Classical Quarterly **42** (ii) 421–436 (1992) *Printed in Great Britain*

THE IDEAL BENEFACTOR AND THE FATHER ANALOGY IN GREEK AND ROMAN THOUGHT

When Cicero uncovered and suppressed the Catilinarian Conspiracy as consul in 63 B.C., supporters hailed him 'father of his country' (*pater patriae*) and proposed that he be awarded the oak crown normally given to a soldier who had saved the life of a comrade in battle (*corona civica*).[1] Our sources connect these honours with earlier heroes such as Romulus, Camillus and Marius, but the Elder Pliny writes as if Cicero was the first before Caesar and the Emperors to be given the title *pater patriae*.[2] Pliny's point may revolve around Senatorial initiative, and assuming this to be the case he really should have stressed that Cicero received the informal support of a limited number of Senators only, whereas Caesar and the Emperors were honoured by formal vote of the entire Senate. Perhaps Pliny was fooled by the prominence of those who spoke on Cicero's behalf, such as Cato, Catulus and Gellius Publicola. Opponents, on the other hand, angrily rejected calls that Cicero be recognised as the saviour of the state. In their eyes his execution of the Catilinarians marked him as a cruel tyrant. Metellus Nepos proposed Pompey's recall from the East in order to free Rome from Cicero's tyranny.[3] Aside from echoes of *patria potestas*, it seems obvious that the Romans were thinking in terms of the conventional Greek antithesis between the good king who is like a father to his people and the selfish tyrant who treats his subjects as slaves.[4] The Younger Pliny employs the same basic ideas in his *Panegyricus*: the cruel tyrant Domitian suppressed freedom (*libertas*) and desired honour as a god (*deus*, *numen*); the gentle Trajan is a citizen and father not a tyrant and master (*dominus*).[5] Tacitus has this basic distinction in mind too.[6] Nevertheless, as is well known, Pliny regularly addresses Trajan not as 'father' but as 'master' (*domine*) in Book 10 of his *Letters*. This was plainly an acceptable practice on the social plane, if not quite yet on the political. Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius indicated their opposition to *dominus* as a title for themselves, evidently for its

[1] See S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 200ff. for full discussion and references. The standard work in this field is A. Alföldi, *Der Vater des Vaterlandes im romischen Denken* (Darmstadt, 1971), reprinting a series of articles first published in *Museum Helveticum* 7–11, 1950–4; cf. E. Skard, 'Pater patriae: zum Ursprung einer religiöspolitischen Idee', *Festskrift til Halvdan Koht* (Oslo, 1933), pp. 42–70. Weinstock's harsh criticism of Alföldi for failure to achieve synthesis (p. 200 n. 4) merely points to the limitations of his own handbook-style work. For Alföldi's muted response, see his review of Weinstock in *Gnomon* 47 (1975), 166.

[2] Romulus: Cic. *Rep.* 1.64 (Enn. *Ann.* 110–14 V); cf. Cic. *Div.* 1.3; Liv. 1.16.3; 1.16.6; 4.3.12. Camillus: Liv. 5.49.7. Marius: Cic. *Rab. perd.* 27. Plin. *N.H.* 7.117; cf. App. *B.C.* 2.7.25; Juv. 8.243.

[3] Plut. *Cic.* 23.2; cf. Broughton, *MRR* ii.174–5 for full refs. (including Cato's opposition to Nepos and activities as tribune).

[4] Ordinary Romans would have been quite familiar with this antithesis from the stage: see J. Dunkle, 'The Greek Tyrant and Roman Political Invective of the Late Republic', *TAPA* 98 (1967), 151–71. H. Kloft, *Liberalitas Principis* (Koln, 1970), repeatedly mentions the influence of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* in this regard.

[5] Plin. *Pan.* 2.3; cf. *Pan.* 21.4, 94.4 (Trajan as *parens*); 4.2, 29.2, 53.1, 87.3 (*parens noster*); 26.3, 67.1, 87.1 (*parens publicus*); 39.6 (*communis omnium parens*). As *parens publicus* Trajan does not use force and respects libertas (*Pan.* 87.1).

[6] Note, for example, Tacitus' explicit damning of Tiberius as a tyrant: *Ann.* 6.6.2.

connotations of autocracy and servitude.[7] Domitian, damned as a tyrant, was accused of demanding to be addressed as *dominus et deus*.[8] The title *dominus* existed from at least the first century A.D. as a common form of polite address between inferiors and superiors of free birth, not only between masters and slaves. It gradually gained acceptance as an official title of the Emperor through the second century and was advertised widely by the Severi. And yet its tone throughout this period could also be critical when understood in terms of the good king/tyrant antithesis.[9]

A number of points can be made about this ideology. For instance, it describes Cicero and the Emperors as saviours, fathers, etc., in a way that was common for benefactors of various types (including gods, rulers, and less prominent mortals) from the time of Homer onwards.[10] It revolves around a fundamental father/tyrant contrast, which was developed in the Greek world and maintained, for example, in panegyrical writings of the fourth century A.D. and beyond.[11] It is concerned with personal qualities and motivation, as in the contrast between Domitian's cruelty and Trajan's gentleness. In addition, it paints a rather ambivalent picture, or at least it is capable of handling ambivalence. Consider, for instance, how appellations like 'father', 'saviour', etc., might have been understood. There was nothing legal or definitive about them. The impressions are more moral and intangible. Nonetheless the elements of the ideology do seem to have formed a coherent system which might be analysed from religious, social or political perspectives.[12] Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, focusing upon the Emperor's social and political relations, has shown that both Hellenistic kings and Roman Emperors behaved at times in a deferential manner which involved a 'sacrifice of distance' between themselves and their subjects. This behaviour meant a certain ambivalence in the relationship between monarch and subject. Indeed, it was argued that we should see ambivalence as being the essence of the Augustan Principate.[13] The Emperor was both Republican magistrate *and* charismatic monarch together. In explaining the fundamental ambiguity, Wallace-Hadrill stresses social and political realities, such as the need for a king to be accessible to petitioners, and the Emperor's dependence upon the upper classes and traditional ties with the city of Rome and Republican institutions. A theoretical picture was drawn of *moderatio* and *comitas* coming together to produce *civilitas*, the

[7] Augustus: Suet. *Aug.* 53.1; Dio 55.12.2; Tiberius: Vell. 2.124.2; Suet. *Tib.* 27; Tac. *Ann.* 2.87.2; Dio 57.8.1–2; Claudius: Tac. *Ann.* 12.11. Contrast Suet. *Tib.* 29 (Tiberius calls the Senators *domini*); cf. Suet. *Claud.* 21.5.

[8] See L. Thompson, '*Domitianus Dominus*: A Gloss on Statius, *Silvae* 1.6.84', *AJP* 105 (1984), 469–75.

[9] Compare the Greek practice of addressing the Emperor as *kyrios*. Further on the address *domine*, see A. Alföldi, *Die monarchische Repräsentation im romischen Kaiserreiche* (Darmstadt, 1970), pp. 91–2; A. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 557–8.

[10] A. Nock, 'Soter and Euergetes', in Z. Stewart (ed.), *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, ii (Oxford, 1972), pp. 720–35.

[11] L. Born, 'The Perfect Prince According to the Latin Panegyrists', *AJP* 55 (1934), 20–35 (esp. pp. 29ff.); S. MacCormack, 'Latin Prose Panegyrics', in T. Dorey (ed.), *Empire and Aftermath: Silver Latin II* (London/Boston, 1975), pp. 143–205; S. Stertz, 'Marcus Aurelius as Ideal Emperor in Late Antique Greek Thought', *CW* 70 (1977), 433–9 (esp. p. 436).

[12] For a religious perspective, see my 'Social and Psychological Interpretations of Graeco-Roman Religion: Some Thoughts on the Ideal Benefactor', *Antichthon* (forthcoming), which discusses the common focus upon procreative/tutelary power.

[13] A. Wallace-Hadrill, '*Civilis Princeps*: Between Citizen and King', *JRS* 72 (1982), 32–48 (esp. p. 32). Note the acceptance of ambivalence by S. Price, 'From Noble Funerals to Divine Cult: the Consecration of Roman Emperors', in D. Cannadine and S. Price (eds.), *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 56–105, esp. pp. 57–8.

behaviour of a citizen among citizens which above all distinguished the deferential style of the Roman Emperor from other manifestations of monarchic style in the ancient world.[14] Given the background provided by Republican tradition, it is reasonably clear how a deferential Emperor could be described as *civilis*. The use of terms like 'father', 'master' and 'tyrant' lead one to consider a broader background. It seems possible to locate Wallace-Hadrill's *civilis princeps* within a more general theoretical framework and to suggest that positive images of the Emperor as *pater patriae* or *civilis princeps* evoke a general ideal.

The aim of this paper, therefore, is to describe a general ideal model, constructed around the ideal benefactor–beneficiary relationship, which seems to have been applied to relationships involving the Roman Emperor, especially during (roughly) the first two centuries A.D. (note the evidence of the opening paragraph). Greek influence is most obvious from emphasis upon the 'tyrant', an element of the 'rhetoric of power' which the Romans obtained from the Greek world as part of the process of Hellenisation.[15] Yet there is every reason to believe that the Greeks and Romans shared the general model in common. In other words, it appears that Greeks and Romans thought of the ideal benefactor (and ideal beneficiary) in the same basic terms.[16] Thus, it is likely that the Romans always had the general framework in place within which they could locate the Greek conception of the 'tyrant' as a figure opposite to the ideal benefactor. Ambivalence emerges as a regular feature of the model, and so an awareness of the model will, it may be hoped, improve our understanding of characterisations like 'father' or 'civil leader' which both reflect and perpetuate the inherent ambivalence of the Emperor's position.

In essence the model is the product of reactions to power, or of sensitivities about the elevation of prominent individuals above their peers. Such elevation might in theory be justified in a number of basic ways: by force as its own justification, by divine right, by right of law, or by the moral superiority of the person concerned. The first option is enshrined in a famous passage from Thucydides;[17] the second is primarily a product of Christian thought;[18] the rule of law was discussed at length in philosophical works (see Sections II and IV below). It is the fourth option which commands most attention in this discussion. The ancients commonly justified individual pre-eminence in moral terms, namely a man was your superior because he was more virtuous than you or because a moral relationship existed between him and you (governed, for example, by *pietas* or *fides*). This is an interesting and important phenomenon because it tends to imply a certain rejection of force as a theoretical basis for maintaining pre-eminence (though the underlying reality of force could never be forgotten). It is not difficult to understand why this should be so. Men quickly lose virility and violence tends to beget violence. It would be preferable, or at least more secure and peaceful, for all parties to stress moral obligations in line with an accepted ideal. Perhaps ambivalence was an inevitable result in these circumstances.

[14] *JRS* 72 (1982), 41–4.

[15] The term used by Wallace-Hadrill with reference to the Greek system of honours which was gradually assimilated by the Romans: 'Roman Arches and Greek Honours: The Language of Power at Rome', *PCPhS* 36 (1990), 143–81, p. 147.

[16] On fundamental similarities in outlook, see the comments of M. Charlesworth about 'certain common fundamental elements which are constant throughout ancient civilization': 'Some Observations on Ruler Cult, Especially in Rome', *HTR* 28 (1935), 8.

[17] Thuc. 5.89 (Melian Dialogue), cf. 3.37.

[18] P. Brunt, 'Divine Elements in the Imperial Office' (review of J. Fears, *Princeps A Diis Electus*), *JRS* 69 (1979), 168–75, p. 174.

The ideal model can be detected from the time of Homer, especially in the context of behaviour designed to engender or recognise a benefactor–beneficiary relationship. In fact the ideal could have been applied to any such relationship.[19] It required the power of a (potential or actual) benefactor to be framed in procreative/tuletary terms, namely in terms of power to give, sustain and protect life. Our evidence shows that it was possible to frame the power of a variety of benefactor figures, including parents, rulers, and even the state itself, in these terms. The model seems to have operated on two levels, the social and the psychological.[20] For instance, on several occasions Odysseus addresses unknown potential benefactors as '(stranger) father' (*ξεῖνε πάτερ*).[21] In a similar situation he begs a stranger, who proves to be Athena in disguise, to 'save' him (Hom. *Od.* 13.230ff.). He also asks Nausicaa to 'save' him after shipwreck (*Od.* 8.464ff.). A related example has Odysseus himself being recognised as a father to his people, perhaps with some reference to his extraordinary justice.[22] Odysseus' submissive language does not really suit literal interpretation. The message is more figurative: 'It shall be between us as if you were my father / as if you saved me / gave me life.' On one level such a message can both reflect and create social distance, and acknowledgement of social distance can be the prime reason for behaviour of this kind. At the same time the psychological dimension should not be excluded. Odysseus' language affords the potential benefactor the opportunity of giving the ultimate benefit (life itself) and suggests a strong moral bond between the parties involved. It invokes a (father–son) relationship which is characterised by special attitudes of mind. The elements of life and filial loyalty would seem to allude to ideal conditions, especially when imported into situations in which life is not in immediate danger.

Of course the two levels can and do overlap. For instance, there is no sense of forced or unwelcome submission in Odysseus' language. He affects a lack of concern about the social distance and notional authority that is created by addressing a stranger as 'father', apparently because he does not account for selfish exploitation on the part of the benefactor. This tallies with evidence that the ideal world is characterised by selflessness (see especially I below). In the ideal world, the benefactor gives and sustains life from no self-interested motives; reciprocity is not a concern as it is for benefactors in the real world. On the other hand, the ideal beneficiary is only too willing to commit himself sincerely and completely to the cause of the ideal benefactor; there is no concern about exploitation as there is in the real world. Thus we have an ideal benefactor unconcerned about recompense but ideal beneficiaries completely concerned with it. It is not easy to see how this situation can be resolved without subverting the ideal. Given the reality of self-interest and reciprocity in social relations, a certain ambiguity must arise when ideal conditions are evoked via honorific language and behaviour. The real and the ideal worlds do not coincide; and even if the ideal were to be matched there would still be problems.

Yet the great value of the ideal model is that images of a benign ruler (*pater patriae, civilis princeps*) and loyal subjects are congenial to both parties. This holds even though much that is labelled 'sycophancy' or 'adulation' is due to the inherent ambivalence which results from applying the ideal model. When Pliny addresses Trajan as *domine*, he does not display any of the acute sensitivities of his class about self-interest, subjection or exploitation. Certainly he knew how governors addressed

[19] Nicely expressed by a character of Plautus (*Rud.* 4.8.2; cf. *Capt.* 444): 'mi patrone, immo potius mi pater.' cf. Arist. *N.E.* 1162a4–7, 1165a22–7.

[20] See my article (n. 12 above).

[21] Hom. *Od.* 7.28, 7.48, 18.122, 20.199.

[22] *Od.* 2.47, 2.234, 5.12. For his extraordinary justice: 4.689ff.

the Emperor but there is more to it than mere convention. If Pliny deliberately drops his guard, there would seem to be a belief that the Emperor will reciprocate in similar vein. An element of moral manipulation is suggested. The intent is to acknowledge social distance of the widest kind – as between a master and a slave. The psychological interpretation of the honorific language, with its connotations of servitude, is suppressed in favour of the social purpose. *Dominus* thus becomes a term of high honour in spite of connotations that would normally see it opposed to 'father' as an honorific epithet. Of course, for the whole scenario to work in this fashion requires considerable self-deception and tact.[23] The more Pliny suppresses his sensibilities in the Emperor's favour, the greater is his show of loyalty. Yet the level of his subjection becomes more apparent too and insecurities on both sides can grow. Can the other party be trusted to maintain its ideal role? The hostile viewpoint sees only the reality of self-interest and reciprocity, and thus describes the dealings as *adulatio* or *adulatio Graeca*.[24] If the relationship were to break down completely, as it did with Domitian, Pliny would no doubt claim once more that the tyrannical Emperor had forced his subjects to address him as *dominus et deus*.[25]

The father analogy suggests itself as a promising focal point for two main reasons. In the first place, it was used in a positive manner to suggest the ideal benefactor in both Greek and Roman evidence. Secondly, while few sources were moved to delineate the general theoretical background governing benefactor–beneficiary relationships, there is quite a body of evidence about fathers and their dependants. Ambivalence in social and political relationships was largely taken for granted. It was an accepted part of the social *mores*. It did not occur to Tacitus, for instance, to explain *adulatio* – only to exploit distasteful connotations. Seneca's *De Beneficiis* stands out as the Principate's most detailed theoretical work of its kind. It employs the father analogy regularly and is vitally concerned with the relationship between the ideal benefactor and the ideal beneficiary (I below). Philosophical works about proper relations between parents and children provide evidence for the ideal model, although they tend to make the point that the ideal cannot be matched in a society characterised by expectation of recompense and self-interest (II). The relationship between a state and its citizens could be seen in benefactor–beneficiary terms, and this is why it was often likened to a parent–child relationship. Accordingly, when an individual 'founds', 'saves' or otherwise dominates the state in people's perceptions he assumes the parent role. Our evidence shows that the father analogy was used regularly of Greek founders and saviours, at least in literary if not epigraphic evidence. It is clear that the image of the state as a family does not derive from normal social institutions, for an examination of these leads to the opposite conception of the state as a collection of families (III). Finally, employment of the father analogy in Greek kingship literature suggests the applicability of the general model and provides background to Roman usage (IV).

I

One might well ask why Seneca was concerned to emphasise ideal conditions which are elsewhere often implicit. The *De Beneficiis* can be thought of as more than a philosophical exercise. It seems much concerned to reconcile conflict between *potestas*

[23] A. Wallace-Hadrill, *JRS* 72 (1982), p. 36 on voluntary self-deceit.

[24] Tac. *Ann.* 6.18; Curt. 8.5.7–8; cf. the revulsion embodied in Polyb. 30.18.5 and Liv. 45.44.20 when King Prusias addresses the senators as 'saviour gods'.

[25] See Thompson (above n. 8) on Domitian's characterisation as the direct antithesis to that of Trajan.

and *pietas* in the Roman context and to advance the model of the good parent for the good king. Seneca's audience would surely see the contemporary political relevance in this. The advantages of the ideal relationship for *both* parties are there to be noticed.[26]

Seneca's ideal benefactor is not motivated by thoughts of repayment (*Ben.* 1.1.9). He can be compared to parents who continue to have children even though they are often disappointed (1.1.10). He gives willingly (1.4.3), never demands any return, rejoices if a return is made, in all sincerity forgets what he has bestowed, and accepts a return in the spirit of one accepting a benefit (2.17.7). A joyful response is sufficient to him, even where the benefit in question is the ultimate one of life. You might indeed save a man's life, but if it was not done willingly and accepted willingly, it is just a bargain (*negotiatio*) not a benefit (*beneficium*) (2.18.8; 2.30.1–2; 2.31.2). Better to imitate the gods in giving benefits than the moneylenders in seeking a return (3.15.4).

Parents are like the ideal benefactor but there are a number of crucial differences. In the first place, parents do not choose the children they will rear – it is entirely a matter of hope. Thus, parents are given a certain power (*potestas*) in order that they might be more content to run the risk (3.11.1). Furthermore, since the services of parents are unquestionable and it is expedient that the young should be controlled, parents are placed over them like household magistrates under whose custody they may be held in check (3.11.2). The dramatic legal power (*patria potestas*) of the Roman father (*paterfamilias*), which Seneca elsewhere assigns to the Emperor himself (Sen. *Clem.* 1.14.2), appears to be something of an embarrassment for its overtones of compulsion and control. He thus tries to justify the reality of *potestas* in terms which do not undermine the ideal. His argument is that the dramatic potential of the father's (Emperor's) *potestas* does not preclude a moral relationship based upon *pietas*. This is his reason for assimilating imperial power to that of a Roman father.[27]

The attitude of the child or beneficiary is crucial. The ideal beneficiary receives willingly and returns willingly (1.4.3). He does not accept that the greatest benefits (life, position, security, sound health) cannot be fully repaid (2.30.2; 2.31.2; 3.14.3). The point itself is debatable, as Seneca proves at length (3.29.1ff.). In the end, however, a contest of benefits between a father and his children is advocated (3.36.2). Filial duty (*pietas*) will be all the more ardent if it approaches the repayment of benefits with the hope of surpassing them (3.36.1).

In spite of factors such as ingratitude, Seneca finds considerable reason for optimism. In a variety of situations, men do help others from motives beyond self-interest (cf. 4.3.2ff.); and while no law sanctions ingratitude, Nature has taken sufficient precautions against it (4.17.1–2). It is from a feeling of gratitude that men worship the supreme god as if he were a father (4.19.3). The ideal benefactor should be careful not to honour ungrateful persons (4.27.5). On the other hand, it is better to benefit the bad for the sake of the good (4.28.1). Thus a king gives largesse even to the unworthy; every citizen whose name appears on the register receives grain from the state regardless of character (4.28.2). In such a case it is difficult to show gratitude to a king (4.40.1), but everyone should maintain a desire to do so and accept benefits willingly as given (4.40.1–2).

[26] On political relevance, see M. Griffin, 'Philosophy for Statesmen: Cicero and Seneca', in H. Schmidt (ed.), *Antikes Denken – Moderne Schüle* (1982), pp. 133–50.

[27] Thus I cannot agree that Seneca has rejected an 'earlier' meaning (with overtones of founding or saving) in favour of a 'later' meaning (with juristic overtones), as argued by F. Weidauer, *Der Prinzipät in Senecas Schrift de Clementia* (Diss. Marburg, 1950), pp. 39–40 (cited without comment by M. Griffin, *Seneca* [Oxford, 1976], p. 146 n. 4). These meanings had always been possible; Seneca has just chosen to highlight *potestas* in a way that is not the norm.

The idea is to match the benefactor in spirit, even if you cannot match him in deeds (5.4.1). There is no disgrace in this, and kings and princes derive significant advantage from it because their power rests upon the consent and service of their inferiors (5.4.3).

It is implicit in *De Beneficiis* that the ideal conditions are virtually impossible to fulfil, precisely because reciprocity and self-interest are embedded within society. Yet Seneca does not go so far as to admit impossibility. While recognising the dramatic potential of their *potestas*, he looks with most optimism towards situations governed by a parent or by a ruler who behaves as a parent to his people.

II

The philosophers identified two factors which motivated parental love, namely nature and expectation of recompense.[28] There seems always to have been an unresolved tension between the two, so that even the best parents would have been encouraged to think in terms of recompense. The ethic of reciprocity was very strong indeed. Accordingly, parents did not in practice match the ideal benefactor. Nonetheless, the ideal benefactor remained as the standard by which all were judged.

The theme of the naturalness of parental love is commonly found in literature, often implicitly in drama, and explicitly in philosophical writers, such as Plato and Aristotle.[29] Even before Plato, Democritus had argued that all animals, including man, have a natural or instinctive love for offspring, evidenced in their great care for them and willingness to die for them; but man alone, with his advance to civilisation, now is motivated by the expectation of an advantage.[30]

Plutarch repeats Democritus' views in his essay *On Affection for Offspring*. He also gives the view of Epicurus that it is for pay that a father loves his son, a mother her child, children their parents (495a). Yet Plutarch is sure that parents in his day do not procreate, love and rear children with the expectation of return. He points out that children are troublesome to rear and slow to mature, and fathers often die before sons reach maturity.[31] He cites a line of comedy which was applauded in the theatre: 'What man will love his fellow man for pay (495a)?' There is a strong belief here that parental care is demeaned when motivated by expectation of financial or other return. On the other hand, it seems to be Plutarch's view that the expectation of such return is not unnatural in itself because, in his essay *On Brotherly Love*, he subscribes to the concept of creditor–debtor relationship in parent–child love and points out that men consider it unholy to transgress this relationship (479f–480a).

For Plutarch, therefore, it is natural or instinctive for man to share with the animals a disinterested or unselfish affection and concern for his young; it is also natural for man to expect and receive a return as 'wages of rearing'. What is evidently not natural is for a man to let this expectation of return act as the primary motivation for loving and caring for his offspring. The distinction is subtle and perhaps impossible.[32] Parents do seem to have expected recompense, especially in old age, for bringing up children, and found in this nothing unnatural or incompatible with natural love. They

[28] See the evidence collected in G. Lambert, *Rhetoric Rampant: The Family Under Siege in the Early Western Tradition* (London/Ontario, 1982), pp. 11–22.

[29] E.g. Soph. *El.* 770–1; Eur. *H.F.* 280–1; *Phoen.* 355–6, 965–6; fragment of Dictys (346 Nauck², in Stob. *Floril.* 83.17 [Hense]); Men. fr. 763 Kock; *D.L.* 3.81 (Plato); Arist. *N.E.* 1155a3 ff.

[30] Democritus in Stob. *Floril.* 76.33 (Hense), and fr. 278 DK; transl. K. Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Oxford, 1956), p. 117.

[31] Plut. *Amor. Prol.* 496f–497a (Loeb trans.). [32] G. Lambert (above n. 28), p. 14.

were thinking in terms of an old-age security plan and this was at times openly declared to be a motivation for marrying and rearing children, not merely a *post hoc* bonus.

In a string of philosophical works, the principle of reciprocal obligations is said to underlie the relationship between parents and children. The latter owe their parents respect, obedience, and care in old age in return for their existence and nurture. This duty was enshrined in ancient education, social practice and legislation. From Homer onwards there was expressed in ancient literature the commonplace that an important reason for having children was the help they could render their parents.[33]

Plato presents a definitive statement of this reciprocal ethic and gives a divine sanction to it. He argues that children must feel obligation for the loans of care and pain spent on them by those who suffered on their behalf. There is a remarkable lack of any mention of love in Plato's analysis. It reads painfully like a balance sheet. Children repay their parents with reverent speech, constant obedience, readiness to pardon even in the face of the father's temper tantrums, and care in old age or infirmity.[34] The father can curse or bless his descendants as he sees fit according to the treatment he receives from his children, and he can rest assured that the gods will fulfil his wishes. Services of requital to parents continue after death: sons should offer modest funeral rites to the dead and yearly attentions (*Laws* 717e–718a). A reward of lifelong happiness follows faithful repayment of the divinely sanctioned filial obligation (*Laws* 718a).

Xenophon (*Mem.* 2.2.1–13) pictures Socrates remonstrating with his son Lamprocles for breaking the moral code. The young man is reminded in some detail of the debt he owes his parents for birth, rearing and education. Xenophon also has Socrates and Hippias agree that the duty of honouring parents, like that of fearing the gods, is an unwritten law, observed in all countries, and made by the gods for men (*Mem.* 4.4.19–20).

The roots of this ethic go deep in Greek culture.[35] It can be shown operating through the stages of a man's life. Parents might carefully plan to beget children as a help in old age.[36] Home and school training of the child follows, then adult-life opportunities to repay the aged parent, caring for him when bed-ridden and burying him.[37] Moral maxims played no small part in inculcating and transmitting the ethic. A collection of about a thousand such maxims, associated with the name of Menander, was gradually built up and used in schools for over a millennium. They urged children to honour their parents as they would the gods, or honour parents second only to God, and tend their aged parents.[38] What the maxims of Menander were to Greek-speaking children, the *sententiae* of Publilius Syrus and the 'Sayings of Cato' (*dicta Catonis*) were to Latin speakers.[39] Neither of the Latin collections has quite so much emphasis on honouring parents as the maxims of Menander. 'Cato' advises parents to train children but does not say that they should love them.[40]

[33] Cf. T. Weidemann, *Adults and Children in the Roman Empire* (London, 1989), pp. 39ff., 143–75.

[34] *Rep.* 538b–c; *Laws* 930e–931a; *Symp.* 207a–209e.

[35] For the 'debt of rearing' idea in Homer, see *Il.* 17.301–3, cf. 17.477–9; *Od.* 2.113–14, 130–1; cf. Hes. *Op.* 182, 185–8.

[36] E.g. Xen. *Oec.* 7.12, cf. 7.18–19, 7.30–1; Simonides or Simias in the *Pal. Anth.* 7.647; Eur. *Andr.* 24–8; Lucr. 4.1254–6.

[37] Soph. *O.C.* 441–9; Eur. *I.A.* 1220–30, *Suppl.* 1098–1103, *Phoen.* 834–7, *Hec.* 277–81, *H.F.* 1419–21; cf. Sen. *Ira* 3.16.3–4, and Plut. *Mul. Virt.* 263a–b, for fathers' requests that one of several sons be spared from military service as a comfort for the fathers' old age; Plut. *Frat. Amor.* 480a–c.

[38] See G. Lambert (above n. 28), pp. 17ff.

[39] J. Wight Duff and A. Duff, *Minor Latin Poets* (Loeb), pp. 3ff., 585ff.

[40] Plut. *Liber. Educ.* 7e; cf. Sen. *Contr.* 1.1, 1.7, 7.4.

In the later Roman Republic and during the Empire, the ethic of reciprocity gained its most definitive formulation in Stoicism. Panaetius played an important role by stressing less the Stoic wise man and more the man in process of advancing to wisdom through 'daily duties' (*kathēkonta* or *officia*). In Cicero's *De Officiis*, drawing on the work of Panaetius, filial love and obligation are associated with justice,[41] which is concerned 'with the preservation of human society, the rendering of his due to every person, and good faith in keeping obligations' (*Off.* 1.15). Nature and the gods are responsible for this alliance among men, and nature 'implants in man above all ... a strangely tender love of his offspring ... She further dictates ... the effort on man's part to provide a store of things ... for his wife and children.'[42] A man's responsibility works both ways, to parents and children, but the greater obligation is to his parents: 'country would come first, and parents, for their services have laid us under the heaviest obligation; next come children and the whole family, who look to us alone for support and can have no other protection; finally, our kinsmen' (*Off.* 1.58). In his summation at the end of the first book, Cicero adds the gods and changes the emphasis slightly: 'our first duty is to the immortal gods; our second, to country; our third, to parents; and so on, in a descending scale to the rest' (*Off.* 1.160).

Stoic writers under the Roman Empire go on at great length discussing whether a son can ever fully repay his debt of rearing to his father. No firm conclusion is reached. Seneca is quite tedious in *De Beneficiis* (e.g. 3.29.1ff.). For Hierocles, parents are images (*eikones*) of the gods, gods of the household, benefactors, blood-kin, creditors, masters and strongest of friends. Children can serve them physically with bed, sleep, food, bath and clothing, and psychologically with, for example, companionship, care and sensitive consideration. Children are, therefore, assigned by nature to be like servants and priests to their parents in their shrine, i.e. the home.[43] In addition, one important way for a son to repay his parents is to have children of his own as a pleasing insurance policy for his own parents.[44] The natural relationship between parents and children is sufficient sanction for the ethic of reciprocal obligation.[45]

The effect of these works is to demonstrate the power of the ethic of reciprocity. Even the best of parents could not be expected to match the selfless ideal completely. And yet it was conceived that they and their children would approximate the ideal as closely as possible.

III

The Greeks and Romans saw their states as 'fatherlands' (*πάτρα*, *πατρίς*, *patria*), and our sources often describe the state as a parent with the citizens as its 'children'.[46] This description, which might equally fit the state in a physical or a political sense, seems to rest as usual upon fundamental perceptions of a benefactor–beneficiary relationship: the produce of the land sustains life, the state brings people together as in a family, it affords protection, it is owed loyalty as to a parent, its laws

[41] Cic. *Off.* 3.7. On the influence of Panaetius, see the new edition of *De Officiis* by E. M. Atkins and M. Griffin (Cambridge, 1991).

[42] *Off.* 1.12, cf. 1.54, 3.28. Note also *Fin.* 5.65, where Cicero puts parental love and family ties at the heart of human society.

[43] Hierocles in Stob. *Floril.* 79.53 (Hense); cf. Phil. *Decal.* 120.

[44] Hierocles in Stob. *Floril.* 75.14; cf. Sen. *Ad Marc.* 16.6.

[45] Epict. 2.10; cf. P. Garnsey and R. Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (London, 1987), p. 148.

[46] See the refs. collected in Liddell–Scott[9], s.v. *πάτρα*, *πατρίς*, *OLD* s.v. *patria*; cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1253b–1255a; 1259a; 1278b20–1279a20; 1285b30; *N.E.* 1060b20–61a10.

regulate the lives of citizens and guard against civil discord,[47] and so on. It is not hard to see how a ruler, who might be thought to embody the state or to carry out its functions, could be honoured by extension as a 'father'. This reasoning applies all the more to a 'founder' or 'saviour' who is responsible for the state's very existence. Our evidence shows that the father analogy was used regularly of founders and saviours in the Greco-Roman world.[48] In Greek literary sources 'father' appears commonly, in conjunction with epithets such as σωτήρ, εὐεργέτης and κτιστής.[49] On Greek inscriptions, however, 'father' is absent as an honorific epithet, and it does not appear as a formal royal title in the Hellenistic period. Inscriptions show a marked preference for εὐεργέτης and σωτήρ as honorific titles, whereas κτίστης is quite rare. These titles may seem less imbued with moral connotations, but it would appear from the continual stress in the same inscriptions on the benefactor's ἀρετή, and on the grateful response of the beneficiaries, that there was constant allusion to the ideal, and that each of these epithets was as capable of evoking the ideal as was 'father'.[50] It was apparently more momentous, and perhaps less incongruous, to be called εὐεργέτης or σωτήρ in the often exuberant circumstances. The Roman propensity to honour 'fathers' stands in stark contrast. It may even be that the *pater patriae* title was intended as something distinct from the kinds of epithets by which Hellenistic kings were known, but sharing many of the same associations.

We are of course dealing with theoretical concepts which are hardly literal reflections of social or political realities. The evidence for social units shows that the image of the state as a family required some conception of citizens as common beneficiaries because all other indications are that the state was seen as a collection of families. In Greece and at Rome the family was the fundamental unit of society, and although kinship groups could be broadly defined on occasion, the fundamental belief was always that the state was really a collection of families. On the other hand, an examination of some relevant social concepts shows how they might have modified employment of the father analogy in the ideology.

Greeks generally thought of the family as the fundamental unit of the *polis*. Modern scholarship has reinforced this view.[51] The challenge to the sanctity of the family contained in Plato's *Republic* was thought unrealistic by Aristotle, who preferred to see the state as an association of families rather than a compound of individuals. Plato himself greatly modified his opinion when he wrote the *Laws* in later life.[52]

At Rome, family links could at times be interpreted broadly for various political and social reasons. Caesar and Augustus exploited the legend which made Iulus progenitor of the Iulii. The precocious Papirius Paetus set up *imagines* in his house of *gentiles* who had held office.[53] The not infrequent use of *familia* as an equivalent for *gens* seems to reflect a certain general belief in gentile blood relationship,[54]

[47] Plat. *Crito* 50d–51c.

[48] See the evidence collected in A. Alföldi (above n. 1), pp. 49, 110ff.; cf. E. Skard (above n. 1), pp. 49ff.

[49] E.g. Pind. fr. 94 Bowra; *Pyth.* 3.70; Eurip. fr. 72 Nauck; Dem. 19.280; Xen. *Anab.* 7.6.38; Diod. Sic. 9.24; Plut. *Pelop.* 33; *Arat.* 42; Cic. *Flacc.* 60; *ad Q.fr.* 1.1.31. Further refs. in the works cited above in n. 48.

[50] See the discussion in my article (above n. 12).

[51] W. K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (London, 1968).

[52] Plato, *Rep.* 451b–464b; Arist. *Pol.* 2; E. Barker, *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle* (new edn, New York, 1959), p. 398.

[53] Cic. *Fam.* 9.21.

[54] Tac. *Ann.* 6.27; Val. Max. 4.1.5, where *gens* and *familia* are used interchangeably in the same passage, as they are in 5.2.4, 5.6.4, and Liv. 6.40.3; cf. Paul. Fest. p. 94. Similar examples appear in Val. Max. 1.1.17 and Suet. *Iul.* 6.1; *Nero* 1.1; *Galba* 3.1.

although the learned jurist and pontifex maximus Q. Mucius Scaevola (cos. 95) specifically ruled that this could not be demonstrated.[55] Even the most common words for 'family' at Rome, *familia* and *domus*, did not commonly refer to the nuclear family, which scholarship now contends was the basic social unit.[56] *Familia* tended to exclude *cognati*, whereas *domus* could include the physical house, the household including family and slaves, the broad kinship group including agnates and cognates, ancestors and descendants, and the patrimony.[57] This broad definition allowed one to cast the net for kin widely. The more impressive the result the greater the social respectability, especially under the Principate when competition between the *familiae* was no longer the political reality.[58]

The new political reality was a web of friendship and patron–client ties emanating from the Emperor.[59] The concept of *domus*, when used in the sense of an extended kin group encompassing even cognate relatives of remote distance, adds a new dimension to this reality with respect to the link envisaged between the Emperor and his relatives within the ruling classes.

On the other hand, the view that *patria potestas* shaped and directed the Roman world view and underlay Roman institutions is problematic.[60] As a theory it seems to give undue emphasis to *agnatio* and also to underestimate *gens* relationships.[61] Furthermore, it is difficult to agree, in the light of collegiality and limited tenure of office, that the Romans preferred single executive officers with wide discretionary powers (on the model of a *paterfamilias*) to government through boards or committees.[62] It seems instead that the father analogy was applied because of pleasing associations inherent in the general model under discussion. This is why Seneca likened the power of the Emperor to *patria potestas* (supposedly received along with the *pater patriae* title: *Clem.* 1.14.2; cf. I above). It is also at least part of the reason why Senators continued to be addressed collectively as *patres conscripti*, or merely as *patres*, in the time of Cicero when the true derivation of the former phrase had been forgotten.[63] Susan Martin is probably quite right too in saying that Senators were seen and saw themselves, even well into Imperial times, as the heads of Roman households fittingly described as *patres*.[64] The Emperors were no doubt pleased by the image of a *paterfamilias* operating with a *consilium* of peers.[65]

IV

Cicero implies that the Romans borrowed the concept of ideal rulers as 'fathers' in a moral sense from the Greeks.[66] He traces this development back to a passage in which Ennius writes about Romulus.[67] This should not be taken to mean that the Romans would have been ignorant of the ideal model were it not for the Greeks.[68] Nor does it mean that they required Greek input before they could label the ideal

[55] Cic. *Top.* 29; cf. Cic. *Leg.* 2.55, Cincius ap. Fest. 83 L.

[56] R. Saller, '*Familia, Domus*, and the Roman Conception of the Family', *Phoenix* 38 (1984), 336–55, p. 341. [57] Ibid., pp. 348–9. [58] Ibid., p. 355.

[59] R. Saller, *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire* (Cambridge, 1982).

[60] W. K. Lacey, 'Patria Potestas', in B. Rawson (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome: New Perspectives* (London/Sydney, 1986), pp. 121–44.

[61] G. Clark, review of B. Rawson (n. 60), *LCM* 11.7 (July 1986), 106–7.

[62] Lacey (above n. 60), p. 132. [63] Ibid., p. 131.

[64] S. Martin, review of R. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome*, *JRS* 75 (1985), 224.

[65] See the cases assembled by Seneca in *De Clementia* which show Augustus operating as a *paterfamilias* in this way and even as an *amicus* on the *consilium* of a peer.

[66] Cic. *Rep.* 2.48; cf. 1.54–5. [67] Cic. *Rep.* 1.64 (Enn. *Ann.* 111ff. V).

[68] See Charlesworth (above n. 16).

benefactor as 'father', although the *paterfamilias* was clearly thought to be a sterner figure than the Greek father.[69] Cicero's real point is to contrast Greek and Roman ideas of kingship. The Greeks likened good kings to fathers; by contrast, Romans used *rex* to mean a figure like the Greek tyrant. Yet Cicero argues that this antipathy had not existed before the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus and implies that Rome could now tolerate a man with the qualities of the good king.[70] He shows incidentally that Romans had been internalising the Greek 'rhetoric of power' since at least the time of Ennius.[71] Greek kingship thought was clearly important in formulating the image of the Emperor as a 'father'. As such, it should prove enlightening to look at the image of Zeus as 'father' and then at surviving traces of literature which characterised the good king as a father to his subjects.

(i)

Zeus is both 'father of gods and men' and 'king of the gods' from the beginning.[72] However, the Zeus of Homer, Hesiod and *Prometheus Bound* is predominantly a forceful, violent, even 'tyrannical' ruler; in later sources he appears more as a wise, loving figure.[73] This dichotomy is evident in the two images by which Zeus was represented in art: as the boldly striding warrior who swings the thunderbolt in his raised right hand, and as the figure enthroned with sceptre in hand.[74] The problem is to explain how Zeus as 'father' applies to these images. The answer would seem to lie in opposing attitudes to the exercise of power, and ambivalence rather than any absolute development is once again the key.

The ideal benefactor seems motivated by a moral attitude which is the opposite of an attitude which accepts force as its own justification ('might makes right'). These attitudes are respectively governed (it might be said) by *pietas* and *potestas* (cf. I above). The ambivalent image of Zeus as 'father' can be understood in terms of tension between these different attitudes. Burkert, for instance, sees power as '...latent violence which must have been manifested at least in some mythical once upon a time. Superiority is guaranteed only by defeated inferiors.'[75] Where superiority is established by force, its maintenance tends subsequently to become a matter of emphasising morality, legality, and so on, rather than the capacity for violence. Yet violence, or the potential to unleash it, remains at the heart of the picture. Therefore, while it might be possible for attitudes of morality and force to exist in a vacuum, in reality they seem to occupy two halves of a continuum. One may overshadow the other, but not to the latter's total exclusion. In Classical and Hellenistic political philosophy, the father analogy is applied to the virtuous, moral ruler, who could perhaps be forceful on occasion but only in the common interest. The 'tyrant', by contrast, employs force selfishly in order to establish and maintain his supremacy. The distinction is ambiguous, based upon a subjective judgement of the motives and deeds of the actors. The father/tyrant antithesis attempts to give the two sides of the

[69] For *patria potestas* as a poor indication of social reality, see J. Crook, *CQ* 17 (1967), 113–22.

[70] Cic. *Rep.* 1.64; 2.48. Note the provocative article by A. Erskine, 'Hellenistic Monarchy and Roman Political Invective', *CQ* 41 (1991), 106–20 (esp. p. 111 n. 20).

[71] See A. Wallace-Hadrill (above n. 15).

[72] E.g. Hom. *Il.* 22.167; *Od.* 13.128; 17.137; Hes. *Theog.* 47; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 125–31, 398–400.

[73] Cf. F. Solmsen, *Hesiod and Aeschylus* (Ithaca, 1949), pp. 124–77; H. Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley, 1971), esp. pp. 79–103.

[74] W. Burkert (above n. 72), p. 127.

[75] Ibid., p. 128.

continuum separate images, but there is a certain uncomfortable fluidity between them. Zeus' forcefulness, like the *potestas* of Seneca's *paterfamilias* (I above), is not necessarily at odds with the image of a gentle father who clearly matches the ideal benefactor, even if it is something of an embarrassment.

On the other hand, our literary sources from about the fourth century B.C. generally portray a milder Zeus. Violent aspects are minimised. The Zeus of Diodorus Siculus, taking a random example, is fashioned so as to conform unequivocally to the ideal benefactor and this is why he is called 'father'.[76] The statue of Zeus which Pheidias produced for the temple at Olympia had some relevant impact. It represented the mature subject as a benign figure enthroned in glory. Descriptions of the statue in Strabo and Pausanias indicate its influence, which to these writers of the Roman period at least was as much religious as artistic.[77] Greeks of the time of Pheidias could well have seen themselves as members of a mature world ruled by a commensurately mature supreme god. Yet the rise of dominant individuals in the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods was probably more important. Their rise produced an increased focus upon the image of the ideal benefactor. Indeed, the ideal model might have been first engendered and emphasised in the context of relationships between mortal benefactors and their beneficiaries because it implies sensitivity about the elevation of an individual above his peers. In contrast to the gods, tangible and vulnerable mortals are less equipped to maintain relationships based on the principle that the strong should rule the weak. It would then be slightly ironic if this mortal ideal affected the way in which Zeus came to be portrayed.

(ii)

By Cicero's time the volume of Greek literature on kingship was massive. While it is not appropriate to attempt a comprehensive survey here, a few important points can be made nonetheless. There was considerable debate about precisely what it was that made a good king. A variety of virtues were highlighted at one time or another. Nonetheless a basic framework seems to have been accepted by all the opposing schools of thought. Prominent within it was the distinction between the good king and the tyrant. The father analogy was conventionally applied to the good king in the context of this contrast.[78] It evoked the opposite of the selfish, violent, lawless tyrant who treated his subjects like slaves. The good king was being measured against the ideal benefactor, though once again the reality of self-interest and reciprocity intervened so that the good king could be somewhat less than completely selfless. There seems at times to be the implication that he allows himself to be shackled by the laws, or that he subordinates his self-interest to the common good (which hardly implies selflessness). In reality it could be in a king's interest to do this, from motives of self-preservation and security, but such behaviour is presented as a result of his outstanding character, dictated by the virtues associated with him. It is a positive aspect of his superiority, not a restraint governed by sensitivity about the elevation of a mortal above his peers or perhaps by flimsy notions of equality between men.

The major problem for ancient political theorists lay in ensuring self-control and virtue in the ruling figure or group.[79] From the time of Herodotos (3.82) we find the view expressed that, provided that the king is virtuous, monarchy is the ideal polity.[80]

[76] Diod. Sic. 3.61.4. [77] Strab. 8.353–4; Paus. 5.11.1.

[78] In addition to the works cited in n. 48 above, see S. Weinstock (above n. 1), p. 201 n. 1; G. Aalders, *Political Thought in Hellenistic Times* (Amsterdam, 1975), see index.

[79] Cf. Dio Chrys. 3.47. [80] Hdt. 3.82.

As the idea of monarchy became more pervasive in the fourth century B.C., the contrast between *basileus* and *tyrannos* received special emphasis, although it does seem to have existed beforehand, apparently balanced by an original 'neutral' use.[81] Plato pushed the contrast between the good king and the bad tyrant to its limits,[82] and contributed the famous suggestion that the appointment of philosopher-kings was the only way to remove *stasis* from the Greek cities.[83] Yet he did not share Xenophon's enthusiasm for monarchy, except that he saw autocratic power as the means by which an ordinary *polis* could be converted into an ideal one.[84] He was particularly concerned to emphasise the importance of the law (or laws). The parental relation of the laws to citizens pervades the *Crito*.[85] The laws provide a foundation for the state, regulating behaviour and guarding against anti-social acts which lead to discord. They ought to have the character of loving and wise parents rather than of tyrants and masters who command and threaten.[86]

Aristotle shared Plato's preference for the *polis*, but his argument is more subtle on the whole. He preferred kingship to tyranny on the grounds that 'the tyrant looks to his own advantage, the king to that of his subjects'.[87] However, in Book 3 of the *Politics*, under the guise of accepting the perfect king in theory, Aristotle offers the most devastating critique of kingship in practice.[88] He accepts (momentarily) that everyone should submit willingly to a man who is pre-eminent in virtue (*arete*), 'like a god among men' (*Pol.* 3.13). Then he proceeds implicitly to deny that such a figure could be manifested in reality. His doubts are encompassed by the questions: 'Should rule be by the best man or the best laws?' 'Which would best promote virtue and justice (namely a fair sharing of political power) in the community?' (*Pol.* 3.15). For Aristotle, to allow the law to rule is to allow God and reason to rule; to allow a man to rule is to add passion (a potentially disruptive element, it is implied); the law is reason without passion (*Pol.* 3.16). Only when a man is so outstanding in goodness that his goodness exceeds that of all others is it right for him to be sovereign over all. Only when the part exceeds the whole in this way can absolute kingship be justified (*Pol.* 3.17). Aristotle did not think this condition could be fulfilled in reality.

Later writers, confronted with the unprecedented might of the Hellenistic rulers, tended to accept monarchy unequivocally as the best political form.[89] These men could not match the force/military might of the kings. All they could do was emphasise an ideal which might confine his exercise of power within moral constraints. They tackled the new phenomenon of absolute kingship in three main ways: (i) in political and philosophical treatises 'On Kingship' (*Περὶ βασιλείας*); (ii) in laudatory biographies of prominent kings (e.g. Isocrates' *Evagoras*, Xenophon's *Agesilaus* and *Cyropaedia*); and (iii) in the form of a 'Furstenspiegel', a description of the perfect monarch and his virtues, designed to be used as a mirror by the king (e.g. Isocrates' *Nicocles* and *ad Nicoclem*, Xenophon's *Hiero*, pseudo-Aristeas' *Letter to Philocrates*). Murray concludes that philosophical works on kingship were mainly concerned with the maintenance of peace (understood to include prosperity), the

[81] J. O'Neil, 'The Semantic Usage of "tyrannos" and Related Words', *Antichthon* 20 (1986), 26–40; cf. A. Ferrill, 'Herodotos on Tyranny', *Historia* 27.3 (1978), 385–98. Both writers are basically reacting against A. Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (London, 1956), pp. 20ff.

[82] E.g. Plat. *Rep.* 9.587d–e. [83] Plat. *Rep.* 5.473c. [84] Plat. *Rep.* 6.502b.

[85] Plat. *Crito*, esp. 50d–51c; 51a8–9; 51e. See R. Kraut, *Socrates and the State* (Princeton, 1984), esp. pp. 48–52; 91–114; 143–8; cf. *Rep.* 548b. [86] Plat. *Laws* 859a.

[87] Arist. *N.E.* 1160b1.

[88] O. Murray, *Peri Basileias*: Studies in the Justification of Monarchic Power in the Hellenistic World (D.Phil. Oxford, 1970), pp. 78ff.

[89] E. Goodenough, 'The Political Philosophy of Hellenistic Kingship', *YCS* 1 (1928), 58ff.

exercise of justice, and the character of the ruler which guarantees these things.[90] The character of the ruler was of special interest. The good king was distinguished from the tyrant on the basis of his virtuous character, and it is the main thrust of Greek thought on kingship to point out that the good king is the best man – hence the enumeration of his various virtues.[91] As a rule the king is described as 'a noble-minded and well-gifted person, toiling uninterruptedly for the common welfare and for the well-being of his subjects, as their benefactor, even their saviour, as a man also of great mildness and humanity (whose gifts and indulgences are termed therefore *philanthropia*), and as a dispenser of justice'.[92]

It is striking that Hellenistic kingship is not conceived in our literary sources as the rule of God Manifest. There is, however, a tendency to extol the king above the level of ordinary mankind, even among the Stoics and pseudo-Pythagorean authors by whom deification of the king was principally rejected. One idea was that the king imitates the heavenly ruler and is the image and representative of God on earth.[93] In another strand of thought the king is depicted as living law (*nomos empsychos*). Nearly all traces of this theory come to us in pseudo-Pythagorean writings, though Stoics such as Musonius Rufus are aware of it too.[94] One should note Murray's warning against amplifying the importance of this idea.[95] Goodenough's view that fragments of derivative pseudo-Pythagorean treatises show the 'official' political philosophy of the Hellenistic age has been highly misleading.[96] Kingship, as Murray points out, was hardly a central topic for Pythagoras or for real Pythagoreans.[97]

It was therefore possible to argue over details, but in general terms the good king was measured against the ideal benefactor. In consequence, the father analogy was applied to him. The Romans were able to borrow from this literature precisely because they understood the general framework and had the same basic ideal.

Why should the ideal model have been applied to relationships involving the Roman Emperor? A number of reasons suggest themselves. In essence, the model evokes an ideal scenario with connotations which the Emperor and his subjects would find mutually congenial (selfless care, absolute loyalty, the absence of exploitation or ingratitude). It signals acceptable terms for the accommodation of overwhelming individual power. It is sufficiently ambivalent in its connotations to soothe sensibilities on the one hand and yet to recognise the reality of a superior–inferior relationship on the other. The copious evidence for 'saviours', 'fathers', etc., in honorific contexts indicates that the model was probably a part of the ancient subconscious. As such, the debilitating drag of convention would tend to undermine its potency on a day-to-day basis, but at times of stress, or on ritual occasions when the relationship between ruler and ruled was ceremonially depicted, it would come to the fore as the product of deeply felt sensibilities.

Furthermore, it need not have been merely a matter of elite thinking. Wallace-Hadrill has warned against concluding that the ideology of the Senate would have been atypical,[98] and it is striking how the evidence transcends chronological, geographical and even social boundaries. When Augustus accepted the *pater patriae* title in 2 B.C., the various strata of Roman society joined together in a combined

[90] O. Murray, 'Aristeas and Ptolemaic Kingship', *JTS* 18 (1967), 353.
[91] O. Murray, *JTS* 19 (1968), 677. Note the king's *megalopsychia*: U. Knoche, 'Magnitudo Animi', *Philol. Suppl.* 37, 3 (1935).
[92] G. Aalders (above n. 78), p. 21.
[93] Ibid., p. 26.
[94] Musonius: Stob. 4.7, p. 283 Hense; Dio Chrys. 3.82; Plin. *Pan.* 80.3.
[95] O. Murray (above n. 91), p. 677.
[96] E. Goodenough (above n. 89).
[97] O. Murray (above n. 88), pp. 247ff.
[98] A. Wallace-Hadrill (above n. 13), p. 46.

display of spontaneity and unanimity.[99] Yet Lacey has shown that the Senate, Equites and People also participated in separate ceremonies for the bestowal of this great honour.[100] The famous *coniuratio Italiae* is likewise relevant (*RG* 25.2). Augustus emphasises that the oath was taken by *tota Italia* of its own free will ('iuravit in mea verba tota Italia sponte sua...'), apparently without concern for subjection. In fact, the Italians 'demanded' him as their leader. One could view the event and its presentation in terms of hypocrisy, coercion, self-interest and politics. Alternatively, the presentation may be seen as being consistent with the ideal model discussed here. Subjection is not contemplated in the ideal scenario, although duties and obligations are involved in spite of the ideal benefactor because of the response of the ideal beneficiary. The relationship is willingly accepted; it is not imposed from above.

The ideal model would always be valuable when a mortal was elevated above his peers. This holds even for a well-established monarchy in which no Tacitus might live. Yet it would have particular value when sensibilities were likely to be especially sharp: for example, at times of great stress or revolutionary change, or in the presence of hallowed bodies like the Senate. It could find expression in the kind of deferential behaviour described by Wallace-Hadrill (wearing a toga, greeting consuls with a kiss, advising a peer on domestic matters, and so on), or in cult observances and honorific language on the part of subjects. The ideal adds a further dimension to our understanding of relationships between power-holders and their dependants, and it would seem to be a worthwhile construct to keep in mind when considering the relationship between a Roman Emperor and his subjects.

University of Auckland T. R. STEVENSON

[99] Aug. *RG* 35.1; Ov. *F.* 2.127ff.; Suet. *Aug.* 58; *CIL* i (2), 133.
[100] W. Lacey, '2 BC and Julia's Adultery', *Antichthon* 14 (1980), 127–42.