

FAMILIA, DOMUS, AND THE ROMAN CONCEPTION OF THE FAMILY

RICHARD P. SALLER

THE ENGLISH WORD "family" has undergone a transformation of primary meaning in the modern period. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was used to signify (1) persons related by blood or marriage (kin in a wide sense), or (2) a lineage or house (i.e., those descended from the same stock or blood), or (3) all those living under the same roof including servants and other non-relatives. As Flandrin has shown, dictionaries of the period did not define family as "father, mother, and children," a primary definition today. That has emerged as a standard definition only in the past two centuries and is, in Flandrin's view, to be connected with the development of the father-mother-children triad as the typical household unit among the educated classes as the servants were excluded.¹ This change prompts two questions about the Roman world. First, when Latin lexicons give "family" as a meaning for *familia* or *domus*, what sense of "family" is to be understood? Secondly, what insights do the meanings attached to *familia* and *domus* by the Romans offer into their conception of the family?

The conception of the family can be related in important ways to fundamental aspects of familial behaviour, such as inheritance, marriage strategies, and adoption. So, for instance, today we conceive of the family as made up of the individuals of the father-mother-children triad, and we rarely talk of the welfare of the family apart from the welfare of each of its members. In earlier times, however, the family in the sense of "house" or "lineage" was thought of in some places as an entity of great importance apart from the members. With such a conception, as Bourdieu has stressed, it made good sense to develop marriage and inheritance strategies that sacrificed the welfare of most of the children in order to preserve the "house" with its patrimony at full strength.²

In this paper I hope to clarify the meanings of *familia* and *domus*. Both words had a wide range of meanings, some of which are not related to

¹J.-L. Flandrin, *Families in Former Times* (tr. R. Southern, Cambridge 1979) 4–10. Flandrin's work has come in for criticism, but his point about definition has been accepted: see M. Anderson, *Approaches to the History of the Western Family, 1500–1914* (London 1980) ch. 3, esp. 41. On the distinction between lineage and other types of descent groups, see J. Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (Cambridge 1983) App. 1.

²P. Bourdieu, "Marriage Strategies as Strategies of Social Reproduction," in R. Foster and O. Ranum, eds., *Family and Society* (Baltimore 1976) 117–144 (first published in *AnnalesESC* 27 [1972] 1105–25).

kinship or household and hence will be passed over here. We do not enjoy the luxury that Flandrin had of being able to look at a series of dictionaries of different periods to determine developments in meaning. As an alternative, I have looked at all relevant uses of the two words in the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* and in the concordances of the major prose writers of the late Republic and the Principate. This involved examining more than 1200 uses of *domus* and more than 300 of *familia*—sufficient numbers, in my view, to give validity to arguments based on the absence of particular meanings. My study suggests that the Latin-English lexicons are imprecise and even misleading in the definitions given for *familia* and *domus*.³ After the meanings have been established, a more general argument will be made that in consideration of family background the Roman elite moved from an emphasis on the agnatic *familia* to a stress on the wider kinship group encompassed by the *domus*. Furthermore, *domus*, a central symbol of social status under the Republic, was easily adapted to serve as status symbol in the new political conditions of the Principate which saw a rapid turnover of senatorial families.

I DEFINITIONS OF *FAMILIA*

A good starting point in an attempt to define the range of meanings of *familia* is Ulpian's definition in *Digest* 50.16.195.1–4:

"Familiae" appellatio qualiter accipiatur, videamus. et quidem varie accepta est: nam et in res et in personas deducitur. in res, ut puta in lege duodecim tabularum his verbis "adgnatus proximus familiam habeto." ad personas autem refertur familiae significatio ita, cum de patrono et liberto loquitur lex: "ex ea familia," inquit, "in eam familiam." et hic de singularibus personis legem loqui constat. Familiae appellatio refertur et ad corporis cuiusdam significationem, quod aut iure proprio ipsorum aut communi universae cognationis continetur. iure proprio familiam dicimus plures personas, quae sunt sub unius potestate aut natura aut iure subiectae, ut puta patrem familias, matrem familias, filium familias, filiam familias quique deinceps vicem eorum sequuntur, ut puta nepotes et neptes et deinceps. pater autem familias appellatur, qui in domo dominium habet, recteque hoc nomine appellatur, quamvis filium non habeat: non enim solam personam eius, sed et ius demonstramus: denique et pupillum patrem familias appellamus. et cum pater familias moritur, quotquot capita ei subiecta fuerint, singulas familias incipiunt habere: singuli enim patrum familiarum nomen subeunt. idemque eveniet et in eo qui emancipatus est: nam et hic sui iuris effectus propriam familiam habet. communi iure familiam dicimus omnium adgnatorum: nam etsi patre familias mortuo singuli singulas

³TLL, Lewis and Short, and OLD do not give any attention to the distinction between agnates and cognates emphasized by the jurists (see below), nor do they give any indication of what circle of relatives is included in their definition "family" for *familia* or *domus*. A better entry for *familia* can be found in Daremberg-Saglio, which follows the jurists' definitions. Leonhard's article on *familia* in RE 6.1980–84 is concerned almost exclusively with the legal material.

familias habent, tamen omnes, qui sub unius potestate fuerunt, recte eiusdem familiae appellabuntur, qui ex eadem domo et gente prodi sunt. Servitutium quoque solemus appellare familias. . . . Item appellatur familia plurium personarum, quae ab eiusdem ultimi genitoris sanguine profisciscuntur (sicuti dicimus familiam Juliam), quasi a fonte quodam memoriae. Mulier autem familiae suae et caput et finis est.

The great jurist begins by distinguishing the use of *familia* for *res* from its use for *personae*. In the first sense it means patrimony, as in the Twelve Tables statement: *agnatus proximus familiam habeto*.⁴ Outside of legal contexts *familia* is rarely used in this way in the literature of the late Republic and early Empire.

Ulpian then proceeds to enumerate a variety of meanings of *familia* used in respect of *personae*. The first is the strict legal sense of all *personae* in the *potestas* of the *paterfamilias*, either by nature or by law, including the *materfamilias*, sons, daughters, adopted children, grandsons, and granddaughters. This definition is the one that most closely approximates our primary meaning of "family," the father-mother-children triad, but it is in fact different in quite important respects. Its significance lies more in the legal realm than in the social: those *in potestate* (that is, the *sui heredes* of a *paterfamilias* entitled to an equal share of the estate on intestacy) are included, but not the wife who in a free marriage continues to belong to her father's *familia*.⁵ Furthermore, as Ulpian points out, even a boy (*pupillus*) can be a *paterfamilias* under this definition, since he holds *dominium in domo*, though the *familia* has no mother or children. Of course, this legal definition of *familia* continued to have notable economic and social consequences, but it was essentially archaic to the extent that it did not coincide with the way Romans of the classical period regularly used the word outside the legal context.

The jurists' statements underline the ambiguous relationship of the *mater* to the *familia*. So long as *manus* marriages were usual and the woman entered the *potestas* of her husband, she became a member of her children's and her husband's *familia*.⁶ But when free marriages became common and the wife was no longer in her husband's *potestas*, a conflict arose between legal definition and the reality that the wife was a vital member of the basic unit of

⁴XII Tables 5.4. For a discussion of the early development of this and other meanings of *familia*, see R. Henrion, "Des origines du mot familia," *AntCl* 10 (1941) 37–69 and 11 (1942) 253–287.

⁵Gaius *Dig.* 50.16.196. Consequently D. Herlihy's characterization of the Roman family based on the definition of *familia* is misleading ("The Making of the Mediaeval Family: Symmetry, Structure, and Sentiment," *Journal of Family History* 8 (1983) 116–130.

⁶It is on this basis that Labeo gives his etymology of *soror* as someone who leaves the *familia* (Aul. Gell. *N.A.* 13.10.3). For the development from *manus* to non-*manus* marriage see A. Watson, *The Law of Persons in the Later Roman Republic* (Oxford 1967) 29 ff. On the possibility of the woman marrying a member of her *familia*, see B. D. Shaw and R. P. Saller, "Close-Kin Marriage in Roman Society?" *Man* 19 (1984) 432–434.

reproduction. The ambiguity of the woman's position is reflected in the fact that in non-legal usage *familia* is occasionally taken to include the wife. For instance, in the *Pro Caelio* (33) Cicero can speak of Clodia as marrying in *familiam clarissimam* (the Metelli) and at the same time as being in the *familia Claudia*. Passages of this sort, which appear to violate the legal definition, are in fact quite rare. More often, the wife is treated as part of her father's *familia*. So Livia did not enter the *familia Iulia* upon her marriage to Octavian, but by adoption on Augustus' death.⁷ Instead of *familia* the Romans more often used *domus* to indicate the living unit including the wife (see below).

In common parlance, according to Ulpian, *familia* encompassed a wider group, since siblings did not cease to refer to themselves as a *familia* when their father died and each became *sui iuris* with his own household. Thus all *agnati* are called a *familia*, that is, the group from the same *domus*, and related by blood through males. (I.e., children are in the same *familia* as their father's brother, his children, and their father's sister, but not her children or their mother's siblings.) *TLL* and the standard Latin-English dictionaries do not seem to have taken Ulpian's reference to *agnati* seriously and include agnate and cognate relatives without distinction in the definition of *familia*. I have been able to discover only three exceptional passages in which cognate kin are included in the *familia* and more where they are by implication excluded. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (5.28) people are said to be criticizing *omnem Veneris familiam* because Cupid was spreading licentiousness. Venus is hardly a realistic Roman *matrona*, and it would be unwise to draw any conclusion from this passage about the place of mother and son in the real Roman *familia*.

The second passage to include cognates in the *familia* is also far from straightforward. Fronto wrote to his son-in-law Aufidius Victorinus, legate of Germany early in Marcus Aurelius' reign, that with the favor of the gods *nostra familia* will be increased *liberis ac nepotibus* (*Ad amicos* 1.12). By including his daughter's husband and offspring in *nostra familia* Fronto violated the agnatic principle in Ulpian's definition. Here again, however, it would be wrong to attach too much significance to this passage, since *familia* is an appropriate word in the strict sense with regard to Victorinus' relationship to the *liberi*. Fronto seems to be pushing the word beyond its usual limits, encouraged by his great hope that Gratia, his only surviving child, would provide grandchildren for him. As it happened, Fronto's name was perpetuated through his daughter's child, as *CIL* 11.6334 dedicated to his great-grandson M. Aufidius Fronto reveals. I hope to argue elsewhere that Fronto's case is just one of those which point to a growing

⁷Tac. *Ann.* 6.51. Similar examples include *Ann.* 12.1 and 15.22; Seneca *Cons. ad Marciam* 16.3.

willingness in the senatorial aristocracy to see the lineages perpetuated through daughters and their children as well as sons. But, as will be shown below, the normal word to describe such a group was *domus*, not *familia*.

The third and final passage which includes cognates in the *familia* is from Suetonius. Of Tiberius he writes (*Tib.* 3): *insertus est et Liviorum familiae adoptato in eam materno avo*. The force of *insertus est* is not clear here.⁸ If Suetonius means that Tiberius was merely connected with the *familia Livia* but not a member of it, then the statement is not at odds with Ulpian's agnatic principle. If, on the other hand, Suetonius intends the reader to think that Tiberius was in the *familia Livia*, then we can only conclude that he was using the word very loosely or carelessly. Tacitus indicates correctly the position of Tiberius (*Ann.* 6.51): *pater ei Nero et utrimque origo gentis Claudiae, quamquam mater in Liviam et mox Iuliam familiam adoptionibus transierit*. In other words, his mother's and maternal grandfather's adoptions did not affect Tiberius' membership in the Claudian *gens*. (It is also true that *utrimque* shows that both father's and mother's lineages had a bearing on an aristocrat's quality by birth, as will be discussed below.)

A survey of other uses of *familia* proves that Tacitus, not Suetonius, was in tune with ordinary usage in this case. When the king Deiotarus of western Galatia was prosecuted by his daughter's son, Cicero spoke of the latter as a member of his father's *familia* as distinct from that of the maternal grandfather (*Pro Deiotaro* 30). Similarly, in Cicero's attacks on Piso earlier in his career he tried to avoid insulting Piso's *familia* (their cognomen Frugi being evidence of their inborn virtue) and suggested that the iniquitous streak in his character derived from his *maternum genus*. Consequently, his behavior was a stain on his *cognatio* rather than his *paternum genus*.⁹ Cicero appears to draw a similar distinction in the *Pro Cluentio* (16) when he argues that the appalling activities of Cluentius' mother were a *dedecus* on both his *familia* and his *cognatio*. Valerius Maximus' story about Astyages written about a century later, requires the reader to separate *familia* from cognate relatives: Astyages ordered his daughter's son Cyrus exposed *ne in eius familiam regni decus transferretur* (1.7ext.5). As with the Deiotarus example, the family here is not Roman, but Roman family concepts are used in telling the story, in which the grandson by a daughter is not counted as a part of the *familia*.¹⁰

Even Suetonius, in the one other relevant passage in his work, seems to

⁸In *Claudius* 39.2 the phrase *familiae insertus* clearly means acquiring membership in the *familia*.

⁹*Pro Sestio* 21, *In Pis.* 53.

¹⁰It should be stressed that these are the passages in which cognates are treated as being outside the *familia*. Many dozens of others could be added to illustrate the fact that agnates are part of the *familia*—in contrast to the meagre three in which cognates are included.

place only agnate relatives in the *familia*. Otho's *familia*, said to be *vetus et honorata atque ex principibus Etruriae*, is contrasted with the humble birth of his grandfather's mother (Otho 1.1). Altogether, then, there is no good evidence that Romans considered cognate relatives to be part of their *familia*. In usage Roman authors usually were in accord with Gaius' rule that "it is plain that *liberi feminarum* are not in the woman's *familia*, since those born to them succeed to the *familiam patris*."¹¹

In many passages with *familia* the context does not make it obvious whether the author intended his readers to understand *agnati* or the still larger lineage group including ancestors. Ulpian's last definition in the above cited passage is "all *personae* born of the blood of the same ultimate ancestor." This is the most commonly found sense of *familia* in Cicero and the prose authors of the Principate. Since there is no such thing as a known "ultimate ancestor," *familia* could be more or less inclusive, sometimes taken to be equivalent to *gens* and other times more narrowly. Occasionally the distinction between *familia* and *gens* is made explicitly, as in Festus' statement that *gens Aemilia appellatur quae ex multis familiis conficitur*.¹² Of course, *gens* membership was usually associated with a common *nomen* and *familia* with a *cognomen*. Just as often *familia* is used as a synonym for *gens*, as in references to the *familia Aemilia* or *familia Fabia*.¹³ In most cases, however, the context does not indicate to the reader how broad a descent group the author is referring to with the word *familia*. This is surely because the author is not trying to convey precise genealogical information so much as a general impression of quality of birth for which the *gens*—*familia* distinction may not be important. In his speeches Cicero several times uses a triplet including *gens*, *nomen*, and *familia*. When, for example, reference is made in Cicero's *Pro Scauro* (111) to the *dignitas* of Scaurus' *genus*, *familia*, and *nomen*, *familia* obviously has the meaning of a descent group, but exactly what group and how *familia* differs, if at all, from *genus* and *nomen* are questions that I cannot answer, nor is Cicero likely to have expected his audience to worry over the fine distinctions.¹⁴ As a group the three words brought to mind agnatic lineage and its prestige in a broad sense.

¹¹*Dig.* 50.16.196. In the Justinianic period *familia* was broadened to include cognates (e.g., *gener* and *nurus*), as *CJ* 6.38.5.pr.1 explicitly states, but there are no comparable statements in the classical jurists. (In *Dig.* 38.8.1.4 the *adoptatus* is said to have *iura cognationis in familia naturalis patris*, which is not to say that he is part of it.) The fact that all three exceptions to the agnate rule are second-century may suggest some change of meaning in that period.

¹²Pauli Festus p. 94. Similar examples appear in Val. Max. 1.1.17 and Suet. *Iul.* 6.1, *Nero* 1.1, *Galba* 3.1.

¹³*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.ext.4, 5.6.4, and Livy 6.40.3. Already noted by Mommsen, *Römische Staatsrecht* 3.16, n. 2.

¹⁴The triplet also appears in *Verr.* 2.2.51, *Pro Murena* 12, and *Pro Ligario* 20.

As in the early modern period, lineage was thought by Romans to have an existence and prestige all its own. Augustus gave M. Hortalus a large sum of money to marry and have children so that a *clarissima familia*, the Hortensii, would not come to an end.¹⁵ In other cases, wealthy aristocrats adopted adult sons in their wills on condition that as heirs they assume the testator's *nomen*.¹⁶ Both of these occurrences are based on the notion that continuity of the *familia* and its name is, in itself, of some importance (though perhaps not as much as in some early modern aristocracies). Consequently, Seneca (*Ben.* 3.33.4) could describe a son as a *beneficium* to his father on the ground that the son would provide *domus ac familiae perpetuitas*. The honor of the *familia* had an existence apart from its individual members. Valerius Maximus (9.7.2) reported that the censor of 131 B.C. Metellus would not accept a census registration from someone claiming to be the son of the deceased Tiberius Gracchus, saying that Gracchus' sons had died, *neque oportere clarissimae familiae ignotas sordes inseri*.¹⁷ Metellus felt in duty bound to protect the honor of Gracchus' *familia* even though Tiberius and his sons were dead. The feeling that a *familia* could be polluted appears again later in Tacitus' comment (*Ann.* 4.7) that the planned marriage of Claudius' son to Sejanus' daughter and the possibility that Sejanus would share grandsons *cum familia Drusorum* would represent a stain on the *nobilitas familiae*. Not every Roman shared the censor Metellus' concern about the honor of the *familia*: the *populus* stoned Metellus for his effort on behalf of the Gracchi. Only a narrow circle of aristocrats can have known enough about their male ancestors to attach great importance to their agnatic descent group.

II DEFINITIONS OF *DOMUS*

Domus was used with regard to household and kinship to mean the physical house, the household including family and slaves, the broad kinship group including agnates and cognates, ancestors and descendants, and the patrimony. Ernout attempted to show some time ago that *domus* was not commonly used so much for the physical house (*aedes*) as for the domain in which the *dominus* exercised his control (a distinction along the lines of our house/home distinction).¹⁸ In very many passages, especially where *domus* is

¹⁵Tac. *Ann.* 2.37. Cicero exploited this appeal when he asked the jury to preserve the *nomen clarissimum* of Flaccus (*Pro Flacco* 106).

¹⁶Pliny *Ep.* 8.18 gives the example of Domitius Afer, who adopted two sons, Lucanus and Tullus, of a man whom he had destroyed. The will had been made long before Afer's death and before his hostile action against the father of Lucanus and Tullus.

¹⁷According to Pliny (*HN* 35.7), the same sentiment prompted Valerius Messala to write his *De familia*.

¹⁸Ernout, "Domus, fores et leurs substituts," *RevPhil*³ 6 (1932) 304. I cannot understand how E. Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society* (tr. E. Palmer, London 1973) 243, can claim that "domus always signifies 'house' in the sense of 'family'."

used adverbially ("to return *domum*," or "to be *domi*"), it is hard to know whether authors intended one or the other of Ernout's meanings. There are, however, enough passages in which *domus* can mean only the physical building to show that such usage was quite normal. During and immediately after his exile Cicero repeatedly expressed concern about recovering his *domus*. When he spoke of the senate ordering it rebuilt, he was clearly referring to the physical structure and not to the household over which he exercised *dominium*.¹⁹ There are many other clear-cut examples, too numerous to allow us to attach much plausibility to Ernout's difference of nuance.²⁰

In its sense of household establishment *domus* comes close to one of the definitions of *familia*—i.e., a man's servile dependants—but normally there is some distinction. While *familia* is frequently used for the group of slaves under a *dominus*, to the exclusion of the free members of the household, *domus* is often rather broader, including the wife, children, and others in the house. Seneca castigates the man who complains of the loss of *libertas* in the *res publica*, but then destroys it in his own *domus* by forbidding his slave, freedman, wife, or client to talk back to him.²¹ The *domus* here is clearly larger than the *familia* in the limited sense of slaves and freedmen. It is presumably this broader group that is meant by the phrase *tota domus*, as when Cicero closes a letter to Atticus with the line *domus te nostra tota salutatur*.²² In some passages, on the other hand, the distinction between *domus* and *familia* seems to disappear. Seneca reports that when the aging *praefectus annonae* Turannius was asked by the emperor to retire, Turannius had his *familia* mourn him as if he were dead; and the *domus* did not stifle its grief until he was reinstated.²³ The two words are used synonymously here, apparently for the servile establishment. Similarly, both *familia* and *domus* appear in connection with the emperor's servile staff.²⁴

It is worth stressing, since the lexicons give the opposite impression, that *domus*, like the English word "family" in the sixteenth and seventeenth cen-

¹⁹E.g., *De harusp. resp.* 16.

²⁰Cicero *Cat.* 4.12, *Verr.* 2.5.80, *Pro Caelio* 60, *Pro Milone* 64, *Phil.* 2.91; Val. Max. 5.7.3; Columella *De r. r.* 4.3.1; Seneca *De cons.* 12.2, *Ep. Mor.* 41.7 (*familia formosa et domus pulchra*); Quint. *Decl.* 337, p. 325; Pliny *Ep.* 7.27; Tac. *Ann.* 13.18, 15.38, 41, 43, 50, 52, *Hist.* 3.33; Suet. *Aug.* 5, 72.1, *Cal.* 22.4, *Nero* 16.1, *Dom.* 1.1.

²¹*De ira* 3.35.1. Other examples where *domus* clearly includes the wife are Cicero *Cat.* 1.14, *Phil.* 5.11.

²²*Ad Att.* 4.12. Because *domus* usually is understood to include the whole group living in the household, Columella does not use it in his discussions of the organization of the slave staff; he invariably uses *familia*, a more precise word for slaves alone. For the feeling of family among slaves in the household, see M. Flory, "Family in Familia: Kinship and Community in Slavery," *AJAH* 3 (1978) 78–95.

²³*Brev. vit.* 20.3. Tacitus uses *domus* with reference to Agricola's servile staff while he governed Britain (*Agr.* 19).

²⁴Seneca *Cons. ad Polybium* 2.4; Tac. *Hist.* 2.92; Suet. *Claudius* 40.2. For *familia Caesaris* see P. R. C. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* (Cambridge 1972) 299–300.

turies, normally refers to all those living in the household and not just the nuclear family within it. This is the implication of Cicero's statement in the *De officiis* (1.58) on the hierarchy of family obligations. First comes the husband-wife bond, then the parent-child, and third the bonds of those within the *domus*. This ranking would make no sense if the Romans usually thought of *domus* as the mother-father-children triad. In Cicero's *commendationes* freedmen are assumed to be part of the recommended *domus*, and Seneca and Pliny write of the *domus* as a miniature *res publica* in which the slaves participate as citizens.²⁵ Of course, humbler households did not necessarily have slaves, and in these cases the *domus* might well coincide with the nuclear family. A couplet from Ovid's *Fasti* (4.543 f.) offers an example of this. When the goddess Ceres enters the poor cottage of Celeus and heals his little son, *tota domus laeta est, hoc est materque paterque / nataque: tres illi tota fuere domus*.²⁶ Ovid expects to raise a smile here with the hyperbolic use of *tota domus* for a small nuclear family. The lines would be tediously flat and repetitious if *domus* had regularly brought to his well-to-do readers' minds mother, father, and children. The conclusion to be drawn, then, is that neither *domus* nor *familia* had as a usual meaning in literary Latin "family" in the primary sense in which we use the word today. When writers wished to signify that core family unit, they employed the phrase *uxor liberique*, as when Cicero referred to Sex. Roscius having *domus, uxor liberique* at Ameria.²⁷

As with the English word "family" in the early modern period, *domus* could be used for a kinship group (not including servants), but again this was a broader group than the nuclear family. *Domus* could refer variously to a man's circle of living kin or to his descent group including ancestors and descendants. The extent of the kin encompassed by the *domus*, as by the *familia*, could be more or less great, from the whole *gens* to a much narrower circle of relatives. In these respects, *domus* is very much like *familia*, but there is one notable difference: *domus* is an appropriate term for cognate, as well as agnate, kin.

With regard to living relatives, *domus* could refer to a group as narrow as brothers. In his *Consolatio* addressed to Polybius (3.4), Seneca chastised

²⁵Cicero *Ad fam.* 13.23.1, 13.46; Seneca *Ep. Mor.* 47.4; Pliny *Ep.* 8.14.16.

²⁶In most passages the composition of the *domus* is not so clearly specified, and it is possible that the nuclear family is sometimes meant, but I have not found any other examples where this is certainly the case, and only a few where it might be the case (e.g., Lucr. 3.894 where it is unclear whether *domus laeta* is equivalent to the following *uxor* and *liberi* or to a wider group).

²⁷*Rosc. Amer.* 96. See also Cicero *Phil.* 12.5, *Quinct.* 54; Quint. *Decl.* 337, p. 325. In *Pro Deiotaro* 15 Cicero argues that Deiotarus would not have been foolish enough to plot against Caesar, since even if he had succeeded he would have been destroyed *cum regno, cum domo, cum coniuge, cum filio*. The position of *domus* in this series suggests that it was an entity of intermediate size between *regnum* and *coniunx et filius*.

Fortuna for breaking up *optimorum adolescentium domum*—that is, Polybius and his recently deceased brother. As a freedman, Polybius had a necessarily very limited circle of relatives, and usually *domus* encompassed a large group, not limited to the *familia*. In several recommendations Pliny stressed the quality and standing of the *domus* of his client. In the letter to Minicius Fundanus on behalf of Asinius Bassus Pliny described Bassus' father, brother-in-law, and nephew *ut scias quam copiosam, quam numerosam domum uno beneficio sis obligaturus* (*Ep.* 4.15.4). Sextus Erucius Clarus was said by Pliny to be a young man of virtue *cum tota domo*, from which Clarus' father and *avunculus* (maternal uncle) Septicius Clarus the future praetorian prefect were singled out for mention (*Ep.* 2.9.3) When Iunius Mauricus asked Pliny to suggest a husband for his orphaned niece, Pliny nominated Minicius Acilianus, in part for the virtues of *tota domus* including his father, his *avia materna*, and his *avunculus* (*Ep.* 1.14.6). It is striking that Pliny places as much stress in these letters on cognate kin as on agnates, or more, and for this group *domus* rather than *familia* was the appropriate label. Pliny regarded even distant kin as part of his *domus* and deserving of his patronal support, as illustrated by his letter of thanks to Trajan for transferring to his own staff Caelius Clemens, *adfinis* of his previous wife's mother. Pliny was pleased that Trajan extended his beneficence to Pliny to his whole *domus* (*Ep.* 10.51).

These passages from Pliny can be paralleled by uses of *domus* in other authors. Seneca (*Ben.* 5.16.4) wrote of Caesar as being part of the *domus* of Pompey, his son-in-law, and Tacitus regarded himself as a member of Agricola's *domus* by virtue of his marriage to Agricola's daughter (*Agr.* 46). Nephews were included in the *domus*. Whatever their faults, Otho and Vitellius had the common decency to avoid harming each other's *domus*, in which Otho's brother and nephew were counted (*Tac. Hist.* 1.75, 2.48). The kin included were sometimes very distant: as a show of *liberalitas* Tiberius gave to Aemilius Lepidus the unclaimed *hereditas* left by a wealthy Lepida *cuius e domo videtur* (*Tac. Ann.* 2.48). The fact that Lepidus could not claim the estate through the normal procedure indicates that his kinship must have been beyond the sixth degree. Tacitus' wording suggests that a common cognomen may have been Lepidus' only evidence of being from the same *domus* (i.e., *familia*).

The emperor's relatives of all types constituted the *domus Caesarum*. Pliny judged it praiseworthy that Nerva, in contrast to most of his predecessors, did not confine his search for a successor *intra domum* (*Paneg.* 7.5). That the imperial *domus* was a broader group than the *familia* is made clear by Tacitus' statement that Tiberius entered the *domus Augusti* first as a *privignus* (stepson) when his mother married Octavian.²⁸ Only later did he be-

²⁸*Ann.* 6.51. See also *Ann.* 6.8 and *Suet. Aug.* 25.1.

come a member of the *familia* by adoption. Altogether, if the frequency with which *domus* is used for relatives by marriage and by blood through females is compared with the rare, exceptional uses of *familia* for cognates, it seems certain that *domus* is the more general term.

Often the context does not indicate whether *domus* means the living kin group, as in the above passages, or the kin of earlier and later generations as well. Where *domus* has the sense of lineage, it is sometimes synonymous with *familia*. For example, Valerius Maximus (5.2.ext.4) reports that Masinissa, known for his loyalty to the *familia Cornelia*, advised his wife and children to continue their contact with the *domus Scipionis*. In Tacitus' account of the humiliating episode of M. Hortalus' request for money in the senate, *domus Hortensia* and *familia Hortensia* both appear without distinction (*Ann.* 2.37 ff.). And in the scene from the *Histories* (3.66) in which Vitellius' supporters urge him to be worthy of his father's consulships and censorship, *honores egregiae domus*, Tacitus could have substituted *familia* without altering the meaning.²⁹ Occasionally the two words are found in sequence, as when Seneca writes of a son being *domus ac familiae perpetuitas*.³⁰ Is this simply a case of hendiadys or is there a difference of nuance? The context here offers no answer.

Domus certainly can be used for a broader descent group than that for which *familia* would be appropriate. In Virgil's version of the founding legend of Rome the native king Latinus lacked a son, and consequently *sola domum et tantas servabat filia sedes*.³¹ A *domus* could be extended through a daughter's children, but a *familia* could not without adoption. Seneca also considered the mother's ancestors to be part of the *domus*. Comparing the deaths of Marcia's father and grandfather with that of her son, Seneca summoned up the spirit of her father to console her with the thought that her son's was the least painful death *in nostra domo*.³²

Given Augustus' practice of securing marriage ties with leading aristocratic families, the *domus Caesarum* became extensive. At the core of the imperial dynasty were the two *familiae*, referred to as the *domus Iuliorum Claudiorumque* or the *Claudia et Iulia domus*, but the circle of cognatic kin extended much further.³³ Among the ancestors in *nostra domus* Claudius would have included, in Seneca's view (*Cons. ad Polyb.* 15.3), M. Antony his maternal grandfather. The *domus Caesarum* was in fact such a large group that there were bound to be factional houses or *domus* within it. So,

²⁹So also in *Ann.* 2.48, 3.24.

³⁰*De ben.* 3.33.4. See also *Ad Heren.* 4.51; *Livy* 22.53.11; *Curtius* 10.7.15; *Petronius Sat.* 64.7.

³¹*Aen.* 7.52. Anchises refers to his *domus* in *Aen.* 2.702: here *familia* would also be appropriate since he is referring to agnatic lineage.

³²*Cons. ad Marciam* 26.3. Pliny writes of Helvidius' last living child, a daughter, as being the hope for continuation of his *domus* (*Ep.* 4.21.3).

³³*Tac. Hist.* 1.16, *Ann.* 6.8.

for example, Germanicus, who was part of the imperial family, was also represented as having his own *domus* made up of Agrippina, his children, and their descendants, toward whom Tiberius was thought to be implacably hostile. Awareness of the *domus Germanici* continued to shape popular opinion and to provoke family infighting after his death. Titius Sabinus suffered for his loyalty to the *domus Germanici* from other factions in the *domus Caesarum*, and in the popular view the birth of Drusus' twins was a further misfortune for the *domus Germanici* (though in the broader sense they were all part of the same House).³⁴ Because Tiberius felt compelled in the end to select his successor from the *domus Caesarum*, he had to turn, after the misfortunes of his once *florens domus*, to Germanicus' house and to select Gaius.³⁵

The use of *domus* for the imperial dynasty continued with the *domus Flavia* which included Vespasian's brother and sons (Tac. *Hist.* 2.101, 3.75). According to Tacitus, one of the reasons Mucianus conceded primacy to Vespasian was that he had two sons in his *domus*—some assurance that the dynasty would survive more than one reign (*Hist.* 2.77).

The survival of a *domus* depended not only on having children, but also on having the financial resources to preserve their social standing. For this reason *domus* in the sense of lineage is closely related to *domus* meaning patrimony. *Domus* as patrimony does not occur frequently in classical texts, but it is not an archaic or legal usage, as *familia* is with regard to *res*. One of the son's responsibilities as heir of a patrimony, according to Seneca, is to hand on the *domus in integro statu* when he dies.³⁶ In his *Apologia* (76) Apuleius accuses his arch-enemy Rufinus of being a wastrel with a *domus exhausta et plena liberis*. Clearly, the only sense in which a house with children could have been *exhausta* was with regard to its financial resources, and that is the sense in which L. Volusius strengthened his *domus* with great riches (Tac. *Ann.* 3.30).

In sum, all of the above meanings of *domus* are related and shade into one another. When a Roman spoke of the pleasures of his *domus*, it is often impossible to discover whether he meant his physical house or the family and servants in it over whom he exercised *potesitas* or *dominium*. Or again, when pride is expressed in a *domus*, it could be pride in a physical *domus* or the household establishment or the wider circle of kin who derived from a single household.³⁷ Further, the distinction between *domus* as the living ex-

³⁴Tac. *Ann.* 4.68, 4.40, 2.84. Germanicus' son Drusus includes his whole family in Tiberius' *domus* in *Ann.* 6.24.

³⁵Tac. *Ann.* 4.1., 6.46; Suet. *Cal.* 13.

³⁶*Cons. ad Marciam* 26.2; a similar comment using *domus* appears in Tac. *Ann.* 15.1.

³⁷Tiberius rejected a proposal for selection of magistrates five years in advance, arguing that it would be impossible to foresee a candidate's *mens*, *domus*, and *fortuna* so far in the future (Tac. *Ann.* 2.36). *Domus* is used as a measure of status, but which sense of *domus*, if one in particular was intended, is difficult to discern.

tended family and *domus* as the descent group is often not worth making. When the deaths of Gaius and Lucius left Augustus with a *domus deserta* (not literally true on any definition of *domus*), the reader is meant to understand that they were lost from the *domus* as the living circle of kin, but also, and more important, that they were lost as potential successors in Augustus' *domus* in the sense of dynasty.³⁸

The range of meaning made *domus* a more widely applicable measure of social respectability than *familia* in the Principate. Cicero always used *familia* when speaking of a man's prestige through his family background (though he was not oblivious to the mother's pedigree), and he rarely employed *domus* to mean the extended family.³⁹ The very nature of Republican politics ensured a concentration on *familia*: in the popular assemblies the renown of a man's *nomen*, transmitted through the *familia*, was an important asset in securing a successful political career.⁴⁰ The change in thinking about family background in the Principate is evident in Pliny's letters: in contrast to Cicero, Pliny never refers to the *familia* of his friends or clients in recommendations, but always to the *domus* including cognate kin. Pliny's contemporary, Tacitus, associated *familia* in the sense of lineage mainly with Republican noble families and the imperial house.⁴¹ Such noble families were increasingly rare as the turnover in senatorial families continued at a very rapid pace.⁴² Consequently most senators of the empire

³⁸Seneca *Cons. ad Marciam* 15.2. Similarly, in Tac. *Ann.* 4.3 *plena Caesarum domus* refers not so much to the size of the kin group as to the number of potential male successors, as the enumeration of the members of the *domus* makes clear (*iuvēnis filiū* and *nepotes adulti* of Tiberius).

³⁹I find only a few certain examples in Cicero's letters and speeches. In *Ad fam.* 10.3.2 Cicero refers to his bond of *necessitudo* with the *domus* of Plancus which began before Plancus' birth. The other three examples appear in letters to C. Marcellus (*cos.* 50 B. C.) in comments on the services rendered to Cicero by *domus tua tota* (*Ad fam.* 15.8, 15.10.2, 15.11.1). In these instances, Cicero wishes to include P. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus who had left the *familia Marcellorum* through adoption—consequently *familia* would not have been an accurate description of the extended family (see Shackleton Bailey's commentary on 15.10.1). In general, Cicero does not use *domus* where *familia* would be appropriate, as imperial authors do.

⁴⁰T. P. Wiseman, *New Men in the Roman Senate, 139 B. C.—14 A. D.* (Oxford 1971) 102 ff. I do not mean to suggest that office-holding was hereditary in the Republic, only that a distinguished *nomen* was perceived to be an asset in competition in the popular assemblies and the law courts; see K. Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* (Cambridge 1983) 36 ff.

⁴¹By my count, of the 41 passages in which Tacitus uses *familia* to refer to lineage, 11 involve the imperial family and 22 involve families which established their nobility in the Republic. Among the remaining eight *familiae* one is said to be consular, three praetorian, one senatorial, and three equestrian. Already in the Republic the rights of cognates had begun to appear in praetorian law. On the diminishing power of the agnatic principle, see Y. Thomas, "Mariages endogamiques à Rome. Patrimoine, pouvoir et parenté depuis l'époque archaïque," *RD* 58 (1980) 362 ff.

⁴²Hopkins, (above, n. 40) ch. 3.

could not boast a long, illustrious agnatic lineage, nor was there the same need for a great *nomen* since its recognition in the assemblies was no longer of consequence. The value of the old, great *nomina* was in any case diluted when new citizens acquired the same names. An ancient Republican lineage, of course, continued to carry prestige in a society still concerned about birth: the funeral of Iunia in A.D. 22 must have been an impressive sight with *imagines viginti clarissimarum familiarum* (Tac. *Ann.* 3.76). But for the vast majority of recently promoted senatorial families, it was enough to boast a respectable circle of kin whether related by male blood, female blood, or marriage. This change in thinking away from an emphasis on agnatic line is nicely reflected in the development in nomenclature, from the agnatically transmitted *nomen* and *cognomen* of the Republic to the excessively long names of the second century A.D. taken from maternal as well as paternal ancestors.⁴³

III *DOMUS* AS A SYMBOL OF FAMILY AND STATUS

The significance of *domus* for social status was not limited to its familial meanings. In the Roman view, *domus* as house and household had a direct bearing on a man's standing and prestige. It has perhaps not been sufficiently emphasized that in Roman society, in which wealth and social respectability were closely related, the *domus* was a central symbol of status and honor. Of course, even today the size and elegance of a house are thought to be a status symbol, but the nature of Roman public life dictated that the *domus* be of markedly greater importance. This is reflected in some malicious remarks about Roman leaders. Among other things for which Antony is ridiculed in the *Second Philippic*, Cicero includes the fact that Antony had no *domus* of his own even before Caesar's confiscations when nearly everyone had his own house.⁴⁴ It was thought to cast a grave light on Vitellius' character that he had to lease out his *domus* when he went to Germany as a legate.⁴⁵

⁴³The practice of adopting names from the mother's family appears clearly in the stemma of the Dolabellae in *PIR*² C 1348 (chosen *exempli gratia*): Cn. Dolabella and Petronia produced a son named Ser. Dolabella Petronianus; L. Nonius Asprenas and Quinctilia had a son named Sex. Nonius Quinctilianus; another L. Nonius Asprenas and Calpurnia named their son (Nonius) Asprenas Calpurnius Serranus; related to the family was the emperor Galba, who added to his name the name of his *noverca* Livia Ocellina, becoming L. Livius Ocella Ser. Sulpicius Galba. Unfortunately, there seem to have been no rules with regard to adding cognate relatives' names, and nothing more concrete can be deduced from a name like Ti. Iulius Candidus Marius Celsus (*cos. ord.* II A. D. 105) than that "parentela coniunctus videtur et cum Mariis Celsis" (*PIR*² I 241).

⁴⁴*Phil.* 2.48. See Cicero *In Pis.* 61 for a similar, but less direct, insult against L. Calpurnius Piso.

⁴⁵*Suet. Vit.* 7. In contrast, Petronius has the freedman C. Pompeius Diogenes put up a sign stating that he is moving to his own *domus* as an advertisement of his rise in the world (*Sat.* 38).

Religious, political, and social factors contributed to the value of the *domus* as a symbol for the Romans. Of course, the Roman house had a sacred aura, embodied in the *dii penates*, that houses in more recent societies have not had.⁴⁶ Cicero refused to believe that the goddess *Libertas* would want a temple built by Clodius on the site of his house while he was in exile. Would *Libertas* want to eject Cicero's own *dii penates*? *Quid est sanctius, quid omni religione munitius quam domus unius cuiusque civium* (*De domo sua* 108)? Cicero was not above rhetorical exaggeration to support his argument, but the interchangeable use of *domus* and *dii penates* in other authors must reflect a general belief in the sanctity of the house.⁴⁷ So too does the association of *domus* with the temples and altars in other passages. The worst of the excesses of Vitellius' army in A.D. 69 included polluting houses and altars with blood (*domus arasque cruore foedare*).⁴⁸ This was particularly repugnant to Romans who felt that a man's *domus* was his last refuge, a *perfugium sanctum*.⁴⁹ The sacred nature of the *domus* made it an especially emotive symbol for generals to employ in appeals to their soldiers: whereas more recently armies have been called on to fight for "God and country," Romans were asked to fight for *patria domusque*.⁵⁰ No doubt the Roman generals were not referring to the physical houses alone, but rather to the whole complex of meanings of *domus*. On the other hand, the fact that *domus* and *dii penates* were synonymous must have added power to the symbol beyond the soldiers' feelings for their wives and children.

As a symbol the physical *domus* could give expression to the family's sentiments. After the Pisonian conspiracy was discovered, at the very time when leading Romans were burying their relatives and friends, they were also decorating their *domus* with laurel as an expression of gratitude and joy for Nero's safety.⁵¹ Commentators have noted Tacitus' sarcasm about the hypocrisy,⁵² but the irony may be more subtle than they suggest: the survivors were decorating their physical *domus* at the same time that their kinship *domus* were being destroyed in the bloodbath.

⁴⁶Prud. *Contra Symm.* 2.445 ridicules the pagans for investing each *domus* with its own *genius*. For the epigraphic evidence, see the dedications to *Genius domi* given in E. de Ruggerio, *DizEpigr.* 2.2.248, together with the useful discussion of how the "*famiglia*" and "*casa*" senses of *domus* are united in inscriptions.

⁴⁷Val. Max. 5.6, 9.1.6, 9.15.5, Seneca *De clem.* 1.15.3, Tac. *Hist.* 3.70, *Ann.* 13.4.

⁴⁸Tac. *Hist.* 3.84. The association of *arae* and *foci* in passages such as Cicero *Phil.* 2.75 and Sallust *BCat.* 52.3 also reflects the Roman feeling of the sanctity of the house.

⁴⁹Cicero *Cat.* 4.2, *Vatin.* 22 *De domo sua* 109. The refuge was even protected in law: a man could not be dragged out of his *domus* into court (Gaius *Dig.* 2.4.18, 50.17.103).

⁵⁰Tac. *Hist.* 1.29. In defeating the Carthaginians, Scipio was said to be taking revenge for *patria* and *domus* (Sil. Ital. 16.593). Vergil has Aeneas exclaim upon landing in Italy *hic domus, haec patria est* (*Aen.* 7.122).

⁵¹Tac. *Ann.* 15.71. Earlier, one of the charges against Piso, the adversary of Germanicus, was that his *domus* was festively decorated after Germanicus' death (*Ann.* 3.9).

⁵²E.g., Koestermann 4.321.

For all Romans the *domus* was closely associated with wives, children, and other relatives; for aristocrats it was also associated in a concrete way with lineage, for which it could stand as a symbol. Pliny the Elder describes the various aspects of the house related to lineage: *imagines* were displayed in the atrium with strings running between them to indicate genealogy; records of family achievements were kept in archive rooms; and the trophies of battle victories were fastened to the outside of the *domus* and around the *limina*. Altogether, the physical *domus* was an impressive symbol of the glory and continuity of the great Republican lineages. Pliny notes that they continued to be so even after the great *familiae* died out because the spoils of victory were not to be taken down by the new occupants: *triumphabant etiam dominis mutatis aeternae domus*.⁵³ For the great families some of the symbolic significance of the house was lost if the *imagines* were taken down. That this was thought to be a considerable diminution of honor is suggested by the fact that one of the penalties established by the severe *lex Calpurnia de ambitu* of 67 B.C. was the loss of the right to display family *imagines*. In his defense of P. Sulla, Cicero tried to draw the sympathy of the jury by stressing Sulla's already wretched state after having lost his *imagines* through a previous conviction.⁵⁴ Given this emphasis on the *domus* as a symbol of high birth and family renown, it is not surprising that the old families resented upstarts moving into great houses. Cicero expresses exasperation at the snobbery of those who said that he was not worthy of occupying a villa that once belonged to Catulus or of building a house on the Palatine.⁵⁵

With the influx of new families into the senatorial aristocracy in the Principate, few houses could display an impressive string of their own *imagines*. At this point the symbolic importance of the *domus* shifted somewhat, and it became more a visual sign of the current wealth and power of the owner.⁵⁶ Because of the connection between a fine *domus* and social standing Seneca repeatedly included the *domus* with *pecunia* in his list of transient material things which did not bring goodness or happiness. When

⁵³HN 35.7. Suetonius notes that many of these *domus priscorum ducum* were destroyed in the great fire of Nero's reign (Nero 38.2). The association of the house with the glory of the triumph is found in Propertius 1.16.1 ff.

⁵⁴*Pro Sulla* 88. On the *lex Calpurnia de ambitu* and the *ius imaginum* see Mommsen, *Römische Staatsrecht* 1.442 f. and 492, n. 3.

⁵⁵*Ad Att.* 4.5.2 with Shackleton Bailey's commentary 2.186. See W. Allen, Jr., "Cicero's House and Libertas," *TAPA* 75 (1944) 3. Earlier Clodius had taunted Cicero with the comment *domum emisti* (*Ad Att.* 1.16.10).

⁵⁶I want to stress that this was only a shift of relative emphasis which must have occurred with the great flow of new aristocratic families from Italy and the provinces into Rome (see K. Hopkins [above, n. 40] ch. 3). That continuity of the family in the physical house was still valued is evidenced by *fideicommissa* prohibiting the heir from alienating the house (Papinian *Dig.* 3.69.3). For a similar condition in a will, Scaevola *Dig.* 32.38.4.

he preaches "put me in *opulentissima domo* . . . and I will not admire myself" or "a *domus formosa* makes you arrogant," he presumably chooses the *domus* because his readers did think that a house was a manifestation of worth.⁵⁷ He had good reason for believing this, to judge from Apuleius' list of attributes proving the respectability of Crates the philosopher: wealth, a large retinue of slaves, and a *domus amplo ornata vestibulo* (*Flor.* 22).

It was vital for a Roman aristocrat to have a fine house because, unlike his classical Athenian counterpart, he had to carry out most of his dealings with his public there. In particular, the morning *salutatio* was an open demonstration of a man's position in the social hierarchy.⁵⁸ If friends or clients needed a man's help, they approached him at his *domus*. Consequently, the *domus frequentata* (crowded house) repeatedly appears in our texts as an indication of power in an active public life. Among the signs of prominence picked out by Seneca is the *domus frequentata*, and Aper, Tacitus' ambitious orator in the *Dialogus*, claims as one of the rewards of forensic oratory a *domus* filled with high-ranking persons.⁵⁹ Examples show that this was taken for granted in the Republic and Principate. Cicero took the quantity and quality of his callers as a barometer of his current prestige: as evidence of his popularity he wrote to Atticus in 59 that *domus celebratur*.⁶⁰ A sign of the corruption of public affairs in Sicily during Verres' governorship was that the *domus* of the jurisconsults were empty, while that of Verres' mistress was full of crowds hoping to secure favorable legal decisions. Honorable men had to debase themselves by going to *meretricis domus* (*Verr.* 2.1.120, 137). Patronage remained central in social and political life under the emperors, and so too did the symbol of the *domus frequentata*. Sejanus' power grew in the 20s to the point that he became concerned about arousing Tiberius' suspicions. Since the praetorian prefect was unwilling to diminish his *potentia* by prohibiting *adsiduos in domum coetus*, according to Tacitus, he decided to encourage Tiberius to retire from Rome so that he could not see the manifestations of Sejanus' power.⁶¹ The nexus of the

⁵⁷*Ep. mor.* 41.7, 87.6, 110.17, *Vita beata* 25.1, 26.2.

⁵⁸Seneca *Ep. mor.* 68.10, 76.12 and 15, 84.11 f., *Cons. ad Marciam* 10.1. Vitruvius 6.5.1–2 distinguishes between the men of high rank who fill public office and the ordinary man who has no need of *magnifica vestibula nec tabulina neque atria, quod in aliis officia praestant ambiundo neque ab aliis ambiuntur*. L. Friedlaender, *Roman Life and Manners under the Early Empire* (tr. L. A. Magnus, London 1908) 1.207–209, describes the *salutatio*.

⁵⁹Seneca *Ep. mor.* 21.6, Tacitus *Dial.* 6 (compare Maternus' wish in *Dial.* 11 to avoid *frequentia salutantium* as part of his retirement from public life).

⁶⁰*Ad Att.* 2.22.3, cf. 1.18.1, *Ad fam.* 9.20.3, 11.28.1, *Comm. pet.* 35, 47.

⁶¹*Ann.* 4.41. When Vespasian's accession to the throne seemed imminent, senators, *equites*, and soldiers filled the *domus Flavii Sabini* (*Hist.* 3.69). Nero moved Agrippina out of his *domus ne coetu salutantium frequentaretur* (*Ann.* 13.18). One sign of Seneca's retirement was that he stopped the *coetus salutantium* at home (*Ann.* 14.56). See also Seneca *Ep. mor.* 84.12 and Suet. *Claudius* 25.1.

domus frequentata, *potentia*, and public prestige could not be brought out more clearly.

Cicero's comment in the above Verrines passage points up the fact that who went to whose *domus* was a matter of honor, an indicator of relative social status. Augustus was praised by Seneca for his common touch when he participated in another man's family *consilium* "at the *penates*" of the other rather than insisting on it being held at his own *domus*.⁶² One sign of the inversion of the social order during the heyday of the imperial freedmen was that Callistus' former master stood in line before Callistus' doors to pay his respects. Even more repugnant to Seneca's readers was the subsequent turning away of the former master by Callistus on the ground that he was unworthy *domo sua* (*Ep. mor.* 47.9). This points to another indication of the significance of the *domus* as a symbol in public life: in breaking off a friendship a Roman prohibited the former friend from his house (*interdicere domo sua*).⁶³

Domus in the sense of household, as well as physical house, was a focus of honor for Romans: the honor of the *paterfamilias* depended on his ability to protect his household, and in turn the virtue of the household contributed to his prestige.⁶⁴ Upon discovering the conspiracy of Cinna, Seneca claims that Augustus took him aside for a long talk. As one means of embarrassing him, Augustus is said to have pointed out to Cinna that he was hardly capable of seizing and holding imperial power: *domum tueri tuam non potes, nuper libertini hominis gratia in privato iudicio superatus es*.⁶⁵ Seneca's Augustus chose not Cinna's inability to protect himself but his inability to protect his *domus* as a way of belittling him. The virtue of one's *domus*, on the other hand, was praiseworthy: Livia preserved the *sanctitas* of her household and Rubellius Plautus had a *domus casta*, while Verres' and M. Antony's households were marked by *dedecus*.⁶⁶ Violations of this virtue were treated particularly harshly and thought to be a matter of pollution.

⁶²*De clem.* 1.15.3. Cicero remarked on Appius Claudius Pulcher's courtesy in coming to Cicero's *domus*, an action that was not taken for granted among social equals outside the circle of immediate friends (*Ad fam.* 3.13.1).

⁶³Seneca *De ira* 3.23.5 and 8, Tac. *Ann.* 3.12, 6.29, Suet. *Aug.* 66.2.

⁶⁴J. Pitt-Rivers, *The Fate of Shechem, or the Politics of Sex* (Cambridge 1977), esp. ch. 2, comments on the dual nature of the honor of the Mediterranean family: the male virtue of being able to dominate in competition with the outside society and the female virtue of purity (sexual purity in particular) at home. As is evident from the examples adduced here, these two aspects were not strictly divided along male-female lines in Rome (though Rubellius Plautus' *domus casta* is associated with a withdrawal from public competition).

⁶⁵Seneca *De clem.* 1.9.10. I have no confidence that this anecdote accurately represents events, but it does embody Seneca's values—which is enough for my purposes.

⁶⁶Tac. *Ann.* 5.1, 14.22, Cicero *Verr.* 2.4.83, *Phil.* 3.35. Crassus' *domus* was also described as *castissima* by Cicero (*Pro Caelio* 9). Pliny in a discussion in which associations of the *domus* with continuity and virtue come together, lamented Fannia's death on the ground that it would shake her *domus* because she was the last of her line in virtue (*Ep.* 7.19.8).

The law permitted a father to kill his daughter and her *adulter* only if he caught them in his own *domus* or that of the daughter's husband, and the husband could kill an *adulter* of low status if discovered in the husband's house.⁶⁷ In Valerius Maximus' version of the legend of the rape of Verginia, Verginius her father went to the extreme of spilling his own daughter's blood so that his *domus* would not be contaminated by *probrum* (Val. Max. 5.10.2). In historical times Iullus Antonius "violated the house of Augustus" (*domum Augusti violasset*) through his affair with Julia; Seneca was taunted by Suillius with being an adulterer of the *domus Germanici*; and Fabius Valens, Vitellius' general, abused his power by polluting the houses of his hosts (*stupris polluere hospitum domus*).⁶⁸ The language of pollution and violation in these passages once again underlines the sacred nature of the *domus* and the honorable duty to protect it. Even much less serious offenses than adultery and rape could diminish the honor of the household. In the choice of a new Vestal Virgin in A.D. 19 Fonteius Agrippa's daughter was passed over through no fault of her own: *nam Agrippa discidio domum imminuerat* (Tac. Ann. 2.86). Of course, divorce was common at this time, and it was frowned on only in special situations where religious purity was required.⁶⁹ But the point remains that Tacitus focussed on the *domus* in choosing his language regarding family purity and honor.

One last stark indication of how closely a man was associated with his *domus* may be considered. It was not enough in the Republic to punish an aristocrat suspected of aiming at tyranny with execution: his *domus* was razed to the ground as well. Cicero (*De domo sua* 101) and Valerius Maximus (6.3.1) review the famous examples of this: Sp. Maelius, Sp. Cassius, M. Vaccus, M. Manlius, M. Flaccus, and L. Saturninus. Clodius tried to exact the same penalty from Cicero, but his actions were reversed by the senate.⁷⁰ The demolition of the *domus* constituted a symbolic destruction of the offender and his family root and branch. Not only was he eliminated but also all reminders of his House, in the senses of household and lineage. In Valerius Maximus' words, *senatus populusque Romanus, non contentus capitali eum (Sp. Cassium) supplicio adfcere, interempto domum superiecit, ut penatium quoque strage puniretur*. These examples are traditional Republican ones, and it is likely that in the Empire there was some loosening of the link between lineage and *domus*, with its sacred embodiment the *penates*. But the link did not disappear, to judge from a comment in Seneca's *De ira* (3.2.4). One of the terrible consequences of the mob's anger is *totae cum stirpe omni crematae domus*. Here there is an explicit connection between the physical destruction of a *domus* and the destruction of a man and his family root and

⁶⁷*Pauli Sententiae* 2.26.1 and 7, *Dig.* 48.5.23.2, 24.2, 25.pr., *Coll.* 4.2.3-7, 3.2.

⁶⁸Tac. Ann. 3.18, 13.42, *Hist.* 3.41.

⁶⁹M. Humbert, *Le remariage à Rome: Étude d'histoire juridique et sociale* (Milan 1972) 31 f., 77 ff.

⁷⁰Allen (above, n. 55) 8 f.

branch. Philosophers, such as Seneca, might teach that the *domus* was just another of man's transient worldly possessions. Cicero acknowledges these lessons in the conclusion of his oration *De domo sua* (146), but went on to say that the seizure and destruction of his house was not just a material loss, but a *dedecus* and a source of *dolor*.

Given the various aspects of honor and status involved in the *domus*, it is not surprising that it became increasingly emphasized as *familia* became less suitable. A few senators might still look back to their agnatic ancestors in their claim to *dignitas*, but most of the new senatorial families had to find other standards of social status. Wealth was indispensable, and was publicized by a fine house capable of accommodating the morning crowds seeking the *quaestuosae domus gratia* (Sen. *De const.* 8.2). A respectable and well-connected circle of kin was another measure of a man's position. As Livia clearly demonstrated, these kin did not have to be agnatic relations to be valuable patronal links;⁷¹ consequently, it became more important to include relatives traced through females and through marriages in a description of family background. The new political reality was a web of friendship and patron-client ties emanating from the emperor. To this new reality the agnatic principle, enshrined in Roman family law, was irrelevant, as it had been to the real household units in Rome for some time. As alternative criteria of social status became more solidly entrenched, *familia* as lineage could begin to appear somewhat empty. Pliny was pleased at the show of talent by the young Calpurnius Piso—after all, it would be sad if *nobiles nostri nihil in domibus suis pulchrum nisi imagines habeant*.⁷²

We may end with a paradox: neither *familia* nor *domus* has as a regular meaning the nuclear family, and yet much evidence suggests that this was the dominant family type. Funerary inscriptions and literary evidence, such as Cicero's statement about the hierarchy of kinship bonds, seem to show that though the Romans had no word for it, they drew a conceptual circle around the mother-father-children triad and made it the center of primary obligations.⁷³ This is not the only example of language not corresponding with social institutions and behavior.⁷⁴

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⁷¹R. P. Saller, *Personal Patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge 1982) 65.

⁷²*Ep.* 5.17.6. New men of the Republic might have made the same point, but not in the same patronizing tone, since *nobilitas* still dominated.

⁷³P. R. C. Weaver correctly noted the centrality of the nuclear family and called for a semantic study of the word *familia* [above, n. 24] 95, 299). B. D. Shaw and I have studied the family unit on the basis of tombstone evidence from all areas of the western empire in "Tombstones and Roman Family Relations," *JRS* 74 (1984) 124–156.

⁷⁴I wish to thank Professor John Crook, Sir Moses Finley, Professor Martin Ostwald, Dr. David Cohen, Dr. Peter Garnsey, Dr. R. Gordon, Mr. G. Herman, Dr. Brent Shaw, Dr. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, and the journal's referees for reading and commenting on this paper.