

## Review

by Carlo Martino Lucarini, the member of the dissertation council for the dissertation of Roman Isaenko on the topic: «The ritual of evocation in ancient Roman literary and epigraphic sources», submitted for the degree of Candidate of philological sciences in scientific speciality 5.9.7.

It was a pleasure to read Isaenko's dissertation about the ritual of evocation. The work is divided into nine chapters.

The first chapter ("Adoption of religious practices in ancient Rome", p. 7-26) offers a general and useful survey of the Roman practice of borrowing of religious cults and ceremonies from other peoples.

The second chapter ("The Aeneid", p. 27-37) deals with Aen. 2, 351-3 and proves that Servius Danielis was wrong assuming that Vergil in these verses alluded to the rite of *evocatio*.

The third chapter ("Veii", p. 38-61) argues that the description of the transfer of cult of Juno from Veii to Rome (396 BC), attested by Livy (5, 22) and other ancient historians, does not correspond to the ritual of the *evocatio*.

The fourth chapter ("Falerii", p. 62-71) denies that the Roman adoption of the cult of the deities worshipped in Falerii (*Iuno Curitis, Minerva Capta, Ianus Quadrifrons*) occurred with the help of the ritual of the *evocatio*.

The fifth chapter ("Volsinii", p. 72-84) rejects G. Wissowa's opinion that the cult of Vertumnus was imported from Volsinii to Rome through the ritual of the *evocatio*.

The sixth chapter ("Carthage", p. 85-101) argues that Sammonicus Serenus' statement (quoted by Macrobius, *Sat.* 3, 9, 6; see also Serv. *In Aen.* 12, 841), according to which Scipio Aemilianus by conquering Carthage (146 BC) pronounced the formula of the *evocatio*, is untrustworthy.

The seventh chapter ("Isaura vetus", p. 102-9) argues against the assumption that the ritual of the *evocatio* took place during the siege and the capture of Isaura vetus (as some scholars have assumed moving from a very short inscription published in 1977: *AE* 1977, 0816).

The eighth chapter ("Jerusalem", p. 110-20) argues that there are no significant reasons to see any literary references to the ritual of the *evocatio* in the description of the Second Temple's destruction provided by Flavius Josephus, Tacitus or the Gospel of Mark.

Whereas in the previous chapters the author argues against the reality of the *evocatio* in the alleged historical circumstances, the ninth chapter (“A secret ritual?”, p. 121-132) anticipates the possible objection that Macrobius’ statement, according to which the *evocatio* was *arcana et multis ignota*, could explain the lack of evidence to this ritual in ancient historiography.

In the “Conclusions” (p. 133-47) the author suggests that the *evocatio* could be a forgery of the Augustan age, canonized by Verrius Flaccus in his important lexicon.

In general, the author shows a wonderful knowledge of the subject and his scientific prose is agreeable and captivating. I think that he is right about the cases of Vergil, Falerii, Volsini, Carthage, Isaura vetus, Jerusalem. Nevertheless, I see serious problems in order to accept Isaenko’s view about Verrius Flaccus, in my opinion an honest trustworthy scholar. Two texts should be considered:

1) Festus 268 Lindsay: *peregrina sacra appelluntur, quae aut evocatis dis in oppugnandis urbibus Romam sunt conlata* (about this word see *infra*) *aut quae ob quasdam religiones per pacem sunt petita, ut ex Phrygia Matris Magnae, ex Graecia Cereris, Epidauri Aesculapi; quae coluntur eorum more a quibus sunt accepta.*

2) Pliny NH 28, 18: *Verrius Flaccus auctores ponit quibus credat in obpugnationibus ante omnia solitum a Romanis sacerdotibus evocarideum, cuius in tutela id oppidum esset...*

Considering that, according to Pliny, Verrius quoted a plurality of authorities and that Festus offers only an abridgment of Verrius, it is evident that Verrius quoted more sources to support his view. In order to accept Isaenko’s view we have to assume that Verrius consciously falsified sources and documents, an allegation for which I do not know any parallel. It is also important to observe that Verrius-Festus refers to the *evocatio* immediately prior to his account about rituals, that *ob quasdam religiones per pacem sunt petita*, and that for the latter there is no reason to doubt the truth of his statements.

In many cases Verrius refers to ancient customs and rituals for which he is our only source, and we are not allowed to question his reports that cannot be confirmed by other authorities. Concerning the *evocatio*, Isaenko provides an important contribution to demolish the claim of many ancient and modern scholars, who have arbitrarily extended the presence of this ritual. Among the cases discussed by Isaenko the only case in which I suspect that the *evocatio* really took place is that of Veii.

I think that K. Latte was right assuming that Verrius’ account about the *evocatio* was trustworthy and that the only historical case known to us in which it took place was that of Veii.

Despite these objections, Isaenko's work is a very important contribution to the subject and I hope that it will appear soon as a book (once the bibliography is updated as suggested below).

Minor points: the author seems to refer to Macrobius and Servius as two independent authorities, but it is universally admitted that they draw on the same source (probably Aelius Donatus). P. 11: Godofredus' emendation *conlata* (instead of *conata*) should be accepted without hesitation. Critical editions used by the author are often outdated: for Servius the *edition Harvardiana* should be used, for Macrobius Kaster's Oxford edition, for Gellius Holford-Streven's edition, for Herodotus Wilson's edition, for Herodian and Curtius Rufus Lucarini's editions (by the way, Hedickes's second edition of Curtius appeared in 1908, not in 1998, as we read on p. 148), for Florus Malcovati's edition, for Vergil Conte's edition. Festus' quotations are always introduced with the *siglum* "Gloss. Lat."L(indsay), but this *siglum* refers to another work edited by Lindsay (the *Glossaria Latina*), that has nothing to do with Festus. The recent collection *Fragments of the Roman historians* (Oxford 2013) is not quoted by the author; more importantly, the author should absolutely see S. Casalis' recent commentary to Verg. *Aen.* 2, who offers a view similar to that championed by him.

No violations of paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Order No.11181/1 as of November 19, 2021 "On the Procedure for Awarding Academic Degrees at St. Petersburg State University" have been detected.

Roman Isaenko's dissertation on the topic «The ritual of evocation in ancient Roman literary and epigraphic sources» **meets** the criteria of dissertations for the academic degree of Candidate of sciences established by the specified Order of the St. Petersburg State University. The applicant Roman Isaenko **deserves** to be awarded the academic degree of **candidate** of philological sciences in a scientific speciality 5.9.7.

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