

Abstract: The essay focuses on a selection of case studies referring to Gaius Caesar's mission to the East (early 1 B.C.-A.D. 4). The first concerns a reassessment of *Plu. Mor.*, 207 E and *Mor.* 319 D, and *Jul. Caes.* 332 D, all referring to the same historical episode. The three versions differ from each other in some significant details that have been overlooked by critics, and that are here analyzed specifically. The episode they refer to may be reconstructed as a public speech held by Augustus as augur, solemnly celebrating Gaius' departure. Another possibility is taken into account, i.e. that the episode refers to a celebrative epigram composed by Augustus. In this respect, the comparison with *AP* 9.59 highlights the analogy with an ekphrastic *propemptikon* by Antipater of Thessalonica in honour of Gaius, which must be coeval with the episode narrated by Plutarch and Julian. The similarity of the final verses of Antipater with Plutarch's and Julian's words concerning the prayer of Augustus is notable, but the idea that the episode relates to a poem by the *princeps* is only seductive. An appendix is dedicated to the ekphrastic construction of Antipater's composition, revealing that the occasion for the poem was given by the inauguration of a painting in Gaius' house on the Palatine, where Antipater may have been present.

Keywords: Augustus, Gaius Caesar, Plutarch, Julian, Antipater of Thessalonica.