

43 See J. Rüpke "Triumphator and ancestor rituals between symbolic anthropology and magic", *Numen* 53 (2006) 251–289; on the modification of the Roman ritual of triumph in the middle Republic.

44 G. Manuwald (Ed.), *Identität und Alterität in der frühromischen Tragödie*. Identitäten und Alteritäten; Altertumswissenschaftliche Reihe vol. 1 (Würzburg, 2000) provides the texts. Staging history produced a number of practical problems; see M. Erasmo, *Roman Tragedy. Theatre to Theatricality* (Austin, 2004) 52–80. For the exception of the *Octavia praetexta* see P. L. Schmidt "Octavia [4]", in: *Der Neue Pauly* 8 (2000) 1096 f. Id., "Praetexta", in: *Der Neue Pauly* 10 (2001).

45 W. Suerbaum, *Archaische Literatur* (see note 35), 108.

pieces by Plautus or Terence from the following decades confirm the impression left by these titles: plots are set in a Greek world, even when the problems they treat are clearly marked by Rome.⁴⁶

How can we interpret these findings? The forms and objects of entertainment are ethnically marked in a multitude of ways. It must have been clear to the majority of spectators that they were consuming Greek (in the broadest sense of the word) entertainment, products from a culture perceived as superior in this regard and therefore attractive. There is another side to this: Rome imported these products often enough against the will of their author or maker. Art piracy and enslavement were central modes of cultural transfer, and the profits of war served to engage the best free⁴⁷ theatre troops and artists. In most cases the entertainment was connected to celebration of a military victory or its commemoration.⁴⁸ In all this, Rome presented itself as the centre of the world.

However: Rome presented itself as the centre of a world, a world outside of Rome, a world which was older than Rome. It was, above all, Greek narrative traditions which really dominated the Mediterranean world, and which, with the gods moving about in stories, exiles founding cities or adventurous military expeditions, gave the coastal cities of the Mediterranean a genealogy, a place in Greek history. Thus Rome is understood to have been founded, as Varro worked out on the basis of these traditions, four-hundred and thirty years after the fall of Troy. That is whence the dates 754/753 for the foundation of Rome came from; year one in the history of the city is a date from Greek history. It is the gods with Roman names, not Zeus but Jupiter, not Hera but Juno, not Ares but Mars, who received a history, a genealogy, within the plays. Even the demanding and destructive god Dionysus of the Lycurgos was a god so native that his followers only a short time later, in 186, were suspected of being members of a mass movement to overthrow the state.⁴⁹

The systematisation which begins to be achieved from this point is more recognisable in other types of texts, such as Latin epic, which began with the same two authors. Its content was an 'Odyssee' and a 'Punic War' which reaches back to Troy and Aeneas. Another example is Roman historiography which

46 See the exemplary analysis of H. Flower, "*Fabula de Bacchanalibus*: the Bacchanalian Cult of the Second Century BC and Roman Drama", in: G. Manuwald (Ed.), *Identität* (see note 44) 23–35; of the Bacchic theme in different genres. For the fictitious place of the dramatic scenes see J. C. Dumont, "L'espace plautinien: de la place publique à la ville", *PALLAS* 54 (2000) 103–112.

47 See D. Gilula, "Greek Drama in Rome: Some Aspects of Cultural Transposition", in: H. Scolnicov (Ed.), *The play out of context: transferring plays from culture to culture* (Cambridge, 1989) 99–109; here 100 f. for the restrictions imposed on the theatre by Roman magistrates.

48 Stressed by E. Flaig, *Politik* (see note 14) 232–235.

49 For the long history of the cult of Bacchus see the considerations by Wiseman (n. 17).

began in the same generation with the work of Fabius Pictor, written in Greek. Both genres were aimed at a mass audience. The epic was most probably recited at upper-class banquets,⁵⁰ while, considering that the language of historiography was only changed to Latin in the second third of the second century, private reading is the most probable form for its reception. The exclusivity of both types of texts makes clear that history lessons in Rome took place in the theatre.⁵¹

Comedy has a quite different goal and effect with its every-day plots. Here the problems of ordinary Roman people are being played out, literally, in Greek costumes.⁵² Conflicts about love and money, the superior intelligence of dependent slaves, the laziness of rich heirs, the reckless abandon of soldiers enriched by booty. Thus it comes as no surprise that allusions to daily political life occur in this context rather than in the tragedies,⁵³ and that these texts, rather than high tragedy, have survived. However, it was not local colour but the universalisation that was achieved here which was decisive. That may sound a bit much to attribute to performances which primarily served as light entertainment, but we must not forget that even as light entertainment, just as much as in the soothing of anger, the pieces had to fulfil the standards of graecified gods.

4 Rationalisation

My second point – rationality – has come up rather short. Until now, we have been reconstructing those spaces in which public communication offered room for systematisation at all. The priority was to allow the norms of discourse which structured communication within these spaces to become visible. These norms allowed for or even awarded room for rationalisation under certain circumstances only.

A look at the self-descriptions of the institutions, at antiquarian or historiographic systematisations from the end of the third century is instructive, as it allows a clearer evaluation of the degree of reflexivity of such

50 Argued in detail by J. Rüpke, “Kulturtransfer als Rekodierung: Überlegungen zum literaturgeschichtlichen und sozialen Ort der frühen römischen Epik.” In: id. (Ed.), *Von Menschen und Göttern erzählen: Formkonstanzen und Funktionswandel vormoderner Epik*. Potsdamer altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 4 (Stuttgart, 2001) 42–64.

51 This thesis was argued variously by Peter Wiseman, e.g. id., *Remus: A Roman Myth* (Cambridge, 1995).

52 T. J. Moore, *The Theatre of Plautus. Playing to the Audience* (Austin, 1998); here p. 54, does even speak of “hyper-Hellenization” by Plautus.

53 See, however, the decontextualising piecemeal political interpretation of tragedies by the Roman audience as shown by E. Stärk, “Politische Anspielungen in der römischen Tragödie und der Einfluß der Schauspieler”, in: G. Manuwald (Ed.), *Identität* (see note 44) 123–133.

rationalisations. With regard to religion, the spectrum of intensified forms of systematisation reaches all the way to the known texts of the end of the Republic in the first century BC.

Lucretius' *De rerum natura* makes room not only for theology in the strict sense and for the physical description of the gods, but also formulates the teachings of Epicure as a means of salvation (or, perhaps less offensively put, as a life philosophy), which represents an alternative to a view of the world associated with religious practices and fear of the gods.⁵⁴ M. Tullius Cicero's dialogue *De natura deorum* discusses the question of the 'nature of the gods' and their relation to humanity in a loose representation of older and more recent Greek-Hellenistic positions.⁵⁵ Finally M. Terentius Varro's *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* summarises Late Republican knowledge of religious institutions and the gods to whom they are dedicated and which provided a canonical point of departure for the description of specifically Roman religion, whether polemically or in positive reception, which itself is known to us through this broad sketch.⁵⁶ A plethora of further contemporary literature is known only by title or in scanty fragments. Engagement with culturally and politically relevant institutions like divination and the holidays of the Roman year is at the forefront.⁵⁷

The surviving texts reveal a large degree of influence from Attic-Hellenic philosophy and still provide a primary source for the history of philosophy and the reconstruction of Greek philosophy in the Hellenistic period, although the texts understood themselves as an attempt to make their thoughts comprehen-

54 Lucretius, *de rerum natura* 2,600–659. 1090 ff.; 3,322; book 6. See C. Segal, *Lucretius on death and anxiety: poetry and philosophy in "De rerum natura"* (Princeton, 1990).

55 The best approach to any occupation with these works is still to look at the commentaries by Arthur Stanley Pease (Cambridge/Mass. 1953–58 and Repr. Darmstadt 1963).

56 Fundamental, even if not always very helpful as far as it considers history of religion are the edition and the comments by B. Cardauns, *M. Terentius Varro, Antiquitates rerum divinarum. 1: Die Fragmente. 2: Kommentar*. Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse 1 (Wiesbaden, 1976).

57 A synopsis at E. Rawson, *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London, 1985) 298–312; on literature "about Roman year" see A. Degraisi (Ed.), *Inscriptiones Italiae 13: Fasti et elogia. Fasciculus 2: Fasti anni Numani et Iuliani, accedunt ferialia, menologia rustica, parapegmata*. 2 vols. (Roma, 1963) xxv–xxvi; "the calendar", *fasti* as such, only seem to have reached their appropriated position as organising frame after the Julian calendar reform and after the fast diffusion of inscriptional calendars: here Verrius Flaccus and Ovid rank first. For literature *de fastis* see in detail J. Rüpke, "Kognitive Einheit ritueller Sequenzen? Zur kommunikativen Funktion kalendarischer Gattungen in Rom", in: Gerhard Binder, Konrad Ehlich (Eds.), *Stätten und Formen der Kommunikation im Altertum 6: Religiöse Kommunikation – Formen und Praxis vor der Neuzeit*. Bochumer Altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium 26 (Trier, 1997) 191–223.

sible to a Roman public.⁵⁸ They connect the unusual choice of language for a philosophical text, Latin, and efforts at using Roman examples in the rational discourse about religion. The validity of religious assumptions is examined on the basis of non-religious premises and evidence.

However, the procedure of *reddere rationem*⁵⁹ cannot be measured solely on the standards of Greek logic. The criteria of evidence are dependent on the social and cultural context. Plausibility, a core topic of classical rhetoric, is not least of all dependent on the person of the speaker. Still more interesting is the question of what could enter the forum of argumentative conflict or become the object of systematising processes at all. When Cato the Elder begins his history in the first half of the second century by requiring and giving an account of the whole of life, *otium* (leisure) as well as *negotium* (business, non-leisure), this indicates that standards connected with a universalising ethic were transported along with the import of Greek artefacts and entertainment. In a world empire it is not unimportant to face such questions, even if it is merely for the pacification of one's subjects.

Next to this form of rational discourse on religion (again, a modern umbrella term which has no ancient equivalent) there is another form of the writing down of religion which follows different rules, namely so-called antiquarian literature.⁶⁰ It is precisely Varro's work (which builds a philosophical, rational framework around an antiquarian kernel), which makes this characterisation apparent.⁶¹ Besides this, the titles do not reveal much about the direction of the works they head, even when it seems reasonable to suspect an antiquarian approach the more concrete and more closely connected to institutions and objects the titles appear; *De natura deorum* and *De divinatione* achieve a higher level of abstraction than *De auspiciis* or *De anno Romanorum*.

Engagement with, even inspiration by and passing-down of Greek positions is central for the group of texts named first above.⁶² This direction is already

58 For the self-conception of Ciceronian philosophy see P. L. Schmidt, "Cicero's Place in Roman Philosophy: A Study of his Prefaces", *CJ* 74 (1978/79) 115–127; for classification of philosophical work and self-stylisation of members of Roman nobility in their public *persona* see J. Leonhardt, *Ciceros Kritik der Philosophenschulen*. Zetemata 103 (München, 1999).

59 For this see C. Moatti, *Raison* (see note 9) 204 ff.

60 For the use of the already antique term in modern history of science see A. Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography*. With a Foreword by Riccardo Di Donato. Sather Classical Lectures 54 (Berkeley, 1990).

61 C. Moatti, *Raison* (see note 9) 100.

62 Cf. G. Vogt-Spira, "Literarische Imitatio und kulturelle Identität", in: id. – B. Rommel (Eds.), *Rezeption und Identität: Die kulturelle Auseinandersetzung Roms mit Griechenland als europäisches Paradigma* (Stuttgart, 1999).

perceptible at the beginning of the second century BC in Ennius' *Euhemerus*,⁶³ but this remains an isolated instance.⁶⁴ Direct connections cannot be named, neither with regard to content nor with regard to form (the first Latin poetry?). Because of this gap, which may well result not only from the surviving texts but be a result of actual literary production, Claudia Moatti does not explicitly discuss the date of this birth, although she calls in Cicero as the first witness.⁶⁵

The second group of texts, characterised above as antiquarian, can be traced decidedly farther, and definitely begins in the middle of the second century. A Latin book about the *ius pontificale*, by Ser. Fabius Q.f. Q.n. Pictor, as Flamen Quirinalis a member of the priestly college,⁶⁶ seems to represent the first literary product of this type.⁶⁷ Further works from the hands of senatorial authors e. g. on the hierarchy of power followed.⁶⁸ To judge from the few texts mostly stemming from a late period, these treatises were not yet systematic handbooks but collections of traditions, surely not without interpretation and modification. It is Cato's book on agriculture – a rather uncontroversial theme – that might give an impression of the genre. The authors of these texts stem from the senatorial class, epic excepted. Even here one cannot exclude the possibility of contact with and inspiration from relevant Greek texts: apart from the Attidography, which probably reveals the closest parallels, one also thinks of historiography, specialist literature and aetiological poetry of a Callimachean type.⁶⁹ The primary cause, however, is to be found in Rome, in the reaction to

63 Exact dating and form of these works rest debateable. For the reconstruction of Ennius' intention the non-Euhemeristic interpretation of the Hellenistic original see R. J. Müller, "Überlegungen zur Hiera Anagraphe des Euhemeros von Messene", *Hermes* 121 (1993) 276–300.

64 A natural-philosophic-reductionistic interpretation of Iuppiter can be found e. g. at *fr.* 39 Courtney = *var.* 54–58 V: ... *Iuppiter ... quem Graeci uocant aerem ...*

65 C. Moatti, *Raison* (see note 9) 159 ff. J. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979) 29–39, speaks of the "rationalism of the late republic", but uses the term rather to highlight the incompleteness of rationalisation by pointing to the positive approach of Varro or Cicero towards ritual (31).

66 J. Rüpke, "L'histoire des fasti romains: aspects médiatiques et politiques", *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* 81,2 (2003) 125–140; Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum* (see note 70) no. 1600.

67 On the supposed comment of *fasti* by Fulvius Nobilior see J. Rüpke, *Kalender* (see note 21) 341–345 and id., "Ennius" (see note 72); it is just a mural epigraph.

68 To name e. g. Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus' *De iure pontificio* or *De potestatibus* by M. Iunius Congus, maybe also *monumenta* by M. Manilius, consul from 149 BC. See E. Rawson, *Intellectual Life* (see note 57).

69 For Attidography: L. Pearson, *The Local Historians of Attica*. American Philological Association, Philological Monographs 11 (Philadelphia, 1942); P. J. Rhodes, "The Attidographers", in: H. Verdin, G. Schepens, E. de Keyser (Eds.), *Purposes of History* (Louvain, 1981) 73–81, 111–23; the study of Greek and Latin aetiological poetry by J. Loehr, *Ovids Mehrfacherklärungen in der Tradition aitiologischen Dichtens*. Beiträge zur

the vulnerability of traditions in a society, which, because of its rapid expansion and also its newly intensified contact with Greek, Hellenic, and Punic cultures (to name a few), was in a state of rapid internal change. The ‘antiquarian literature’ reacts to this by collecting traditions, systematising them and committing them to writing, about one hundred and fifty years after written business protocols in public institutions had begun at the beginning of the third century.⁷⁰

Drawing on the institutional audiences listed in the first half of this article, the development can be densely contextualised. By the end of the third century BC a systematisation of Roman myths and of gentilician claims to consular ancestors started that took the form of Greek historiography.⁷¹ The process started with Greek texts that must have been destined for private reading but was soon supplemented by Ennian epic and public lists of magistrates added to calendars that recorded Roman generals’ victories by way of the founding days of votive temples.⁷²

Concentrating on forms of theoretical rationalisation, so clearly present in the philosophical works of the first century BC, the most important result of

Altertumskunde 74 (Stuttgart, 1996) stays on a small scale; D. Porte, *L'Étiologie religieuse dans les Fastes d'Ovide* (Paris, 1985) does not classify Ovidian aetiology into history of ideas.

70 J. Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum: A Prosopography of Pagan, Jewish, and Christian Religious Officials in the City of Rome, 300 BC to AD 499*. Trsl. by David M.B. Richardson (Oxford, 2008) 24–38 with reference to the beginning of the commentarii of pontifex maximus; c.f. also J. Scheid, “Les annales de pontifes: une hypothèse de plus”, in: *Convegno per Santo Mazzarino*. Roma 9–11 maggio 1991. Saggi di Storia Antica 13 (Rom, 1998) 199–220.

71 See E. Gabba, *Roma arcaica: Storia e storiografia* (Rome, 2000) 19.

72 On early Roman historiography cf. E. Rawson, “The First Latin Annalists”, *Latomus* 35 (1976) 689–717; Repr. id., *Roman Culture and Society: Collected Papers*, 245–271 (Oxford, 1991); J. v. Ungern-Sternberg, *Die Nobilität der römischen Republik* (Stuttgart, 1983); id., “Überlegungen zur frühen römischen Überlieferung im Lichte der Oral-Tradition-Forschung.”, in G. Vogt-Spira (Ed.), *Studien zur vorliterarischen Periode im frühen Rom*. Script-Oralia 12, Reihe A, Altertumswissenschaftliche Reihe 2 (Tübingen 1989) 11–27; M. Chassignet, *L'annalistique romain 1* (Paris, 1996); M. Sehlmeier “Livius und seine annalistischen Quellen für das frühe Rom”, *Gymnasium* 105 (1998) 553–561; U. Eigler (Ed.), *Formen römischer Geschichtsschreibung von den Anfängen bis Livius. Gattungen – Autoren – Kontexte* (Darmstadt, 2003); J. Rüpke, “Ennius’ fasti in Fulvius’ Temple: Greek Rationality and Roman Tradition”, *Arethusa* 39 (2006) 489–512; for the sources: T. P. Wiseman “Introduction: Classical Historiography”, in id. – C. Holdsworth (Eds.), *The Inheritance of Historiography 350–900*. Exeter Studies in History 12 (Exeter, 1986); id., “The Origins of Roman Historiography”, in id (Ed.) *Historiography and Imagination: Eight Essays on Roman Culture*, Exeter Studies in History (Exeter, 1994) 1–22; 119–24; E. Flaig, “Die Pompa Funeris: Adlige Konkurrenz und annalistische Erinnerung in der Römischen Republik”, in O.G. Oexle (Ed.), *Memoria als Kultur* (Göttingen, 1995) 115–148; especially for the *fasti* J. Rüpke, *Zeit und Fest: Kulturgeschichte des Kalender* (München, 2006).

this investigation is the early dating of a process which has up to now been believed to have first arisen in works from the second quarter of the first century BC. But what significance does this reconstruction have for the history of rationalisation? Do we identify the process in institutional history, in Greek philosophical embassies or the establishment of scientific grammar (Crates of Mages), and Greek and Latin rhetorical schools in Rome?⁷³ Religion, in any case, seen as a system of symbols and practices for which a traditional legitimisation is characteristic and for which assumptions about the exceptional are constitutive, became explicit in a new way through the rise of rationalisation. This was the precondition for the beginning of any sort of discourse on religion.

Rationalisation also has a social dimension. Rational argumentation competes with traditional authority,⁷⁴ as the resistance against Latin rhetoric makes clear. Tradition is a source of authority to which the aristocracy has privileged access,⁷⁵ even if competing claims arise. In case of doubt, claims to traditional authority can be backed up by power. Knowledge and argumentation cause a shift of authority into the hands of specialists.⁷⁶ For Rome, the interplay of theatrical producers and sponsors of games shows that specialists and other forms of authority could get along well, although the history of the highly literary dramas after the second century BC, which includes more and more forms from mimes in public performances, also shows that this was a delicate balance. Further, in the second century 'specialists' from the aristocracy and the identity of observer and observed⁷⁷ still dominate. Alternative models are suppressed by exiling marginalised specialists such as rhetoricians, astrologists and philosophers. Only in the transition to the Sullan Period do we find annalists and grammarians who do not belong to the aristocracy and who begin a process of professionalisation.⁷⁸ In this connection we should recall the

73 For the establishment of rhetoric excellently: P.L. Schmidt, "Die Anfänge der institutionellen Rhetorik in Rom: Zur Vorgeschichte der augusteischen Rhetorenschulen", in E. Lefèvre (Ed.), *Monumentum Chiloniense: Studien zur augusteischen Zeit. Kieler Festschrift für Erich Burck zum 70. Geburtstag* (Amsterdam, 1975) 183–216.

74 A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Mutatio morum: the idea of a cultural revolution", in Th. Habinek, A. Schiesaro (Eds.), *The Roman Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge, 1997) 3–22.

75 T. Habinek, *The Politics of Latin Literature* (PRINCETON, 1998) 53.

76 Wallace-Hadrill, *Mutatio morum* (see note 74) 14.

77 See E. Rawson, *Intellectual life* (see note 57) 91, 93.

78 Cf. J. Dangel, *Accius' Oeuvre* (Paris, 1995) 24, on Caesar Strabo *ibid.*, 22. The appearance of systematic cycles in the work of Accius (*ibid.*, 31 f.), the contentual conjunction of the dramatic work to an epic argumentum perpetuum (*ibid.*, 42. 45) as well as the megalomania of the later annalistics can be interpreted as indicators of such an process of professionalisation. But Rawson, *Intellectual Life* (see note 77) is right when she sketches the process of Roman intellectualisation in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC as marked with fragmentation, cf. A. Wallace-Hadrill, "Time for Augustus: Ovid, Augustus

conflict between L. Accius, the chairman of the *collegium poetarum*,⁷⁹ and C. Iulius Caesar Strabo, the patrician, in whose presence Accius refused to rise.⁸⁰ An analysis in terms of the history of rationalisation is further suited to demonstrate how strongly patterns of thought penetrated aristocratic communication. The members of this class gain an instrument with which to make such additions politically fruitful in the form of rhetoric, which spread from the times of the Gracchi on, despite significant resistance. Specialist knowledge only became socially relevant when it was integrated into such public audiences. In terms of numbers, ritualism continued to dominate rationalism.

and the Fasti”, in: M. Whitby – P. Hardie – M. Whitby (Eds.), *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble* (Bristol, 1988) 221–230.

79 After many discussions just this seems to clear up the statue at *aedes Camenarum* (Plinius maior, *naturalis historia* 34,19; see also Lucilius, *saturae* 747 Krenkel = 794 Marx) and Lucilius, *saturae* 1071 Krenkel = 1090 Marx – *cui sua committunt mortali claustra Camenae* – (I owe these hints to Stefan Faller, Freiburg). For a political placing of the conflict between Accius and Lucilius sceptically R. Degl’Innocenti Pierini, *Studi su Accio* (Florence, 1980) 9–11.

80 Valerius Maximus, *facta et dicta memorabilia* 3,7,11.