

*Sacris rite paratis:*  
Women's Responsibilities in Household Rituals

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From talking with students who have had Latin in high school, my impression is that, in terms of the participation of Roman women in religion, students most often learn about Roman women's roles in public cults. Classroom discussions of Roman religion usually mention the Vestal Virgins, and sometimes the Senate's expulsion of the Bacchanalian adherents, with attention, we may hope, to the role of Hispala Faenecia (WRW Reader: State)<sup>i</sup> in revealing the conspiracy. Mention of the institution of the rites of the Magna Mater, surely, always includes (or does it?) the role of Claudia Quinta (WRW Reader: State)<sup>ii</sup> in bringing the statue of the goddess up the Tiber from Ostia to her new home in Rome. This quick review of women's activities in public cults, explains why Companion's texts are found not only in the World of Religion, but in other Worlds as well, where the focus of the text is primarily on a different aspect, e.g. *Pudicitia* as *Patricia* and *Plebeia*, which illustrate class divisions (Companion: Class)<sup>iii</sup> or where the focus is on the role of imperial women as priestesses of deified emperors or as deified women themselves (Companion: forthcoming).

But what classroom discussion is there about women's participation in private religious rites beyond the marriage ceremony? In terms of secondary literature, until lately, there has been little or no mention of family rites; they are not covered in *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* or in *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History*.<sup>iv</sup> The book, *Women in the Classical World*, states briefly that:

...although she [the wife] no longer took part in domestic cults of her own family, it is not clear how much she could share in her husband's family cults. Descriptions of household ceremonies to Vesta and the Lares...show daughters rather than wives supporting the paterfamilias in the daily rites.<sup>v</sup>

However, we now have Celia Schultz's recent book, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*,<sup>vi</sup> which provides not only a good introduction to women's public religious activity, but also their private religious participation in household ritual. I recommend it to anyone teaching the World of Roman Women's Religion. It has proven extremely useful in preparing this paper and its texts that will be posted on the Companion.

I define "participation" as embracing a range of involvement. One may pray, aloud or silently, and /or offer something to a divinity. An example here might be a prayer a woman in childbirth offered to Lucina or a libation she made at the grave of a loved one. Participation also includes one's attending a ritual and being emotionally and spiritually involved in it. An example is a woman's presence while her spouse uttered the prayers and offered the sacrifice to the gods. Even if she were silent during the prayer or sacrifice, a woman participated through her emotional and spiritual involvement. Lastly, one may participate through making preparations and gathering supplies for the ritual (and/or in taking care of the paraphernalia at its end). This kind of participation women did experience. For example, the *domina* of the household lit the fire on an altar for the sacrifice on the *Terminalia*, the day that honored Terminus, the *numen* of the estate's boundary markers:

TEXT 1

Ara fit: huc ignem curto fert rustica testo

Sumptum de tepidis ipsa colona focus. (Ovid, *Fasti* 2. 645-645)

(An altar is made; to it the farmer's wife brings, in a broken potsherd, fire taken from the warm hearth fire.)

As a second example, we have Horace's description of a farmwife, Phidyle, sacrificing to her *Lares*:

TEXT 2

Caelo supinas si tuleris manus

nascente luna, rustica Phidyle,

si ture placaris et horna

fruge Lares... (Horace, Carm. 3.23.1-4)

(If you raise your hands in supplication to the sky during the waxing moon, rustic Phidyle, if you appease the *Lar* with incense and this year's field fruits...)<sup>vii</sup>

In this presentation I focus first on some of the religious rites pertaining to the *Lares familiares*, the gods of the household, and then on the rites for the *Lares compitales*, before concluding with rites and holy days connected with the family dead.

#### SLIDE: LARES FAMILIARES W/ GENIUS OF PATERFAMILIAS

*Lares* were divinities that were connected with a place who, as Dumézil says,

provided indiscriminate protection for all the members of the household, free or slave.... The first care of the *pater familias* arriving at his villa, his country house, is to greet the *Lar familiaris* (Cato, *Agr.* 2). Plautus' characters pray to him when they leave on a voyage (*Mil.* 1339), or inform him that they are going to find *alium Larem, aliam urbem, aliam ciuitatem* (*Merc.* 836-837)...They pray to him when they settle into a new house, *ut nobis haec habitatio bona fausta felix fortunataque eueniat* (*Trin.* 39-41).<sup>viii</sup>

It is not surprising, then, that when a bride settled into her new house, she prayed to the *Lar familiaris*, and when a family member took that trip to the grave, the *Lar* received a *piaculum*, an offering of expiation.<sup>ix</sup> Worship of the *Lar familiaris*, therefore, was the most important of private religious rites and so is a natural topic to examine regarding Roman women's participation in private cult, because, as Schultz points out, "Roman women were most strongly associated with the domestic realm, household religious observances would seem the most natural avenue for female religious expression."<sup>x</sup>

She notes, however, that information on such expression is "meager at best"<sup>xi</sup> and pertains mostly to *matronae*; there is no mention of widows or childless aunts.<sup>xii</sup> She

thinks, however, that we can gain some idea by looking at the duties specified for a *vilica*, the wife of the overseer of the master's estate,<sup>xiii</sup> for just as the *vilicus* acts in the role of the *paterfamilias* when the latter is absent, the *vilica* would, likewise, have taken on the responsibilities of the *materfamilias* in her absence.<sup>xiv</sup>

Columella makes clear the parallel between the two couples:

TEXT 3

Quam ob causam cum in totum non solum exoleverit, se etiam occiderit vetus ille matrumfamiliarum mos Sabinarum atque Romanarum, necessaria irrepsit vilicae cura, quae tueretur officia matronae: quoniam et vilici quoque successerunt in locum dominorum, qui quondam prisca consuetudine non solum coluerant, sed habitaverant rura. (Columella, *de re rust.* 12 *praef.* 10)

[Because not only has the ancient custom of Sabine and Roman *matresfamilium* faded away but has even died out, the requisite care for the household has gradually crept onto the *vilica*, who now carries out the duties of the *matrona*. Just so have the *vilici* also entered upon the role of their masters, who used to follow ancient custom in not only cultivating their lands, but also in living on them.]

According to Cato the Elder the *vilica* was expected to:

TEXT 4

Focum purum circumversum cotidie, priusquam cubitum eat, habeat. Kal(endis), Idibus, Nonis, festus dies cum erit, coronam in focum indat, per eosdemque dies lari familiari pro copia supplicet. (Cato, *de agr.* 143.2)

(Make sure that the hearth is daily on all sides ritually clean before she goes to bed. On the Kalends, Ides, Nones, and when there is a festival, she should put a *corona* on the hearth and throughout all these days she should make propitiary offerings to the *Lar familiaris* as circumstances allow.)

SLIDE: 2D CE STELE TUNIS: DOMINUS, DOMINA, FILIAE  
SACRIFICING TO SATURN

Wine and bread made out of the type of grain called *far* were typical offerings made in various rites. The *vilica*, according to Columella, was responsible for the production and preservation of wine, which surely was included within the household food stock under the protection of the household gods.<sup>xv</sup> The *vilica* was also expected to know how to grind *far* into fine granules for ritual offerings.<sup>xvi</sup>

Meal preparation also had a religious aspect, in that it involved taking out of the storeroom food that was under the protection of the *Penates*. Anyone carrying out such food, Columella says, whether a woman or a man had to be ritually pure:

TEXT 5

His autem omnibus [scriptoribus] placuit eum, qui rerum harum officium susceperit, castum esse continentemque oportere, quoniam totum in eo sit, ne contrectentur pocula vel cibi nisi aut inpubi aut certe abstinentissimo rebus veneriis: quibus si fuerit operatus vel vir vel femina, debere eos flumine aut perenni aqua, priusquam penora contingant, abluī. (Columella, *de re rust.* 12.4.3)

(All these authors agree that he who undertakes this duty ought to be chaste and continent, since it was of extreme importance that neither the cups nor the food should be handled except by a pre-pubertal person or by one who had certainly abstained from sex. If the person, whether male or female, had engaged in sex, they had to wash either in a river or in running water before touching the provisions.)

Columella's comment that ideally only a pre-pubertal child should handle the food stock of the household (*penora*) because children would not have engaged in sex indicates that young girls, as well as *matronae*, participated in rites of family religion.<sup>xvii</sup>

## SLIDE: LARARIUM, POMPEII

The *Lar familiaris* was also involved in the rite of passage of the household's sons into manhood and daughters into womanhood. The scholiast Pseudo-Acro states

## TEXT 6

Solebant pueri, postquam pueritiam excedebant, dis Laribus bullas suas consecrare, similiter et puellas pupas.<sup>xviii</sup>

(Boys were accustomed, after they left their childhood, to dedicate their *bullae* to the *Lares*, and similarly the girls dedicated their dolls.)

Just as the youths dedicated their *bullae* and *togae praetextae* to the *Lar familiaris* before donning the *toga pura*, so girls also sacrificed their childhood things to the Lar before going through the marriage ceremony that marked their passage into adult womanhood:

## TEXT 7

Suspendit Laribus manias, mollis pilas, reticula, ac strophia. (Varro in Non. 863.15L)<sup>xix</sup>

(She hangs up to the *Lares* her small images, soft balls, hairnets and bands.)

The *Lar* of her husband figured prominently in a woman's marriage rite. The bride carried three coins to her husband's home. One she gave to her husband. Upon entering her husband's home, she placed the second coin on the hearth as an offering to the *Lar familiaris* of her new home, while the third she threw to the *Lares compitales*, whom Boëls-Janssen terms more dangerous than the household gods as the *Lares compitales* represented the dangers outside the house.<sup>xx</sup> According to Nonius,

## TEXT 8

Nubentes veteri lege romana asses III, ad maritum venientes, solebant pervehere, atque unum, quem in manu tenerent, tamquam emendi causa, marito dare; alium, quem in pede haberent, in foco Larium Familiarium ponere; tertium, quem in sacciperio condidissent, compito vicinali solere resonare. (Nonius 852L)

(Brides, according to old Roman law, were accustomed to carry three asses as they came to their husband and to give to their husband one of the coins, which they held in their hand, as if for the purpose of gaining his favor; the second, which they had in their shoes, they placed on the hearth of the *Lares familiares*; the third, which they had hidden in a small sac, they were accustomed [to throw] to the neighborhood crossroads [so as] to make [the coin] ring.)

Boëls-Janssen adds that this offering to the *Lares compitales* also gave the gods notice not only of the bride's arrival, but also of her intention to have an image hung for her when her new family celebrated the next *Compitalia*.<sup>xxi</sup>

On the day after her marriage, she presided over the devotions to the *Lar familiaris* and other household gods, thus taking on her role of *domina* for the first time<sup>xxii</sup>:

#### TEXT 9

Nam quia primus nuptiarum dies verecundiae datur, postridie autem nuptam in domo viri dominium incipere oportet adipisci et rem facere divinam...(Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.15.22)

(For because the first day of the wedding is given to modesty, the next day it is necessary for the bride to assume her authority in the house of her husband and to offer sacrifice....)

Let us now turn to the *Lares compitales* to whom the bride offered one of her coins. The *Lares compitales* guarded the *compitum*, the crossroads nearest a house or villa and were worshipped at little towers constructed there

...with as many doors as there are adjacent farms, and at the edge of each of these farms, facing the tower, an altar is set up, so that each property-owner may sacrifice with his feet on his own land.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4.14.3) states that as part of the sacrifice, each household offered honey cakes to the *Lares compitales*. It would seem most likely that the women of the household made these cakes.<sup>xxiv</sup> A letter of Cicero's to Atticus makes it clear that women attended the *Compitalia*:<sup>xxv</sup>

#### TEXT 10

Sed haec ambulationibus compitaliciis reservemus. Tu pridie compitalia memento... et Pomponiam Terentia rogat; matrem adiungemus. (Cicero, *ad Att.* 2.3)

[But we will save these matters for the Compitalian strolls. Remember the Compitalia on the day before...and Terentia invites Pomponia; we will add my mother (to the company)].

Given the responsibility of the *matrona* for any wool-working on behalf of her household, we can surmise that it was her duty to make the little woolen effigies, one for each free man and woman of the house, and the woolen balls, one for each slave, that were hung at the crossroads, so that the *Lares compitales*, configured in this rite as gods of the dead, might be satisfied with these balls and images and leave the living unharmed:

#### TEXT 11

Pilae et effigies viriles et muliebres ex lana Compitalibus suspendebantur in compitis, quod hunc diem festum esse deorum inferorum, quos vocant Lares, putarent, quibus tot pillae, quot capita servorum, tot effigies, quot essent liberi, ponebantur ut vivis parcerent et essent his pilis et simulacris contenti. (Paulus exc. Fest. 239L)

(Balls and effigies of men and women made from wool were hung at the crossroads on the *Compitalia*, because they thought this was a sacred day of the gods of the dead, whom they call the *Lares*; as many balls as there were slaves, and as many effigies as there were free men and women were placed so that the *Lares* would spare the living and be content with these balls and images.)

The *matrona* and the *Lares* played important roles in another family ceremony. Just as a sacrifice to the *Lares* was the ceremony through which the bride was incorporated into her new family, so too did a sacrifice to the *Lares* form part of the ceremony that incorporated the new clients into the *clientelae* of their *patroni/ae*. Torelli believes that this ceremony of *applicatio* (attachment of a client to a *patronus*) and *receptio* (reception) of clients is depicted on an altar that was found in Cerveteri (but was manufactured in Rome) dating to ca. 10 BCE.<sup>xxvi</sup>

#### SLIDE ALTAR OF MANLIUS: DANCING LAR

On each of the short sides of the altar is a dancing *Lar*. On the front is the inscription

#### TEXT 12

C. Manlio C. f. cens(ori) perp(etuo) clientes patrono [aram dederunt] (CIL 9.3616 = ILS 6577)

(To Caius Manlius son of Caius, perpetual censor [his] clients [dedicate this altar] to their patron.)

#### SLIDE ALTAR OF MANLIUS: SACRIFICE SCENE

Below this inscription is a scene of sacrifice, showing, on the left, a *victimarius*, the sacrificial assistant, raising his axe to smite a bull that is held by two assistants. Another *victimarius* stands behind the bull with his hammer (*malleus*) in his right hand, while holding a platter (*lanx*) containing the milled cake of barley and salt (*mola salsa*) in his left hand. On the right of this relief is a man in a toga, *capite velato*, presumably C. Manlius. He pours the contents of a shallow bowl (*patera*) on the sacrificial fire, while a

boy attendant (*camillus*) holds a jug (*urceus*) and a flute player (*tibicen*) plays music. Behind these three is another male figure, who, Torelli suggests, may be one of the clients, or C. Manlius' son.

#### SLIDE ALTAR OF MANLIUS: SCENE W/ WOMEN

The scene on the rear of the altar shows a goddess seated on a throne on top of a large rock; she holds a cornucopia in her left hand, while her right hand holds a bowl (*patera*). In front of her and on lower ground are two groups. Forming the left-hand group are three women, each with her *palla* over her head. The leftmost woman holds in her raised right hand an image, which Torelli identifies as a *Lar*. The middle woman raises her left hand; her right hand holds a laurel branch. The rightmost woman touches the knees of the goddess with her right hand. On the right side of this relief is a group of three men. The central man places his right hand on the shoulder of the rightmost man while the third man watches them.

The act of *applicatio in clientelam* had two parts. One part was the *detestatio sacrorum*, in which the clients and their wives had to abjure their former *familia* in public in the *curiae*, as Servius explains:

#### TEXT 13

Consuetudo apud antiquos fuit, ut qui in familiam vel gentem transiret, prius se abdicaret ab ea in qua fuerat et sic ab alia acciperetur. (Servius *on Aen.* 2.156)

(It was the custom among the ancients, that anyone who passed into a *familia* or *gens*, first had to abjure himself from that *familia* or *gens* in which he had been and thus would be accepted by the other *familia* or *gens*.)

The offering of propitiation (*supplicatio in fidem*) is shown on the altar's back, according to Torelli. In the *supplicatio*, the wives of the clients supplicated the goddess Fides; this supplication is represented by the woman who places her hand on the goddess' knee. The clients also had to transfer the *Lar* of their new family as part of their *transitio* into the family of their new *patronus*. This reception Torelli sees as illustrated by the leftmost

woman, holding the image of the *Lar*. The middle woman, shown frontally and most prominent of the three, he identifies as the wife of the *patronus*. This middle woman, Torelli says

with the twofold gesture of salutation (her raised hand) and of feast (the laurel branch) welcomes in her *domus*, the traditional seat of woman in antiquity, the women of the *clientes*, who are transferring—and not metaphorically—their own *Lares* into that new house.<sup>xxvii</sup>

The last kind of private rites I wish to look at is that of burial and mourning. Because the days given to the funeral and mourning were days of religious rites for the family, they were called *feriae* (holy days)<sup>xxviii</sup> and, according to Festus (282L) included among the other *privatae feriae* (private holy days) such as birthdays (*natales*) and offerings of sacrifice (*operationes*).<sup>xxix</sup> The mourning period (*denicales* or *denecales*) began on the day of the burial and lasted a total of nine days, concluding with a funeral feast on the ninth day.

#### SLIDE PAINTING FUNERAL PROCESSION

During the *denicales*, the house, *Lar familiaris*, and people who had participated in the funeral needed to be purified from their contact with death. The “sweeper out” (*everriator*)<sup>xxx</sup> ritually cleansed the house with a special broom.<sup>xxxi</sup> The *Lar* received a sacrifice of a castrated male sheep (*vervex*).<sup>xxxii</sup> The purification of participants in the funeral had two stages. At the funeral feast at the tomb a sow was sacrificed to Ceres (and, possibly, to Tellus) as a *piaculum* to expiate the pollution. Upon their return from the funeral, participants, including women, were purified through the act of *suffitio*,<sup>xxxiii</sup> a cleansing ritual in which they were first sprinkled with water by means of a laurel branch and then required to pass over fire, as Festus explains:

#### TEXT 14

Aqua et igni tam interdici solet damnatis, quam accipiunt nuptae, videlicet quia hae duae res humanam vitam maxime continent. Itaque funus prosecuti redeuntes ignem supergradiebantur aqua aspersi; quod purgationis genus vocabant suffitionem. (Paulus exc. Fest. 3L)

(The condemned are accustomed to be prohibited (from receiving) water and fire, which brides receive, because these two things particularly sustain human life. And so those who have followed a funeral, upon returning, having been sprinkled with water, step over fire; which kind of purification they call *suffitio*.)<sup>xxxiv</sup>

The nine days of mourning concluded with another funeral feast, called the *novendiale sacrificium* (ninth day sacrifice).<sup>xxxv</sup>

During the days of *denicales*, men participating in the funeral wore a *toga pulla* (dark toga), while the male relative celebrating the funeral wore a *toga pulla praetexta* (praetextate dark toga).<sup>xxxvi</sup> Similarly, the widow and other women participating in the funeral wore special mourning clothing. We know of one item, the *ricinium*, which was a black, praetextate, outer garment, quadrate in shape, and worn double-folded, with one half of it thrown back over a shoulder.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

In addition to the nine days of *denicales*, there were stated periods of mourning, the length of which depended upon age and relationship to the deceased. Not unexpectedly the lengths of mourning changed over time. According to Plutarch, no mourning was to go beyond ten months, at which time widows could remarry.<sup>xxxviii</sup> The younger Seneca, however, mentions a different length of mourning when he reminds his friend Lucilius that women and men were expected to mourn differently:

#### TEXT 15

Annum feminis ad lugendum constituere maiores, non ut tam diu lugerent, sed ne diutius: viris nullum legitimum tempus est, quia nullum honestum. (Seneca, *Epist.* 63.13)

(Our ancestors set for women as a limit of mourning a year, not so that they would mourn for so long, but so that they would mourn no longer than that: for men there is no legally prescribed length of time, because there is no honorable length of time.)

The lawyer Julius Paulus (second-third centuries C.E.) states that

## TEXT 16

Parentes et filii maiores sex annis anno lugeri possunt, minores mense: maritus decem mensibus et cognati proximioris gradus octo. Qui contra fecerit, infamium numero habetur. (Paulus, *Sent.* 1.21.13.)<sup>xxxix</sup>

(Parents and children older than six years should be mourned for one year; children under the age of six should be mourned one month. A spouse is able to mourn for ten months, and one may mourn closer cognate relatives for eight months. Whoever does not do this is considered in the number of the *infames*.)

We may reasonably suppose that after the *denicales* were over, women visited, from time to time, the place of burial, perhaps to perform a libation, or make an offering. There was, however, an established time of visitation to the grave. Along with other family members, women participated in the *Parentalia* (February 13-21), the festival of the family dead, which Ovid describes thus:

## TEXT 17

Est honor et tumulis, animas placare paternas,□  
     parvaeque in exstructas munera ferre pyras.□  
 parva petunt Manes: ..... □  
 tegula porrectis satis est velata coronis□  
     et sparsae fruges parvaeque mica salis,□  
 inque mero mollita Ceres violaeque solutae:□

.....

    adde preces positis et sua verba focus. (Ovid, *Fasti* 2.533-535, 537-539, 542)

(It is a mark of respect to placate the paternal spirits and to bring small gifts to the constructed pyres. The *Manes* ask for small gifts....It is sufficient to veil the roof with lengths of garlands and with a sprinkle of meal and small grains of salt, and bread [soaked] in unmixed wine and loose spring flowers....add your prayers and [appropriate] words to the sacrificial altars placed (there).

While Ovid does not specify what exactly the *matrona* did during the *Parentalia*, she certainly participated through her presence.

Having renewed its bonds with its dead through the *Parentalia*, on the following day families celebrated the *Caristia*, which was a time for a family to meet and renew its bonds with the living by making an offering to the *Lares* and sharing a meal. Ovid indicates that it was also a time when disagreeing and disagreeable relatives should stay away:

TEXT 18

Proxima cognati dixere Karistia kari, □  
 et venit ad socios turba propinqua deos. □  
 scilicet a tumulis et qui periere propinquis □  
 protinus ad vivos ora referre iuvat,  
 postque tot amissos quicquid de sanguine restat □  
 aspicere et generis dinumerare gradus. □  
 innocui veniant: procul hinc, procul impius esto □  
 frater et in partus mater acerba suos, □  
 cui pater est vivax, qui matris digerit annos,  
 quae premit invisam socrus iniqua nurum.  
 dis generis date tura boni: Concordia fertur □  
 illa praecipue mitis adesse die; □  
 et libate dapes, ut, grati pignus honoris, □  
 nutriat incinctos missa patella Lares. (Ovid, *Fasti* 2.617-626, 631-634)

(The next day the relatives call the “Dear” from “dear relations,” and the crowd of family members comes to the family gods [*Lares*]. Surely it is

pleasing to return from family tombs and those who have perished, and straightaway to gaze on the living, and, after so many of the family have been lost, to look upon whoever remains of that blood-line and to count up the degrees of relationship. Let the blameless come; be far from here you impious brother and mother cruel to her children, you for whom the father is [too long] alive, and you who counts off the years of his mother, and you harsh mother-in-law who afflicts her hated daughter-in-law....Good people, give incense to the gods of your house; Concordia particularly is said to be present on that day; offer food so that the offering dish, held out, a pleasing mark of esteem, nourishes the robed *Lares*.)

Ovid's passage indicates clearly that the women of the *familia* expected to be present in this festive gathering. In all likelihood, the *materfamilias* made the hearth ritually pure and perhaps joined with her husband making offerings to the *Lares*.

A Roman woman was expected to devote the fertility of her body to her husband and her labors to her household to ensure the biological and economic prosperity of his *domus*. Women who did so were honored with the title *custos domi*, "preserver or guardian of the household."<sup>x1</sup> But for a household to prosper, it had also to maintain its proper relationships with its household gods. By participating in worship of the *Lares* the Roman woman had an essential role in maintaining the "*pax Larium*," if I may coin that phrase. Her religious actions on behalf of the *familia* were, therefore, an important part of her larger role as *custos domi*, guardian of the household.

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<sup>i</sup> See Ann Raia, Cecelia Luschnig, Judith Lynn Sebesta, *The Worlds of Roman Women* (Focus Press, Newburyport, MA: 2005) World of State, p. 15.

<sup>ii</sup> See *The Worlds of Roman Women*, World of State, p. 19.

<sup>iii</sup> <http://www.cnr.edu/home/sas/araia/PudicitiaLivy.html>

<sup>iv</sup> There is no coverage of family rites in: Mary Lefkowitz and Maureen Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* (The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 2005, 3d ed.);

Jo Ann Shelton, *As the Romans Did: A Sourcebook in Roman Social History* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1997, 2d ed.); or Suzanne Dixon, *Reading Roman Women* (Duckworth: London, 2001. Eve D'Ambra, *Roman Women* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2007) has a short discussion of women and religion

<sup>v</sup> Elaine Fantham et al., *Women in the Classical World* (Oxford University Press, Oxford: 1994) 227-228.

<sup>vi</sup> Celia Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*. University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 2006.

<sup>vii</sup> Horace uses the poetic plural *Lares*.

<sup>viii</sup> Georges Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, transl. Philip Krapp, (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1970) vol. 1, 342.

<sup>ix</sup> Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, 342. Cicero, *de leg.* 2.55, 57. See note 34 below.

<sup>x</sup> Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 121.

<sup>12</sup> Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 121.

<sup>xii</sup> Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 122.

<sup>xiii</sup> See *The Worlds of Roman Women*, World of Work, p. 131.

<sup>xiv</sup> Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 125-126.

<sup>xv</sup> See Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 127. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 18.107: *ipsi panem faciebant Quirites, mulierumque id opus maxime erat...* (Citizens themselves used to make bread, and that was a task particularly for women.) *Nat. Hist.* 18.84: *et hodie sacra prisca atque natalium pulte fitilla conficiuntur...* (and today the oldest rites and rites of birthdays are performed with sacrificial cakes made from *puls*.) Birthdays were among private rites celebrated by the family. See Festus, note 31 below.

<sup>xvi</sup> Cato, *de Agr.* 143.3: *Farinam bonam et far suptile sciat facere*. Pliny the Elder notes that bread making was an important activity for women before millers and bakers (both termed *pistores*) opened shops in Rome and that *far* made into a porridge (called *puls*) was still in use for ancient rites and birthday celebrations. See Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 127.

<sup>xvii</sup> The *toga praetexta* was an indicator that the child was *liber/libera* and a *civis* and therefore off-limits not only from solicitation or rape, but also from sexually suggestive language or actions, see Judith Lynn Sebesta, "The *toga praetexta* of Roman Children and Praetextate Garments," 114-116 in Lela Cleland, Mary Harlow and Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, *The Clothed Body in the Ancient World* (Oxbow Books, Oxford: 2005) 113-120. On *camillae* attending the religious officials, see Schulz, 199 n. 15.

<sup>xviii</sup> Ps. Acr. *Ad Hor. Sat.* 1.5.65. On the parallelism between this dedication and the boy's rite of passage, see Nicole Boëls-Janssen, *La vie religieuse des matrons dans la Rome archaïque* (École Française de Rome, Rome: 1993), Coll. De L'École française de Rome, vol. 176: 66.

<sup>xix</sup> See also Schol. Cruq. *Ad Hor. Sat.* 1.5.69: *Solebant enim virgines antequam nubarent quaedam virginitatis suae dona Veneri consecrare, hoc et Varro scribit*. Persius (*Sat.* 2.70) states that the girls (also?) gave dolls to Venus.

<sup>xx</sup> Boëls-Janssen, *La vie religieuse*, 202.

<sup>xxi</sup> Boëls-Janssen, *La vie religieuse*, 203.

<sup>xxii</sup> Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 127. Boëls-Janssen, *La vie religieuse*, 222.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Dumézil, *Archaic Roman Religion*, 343.

<sup>xxiv</sup> It is unknown whether the *domina*, and her daughters, prepared the cakes or whether the *domina* supervised the slave women doing so.

<sup>xxv</sup> See Schultz, *Women's Religious Activity*, 129.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Mario Torelli, *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor: 1986) 16-20. The altar is now in the Lateran Museum.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Torelli, *Typology*, 18. Torelli views the altar as dedicated to the *Lar genialis* of the Manlius family. For alternate interpretations of the reliefs, see: Lily Ross Taylor, "The Altar of Manlius in the Lateran," *AJA* 25 (1921) 387-395. She sees the goddess as Concordia or Terra Mater; Manlius is bestowing protection on one of his clients who is in debt. Inez Scott Ryberg, "Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art," *MMAR* 22 (1955) views the relief as showing a scene of *supplicatio* for some civil incident; she identifies the statue held by the woman as a statue of Victory.

<sup>xxviii</sup> *Feriae*: Cicero, *de Leg.* 2.55. See also Daniel P. Harmon, "The Family Festivals of Rome," *ANWR* II.16.2, 1001.

<sup>xxix</sup> Festus 282L: *Privatae feriae vocantur sacrorum propriorum, velut dies natales, operationis, denicales.*

<sup>xxx</sup> Paulus exc. Festus 68 L : *Everriator vocatur qui iure accepta hereditate iusta facere defuncto debet; qui si non fecerit, seu quid in ea re turbaverit, suo capite luat. Id nomen ductum a verrendo. Nam exverriae sunt purgatio quaedam domus, ex qua mortuus ad sepulturam ferendus est, quae fit per everriatorem certo genere scoparum adhibito, ab extra verrendo dictarum. "He is termed the everriator who is required to perform for the dead required funerary rites, having received his legacy justly; and who, if he does not perform these rites or if he disrupts anything in the proceedings, pays for it with loss of his head. The term comes from 'sweeping with a broom.'" For the exverriae are the certain kind of purification of the house from which the dead must be taken to burial, which is done through the everriator who uses a certain kind of a broom, so called from "sweeping out."*

<sup>xxxi</sup> Hugh Lindsay, "Death Pollution and Funerals in Rome," 166 in Valerie M. Hope and Eireann Marshall, eds., *Death and Disease in the Ancient City* (Routledge, London and New York, 2000) 152-173.

<sup>xxxii</sup> Cicero, *de Leg.* 2.55. *Nec vero tam denicales, quae a nece appellatae sunt quia residentur mortuis, quam ceterorum caelestium quieti dies feriae nominarentur, nisi maiores eos qui ex hac vita migrassent in deorum numero esse voluissent. Eas in eos dies conferre ius, ut nec ipsius neque publicae feriae sint. Totaque huius iuris compositio pontificalis magnam religionem caerimoniamque declarat, neque necesse est edisseri a nobis, quae finis funestae familiae, quod genus sacrificii Lari vervecibus fiat, quem ad modum os resectum terra obtegatur, quaeque in porca contracta iura sint, quo tempore incipiat sepulcrum esse et religione teneatur. (Nor would the denicales, which are so named because they are celebrated for the dead (Cicero seems to etymologize the term as derived from *de* "about" and *nex* "death") be included among the holy days unless our ancestors who had departed from this life wished to be included in the number of the gods. It is right to celebrate these denicales in such a way that they do not coincide with other public or private holy days. The whole corpus of pontifical law shows its deep religious feeling and reverence (for these holy days) and I need not explain, what when the period of family mourning has ended, what sacrifice of wethers is made to the Lar and how the*

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severed bone is hidden in the earth and what procedures must be followed to sacrifice a sow (to consecrate the grave) and at what point the grave begins to be a grave and to be protected by religion.)

<sup>xxxiii</sup> *Suffitio* derives from the *suffire* “to subject to aromatic fumes, fumigate (OLD p. 1867).

<sup>xxxiv</sup> Festus explains that the laurel was used also to purify soldiers returning from war so that they could enter the city and draws a parallel between their death pollution and that of the family: *Laureati milites sequebantur currum triumphantis, ut quasi purgati a caede humana intrarent Urbem. Itaque eandem laurum omnibus suffitionibus adhiberi solitum erat...* (Paulus exc. Fest. 104L)

<sup>xxxv</sup> See Harmon, 1602 and Porphyry, *ad Hor. Ep.* 17.48.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> See Paul. exc. Festus 273L: *Praetexta pulla nulli alii licebat uti, quam ei qui funus faciebat.*

<sup>xxxvii</sup> On the *ricinium* as a garment of mourning, see Nonius, quoting Varro, 542M: *Ec quo mulieres in adversis rebus ac luctibus, cum omnem vestitum delicatiorem ac luxoriosum postea institutum ponunt, ricinia sumunt.* On the shape and form of the *ricinium*, see Paulus exc. Fest. 342L: *Ricinium omne vestimentum quadratum hi qui XII interpretati sunt esse dixerunt + vir toga + mulieres utebantur, praetextam clavo purpureo.* On how the *ricinium* was worn, see Varro, *de ling. Lat.* 5.132: *[Ricinium] quod eo utebantur duplici, ab eo quod dimidiam partem retrorsum iaciebant, ab reiciendo ricinium dictum.*

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Plutarch, *Numa* 12.5.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Ovid, *Fasti* 1.35-36 and 3.134, states that widows mourned for ten months.

<sup>xl</sup> On the role of the *matrona* as *custos domi*, see T. Pearce, “The Role of the Wife as *Custos* in Ancient Rome,” *Eranos* 12 (1974) 16-23 and Judith Lynn Sebesta, “Women’s Costume and Feminine Civic Morality,” *Gender and History* 9.3 (1997) 529-541.