

SIXTY YEARS AFTER SYME

A. GIOVANNINI (ed.): *La révolution romaine après Ronald Syme. Bilans et perspectives*. Pp. xi + 342. Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 2000. Cased. ISBN: 2-600-00746-6.

Few books on Roman history inspire discussion sixty years after publication. This is at least the third book to offer retrospectives on Syme's *The Roman Revolution* (after F. Millar and C. Segal [edd.], *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects* [Oxford, 1984] and K. Raafaub and M. Toher [edd.], *Between Republic and Empire* [Berkeley, 1990]), and one suspects that it will not be the last. Syme's insightful analysis of Augustus' rise to power will remain our starting-point for understanding the period for the foreseeable future. These seven weighty chapters explore themes that were not at the core of Syme's work. They are historical and archaeological rather than literary in approach (for the latter, see T. Habinek and A. Schiesaro [edd.], *The Roman Cultural Revolution* [Cambridge, 1997]).

The significance of the early years, before Caesar became 'Augustus', emerges clearly. As Millar demonstrates, Caesar's travels in the Greek East immediately after Actium show how he adopted a new rôle as sole ruler, and developed mechanisms for wielding power, which were to remain characteristic of the principate (as explored in *The Emperor in the Roman World* [London, 1977]). In discussion, Scheid notes how this period witnessed several religious initiatives, and Speidel's chapter develops a hypothesis that Caesar gained experience in raising and spending cash even earlier, during the civil wars, that was to prove invaluable in later years. Thus, the date of many aspects of the 'Roman revolution' needs reassessment.

Three chapters demonstrate the significance of new approaches to Roman history. Scheid shows the benefits of discarding the idea that religion declined at the end of the Republic, when it was merely being exploited for political gain. We gain a new appreciation of Augustus' election as *pontifex maximus*, as well as of the fact that his first act of religious revivalism took place in 43 B.C. Hölscher explores how art illustrates the importance of charisma, ideology, and collective mentalités. His point that Augustus' omnipresence in Rome through art was a crucial part of his charismatic image could be further strengthened by drawing attention to Augustus' physical absences from the capital. Furthermore, Hölscher tends to make Augustus the protagonist, and although he is certainly the spider at the centre, many other parties played crucial rôles in helping to create the ideological web. Wallace-Hadrill discusses the transformation of identities in the light of archaeological evidence (urbanization, housing, and consumer goods). Occasionally, his argument rests upon uncertain ground: the claim (p. 311) that local funerary monuments disappeared by the first century A.D. is exaggerated, since *columellae* were still used at Pompeii in the Flavian period.

Although it is not a new insight that money played a crucial rôle in developing and maintaining Augustus' power-base, Speidel offers a new interpretation of how this was the case. His picture involves a carefully calculated balance-sheet, dependent upon the documentation of the *breviarium totius imperii*. Speidel also insists that the loyalty of the army was equally crucial (p. 121), but does not explain why Augustus introduced lower pay for soldiers.

A good example of the potential insights offered by fresh documentary evidence into a seemingly exhausted topic is the chapter by Girardet on constitutional aspects of Augustus' reign, which contains important discussion of the nature of *imperium*

maius. The edict concerning the Paemeiobrigenses has since been published (G. Alföldy, *ZPE* 131 [2000], 177–205; F. Javier Sanchez-Palencia and J. Mangas [edd.], *El edicto del Bierzo. Augusto y el nordeste de Hispania* [León, 2000]).

Demougin explores the rôle of the *plebs* and soldiers in the ‘Roman revolution’. The political significance of the *plebs*, via both direct and indirect forms of participation, is also a recurring theme in discussion (e.g. pp. 228, 280).

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AUGUSTUS (i)

D. KIENAST: *Augustus: Prinzeps und Monarch*. Pp. xvi + 608, maps. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1999. Paper, DM 98. ISBN: 3-534-14293-4.

The first (1982) edition of this important study of Augustus was not reviewed in this journal. The appearance of the third, expanded edition (the second, 1992, edition was an unaltered reprint) affords a welcome opportunity to remedy this omission. I must apologize for the further delay caused by the lateness of this review.

The book was originally planned as a bibliographical survey for the publisher’s *Erträge der Forschung* series, but outgrew its constraints. The work’s origins are still reflected in the austere format: two maps relating to Augustus’ building activity (pp. 439–41) and a stemma of the imperial family are, regrettably, the only illustrations, but sources and bibliography are richly documented in the ample footnotes. New evidence and bibliography are taken account of in this edition in the substantially expanded notes and in a modest number of additions to the text. The interpretation, however, remains virtually unchanged.

The selection and organization of material are informed by the sharply conceived overall design of the work. As K. explains at the outset (p. xi), it is neither a biography of Augustus nor an account of his age and its culture: the focus is rather on Augustus’ work as a politician and statesman, and as a founder of a new monarchy. Art and literature are thus considered only in their political aspect. Particularly full treatment is accorded to some topics which K. sees as neglected, such as Augustus’ building work in Italy and the provinces (pp. 417–49, an invaluable treatment), whereas some others receive relatively brief coverage, for example the marriage legislation or the improvement of public services in the city of Rome.

The first two chapters are chronological, dealing with respectively Octavian/Augustus’ rise to power and his sole rule. Much stress is laid in the second chapter on the disarming of opposition as an explanation for Augustus’ actions, and K. has not taken full account of the minimizing of this factor in studies by Badian and others which have appeared since his first edition. The remaining five chapters deal thematically with what K. views as Augustus’ policies for establishing his monarchy on a secure basis. A chapter on his relationship with the senate, *equites*, and urban *plebs* is followed by the longest chapter of all, which shares with the whole work the title ‘Prinzeps und Monarch’: this chapter ranges from the ideology of the principate to religious policy (including the imperial cult), the promotion of the new regime in literature and the development of a monarchical court. The next chapter gives a concise survey of military policy and a fuller account of external policy, arguing

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