

Pimentel, M.C., Lóio, A.M., Simões Rodrigues, N. and Furtado, R. (edd.) 2020. *Augustan Papers: New Approaches to the Age of Augustus on the Bimillennium of his Death* (Spudasmata 184.1, 184.2). 2 vols. Zürich and New York: Olm-Weidmann. Pp. 702. ISBN 978–3–487–15816–7; 978–3–487–15817–4. €156.00.

This collection is the product of the conference XIV AD SAECVLVM AVGVSTVM, held in Lisbon in September 2014: one of many which marked the bimillennium of Augustus' death. Three papers, on Augustus' funeral, Tacitus' obituary, and the bimillennium of Augustus' birth, reflect the occasion directly and five on Spanish or Portuguese archaeological sites and literature give the collection an Iberian strand, but the collection is wide-ranging. The majority of the contributions are in English, with a handful in Italian, and one in French.

Following an introduction, the thirty-one chapters are organized into four themes: History and Religion (eight papers), Literature (thirteen), Art and Archaeology (six), and Receptions (four). Augustus is their common centre of gravity, but their approaches to him and the intensity of their focus vary greatly, as is natural for the products of a conference with a wide remit. Tight thematic unity is desirable in smaller-scale collections, but this is a different sort of production, to be understood on its own terms.

That said, the quantity and range of papers included here is both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, it makes available a substantial cross-section of current research on Augustus and related topics, which must have taken a great deal of editorial work to produce. Connections between papers across the four sections also demonstrate the connections between different areas of Augustan studies. Thus a paper on Horace in the History and Religion section points the way towards three more on the same author in the Literature section; many papers in the Literature and Art and Archaeology sections support historical conclusions; and the Receptions section is rich with literary engagement.

On the other hand, the editors could have done more to signal links between papers and resolve errors. Although some authors have cross-referenced other papers, the editors do not seem to have required this, or have inserted references themselves. Thus a reader who had homed in on Victoria Emma Pagán's paper on Tacitus or Susan Jacobs' on Plutarch might miss that both discuss passages also treated by the other. More serious are errors or misunderstandings. Victor Martínez's paper on the Palatine terracotta plaques quotes a passage from Iacopi and Tedone's 2006 publication on the site stating that they must pre-date the Battle of Actium, but he follows

it by saying that they assign them to a phase just after it (pp. 476-77). The editors could usefully have asked him to check this. Indeed, they might have checked their own introduction, where they muddle up Syme's *The Roman Revolution* (1939) and *Roman Papers* Vol. I (1979).

Nevertheless, there is much of value here. The opening section on History and Religion begins with two heavyweights: Peter Wiseman and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, both addressing Augustus' relationship with the people. Wiseman's text ('Augustus and the Roman people', pp. 35-55) is in fact the opening chapter of his monograph *The House of Augustus: A Historical Detective Story* (Princeton 2019) with minor editorial changes, which he presumably trialled at the conference before the book was published. His view that Augustus was a 'champion of the people' is thus restated here (pp. 45-46), but it relies on a belief that we can know Augustus' 'real' motivations and that they were philanthropic, which I am not convinced the evidence can support. One difficulty with Wiseman's case is that he never really unpacks who 'the people' for whom Augustus was champion were, but this is where Wallace-Hadrill comes in ('Augustus and the transformation of Roman citizenship', pp. 57-77). He explores the complex hierarchy of statuses already in place and further developed under Augustus, noting that the *princeps* may have approached citizenship inconsistently, but was consistently committed to the institution. His main argument is that this is because it ensured an ordered society with Augustus as the apex and guarantor of the system.

We switch to foreign policy for Leonardo Gregoratti's paper ('Augustus and the Parthians', pp. 79-93), which examines the internal politics of Armenia and Parthia, arguing that Augustus' success in supporting candidates for the kingship here depended on the allegiances of local aristocratic factions. Gregoratti's emphasis on a non-Roman perspective is very welcome, though he could have done more to support his case that Augustus did not understand the factional divides in these regions, rather than understanding them but having limited options. Cristina Santos Pinheiro ('Augustus and the children: family and childhood in Augustus' policies and in Augustan Literature', pp. 95-109) then returns to the question of citizenship and its relationship to parenthood, arguing that children became prominent on the funerary memorials of former slave families in the Augustan period because they represented a route to citizenship.

Four papers on religion follow, between them demonstrating very clearly how religious thought and activity can operate on multiple levels without necessarily creating paradoxes. Paola Pinotti ('La preghiera di Augusto', pp. 111-32) shows that the language of Augustus' prayer recorded on the *ludi saeculares* inscription (*CIL* 6 32323, ll. 90-99) was archaic and formal, but that this did not conflict with his expressed disdain for archaic language in other

contexts, or the very modern language of Horace's *Carmen saeculare*. Rather, it was appropriate to the ceremony and furthered the characteristically Augustan fusion of tradition and innovation. Darja Šterbenc Erker ('Narrations on epiphany and deification: Romulus' deification', pp. 133-61) similarly shows that sceptical and ironic readings of Romulus' epiphany could exist alongside simple acceptance without compromising the public cult of deified emperors, while Pedro Braga Falcão ('Horace's religion: a true experience or an Augustan artifice? The ritual dimension', pp. 163-84) argues that we need not take Horace's descriptions of ritual in the *Odes* as literal or deny their political ramifications in order to recognize that they also convey religious meaning. Finally, Carlo Santini ('Le tre immagini del funerale di Augusto', pp. 185-97) highlights the three complementary images of Augustus conveyed through his carefully planned funeral: as military leader, civilian leader, and head of household.

The Literature section begins with eight papers on Horace, Ovid, and Virgil, followed by three on prose texts dealing with Augustus and two on Greek compilations of the Augustan era. The creative independence of the Augustan poets is highlighted from the start by Paolo Fedeli ('Augusto nel IV libro delle *Odi* d'Orazio', pp. 201-217) and furthered by others: especially Kristopher Fletcher ('Ovid and the evolution of the *sphragis* over the course of the Augustan Principate', pp. 277-300). Collectively, these papers show that the poets did champion Augustus, but this was not their sole objective, and when they did so it was because they shared his goals and he met their desires, not because they were slavishly beholden to him. These papers are also characterized by close readings of vocabulary choices, word order, imagery and even individual letters in selected extracts or collections. Cristiano Castelletti's exposition of some possible boustrophedon acrostics at the beginning of the *Aeneid* particularly stands out ('Virgil's *sulcus primigenius* of Augustan Rome', pp. 301-28). The author, who sadly died in 2017, is clear that we cannot know whether such patterns were intended by the author, and it is hard to see how Virgil could have expended so much effort on acrostics while also writing an effective poem. But it is such an engaging reading of the text and its relation to Augustus' public image as a city-founder that this hardly matters.

The prose section begins with an Iberian flavour, as Pamina Fernández Camacho considers the resonances of the *Res Gestae*'s reference to Gades ('*A Gadibus ad ostium Albis fluminis*: considerations on the symbolic image of Gades in the *Res gestae*', pp. 361-76). As she shows, it casts Augustus as the 'Alexander of the West' (pp. 370 and 373), in whose empire a once-mythic icon of remoteness had been tamed and civilized. Victoria Emma Pagán then explores Tacitus' sketch of views expressed after Augustus' death ('The obituary of Augustus in Tacitus, *Annals* 1.9-10', pp. 377-93). She argues that

even Tacitus' detractors acknowledge that Augustus changed his behaviour in response to circumstances, allowing room for arguments that he navigated changes effectively and was himself subject to changing evaluations. Susan Jacobs ('Plutarch's Augustus', pp. 395-414) follows with a subtle exploration of how the different agendas of Plutarch's surviving works, and particularly the narrative arcs of his *Lives*, lead to differences of detail in his portrayals of Octavian/Augustus. Finally, the papers of Rafael Gallé Cejudo ('Hellenistic Poetry in the Augustan Age: the metapoetic prose of Parthenius of Nicaea', pp. 415-26) and Nereida Villagra ('Conon's account of Caunus and Byblis (Cono 2): structure and innovation', pp. 427-53) form a nice complementary pair, demonstrating how Hellenistic literary traditions found new audiences in an Augustan world.

The Art and Archaeology section opens with Louis Callebaut ('Le Prince et l'architecte', pp. 457-69) considering the relationship between Vitruvius and Augustus and showing how the architect reflects contemporary ideologies in attributing Rome's *maiestas* to its equidistance from geographical and climatic extremes and asserting the *auctoritas* of his own text. Two papers on visual art in Rome follow. Victor Martínez ('Image matters: Augustan renovation before Actium', pp. 471-93) rightly notes that both the strength of Augustan art and its challenge to scholars is its capacity to support multiple readings. Recent archaeological work has certainly unseated older readings of the Palatine terracotta plaques, creating the perfect opportunity to reassess them, but I was not ultimately convinced by his suggestion that they relate to Agrippa's aedileship. Robert Kebric's paper ('Identifying Augustus' deceased nephew and heir Marcellus on the *Ara Pacis Augustae*', pp. 495-533) then builds nicely on Martínez's case for polyvalence, making a fair case that a forward-facing figure with his hand on the head of a young boy may be a memorial portrait of Marcellus. But the very nature of Augustan art means that the debate will continue.

The next three papers deal with Portuguese archaeological sites. Lídia Fernandes ('The Augustan architectural decoration in Western *Lusitania*: between archaism and the *consuetudo Italica*', pp. 535-70) argues that the austere and simple column capitals of the theatre at Osilipo (Lisbon) were deliberately preserved, rather than updated in later renovations, out of reverence for Augustus and the early principate. Maria de Fátima Abraços ('The High Imperial mosaics of the oldest Roman house of *Bracara Augusta*', pp. 571-83) and Licínia Nunes Correia Wrench ('Analysis of a mosaic found in the "Casa da Roda" in Braga', pp. 585-604) then examine mosaics from *Bracara Augusta* (Braga), identifying their relationship to Vitruvian ideals and considering their use of motifs and compositions found in Italy and other provinces. There is a sense in these chapters of Augustus as a beneficent figure whose regime bestowed civilization upon the provinces. Cer-

tainly, Fernandes describes ‘the architecture introduced under the new power of Augustus’ as ‘the mark of a civilization uniting people across a geographical area’ (p. 554), while the editorial introduction notes that these chapters ‘reveal how Augustan politics and ideology achieved their most ambitious objectives by manifesting themselves in the empire’s outermost territories’ (p. 15). Some additional discussion of the power dynamics involved in Roman imperialism and the reasons why (some) local people chose to adopt Italian decorative styles would have been worthwhile.

By contrast, some of the most critical perspectives on Augustus emerge in the closing Receptions section. Rosalba Dimundo begins, examining sympathetic treatments of Virgil’s Dido in Baroque opera (*I tormenti d’amore di una regina, da Virgilio all’opera musicale barocca*, pp. 607-26). Jonathan Perry then looks back to another Augustan anniversary: the bimillennium of his birth (“Augusto non è morto”: celebrating the *Saeculum Augustum* in 1937’, pp. 627-37). He shows how an Italian volume issued to mark the occasion reflected contemporary Fascist ideologies, including the idea of a continuous connection between Augustan Rome and the present and specific parallels between Augustus’ activities and Mussolini’s. One interesting observation here is that Momigliano, who had left Italy by this time, nonetheless contributed a paper, which engaged with Syme’s scholarship. This reveals that the enthusiasm for state ideology in the other papers was voluntary rather than obligatory, perhaps paralleling the approach of the Augustan poets.

Fabio Stok (*‘Augustus and Virgil in contemporary literature: Wishart, Nadaud, Vassalli’*, pp. 639-56) follows by examining three novels from the 1990s on Virgil and Augustus. Though they are different, all three portray the relationship negatively, showing the poet as initially favourable towards Octavian, but later disillusioned as a manipulative and authoritarian Augustus interferes in his creative autonomy: a striking difference from the more optimistic reading of historical reality offered within this volume. Finally, Maria José Ferreira Lopes (*‘Interpreting the revolution: Augustus, between Ronald Syme’s Roman Revolution and Agustina Bessa-Luís’ Crónica do Cruzado Osb.’*, pp. 657-79) considers the parallels between Syme’s reading of the Augustan regime and Agustina Bessa-Luís’ in the context of Portugal’s 1974 Carnation Revolution. Characters in her *Crónica do Cruzado Osb.*, a novelized account of the revolution, refer directly to Augustus, viewing him in Symean terms as a fraudulent absorber of power to whom contemporaries were nevertheless drawn as a safe retreat from unrest.

If the images of Augustus arising out of this collection are greatly varied, this encapsulates its value: as an opportunity to trace, compare, and contrast wide-ranging framing and conclusions through a single work. Any univer-

sity with a module on Augustus will surely need this collection for their library.

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