AGRIPPA

I. ROMEO: *Ingenuus Leo. L'immagine di Agrippa.* Pp. 227. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1998. Paper. ISBN: 88-8265-025-1.

Originating in the author's doctoral thesis, this close study of iconographical representations of Agrippa in the Roman world between the age of the civil wars and the reign of Claudius constitutes the first synthesis of visual images of him. The material includes coinage, statues (including those that form part of a 'dynastic' group), historical reliefs, gems, and cameos. The importance of the book lies in the collection of all available material, and in the detailed analysis of its form and of individual contexts. The carefully compiled catalogue that forms the second part (pp. 161–218) will in itself be useful for reference.

The first chapter deals with coinage, including both coins issued by Agrippa himself, 'imperial' issues privileging 'official' and 'Roman' themes, such as the shared consulship of Augustus and Agrippa in 28/7, and those issued at provincial level. Romeo distinguishes some of the different emphases of urban and provincial coinage (pp. 19–45). Most notably, urban coinage is markedly late to pick up on the importance of Agrippa in the Augustan universe, while in surviving examples of provincial coinage Agrippa's appearance is secondary only to that of Livia, Gaius, and Lucius, with numerous appearances that can only be categorized rather vaguely as 'honorary' (p. 5). Despite this prominence, however, the image of Agrippa is carefully circumscribed in provincial coinage: where the association with the *princeps* is clear, he is very definitely relegated to the rôle of *adiutor* (p. 6). In contrast, urban coinage is most interested in the dynastic rôle of Agrippa within the Julian house, his final phase in public life. R. tries to account for the absence of Agrippa from the 'official' urban coinage until 13 B.C. by reference to the argument that he was hitherto resented by the *nobilitas*. The eventual acceptance of Agrippa, signalled by his appearance on 'official' urban coinage, is explained by the ascendancy of the new men in the Augustan senate, along with the idea that, after the adoption of Gaius and Lucius, Agrippa was no longer seen to pose a threat to the nobility (pp. 37–40). This explanation raises more questions than it solves. For one thing, objection to Agrippa on the grounds primarily of his 'newness' is not particularly well grounded in the ancient literature. Dio's notorious comment on the absence of *hoi protoi* from his funeral (54.29.6), Maecenas' hiss, drawing attention to Agrippa when the rhetorician Latro discourses on the theme of the adoption of a very lowborn child into the nobility (Seneca the Elder, *Controversiae* 2.4.12–13), and what M. Reinhold (*Marcus Agrippa. A Biography* [Geneva and New York, 1933], p. 72) called Agrippa's 'socialistic views with regard to great works of art' were made to shoulder a heavy thesis on the 'problem' of Agrippa's newness by Sir Ronald Syme (*The Roman Revolution* [Oxford, 1939], pp. 342–6). R.'s explanation for the appearance of Agrippa in the 'official' urban coinage from 13 requires her to ignore Dio 54.29.6, one of the main bases of what is, after all, essentially a modern emphasis on his parvenu status, resented by the nobility.

The second chapter is concerned with portraiture. R. identifies three distinct and successive typologies, each corresponding to a phase in Agrippa's career, marking the transition from general to 'co-regent' to member of the Julian dynasty: the youthful, idealized 'Vibo Valentia-Gabii' type (pp. 47–55), the 'Ara Pacis' type with increasingly furrowed brow and crows' feet around the eyes and incipient double chin (pp. 55–60), and, finally, the posthumous 'Butrint' type with its characteristic hairstyle, a fringe that falls in uninterrupted, even waves to the left (p. 60). The third chapter examines the

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https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/51.2.334 Published online by Cambridge University Press

geographical and cultural contexts of portraits of Agrippa, and has some interesting things to say about his place in dynastic groups of statues, including those from the reigns of Caligula and Claudius, when claims to restore the Julian dynasty in the former case and, in the latter case, to assert close links with the Julian house, make desirable the presence of Agrippa once again (pp. 85–90). The final substantive chapter considers the presence of Agrippa in Roman historical reliefs, where identification is sometimes a lot less secure (e.g. the identification of heads of Agrippa and Octavian in the 'San Lorenzo' frieze, pp. 119–21).

Beyond the careful individual analyses, aims and conclusions are clearly (and, it has to be said, repeatedly) stated. The broader conclusions are not particularly surprising: R.'s material is largely read and interpreted by reference to a well-known narrative mainly based on the literary sources, and is used in turn to illustrate this narrative. The lines of the story are well known, and particularly so now, with the recent publication of the multi-authored *Il bimillenario di Agrippa* (Genoa, 1990), and F. Hurlet's *Les Collègues du Prince sous Auguste et Tibère* (Rome, 1997). It is precisely because the story is well known that R. needed to say rather more about the specific contribution of an iconographical study to the subject, along the lines, perhaps, of C. B. Rose's *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period* (Cambridge, 1997) or E. Bartman's *Portraits of Livia: Imaging the Imperial Women in Augustan Rome* (Cambridge, 1998). One unfortunate effect of the author's attention to detail is that she almost forgets to ask the most obvious questions about why Agrippa, for ancient and modern biographers 'always the bridesmaid and never the bride', seems to have been such a focus of attention not just for his contemporaries, but even for the post-classical world. R.'s cover illustration, Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema's *An Audience at Agrippa's*, and her tantalizingly brief discussion of 'modern' representations (p. 47) hint at phenomena that could also be usefully discussed with reference to the ancient world.

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STALKING SYME

L. LORETO: *Guerra e libertà nella repubblica romana. J. R. Seeley e le radici intellettuali della* Roman Revolution *di Ronald Syme*. Pp. xvii + 169. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1999. Paper. ISBN: 88-7062-981-3.

R. SYME: *The Provincial at Rome and Rome and the Balkans 80 BC–AD 14* (ed. A. Birley). Pp. xxvi + 238. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1999. Cased, £32.50. ISBN: 0-85989-632-3.

I feel a little self-conscious reviewing the work of Ronald Syme and considering his historical legacy. I never met him and was still a student at the time of his death. I suspect many who read this know far more about S.'s politics and would be able

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