

The deeds of the divine augustus



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Article summary

The article to be summarized titled 'The Deeds of the Divine Augustus', is an autobiography translated by Thomas Bushnell and originally written as a funerary inscription by the first Roman emperor, Augustus, as a first-person narration or record of his accomplishments in his life as emperor. Written between 27 BCE and 14 CE, and organized with a short introduction, over 30 body paragraphs as well as a posthumous addendum, the document details the emperor's public benefactions, political career and military accomplishments. Bushnell (1) asserts that the document highlights an attempt by Augustus, in shaping how the Romans would remember him.

Seen as propaganda highlighting the emperor's accomplishments during his reign, the document provides insights into the image of the emperor, Augustus portrayed to the Roman people, the audience whom the publication was intended. The publication seems to have been written as a way to convince the Romans that he, the emperor, had ruled wisely and in accordance to how the Romans wanted to be ruled, which is accentuated by accomplishments, though gained in his name, belonged to the Romans. This assumption is informed by the emperor's boastful exclamations in the document and reference to how the Romans gave him that power.

Gauging by the tone of the text, it is safe to be skeptical in believing the contents of the document even though the accomplishments provided in the document seem to tally with historical accounts of the time. The document shows the Roman society as under autocratic rule of the incumbent Roman Emperor and subjected to foreign as well as civil wars with increased use of

public coffers for personal gain. The document is related to its context considering that other accounts of that historical era especially in relation to reasons that led to the fall of the Roman Empire seem to tally.