

or rather referring to modern politics in Italy, I do not see any direct relationship between his words and the important topic of the role of the *nobilitas* and the way those families secured control of the political life of the Republic. Moreover, the same sensation is produced in the reader by a too facile comparison, without further explanations or references to such an important topic, between Augustus' and Mussolini's rhetoric in ch. 27 (the blacksmith of Predappio), otherwise one of the most illuminating in the whole book. Similarly inappropriate seemed to me the tone used in describing Caesar's war crimes during the Gallic campaigns in ch. 15.

Some observations on the appendices. At the end of the book there is a very useful and detailed chronological table of the events related to Caesar's life from his birth up to the Ides of March: a practical and easy-to-browse tool, which provides quotations of the ancient sources on each fact. Surprisingly, some of the appendices originally in the Italian version are missing. In the edition by Laterza, one finds five short digressions on specific arguments (most interesting are no. 1 on Caesar as a writer and no. 2 on Pollio's historical work). Additionally, there is a short glossary and a section called "Biografie" with basic facts on some of the persons named in the book. Those appendices would have been of some use for readers unfamiliar with the field of Roman history. Furthermore, I would have left the footnotes as footnotes, as in the Italian edition, instead of placing all the quotations as endnotes after every chapter.

As for the translation, the translators provide an always readable and flowing text and, as said before, the choice of the title (*The People's Dictator*) is much more suitable than the original paradox (*Il dittatore democratico*), whose meaning remains otherwise almost obscure. To conclude, *The People's Dictator* is a series of interesting and well-written essays, rich with sharp intuitions and based on a solid command of the ancient sources. Rather than being a definitive biography of Caesar, this book is, however, a very stimulating interpretation of some aspects of the most famous life in Roman history.

Luca Maurizi

*The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*. Edited by KARL GALINSKY. Cambridge University Press, New York 2005. ISBN 978-0-521-80796-8 (hb), 978-0-521-80796-8 (pb). XVII, 407 pp. GBP 48, USD 90 (hb), GBP 18.99, USD 34.99 (pb).

Periodization, though clearly indispensable for the orderly study of history, is never easy, always arbitrary and often contestable. However, there are certain periods which virtually stand out in splendid relief. Few eras in western history appear as distinct and self-contained as that of the ascendancy of Octavian/Augustus. As one of the contributors to the volume under review here notes (A. Barchiesi, p. 281), "[t]he Augustan Age ... has achieved unparalleled stability among the many constructs of historicism." This is true not merely in political chronology, but also in artistic history. Only rarely does an epoch distinguished by so much momentous change, in terms of administrative and organizational reform, coincide so conspicuously with the *floruit* of so many important names in literature and with such a flowering in monumental architecture and the other arts. Hardly anyone could be better qualified to conceive an overview of those pivotal decades than Karl Galinsky, author of a host of significant studies on Augustan themes, including the acclaimed synthesis *Augustan Culture* (Princeton 1996).

In producing the volume under review here – defining the themes to be covered, engaging suitable writers and editing their submissions – Galinsky has done a first-rate job. Topics are well chosen, accurately reflecting the concerns of recent scholarly discussions. The contributors, an all-star cast of international experts, provide the substance and quality one is entitled to expect from them.

After the editor's "Introduction" (pp. 1–9), describing the scope and aims of the volume and also presenting the topics, the book consists of fifteen chapters grouped thematically into five main sections (Parts 1–5); these are followed by a final section (Part 6) containing one single item.

The two contributions constituting Part 1, *Political History*, provide the chronology and much of the essential historical background for the subject matters treated in the book. Walter Eder, in his entry on "Augustus and the Power of Tradition" (pp. 13–32), covers the various phases in the career of Octavian/Augustus and discusses the nature of his rule. Erich S. Gruen ("Augustus and the Making of the Principate", pp. 33–51) examines – from the point of view of public law – Augustus' power and position, actually a series of *ad hoc* settlements evolving only gradually into the political system which became (and is) known as the Principate.

Part 2 consists of four chapters around issues pertaining to *Intellectual and Social Developments*. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, in a contribution entitled "*Mutatas formas*: The Augustan Transformation of Roman Knowledge" (pp. 55–84), adopts an interesting and very innovative approach in his analysis of Augustus' grip on power. Inspired by Michel Foucault's ideas of the inseparability of power and knowledge, he demonstrates how pervasive the new regime's control and employment of knowledge was, from time-keeping and religion to the organization of civic space. In the two following contributions, dealing with the complex inter-relationships between centre and periphery, the focus is broadened to encompass the entire Roman World. Nicholas Purcell, in his chapter "Romans in the Roman World" (pp. 85–105), deals with an issue which has often been neglected in overviews of Roman history. Discussing the diaspora of mobile, opportunistic Italians outside their homeland – typically serving as agents of commercial enterprise or functionaries in the provincial administration – he provides a most interesting examination of their impact on the individual, local and provincial levels as well as on Rome herself. Greg Woolf, dealing with "Provincial Perspectives" (pp. 106–29), offers interesting thoughts on the cultural reciprocal exchanges between Rome and the provincial elites during the reign of Augustus. The fourth contribution to this section is a paper by Susan Treggiari, "Women in the Time of Augustus" (pp. 130–47), in which there is a good overview of women's legal and economic situation as well as of their roles in domestic and public cults in the late Republic (c. 100–38 BC); this outline is followed by a discussion of the changes which Augustus' reign brought about.

Though covered also elsewhere, Part 3 is specifically dedicated to *The Emperor's Impact*. Somewhat surprising, only two contributions are featured here. Richard Beacham, "The Emperor as Impresario: Producing the Pageantry of Power" (pp. 151–74), is a most stimulating study of the self-representation of the new regime, discussing how Octavian/Augustus represented his actions and policies metaphorically by recourse to the imagery and language of myth and drama. John Scheid's chapter on "Augustus and Roman Religion: Continuity, Conservatism, and Innovation" (pp. 175–93) is a thorough treatment of the first emperor's religious policy which, according to Scheid, was indeed a long-lasting and deliberate program rather than a series of progressive adaptations.

The three chapters making up Part 4, *Art and the City*, are dedicated to Augustan art and architecture as a means for propaganda and imperial self-promotion. Diana E. E. Kleiner, in her chapter "Semblance and Storytelling in Augustan Rome" (197–233), is mainly concerned with the storytelling function of art commissioned by the princeps and with how this element affected artistic conventions, but she also considers at length the role of many of the protagonists of the era (notably Livia and other women). Diane Favro, "Making Rome a World City" (pp. 234–64), deals with Augustus' efforts to make Rome the worthy capital city of its Empire, a monumental conception designed to equal, if not surpass, the famed metropolises of the Hellenistic East. John R. Clarke, in the chapter "Augustan Domestic Interiors: Propaganda or Fashion?" (pp. 264–78), examines interior painting during the age of Augustus. Offering a most valuable overview of recent research, he questions the common view that the imagery of the era expresses Augustan ideals and propaganda and concludes that interior decor, even that of Augustus' own residence on the Palatine Hill, constituted no significant element of the dominant discourse.

Part 5, *Augustan Literature*, provides a series of interesting discussions on the literary output of the era; however, somewhat astoundingly, these are only and exclusively concerned with poetry. For instance, in the entire book, there are only a handful of passing references to the historian Livy (about seven, a figure I reached with the aid of the index). Though the lack of a treatment of Augustan prose is clearly a shortcoming, the four chapters making up this section of the book represent very stimulating reading. Alessandro Barchiesi, in his study "Learned Eyes: Poets, Viewers, Image Makers" (pp. 281–305), offers intriguing thoughts on the relationship between the poetry and the visual arts (including architecture) of the era. Jasper Griffin, in a chapter entitled "Augustan Poetry and Augustanism" (pp. 306–20), discusses the very concept "Augustan" in its conventional usage as a term in Roman literary history, stressing several of its limitations. For instance, he calls attention to the fact that many of the poets we habitually regard as Augustan had made their names before the inception of Augustus' sole rule, and that the plurality of patrons and addressees of these writers reminds us that Augustus never attained "a complete monopoly of the best work produced in his time" (pp. 306 f.). Peter White, in his chapter "Poets in the New Milieu: Realigning" (pp. 321–39), examines the interconnected issues of patronage and of the production and dissemination of poetry under Augustus. The following reflection embodies much of the main conclusion of this chapter (p. 336): "Scholars are probably less close to agreement about the proper framework in which to understand Augustus' relationship with poets than at any time since the debate began." In his own contribution, "Virgil's *Aeneid* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as World Literature" (pp. 340–58), Karl Galinsky eruditely discusses these two key works of the era, demonstrating that both reflect the cosmopolitanism befitting the new horizons of the Augustan *oikumenē*.

The last chapter in the book, solely making up Part 6. *Epilogue as Prologue*, is "Herod and the Jewish Experience of Augustan Rule" by L. Michael White (pp. 361–87). Dealing, as it does, with the aforementioned centre-periphery relations, this contribution would have been better placed in Part 2 together with the discussions of Purcell and Woolf. However, it is a self-contained paper and most interesting case study of how a local ruler, Herod the Great, skilfully survived the turbulence of the civil wars and the inception of a new political system at Rome.

Each individual chapter is concluded with a suggested reading list, but there is an additional, separate bibliography at the end of the book ("Select Bibliography and Works Cited", pp. 389–99), before the general index ("Index", pp. 401–7). Moreover, the book features nu-

merous illustrations of good quality, both photographs (mostly in black-and-white, but there are also eight colour plates), plans and maps as well as a helpful genealogical chart of the family of Augustus.

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FIK MEIJER: *Emperors Don't Die in Bed*. Translated by S. J. LEINBACH. Routledge, London – New York 2004. ISBN 0-415-31201-9 (hb), 0-415-31202-7 (pb). VIII, 183 pp. GBP 14.99.

The last days and deaths of prominent or powerful persons have always fascinated people's taste for the macabre. The history of the Roman Emperors is in this respect very rewarding. It offers an endless series of violent or extraordinary deaths, which have been chronicled numerous times from Suetonius and the *Historia Augusta* to the present day. Even if the death were quite natural, there often have been rumors and suspicions about the real cause of death. The emperors' unusual and painful illnesses leading to death have also been found attractive in people's imagination.

In his book, Fik Meijer tells us about Roman emperors from Julius Caesar to Romulus Augustulus in 2–4 page long chapters, showing the miserable fates of each Roman ruler. The most notable exception among all the violent deaths is Antoninus Pius, whose "final hours were in perfect harmony with his reign" (p. 58). Exceptions are also Diocletian, who abdicated from office after a reign of over 20 years, and Romulus Augustulus, who got a pension at the admirable age of fifteen, having been emperor less than a year.

Meijer also quotes the last words of the dying emperors and mentions the places where they were buried or what happened to their bodies. It is one of the ironies of history that the pagan emperor Julian the Apostate found his final resting place in the Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople (p. 133). The descriptions of the illnesses of the emperors are not without grotesque features, especially when the description is made by a Christian author, like Lactantius' account of the fatal illness of Galerius (p. 114). A very detailed account is given of the death of Emperor Valentinian. Meijer's short sentences are in accordance with the last reactions of the body of the dying emperor: "His body convulsed; he hiccupped and hacked; he gnashed his teeth and his fists punched helplessly at the air. A short time later he expired." (pp. 136–7)

Fik Meijer's book is very handy as a repetition course for everybody interested in the history and fate of the Roman emperors. Meijer presents the 87 emperors in chronological order; for some reason, Maximinus the Thracian is presented after Gordian I and Gordian II and Diocletian as the last of the members of the tetrarchy. Along with the short biographies, the dates of lifetimes and reigns as well short lists of principal ancient sources are given. It is, however, regrettable that the complete names of the emperors are not given anywhere. The author appeals to readability (p. 6), but the complete names could, of course, have been listed together with the dates, without repeating them every time. The book also contains the family trees of the Julio-Claudian and Antonine emperors, two maps and a selected bibliography.

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