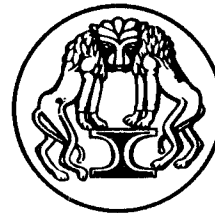


SUETONIUS DIVUS AUGUSTUS

Edited with Introduction and
Commentary by
John M. Carter



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Cover illustration: silver *denarius* of Augustus minted ca. 20 B.C.;
British Museum, London (BMC 334).
[Drawing by Jean Bees.]

FOR

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Head of a statue of Augustus as *pontifex maximus*
 from the Via Labicana; Museo delle Terme, Rome.
 [Drawing by Jean Bees.]

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PREFACE

This edition of Suetonius' *Life of Augustus* is intended to be of use to all who have an interest in the historical aspect of the book. I have attempted on the one hand to incorporate references to up-to-date scholarship, and on the other to make the commentary intelligible to, and usable by, students of history who may not be able to read Suetonius in the original. It is for this reason that I have commented from time to time on the Penguin translation of Robert Graves (revised by Michael Grant) as being the version most likely to be in the hands of such students. I have also assumed that readers will have to hand the excellent commentary of P.A. Brunt and J.M. Moore on Augustus' *Res Gestae*.

I am aware that to confine oneself in the main to one aspect of an author's work is not an entirely satisfactory procedure. I have therefore tried to compensate for commenting on Suetonius chiefly as a historical 'source' by saying something in the Introduction on questions of genre, style, and composition, although lack of space has forced me to be brief and dogmatic. The scope of the edition and my own limitations have likewise entailed a neglect of Suetonius' Latinity which is regrettable but not I hope fatal to adequate interpretation.

It is usual, in writing about Augustus, to refer to him as Octavian up to 27 B.C. and as Augustus thereafter. Suetonius' treatment makes it impossible to follow this convention and I have therefore used the name Augustus throughout.

As regards bibliography, I have in most cases thought it sufficient to cite recent works, through which the full range of references can without difficulty be reached by those who wish to pursue any topic in greater depth. Complete documentation of all the views and information presented in the commentary would swell it enormously and only marginally increase whatever usefulness it may possess. Many standard works do not appear in these pages; but this need not mean that they have been ignored.

In conclusion, it remains to express my thanks to the British Academy and the Central Research Fund of London University for making possible a period of study in Rome, and to the Council of Royal Holloway College for granting me leave and supporting the minor expenses of my research.

9th May 1981

J.M.C.

INTRODUCTION

Suetonius and the Sources for Augustan History

§1 Suetonius' *Life of Augustus* is, with the possible exception of the emperor's own *Res Gestae*, the most important single document concerning him which has come down to us. Of the three other connected accounts of Augustus, two deal only with the early years of his career: these are the fragment of the biography written by his contemporary and acquaintance Nicolaus of Damascus, court historian to Herod the Great; and the latter part of the work of the 2nd century historian Appian on Rome's *Civil Wars*, which ends in 35 B.C. The third account is that of Dio Cassius, senator and twice consul in Severan times, which has some gaps but survives in large part complete. All three men came from the eastern half of the empire and wrote in Greek, and their understanding of Roman institutions at the time of Augustus is not always perfect. The loss of most of Nicolaus' biography is not the tragedy it might seem, since it was based on Augustus' own, doubtless highly tendentious, autobiography and in any case went no further than 25 B.C. Appian, though good and detailed, does not even reach the battle of Actium, while Dio (not unnaturally, seeing that he was writing a *History of Rome*) has large omissions and cannot be pressed on points of detail and chronology. Suetonius, on the other hand, is free from all these criticisms. His treatment is complete, he is far enough from Augustus and his dynasty to be tolerably objective, and as an Italian and high civil servant he has an understanding of things Roman which sometimes eludes the others. By temperament a compiler, he preserves many precious facts whose accuracy there is no reason to question. His major defect, from the point of view of the modern historian, is that he has no interest in chronology and thus obscures the processes of change at work in the forty years of the first princeps' reign. He does, though, understand the importance of evidence and is remarkable amongst ancient historical writers for the range and quantity of what he adduces. No doubt his work in the imperial secretariat (see §18 below) was responsible for developing this trait.

§2 Suetonius and Dio are thus the bedrock of any narrative of Augustus' reign. (For their relationship, see §12 below.) Other important literary sources are the relevant chapters of Velleius Paterculus' outline of Roman history, published in A.D. 29 and particularly concerned to flatter Tiberius; the epitome of Livy; some of Plutarch's *Lives*, especially that of Antony; the letters and Philippics of Cicero (for the years 44-43 B.C.); and the Augustan poets, who reveal attitudes and ideals (and sometimes even policies) which are of the greatest importance for our comprehension of the more intangible aspects of Augustus' regime. The Jewish historian Josephus is valuable

for the relations of Rome and the Jews, and the geographer Strabo describes the empire as it was under Augustus. We also have Tacitus, particularly the opening chapters of the *Annals*, and a whole range of post-Augustan writers, notably the Elder Pliny, who contribute diverse snippets of information (see CAH 10.866-876).

§3 The composite picture thus obtained is controlled and amplified by the evidence of excavation and all kinds of non-literary material, amongst which pride of place must go to Augustus' own enumeration of his achievements, the great inscription from Ankara known as the *Res Gestae* or the *Monumentum Ancyranum*. This is a copy of the text set up on two bronze pillars outside the emperor's mausoleum in Rome. (See Brunt & Moore 1967). Other inscriptions, the coinage - astonishing in its range and diversity of types -, works of art, buildings, religious monuments, and the outlines of Augustan law still visible in Justinian's *Digest*, all add to the body of evidence which can be used to understand the Augustan principate. But none can replace the coherent exposition of the literary artist; the other material may illuminate, confirm or correct him, but on its own it remains enigmatic and a little impersonal. The key to Augustan history must remain the literary accounts: and of these the best, in its own terms, is that of Suetonius.

The Character of Suetonian Biography

§4 Biography was a relative newcomer among the various genres of literary composition practised by the Greeks and Romans. It tended to retain strong links with rhetorical encomium, whether of the living or the dead, and with memoirs composed by followers, admirers, or friends of the subject - a species of composition which goes back to the early fourth century B.C. with Xenophon's Socratic writings and Isocrates' panegyric of Evagoras. It was also heavily influenced by the Peripatetic school of philosophy, which was interested in biography for two reasons: one ethical, since it was believed that the study of individual character could lead a man to a more accurate understanding of virtue and vice, and that an individual revealed his character through his actions; and the other more technical, because the development of an art could be illustrated by a collection of Lives of its well-known practitioners, as for example in Suetonius' own *Lives of the Famous Grammarians*. Peripatetic biography thus tended to have a more objective character and indeed its most famous and successful exponent Plutarch (who was about 20 years older than Suetonius) says: "Perhaps it is not a bad thing for me to introduce one or two pairs of characters of reckless life and conspicuous defects into my *Lives*, not to divert and entertain

my readers ... (but so that) we shall be more eager to observe and imitate the better lives if we do not leave unrecorded the bad and the blameworthy" (Plutarch, *Demetrius* 1.5-6). None the less, panegyric and ethical admiration are not far apart, and both kinds of biography are inevitably structured by the categories of moral approval and disapproval. Events are told not simply because they happened, but in order to bring out some aspect of the character of the individual. This is the basis of the distinction between biography and history of which the earliest Latin biographer, Cornelius Nepos (see 77n.) is well aware. Introducing Pelopidas, he says: "I am afraid that if I start on a systematic exposition of his achievements, I may appear to be writing history rather than giving an account of his life" (*Nepos* 16.1). Plutarch is even more specific in divorcing the two: "I am not writing history, but biography, and in the most famous deeds there is not always a revelation of virtue or vice. In fact a little thing like a saying or a joke often reveals character more clearly than murderous battles, or vast musterings of armies, or sieges of cities" (Plutarch, *Alexander* 1.2).

§5 But ancient biography not only forswears historical explanation. It also refuses to set a man against the context of his age. Partly this is because of the origins of the genre, as described above, in which the individual's actions, achievements, and character are the sole focus of attention. But it is also partly because of that tendency of ancient thought termed 'substantialism' by Collingwood to see a man's character as something fixed and 'given' at birth. What to us appears as change (and hence needing explanation) was, to the ancients, merely the progressive uncovering of qualities which, though always present, had not at first been revealed. Tacitus' comments on Tiberius (*Annals* 6.51.5-6) are a perfect instance of this mode of thought: "his character, too, had its various stages. So long as he was a private citizen or held commands under Augustus, his life and reputation were blameless; while Germanicus and Drusus still lived, he was devious and cunning in pretending to virtuous qualities; until the death of his mother he was a mixture of good and bad; while he favoured (or feared) Sejanus, his cruelty was detestable but his lusts concealed; and finally, when shame and fear meant nothing to him and he followed only the *dictates of his own nature*, he launched out upon criminal and obscene wrongdoing". Suetonius delivers a similar judgement (*Tiberius* 42.1): "but after he had acquired the freedom of seclusion away from the public gaze, all his vices, *long imperfectly concealed*, were at last indulged together".

§6 This conception of an underlying static character revealed by action was in harmony with yet a third strand present in the ancestry of Latin biography - the Roman funeral *laudatio* (see 8.1 n.). In this, as in Roman commemorative inscriptions, stress was laid above all on the deceased's achievements in

public life, and particularly in war. By great deeds a prominent member of the community both increased the power and prosperity of the Roman people, and justified the status which that people had conferred on him and his family by choosing him to be a magistrate and military commander. Thus there existed a native Roman tradition, which sought to remember and judge men by their deeds, long before the influence of Greek biography reached Italy. A splendid product of this tradition is Tacitus' *Agricola*, written in Suetonius' own lifetime.

§7 Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* clearly combine the Roman 'documentary' approach, in which the facts narrated allow the reader to draw the desired conclusion for himself, and the Greek ethical approach, in which the material is consistently given relevance by the moral framework within which it appears, whether this is explicit, as in *Nero* 19.3, or implicit, as in *Augustus*. The particular combination is unique, and in this sense Suetonius can be said to be original. His own earlier and much shorter biographies of grammarians, rhetoricians, and poets belong by their subject-matter to the world of Greek literature and by their focus of interest to the 'technical' species of Peripatetic biography; while his only extant predecessor in the genre in Latin, Cornelius Nepos, works on a far smaller scale and his clear emphasis on illustrating qualities of character keeps him much closer to the kind of ethical biography composed by Plutarch. This illustrative trend, which is so clear in Plutarch and Nepos, favours the presentation of information analytically, by categories; and given the static conception of individual character and the desire not to trespass on the territory of History which has been noted above, the result seems inevitable. Speaking of *Augustus*, Suetonius says (ch. 9): "after laying out a sort of summary of his life, I shall go through its parts one by one, not in chronological order but by categories, so that they can be more distinctly presented and understood." This is the most precise statement anywhere in the *Lives* of Suetonius' general principle of procedure (though the beginning of *Julius*, which could well have contained similar remarks, is lost). The main heads which he uses to order his material are, in *Augustus*, military life and achievements (10-25), civil and political administration (26-60), and private life and interests (60-93). The last of these flows, by a skilful transition, into the narrative of *Augustus*' last days and death, and the first is prefaced by the usual account of ancestry and early life which was a necessary part of any extended biography. The general historical background, and much of the detail, is taken for granted. This is the basic pattern which underlies all the *Lives*, though it is varied and adapted to suit each emperor's career. In *Julius*, for example, the chronologically ordered section describing his rise to power is naturally of considerable length, and the account of the events leading up to his murder is full and approaches History; but the inter-

vening portion contains many of the same sub-heads as *Augustus* (e.g. adornment of the city, personal appearance, sexual behaviour, treatment of soldiers) but in a different order and not clearly differentiated into 'public' and 'private' categories. It is perhaps true that Suetonius was by nature a cataloguer, as the subjects of some of his lost works suggest (amongst them a book on Greek games, another on ill-omened phrases, one on *Signs used in Books*, and two on games and spectacles of the Romans); but we must not forget that the traditions (such as they were) of the biographical genre made it difficult to adopt a different approach and that he is anything but mechanical in the way he presents his various subjects.

(For further discussion of Suetonian biography, see Steidle 1951, Townend 1967, Mouchova 1968.)

The 'Life of Augustus'

§8 The *Augustus* forms the second of the eight books in which the Twelve Caesars were originally arranged. An analysis of its structure and content may be found in the introductory commentaries to chapters 1, 5, 9, 13, 17, 19, 20, 24, 26, 32, 35, 41, 46, 47, 51, 59, 61, 66, 68, 79, 84, 90, and 97 below. These can be read consecutively for a general view of the work, and should be interpreted in the light of what has been said above on the character of Suetonian biography.

§9 *Augustus* is the longest of the *Lives* and is generally reckoned one of the best, both for the sympathy with which Suetonius treats his subject and for the fullness and quality of the information given. In this latter respect, *Julius* and *Augustus* are noticeably superior to the later *Lives*, and it has been suggested, with some plausibility, that the decline from *Tiberius* onwards may be connected with Suetonius' dismissal from his post in Hadrian's secretariat and his consequent loss of easy access to the documentary material of the palace archives, including imperial letters. This, however, is not the only possible explanation, and it could be that Suetonius lost the interest necessary to treat all twelve Caesars at the same high level, or that the recently published historical works of Tacitus and biographies of Plutarch (which included lives of all the emperors from *Augustus* to *Vitellius*, amongst them the extant *Galba* and *Otho*) had made his subjects less suitable for extended treatment.

§10 Whatever the reason for this difference in quality in the later *Lives*, it is clear that Suetonius drew upon a wide range of material in composing *Augustus*: the emperor's autobiography (2.3, 27.4, 85.1), edicts (28.2), and autograph

letters (71.2, 87.3, 88); decrees of the senate (5, 58.2); letters of Antony (*passim*), Cicero (3.2), and Cassius of Parma (4.2); several writers known only by his citations (Aquilius Niger, 11; Julius Saturninus, 27.2; Julius Marathus, 79.2, 94.3; C. Drusus, 94.6); others like Cremutius Cordus (35.2), Valerius Messalla (74), Cornelius Nepos (77), and Asclepiades of Mendes (94.4), who are referred to elsewhere although none of their writings on Augustus survive; the evidence of dedications (57.1); and the *Res Gestae* (43.1, unattributed, but almost a verbatim quotation). Ancient authors do not on the whole name their authorities, and it is unlikely that this is anything like a complete list of Suetonius' sources. For example, he never cites Livy, whose history came down to 9 B.C., and must have been known to him. And surely he also used the works of Pollio, Cassius Severus, Seneca, and the Elder Pliny, not to speak of more obscure figures, all of whom he cites in connection with other emperors.

§11 To what extent Suetonius knew these sources at first hand and to what extent he drew his information from secondary accounts seems a question impossible to answer, as the latter (notably the writings of Cremutius Cordus and Plutarch's *Augustus*) do not survive. Only in one case, that of the *Res Gestae*, is it possible to check Suetonius against his source. There are some ten or a dozen possible references, ranging from near-verbatim quotation, through obvious echoes of Augustus' phraseology, to information which although clearly originating with the *Res Gestae* could equally well have been obtained from an intermediate source. In my view, the near-quotations and the fact that the text was a prominent feature of one of the more remarkable sights of Rome make it fantastic to suppose that Suetonius had not read it for himself, even though he never names it. If this is so, it may seem surprising that there are three places where there is an obvious discrepancy between Suetonius and the monument. The first is in ch. 10, where Suetonius gives as a reason for all the civil wars Augustus' desire to take vengeance on Caesar's murderers, while Augustus himself speaks of "freeing the republic from the tyranny of a faction"; but Augustus' statement is clearly tendentious, and there was no reason for Suetonius to reproduce it if he did not believe it. The second is at 27.5, where Suetonius (like Dio) makes Augustus accept the *cura morum legumque* which the emperor says he declined. The explanation here may be that Augustus' denial is oblique: "I accepted no magistracy that was not in accord with ancestral custom". By Suetonius' day, the imperial censorship had become, in practice, just such a general "oversight of laws and morals" as had been offered to Augustus and he may have thought that it was, in fact, in accord with Republican forms. The third discrepancy, at 35.1, concerns the revisions of the roll of the senate (*lectiones*) and I can offer no explanation except to observe that ancient scholarship depended much more on

memory and less on checking than the modern variety, and Suetonius may simply have become muddled. These three instances apart, Suetonius has reported Augustus faithfully; but it is fairly clear that the *Res Gestae*, though useful, was not a source of great importance for him, nor did its bald paragraphs form the framework on which he erected his *Life*.

§12 Suetonius' general accuracy is shown by his substantial agreement with the considerably more detailed, though incomplete, chronological account of Books 45-56 of Dio. Dio was writing a hundred years after Suetonius, and he practices total reticence in the matter of his sources. Therefore the fact that he does not mention Suetonius does not necessarily mean that he did not use him. But use is unlikely, for two reasons: first, Suetonius' analytical and summarising method of presentation makes it impossible for a conventional historian to convert his material into a narrative; and second, the way the two authors report the dream of Atia (94.4) makes it certain that Dio did not take the story from Suetonius but either direct from Asclepiades or via a different intermediary. The thesis of Schwartz (*RE* 3.1716) that Tacitus, Dio, and Suetonius all depend on an unknown 'annalist' (whose lack of character is so complete that even the date from which he is supposed to have begun his annals eludes identification) has recently been restated by Manuwald (1979); but I cannot believe that Suetonius' *Augustus*, with its topical arrangement, wide range of reference, and diversity of material, depends on a single 'main source'. A reading of, for example, chapters 45-56 of *Julius* will dispel any notion that Suetonius had not read widely in the primary source-material or was incapable of handling it critically. The following position thus emerges: Dio's 'main source' (if he had one) is unknown; Suetonius did not have a 'main source' at all; Dio did not use Suetonius; and yet there exists a very large measure of agreement between them.

§13 We may therefore feel reasonably confident about the reliability of both authors. One can of course find errors in Suetonius, but these are for the most part trivial (see e.g. notes on 17.4, 30.2, 31.2, 101.2 below). Apart from the question of the senatorial *lectiones* and the *cura morum*, discussed above, his only serious mistakes seem to be in reporting the patrician status of the Octavii (2.1) and in garbling the admittedly complicated and controversial events of 44-43 B.C. (ch. 10). Even here, he does not really misrepresent Augustus' political stance, and it might be argued in Suetonius' defence that it was not felt to be the business of the ancient biographer to provide an accurate historical background to the actions of his subject. Finally, there is the chapter on omens and prodigies (94) - but such stories are in a class of their own and belong to a very special sub-genre which never considered the literal truth to be important.

(For fuller discussion of the composition and emphases of *Augustus*, see Hanslik 1954, Gasco 1976, Cizek 1977.)

Suetonius' Style

§14 Suetonius writes taut, economical, matter-of-fact Latin, in which every word tells; but he is no conscious stylist like the Younger Pliny and no seeker after effect like Tacitus. Although the present edition is directed specifically towards the historical content of his work, one feature of his writing deserves notice because it is important to a correct understanding of the text.

§15 Suetonius occasionally spells out the pattern of organisation he proposes to apply to his subject (the so-called *divisiones*); notable examples in *Augustus* are in chapters 9 and 61, and it is not difficult to relate the text to the heads there set out. What is not always so apparent is that he constantly uses the same technique on a much smaller scale, within paragraphs and even within sentences. Most paragraphs begin with a key word which announces the topic about to be treated. Two or more aspects of this topic may immediately be indicated, of which one will then be handled. This finished, Suetonius will switch without any transition or warning to the second, and so on. A good example is chapters 26-27 of which the first sentence runs: "he took magistracies and offices both (a) before the legal age and (b) of a new sort and (c) perpetual". The rest of ch. 26 then deals with (a), Augustus' consulships, all of which except the last two were held below the legal age established in the Republic; in ch. 27 we meet the triumvirate, which is (b), though it is easy to miss the connection; and at 27.5 we come to (c), perpetual tribunician power and perpetual 'oversight of laws and morals'. Thus (c) is not in fact the somewhat illogical and disconnected addition to (b) which on a quick or partial reading it would seem to be. Within a single sentence an instance is 35.3: "so that those selected and approved should perform their duties as senators with (a) more ceremony and (b) less trouble, he enacted that (a) before he took his seat each man should offer incense and wine at the altar of the god in whose temple the session was being held, and (b) regular meetings of the senate should take place no more than twice a month ...". If this peculiarity of Suetonius' style is not appreciated, the reader will be tempted to interpret examples illustrating only one aspect of a topic as though they applied to all the aspects mentioned; and in consequence Suetonius will appear to be a far less precise writer than he is.

§16 One other remarkable feature, though it causes no difficulty, is that Augustus is the (unexpressed) subject, or very occ-

asionally the object, of almost every sentence from ch. 5 to ch. 100. This is a demonstration of how personal biography could impose a pattern of thought and expression. It also contributes to a certain monotony in the writing.

Suetonius' Life

§17 We know from Suetonius himself (*Otho* 10) that his father, Suetonius Laetus, served as military tribune in the Thirteenth Legion in A.D. 69. He therefore possessed the requisite property-census (400,000 HS) to be an *eques* ('knight') and belonged to the comfortably-off upper class of the empire, men who constituted the aristocracy of the provinces and of Italy outside Rome. His son, C. Suetonius Tranquillus, was born ca. A.D. 65-72 (*Nero* 57.2, *Domitian* 12.2) perhaps at Hippo Regius (Bône) on the North African coast some 150 miles west of Carthage. Suetonius was in Rome as a teenager (*adulescentulus*, *Domitian* 12.2) in the 80's, doubtless completing his education in the capital in the normal manner of the sons of the municipal aristocracy who had some kind of public career in view. We next hear of him some ten to fifteen years later, in the correspondence of the younger Pliny, consul in the year 100, advocate, *littérateur*, and administrator, who became his patron and secured a military tribunate for him (Pliny, *Epp.* 5.10, 9.34 and when Pliny was sent to govern Bithynia in A.D. 109-111 Suetonius accompanied him as one of his entourage (*cohors amicorum*). Evidently he earned Pliny's gratitude, for Pliny obtained for him from Trajan the *ius trium liberorum*, by which, although childless, he was permitted to enjoy certain legal advantages conferred on fathers of three children (Pliny, *Epp.* 10.94-95).

§18 Most of the rest of the story is given by a damaged inscription from Hippo (Smallwood 1966, no. 281; Townend 1961) which shows that Suetonius, having already attained the respectable, but unremarkable, distinction of being enrolled as a member of the metropolitan jury panels (*adlectus inter selectos iudices*), was appointed to a priesthood, probably in the capital. If this last inference is correct, Suetonius is revealed as a recipient of imperial patronage and his subsequent appearance in the upper echelons of the palace bureaucracy is not a sudden stroke of the emperor's favour - still less so if the gap which exists in the inscription before the post a *studiis* contained an administrative office rather than an honour. The exact duties of the a *studiis* are unknown, except that they must have been connected in some way with literary, and possibly legal, matters. Suetonius passed on, understandably, to the oversight of the imperial library, the post he must have been holding when Trajan died in 117. The new emperor Hadrian promoted him to be his chief secretary and

one is tempted to suppose that it was Suetonius' tenure of this office which in some way prompted the Hippo inscription. His duties included overseeing the emperor's correspondence with provincial governors and drafting replies to petitions and other important letters. He must have worked closely with the emperor and had ample opportunity for influencing his decisions. This was the summit of his official career. Only the great prefectures, of Egypt, of the corn supply, of the praetorian guard, remained for him to reach; but they were likely to be for ever barred to him because of his lack of military experience.

§19 Suetonius' promotion under Hadrian is associated with that of another friend of Pliny, Septicius Clarus, who became Hadrian's praetorian prefect. It appears that on Pliny's death Septicius took over the role of Suetonius' patron. They rose and fell together, for both were dismissed, if we can believe the writer of the *Life of Hadrian* (11.3) in the *Historia Augusta*, for over familiarity with the empress Sabina. The date apparently indicated for this event, A.D. 122, has now been thrown into doubt by the discovery of a military diploma (AE 1973, 459) which may date Septicius' appointment to the praetorian prefecture after 10th August 123 (Gascou 1978; contra Alföldy 1979). This at least makes it possible that both he and Suetonius were still in office in 128 when Hadrian visited Africa, an occasion on which the emperor's secretary could well have been honoured by the citizens of Hippo if he had been instrumental in securing some favour for the town. The date of Suetonius' death is unknown, but is probably later than 129-132, since he makes a reference to Domitian's widow Domitia Longina, who survived until then, as though she were no longer alive (*Titus* 10.2).

Imperium, Auctoritas, and Tribunicia Potestas

§20 The basis of constitutional power at Rome was *imperium*, 'power of command'. This was conferred on the higher magistrates (praetors, consuls, dictator) after, or as a result of, their election to office. There were two varieties, civil (*imperium domi*) exercised within the *pomoerium*, the sacred boundary of the city of Rome, and military (*imperium militiae*), exercised outside it. These could be separated. For example, censors, whose duties were civil and who exercised their office entirely within the city, possessed only *imperium domi* (if they possessed it at all; the question is disputed), while proconsuls possessed only *imperium militiae*, which they assumed at a special ceremony on leaving the city for their province and had to lay down again on re-entering the *pomoerium*.

§21 *Imperium* was not an absolute power. It was limited ter-

ritorially by the sphere (province) to which the holder was designated. It was limited in time, either by the (normally annual) duration of an elective office or by the terms of the senatorial decree or popular law appointing a man to a pro-magistracy or special command. It was limited by the existence of equal or greater *imperia*, whose holders could impose a veto on colleague or subordinate. Thus the principle of collegiality seen in all Roman magistracies except the dictatorship served as a check on the misuse of power. And finally, it was limited by the general requirement laid upon magistrates to observe the laws, and by the right of the individual citizen, so long as he was not on military service, to appeal to the tribunes of the plebs or to other magistrates whose *imperium* allowed them to interpose a veto. Neither could *imperium* be delegated except by express authority of senate or people, since it was personal to the holder.

§22 The ranking order of holders of *imperium* (dictator - consul - proconsul - praetor) corresponded to no difference in their actual powers. A praetor could give the same range of commands, and expect the same obedience, as a consul. The purpose of the ranking order was to eliminate conflicts of authority (not always successfully, as the great disaster at Orange in 105 B.C. showed). Thus the only difference between a commander who was acting *pro consule*, i.e. with 'consular' *imperium*, and one who was acting *pro praetore*, i.e. with 'praetorian' *imperium*, was that the former could give orders to the latter. It is for this reason that the provincial governors to whom Augustus, who himself held consular *imperium*, delegated the power, were invested with only praetorian *imperium* in spite of the fact that many of them had held consulships and were commanding the most important armies of the state; while the much less significant governorships of senatorial provinces (see 47n.) carried, as they had always done, the title of *proconsul* although the vast majority of their holders had held no higher magistracy than the praetorship.

§23 In addition to executive and military authority, *imperium* also included powers of jurisdiction (though such powers were separable from *imperium* and could be held independently). It was by virtue of these that the proconsul was the highest judicial authority in a province, and the urban and peregrine praetors dispensed civil justice at Rome. Consular jurisdiction was a rarity in the late Republic, but was resuscitated under Augustus and his successors.

§24 The military and political necessities of the late Republic and early Empire resulted in the creation of *imperium maius*, 'overriding *imperium*' which prevented clashes (or deadlock) between holders of equal *imperium* who might have reason to exercise it in the same area (see Last 1947). In the case of Augustus, it was needed after 23 B.C., when by ceasing to be consul, but continuing to govern his provinces

as proconsul, he lost the clear precedence over other provincial governors which his simultaneous tenure of the consulship had hitherto given him. After this, the conferment of *imperium maius* (not necessarily over the whole empire) became a recognised way of marking out an imperial successor. This power is usually, but inaccurately, referred to in modern discussion as *imperium maius proconsulare*, a term unknown to the Romans of Augustus' day.

§25 There can, in my view, be little doubt that it was Augustus' continuous tenure of *imperium*, first consular and then *maius*, together with the direct control of the strongest provinces of the empire, which was the constitutional foundation of his power. His concealment of this *imperium* in the *Res Gestae* probably amounts to proof of the proposition. The attempts of Magdelain (1947) and Grant (1946) to convert that important but intangible quality of *auctoritas* (personal authority) which Augustus undoubtedly possessed (cf. *Res Gestae* 34.3) into some form of specific constitutional authority have not won much support. As to the tribunician power, this has commonly been held to be an important constitutional prop (so proving the success of Augustan propaganda on the matter); the truth is different, as I have tried to show in my note to 27.5 below. Discussions of the 'essence' of the Augustan principate are by their nature inconclusive and not particularly rewarding, but much of value may be found in Wickert 1954, Béranger 1953, and Grenade 1961 - works which emanate from a continental tradition of scholarship very different from that which produced Syme's pungent and magisterial *Roman Revolution* (1939), still the best single book for obtaining an insight into the politics and power struggles of the dying Republic and nascent Empire.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

The left hand column includes in brackets the dates of Augustus' consulships. Large case numbers after events refer to the relevant chapter of Suetonius.

B.C. 63	Sept. 23 Birth of Augustus - 5.
49	Outbreak of civil war between Caesar and Pompey.
48	Caesar defeats Pompey at Pharsalus. Flight and death of Pompey.
45	Defeat of Pompey's sons at Munda.
44	March 15 Murder of Caesar; Augustus returns to Italy, opposes the consul Antony, raises an army, and allies himself with the senatorial group led by Cicero.
43 (cos.I)	Augustus is given (Jan. 7) a grant of <i>imperium</i> by the senate - 8 and 10. Siege and (April) battles of Mutina; deaths of the consuls Hirtius and Pansa - 10-11. Augustus seizes (Aug. 19) his first consulship - 26. Formation of triumvirate (Nov. 27); proscriptions - 27.
42	Julius Caesar officially deified (Jan.). Campaign and battles (Oct.- Nov.) of Philippi - 13.
41	Antony in the East, meets Cleopatra. Civil war in Italy between L. Antonius and Augustus - 13 - 14
41-40	Parthians invade Syria and Asia Minor.
40	Surrender of L. Antonius (Feb.?) at Perugia - 15. Return of Antony from Alexandria. Augustus marries Scribonia - 62. 'Treaty' of Brundisium between Antony and Augustus (Autumn). Antony marries Octavia.
39	'Treaty' of Misenum between the triumvirs and Sextus Pompeius. Augustus divorces Scribonia (Dec.?) - 62.
39-38	Antony's generals drive the Parthians out of Syria
38	Augustus marries Livia - 62 and starts war against Sextus Pompeius - 16.
37	Triumvirate renewed by 'Treaty' of Tarentum

- (Summer) between Augustus and Antony - 27 n.
Antony leaves Octavia in Italy and joins Cleopatra.
- 36 Augustus and Agrippa defeat Sextus Pompeius; Lepidus bids for power but is eliminated - 16. Antony conducts his disastrous Parthian expedition. Augustus given sacrosanctity.
- 35 Sextus Pompeius killed in Asia.
- 35-34 Augustus conducts successful military operations in Illyria - 20.
- 34 Antony invades and annexes Armenia. 'Donations of Alexandria' (late Autumn).
- 33 Aedileship of Agrippa. Sharp deterioration in relations between Antony and Augustus. Expiry of triumvirate (Dec. 31) - 27 n.
(cos. II)
- 32 Flight of consuls and more than a third of the senate to Antony; Italy and the western provinces swear oath of allegiance to Augustus - 17. Both sides make open preparations for war. Antony divorces Octavia.
- 31 Campaign and battle of Actium (Sept. 2); Antony and Cleopatra flee to Egypt - 17.
(cos. III)
- 31-30 Parthians overrun Armenia.
- 30 Augustus captures Alexandria (Aug. 1); suicides of Antony and Cleopatra - 17.
(cos. IV)
- 29 Augustus returns to Italy and celebrates (Aug. 13-15) his triple triumph - 22.
(cos. V)
- 28 Constitutional normalisation, culminating in 'First Settlement'.
(cos. VI)
- 27 'First Settlement' (Jan. 13 and 16); Augustus receives the governorship of Spain, Gaul, Syria, Cyprus, and Egypt for 10 years and remains consul - 47 n. He takes the name 'Augustus' and leaves Rome for Gaul and Spain.
(cos. VII)
- 26-25 Augustus' Cantabrian war - 20.
(cos. VIII-IX)
- 25 Marriage of Julia to Marcellus (December?).
- 24 Augustus returns to Rome from Spain.
(cos. X)

- 23 Severe illness of Augustus, followed by 'Second Settlement': he resigns his consulship, is granted *imperium maius* everywhere outside Rome, and counts his years of tribunician power from June 27 of this year - 27 n. and 28. Death of Marcellus (Autumn).
(cos. XI)
- 22 Augustus refuses dictatorship (ca. Feb.) and perpetual consulship.
- 22-19 Augustus visits Sicily, Greece, and the East.
- 21 Agrippa marries Julia.
- 20 Tiberius places Roman nominee on Armenian throne and the Parthians return captured Roman prisoners and legionary standards.
- 19 Augustus returns to Rome and receives consular powers and insignia. Agrippa in Spain.
- 18 Augustus' *imperium maius* renewed for 10 years; Agrippa is granted the tribunician power for 5 years (? also *imperium maius*).
- 18-17 'Moral' legislation of Augustus - 34.
- 17 *Ludi Saeculares* - 31. Augustus adopts his grandsons Gaius and Lucius - 64.
- 16-13 Agrippa in the East; Augustus in Gaul supervising campaigns.
- 15 Campaigns of Tiberius and Drusus in the Alpine regions (as first steps towards annexing Germany).
- 13 Agrippa granted *imperium maius* and his tribunician power renewed.
- 12 Death of Agrippa. Augustus becomes Pontifex Maximus after Lepidus' death in 13.
- 12-9 Campaigns of Tiberius in Dalmatia; Drusus on the Rhine - 20-21.
- 11 Tiberius marries Julia - 63.
- 9 Death of Drusus.
- 8 Augustus' *imperium maius* renewed. Death of Maecenas.
- 8-7 Tiberius campaigns on the Rhine.

6	Tiberius given tribunician power, but then re-tires to Rhodes.
5 (cos. XII)	Gaius Caesar introduced to public life and designated consul for A.D. 1.
2 (cos. XIII)	Lucius Caesar introduced to public life and designated consul for A.D. 4. Dedication of Temple of Mars Ultor and Forum of Augustus - 29. Title of Pater Patriae officially conferred on Augustus - 58. Banishment of the elder Julia - 65.
1	Expiry of Tiberius' tribunician power.
A.D. 1-3	Gaius Caesar campaigns in the East.
2	Tiberius returns to Italy; death of Lucius Caesar - 65.
3	Augustus' <i>imperium maius</i> renewed.
4	Death of Gaius Caesar - 65. Augustus adopts Tiberius and Agrippa Postumus - 65 - and re-invests Tiberius with tribunician power (? also <i>imperium</i> equal to his own).
4-6	Tiberius brings most of Germany under Roman control.
6	Revolt in Pannonia and Dalmatia - 21.
7-8	Banishment of Agrippa Postumus and the younger Julia - 65.
7-9	Tiberius suppresses Pannonian and Dalmatian revolts.
9	The Germans annihilate 3 legions under Quintilius Varus - 23.
10-11	Tiberius and Germanicus hold the Rhine frontier and make a limited counter-attack.
13	Renewal of Augustus' <i>imperium maius</i> and Tiberius' tribunician power. Conferment of <i>imperium</i> equal to Augustus' on Tiberius (if not already given in A.D. 4).
14	Death of Augustus (Aug. 19) - 99-100.

Table I

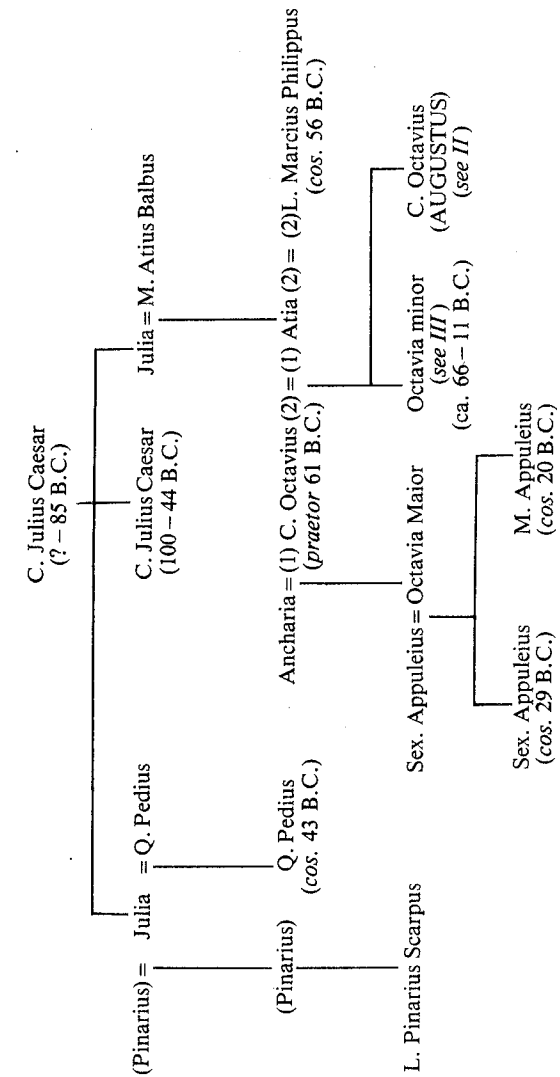


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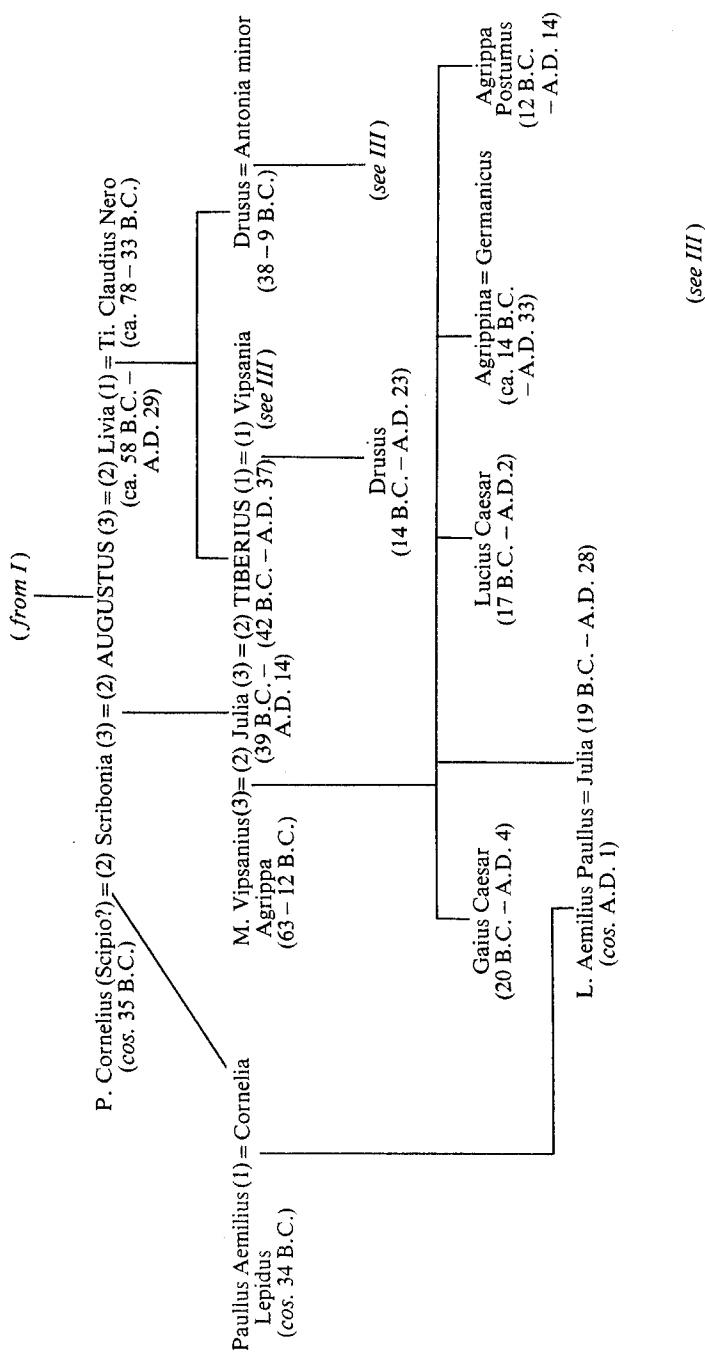
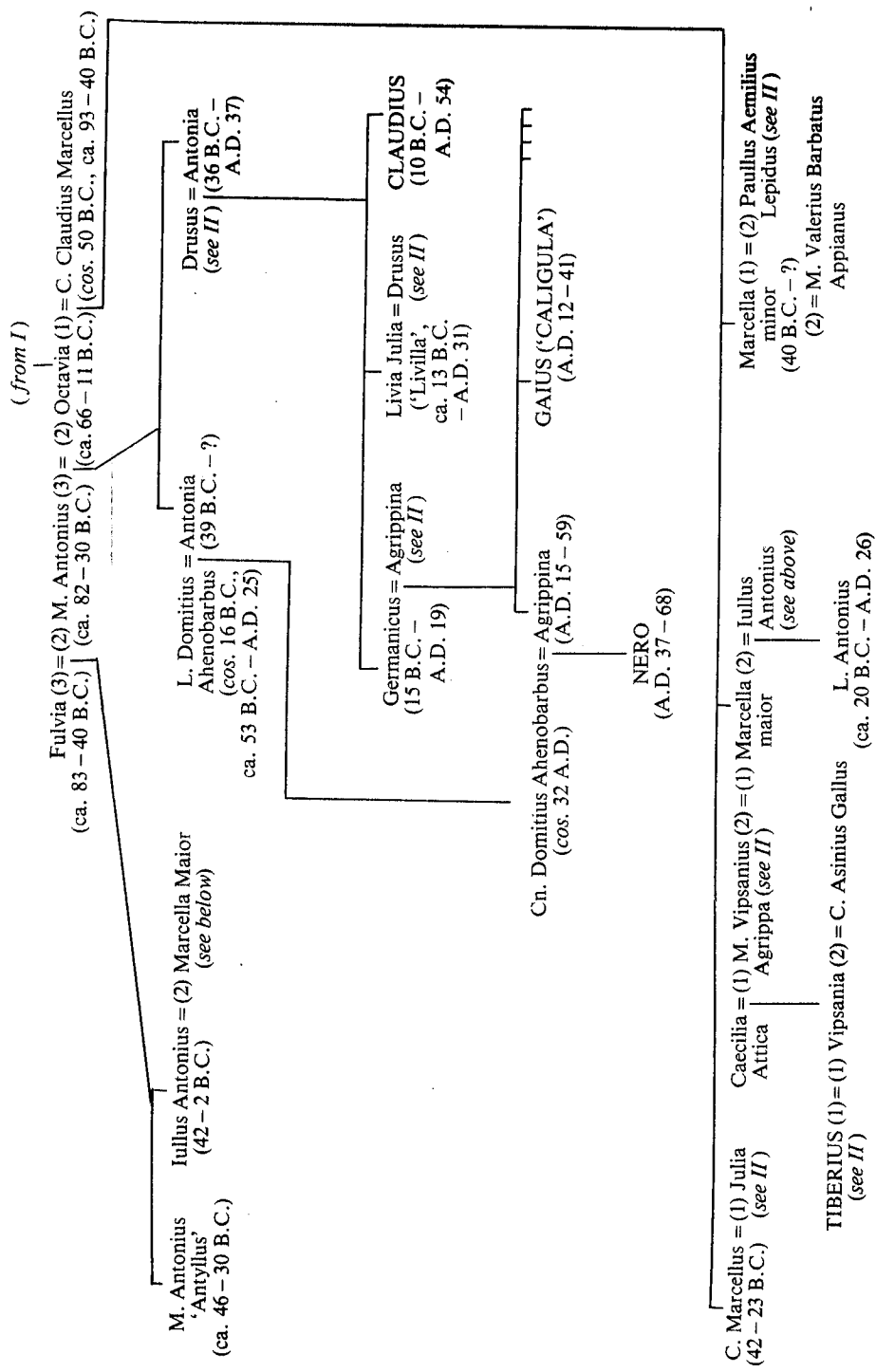


Table III



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- III Abbreviations (by initial letters) used for books and periodicals
- AE L'Année Epigraphique
- AJA American Journal of Archaeology
- AJP American Journal of Philology
- BCH Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique
- BMC Aug *The Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum* - vol. I, Augustus to Vitellius, by H. Mattingly (London, 1925)
- CAH *The Cambridge Ancient History*, ed. J.B. Bury, S.A. Cook, F.E. Adcock, and M.P. Charlesworth (12 vols., Cambridge, 1923-)
- CIL *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin, 1869-)
- CR The Classical Review

- E-J³ *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, 2nd enlarged ed. by V. Ehrenberg and A.H.M. Jones (Oxford, 1976)
- FIRA *Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani*, 2nd ed. by S. Riccobono (Florence, 1968)
- GG *Suetonius: Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, tr. by R. Graves, rev. by M. Grant (Harmondsworth, 1979)
- HRFC *A History of Rome through the Fifth Century*, by A.H.M. Jones, vol.I, The Republic (New York, 1968)
- HSCP Harvard Studies in Classical Philology
- HTR Harvard Theological Review
- ILLRP *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae*, 2nd ed. by A. Degrassi (2 vols., Florence, 1972)
- Inscr It *Inscriptiones Italiae*, vol.13, Fasti et Elogia, ed. by A. Degrassi (2 vols., Rome 1937 and 1963)
- JNG Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte
- JRS Journal of Roman Studies
- LR *Roman Civilisation, Sourcebook*, vol.I, The Republic and II, The Empire, rev. ed. by N. Lewis and M. Reinhold (New York, 1966)
- MAAR Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome
- MDAI(R) Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Römische Abteilung)
- MEFR Mélanges d'Archeologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome
- MH Museum Helveticum
- Not Sc Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità (Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rome)
- ORF³ *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta*, 3rd ed. H. Malcovati (Paravia, 1966)
- RE *Realencyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*, by A. Pauly, ed. by G. Wissowa (Stuttgart, 1893-)
- REA Revue des Études Anciennes

REL
ZPE

Revue des Études Latines
Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik