Chapter Three

THE SCHOLARLY BIOGRAPHER

Suetonius came to the *Caesars* already an experienced biographer. The *Lives of illustrious men* was a classic in its own right; but it also in many respects laid the basis for the *Caesars*, determining the author's method and approach. It was, we may well feel, a strange background for a biographer of emperors. To Suetonius, as to his many Greek and Roman predecessors, 'the illustrious' meant primarily notable authors. He named the most important of his predecessors in his preface: Hermippus, who wrote 'lives of distinguished literary figures'; Antigonus, biographer of philosophers; Satyrus, part of whose life of Euripides has been discovered on papyrus; and Aristoxenus, an authority on music as well as a literary biographer. His Roman predecessors are named as Varro, Santra, Nepos and Hyginus. It is true that Nepos included generals in his series of famous men (it is primarily the section on Greek generals that happens to survive), and Hyginus at least wrote on Scipio Africanus. Still, on the whole it was authors of whom they wrote, and Varro restricted himself to poets.[1]

Literary lives

Many have regretted the loss of Suetonius' *Illustrious men*, and with good reason. Much scholarly energy has been expended on attempts to 'reconstruct' the lives, above all the lives of the poets. Some of the most important can be partly salvaged, for it is clear that some of the biographies of poets prefaced to the ancient

1. The names of S's predecessors are preserved in Jerome's preface to his own *de Viris Illustribus* = Reifferscheid fr.1. All are discussed by Leo (1901). The Greek tradition is discussed by Momigliano (1971) esp. 73ff. For Satyrus' *Life of Euripides*, see Italo Gallo, 'La vita di Euripide di Satiro e gli studi sulla biografia antica', *Parola del Passato* 113 (1967) 134ff. On the title of S's work, see Brugnoli (1968) 41ff., arguing that it may have been *Catalogus virorum illustrium*.

commentaries derive substantially from Suetonius' collection. This is certain for the life of Terence, beyond reasonable doubt for Horace, probable for Lucan, and highly likely for Virgil, though controversy still surrounds his various lives. All four make interesting reading, and they offer numerous points of contact with the *Caesars*. But in order to put the *Caesars* in their proper perspective, the study and 'reconstruction' of individual lives is not nearly so important as an attempt to grasp the scope of the series as a whole. This problem has suffered relative neglect. Yet enough can be said to cast light on the intellectual horizons of the author and explain some notable features of the *Caesars*.[2]

Two main sources combine to give us a fairly reliable idea of the scope of the *Illustrious men*. Of prime importance, of course, is the surviving section on grammarians and rhetors, though critics have scarcely been able to veil their disgust that it is the dull academics not the poets who have been preserved. The second source is the learned Church father Jerome. It was 'Tranquillus' on whom he modelled his own series of lives of Christian authors. More important, he turned to the *Illustrious men* in order to supplement Eusebius' chronological tables which sought to align the major historical and literary events of the Jewish and Greek peoples. Suetonius was Jerome's only source for Latin literary data, at least until Jerome could draw on his own knowledge for the figures of the fourth century. Jerome made heavy use of Suetonius: some ninety or so entries give data about seventy or more authors (doubt about marginal figures means that the numbers are only approximate). As a result, we have something like a content list of Suetonius' lives.

Unfortunately Jerome did his job in a hurry. Apart from committing chronological howlers, he missed out many of Suetonius' authors, and we may guess that the original total was well over a hundred. An idea of the extent of his omissions is given by the comparison of his data on grammarians and rhetors with the original. He mentions only five of the twenty grammarians, cutting out everyone before Verrius Flaccus; he does better by the rhetors,

2. Recent scholarship has focussed on the lives of the poets. Rostagni (1944) produced a new edition of these lives. Paratore (1946, revised 1950) is an extended criticism of Rostagni's edition. H. Naumann (1974 and 1979) has argued for the authenticity of the surviving lives of Terence, Horace, Virgil and Lucan. E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (1957) 1ff. is a valuable commentary on the Suetonian life.

naming ten, but dropping six. Perhaps his manuscript of the grammarians was mutilated; even so, it is obvious that he was selective. Scholars therefore have felt at liberty to assume that names missing from Jerome were included in Suetonius.[3]

Which then were the authors who featured? To judge from the labels Jerome attaches to names, they fell into several main categories: the poets in their many varieties, epic, lyric, tragic, satiric and so on; the orators, historians, philosophers; and of course the grammarians and rhetors. These in fact are the categories Juvenal enumerates in his satire on literary patronage (7). Patrons are so mean, he complains, that unless the emperor intervenes, literary men are reduced to poverty, whether poets, historians, orators, rhetors or grammarians (he omits philosophers). Juvenal may well have written the satire in the wake of the publication of the *Illustrious men*. At any rate, Suetonius evidently arranged his authors in their separate categories.[4]

The natural assumption is that within these categories Suetonius enumerated all the authors of consequence down to his own lifetime. It is agreed that there was a cut-off point. The dreadful muddle Jerome makes between the two Plinys, uncle and nephew, indicates clearly that there can have been no Suetonian life of the younger Pliny, his own patron. It has variously been supposed that this was because Pliny was still alive when the *Illustrious men* came out, or because Suetonius adopted the same terminus as in the *Caesars*, the death of Domitian. Yet a closer look at the names on Jerome's list shows that there is no reason to suppose that Suetonius' lives were

3. Attempts to reconstruct S from Jerome move from Mommsen's paper of 1850 'Ueber die Quellen der Chronik des Hieronymus', *Gesammelte Schriften* 7 (1909) 606ff. Roth 287-301 and Reifferscheid 3-144 with discussion at 363ff. offer alternative reconstructions based on Jerome. A thorough examination of Jerome's notices name by name was undertaken by R. Helm, *Hieronymus' Zusätze in Eusebius' Chronik* (*Philologus* Suppl. 21,2, 1929). Brugnoli (1968) 57-60 shows how little progress has been made since. For the circumstances and methods of Jerome's compilation, see J.N.D. Kelly, *Jerome, his life, writings and controversies* (1975) 72ff. That Jerome worked from a mutilated manuscript is argued by Brugnoli (1968) 131ff.

4. G.B. Townend in an unpublished paper, of which Townend (1972) is a brief report, makes the attractive suggestion that Juvenal's seventh satire draws on the *Illustrious men* in cataloguing ill-rewarded literary types, poets, historians, orators, rhetoricians and grammarians; cf. also *JRS* 63 (1973) 152. He goes on to suggest that S's order was the inverse of Juvenal's, and that it was because Jerome had before him a progressively more mutilated manuscript that his own list is so lacunose. I am grateful to Professor Townend for showing me the full text of his paper.

complete even as far as the death of Domitian. On the contrary, a marked pattern emerges, of concentration on the age of Cicero and Augustus, with waning interest in the Julio-Claudian period, and almost complete neglect of the Flavians. It is worth looking at the list in some detail, for there are many surprises. We must remember, of course, that Jerome offers only a selection; but if his selection is at all representative, there are some very odd points that demand explanation.[5]

Take the poets first. The list opens as it should with a galaxy of poets of the middle republic: the epic poets Ennius, Livius and Naevius, the comedians Plautus, Caecilius, Terence and Turpilius, the tragedians Pacuvius and Accius, and the satirist Lucilius. Here Suetonius could draw happily on the collections by Varro and Nepos. But once in the first century BC, the density of names increases greatly. Most of the big names are here: Lucretius, Catullus, Gallus, Horace, Virgil, Varus, Ovid. The obvious absentees are Propertius and Tibullus: Jerome must have nodded. But more impressive is the profusion of names of minor, some very minor, figures: Furius Bibaculus, Varro of Atax, Cornificius, Varius and Tucca (Virgil's executors), Aemilius Macer, all outshone by their more talented contemporaries; the mime writers Laberius, Publilius the Syrian and Philistio; the authors of local Italian-style drama, Quintius Atta and Pomponius of Bononia; and even those negligible brothers Bavius and Maevius, whose only claim to fame was that Virgil pilloried them in the *Eclogues*. Then, after the age of Augustus, the fall-off is startling: only Persius and Lucan, both of Nero's reign. There is total silence not only as to the lesser Julio-Claudian poets (Manilius, Phaedrus, Calpurnius for instance) but also about all the poets of the Flavianic period, Statius, Silius Italicus, Valerius Flaccus and Martial, let alone those who do not survive but were well thought of by contemporaries, Serranus,

5. Roth lxxviii inferred that the *Illustrious men* must have appeared before Pliny's death, and is generally followed, e.g., Macé (1900) 69ff., Funaioli (1932) 598, Brugnoli (1968) 59. Rostagni (1944) xi is more cautious. But the worthlessness of this argument was seen already by Reifferscheid 422: one might as well suppose that the *Caesars* must have been written before the death of Nerva in 98. The only life likely to have transcended the limit of Domitian's death is that of the rhetor Julius Tiro. However, even this is to assume that he happens to be identical with the Julius Tiro whose disputed will came up before Trajan in AD 105, Plin. *Ep.* 6.31.7f., a possibility not even considered by Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* 394.

Saleius Bassus or Maternus. Is this Jerome's selection? If so, why exclude Martial and include Bavius?[6]

The list of orators is even more limited. It starts with Cicero and ends with the accuser Domitius Afer who died in AD 59. The cluster of names around the very late republic is striking: Calidius, taught by the same Greek rhetor, Apollodorus of Pergamum, as Augustus; the younger Curio; Atratinus, rival to Cicero's pupil Caelius (Jerome has missed the latter); the Furnii, father and son, who fought on opposite sides at Actium; Asinius Pollio, Munatius Plancus and Messala Corvinus, notable figures of the reign of Augustus; Q. Haterius, Asinius Gallus, Cassius Severus and Votienus Montanus who survived Augustus to meet their ends under Tiberius; then only Passienus Crispus, the stepfather of Nero who died under Caligula, before Afer. Suetonius only had to read Cicero's *Brutus* (which he certainly knew) to see that Cicero was the culmination of a long Roman tradition, and to find the names of dozens of orators before him. Nor did eloquence die with Afer, and Tacitus' *Dialogus* could have provided the names of many notable figures, including the sinister pair Vibius Crispus and Eprius Marcellus. Then there were famous orators in the reign of Domitian, of whom Pliny's letters supply details, like his own rival Aquilius Regulus, to say nothing of Tacitus and Pliny themselves.[7]

The orators, at least on Jerome's showing, were thus restricted to a brief period centring on the reign of Augustus. The other prose writers fall within the same general limits, but they are not even completely represented within their limits. The historians are a very odd selection. Sallust and Livy, the classics of the later republic and the Augustan age, are there, but apart from them are only four names: Nepos the biographer, Fenestella the Augustan antiquarian, Asconius Pedianus, the learned commentator on Cicero who died under Vespasian; and we may add from other sources the elder

6. The gaps in the list of poets are discussed by Rostagni (1944) xix-xxiv who concludes, in my view rightly, that S's coverage was very uneven. Quite different is the list of 'classics' given by Quintilian 10.1.85-100. That Jerome made some omissions is certain, and Rostagni 133ff. rightly attributes to S the manuscript life of Tibullus with its typically Suetonian quotation of Domitius Marsus.

7. Scholars are divided as to whether the orators before Cicero were included by S: thus Reifferscheid 406 supposes that they were not, but Funaioli (1932) 606f. challenges this. That S knew Cicero's *Brutus* emerges from *Jul.* 5.1 and 56.2. The question must remain open.

Pliny, historian, scientist and philologist. Here we miss not only the republican annalists who preceded Sallust, from Cato and Calpurnius Piso to Licinius Macer and Valerius Antias, but even the main historians of the early empire, Servilius Nonianus, Aufidius Bassus, Fabius Rusticus, Cluvius Rufus and others. The philosophers too make a queer bunch: Seneca is there, a famed orator as well as a philosopher. But instead of the philosophers whom Quintilian (10.1.123-5) thought worth mentioning, the Sextii and their pupil Cornelius Celsus, the Stoic Plautus and the Epicurean Catius, Jerome mentions only two names, and of men we would hardly associate with philosophy: the antiquarian Varro, and his learned contemporary, the savant and divine Nigidius Figulus.[8]

Nor is this all. The confusion over the historians and philosophers is added to by the presence of a medley of displaced persons who appear to fit into no category at all. Pylades the Augustan pantomime star can at least be accounted for: he will have been mentioned along with Roscius in the prefatory remarks on the Roman stage. But what of Tiro, Cicero's freedman, who invented the first Roman shorthand system, Artorius, the doctor of Augustus who died not long after Actium, Servius Sulpicius the jurist, or Servilius Isauricus who like Sulpicius was honoured with a public funeral, but is not credited with writing of any genre? It is surely too much to suppose on this slender basis that Suetonius also wrote a series of lives of doctors and jurists – where are the others? – and many scholars prefer to forget this embarrassing evidence.[9]

The lazy solution to all these difficulties is to play down the value of Jerome's evidence. Jerome was hasty, muddled and quirkish, but of course Suetonius was thorough and without prejudices, and we must imagine him wading efficiently through the main poets, orators, historians and philosophers down to Domitian's death. What gives the lie to this solution is the internal evidence within Suetonius. The

8. Macé 262f. simply assumes that the early imperial annalists must have been covered by S. Similarly Reifferscheid 407f. assumes the philosophers must have been there. In fact the majority of notices in Jerome are about expulsions of philosophers from Rome: this is a likely enough Suetonian theme, see below.

9. Reifferscheid 375 puts Pylades in the preface to the *Poets*, but is not followed by Rostagni 5ff. Mommsen 613 included Tiro in the life of his master Cicero; but this fails to accommodate the clearly Suetonian history of stenography which Reifferscheid frr.105-7 associates with Tiro. Following Mommsen 616f. all scholars reject the possibility of series of lives of jurists and doctors; Sulpicius and Artorius are variously disposed of, by subterfuge or neglect.

names in Jerome's list, for all the oddities of their distribution, do in fact correspond remarkably well with the kind of authors in whom Suetonius manifests interest elsewhere. The list constitutes precious evidence of the sorts of authors Suetonius did and did not read, was or was not interested in.

In the first place, the chronological distribution makes perfectly good sense. Jerome, who was trying to fill out his chronological list for the whole Roman period, had no interest in creating an artificial cluster of information round the lives of Cicero and Augustus. But for Suetonius, writing at the start of the second century AD, the closer he got to the present, the more things were a matter of common knowledge. Many of his contemporaries will have known Statius or Martial better than he. Their biographies required interviews with friends, not book-learning, and it was research in the libraries that was his forte. Nor was the middle republic such an attractive period for research. Varro and Nepos, probably also Santra and Hyginus, had gone over this ground very thoroughly. It was the age of Cicero and Augustus, when his four predecessors were themselves alive, that offered the best opportunities for breaking new ground.

This pattern is borne out by the surviving lives of grammarians. Suetonius believes that philological studies reached Rome in the mid second century; yet he deals with the earliest scholars very rapidly in the preface. Lampadio, Vargunteius, Aelius Stilo and others of the second century merit no full biographical notices (2.4-3.3). The list of famous professors starts with the first century; eleven belong to the lifetime of Cicero, who is frequently named or cited; six to that of Augustus; two to the Julio-Claudian period; and one to the Flavians. The early empire must certainly have produced more professors of distinction than are here named. The balance with rhetors is a little different: four are Ciceronian; five or six were active in Augustus' lifetime; four flourished under the Julio-Claudians, and three under the Flavians. Here at least the first century AD is better served, necessarily so since it was in this period that declamation was at the height of fashion. But at least we can see here that Jerome has no bias against the post-Augustan period: he has entries for three Julio-Claudian rhetors, and two Flavian ones.

So it looks as if the massive concentration of detail, much of it minute, on the Ciceronian and Augustan period does reflect Suetonius' area of expertise. Though he does not completely neglect the

second century BC or the post-Augustan age, he does not show the same inclination to dig out recondite material. He simply was not so well read in these periods.

We can go further. The literary lives hang together as a group, and not only in the sense that they are conceived of as a coherent series rather than as a collection of individual lives (this is particularly clear with the grammarians). They are also a group in that the authors relate to each other and are used as sources for each other. Grammarians and rhetors, after all, were the teachers of poets and orators. Grammarians wrote commentaries on earlier poets, and could be used as sources for their lives; while poets who were pupils of grammarians provided information for their teachers' lives. Suetonius is generous in citing his authorities (it was part of scholarly style), and again and again the authorities he cites are themselves authors whose biographies he wrote.

The orators are a good example of this. At least half the orators who appear in Jerome's list are mentioned by name in the lives of the grammarians and rhetors. Cicero of course is both named and quoted frequently. Pollio is quoted as criticising Sallust for using Ateius Philologus to collect archaisms for him (10). A letter of Messala Corvinus is quoted speaking dismissively of Valerius Cato (4). Asinius Gallus wrote an epigram about Pomponius (22). Plancus took Albucius Silus under his wing (30.2). Famous trials are mentioned involving Curio (25.4), Atratinus (26) and Cassius Severus (22). The orators also appear in the *Caesars*. Messala was responsible for a complimentary decree in favour of Augustus which Suetonius quotes (58); Cassius Severus libelled the ancestor of Vitellius (2.1); Haterius had a sharp exchange in the senate with Tiberius (29); and Passienus Crispus left his money to his stepson Nero (6.3). Thus it is just the orators named by Jerome with whom Suetonius elsewhere displays acquaintance. Conversely he rarely shows acquaintance with the orators Jerome does not mention, Cicero's predecessors and Afer's successors. There are no citations from the elder Cato or the Gracchi.[10]

The same observation can be applied to Suetonius' 'historians'. Nepos, Fenestella and Asconius sound to us an odd group. Yet it was these learned antiquarians who were most useful to the author

10. Though S does not cite pre-Ciceronian orators, he does occasionally betray knowledge of their existence: Julius modelled his style on Strabo Caesar (55.2), Galba's ancestor Sulpicius was one of the leading speakers of his day (3.2). He also knew of Licinius Crassus (*Ner.* 2.2) and Hortensius (*Tib.* 47).

of the *Illustrious men*, and not the annalists who concentrated on military and political events. Nepos and Fenestella are cited in the life of Terence: Fenestella had shown that some of Nepos' assertions were chronologically impossible. Asconius is twice cited in the life of Virgil: he had written an essay against Virgil's critics. All three must have featured together in the life of Cicero. Gellius in the *Attic nights* (15.28) reports a dispute over the age of Cicero when he made his defence of Roscius. Nepos, though a personal friend of Cicero's, committed a howler, asserting that he defended Roscius at 23; Fenestella controverted Nepos, changing the age to 26; it took Asconius to hit on the correct age of 27. Jerome duly reports from Suetonius that Cicero defended Roscius at 27. Gellius, ever a magpie, must have lifted the controversy direct from the Suetonian life.

Suetonius' close familiarity with learned authors like these three, as well as Varro, the elder Pliny, Santra and Hyginus, manifests itself again and again. Why suppose that he wrote biographies of the annalists in whom he shows no interest and ignore the evidence of Jerome who confirms his inclination to the men of learning? While we can never be confident that an author not named by Jerome was therefore not the subject of a Suetonian biographical notice, we should be most wary of supposing that Suetonius dealt with any group not represented in Jerome. Another such group is that of the fashionable 'Stoic' biographers of the early empire, familiar from the letters of Pliny. Arulenus Rusticus had written a life of his master Thrasea Paetus, and Herennius Senecio of Helvidius Priscus; both biographers met their ends, allegedly in consequence, under Domitian. Pliny's friend Titinius Capito wrote on the deaths of some of Domitian's victims; while Fannius had completed three volumes on the fates of Nero's victims when he himself died in AD 105-6. But despite Pliny's effusive praise for these biographers, there is no sign that Suetonius interested himself in them. Indeed the one reference he makes to Rusticus reveals his ignorance: he attributes to him the life of Helvidius.[11]

It is best to avoid forming too fixed an idea of the layout of the *Illustrious men*. More important is to grasp its character, learned and idiosyncratic; not at all after the style of a modern handbook of literary history, dealing with everything that *ought* to be there, but following where the author's interests and reading led, and packed with recondite information. Perhaps we should envisage the collection growing by a process of crystallisation, and not in a straight

11. On these biographers, see above, ch.1, n.18. On Rusticus' biographies, Tacitus *Agricola* 2.1 is to be preferred to *Dom.* 10.3.

line. Bavius and Maevius, even Varius and Tucca, may owe their place (if indeed they enjoyed entries of their own) to an attempt to explain things about Virgil. Other misfits could owe their mention to similar reasons. Servilius Isauricus, listed by Jerome, is not otherwise known as an author. But he does, as it happens, feature in an anecdote in the life of the rhetor Epidius (28). Octavian and Antony were told by a political opponent that it was better to be a follower of Isauricus than of the slanderous Epidius, as they were.

If we seek to extend Jerome's list, we should think in the first place of authors Suetonius knew and used: Domitius Marsus the epigrammatist, who had things to say about Orbilius, Epirota, Bavius and Tibullus; Ticidas, a follower of Valerius Cato; Ateius Capito, the Augustan jurist, warm supporter of the family grammarian Philologus. Another candidate might be the grandfather of Galba, more famous for his studies than for political achievement, who wrote a history which Suetonius describes in terms so well applicable to his own work, *multiplex nec incuriosa*, 'manifold and not lacking in scholarship' (3.3). Above all we miss the name of Santra, antiquarian and biographer, who is to us no more than a name, but a name known from Suetonius.

Literary lives and Caesars' lives

It is worth lingering over the *Illustrious men* simply because it explains so much about the *Caesars*. It was a work of very considerable learning. Suetonius needed to be at home in at least part of the work of each author about whom he wrote. Of course, it was not all original research. Inevitably he owed much to a succession of predecessors, criticising each other in turn, as did Nepos, Fenestella and Asconius, and also to the commentaries of his master, the formidable Probus. Even so, the sheer range of the work meant that there could be no simple dependence on forerunners. It is most implausible that this should have been his first publication, which Pliny awaited so impatiently in AD 105. The book is the fruit of long years of scholarly study, and ought to follow the bulk of the less demanding philological and antiquarian essays. In its wake, Suetonius could approach the *Caesars* with a mind already stocked with information; and this is surely what he did, moving more or less directly from the lives of authors to Caesars.

The progression was a natural one in more than one sense. Nepos, and probably Hyginus, had included generals or politicians alongside

literary figures in their biographies. Twelve Caesars formed a series in much the way that poets or grammarians did, only the scale was rather different. But there is another way in which the *Illustrious men* naturally drew the author on to the *Caesars*. One of the features of the literary lives one cannot miss is the acute awareness of the relations between the authors and the outside public world. This comes across markedly, as we have seen, in the *Grammarians and rhetors*. The essay is primarily about cultural history, not literary history. It is concerned with the absorption by the Romans of Greek education, and with the rising public esteem of the arts and their practitioners. The same is true of the *Poets*. The life of Terence revolves round the relations between the playwright and his aristocratic patrons. Scipio, Laelius and others – were they contemporaries of Terence? Is it true that his patrons wrote his comedies for him? There is no literary criticism here, no attempt to assess Terence's contribution to the Roman comic tradition. The lives of Virgil and Horace are equally obsessed with the patronage of Maecenas and Augustus, and perhaps the most valuable feature of either of them is the citation of letters from Augustus. The life of the orator Passienus Crispus describes the way he earned approval in succession from Tiberius and Caligula (when the latter asked whether he had committed incest with his sister, he tactfully answered 'Not yet'). This reads very much like the account of Vitellius' courtier father (2.4-3.1). The life of Lucan concerns his rise and fall in Nero's favour; at first rewarded with a quaestorship, he quarrelled when Nero walked out of a recitation, and signified his contempt for Nero's verse by citing it aptly in a public latrine; eventually, he turned conspirator.

Even in the fragments preserved by Jerome, one is aware of the presence of Augustus and his successors. The orator Atratinus committed suicide in the bath, and left Augustus his heir. Asinius Gallus was horribly punished by Tiberius. Quintilian was brought to Rome from Spain by Galba. The fragments referring to philosophers suggest that Suetonius was largely concerned with persecutions and expulsions of philosophers and astrologers. Nigidius died in exile. Anaxilaus, Pythagorean and magus, was expelled from Italy by Augustus. Seneca was exiled by Claudius and driven to death by Nero. Vespasian exiled all philosophers. Titus recalled them: Musonius Rufus returned from exile in AD 80. Domitian expelled philosophers yet again. We may recall the struggle rhetoric had for recognition at Rome in the face of censorial and consular

edicts: for philosophy the struggle against public opinion went on much longer, and Suetonius surely was interested in tracing it.[12]

The author of literary lives was thus already familiar with the Caesars. One thing led to another. Writing the life of a poet like Furius Bibaculus led to the life of the grammarian Valerius Cato he said so much about (or perhaps the other way round). Writing of the Augustan poets or the early imperial orators and rhetors led to lives of the Caesars themselves. In fact 'Caesars' was an ingenious choice, given Suetonius' chronological predelictions. It allowed him to handle the late republic as well as the early empire.

How did the scholar set about equipping himself for his new task? The writing of history is a time-consuming undertaking. Cassius Dio tells us that it took him ten years to do his reading before he put pen to paper. Cicero himself would have liked to have become Rome's first real historian, but he frankly admitted that history, unlike philosophy, could not be written as a hobby in odd moments. The younger Pliny too shied off the onerous task of collating variant versions. It is easy to imagine that Suetonius had a hard grind of historical research ahead of him before he could write his *Caesars*. Yet it may be quite wrong to suppose he ever undertook it.[13]

One feature of the *Caesars* is, to our sorrow, only too palpable. The quality falls off sharply as the work progresses. The *Julius* and *Augustus* are in a class apart for length, minuteness of focus, abundance of documentation and liberal citation of authorities. The Julio-Claudian lives are still substantial, but they lack the freshness and sharpness of the first two. The citation of original documents falls off, and is largely limited to the early parts of the *Caesars* which actually fell in Augustus' reign. Authorities are no longer named; the detail becomes cruder; and the regrettable habit of covering up for lack of information by generalising from single instances emerges. The next three, civil war, lives are sketchy indeed. There is interesting material on the background and early careers of Galba, Otho and Vitellius, but the handling of their reigns and

12. Macé 256ff. notes the frequency of allusions to Caesars in the *Illustrious men*. He also observes that S failed to make use of most of these items in the *Caesars*, surely because it was the authors, not the Caesars, on whom these anecdotes cast light. Macé's observation undermines the argument of Brugnoli (1968) 33f. that the *Grammarians and rhetors* must have been published later than the rest of the *Illustrious men* and later than the *Caesars* on the grounds that the *Caesars* ignores information contained in the *Grammarians*.

13. So Dio 72.23.5, Cicero *de Legibus* 1.8-9, Pliny *Ep.* 5.8.12.

even their private lives is cursory in the extreme, hardly amounting to a couple of paragraphs. Perhaps the brevity of their reigns may excuse this; but the sad decline continues with the Flavians where there is no such excuse. The *Vespasian* is an interesting and sympathetic life, but its detail is extraordinarily thin. The *Titus* is closer to romance or panegyric than biography. The *Domitian* is an improvement, and contains some precious details; but it must be a matter of lasting regret to the historian that the biographer who spent his early life in Domitian's Rome and who knew so many people, inside the palace and out, who could remember the same period, dealt with this life in the same number of chapters as the *Galba*.

The explanation for this decline may be sought partly in the author's disgrace. We know that at least the first instalment of the *Caesars* was dedicated to Septicius while still in office. He and the biographer were dismissed early in Hadrian's reign (as we have seen), and it is quite possible that the *Caesars* still awaited completion at the time of the dismissal. It is nice to think of a dispirited Suetonius, out of favour, mechanically completing his most ambitious undertaking without the old zest and energy. But even if this happens to be right, the dismissal was no more than a psychological excuse for neglecting what the author had little appetite for in the first place. The pattern of decline of interest corresponds so exactly with what we have observed in the *Illustrious men* that there can be no doubt that the same predispositions of the author lie behind both.[14]

This should provoke further reflections on the scholarly author's methods and sources. He did not transform himself from scholar to historian, but set about his new task in his old way. What did he read? Writing on authors, he read their works. He did the same for the Caesars. He may have made direct use of Julius' *Commentaries* for his analysis of his generalship. He read Augustus' private correspondence with great care. He also used his autobiography, and the letters of Antony to or against him. He read Tiberius' brief autobiography, and was shocked to discover him laying the death of Germanicus' children at Sejanus' door, despite the fact that one

14. The decline was observed by Macé 361ff. and attributed to S's decline in interest. Townend (1959) 286ff. further documented the extent of the decline and connected it with his dismissal from office; the idea is supported by Syme (1980) 116ff. But J.A. Crook (1969), in a review of della Corte advocated a return to Macé's explanation.

was executed after Sejanus' fall (61.1). Claudius also wrote eight volumes of memoirs that displayed his lack of tact (41.3); the biographer could quote his indignant complaint at the brutishness of his pedagogue (2.2). Nero was famous for his poetical aspirations: Suetonius used Nero's poems to condemn his charioteering from his own lips (24.2), and to identify a senator who claimed to have compromised the young Domitian (*Dom.* 1.1). Domitian wrote a light essay *On looking after hair*: the biographer cited it to illustrate the emperor's sensitivity about his own baldness (18.2). All these works were private, literary, products. It seems not to have crossed his mind to make an analysis of the public official documents of each emperor as a modern historian would. But then, maybe the secretary knew too much about the circumstances of composition of official documents to think that worthwhile.

Then there were contemporary documents. Julius' friend Oppius wrote a useful biography: the author recalled an incident on a journey when he had a sudden attack of fever and Julius gave up his own bed (72); or how Julius ate a dish dressed with bad-tasting oil rather than embarrass his host (53); and doubtless he provided many other details. Julius' other close friend, Cornelius Balbus, described the discovery of prophecies of doom immediately before his murder (81.2). Augustus' freedman Julius Marathus could similarly supply intimate details of his physique (79.2), and had wild messianic tales of a proposed slaughter of innocents at his birth (94.3). To balance these friendly accounts were contemporary invectives. Julius was plentifully slandered; for involvement with Catiline by his colleague Bibulus, the orator Curio, the historian Tanusius Geminus and by a certain Actorius Naso (9); and for sexual misconduct by (among others) the orators Dolabella, Curio father and son, and Cicero (49-52), by Bibulus, Memmius and Pompey, and by the poets Calvus (49.1), Catullus (73) and Pitholaus (75.5). Augustus was libelled in his youth by open 'letters' of Antony, Cassius of Parma and doubtless others including anonymous lampoons (2-4 and 68-70). Suetonius also produces lampoons against Tiberius (59), Nero (39.2), Otho (3.2) and Domitian (14) and records the appearance of a pamphlet under Claudius arguing that nobody ever pretended to be a fool, despite the emperor's public claims to have done so (38.3).

There is much more in this vein. The important point is that the vast majority of sources whom Suetonius names, or cites verbatim, which he does with considerable frequency in the first two *Caesars*

and only exceptionally thereafter, are not the standard historical sources or indeed works in general circulation, but just the kind of sources he had drawn on in the *Illustrious men*, obscure, ephemeral or distinctly 'literary'.

This is not to say that he makes no use of historians. He quotes them when they provide first-hand evidence. Asinius Pollio could vouch for the words of Julius immediately before the battle of Pharsalus: 'They would have it so' (30.4). The disloyal Cremutius Cordus, whose works were banned by Tiberius (61.3) but taken off the black list by Caligula (16.1) described the tense atmosphere in the senate when Augustus conducted his purges (35.2). An anonymous consular historian, most likely Servilius Nonianus, witnessed the incident when Tiberius was prompted by a dwarf jester to hasten a condemnation (61.6). Finally he cites the elder Pliny once in order to refute him: Pliny reported seeing an inscription in Germany which proved Caligula was born there, quite wrongly (8).

Ancient historians were habitually shoddy, by our standards at least, about citing their authorities. Predecessors are rarely named except at points of disagreement or error. Silence is no argument for ignorance. Inevitably Suetonius must have based himself on standard historical accounts of the principate. The numerous correspondences of detail between him and Tacitus, Plutarch and Dio demonstrate that he drew on some of the same sources as they did. It is even possible on the basis of such comparison to come some way towards reconstructing which these sources were. But though this exercise is important for understanding the relationship between the Caesars and other surviving historical accounts, it should not be allowed to overshadow what is special and unusual about Suetonius.

Suetonius had to use historians; but there is little sign that they excited him. The proper procedure of the ancient historian was to read through his predecessors, comparing and judging their accounts, and to seek to produce a version that was more accurate and more elegant. Here lay the labour and the challenge. It was not a challenge Suetonius rose to. The fact that the sources he names and quotes are not historians, except when they happen to be conveying personal anecdotes, reflects his very unhistorical approach. The obscure, out-of-the-way, antiquarian details were the ones he was capable of contributing and enjoyed contributing. We should be very cautious of overestimating the amount of time and effort he put into reading and digesting the historians, though undoubtedly he did use them. It is relevant to recall which 'historians' appear on Jerome's list.

Sallust and Livy were the grammarian's favourites, and he may be expected to have known them well. The elder Pliny was a kindred spirit, and surely appealed to him. But, these apart, we cannot assume that he had any special familiarity with historians as opposed to antiquarians and writers of memoirs, nor that he undertook more than the inevitable minimum of investigation in this direction for the *Caesars*. At any rate, he covered his traces, and he cannot now be caught out.[15]

The investigation of oral sources was the second main element of the historian's craft. It may be imagined that the closer Suetonius came to his own times, the more he relied on non-written sources, and that this contributed to his failure to name authorities in the later lives. Again, the matter is very hard to control. The prevalence of what we regard as 'gossip' in some of the lives has led many to suppose that Suetonius made use of orally-circulated stories and rumours. Yet the labour involved in collecting oral accounts was considerable, even for those not so conscientious as Thucydides. The very lack of detail in the *Domitian* is a strong indication that Suetonius took little pains on this score. It is safest to imagine him continuing with his philological methods, which involved essential reliance on the library supplemented by the occasional personal anecdote. The grammarian Nisus, as Suetonius reports, used to say that he had heard from his elders that Varius in editing Virgil's epic changed the order of two books, and deleted four prefatory lines. Suetonius' own personal contributions are very much along these lines. He recalled at the end of the *Lucan* that the poet's works used to be lectured on at school. In the *Grammarians* he remembered how the one called Princeps used to declaim rhetorically and dispute grammatically on alternate days (4.9). In the *Caesars* he reminisces to similar effect. His grandfather used to report the inside palace story about Caligula's Baiae bridge – it was all to frustrate an astrologer's prediction (19.3). His father used to describe the final, glorious, moments of Otho which he witnessed (10.1). He himself remembered the appearance of a false Nero (57.2) and an anti-semitic trial under Domitian (12.2). Perhaps too it was he who had seen inscriptions celebrating Vespasian's father in Asia (1.2) and statues of Titus throughout Germany and Britain (4.1); or even

15. Macé's chapter on the sources of the *Caesars* (357ff.) is judiciously restrained. There can however be little doubt that S used Cluvius Rufus, as Townend has shown in a series of papers: Townend (1960), *Hermes* 89 (1961) 227, *ib.* 92 (1964) 467, *Am. Journ. Phil.* 85 (1964) 337.

the golden dice thrown by Tiberius in the fountain at Padua (14.3).[16]

The scholarly biographer had no need to transform himself into a historian in order to tackle his new subject. He could draw on his old expertise, especially his familiarity with writings of all sorts from the ages of Cicero and Augustus. He could use his old methods: little more than a reading of the standard period histories would be necessary to provide the essential historical backbone. He could also indulge old interests. Caesars were not totally different from orators. Julius had claims to a ranking as one of Rome's leading orators, as Cicero's testimony showed; a comparison of texts indicated that Strabo Caesar was his first model (55.2). Augustus had firm views on rhetorical style, pungently expressed, and had mocked Antony as falling between two rival schools (86). Tiberius was nothing if not a self-conscious speaker: his style was that of Messala Corvinus, but marred by excessive obscurity (70.1). Caligula too had a ready tongue, and criticised the style of the fashionable Seneca as sand without cement (53). Claudius spoke in public often enough, but his total lack of a sense of propriety undermined his efforts (39-40). Nero, still a student in age at his accession, declaimed in public to general approval (10.2). Suetonius had already observed in the *Grammarians and rhetors* what good this did to the profession (25.6). Galba at least came from a family of accomplished orators (3). Vespasian made up for a lack of educational polish by his lively sense of humour (22-3). Titus' early promise as an orator was considered remarkable (3). Domitian is criticised for his neglect of style; yet Suetonius had to admit that he could put things remarkably neatly. It was he who said it was the misfortune of a prince that nobody would believe a conspiracy had been discovered unless he was killed (20-1).

Biographical form

In the *Caesars* we see emperors not only as orators, but as historians, poets, grammarians, critics and essayists. The *Illustrious men* leaves its unmistakable stamp. But it should not be invoked to explain everything. In particular it is necessary to tread warily in the question of biographical form. The problem is how far the literary

16. Della Corte (1967) 143-52 stresses S's character as 'memorialista' with his love for the anecdotal. If the anecdotes and sayings in the later lives are of oral provenance, they are of a different type from the oral evidence historians collected. Syme (1981) 111f. conjectures that certain items are the fruit of the author's own travels.

lives provided a ready-made formula which could be applied without further ado to the *Caesars*. Fragmentary though the preservation of the poets' lives may be, enough survives to show that there were many striking formal similarities with the *Caesars*. Yet it is essential to bear in mind the question of scale. Even the shortest of the *Caesars* exceeded the longest of the *Poets* (undoubtedly Virgil) by an order of magnitude. The vast majority of the literary lives were no more than thumb-nail sketches. In one case the author was crippled by the paucity of his information, and needed to deploy all his learning in order to say anything: in the other there was an *embarras de richesse*. It would be a remarkable formula indeed which could cater for both.

What, first, is 'biographical form' and what is special about that met in Suetonius?[17] There is, as we have seen, an otiose sense in which any biography has a form which makes it instantly recognisable as such. Certain features are common to numerous types of biographical record. Parentage, date of birth, details of education, nature of main achievements, date and circumstances of death, names of spouses and offspring, value of estate and other details of this order can naturally be found in any Suetonian life, as in any other ancient life, or any modern one. The presence of this basic framework, though it instantly alerts the reader to the fact this is biography, can indicate little more. But when it comes to describing character and personality there is much wider scope for variation, and it is here that Suetonius may be felt to impose his sign manual.[18]

His characterisation of Claudius may serve as a specimen (30-42). Once the analysis of Claudius' rule has reached its climax in the description of the way his wives and freedmen dominated him, the biographer turns to the personal details. First his appearance, the impression of dignity conveyed by his build and grey head, counteracted by the absurdity of his body and features when in movement, his spluttering laugh, running nose and stuttering tongue (30). This is followed by a comment on his state of health, which with the exception of a bad attack of the gripes was good (31). Next we are given an account of his way of life. His style of entertainment

17. Ancient biographical form has been much discussed since Leo (1901). The most substantial contributions have been Stuart (1928), Steidle (1951), A. Dihle, *Studien zur griechischen Biographie* (1956), Momigliano (1971).

18. The occurrence of these topics on the ancient gravestone is nicely illustrated by R. Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Roman Epitaphs*[2] (1962) 266ff.

is described as lavish, though it is observed that he had quaint theories about flatulence (32). Then some details of his routine: he had a marked appetite for food and wine (he once left his seat of judgment tempted by the smells of a nearby sacerdotal dinner), slept very little, but tended to nap while at work; had a strong, but strictly heterosexual libido; and amused himself by dicing, for which he had a passion (33). We now move to an account of his salient traits of character: he had a marked sadistic streak, evinced in his fondness for death-sentences and for gladiatorial duels (34); he was exceptionally timid and gullible, which led to his manipulation by palace staff (35-7); he was given to outbursts of wrath, which he admitted openly, and he failed to convince the public that his folly was put on (38); and he was exceptionally absentminded (39). Finally the biographer turns to his intellectual side: his conversational style (40), his activities as an author (41) and his accomplishments in Greek (42).

No two of the *Caesars* are exactly the same, but a corresponding group of personal details is found in almost every one, composed of the same basic items (appearance, style of living, characteristics, intellectual pursuits) or a selection of them, in this order or in a variation on it. The same formula shines through in the more substantial literary lives. Horace was short and fat, and Augustus wrote teasingly to him to say that so voluminous a man should write more voluminous poems. His sexual appetite was intemperate: his bedroom was lined with mirrors. He lived mostly in his country hideout which was still pointed out near a grove at Tibur. (This last is a most Suetonian aside: the house where Augustus was nursed was also 'still pointed out' – 6.) The biography then went on to discuss Horace's poetry. Virgil was tall and dark, but suffered from bad health, stomach pains, headaches and blood-spitting; he had little appetite for food and wine, was mildly homosexual, but in general was wholly proper in behaviour, and painfully shy. After some notes on his properties and family, the *Life* goes on to examine his studies, not proceeding to his poetry before observing his interest in medicine and mathematics, and his lack of gift for oratory.

Among the *Illustrious men*, Horace and Virgil were evidently treated at exceptional length. The majority of the sketches will have included at most one or two details of this sort. Terence was of medium height, slender and dark. That is all in a relatively full life. Nothing is said of the physique of any of the surviving grammarians and rhetors, except that Sextus Clodius had bad eyesight (29).

Remmius Palaemon is the only one of that series about whose personal life much could be said: he was very arrogant, called Varro 'the pig', was so luxurious in his life-style that he bathed several times a day and outspent a considerable professional income, while his perverse sexual tastes gave him a bad name (23).

On this basis, can we say that Suetonius used the same biographical formula for the Caesars as for authors? It is helpful to consider how Plutarch approached the same problem, for comparison throws up both similarities and contrasts. Plutarch's formula for personal details is very similar in that he gives exactly the same sort of details. He describes Sulla's appearance, his complexion blotched like a mulberry, and his style of life, his fondness for entertainers and actors, his behaviour at dinners, and his proneness to sexual indulgence (*Sulla* 2). We hear about Pompey's character, his charm and tact, his majestic appearance, enhanced by the swept-back hairstyle modelled on Alexander's, his relationships with mistresses, and his simple tastes in food (*Pompey* 1.3-2). Again, Crassus' way of life was very moderate and restrained, and accusations of adultery were untrue; but this millionaire was certainly avaricious when it came to money; his hospitality was generous and he was a man of high culture, a very able orator, well read in history, and a dabbler in philosophy (*Crassus* 1-3).

These examples are enough to show that Plutarch drew on the same group of topics as Suetonius: appearance, character, way of life, physical appetites and cultural interests. But there are also considerable contrasts. The style has a completely different feel. Suetonius is factual and compact, as if he were rattling off a list of prescribed items. Plutarch is much more relaxed and flowing, and the reader is led along from one point to another without noticing the transitions. The information emerges so naturally from the course of the discussion, and the illustrative anecdotes are told with such charm, that it is not easy to recognise the presence of a schema. Plutarch's treatment of this aspect of a biography is in line with his approach as a whole. He writes as an essayist, treating a man's life as a story worth telling for the interest of the tale, and worth discussing for the improvement to be derived from its morals. He narrates and ruminates where Suetonius lists, analyses, informs.[19]

The value of the contrast is to show what extraordinarily different

19. For a comparison between Plutarch and S, see A. Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives* (1974) 144ff.

use could be made by contemporary authors of the same biographical framework. Yet Friedrich Leo, in a study of the ancient biographical tradition of fundamental importance, drew wider conclusions from the contrast. He wrote at a period, at the turn of the century, when classical philology was much affected by Mendelian biology. It seemed that literature could be scientifically categorised in the same way as plants, divided into genus (genre) and species, each variant being traced back to its original descent. Leo saw in Suetonius and Plutarch two branches of the same family, biography; one branch scholarly and informative, the other philosophical and reflective. He argued that the two species had already split off from each other in the third century BC. Suetonius was the descendant of a long line of scholarly biographers writing lives of literary men, Plutarch of philosophical ('peripatetic') ones writing about men of action.

Leo's genetic classification never fitted the surviving specimens. Nepos' *Lives* and Tacitus' *Agricola*, the main Latin biographies apart from Suetonius, cannot be usefully interpreted in these terms: the *Agricola* is neither philosophical nor scholarly, but historical, being in its core section concerned with the conquest and government of Britain. Worse, when a papyrus fragment of the *Life of Euripides* by the peripatetic Satyrus was discovered, it proved a complete surprise: it is in dialogue form. But then, a work of literature is not a plant. The form of a plant is determined by its genetic make-up: it cannot choose. But an author can make what he will of a work of literature, and though ancient authors liked to place their works in a recognisable tradition, they did so as a conscious act of will, and made their own decisions about where to follow tradition and where to part from it. The great value of Leo's book was to show that Suetonius' biographies do indeed belong to a long scholarly tradition. The discovery of an Alexandrian collection of *Bioi Endoxōn Andrōn* ('Lives of Illustrious Men') would cast invaluable light on the *Illustrious men*. But the fallacy is to suppose that because the *Caesars* was written by one deeply versed in this tradition, its fundamental features were predetermined: the plant had its genetic make-up, and, once Roman emperors had been crossfertilised with literary biography, they would automatically grow up in a certain form.

In fact there are vast areas of the *Caesars* for which the *Illustrious men* can offer no precedent. They could offer, for example, no possible framework for handling the public administrative life of an emperor. Suetonius set about this in what was certainly a scholarly

way, and I shall suggest that he was here much influenced by the Roman antiquarian tradition (chapter 6); but this had nothing to do with literary biography. It is also important to realise how little the literary lives explain about an area where they might have provided a model, that is the description of character.

The biographical schema common to Suetonius and Plutarch offered an opportunity for describing character. Traits of personality, whether the avarice of Crassus or the idiosyncrasies of Claudius, could be enumerated along with other personal features, most naturally directly after a description of physical appearance. But though both authors make occasional use of this method, it is exceptional. It is only really suitable for a short biographical sketch. In a full length portrait, character is much too important for such perfunctory treatment. The two biographers go different ways. For Plutarch the interpretation of *ēthos* is so central that he prefers to let it emerge from the whole narrative of a man's life: his actions over a long period of time gradually reveal his true character. In the *Caesars* character is also of great importance, but in a different way. Virtues and vices form a large part of what makes an emperor good or bad, and Suetonius sets about documenting them in a scholarly way. Each vice or virtue is taken separately, and exemplified by a list of actions and anecdotes (below, chapter 7).

Suetonius' method here has no more to do with literary biography than does Plutarch's. The approach he has adopted is that of encomium, in which it was strongly recommended that actions should not be narrated chronologically, but distributed under virtues. Xenophon's encomium of the Spartan king Agesilaus set the model. After a brief chronological survey of Agesilaus' career and campaigns, Xenophon offers a series of chapters that document his virtues: piety, justice, temperance, courage and wisdom, and then some less definable qualities. This is a method designed for handling men of action, particularly kings. It is merely perverse to suggest that when Suetonius employed the same scheme on emperors, because it was a non-narrative method it must have been the product of the scholarly biographical tradition.[20]

Imperial biography was a much more demanding project than anything Suetonius had yet undertaken. He needed to draw on all

20. S's debt to encomium was seen by Steidle (1951) 129ff., accepted by Momigliano (1971) 87. For an introduction to the ancient encomiastic tradition, see D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson, *Menander Rhetor* (1981) xiff. The practice of panegyric under the empire and its influence on S is discussed below, ch.7.

his resources of learning and experience in order to rise to the challenge. The lives of literary figures offer an essential clue as to how he contrived to write biographies that were more than potted history. They explain much about his intellectual horizons, his methods and his interests. They should not be asked to explain everything. He drew extensively on all his previous scholarly work, on Games, the Calendar and other antiquarian subjects. He enriched the scholarly biographical schema from other sources, encomium and native Roman tradition. In consequence, the *Caesars* is very much *sui generis*.

Chapter Four

THE SCHOLAR AT COURT

The *Caesars* was dedicated by Hadrian's secretary *ab epistulis* to his praetorian prefect. Between them, the two men held two of the most important posts in the emperor's service. It is fair to speculate that it was through holding this post that Suetonius was emboldened to turn his pen to the Caesars. Certainly these biographies are not simply the product of armchair scholarship out of touch with the realities of public life. On the contrary they are written by one with experience of emperors and their business, and for readers no less experienced. But where does this show?

Suetonius the official is not so readily pinned down as Tranquillus the scholar. It is not easy to establish what views and mentality characterise the imperial official. We are beguiled into supposing that we understand the imperial service by the innumerable career inscriptions that survive like the Hippo inscription on Suetonius himself. The limitations of this sort of evidence are formidable: inscriptions tell us what posts people held, not why they were given them, what they had to do, how the system worked or how those within the system viewed life. It is all too tempting to operate by analogy from other bureaucratic systems. Too often the assumptions derived from analogy prove deceptive.[1]

Two alternative approaches to the question may be conceived. The first, adumbrated in the imaginative book of della Corte, is to work from a preconceived notion of what the views of an official ought to have been, and look for traces of them in his work. It is a

1. The most comprehensive survey of the imperial administration remains O. Hirschfeld, *Die Kaiserlichen Verwaltungsbeamten*[2] (1905). The epigraphic evidence for officials is collected in the massive studies of H.G. Pflaum, *Les Carrières procuratoriennes équestres* (1960-1) for equestrians, and G. Boulvert, *Esclaves et Affranchis Impériaux* (1970) for freedmen. Strong pleas have been made by a series of scholars against inferring a systematic and bureaucratic nature for the imperial service. See particularly Millar, *Emperor* 59ff., and R.P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (1982) esp. 79ff.

SUETONIUS

The Scholar and his Caesars

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