

Cenerini, F. (2019) “An exceptional and eternal couple: Augustus and Livia”, in A. Bielman Sánchez (ed), *Power Couples in Antiquity. Transversal Perspectives*, London and New York, Routledge, 136-150.

In this paper the relationship between Julius Caesar Octavianus, i.e., Emperor Augustus, and Livia is examined. This is an unusually long-lasting relationship (which will come to an end only with Augustus' death in 14 A.D.), despite its lack of offspring and, therefore, in open contrast with the policies of demographic growth promoted by Augustus himself by way of his controversial legislation. Regarding this, the interpersonal relationship between the two spouses has been inspected and their inner relational dynamics, drawing on the scant (and ultimately contradictory) sources available to us. It has been investigated: the stability of power ensured through this marriage, the legacy of the marriage, the impact of the role-model represented by their relationship, the definition of the feminine role in the new Augustan "court" through this marriage, the subsequent employment of such a relationship as a source of legitimation of new imperial powers. One of the most interesting aspects worth investigating is the fact that, in my opinion, within this "exceptional" and crucial relationship for the construction of the Augustan power stands an element alien to the couple *stricto sensu*, that is to say, Livia's previous maternity. This element is not only "incorporated" and made functional to the dynamics of the wedded couple, but it even guarantees the continuity of the imperial power itself. For Augustus' successor is Tiberius, that is, the son born from Livia's first wedding with Tiberius Claudius Nero, originally an opponent of Octavian.