

## DIO AND MAECENAS: THE EMPEROR AND THE RULER CULT

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IN THE COURSE OF THE CELEBRATED SPEECH that Dio puts in the mouth of Maecenas the sage instructs Augustus on the delicate matter of ruler worship (52.35). As K. Scott noted long ago,<sup>1</sup> the thesis of Maecenas' argument draws heavily on the precepts commonly enjoined by writers in the education of princes.<sup>2</sup> Central to this tradition is the idea that deification has its true basis in virtue: a ruler really becomes a god in the minds and hearts of his subjects. Dio borrows heavily from the genre in concocting the fictitious advice of Maecenas and the extent of his indebtedness has an obvious bearing on the general topic of his historiographical method. But beyond that it relates closely to the wider question of whether the historian intended a political message to be inferred from Maecenas' words, a prescription offered by Dio himself for correcting the defects of his own times. If so, was he in fact advocating that there should be no formal worship of the emperor at all?<sup>3</sup>

As a first step, it will be appropriate simply to catalogue the various elements of this segment of Maecenas' speech (the translation used is that of E. Cary) and refer to texts in other writers where very much the same ideas occur, often overlapping from source to source or from passage to passage within the same source. These are by no means the only parallels that could be adduced—further examples both in the authors cited and in

<sup>1</sup>K. Scott, "Tacitus and the *Speculum principis*," *AJP* 53 (1932) 70–72; cf. *id.*, "The Significance of Statues in Precious Metals in Emperor Worship," *TAPA* 62 (1931) 101–123, at 110; "The Elder and Younger Pliny on Emperor Worship," *TAPA* 63 (1932) 156–165, at 158, 162. See further G. W. Bowersock, "Greek Intellectuals and the Imperial Cult in the Second Century A.D.," in W. den Boer (ed.), *Le Culte des souverains dans l'empire romain* (Vandoeuvres-Geneva 1973, Entretiens Fondation Hardt 19) 179–206, at 194 f., 203; U. Espinosa Ruiz, *Debate Agrippa-Mecenas en Dion Cassio* (Madrid 1982) 396–402; M. Reinhold, *From Republic to Principate: An Historical Commentary on Cassius Dio's Roman History, Books 49–52 (36–29 B.C.)* (Atlanta 1988, APA Monograph Series 34) 207 f., noting that Dio's image of the ideal king is in the Stoic tradition. For the philosophical background see Reinhold 183 f.

These works will be cited subsequently by author's name alone, as will the following: D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West* (Leiden 1987–); B. Manuwald, *Cassius Dio und Augustus* (Wiesbaden 1979, Palingenesia 14); F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford 1964); E. M. Smallwood, *Documents Illustrating the Principates of Gaius, Claudius and Nero* (Cambridge 1967).

<sup>2</sup>See in particular Plutarch's *Precepts of Statecraft* (*Mor.* 798–825) and *To an Uneducated Ruler* (*Mor.* 779d–782).

<sup>3</sup>So Bowersock 204 ff. Cf. Reinhold 207; *id.*, "In Praise of Cassius Dio," *AntClass* 55 (1986) 213–222, at 221.

other writers could undoubtedly be tracked down—but they are sufficient to provide a substantial basis for the main points to be argued in the present paper. What we are concerned with initially are commonplaces of doctrine and similarities of theme drawn from the traditional *speculum principis*. Verbal echoes and resonances will be documented in their turn by means of full citations.

As regards your subjects, then, you should so conduct yourself, in my opinion:

So far as you yourself are concerned, permit no exceptional or prodigal distinction to be given you, through word or deed, either by the senate or by anyone else.<sup>4</sup>

For whereas the honour which you confer upon others lends glory to them, yet nothing can be given to you that is greater than what you already possess, and, besides, no little suspicion of insincerity would attach to its giving.<sup>5</sup> No subject, you see, is ever supposed to vote any such distinction to his ruler of his own free will, and since all such honours as a ruler receives he must receive from himself, he not only wins no commendation for the honours but becomes a laughing stock besides.<sup>6</sup>

You must therefore depend upon your good deeds to provide for you any additional splendour.<sup>7</sup> And you should never permit gold or silver images of yourself to be made, for they are not only costly but also invite destruction and last only a brief time.<sup>8</sup> But rather by your benefactions fashion other images in the hearts of your people, images that will never tarnish or perish.<sup>9</sup>

Neither should you ever permit the raising of a temple to you.<sup>10</sup> For the expenditure of vast sums on such objects is sheer waste. This money would be better used for necessary objects; for wealth which is really wealth is gathered not so much by getting largely as by saving largely.<sup>11</sup> Then again from temples comes no enhancement of one's glory.<sup>12</sup> For it is virtue that raises many men to the level of the gods and no man ever became a god by popular vote.<sup>13</sup> Hence if you are upright as a man and honourable as a ruler, the whole earth will be your hallowed precinct, all cities your temples, and all men your statues, since within their thoughts you will ever be enshrined and glorified.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 543d, 820c; Pliny *Pan.* 55.1,5.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Plut. *Demetrius* 30.6–8.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Plut. *Demetrius* 10.2, 30.6–8; *Mor.* 820f.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 780e.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 360c; 820f; Pliny *Pan.* 52.3–5; 55.11. See further Cass. Dio 74.14.2a.

<sup>9</sup>See below on verbal echoes.

<sup>10</sup>See further below on imperial "refusals."

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 820f.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 360c.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Plut. *Mor.* 780e–f; *Romulus* 28.10; *Aristeides* 6.3–5; Pliny *Pan.* 55.10 f. See further Cass. Dio 74.14.2a.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Thuc. 2.43.3; Tac. *Ann.* 4.38.1–3.

As for those, on the contrary, who administer their realms in any other way, such honours not only do not lend holiness to them, even though shrines are set apart for them in all their cities, but even bring a greater reproach upon them, becoming, as it were, trophies of their baseness and memorials of their injustice; for the longer these temples last, the longer abides the memory of their infamy.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, if you desire to become in very truth immortal, act as I advise.

For resonances of the actual vocabulary and figures of speech of other writers one might turn in the first place to Maecenas' opening statement: τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἄλλοις κόσμον ἢ παρὰ σοῦ τίμη φέρει, σοὶ δ' αὐτῷ μείζον μὲν τῶν ὑπαρχόντων οὐδὲν ἂν δοθείη (35.2). This seems to echo, if faintly, Pliny's exclamation in the *Panegyricus*: *tanto maior, tanto augustior! nam cui nihil ad augendum fastigium superest, hic uno modo crescere potest, si se ipse summittat securus magnitudinis suae* (71.4). A clearer example that exactly coincides with the sense, if not the actual words, of Plutarch is Maecenas' gibe at deification: χειροτονητὸς δ' οὐδεὶς πώποτε θεὸς ἐγένετο (35.5). This compares closely with Plutarch's argument that virtue alone can deify, not the decree of the city: ἀλλὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς . . . οὐ νόμῳ πόλεως, ἀλλ' ἀληθείᾳ καὶ κατὰ τὸν εἰκότα λόγον εἰς θεοὺς ἀναφέρεσθαι (*Romulus* 28.10).<sup>16</sup> More obvious still is Maecenas' ringing claim that if you are a good and upright ruler πᾶσα μὲν γῆ τεμένισμα ἔσται, πᾶσαι δὲ πόλεις ναοί, πάντες δὲ ἄνθρωποι ἀγάλματα (ἐν γὰρ ταῖς γνώμαις αὐτῶν αἰεὶ μετ' εὐδοξίας ἐνιδρυθήσῃ) (35.5). This flight of rhetoric is plainly modeled on Pericles' declaration in the Funeral Oration: ἀνδρῶν γὰρ ἐπιφανῶν πᾶσα γῆ τάφος, καὶ οὐ στηλῶν μόνον ἐν τῇ οἰκείᾳ σημαίνει ἐπιγραφή, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῇ μὴ προσηκούσῃ ἄγραφος μνήμη παρ' ἐκάστῳ τῆς γνώμης μᾶλλον ἢ τοῦ ἔργου ἐνδαιτύεται (Thuc. 2.43.3).<sup>17</sup> Most striking of all, however, is Maecenas' advice to fashion other images in the hearts of your people: ἄλλας δὲ ἐν αὐταῖς ταῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχαῖς καὶ ἀκηράτους καὶ ἀθανάτους ἐξ εὐεργεσιῶν δημιουργεῖ (35.3). This is in fact a commonplace found in a wide range of writers. In addition to Thuc. 2.43.3 (above) the same metaphor occurs in Plutarch, *Cato Maior*: αὐτοῦ δὲ καλλίστας εἰκόνας ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς περιφέρειν τοὺς πολίτας (19.5). Similarly, Tacitus has Tiberius say: *haec mihi in animis vestris templa, hae pulcherrimae effigies et mansurae* (*Ann.* 4.38.2).<sup>18</sup> Perhaps the most interesting example of all,

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.38.2; Plut. *Demetrius* 10.2; 30.7 f.; Mor. 360c–d; 820b, f; Pliny *Pan.* 55.8 f.

<sup>16</sup>Noted by Bowersock, 204 ff.; cf. 190.

<sup>17</sup>Bowersock 204 ff. Reinhold, 207, notes that the Thucydidean resonance was already recognized by E. Kyhntzsch, *De contionibus, quas Cassius Dio historiae suae intexit, cum Thucydideis comparatis* (diss., Leipzig 1894) 39.

<sup>18</sup>For an echo of the thought, if not the actual metaphor, see further Pliny *Pan.* 55.10: *non ergo perpetua principi fama, quae invitum manet, sed bona concupiscenda est; ea porro non imaginibus et statuīs, sed virtute ac meritis prorogatur*; cf. Dio of Prusa *Or.* 44.2.

however, is an inscription of A.D. 194 in which a letter, written by L. Munatius Hilarianus to the phratry of the Artemisii at Naples, uses exactly the same expression—conclusive testimony that this particular commonplace was by no means restricted to literary composition:<sup>19</sup> . . . *mihi enim sufficit statua una / et una imago. Sed et in honorem fili mei sufficiet / statua una; plures enim imagines et statuas in / vestris animis habemus constitutas.* (*AEpigr* 1913, no. 134). Interestingly, the same figure of speech was to be used later by John Chrysostom (Migne, *PG* 49.216), also in the Theodosian Code (15.4.1).

In addition to familiar *topoi* of political science and commonplaces of figurative language the instruction of Maecenas is remarkable for two pieces of advice, both of which were cardinal points of imperial policy as it had evolved since the establishment of the principate. Augustus is urged to forbid the raising of temples to himself, for not only is this a waste of money but from temples comes no enhancement of glory. To prohibit such honours would be consistent with the standard Roman sentiment against the deification of a living man and was, in fact, the basic attitude to divine honours taken by all 'constitutional' monarchs from Augustus on. A year earlier than the historical setting of Maecenas' speech (29 B.C.), Octavian had laid down the ground rules for the cult of the emperor in the provinces and, in reporting these, Dio remarks that in Italy as well as at Rome no emperor dared accept *isotheoi timai* in his lifetime (51.20.8); only after death were shrines appropriate to upright rulers and, in fact, built to them. The generalization scarcely holds for Italy<sup>20</sup> but, apart from such aberrations as Gaius' reported attempt to build a temple to his own *numen* (Suet. *Gaius* 22.3), it is certainly true of the capital; theoretically even Gaius' planned temple was not strictly speaking to himself.<sup>21</sup> Similarly in the provinces the regulation was that temples were acceptable only if Dea Roma shared in the cult—Dio omits to mention Roma (51.20.6–7) but her inclusion at Pergamum is confirmed by Tacitus (*Ann.* 4.37.4) and elsewhere by the combined numismatic and epigraphical evidence—and we have a prime example in the magnificent temple built by Herod at Caesarea with its colossal cult idols of Roma and Augustus (Josephus *BJ* 1.414; *AJ* 15.339). Suetonius states

<sup>19</sup>D. Fishwick, "L. Munatius Hilarianus and the Inscription of the Artemisii," *ZPE* 76 (1989) 175–183, with n. 32, citing S. R. F. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984) 199, n. 152; G. W. Bowersock, "The Imperial Cult: Perceptions and Persistence," in B. F. Meyer and E. P. Sanders (eds.), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* 3 (Philadelphia 1983) 180.

<sup>20</sup>Fishwick I.1.91 f., with n. 55 (and *corrigenda*).

<sup>21</sup>D. Fishwick, "Numen Augusti," *Britannia* 20 (1989) 231–234; "Genius and Numen" in Fishwick II.1 (forthcoming). For the temple of Gaius see now A. A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power* (New Haven and London 1989) 146 ff.

explicitly: *templa ... in nulla provincia nisi suo Romaeque nomine recepit* (Aug. 52).

The official attitude is best attested, however, by imperial 'refusals' of divine honours, of which we have at least seven examples under Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius.<sup>22</sup> That the formula derives from an Augustan precedent has been inferred with strong probability, though the general lines are already there in Cic. *QFr.* 1.1.26; cf. *Att.* 5.21.7 (see Fishwick I.1.127, n. 206.). In each example the monarch (in one instance Germanicus) declines temples and such like on the grounds that he is a mere mortal and that divine honours are appropriate only to the gods; to accept would bring odium upon himself and make him seem vulgar to contemporaries or provoke envy. There is certainly a discrepancy between the formulation of policy in Rome and its implementation in the provinces and in practice such 'refusals' seem to have had little effect in restricting the conferral of the honours politely declined.<sup>23</sup> Clearly the response was not taken literally as the emperor's last word. Nevertheless, that was the official attitude and it is significant that precisely this strategy is what Maecenas urges upon Augustus when he was on the point of restoring the republic to the Senate and the People. The opening self-deprecation, that the emperor is a mere mortal, is omitted, but Maecenas goes on to emphasize that temples are not appropriate monuments of the good ruler and that shrines will bring reproach upon those who accept them, if they prove bad rulers (35.6). This very fear is openly expressed in several of the extant versions of the formula: Germanicus, in his edict to the Alexandrians, declines their *ἰσοθέους ἐκφονήσεις* calling them *ἐπιφθόνους*; Claudius hopes to avoid being *φορτικός* to his contemporaries by declining the high priest and temple establishments offered by the Alexandrians;<sup>24</sup> and Marcus Aurelius and Commodus moderate the honours offered by the Athenian Elders remarking [*ἀλλὰ τὰ θεῖα*] καὶ τὰ δο[κ]οῦντα ἐπιφθονα ὀκνοῦντες ἐν ἅπ[ασι] καιροῖς ...].<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup>V. Ehrenberg and A. H. M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius* (Oxford 1976) 102b, lines 20 f. (Tiberius); 320b, lines 35 f. (Germanicus); Smallwood 370, lines 48–52 (Claudius); 371, lines 6–8 (Claudius); O. Montevecchi, "Nerone a una polis e ai 6475," *Aegyptus* 50 (1970) 5–33, at 12 ff. (= *Sammelbuch* 12, 11012); *Inscr. Olymp.* 57 (Hadrian); *Hesperia* Supp. 6 (1941) no. 24, line 37 (Marcus Aurelius and Commodus); cf. *Hesperia* Supp. 13 (1970) p. 87, line 61. For discussion see Fishwick I.2.198 f. with bibl. n. 22; Price (above, n. 19) 72–74.

<sup>23</sup>For a priest of Claudius at Thasos—despite his refusal of divine honours—see Chr. Dunant and J. Pouilloux, *Recherches sur l'histoire et les cultes de Thasos* 2 (Paris 1958, *Études thasiennes* 5) 180. On the reference to "our god Caesar" in the preamble (published by the prefect of Egypt) to Claudius' letter to the Alexandrians see Fishwick, I.2.198 f.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. the phrase he uses in his speech preserved on the Lyons tablet: *vereor ne nimio insolentior esse videar*: Smallwood 369, lines 38 f.

<sup>25</sup>J. H. Oliver, *The Sacred Gerusia* (Baltimore 1941, *Hesperia* Supp. 6) 117 f.

In each case the refusal of divine honours is coupled with the fear of the bad reputation that would accrue from overstepping what was appropriate to human nature (cf. Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 919 ff.). The fact that Maecenas makes exactly the same point in advising Augustus clearly confirms that he was proposing in retrospect what had been standard imperial policy since the eve of the principate.

The second element in Maecenas' admonishment is that Augustus should never permit gold or silver images to himself. The traditional character of such a policy was originally noted by Scott and, though details of his analysis have been corrected and nuances brought out by subsequent research, his main point still stands. "It is a striking fact that . . . during the early centuries of the Roman empire almost every living emperor felt under obligation to define a policy of accepting or refusing statues in precious metals, and the absolute monarchs such as Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Commodus, and Caracalla are the rulers who officially permitted their likenesses in gold and silver."<sup>26</sup> In composing this fictitious speech Dio could therefore draw on two centuries or so of standard imperial policy.<sup>27</sup> Augustus himself, to whom the advice is offered, pointedly states that he did in fact melt down eighty silver statues which had been set up to him in Rome and with the money they realized placed golden offerings in the Temple of Apollo in his own name and in the names of those who had honoured him with the statues (*Res Gestae* 24.2; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 52; Cass. Dio 53.22.3). On a subsequent occasion in 11 B.C., when the senate and the people once more contributed money for statues of Augustus (presumably of gold or silver, though this is not stated explicitly) he would set up no statue of himself but instead set up statues of *Salus Publica*, *Concordia*, and *Pax* (Cass. Dio 54.35.2). For Maecenas to urge Augustus to prohibit gold and silver images, then, was to advise him to adopt the policy he had himself initiated and which subsequent experience had shown to be wise.

Reasons why gold or silver statues were undesirable are clear enough.<sup>28</sup> Whereas bronze was considered a sign of modesty (though costly enough in itself), gold and silver were thought an excess acceptable only *post mortem*. This is partly because of their psychological background as precious metals that invited theft and destruction (cf. Cass. Dio 52.35.3) but more importantly because they were the material of which cult idols were usually

<sup>26</sup>Scott (1931) 123; cf. Oliver (above, n. 25) 116.

<sup>27</sup>For the policy of individual rulers see now T. Pekáry, *Das römische Kaiserbildnis in Staat, Kult und Gesellschaft* (Berlin 1985, *Das römische Herrscherbild* Abt. 3, Bd. 5) 66–80.

<sup>28</sup>Reinhold, 208 with refs., explains Dio's injunction against images in precious metals in terms of his general concern for the empire's economic distress. This could be part of the picture but is surely a minor issue in comparison with the cultic implications of gold and silver.

made.<sup>29</sup> Hence, though a statue in gold or silver did not automatically imply a claim to divinity, as Scott thought,<sup>30</sup> it was an excess, a sign of *adulatio*, and considered bad form because it lifted a man above the mortal level. One of the clearest statements of the constitutional outlook is contained in the letter of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus to the Athenian *gerousia* in which the emperors decline gold and silver statues as divine honours, but gladly accept bronze *protomai* on a moderate scale.<sup>31</sup> In this connection it is worth observing too that Maecenas speaks of prohibiting *eikones* of gold and silver (35.3): that is images, often in the form of a bust but also of a statue, a tondo, or even a painting. As a rule, the term refers to an honorific likeness, though an *eikon* might be set in a temple as an offering, often *ex voto*, to the god whose temple it was; on rare occasions it can even denote the cult statue.<sup>32</sup> But in emphasizing that the good ruler will have all men as his statues he uses the word *agalmata* (35.5), which normally refers to idols—especially in association with the verb *ιδρύω* and its compounds. The implication is therefore that in contrast to honorific representations in gold and silver with their connotation of *adulatio*, the good ruler will be rewarded by cult idols established in the thoughts of his subjects. Metaphorically speaking, he will be enshrined in their minds as a god.

What clearly emerges from the above analysis is that the advice Maecenas gives to Augustus on the ruler cult had been common policy for two hundred years or more. Writing in the light of after-events, Dio has Maecenas advocate a policy consistent with the one Augustus did in fact lay down.<sup>33</sup> This had set the pattern followed by most monarchs down to the time when Dio composed the speech and his readers will have been able to reflect on the merits of Maecenas' advice much as the readers of Vergil's *Aeneid* might have reflected on the historical outcome of what Aeneas learned on his descent into Hades. In the same way Maecenas' arguments against restoring the Republic (Cass. Dio 52.15.5–6; 17) seem to depend upon the tradition

<sup>29</sup>Pekáry (above, n. 27) 67 f.; D. Fishwick, "Liturgy and Ceremonial" in Fishwick II.1 (forthcoming), noting that in a temple a gold or silver statue or image of the emperor would consequently have a divine connotation, especially if placed in the *cella* beside the *simulacrum*.

<sup>30</sup>For discussion see Pekáry (above, n. 27) 69 ff; *id.*, "Goldene Statuen der Kaiserzeit," *RömMitt* 75 (1968) 144–148; Price (above, n. 19) 186 f. There seem to have been no restrictions on fashioning gilded or silvered likenesses of the ordinary person, not at least until late antiquity.

<sup>31</sup>Oliver (above, n. 25) 116–119. Similarly Claudius refused a gold *andrias* of Pax Augusta Claudiana as reflecting badly on himself by association: Smallwood, 370, lines 34–37.

<sup>32</sup>Price (above, n. 19) 176 ff., with bibl.; Fishwick (above, n. 29).

<sup>33</sup>M. Hammond, "The Significance of the Speech of Maecenas in Dio Cassius, Book LII," *TAPA* 63 (1932) 88–102, at 100 f.

reported by Suetonius (Aug. 28.1) that Augustus had twice considered taking the step but refrained when he realized the dangers both to himself and to the Senate (Millar 105). But did Dio also intend to convey a historical message, one that contemporary experience imposed? There seems general agreement that from Ch. 19 onwards the speech is a political pamphlet, in practice Dio's own answer to what he saw as the short-comings of his time.<sup>34</sup> G. W. Bowersock has argued that the advice the historian puts in Maecenas' mouth should be seen as a reaction to the reigns of Commodus and Elagabalus. It was their "gross and unspeakable abuse" of the ruler cult that led Maecenas to urge that there should be an end to the cult of the living emperor: no gold or silver images, no temples at all (Bowersock 205). What the above analysis has suggested is that Maecenas is proposing not so much the abolition of the cult as a return to the moderate policy that had been established by Augustus, but then abandoned by "absolutist" emperors. As A. Piatkowski has shown,<sup>35</sup> Dio took a pragmatic attitude to the ruler cult, seeing its positive as well as its negative features; so a return to Augustan practice would be in keeping with his general outlook. Maecenas' advice would in that case be in line with the basic "counter revolutionary" theme of the speech and comparable, for example, with Dio's plan to return to the practice of the early principate in regard to respecting the dignity and position of the Roman upper classes (31.3–10; Millar 107 f., 118). Bowersock's point can still stand, however, in the sense that a reassertion of traditional practice would itself mark a radical change of direction from the policy followed under Commodus or Elagabalus. The view naturally presupposes an appropriate time at which Dio invented the speech. Bowersock accepts the opinion of most (Meyer *et al.*) that it was a product of the reign of Alexander Severus,<sup>36</sup> so a date ca 223 or later would fit nicely with his interpretation. On the other hand if the speech was composed much earlier under Caracalla, more precisely when Dio was with Caracalla at Nicomedia at the close of 214, as F. Millar (30 f., 104; cf. 119 f.) and others have proposed (see Manuwald 22, note 55, with refs.), it will rather have been the aberrations of Commodus—whose reign Dio certainly saw as a turning point in his history (72.36.4)—that provoked his reaction. More recently T. D. Barnes has argued that the history as a whole was composed under Alexander Severus with Book 52 itself written after 222/223.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup>Millar 107; B. Manuwald, *Cassius Dio und Augustus* (Wiesbaden 1979, Palingenesia 14) 21–25; R. Bering-Staschewski, *Römische Zeitgeschichte bei Cassius Dio* (Bochum 1981, Bochumer historische Studien, Alte Geschichte 5) 129–134.

<sup>35</sup>A. Piatkowski, "Cassius Dio über den Kaisercult," *Klio* 66 (1984) 599–604.

<sup>36</sup>Bowersock 203, n. 1; *id.*, *Gnomon* 37 (1965) 471–473; Manuwald 22, n. 55.

<sup>37</sup>T. D. Barnes, "The Composition of Cassius Dio's *Roman History*," *Phoenix* 38 (1984) 240–255, with full review of the main theories. See now Reinhold 11 f., 180–182, with refs., concluding that a later date is preferable.



With the evidence ambiguous and incomplete, a firm decision either way is hardly possible. Fortunately for present purposes, the precise date of composition is of secondary importance. The more significant point is that in pleading for a return to the practice of the early principate Dio does so through the medium of a speech that is itself a literary potpourri, a pastiche of familiar themes drawn from the traditional advice characteristic of the *speculum principis*<sup>38</sup> and laced with commonplaces of literary invention.

This surely says a great deal about Dio's method of composition. In particular, there is a clear analogy with the way he uses standard anecdotes drawn from a common stock of *exempla*, simply adapting them to his purpose by changing such elements as time and physical setting.<sup>39</sup> It follows that this segment of Maecenas' speech stands out as a particularly illuminating exercise in ancient historiographical method (Manuwald 26). One sees Dio at his desk, drawing freely from a wide range of source material, in the throes of composing a fictitious speech to which he lends an aura of plausibility with the help of historical hindsight.

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<sup>38</sup>Bowersock 203, noting that the speech contains strains familiar from other writers of the second century.

<sup>39</sup>R. Saller, "Anecdotes as Historical Evidence for the Principate," *G&R* 27 (1980) 69-83, especially 74 ff.