

comes to acquiring material rewards, whether those be pay or land. At the same time, bonds of friendship with fellow veterans and the commander continue to be integral for constructions of healthy masculinity for veterans in times of peace.

Chapter 6 considers the physical bodies of veterans and the stories these bodies tell, especially through their frequent scars. Such traces of past violence that veterans bear on their bodies, testify to their continued danger to self and others. Veterans and their exaggerated martial masculinity are forever a potentially destructive force for the society in which they live. Building on these themes, Chapter 7 considers the role of veterans in politics, especially as those pertain to uses of land. Commanders, M. notes, in both Rome and Zimbabwe have sometimes mobilised their client veterans' destructive potential for their own political aims.

In the brief concluding Chapter 8 M. expresses a confidence that I share, that 'such comparison also allows us to see how such remote societies may speak to the realities of today, and help shed light on many present-day phenomena' (p. 195). The book's premise, but especially this conclusion, reminded me of Jonathan Shay's now classic *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming* (2003).

M.'s book, interweaving ancient Roman primary sources with interviews of veterans from modern Zimbabwe, shows that the interpersonal and economic elements of war and its aftermath are remarkably timeless for veterans from both societies. While there are invariably key differences between societies, whether those that exist in the same time period or those separated by thousands of years, the similarities outweigh those differences and point forward to further value of comparative studies to come. It is studies like this present book that provide the path forward to more groundbreaking research in the field of military history of all societies and periods. Indeed, such work is already in progress. In particular, Kelly Nguyen's groundbreaking comparative work on ancient Rome and modern Vietnam readily comes to mind, and I look forward to seeing more.

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SPECIAL COMMANDS IN THE EARLY PRINCIPATE

SAWIŃSKI (P.) *HOLDERS OF EXTRAORDINARY IMPERIUM UNDER AUGUSTUS AND TIBERIUS. A STUDY INTO THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PRINCIPATE*. Translated by M. Jarczyk. Pp. xiv + 152, ills, map. London and New York: Routledge, 2021 (originally published as *Specjalni wysłannicy cesarscy w okresie od Augusta do Tyberiusza: studium nad początkami pryncypatu*, 2005). Cased, £96, US\$128. ISBN: 978-0-367-72533-4.

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Given the tendency among scholars to write overly voluminous monographs, it is pleasantly surprising to find such a synthetic study in today's publishing scene. This short and concise book of just over 150 pages is devoted to the study of the grants of special commands to certain members of the *domus Augusta* (Agrippa, Drusus the Elder, Tiberius, Gaius Caesar, Germanicus and Drusus the Younger) during the reigns

of Augustus and Tiberius. S. traces the beginnings of this practice from the Late Republic, highlighting its importance in the conception of imperial power at a still seminal stage of the Principate and analysing its impact on the diplomatic and military projects of the first two emperors as well as the causes of the disappearance of these kind of commands in later times. The book presents a simple structure in four chapters, plus a section of conclusions, four brief appendices and two useful indexes of people and places. The main argument, centred on the nature of the special commands granted to the members of the *domus Augusta*, is dealt with in the first chapter, while the following sections focus on the embodiment of these powers in the provinces, both in the west (Chapter 2) and in the east (Chapter 3), and on the honours granted to the holders of these special *imperia* (Chapter 4) with the priority, to a large extent, of contributing to dynastic legitimisation.

Apart from questions of content, one of the most remarkable aspects of S.'s work is the author's courage in tackling issues that are not out of controversy, sometimes using a language that is perhaps too blunt when it comes to supporting or discarding arguments that are doubtful or, at least, part of the discussion. A good instance of this is the revival of the debated idea of *proconsulare imperium* (Chapter 1), abandoned by a good part of scholarship over the last decades. S. considers that, had the *proconsulare imperium* not existed in the late Republic, proconsuls would have had the same authority as the consuls in office, which would have been a tort to the higher magistrates of Rome; however, we should not forget that the consul had a superior *potestas* that prevailed over the powers of other commanders, regardless of whether their *imperium* was identical or not. According to Cassius Dio, when Cn. Manlius Maximus and Q. Servilius Caepio had to gather their forces to fight the Cimbri and Teutoni, Servilius was suspicious of Manlius because the latter was consul (*cos.* 105 BCE) and therefore had a higher rank (ἄξιωμα) than him, who had been consul the year before and acted as proconsul (Cass. Dio 27, fr. 91.1). Cassius Dio's testimony shows that *imperium* was not the only principle that determined the hierarchy among Roman commanders; so there is no reason to suppose that there was an *imperium proconsulare* (at least during the late Republic and the early Principate), as authors like K.-M. Girardet, F. Hurllet and F. Vervaeke have pointed out. Moreover, S. acknowledges that, although the boundary between the *imperium* of the *princeps* and the special *imperia* granted to members of his family must have been blurred, it was in practice the *auctoritas* enjoyed by the *emperor* (as Augustus indicates in *RG* 34.3) that determined the unbridgeable distance between the two powers (pp. 38–42). On the other hand, since S. rightly situates the origins of these special commands in the late Republic, it is also surprising that the work devotes so little attention (just a few pages, merely descriptive) to the study of these grants in the Republican period, which is precisely the touchstone for understanding the use of this practice during the Principate.

Without detracting from other aspects, possibly the most valuable contribution of the book is the study of this type of grants as part of the means used by both Augustus and Tiberius to create a new power structure around the *princeps* and his family, which gave rise to a real dynasty based on the appropriation and exclusive exercise of certain prerogatives. The work is thus in line with previous contributions by S., such as *The Succession of Imperial Power under the Julio-Claudian Dynasty (30 BC–AD 68)* (2018); in fact, the monograph is an English version of a study previously published by S. in Polish in 2005. Agrippa's case is paradigmatic in S.'s argumentation: S. considers that Augustus' son-in-law was endowed in 23 BCE (renewed in 18 and 13) with an *imperium proconsulare maius* (sic) similar to that of the *princeps*, as suggested by Cassius Dio (54.28.1), with authority over all the overseas provinces and superior to that of the corresponding governors; an *imperium* conceived, in short, not to administer a province

or to fulfil a specific mission, as had been the tradition during the Republic, but to govern the whole empire. Augustus would thus have introduced a kind of co-regency with Agrippa, endowed with powers largely comparable to those of his father-in-law, which made him his immediate successor. In this sense – and as S. emphasises – it is unquestionable that the granting of this type of extraordinary *imperia* contributed decisively to normalising the imperial succession and to creating a true and legitimate dynasty, insofar as only members of the *domus Augusta* were elevated with such powers above the other Roman commanders and could be recognised with the honours of victory (as S. underlines in Chapter 4).

This is also the argument pointed out in Chapters 2 and 3, which dwell (perhaps too descriptively) on the various missions carried out by the members of the *domus Augusta* after being invested with special *imperium*, whether in the West or in the East. Beyond the military actions carried out in Germania and the Danubian area, it is interesting to note that a good part of these missions was merely diplomatic and honorary, despite the notable powers conferred on their protagonists for this purpose. In this respect, the practice of granting special commands during the early Principate also departs from the Republican tradition, since during the Republic the *imperia extraordinaria* were linked to military campaigns of particular importance. Moreover, contrary to Republican habits, the special missions were not entrusted to men particularly experienced or seasoned in war, as Pompey had been, but to individuals, sometimes very young, whose only merit was to belong to the *domus Augusta*. This clearly shows that the main aim of these concessions was not to respond to crisis situations, but to promote these individuals and to create a structure parallel to Republican institutions, based on the patrimonialisation of powers (as well as honours like the triumph) by the family of the *princeps*.

What is most striking about this practice – to a certain extent common to Augustus and Tiberius – is that it disappeared after the latter's reign, possibly, as S. points out, because of the consolidation of the monarchy and the disappearance of suitable candidates for this type of mission. However, we must also bear in mind that, with Caligula and Claudius, conspiracies began to take place within the *domus Augusta*, creating at the same time a competition for power that probably did not make the attribution of these commands advisable. As S. points out, the special military missions in the provinces were henceforth carried out by individuals trusted by the emperor, outside the *domus Augusta*, and converted into simple *legati* without independent *imperium*. In short, the practice of entrusting extraordinary commands to members of the Augustan *domus* was one of the conjunctural phenomena that marked the transition from the Republic to the consolidation of the monarchy instituted by Augustus; a practice that had its *raison d'être* at a concrete time and in concrete circumstances, when the Principate was taking shape and the foundations of the new system of government were being laid, based on the appropriation of powers by a dynasty. In this sense, S.'s book is a valuable contribution to the understanding of this process and the consequent shaping of dynastic power around the figure of the *princeps*.

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