

senses of the term. True to its title, *Reassembling Religion in Roman Italy* brings together a novel assemblage of a variety of data types in close coordination with a range of materialist theoretical perspectives focused on assemblage theory, affordances and ‘thingliness’, to show just how we can advance the material-centred approach of lived religion that is so prevalent in current scholarship on Roman religion. While grounded in the evidence of ritual from central Italy in the mid to late Republican and early Imperial periods, the volume will surely serve as a model for future studies of religion that look beyond this geographical and chronological frame. Whether a graduate student new to the field or a specialist, the reader will leave the book with a reassembled and greatly enhanced understanding of ‘religion’, Roman or otherwise.

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AUGUSTAN GODS IN THE ROMAN WEST

VILLARET (A.) *Les dieux augustes dans l'Occident romain. Un phénomène d'acculturation.* (Scripta Antiqua 126.) Pp. 491, colour figs, b/w & colour ills, colour maps. Bordeaux: Ausonius, 2019. Paper, €25. ISBN: 978-2-35613-329-8.
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The connection between the Roman emperors and the Roman gods titled ‘Augustus’, which we encounter in Western Rome, plays an important role in explaining the forms of historical relation between mortals and immortals. The mortals’ need for immortals, especially in order to establish absolute sovereignty, has continued since the first day of humanity until today. Kings and emperors have needed these gods for thousands of years to render their authority indestructible. For this reason, the rulers’ declaration of their positive relationship with the gods (especially from an epigraphic and numismatic point of view) played a key role in the manipulation and management of society.

V.’s book includes the conclusions from his doctoral dissertation entitled ‘Les dieux augustes dans l'Occident romain, un phénomène d'acculturation’, which he completed at the University of Montaigne in Bordeaux in 2016. In the introductory section V. addresses the concept of Augustan gods. He describes the title ‘Augustus’ as a special form of power-based relationship between the gods, the emperor and the emperor’s family. In his research on Augustan gods V. focuses on the issue of political, religious and social acculturation in Western Roman states. In the book, which consists of seven chapters, V. tries to explain the relation between emperors and gods, referring mainly to Latin epigraphic sources.

In the first chapter V. explains in-depth what the concept of ‘Augustan Gods’ means and what it does not. After carefully analysing the epithets, V. points to the existence of a close relationship between the gods and the emperor who receives the epithet.

In the second chapter V. takes Latin epigraphic sources as the point of reference and elaborately dwells on the theory that emperors functioned as mediators among the gods. He states that emperors who collaborated with the gods served as an active catalyst between mortals and immortals. Thanks to the virtues associated with the epithet

'Augustus', emperors turn into 'superhumans'. According to V. 'Numen Augusti' represents the deification of the emperor's power. V. then explores the term 'Augustus', used only in western states to highlight the unity between gods and emperors. As part of a universal fact, emperors were given power to communicate with the gods.

In the third chapter V. addresses the Augustan gods' geographical distribution within the empire. In this section he also mentions the difference between the number of relevant inscriptions found in the east and west. The western phenomenon of 'Augustalisation' affected western provinces of the Empire in many aspects. According to V. 'Augustalisation' spread quickly in the west starting in the Principate, and it gradually slowed down after the Severan dynasty (worship of the imperial gods).

In the fourth chapter V. addresses the subject of Augustan gods and identities, also touching upon the relations between the imperial families and the gods chosen by them. He tries to explain the relations between the gods and rulers by referring to the relations of the Principate with Apollo, Diana and Mars; the relations of the Julio-Claudians with Venus; and the relations of the Antonines and the Severan dynasty with Hercules. V. classifies deities as the ones that attend to economic and social affairs and as personal protective gods. He also points to a division of sovereignty among the gods in terms of geographical territories. V. discusses the local gods in Gaul, at the Danube and in Africa as well as Augustan gods in different categories. He notes that emperors acted as intermediaries among local gods not only for the Roman people, but also for all their subjects.

In Chapter 5 V. addresses the relations of the cities and local elites to the Augustan gods. V. dwells on the connections between the Augustan gods and the status of the cities. He also touches upon the relations between the cult of Augustus and the onomastic acculturation, while addressing the euergetic events carried out in cities and their connections with 'Augustalisation'.

In Chapter 6 V. examines the popular dimension of the worship of Augustan gods. He states that low-ranking slaves, the middle classes and rich free people immediately adapted to Augustalisation, while also mentioning that the percentage of women participating in these activities was very low (only 7.72%). He says that 104 of these women were in the shadow of their fathers and husbands, and 105 were free to make their own individual offerings.

In the seventh chapter V. discusses the places used for worshipping Augustan gods, which were mostly located in city centres. According to V. the prevalence of the cultic worship of Augustan gods in rural areas was low (around 15%.) The places of worship for the Augustan cult occupied extensive areas, and they were located near recreational buildings, which attracted a considerable crowd. To give an example, V. mentions the ancient city of 'Munigua', which consisted of three hierarchically classified regions: private, civil and sacred.

In line with his definition of Augustalisation V. states that the relations between gods and emperors were based on a three-layer acculturation with political, religious and social bases. He thus tries to explain in detail how the gods that had the title Augustus like the emperors had a close relationship with the emperors. The use of the same title by the gods and the emperors caused people to see emperors as the gods' representatives on earth. Consequently, although emperors were not immortal, people started to dignify them as immortal gods. When gods and emperors used the same title, this created the impression that the emperors' commands and rules came from the gods. Thus, the emperors were able to use religious propaganda to manipulate people towards any direction they wanted.

In this meticulous and comprehensive study on Augustan gods V. describes the concept of Augustalisation in detail, and he explains that emperors functioned as mediators between the gods and the people. The book is a successful scholarly work that makes significant contributions in its field, and it should appeal to anyone who specialises in Latin epigraphy or has an interest in Roman history.

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INSCRIPTIONS ON WOMEN

HEMELRIJK (E.A.) *Women and Society in the Roman World. A Sourcebook of Inscriptions from the Roman West*. Pp. xxii + 345, ill., maps. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Cased, £99.99, US\$130. ISBN: 978-1-107-14245-9.

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Sourcebooks in translation are extremely useful for students and scholars who are not proficient in a given ancient language and who would have difficulty in locating and accessing the relevant sources. They have a long history, of course. J.H. Breasted's *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents from the Earliest Times to the Persian Conquest* of 1906–1907 and J.B. Pritchard's *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, first published in 1950, made available important texts in scripts and languages very few people could read or understand. They have vastly increased access to sources and enabled many more people to learn and think about ancient societies and history. Consider the repercussions of the translation of the Bible into the vernacular, for 'ordinary people' to read, and we can gain an impression of the impact sourcebooks in translation have had on the historically inclined.

The field of classical studies has its own canon of sourcebooks that many are familiar with: the six volume series of *Translated Documents of Greece and Rome* (1983–1988), for example, and N. Lewis and M. Reinhold's *Roman Civilization* volumes 1 and 2, from 1951 and 1955, have gone through three editions to 1990. Routledge have also published sourcebooks on specific periods as well as on specific topics, such as the Roman army, household, slavery and even animals, with more slated for release. As fewer people are now proficient in classical languages, sourcebooks in translation grow more useful and more numerous, and increasingly more specialised in terms of topic. Since so many English translations of full texts are available in series such as the Loeb Classical Library as well as Oxford and Penguin Classics, and increasingly freely available online at sites such as LacusCurtius and the Perseus Digital Library, topic-based sourcebooks, while not new, are a natural progression, gathering together snippets related by theme.

H.'s book joins a growing list of sourcebooks on women in the ancient world, which includes M. Lefkowitz and M.B. Fant's *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: a Source Book in Translation*, the first of its kind, originally published in 1982 and now in its fourth edition (2016), J. Rowlandson's *Women and Society in Greek and Roman Egypt: a Sourcebook* (1998) and B. Maclachlan's *Women in Ancient Greece: a Sourcebook* (2012) and *Women in Ancient Rome: a Sourcebook* (2013). The geographical focus of