CHAPTER 3

AUGUSTUS: POWER, AUTHORITY, ACHIEVEMENT

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I. POWER

Rome's tradition of government, down to Iulius Caesar, was characterized by distributed power and multiple sources of decision. That was never to return. From 30 B.C. onwards, the whole Roman world found itself in the grasp of a single ruler, possessing all power and making all decisions, except insofar as he might choose to leave some of them to others. We are insistently bidden to penetrate behind the 'façade' to the 'reality' of Augustus' power, and some advantage is to be gained if, to begin with, we separate the power – its extent and sources and the functions it was used to accomplish – from the authority, which was the dress in which the power was clothed. But we must remember that such a separation is, in the long run, artificial, because, in the actual political life of a nation, power and its formalizations are inextricably linked, and where authority is entrenched recourse to power is unnecessary.

Tacitus, in a paragraph which, if its hostility of tone be discounted, remains the most masterly succinct statement of what Augustus did, writes thus: '... he laid aside the title of triumvir and paraded himself as consul and as content with the tribunician authority for looking after the commons. The soldiery he enticed with gifts, the people with corn, and all alike with the charms of peace and quiet; and thus he edged forward bit by bit (*insurgere paulatim*), taking into his hands the functions of Senate, magistrates, laws.'[1] Both as to the use of power, and its spheres of application, and as to its translation into constitutional terms, *insurgere paulatim* describes what occurred with profound insight. What did not change or develop was the ruler's hold on actual coercive power: he possessed that, totally, from the start, and never let a particle of it slip from his hands. Power, he had; functions, he increasingly took over; formulations of that power and those functions he carefully fostered. But one aspect deserves to be stressed from the outset: initiative. All policy was decided by Augustus, as far as we know.[2] In making decisions he naturally listened to representations from, and took advice from, appropriate quarters, and, for all we know, he may have put into practice

[1] Tac. *Ann.* 1.2.1. [2] Millar 1977 (A 59) 616.

policies proposed to him by others, though the state of the evidence makes that difficult to demonstrate. But, apart from what he might choose to leave to others, for example to the Senate, he presided over the withering away of independent sources of initiative.

Those who urge the historian to look behind the 'façade' and confront the 'reality' of Augustus' power mostly imply that he should acknowledge that Augustus' ultimate possibility of coercion lay in control of the army. That is a truism, and scarcely penetrates far enough, for we have still to ask, especially in the case of that first sole Roman ruler, how he was able to control the army. The Roman Republic had had no post of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces; and, until it began to change in the crucible of the late Republic, the army had been a conscript force recruited by the consuls *ad hoc*, allotted by the the Senate to those whose *provinciae* required armies, and swearing an oath of obedience to each commander set to lead them. The triumviral age had been the culmination of changes: nevertheless, it was the achievement of Augustus to create a volunteer, professional army, its size determined by himself, 'depoliticize' it,[3] and establish for it an ethos of loyalty to himself and the 'divine family'. That result was not accomplished in a day. One of the reasons why Augustus' formal authority cannot be detached from his actual power is that armies can only with difficulty and exceptionally be recruited and held without a legitimate claim. Augustus was, in the first years after 30 B.C., consul, and the *provincia* he was given from 27 B.C. entitled him to overall command of the troops within it (which was most of the troops, and their oath of obedience was necessarily to him). Although for a time there continued to be independent proconsuls with their own *auspicia*, they did not command enough forces to be a serious counterpoise to those commanded by Augustus. Perhaps the crucial fact in the whole story is that, in Augustus' first decade, Roman citizens were tired of civil war, which had brought no advantage to the ordinary soldier; that generation mostly wanted peace and discharge, and would not have been available for recruitment by a mere new pretender in a struggle against Augustus for power. By the time that war-weariness had worn off, he had succeeded in building a new army loyal to himself, and could offer it enough reward to make service worth while.

But, though legitimacy is important, the most direct influence on soldiers is that of their immediate commanding officers. It was those people's loyalty that Augustus needed to secure. The Republic had had no professional officer class with a distinct ideology or solidarity: commanding troops was something that every member of the governing class must do, but none could or wished to do for more than sporadic periods. Augustus, then, had no army lobby either to oppose him or to

[3] Raaflaub 1980 (C 190).

be coaxed into supporting him. His formal powers gave him the right to choose his *legati* for his *provincia*, which included most of the areas of military activity, and the formally independent commands soon withered away; beyond that, his ability to control who commanded the armies remained simply a part of his general patronage of those who sought high office in the state. So two things were needful to enable Augustus to keep control of the army: he had to satisfy the aspirations of the political class, and to be a reliable paymaster to the troops.

That consideration leads to the second 'brute fact' about the power of Augustus, his overwhelming predominance in resources. The figures he gives in the *Res Gestae* suffice to show that the resources he directly had and personally controlled, from the start (once the Ptolemaic fortune passed into his hands), made it inconceivable for any alternative paymaster to arise, capable of supporting any notable army against him. The *imperium* that he caused to be bestowed on himself supplied the formal right to receive out of public revenue the cost of the major part of the armies; but beyond that, though he did not need to mingle the state's revenues officially with his private fortune, he took care to account for, and budget in the light of, the whole resources of the state.

A third aspect of Augustus' *de facto* power, and that which has received most emphasis recently, is his role as the universal patron, the sole source of benefits.[4] Already in preparation for war upon Antony and Cleopatra he had obtained from Italy and the provinces of the West an oath of personal allegiance, which was to become a standard element in the position of the ruler.[5] For a time, recently, historians urged us to see it as an oath of 'clientship' and describe Augustus as the universal *patronus* in as formal a sense as a former owner was *patronus* of his freedmen. That notion has been shown to have been too schematic,[6] and, besides, the practical importance of the oath, beyond its original context, cannot be judged. Nevertheless, patronage played a great role in the ruler's position, and its workings can be seen, already under Augustus, in various spheres. The leading families of the Republic had cultivated clientships all over the Roman world, especially in the East and in Spain and Africa; and numerous documents of the triumviral period show the 'dynasts' of the civil wars using their clients as agents in the control of cities and regions.[7] 'So-and-so, my friend' (*philos*, *amicus*) might be the key figure in a locality. And when there was only one 'dynast' left it was his 'friends' around the world who kept cities and regions in line with his wishes, and could expect rewards such as the grant of Roman citizenship. (One category of such supporters were the 'client kings',[8] who, even if

[4] Saller 1982 (F 59) esp. ch. 2. [5] Herrmann 1968 (C 117). [6] Saller 1982 (F 59) 73–4.
[7] Bowersock 1965 (C 39) ch. 3, and texts in Reynolds 1981 (B 270) nos. 10–12.
[8] Braund 1984 (C 254).

originally Antony's men, soon submitted to the patronage of the victor of Actium.)

But how far the upper class of Rome as a whole depended for their careers, henceforward, on the patronage of the ruler is, at least for Augustus' time, dificult to determine. It cannot be ascertained how minutely he supervised entry into the *militiae* that formed the base of every public career. After those first steps, civil promotion depended, as before, on election. We know that Augustus was prepared to promote specific candidates openly by his own canvas and vote; and he could grant the *latus clavus* or see that a man did not lack the senatorial *census*. In so far as he created new executive posts, such as the praetorian prefectures, he nominated to them as he chose. But he did not have to control the whole promotion system in painful detail. The Roman state had never had high governmental or executive posts held for life or till retirement: there were no Chancellorships or the like. Nor did Augustus establish any such posts. The structure of public careers remained sporadic and gentlemanly in character: offices were held on short tenures, and none created any kind of fief. That was in one way an advantage to the ruler, but it precluded him, even if he had wished otherwise, from dominating areas of political life through the promotion of his *amici* to permanencies.

Historians have, since the 1930s, very readily applied to this period the notion of a dominant 'Party'.[9] Augustus began his career, certainly, as a *dux partium*; when he became sole ruler, we are told, it was through the 'Party' that he continued to dominate the political world, his biggest problems, consequently, being those involved in holding the 'Party' together. That analysis is too closely based on the modern experience; and as soon as one attempts to locate the alleged 'Party' one is confronted with either too many people or too few. The obvious place to look is at the 'Friends of the Ruler', *amici principis* (and *renuntiatio amicitiae*, such as happened to Cornelius Gallus, is then described as 'expulsion from the Party'). But the *amici principis* are too broad a group, for although Augustus' few close collaborators were, of course, *amici principis*, that category could also include jurists, philosophers, doctors and poets; in fact, it is hard to say where *amicitia* ended and *clientela* began. And if we include Augustus' well-wishers in the cities of the empire, we are soon in danger of ascribing to the 'Party' more or less everyone who is not known to have been an opponent of the regime – at which point the concept ceases to be helpful. Neither is any structural organization to be seen such as is nowadays associated with the idea of a 'Party', or would have held Augustus' adherents in the Roman world together politically. Of his handful of close associates, and how he bound them to him, there

[9] The most cogent account in terms of 'Party' is Béranger 1959 (C 27).

will be more to say later; it is not at a 'Party' that we shall be looking, but at a dynastic network.

The fact that one finds it impossible not to speak of Augustus 'doing' this or 'deciding' that or 'establishing' the other is a reflection of blunt reality. It was he who decided what campaigns should be waged and when, and by armies of what size. As overall commanders of the main enterprises he appointed whom he chose. He decided policy towards Parthia, and the disposal of Judaea (though in that case we have in Josephus a window through which to watch him taking public advice).[10] It was he who settled, not who should be consuls, but, much more importantly, how many consuls and praetors there should be each year, and from what minimum ages men might hold office. The campaign to legislate for morality was his campaign. And as he took over functions, such as responsibility for food supply, security and fire-fighting in the capital, so his executive hold grew on more and more aspects of public life. Of power, that is to say of initiative and its important counterpart, the power to prevent things being done, Augustus held the essential reins from the beginning, and the rest he took over.

II. AUTHORITY

So the whole Roman world had a single ruler. The Greek-speaking part of that world , used to rulers and their ideology, saw no complications. By the time of, let us say, Hadrian or Marcus Aurelius, the ruler's total power was equally taken for granted in Rome, Italy and the West, and descriptions and justifications of it in Roman terms were available without embarrassment or hesitation. It was due to Augustus that that came to be so, because he combined a conservative cast of mind, and a vision of himself as restorer of Rome's erstwhile greatness and stability, with the ruthless determination to turn his power into a transmissible system. The descriptions and justifications of the power of the Roman ruler run, for that reason, on two parallel tracks: conformity to *mos maiorum* and creation of 'charisma'.

It was suggested in chapter 2 above that accounts of the traditional elements in Augustus' position in terms of a 'hoax', a 'cloak', or a 'veneer', masking 'brute power', though common, are seriously inadequate. The better concept is 'legitimization': 'political power and legitimacy rest not only in taxes and armies, but also in the perceptions and beliefs of men'.[11]

The narrative in chapter 2 showed how the main constitutional elements of the imperial system, *imperium proconsulare maius* and *tribunicia*

[10] Joseph. *BJ* II. 25 and 81: *AJ* XVII.229 and 301; Crook 1955 (D 10) 32.
[11] Hopkins 1978 (A 45) 198.

potestas, arose as solutions to particular political situations rather than out of any global vision. What is more, by no means every element of the eventual system was in place by Augustus' death: some of the cogs were added by his successors, and some of what were, during all his time, still experiments, hardened into fixity under his successors. Whether the inventive brain was that of Augustus alone, we cannot be sure. It is possible that the conventions of ancient historiography, aggravated by the self-advertising genius of Augustus, may have caused the suppression from the record of people whose ideas and influences helped to create the imperial system. But little can be done to put that record straight. A final preliminary is to observe that one may judge the product to have been a remarkable achievement without, necessarily, admiring it wholeheartedly.

The Roman Republic – to repeat – had had, by tradition and convention, multiple points of decision-making: votes of the *comitia*, resolutions of the Senate, edicts of magistrates, interventions of tribunes, verdicts of criminal juries, *sententiae* of lay judges in the civil courts. The most fundamental long-term political trend of the imperial age of Roman history is the dwindling of that multiplicity until decision-making was, by formal rule even, in the hands of the emperor or of those to whom he might delegate authority. When it is asked how far Augustus carried Rome along that path – the path to 'the emperor is dispensed from the laws' and 'what is pleasing to the emperor has the force of statute' – two contrasting answers are given by historians, and debate is not over.

One answer was implied in the narrative of chapter 2, where Augustus was described as keeping, and brilliantly utilizing, the old republican unwritten 'rule-book' and its well-tried terminology, and rejecting offers of powers formally inconsistent with that; but modern scholarship has repeatedly emphasized that there appear to exist a whole set of counterfactuals to that picture, which would lead to the view that, in fully formal terms, Augustus' constitutional position was quite different, and quite revolutionary. One source, above all, poses the problem: the so called *lex de imperio Vespasiani*, the surviving second bronze tablet of an inscription on which were set out the constitutional powers conferred on the emperor Vespasian.[12] The sixth surviving clause reads: '... and that, whatever he judges to be in accordance with the interest of the state and the solemnity (*maiestas*) of divine and human and public and private affairs, he shall have the right and power to do and perform, as the divine Augustus, and Tiberius Iulius Caesar Augustus, and Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, had'. If that sentence be taken at its face value, the consequences for the picture so far given of

[12] EJ² 364; Brunt 1977 (C 335).

Augustus' formal position are devastating, for in that event it must be admitted that he had, all the time, in the most formal sense,[13] total constitutional power. That conclusion is particularly welcome to legal historians, as an explanation of how it was that Augustus seems to have been accepted as the head of the legal order, which no concatenation of executive or initiative powers (which is what *imperium* and *tribunicia potestas* were) could have achieved. Numerous further pieces can be fitted into the picture, especially the remark in Gaius' *Institutes*[14] that '. . . it has never been doubted that it [a decision by the emperor, *constitutio principis*] has the force of statute', and the statement in Suetonius' *Life of Caligula* that Caligula received *en bloc*, at his accession, the 'right and arbitrament of all matters'.[15] Strabo's claim that Augustus had the arbitrament of peace and war[16] is another item for the dossier. And scholars have found, in phrases from the sources here and there, possible titles for the supremacy Augustus is supposed to have received – 'care of the *res publica*', 'headship of the common weal', 'Principate', or just *imperium*.

Augustus told the world how he wished it to think about this in the *Res Gestae*. Minimizing his formal powers, and insisting on his rejection of powers contrary to *mos maiorum*, he asserted that what he predominated in was *auctoritas*,[17] the predicate of 'being accepted as a top person' that the 'chief men' (*principes viri*) of the Republic had been said to possess, by which the things he commanded were done simply because it was he who commanded them. Some historians have tried to show that unofficial *auctoritas* was turned – by some step that has eluded us – into an official power of legislation, or that it replaced *imperium* as the formal statement of total power, or that by an edict of 28 B.C. Augustus received a formal 'Principate' that carried all else with it.[18]

There is no compatibility between the two pictures, and no compromise will accommodate both; it is necessary to choose. The choice made in chapter 2 and in the present account, of the more old-fashioned, 'minimalist' – and at present heterodox – picture of the 'Augustan constitution' imposes some immediate caveats and clarifications. First, to repeat: neither picture is an account of *de facto* power; both are accounts of descriptions, justifications, legitimizations, of power. To choose the first is not, therefore, to imply that Augustus finished up any the less the *de facto* ruler of Rome; it is to say that he and his contemporaries clothed his rule in concepts that were not yet of the monolithically monarchical kind familiar to the Severan emperors and their contempor-

[13] *Ius* and *potestas*. [14] Gai. *Inst.* 1. 5. [15] Suet. *Calig.* 14.1. [16] Strab. XVII.3.25 (840C).
[17] The Greek is ἀξίωμα. The Latin word that stood in that place was not known until discovery of the Antioch-in-Pisidia copy of the *RG* (published 1927), and Mommsen's guess was *dignitas*.
[18] Respectively, Magdelain 1947 (C 167); Grant 1946 (B 322); Grenade 1961 (C 103).

aries two hundred years later. Secondly it imposes the duty to offer an alternative account of at least three texts, but especially of the sixth clause of the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*, the so-called 'discretionary clause'.[19]

The difficulty about believing that clause to mean, baldly, what it seems to imply – that is, that Augustus already had total, formal power to act at will – is that it would have made otiose the whole of the rest of the document, including the grants of the major specific powers that presumably occupied the missing first tablet. Proper significance needs, instead, to be given to its position in the list of regulations: it belongs to a closing group, in which the seventh clause grants the new ruler exemption from certain statutes and the eighth validates retrospectively his actions before becoming ruler. That position establishes for the sixth clause its natural and appropriate role as a grant of residual emergency powers.[20] It is, in any case, erroneous to invoke the 'discretionary clause' as a prop for the ruler's legislative authority, for it gives him power to do things, whereas legislation is only in a truistic sense the 'doing' of things: it is the creation of rules, an altogether broader activity.

Gaius, writing an elementary law-book in the second century A.D., sounds uncomfortable in his protestation (if it is his) that 'no one has doubted' that a *constitutio principis* has the force of statute. Such was certainly correct doctrine in his own day, and perhaps we should simply infer from his embarrassment that he knew that earlier constitutional statements had not taken that form. But Gaius' passage is in a more parlous state still, for it continues by giving a reason for the principle that a *constitutio principis* has the force of statute which is deficient in logic: '... because the emperor receives his *imperium* by statute'. The *non sequitur* is so blatant as to cast doubt whether Gaius could have penned such an absurdity. It bears, too, the marks of an unintelligent echo of Ulpian's account, quoted in Justinian's *Digest*, of what is there called the 'royal law', *lex regia*;[21] it is in all probability an intrusion into the real text of Gaius, which will simply have stated the rule about imperial pronouncements that prevailed in his day.

The third text is that of Strabo. He was a contemporary and a serious author; but his assertion that Augustus received 'headship of the hegemony' and 'the power of war and peace for life' comes at the end of his *Geography*. That is not a work of legal science, and he is not making a constitutional statement. (He is, in fact, detailing the division of the provinces into 'people's provinces' and 'Caesar's provinces'; and that

[19] The view here argued for is mentioned, but dismissed, by Brunt 1977 (C 335) 113.

[20] For my negative argument, see Jolowicz and Nicholas 1972 (F 660) 365–6; for my positive argument, see Hammond 1959 (A 43) 306, n. 59; de Martino 1974 (A 58) fasc. 1, 501–2.

[21] *Dig.* 1.4.1 pr., Ulpian, 1 *Inst.*: 'Quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem: utpote cum lege regia, quae de imperio eius lata est, populus ei et in eum omne suum imperium et potestatem conferat.'

was actually accomplished not by virtue of any great overriding power of Augustus, but, in all probability, in a senatorial debate.)[22]

The case, then, for Augustus having been granted a formal 'constitutional monarchy' does not prevail over the account, derived from Dio and elsewhere, of his receiving at different stages a concatenation of particular powers; and when Dio himself says that it was from the beginning 'unalloyed monarchy'[23] he is not giving a description but making a comment.

In any case, there is still more to be said about the constitutional forms in which the ruler's power was expressed. They interacted with the 'brute realities' by creating boundaries of normal conduct: the clothing helped to define the role. And the separate powers had a further usefulness: they could be applied piecemeal in the gradual promotion of the ruler's principal collaborator to the position of *collega imperii*. The pedantic precision of their use in that way can be observed in the papyrus fragment of a Greek translation of Augustus' funeral laudation of Agrippa: '... tribunician power for five years in 18 B.C. on the basis of a *senatus consultum*, and again in 13 B.C., plus, in a statute, that no man's authority should be greater than yours in any province to which the public weal of Rome might hale you'.[24] That careful formulation helps to corroborate the case that has been argued here, that the ruler's own powers were described in terms of a concatenation rather than by some global formula.

Auctoritas is the aspect of the forms (in the sense that it could be given a name and is appealed to in the *Res Gestae*) that lay closest to the actuality. It was personal to the individual ruler, and if he lacked or lost it his rule was in peril. He possessed it partly by force of personality, partly by the 'brute fact' that he held the reins of power; yet at the same time it was by possessing *auctoritas* that he held those reins, for, insofar as he possessed it, he had only to command to be obeyed. Inscriptions recording that things were done 'by order of Augustus', *iussu Augusti*,[25] ought not to cause perplexity: they are the reflection of *auctoritas*, for the people concerned were content to state that they had done things because Augustus told them to. *Auctoritas* was, furthermore, the link between the conformity to *mos maiorum* (for it had been predicated of republican *principes viri*) and the creation of 'charisma' (because it was predicated of the ruler as an individual): it could pave the way for the insertion of the ruler's personality in the permanent, extra-constitutional consciousness of the people.

But legal historians are quite right, that it is above all for the ruler's role as an issuer of norms, regulations to be obeyed generally and for the future, that we need to seek the constitutional basis, because that role is

[22] Lacey 1974 (C 146). [23] Dio LII.1.1. [24] EJ² 366. [25] EJ² 283; 368.

not explicable in terms of the 'blunt realities' of power. Augustus' word, though it was as well to obey it in the instant case, did not 'have the force of statute'. He was offered, as a special grant, the right to make *leges Augustae*, but turned it down; instead he put bills before the *comitia* by virtue of his tribunician power, and they became *leges Iuliae*.[26] He could summon and put motions to the Senate, but the resulting decisions were *senatus consulta*.[27] His edicts would lapse unless validated, at least tacitly, by his successors (though is was probably not doubted that they would be).[28] The *responsa prudentium*, 'opinions of the jurists' (the jurists of the late Republic had sought normative status for their *responsa*,[29] which came, in the imperial period, to count as an official source of law) continued to depend on the *auctoritas* of the individual jurist. Augustus, besides himself giving some *responsa*,[30] is said to have 'decided that they [the jurists] should give their opinions *ex auctoritate eius*'.[31] There are reasons for being extremely unsure what exactly that meant or what resulted from it. Some scholars see it as a takeover by the ruler of the interpretation of the law, which is very implausible; others think it just gave certain favoured jurists a status somewhat like that of English Queen's Counsel. In any case, what supported the privilege was not *imperium* or *potestas*, but, properly, *auctoritas*, Augustus' *auctoritas* supplementing, as it were, that of the particular jurist.

The ruler in the imperial period had the role, also, of supreme and ultimate judge. In the Republic there had been no supreme judge or court of the Roman state, and decisions both of the criminal and of the civil courts were inappellable. So it has again to be asked what part Augustus played in that important development, and by what constitutional authority. Under him the civil courts continued to function in the standard way, and so did the criminal *quaestiones*, with, even, an addition, the adultery court; and for the organization of them all the important pair of statutes *de iudiciis* was passed.[32] But besides that, there existed already judicial appeal to the ruler as a supreme court and jurisdiction by the ruler at first instance, in the form of pure *cognitio*: there is not much evidence, and it is anecdotal at that, but historians mostly, and rightly, accept that at least tentative beginnings can be perceived under Augustus.[33] Attempts to derive that *extra ordinem* jurisdiction of

[26] And after the one great burst of 'Julian Laws' there are very few certain cases of even those.

[27] Not until the second century A.D. was the *oratio principis* in the Senate treated as *per se* normative.

[28] For normative-looking edicts of Augustus see EJ[2] 282, and, in the law, *Dig.* 16.1.2 pr. and 28.2.26. [29] Frier 1985 (F 652) 186–7.

[30] E.g. *Dig.* 23.2.14.4. See also the new fideicommissary jurisdiction, *Inst. Just.* II.25 pr. and 23.1. [31] Pomponius at *Dig.* 1.2.2.49. On *ius respondendi* see, especially, Wieacker 1985 (F 706).

[32] Essential still: Girard 1913 (F 653). On the *decuriae*, see Bringmann 1973 (D 249) 235–42.

[33] Suet. *Aug.* 33; Val. Max. VII.7.3–4; Dio LV.7.2.

Augustus from republican precedents and his traditional constitutional powers[34] all fail, at least in part, however hard scholars press into service the early grants of 'judging when called upon' and the 'vote of Athena',[35] or seek to extract a judicial power from his proconsular *imperium* or – for those who believe in its existence – his consular *potestas*. It seems necessary to posit some formal legislative basis for Augustus' jurisdiction; and as that is unlikely to have been a statute of which no hint survives in the sources, a reasonable guess, in a situation of admitted uncertainty, is that something may have been contained in the *leges de iudiciis*. Be that as it may, the emergence of the ruler as supreme judge and head of the legal order is the principal formal difference between the Republic and the Empire.

III. ACHIEVEMENT

1. Governing class

However one may qualify or re-phrase, the late Republic was running into an imbalance between the growing scale of its responsibilities as a world power and the organization needed to meet them,[36] and, with further growth of empire, some initiatives would have had to be taken, though they did not need to be massive or revolutionary. The organs of government of the Roman empire are treated in various chapters below, but we must here consider what part Augustus played in their development.

To call the Senate an 'organ of government' brings out vividly the change it had to undergo, for it had been, not an 'organ', but the government itself. To an extent, that continued to be so.[37] There was no 'dyarchy': just as Augustus' *imperium maius* entitled him to determine things all over the empire, so *senatus consulta* could be of universal application. And the Senate gained (like Augustus) one completely new role, as a court of law.[38] Nor need it be doubted that Augustus' repeated efforts to reduce the size and purify the social composition of the Senate were motivated by his desire for that body to retain a responsible role in public affairs. The sub-committee he set up to prepare senatorial business with him will have improved, not diminished, the chance of the Senate to maintain a hold on serious matters of state, as well as for the ruler to propose initiatives and gauge reactions.[39] As individuals, the senators remained the holders of virtually all the top offices of state – in principle,

[34] The principal attempt is that of Jones 1960 (A 47) ch. 5.
[35] Dio LI.19.7; and see ch. 2 above, p. 74. [36] Though *contra*, Eck 1986 (C 82).
[37] Brunt 1984 (D 27). [38] Ov. *Tr.* II.131–2; Dio LV.34.2; and see ch. 12 below, pp. 408–9.
[39] Crook 1955 (D 10) 9–10.

all home magistracies, all legionary legateships and all governorships of provinces, save for the one major exception, Egypt, and a few minor ones. (Nor was Egypt any harbinger of change: no further major province, nor any other legionary command, became equestrian till Severan times.) Senators also retained charge of the state treasury, and supplied, exclusively, the personnel of a number of new administrative committees: *praefecti frumenti dandi* from 22 B.C.; *curatores viarum* from 20 B.C., *curatores aquarum* from 11 B.C.; *praefecti aerarii militaris* from A.D. 6; *curatores operum publicorum* (not datable); *curatores frumenti*[40] for acquiring grain in A.D. 6 and 7; the consular commission on expenditure, A.D. 6; the consular committee to take over embassies, from A.D. 8. The consuls were also charged with a new jurisdiction over *fideicommissa*, testamentary trusts. Finally, experimental but with a future of high prestige, there was the prefecture of the city.

An important advance on tradition, however, was that Augustus created in the senatorial order something closer to a hereditary peerage.[41] Suetonius informs us that Augustus permitted the sons of senators to wear the 'broad stripe', *latus clavus*,[42] and Dio that in 18 B.C. he imposed a minimum property qualification upon candidates for office, which settled at 250,000 drachmas – a million sesterces. Dio states, indeed, that Augustus' original minimum was 100,000 drachmas (400,000 sesterces), but that was just the 'equestrian' rating that everybody had to have to serve as an officer, the necessary preliminary to all political office. So 18 B.C. should date the inception of a specifically senatorial *census*.[43] Sons of senators could, henceforward, automatically stand for the offices that – still, alone – gave entrance to the order. Suetonius does not say that others could only do so as a *beneficium* of the ruler, thus giving him sole control over access to the order, but the power may have been employed to keep out 'gatecrashers'.[44] As for the property qualification, the figure was presumably chosen with an eye to getting a senatorial order of the desired size, for there were plenty of people – and not only senators – much richer than the minimum.

But Augustus' struggle was uphill, because he could not bring himself to accept the inevitability of apathy. To put it in a homely form, if you say to people 'I am the ruler, but please, everybody, carry on exactly as usual', they won't. The honorific and social position was still a goal, and legionary and provincial commands were still sought after, but the requirement of residence to attend formal meetings was thought a

[40] Dio LV.26.2; 31.4.

[41] Nicolet 1976 (D 53); Chastagnol 1973 (D 31) and 1975 (D 33). Both Mommsen and Willems had, in their day, pointed this out.

[42] Suet. *Aug.* 38.2; Suetonius does not necessarily imply that (for example, owing to a 'crisis of recruitment') they were forced to enter the Senate.

[43] Dio LIV.17.3; Suet. *Aug.* 41.1, with Carter's note. [44] As in 36 B.C., Dio XLIX.16.1.

nuisance. Hence the changes that had to be made in the rules of senatorial procedure.[45] The 'acts of the Senate' ceased to be published,[46] and it is possible that that was intended actually to encourage freedom of oral debate; but principally the changes were by way of securing proper levels of attendance:[47] increased fines for absence, fixing of regular sessions of the Senate fortnightly on specified days, and – in capitulation, really – lowering of the quorum needed to pass valid *senatus consulta*.

Recently, in line with the general theme of 'opting out' whose repercussions on the 'divine family' were seen in chapter 2 above, historians have discerned a 'crisis of recruitment' in the governing class, especially in the Senate. In 13 B.C. the Senate itself, in Augustus' absence, alarmed at the situation, appointed men from the equestrian order to the lowest set of senatorial posts, the 'vigintivirate' (allowing them to remain *equites*), and obliged ex-quaestors over forty to draw lots for the tribunate; and on his return Augustus compelled some people with the requisite *census* to enter the Senate. In the following year there was again a shortage for the tribunate, and *equites* were forced into it, with a choice, at the end, which order to stay in. In A.D. 5 (and often, says Dio) people were unwilling to be aediles, and compulsion was used. Suetonius alleges that the additional *decuria* was necessitated by avoidance of jury-service, and Dio records the difficulty of getting people to offer their daughters as Vestal Virgins.[48] We can, then, agree as to the phenomenon, provided that a careful distinction be made. For the people at the lower end of the elite group, the sort who in the Republic would not have got beyond quaestorian rank and would have remained *senatores pedarii*, in the new dispensation the rank was not worth the trouble and expenditure. But the top was unaffected; praetorships and consulships were still sought after and fought over, hence Augustus' need to pass a *lex de ambitu* and make a rule, in 8 B.C., requiring deposits from candidates for office.[49] In 23 B.C. he had declared that only ten praetors were needed annually, and the figure was kept at that for a few years; but there was pressure, and they were restored to twelve. And in A.D. 11, there being sixteen candidates, all were let in.[50] As for the consulship, both its relinquishment by Augustus from 23 B.C. and the introduction of a second pair each year, which was regular from 5 B.C., must be seen as a response to the number of men eagerly surging up through the system and wanting the social reward: the age at which *nobiles* might reach the consulship was actually lowered.[51] So it is no wonder that in the Augustan marriage-laws one of the privileges achieved by the possession of children was priority in the candidature for office.

[45] Talbert 1984 (D 77) 222–4, following Rotondi, posits a *lex Iulia de senatu habendo* of 9 B.C.
[46] Suet. *Aug.* 36.1. [47] Dio LIV.18.3 and 35.1; LV.3. [48] Suet. *Aug.* 32; Dio LV.22.5.
[49] Dio LV.5.3. [50] Dio LVI.25.4. [51] Syme 1986 (A 95) 51–3

The election to magistracies was plainly not intended by Augustus to go simply by his fiat. There was insistence on giving people the vote, as in the arrangements for the decurions of the twenty-eight Italian *coloniae* to have a kind of 'postal vote';[52] and Agrippa's new Saepta and Diribitorium must have been intended and used for actual voting and vote-counting, even if also for exhibitions. That might not be very significant: by Pliny's time, elections by the people in the Campus, though they still happened, were just a piece of pageantry. But to the extent to which, in Augustus' day, the ruler still needed to influence them, that state had not yet arrived. We are told how he gave presents to his own tribes and canvassed personally for his preferred candidates.[53] One of his privileges was that of 'commendation' of candidates for the higher offices, who were then 'candidates of Caesar' and automatically elected: Augustus seems to have used it sparingly, and not at all (as far as we know) for the consulship. He did not 'give' consulships to people, though we have seen in chapter 2 how he caused special arrangements to be made for the young hopefuls of the 'divine family'. Dio asserts that Augustus often chose the urban praetor himself[54] (not, it appears, the peregrine praetor, who shared the civil jurisdiction, which shows that this is nothing to do with a 'grip on the law'); doubtless what that means is that he decided which of the annually elected praetors should have the hierarchically senior position.[55] As for governors of provinces, those of Augustus' own *provincia* were, properly, his to choose: it was an immense hold on promotion to the really significant jobs. The proconsulships of the 'provinces of the Roman people', were, in principle, still determined by the lot. Some scholars are minded to show that they were somehow picked with an eye to particular talent or suitability or experience.[56] The attempt results in very little, but some manipulation of the lot is plausible, for ensuring, for example, that Africa got a soldier when needed, and we know that the lot was abandoned in at least one period of emergency.

In any case, it is a merit of recent scholarship to have pointed out that, in the Empire just as in the Republic, public responsibilities were not specialized (not even, by and large, the military ones, for every gentleman had to do some soldiering). Provided candidates seemed loyal and ordinarily competent, it did not greatly matter who received which office, and there was little need to gerrymander the system in detail, except, perhaps, negatively, to exclude men not competent enough – or too competent. The great, overriding campaign commands were just put, unashamedly, in the hands of members of the 'divine family';

[52] Suet. *Aug.* 46; cf. EJ² 301 II, 2. [53] Suet. *Aug.* 40.2; 56.1. [54] Dio LIII. 2.3.
[55] People who became *collegae imperii* seem to have held, as praetors, the urban praetorship.
[56] Szramkiewicz 1975–6 (D 75).

otherwise, the important criteria were, really, social, and it is best to view the whole as an honours system, positions of distinction graded in a traditional ladder up which the socially ambitious could move. Its other importance was as a 'brokerage' system in the distribution of the ruler's *beneficia*, because it was those who rose in the order whose recommendations carried weight, and who could obtain favours for the people or cities who were their *clientes*.[57]

The only other 'order' that mattered was that of the *equites*, and to them Augustus looked for some administrative personnel, without whom he would have had to expand the traditional magistracies and so dilute the senatorial *crème de la crème*. The wealthy class of newly united Italy was ready to be brought into the scheme of things. We have learnt better, however, than to see Augustus as 'inventing the Roman civil service' or harnessing to his regime the skills of a 'business class'. He used individuals of different kinds and skills and backgrounds, and did not create for them a *cursus honorum* in imitation of that of the senators: that was a later development. He did take steps to give the order a stronger collective image, with a formal 'entrance examination' and an annual equestrian parade, and, when Gaius and Lucius Caesar were old enough, making them its honorary presidents. From the funeral honours for Germanicus[58] we learn of a Lex Valeria Cornelia of A.D. 5, by which a new electoral committee of senators and select *equites* was interposed between candidature for office and the *comitia*, choosing a list of persons *destinati*, to be added, probably, to any *commendati*, to be put before the assembly of the people. It was allowed for that there might still be more candidates presenting themselves independently, but maybe from then on the assembly was virtually a rubber stamp. The significance of the new committee has been variously assessed; one view is that it had a political purpose, to encourage, by allowing some *equites* a say in the process, the rise to office of 'new men' favourable to Tiberius. But the more sober, and now prevailing, view is that it was an 'honour', a further special mark of distinction for the equestrian order.[59]

When it came to the offices opened to the *equites*, there was, in Augustus' conception, no 'ladder'.[60] The order maintained, in any case, its traditional role as a principal source for the manning of the standard jury-courts and the filling of junior army officerships. The most significant of the new functions were for experienced military *equites*: the prefectures of small provinces and of the naval squadrons, and the census

[57] Saller 1982 (F 59) 94–111 and 73–8.

[58] The *rogatio Valeria Aurelia* of A.D. 19. Sources: *Tabula Hebana*, EJ² 94a; *Tabula Siarensis*, J. González 1984 (B 234); Rome fragment, *CIL* VI 31199; perhaps also the *Tabula Ilicitana*, EJ² 94b (or the latter may come from similar honours for Drusus in A.D. 23).

[59] Brunt 1961 (C 47).

[60] Dismantling of the 'ladder' began with Sherwin-White 1939 (D 65).

officerships in the provinces. Above all, of course, stood the prefecture of Egypt and Alexandria itself. The first three prefects performed important military tasks; quite a number of other prefects are known by name from Augustus' reign, but we hear little of their activities, they had short terms of office, and they were socially not of high consequence.[61] *Equites* were also employed in new procuratorial, that is financial, offices (though such offices might go to freedmen, such as the notorious Julius Licinus).[62] The equestrian offices in the capital arose only relatively late, in the process of experimentation: the two praetorian prefects first in 2 B.C., the *praefectus vigilum* in A.D. 6, the *praefectus annonae* not before A.D. 7.[63] The stimulus may not have been so much growing confidence in the equestrians as dissatisfaction with experiments using senatorial committees.[64]

In the imperial period there is a civil service, purely executive, staffed by 'slaves of Caesar' and 'freedmen of Augustus' (until its headships begin to go to *equites*, and then we really are in a different world). There are, especially, a number of central posts occupied by freedmen, the secretaryships of correspondence, accounts, and petitions being the principal: and for a period in the first century A.D. holders of some of those posts had powerful personal influence on the rulers. Augustus' part in initiating the system is hard to estimate because of shortage of evidence, but historians, probably rightly, tend to conclude from that shortage that the beginnings, under him, were slight and unsystematic. To his last instructions, leaving behind a military and financial handbook to the empire, he 'appended also the names of the freedmen and slaves who could be called to account',[65] which suggests a precursor of the Department of Accounts; but the floodtide of correspondence was yet to come,[66] and the regular answering of, at any rate, legal petitions a later development. Certainly, there is no sign of any such persons having political influence on Augustus. Naturally, there was also a large personnel, greater than, though not different in kind from, that of the republican *principes viri*, of household servants, and with the rise of a 'court' (to which we shall come) it was destined to become very large indeed. But Augustus treated his servants sternly,[67] and no sign is yet to be detected of the influence of chamberlains or the like, let alone of the ruler's inaccessibility behind layers of personnel.

Our focus has shifted from the way Augustus secured the personnel he needed to the extent of their influence upon him. The 'Party' has been

[61] Brunt 1975 (E 906). [62] Dio LIV. 21.3–8.

[63] It is likely that the *praefectus vehiculorum* also goes back to Augustus, though not yet epigraphically attested so early: Suet. *Aug.* 49.3.

[64] Eck 1985 (C 82). [65] Suet. *Aug.* 101.4.

[66] Though for a trace of a precursor of *ab epistulis* see Suet. *Aug.* 67.2, with Kienast 1982 (C 136) 262. [67] Suet. *Aug.* 67; 74.

adduced, and the *amici principis* were his obvious channel of advice; but it is practically impossible to attribute any particular action to the influence of a specific individual, except in a few cases of personal patronage. Crucially lacking, of course, are the files, letters, memoirs and diaries from which historians of the modern age extract such information. In accordance with *mos maiorum*, Augustus brought in persons of standing, of his choice, when public decisions had to be seen to be made; they can be observed, listed hierarchically, in the minutes of formal meetings.[68] It is also quite certain that Augustus used *amici* of his choice, according to their talents and the matter in hand, as his informal *consilium*, summoned according to need.[69] Doubtless they did exercise influence; someone must have been involved, for example, in the orchestration of the imperial symbolism (a subject to which we shall come). Doubtless, too, the senatorial probouleutic sub-committee was not always on the mere receiving end. But that is all that can be said.[70] There were *éminences grises*: Maecenas and Sallustius Crispus were sources of confidential information and privy to secret plans, and people, no doubt rightly, believed that they could get what they wanted;[71] but we do not actually know what items of policy sprang from their brains.[72] Livia Drusilla, always at her husband's side, may have had the greatest influence of all; in her case, the less people knew, the more – and worse – they guessed. Prosopography has, to be sure, given vivid life to a number of powerful personalities of the age whom we may well guess to have been immensely influential: M. Lepidus, M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, L. Calpurnius Piso, consul of 15 B.C., Cn. Cornelius Lentulus, consul of 14 B.C., Paullus Fabius Maximus, consul of 11 B.C., and plenty of others. But the most characteristic means whereby Augustus obtained the co-operation of, and promoted to high responsibilities, the people of his choice, was their incorporation in the ramifications of the 'divine family'.[73] Complex family alliances were not in the least contrary to tradition, but when such an alliance revolved round just one *princeps vir* instead of many, the quantitative change became qualitative, and an imperial court was in the making. To the ideological aspects of the 'divine family' we shall return; its practical aspect was that the greatest commands and the most spectacular diplomatic missions went – and were held for as long as the ruler thought necessary – to the closest members of his family and then, as it were, spread outwards. It is likely that, insofar as they were experienced enough, those men were also Augustus' principal counsel-

[68] *EJ*[2] 379, lines 34–40. [69] Crook 1955 (D 10) ch. 3.
[70] Policy about codicils was suggested by the jurist Trebatius Testa, *Inst. Just.* II. 25.
[71] Hor. *Sat.* 1.9.43–56; II.6.38–58.
[72] Crispus may have been solely responsible for the elimination of Agrippa Postumus.
[73] For the process, and the people, see Syme 1986 (A 95).

lors and collaborators; hence the political tragedy of Augustus' unwillingness to trust Tiberius and Tiberius' withdrawal from collaboration with Augustus.

2. *Policy*

What, with hindsight, historians analyse as Roman 'policy' was often, simply, the Roman government's pragmatic reaction to situations. (The 'spread of citizenship', with the founding of new coloniae, is, as far as Augustus is concerned, a case in point, because veterans had to be settled somewhere.) There are, nonetheless, one or two areas in which it is proper to speak of, and needful briefly to review, Augustus' 'policy'. He had a military and imperial policy: that is assessed in chapter 4 below. He had a financial and budgetary policy and a social and demographic policy. He also had an ideology, the most important part of the whole story.

A degree of financial policy and initiative greater than that of the Republic was forced upon Augustus by the need for a permanent military budget. What was needed was relatively exact housekeeping – and the *Res Gestae* was evidently composed by someone who relished exact figures. A 'statement of accounts' of the empire, such as was left by Augustus to his successor, had already been available to be handed to his fellow-consul in 23 B.C., when he thought he was dying.[74] The general basis of taxation from the republican time was not seriously changed, except for the introduction, quite late on, of the estate duty, *vicesima hereditatium*, to feed the new account for meeting army discharge gratuities. However, a full property and poll census of the provinces was put in hand, gradually and over many years; it was imposed particularly on newly acquired regions, where it was regarded as the principal sign of subjection and was a major cause of unrest. Besides army pay, another costly item was the supply of free corn at Rome (though much of the taxation for that came in in kind). Augustus did not invent the policy of 'bread and circuses'; in fact, probably after the great food panic of A.D. 6, he was minded to abolish the *frumentatio* (his motive being not economic but social, namely the very conservative belief that free corn at Rome lured citizens away from the admirable activity of peasant farming). But he concluded that abolition was politically inexpedient.[75] The main economic fact, however, that determined policy was the enormous, and ever-growing, wealth of the ruler himself; the *patrimonium* could serve as an alternative treasury, and enabled Augustus to practise a kind of deficit financing on the main accounts, with himself making up the shortfall from his private fortune. Chapters 15 to 18 of the *Res Gestae* tell the story:

[74] Dio LIII.30.2. [75] Suet. *Aug.* 42.3.

'. . . four times I helped the state treasury with my money'; '. . . from the year of the Lentuli [18 B.C.], when the public revenues were insufficient, I gave subventions of corn and cash from my own granary and bank to sometimes 100,000 people and sometimes many more'. The ruler thus imposed on himself, as the richest citizen, a kind of super-liturgy, which enabled him – as the ancient liturgical principle always enabled the payer – to take on the role of super-benefactor.[76]

Except for that part of the taxation of the provinces that was paid in kind, the Roman empire had a money economy. In particular, the armies were paid in cash, and so were the principal officials. Governors of provinces received large salaries (which was an important innovation of Augustus),[77] and equestrian officialdom was from the start a salaried service. As in every respect, so in that of coinage the Roman imperial system relied on the continuance of local government and practice, and so the cities of the Roman world went on issuing, for everyday use, their own, mostly bronze, coinages. The gold and, above all, the silver coinages, for major payments, passed into the control of Rome, the ruler. Numismatists tell us that under Augustus there came into being a 'world coinage'. There was less of policy about that than just the way things worked out (and the only actual Augustan change in the currency system was, surprisingly, in the non-precious metal currency of Rome, which became bimetallic):[78] huge coinages had been issued in the triumviral period, to pay the rival armies, so there was much in circulation; the government opened and closed mints at different times and places, as and when the need was perceived for specific quantities of new coin. The total production was, undeniably, enormous.[79]

The aspect of Augustus' activity, however, that most plainly deserves the name of 'policy' is that which is commonly called his 'social policy', since it evidently sprang from passionate personal concern: he doggedly fought his own elite over it. The impression given by much recent writing is that Augustus was both revolutionary, in trying to mould the morality and demography of a society by legislation, and at the same time grossly illiberal and reactionary in the rules he sought to impose. As was pointed out in chapter 2 above, there stood behind Augustus a strong republican tradition of the state's interference in the behaviour of the citizens, through legislation, the courts, and, above all, the censorship.[80] As to the illiberality, it has often been characteristic of dictators and the like to treat what part, at least, of the citizenry regard as freedoms of personal choice as signs of decadence, and try to curb them, and Augustus is easily tarred with that brush; but the debate about the state's

[76] Not only in the capital: Suet. *Aug.* 47.1; Dio LIV.23.7–8. [77] Dio LIII.15.4.
[78] *Sestertii* and *dupondii* of brass (*orichalcum*), *asses* and *quadrantes* of copper.
[79] Sutherland 1976 (B 336) ch. 4, and ch. 8 below, pp. 316–19. [80] See ch. 2 above, p. 93.

role in relation to morality and family is perennial, and we should beware of imposing a current standard too crudely. Augustus shared with Cicero[81] the belief in a superior early and middle Republic, whose victories had been based on better morals and solider family virtues, and he strove to re-create that idealized past.

The legislation relating to slaves and former slaves (freedmen and freedwomen) occurs relatively late in Augustus' reign, and was not part of the 'package' of the *leges Iuliae*.[82] Proposed by consuls, it may well have been with the approval or even at the initiative of the Senate; for the governing class had a tradition (as can be seen in 'sumptuary laws') of restraining their richer members from stepping too far out of line.[83] The astute may even detect, in the Lex Aelia Sentia, some competing pressures, for example, between the drastic regulation of the number and kind of persons who could be elevated to Roman citizenship by the mere process of being liberated by a Roman owner, and, on the other hand, the even-handed provisions governing conduct between freed people and their former owners.[84] The *leges Iuliae de adulteriis* and *de maritandis ordinibus* and the Lex Papia Poppaea are the group that represent a moral commitment evinced by Augustus from the beginning,[85] and never given up. The curious title of the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* seems to relate only to those parts of the big statute that restricted the right to full Roman marriage between certain status classes, for example between the senatorial order and freed persons and between all freeborn persons and the usual classes of 'people of low repute' (*infames*); but its best-known feature is the pressure that it placed on citizens to marry and re-marry, backed by rewards for those with at least three children and penalties for the childless. The rewards included priority in the competition for public office, and the penalties included severe public marks of disesteem for the unmarried; but the system was made to turn a good deal on how far people were allowed to take inheritances, and those rules did not apply as between close kin, nor below a modestly high property rating. It is fair to infer that it was the birth-rate in the upper ranks of society that Augustus cared about (less so to infer that the true purpose of the legislation was different from what lies on its face, such as the preservation of estates).[86] It is, of course, true that Augustus did not dispose of proper demo-

[81] Cic. *Marcell.* 23.

[82] The Lex Iunia, which created the status of 'Junian Latins', bears the title *Iunia Norbana* in *Inst. Just.* 1. 5.3, and should be dated to A.D. 19 accordingly. If it had been part of the early batch of Augustus' laws it would have been a Lex Iulia like the rest.

[83] For *leges sumptuariae* of Julius Caesar and of Augustus in the old republican tradition, see Rotondi 1912 (F 685) 421 and 447 and Gell. *NA* 11.24.14–15.

[84] Accusation of ingratitude against freedmen, *Dig.* 40.9. 30 pr.; but if patron fails to support freedman he loses rights, *Dig.* 38.2.33; and if he obliges freedman or freedwoman to agree not to marry he loses rights, *Dig.* 37.14.15.

[85] The standard view; challenged by Badian 1985 (F 4).

[86] So Wallace-Hadrill 1981 (F 73).

graphic knowledge about the trend of the birth-rate and what needed to be achieved to change it; but he probably thought he knew quite enough, and the upper class he could, if unsystematically, observe. His legislation was not going to produce waves of stout yeomen (unless by imitation of their betters), but what he might achieve was a stable officer class. That such was his aim is corroborated by two other new legal rules that will have had importance mainly for the better-off: first, the introduction of *peculium castrense*, the fund comprising what a *filius familias* earned from, or acquired in connexion with, his military service, which he could control independently of his *paterfamilias*; and, secondly, the rule that a *paterfamilias* was not allowed to disinherit a *filius familias* during his military service.[87]

Augustus was, then, probably telling in the *Res Gestae* the simple truth about what he conceived his legislation to have been for: 'By new statutes passed on my initiative I restored many good examples of our forbears that were disappearing from the current age, and I personally[88] handed on to posterity examples of many things for them to imitate'. That does not mean that it was particularly successful or that it was without pernicious consequences, of which perhaps the worst was that the marriage laws conjured up a fiscal interest in escheated estates that had not existed before.

3. Ideology

The act of creative policy, however, that was Augustus' abiding legacy to Rome was the bringing into being of an ideology of rule, parallel to the careful traditionalism of most of what has been spoken of so far – surprising, in that it manifests itself quite early in Augustus' reign, and multifaceted, so that to describe it even summarily involves consideration of many phenomena, of which the 'imperial cult' is only one. Glorification of the personality of the ruler, advertisement of his role, proclamation of his virtues, pageantry over his achievements, visual reminders of his existence, and the creation of a court and a dynasty: those are, *par excellence*, the things that make A.D. 14 different from 30 B.C.

It is a difficult question how far the pattern of ideas and symbols that pervades the culture of Augustus' age was 'orchestrated'. Scholars do make such a claim,[89] and, however great the need to resist exaggeration, at least some of the broad lines of the pattern must have been someone's deliberate contrivance. Augustus was probably entirely sincere when he

[87] Respectively, *Tit. Ulp.* 20.10; *Dig.* 28.2.26.

[88] *RG* 8, 5. The Greek version says 'I gave myself as an example'.

[89] They are influenced by Weinstock 1971 (F 235). See, e.g., Gros 1976 (F 397) esp. ch. 1; Zanker 1987 (F 632) 110–13; 215.

said he wanted to be remembered as the creator of the 'best possible condition' (*optimus status*), and in his delight when the crew and passengers of a ship from Alexandria put on festal dress and poured libations and cried that 'because of him they had their livelihood, because of him they sailed the seas, they enjoyed freedom and prosperity through him';[90] but into that broad river flowed many channels, some the result of more deliberate channelling than others.

The public cult of the ruler bulks large in the ideology of the Roman empire. Augustus began it – though Iulius Caesar and Antony would have done the same. Cult means, strictly, performing acts of worship to the ruler as a god, but, broadly conceived, it is about people's perceptions and descriptions of the ruler and his role, and also about the practical business of securing and rewarding adherents in positions of importance in the cities and regions. The cult of the ruler as founder, saviour and benefactor was well established in the Greek-speaking world, and such honours had been bestowed, from time to time, on Roman commanders in the late Republic; even 'Roma', as a divinity, had come to be an object of cult in the East.[91] But it was the rival claims of the triumvirs to influence in the cities that raised the stakes in the game,[92] and hence the cult and symbolism of the ruler were promoted and financed in the East by Augustus and by his wealthier supporters.[93] In Rome, the plebs had offered worship to Scipio, Marius and Iulius Caesar, but its betters had been too strongly *principes inter pares* for that, and Augustus behaved carefully. A gesture used by his successors, but no doubt deriving from him,[94] was the refusal of public divine honours for his person in his lifetime: we have seen how he declined to allow Agrippa's temple in the Campus to be called 'Augusteum'. On the other hand, there were by now many Roman citizens about the world: the colonizations of Iulius Caesar had made a big difference. For them, the answer was an official cult of 'Rome and Augustus'. The West and North (except for Provence, southern Spain and Africa, long the home of *cives Romani*) were still under conquest and first-stage reorganization, and had no traditions offering precedent: Augustus promoted there major centres of cult and ceremony, the 'Altar of the Three Gauls' at Lugdunum and the 'Altar of the Ubii' at Cologne. For the Roman plebs there was yet another expedient in this rich fund of devices, the setting of a new cult of the *genius*, or 'abiding spirit', of the ruler amongst the little tutelary gods of the 'blocks' of urban Rome, the *lares compitales*: their cult was in the charge of the 'block leaders', *magistri vicorum*.[95] Those *magistri* were

[90] Suet. *Aug.* 28.2; 98.2. [91] Mellor 1975 (F 186). [92] Reynolds 1982 (B 270) nos. 7, 8 and 12.
[93] Millar 1984 (D 102). The 'Common Councils' certainly pre-existed, but they were turned into a principal focus of the cult. [94] Charlesworth 1939 (F 115).
[95] Simon 1986 (F 577) 97–103; Zanker 1987 (F 632) 135–8.

freedmen; Augustus took account more globally of the fact that large numbers of Roman citizens were actually of that status, promoting another novelty: *collegia* of freedmen devoted to the cult of the ruler came into being in the cities under the title of 'Augustales', forming a freedman elite parallel to the municipal elites of the freeborn.[96]

No account on the scale here available can do justice to this vast subject. The antiquarian revival of cults, temples and ceremonies in Rome, and the harnessing of the major priesthoods to the new order, are part of the story;[97] so, too, the inclusion of Augustus' *genius* in oaths sworn by the divinities; so, too, the additions to the religious calendar celebrating his important dates. We have been bidden, rightly, to develop an imagination for the enormous visual impact of it all, with images of the ruler everywhere, in endless profusion, both actual and portrayed on the coinage. In summary, the whole complex was meant to serve as an ecumenical unifying force: citizens and non-citizens, classes and statuses, language- and culture-groups enmeshed in a common, though varied, symbolic network, and the cult acts of Gallic magnates, leading bourgeois of Asia, successful freedmen in the *municipia*, the plebs of Rome, and the legions,[98] all focussed on the ruler, legitimizing his rule on the charismatic plane, while ministering at the same time to their own desire for social prominence.

The 'divine family' must return into consideration here, from a more conceptual viewpoint. Should we, for example, see Livia Drusilla as an 'empress', or Gaius and Lucius Caesar as 'princes'? Did Augustus inhabit a 'palace', and was he surrounded by a 'court'? The best answer to all those questions would be 'hardly, yet', and, as in the constitutional sphere, comparison with the Severan or Diocletianic age shows how far there was to go. Yet transition was certainly occurring, as can be neatly seen in the matter of Augustus' house.[99] Its nucleus was the house of the republican orator, Hortensius, on the south-western slope of the Palatine, and it remained modest in type and scale, though neighbouring properties were added to it[100] to an extent that is yet uncertain (and the well-known 'House of Livia' presumably came to count as part of it). But the symbolic significance of the dwelling was played upon with insistence.[101] Augustus' temple of Apollo was built not merely adjacent to it but connecting directly with it. Then, in 27 B.C., the civic crown of oak was placed permanently above its doorway, and laurels were planted to flank the entrance.[102] When Augustus became *pontifex maximus* in 12

[96] Duthoy 1978 (E 37).

[97] Augustus was, besides *pontifex maximus*, a member of all the major priestly colleges; and their role on the Ara Pacis is evident.

[98] Kienast 1982 (C 136) 211, with n. 168.

[99] Coarelli 1985 (E 20) 129–33.

[100] Suet. *Aug.* 72.1.

[101] Wiseman 1994 (F 81) esp. 101–8.

[102] *RG* 34, 2.

B.C., a shrine of Vesta was consecrated in the house.[103] After a fire on the Palatine in A.D. 2 or 3, in which the house of Augustus and the temple of the Magna Mater suffered badly, a public subscription was got up, of which Augustus graciously accepted part; but he then declared the house public property, as being the residence of the *pontifex maximus*.[104] A few years later, Ovid, describing how his books from exile might approach the ruler, shows – if we discount a degree of understandable sycophancy – how much more than a mere house the 'Caesaris domus', though still so called, had become.[105]

The association of the ruler's family with him took no long time to develop.[106] We have seen the 'divine family' on exhibition in the frieze of the Ara Pacis of 13 B.C., and can see it at a later stage in the inscriptions recorded in the Codex Einsiedlensis as coming from statues that adorned a gateway at Ticinum, dated to Augustus' thirtieth tribunician power, A.D. 7-8.[107] Honours, even cult, were paid in the cities to members of the family besides Augustus. To what extent the group associated, or even lived, together is uncertain;[108] but there sound like the makings of a 'court' when we hear of Augustus' views about the younger members appearing for dinner with their elders and whether young Claudius could be allowed to make public appearances,[109] and there is rather more evidence about the education of the 'princes' and other youngsters who belonged to the charmed circle.[110] The house of a *princeps vir* of the republican time had never been solely a haven of privacy, so it was not new for the ruler to live his life in the public gaze, but Augustus wanted his *domus* to serve as a universal exemplar of the values he aimed to promote.

Most of the evidence about imperial insignia and ceremonial[111] concerns developments later than Augustus: till well after his day, accessibility of the ruler and primacy *inter pares* remained the ideal. The orb and sceptre carried by the 'emperor', the sacred fire carried before the 'empress', belong to an ideology that was to lead to the remote and hieratic emperorship of late antiquity, and hardly began before the middle of the second century A.D. Yet some seminal elements can already be traced, for example, in the oak-leaf crowns and laurel wreaths, and the symbolism of victory-on-the-orb on the coinage and elsewhere; and

[103] The Calendar for April 28, in EJ. [104] Dio LV.12.4–5.

[105] Ov. *Tr*, I.i.69–70; III.i.33–40. The formal approach was by then, it seems, from the northern side, via the Forum Romanum.

[106] Beginning with the grant of tribunician sacrosanctity to Livia and Octavia, the wives of the triumvirs, in 35 B.C. [107] EJ² 61.

[108] Agrippa was offered a home there in 25 B.C., after his own had burnt down, Dio LIII.27.5; but it is not clear that that was more than temporary. [109] Suet. *Aug.* 64.3; *Claud.* 4.1–6.

[110] Wallace-Hadrill 1983 (B 190) 177–80; Kienast 1982 (C 136) 253–63.

[111] Alföldi 1971 (F 246) and 1980 (F 247).

Augustus was accorded the right to wear at any time the triumphal costume, which was the dress of Jupiter himself, and included a sceptre.

In any case, ceremonial in a wider sense was of the first importance. Augustus was a supreme showman (or someone was on his behalf), and made a perpetually inventive use of the 'parallel language' to maintain himself and his achievements in the public consciousness. The games and shows are one part of the story, valuable to him to establish a relationship to his plebs, to preside over its pleasures and expose himself to its demonstrations. Augustus provided generously, adding *ludi Actiaci* and *ludi Martiales* to the traditional regular series; and there were regular games on his birthday from 11 B.C. onwards. Triumphs, the irregular spectacle *par excellence*, reserved after 19 B.C. for members of the 'divine family', were pretty rare, but they were complemented by the great funerals, often also with games: Marcellus, Octavia, Agrippa, Drusus. As for the posthumous honours for Gaius and Lucius Caesar, their complexity and comprehensiveness are revealed in detail by inscriptions[112] (which show, incidentally, that such ceremonies were not laid on only at Rome, but took place in the municipalities and provinces).

The reign was punctuated by other colourful excitements; Augustus' pride in them is attested by the attention given to them in the *Res Gestae*. There was the journey of Senate and people to Campania to meet the returning ruler in 19 B.C., with the ceremonies at the altar of Fortuna Redux: 'returns' became a standard occasion for pageantry. The *ludi saeculares* in 17 B.C., the thronged assembly for Augustus' assumption of the role of *pontifex maximus* in 12 B.C., the full triumph of Tiberius in 7 B.C., the successive installations of Gaius and Lucius as *principes iuventutis*, reached a culmination in 2 B.C. with the bestowal of the title *pater patriae* on Augustus and the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor, accompanied by gladiatorial combats and the long-remembered 'Naval Battle of the Greeks and Persians'. Perhaps creativity ran out after 2 B.C., but activity did not, for the games of A.D. 8 in honour of Germanicus and (astonishingly) Claudius were notable, and it must not be forgotten that it was intended for Augustus and Tiberius to hold full triumphs after the defeat of the Pannonian rebellion in A.D. 9, and Tiberius did celebrate one on 23 October of A.D. 12 or 13. The whole was, in any event, a remarkable calendar of novelties to keep the images of victory and peace simultaneously before the public eye.

Commonly related to the process of image-building are the legends and pictures on the Augustan coinage. It is wise to be cautious about calling them 'propaganda', not least because much uncertainty and disagreement persists as to whom the coinage was supposed to influence

[112] EJ² 68–9, and the material in n. 58 above.

and who decided on the types and legends.[113] Gold coinage, and even silver, down to the denarius (the 'tribute-money') will not often have been in the hands of ordinary people; and some of the best-known 'speaking' types and legends are portentously rare and must have been struck in relatively tiny issues, while, conversely, some very large emissions have relatively uninformative material on them. New money probably went first to the troops, so the influence of the coins may have been intended primarily for them; certainly, an explosion of vivid and dramatic, plainly propaganda, types is a feature of the years after Julius Caesar's assassination, and they were part of the armoury of the triumvirs and Sextus Pompeius. In the new age after Actium that momentum was maintained for a while, but it then diminished. Augustus' 'saving of the citizens' and the crown of oak leaves, and the Shield of the Virtues, achieved celebration, as did festivals and buildings and cult – Fortuna Redux, the *ludi saeculares*, Actian Apollo, the Altar of the Three Gauls and the temple of Rome and Augustus at Pergamum. The collegiality of Augustus and Agrippa was also given some emphasis. But the only specific promotional campaign run by the official coinage was bestowed on Gaius and Lucius Caesar (though the successes of Tiberius late in the reign did not go quite without mark). At least, however, the Augustan coinage was, even in terms of types, as well as scale, a world-coinage, with Lugdunum and Nemausus, Ephesus and Pergamum, all striking to recognizably similar effect, and as a dissemination of the image of the ruler that was tremendous.

Buildings also (to return to that important theme) were part of the image-making.[114] The public heart of the city of Rome was transformed: everyone knows how Augustus boasted that he had 'taken over a Rome of brick and left a Rome of marble',[115] and Ovid, justifying the *soignée* look for ladies, exclaims 'Before, all was country plainness: now Rome is of gold'.[116] The transformation was not just in grandeur, but in symbolic orientation towards the ruler. It is, indeed, unfair to see the programme solely in that context: improvement and amenity went hand in hand with symbolism. Sewers and water supply, markets and porticoes, theatres and an amphitheatre, improvements to the race-course, parks, baths and libraries now adorned Rome, and Agrippa's part was the more brilliant in that it combined the prosaic and the charismatic. But improvement stopped short when it paid no dividends in prestige (and when Agrippa was no longer there), so that some of the recurrent scourges of the plebs – floods, fires and collapses – were tackled with less than total commitment. About the transformation of Augustus' house enough has

[113] Consigliere 1978 (C 64); Sutherland 1976 (B 356); Levick 1982 (B 338); Wallace-Hadrill 1986 (B 362). [114] See the references in ch. 2, n. 13 above.
[115] Suet. *Aug.* 28.3. Carrara marble had just come into use. [116] Ov. *Ars Am.* III.113.

been said, and about his new Forum; but even the Forum Romanum took on the symbolism of the ruler and his divine ancestry, and Jupiter Tonans on the Capitol stole some of the limelight of the Capitoline god himself.[117] Agrippa adorned the middle Campus, Augustus the northern part, with the Mausoleum, the Ara Pacis and the Horologium. Buildings were erected by, or in the name of, many members of the 'divine family'; as for the republican tradition by which triumphing generals embellished the capital and built roads 'out of spoils' (*ex manubiis*), Augustus was keen for it to continue, and for a while it did, endowing Rome with such important structures as Asinius Pollio's Atrium Libertatis, with the first Roman public library, Cn. Domitius Calvinus' marble rebuilding of the Regia, T. Statilius Taurus' amphitheatre in the Campus and the major temples of C. Sosius (Apollo Sosianus in the Campus) and C. Cornificius (Diana on the Aventine). That tradition only died out because the triumphs and the independent commands on which they rested died out: the last major such building was the theatre of Balbus, and he was, precisely, the last person outside the 'divine family' to celebrate a full triumph.

It hardly needs saying that building programmes advertising the ruler were not confined to the capital. Nor, in the Roman world in general, were they confined to structures erected at government expense, for there was a great mass of building on local and private initiative, as the municipal wealthy responded to the stability of the 'Augustan Peace'. Much was, however, inspired from the centre, such as the Augustan arches that still stand in testimony to the construction of roads, city-walls and harbours, and other imposing structures still to be seen – the Pont du Gard, the Maison Carrée, the public buildings of Mérida: enough for the imagination to grasp how new a visual world had been created by A.D. 14. In the Roman Forum stood the Golden Milestone,[118] and the Chorographic Map of Agrippa stood in his sister Vipsania's portico.[119]

Of such elements was composed the great assault on the psychology of a generation. A consistent ideology is conveyed, an 'Augustan synthesis', the visual monuments being echoed by the literary monuments: it may be summarily spelt out, under three or four heads. First, this is a 'new age', *novum saeculum* – the keystone of Virgil's *Aeneid*,[120] the theme of the *ludi saeculares* and of the architectural transformation of Rome. It is an age in which the Hellenic and Roman cultural heritages are to be no longer enemies but partners,[121] a partnership symbolized by Actian Apollo, the god combining arms and arts, with his temple and libraries on the Palatine. The gift of the new age is the 'Augustan Peace'; and the

[117] On the Forum Romanum, Simon 1986 (F 577) 84–91; on Jupiter Tonans, Zanker 1987 (F 632) 114. [118] Dio LIV. 8.4. [119] Strab. II.5.17 (120C); Pliny, *HN* III.17.
[120] Virg. *Aen.* VI.791–853. [121] Bowersock 1965 (C 39) ch. 10.

prerequisite of that peace is the ruler's untiring devotion to his *cura*, by reason of his *virtus*, *clementia*, *iustitia* and *pietas*. But it demands an answering devotion from others, a willingness to constitute a nation of stern morality and stable family life: that comes out best in the most overtly moralizing of all the literary monuments, the *Carmen Saeculare* of Horace. And amongst the duties demanded is untiring militarism. For Roman victory and supremacy to be maintained the Romans must keep faith with their long history. That is the message of the Fasti Triumphales and the busts of Rome's heroes in the porticoes of the Augustan Forum, of the triumphal arches placed about the Roman world, and of the importance attached to the 'return of the standards' in the symbolic nexus. Virgil's 'Be it thy care, O Roman, to rule the peoples with thy sway' is the formal repudiation of the Epicureanism of Lucretius: 'Better to obey in quiet than wish to rule things with your sway and control kingdoms.[122]

4. *Resistance*

The 'Augustan synthesis', thus summarized, is a rich diet and a heady brew; historical therapy demands that it be countered, in conclusion, by more astringent and sobering reflections. The historian must ask how successful the mystique was. To what extent can we perceive scepticism, rejection, an alternative ideology,[123] a revolutionary temper, even? 'Resistance' is an insistent modern theme;[124] how much of it is to be found beneath the confident surface of the 'Augustan synthesis'?

A distinction can properly be made between political and ideological dissent within the Roman people (which is really our theme) and the resistance of conquered peoples to Roman imperialism. Of the latter there was enough and to spare, but the only question about it needing to be raised here is how Augustan rule was viewed in the Greek half of Rome's dominions. For the Greek world too, was a conquered world. Most of it, indeed, had been conquered already under the Republic, and the 'intellectual opposition' (a well-worn topic)[125] was rather to Rome in general than to the Augustan rearrangements – though it was them that Alexandria long bitterly resented.[126] By and large, the ruling classes, to whom the Augustan effort was mainly addressed, were glad of the 'Augustan Peace', which perpetuated their own local predominance; and there was no shortage of leading families eager for Roman citizenship. If

[122] Virg. *Aen.* VI.851; Lucr. V.1129–30.

[123] D'Elia 1955 (B 41); La Penna 1963 (B 102).

[124] See the collections of papers in Pippidi 1976 (A 72A) and Yuge and Doi 1988 (A 111).

[125] Bowersock 1965 (C 39) ch. 8.

[126] Hence the 'Acts of the Pagan Martyrs': for the Augustan items that may belong to them, see Musurillo 1954 (B 381) no. 1; *POxy* 3020; *POxy* 2435, verso (= EJ² 379).

they did not 'rally to the support of the Principate',[127] they did not rally against it. The two expatriate Greek intellectuals in Rome of the Augustan time of whose writings the most survives today, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Strabo of Amaseia, were enthusiastic supporters; if the rest of the Greek world was cooler, it was not estranged.

Coming, however, to Roman opposition to Augustus, we should first remember that there were conspiracies, numerous, it appears,[128] and spanning his whole reign. Heads of state are, notoriously, at the mercy of plain and simple assassination attempts by individuals, but it was – presumably – Augustus' triumph not to bring upon himself a conspiracy of an entire section of the governing class, as Iulius Caesar had done. As to conspiracy by factions within the 'divine family', reasons have been given for wariness in the face of some sensational hypotheses; in so far as such conspiracies existed, they seem to have been directed against the succession of Tiberius, and, in the end, by him against residual rivals.

More generally, however, we have to do with what was described earlier as resistance to playing the game by Augustus' rules and subscribing to the Augustan ethic. Modern studies place emphasis on the 'crisis of recruitment' of the senatorial class and Augustus' continual battle against the apathy of senators towards attendance in the Curia; they invite attention, too, to the 'crisis of recruitment' of the armed forces in the last decade of the reign. And, lastly, recent studies of Augustan Latin literature have dwelt upon the themes of resistance to tyranny, revolt against crude demands for panegyric and conformity, and covert undermining of the official ethic and promotion of an alternative ideology of 'love, not war' – with the fates of Cornelius Gallus, at one end, and Ovid, at the other, as the real, and damning, historical symbols of the 'Augustan Peace'.

As to the 'crisis of recruitment' in the governing elite, something has been already said, and a distinction has been insisted on: from the top parts of the *cursus honorum* and the valuable and prestige-enhancing offices of state there was no such flight, and leading dignitaries from the provinces would soon be eager for a place in the system. In the case of the armies, conscription was certainly needed at the military crisis, which shows that the envisaged system was over-stretched; the reduction of the legions to twenty-five after the Varian disaster may have brought the size of the citizen army into balance with what the recruiting possibilities were as well as what the treasury could afford. Already in A.D. 5 the length of service of legionary rank-and-file was raised from sixteen to twenty years, because time-expired soldiers were not staying on;[129] that implies that there were not plenty of citizens queuing to take over from

[127] Bowersock 1965 (C 39) 104; he is talking specifically about A.D. 6.
[128] Suet. *Aug.* 19.1; Dio LIV.15.1. [129] Dio LV.23.1.

them. But the undoubted eventual decline of recruitment in Italy was a very long-term process, hardly to be attributed to discontent with Augustus. He did not, after all, find himself constrained to raise the pay of the troops, he gave only two army donatives, and he was able to impose a prohibition of *iustum matrimonium* upon serving soldiers.[130] At his death the northern armies were just about to mutiny; but they had not, nor had the rest, simply melted away.

Finally, as to social and moral attitudes, in literature and life: Augustus proposed, in certain matters, standards stiffer than those to which part, at least, of the leading class were accustomed. Resistance to the legislation about sexual behaviour, marriage, celibacy and childlessness (and to the direct taxation of *cives Romani*!) was vociferous. On the other hand, the very practical case of high-status people engaging in theatrical and gladiatorial performances, and of the attempts by the Senate as well as Augustus to prohibit such conduct,[131] brings out the feature that the elite had motives for maintaining its own cohesion by drawing the bounds of accepted standards more tightly. Nevertheless, we can appreciate why, more than anything else, it was Augustus' daughter who broke the spell of Augustus' vision – the candid and caustic Iulia, who did every bit of her duty in her dynastic role but refused to bound her life with demure domesticity.

Some *bons mots* of Iulia survived, as did some of her father's[132] – and of his opponents. It is not right to imply (though that is sometimes done) that the voice of opposition was somehow suppressed from the historical record, for plenty of it has come down to us, not only in anecdotes but in whole passages in the chief historians where editors point out that the writer is 'following a hostile source'.

And the poets?[133] They have been seen by some as purveyors of propaganda, drafted in detail by someone for them to versify: for how else could their images correspond so well with those of the visual monuments? Patronage certainly demanded its *quid pro quo*, and it was open and explicit in that age: the frankest statement is the preface of Vitruvius' *De Architectura*.[134] We must beware of hypocrisy: we find no difficulty about accepting that the epigrammatists Crinagoras and Antipater wrote to order for the 'divine family' and others, or that the panegyrist of Messalla or the writer of the *Consolatio ad Liviam* were *clientes*, so why should we doubt it of the patriotic purple passages in the *Aeneid*, the 'Roman Odes' of Horace, the *Carmen Saeculare*, or Propertius'

[130] Campbell 1978 (D 172) esp. 153–4.
[131] Illuminated by the new bronze from Larinum, *AE* 1978, 145; see Levick 1983 (C 369).
[132] Julia: Macrob. *Sat.* II.5; Augustus, *ibid.* II.4. [133] See ch. 19, below.
[134] Vitr. *De Arch.* Praef. 2–3. Vitruvius was the only one to whom Augustus is known to have been direct patron.

celebrations of Roman legend? Tibullus, precisely because he never belonged to the crucial *salon*, could stay cool and aloof from the Augustan mystique, and Ovid was able to take on the role of cynic and 'debunker' for the same reason, while Propertius trod a complicated middle ground. It is in Ovid and Propertius that we meet most explicitly the 'alternative life style', the cult of the clandestine love-affair, the theme of *militia amoris*, or 'love, the true enlistment', and the cry that 'there shall no soldier be born of thee and me'.[135] Yet even among the 'establishment' poets there occurred *recusatio*, the elegant refusal of commissions: Augustus never got the simply conceived epic of his *Res Gestae* that he would have liked, nor the revival of good old native drama.[136] A recent tendency goes further, detecting concealed sniping even in the most panegyrical works. Is fulsomeness of praise, then, a form of deliberate 'overkill'? Is the *Aeneid*, actually, a condemnation of Augustan triumphalism (since it is, admittedly, not a naive affirmation)? Some recent claims may come to be thought exaggerated: what it is certainly important not to forget is that, with the exception of Ovid, the minds and hearts of the major poets – and of Livy – were formed before Augustus ever became Augustus, *and so were his mind and heart*. Their praise of peace and the unity of Italy and Rome's mission, their vision of the 'new age', grew out of the experiences of the late Republic and the triumviral age, and Augustus, their coeval, was the fortunate inheritor of those sentiments: he did not have to drum them up. It may be that all of them, *including himself*, as time went on, came to perceive only too well the price that had to be paid for the 'Augustan Peace'.

For the Augustan creation perpetuated some of the ruthlessness of its origins. Certainly, in the 'police states' that we nowadays know, the ordinary folk as well as their betters are under fear and compulsion – the informer in the pub and the apartment block, the exclusion of the dissident from employment and of his children from education, the bloody suppression of meetings and arrest of popular leaders. The Augustan regime did not possess the apparatus of ideological tyranny to operate on that global scale, though every provincial governor's duty of 'maintaining the peace' included keeping a sharp eye on public meetings, and both abroad and in Rome the *collegia* were anxiously controlled. In Rome, too, the Egnatius episode shows that the government would not tolerate a successful demagogue; and the city was heavily policed at the crisis of A.D. 6.

But if we stick to the ambience of the governing elite at the political centre, there, particularly, though not exclusively, in Augustus' later years, things were done that we do associate with the behaviour of 'police states': the widening of the range of offences counting as treason

[135] Prop. II.7.14. [136] If that is what he wanted, as argued by La Penna 1963 (B 102).

(with the inevitable encouragement of informers); banishments and exiles without trial; the sudden courier and the enforced suicide; the suppression of literature and the banning, and worse, of authors. And those things were a legacy: they formed part of the apparatus of rule of Augustus' successors, used from time to time as *raison d'état* demanded.

Yet, though they were a characteristic, they were not the dominant characteristic, nor even the dominant ultimate weakness, of Augustus' creation. The work known as the *Dialogus*, attributed to Tacitus, contains, through the mouth of an 'opposition' writer, a well-known expression of the view that the ending of the creative phase of, at least, Roman eloquence was directly due to the loss of freedom.[137] That was not the only view then,[138] nor need it be now; but historians are not wrong to perceive a general loss of momentum supervening on the Augustan triumphs. The late Republic had been moving fast; the very fact of Augustus' rule, let alone his ideals and policies, applied a brake that brought his whole society to a relative standstill. The 'New Age' was conceived of as a 'return to the Age of Saturn', not a great leap into the future; and just as the Greek literature of the age swung back from 'Asianism' to 'Atticism', so did the visual arts return from Hellenistic 'baroque' to serene Classicism and even a curious cult of the Archaic.[139] It is likely that to most of the upper classes in the Roman world, in most respects, that result was welcome rather than otherwise, for their interest was in stability, and Augustus had to fit in with their career ambitions and social expectations as much as they with his proddings and exhortations. Certainly, his revolution was no social revolution: the maintenance, and strengthening, of status hierarchy was high on its priorities,[140] and some historians have seen its principal historical effect as the consolidation of the 'slave society'. Be that as it may, 'it is a fair criticism of the new order, that its temptation was to be static in high matters',[141] and stability is, of the political virtues, the least heart-warming to read about.

5. *An estimate*

Tacitus offers an appraisal of Augustus, in contrasting paragraphs: what can be said in his favour and what against.[142] For Tacitus, as for many historians after him, the bad outweighed the good. Nevertheless, whether for good or ill, Tacitus lived in a political world of which Augustus had been the principal architect; and for an estimation of

[137] K. Heldmann, *Antike Theorien über Entwicklung und Verfall der Redekunst* VI.1, Munich, 1982, esp. 271–86.

[138] It is not even the only view in the *Dialogus*; and in 'On the Sublime', ch. 44, expressed more broadly, it is rejected by the author of that work himself; see Heldmann, *Antike Theorien* VI.2.

[139] Literature: Gabba 1982 (B 57); visual arts: Simon 1986 (F 577) 110–36, with the illustrations.

[140] Rawson 1987 (F 56). [141] Adcock, *CAH* x[1] 606. [142] Tac. *Ann.* 1.9–10.

Augustus' achievement, for good or ill, it is as necessary to look at what followed him as at what preceded him. For we can then see that his was not a 'blueprint' creation, but experimental, and that it underwent much further change. Neither was it in all respects successful, even in his own time and terms:[143] there was more propaganda than reality about some of the military enterprises, and the programme of social reform probably had little good effect and certainly had some bad. As for the subsequent changes, some represent practical breakdowns in his scheme of things. For instance, the transmission of power broke down with Nero, and it is doubtful whether Augustus envisaged the rise of any of the new equestrian officials to formal political influence, and virtually certain that he would have been appalled at the political power of freedmen.

But if we look from the political world of Cicero to that of Tacitus, we ought to be able to discern what structures Augustus left (in principle, at least, and for good or ill) to the Roman world after him. First, the ideology, as well as the reality, of a single ruler (supported, it might be, by a *collega imperii*). Secondly, a system for the transmission of power and authority, namely dynasty, by birth or adoption, coupled with the bringing of the chosen successor into proper relation with the legitimizations of power as early as possible, which, though sometimes nullified in practice, was always, in principle, revived and never supplanted. Thirdly, a rule of law – for the ruler was not, in principle, 'above the law' – intended normally to prevail, although *raison d'état* overrode it all too readily in crises.[144] Fourthly, the preservation of strict social hierarchy, the leading role being still assigned to the senatorial order, the governing class of the empire remaining a tiny elite. Fifthly, unchanged also from the Republic, the principle of 'government without bureaucracy',[145] by which the local management of the vast empire was left to the municipalities and imperial administration could remain unprofessionalized and economical of manpower and cost. Sixthly, by contrast, armed forces that were, in the lower ranks, professional. They were composed partly of Roman citizens and partly of non-citizens, and by careful budgeting they were supported on a scale enabling them to achieve some modest further expansion of Rome's dominions down to the time of Trajan – though they were destined, in the 'Year of the Four Emperors', to be the vehicle of renewed civil war. Lastly, it would be unfair to rob Augustus of his part in turning the city of Rome into a monumental imperial capital.

'Achievement', however, may seem too biographical a term in which

[143] Raaflaub 1980 (C 190), and see ch. 4, below.

[144] Nero's remark, in the course of murdering Britannicus (Suet. *Ner.* 33.2), 'So I'm supposed to be frightened of the Lex Iulia', illustrates the consciousness of the rule of law in the very moment of flouting it.

[145] Garnsey and Saller 1987 (A 34) ch. 2.

to estimate the place of Augustus in history: more neutrally, we could substitute 'results' or 'effects', and the observed effects may have had a multiplicity of causes, amongst which Augustus was only one. He stands between what we recognize (or have created for our own convenience) as two ages of European history, the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire. But was he, after all, the 'architect' of the Empire? Or was he just the culminating 'dynast' thrown up by the 'Roman Revolution',[146] a process of change that began with Sulla, or even the Gracchi, and had its own momentum, so that even if Antony had won at Actium or Augustus had died in 23 B.C. the Roman Republic would still have been succeeded by the Roman Empire? What specific contribution is it possible to attribute to Augustus within that massive historical process? Perhaps just this much (if only by slipping back into biography): if Julius Caesar or Antony had been the culminating dynast there would, very likely, still have been a Roman Empire, but it would, very likely, have had a different face. The characteristic structure of the Empire, in which so much of what was new was based so firmly on what was old, is likely to have owed something to the particular cast of mind of its first ruler – narrow, pragmatic and traditionalist. Augustus was equated, in his time, with most of the gods of the Roman pantheon; today, we might think him best fitted by one he was not equated with, Janus, as he steered the Roman world into the future with his eyes fixed on the values of the past. Plutarch records a saying of his (it matters little whether *vero* or *ben trovato*): when somebody told him that Alexander, after his conquests, had been at a loss what to do next, Augustus said he was surprised that Alexander had not realized that a greater job than acquiring empire was getting it into shape when you had acquired it.[147] The shape of the Roman Empire was his contribution.

[146] See the studies in the bibliography, A 82A.

[147] Plut. *Apophthegmata reg. et imp.* 207D, τὸ διατάξαι τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν.