

OVID AND THE *DOMUS AUGUSTA*: ROME SEEN FROM TOMOI*

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I. FROM TRIUMVIRAL TO AUGUSTAN LITERATURE

The greatest works of what we normally call 'Augustan' literature were produced by writers who came to maturity in the Triumviral period, and were already established as major authors before January 27 B.C., when 'Imperator Caesar Divi filius', whom we like to call 'Octavianus', gained the unprecedented *cognomen* 'Augustus'. By that moment the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* of Virgil, the *Epodes* and *Satires* of Horace, and Book I of the *Elegies* of Propertius were already written. Livy had composed his sombre *Praefatio*, and probably the whole first pentad, in the later Triumviral period, perhaps around the time of Actium or soon after.¹

We might thus wish to see these writers not as 'Augustan' but as 'Triumviral', along (for instance) with Sallust, and the much underestimated Cornelius Nepos (whose *Vita* of Atticus is the most illuminating prose work for the 40s and 30s),² not to speak of Vitruvius, whose *de architectura* does not use the name 'Augustus'. Several of the key monuments of 'Augustan' Rome were equally dedicated before the name 'Augustus' was acquired: the Mausoleum on the Campus Martius, the temple of Apollo Palatinus and the Curia Julia.³ The impulse to repair the ancient temple of Iuppiter Feretrius on the Capitol had come from Atticus, who had died in 32 B.C.⁴

But if we decided to identify this crucial and creative period in the history of Roman culture as 'Triumviral',⁵ which writers can we designate as truly and unambiguously 'Augustan'? The great 'Augustans', Virgil, Horace, Propertius and Livy,⁶ emerge as triumviral, and in their later works could be thought of as 'post-triumviral'. If anyone is to qualify as Augustan through and through, it is Ovid, born in 43, whose writing starts in the 20s and extends into the early years of Tiberius. He is 'Augustan' not merely in a chronological sense, but in a far more profound one, of the expression in some (not all) of his works of an overt literary commitment to the new regime (of true *personal* commitment we can never know, and should not attempt to speak). The poetry of exile, this paper will suggest, expresses not the voice of the subversive dissident, but that of the outraged loyalist whom the regime has rejected, and was never to accept back.

The earlier *Heroides* and the first version of the *Amores* apart, Ovid's major surviving works belong, in the form in which we have them, to the very mysterious and rather neglected last two decades of Augustus' life: the *Ars Amatoria*, the *Fasti*, the *Metamorphoses*, the *Tristia* and *Epistulae ex Ponto* I–III, with *Epistulae* IV stretching from a year before Augustus' death to two years after it. All of them manifest an intense concern to incorporate appropriate reflections of the major monuments and successes of the regime, in a laborious and explicit way which had not been characteristic of the poets of half a generation earlier. As Jasper Griffin has brilliantly demonstrated, these writers found ways of honouring the new regime, while delicately distancing themselves from it.⁷ By contrast, Ovid's works have to negotiate the insuperable task of incorporating appropriate allusions to Augustus, while also giving due recognition to his associates and successors, potential or actual.

* This paper represents a version of my Presidential Lecture to the Roman Society, given on 7 January 1992. I am very grateful to the Editor and the Editorial Committee for valuable and salutary criticisms, and to the Editor for providing his own translations of the Latin. But for the author's obstinacy, the criticisms offered would have served to reduce the defects of the paper somewhat further.

¹ Livy IV.17–20, see Ogilvie ad loc., and see esp. R. Syme, 'Livy and Augustus', *HSCPh* 64 (1954), 27 = *Roman Papers* I (1979), 440, and T. J. Luce, 'The dating of Livy's first decade', *TAPhA* 96 (1965), 209.

² See F. Millar, 'Cornelius Nepos, "Atticus" and the Roman Revolution', *Greece and Rome* 35 (1988), 40, and now especially N. Horsfall, *Cornelius Nepos: a Selection, Including the Lives of Cato and Atticus* (1989).

³ For this phase see P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (1987), chs 2–3.

⁴ Millar, op. cit. (n. 2), 40 and 51.

⁵ For the suggestion that the period from 43 to 28 B.C. might be so termed, see R. Syme, *History in Ovid* (1978), 169.

⁶ For difficulties in seeing Livy as 'Augustan', see T. J. Luce, 'Livy, Augustus and the Forum Augustum', in K. A. Raafaub and M. Toher (eds), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate* (1990), 123.

⁷ J. Griffin, 'Augustus and the poets: "Caesar qui cogere posset"', in F. Millar and E. Segal (eds), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (1984), 189.

These considerations might allow us, as a way of relocating and re-evaluating Ovid, not only to separate him from the earlier, less than truly 'Augustan' writers, but to re-attach him to others, whose adult lives or whose works also bridge the divide between Augustus' regime and what one might think of as the 'post-Augustan' phase of Tiberius' reign, that is the years dominated by Livia, up to her death in A.D. 29. This period of approximately three decades, from the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor in 2 B.C. to the death of Livia, and the disgrace of the widow and children of Germanicus, is marked by the most emphatic public assertions of 'Augustan' values and historical claims, along with their proclamation as lessons for future generations, and simultaneously by systematic uncertainty and unease about the role of other members of the Imperial house — and (given the deaths of many of them) by the repeated necessity to reflect on what might have been. The combination of triumphalism and anxiety is perfectly caught by Velleius Paterculus, coming towards the end of the *History* which he dedicated to M. Vinicius, *consul ordinarius* of A.D. 30; for he emphasizes the unhappy coincidence, in 2 B.C., of the dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor with the disgrace of the elder Julia:⁸

At in urbe eo ipso anno, quo magnificentissimis gladiatorii muneris naumachiaeque spectaculis Divus Augustus, abhinc annos triginta, se et Gallo Caninio consulibus, dedicato Martis templo animos oculosque populi Romani repleverat, foeda dicta memoriaque horrenda in ipsius domo tempestas erupit.

But in the City, in the very year, thirty years ago, in which Divus Augustus, in his own and Gallus Caninius' consulship, marked by the most magnificent shows of gladiatorial games and a sea-battle the dedication of the temple of Mars, and sated the minds and eyes of the Roman people, a storm, foul to speak of and horrible to recall, broke out under his own roof.

Velleius Paterculus himself offers the most illuminating comparison to Ovid, and one of the chief purposes of this paper will be precisely to suggest the significance of this thirty-year period as embracing them both. In Latin epigraphy likewise, this 'late-Augustan' and 'post-Augustan' period might also be seen as representing a distinct phase, marked by the production of long and complex inscribed texts, which can be seen not merely as counterpoints to the literature of the period, but as a sub-branch of literature in themselves. They too exhibit that same curious *mélange* of triumphalism, anxiety and unfulfilled hopes. The reign of Augustus itself, of course, is reflected in an explosion of epigraphic commemoration, as Géza Alföldy has recently demonstrated.⁹

This particular phase would thus begin with the dedication in 2 B.C. of the temple of Mars Ultor, along with the surrounding Forum Augustum, adorned with statues of the *duces* who had made the *populus Romanus* great from small beginnings. The surviving inscribed *elogia* which accompanied the statues simply do not match what Livy had earlier written about the achievements of the same *duces*, a point which underlines how far Livy was from offering the canonical 'Augustan' text. We do not, however, need to scan these inscriptions in order to understand what message was intended. For Suetonius records that Augustus informed the people in an *edictum* how they were to read these statues and their inscriptions: they were to serve as a model, by which appropriate conduct should be demanded of himself while he lived, and of the *principes* of succeeding ages.¹⁰

The formation of an ideology of the proper role of *principes* is reflected in other inscriptions of the following years. First there is the Greek inscription from Messene giving an exaggerated view of Gaius' achievements in the East ('learning that Gaius Caesar, the son of Augustus, was fighting the barbarians for the safety of all mankind').¹¹ Then come the two long inscriptions from Pisa expressing the mourning of the *colonia* for Lucius (A.D. 2) and Gaius (A.D. 4).¹² The sense of a future which was not now to come about is particularly clear in the latter case: 'crudelibus fatis ereptum populo Romano, iam designatu[m] iustissimum ac

⁸ Velleius II. 100. 2. For his repeated allusions to the consulate of M. Vinicius see *PIR*¹ v. 445.

⁹ G. Alföldy, 'Augustus und die Inschriften: Tradition und Innovation. Die Geburt der imperialen Epigraphik', *Gymnasium* 98 (1991), 289.

¹⁰ Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 31. 5; see Luce, *op. cit.* (n. 6).

¹¹ *AE* 1967, no. 458; *SEG* xxiii. 206; see esp. J. E. G. Zetzel, 'New light on Gaius Caesar's eastern campaign', *GRBS* 11 (1970), 259.

¹² *ILS* 139-40; A. R. Marotta d'Agata, *Decreta Pisana* (CIL XI, 1420-21) (1980).

simillimum parentis sui virtutibus principem' ('by the cruel fates snatched from the Roman people, already designated, as the one most just and most similar to his parent's virtues, princeps'). We know, of course, of one aspect of the elaborate forms of commemoration devised in Rome itself for Gaius and Lucius, namely the addition to the *comitia centuriata* of ten new *centuriae* named after them; the measure was embodied in the *Lex Valeria Cornelia* passed by the *consules ordinarii* of A.D. 5, L. Valerius Messalla Volesus and Cn. Cornelius Cinna Magnus. It is no more than an accident that we have no text of this law itself, and can perceive it only through the *Tabula Hebana* of Tiberius' reign.¹³

That sense of a future which could not now come about is of course felt also in the most famous inscribed document of the period, the *Res Gestae* of Augustus (ch. 14): 'filios meos, quos iuve[nes m]ihi eripuit fortuna' ('my sons, whom fortune snatched from me in their youth'). But the two texts share more than that, for the *Res Gestae* itself is simultaneously both 'Augustan' and 'Tiberian'. As a *text*, it is a composition of the Emperor's last years, culminating in the award of the designation 'Pater Patriae' in 2 B.C. (of which more below), and completed in A.D. 13 (ch. 35).¹⁴ But as an *inscription* it is Tiberian, put up after Augustus' death (we do not know exactly when), at the entrance to the Mausoleum, and then copied — again we do not know exactly when — in provincial towns. All the copies which we happen to have come from a single province of Asia Minor. It remains uncertain whether local copying was specifically enjoined, as we now know was the case for the text of the measures passed in Rome to commemorate Germanicus (see below). But those latter measures, revealed by the *Tabula Siarensis*, also show that it was not an idle guess on the part of Zvi Yavetz to suggest that a text of this period celebrating the virtues and achievements of a deceased member of the Imperial household might have been specifically designed for the edification of the *iuventus* of the next and future generations. For Tiberius formally stated to the Senate in December A.D. 19 that his *testimonium* to Germanicus' services would be 'utile iuventuti liberorum posterorumque nostrorum' ('useful for the youth of our children and descendants').¹⁵ But the combined text of the *Tabula Siarensis* and the longer-known *Tabula Hebana*, conveniently overlapping to produce 176 lines of official Tiberian prose, is also simultaneously 'Augustan' and 'Tiberian'.¹⁶ For, as mentioned above, it rehearses the legislation put through in A.D. 5 by the two *consules ordinarii*, adding ten new *centuriae* to the *comitia centuriata*, and uses that as the model for the addition of five further *centuriae* in memory of Germanicus. If a *lex* had been required for that previous enactment, so it would be for these measures. So the *Tabula Siarensis* records that the Senate advised the incoming consuls of A.D. 20 to have its votes incorporated as soon as possible in a *lex* passed by the People: 'Utique M. Messalla, M. Aurelius Cotta Maximus, cos. designati, cum magistratum inissent, primo quoque tempore cum per auspicia liceret, sine binum trinumve nundinum prodictione, legem ad populum de honoribus Germanici Caesaris ferendam curent' ('and that M. Messalla and M. Aurelius Cotta Maximus, consuls designate, when they enter their magistracy, at the first moment permitted by the auspices, without a declaration of notice of a double or triple nine-day period, should see to the taking to the people of a law about the honours of Germanicus Caesar').¹⁷ The full name of the first of the consuls was 'M. Valerius Messalla Messallinus', and of his colleague 'M. Aurelius Cotta Maximus Messallinus'; they were respectively (as it seems) the grandson and the son (by a different wife) of M. Messalla Corvinus, the consul of 31 B.C. As we will see, all three names bring us close to the life and works of Ovid. One of the consuls of A.D. 5 had been another Messalla, apparently not related.¹⁸ The public adulation and exaltation of the Imperial house was in no small measure the work of long-established Republican families — as well as of their associates, like Ovidius Naso.

The *Tabula Siarensis* also takes us back to the public celebration of Augustus, and almost certainly to the year after his death. For it records that the arch ('ianus') which was to be

¹³ See, still, P. A. Brunt, 'The Lex Valeria Cornelia', *JRS* 51 (1961), 71.

¹⁴ See now E. S. Ramage, *The Nature and Purpose of Augustus' Res Gestae* (1987).

¹⁵ *AE* 1984, no. 508, Fr. II, col. b. See Z. Yavetz, 'The *Res Gestae* and Augustus' public image', in Millar and Segal, *op. cit.* (n. 7), 1.

¹⁶ It is unfortunate that so far no combined text of the two inscriptions, set out with the original line-divisions, has

yet been published. The nearest one can get is the excellent English translation of the whole text provided by R. K. Sherck, *The Roman Empire* (1988), no. 36.

¹⁷ *AE* 1984, no. 508, Fr. II, col. b.

¹⁸ For these genealogical connections, by their nature beyond the ability of the present writer to grasp in detail, see R. Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy* (1986), chs xv–xvii and tables ix–x.

erected in the Circus Flaminius was to go on the spot where statues had already been dedicated to Divus Augustus and the Domus Augusta by Gaius Norbanus Flaccus. The occasion is very likely to have been Flaccus' consulate as *ordinarius* in A.D. 15. If so, the combination of attention to the recently deified Augustus and to the wider Imperial house finds, as we will see, a close reflection both in Ovid's poetry and in another key inscription of the same period.¹⁹

The dossier of major inscriptions of this very distinctive period will soon be augmented by the extremely important text, also from Baetica, recording the proceedings of the Senate after the suicide of Cn. Calpurnius Piso in A.D. 20. But that remarkable reflection of the same combination of adulatory triumphalism on the one hand and of fear, uncertainty and (now) unfulfillable hopes on the other is also matched in two other literary works of the period, which need to be mentioned briefly before we turn to the later works of Ovid.

The first is the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* of Valerius Maximus, a work which is only now beginning to be accorded the prominence which it deserves.²⁰ For it is a perfect reflection, composed under Tiberius, of the moralizing deployment of *exempla* from the Roman past in Augustan historiography. The opening address to Tiberius sets the tone:

Te igitur huic coepto, penes quem hominum deorumque consensus maris ac terrae regimen esse voluit, certissima salus patriae, Caesar, invoco, cuius caelesti providentia virtutes, de quibus dicturus sum, foventur, vitia severissime vindicantur.

You therefore do I invoke in this undertaking, Caesar, in whose power the common will of gods and mankind wished the government of sea and earth to be, by whose celestial providence the virtues, of which I am about to speak, are fostered, and vices are most severely punished.

But here too, as is well known, a powerful note of anxiety and of danger narrowly averted, makes itself felt. For in IX. 11. *ext.* 4, Valerius launches into an invective against someone who had conspired against the current Emperor.

Tu videlicet efferatae barbariae immanitate truculentior habenas Romani imperii, quas princeps parensque noster salutari dextera continet, capere potuisti? . . . sed vigilarunt oculi deorum . . . et in primis auctor ac tutela nostrae incolumitatis ne excellentissima merita sua totius orbis ruina conlaberentur divino consilio providit.

Could you indeed, a being more savage than the monstrosity of wild barbarity, have taken over the reins of the Roman empire, which our princeps and parent holds in his salutary right hand? But the eyes of the gods were vigilant . . . and above all the author and guardian of our security took provision by his divine counsel to prevent his most excellent services from collapsing in the ruin of the whole globe.

Generally taken to refer to Sejanus, and hence to date the work after A.D. 31, this invective may well, as Jane Bellemore has suggested, refer to the conspiracy of Libo Drusus in A.D. 16.²¹ If so, then the whole text may date to the earlier years of Tiberius; we might therefore all the more easily see it too as a work which was, both in inspiration and in actual date, 'post-Augustan'. Precisely because it is *intended* to represent conventional wisdom, its importance for the ideology of the period can hardly be exaggerated.

One limiting factor in any attempt to locate the *Dicta et Facta* within the formulation of early Imperial ideology is the fact that its author hardly reveals anything of himself, whether as regards geographical origin, social standing or life-history. Precisely the opposite is true of the writer who, in part for that very reason, offers by far the most revealing comparison to Ovid (and indeed to Valerius Maximus), namely Velleius Paterculus. His work, dedicated as we saw to the consul of A.D. 30, M. Vinicius, also gains its importance precisely from its deliberate conventionality, from its attempt both to retell the main events of Roman history and to give due emphasis to its salient features.

¹⁹ *AE* 1984, no. 508, Fr. 1. See pp. 15–17 below. For this connection see already F. Millar, 'Imperial ideology in the Tabula Siarensis', in J. González and J. Arce (eds), *Estudios Sobre la Tabula Siarensis* (1988), 11.

²⁰ See Y. Maslakov, 'Valerius Maximus and Roman historiography: A study of the *exempla* tradition', *ANRW*

II.32.1 (1984), 437, and now esp. W. Martin Bloomer, *Valerius Maximus and the Rhetoric of the New Nobility* (1992).

²¹ J. Bellemore, 'When did Valerius Maximus write the *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*?', *Antichthon* 23 (1989), 67.

But in this case there is an extra dimension, in that he gives sufficient prominence to his ancestors and his own career, to reveal himself as the perfect example of what Syme saw as a fundamental feature of 'the Roman revolution': the long-delayed absorption by Rome of *tota Italia*, or in other terms, the large-scale entry of the *domi nobiles* of Italy into the *equester ordo* and the Senate itself.²² Velleius ought to have been the hero, or anti-hero, of *The Roman Revolution*, as the *domi nobilis* who entered the Senate in the last part of Augustus' reign, after equestrian military service; and then, in writing his *History*, did his best to direct *adulatio* appropriately to both successive Emperors, sometimes with unintentionally comic effects.²³ Looking in another direction, we could see Velleius as the successful counterpart to Ovid, his older contemporary, that is as the Italian *domi nobilis* who followed the career which Ovid rejected, reached the Senate, wrote what at the relevant moment (just before the fall of Sejanus) seemed to be required by the regime, and left descendants who rose to the consulship. To suggest the significance of the family and the man, only the barest details need be given here.²⁴

A remote ancestor on the maternal side had been Decius Magius, a pro-Roman Capuan who played a part in the Second Punic War; by the early first century B.C. the family was settled in Aeclanum, and Velleius' great-great-great(?) grandfather, Minatius Magius, fought on the Roman side in the Social War; his two sons became praetors in Rome; a later member of the family, a contemporary of Velleius, will be the Marcus Magius Maximus from Aeclanum who was Praefectus Aegypti in the period A.D. 11/14. On the paternal side, the grandfather, Gaius Velleius, was *praefectus fabrum* and *iudex* in the late Republic; of his sons, one was a senator (and *subscriptor* in the prosecution of Cassius), while Velleius' father remained an *eques*, and was *praefectus equitum*, apparently in Germania. If we follow the recent discussion by Ségolène Demougin, the father will have been born in the 50s B.C.; hence it makes sense that Velleius himself began his military career as a *tribunus militum* under P. Vinicius and L. Silius in Thrace and Macedonia about 2 B.C. (he may thus have been some 15 years younger than Ovid). Then, after further service, still as *tribunus militum*, with Gaius Caesar in the East, he served as *praefectus equitum* with Tiberius in Germany. In A.D. 7 he entered the Senate as *quaestor*, evidently at a later age than the norm of 25. In A.D. 14, as his own testimony shows, he was, along with his brother, Magius Celer Velleianus, *candidatus Caesaris* for the praetorship of A.D. 15, 'commended' both by Augustus before his death and then by Tiberius (II. 124. 3-4). Just before this (124. 2), Velleius had recorded the long reluctance of Tiberius to take up the position of Emperor: 'solique huic contigit paene diutius recusare principatum, quam ut occuparent eum, alii armis pugnaverant' ('to him alone it befell to refuse the principate almost longer than others have fought with arms to seize it'). There is thus no earlier witness to this reluctance — except Ovid.

Velleius' ancestry and career would of themselves give him a significant place in Roman history, even if he had not gone on to write his patriotic and value-laden account of it. Its structure and emphases would deserve much fuller analysis, especially if taken seriously as the perfect expression of 'post-Augustan' ideology. But in this context it will be enough to stress the paucity of the account of Gaius and Lucius, compared with the importance given to the return and adoption of Tiberius (II. 102-4); the low profile of Germanicus, and the unmistakable, if muted, unfavourable comparison between him and Drusus, the son of Tiberius (II. 125. 4); the elaborate justification of the prominent role of Sejanus, in spite of his relatively modest origins and equestrian rank (II. 127-8); and the rhetorical evocation of the pain caused to Tiberius by Agrippa, the widow of Germanicus, and her son Nero (II. 130): 'Quam diu abstruso, quod miserrimum est, pectus eius flagravat incendio, quod ex nuru, quod ex nepote dolere, indignari, erubescere coactus est!' ('How long did his heart burn with an inflammation, more wretched for being concealed, which as a result of his daughter-in-law and grandson forced him to pain, indignation and shame!'). In keeping with the tone of combined

²² See G. V. Sumner, 'The truth about Velleius Paternus: Prolegomena', *HSCP* 74 (1970), 252; A. J. Woodman, *Velleius Paternus: The Caesarian and Augustan Narrative (2.41-93)* (1983); *The Tiberian Narrative (2.94-131)* (1977).

²³ Contrast the much-quoted passage on the 'restoration' of the *res publica* by Augustus (II. 89) with that on the same achievement on the part of Tiberius (II. 126).

²⁴ S. Demougin, *Prosopographie des chevaliers romains julio-claudiens* (1992), no. 88 (the father); no. 108 (Velleius himself).

triumphalism and anxiety which marks the literature of this period, the work ends with a prayer to Iuppiter Capitolinus, Mars Gradivus and Vesta to preserve Tiberius as long as possible — and then grant him capable successors: 'destinate successores quam serissimos, sed eos quorum cervices tam fortiter sustinendo terrarum orbis imperio sufficient, quam huius suffecisse sensimus, consiliaque omnium civium aut pia [fovete aut impia opprimate?]' ('mark out successors as far as possible in the future, but ones whose shoulders are broad enough to bear the government of the world as bravely as we have seen his do, and whatever the plans of all citizens, if pious [promote them, if impious suppress them?]').

II. OVID IN ROME

There were of course profound differences between Velleius and another *domi nobilis* of the Augustan period, Ovidius Naso from Sulmo. First, though Ovid began a career as a senator, he did not pursue it; second, his prominent position in Rome ended suddenly in disgrace and exile, from which (so far as we know) he was never to be recalled; and third, he was a writer of rare talent, capable of the highest achievements in a succession of different poetic genres.

But his undeniable literary genius, combined with his eventual fall and exile, should not tempt us to see him as having always been, in social and political terms, at some distance from the regime, as having preserved a real spiritual and artistic independence, or as having been in some sense a rebel whose non-compliance was ultimately punished. This paper will suggest that the truth is otherwise: that Ovid should be clearly contrasted with the great 'post-Triumviral' writers of the earlier part of Augustus' reign; and that he belongs not with them but, in social origin, in attachment to a strongly loyalist senatorial family, and in the overt 'Augustanism', found in some of his later works, with the 'post-Augustan' Velleius. Far from being expressions of spiritual resistance, the poems of exile should be read as the protests of a rejected loyalist, whose rightful place, in Rome and in relation with leading senatorial families, has wrongly been denied him. The poetry both of the decade before his exile in A.D. 8, and of the decade after it, it will be suggested, incorporates 'Augustan' features, in a way in which the works of the 'post-Triumviral' writers do not.

This is no place to rehearse all that is known of Ovid's origins, career and earlier works.²⁵ But it is important to stress how prominent an example he is of the *domi nobilis* who might have ascended to the heart of the senatorial order in Rome. As we all know, an inscription of the Augustan period reveals that the first ever Roman senator to come from the territory of the Paeligni was Q. Varius Geminus from Superaequum Paelignorum:²⁶ 'is primus omnium Paelign(or)um senator factus est et eos honores gessit'. The earliest of the offices listed in his *cursus* will have been the pre-senatorial post in the vigintivirate, *decemvir stlitibus iudicandis*, and he went on to be praetor, and a praetorian *legatus* and *proconsul*. That no earlier Paelignian had risen so far lends much greater significance to the fact that Ovid (and his brother) might have done so. Like Velleius, Ovid lays repeated emphasis on his *patria*, Sulmo, and on the (equestrian) *ordo* which he inherited (eg. *Tr.* IV. 10. 3–8) — though in fact no Roman rank can have gone back more than two generations (at the most) of the family, for Sulmo, as Ovid himself recalls, had been non-Roman and on the allied side in the Social War (*Amores* III. 15. 5–10). In the 20s B.C., Ovid was in Rome, and, like his brother, assumed the *latus clavus*. It seems to have been after his brother had died in 24 B.C. that Ovid held the post of *tresvir (capitalis or monetalis)* in the vigintivirate, and was preparing for a senatorial career — only then to reject it in favour of poetry (*Tr.* IV. 10. 27–40).

The conclusion is inescapable that Ovid belonged to one of the most prominent families of the whole Paelignian region. That he rejected a senatorial career was a personal choice; he remained a member of the *equester ordo*, later regretfully recalling from Tomoi how he had ridden in the annual *transvectio* on 15 July (*Tr.* II. 89–90): 'at, memini, vitamque meam moresque probabas / illo, quem dederas, praetereuntis equo' ('But, I recall, you used to approve my life and morals, when I rode past on the horse you had granted me').

²⁵ Only the key references will be given. The evidence has often been collected, most recently in *PIR*² O 180.

²⁶ *ILS* 932.

He also enjoyed the personal friendship and encouragement of one of the most prominent of all Augustan senators, M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus, who had shared the consulship with Emperor Caesar Divi filius in the year of Actium. True social equality there surely was not; but at the same time we should avoid at all costs importing into our conceptions of how Latin literature was written the wholly irrelevant categories of *patronus* and *cliens*.²⁷ As countless examples show, comfortably-off persons of equestrian origin, whether from Rome itself, like Atticus, or from a *municipium*, like Cicero, belonged, in social, economic and cultural terms, to the same broad band of educated landowners as did senators, even those who were *nobiles*. In the crucial year 2 B.C., which it is suggested should be seen as beginning the 'late-Augustan' phase of Latin literature, it was Messalla Corvinus who proposed in the Senate that Augustus should receive the appellation 'Pater Patriae'.²⁸ But it is Augustus himself who records that it was not only the Senate and the *populus Romanus* who awarded this honour, but also the *equester ordo*, acting as a corporate body (*RG* 35). If this piece of loyalism involved some form of vote or resolution, it is the only such act attested on the part of the *ordo*, and must thus have been of great significance. In the *Fasti* Ovid does not fail to note this also, carefully using the first person plural to signal his own participation (*Fasti* II. 127–8): 'Sancte pater patriae, tibi plebs, tibi curia nomen / hoc dedit, dedimus nos tibi nomen, eques' ('Reverend father of the fatherland, the plebs, the senate and we, the equites, gave you this name'). He goes on to a laborious comparison of Augustus first to Iuppiter and then to Romulus, in which the latter clearly comes off worse (129–44).

These same years witnessed the emergence of Ovid as a poet in whose works emphatic, explicit and highly developed expression of loyalty to the regime would play (at least) a very marked part. It would be absurd to claim that other currents, or ambivalences of attitude, can nowhere be found in Ovid's poetry of this period; critical ingenuity can in any case discover these in any text. What is claimed as significant here is simply that Ovid's writing of this period is marked by deliberate, highly developed and overt expressions of loyalism. For instance, in the revision of the *Ars Amatoria*, which seems to belong in 1 B.C.,²⁹ Ovid inserted, as Glen Bowersock has shown, a reference to the sea-battle of 'Athenians and Persians', which Augustus put on in 2 B.C. in the newly-created naumachia; and he went on to expound its connection with Gaius' mission to the East to confront the Parthians (*AA* I. 171ff.).³⁰ Ovid does not forget (202–3) to bring in both Mars and the prospective deification of Augustus: 'Marsque pater Caesarque pater, date numen eunti: / nam deus e vobis alter est, alter eris' ('Father Mars and Father Caesar, send him off with your blessing: for of the two of you, one is a god, and one will be'). This long passage gains all the more significance from being so evidently a deliberate insertion in the new edition.

The newly dedicated temple of Mars Ultor and the surrounding Forum Augustum were of course to receive their fullest literary exposition in the *Fasti* (v. 550–78), of which six books were completed before Ovid's exile (Syme dates the first version to A.D. 1–4),³¹ to be partially revised during it. This work is the most systematic attempt at writing poetry which was not only 'Augustan', but which placed the new regime laboriously in the framework of inherited cults and of newly-revived antiquarian learning. This is not to deny that tensions or ambivalences in the treatment of Augustus and his regime are present in the text.³² It is to assert that in its overall, overt programme and structure it represents a new phase in 'Augustan' literature. If we are to understand the revolution of consciousness brought about by the emergence of a monarch from within the traditional *res publica*, it is here, and not with the great writers of a generation, or half-generation, earlier, that we should begin.

As an 'Augustan' work, the *Fasti* involved both the evocation of an inherited (or reinvented) set of rituals, and a due emphasis on novelty, that is the role of Augustus, of the

²⁷ There is no room here to argue this proposition. I will merely state baldly that (for instance) it wholly vitiates the otherwise interesting paper by G. Williams, 'Did Maecenas "fall from favour"? Augustan literary patronage', in Raaflaub and Toher, op. cit. (n. 6), 258.

²⁸ Suetonius, *Div. Aug.* 58.

²⁹ For the dates (as in all that follows), R. Syme, *History in Ovid* (1978), 19–20.

³⁰ G. Bowersock, 'Augustus and the East: the problem of the succession', in Millar and Segal, op. cit. (n. 7), 169.

³¹ Syme, op. cit. (n. 29), 21f.

³² See e.g. A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Time for Augustus: Ovid, Augustus and the *Fasti*', in M. Whitby, P. Hardie and M. Whitby (eds), *Homo Victor: Classical Essays for John Bramble* (1987), 221; the essays collected in *Arethusa* 25.1 (1992), *Reconsidering Ovid's Fasti*; and D. C. Feeney, 'Si licet et fas est: Ovid's *Fasti* and the problem of free speech under the Principate', in A. Powell (ed.), *Roman Poetry and Propaganda in the Age of Augustus* (1992), 1.

members of his household, and of his actual *domus* on the Palatine (e.g. iv. 943–54). But, while never achieving the intended twelve books (*Tr.* ii. 549–50), the work was none the less revised in exile, then acquiring (among other things) a dedication to Germanicus. Like other works of the period, it thus finishes up by exhibiting a systematic uncertainty as to what, or who, the proper focus of loyalty should be. That object was in any case a moving target, repeatedly transformed by death, and by reversals of fortune among members of the *domus Augusta*. Some aspects of the *Fasti* as we have it will even reflect revisions made after Augustus' own death.³³

If the *Fasti* sets out systematically to place Augustus within the framework of inherited tradition, the same is also true of Ovid's greatest work, the *Metamorphoses*. Looking back in *Tristia* II on his poetic achievement before his exile, Ovid, if anything, rather understated just how profoundly shaped by Augustan loyalism this work had been (555–62):

Dictaque sunt nobis, quamvis manus ultima coeptis
defuit, in facies corpora versa novas.
atque utinam revoces animum paulisper ab ira,
et vacuo iubeas hinc tibi pauca legi,
pauca, quibus prima surgens ab origine mundi
in tua deduxi tempora, Caesar, opus:
aspicies, quantum dederis mihi pectoris ipse,
quoque favore animi teque tuosque canam.

We sang too, though the final touch was missing from the undertaking, / of bodies transformed into new appearances. / If only you would put your anger briefly from your mind, / and in an idle moment have a few lines from this work read to you: / a few, in which starting from the first origin of the world / I spun out a work down to your times, Caesar. / Then you will see how much heart you put into me, / and with what wholehearted support I sing of you and yours.

Not only does Ovid's brilliant retelling of myths of transformation culminate in the deification of Julius Caesar and the prospective deification of Augustus. As Denis Feeney has recently shown, the entire work is framed by the very recent Roman institution of the legal transformation of humans into deities.³⁴ Thus Book I introduces the extremely bold reversal of representing Iuppiter as summoning all the gods to conclave in a context which is explicitly compared to the Palatine (I. 170–6): 'hic locus est, quem si verbis audacia detur, / haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli' ('this is the place which, if my words be allowed some boldness, I should not fear to call the Palatine of the great heaven'). Soon after comes a crucial reference to the murder of Caesar, and the continuing *pietas* shown to Augustus by his people, as by the other gods to Iuppiter (199–205). But even that hardly prepares the reader for the culmination in Books XIII–XV, in which Aeneas is to play the central role, with diversionary sub-plots, before the emphasis shifts to Romulus, and then Numa (with further sub-plots); then to the importation of the cult of Aesculapius — and finally, by another daring conceit, to the deification of Caesar. Caesar, unlike Aesculapius, was a native of Rome; but, more than that, it was not so much his own deeds which had won him divinity, but his *progenies* (xv. 745–51): 'neque enim de Caesaris actis / ullum maius opus, quam quod pater exstitit huius' ('nor is there among Caesar's acts / any greater achievement than that he proved father of this man'). The claim that what had been involved was natural, biological succession is now re-emphasised again. Were any of Caesar's triumphs greater than that of having fathered so great a man: 'quam tantum genuisse virum?' (752–8). Not only the Triumvirs, but the *populus Romanus*, who passed the *lex* of 42 B.C., and with them the natural father of Augustus, have all vanished, to leave Augustus both as the real son of Caesar, and the sole author of his divine status. The passage moves to the most vivid of all literary evocations of Caesar's murder, and then turns, in a prophecy uttered by Iuppiter, to Augustus. But the prophecy also looks forward to the prospective accession of Tiberius, and finally focuses on Divus Iulius and his temple (xv. 832–42):

³³ So e.g. G. Williams, *Change and Decline: Roman Literature in the Early Empire* (1978), 54–5 — though I cannot see why the main passage quoted, *Fasti* iv. 19–62, must have been written after A.D. 14. *Fasti* i. 531–6, is a much clearer case (see p. 15 below).

³⁴ See D. C. Feeney, *The Gods in Epic: Poets and Critics of the Classical Tradition* (1991), ch. 5.

Pace data terris animum ad civilia vertet
iura suum legesque feret iustissimus auctor
exemploque suo mores reget inque futuri
temporis aetatem venturorumque nepotum
prospiciens prolem sancta de coniuge natam
ferre simul nomenque suum curasque iubebit,
nec nisi cum senior Pyllos aequaverit annos,
aetherias sedes cognataque sidera tanget.
hanc animam interea caeso de corpore raptam
fac iubar, ut semper Capitolia nostra forumque
divus ab excelso prospectet Iulius aede.

Peace once brought to the earth, he will turn his mind/ to civil justice, and, most just of law-makers, will carry laws, / and by his own example will control morals; and looking ahead to future/ ages and coming generations/ will order offspring born of a saintly wife/ to bear both his name and his cares;/ nor, till in old age he has matched the years of Nestor,/ will he touch the etherial seat and the stars that share his blood./ Meantime, make this soul snatched from the murdered body/ into a star, so that for ever over our Capitol and forum/ Divus Iulius may look forth from his lofty temple.

If, as has been claimed, Julius Caesar had indeed not been given a very prominent place in earlier Augustan literature, that is not so in Ovid. Equally, inattention to his memory cannot have reflected popular perceptions. For since 29 B.C. the new Temple of Divus Iulius had occupied one pole of the central axis of the Forum.³⁵ But Ovid's exploitation of the symbolic landscape of Rome is not yet complete. In his final prayer he evokes, as he does in the *Fasti* (iv. 949–54), the cohabitation of Vesta, Apollo and Augustus himself on the Palatine, linking the three in a single complex line of great conceptual boldness ('et cum Caesarea tu, Phoebae domestice, Vesta' — 'and you, domestic Phoebus, together with Caesarian Vesta', 865) — and looks forward once again to the prospective deification of Augustus (861–70).

In the last part of the *Metamorphoses* the delicacy, restraint and indirectness which Virgil had deployed in linking the Julian house to the legendary origins of Rome has vanished, to be replaced, as in the *Fasti*, by an overt loyalism, as well as by a creative use of the now 'Julian' topography of the centre of Rome. What remained for the poems of exile was an intensification of these elements, a repeated evocation of changes of power, both those which might happen and those which already had; and something new, in the *Epistulae ex Ponto* at least: a representation of the relationship of Augustus, and then of Tiberius, to the successive holders of the consulate, to the Senate and to the *populus Romanus*.

III. OVID IN TOMOI

As to how Ovid came to be exiled, this paper has no suggestion to offer to add to the scores already canvassed. It is important instead to stress his high social position, as an *equus* who might have chosen a senatorial career, and who had personal connections to the family of Messalla Corvinus. Messalla had died in A.D. 8, and Ovid had written the *elogium* delivered at his funeral (*Ex P.* i. 7. 29), just as he had composed the *epithalamium* for the marriage of Fabius Maximus, consul of 11 B.C. (i. 2. 133). The notions of 'patronus' and 'cliens' give a quite distorted impression of such relationships, and of the social standing of a *domi nobilis* and Roman *equus* like Ovidius Naso. Such a person, whether he wrote poetry or not, was a member of the political class, a man (necessarily) of independent wealth, and of high, but not the highest, rank.

It will have been of real practical importance that Ovid, though ordered to live in Tomoi, had been, as he explicitly says, merely *relegatus*, and had not been subject to condemnation. Whatever stage the developing rules about the confiscation of the property of the condemned had reached by A.D. 8, Ovid will have kept his property and income.³⁶

Beyond that, as to the real circumstances which attended him in exile, and the real extent of actual communications between him and Rome, we have no 'evidence' external to the

³⁵ See P. White, 'Julius Caesar in Augustan Rome', *Phoenix* 42 (1988), 334.

³⁶ *Tr.* ii. 131–7; iv. 9. 12; v. 2. 56–8; ii. 21.

Tristia and *Epistulae ex Ponto* themselves. What we have instead is the poetic evocation of a personal disaster, and equally a series of poetic evocations of appeals made to persons in Rome in the hope of getting his exile ended — along with representations of public events, of public ceremonials, of the assumption of office by consuls, and of personal relationships at the centre of power, in Rome itself. A real 'history' of relations and communications between Ovid and persons in Rome cannot be written. We may suppose, for instance, that the poems of the years A.D. 8 to 16 were indeed actually carried to Rome, though by whom we do not know; and were read there, though again we do not know by whom. But all that the poems present, as regards such communications is, for instance, an *anticipatory* portrayal of the journey of his *liber* to Rome and its reception there (*Tr.* I. 1); or a poem written in the person of the *liber* itself as it records its (prospective) tour of the Forum, the Palatine and the nearest part of the Campus Martius (*Tr.* III. 1). We cannot even be sure that poems which represent themselves as directed to well-placed intermediaries to intercede with the ultimate holder of power were in reality delivered to those persons.

At the same time, the poems are, without qualification, evidence for the transmission of news from Rome to the outer fringes of the Empire. Ovid may mislead his readers into forgetting that Tomoi, far from being 'Getic', was a long-established Greek city, which will have had much the same diplomatic relations to governors and emperors as any other; and equally his continued personal contacts with Roman society, presumably transmitted by letters carried by messengers, may have kept him more precisely up-to-date than might have been expected of someone living on the shore of the Black Sea. In that sense he provides simultaneously both an 'insider's' and a provincial 'outsider's' view, or representation, of the march of events in Rome. But information about those events does reach him: about triumphs, about who will hold the consulship, about the death and deification of Augustus. In some ways his poetic recreations of these distant events, happening in an urban context which is intensely familiar, are actually more important for the historian than mere eyewitness accounts. For, first, they are the work of an extremely well placed loyalist (or author of loyalist expressions), whose writing from after his exile shows profound continuities, in general and in detail, with that from the years before it. And, second, by being compelled to re-imagine what was occurring in Rome he confers on it a generic significance which a mere report might lack.

The poems 'addressed' to named persons are very important for historians, not because they actually 'are' petitions for intercession (we do not know whether they were or not), but because they are remarkably vivid representations of the central role which the arrival of monarchic power had conferred on petitioning; and because, more precisely, they are testimony to the already-established significance of what Richard Saller has called 'brokerage': the custom of directing appeals and requests to well placed intermediaries, who — it was to be hoped — would intercede with the real holders of power.³⁷ Precisely because of the importance of brokerage in their structure, the poems in *Ex Ponto* in particular go beyond the representation of the Imperial house and the structure of power within it, to speak of leading senators and their imagined relationship to the regime. Ovid's evidence is thus of immense complexity and significance, all the more important for reflecting a period at the end of Augustus' reign and the beginning of Tiberius' which is relatively little known.

As is obvious, the representation of public scenes and political relations in Rome is only one aspect of the poetry of exile;³⁸ and even as regards this aspect I will pick out merely a few examples of three overlapping themes: Emperor and public in Rome (IV); consuls and the Emperor (V); and the changing structure of the Imperial house (VI).

IV. EMPEROR AND ROMAN PEOPLE

I begin with an event which never occurred, the triumph over Germany which Ovid was expecting in A.D. 10.³⁹ As indicated above, events and interconnections which had literally to be imagined, and presented in poetic form, could be thought of as even more significant than

³⁷ R. Saller, 'Promotion and patronage in equestrian careers', *JRS* 70 (1980), 44; idem, *Personal Patronage in the Early Empire* (1982).

³⁸ For the fullest recent discussion see H. B. Evans, *Publica Carmina: Ovid's Books from Exile* (1983).

³⁹ Syme, *op. cit.* (n. 3), 38–9.

those, described at second-hand on the basis of actual reports, which had in reality already occurred, like the triumph of A.D. 12 to which we will come next.

Writing the poem in question (*Tr.* iv. 2), Ovid explicitly represents himself, the exiled outcast, as speculating about whether a victory had already been achieved, or perhaps even a triumph already held; but though Tiberius and Germanicus did campaign in Germany in A.D. 10 and 11, and imperial salutations were gained for Augustus and Tiberius, no great victory was achieved, and no triumph was held. Ovid could still imagine what it would be like, or would have been, to be there:

Iam fera Caesaribus Germania, totus ut orbis,	1
victa potest flexo succubuisse genu.	
altaque velentur fortasse Palatia sertis,	
turaque in igne sonent inficiantque diem,	
candidaque adducta collum percussa securi	5
victima purpureo sanguine pulset humum,	
donaque amicorum templis promissa deorum	
reddere victores Caesar uterque parent.	
et qui Caesareo iuvenes sub nomine crescut,	
perpetuo terras ut domus illa regat,	10
cumque bonis nuribus pro sospite Livia nato	
munera det meritis, saepe datura, deis,	
et pariter matres et quae sine crimine castos	
perpetua servant virginitate focos;	
plebs pia cumque pia laetetur plebe senatus,	15
parvae cuius eram pars ego nuper eques:	
nos procul expulsos communia gaudia fallunt,	
famaque tam longe non nisi parva venit.	
ergo omnis populus poterit spectare triumphos,	
cumque ducum titulis oppida capta leget.	20
vinclaque captiva reges cervice gerentes	
ante coronatos ire videbit equos.	
et cernet vultus aliis pro tempore versos,	
terribiles aliis inmemoresque sui.	
quorum pars causas et res et nomina quaeret,	25
pars referet, quamvis noverit illa parum.	

- (1) Already before the Caesars wild Germany, like the whole world,/ may have fallen in defeat on bended knee./ Maybe the high Palatine is veiled in garlands,/ and incense crackles in the fire and dyes the day,/ and the white victim smitten in the neck by the lifted axe/ throbs purple blood to the ground,/ and the gifts they had promised to the temples of the friendly gods/ the victors, each a Caesar, may be making ready to present;/ together with the young men who grow under the name of Caesar,/ to ensure the household rules the earth for ever./
- (11) Livia too with her good daughters-in-law may be making for her son's safety/ the offerings she will always make to the well-deserving gods;/ likewise the matrons and the chaste ones/ who preserve the sacred hearths with their perpetual virginity,/ and the loyal plebs and with the loyal plebs the senate/ and the knights of whom I was once a small part./ This common joy passes me by in distant isolation,/ and none but slight news penetrates so far./ So all the people will have managed to watch the triumphs,/ and will read on placards the names of leaders and cities captured./
- (21) They will see kings with chains about their captive necks/ walking before the garlanded horses./ Here they will see expressions fittingly downcast,/ there fearsome scowls of men beside themselves./ One viewer will ask for names and stories and explanations;/ the next will give them, little though they know.

Ovid, who could not be there, devotes much of the poem, in the lines which follow (27-46), to an imagined interpretation of the scene given by one spectator to another; the technique is strikingly similar to Polybius' use of spectators' reactions as a way of giving meaning to the events in his *History*.⁴⁰ One figure which needed to be identified will have been

⁴⁰ J. Davidson, 'The gaze in Polybius', *JRS* 81 (1991), 38-9.

a representation of the conquered Germania (43–4): ‘crinibus en etiam fertur Germania passis, / et ducis invicti sub pede maesta sedet’ (‘Look — even Germany is borne along with her hair flying wild, / and sits sadly at the foot of the invincible leader’). This figure recalls the images of conquered *ethne*, above all Britannia herself, from the Sebasteion of Aphrodisias.⁴¹

If the crowd could not identify the symbolic figures carried in the procession, it was possible (as equally, in permanent form, at Aphrodisias) to read the names, and pass on the information to others. At the end of the poem (67–74), Ovid returns to the theme of his own absence from among the spectators; but earlier, in the passage quoted, he has also recalled once again his proper, if now lost, place as a member of a privileged *ordo*, one of the groups whose rejoicing gives meaning to the event (15–16).

In the context of a triumph, however, it must be striking that the only member of the Imperial house who is actually named in this passage is Livia (11–14), identified as offering sacrifices, along with her unnamed daughters-in-law (Agrippina and Livilla), for the safety of her equally unnamed son (Tiberius); with equal emphasis, she is associated with *matres* and the Vestal Virgins.⁴² The Imperial family is seen expressly as a collectivity, and as located within traditional Roman society.

The prospect of change and a shift of power in the *domus* is already implicit, even explicit. Augustus and Tiberius appear only as ‘Caesar uterque’, and far more emphasis is laid, in remarkably unambiguous language, on the prospective rule of the next generation, Germanicus and Drusus (9–10). In noting Ovid’s bold use of the verb *regere*, we should also recall that, like the entire scene (which never occurred), *domus illa* was a construct, made up, in default of other unfulfilled possibilities, by reluctant adoptions.

The other triumph which Ovid was to evoke was at least a real one, that celebrated by Tiberius ‘ex Illyrico’, on 23 October A.D. 12.⁴³ In the first of two poems on this triumph (*Ex P.* II. 1), he provides another evocation of the spectators watching the procession (21–48), and a prediction of a future triumph by Germanicus (49–63). But the following poem (II. 2) is the more concrete and, in various ways, the more significant. First, it is addressed to M. Valerius Messalla Messallinus, consul of 3 B.C., and the elder son of Messalla Corvinus, with an allusion to his brother, M. Valerius Cotta Maximus. Like many poems in *Ex Ponto* it has the form of a request for intercession, or brokerage, which is to be based on close connection with the Emperor of the prospective intercessor, who is to deploy the eloquence inherited from his famous father (41–52):

verbaque nostra favens Romana ad numina perfer,
 non tibi Tarpeio culta Tonante minus,
 mandatque mei legatus suscipe causam:
 nulla meo quamvis nomine causa bona est.
 iam prope depositus, certe iam frigidus aeger,
 servatus per te, si modo servor, ero.
 nunc tua pro lassis nitatur gratia rebus,
 principis aeterni quam tibi praestat amor.
 nunc tibi et eloquii nitor ille domesticus adsit,
 quo poteris trepidis utilis esse reis.
 vivit enim in vobis facundi lingua parentis,
 et res heredem repperit illa suum.

As a favour take my words to the Roman powers / whom you worship no less than the Thunderer on the Tarpeian rock, / and as my emissary take up my brief, / even though no plea in my name is good. / All but abandoned, ailing and chill indeed, / if I am saved, it will be by you. / Now may my flagging fortunes rely on the influence you enjoy, / thanks to the love for you of the eternal prince. / Now summon up your family’s brilliant eloquence, / which has made you useful to trembling defendants. / For in you lives on your father’s gift of speech, / and has found in you a true heir.

⁴¹ R. R. R. Smith, ‘The imperial reliefs from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias’, *JRS* 77 (1987), 88; idem, ‘*Simulacra Gentium*: the *Ethne* from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias’, *JRS* 78 (1988), 50.

⁴² See N. Purcell, ‘Livia and the womanhood of Rome’, *PCPhS* 212 (1986), 78.

⁴³ The date is given by *AE* 1922, no. 96 (from Praeneste, *Ins. It.* XIII.2, p. 135, a fragment of the *Fasti Praenestini*): ‘Ti. Caesar curru triumphavit ex Illyrico’ (on the same day of the year as the second battle of Philippi); see Syme, *op. cit.* (n. 3), 40f.

The triumph itself is then suggested as an appropriate moment for the presentation of a request, and once again stress is laid on the collective role of the Imperial house (67–74):

tempus adest aptum precibus. valet ille videtque
 quas fecit vires, Roma, valere tuas.
 incolumis coniunx sua pulvinaria servat:
 promovet Ausonium filius imperium;
 praeterit ipse suos animo Germanicus annos;
 nec vigor est Drusi nobilitate minor.
 adde nurum neptemque pias natosque nepotum
 ceteraque Augustae membra valere domus.

The time is right for prayers. He is flourishing, and sees/ that your strength, Rome, that he built up himself, is flourishing too./ A wife in good health guards his couch;/ his son pushes forward the western front./ Germanicus is older than his years in spirit;/ the vigour of Drusus matches his nobility./ Add a pious daughter-in-law and granddaughter, and grandsons with sons,/ and that all the members of the Augustan house are in good health.

Again Livia comes first, though here unnamed, followed by Tiberius, also unnamed; then Germanicus and Drusus, followed by Livilla and Agrippina (unnamed), and the ‘sons of his grandsons’ — that is the sons of Germanicus — Nero, Drusus, and the just-born Gaius; and (perhaps) the infant son of Drusus, who was to die in A.D. 15.⁴⁴

Tiberius, the actual *triumphator*, continues to play a strikingly anonymous role, alluded to only in the ‘triumphant foot of Caesar’ (‘Caesareum . . . pedem’) of l.78. More prominence is given to the two sons of Messalla themselves, evidently taking part in the triumph, and to the traditional setting in the Forum — the temple of Castor and Pollux (to whom the two brothers are compared), and (as before) the temple of Divus Iulius (81–4):

quem pia vobiscum proles comitavit euntem,
 digna parente suo nominibusque datis,
 fratribus adsimiles, quos proxima templa tenentis
 divus ab excelsa Iulius aede videt.

With him ride you and your pious progeny,/ worthy of their father and the names they bear,/ like the twin brothers who occupy the temple/ next to the lofty one from which Divus Julius looks on.

The ‘triumph’ poems are another reminder of the fact, only partially modified by the arrival of monarchy, that Rome was a traditional public stage on which the actors (now including the female members of the Imperial house) played out their roles in public, in the open air, before an audience made up of the *populus Romanus*. Within that same context the holders of the traditional magistracies also played their roles; in the new context of monarchy, they could be assumed on the one hand to be in a position to influence the ruler, but they were known on the other to be subject to his patronage. The interplay of public ceremonial and private influence was well known to Ovid, who (once again) can evoke it in advance, without waiting for mere reports.

V. CONSULS AND EMPEROR

So, if we turn to the second of the three themes picked out from the exile poetry, the occupation of the consulate, we find Ovid in A.D. 13 looking forward to the consulate as *ordinarius* which Sextus Pompeius is to hold throughout A.D. 14 (*Ex P.* IV. 4. 23–42). He imagines the crowd on 1 January filling Pompeius’ house to bursting; the procession to the Capitol and the sacrifice of oxen; the entry to the *curia* and the customary speech by the new consul; and then the return to his house, accompanied through the streets by the whole Senate. Here too, the public framework is profoundly traditional, and much of what is

⁴⁴ Dio LVII. 14. 6.

imagined could have taken place centuries before. But one element may be new. Was it already acknowledged, in formal public ceremonial, that the consulate was a gift from the Emperor? What is certain is that the anticipated speech in the Senate by the new consul was to include expressions of thanks both to the gods and to the Emperor (39): 'egeris et meritis superis cum Caesare grates' ('you will have offered due thanks to the gods and Caesar'). Were the thanks which he would give going to be offered for the peaceful and victorious state of the Empire? Or, as later consuls would do, specifically to the Emperor for the gift of the consulship itself?

In this poem that is left unspecified. But no such doubt remains when Ovid turns, in perhaps the latest poem in the collection, to imagine in advance (once again) the suffect consulship of C. Pomponius Graecinus, which would begin in July A.D. 16, and would last to the end of the year; and then the coming consulate as *ordinarius* of his brother, C. Pomponius Flaccus, due to start on 1 January A.D. 17. Ovid must be writing towards the middle of A.D. 16 (*Ex P.* iv. 9). Once again, addressing Graecinus, Ovid imagines the public ceremonials and sacrifices of the first day, adding only (18) the role that he himself, as an *equus*, would play there if he could: 'consulis ante pedes ire iuberer eques' ('I would be ordered to go as a knight before the feet of the consul'). But in this case he also goes on to imagine the daily public functions of the consul, in the Forum or the Senate, or sacrificing on the Capitol — and perhaps then there might be a place for a prayer on behalf of Ovid (41–52):

mente tamen, quae sola loco non exulat, usus
 praetextam fasces aspiciamque tuos.
 haec modo te populo reddentem iura videbit,
 et se decretis finget adesse tuis;
 nunc longi reditus hastae supponere lustrum
 credet, et exacta cuncta locare fide;
 nunc facere in medio facundum verba senatu.
 publica quaerentem quid petat utilitas;
 nunc pro Caesaribus superis decernere grates,
 albave opimorum colla ferire bouum.
 atque utinam, cum iam fueris potiora precatus,
 ut mihi placetur principis ira roges!

In my mind, which alone is not in exile,/ I shall see your robes and fasces./ It will see you one moment giving justice to the people,/ and imagine itself to witness your decrees./ Next it will believe you to be putting to auction the revenues of a long cycle,/ and to be contracting out everything with impeccable honesty;/ next to be delivering an eloquent address in the senate/ enquiring what the public interest requires;/ next to be decreeing thanks to the gods for the Caesars,/ and to be smiting the white necks of choice oxen./ If only, when you have prayed for higher things,/ you would ask for the emperor's anger against me to abate!

But it is towards the middle of this poem that Ovid offers his most striking insight into how the consulate was now understood, in using the utmost ingenuity to express the idea that its dignity was even increased by its being in the gift of another. As to the latter point, there here is no ambiguity at all. Ovid is referring to both of the two consulships to be held by the brothers (65–70):

qui quamquam est ingens, et nullum Martia summo
 altius imperium consule Roma videt,
 multiplicat tamen hunc gravitas auctoris honorem,
 et maiestatem res data dantis habet.
 iudiciis igitur liceat Flaccoque tibi que
 talibus Augusti tempus in omne frui.

Mighty though he is, and though Mars' Rome/ sees no power higher than the supreme consul's,/ yet the gravity of its author multiplies this honour,/ and the gift shares the majesty of its giver./ Both Flaccus and yourself may now enjoy the benefit/ of Augustus' judgement for all time.

The language is unambiguous: the Emperor is the *auctor* of the *honor*, and the consulship itself is a gift (*res data*) which partakes of the *maiestas* of the giver.

VI. METAMORPHOSES IN THE IMPERIAL HOUSEHOLD

But the 'Augustus', whose favourable judgements both brothers will, it is hoped, continue to enjoy, is not of course Augustus, now dead, but Tiberius. Tiberius may perhaps have claimed that he would reserve this *cognomen* only for writing to kings;⁴⁵ but if so, Ovid, like everyone else in the Empire, did not believe it. It was not however that detailed news did not reach him in Tomoi. In the sixth winter of his exile (A.D. 14/15) he was able to claim that he had written a poem *Getico sermone* on the deification of Augustus and the delayed accession of Tiberius. The poem which embodies this claim (*Ex P.* iv. 13), reflecting the reports of the events of summer A.D. 14 which had reached Tomoi by the following winter, is thus by far the most immediate testimony to the confused and hesitant process by which Tiberius took up the *frena imperii* — those same 'reins' which Valerius Maximus, perhaps writing not long after, recorded as having nearly been seized from Tiberius by a conspirator.⁴⁶ Ovid writes as follows (25–33):

nam patris Augusti docui mortale fuisse
 corpus, in aetherias numen abisse domos:
 esse parem virtute patri, qui frena rogatus
 saepe recusati ceperit imperii:
 esse pudicarum te Vestam, Livia, matrum,
 ambiguum nato dignior anne viro:
 esse duos iuvenes, firma adiumenta parentis,
 qui dederint animi pignora certa sui.

For I taught how, though father Augustus had been mortal/ in body, his spirit had departed for heavenly abodes;/ that one matched his father in virtue, who, offered the reins/ of empire, took them after frequent refusal;/ that you, Livia, were the Vesta of chaste matrons,/ whether worthier of son or husband none can tell;/ that there were two young men, firm props for their parent,/ who had given sure guarantees of their spirit.

The language which Ovid uses is, not surprisingly, very close to that of a revised passage which appears in Book I of the *Fasti*, again as part of a prophecy of the rule of the Augusti, put in the mouth of Carmentis (529–36):⁴⁷

tempus erit, cum vos orbemque tuebitur idem,
 et fient ipso sacra colente deo,
 et penes Augustos patriae tutela manebit:
 hanc fas imperii frena tenere domum.
 inde nepos natusque dei, licet ipse recuset,
 pondera caelesti mente paterna feret;
 utque ego perpetuis olim sacrabor in aris,
 sic Augusta novum Iulia numen erit.

Time will be, when the same one will protect you and the globe,/ and sacrifice will be offered by the god himself,/ and the guardianship of the land will remain with the Augusti:/ it is the gods' will for this house to hold the reins of empire./ Hence the grandson of a god and son of a god, though he may himself refuse,/ will carry his father's burden with celestial mind;/ and just as I shall one day be sanctified with perpetual altars,/ so shall Iulia Augusta become a new deity.

Here too the *frena imperii* make their appearance; and here too, a real prominence is given to Livia, appearing in the *Fasti* with her new name 'Augusta', while in *Ex Ponto* she is again associated with Vesta and the *matres*. Once again, in both passages, stress is laid on the (artificial) continuity of the Imperial house. Here too, Ovid's perceptions were specifically prompted from Rome, and from the inmost circles of the 'Augustan aristocracy'. Norbanus Flaccus' public dedication in the Circus Flaminius of statues of Divus Augustus and the Domus Augusta (p. 4 above) was matched by the fact that Cotta Messallinus, before Augustus' death, had sent Ovid a set of silver statuettes of Augustus, Tiberius and Livia, intended — or

⁴⁵ Suetonius, *Tib.* 26. 2.

⁴⁶ P. 4 above.

⁴⁷ cf. p. 8 above and n. 33.

certainly deployed by Ovid — as objects of worship (*Ex P.* II. 8. 1–10). But now, in the same poem addressed to Pomponius Graecinus about his consulate, Ovid proclaims that in the *sacrum Caesaris* in his house not only Livia and Tiberius but Germanicus and Drusus have their place, all duly receiving his daily worship (*IV.* 9. 105–12):

nec pietas ignota mea est: videt hospita terra
 in nostra sacrum Caesaris esse domo.
 stant pariter natusque pius coniunxque sacerdos,
 numina iam facto non leviora deo.
 neu desit pars ulla domus, stat uterque nepotum,
 hic aviae lateri proximus, ille patris.
 his ego do totiens cum ture precantia verba,
 Eoo quotiens surgit ab orbe dies.

Nor is my piety unknown: the land that shelters me sees/ that in my home there is a shrine of Caesar./ By him stand pious son and priestess wife,/ no slighter powers now he has become a god./ No part of the house is missing, each of the grandsons stands there,/ one by his grandmother's side, the other by his father./ To them time and again I offer incense and words of prayer,/ as often as the day rises from the east.

VII. ROME SEEN FROM TOMOI: THE INSIDER'S VIEW FROM OUTSIDE

Ovid's exile, however unfortunate for him, offers still unexploited resources for us. For, on the one hand, he was the close associate of prominent senatorial families which not only made their peace with the new regime, but played a central part in constructing an adulatory ideology for it. Secondly, while he did indeed step aside from the senatorial career which his younger contemporary, Velleius Paterculus, followed, he remained high up in Roman society. What is more, the poetry of his last ten years in Rome might be seen as the most 'Augustan' of all, as the only large body of verse to devote itself overtly to the celebration of the new regime. But it is, I wish to suggest, precisely this previous role as an indefatigable and poetically resourceful loyalist which provides the background against which we should read the 'late-Augustan', or 'post-Augustan', poetry of Ovid's exile. For circumstances forced to him to devote his extraordinary talents to a construction or representation of Rome, its public life, the role of the leading senators, and the place within it of the Imperial family, which is all the more important for being both well-informed and yet almost wholly 'imagined'. There is of course far more to this evocation than the isolated examples put forward here.

Ovid, writing from Tomoi, was thus simultaneously the rejected loyalist 'insider' and the provincial 'outsider', catching the distant echoes of political change. He makes himself, of course, rather more distant, in a true sense, than he really was. For although Tomoi was indeed a frontier city, outside which the territory of barbarian peoples began, it was itself a Greek city like any other,⁴⁸ a fact which achieves only a brief reflection in the poetry which he wrote there (*Ex P.* IV. 14. 47–8).

Seen in a different light, therefore, as the witness writing from 'outside', Ovid reflects the close attention to the changing shape of the Imperial house, and the anxieties as to how to react after the death of Augustus, which might be felt in any Greek city. How those distant realities were construed and expressed must itself be fundamental to the nature of the immediately 'post-Augustan' Empire as understood by us. The most vivid parallel to the exiled Ovid's insistent loyalism is the rather neglected oath of loyalty from Palaipaphos in Cyprus.⁴⁹ The inhabitants of this small Greek city also had to do what they could in A.D. 14. They did not need to feel so marginal to the Empire as the people of Tomoi, and were not exposed to the bitter cold of the Black Sea coast, or the raids of barbarians; and what is more, they could (and

⁴⁸ See esp. D. M. Pippidi, 'Tomis, cité géto-grecque à l'époque d'Ovide?', *Parerga: écrits de philologie, d'épigraphie et d'histoire ancienne* (1984), 189. For the inscriptions see *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graecae et Latinae* II: *Tomis et territorium* (1987).

⁴⁹ T. B. Mitford, 'A Cypriot oath of allegiance to Tiberius', *JRS* 50 (1960), 75; *SEG* XVIII, 578; *AE* 1962, no. 248. See P. Herrmann, *Der römische Kaisereid* (1968), esp. 102f.

did) claim a special link to 'the descendant of Aphrodite Sebastos Theos Kaisar'. None the less, it is worth recalling that they were in fact situated some one- and-a-half times as far from Rome, as the crow flies, as Tomoi, and were faced with the same need to construe an unprecedented situation. What is more, they too had heard that there was some hesitation in the new Emperor's acceptance of the Imperial nomenclature, and duly left in the inscribed text of their oath of loyalty two gaps into which they might later insert the word 'Autokrator' — if the new Emperor later turned out to have taken the *praenomen* 'Imperator' after all. But, more important, they laid a heavy emphasis on the (fictional) continuity of the Imperial house: some honours (it is not clear which) would be voted 'along with the other gods, to Roma, to Tiberius Caesar, son of Augustus, Augustus, and to the sons of his blood, and none other of all'. The ideological force of the new monarchy was indeed remarkable: poetry and prose, inscriptions in both Greek and Latin, coins both Roman and non-Roman, and images both Roman and provincial, had all come to express an elaborate series of constructions of an Imperial 'family' which was itself a succession of constructions.

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