

BOOK REVIEW

Fortuna: Deity and Concept in Archaic and Republican Italy. By DANIELE MIANO. Oxford, UK and New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xiv + 242. Hardback, \$85.00. ISBN 978-0-198-78656-6.

The study of Roman religion has made great strides in recent years toward a more considerate and careful understanding of Roman and Italian religious rituals, institutions and beliefs. Miano's book on Fortuna contributes to this trend to satisfying results. As the title suggests, Miano's work has a conceptual approach best articulated by Clark's 2007 *Divine Qualities, Cult and Community in Republican Rome*. Miano focuses solely on Fortuna, perhaps Rome's most famous divine quality, rather than others like Salus, Victoria or Fides (7-8). While the concept of *fortuna* certainly plays a part in this study, the work focuses on instances where the goddess is clearly intended, which is often not the case in, for example, the writings of Caesar. The distinction between concept and goddess is a complicated one that Miano takes most of his work developing.

The work effectively demonstrates why older structuralist approaches to Roman religion fail and why deities like Fortuna were not restricted to one or two primary "powers" or "domains." Instead, Fortuna carried a wide range of meanings and, as the conclusion states, other deities should be similarly studied. Fortuna could mean one thing to one group in one city, something else to another group, and sometimes carry multiple meanings at once to the same group. Epithets are the most obvious example of

Fortuna having multiple meanings, but these are by no means the only proof for his argument.

Miano's chapters proceed geographically, with each chapter then structured chronologically. The first chapter presents evidence for Fortuna at Praeneste (modern Palestrina), the goddess's most popular site and where most of our evidence originates. Since it is arranged chronologically, much of the evidence is material. Some important early evidence for Fortuna includes a mirror found at the necropolis of Praeneste, engraved with Fortuna in procession (19), and later the massive Temple of Fortuna Primigenia in Praeneste (32), including a discussion of those who might have worshipped the goddess at the site.

The second chapter looks more broadly at Italy and the different Fortunae represented over time. The evidence presented comes from all over Italy, beginning with the earliest evidence in Tusculum (49-50), and considering other sites like a dedication made to Fortuna Opsequens at Cora (54) and an early bronze tablet inscribed with *Fortunai Publicani sacra* from Beneventum (59). Of all the chapters, this is the best condensed version of Miano's overall argument, namely, that people throughout Italy associated different meanings with Fortuna across time and place.

Miano spends three chapters on Fortuna in Rome, with the third chapter on the archaic period, the fourth on the Republic and the fifth on individual meanings. These three chapters help to demonstrate how Fortuna could change meaning over time, like how Fortuna Equestris was initially important for the Roman cavalry (107), and later to Roman knights writ large (108). Fortuna Equestris, then, expanded her meaning over time and was herself distinct from Fortuna Muliebris, whose own meaning was not restricted to what her epithet might suggest, "womanly concerns." As analyzed in Chapter 5, the temple of Fortuna Muliebris

commemorated Rome's salvation from Coriolanus, already expanding her meaning beyond the epithet's apparent meaning (126). In the late Republic, Fortuna gains some associations with Rome's military leaders, like Cicero's reference to Fortuna in conjunction with Pompey in the *pro lege Manilia* (138). Importantly, all of these meanings for Fortuna were valid meanings for someone to have about the goddess and these examples are limited to the specifically Roman discourse.

The next two chapters are more conceptual. The sixth chapter is on the translation of Fortuna into other languages and cultures, particularly with the Greek Tyche (157). The seventh studies some negative meanings of the goddess like Mala Fortuna in Plautus (182) and Cicero (189-190).

The chronological structure for each chapter works for the evidence in most cases, at least as much as dates of origin are certain. However, it also creates one unfortunate issue, my primary complaint with an otherwise excellent book. Since evidence is only analyzed if it fits the discussion geographically and chronologically, Miano frequently needs to self-reference his work. For example, when discussing Fortuna at Praeneste, it would make sense to discuss Greek references to the site, but Miano leaves that for Chapter 6 (31 n. 54). Each chapter is thus connected to the overall work, helping the work stand as a coherent whole when taken together, but reading a chapter or two in isolation might be harder than it otherwise could be. Still, the accumulation and careful presentation of evidence means that, by the end, the argument is convincing and certainly worth considering.

Miano's work concludes by reviewing the multiplicity of evidence and meanings presented in the preceding seven chapters. The advantages to the conceptual approach to studying Rome's

gods and goddesses in this way are manifest, most obviously opening up the goddess's meanings beyond rigid structuralism. Miano's work ends with a call to use this same strategy on other gods and goddesses in Rome's complicated polytheistic religious system. After reading his work, it is clear that the conceptual approach should be applied to deities like Jupiter, Juno and other deities who were not divine concepts.

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