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**C. Ravara Montebelli (ed.), *Alea iacta Est.*
Giulio Cesare in Archivio,
Società Editrice «Il Ponte Vecchio» 2010**

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The Italian State Archives are essentially a public service that provides citizens the written heritage, produced over time. It's important that this heritage is rooted in the territory, in order to develop a cultural policy, its conservation and promotion, and the promotion of the documentary material preserved. Therefore, «It must begin, from the Archives experiences of scholars in the Archives of Rimini to understand the reasons of this book, this collection of essays is more than just a catalog, but has the ambition to be a fundamental step in the writing of the history of the relationship between Julius Caesar and the city of Rimini», so says the director of the State Archive of Rimini (p.7). In this respect, the volume, in fact, has been realized for the documentary exhibition *Alea iacta est. Giulio Cesare in Archivio*, curated by the same C. Ravara Montebelli, and promoted by the State Archive of Rimini, which on this occasion it participate for the third consecutive time, the *European Heritage Days*. Organized in collaboration with the Municipal Library Gambalunga, with the patronage of the University of Bologna, University of San Marino and the Municipality, the Province of Rimini and also of the Rubicon Filopatridi Academy, the exhibition was shown from 25 September to 25 November 2010 at the State Archive and Gambalunga Library of Rimini, and retraced the history of the city from the first century BC until the Fascist period, through historical and artistic treasures found in Piazza Tre Martiri, heart of the old town since Roman times. Much more than a catalog, then, the volume is characterized specifically for its philological and scientific rigor, creating a particularly significant referent for the many analysis developed in it, both diachronic and synchronic. On this basis, specifically, in the historical events that have marked the history of the Roman Empire, the most famous are: the passage of the Rubicon River (in Romagna) and the exhortation of the Roman general Julius Caesar *Alea iacta est* to the legionnaires who accompanied him, in January 49 BC. The Roman law was clear: a consul at the head of armed men that cross from the north bank of the Cisalpine to the Italian Rubicon edge became an enemy of the Republic. Between 10 and 11 January 49 BC, Caesar crossed the border of Italy in arms, declaring war to the Senate of Rome.

Which Rubicon has been crossed? Which way has travelled? Where he harangued the soldiers to get them to follow him against the Senate: in Ravenna or Rimini? A centuries-long tradition, supported by ancient sources and by modern historians, believes that the speech to the soldiers took place in Rimini: the *suggestum* stone is the tangible sign and testimony.

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This secular tradition has prompted the Duce Benito Mussolini in 1933 to donate a statue of Julius Caesar to the town of Rimini, similar to that shown in Rome, at the Campidoglio and along the Fori Imperiali and making it place in the same Piazza Giulio Cesare, where the suggestum was already. Without the presumption to resolve long-standing issues, such as that of the Rubicon river, the book attempts to answer these questions and more, to examine and explain some of the stories about those signs and those traces, thanks to a wonderful union between archaeological and archives research. A union whose outcome may be called more than brilliant.

In the first part, the editor herself, is addressing the complex web of cultural and historical issues concerning *Il passaggio del Rubicone, Cesare a Rimini*, and *La statua di Giulio Cesare*. In the second part Fabio Pesaresi deals with *Sulle tracce di Cesare: itinerari del Grand Tour tra Rimini e il Rubicone*, and Michela Cesarini develops *Artefici del Ventennio. Nomi noti e meno noti dell'arte riminese negli anni Trenta del Novecento*. Daniela Baroncini that closes this part considers the theme: *Panzini e il romanzo di Giulio Cesare*. In the third part, at the volume close, many valuable cards and documentary appendix are shown and they make available to the reader materials ever collected in one volume, as is the case for example of *Memorie di viaggio* (eds. by Ravara Montebelli and Pesaresi). Trying something similar to that performed by Mansfred Pfister in his anthology of texts on the trip to Italy *The Fatal Gift of Beauty: the Italies of British Travellers: an annotated anthology*, Amsterdam-Atlanta 1996, in this appendix are collected the texts that geographers and Italian and foreign visitors have thoroughly dedicated to the Rubicon and the suggestum between the sixteenth and early Twentieth Century period, as we read in the story, for example, of Richard Lassels (1603-1668):

«From Catholica we went to Rimini, called Ariminum in Latin, this is a pretty town, in wich the foresaid Council was kept. In the Market place I saw the Stone (set now upon a Podestal) upon wich Caesar stood when we made a Speech to his Souldiers, to make them resolve to march up to Rome. Hard by, in the same Market place, stands a little round Chappel, famous for a miracle wrought there by St. Antony of Padua, in Confirmation of the real Presence. The History is too long, but seen here painted round the Chappel, with a cast of an Eye. From hence [...] in the way before we came to Cesena, we saw an old Inscription in Stone, set up by a little River side, which I found to be very Decree of the old Senate of Rome, forbidding in general, any Officer or Souldier whatsoever, to pass over the Rubicon, upon pain of being judged an Enemy to his Country, and guilty of high Treason. By which Words I gathered, that this little River here now called Pisatello, was Rubicon, mentioned in the Decree of the Senate; and that this Decree pointed at Julius Caesar and his Army. Yet Caesar being resolved to march up to Rome with his Army, made a Speech to his Souldiers; and finding a compliance in their resolutions, passed over Rubicon, crying out: *Jacta est alea. We must either Sink or Swim*, and so passed on to Rome, which he soon possessed himself of, and then of the World» (*An Italian Voyage, or, a compleat Journey through Italy, in two parts*, London 1698, part. II, pp. 219-220).