Hope, Fear, and Conceptions of the Future in the Early Principate

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Abstract

This thesis examines a selection of ways in which Roman political actors (be they senators, *equites*, troops, *plebs* or others) conceived of the political future of Rome, in a series of four crises from the Ides of March 44 BCE to the establishment of the Flavian dynasty in 69 CE, and the way in which contemporary and later authors represented the views of those figures in historical narratives. It demonstrates that there was a great deal of uniformity in the political language used in these crises, first, by those who sought to restore the consular government that had existed prior to the supremacy of Julius Caesar; secondly, by those who sought to promote and maintain the Julio-Claudian family's exceptional position attained after the civil wars; and thirdly, by those who sought some form of compromise, perhaps in the form of a more virtuous *princeps*, or the devolution of some authority to the senate, as 'the Principate' developed from an *ad hoc* bundle of powers into a 'system' of government. There was often a strong moralising element in this political discourse, and it centred on the virtues and vices of leaders involved in the crises. In many cases these individuals came to embody competing images of the future in their own right, as in the case of Antony and Octavian, the successors to Augustus, or the rival contenders in 68-9 CE. In other cases, slogans such as *libertas* could encapsulate idealised images of the future in a synecdochic manner, and acted as rallying points for political action. Hopes for a better future were often contrasted with fears of some other outcome, and the two were often presented as a dichotomy, to exhort audiences in a particular direction. Unrealised visions of the future and the failed plans that went along with them shaped the political landscape of Rome and its development in a range of important ways, and continued to be influential as a part of Roman cultural memory and historiography.

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Introduction:

Hope, Fear, and Conceptions of the Future from the Triumviral Period to the Flavians

> 'The tale has often been told, with an inevitability of events and culmination, either melancholy or exultant. The conviction that it all had to happen is indeed difficult to discard. Yet that conviction ruins the living interest of history and precludes a fair judgement upon the agents. They did not know the future.'
>
> (R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, 4)

Why Conceptions of the Future?

This thesis examines conceptions of Rome's political 'future', expressed by a range of ancient individuals, in a selection of crises in the period from the death of Caesar through to the establishment of the Flavian dynasty. Within much modern scholarship concerned with the Roman world, and particularly in a number of important works written in the twentieth century which continue to be influential, there is often a tendency to see the chains of events in human history as inevitable – to slip from recognising that the past cannot be changed, to claiming that long term trends and natural forces meant that particular events were bound to happen, while diminishing the importance of the way in which individuals in antiquity (perhaps aside from a few 'great men') thought about the past, present, and future, and how they acted as a result. As noted above by Syme, part of this historical determinism is a consequence of a confirmation bias that takes hold once historical narratives of certain periods become familiar (which can apply as much to particular ancient narratives as to modern reconstructions), alongside other larger inherited paradigms which influence the contemporary practice of history, whether openly acknowledged or operating behind the scenes (for example, the teleological frameworks present in Christianity, Marxism, or scientism). Yet very few people, including the historians who construct such narratives, live their own lives as though they do not possess free will and

agency to a large extent.[1] At the heart of such deterministic approaches to the past is often the sense of historical research being a science, and that, as such, it ought to be concerned with the description of 'real' events, actions and objects, tangible changes – things as they essentially happened. The entertainment of counterfactuals, or alternative histories that did not occur, is not the job of the historian, in this paradigm.

Yet a distinction ought to be made between discussions of events that did *not* occur, which typically cannot proceed very far before the multitude of variables makes the exercise of limited worth (e.g. asking: 'What if Caesar had decided not to cross the Rubicon?'), and discussions of what people in history *thought* might happen but did not – including their ideas or speculations about the future that never came to be realised (e.g. studying someone in early 49 who claimed: 'Surely Caesar will not cross the Rubicon.').[2] The way in which people thought about the future (of Rome's political situation, in the case of this thesis) is a vital aspect of intellectual history or the history of ideas, since it forms a part of the lived experience of individuals in a given moment. A person's mentality or 'mental architecture' plays an extremely important role in determining the way in which a society functions. This is because the worldviews of different individuals who collectively make up a society, and the conflicts and tensions that occur between those holding different perspectives, play a large role in

[1] See Dihle (1982), and especially Frede (2011), for the origins of the conception of 'free will' in ancient thought, as opposed to the 'garden-variety' recognition that humans are responsible for some of their own actions, to some extent. Dihle, with a narrower definition, ties this development to Augustine, while Frede more convincingly argues that the general idea was an earlier development in late Stoic thought, which in turn influenced rival Peripatetic, Platonic, and eventually Christian conceptions of 'free will'.

[2] Powell (ed.) (2013) contains a number of discussions of the role of hindsight in historiography, and its connection with causality, 'sideshadowing' (i.e. alluding to alternative possibilities), and 'virtual history'. Powell (2013a) xii, observes, 'Our collective studies may seem to commend a practical principle: that historians of every situation should try *for a time* to put out of mind knowledge of what ensued, and instead to focus rigorously on what people at the time might foresee, people who were obliged to depend for their forecasts strictly on ideas about their own past.' On the merits of 'virtual history' itself, see Pelling (2013); and on the possible victory of Antony, Powell (2013b), both in the same volume. On the importance of 'sideshadowing' in counteracting the teleological drive in narrative, and restoring some of the uncertainty to historical scenarios, see Grethlein (2013), 14-16.

shaping the discourse within a culture (be it 'political', 'religious', or some other category), and how it changes over time. Conceptions of what is likely to, or might, happen in the future are particularly significant since they provide the motivation for human action in the present, and spur people on with the hopes or fears that result from such formulations.

Dominant Genres in Modern Scholarship

One obstacle that has discouraged scholars from undertaking a study of conceptions of the future is the types of works that are typically written about the early Principate by modern scholars. Imperial biographies sometimes form the backbone of reconstructions of political history, and take their cue from the works of Suetonius, Plutarch and others, privileging the character and decisions of the *princeps* over other aspects of Roman society.[3] When individual *principes* are not being analysed, the institutions and traditions of the *res publica* are sometimes examined synchronically, as though the Principate were a 'system' – a problem also seen in wider Roman cultural and religious history, usually owing to a dearth of available evidence.[4] Studies of particular elements of the Roman 'constitution', or more specialised areas such as changes in Roman religious practice, have also received attention.[5] The other dominant approach to this period is that of literary criticism or historiography, with a focus on individual ancient authors or texts in modern commentaries or monographs. All of these kinds of works are certainly valuable in their own right, but the generic considerations of each make a subject such as 'the ways in which people thought about the future' difficult for them to explore. On the one hand, the ancient sources often preserve a good amount of information about one topic

[3] E.g. Barrett (1989); Bleicken (2015); Everitt (2007); Griffin (1984); Levick, (1976), (1990), (1999), (2010); Osgood (2011); Seager (1972); Shotter (2008); Winterling (2011).
[4] For instance, the 'petition and response' model of relations with the emperor examined across three centuries in Millar (1977).
[5] On religious change of various sorts in the early Principate, see for example, Liebeschutz (1979), Beard, North, and Price (1998) 167-210; Hekster, Schmidt-Hofner, and Witschel, (eds.) (2009), Pollini, J. (2012), Rüpke (2014).

(for instance, the character of a *princeps*) and almost nothing about another (say the opinions of a freedman about the future of Rome), and this encourages scholars to write particular types of modern works in line with what is available; on the other hand, modern works are sometimes restricted by their genre, such as the need for a commentary to examine one text, typically line by line, or for a biography to focus on one character, restricting the amount of space given to comparative material from other texts, or periods, respectively. The perceived ephemeral or intangible nature of 'conceptions of the future' noted above has also contributed to the lack of attention it has received, and will be addressed at greater length below.

Nevertheless, there are a number of important works which lie close to some of the ideas proposed in this thesis, without directly engaging with the overall topic explored here: studies of particular concepts such as *libertas, spes*, or *res publica*; studies of changes in the socio-political culture between the late Republic and early Principate; works on Roman divination, philosophical schools, progress, time itself, and other themes.[6] The recent trend of works examining the use of cultural memory in Roman society and literature is also particularly important.[7] A subset of this investigation of cultural memory is the representation of the

[6] On *libertas*, see e.g. Wirszubski (1950), Brunt (1988), and Arena (2012), though the latter only extends into the late Republic. On *spes*, see Clark (1983), Scanlon (1987). Numerous works discuss the concept of *res publica* in various contexts, including Cartledge (1975), Cowan (2006), Flower (2010), Beck et al. (eds.) (2015), Hodgson (2017). On divination, see now Santangelo (2013). On conceptions of time in the Greek world, Republic and early Principate, Clarke (2008) and Feeney (2008) are particularly noteworthy.

[7] Memory being the first step when imagining a 'future.' On cultural memory see, Walter (2004), Gowing (2005), Roller (2010), Gallia (2012), and Galinsky (2014); also Galinsky's Max Planck Research Project, *Memoria Romana*, involving numerous researchers. Though there have been no broad studies of 'futures' under Augustus and others *per se*, there are a handful of exceptions, in various areas of scholarship. For example, O'Gorman's article (2006) on the Pisones touches on issues relating to 'futures' in the principate; Smith (2005), among other Virgilian scholars, offers an analysis of visions of the future, though this is not the only kind of 'vision' in his work; perhaps even more directly, Milnor (2007), 7-23, examines the issue of Augustus' own vision for the future enacted through "social legislation," drawing on the ideas of Edwards (1993) regarding a 'moral revolution.' Revolutions, of course, overturn one thing for another, and those who carry them out must possess some notion of the 'future' or of 'progress/decline' (even if, as in the case of Caesar's assassins, or Germanicus' mutinous troops in 14, that future is merely obtaining the absence of something, with minimal planning beyond that point).

Republic from the perspective of the Principate.[8] These works will be discussed as they become relevant to the material or question at hand, though a few are singled out for discussion in this introduction.

This thesis does not claim to be a comprehensive study, and the range of approaches that might be taken to the array of evidence is one of the chief reasons for this. As Feeney rightly notes in the introduction to his work, time – and in this case, 'the future' in particular – is a topic that can be explored from all sorts of angles, and one which draws a potentially infinite number of other related topics into its orbit.[9] Clarke has also usefully elucidated some of the different ways in which time can be articulated and measured, the relationships between 'naturally determined' and 'culturally constructed' forms of time, and especially the relation of *poleis* to their histories and the various chronological and calendrical systems that existed in the Greek world.[10] In order to keep the lid on this Pandora's jar as much as is possible, it should be clarified that the objective here is to examine some of the ways in which people thought about the future of Rome in the transitional period from after the Ides through to the emergence of the Flavian dynasty, in a series of crises which could well have had different political outcomes. This can be contrasted, for example, with investigating philosophical treatises which explore the issue of time and the future in more general terms (e.g. 'What did Lucretius think of the future, and its relationship with *fortuna*?' 'Did Cicero think that divination was possible?'), or with conceptions of the future that primarily relate to the personal circumstances of an individual not directly connected with the future of the *res publica* (e.g. 'At what age will I die? Will I have children in the future?'). Of course, these distinctions are very much artificial,

[8] See especially Gowing (2005), Gallia (2012), and Wilkinson (2012).
[9] Feeney (2008), 1-3.
[10] Clarke (2008), especially Ch 1.

and both philosophical and theological disputes on the one hand, and very personal interests and concerns on the other, inevitably informed the views of some (if not all) of those involved in the socio-political episodes discussed here. So too did the state of the *res publica* and its prospects influence people's lives, choices, and philosophical pursuits in significant ways. Yet particular issues must be prioritised to make such a project manageable (while leaving plenty of scope for further research): historical case studies have been selected which shed some light both on the types of ways individuals thought about the future of Roman politics and society in this period of transformation, and the ways in which authors represented such thoughts in later works. As a consequence, this thesis is at times more historiographical than historical, but quite deliberately so, since in order to properly understand history, one must analyse historiography, and vice versa. In his recent work, Grethlein has paid particular attention to the historiographical side of this coin in his examination of the extent to which a selection of ancient authors pointed their narratives, through the characterisation of historical figures and the selection of particular themes and episodes, towards their 'present' or 'telos'.[11] Grethlein's key term, 'futures past', is borrowed from the title of the seminal work by Reinhart Koselleck.[12] Yet unlike Koselleck, who employs it to refer to the perspective on the future held by figures in the past, Grethlein uses it to focus more on the 'temporal asymmetry of agents and historians that is at the core of historiography' – the tension between the lived experience of individuals concerning the future in earlier periods, and their representation in later works with their inevitable imposition of teleological frameworks.[13] This thesis uses 'imagined futures' or 'present futures' to refer to those which, from the perspective of the author/protagonist, had not yet been realised or disappointed; and 'past futures', 'retrojected futures', or 'alternative

[11] Grethlein (2013).
[12] Koselleck (2004).
[13] Grethlein (2016), 60.

futures' to refer to ideas of the future that individuals may have held in the past (some of which are evidently the product of a later interpretation or invention).

This study attempts to avoid anticipating developments in the political culture and institutions of the *res publica*, even when the framework provided by ancient authors makes it tempting to do so. This approach allows for different sorts of connections to be made between the crises studied here that might otherwise be overlooked.

Complexity and Simplicity

The work of an historian often involves digesting a complicated mass of information from a particular period – characters, events, ideas – into a coherent narrative to be consumed by his or her audience. Of course, selecting or prioritising particular material or themes at the expense of others is always necessary. One issue that arises in the construction of narratives about the early Principate is that ancient historians themselves have often already interpreted, selected from, and synthesised this information (including earlier lost accounts) in ways which become compelling to modern scholars in the absence of other evidence, influencing the shape of historical narratives and the questions with which they are concerned, before the interpretations of modern scholars have even begun. This can be contrasted, for example, with studies of politics in the late Republic, in which the extant sources, and Cicero's contemporary correspondence in particular, provide some insight into the complex and often turbulent nature of political competition and compromise among the elite (despite being constructions themselves, with their own particular agenda). In the early Principate, the superficial appearance of order and neatness (implicit in terms such as 'autocracy' and 'monarchy'), and the aforementioned dominance of biography, obscure much the same sort of political environment, although political competition and debate came to be expressed in slightly

different ways, and sometimes in new venues – for instance, factions that formed behind particular members of the imperial family, or oratorical displays in the declamation schools or courts. Changes which occur in society without a cause or origin being recorded in our sources are often attributed to some sort of personal whim of the *princeps* or propagandistic motivation on the part of the 'regime' – in other words, the *auctoritas* of the *princeps* is sometimes used to paper over the gaps.[14] Yet even within the most infamous monolithic authoritarian regimes of the modern period, for example, there have been internal disputes and tensions between various parties and individuals, despite publicly projected images of unity. This thesis seeks to question the shorthand that has been employed in various ways when discussing the political situation in selected moments of crisis, with a view to revealing the diversity of opinions that existed concerning what might happen in the future. For example, when we consider what 'the senate' or 'the praetorian guard' wanted in a given moment, we create a label that elides the variety of opinions contained within those groups of individuals – labels and elisions which can appear in the ancient sources themselves. Yet sometimes events in the narrative, or small details, seem to go against the grain of the overall interpretation by an ancient author, and enable us to complicate the received paradigm. This is important since many reconstructions of the past in ancient historiography often have a particular agenda, which may seek to reinforce or challenge those in power at the time of writing, or to demonise or venerate particular individuals or groups. By maintaining as complex a view of society as is possible (which surely should be the aim of any historian), we can see the influence of, and dynamic between, differing perspectives on Roman culture, including views of its future.

[14] Galinsky (1996), while denying a straightforward propaganda model, nevertheless at points overemphasises the role of the *auctoritas* of the *princeps* in the formation of Augustan culture. This highlights the issue at stake – the lack of evidence for the motivation for, or process by which, many works of art, literature, and so on, that make up modern notions of 'Augustan culture', came to be created. Rowe (2013) criticises the overemphasis and inflation of the importance of the term *auctoritas* in the Augustan period (including that of Galinsky), which is found in few places outside of the *Res Gestae* (34.3), and makes a strong case against it having a kind of numinous significance when applied to the *princeps*. Noreña (2011) 8, notes the tendency to conflate the institution of 'monarchy' (sic) with the reigning emperor.

This is related to the idea that 'history is written by the victors', which very much applies to the extant source material available on the early Principate, with each successive generation of 'winners', in many cases, producing their own accounts. What about the 'losers', continuing opposition, or those not in the spotlight?[15] At various points this thesis seeks to show that glimpses of those other alternative views of the future can, to some extent, be recovered – and that they were often influential despite their lack of success. These alternatives encourage us to question modern narratives of political and cultural change that over-emphasise homogeneity.

The Problem of Writing about the Future, and Cultural Memory

Various difficulties are encountered when attempting to write about the future. One of these is that the 'future' cannot be known like the 'past', and in a sense one is always living in an ever-changing 'present'. Yet people today, as much as they did in ancient Rome, make predictions about what is going to happen on the basis of what has been experienced in the past – or more accurately, what is remembered, which inevitably involves some distortion.[16] Even if what is imagined to be likely to occur in the future is the opposite of something one has remembered from the past, it is still constructed in *relation* to that experience. Moreover, as Grethlein has argued, expectations about the future (however short-term that future is) are an inevitable part of human experience, as is the construction of narratives (however simplistic) which order and make sense of past experiences and link these experiences to expectations and projections into

[15] Powell and Welch (eds.) (2002), for example, sought to restore the perspective of Sextus Pompeius and the 'Republican' opposition despite the overwhelming pro-Augustan slant in the extant sources.
[16] On the development of the understanding of the 'parts of time' in pre-Socratic philosophy (and particularly in Protagoras), see Dunn (2001). Grethlein (2013), is very much concerned with this distortion and reinterpretation, as lived experiences are retrospectively made into intelligible narratives in historiography, which involves a process of selection.

the future as seen from the author's present time.[17] The future political situations entertained in the minds of the Romans discussed in this study were constructed in such a manner, and in many instances quite deliberately in relation to different periods of Rome's history. The exemplary lens through which history was seen, and the strong conservatism and fixation on the *mos maiorum* in Roman political thought, meant that even when changes from customs in the recent past were proposed or made incrementally, appeals to historical examples were made. Wallace-Hadrill has argued that one of the uses made of the *maiores* in the first century BCE was the indication of a change from a better state of something (in the past) to a worse one (in the present), with the implication that there should be a change or reversion to an earlier state (in the future).[18] This use of cultural memory occurs at many points in the crises examined in this study, owing to the aforementioned dependence of conceptions of the future on past experience and memory.

This brings us to the broader issue of the ways in which conceptions of the future relate to historical narratives and teleologies. An idea of the future is commonly placed in a chain of events, or periods, that begins at some point in the past, and extends into the present, before being projected into the future. This can take a number of forms, but these basic 'building blocks' of time often contain some form of contrast or change. In its simplest form, 'the past' is understood as one block of time (seen, for instance, in modern expressions such as 'the good old days', or in the Romans' references to *maiores* in a general sense), which can be used to

[17] Grethlein (2013), 13-14.
[18] Wallace-Hadrill (2008), 225-237 on *maiores*. See especially 229, where he argues that the *maiores* could be used as symbols of an idealised past, marking a rupture between past behaviour (which ought to be imitated) and present action – as a consequence, 'the present world is either rapidly slipping away, or already so deeply corrupted that imitation must involve a major effort of revival.' See also 239, on the role of antiquarianism in perceiving discontinuities with the past – a recognition that often generated entirely new cultural developments, rather than conservative restorations of a past state, since information about earlier periods was fragmentary or deliberately skewed by those with an agenda.

create a contrast with ‘the present’. Typically, however, there are more complicated historical arrangements, for example when the recent past is contrasted with the distant past, or various turning points in history divide up the past into a (potentially infinite) number of different blocks or phases. Teleologies of decline, such as those found in Sallust’s prefaces (discussed in Ch. 1), posit that the distant past was in some way better than the more recent past, and that this, in turn, was better than the present.

A similar arrangement with blocks of time or periods can also apply when considering the future, with the near future being separated from the distant future, or multiple stages of development being imagined. When conceptions of the future are presented as part of a larger teleology of progress or decline with respect to some aspect of society, they can either continue the same trajectory that has been laid out in reconstructions of the way the past leads to the present, or can diverge in the opposite direction, in accordance with an author’s perception or agenda. One example of this phenomenon of diverging from the general direction of a teleology is the way in which a number of authors (for instance, Horace or Velleius) presented the Augustan age as a renewal and restoration of civic virtue, peace, and prosperity, after a century of decline involving numerous periods of turmoil and civil war. This can be contrasted, for example, with the Tacitean narrative which presented the principates of Augustus and Tiberius as being a continued decline in Roman society. A similar idea to the Augustan paradigm of renewal and restoration is found in some of the accounts of the Flavian period, following the civil wars of 68-9 CE.

Other more complicated schematic arrangements developed in society over time or were consciously contrived. Some authors, usually with a less optimistic outlook on historical

developments, laid on top of each other both positive and negative teleologies that related to different aspects of society. A common example of this is the combination of a teleology of moral decline with one of simultaneous technological progress – seen in Hesiod's metallic ages (briefly discussed in Chapter 1), down to Lucretius, and beyond – though usually one of the two trajectories (typically the one involving morality) is presented as being more important.[19]

The often discussed idea of 'cyclical' conceptions of history, seen perhaps most clearly in the Polybian view of *anacylosis* (the cycle of political constitutions), can also be mapped onto this model of blocks of time to some extent, since no advocate of such a 'cycle' suggests that it is a strict repetition of events. Rather it is a theory of political behaviour, and the historical contexts have changed when each constitution remerges (perhaps creating more of a 'spiral' than a circle), with earlier forms of government returning to prominence in subsequent generations.[20] In other instances, when such a change of 'direction' is framed as a choice to be made in the present, for example, in some of the exhortative passages in Cicero's *Philippics* (in Chapter 1), it places the onus on the audience to make the correct decision in accordance with a predicted positive outcome for society, which is often contrasted with projected negative futures resulting from alternative choices.

[19] The Hesiodic decline does, however, contain the notable 'bump' of the fourth race of demigods/heroes. Hes. *Op.* 156. In the period under discussion, Ovid *Met.* 1.89-150 provides a simplified version of the Hesiodic account, demonstrating its ongoing importance in Roman culture. See Costa (1984), xx on Lucretius' teleologies; Lightfoot (2007), 124-5 on the tensions between Hesiod and the Genesis account that inform the teleologies found in the Sibylline oracles.

[20] Cole (1964); Trompf (1979), 4-115; see Walbank (1957), 16-26, on the role of Tyche in Polybius, and 635-658, on the *anacyclosis* and mixed constitution.

Fatalism and Free Will

Some of the teleologies that were formulated in the period under discussion incorporated an element of fatalism or determinism. There were fatalistic ideas of various sorts built into many of the philosophical and religious, as well as social and political, mentalities held by Greeks and Romans, which influenced their personal conceptions of the future, and later retrojections of 'futures' into the past (for instance, by historians), in significant ways. For example, there was a wide variety of forms of divination practised in the period under discussion, and prediction often implies fatalism, at least within a certain period or with respect to a particular issue. Another well-known philosophical example is the Stoic doctrine of fate, with chains of causality stretching back in time. Despite the presence of these forms of fatalism, many of these deterministic theories still maintained that there was at least an element of human agency, even if every aspect of life could not be controlled, if the gods played various roles in the course of events (or indeed adjusted things around, or directly influenced, human action), or if overarching, large-scale teleological narratives were inevitable.[21] There is also the question of the extent to which the conceptions of teleologies and ideas of the future held by protagonists in the historical crises examined here were informed by any particular philosophical framework – this is certainly the case with figures such as Cicero and Sallust, but becomes much more difficult to prove with other (particularly non-elite) figures and authors, and when our only evidence of an individual's thoughts or motivations comes to us via someone else's historical account.

[21] Frede (2011), outlines some of the 'gaps' in the deterministic philosophies in the Greek and Roman worlds which allowed space for human agency, which differ from many modern conceptions of determinism. See also Matthews (2012), whose subject, Fortuna, often plays a role in fatalistic constructions in the period examined here, or to explain broader social changes, though her precise role was very much contested, and she was appropriated by different groups for their own purposes.

Therefore, there was a range of options open to the various individuals and groups involved in each crisis discussed in this thesis, and to their later representations in literature – but whether they were aware of this range, and whether they wished to represent it as such, is another matter. All of these features – of fatalism, periodisation, teleologies, their projection into the future, and changes in their direction – will be seen in the various historical narratives examined here to a greater and lesser extent.

As noted above, this thesis analyses two main types of 'future'. A distinction must be made between 'futures' which were still a possibility in the present, which are mentioned or implied in (near) contemporary sources such as speeches, and secondly, those which were in some sense 'counterfactual,' in that they were later shown to be contradicted by what transpired, and are mentioned in accounts which are 'historical' in some sense. These 'counterfactuals' will be referred to as 'past futures', 'retrojected futures', or 'alternative futures' – the beginnings of narratives that never eventuated, or existed only in the mind. This is because the term 'counterfactual' not only implicitly diminishes the possibility of there having been an alternative series of events to those which transpired, but it also blurs a distinction that can be noted within this second category. Some of the 'past futures' which are mentioned in 'historical' accounts might well have been contemporary opinions or thoughts about the future, which have been transmitted through the historical record, while others were no doubt later inventions or retrojections by historians, (auto)biographers, and others. While later inventions or retrojections could be called 'counterfactual,' the transmission of historical thoughts about the future differs little from the first main category of contemporary projection or prediction, aside from the period (and thus genre of work) in which it was recorded. However, one must always be aware of potential distortions involved in the process of their transmission, and there is often insufficient information available to make such a distinction. So in summation, 'past

futures' vary not only in their likelihood of having been a possible alternative to what transpired (which raises larger issues of causality and determinism), but of having been the *actual* thoughts, hopes and fears of figures in the past, rather than the retrojections of an historian.[22] Naturally, there is a range of uses for these kinds of narratives. Improbable 'futures' entertained in the past can be developed by the historian to persuade or illustrate a moral point, just as improbable 'futures' in the present can be used by an orator to sway his or her audience. When attempting to distinguish between these different kinds of past conceptions of the future, some progress can be made, in some cases, by posing the question 'cui bono?', or by noting the important themes in the wider work of an author; at other times it is difficult or impossible to establish owing to the absence of other evidence. Making such a distinction between types of images of the future on the basis of their temporal perspective is important since it allows us to historicise different ideas and trace their development over time, and to analyse and critique the constructions of teleologies by historians in the ancient world, and the anachronisms that they may contain.

Why 'Crises'? The Limitations in Roman Ways of Thinking about the Future, and Meier's 'Crisis without Alternative'

This thesis examines a selection of political and cultural crises, in order to investigate the way in which various ancient authors, as well as the contemporary or historical figures whom they discuss, thought about the future of Rome. Episodes of crisis have been selected since such

[22] For a similar division see O'Gorman, (2006), 281-301, especially 300: 'What virtual history aims to present us with is "plausible worlds" […] as well as "possible worlds." While virtual historians are sometimes vilified for creating not "what if" history but "if only" history, they continue to ground their speculations (or wishful thinking) in notions of plausibility and causality. Indeed, one "rule" that has been offered for virtual historians calls on a harder form of historicism to authorize their imaginings: "We should consider as plausible or probable *only those alternatives which we can show on the basis of contemporary evidence that contemporaries actually considered*." I shall discuss these issues further below, but needless to say, this cannot be the modus operandi for an ancient historian. See also Pelling (2013) on the merits of virtual history.

ideas about the future are more likely to be articulated and reported in periods of great uncertainty or turmoil, which often form 'forks in the road' when viewed with hindsight. The four case studies that form the basis of the chapters differ from each other in various important respects, though there are also particular continuities in modes of thought and political discourse that run throughout the entire period.

A number of key points emerge from the case studies which are investigated. The first of these is that the manner in which the Romans thought about the future was restricted in various ways by the conservatism which pervaded their culture, and the uses to which historical knowledge was put in Roman society. Many Romans attributed their success, and the rise of their dominance in the Mediterranean and beyond, to a continued adherence to their mixed constitution and to the cultivation of the state gods, despite notable changes in both areas of Roman culture over time. The didactic and exemplary mode in which history was written, and the consequential 'flattening' of the past and present so that they resembled each other (*mutatis mutandis*), produced impediments for those considering historical progress and change, as we understand it.[23] While it would be incorrect to swing the pendulum too far in that direction and claim that there was *no* sense of change or progress (for the better or worse), and although it is clear, for example, that technological innovation occurred and was recognised as such, the 'opening out' of a limitless future seen, for instance, after the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, did not occur in the same way in Roman society.[24]

[23] A point noted by Syme (1939), 315. 'Lacking any perception of the dogma of progress – for it had not yet been invented – the Romans regarded novelty with distrust and aversion. The word *novus* had an evil ring.' This thesis that there was a lack of a perception of progress prior to the early modern period is also outlined by Koselleck (2004), whereas Grethlein (2013) discusses the deliberate attempts to restore 'presentness to the past' in narratives constructed by a range of ancient authors, which makes the phenomenon more proactive than the accounts of Bury, Koselleck (and others) of a world in which progress was almost inconceivable.

[24] See especially Koselleck (2004), on the idea of the past being similar to (and directly comparable with) the present, prior to modernity – and by contrast, modernity's greater emphasis on the future coinciding with greater and faster changes in science, technology, and social structures after the Enlightenment, French Revolution, and Industrial Revolution. See also Bury (1920), who claimed that the ancients were ignorant of the idea of progress.

A second point that emerges is that because of this conservatism, and the traditional political language used to project certain images of the future in these crises and the mentality that stood behind it, the same sorts of virtues, qualities, or concepts remerge over time, but in some instances possess a wider semantic range as they are employed in different contexts. One example of this is the widening of the meaning of *libertas* over time – it does not follow a strict development of meaning in a linear fashion, but rather extends its semantic range over time precisely as a consequence of being contested. These pieces of political rhetoric, or 'slogans', are important because they often encapsulate idealised visions of Rome's future in a synecdochic fashion, and motivate their audience to act in particular ways.[25]

The variety of conceptions of the future of the Roman *res publica* espoused by the different authors and historical figures who feature in these case studies ultimately creates three major categories of possible idealised projections into the future. These three possibilities are, first, an imagined future in which an individual leader guides the Roman state out of a crisis in one way or another – through military victory, political compromise, or perhaps even through merely embodying certain virtues. Importantly, whatever the particular situation or method adopted, it is often achieved through the virtues of the leader (which can be divinely bestowed, or to some extent 'inherited'), or outright divine support, which may become evident through the practice of different forms of divination, including the recognition of portents. Into this

Bury was then challenged by Edelstein (1967), who promoted the idea that the Greeks and Romans definitely conceived of progress, which in turn inspired a response by Dodds (1973), who argued that conceptualising progress was more common only in certain periods of classical antiquity when (primarily scientific) advances were actually being made, and was usually confined to the idea of technological progress. Bury, and much more recently, Koselleck, both appear to have been influenced (however indirectly) by Comte, who emphasised the unique nature of the French Revolution, and perhaps underestimated the evidence for the conceptualisation of progress in the ancient world, in order to create a sharper contrast.

[25] Cf. Arena (2012), Noreña (2011).

category (‘individual leaders embodying a solution’) we might place some parts of the works of Cicero and Virgil, and their ideas concerning Octavian. The leader can either become redundant once order is restored, or can become an integral part of the functioning of the state.

Secondly, an imagined future in which the institutions of the *res publica* in an idealised state (as articulated by the author or protagonist in question) are the key rallying point in some sort of new programme, or change to how things are currently being done – once again, either through military force, or political compromise. The need for change results from some sort of an aberration or deviation in the more recent past from a norm as defined by the protagonist. The rhetoric of a ‘Golden Age’ under a Caesarian leader, developed during and following the civil wars, fits into this category (noted in Chapter 1), as does the political position that modern scholars have termed ‘Republicanism’ after a period of tyranny (addressed throughout, but especially in Chapter 3). Cicero’s verdict on the state of Roman politics after the Ides belongs to this category at certain points as well (discussed in Chapter 1).

Thirdly, some sort of negative outcome or future for the *res publica*, at least after a certain point, owing to the fear and despair an individual feels about the present. Few authors present no future whatsoever, but rather imply a continual decline which may not be articulated in any detail, or may involve particular outcomes such as the destruction of political life or freedom at Rome (Sallust, in Chapter 1, being a key example). Fear, one kind of ‘opposite’ or antonym of hope, is always directed towards an object (and in this way akin to hope), and can be used to motivate individuals and especially groups to act in particular ways (for instance, Cicero’s use of Antony in the *Philippics*, or the *metus hostilis* in Sallust, in Chapter 1, or different bodies of troops fearing a return to civil war, in Chapter 3), but can also be paralysing for individuals,

and can lead to despair (seen in the fear of a tyrannical *princeps*, in Chapter 3).[26] Despair, on the other hand, is more concerned with the agency of an individual, and the absence of hope altogether. Within these three main categories there are many distinctions and external factors which make the situation far more complicated, including the 'trajectory' of the teleology which precedes a solution, and the extent to which these solutions extend into the future.

When thinking about these recurring elements in the way that the Romans thought about their future from the post-Ides period through to the Flavians, the work of Christian Meier contains perhaps some of the most important ideas found in modern scholarship, which can be summarized by the phrase that he coined, the 'crisis without alternative'.[27] The 'crisis' to which he refers is a long-term one that the Roman state faced from the middle of the second century B.C. down to Octavian's supremacy at the end of the 30s B.C..[28] While in this thesis we are thus only dealing with the tail end of this process, Meier's paradigm nevertheless sheds a great deal of light on the elements discussed above – in particular, why it seems that these three types of response to Rome's future are so common. The conundrum Meier outlines – the general inability to think outside of a prescribed set of options – is not unique to the late Republic and Triumviral age, and continues to be applicable well into the 'Principate' itself, as will become apparent in the subsequent chapters of this study.

By a lack of alternative, Meier means that 'powers and interests were distributed and arranged

[26] Kapust (2008), has recently outlined some of the political uses of fear in the ancient world.
[27] Meier (1990).
[28] Whether this period is too long to be designated a 'crisis' is arguable – the examples discussed in the following chapters are much more contained chronologically. Flower (2010) questions treating the Republic as one block of time, since the *res publica* operated in quite different ways throughout its history. Yet, while her periodisation might be useful in modern educational contexts, it does not map onto the perspective of the Romans themselves, who primarily saw continuity, owing to some of the aforementioned characteristics of their historiography.

in such a way that no force could be built up that was sufficiently strong and consistently directed toward overcoming the crisis'.[29] Meier outlines a theory in which there were 'defenders of the old Republic', but no 'advocates of a new order' in Rome. The inextricable links between the 'social' and 'political' spheres (and indeed the 'religious' sphere too – if such a distinction can be made – an area he does not spend long discussing) meant that it was difficult to achieve any critical distance from the problems at hand. Once Rome's empire had grown, the role of powerful generals in this crisis, either in resolving large foreign conflicts, or in averting or quelling civil war, only increased the senate's resentment towards these figures, alienating them further, and leading to yet more civil war.

Meier argues, quite convincingly, that Octavian/Augustus finally managed to resolve the 'crisis without alternative', to some extent, by positioning himself against the Hellenised/Orientalised Antony as a saviour of the traditional form of the *res publica*, and by promising to hand it back to the senate once the war was won, while actually ushering in a kind of 'monarchy'. Yet it is to a large extent true that the vast majority of changes within Roman politics and society were accompanied by the rhetoric of traditional custom, and references to the *mos maiorum*.[30] This was the case even after the 'Republic' had fallen and the 'Principate' had been established. In

[29] Meier (1990), 55.

[30] There are numerous works which have dealt with the ubiquitous tension between tradition and novelty (or innovation), in both the ancient Mediterranean world and in other cultures and periods. An influential work in this area has been that of Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), which perhaps sets up a too sharp a dichotomy between invented traditions and 'real' traditions – this is particularly problematic when applied to the ancient world, where many traditions (whether ancient or comparatively new) were constantly undergoing redefinition or change in various ways. D'Angour (2011) discusses this tension between novelty and tradition in earlier Greek contexts, across a range of genres and media, and usefully draws out a number of important points – such as the necessity for things to be characterised as 'old' in order to create a sense of the 'new', that some 'new' ideas were actually returns to 'old' ones in a rather cyclical manner, and that there were always opponents to, and supporters of, 'new' developments. No such wide-ranging study has been undertaken concerning ancient Rome, though particular elements have been covered in various ways. Finley (1965) examined, in quite a synoptic way, technical innovation and its relationship with the economic systems in Greece and Rome, and particularly the fact that the presence of abundant labour in the form of the lower classes prevented technical innovation from being greatly valued and widely implemented. Hölkeskamp (2010) Ch. 2, discusses the move from appealing to the *mos maiorum*, an unwritten 'constitution', towards the legislation of social norms, and its role in the decline of the Republic.

order for any change to be successful in Rome, it needed to latch onto some form of precedent, no matter how anachronistic, infrequent, or distant, which in actual fact allowed for a substantial amount of innovation and adaptation over the entire period of the Republic and Principate (though the senate's role as 'peer reviewers' of what precedent entailed was naturally more influential in the Republic).

One interesting element in these processes of change and innovation to which Meier does not give much attention is the 'alternatives' that were proposed but, for one reason or another, did not succeed. By 'alternative', Meier means a 'viable alternative'. Among a range of ways of thinking about the future, this thesis will explore some of the failed attempts at creating alternatives to what was the status quo at particular moments in time. Their lack of success does not indicate that there was no support for such ideas, nor does it mean that they did not inform and shape other *successful* 'alternatives' (as we shall see with Claudius' adoption of the rhetoric of the assassins of Caligula, who did not intend a further Julio-Claudian to accede). The other side of this coin addressed here, is when and how the charismatic leader became a necessary component of the ideal *res publica* – one might argue that this can only be established by examining instances of opposition to such a prospect.

The Case Studies

The following case studies have been selected in order to provide a sample of some of the ways in which studying the future can be approached in the Roman world. While this thesis does not attempt to be comprehensive, and while it does not seek to provide a continuous narrative of the early Principate, the case studies selected here offer particular, representative features

which are repeated in various ways throughout time in Roman history. They either avoid some of the more commonly discussed aspects of projecting into the future by those at the centre of power (for example, Augustus' views of the future), or if they are discussed, an attempt is made to shine new light on them by approaching them from a different angle, or in tandem with other texts or issues not usually brought to bear. This is because one of the aims of this thesis is to restore a range of possibilities or alternatives in a given moment, and to look for different perspectives among what is often familiar material.

The first chapter explores the crisis of the post-Ides period, one which was defined in markedly different ways by various political actors, in accordance with their (in some cases shifting) plans and loyalties after Caesar's assassination. For some, this crisis was the death of Caesar itself and the uncertainty which surrounded the form of government, its leadership, and the way in which his legacy was to be handled (including vengeance), while for others, the crisis was how best to return to a pre-Caesarian government, or to negotiate a settlement without reverting to further civil war. The focus in this chapter is primarily on the images of the future implied in key passages of Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Jugurthinum*, and the difficulty with which Sallust could imagine a positive future for Rome when considering the teleologies of decline he presents, and in Cicero's *Philippics*, in which his images of the future fulfil an exhortative role. It briefly compares and contrasts these approaches with the much discussed 'Golden Age' idea, which appeared at about the same time in Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue*, and drew upon and adapted a range of teleological traditions in order to present a much more hopeful conception of Rome's future. Finally, the chapter moves on to the period after Actium, and later political developments which can be seen reflected in Vitruvius' *de Architectura*, once Octavian was victorious. This chapter introduces a number of central themes and paradigms, including the aforementioned use of historical *exempla* in creating a contrast between the past, present, and imagined futures, the use of political slogans or catchphrases in

order to encapsulate idealised positive or negative futures, the embodiment of positive and negative expectations in individual statesmen, and the importance of hope and fear in generating political support.

Chapter two examines quite a different sort of crisis, caused by the inevitable mortality of Augustus himself – the tensions found within the 'succession' plans towards the end of the Augustan period, when the emerging 'Principate' began to be defined and shaped in new ways. This chapter continues some of the themes outlined in the first chapter, such as the way in which the imagined future of Rome began to be tied more closely to the personalities, virtues, and vices of prospective leaders (some of which were claimed to be 'inherited'), as one might expect in a more 'autocratic' arrangement. It pays particular attention to the unsuccessful potential candidates for the role of *princeps*, Germanicus and Agrippa Postumus, and how they were a rallying point for the discontented, who hoped for a different future than one in which Tiberius became *princeps*. Germanicus is examined in relation to the cult of *Spes*, and the way in which Augustus had promoted his potential successors after 4 CE by reviving interest in this future-oriented deity and playing on the emotion that she embodied – an experiment that was later to cause problems for Tiberius. Velleius' account of this period receives particular attention since it demonstrates the contested nature of images of the future, even long after the moment had occurred in which they were entertained. Agrippa's exclusion from the succession plans is examined in relation to the idea of 'inherited characteristics', and how his connection to his father Agrippa was used by both the supporters and detractors of Augustus and Tiberius for their respective political ends. 'Past futures' were often contentious in later periods, since they unsettled the present.

The third chapter examines the aftermath of the assassination of Caligula, and the discussions that occurred among the senate, people, and soldiery. It reviews the problems that stem from modern discussions of 'Republicanism', and how a case can be made that those involved in the assassination, and some senators and others who supported this action, desired a return to a pre-Caesarian form of consular government, and not just a *res publica* in which the senate selected an *optimus princeps* to take the place of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. As a part of this discussion, the importance of slogans is explored (especially that of *libertas*) as synecdochic encapsulations of particular ideas of the future. This chapter also attempts to complicate the notion that 'the praetorians' or 'the senate' were cohesive enough groups to want the same kind of future for Rome, as noted above on the issue of homogeneity and simplicity.

Chapter four examines the crisis of 68-9 CE that resulted from the death of Nero, the last Julio-Claudian. It examines the difficulties that Roman society faced when attempting to move beyond the model of Julio-Claudian supremacy which had developed in the intervening period between Augustus and Nero. The lack (or impossibility) of synoptic perspectives of this period in ancient historiography is discussed, in a situation in which events were taking place simultaneously across the empire, along with the limitations of imperial biography as a genre. The discussion also examines the evidence for the way in which each of the four contenders positioned themselves in relation to earlier *principes*, including selective histories of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, or appeals to earlier political slogans, and how these elements generated an impression of what the future under their respective rules might look like.

These particular case studies have been selected from a range of possibilities. They are not intended, when combined, to create a continuous narrative of the rise and beginnings of the Principate overall, but rather to act as a representative sample of the types of situations that

arose towards the end of the Republic, Triumviral period, and early Principate, in which discussions of the future were prominent. Each chapter emphasises a particular issue or type of future, and such situations continued to be repeated in various ways, and similar discussions held, in the centuries that followed. These include, a leader emerging from a civil war context, and forging a government, and in some cases eventually a dynasty; factions forming behind potential 'successors' with conflicting ideas, and the difficulties of managing even a peaceful transition of power; a *princeps* being assassinated by a strong enough internal, Rome-based group of conspirators, and the difficulties in reconciling various groups with diverging political aims and ideal forms of governance in its aftermath; and finally, the end of a dynasty altogether, brought about by external military force, ushering in another period of civil war, and creating a repetition of military commanders attempting to establish themselves as legitimate leaders by relying on similar elements seen in earlier chapters. Along the way, this thesis points towards other topics that could be explored in much greater details, such as the ways in which people made use of divination in Roman society, and how the past was manipulated in various ways to create teleologies of progress or decline.

Chapter One: Sallust, Cicero, the 'Golden Age', and Vitruvius: Some Conceptions of the Future in the Post-Ides Period

Introduction

The post-Ides period is the first case study examined in this thesis, which sheds light on the importance of conceptions of the future in Rome during times of crisis. In this chapter I shall compare the visions of the future developed by two authors writing directly after the death of Caesar, Sallust and Cicero. They will be contrasted with the much discussed idea of a return to a 'Golden Age', a hopeful projection into the future developed by Vergil in the *Fourth Eclogue* a few years after this. Finally I shall make use of Vitruvius as an example of someone writing, with rather more certainty, at the beginning of what is now known as the Principate.[31]

I shall argue that there were a number of similarities in the way in which various historians, orators, political actors, and (to some extent) poets thought about the future in the post-Ides and Triumviral period, which can be seen quite clearly in the extant sources. Despite the fact that these texts belong to different genres, and in some instances their authors envisage the crisis in rather different ways (for instance, were the Liberators the cause of the crisis, or was Caesar himself?) there are recurring themes found within them when we turn towards their imagined futures. These themes also recur in other texts discussed in later chapters, and reveal the surprisingly unified political language and mental framework used by the Roman elite in the crises which form the focus of this thesis, from the Ides until the Flavian era. As outlined in the Introduction, three major possibilities for Rome emerge (*mutatis mutandis*) from an array of imagined futures: a virtuous individual guiding the Roman state out of a crisis, who then is

[31] The *novus status rei publicae*, cf. Suet. *Aug*. 28; cf. Vell. Pat. 2.131 – *custodite, servate, protegite hunc statum, hanc pacem, hunc principem* also provides important evidence for the development of an awareness of a change of the *status* of the *res publica*, even if it was not replaced by a *principatus per se*. This issue of terminology with respect to *res publica* and 'Republic' is also discussed in Ch. 3.

either to be made redundant after this is achieved or who is to hold the state together through these virtues; the institutions of the *res publica* being revived to an idealised state (from the perspective of the protagonist) after a period of decline, through the senate and people realising the error of their ways; or a kind of despair about the future (perhaps vaguely articulated), in which Roman society will continue in a downward trajectory.

While these three resolutions to a crisis may seem quite straightforward, there is an array of variables which must be taken into account. One of the most important factors is the 'shape' of the teleology which precedes a solution. Moreover, the solution may involve more than one stage ('long term' versus 'short term' futures). For example, in the case of Cicero, we have an orator and author who, in the *Philippics*, sees that the immediate crisis of Rome's future might be managed by making use of the young Octavian and his military force, even though this does not represent his ideal state for the *res publica* overall, which, it seems clear, was a return to a situation prior to Caesar's dictatorship, in which he and other members of the senate possessed greater parity. Yet an alternative model, if Cicero's ideal plan is not carried out, is also presented as a warning: a situation in which the state descends into future civil war and eventually, greater tyranny under Antony. Thus, we have 'short term' and 'long term' futures, responding to 'short term' and 'long term' pasts, which, when stitched together, form the mental framework of an individual with respect to time and history. These 'futures' can only be built upon experiences of the past, or some blending of different aspects of the (often idealised) past – and considering the strong concern that many had for the *mos maiorum,* the political arrangements proposed were often supposed to resemble closely the *res publica* in an earlier period, however romanticised, rather than drawing upon models from elsewhere (for instance, from other *poleis* or cultures, perhaps with the exception of the poets).

As well as the similarities outlined above, these authors also illustrate important differences in the way in which conceptions of the future might be handled in various contexts. Sallust's overarching teleology of decline, and his uncertainty about the future of Rome in his own day, demonstrate an outlook of resignation and/or despair, which may have been shared by a number of his contemporaries.[32] While he does not say much about the distant future (from his own standpoint), perhaps owing to the volatile political situation in which he composed his works, to which he alludes in various ways, he nevertheless provides a faint glimmer of hope for the possibility of Rome's recovery from its downward trajectory through the restoration of *virtus*. Additionally, Sallust can be seen to allude to the subsequent careers of key figures in his works in such a way as to create a teleology of decline that depends upon their actions, a form of negative *exempla* illustrating the importance of *virtus*. The tension between this personal responsibility and a general cultural malaise, as well as the role given at places to *fortuna*, provides an interesting dynamic. Furthermore, his presentation of conceptions of the future held by protagonists themselves in his historical narratives provides an example of how such 'futures' in the past could be used in historiography to portray protagonists as naïve, short-sighted, providential, and so on.

In the *Philippics*, Cicero demonstrates a common use of conceptions of the future in oratorical contexts. That is, they are simplified into (often false) dichotomies, since painting good and bad alternative images of the (usually immediate) future for an audience was a way in which to harness that audience's hopes and fears, in order to convince them to act according to the orator's wishes. As a part of this, basing expectations of an individual's future behaviour upon their past actions was a way of projecting their actions into the future; so too, the accumulation

[32] Osgood (2006), 4-5, discusses the pessimistic attitude evident in a number of texts from the Triuvmiral period as a consequence of the turmoil and violence.

of instances of exemplary figures from Rome's history acting to the detriment of, or for the good of, the *res publica* was also a way of creating patterns or teleologies which could be extended some way into the future.

Despite these tentative futures, both Cicero and Sallust reveal something interesting about the extant prose authors from the post-Ides period, which is that their conceptions of the future do not extend very far into the distant future. The *telos* (if articulated) is a rather simplified, virtuous *status quo* which was imagined to exist at some point prior to the civil wars (and for Cicero this superior age possibly lies in the more recent past than for Sallust), and is perhaps more of a 'corrective' or 'return' to a norm more than anything else. Their hesitation or inability to articulate exactly what their ideal 'long term' future scenario for the *res publica* will look like is no doubt partly owing to the respective genres in which they wrote, by contrast with poetry which lends itself more naturally to a prophetic mode (seen in the word *vates*). Yet it is not entirely a result of genre. Unlike the predictability found earlier in the Republic, when the consistency of the election of annual magistrates from familiar elite clans mapped out a kind of future, generation by generation, in a rather predictable fashion (at least in theory), and unlike the later developments in the Principate, when the 'reigns' of various *principes* could be envisaged as stretching out the future into an imagined series of successions (also in theory, as we shall note in Chapter 2, with the hiccups in succession plan, and Chapters 3 and 4, with the deaths of Caligula and Nero, respectively), some authors from the post-Ides period evidently struggled to see a longer-term future.

The idea of a 'Golden Age' provides quite a different near-contemporary perspective, and Vergil's first articulation of this idea in his *Fourth Eclogue* comes only a few years at most after both Cicero's *Philippics* and Sallust's monographs. It shares a number of things in

common with these works, such as an implicit teleology of Rome's moral decline up to the present, drawing upon various mythological traditions, and, like Sallust's role for the man of *virtus* and to some extent Cicero's use of figures such as the young Octavian, the idea that an individual figure might rectify this downward trajectory is also presented. Yet there are notable differences, one of which is the more explicitly structured mythical-historical framework, which allows for a greater amount of projection into the (exceptionally idealised) future, but also creates temporal issues since it pulls in different directions of present and future; another is the fact that the transformative leader is a 'messianic' child, whose presence brings the Golden Age into being. Yet perhaps the most significant difference is simply the exceedingly hopeful nature of this imagined future which checks Rome's decline.

After the civil wars had concluded, projections could be made more easily with the reduction in uncertainty that came with peace. Thus, Vitruvius' conception of the future in his preface reflects a wider culture of (professed) optimism about the *res publica* under Caesar (Augustus), shared by some, though certainly not by all. It shows the way in which the imagined future solutions to Rome's problems in the post-Ides period, and particularly the idea of a man of *virtus* guiding the state out of turmoil and corruption, were picked up by later authors and applied to Octavian/Augustus. It also demonstrates how appeals to the future could be used to praise the *princeps*, particularly when comparing the present and imagined future with Rome's troubled recent past, as well as being exhortative (in a manner not dissimilar to Cicero's approach), by encouraging those in power to continue to act in a particular way.

Sallust's Teleology of Decline, and Despair: the *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Jugurthinum*

Sallust presents us with an important case study when considering conceptions of the future of Rome at the beginning of the Triumviral period. Writing shortly after the assassination of

Caesar in the late 40s, the subject matter he chose to address in his works concerned earlier periods of Rome's history. Yet these periods were sufficiently recent to be relevant to issues faced in his own time, since Sallust diagnosed the ills afflicting contemporary Roman society as having their causes much further back in the Republic of the second and early first centuries BCE. As a consequence of the periods he discusses, and his apparent reluctance to provide explicit assessments of what he considers likely to happen in the future from his standpoint in the late 40s, one must take a roundabout approach to working out his opinions, by examining the nature of his teleology of decline and the conditions necessary to reverse the process, and by examining potential allusions to his own contemporary situation and the future.[33] As Levene has noted, the *Bellum Jugurthinum* appears to be quite deliberately fashioned as a 'fragment' of a larger narrative, and points to events that occurred both in the past and, more importantly for our purposes, in the future.[34] While the *Bellum Catilinae* may not possess quite the same level of sophistication in this respect, both works certainly contain similar themes, and a teleology which stretches beyond their notional chronological limits, and both contain allusions that could be said to refer to Sallust's own time, telling us something about his idea of the future. Since a comprehensive study of Sallust's view of Roman history, and all of the episodes that may have some bearing on the future from his perspective in the late 40s would require a much more extensive analysis than can be presented here, some of the major strands in his conception of, and fears for, Rome's future will be examined. The general shape of the teleology of moral decline which Sallust presents in his works can perhaps be seen most clearly in a few key passages of his monographs, such as in the 'archaeology' in the *Bellum Catilinae* (6-13).

[33] Sallust's teleology of decline is influenced by and in dialogue with that of Thucydides. Scanlon (1980), 23-5. Some particular parallels are noted below. On the more general question of Sallust's debt to Thucydides, see especially Scanlon (1980), and Wiater's concise summary (2017), 666-73.
[34] Levene (1992), 53.

In the 'archaeology', an idealised view of Rome's early history is constructed (6-9), emphasising Rome's surprising *concordia* among the different groups of Trojans and Aborigines that made up its citizenry shortly after its foundation (6.2), and its growth in population, size, and *mores*, with the only envy mentioned at this point being that of other nations or tribes directed towards Rome (6.4). Its men vie with each other for glory through military exploits against these groups (6.5). Sallust notes the change from monarchy (described as initially lawful or proper - *imperium legitumum*) to consular government, though the presence of the *patres* under the monarchy is also observed (6.6-6.7). Significantly, however, this only occurs once the monarchy becomes tyrannical (*dominatio*), since it is presented as securing liberty (from foreign enemies, suggested by the emphasis on Roman expansion throughout) and contributing to Rome's growth (*quod initio conservandae libertatis atque augendae rei publicae fuerat*).[35] This is followed by more competition (of the right sort) for military glory, with men valuing praise and demonstrating generosity, after consular government is introduced (7), and then a short digression on how the best men of Rome were involved in action and thus were not involved in the writing of history, unlike the Athenians, whose deeds were not as great but who nevertheless have a reputation owing to historians with *magna ingenia* (8) – here Sallust takes a bow, and on his connection of *virtus* to the writing of history, more below. It is curiously introduced and to some extent 'explained' by a reference to *fortuna* ruling in all affairs. Next comes a summary (9) of the proper attention paid to *mores* and the *concordia* that existed within the state (returning to the emphasis on *concordia* in 6.2), placed alongside quarrels conducted appropriately with foreign enemies, and the only competition with each other being for *virtus*. The Romans are frugal in their homes, yet cultivate the gods lavishly, and are faithful to their friends. They are bold in war and just in

[35] Perhaps an allusion to Sallust's more recent past, and his idea that a sole ruler of sufficient *virtus*, in the right circumstances, could be good for the welfare of the state, discussed below.

peace. However, after this initial positive stage, which is represented rather simplistically as an era of Roman expansion and moral progress, things take a turn for the worse in the following section (10), which starts the period of decline.

This decline is presented partly as a result of the destruction of their foreign enemies, sometimes referred to as the removal of the *metus hostilis* – a phrase not appearing here but borrowed by scholars from Sallust's later monograph (*BJ* 41.2) to describe this fear of an external enemy that was a positive unifying force.[36] This idea sits behind the sections just discussed (6-9) as Rome expands into a world power, the growth here noted as being a consequence of *labor* and *iustitia*. While Carthage is singled out as a vanquished opponent and its destruction as a turning point in 146 BCE, there are allusions to other unnamed enemies (perhaps Hellenistic kings, and former Carthaginian territories), which complicates the idea that the beginning of Rome's decline can be identified with a particular moment in time, or at least this one – and indeed Sallust may have been moving the start of the decline of Rome's *mores* rather late in the piece compared with the annalistic tradition.[37] Furthermore, *fortuna* reappears, this time being at least partly responsible for causing trouble (*saevire fortuna ac miscere omnia coepit*) (10.1). As a consequence of these things, avarice and a desire for power begin to take hold (10.3), and Sallust claims this *avaritia* subverted *fides, probitas,* and the *bonae artes* and taught instead evils including insolence (*superbia*), cruelty (*crudelitas*), the neglect of the gods, and the commodification of all things (10.4).[38] *Ambitio* is targeted in the following sentence for creating two-faced individuals, and the valuing of friendships only

[36] The variant expression *metus Punicus* appears in *Hist.* 1.12. On the use of the *metus hostilis* and the political uses of fear, see Kapust (2008), 364-8.
[37] Indeed, Sallust further complicates this simplistic presentation of a period of *concordia* in the fragmentary *Histories* by noting the discord involved with the expulsion of the kings and the struggle of the orders, prior to the destruction of Carthage, which nevertheless still plays an important role as a turning point. Cf. Earl (1961), 41-2, who takes this modification as Sallust's response to criticism of the idealised teleology presented in his monographs.
[38] The combination of greed and ambition mirrors Thuc. 3.82.8. Thucydides' discussion of the Corcyran *stasis* is the passage that Sallust alludes to most frequently. See Scanlon (1980), 35, 60-1, 99-102; cf. 23-5.

according to one's own interest rather than from a good nature (*ingenium bonum*) (10.5). Then there is an illustration of the 'snowballing' nature of Sallust's decline, the vices at first growing little by little (*haec primo paulatim crescere*) and occasionally checked by punishment, but eventually the corruption spreads like a disease (*ubi contagio quasi pestilentia invasit*) and the citizenry is altered, with the government becoming intolerable and cruel (10.6).[39]

Sallust creates further nuance (or a slightly different order) in the decline in the following section, noting that *ambitio* had in fact been the first major problem, rather than *avaritia*, the former he notes being not so far from *virtus*, since *gloria*, *honor* and *imperium* are sought by both good and cowardly (or lazy) men (11.1). This is contrasted with *avaritia*, which he suggests is entirely bad since no wise man covets money – it has a poisonous effect making the mind and body effeminate, and is always insatiable. Thus, curiously, within a relatively short space, Sallust appears to prioritise *avaritia* as the original vice manifesting itself in Rome's populace (10.3), before changing tack slightly and prioritising *ambitio* (11.1).[40] The latter order of vices taking hold does accord somewhat better with the overall notion of a growing decline, and the earlier emphasis (in 6-9) on military virtues and great deeds presumably leads more naturally to *ambitio*. Moreover, it introduces Sulla in the next section, an important passage in which he is cast as a key figure in the decline, and a symbol of Rome's infection by *avaritia* (11.4-7)[41]:

> Sed postquam L. Sulla armis recepta re publica bonis initiis malos eventus habuit, rapere omnes, trahere, domum alius alius agros cupere, neque modum neque modestiam victores habere, foeda crudeliaque in civis facinora facere. Huc adcedebat quod L. Sulla exercitum quem in Asia ductaverat, quo sibi fidum faceret, contra morem maiorum luxuriose nimisque liberaliter habuerat. Loca amoena, voluptaria facile in otio ferocis militum animos molliverant. Ibi primum insuevit exercitus populi Romani amare,

[39] Cf. Thuc. 2.53. See Scanlon (1980), 59-60.
[40] Cf. Lintott (1972), 627-8. Lintott attributes this tradition of moral decline deriving from foreign conquest, which appears in a range of authors, to the political rhetoric of the Gracchan period, 638. Of course, the Sullan era's role as a turning point for the spread of *avaritia*, noted below, must have been a later addition to the original tradition if this was the case.
[41] All translations taken from the Loeb editions and adapted by me in many places.

> potare; signa, tabulas pictas, vasa caelata mirari; ea privatim et publice rapere, delubra spoliare, sacra profanaque omnia polluere. Igitur ei milites, postquam victoriam adepti sunt, nihil relicui victis fecere. Quippe secundae res sapientium animos fatigant: ne illi corruptis moribus victoriae temperarent.
>
> But after Lucius Sulla had regained control of the state by arms, and brought about bad results despite good beginnings, all men began to rob and pillage; one coveted a house, another lands; the victors showed neither moderation nor restraint, but did shameful and cruel deeds against their fellow citizens. To this was added the fact that Lucius Sulla, so as to secure the loyalty of the army which he had led in Asia, had allowed it luxury and excessive license contrary to our ancestral custom; charming and pleasure-filled places had easily sapped the war-like spirit of his soldiers in their idle moments. There it was that an army of Roman people first became accustomed to indulge in women and wine; to admire statues, paintings, and chased vessels; to steal them from private houses and public places; to pillage shrines, and to desecrate everything, both sacred and profane. These soldiers, therefore, after they had achieved victory, left nothing to the vanquished. In truth, prosperity tries wise men's souls; still less could men of depraved character like those temper victory.

Sallust here underscores the actions of Sulla and his army as a major turning point – perhaps in the same way that the destruction of Carthage is made to symbolise the end of the *metus hostilis*, the conduct of Sulla and his troops encapsulate the later stage of widespread *avaritia* and increasing *luxuria*. Yet the Sullan era is given much more space than the destruction of Carthage. More than this, emphasis is placed on the snatching and dragging away of goods (*rapere omnes*, *trahere*) and especially of coveting of houses and land, and cruel deeds carried out against citizens, in particular. These actions bring to mind not just the sack of Athens but especially Sulla's proscriptions in 82 BCE. We shall return to Sallust's contemporary context below, but this could well be an allusion to, and condemnation of, the Triumviral proscriptions of 43 BCE, which likely occurred just prior to (or perhaps coincided with) Sallust's composition of the *Bellum Catilinae*. The final idea of acting with *temperantia* in one's moment of victory is also rather resonant of the *clementia Caesaris*, notably absent in the next generation of Caesarians, in 43.

In the next section, Sallust suggests that once the honour of riches could be seen as leading to glory and positions of power, *virtus* became dull, poverty a disgrace, and *innocentia* began to be considered *malivolentia* (12.1). The youth are also corrupted by riches and consumed by *luxuria*, *avaritia*, and *superbia*, and as a result of this, all sorts of other vices take hold (12.2). Thereafter he makes a comparison between the luxurious houses of recent times and temples built by the *maiores*, who adorned shrines with *pietas*, their own houses with *gloria*, and interestingly, from the defeated took nothing but their freedom to do harm (*neque victis quicquam praeter iniuriae licentiam eripiebant*). Sallust switches back to his contemporaries, and notes that they have taken from the *socii* all that the brave men of former generations had left them when victorious, as if to cause injury was the same as to rule (12.3-5) – another call for moderation and clemency. Finally, he makes the point that these individuals have squandered the wealth they obtained through levelling mountains and building on the sea, and that their riches are a mockery (13.1-2). These riches have led, as he notes earlier on, to other vices, including debauchery and gluttony, which he follows with a list of illustrations of various forms of self-indulgence, vices which also corrupt the youth (13.3-5).

Thus, the decline in the Roman state presented in the 'archaeology' establishes the context of depravity in which Catiline and his followers should be seen, who are discussed immediately afterwards (14-16), and to some extent attempts to explain how Rome could produce such a figure. Yet notably, there is no indication here that Rome has reached the ultimate depths of its decline – indeed there may be hints for the knowing reader that worse is yet to come, leading up to Sallust's own time, and beyond, into his imagined future.

Some related passages in the *Bellum Jugurthinum*, which will be dealt with more concisely, provide an interesting comparison, and there is some evidence that Sallust's conception of

Rome's decline had altered slightly by the time of his second monograph, while keeping the same downward trajectory. As noted above, a similar emphasis on the destruction of Carthage as a turning point is found in an excursus in the *Jugurtha* (41-2), although in this case it is a rather truncated teleology of Rome's decline focussed on internal political strife. Sallust attributes to the destruction of Carthage the rise of political *partes* and *factiones*, and other ills, as a consequence of the peace, and the abundance it brought with it (41.1). He creates a contrast with the period beforehand, in which the senate and people peacefully manage the *res publica* with moderation, and when there was contest for *gloria* or *dominatio*. This was a result of fear of the external enemy, which kept the citizenry within the bounds of good morals or qualities (*metus hostilis in bonis artibus civitatem retinebat*) (41.2). Thus with the removal of the fear of Carthage, numerous vices are unleashed – yet this time *lascivia* and *superbia* are emphasised – and this brings about a conflict between the *nobilitas* and the *populus* (41.3-5). Interestingly, similar words describe the nature of the conflict and looting between nobles and the people as were used in the earlier Sullan passage in the *Bellum Catilinae* (*ducere*, *trahere*, *rapere*). Thereafter, the dominance and injustice of the *nobilitas* is discussed (41.6-10), including the emergence of *avaritia* alongside *potentia* – the different emphasis, on internal class conflict, reflecting the earlier period and the subject matter of the *Bellum Jugurthinum*, with its focus on *novi homines* such as Marius. Naturally, in this account of Rome's decline Sulla is not mentioned, yet it is interesting to note that *avaritia* is a problem well before him here. The Gracchi are then used to illustrate this wider point about discord in Rome, in their assertion of the freedom of the plebs against the nobility, in an abridged history of the two brothers and their deaths (42.1-5). For our purposes, what is quite significant is the repetition of ideas and motifs from Sallust's earlier description of Sulla's proscriptions, and most notably, the idea of moderation or clemency towards the defeated, which continues throughout this section (42.3-5). Of particular importance is the claim that it is better for a good man to be defeated than

triumph over a wrong in a wicked manner (*sed bono vinci satius est quam malo more iniuriam vincere*), and close attention is paid to the cruelty of the nobility in their treatment of the vanquished (42.4):

> Igitur ea victoria nobilitas ex lubidine sua usa multos mortalis ferro aut fuga exstinxit plusque in relicuom sibi timoris quam potentiae addidit. Quae res plerumque magnas civitatis pessum dedit, dum alteri alteros vincere quovis modo et victos acerbius ulcisci volunt.
>
> And so, the nobles abused their victory to gratify their passions: they put many mortals out of the way by the sword or by banishment; and for the future they gained for themselves a greater measure of intimidation than of power. It is this spirit which has commonly sent great nations crashing down, when one party desires to triumph over another by any means at all and to take vengeance on the vanquished with excessive cruelty.

In these lines it appears that Sallust is alluding to more recent events, again emphasising the lack of *clementia* among those making the most of Caesar's legacy. This seems particularly the case in this instance, since Sallust turns this episode into a general theory of civic decline that can be applied in different contexts, and it is with this that he ties off his digression (42.5) and returns to his main narrative.[42]

In these two important passages, in the prefaces to Sallust's works, and throughout the main narratives, the decline of Roman society is diagnosed very clearly as a moral problem, resulting from the absence of *virtus* among the populace. *Virtus* appears throughout the 'archaeology' numerous times as the glue holding the *res publica* together (6.5, 7.2, 7.5, 8.4, and 9.2). Earl dedicated a large part of his work to defining the specific Sallustian conception of *virtus*, noting that it has a broader meaning than the traditional aristocratic definition, and is focussed on one's own deeds in a wide array of fields (including the writing of history itself) that arise from possessing a good nature or talent (*ingenium*, noted above in the context of friendship in *BC*

[42] For the Thucydidean borrowings in this passage, see Scanlon (1980), 128-31.

10.5).[43] By contrast, birth and station were of chief importance in the conception of *virtus* held by the nobility, which Cicero among others sought to expand to include the *novi homines* based on personal achievement.[44] Sallust attempted to replace the aristocratic ideal entirely by claiming that the history of the corrupt nobility – some of which has been noted in the digressions discussed above - demonstrated that hereditary *nobilitas* ought not be as important as those who possessed *virtus* in the manner in which he defined it. Yet in the *Bellum Jugurthinum* (4.7) even the *novi homines* are corrupted by the same *ambitio*, including Marius (63.6), who makes this very argument against the nobility in his speech (85). To this point one must add that the role of *fortuna* seen in the passages described above and elsewhere in the works is also quite unusual, since *fortuna* only appears to affect those who do not display adequate *virtus* – and thus the *fortuna* which appears to have a role in Rome's decline is perhaps decisive simply as a result of the vacuum created by the absence of *virtus*.[45] Marius, on this count too, falls short of the mark. At the very beginning of the preface to the *Bellum Jugurthinum* (1.1), Sallust criticises those who think that life is controlled more by chance than by virtue (*forte potius quam virtute regatur*). He notes that when the mind advances to *gloria* via *virtus*, it is powerful and illustrious and has no need for *fortuna*, since *fortuna* cannot give or take *probitas, industria*, or any of the *bonae artes*. Only those who lack these things blame their circumstances. Thus when we later see Marius consulting the soothsayer, who predicts great things for him and advises him to put his fortune to the test (63.1-2), or when he later awaits the favour of *fortuna* (93.1) or wins a military victory only by chance (*forte*) (94.7), this is as much a symptom of Marius' moral decline as any intervention on the part of a deity. Who

[43] On *virtus*, see Earl (1961), 28-40.
[44] Earl (1961), 39.
[45] Stewart (1968), notes this tension between *fortuna* and *virtus*, as does Santangelo (2013), 183, though the latter claims that nothing meaningful can be said about the role of *fortuna* in Sallust owing to the apparent contradictions.

was there of sufficient *virtus* to check Rome's demise, and did Sallust think any of his contemporaries were up to the task?

In fact, many of the main characters, including the largely 'good' figures, in Sallust's works can also be seen to be corrupted in various ways as the narratives progress. Levene has demonstrated that each of the main protagonists in the *Bellum Jugurthinum* – Jugurtha, Metellus, Marius, and Sulla – show various sorts of decline in character, as their morals are corrupted, not only by the general situation in Rome, but by each other in turn.[46] Moreover, even those who are explicitly attributed *virtus* by Sallust, such as Metellus, Cato, and Caesar, are shown to be lacking in various respects – they may have a kind of *virtus*, but not the whole package in accordance with his idealised past.[47] On this particular issue, Levene has also made an interesting case for the idea that in their speeches, Sallust has Caesar and Cato embody different parts of the Elder Cato's character, of mercy and rigour respectively (Cato being an historiographical and moral model for Sallust), and that this fragmentation of the Elder Cato's character results in a situation in which neither have all of the tools necessary to navigate the situation.[48]

The speech of Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae* is also of great significance when attempting to assess this question of whether anyone in the recent past, including Sallust's contemporaries, possessed sufficient *virtus* to alter the process of moral decline. Of particular interest is the section that looks towards the future, when Caesar discusses setting a precedent (51.25-36):

[46] Levene (1992), 64.
[47] Despite Earl's claim about Metellus (*BJ* 64.1) and Cato (*BC* 53.6) – strangely leaving out Caesar, whose *virtus* is noted by Sallust at the same time as that of Cato. Earl (1961), 39.
[48] See Levene (2000). Moreover, he suggests that this episode and others reveal that the *virtus* mentioned by Sallust in the prefaces was not as pure prior to 146 BCE as it is presented. The paradoxical situation arises in which to act for the good of Rome and destroy the *hostis* (whether Carthage or Catiline) removes the conditions and motivations for displaying *virtus* in the first place, causing further decline. There is also the influence of Thucydides' Mytilenian debate (3.37-48) on Sallust's debate between Caesar and Cato. See Scanlon (1980), 102-8.

At enim quis reprehendet quod in parricidas rei publicae decretum erit? Tempus, dies, fortuna, quoius lubido gentibus moderatur. Illis merito adcidet quicquid evenerit; ceterum vos, patres conscripti, quid in alios statuatis considerate. Omnia mala exempla ex rebus bonis orta sunt; sed ubi imperium ad ignaros eius aut minus bonos pervenit, novom illud exemplum ab dignis et idoneis ad indignos et non idoneos transfertur. Lacedaemonii devictis Atheniensibus triginta viros inposuere qui rem publicam eorum tractarent. Ei primo coepere pessumum quemque et omnibus invisum indemnatum necare. Ea populus laetari et merito dicere fieri. Post ubi paulatim licentia crevit, iuxta bonos et malos lubidinose interficere, ceteros metu terrere; ita civitas servitute oppressa stultae laetitiae gravis poenas dedit. Nostra memoria victor Sulla quom Damasippum et alios eius modi, qui malo rei publicae creverant, iugulari iussit, quis non factum eius laudabat? Homines scelestos et factiosos, qui seditionibus rem publicam exagitaverant, merito necatos aiebant. Sed ea res magnae initium cladis fuit; nam uti quisque domum aut villam, postremo vas aut vestimentum aliquoius concupiverat, dabat operam ut is in proscriptorum numero esset. Ita illi quibus Damasippi mors laetitiae fuerat paulo post ipsi trahebantur, neque prius finis iugulandi fuit quam Sulla omnis suos divitiis explevit.

Atque ego haec non in M. Tullio neque his temporibus vereor; sed in magna civitate multa et varia ingenia sunt. Potest alio tempore, alio consule, quoi item exercitus in manu sit, falsum aliquid pro vero credi; ubi hoc exemplo per senatus decretum consul gladium eduxerit, quis illi finem statuet aut quis moderabitur?

But, you may say, who will complain of a decree which is passed against traitors to their country? Time, I answer, the lapse of years, and Fortune, whose caprice rules nations. Whatever befalls those prisoners will be deserved; but see that you consider, Members of the Senate, how your decision will affect other criminals. All bad precedents have originated from good measure; but when power comes to those inexperienced in exercising it or to men not so virtuous, that new precedent is transferred from those deserving and fit for such punishment to the undeserving and unfit. The Spartans, after they had conquered the Athenians, set thirty men over them to administer their state. Those men at first began to put to death without a trial the most wicked and generally hated citizens. The people rejoiced at those executions and declared that they were carried out deservedly. But afterward, when their license gradually increased, the tyrants slew good and bad alike at their pleasure and intimidated the rest. Thus the nation was reduced to slavery and paid a heavy penalty for its foolish rejoicing. Within our own memory, when the conqueror Sulla ordered the killing of Damasippus and others of that kind, who had become prominent to the detriment of the state, who did not commend his deed? People asserted that criminal intriguers, who had disturbed the country with civil strife, had deservedly been put to death. But that act was the beginning of great bloodshed; for whenever anyone coveted a man’s house in Rome or the countryside, or in short even a man’s cup or clothing, he contrived to have him enrolled among the proscribed. Thus those who had exulted in the death of Damasippus were themselves a little afterward dragged off to execution, and there was no end to the killing until Sulla glutted all his followers with riches.

For my own part, I fear nothing of this kind in Marcus Tullius or in these circumstances, but in a great community of citizens there are many different natures. It is possible for something false to be believed true at another time, when someone else is consul who may likewise have an army under his control. When the consul, on the basis of this

> precedent, shall draw the sword in obedience to the senate's decree, who will limit or who restrain him?

It is tempting to see an even more explicit reference to the proscriptions of 43 in this passage than in the 'archaeology' concerning Sulla, and in the excursus on factional strife in the *Bellum Jugurthinum* concerning the *nobiles*, observed above. While some comparisons of this sort have been advanced in the past, perhaps the most compelling and detailed argument for a parallel has been made recently by Stone.[49] The two historical examples Caesar cites, the Thirty Tyrants and Sulla, have some bearing on the situation in 63, he claims, and may reflect part of Caesar's historical speech, yet from *atque* onward Caesar does not make use of them but looks towards the future. The details Stone provides that suggest Sallust's Caesar might be alluding to 43 include the intervention by a consul; the presence of an army, which importantly, Cicero did not possess in the city at the time of the killing of the Catilinarians; a senatorial decree, which occurs both in 63 and 43, since the *lex Pedia*, he argues, must have been preceded by a decree annulling the *senatus consultum* that established the amnesty in the first place; and a drawn sword as the manner of death, used for citizens declared *hostes* in civil war, rather than the array of other traditional methods of execution at Rome.[50] Stone claims that Sallust lays at the feet of Octavian the breach of the amnesty (more often attributed to Antony, thanks to Cicero), and thus also the proscriptions that are the logical next step for the consul with an army.

Here Sallust's Caesar is predicting the future - the triumvirate and the proscriptions they will introduce - in order to show just how far things will degenerate in Sallust's own lifetime, beneath even the state of affairs in Catiline's Rome. This prediction of the future does not extend beyond Sallust's present day, but the implication of the allusion is that Octavian, the

[49] Syme (1964), 121-3; Osgood (2006), 261-2; Stone (forthcoming); *pace* Levene (2000), 189-90.
[50] This imagined future is much more specific than Diodotus' generalised call for the Athenians to think of their future advantage when considering clemency for the Mytilenians. Thuc. 3.44.

young Caesar, definitely cannot be a man of *virtus*, and is ironically condemned by 'Caesar' himself. The emphasis on moderation and clemency in other parts of the work have been noted above, and here there is further unrestrained violence and coveting of the possessions of others. There was no leading figure who could represent *virtus* waiting in the wings in 43, since all of the key Caesarians were implicated.

Sallust's teleology has been examined by Comber and Balmaceda, who observe that political decline does not occur automatically in Sallust's paradigm, 'but results from conscious decisions made by individuals: and the hopeful corollary of this firm judgement is that decline can be halted and reversed by the resolute efforts of each one of these individuals.' [51] They note that general causes or the 'course of history' cannot be blamed for the decline, and that Sallust thus promotes a sense of personal responsibility in his audience. Scanlon, too, observed the implications of this account of virtue and vice, suggesting that Sallust's criticism of public office does not stem from an idea that it is inherently corrupt, but that virtuous men are not granted it at present. He claims that the 'distinction is crucial in determining the "target audience" of the work since Sallust implicitly allows for the possibility that men of *virtus* may again take office and that this recovery may be aided by his historical *exempla*. […] He does not rule out a change for the better nor does he explicitly discourage others from pursuing politics perhaps with more success than he had.'[52] However, despite both of these assessments, it is clear that Sallust presents no contemporary candidate for this role of the man of *virtus*, and in fact implies that things have deteriorated even further since 63 BCE.

[51] Comber and Balmaceda (2009), 26.
[52] Scanlon (1987), 12-13.

It is possible that Sallust considered the act of stepping outside of the system in order to write history in a moralising or didactic fashion more important than trying to act with *virtus* within such a self-serving political climate, owing to historiography's potential to influence a wider group within the senatorial class (and beyond it).[53] So there remains a glimmer of hope for unknown men of *virtus* in the future, and the particular attention he gives to the corruption of youth, noted above, might suggest they are one intended audience for his work. In addition to this goal, the career trajectory of Sallust meant that it was not wise for him to continue in politics in any case – it was a dangerous period in which he decided to retire.[54] These personal considerations no doubt also influenced Sallust's complicated and pessimistic view of the future. At the end of the preface to the *Bellum Catilinae*, he writes (*BC* 4.1-2):

> Igitur ubi animus ex multis miseriis atque periculis requievit et mihi relicuam aetatem a re publica procul habendam decrevi, non fuit consilium socordia atque desidia bonum otium conterere, neque vero agrum colundo aut venando servilibus officiis intentum aetatem agere; sed a quo incepto studioque me ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus statui res gestas populi Romani carptim, ut quaeque memoria digna videbantur, perscribere; eo magis, quod mihi a spe, metu, partibus rei publicae animus liber erat.
>
> Accordingly, when my mind had found peace after many perilous misfortunes and I had determined that I ought to pass the remainder of my life apart from public affairs, it was not my plan to waste my precious leisure in indolence and sloth, nor yet to spend my life by devoting myself to the slavish employments of turning the soil or hunting. Rather, I decided to return to an undertaking and pursuit from which the harmful craving for advancement had held me back, and to write up the deeds of the Roman people selectively, according to whatever seemed to me worthy of record; all the more was this my intention because I possessed a mind free from hope, fear, and partisanship.

[53] Allen (1954), 7-8 proposed that his withdrawal from politics was a consequence of Sallust being involved in an extortion case, from which Caesar must have saved him despite his guilt, and after which he forced him to retire from the limelight. However, there is no indication that the passage in Suetonius (*Iul.* 43.1), which describes Caesar removing senators convicted of extortion, relates to Sallust in any way, even though pseudo-Cicero (*Sall.* 19) accuses Sallust of paying Caesar 1,200,000 sesterces to avoid the *repetundae* trial. Novokhatko (2009) 111-29, posits an Augustan date for the pseudo-Sallustian and pseudo-Ciceronian invectives, on the basis of their probable relationship with the rhetorical schools; even if this is the case, the rumour (or reality) of Sallust's bribery of Caesar may well have been contemporary. If Allen's case is correct, and Sallust was in fact forced to retire, this changes our reading of the prefaces and their moralising tones significantly – it need not discredit Sallust's desire for *virtus* in the *res publica* (and indeed there was a long tradition of otherwise respectable senators stripping the provinces of their wealth), but may alter the way we see his relationship with Caesar and also with those who sought to convict him (particularly *BC* 4.1-2, discussed below); and his potentially 'neutral' status throughout the post-Ides period.

[54] Syme (1964), 29-59.

In this passage Sallust argues that it is possible for a Roman statesman to serve the *res publica* through the writing of history, but he also draws attention to three themes that pervade all of the chapters of this thesis – hope, fear, and partisanship (*partibus rei publicae*). These themes, from which he claims to be freed owing to his retirement, are central to Roman politics in the period in question.[55] The question of hope (*spes*) in Sallust has been addressed at some length by Scanlon, and the manner in which it is used in the *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Jugurthinum*; it is often portrayed as a 'negative or unreliable force', attributed, for instance, to Catiline himself and his corrupt and often irrational conspirators, and the manner in which they considered the future.[56] Thus it is perhaps not surprising that in writing the preface to the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust claims that he has been freed of *spes*, since when directed towards the wrong goals it could prove disastrous for both the individual who entertained such hopes and the state more broadly.[57] This professed freedom from hope and fear is one reason why Sallust's conception of the future is so difficult to pin down, since they are the primary future-oriented political emotions. Partisanship, as has been noted, has subsumed the concern for the *res publica* which is more appropriate for those holding office, in Sallust's conception. What we are left with in Sallust's works, then, is an overall sense of despair (the other antonym to hope, yet unlike fear, one that refuses to engage with the future), along with an implicit hope that those of sufficient *virtus* may one day turn the *res publica* around.

[55] Compare Thucydides (5.26.5-6) whose experience of the war, he says, gave him knowledge of both sides, but whose exile gave him leisure to study the details of the events.
[56] Scanlon (1987), 17. Catiline's hopes are many, and are dashed one after the other: at *BC* 21.3 he hopes to be elected with C. Antonius; at 26.1 he hopes to do whatever he wishes when elected with Antonius. Upon disappointment, at 26.5 he resolves to seize control by force, since his covert attempts had resulted in disappointment (*aspera*) and disgrace.
[57] This scepticism towards *spes* is also found in Caesar's *Commentarii*, in which he largely avoids portraying himself as experiencing hope personally or allowing it to guide his actions, but rather emphasises his rational thought as the ideal *imperator*; this is opposed to others he describes who have wild hopes (such as Gallic tribes, or unruly troops) of booty, victory, and so on.

Hope, fear, and partisanship all make appearances in the various crises discussed in this thesis (*spes* receives particular attention in Chapter 2). For instance, Cicero often makes use of hope and fear in the *Philippics*, which is analysed in the next section – an exhortative context in which *spes* is a more positive emotion when applied to the hopes he constructs for himself and his (in some instances imagined) allies. Partisanship is also a central concern in the Roman state in this period, with appeals to be the legitimate representatives or defenders of the *res publica*, as opposed to a *factio* or *partes*, coming from all sides. This discourse of partisanship continues into the Principate, and is seen most clearly in the civil wars of 68-9 CE (Chapter 4), but also appears in other rivalries and intrigues within and around the *domus Augusta*, as discussions of succession and conspiracies became a (muted and less public) form of political activity (Chapters 2-3).

Cicero's *Philippics* – Dichotomies, Individuals as a Means to an End, and 'the Future' as an Oratorical Tool

Cicero's *Philippics*, delivered in an atmosphere of intense political anxiety and uncertainty between September 44 and April 43 BCE, develop conceptions of immediate and long-term futures in order to influence the political decision-making of the senate and people.[58] The imagined futures portrayed offer possible ways out of the 'crisis' Cicero describes in the *res publica*.[59] While it should be noted that we possess written versions of speeches which may

[58] Although he does not discuss the *Philippics*, Seager has examined Cicero's use of the 'false dilemma' in the *pro Roscio Amerino*, *pro Cluentio*, *pro Milone*, and *pro Caelio*, 'a rhetorical trick, namely the ploy whereby Cicero tells a jury that it has to choose between only two possibilities, allegedly mutually exclusive, when in fact those possibilities may not be mutually exclusive at all and there may be also others available'. Seager (2011), 99.

[59] Wooten (1983) refers to both Cicero's *Philippics* and the late speeches of Demosthenes upon which they are modelled as employing a type of oratory he terms the 'rhetoric of crisis'. The creation of false dichotomies and illustrative comparisons, the use of exaggeration, and calls for urgent action are all important elements of this. See also Manuwald (2007), 123.

have differed in various minor ways from the words actually delivered to the senate and people – or not delivered at all, in the case of the *Second Philippic* – it remains highly likely that the publicly circulated versions did not deviate too much from the orally delivered versions in terms of their main points.[60] The particular political scenarios which brought about each of the speeches, and prior knowledge of the delivered versions on the part of his peers, meant that Cicero was constrained by these factors when writing them down. In any case, for the possible range of futures discussed in the crisis of 44-43 and its immediate aftermath, it does not make a great deal of difference whether the texts we possess represent an idealised version of Cicero's rhetorical use of the future, or a precise depiction of his activities in meetings of the senate and people.

Cicero sought to persuade his audience to carry out the plans he thought best for the *res publica* in large part through the careful and selective use of praise and blame. As Manuwald has shown, Cicero's praise of Octavian and others and blame of Antony and his adherents in the *Philippics* does not reflect Cicero's political position unambiguously, as is evident through comparison with the contemporaneous correspondence.[61] Manuwald demonstrates that praise and blame were designed to rally the senate and/or people to approve of rewards and punishment for those described, in order to clarify the positions of the senate and the individuals mentioned; they had immediate political objectives.[62]

One aspect of this praise and blame is the articulation of the different future which each of these protagonists will bring about if he is able to wield power. Cicero uses the past actions

[60] Manuwald (2007), 54-65.
[61] For example, while Octavian is praised in some letters *Att*. 366 (14.12) *Att*. 390 (15.12), in others he is not taken particularly seriously *Att*. 360 (14.6), *Att*. 420 (16.11), *Att*. 425 (16.14), and seems to be treated as being too young to be a significant threat to the *res publica*, or a mere tool in Cicero's plans.
[62] Manuwald (2011), 200.

and behaviour of these leaders in order to create their anticipated 'trajectory' into the future, and by extension, the future danger or wellbeing of the *res publica*. As a result, we can see very clearly in Cicero's *Philippics* one of the most important uses of conceptions of the future in Roman society. In an oratorical context, laying out different alternative images of the future – particularly (often false) dichotomies based on an audience's hopes and fears – was a way in which to motivate individuals and groups to take action in accordance with the orator's wishes.[63] This call to action is more direct than in Sallust, who implicitly demonstrates what his contemporaries ought to be doing by providing negative *exempla* of what they ought not do, and who claimed to be unable to fulfil the political career of the man of *virtus* himself in his contemporary political climate.

In the *Philippics*, Cicero's use of imagined futures and hope differed from the way in which he employed these ideas in the 'Caesarian speeches' that he had delivered in recent years. In the Caesarian speeches the future was largely undefined, but entirely dependent upon the agency of Caesar. In the *Pro Marcello* in particular, Cicero argued that now that Caesar had achieved victory, he must set the state to rights (the clearest exposition of the details perhaps being in section 23, where he calls for the restoration of courts, population growth, and a check on licentiousness). The exact plan or vision being proposed was less clear than the constant refrain that it was Caesar who must and would carry it out (e.g. at Cic. *Marc.* 27).[64] Future ages will judge Caesar's achievements in this area to be above his victories (Cic. *Marc.* 29). Cicero also uses hope frequently in the Caesarian speeches, yet it is focussed predominantly on one issue – the hope which individuals (Marcellus, Ligarius) have of their restoration to Rome, and to

[63] 'In judicial oratory it might be sufficient to denigrate the opponent (depending on the circumstances), but a successful policy requires a constructive element and therefore has to rely on praise in order to commit the audience to the preferred policy and create loyal representatives.' Manuwald (2011), 210.
[64] Cicero may have tried to sketch out a more detailed plan for the future in his aborted letter of advice to Caesar. He had suggested that Caesar needed to spend more time settling affairs in Rome prior to leaving for the Parthian campaign. Cic. *Att.* 13.27.1 (SB 298), 13.31.3 (SB 302). See e.g. Hall (2009), 102.

public life, thanks to Caesar's clemency (e.g. Cic. *Lig.*31). Their future return is predicted by Cicero on the grounds of his own hopes of return having been realised. Therefore, although the immediately preceding speeches also make use of hortatory futures, they present a very different world in which Caesar is the author and guarantor of all. In the *Philippics*, as has often been noted, Cicero reverts to many themes and slogans from earlier in his career, and especially those relating to the Catilinarian conspiracy in 63 BCE.[65] He presents himself as coming to save the state once again, with the future in doubt – that is a range of possible futures now existed, as opposed to the one Caesarian future, and a variety of agents sought to bring these to fruition. Situated among this array of options, he needed to convince the senate and people that his imagined future was the only viable solution to Rome's problems.

The Future of Rome: Freedom or Slavery

The rhetorical dichotomy which underpins the *Philippic* collection as a whole is the idea that the current political crisis is a fork in the road, after which Rome will either recover her freedom or be reduced to slavery. Cicero presents this moment in time, particularly in the third *Philippic,* delivered on the 20th December 43, as the vital one for determining Rome's future: 'if we miss this moment, there will be no other' (*Nullum erit tempus hoc amisso*. *Phil.* 3.32).[66] He claims that the crowds that throng the Forum recognise this, and are full of hope that freedom can be regained (*Phil.* 3.32). This is in contrast to what the Roman people suffered under Caesar, when they were powerless to do anything about their condition of servitude (*Phil.* 3.33). Now the choice is between victory and freedom, or servitude, violence, and death (*Phil.* 3.35-36). The anticipated freedom will be sweeter because of the recent memory of slavery (alluding to the dictatorship of Caesar) (*Phil.* 3.36). In the fourth *Philippic*, delivered before an assembly of the

[65] See Hall (2013).
[66] Cf. *Phil.* 6.19: 'The ultimate crisis is upon us; freedom is at stake'. *Res in extremum est adducta discrimen; de libertate decernitur.*

Roman people, Cicero is even clearer that the possible future under the leadership of Antony is not just one of servitude, but unchecked violence. Antony desires not only to make the Romans slaves, he desires blood (*Phil.* 4.11). The possibility before them is not just one of freedom versus slavery, but also life versus death (*Phil.* 4.12).

Cicero characterises himself as a prophet in the speeches (e.g. *Phil.* 6.17). He is the one who can foresee the different paths open to Rome, and who now urges particular actions in order that Rome might take hold of the freedom which is her birthright and natural condition (*Phil.* 6.19). In a discussion of the role of the tribunes in checking bad political decisions, Cicero claims that despite their potential to veto bad law-making, he and the senate in general need to remain vigilant, as Antony cares nothing for the legal processes. He foresees a possible future in which Antony passes laws at will, with the assembly surrounded by armed men (*Phil.* 1.25-26). After this emotive appeal, he reminds the senators that he is speaking of the future, because it is his job as a friend of the *res publica* to foresee and to warn of things that can be avoided (*Phil.* 1.26).

Cicero's ability to see Rome's possible futures is predicated on his ability to read the signs which, he claims, the gods themselves are providing. The gods want to conserve the *res publica*, and the portents they have provided thus clearly show that justice will come to Antony, and liberty to the Roman people (*Phil.* 4.10). Yet the Romans have to take hold of this prophecy and enact the *virtus* that is their Roman heritage (*Phil.* 4.13).

Cicero sees his own personal future as one of continued service to the *res publica*. At the end of the first *Philippic*, he looks forward to two possibilities: if he is able to speak freely and without fear of violence, he will continue to serve the state publicly; if he cannot, he will

preserve his life in the hopes that some later service to the *res publica* will still be possible (*Phil.* 1.38). In either scenario, he remains committed to being a friend and guide of the state; his past actions provide the model for his future participation (*Phil.* 2.118). Cicero declares that even his own death is to be wished for, if through it he is able to bring into being freedom for the Roman state (*Phil.* 2.119).

Antony and Allies Embodying the Future Destruction of the *Res Publica*

One of the most commonly used motifs throughout the *Philippics* is the idea that Antony and his followers will bring about the destruction of the *res publica* if they are victorious, which Cicero raises in a number of different ways.[67] Cicero sometimes connects this possibility to earlier actions of Antony (and other Caesarians) which brought about the civil war and the dominance of Caesar, and laid low the *res publica* (*Phil.* 2.52-54). By speculating about Antony's plans for the future of Rome on the basis of his past actions, Cicero sought to spur the indecisive senate into action and to convince them to declare war on the consul of 44.[68] His argument is quite simply that his audience *knows* Antony (*Phil.* 3.35).

A clear example of the way in which Cicero characterises Antony's plans for the future is found in the *Third Philippic*. He asks a series of rhetorical questions (at *Phil*. 3.27, 30), which hinge on the opposition between being a *custos* (guardian) of the city and being a *direptor* (plunderer). Antony's past behaviour demonstrates that he will in fact be the second; his motivation for being under arms is a desire for plunder, which he will achieve if he is not prevented by the senate (3.30):

[67] Cf. Antony's use of armed troops to maintain his power at *Phil.* 1.34 and 2.108.
[68] The difficulty of Cicero's position in advocating war against a lawfully appointed proconsul, while supporting the unelected Octavian who had raised a private army, is outlined by Mitchell (1991), 308. This undoubtedly influenced the senate's hesitation in accepting Cicero's solution proposed in the later *Philippics*.

> Quid hic faciet, si poterit, iratus qui, cum suscensere nemini posset, omnibus bonis fuerit inimicus? Quid hic victor non audebit qui nullam adeptus victoriam tanta scelera post Caesaris interitum fecerit…
>
> What will he do, given the power, when he is angry, seeing that he was the enemy of all decent men when he had no grievance against anyone? What lengths will he not go to as a victor when without gaining any victory he committed such heinous crimes after Caesar's death?

Cicero then recounts Antony's actions in the period following Caesar's death, focusing on his control of Caesar's wealth and his *acta*, and alleging that Antony even promulgated many laws and decrees which he attributed to Caesar, but were not a part of Caesar's plans. The details are piled up to convince the listeners of Antony's dangerous lack of regard for laws, and his readiness to resort to violence. These past actions are framed in such a way as to be a warning that if he remains unchallenged, he will carry out even worse crimes than those he committed in this short period of time. Cicero dwells on the tyrannical overtones in these past actions, especially the fact that Antony ignores the customary procedures for passing legislation with the support of the senate and people, relies upon the force of arms of his bodyguard to have his way, and murders those who oppose him. The general impression from this heaping up of self-centred (and indeed, criminal) acts is the idea that the *res publica*, and law and order, was being overturned by a new tyrant in accordance with his whims – and that in the future he would be capable of even worse.[69]

A similar example of Cicero's projection of Antony's plans for the future of Rome involves him and his followers murdering citizens and dividing up their property and the city, as though it were a foreign conquest.[70] This can be seen, for example, at *Phil*. 4.9:

> Sed spes rapiendi atque praedandi occaecat animos eorum quos non bonorum donatio, non agrorum adsignatio, non illa infinita hasta satiavit; qui sibi urbem, qui bona et fortunas civium ad praedam proposuerunt; qui, dum hic sit quod rapiant, quod auferant,

[69] On the representation of Antony as a tyrant in the *Philippics*, see Stevenson (2008b), 98-102.
[70] Antony's intention to march on Rome, murder citizens, and distribute their property, occurs at numerous points, including, *Phil*. 3.4; 3.27; 3.30; 4.9; 5.6-7; 5.20; 5.32-3; 6.14; 8.8-9; 13.19; 13.42; 13.47; 14.10.

> nihil sibi defuturum arbitrantur; quibus M. Antonius—o di immortales, avertite et detestamini, quaeso, hoc omen!—urbem se divisurum esse promisit.
>
> But the hope of loot and plunder makes blind the minds of those who have not been satisfied by the gift of goods, the allocation of lands, the limitless auctioning. They have marked the city, the goods and fortunes of its citizens for plunder. While there is something here for them to loot and rob, they reckon they will not go short of anything. And Marcus Antonius—I call upon the immortal gods to avert and ward off this omen!—has promised to divide the city up among them.

Cicero makes use of forward-looking concepts such as *spes* (in this case *rapiendi atque praedandi*) and attributes to Antony the idea that he has promised his followers he will divide the city between them. Once again, the combined themes of the need for the *res publica* to be preserved (*conservandam*), and the hope of Antony's approaching punishment (*illi poena*) and the senate's freedom (*nobis libertas*) are reiterated to alienate Antony and motivate the senate. Moreover, Cicero goes on to claim that prodigies and portents have revealed the danger which Antony represents and the willingness of the gods to aid those who would oppose him. The importance of these forms of predicting the future in Roman society (more 'passive' than other forms of divination, such as augury) means that Cicero's allusion to them, no matter how vague, would have carried some rhetorical force. If the gods have preordained that these things will occur, then it makes sense for Cicero's audience to support him in the pursuit of his goals.[71]

Cicero also makes similar pronouncements about Antony's allies, and attempts to tie their past actions to Antony's future plans. For example, Cicero's depiction of Lucius Antonius as a

[71] The Polybian view (6.56.6-12) of a cynical elite manipulating the gullible plebs has shaped the opinion of numerous modern scholars writing about Roman religion and divination. Particular readings of Cicero (e.g. *Nat.D.* 1.42), Tacitus and other authors have also contributed to this modern notion of 'insincerity' among the upper classes in using divination and religion for political ends. Lily Ross Taylor (1949), 76-97, is a clear example of such an approach. Rasmussen (2003), 258, distinguishes between Cicero's works when assessing the extent of his 'cynicism', since he appears to follow tradition on divination in *de domo sua* and *de haruspicum* while adopting a more philosophical stance in *de divinatione* and *de natura deorum*. The idea that religion and divination in the Republic were largely manipulated by the elite for their own ends has been challenged by numerous modern scholars including Davies (2004), Johnston (2005), Ripat (2006), and especially Santangelo (2013), 5-7, and Champion (2017), 1-22, the latter providing a synopsis of much recent scholarship that both maintains and more importantly challenges this position.

gladiator, based on his sponsorship of gladiatorial contests in Asia, is used as a guide to the violence he will, if permitted, unleash in the future.

> cum ornasset Thraecidicis comitem et familiarem suum, illum miserum fugientem iugulavit, luculentam tamen ipse plagam accepit, ut declarat cicatrix. Qui familiarem iugularit, quid is occasione data faciet inimico? Et qui illud animi causa fecerit, hunc praedae causa quid facturum putatis? Non rursus improbos decuriabit, non sollicitabit rursus agrarios, non queretur expulsos?
>
> He equipped one of his followers, a personal friend, with the weapons of a Thracian gladiator and slaughtered the poor devil as he tried to get away; yet he himself received a heavy blow as proved by a scar. Since he slaughtered a comrade, what will he do to an enemy, if given the chance? And what do you think a fellow who did that to amuse himself will do for loot? Will he not organize troops of criminals yet again, stir up yet again people eager for a new distribution of land, and protest against evictions?

The use of this *argumentum a fortiori* about slaughtering a friend is typical of the rhetorical strategy of Cicero that posits future behaviour on the basis of known events. Lucius is also depicted as a gladiator elsewhere in the *Philippics.*[72] In the following section of the speech this behaviour is then connected to Marcus Antonius himself not only through their familial connection, but also through the idea that the supporters and troops of both Antonii are drawn from the lowest and most desperate elements in society (presumably including gladiators).

Thus through a selective use of episodes from Antony's past, and those of his allies, Cicero is able to predict the sort of future the *res publica* would suffer under the dominance of Antony. This is marked by a disregard for law, a propensity for violence, and the possibility of proscription, with Antony's followers dividing spoils among themselves. Thus Cicero creates not only a teleology of decline for the man himself, but also for the *res publica*, unless the senate takes action.

Octavian (and others) Embodying the Future Safety of the *Res Publica*

[72] Cf. *Phil.* 3.31, 6.13.

By contrast with the various negative descriptions of kings and autocrats of different periods, including the tyrannical aims of Antony himself, Cicero presents other individuals of great standing as having a beneficial influence on the *res publica*. Into this category he places the young Octavian, partly in order to influence his future actions, and historical figures such as Pompey, who is presented as having been a champion of the traditional form of the *res publica* against the aspirant and eventual monarch in all but name, Caesar. Pompey serves as Cicero's model for Octavian and the senators whom Cicero is seeking to inspire. Another example of this phenomenon is Lucius Junius Brutus, at *Phil.* 2.113-4, where Cicero employs the *gubernator* and 'ship of state' metaphor, and implicitly contrasts Brutus' actions with Antony's earlier potential piloting of the *res publica* to the point of shipwreck (at 2.92):

> Habet populus Romanus ad quos gubernacula rei publicae deferat: qui ubicumque terrarum sunt, ibi omne est rei publicae praesidium vel potius ipsa res publica, quae se adhuc tantum modo ulta est, nondum recuperavit. Habet quidem certe res publica adulescentis nobilissimos paratos defensores. Quam volent illi cedant otio consulentes; tamen a re publica revocabuntur.
>
> The Roman people has men to whom it can commit the helm of the Republic. Wherever in the world they are, there is the entire defence of the Republic, or rather, there is the Republic itself, which so far has only avenged itself, not regained itself. Yes, assuredly the Republic has champions ready to hand, young men of the highest birth. Let them withdraw as much as they please out of concern for public tranquillity: the Republic will recall them.

Once again, the language of the *res publica* not having been properly restored to its earlier pre-Caesarian state (*nondum recuperavit*) echoes earlier passages (such as *Phil.* 2.24) in which Caesar has brought the *res publica* down or overturned it in some way. The Liberators have avenged but not yet restored it, for Rome is still in a state of civil war.

Yet this problem of making use of charismatic leaders in pursuit of the goal of restoring the *res publica* to its former pre-Caesarian state becomes apparent when Cicero turns to praise Octavian in the *Third Philippic* – a problem pointed out by Brutus (or pseudo-Brutus) in his

letters to Cicero and Atticus.[73] Cicero attempts to separate Antony and the elder Caesar from his young heir primarily through characterisation, including the attribution of motives to the two claimants to Caesar's legacy. The dichotomy can be seen at *Phil.* 3.3-5, where the vices of Antony (especially *crudelitas*), and his intention to return to Rome and bring about the destruction of the *res publica* upon his arrival, are directly contrasted with the virtue of Octavian (*incredibili ac divina quadam mente atque virtute*) and his plans to save the state with his army of veterans (*in salute rei publicae collocavit*). This passage contains some of the highest praise for the young Octavian found in the speeches. The emphasis on Octavian's having freed (*liberavit*) the state again underlines the idea of *libertas* which acts as a kind of Ciceronian shorthand for the ideal condition of the *res publica*.[74] The pairing of Octavian's *virtus* with the concept of Rome's *libertas* is again made shortly afterwards at *Phil.* 3.8. By contrast with Antony, the *virtus* of Octavian is mentioned twice in the same sentence. The key difference here between these two Caesarians is that Cicero presents Octavian and his soldiers as having taken on the cause of the senate, while Antony prioritises the goals of monarchy and private wealth.

In the *Fifth Philippic*, Cicero is more explicit about the future he envisages for the young Octavian. He hopes – and seemingly expects – that the Romans will have many opportunities in the future for giving honours to Octavian (*Phil.* 5.45). The hopes Cicero entertains for Octavian's future services to the state are further elaborated and defended in a later passage. This is because others have expressed fears about Octavian's future: that he will not be able to act with moderation and will exercise his power with *intemperantia*, because of the excessive honours he has received (*Phil.* 5.48-49). Cicero argues that this fear is unjustified, and is being

[73] Cf. letters Brutus to Cicero on merits and shortcomings of Antonius and Octavian, in 26 (1.16), especially 2-3, and 27 (1.17), 2, with the *Philippics* – the authenticity of these letters is questioned. Cf. Shackleton-Bailey (1980) 10-14, Moles (1983) 765, who argues for their authenticity, and Lange (2009).
[74] cf. Cowan (2008), 149-51.

circulated by those envious of Octavian. His confidence that Octavian will be a good citizen is based, first, on the law of nature, that having had a taste of true *gloria* he will not crave the false kind; secondly, on the vast difference between his character and his father's, particularly drawing attention to his *prudentia*; and, thirdly, on the fact that he has renounced private vendettas in order to serve the *res publica* (*Phil.* 5.48-50).[75] Cicero further claims that he knows the young man's mind, and thus he himself can vouch for him (*Phil.* 5.50-51) – the opposite of the assertion noted above that all knew Antony's vices. For all of these reasons, the Roman people should expect even greater things from him in the future (*Phil.* 5.51), yet, in his character, Cicero promises that Octavian 'will always be such a citizen as he is today' (*semper fore civem qualis hodie sit. Phil.* 5.51).

After the battle of Mutina in April 43, Cicero's backpedalling from the great honours he had predicted for Octavian in the *Philippics* had a disastrous consequence. Octavian heard that Cicero was saying privately: *laudandum adulescentem, ornandum, tollendum* (the young man should be praised, decorated, and lifted up) – a pun which implied that Octavian would have to be removed, or perhaps lifted up to the heavens (*Fam.* 11.20.1, also appearing in Vell. Pat. 62.6). Octavian took the allusion to his death badly, and his working relationship with Cicero broke down, despite Cicero's attempts to mend the rift. By mid-43 Octavian had decided that the nebulous support of Cicero and the senate was not worth as much as the concrete power provided by the consulship and an army of Caesar's veterans, authorised to exact revenge for Caesar's death.

Cicero's attempts to shape the actions of his contemporaries in the *Philippics* demonstrate the importance of articulating conceptions of the future in Roman politics. As a part of this

[75] On Octavian's virtues in the *Philippics*, cf. Stone (2008), 223-7.

rhetorical use of imagined futures, making use of the hopes and fears of individuals was a key political tool. Even though Cicero's aims in 43 were not ultimately realised, the way in which he represented the future(s) of Rome, and the scenario(s) that might result from choosing a particular course, altered the behaviour of his contemporaries in meaningful ways.

Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue:* On the Cusp of a Returned 'Golden Age'?

The uncertainty and pessimism about the future in the period of crisis following the Ides, seen especially in Sallust's monographs and to some degree in Cicero's *Philippics*, stand in contrast to the more (at the very least, superficially) optimistic projection into the future articulated in Vergil's prophesy of a forthcoming 'Golden Age' in his near-contemporary *Fourth Eclogue*. This poem has received a very large amount of attention in modern scholarship – indeed, it is probably one of the most famous future-oriented works known from classical antiquity, partly owing to its striking differences from the surrounding *Eclogues* with their sparring bardic shepherds, and even more so because of its later reception and interpretation in Christian contexts.[76] My primary purpose in examining it here is to trace briefly the main teleological strands it contains and how they were used to shape images of the future, however idealised and metaphorical they may be, and to compare and contrast them with those in the other works examined in this chapter.

Temporally located in 40 BCE, with its narrator addressing the consul of that year, C. Asinius Pollio (in lines 11-12), it shares some features in common with the other texts of that era that have been discussed above, despite belonging to a very different, and poetic, genre.[77] Through

[76] For example, Syme (1939), 218-20, Mattingly (1947), Gatz (1967), Leach (1974), 216-44, DuQuesnay (1977), Nisbet (1978), Pulbrook (1982), Wallace-Hadrill (1982), Clausen (1994), 119-29, Galinsky (1996), 90-3, Osgood (2006), 193-200, Kapust (2008), Feeney (2008), 131-3.
[77] Indeed, Vergil's *Eclogues*, though generically close in some ways to one of his key influences, Theocritus, were nevertheless a significant innovation in Latin poetry. Cf. Breed (2006), 15-17.

his allusions to earlier works of various kinds, Vergil's narrator implicitly presents a teleology of Rome's decline down to the present moment; once again it is primarily a moral decline, and the idea of an individual leader potentially providing a solution for Rome's problems also appears. Yet unlike Cicero and Sallust, who are hesitant to project too far or with too much hopefulness into the future, in the *Fourth Eclogue*, Vergil's narrator predicts, at least in the midst of his imagined pastoral landscape, that Rome's downward trajectory will change course dramatically, and indeed the poem begins *in medias res*, at the moment at which things begin to diverge for the better, with the promise of a new 'golden' or 'Saturnian' age. The leader who will steer Rome out of trouble also appears in rather a different guise, as a *puer*. Not only does the birth of this *puer* bring about or portend a positive change, but as he grows older, Vergil's narrator predicts that conditions will improve until the point of his maturity, creating a teleology of progress mapped onto the natural course of a human life. Vergil's narrator in *Eclogue* 4 presents a longing for future peace in a time of turmoil and violence, yet the poem, when considered as part of the wider collection, gives the reader pause for thought.

Blending Different Traditions

One of the most significant features of the poem is the way in which Vergil draws upon a number of different poetic, prophetic, and mythological traditions in crafting his work, blending them together to create a particular set of images of the future. Theocritus *Idyll* 16 and Catullus 64 have long been identified as Vergil's main models when considering the overall structure and genre of the poem, incorporating some elements of the *basilikon* seen in the former, praising his patron Pollio by implicitly equating him as consul with a *basileus*, and from the latter, some aspects of the *epithalamium*, which some readers (though not all) have taken to be a nod towards the recent marriage of Antony and Octavia which was arranged at

about the same time as the Pact of Brundisium, in September of 40 BCE.[78] These events united the opposed Caesarian factions (for the time being) and prevented the outbreak of civil war in Italy, providing a potential reason for the narrator's optimism about the future. Arnold has dismissed the ability to read this poem in this way by rather proleptically pointing to events later in the Triumviral period, stating, 'The decade that followed the composition of this poem proves any such utopian vision to have been grossly illusory.'[79] Yet it is possible to maintain that the poem was read both by contemporaries in a more historical and prophetic way (as indeed Asinius Gallus was later to read it), while also acknowledging that the poetic allusions made in *Eclogue* 4 were perhaps intended to point more towards the space he had created for his work in wider poetic traditions, for the more sophisticated readers in his literary milieu. Other readers have seen in the poem, not so much an allusion to historical events, but rather the positioning of Vergil himself within a poetic tradition, with the narrator observing the life of the *puer* representing in some sense the creation of the new genre of pastoral within Latin poetry.[80]

More importantly, Vergil conveys this hopefulness (about his poetry, or Rome's future, or both?) by combining, and in some instances reversing, a number of different ways of conceiving of time. This is evident, for example, in the allusions in lines 4-10:

> Ultima Cumaei venit iam carminis aetas;
> magnus ab integro saeclorum nascitur ordo.
> iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna;
> iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.
> tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
> desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
> casta fave Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo.
>
> Now is come the last age of Cumaean song; the great line of the centuries begins anew. Now the Virgin returns, the reign of Saturn returns; now a new generation descends

[78] Du Quesnay (1977), 25, 28-9. There may, of course, be other inspirations, such as the proposed allusions to Cornelius Gallus and to a lost work of Pollio himself.
[79] Arnold (1994/5), 145.
[80] Breed (2007), 147.

> from heaven on high. Only do you, pure Lucina, smile on the birth of the child, under whom the iron brood shall at last cease and a golden race spring up throughout the world! Your own Apollo now is king!

There are at least four different mythological, theological, and astrological paradigms that have been merged together in these lines, creating a complex image of the coming age that is being ushered in with Pollio's consulship. These are, perhaps most famously, Hesiod's 'metallic ages', found in his *Works and Days* (106-209); the account of *Parthenos-Dike-Iustitia-Virgo* leaving the presence of mankind, from Aratus' *Phaenomena* (96-136); an otherwise unknown prophecy about a cycle of ages attributed to the Cumaean Sibyl; and the Etruscan idea of the *saeculum*. Hesiod's account presented a teleology of the decline of mankind, beginning with the golden race created by the Olympian gods, who lived in the reign of Kronos (identified here with Saturn), and had a life free from labour, evil, and sorrow. This was followed by the lesser races of silver and then bronze, gradually worse in nature and more warlike, then a brief change of course with the penultimate race of heroes (a more positive age – and presumably not in the original schema, since they are not assigned a metal), before a final deterioration to the current race of iron, in which there was constant labour (using technology), sorrow, quarrelling, and impiety. The emphasis on a golden race, as opposed to age, can be seen here with *gens aurea*, which arises once the iron race ends (lines 8-9); yet Hesiod's account, by contrast, allowed no possibility of a return to mankind's original pristine state. Aratus presented a similar structure of decline, in his digression on the catasterism of *Parthenos-Dike-Virgo* (to which Vergil alludes in line 6). This goddess once dwelt among a golden race of mankind, but as subsequent races, identified as silver and bronze, became increasingly violent and made use of weapons and tools, she visited them less frequently and eventually fled from the earth to the heavens.[81] Neither does Aratus' account propose a possible return of Virgo or the golden race.

[81] Ovid later uses this particular *Virgo-Iustitia* episode to appeal to the young Germanicus in an attempt to be recalled, by alluding to Germanicus' Latin translation of the *Phaenomena*, which itself expands this passage from Aratus' original, on which see Stiles (2017).

The reference to the *ultima aetas* of Cumaean song highlights an interesting intersection between conceptions of time, since the Sibyl of Cumae herself represented a palimpsest of different cultural traditions, with later extant texts (the 'Sibylline Oracles') exhibiting Jewish, Greek, and later Christian layers. Vergil names the Cumaean Sibyl, of the ten or so that were thought to exist by this point, but the name of the most local manifestation of this prophetic-apocalyptic tradition that stretched across the Mediterranean may have been attached to prophetic texts of this kind from the East as well.[82] Lightfoot has drawn attention to the fact that the Cumaean Sibyl, according to a text known to Servius (*ad loc.*), had a series of ten ages assigned to metals, with a final age governed by Sol – the constellations then returning to their places and the cycle of ages being renewed, perhaps in a modified version of the 'Great Year' (*magnus annus*) cycle of 10,800 years, traditionally ascribed to Heraclitus.[83] As a consequence of this, Vergil's *ultima aetas* (line 4), and his reference to Apollo (line 10), and most importantly the idea of a 'Return', may have been a part of this chronological arrangement, which bore some similarities to the Hesiodic metallic ages, and shared the *number* of ages with the scheme of Etruscan *saecula* (ten, measured by the lifespan of the oldest man born at the beginning of each age, or approximately one hundred years when taken up by the Roman state), but importantly differed from them since it was cyclical.[84] Thus, if the text Servius was referring to was the correct prophecy, and he did not supplement it with ideas drawn from elsewhere, or 'reverse-engineer' the Sibyl from Vergil's poem, then the idea that the 'return' of a golden race or age was a Vergilian innovation does not appear to be entirely correct, though it is nevertheless true that he introduced it into a new genre, and adapted these other traditions

[82] Nisbet (1978), 59, on the one hand, notes the destruction of the collection of Sibylline oracles on the Capitol in 83 BCE, making it less likely Vergil consulted this collection, but on the other hand, this need not have been all of the extant texts of the Western Sibylline oracles.
[83] Lightfoot (2007), 116-7, see also Du Quesnay (1977), 41.
[84] On the significance of Etruscan *saecula* in this period, and its later institutionalisation in the *Ludi Saeculares* see Du Quesnay (1977), 40-1, Nisbet (1978), 60-1, Feeney (2008), 145-7, Wiseman (2009), 117.

to fit into its overarching cyclical structure.[85] One of the ways in which this synthesis is accomplished is by transferring the epithet 'golden' from the Hesiodic idea of a 'race' of men to the Roman idea of an 'age', and as Feeney notes, a return to an ideal 'age' was perhaps easier to envisage.[86] Yet the *saeculum*, as we have noted, was associated with the lifespan of an individual, and thus we return once more to natural or human time – a tension resolved, to some extent, by the imagined figure of the *puer*, whose birth and growth automatically bring the new age into existence. As has been seen in discussions of Sallust and Cicero, and will be seen in the argument of later chapters (especially Chapter 3), the idea of returning to an earlier idealised age in Rome's past pervaded Roman political rhetoric, and was articulated by a wide range of authors – here one sees the same phenomenon operating on a mythical plane (while possibly reflecting concrete political developments simultaneously).

Having alluded to this array of influences, Vergil begins to map out a teleology of progress which is the inversion of the Hesiodic and Aratean model of decline noted above, with humans and gods mixing together once more (line 16), various kinds of technology associated with the Iron Age disappearing (lines 38-41), and the earth producing an abundance of food and other goods naturally (including the iconic purple wool), without the need for human labour (37-45). Yet this happens gradually, since at first traces of the old 'age of iron' remain, including the use of technology (31-33), and Vergil also places another 'age of heroes' as an intervening stage (34-6) before the return of the 'golden age' proper – certainly a reference to a second version of the Trojan war found in Catullus 64, and for our purposes, possibly a hint that trouble still may lie ahead in the near future under the triumvirs, complicating his overall narrative of

[85] *pace* Wallace-Hadrill (1982), 20-1, Clausen (1994), 121. For the idea that Servius pulled details from the poem and attributed them to the Cumaean Sibyl, see Du Quesnay (1977), 41, Nisbet (1978), 62-3.
[86] Feeney (2008), 131. As Arnold (1994/5), 152, notes, these traditional or mythological paradigms are given a pastoral colouring through the inclusion of various plants.

'progress'.[87] All of this forms quite a large amount of 'future time' to be covered by the lifespan of the *puer*, creating tension with the more present-centred lines of the poem.

While acknowledging Nisbet's identification of possible Jewish 'messianic' influences on Vergil's depiction of the *puer*, if any living (or soon to be living) person was meant to be represented by the child, it seems likely that it was intended to be the son that was predicted (incorrectly, in the end) to result from the marriage of Antony and the young Caesar's sister, Octavia, which occurred in that year, as a buttress alongside the pact of Brundisium.[88] The idea of a son uniting the Caesarian factions and moving Rome beyond the period of civil strife (provided Sextus Pompeius was defeated) is a very interesting one, especially as we have already considered that Sallust may have thought that future generations, instilled with *virtus*, were to be the solution to Rome's problems, much more so, it seems, than his contemporaries. Yet in the case of *Eclogue* 4, the figure of *virtus* (a word used of the father, 17, and the *puer*, 27) is explicitly idealised, and indeed semi-divine (15), and Galinsky, for example, questions this reading and sees the *puer* as being 'no more than a symbol or personification of the age'.[89] Arnold goes further, and suggests that the *puer* is a result of Vergil's adaptation of Catullus, who has the Parcae sing of the deeds of the predicted child Achilles at the marriage feast of Peleus and Thetis, and reverses the process of moral degradation: 'Hence, whereas the Catullan model runs in a general course from a golden age of heroism to an antithetical iron age of dark social deterioration, *Eclogue* 4 presents a deliberate inversion of that basic line of development.'[90] Nevertheless, even if it is sensible to agree with this on the grounds that very few aspects of the poem are not derived from some kind of allusion, it is worth bearing in mind

[87] Nisbet (1978), 68, notes this occurs during the youth of the child, since the process of the return of the golden age begins with his birth.
[88] Nisbet (1978), 62. On later Christian interpretations of the poem, Clausen (1994), 126-9.
[89] Galinsky (1996), 92.
[90] Arnold (1994/5), 149-50.

the tendency of readers, especially in the ancient world, to try to identify the *puer* with a particular individual (for instance, a son of Pollio, Marcellus, or Christ) and this brings us to one of the most significant aspects of this poem for our purposes.

Despite Vergil's emphasis on this teleology of progress beginning in the present (*iam*), there is the problem that most prophetic texts face of promising things that they cannot subsequently deliver. This no doubt created a tension between the historical events described by the poem (such as the consulship of Asinius Pollio), and the wider prophetic framework, as that particular set of circumstances passed by, and the triumvirs renewed hostilities. Yet some massaging of the details – a common approach to apocalyptic or prophetic texts – may have left open the possibility of another child fulfilling this role, and as we have noted, this partly explains the poem's enduring popularity. When such hopeful scenarios were disappointed, those who entertained them often considered the prospect of them being realised at some point in the future, after all (*aderit iam tempus*, 48). This very much applies to the notion of a 'golden age', which is 'pushed forward' into the future, just beyond the present, even within the *Fourth Eclogue* itself (with the use of the future tense after the first few stanzas), at the same time as Vergil claims it is being brought about now. In Chapter 2, this phenomenon of postponing or pushing forward ideal scenarios is examined with respect to the potential successors of Augustus – the hope that was invested in the *princeps* that was never quite fulfilled (incorporating to some extent these ideas of a 'golden age' as it was developed in later texts), was transferred to his family and pushed further into the future, as each candidate in turn disappointed the expectations of the Roman people.

A Vergilian Future

Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue* provides a very different, perhaps superficially optimistic view of the near future of Rome in a mythological guise, reflecting the hope that was attached to the reconciliation between the competing claimants to the political legacy of Caesar, brought about through the Pact of Brundisium and the marriage between Antony and Octavia in 40 BCE. It predicts a change of course, from a past of degeneration to a present and future of progress, drawing upon a range of traditions for the moral decline, before subverting them with the idea of a 'return' to a better age. Importantly, there are various sorts of temporal issues that result from Vergil's blending of mythological traditions, and this idea of being on the cusp of a 'golden age' – now (*iam*), but not quite yet – was to re-emerge in later reinterpretations and innovations of these concepts, in the nascent principate of Augustus. Vergil's later adaptation of the idea in the *Georgics* (1.121) and *Aeneid* (1.291-6, 6.791-4), and his explicit identification of it as being a consequence of Octavian/Augustus' rule, was a shift of significant value to the *princeps*, and Horace's *Carmen Saeculare* adapted this tradition yet again for his *Ludi Saeculares* of 17 BCE. It later played an important role in cultural transition from the Triumviral period to the post-Actium world, as a part of the Augustan 'ideology' of renewal, but at this point in 40, in the midst of the crisis of the Triumviral period, it had rather a different meaning, and promised a route out of civil war quite unlike that which transpired. Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue* clearly demonstrates an alternative, near contemporary projection into the future from those of Sallust and Cicero, with their pessimism and uncertainty in the post-Ides period.

The 'Resolution Discourse' of the Early Principate

Vitruvius, writing at some point between about 30 and 15 BCE, provides us with an interesting example of the way in which the military victory of Caesar (Octavian) in the civil war came to

be perceived by some individuals in Roman society as a way of resolving the crisis of the Triumviral period, and indeed the strife of the late Republic more generally, and of opening up new possibilities for the future. This is seen most clearly in the preface to the first book of his *de Architectura*:

> Cum divina tua mens et numen, imperator Caesar, imperio potiretur orbis terrarum invictaque virtute cunctis hostibus stratis triumpho victoriaque tua cives gloriarentur et gentes omnes subactae tuum spectarent nutum populusque Romanus et senatus liberatus timore amplissimis tuis cogitationibus consiliisque gubernaretur, non audebam, tantis occupationibus, de architectura scripta et magnis cogitationibus explicata edere, metuens, ne non apto tempore interpellans subirem tui animi offensionem.
>
> Cum vero adtenderem te non solum de vita communi omnium curam publicaeque rei constitutionem habere sed etiam de opportunitate publicorum aedificiorum, ut civitas per te non solum provinciis esset aucta, verum etiam ut maiestas imperii publicorum aedificiorum egregias haberet auctoritates, non putavi praetermittendum, quin primo quoque tempore de his rebus ea tibi ederem, ideo quod primum parenti tuo de eo fueram notus et eius virtutis studiosus. Cum autem concilium caelestium in sedibus inmortalitatis eum dedicavisset et imperium parentis in tuam potestatem transtulisset, idem studium meum in eius memoria permanens in te contulit favorem. Itaque cum M. Aurelio et P. Minidio et Cn. Cornelio ad apparationem balistarum et scorpionum reliquorumque tormentorum refectionem fui praesto et cum eis commoda accepi, quae, cum primo mihi tribuisti recognitionem, per sororis commendationem servasti.
>
> Cum ergo eo beneficio essem obligatus, ut ad exitum vitae non haberem inopiae timorem, haec tibi scribere coepi, quod animadverti multa te aedificavisse et nunc aedificare, reliquo quoque tempore et publicorum et privatorum aedificiorum, pro amplitudine rerum gestarum ut posteris memoriae traderentur, curam habiturum. Conscripsi praescriptiones terminatas, ut eas adtendens et ante facta et futura qualia sint opera, per te posses nota habere. Namque his voluminibus aperui omnes disciplinae rationes.
>
> When your divine mind and power, O Caesar, gained the empire of the world, Rome gloried in your triumph and victory. For all her enemies were crushed by your invincible courage and all mankind obeyed your bidding; the Roman people and senate were not only freed from fear but followed your guidance, inspired as it was by a generous imagination. Amid such affairs I shrank from publishing my writings on architecture in which I displayed designs made to a large scale, for I feared lest by interrupting at an inconvenient time, I should be found a hindrance to your thoughts.
>
> But I observed that you cared not only about the common life of all men, and the constitution of the state, but also about the provision of suitable public buildings; so that the state was not only made greater through you by its new provinces, but the majesty of the empire also was expressed through the eminent dignity of its public

> buildings. Hence I conceived that the opportunity should be taken at once of bringing before you my proposals about these things: the more so, because I had been first known to your father herein, whose virtues I revered. When, however, the Council of Heaven gave him an abode in the mansion of the immortals and placed in your power your father's empire, that same zeal of mine which had remained faithful to his memory found favour also with you.
>
> Therefore, along with M. Aurelius and P. Minidius and Cn. Cornelius, I was put in charge of the construction and repair of *balistae* and *scorpiones* and other engines of war, and, along with my colleagues, received advancement. After first granting me this surveyorship, you continued it by the recommendation of your sister. Since, then, I was indebted to you for such benefits that to the end of life I had no fear of poverty, I set about the composition of this work for you. For I perceived that you have built, and are now building, on a large scale. Furthermore, with respect to the future, you have such regard to public and private buildings, that they will correspond to the grandeur of our history, and will be a memorial to future ages. I have furnished a detailed treatise so that, by reference to it, you might inform yourself about the works already complete or about to be entered upon. In the following books I have expounded a complete system of architecture.

Caesar (Octavian), as presented by Vitruvius in this passage, in some ways appears to be the fulfilment of the type of individual whom Sallust had sought in vain in the prefaces to his work – a leader who might act for the greater good of Rome. We have seen the particular definition of *virtus* that Sallust thought it necessary for a statesman to possess, in order to turn the *res publica* away from its trajectory of decline, and reverse the effects of the corruption, greed, and other vices that had held its leaders captive earlier in the Republic, and implicitly, continued to hold them captive at the beginning of the Triumviral period. While Vitruvius may, unlike Sallust, be using a more conventional sense of the word *virtus* in his preface (though one still broad enough to cover more than merely a martial context), it is interesting that he and later Tiberian authors, such as Velleius Paterculus, create a role for the *princeps* which is not too far removed from that earlier Sallustian conception - a statesman who can bring about a change for the better through his personal virtues (this element of Velleius' work is discussed in Ch. 2). Cicero's depiction of Octavian in the *Philippics* may also have influenced Vitruvius in this section, particularly since the phrase noted above, *incredibili ac divina quadam mente atque virtute* (*Phil*. 3.3-5), seems to resonate with the first line of the preface, *Cum divina tua mens*

et numen, imperator Caesar, imperio potiretur orbis terrarum invictaque virtute cunctis hostibus stratis (etc) – and the combination of *divina* and *mens* appears rarely outside of these authors before Vitruvius.[91]

The reference to the idea of *libertas* is also significant, which as we have seen, is one of the threads which can be traced right throughout the late Republic, and into the Principate, acting as a slogan which points towards an idealised future. Here Vitruvius refers to the senate and people of Rome being freed from fear, indicating that he and his contemporaries were returning from an abnormal situation to an ideal state which had existed at some point in Rome's past.[92] Many such claims of freeing the populace from fear or oppression were made throughout the early Principate in a range of contexts, not least in the *Res Gestae divi Augusti*, but also on coinage and in other surviving historical works which describe the end of the Triumviral period.[93] This idea of *libertas* resurfaces at many points in the sources examined in this thesis, and operates in a synecdochic fashion for a wide range of proposed utopian situations – some of which were more likely to come about than others.[94] The general prosperity and peace of the Roman world after Actium is also a feature of Vitruvius' preface – this in and of itself, along with the munificence of Augustus, enables him to compose his work. While the subject of architecture is, of course, closely connected to the interests of Vitruvius himself, the emphasis on the construction of new buildings in the city of Rome under Octavian/Augustus is also indicative of this broader idea of Rome's regeneration after the civil wars.[95]

[91] Cf. Vitr. 6.1.11.9-10, 8.pr.3.3. cf. Morgan (1909), 152, who provides some Ciceronian parallels.
[92] Rowland (1999), 3, suggests Vitruvius' panegyric style 'seems to have more of the cautious classicistic abstraction of the 20s than the triumphal rhetoric of the 30s', yet there are a number of continuities.
[93] E.g. *RG* 1 which refers to the period covered by the *Philippics*: Annos undeviginti natus exercitum privato consilio et privata impensa comparavi, per quem rem publicam dominatione factionis oppressam in libertatem vindica*vi.* The idea that the res publica was claimed to have been 'restored' by Octavian/Augustus has been challenged by Judge (1974). Cooley (2009), 108.
[94] On *libertas*, cf. Wirszubski (1950), Brunt (1988), and Arena (2012).
[95] cf. Wallace-Hadrill (2008), especially 147-9.

The connection Vitruvius makes between the expansion of Rome's empire on the frontiers and the increasing grandeur and scale of the city itself is significant for thinking about the future. This is because it implies a teleology of progress and growth, and moreover possibly alludes to Sulla's earlier building programme that coincided with his extension of the *pomerium* from that purportedly demarcated by Romulus, and foreshadows a similar combination of construction, imperialism, and *pomerium* expansion seen under Claudius, and later Vespasian (though it remains unlikely that Augustus himself extended the *pomerium*).

The key problem involved with this kind of 'resolution discourse' that was developing at the end of the Triumviral period was that it was difficult to sustain it over time. Positive conceptions of the future were constructed by contrasting it with a past or present that was negative, or could be improved in some way. Initially, with the memory of the civil wars still very much present in the early Augustan period, appeals to this negative past carried a great deal of rhetorical force. Yet, later in the principate of Augustus, as the personal experience of those troubled times faded, the claims that were made that Augustus had somehow 'resolved' the problems of the *res publica* through his *virtutes* and divine support could be challenged as new problems arose. In a similar manner to the way in which despair does not envisage a future of any kind, the emphasis on resolution in 'pro-Augustan' material (texts, monuments etc) implies a somewhat 'static future' – a continuing ideal state of affairs. One way around this problem was by pushing the completion of this process of resolution further off into the future, as we have seen with the idea of the Golden or Saturnian Age – and suggestions of further improvement and construction under Augustus are evident in this passage of Vitruvius (e.g. *ut eas adtendens et ante facta et futura qualia sint opera*). There is a sense of Vergil's 'now, but not quite yet' in the preface, with many great things yet to come, but all under the leadership

of the same man. In order to maintain such a situation, the rhetoric of Augustus and his supporters changed, shifting the primary source of fear from the return of civil war to that of foreign enemies, and expanding the object of hope from the virtues of Augustus himself to those of his wider family (discussed in Chapter 2).

Conclusion

An examination of conceptions of the future of Rome in the post-Ides period, in Sallust's works, in Cicero's *Philippics*, Vergil's *Fourth Eclogue,* and in the preface to Vitruvius' *de Architectura,* has revealed a number of common elements in the political thought of the period from the Ides of March, 44 up until the early Augustan period. One of the most striking areas of common ground is the language which is used to explain this crisis, and especially the fact that the crisis is described as a lapse in morality by a range of authors. The emphasis on *virtus* found in the main authors considered in this chapter demonstrates this clearly. Seeing the current state of affairs and future solutions to it in such personal and moral terms, rather than, for example, seeking to address various structural problems that had led to the crisis, led to larger problems. It opened up a space for leaders who claimed to possess the qualities (such as *virtus*) that were deemed lacking to take even more power than had already been the case – quite aside from practical considerations such as the military forces each leader could summon. This was the tail end of a long process in which aristocratic competition led to a series of impasses, as the financial and military resources that were available increased alongside the size and power of Rome's empire.[96] A large part of the reason why this occurred was the aforementioned concern with maintaining the *mos maiorum*, and moreover, the use of it (or particular definitions of it) to thwart the proposals of one's rivals. The proposition or

[96] Though there were exceptions to this trend in the late Republic, including senators who were willing to compromise on various measures, and who sought to improve some aspects of the structures of the *res publica* – for example, in the area of provincial governance; see now Morrell (2017).

implementation of new structural changes, for example, could be met with considerable opposition among the elite, even while possessing unparalleled military strength, as the assassination of Caesar himself suggests.[97]

This highlights the importance of articulating a vision of Rome's future that was sufficiently acceptable to a large part of the elite, as well as the troops and other *ordines*, when attempting to gain or maintain power. One way of creating such an image of the future was by contrasting one's own plans with a negative alternative, or a less satisfactory arrangement – in other words by playing off fears against hopes. For instance, this can be seen clearly in the use of *libertas* in the political discourse of the late Republic and early Principate (a feature which continues to recur in later chapters). As Meier's idea of a 'crisis without alternative' suggested, Octavian navigated a path through the political rhetoric of the late Republic and Triumviral periods and positioned himself as a defender of the status quo – and indeed benefitted from Cicero's characterisation of him as such, no matter how insincere. In this chapter, I have demonstrated how all of the authors under discussion employed *libertas* or its cognates to describe an ideal state of the *res publica*; in Sallust's monographs, in Cicero's *Philippics*, and in Vitruvius' preface, it is contrasted with slavery, which is often the result of the domination of the opposing faction (or the threat of such an outcome).[98] The three possibilities outlined in the introduction have been demonstrated to be methods by which the *res publica* could return to such an ideal state, or indeed into further ruin.

This chapter has also revealed a range of different ways in which imagined futures could be used by authors and orators working in different genres. Sallust points towards his present by

[97] Meier's thesis of the 'crisis without alternative' is thus very much relevant right down to the Principate, and well into it, as I shall propose in later chapters of this thesis.
[98] cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 1. 28-36.

using past futures, illustrating the futility of entertaining certain hopes (those held by his protagonists and antagonists), and showing the continuing trend of Rome's moral decline, implicating his contemporaries; Cicero's *Philippics* made use of conceptions of the future in a more direct call to arms, exhorting the senate and people with dichotomies and worst case scenarios; Vergil blended together and 'reversed' poetic traditions of decline to create a hopeful image for Rome's future, which did not transpire; and finally Vitruvius stands at the end of a long period of war, and contrasts the immediate past with the prospect of restoration and renewal under the victor, Augustus, riding a wave of (professed) optimism, in order to both praise and encourage the *princeps*.

Chapter Two: The Augustan 'Succession Crisis' and Hopes for the Future

Introduction

The employment of the idea that an individual's character and virtues might embody a promising future for the *res publica*, and the solution for many of Rome's problems, has been examined in the post-Ides period in Chapter 1. The present chapter continues to examine this phenomenon in the context of the Augustan 'succession crisis' and its aftermath. It does this by investigating first the theme of hope for the future in relation to these 'successors'. The second theme examined is the concept of 'inherited virtues', and the manner in which they were connected with the notion of descendants being a type of new embodiment of their ancestors, and a continuation, or 'repetition', of the type of future they had come to embody. Emphasis was placed on these figures, who represented alternatives, by those who sought to challenge or destabilise the current situation, in both contemporary political activity, and later on, in literature and historiography. Through these processes of articulating futures under preferred *principes*, whether possible, idealised, or fanciful, the political landscape of the early principate was shaped in various important ways.

The succession crisis was brought about by the problem of Augustus' unique position within the *res publica* after the civil wars, and his impending and inevitable demise in subsequent decades. Passing his amalgamated powers on to a 'successor' in order to ensure political stability after his death, and to secure his memory for later ages, was further complicated by the fact that so many preferred 'successors' died prematurely.[99] The primary focus here will be

[99] The term 'successors' is problematic, in that there was no position to which to 'succeed'. Even as we observe that this transition confirmed for Tacitus the autocratic nature of the role of *princeps*, it is worth noting that he presents a rather proleptic picture of a fully formed political system before this moment (something capable of possessing *arcana – arcana domus*, *Ann.* 1.6.3; *imperii*, *Ann.* 2.36; *dominationis*, *Ann.* 2.59; *imperii*, *Hist.* 1.4), which colours the way the earlier potential 'successors' or heirs prior to Tiberius are seen (even as he uses a phrase such as *primum facinus novi principatus*, or *neve Tiberius vim principatus resolveret cuncta ad senatum*

the consequences of the arrangement in 4 CE, in which Augustus adopted Tiberius and Agrippa Postumus, and compelled Tiberius to adopt Germanicus. I shall not discuss at any length Marcellus and Agrippa, the elder Drusus, and Gaius and Lucius Caesar as potential successors except where they relate to this arrangement which lasted from 4 CE until 14 (the death of Augustus, and Agrippa Postumus) after which Germanicus lived as the most likely 'successor' to Tiberius until his death in 19. This transition from 4 to 14 marked the first time the 'autocratic' powers he had acquired were handed on to an individual in the *domus Augusta*, and for Tacitus and many others before and after him, it was a final confirmation of the monarchical nature of what was to become known as the *principatus*.

Creating a compelling image of the future was a major issue for Augustus and his immediate successor, who sought to secure their power and the continuing dominance of their family. This was a difficult process, owing to issues such as the conservative or retrospective mentality in Roman culture overall, and the general problems inherent in predicting or imagining something outside of one's experience, but particularly, in this instance, the contrast of present peace and tranquillity with the earlier chaos and trauma of civil wars emphasised by Augustus and his supporters, which made it difficult to project further great improvements (a difficulty seen, for example, during the various crises around 6-9 CE).[100] As the civil wars faded from memory,

vocando). The terminology issue has been explored by Gruen, who notes that there was no *principatus*, only a *princeps*, especially in 23 BCE, but in reality continuing right up to the end of his life – 'It must be emphasized, however, that this was indeed a collection of powers and honors. Each was voted or acquired *ad hoc* and piecemeal. They did not amount to a position, an established institution, a principate.' 35; Gruen, (2005) 33-51. Badian (1982), 34-5, also noted that the idea of passing on his *arche* in 23 was impossible, despite Dio's account. Simpson (2005) too suggests that the idea of Augustus' signet ring being in some way a symbol of his power is anachronistic. See now Osgood (2013), on the issue of 'successors' being seen proleptically.

[100] On the conservative/retrospective mentality, a useful recent discussion of the *mos maiorum* (and relevant modern scholarship pertaining to it) is Van der Blom, (2010), 12-17. She points out the fact that aristocratic ancestors were usually credited with Rome's (essentially imperial) success on moral grounds, and that this was largely the result of aristocratic self-preservation, and moreover that it led to history being written as a series of moralizing exempla (in a '*res gestae* mode'), weighed against the collective *mos maiorum*, rather than in a more impersonal fashion. Crucially, she observes that each exemplum could later be reinterpreted, or another exemplum held up against it, to make a rhetorical point, even as there was an apparent tendency to associate particular figures with particular qualities once history was written down; this simultaneously brought an 'imaginary stability' to *mos maiorum*. Almost a topographical equivalent, Roller (2010) offers an analysis of the

one strategy to maintain the 'freshness' of Augustus' rule and to circumvent the potential disappointment of the populace was to claim that the virtues of the *princeps*, which had allegedly removed the peril of civil war, were also necessary to stave off the threat from foreign enemies. These virtues were also extended to members of his family (or projected onto them by supporters who sought to gain from their promotion) to make them appear essential to the functioning of the *res publica*.

A distinction was drawn in the Introduction between different kinds of imagined 'futures': those which were to some extent presented as possibilities in the 'present', and those which were either historical realities or later retrojections reported by authors in subsequent periods. In Chapter 1, contemporary evidence, and thus 'futures' imagined in the present, were mainly discussed. In exploring the succession crisis, however, most of the 'futures' mentioned are presented by historians as the opinion of an individual or group in historical settings that are at least plausible if not 'factual'. Despite this reliance on later accounts, some 'triangulation' is possible, in particular cases, if we assess the overall aims and preoccupations of each author, and incorporate other epigraphic, numismatic, and archaeological evidence. Even if we often cannot establish the historicity of particular conceptions of the future, making such an attempt allows us to introduce more nuances and possibilities into our historical narratives.

Why 'Past Futures' are Important to Opposition and Political Dynamics

discourse surrounding the demolition of houses as a form of punishment, and demonstrates that rather than being for the purpose of *damnatio memoriae per se*, demolished houses served, on the contrary, as memorials of negative exempla. On the issue of peace and stability versus the chaos of civil war, this was the case whether that support was genuine or insincere – and regardless of whether this should be termed 'ideology', 'propaganda' or something else. On peace and prosperity, and the particular nature of Roman *pax* and its developing significance throughout and after the civil wars, see now Cornwell (2017). E.g. Galinsky (1996), 141-155 and Lamp (2009), on the dynastic and thus forward-looking nature of the Ara Pacis Augustae, and Holliday (1990), who attempts to connect it to cyclical conceptions of time in Rome (some of which were discussed in Chapter 1).

The alternatives to the particular plan for the future devised by Augustus in 4 CE – his final 'succession' arrangement, or at the very least his hereditary arrangement – were still being discussed long after the events themselves, and the views of ancient authors demonstrate an ongoing discourse about 'alternative futures' or 'virtual histories'. This raises the issue of 'opposition' to the *princeps*, or indeed the 'principate' as a whole. Those who held on to such alternative 'past futures' most tightly were often those disenchanted, in some way, with the present; (re)presenting or perpetuating the memory of a potential future that differed from what had occurred in the intervening period was one way of unsettling the status quo.[101] In the case of the adoptions in 4 and Tiberius' succession in 14, the most common probable alternative 'past future' found in the sources is that Agrippa Postumus or Germanicus, or indeed one of the other *capaces imperii*, might become *princeps* – or attempt to, and thereby bring about a return to civil war. The restoration of the pre-Caesarian republic is a possibility in some sources, and as will be noted below, Germanicus was perhaps seen by some as a means by which this end could be achieved (rather like Cicero's use of the young Octavian in the *Philippics*) – a focal point of political hope.[102]

Against these sorts of ideas – memories of unrealised hopes, which over time became fossilised – opposing narratives were constructed, including those of omens and oracles predicting and thus confirming the present, particularly in the case of members of the imperial family who

[101] O'Gorman (2006). The idea of 'de-politicised' past futures in the declamation schools will be discussed, and challenged, below. The hijacking of the charismatic authority of particular deceased or exiled leaders by impostors, who often played on the expectations of 'lost futures' in which these politicians or generals played an important part, is noted below and addressed in relation to the false Neros in Chapter 4.

[102] The story of Augustus and his discussion of the *capaces imperii* (*Ann.* 1.13.2), however, does not appear as often as narratives of Agrippa Postumus' potential revival, and the various plots to bring him to power, and the historicity of both of these stories has been questioned in modern scholarship. This trend of weighing and dismissing particular sections of these narratives was largely prompted by Charlesworth's article (1923) on the narrative of Livia's alleged murder of Augustus, which he used to unravel what he thought were a series of connected literary inventions concocted by factions in support of Agrippa (or at least opposed to Tiberius). Syme (1958), 418 et al.; 380-1, argued that Tacitus employed the story of the *capaces imperii* for narrative reasons.

came to power.[103] *Fortuna* often plays a recurring role in narratives of their ascent – or indeed their demise, as in the case of the deaths of Gaius and Lucius Caesar.[104] Particularly striking, in the Tiberian period and especially later on, was the related notion of the *providentia* of the *princeps*, whose almost divine capacity for 'foresight' anticipated such developments and made plans accordingly, ensuring the stability of the Roman people.[105] 'Fatalistic' narratives like this leave little room for serious consideration of alternatives, so that even when these alternatives are included in a narrative involving *fortuna*, for example, they often jar with, downplay, or discount altogether the presentation of alternatives, as we shall see in the case of Tiberius' ascent.

Tiberius' adoption and hope for the future

A focus on the future, and in this case hope (*spes*) in particular, can reveal new features of the historiographical landscape surrounding the adoption of Tiberius. This may seem an odd place to start considering that Tiberius was the one who managed to survive the aged Augustus as a 'factual' rather than a 'counterfactual' *princeps*. However, Velleius' pro-Tiberian account of the adoption (2.103-4), which demonstrates a strong concern with a wider discourse of *spes* and successors, is very important in showing the way in which opposing accounts of what people thought about the future could inform and react against each other in the early principate, and influence later historiography. This reveals a great deal about the manipulation

[103] There have been numerous works written on the role of divination and omens in Roman society. Levick's article (1987) only really applies to the ideas behind Roman magistrates taking the auspices – that is, becoming aware of, and averting, the gods' displeasure. Perhaps closer to the examples discussed in this chapter, Wildfang (2000) has examined the tales of Augustus' divine conception, and the omens pertaining to this, from the perspective of propaganda aimed at constituencies of different cultural/geographical origins. Unlike Levick's 'preventative' examples (which still involve 'free will'), these are 'prophetic' or 'fatalistic' glimpses of the future, owing to their retrospective nature. A similar story, predicting Tiberius' rise to power, is found at Suet. *Tib.* 14.2, a chapter involving many such omens.

[104] *Res Gestae*, 14.1; Suet. *Tib.* 23; Cooley (2009), 161-7. Of course, *Fortuna*/*Tyche* – an exceptionally large and complex topic – has two 'sides', one more akin to 'chance,' the other 'fate'. Its nature is 'ambivalent' like *spes*, which can be a deceiver or a courageous act/quality. cf. Matthews (2012).

[105] On the concept of *providentia* and imperial ideology (including succession plans and thwarting conspiracies), see especially Charlesworth (1936), Fears (1981) 886-7, 902-3, 936, Scott (1982), and Noreña (2011), 92-9.

not only of the past, but of 'past futures,' and how they were used to explain, and in some cases justify, the present, and indeed 'present futures'. By examining the connection between *spes* and successors, this section argues that individual members of the *domus Augusta* came to represent particular images of the future in a metonymic way. The discussion concerns not only Tiberius' own adoption but also that of Germanicus and Agrippa Postumus, and some important connections between 'past futures,' opposition groups, and 'repetition'.

The exceptional position of Augustus within the *res publica* was justified partly by playing on both the future-oriented emotions of hope and fear – hope for peace and prosperity after a lengthy period of civil war, fear that in his absence it might erupt once more, or that foreign enemies might threaten Rome. John Rich has described this phenomenon as 'making the emergency permanent'.[106] The virtues of the *princeps* supposedly held everything together, and flowed down through the various social orders. Yet even for a *divi filius*, there remained the small problem of Augustus' mortality. Thus, as we have noted, a public role for his family emerged, with emphasis placed on successors, who became a focal point for hopes transferred from the *princeps*, and who helped to secure his position in the present and his memory for later ages. The adoption arrangement in 4 CE, in which Augustus adopted Tiberius (and Agrippa Postumus), and compelled Tiberius to adopt Germanicus, was the final dynastic plan made before the death of Augustus, after a series of earlier potential candidates had died unexpectedly. The concept of *spes* played an important role in the promotion of successors from this point on, and this is reflected in the sources which cover the period. Velleius Paterculus is a useful springboard, since his account provides a unique insight into late Augustan and Tiberian political tensions.

[106] Rich (2012).

When composing his brief *Historia Romana* in 29, Velleius took every opportunity to present his former commander and *princeps*, Tiberius, in a positive light.[107] He is particularly enthusiastic in his account of Tiberius' return to Rome from Rhodes in 2 CE, and his political resurrection in 4 CE following the deaths of the young preferred 'successors', Gaius and Lucius Caesar on 20 August 2 CE, and the 21 Feb. 4 CE respectively (2.103):

> Sed fortuna, quae subduxerat **spem magni nominis**, iam tum rei publicae sua praesidia reddiderat: quippe ante utriusque horum obitum patre tuo P. Vinicio consule Ti. Nero reversus Rhodo incredibili laetitia patriam repleverat. Non est diu cunctatus Caesar Augustus; neque enim quaerendus erat quem legeret, sed legendus qui eminebat. Itaque quod post Lucii mortem adhuc Gaio vivo facere voluerat atque vehementer repugnante Nerone erat inhibitus, post utriusque adulescentium obitum facere perseveravit, ut et tribuniciae potestatis consortionem Neroni constitueret, multum quidem eo cum domi tum in senatu recusante, et eum Aelio Cato C. Sentio consulibus V. Kal. Iulias, post urbem conditam annis septigentis quinquaginta quattuor, abhinc annos septem et viginti adoptaret. Laetitiam illius diei concursumque civitatis et vota paene inserentium caelo manus **spemque conceptam perpetuae securitatis aeternitatisque Romani imperii vix in illo iusto opere abunde persequi poterimus,** nedum hic implere temptemus, contenti id unum dixisse quam ille omnibus faustus fuerit. **Tum refulsit certa spes liberorum parentibus, viris matrimoniorum, dominis patrimonii, omnibus hominibus salutis, quietis, pacis, tranquillitatis, adeo ut nec plus sperari potuerit nec spei responderi felicius.**
>
> But fortune, which had removed the hope of the great name [of Caesar], had already restored to the state her real protector; for the return of Tiberius Nero from Rhodes in the consulship of Publius Vinicius, your father, and before the death of either of these youths, had filled his country with joy. Caesar Augustus did not long hesitate, for he had no need to search for one to choose, but merely to select the one who stood out from the others. Accordingly, what he had wished to do after the death of Lucius but while Gaius was still living, and had been prevented from doing so by the strong opposition of Nero himself, he now insisted upon carrying out after the death of both young men, namely, to make Nero his associate in the tribunician power, in spite of his continued objection both in private and in the senate; and in the consulship of Aelius Catus and Gaius Sentius, on the twenty-seventh of June, he adopted him, seven hundred and fifty-four years after the founding of the city, and twenty-seven years ago. The rejoicing that day, the concourse of the citizens, their vows as they stretched their hands almost to the very heavens, and the hopes which they entertained for the perpetual security and the eternal existence of the Roman empire, I shall hardly be able to describe to the full even in my comprehensive work, much less try to do it justice here. I shall simply content myself with stating what a day of good omen it was for all. On that day there sprang up once more in parents a sure hope of children, in husbands of marriage, in masters of inheritance, and in all men the hope of safety, order, peace and tranquillity; indeed, it would have been hard to

[107] Indeed, the work has been described as 'triumphal history' by de Monte (1999), since it works seamlessly through the Republic and Triumviral period, and the dominance of Augustus, towards the *telos* of Tiberius' principate. See Cowan (ed.) (2010) for a recent collection of articles on Velleius, many of which touch on aspects of temporality and issues of 'speed' such as *brevitas*.

entertain larger hopes, or to have them more happily fulfilled.

As Woodman has noted, this passage is interesting for the fact that it does not make a clear distinction between Tiberius' arrival in the city in 2 and his adoption, which occurred two years later.[108] According to Suetonius, after repeated requests and Livia's intercession, Augustus had allowed Tiberius to return to Rome with approval having been given by Gaius – Tiberius had previously had a falling out with Marcus Lollius, who had been his primary enemy in Gaius' entourage (Suet. *Tib.* 13.2). This was permitted on the condition that Tiberius would play no role in public affairs. Tiberius' arrival in Rome was a far cry from the spectacle in Velleius' account, and according to Suetonius, after introducing his son Drusus into public life, he retired to the Gardens of Maecenas and exercised no public functions (Suet. *Tib.* 15).[109]

By conflating these two events – Tiberius' arrival and the adoption – Velleius avoided the awkwardness of dwelling upon his unspectacular return.[110] Woodman notes that some of the topoi associated with the arrival of a great man at the city (the *adventus*) are applied to his adoption, and I would suggest this gives the amalgamated episode greater coherence and credibility. Woodman, Lobur and others have noted that *festinatio, brevitas,* and the appeal to a lengthier forthcoming history are characteristic features of Velleius' work; a useful way of skimming over awkward details, as well as selecting themes that displayed his control over his material.[111]

Furthermore, not only is it Tiberius who reluctantly agrees to be adopted, thereby empowering him instead of portraying him as Augustus' last resort, but directly following this, Velleius also

[108] Woodman (1983), 130.
[109] Levick has noted that it was very likely the younger Drusus' coming of age which brought Tiberius back to Rome, and that his return would have been a very modest affair. Levick (1976), 46.
[110] Woodman (1983), 130-1.
[111] Woodman (1983), Lobur (2007).

notes Augustus' adoption of Agrippa Postumus, with no fanfare whatsoever.[112] The disparity between the two adoptees is obvious, but more interesting is a deliberate omission, for immediately after this, he moves hastily onto Tiberius' departure for Germany. The elephant in the room is, of course, Germanicus Caesar. As a part of the succession arrangement in 4, Tiberius had been compelled by Augustus to adopt Germanicus before being adopted himself, according to Suetonius, Tacitus and Dio.[113] The allegedly uncontrollable Agrippa was easily dismissed from Velleius' narrative shortly afterwards, into exile (9 CE) and death (14 CE).[114] Germanicus was more difficult for Velleius to handle, and a far more sensitive topic, with continuing discussions about his death (allegedly due to poisoning), who would have made a better *princeps*, the fate of his wife and children, and so on. Thus in Velleius' history Germanicus' life and career remain deliberately muted but still positive; a loyal nephew, then son, who is a footnote to Tiberius' achievements. We shall return to this point below.

Perhaps the most important feature of Velleius' account of the adoption (2.103), aside from the chronological concertina and Germanicus' notable absence, is the large number of instances of *spes* or *sperare*.[115] It is hope that ties together all of the blessings of the forthcoming age under Tiberius – a deity and emotion which, as will be discussed below, had been associated with the young Germanicus.[116] There are nineteen other instances of the words *spes* or *sperare* in Velleius' work, but no other passage is infused with hope to the same extent.[117] Of these, the two others which refer to members of the *domus Augusta* occur at 2.75 and 2.94, both of which

[112] Vell. Pat. 2.104: Adoptatus eadem die etiam M. Agrippa, quem post mortem Agrippae Iulia enixa erat, sed in Neronis adoptione illud adiectum his ipsis Caesaris verbis: hoc, inquit, rei publicae causa facio.
On the same day Marcus Agrippa, to whom Julia had given birth after the death of Agrippa, was also adopted by Augustus; but, in the case of Nero [i.e. Tiberius], an addition was made to the formula of adoption in Caesar's own words: 'This I do for reasons of state.'
[113] Suet. *Tib.* 15, Tac. *Ann.*1.3, Dio 55.13.
[114] Vell. Pat. 2.112.
[115] An issue briefly noted by Woodman (1983), 135.
[116] The role of *spes* in this passage is also observed by Clark (1983), 98-9.
[117] Aside from the five instances in 2.103, there are nineteen others in Velleius, but none in a similar cluster, and none referring to successors – aside from the one reference (2.94.2) prefiguring Tiberius' greatness.

are concerned with Tiberius' *fortuna* and the *spes* that those around him placed in him while he was still a youth. The former (2.75) narrates the story of Tiberius' narrow escape as a baby in Livia's arms, fleeing to Sicily during the civil wars – implying a disastrous counterfactual scenario in which Tiberius does not become *princeps*. This introduces Tiberius into the narrative, and the themes of his fortune and hope. The latter (2.94) follows the narration of Marcellus' death and Agrippa's return from the East, when Velleius turns to the promising nineteen year old Tiberius.

With the connection between Tiberius' fortune and hope established, returning to our original passage (2.103), we should consider why Velleius chose to emphasise hope so strongly at this point in his history. As *spes* is a forward-looking concept, the basic answer might be that Velleius is pointing us towards the climax of his work, when Tiberius assumes the role of his adoptive father and an abundance of blessings follow for the *res publica* (most prominently at 2.126). Yet Velleius, in 29 CE, was not the first to make the association between *spes* and potential successors to Augustus, and it is possible to propose an idea that makes more of Velleius' political context. With this in mind, we turn briefly to the cult of *Spes* in the period leading up to Velleius.

Germanicus, the Cult of *Spes*, and the Temple Rededication

Cicero briefly discussed *Spes* in the *de Legibus* (2.28[XI]), providing us with one definition:

> bene vero, quod Mens, Pietas, Virtus, Fides consecratur manu; quarum omnium Romae dedicata publice templa sunt, ut, illa qui habeant (habeant autem omnes boni), deos ipsos in animis suis conlocatos putent… quoniam expectatione rerum bonarum erigitur animus, recte etiam Spes a Calatino consecrata est.
>
> It is a good thing also that Mens, Pietas, Virtus, and Fides should be deified; and in Rome temples have been dedicated to all these qualities, the purpose being that those who possess them (and all good men do) should believe that the gods themselves are established within their own souls… And since the mind is encouraged by the anticipation of good things, Calatinus was right in deifying Spes also.

The 'emotion' or 'concept' of *spes* was thus tied at some point (perhaps prior to the early fifth century BCE, as we shall see) to the activity of an eponymous goddess.[118] The origins of the Roman cult of *Spes* are obscure, and the goddess developed quite a different reputation and set of meanings from that of the Greek *Elpis*.[119] The Roman conception was more often quite positive, and at worst ambivalent, depending on its focus.[120] The earliest temple on the outskirts of Rome was known in later periods as *Spes Vetus*. The relevant sources would seem to indicate that it existed by 477 BCE, and it appears in Livy and Dionysius in connection with Horatius' victory over the Etruscans, prior to the Battle of the Colline Gate.[121] This is the temple which later gave its name to the area near the modern site of Porta Maggiore, known as *ad Spem Veterem*, and to the nearby *Horti Spei Veteris*.[122]

The establishment of a new temple in the Forum Holitorium, which was vowed by Aulus Atilius Calatinus probably in 258 BCE, marked the transition to a more significant cult, during

[118] This idea of these so-called 'abstract deities' or 'divine qualities' manifesting themselves in the emotions or concepts of individuals is discussed by Fears (1981), and Clark (2007). Elsewhere, in philosophical mode, Cicero casts some doubt upon the idea of *spes et al.* being divine, through the Academic sceptic position presented by Cotta in the third book of *de Natura Deorum*. At 3.14 the tension between fatalism and *spes* is noted, and an argument advanced that 'true' *divinatio* - which might reveal a predestined future - would remove even 'the last, and universal, consolation of *spes*'. At 3.46-7 he argues that if some of these 'qualities' or 'concepts' are in fact deities, then *Natio* (and thus many others) must be as well (cf. Clark (2007) 134-5). *De Nat. Deor.* 3.61 (and 3.88-9, depending on a textual emendation) call into question whether *spes* (and other emotions or qualities that reside within mankind) can in fact be divinities, from a Stoic perspective. The broader issue of how representative Cicero's ideas in his theological and philosophical works actually were remains (and indeed the different positions presented in *de Nat. Deor.* suggest it was contested among the elite). Nevertheless, it seems probable that *spes* continued to be seen as a goddess in society more generally (as *de Legibus* 2.11.28, and the rebuilding of her temple on more than one occasion, discussed below, would suggest). Clarifying the precise relationship of *spes* with human emotional states, other deities, fatalism, and divination, might not have been seen as such an urgent task in wider society – many such paradoxes and ambiguities remained unresolved in Roman theology and cult.

[119] As well as Clark (1983), see Panofsky (1956).

[120] Whether hope was considered a good thing was largely dependent upon the particular focus of the hope (usually attached in the genitive e.g. *spes victoriae, spes fugae*) and the literary context in which it appeared. See Clark (1983), 80-105; Clark lists a series of literary representations, cf. 86f. See also Scanlon (1987), who examines its use in Sallust's works.

[121] Liv. 2.51.2-3; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 9.24.3-4.

[122] Frontin. *Aq.*, 1.5, 19, 20, 2.65, 76, 87; *H.A.* Elag. 13. See *LTUR* IV (P-S), 338.

the First Punic War.[123] Livy records that this temple burned down in 213 BCE and was restored the following year by a special commission. It also appears in Dio, being consumed by fire once more in 31 BCE.[124] The temple was again restored, as Tacitus notes (*Ann.* 2.49), and this time dedicated by Germanicus Caesar in 17:

> Isdem temporibus deum aedis vetustate aut igni abolitas coeptasque ab Augusto dedicavit, Libero Liberaque et Cereri iuxta Circum Maximum, quam A. Postumius dictator voverat, eodemque in loco aedem Florae ab Lucio et Marco Publiciis aedilibus constitutam, et Iano templum, quod apud forum holitorium C. Duilius struxerat, qui primus rem Romanam prospere mari gessit triumphumque navalem de Poenis meruit. Spei aedes a Germanico sacratur: hanc A. Atilius voverat eodem bello.
>
> At the same time, he [Tiberius] consecrated the temples, ruined by age or fire, the restoration of which had been undertaken by Augustus. They included a temple to Liber, Libera, and Ceres, close to the Circus Maximus, and vowed by Aulus Postumius, the dictator; another, on the same site, to Flora, founded by Lucius and Marcus Publius in their aedileship, and a shrine of Janus, built in the Forum Holitorium by Gaius Duilius, who first carried the Roman cause to success on sea and earned a naval triumph over the Carthaginians. The temple of Hope, vowed by Aulus Atilius in the same war, was dedicated by Germanicus.

According to the most recent excavation reports, the temple is to be identified with the southernmost of the three which form the skeleton of San Nicola in Carcere in the Forum Holitorium, just a few metres down the road from the Theatre of Marcellus – a Doric peripteral hexastyle structure, with eleven columns of stuccoed travertine on each side. [125]

One of the most important studies of the temple of *Spes* and successors is an article by Mark Edward Clark, which was the first lengthy discussion of the concept of *Spes* in a political

[123] cf. Ziolkowski (1992), 29: 'It is impossible to establish when Caiatinus, who apart from two consulates held *imperium* in Sicily as praetor in 257 and as dictator in 249, vowed this temple [to Fides in Capitolio], especially considering that he also built a temple to Spes. All that can be said is that, whereas during his second consulate he apparently did not achieve anything spectacular, in 258-257 he earned a triumph and in 249 *primus dictator extra Italiam exercitum duxit*. In the wake of the disasters suffered by the consuls of that year dedications both to Fides and Spes would have been quite à propos, though Zonaras explicitly states that the dictator and his master of horse did not achieve anything worth remembering.' [Zon. 8.15.14] and 152: 'It is impossible to ascertain the exact date of Caiatinus' vow, which may have taken place in 258-257, 254, or 249.' *LTUR* IV (P-S), 336-7.

[124] Liv. 25.7.6; 24.47.15-6; fire, Dio 50.10.3.

[125] Crozzoli Aite refers to the excavation reports from the 1960s; Crozzoli Aite (1981), 119.

context.[126] Clark drew attention to the association between *spes* and particular (often youthful) leaders of the late Republic and the Triumviral period, in a range of sources (such as Cicero's Pompey in *pro lege Manilia*, or Octavian in the *Philippics*), before arriving at a discussion of its role in the ideology of the early Principate (via figures such as Virgil's Aeneas and particularly Ascanius, as well as imperial family members).

While providing a very useful survey of some of the evidence, the article's basis was a largely numismatic study of *spes* as a so-called 'imperial virtue' (*Spes Augusta*, *Spes Populi Romani* etc).[127] As a consequence, Clark placed various pieces of literary evidence into different phases to explain these coin legends. This results in a narrative with phases that progressed rather unproblematically from a 'civic' religious cult in the context of the Punic wars, to the hope invested in individual charismatic leaders with 'personal armies' in the late Republic and Triumviral period, before finally arriving at the role it played in the formation of imperial 'propaganda' as a so-called 'virtue'. However, within the periods Clark has designated, there is little sense of political development – each period appears 'synchronic' in its own right. For example, *Spes Augusta*, which does not appear as a slogan until a coin of Claudius from 41 CE, characterises the entire Julio-Claudian period, without a close analysis of its gradual development.[128] Clark writes: 'While numismatic and literary evidence from the time of the later principate is helpful in showing the eventual development of *Spes* in the imperial cult, it does not shed much light upon the origin of the virtue and its transformation from a religious symbol of the republic into imperial propaganda.'[129] As Anna Clark has shown, the essentially

[126] Clark (1983).
[127] Clark (1981).
[128] Clark (1983), 83; A coin issued at Pella from 16 BCE does feature the legend *Spes Coloniae Pellensis*, which apparently refers to Augustus, and does seem to prefigure the later evidence, such as the *Feriale Cumanum*.
[129] Clark (1983), 84; in another section that seeks to establish the origins of the cult (86), a Hadrianic coin is used to illustrate the civic qualities associated with *Spes* from an early age – a synchronic approach that obscures various sorts of changes (semantic, contextual etc).

modern division made between 'religion' and 'politics' did not exist in the same way for the Romans, and distinguishing between 'upper' and 'lower case' *spes* is problematic, and so to suggest it was taken from a murky religious sphere and transported into the political realm, is somewhat mistaken.[130] For example, were our sources more informative, the motivations behind Calatinus' vow of the original temple might turn out to be far more 'political' than it initially appears (perhaps competitive triumphal building); certainly, the 'religious' aspects of the cult later in the principate were not easily separated from the 'political.'

The most unusual aspect of Clark's article, for our purposes, is the fact that he places the rededication of the temple in 19 CE.[131] *Isdem temporibus* in *Annals* 2.49 refers to the previously narrated events of 17, including the earthquake in Asia Minor, and Germanicus' triumph.[132] There appears to be no explanation as to why Clark dates the rededication to 19 – Tacitus is, after all, working largely within an annalistic framework that often places structures built in a given year together at the end of the chapter. What can be established from the Tacitean passage, is that firstly, Augustus had apparently begun restorations, following damage from the fire of 31 BCE – his death therefore, on August 19th, 14 CE, is the *terminus ante quem* for the start of renovations – but that secondly, they were not finished until at least 17 CE. This seems rather a long time, even for the construction of an entirely new temple.[133]

Why then, was there such a delay? The political context provides a good explanation. After his consulship in 12, Germanicus had been sent to the Rhine by Augustus in 13, when Tiberius

[130] Clark (2007).
[131] Clark (1983), 96.
[132] Tac. *Ann.* 2.47.
[133] In the *Res Gestae,* written (or revised) sometime before his death in 14, Augustus claimed (20.4) to have repaired all of the temples that needed restoration (in 28 BCE), despite the fact that Spes was dedicated in 17 CE – either Augustus counted the temple as having been restored once work had begun, Tacitus (or his source) incorrectly attributed the work to Augustus, Augustus is ignoring the structures he did not wish to rebuild (a point Ovid may make with regard to the Palatine cult of Juno Sospita, *Fasti* 2.55-66), or Augustus is not counting structures outside the *pomerium*. On the dating, Cooley (2009), 43, and on this passage, 194-5.

was recalled to Rome to assume equal power.[134] Following the death of Augustus, in the ensuing period of instability, with mutinies on the Rhine and Danube, Germanicus remained in command. His reckless campaigns against the Chatti and the Cherusci began with the purpose of bringing the mutinous legions under control, but eventually resulted in the recovery of standards lost in the *clades Variana* of 9. Probably in 15 (or less likely, 16), according to Tacitus, Tiberius was concerned with the extent of these campaigns, Germanicus' conduct and his popularity, and so a triumph was voted to him in order to bring the expeditions to a close.[135] Despite this, Germanicus continued the campaigns in 16, and eventually, after a series of battles and shipwrecks, and letters from Tiberius recalling him, he decided to return for his triumph. This was celebrated on May 26th, 17 CE.[136]

The Republican tradition of triumphal or manubial building continued throughout and after the civil wars. In an excellent article on Augustan *Iustitia,* Lott notes how the arrival of members of the *domus Augusta* in Rome, the *adventus*, was often celebrated with special attention being given to a new or old cult, including even occasions when triumphs were celebrated – for instance, *Fortuna Redux*, *Pax Augusta*, and *Concordia Augusta*. [137] With these comparanda in

[134] Tac. *Ann.* 1.3 collapses the chronology: At hercle Germanicum, Druso ortum, octo apud Rhenum legionibus inposuit adscirique per adoptionem a Tiberio iussit... 'Yet, curiously enough, he placed Drusus' son Germanicus at the head of eight legions on the Rhine, and ordered Tiberius to adopt him…'; as does Suet. *Cal.* 1.1. However, it is clear from *Cal.* 8.3 that Germanicus was appointed to the command of the Gauls and Germany in 13, immediately following his consulship, after Tiberius' return to Rome.

[135] Tac. *Ann.* 1.55; Druso Caesare C. Norbano consulibus, decernitur Germanico triumphus, manente bello… 'Drusus Caesar and Gaius Norbanus were now consuls, and a triumph was decreed to Germanicus with the war still in progress.'

[136] The triumph is recorded by Tacitus, Strabo, and Ovid, and very briefly in Velleius: Tac. *Ann.* 2.26; Sed crebris epistulis Tiberius monebat rediret ad decretum triumphum: satis iam eventuum, satis casuum. Prospera illi et magna proelia: eorum quoque meminisset, quae venti et fluctus, nulla ducis culpa, gravia tamen et saeva damna intulissent.
'But frequent letters from Tiberius counselled the prince to return for the triumph decreed him: there had already been enough successes, and enough mischances. He had fought auspicious and great fields: he should also remember the losses inflicted by wind and wave – losses not in any way due to his leadership, yet grave and deplorable.'

[137] 'The arrival of the *princeps* or a member of his family was an event of great significance: The *Adventus* of Tiberius was itself deified before 14 [10??]; votive games were offered to Jupiter Optimus Maximus *pro reditu Augusti* in 8 and 7 BCE; and other Augustan testimonia might be cited. But Augustus' policy after 19 BCE of allowing infrequent triumphs made some other celebration when he or a member of his family returned from

mind, it seems probable that Germanicus' triumph and *Spes* fall into a similar category. Various young family members had already been promoted as 'potential successors' or at least given significant publicity, and Augustus had been associating youth with hope, as the *Feriale Cumanum* demonstrates.[138] This sacrificial calendar from Cumae, probably drafted in the period between 4 and 14 CE, features a *supplicatio* to Spes and Iuventas, on October the 18th, to commemorate the day on which Augustus assumed the *toga virilis*. This might be seen as a part of a wider concern to buttress the succession arrangement through revitalising the cult of *Spes*, and connecting it with youth. At 46 years of age (in 4), Tiberius could hardly be called a young man, but Germanicus at 18 certainly could. This is an explanation that fits well with the unusual chronology of the rebuilding in Tacitus, Germanicus' movements in those years, and other examples of cults being founded or rededicated at the time of a triumph or *adventus*. Although the precise route of the triumph has long been a contentious issue, according to most reconstructions the temple would have been located on Germanicus' triumphal route in 17.[139]

Germanicus and *Spes* in Tacitus

I would suggest then, that the rededication of the temple associated the cult of *Spes* with Germanicus more than any other potential successor. Though much later, and employing the associations for its own purposes, Tacitus' *Annals* appear to be adapting an earlier tradition

abroad necessary if the day were to be remembered. The declaration of a cult ensured a festive reception for the *princeps* and provided a means whereby an annual holiday might remark the day. Tiberius' declaration in 7 BCE shows that even when a rare triumph was held, special attention might be paid to an old or new cult. We may suppose, then, that the cults of *Fortuna Redux*, *Pax Augusta* and *Concordia Augusta* were promoted when they were in order to provide an immediate ceremony which coincided with Augustus or Tiberius' arrival; the physical shrines for the new cults were dedicated later after their completion.' Lott (1996), 265.

[138] *CIL* 10.8375. The date of the *Feriale Cumanum* is deduced from the fact that the names of the adoptees have changed, whilst Augustus is not yet deified, giving us a *terminus ante quem*. So the connection between hope and youth was made in *supplicationes*, in the period in which Augustus was making what were to become his final dynastic arrangements, potentially at the same time as the temple in the Forum Holitorium was being rebuilt. More on the use of *providentia* below.

[139] cf. Beard (2007), 92-106.

connecting Germanicus and hope. For example, the troops during the mutinies in 14 have *magna spes* that Germanicus will march on Rome with the legions (*Ann.* 1.31); the same hopes and affection centre on the young Germanicus as they did on the elder Drusus, who allegedly had desired to give back *libertas* (*Ann.* 1.33); the nearer Germanicus stood to the highest hopes, the more energy he threw into the cause of Tiberius, writes Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.34); Piso is sent to Syria to constrain the hopes of Germanicus (*Ann.* 2.43); then there are two important instances worth closer attention. Firstly, in Germanicus' deathbed speech (*Ann.* 2.71) Tacitus has him say:

> Si quos **spes meae**, si quos propinquus sanguis, etiam quos invidia erga viventem movebat, inlacrimabunt quondam florentem et tot bellorum susperstitem muliebri fraude cecidisse.
>
> If any were ever stirred by the hope of me [*or* my hope], if any by kindred blood – even by envy of me while I lived, they will weep that the once prosperous survivor of so many wars has fallen by female treachery.

And secondly, at Germanicus' funeral at the Mausoleum (*Ann.* 3.4):

> Dies quo reliquiae tumulo Augusti inferebantur modo per silentium vastus, modo ploratibus inquies; plena urbis itinera, conlucentes per campum Martis faces. Illic miles cum armis, sine insignibus magistratus, populus per tribus concidisse rem publicam, **nihil spei reliquum clamitabant**, promptius apertiusque quam ut meminisse imperitantium crederes.
>
> The day on which the remains were consigned to the mausoleum of Augustus was alternatively a desolation of silence and a turmoil of laments. The city streets were full, the Campus Martius alight with torches. There the soldier in harness, the magistrate lacking his insignia, the populace in their tribes, iterated the cry that the "commonwealth had fallen, and no hope remained" too freely and too openly for it to be credible that they remembered their governors.

Even taking into account the fact that Tacitus has manipulated his material for dramatic effect, this suggests that the association was there in the popular memory, or an historiographical tradition (perhaps including the memoirs of the younger Agrippina?) and was the result of the political discourse of the 20s CE. Furthermore, there is some external support for this reading found in the *Senatus Consultum de Gnaeo Pisone Patre*. Discovered in Spain, the *SCPP* from

the 10th December, 20 CE, illustrates another connection between *spes* and successors in imperial ideology. At line 126-130 it states:

> ...ut omnem curam, quam in duos quondam filios suos partitus erat, ad eum, quem haberet, converteret, sperareq(ue) senatum eum, qui supersit, tanto maiori curae dis immortalibus fore, quanto magis intellegerent, **omnem spem futuram paternae pro r(e) p(ublica) stationis in uno repositam**...
>
> ...that all the care he [Tiberius] had previously divided between his two sons he devote to the one he had; and that the senate hoped that the one who survives would be all the more an object of the immortal gods' concern insofar as they understood that all future hope of his father's guardianship of the state was now placed in one man...

Here we can see a senatorial expression of the future hope for the succession attached to the younger Drusus, with the implication that hope had formerly been placed in Germanicus as well. Yet despite the equality presented here, there was something particular about Germanicus.

At the height of his popularity, the designated successor and recent *triumphator* died in Antioch, two years after the rededication of the temple. It was this combination, perhaps more than anything else, that solidified his connection with hope. The situation in Rome was extremely volatile owing to the outpouring of grief for Germanicus, and there are numerous passages which highlight this fact. Tiberius was accused by some of a conspiracy against Germanicus via his legate Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso. The *SCPP* presents a picture of widespread though controlled grief, but later sources have more effusive accounts of anguish and distress and even of riotous behaviour; or to use Versnel's term, *anomie*, the breakdown of social norms.[140] This is seen for example in Suetonius (*Cal.* 5-6):

[140] Undoubtedly the most detailed analysis of the mourning for Germanicus, though it predates the discovery of the *SCPP*, is by Versnel (1980); Versnel's religious and anthropological approach highlights the different aspects of the popular grief recorded in the literary accounts, demonstrating that it was not an ordinary display of grief. When using *anomie* to describe this episode he follows Durkheim's definition, which was much broader than the Greek *anomia*. This grief was exacerbated owing to the amount of hope placed in an individual, he argues, brought about especially through the shift in allegiance from *patria* to *pater patriae* through *supplicationes*, *vota* etc. Germanicus in this sense came to embody hope for the future. In literature on the *SCPP*, this context of grief in Rome is perhaps most strongly emphasised by González (1999), especially 138-9; also Flower (1999), 108.

> Tamen longe maiora et firmiora de eo iudicia in morte ac post mortem exstiterunt. Quo defunctus est die, lapidata sunt templa, subversae deum arae, Lares a quibusdam familiares in publicum abiecti, partus coniugum expositi. Quin et barbaros ferunt, quibus intestinum quibusque adversus nos bellum esset, velut in domestico communique maerore consensisse ad indutias; regulos quosdam barbam posuisse et uxorum capita rasisse ad indicium maximi luctus; regum etiam regem et exercitatione venandi et convictu megistanum abstinuisse, quod apud Parthos iustiti instar est. Romae quidem, cum ad primam famam valitudinis attonita et maesta civitas sequentis nuntios opperiretur, et repente iam vesperi incertis auctoribus convaluisse tandem percrebruisset, passim cum luminibus et victimis in Capitolium concursum est ac paene revolsae templi fores, ne quid gestientis vota reddere moraretur, expergefactus e somno Tiberius gratulantium vocibus atque undique concinentium: Salva Roma, salva patria, salvus est Germanicus! Et ut demum fato functum palam factum est, non solaciis ullis, non edictis inhiberi luctus publicus potuit duravitque etiam per festos Decembris mensis dies. Auxit gloriam desideriumque defuncti et atrocitas insequentium temporum, cunctis nec temere opinantibus reverentia eius ac metu repressam Tiberi saevitiam, quae mox eruperit.
>
> Yet far greater and stronger tokens of regard were shown at the time of his death and immediately afterwards. On the day when he passed away the temples were stoned and the altars of the gods overturned, while some flung their household gods into the street and cast out their newly born children. Even barbarian peoples, so they say, who were engaged in war with us or with one another, unanimously consented to a truce, as if all in common had suffered a domestic tragedy. It is said that some princes put off their beards and had their wives' heads shaved, as a token of the deepest mourning; that even the king of kings suspended his exercise at hunting and the banquets with his courtiers, which among Parthians is a sign of public mourning.
>
> At Rome when the community, in grief and consternation at the first report of his illness, was awaiting further news, and suddenly after nightfall a report at last spread abroad, on doubtful authority, that he had recovered, a general rush was made from every side to the Capitol with torches and victims, and the temple gates were all but torn off, that nothing might hinder them in their eagerness to pay their vows. Tiberius was roused from sleep by the cries of the rejoicing throng, who all united in singing: Safe is Rome, safe the homeland, Germanicus is safe! But when it was at last made known that he was no more, the public grief could be checked neither by any consolation nor edict, and it continued even during the festal days of the month of December. The fame of the deceased and regret for his loss were increased by the horror of the times which followed, since all believed, and with good reason, that the cruelty of Tiberius, which soon burst forth, had been held in check through his respect and awe for Germanicus.

A similar report of the intense communal grief is found in Tacitus' account (Tac. *Ann.* 2.82). Furthermore, at the start of Book 3, beginning with the evocative scene of Agrippina's arrival at Brundisium bearing the ashes of Germanicus, lies the most famous account of this grief. It ends with his funeral, shortly after which we find that Tiberius issued an edict to try to put an end to the public unrest – perhaps the same one mentioned by Suetonius (Tac. *Ann.* 3.6).

Thus it seems, even taking into account the possible hyperbole of anti-Tiberian sources in Tacitus and Suetonius, grieving in Rome continued in some form at least from the first news of Germanicus' death on October 10th, 19 CE, right through December, and up until the official cessation sometime shortly before games of the Magna Mater on April 4th. The reported events in Rome with displays of despair and anguish additionally suggest that Germanicus had indeed been considered or promoted as the future hope of the state.

Velleius in Context

We return then, to Velleius and the passage concerning the adoption (2.103) with which we began. Velleius had lived through the rise and sudden death of Germanicus, and the ensuing struggle to determine the nature of his reputation and memory, between Agrippina and her adherents, Tiberius' supporters, and eventually Sejanus. We have already noted his conspicuous absence from the adoption passage; another passage demonstrates how conscious Velleius is of the sensitivity surrounding Germanicus even in 29. In his synopsis of Tiberius' principate, he writes (2.129.1-3):

> **Quibus praeceptis instructum Germanicum suum imbutumque rudimentis militiae secum actae domitorem recepit Germaniae! Quibus iuventam eius exaggeravit honoribus, respondente cultu triumphi rerum, quas gesserat, magnitudini!** Quotiens populum congiariis honoravit senatorumque censum, cum id senatu auctore facere potuit, quam libenter explevit, ut neque luxuriam invitaret neque honestam paupertatem pateretur dignitate destitui! **Quanto cum honore Germanicum suum in transmarinas misit provincias!**
>
> How well had Germanicus been trained under his instructions, having so thoroughly learned the rudiments of military science under him that he was later to welcome him home as conqueror of Germany! What honours did he heap upon him, young though he was, making the magnificence of his triumph to correspond to the greatness of his deeds! How often did he honour the people with largesses, and how gladly, whenever he could do so with the senate's sanction, did he raise to the required rating the fortunes of senators, but in such a way as not to encourage extravagant living, nor yet to allow senators to lose their rank because of honest poverty! With what honours did he send his beloved Germanicus to the provinces across the seas!

Velleius is pleading with his readers that Tiberius had caused Germanicus no harm and the accusations against him were unfounded.[141] Moreover, Germanicus' military achievements are credited to Tiberius. He is subordinated to the *princeps* even as he is being praised for his triumph, which sits within a compliment to Tiberius. There are other examples, but the important point to note is that Germanicus was a difficult subject for Velleius. His image had been sanitised by Tiberius and his supporters after his death, through documents such as the *SCPP* that depict him as a loyal and subordinate son. Consequently, he was not denigrated by Velleius like Julia, Agrippa Postumus or Agrippina; but neither could he be praised, for that would play into the hands of Tiberius' detractors who promoted Germanicus as a superior *princeps*, now lost. As a result, we can have greater confidence that Velleius was writing the account of the adoption with one eye on Germanicus and his reputation.

The cult of *Spes* had been revitalised in order to use it as an additional support during the first experiment in transitioning power within the *domus Augusta*. Following Germanicus' death, the anticipation which had built up around him was to become extremely problematic for Tiberius. It appears that Velleius decided to contribute to the defence of his former commander in a sophisticated way. He took the concept by now associated with young potential successors, and above all Germanicus owing to his triumph and cult dedication in 17, and projected it back onto the amalgamated episode of Tiberius' own unspectacular arrival and eventual adoption. In this way, Velleius attempted to counteract the discourse of hope that had developed around the prince by placing his popularity before Germanicus' chronologically, at the same time as

[141] Further evidence in support of this reading of 2.129 is the way in which Velleius foregrounds the just manner in which Tiberius dealt with Rhascupolis, the slayer of his brother's son Cotys, who shared the throne with him – a strikingly similar familial and political scenario to the accusations against Tiberius preserved in Tacitus. His treatment of Drusus Libo immediately afterwards further underscores the idea that Tiberius' *iustitia* is a key virtue in this passage.

he silenced the alternative narratives of 'past futures' propagated by Agrippina's family and supporters.

Providentia and *Spes* – Two Tiers of Future-Oriented Divine Qualities?

Although *providentia*, as a forward-looking quality and divinity, also played a role in strengthening the Augustan 'succession arrangement', and in many ways went on to have a much more significant position than *spes* in the ideological programmes of later *principes*, the two qualities/divinities were different in important ways. These differences are worth further consideration since they may reflect some of the theoretical and political issues presented by the choice to restore *spes*, and particularly the way in which it became a problematic idea after its association with Germanicus.

In the first major study of *providentia* and *aeternitas*, Charlesworth proposed that there were three major uses or strands of *providentia* in imperial ideology stemming from the basic meaning of the capacity to 'see ahead', suggested primarily by the contexts in which the term was produced on coinage and in inscriptions. It was apparently initially used to represent the foresight of the *princeps* (as *providentia Augusti*) in providing successors, ensuring a smooth transition of power and the absence of civil war, which was first depicted as a consequence of Tiberius' dedication of an altar to *providentia* (a process which in much later iconography, under Nerva, also involved senatorial selection or approval, to some extent). A secondary association developed, according to Charlesworth much later in the Tiberian period, when *providentia* was used to express the ability of the *princeps* to anticipate and foil conspiracies, thereby securing his own power. The concept appears to have been employed to convey this meaning in the aftermath of Sejanus' alleged plot. This second idea is connected to the first, in that the conspiracy supposedly had also sought to eliminate the children of Germanicus, as well

as the *princeps* himself.[142] Thirdly, beginning in the Hadrianic period, was the idea of the *providentia deorum* – a kind of eternal provision on the part of the gods for the continued success of the Roman people and the *res publica* (further linking it to *aeternitas*).

Later scholars, including Fears, Scott, and Noreña, have, to varying degrees, followed Charlesworth's tripartite interpretation of the significance of the quality/deity, with some modifications.[143] Scott attempted to fix the date of the Tiberian altar more precisely, and earlier, in 15/16 CE (Noreña preferred a date range of some point between 14-17 CE), and thus the first issue of the coinage which depicts it, while drawing together strands from earlier work and identifying the supposed *ara numinis Augusti*, the proposed *ara adoptionis* mentioned by Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.14), and the *ara providentiae Augusti* as likely one and the same altar to *providentia*.[144] Scott suggests that Tiberius' decision to dedicate the altar, and his continued emphasis on *providentia* on coinage throughout the Tiberian period, is a consequence of Tiberius' anxieties about Augustus' succession arrangements, and not only his desire to continue at least the outline of Augustus' plan, but also to quell any rumours that he was in some sense an afterthought as a 'successor', a hostile interpretation preserved in the source tradition.[145]

[142] Charlesworth (1936), 112. Evidence for this development includes the inscription from 32 CE (*CIL* XI 4170) found at Interamna Nahars (modern Terni), which includes a dedication to *Salus perpetua Augusta*, and to *Libertas publica populi Romani*, and also to the *providentia* of Tiberius, which is associated with the downfall of Sejanus, who remains unnamed, and with the *aeternitas* of the Roman people. See also Cooley (2012), 401-2. Further evidence for *providentia* being associated with Sejanus' demise is found in Valerius Maximus (9.11, ext 4)

[143] Fears (1981b), Scott (1982), and especially Noreña (2011), 93: 'Imperial *providentia* was quite elastic, and in principle any action on the part of the emperor could be attributed to it. Nevertheless, three interrelated applications of the virtue stand out: the securing of an orderly imperial succession; the suppression of conspiracies; and the active concern for the well-being of the *populus Romanus*. *Providentia* as the imperial virtue that guaranteed dynastic continuity was first publicized by the Ara Providentiae Augustae, located in the Campus Martius in Rome and probably erected between 14 and 17, and by the Providentia types in Tiberius' Divus Augustus Pater coin series, which depicted the altar and announced Tiberius' legitimate succession from his adoptive father.'

[144] Noreña (2011), 93.

[145] Scott (1982), 445.

This presence of the parallel attention being given to *providentia* by Tiberius (who was possibly carrying out plans made by, or with, Augustus) provides some interesting conclusions if it is placed alongside what has been argued in this chapter concerning *spes*. First, one major difference between *spes* and *providentia* is that the former to some extent necessarily implies incomplete knowledge about how the future will develop, since *spes* necessarily maintains an element of uncertainty. *Providentia*, by contrast, very likely became an object of cult precisely owing to its fatalistic nature, which made the issue that was foreseen (in this instance, 'succession') predictable and safe. Thus, at least on a theoretical level, there is a tension between the two divine qualities. *Spes*, as seen in the case of Germanicus' death, can be disappointed, and moreover, as was seen with the presentation of the young Tiberius in Velleius' account, defers some form of fulfilment or completion until a later time. Tiberius undoubtedly did not want to encourage people to look beyond his own principate (at least not prematurely) to some alternative candidate – the Augustan 'plan' was to be carried out in due course. After Germanicus' death, Tiberius and subsequent *principes* may have felt some concern about allowing a potential 'successor' to cultivate such an association with *spes*. When it did resurface, there were very particular reasons for its employment. When coinage issued under Claudius proclaimed SPES AUGUSTA, its 'Augustan' emphasis may have been intended to convey the 'near miss' of not having a Julio-Claudian successor after the assassination of Caligula – Claudius, the brother of Germanicus, stepped into the void (see Chapter 3), and moreover, Britannicus had been born three weeks after his accession. When it later appeared on Flavian issues, a dynasty whose position was to some extent secured by the presence of Vespasian's sons, it was placed alongside the title of *princeps iuventutis*, symbolically returning Rome, again, to a version of the original Augustan-Tiberian idea of an orderly first succession.

Thus, these two future-oriented qualities and divinities, *spes* and *providentia*, were associated with particular figures in the *domus* in the second decade of the first century, Germanicus and Tiberius respectively, and to some extent Tiberius' continued emphasis on *providentia* throughout his principate must be seen not only as a later reaction against Sejanus, but against those who sought to emphasise the *spes* that Germanicus had represented.

To complicate this picture, Fishwick argued that the *Ara Providentiae* was not associated especially closely with Tiberius per se, but rather that it pointed to Augustus' ability to make plans and arrange various potential successors (from Agrippa right through to Tiberius), since M. Agrippa appears on a coin of Emerita of Claudian date, presiding over the inauguration of their own later version of the *Ara Providentiae* in Rome.[146] This is a possible reading of the evidence that exists, yet it seems entirely plausible that this interpretation might have developed over time, and that the immediate, contemporary reason for the altar's construction in the late Augustan and early Tiberian period was to bring a sense of order and inevitability to the particular succession plans of 4 CE, and especially Tiberius' preeminence. Certainly, one useful addition Fishwick notes is that the *SCPP* supplements our knowledge of the altar in the Campus Martius by mentioning (lines 82-4) a statue to Germanicus with an inscription, set up nearby by the *sodales Augustales*, from which the name of Cn. Calpurnius Piso was to be erased after his trial and suicide.[147] The ideological or symbolic link between this statue and the altar is not spelled out in any detail, but it does seem to evoke a connection between the *Ara Providentiae* and the succession plans from 4 CE on at the very least, even if all previous successors did not fall under the umbrella of Augustus' *providentia* at this moment in time.

[146] Fishwick (2010).
[147] *SCPP* 82-4: utique nomen Cn. Pisonis patris tolleretur | ex titulo statuae Germanici Caesaris, quam ei sodales Augustales in campo ad aram Providentiae posuissent
'That the name of the elder Cn. Piso be removed from the inscription of the statue of Germanicus that the *sodales Augustales* erected to him in the Campus <<Martius>> next to the Altar of Providence'.

Alternative Futures, Repetition, and Succession

Having examined the context surrounding Velleius' account of Tiberius' adoption, and the association between successors and *spes* in the period following, we turn to the idea of the apparent succession plan being 'short-circuited' in some way. As we have seen, the two alternative 'past futures' presented most clearly in the sources for this period are reports that either Agrippa Postumus or Germanicus was preferred to Tiberius, and these are raised in various ways – they are both embedded in the narrative, and reported as rumours or opinions of individuals or groups. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the extent to which these 'past futures' were retrojected is very difficult to unravel, but some progress can be made. One result of our investigation of Velleius has been to show that Agrippa Postumus was not as much of a problem for Tiberius and those favourable to his rule by the time Velleius was writing in 29, whereas Germanicus continued to be rather problematic.

In addition to the aforementioned association between Germanicus and hope, this distinction would seem to be largely a consequence of the fact that despite some early promotion (cf. Dio 55.10.6 on his participation in the *ludus Troiae*) Agrippa Postumus was apparently no longer a 'contender' in Augustus' mind from an early stage (whether one assumes that was the case from 4, 6, 9, or 14 CE), and was not promoted in the manner of Gaius and Lucius (Dio 55.22.3).[148] By contrast, Germanicus lived for five years after Agrippa's death, had immediate family who sought to keep his memory alive, and indeed was apparently the preferred successor to Tiberius until his demise. Agrippa was publicly disowned in a way that Germanicus never was, by both Augustus and Tiberius. Yet it is worth pushing the question a little further to see

[148] Agrippa Postumus is discussed at greater length below.

if there are other reasons for the survival of some of these 'past futures' and the differences in the way they were treated in historiography.

One important possibility is that the original idea of having Germanicus as a potential successor could to a certain extent still be put into effect after his death – albeit in a modified, symbolic way – through his children, and this certainly seems to be behind much of the excitement surrounding Caligula's accession (and to some extent even that of Claudius, discussed in Chapter 3).[149] For instance, Suetonius reports (*Cal.* 13):

> Sic imperium adeptus, populum Romanum, vel dicam hominum genus, voti compotem fecit, exoptatissimus princeps maximae parti provincialium ac militum, quod infantem plerique cognoverant, sed et universae plebi urbanae ob memoriam Germanici patris miserationemque prope afflictae domus.
>
> By thus acquiring command he fulfilled the prayers of the Roman people, or may I say of all mankind, since he was the prince most earnestly desired by the great part of the provincials and soldiers, many of whom had known him in his infancy, as well as by the whole body of the city populace, because of the memory of his father Germanicus and pity for a family that was all but extinct.

Claudius' connection with Germanicus was evidently also emphasised at a later date (*Cl.* 7):

> Sortitus est et de altero consulatu in quartum annum; praeseditque nonnumquam spectaculis in Gai vicem, adclamante populo: "Feliciter" partim "patruo imperatoris" partim "Germanici fratri!"
>
> He was also allotted a second consulship, to be held four years later, and several times he presided at the shows in place of Gaius, and was greeted by the people now with "Success to the emperor's uncle!" and now with "All hail to the brother of Germanicus!"

[149] Some of this excitement/hope – and subsequent disappointment/despair – is captured in the Suetonian life, which begins with a very flattering portrait of Germanicus (*Cal.* 1-7), juxtaposed with that of Caligula himself, unmasked as a monster. In Suetonius' *Lives*, ancestral or initially displayed virtue typically degenerates into vice, while any original vice remains constant in descendants. We might therefore argue that despite the thematic arrangement of Suetonius' work, which largely eschews a chronological framework, he is working with an inherent idea of 'moral decline' over generations and certainly within the lifetime of a particular *princeps*. For a discussion of the issue of character development, which divides 'character portrait' from 'personality' in order to emphasise the moralising aspects of ancient biography as opposed to its modern equivalent, see Gill (1983), 469-87. Gill notes, 'These writers, Greek and Roman alike, talk as if their job was to pass judgements on the qualities of the great men of history, and to see how they measure up to certain preconceived norms of excellence, as statesmen and as men. They do not suggest that their job is to understand these people as interesting individuals or personalities, to give a sympathetic or 'empathetic' picture of them, to 'get inside their skin', psychologically, as a modern biographer might.' 473.

Without suggesting that there was a 'cyclical' view of history at work here *per se*, there are what one might describe as 'repetitive' aspects built into the way the Romans perceived the future, distinct from humanity's general inability to imagine something outside of its own experience. For example, throughout the Republic, aristocratic families gained reputations for possessing particular characteristics (sometimes fossilised in *cognomina*), which were thought to be passed on to subsequent generations, whatever the reality of the situation may have been.[150] Thus particular scenarios had the potential to be 'replayed' in a modified manner in each subsequent generation – and one might even suggest that Roman audiences *expected* them to be 'replayed.'[151] It was a lens through which to view not just the past, but the future.

For instance, Tacitus reports a popular opinion about the similarities in political outlook between Germanicus and the elder Drusus, and Caligula's aforementioned popularity was possibly tied to this legacy, as well as to the anticipated contrast with Tiberius' behaviour.[152] In Tiberius' case, the Claudii were considered likely to display *superbia*, probably stemming from the traditions surrounding Appius Claudius Caecus, a version of which appears in Livy (2.27, noting his *insita superbia*). A synopsis of his Claudian heritage, with individuals displaying either 'good' or 'bad' characteristics, is placed at the beginning of Suetonius' life (*Tib.* 1-2), while Tacitus presents only the negative tradition, including *superbia* once more (*Ann.* 1.4.3).[153] The latter Tacitean example is set within a very interesting passage which

[150] Rosillo-López (2017), 98.
[151] O'Gorman (2006) uses the Pisones as a Tacitean equivalent, examining their characteristics over generations. On the issue of *imagines* at funeral processions, a visual form of the same phenomenon, see Flower (1996).
[152] Discussed at greater length below.
[153] For the positive and negative traditions of the Claudian family, which appear in both Livy and Dionysius, see Wiseman (1979), esp. 57-103. 'The ingrained arrogance of the Claudian house was already a historical commonplace when Tacitus wrote his *Annals*. He used it with characteristic effect at the very beginning of his narrative, to introduce the character who would dominate the first six books – Tiberius Claudius Nero, Augustus' successor as *princeps*. His contemporary Suetonius provides the fullest extant statement of the case against the Claudii; in the *Life of Tiberius*, the brief sketch of the good and bad Claudii in the emperor's ancestry is followed by this summary' (and cites *Tib.* 2.4), 57; 'Here, and throughout the tradition, the arrogant patrician

purportedly relates the *vox (*or rather, *voces*) *populi* weighing up the merits of Tiberius as opposed to those of Agrippa Postumus. While this is necessarily to some extent a Tacitean construction, the idea that the Roman people would weigh up the virtues and vices of their prospective *principes* in order to predict what the future of Rome might be like in each scenario must have been a credible construction for Tacitus' audience, and drew upon long-standing traditions.

Levick notes that this clause (*vetere atque insita Claudiae familiae superbia*) is applied by Tacitus to Tiberius, but not to Germanicus, who was just as much a Claudian, thereby displaying the flexibility of such *Leitmotive* – they were manipulated to fit a particular agenda.[154] In fact, the plasticity of such archetypes (here put into the mouths of a section of the populace) is revealed by the fact that Tiberius is shown to be quite retiring or even humble in Tacitus' narrative, and not particularly arrogant at all; his detached attitude and impenetrable *dissimulatio* is perhaps the opposite of the more straightforward *superbia*, by contrast with some of Germanicus' (and certainly, from a Roman perspective, Agrippina's) behaviour. This is despite Tacitus' best efforts to make the stereotype fit – for instance, by rather cleverly claiming his 'moderation' was a sign of arrogance, perhaps in the sense that it demonstrated he was in a position of power (e.g. *Ann.* 1.8.5 *adroganti moderatione*).[155] There are 'non-ancestral' examples from the principate as well – one might think of Tacitus' portrait of Sejanus (*Ann.*

Claudii are a historiographical, not a historical, phenomenon. Somebody invented the legend; Livy and Dionysius exploited it on a large scale, and thanks to them it has taken root.' 58-9; Wiseman also notes that the tyrant had become 'a standard element in the practice declamations used for training budding orators. His characteristic vices were *vis, superbia, crudelitas,* and *libido*, all which duly appear in the political invectives of Cicero and his contemporaries at the end of the Roman Republic.' 80. What is interesting about the Tacitean (popular perception of) Tiberius is that *superbia* is the only one of the four mentioned in the passage, while that is perhaps the least fitting (in the polemical tradition). *Saevitia,* at *Ann.* 1.4.3 is relatively close to *crudelitas*, but neither of them are particularly typical of the Tacitean Tiberius, whose victims' demise generally comes about through the power of *maiestas* trials and *delatores*, Sejanus, etc.

[154] Levick (1976), 184, n.6.

[155] Goodyear (1972) *ad loc.*, 149, describes this as 'perhaps the most effective oxymoron in Tacitus,' and further, 'here as often elsewhere, he cannot resist the temptation to pervert by his interpretation a virtue to which Tiberius could and did lay claim.'

4.1), which, according to some scholars, draws upon Sallust's Catiline (*BC* 5).[156] The similarities here, as with Tiberius and the Claudii, are also limited, so we must think of these 'archetypes' as rather useful tools which were available when constructing 'sequels' in narratives, fictional or historical (or pseudo-historical, in the case of early Rome) – and importantly, when constructing narratives of the future. Drawing on Wiseman's idea that the stage in 'pre-literary' Rome was probably the primary origin of Latin historiography, one might attribute this typecasting in the early principate to a wider tendency of Roman historians to employ theatrically-inspired 'stock characters,' a practice which continued into later periods in order to make complicated political situations intelligible or memorable.[157] Particularly when dealing with monarchical themes such as a 'succession crisis', there was plenty of material available in fictional narratives both on and off the stage. In an autocratic setting, in which the virtues and vices of one man held much greater sway over Roman government, the importance of these 'inherited' characteristics was magnified even more, and could be used to fill in gaps in narratives describing a political environment in which important developments were now often occurring behind closed doors.

By contrast with Germanicus and the continuity provided by his family, in Agrippa's case, his lack of children meant that following his murder, pretenders, such as his slave Clemens, were the only means by which that alternative future could still be realised (*Ann.* 2.39, Dio 57.16.3). Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Tacitean passage is that 'embodying' Agrippa was the fall-back position from what appears to have been a genuine rescue attempt (at least within

[156] See, e.g. Keitel (1984), 322. I would suggest that if such a parallel was drawn by Velleius, the portrait of Sejanus must be seen as negative, despite the superficial praise – and perhaps even pointing the reader towards the idea that Sejanus was plotting to overthrow the Tiberian *res publica*. The alternative is that there is no allusion intended, for an author would not make such a negative allusion and risk offending Sejanus simply in order to appear erudite.

[157] Wiseman (1994), esp. 12-22 '*Mimesis* is the aim, 'the vivid representation of emotions and characters,' as exemplified by Thucydides.' 19.

the narrative itself); in other words, the impersonation was not merely an opportunistic ploy from the beginning.[158] Despite his contempt for Clemens and the fact that it jars with his initial rather fatalistic picture of servitude (*Ann.* 1.2), Tacitus appears to consider the prospect of further civil war seriously (e.g. at *Ann.* 2.39).

Therefore, the importance of these characters over time resulted from the fact that they represented – or at least came to represent – a desirable idea of some kind (both in history and in historiography), an idea or symbol that was considered worthy of 'repetition'. 'Repetition' was a means by which something which was 'past' could become, in a sense, a 'future' – and this idea of the future being a 'return' could apply as much to the politicised members of the *domus Augusta* as it could to an era such as the Golden or Saturnian Age (as with Vergil in Chapter 1), or to an ideal phase of the *res publica* at some point between Tarquinius Priscus and the fall of Carthage (as Sallust describes in Chapter 1). After his death, Germanicus became the idealised model of a *princeps* for some people in Rome precisely because he had never attained that position.

Of course the most basic 'idea' these figures represented (both at the time, and in later historical narratives) was the possibility of *not* having Tiberius as a *princeps*, but the exact type of alternative they offered in each case remains as much open to speculation now as it was then. Perhaps the least desirable, and one of the most common, is the idea that there would be a return to civil war – for instance, seen above in *Ann.* 1.4, and 2.39, which may have derived from contemporary opposition to such a plan. Another option Tacitus describes (*Ann.* 1.33) that we have noted is the *rumor* that Germanicus and his father Drusus held 'republican'

[158] On the wider phenomenon of impostors, see Chapter 4. On the Agrippa Postumus episode, see Hohl (1935), Pappano (1941), Detweiler (1970), Levick (1972), Jameson (1975), Bellemore (2000).

sentiments.[159] A similar idea, connecting Germanicus with his father and both of them with *libertas*, is repeated by Tacitus at a later stage (*Ann.* 2.82). Although, following Pelling and Griffin, this may well be a part of Tacitus' wider scheme of characterisation, which presented Germanicus and Tiberius as 'lost republic' and 'dissimulating principate' respectively, it is not likely that Tacitus fabricated the idea in its entirety in the early second century, and there is some support in Suetonius for a wider tradition surrounding the elder Drusus (*Claud.* 1.4).[160] It is also presented by Suetonius, with an anti-Tiberian spin, in another passage (*Tib.* 50.1) in which Tiberius purportedly produced a letter written by Drusus that discussed whether to compel Augustus to restore *libertas*, implying that it did not exist at that time.

This story is very likely the concoction of those who sought to damage Tiberius' reputation, while presenting the elder Drusus and Germanicus in a favourable light. Exactly who was responsible for such a tradition is unclear, but it seems likely that it was created in the 20s and 30s CE or in the aftermath of Tiberius' death, certainly by those favourable to Germanicus.[161] Yet we should not dismiss the possibility that those responsible were motivated by a genuine desire to restore *libertas* (in a rather odd manner) by harnessing the popularity of Drusus and Germanicus, who were at the core of the *domus Augusta*, but looking beyond them to their

[159] Some of the hope that was invested in Germanicus apparently stemmed from the idea that he, and his father before him, might be a way to achieve this 'compromised Republicanism' – perhaps a *res publica* with a greater amount of senatorial influence and governance. In the same passage (*Ann.* 1.33) Tacitus notes Germanicus' civil/civic character, and Suetonius (*Cl.* 1.4) uses very similar language (*civilis animi*) – perhaps foreshadowing the idea of the *civilis princeps*. On this theme of *civilitas* see Wallace-Hadrill (1982a). On the elder Drusus' 'Republicanism,' cf. Rich (1999); Levick (1976), 32-5; Rich, (1999), *contra* Levick, 34, detaches Drusus' desire for the *spolia opima* from being 'republican', but does not account for the 'republicanism' *per se*. Suetonius' account (*Tib.* 50.1) of Drusus' letter suggesting that they restore the Republic is part of a tradition hostile to Tiberius, and it is hard to establish the extent to which this story is more about blackening Tiberius' name. Both may have been attributed such thoughts on the basis of anti-Tiberian sentiments – nevertheless, it is telling that someone might deploy a story suggesting Tiberius did not approve of a return to *libertas* as a means to blacken Tiberius' reputation (surely here a reference to the pre-Caesarian state of affairs), indicating that it still carried some weight, or even that some still hoped that a pre-Caesarian Republic would be restored through an amenable *princeps*.

[160] See Pelling (1993), Griffin (1995).

[161] Levick (1976), 32 notes that Tiberius and Drusus had a very good relationship, and thus while the letter may be historical, the motivation in showing it to Augustus (if this occurred) almost certainly was not to incriminate him.

father Tiberius Claudius Nero and his opposition to the Caesareans in the aftermath of Caesar's assassination. This may have been done with the intention of propelling one of them into power so that they would then lay it aside, perhaps in the manner of Sulla, or Cicero's blueprint for Octavian (discussed above). In sum, the end result of this tradition is that Tiberius is placed alongside Livia and Augustus, yet retains the Claudian *superbia* of his ancient paternal ancestors, while his father, Tiberius Claudius Nero, the elder Drusus, and Germanicus all retain 'republican' political sentiments. This further demonstrates the malleable nature of these ancestral traits that became projections into the future, and eventually 'past futures' in historiography.

Agrippa Postumus – Like Father, like Son?

This raises the question of the legacy of the popular Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, and the extent to which his distinct identity was remembered and 'repeated' within the *domus Augusta* over time. As we have noted, unlike a number of other descendants of Agrippa, such as Gaius and Lucius Caesar, Agrippa Postumus did not form any part of Augustus' succession arrangements despite his adoption, and had no children of his own to continue his legacy.

According to Dio (55.32.1), Agrippa Postumus styled himself 'Neptune' while in exile, because he regularly went fishing. Pappano, and later Levick, proposed that he may have been alluding to the propaganda of his father Marcus Agrippa after his naval victories at Naulochus and Actium.[162] There is some evidence to suggest that Marcus Agrippa was associated with Neptune, even if he did not claim this divine role for himself explicitly (unlike Octavian). The war of images with Neptune originally began with Sextus Pompeius, who had minted coins

[162] Pappano (1941), 35; Levick (1976), 60.

featuring Pompeius Magnus with a trident, dolphin and the legend *Neptuni*.[163] This linked Sextus not only to the sea god, but also to his father's celebrated naval command in 67 BCE.[164] Here then, in a similar fashion, Agrippa Postumus was most likely associating himself with his own father's naval victory.

Despite the Suetonian account of Caligula's reluctance, at a later date, to be associated with his maternal grandfather Agrippa, perhaps on the basis of his alleged low birth, he or a mint master struck a series of coins featuring Agrippa wearing the *corona rostrata* sometime between 37 and 41 CE.[165] These featured Neptune on the reverse, so the continuity of this association is well attested. In contrast to Caligula's proud use of the maritime imagery, Agrippa Postumus' claim to be Neptune was humorous. All he might do while in exile was spend time fishing, whereas his father had commanded fleets with great success. Nevertheless, following his falling out with Augustus, this emphasised, significantly, a source of authority and popularity other than his connection with the *princeps*.

With this paternal connection in mind, one might wonder what other aspects of Agrippa Postumus' character were 'inherited' – either as a consequence of a deliberate association on the part of Postumus himself or one of his supporters, or as a result of popular gossip about Postumus following his exile, in the absence of reliable information. It is possible that Agrippa Postumus' infamous *ferocia* also falls into this category. *Ferocia* is a common theme in the

[163] Welch (2002), 19.
[164] Hadas (1930), 78, 90, 114; aside from the coinage (42-36 BCE?), there is literary evidence of the aftermath in Horace (*Epodes* 4 and 9).
[165] This slur against him was probably the product of the earlier succession debate between supporters of Marcellus and those of Agrippa, since ancestry was the only thing that Marcellus could hold over the successful general. Sen. *Contr.* 2.4.12-13. cf. Reinhold (1933), 5-6, Roddaz (1984), 20. Further evidence of this snobbery is seen in Dio's report of the reluctance of some of the nobility to attend the games held in his honour by Augustus after his death. Dio 54.29.6.

extant sources that mention him.[166] It is a word which may have some positive connotations in a martial context with regard to *virtus* (and is often applied to barbarians in this manner), but is also often seen in those lacking *temperantia* or *moderatio* – making him not very well suited to the Tiberian age.[167] Traub saw a connection between the word and outspoken characters in the Tacitean corpus, and argued that it could include a sense of *parrhesia*.[168] Yet the relationship extends beyond one author, and this perhaps indicates an older tradition.

For instance, Horace describes the troops of his father, Marcus Agrippa, as *ferox*, in the Ode addressed to him, 1.6:

> …quam rem cumque ferox navibus aut equis
> miles te duce gesserit.
> Nos, Agrippa, neque haec dicere…
>
> …whatever exploit with ships or horse the daring soldier has achieved under thy leadership. No such deeds, Agrippa, do I essay to sing…

Cairns' article on this poem included a note on three possible etymological 'links', or puns on the name 'Agrippa'.[169] The first of these is found in the words *ferox* and *equis*. The expression *navibus aut equis* is an unusual mixture of standard phrases – 'by horse and foot' with 'on land and sea' (*terra marique*). Cairns suggests:

> If 'Agrippa' is deemed to contain the two elements *agr-* and *–ippa*, and if these elements are thought of as Greek *agr-* and *ippa*, i.e. as the stems of, for example, *agrios* and *hippos/hippeus*, then the opening and closing words of the phrase *ferox – equis* (which qualifies Agrippa's soldiery – *miles*, line 4) would constitute Latin equivalent of the two elements of the 'Greek' name 'Agrippa'. [n.14 '*ferox* is glossed *inter alia* '*agrios*'][170]

[166] Levick (1976), 40; on Agrippa Postumus' *ferocia*, see e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.20, Suet. *Aug.* 65.1.8.
[167] This is perhaps another example of being portrayed deliberately unlike the idealised Tiberius, in the campaign that sought to distance him from the *domus* in the aftermath of his *abdicatio*.
[168] Traub, (1953), 252, who notes that the word *ferocia* occurs 13 times in the *Annals*, 10 times in the *Histories*, and 3 times in the minor works of Tacitus.
[169] Cairns (1995).
[170] Cairns (1995), 213.

The second etymology is contained within the first by omission. In changing these stock expressions to exclude the word *pedes*, Horace is rejecting the standard etymology for the name Agrippa, which Aulus Gellius claims comes from *aegritudo* and *pedes*, referring to a breech birth.[171] This also provides some support to the first idea, since it contains a division of the name into two halves which is similar to the joining of *agrios* and *hippos*. This etymology may also provide a reason for the Elder Pliny's belief that Agrippa had been lame during his youth.[172] The third possible etymology is more complicated, and continues the elevated epic flavour. At the end of the fourth stanza, Horace mentions the Homeric warrior Diomedes. While he might also be a good model for Agrippa more generally, Cairns notes that Diomedes' home town in Italy is Argyrip(p)a, which appears in the *Aeneid* (11.243) and sounds strikingly similar to Agrippa – a point also noted by Nisbet.[173] One might also add to Cairns' points that there may be a further layer to Horace's third etymology, which could tie the first and third etymologies together – the other Diomedes, the Thracian king of the Bistones, was famous for possessing wild, man-eating horses until slain by Heracles.[174] Consequently, Horace may be making yet another joke about Agrippa's name.

Horace's etymological games may carry on even further than Cairns suggests in the following poem (1.7), since he juxtaposes *equis* and *Argos* at the beginning of the third stanza:

> Sunt quibus unum opus est, intactae Palladis urbem 5
> carmine perpetuo celebrare et

[171] Gell. *N.A.* 16.16: 'Those at whose birth the feet appeared first, instead of the head, which is considered the most difficult and dangerous form of parturition, are called Agrippae, a word formed from *aegritudo*, or "difficulty," and *pedes* (feet).' See also Maltby (1991), 20.
[172] *NH* 7.45-6. cf. Roddaz (1984), 26-7.
[173] Nisbet (1988), 105 n.29, and Cairns (1995), 215-6. A bust of Agrippa overlooks the square in Arpino, alongside the other famous *novi homines* Cicero and Marius, and may be related to this – the other name for the town of Argyrippa, which is near the modern day Monte Gargano, is that of Arpi, as seen in the Vergil passage. The residents of Arpino and Arpi were both called Arpini, leading to the confusion in a much later period that Agrippa was from Arpino. Whether Agrippa's family was originally from Argyrippa is unknown, but it is certainly a possibility that he was assumed to be from there because of this similiarity. Reinhold (1933), 1-11, and Roddaz (1984), 21-3, for various speculative explanations concerning the origin of the *gens*.
[174] Lucr. 5.30, Eur. *Alc.* 481, Apollod. 2.5.8. It is interesting to note that when Ovid later refers to this Thracian Diomedes in *ex Pont.* 1.2.120, he ends that line with *equis* and line 122 with *ferox*.

undique decerptam fronti praeponere olivam
  plurimus in Iunonis honorem
aptum dicet **equis Argos ditesque Mycenas**.
  me nec tam patiens Lacedaemon
nec tam Larisae percussit campus opimae
  quam domus Albuneae resonantis
et praeceps Anio ac Tiburni lucus et uda
  mobilibus pomaria rivis.

There are some whose single mission is to celebrate the virgin Pallas' city in a long continuous poem, and to display on their brow the olive plucked from every source. Very many, in Juno's honour, will tell of Argos, a good place for horses, and of rich Mycenae. As for me, neither tough Lacedaemon nor the fertile plain of Larisa has so struck my imagination as the home of the echoing Albunea and the plunging Anio and the grove of Tiburnus and the fruit trees moistened by swift streams.

This may be another instance of the *recusatio* found in the previous ode, in which Horace passes over singing of Agrippa's military exploits. If this is the case, *ditesque Mycenas*, wealthy Mycenae, may well form a pun on the name of Maecenas, famous for his luxury.[175]

[175] Horace goes on in *Ode* 1.7 to recommend Teucer to Munatius Plancus as an epic model to be imitated. If one bears this in mind and examines *Ode* 1.15, one could potentially posit that Horace has already created a number of associations in the same book between his contemporaries and figures drawn from epic. If Diomedes is Agrippa, and Teucer is Plancus, both are depicted by Horace as chasing after Paris and Helen across the water, who must surely then be Antony and Cleopatra.

(1.15, stanza 6-8)
Non Laertiaden, exitium tuae
gentis, non Pylium Nestora respicis?
urgent impavidi te Salaminus
  Teucer, te Stheneleus, sciens
pugnae, sive opus est imperitare equis,
non auriga piger. Merionen quoque
nosces. **ecce furit te reperire atrox**
  Tydides melior patre,
quem tu, cervus uti vallis in altera
visum parte lupum graminis immemor,
sublimi fugies mollis anhelitu,
  non hoc pollicitus tuae.

There is Laertes' son, who spells ruin for your people; there is Nestor of Pylos. You are hard pressed by dauntless warriors: Teucer of Salamis and Sthenelus, who is skilled in hand-to-hand fighting and no mean driver if he is called upon to command a team of horses. You will also come to know Meriones. And see, the ferocious son of Tydeus [Diomedes], a better man than his father, is mad to track you down. Like a deer, which, on sighting a wolf on the far side of the valley, forgets about the grass, you will run timidly away from him, gasping for breath; this was something you did not promise to your woman!

Fraenkel (1957) 188-9, noted that a number of earlier scholars identified this scene as having resonances with

All of these Horatian puns bring us back to Agrippa Postumus' presentation in the 'succession crisis'. If this derivation of the name *Agrippa* from 'wild horse' was already in existence (in these *Odes*, and perhaps elsewhere) by the time Agrippa Postumus was exiled, I would suggest that this ancestral 'quality', that originally possessed a positive 'epic' flavour in Horace's *Odes*, and was deployed for humorous purposes, provided a convenient foundation or pretext for later charges of rashness and insanity after 6 CE.[176] It is perhaps not coincidental that the elder Agrippina and Agrippina the younger are often associated with the *ferocia* in the *Annals*, and in Suetonius' *Lives* the only two instances of *ferox* describe Agrippa Postumus and the younger Agrippina, which supports this proposition.[177] While the claim to be 'Neptune' evidently has a pro-Agrippan origin, *ferocia* may be evidence of an 'ancestral quality' that was originally reasonably positive (or at least simply humorous), but was twisted and used against Postumus' claim as a potential successor.

Declamation and the 'Repetition' of Agrippa Postumus

The quality of *ferocia* brings us to the question of declamation and the extent of its influence on the historiographical tradition concerning the succession crisis. The potential relationship between declamation and 'counterfactuals', or 'virtual history', has been raised by O'Gorman

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the battle of Actium, and although this reading has fallen out of fashion due to a lack of evidence, this wordplay on names, and the association between epic heroes and Horace's contemporaries, might enable us to restore such an interpretation, without reducing the poem's meaning to a straightforward allegory. Considering the aforementioned concern with Agrippa's birth and ancestry, it is also very interesting that Diomedes in 1.15 is described as being better than his father.

[176] The name 'Agrippa' is, of course, not actually Greek. It is possible that it entered into Latin from the Greek colonies in Italy – the first instance in popular memory perhaps being the son of Tiburinus and king of Alba Longa, who appears in Livy 1.3. Of particular interest in Livy is also Agrippa Furius Fusus, who is described as *ferox* by Livy at 3.70.10, and referred to simply as *Agrippa* throughout. This may also have been a compliment or joke directed towards the contemporary M. Vipsanius Agrippa.

[177] Some instances of *ferocia vel sim.* relating to Agrippa's descendants in Tacitus' *Annals*: 1.3.20 (Agrippa P.'s description), 1.12.17 (Asinius Pollio, inheriting *ferocia* from his father – interestingly married to Vipsania daughter of M. Agrippa), 2.72.2 (Germanicus implores the Elder Agrippina to strip herself of *f.*), 13.2.8 (Younger Agrippina), 13.21.6 (Younger Agrippina summoning her *f.*). *Ferocia* in Suetonius: Suet. *Aug.* 65.1.8 (Agrippa Postumus), *Nero* 28.2.5 (Younger Agrippina).

when discussing the Pisones in the Tacitean corpus.[178] She highlights the use of *suasoriae* in the context of writing the history of crises and suggests that once something became the subject of declamation, this did not necessarily mean its political 'teeth' were removed, although this is a commonly held view among modern scholars.[179] She writes:

> Similarly [to 'modern virtual historians'], declaimers have traditionally been seen as escaping into a fantasy past because of their impotence in the present. A "harder" version of this interpretation is that the escape into declamation is not the symptom but the cause of political impotence. In either instance, the position of the *suasor* is one of frivolity towards the present and future; his political aspirations are located in the past. Both positions are caricatures to some extent (indeed, my reference to "accusations" above indicates that these are rhetorically formulated positions – perhaps even *declamatory* ones) but their mirror imaging is nevertheless suggestive.[180]

It is quite possible that their images of the future and presentation of 'past futures' could have important political ramifications, and were not merely the fantasies of the politically impotent. There are a few pieces of circumstantial evidence which make Agrippa Postumus seem a good subject for, if not a declamation *per se*, then at least accounts in other genres influenced by such exercises.

Although in our extant examples the subjects of *suasoriae* (the more 'historical' declamations) are at least one generation removed from contemporary events – contributing to the image of *declamatores* as being 'politically impotent'[181] – nevertheless, there is good evidence that

[178] O'Gorman (2006) 294-5: 'For at the same time as virtual history is castigated as pointless frivolity, it is also seen as promoting politically dangerous points of view: first, by suggesting that individuals and their actions are not affected in any way by social, economic, or technological factors; secondly, by granting undue importance to the role of chance in human affairs. In response, many defenders of virtual history attack what they see as the overly determinist view of the historical process implicit in these accusations. In addition, they claim that virtual history *does*, in fact, show regard for the actuality of the past, precisely by emphasizing the alternative paths that any course of events might have taken.'

[179] O'Gorman (2006), 293. Of course, one of the earliest and most famous 'virtual history' or declamatory scenarios was the question, found in Livy, of whether Alexander was capable of defeating the Romans. Cf. Morello (2002), and as noted in the Introduction, Pelling (2013).

[180] O'Gorman (2006), 295.

[181] This is, ultimately, only an *argumentum ex silentio*, and there is a paucity of declamatory material left. On political impotence, cf. Gunderson (2003), 110, 'One should not readily heed the complaint that declamation is a marker of political impotence or that the genre is somehow fundamentally tied to incapacity. Declamation embraces its powerlessness. It even uses this incapacity as one of its own strengths'. If the suggestions here are

political messages could be read into declamations that were not 'historical' (the *controversiae*), in much the same way as lines delivered on the stage, or in poems.[182] The most striking correlation between Agrippa Postumus' case and the extant declamatory material is the fact that a dispute between father and son on the issue of inheritance, particularly following *abdicatio*, was one of the most common scenarios in the extant evidence for declamation. Furthermore, arguing the side of the 'underdog,' even in instances where it was difficult to make a good case, was a popular way of demonstrating rhetorical skill.[183] These facts resonate with reports that Agrippa Postumus accused his adoptive father Augustus of stealing his inheritance from his natural father Marcus Agrippa, through his adoption in 4 and subsequent disinheritance. At around this time, Augustus was facing numerous difficulties, including opposition to his attempts to tax inheritance, making Agrippa's situation rather pertinent. In fact, if we return to Agrippa's inherited vices, in Quintilian a son's *ferocia* is noted as the precise reason for *abdicatio:* 'The law on disowning was established against the unruliness of young men.' (*Lex abdicationis adversus ferociam iuvenum constituta est.* [Quint.] *Min. Dec.*

accepted, the world of declamation becomes far more important politically, by becoming a way of interpreting or revising contemporary political developments.

[182] e.g. Suet. *Aug.* 68 – *Videsne, ut cinaedus orbem digito temperat?* As well as those on apparently standard declamatory topics, such as the aforementioned offence caused by M. Porcius Latro (Seneca's friend and favourite *declamator*), Sen. *Contr.* 2.4.12-13. On this point Dunkle (1967) notes that the declamation schools could be a way of expressing one's opposition while under a tyrant, which could backfire – for instance Caligula put Carrinas Secundus to death for a speech against tyrants, and Domitian the sophist Maternus (Dio 59.20.6; 67.12.5). On the wider issue of 'safe criticism', using figured speech and double entendres as a means of avoiding censorship or reprisals, see Ahl (1984).

[183] It was a chance to display oratorical skill, and creativity in choosing a novel *color*. Russell (1983), 27, 'Moreover, the fantasy of the underdog's victory is always potent and to some degree the rhetor, because his power rested not on resources but on his personal skill, could represent himself as the voice of the oppressed'; and at 31, 'Sympathy is usually with the children. Parents sometimes act with great barbarity: a father kills his daughter and her husband in order to recover the dowry. But the typical parental act is an unjust or disputable 'disowning' (*apokeryxis*, Latin *abdicatio*). This theme no doubt has a background in real life. […] *Abdicatio*, on the other hand, seems to correspond to no precise procedure in Roman law; it is, says Bonner, 'more in the nature of a moral repudiation.'; Also, Bonner, (1969), esp. 101-3, 'One of the most frequent sources of declamatory debate is the repudiation of a son (or, occasionally a daughter), known to the declaimers as *abdicatio*. They commonly envisage a court-case arising from this by reason of the son's objection to the grounds of repudiation. The exercises concerned are often denied to have any legal value, chiefly because it is clearly stated in *Cod. Iust.* VIII 46,6 (a rescript of Diocletian 287 CE) that *abdicatio* has no sanction in Roman law, and because such repudiations were not common in the late Republic.'

orat. 279.2.3, cf. 259.17.2).[184] Dio's account provides the link between the charge, his *abdicatio* (here its equivalent, *apokeryxis*) and the accusation of stealing the inheritance (55.32.1-2):

> τὸν δὲ δὴ Γερμανικόν, ἀλλ' οὐ τὸν Ἀγρίππαν ἐπὶ τὸν πόλεμον ἐξέπεμψεν, ὅτι δουλοπρεπής τε ἐκεῖνος ἦν καὶ τὰ πλεῖστα ἡλιεύετο, ὅθενπερ καὶ Ποσειδῶνα ἑαυτὸν ἐπωνόμαζε, τῇ τε ὀργῇ προπετεῖ ἐχρῆτο, καὶ τὴν Ἰουλίαν ὡς μητρυιὰν διέβαλλεν, αὐτῷ τε τῷ Αὐγούστῳ πολλάκις ὑπὲρ τῶν πατρῴων ἐπεκάλει. καὶ οὐ γὰρ ἐσωφρονίζετο, ἀπεκηρύχθη, καὶ ἥ τε οὐσία αὐτοῦ τῷ στρατιωτικῷ ταμιείῳ ἐδόθη, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐς Πλανασίαν τὴν πρὸς Κύρνῳ νῆσον ἐνεβλήθη.
>
> The reason why he sent Germanicus and not Agrippa to take the field was that the latter possessed an illiberal nature, and spent most of his time in fishing, by virtue of which he used to call himself Neptune. He used to give way to violent anger, and spoke ill of Livia as a stepmother, while he often reproached Augustus himself for not giving him the inheritance his father had left him. When he could not be made to moderate his conduct, he was banished and his property was given to the military treasury; he himself was put ashore on Planasia, the island near Corsica.

The word appears as a verb alongside *ferox* in Suetonius' report (*Aug.* 65.1):

> Tertium nepotem Agrippam simulque privignum Tiberium adoptavit in foro lege curiata; ex quibus Agrippam brevi ob ingenium sordidum ac ferox abdicavit seposuitque Surrentum.
>
> He then publicly adopted his third grandson Agrippa and at the same time his stepson Tiberius by a bill passed in the assembly of the curiae; but he soon disowned Agrippa because of his low tastes and violent temper, and sent him off to Surrentum.

It also features in the elder Pliny's list of Augustus' misfortunes (*NH* 7.150): [185]

> iuxta haec Variana clades et maiestatis eius foeda suggillatio, abdicatio Postumi Agrippae post adoptionem, desiderium post relegationem, inde suspicio in Fabium arcanorumque proditionem, hinc uxoris et Tiberii cogitationes, suprema eius cura. in summa deus ille caelumque nescio adeptus magis an meritus herede hostis suo filio excessit.
>
> Added to this the Varian disaster and the foul insult of his *maiestas*, the *abdicatio* of Agrippa Postumus after adoption, his regret after his exile, suspicion of Fabius and his betrayal of secrets, and his final care, concerns about his wife and Tiberius. In summation, this god who perhaps not only achieved heaven but deserved it, departed from life with his enemy's son as his heir.

[184] Levick (1972), 693.
[185] Perhaps the two most significant works on the issue of Agrippa and *abdicatio* are Levick (1972) and Jameson (1975).

Unlike earlier scholars who focussed on the more technical or legal aspects of *abdicatio*, Fantham explored the link between Agrippa Postumus's case and declamation, when examining the relationship between imagined declamatory families and the reality of life in Rome.[186] Contrary to my argument, she suggests that the frequency of declamations on disinheritance or *abdicatio* decreased as a consequence of Agrippa Postumus' situation. However, this suggestion is an argument from silence, the evidence for the declamatory corpus being simply the elder Seneca and Quintilian.[187]

There is no reason to suggest that the declamations concerning *abdicatio* dropped off following Agrippa Postumus' demise – the numerous examples from Seneca and pseudo-Quintilian would suggest, if anything, an ongoing interest in the topic. Moreover, this passage also reveals how Fantham's overall conception of the principate ('peace without opposition') follows a Tacitean refrain that presupposes there was nobody interested in ruffling Augustan feathers, whereas this is patently false.[188] One might even go a step further and put the shoe on the other foot, by noting that *abdicatio* is unattested outside of the fictional realm of declamation, with the exception of this one case of Agrippa Postumus.[189]

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[186] Fantham (2011), 305: 'Instead "the son was ordered to leave the house but remained *in patria potestate*," presumably in the hope of later atonement and/or forgiveness. It was not however a purely fictional process, and the verb and noun *abdicatio* are applied by Suetonius (*Aug.* 65.1) and the Elder Pliny (*NH* 7.150) to Augustus' repudiation of Agrippa Postumus. Now Postumus was not Augustus' natural son but his grandson, and so apparently an example of one of the phenomena of the declamation schools, the son first adopted then disowned, a prominent example which must have radically affected the unnatural frequency of these disowning in the *controversiae* of the schools.'

[187] Fantham (2011) 318-19: 'But we need not expect that there were any declamations about *abdicatio* in the years after Postumus Agrippa's disgrace. What I would suggest, then, is that there had been sufficient instances of family conflict and disinheriting or disowning during the years leading up to Actium for declaimers before the events of autumn 6 AD to see *abdicatio* as a living and fruitful topic, but also to avoid allusion to political motives: the father's act could be left unmotivated, or, as men grew used to peace without opposition, the schoolmasters could devise actual offences against the family or the father's will to occasion a father's anger and provide the student with a speech of self-justification with which he could identify.'

[188] To take just a few examples from Suetonius, *Aug.* 35, 51, 54-6 include various instances of verbal opposition, in the senate, in pamphlets, and in actual (or alleged) conspiracies to assassinate Augustus.

[189] More on Themistocles, the other 'historical' case, which would have been *apokeryxis*, and which seems even less likely, below. The other possible case is that of Manlius Imperiosus and his son, yet Livy (7.4) does not use the term *abdicatio* (but rather *extorris* etc).

Thus, a known etymological link between the name Agrippa and *ferocia*, I would suggest, was used by Augustus and his supporters as a pretext for the story of why *abdicatio* was necessary, consciously modelled on declamations concerned with the treatment of wild sons, in order to secure the succession arrangement they desired after 4 CE and to diminish support for an alternative future in which Agrippa became *princeps*.

Junius Novatus and Declamation

The idea of seeing Agrippa Postumus through a declamatory lens is made more compelling by the addition of another piece of evidence. Suetonius relates the story of a composition by Junius Novatus in Agrippa's name, packaging the tale with that of Cassius Patavinus in such a way as to suggest that he possessed serious political objectives opposed to those of the *princeps* (*Aug.* 51):

> Clementiae civilitatisque eius multa et magna documenta sunt. Ne enumerem, quot et quos diversarum partium venia et incolumitate donatos principem etiam in civitate locum tenere passus sit: Iunium Novatum et Cassium Patavinum e plebe homines alterum pecunia, alterum levi exilio punire satis habuit, cum ille Agrippae iuvenis nomine asperrimam de se epistulam in vulgus edidisset, hic convivio pleno proclamasset neque votum sibi neque animum deesse confodiendi eum.
>
> The evidence of his clemency and moderation are numerous and strong. Not to give the full list of men of the opposite faction whom he not only pardoned and spared, but allowed to hold high positions in the state, I may say that he thought it enough to punish two plebeians, Junius Novatus and Cassius Patavinus, with a fine and with a mild form of banishment respectively, although the former had circulated a most scathing letter about him under the name of the young Agrippa, while the latter had openly declared at a large dinner party that he lacked neither the earnest desire nor the courage to kill him.

The tradition of writing speeches from the perspective of the protagonist in question (*prosopopoeia*) was standard practice in the declamation schools. Even though the word used in this passage is *epistula*, it is probable that the otherwise unattested Junius Novatus was

influenced by declamation in some way.[190] Levick connected this letter with the accusations Agrippa made against Augustus regarding his inheritance, but did not make the connection with declamation.[191]

Another coincidence merits further investigation. One of the elder Seneca's sons, Lucius Annaeus Novatus, was adopted by the rhetorician Lucius Junius Gallio, at an unknown point before 52.[192] This was the Gallio whom Tiberius later suspected of working for Sejanus.[193] The younger Seneca calls his older brother 'Novatus' at the beginning of *de Ira* (41 CE), and addresses him as 'Gallio' in *de Vita Beata* (58 CE) – a shift which has led scholars to assume that the adoption occurred after the death of the elder Seneca. Yet the elder Pliny shows how easily pre- and post-adoption nomenclature could be mixed up, and calls him 'Annaeus Gallio' (*N.H.* 31.62). He went on to become the proconsul of Achaea in about 52, and is mentioned as such in the *Acts of the Apostles* (18.12), before becoming suffect consul in 55.[194] Syme notes that he is the only senator of the period called Novatus – and this Novatus and Junius Novatus are the only two instances of the name in Latin literature.[195] Considering, as Griffin suggests, the younger Seneca was born c. 4-1 BCE, and was probably resident in Rome by 5 CE, and

[190] Levick (1976), 329 and Birch (1981), 449-51 connect Agrippa Postumus' annoyance at his lack of promotion with the political and military crises in the period 5-6 CE (Pannonian war, corn supply problems), and both scholars suggest Agrippa was encouraging political agitation at the time. Concerning Junius Novatus' letter, Birch, 450, goes on to write: 'No date is given, but the context strongly suggests that such clemency was shown where the person concerned was in no position to do harm, so that it may well date from after Agrippa's final banishment to Planasia. Taken together with the various references to Agrippa's disaffection and dangerous behaviour at this time, this notice may however be good indirect evidence of a connection of some kind between Agrippa and the disorders. Novatus' *epistula* was no doubt similar to the material which had, according to Dio, been distributed by night at the height of the disorders, and the passage implies that whatever its date, the fortunes of Agrippa were of acute political interest when it was written.'
[191] Levick (1976), 59-60.
[192] Griffin (1974), 48, and Sussman (1978), 24 assume this occurred following the death of his father, as a testamentary adoption. He was subsequently called Lucius Junius Gallio Annaeanus (*cos. suff.* 55).
[193] On suspicion of being a former adherent of Sejanus, because he proposed better seating for the Praetorians, he was exiled and then detained in 32 (*Ann.* 6.3).
[194] Epigraphically attested (*SIG* 2 no.801D).
[195] Syme (1978), 588-603; Syme writes, 'For 'Novatus' (21) eight come from Africa, but also eight from Spain, along with Seneca's brother.' 589; no other senator called Novatus in the period, 594; Seneca's brother and the author of the Agrippan epistle are the only two Novati mentioned in literature.

Novatus was his elder brother, born in Baetica sometime before this (Sussman suggests 8 BCE), it seems reasonable to assume that he would have been old enough to compose such a letter – especially if we consider that it could have been written at any point up until the death of Augustus.[196] Of further interest is the fact that he was only fined for his misdemeanour, and not exiled (as in the case of Cassius Patavinus, with whom he is paired by Suetonius), leaving his career open for promotion under the subsequent Julio-Claudians.

If this is the same Novatus, then several possible interpretations of the act of writing the letter are possible, all revolving around the idea of promoting Agrippa at the expense of someone else. One might connect the elder Seneca's son Novatus to a literary and political group opposed to the accession of Tiberius through the rhetorician Gallio, his adoptive father. The chief literary representative of this group was Ovid, who had a close enough relationship with Gallio to address him in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*, and praised Germanicus to some extent at the expense of Tiberius in the exilic poetry.[197] If such connections are made, this may be further evidence for the political activity of those involved in declamation. In this case declamation may have been used to promote the idea of Agrippa Postumus as an alternative to Tiberius, by drawing upon recognisable scenarios – and the repetition of scenarios was one thing for which declamation was well suited. Pettinger has suggested that the followers of Gaius and Lucius Caesar moved across to Agrippa Postumus after their deaths, and placed their hopes for the future in the possibility of his accession.[198]

[196] Griffin (1976), 32-6; Sussman (1978), 22.
[197] Gallio is addressed in *ex Pont.* 4.11. See Bonner (1969), 150. Bonner notes, 'We have already seen how closely in touch with the schools of declamation Ovid was, and how he studied under Arellius Fuscus and imitated Latro. He was also a friend of the declaimer Gallio (*Suas.* 3.7)'. Some of the best evidence for the nature of the relationship between Ovid and Tiberius is the fact that he is passed over, despite being *princeps*, in favour of Germanicus as the new dedicatee of Ovid's revised *Fasti*. See Herbert-Brown (1994) and Stiles (2017).
[198] Pettinger (2012), 47-60.

Whichever group Iunius Novatus was most closely associated with, and whether or not he is to be associated with Gallio, his case may well be evidence of a response to Augustus' use of the earlier pun on Agrippa's name and its link with declamation, to disguise the reality of the political developments which had brought about Agrippa Postumus' removal, by also making use of declamatory motifs. The decision to sideline Agrippa Postumus would have caused a great amount of disappointment for those who had backed the wrong horse, suggested by the conspiracies concerning Agrippa and the stories that circulated about him, both of which made their way into the various historical accounts of the period.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the way in which potential 'successors' within the *domus Augusta* came to represent idealised futures in a synecdochic fashion, once Augustus had secured power and began to promote his family publicly, and various factions began to form around these figures. Once these charismatic leaders (particularly in the case of Germanicus) were lost, the hope that had been invested in them meant that they had a significant afterlife as an imagined alternative to the events that had actually occurred under the leadership of a different figure. Those who sought to hold on to such alternative futures could remind audiences of what had been lost, and could even attempt to repeat or 'return' to them in a variety of symbolic ways (the most extreme form being imposture), while those who had profited from the *status quo* attempted to counteract such narratives. These 'lost futures' continued to shape both the political and historiographical landscape for generations thereafter.

Appendix - *Abdicatio* and *Apokeryxis*, and Themistocles

There is one other reference to *abdicatio* which is of interest to our case regarding Agrippa Postumus, fictionality, and declamation. This is the tradition surrounding Themistocles' youth, when he was allegedly disinherited. The tale of his *abdicatio* is first attested in the Tiberian period, in Valerius Maximus (6.9 ext.2):

> Piget Themistoclis adulescentiam adtingere, sive patrem aspiciam abdicationis iniungentem notam, sive matrem suspendio finire vitam propter fili turpitudinem coactam, cum omnium postea Grai sanguinis virorum clarissimus extiterit mediumque Europae et Asiae vel spei vel desperationis pignus fuerit: haec enim eum salutis suae patronum habuit, illa vadem victoriae adsumpsit.
>
> I feel awkward about mentioning Themistocles' youth when I see that his father punished him by disowning him, or that his mother was forced to end her life by hanging herself because of her son's disgraceful behaviour. And yet he later became the most famous man of the Greek nation, and he stood between Europe and Asia as a symbol of their hope and despair: for Greece he was the champion of her survival, for Asia he was the promise of victory.

This is the only other 'historical' instance, as opposed to the declamatory examples, of *abdicatio* extant in republican or imperial Latin literature. Its historicity is complicated by the parallel passage in Plutarch's *Life of Themistocles*, which uses the closest equivalent Greek term, *apokeryxis*. Plutarch expressed his scepticism about the reality of Themistocles' disinheritance (*Them.* 2.5-6):

> ἐν δὲ ταῖς πρώταις τῆς νεότητος ὁρμαῖς ἀνώμαλος ἦν καὶ ἀστάθμητος, ἅτε τῇ φύσει καθ᾽ αὑτὴν χρώμενος ἄνευ λόγου καὶ παιδείας ἐπ᾽ ἀμφότερα μεγάλας ποιουμένῃ μεταβολὰς τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων καὶ πολλάκις ἐξισταμένῃ πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον, ὡς ὕστερον αὐτὸς ὡμολόγει, καὶ τοὺς τραχυτάτους πώλους ἀρίστους ἵππους γίνεσθαι φάσκων, ὅταν ἧς προσήκει τύχωσι παιδείας καὶ καταρτύσεως.
>
> ἃ δὲ τούτων ἐξαρτῶσιν ἔνιοι διηγήματα πλάττοντες, ἀποκήρυξιν μὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ, θάνατον δὲ τῆς μητρὸς ἑκούσιον ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ παιδὸς ἀτιμίᾳ περιλύπου γενομένης, δοκεῖ κατεψεῦσθαι: καὶ τοὐναντίον εἰσὶν οἱ λέγοντες, ὅτι τοῦ τὰ κοινὰ πράττειν ἀποτρέπων αὐτὸν ὁ πατὴρ ἐπεδείκνυε πρὸς τῇ θαλάττῃ τὰς παλαιὰς τριήρεις ἐρριμμένας καὶ παρορωμένας, ὡς δὴ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς δημαγωγούς, ὅταν ἄχρηστοι φαίνωνται, τῶν πολλῶν ὁμοίως ἐχόντων.

> But in the first essays of his youth he was uneven and unstable, since he gave his natural impulses free course, which, without due address and training, rush to violent extremes in the objects of their pursuit, and often degenerate; as he himself in later life confessed, when he said that even the wildest colts made very good horses, if only they got the proper breaking and training.
>
> What some story-makers add to this, however, to the effect that his father disinherited him, and his mother took her own life for very grief at her son's ill-fame, this I think is false. And, in just the opposite vein, there are some who say that his father fondly tried to divert him from public life, pointing out to him old triremes on the sea-shore, all wrecked and neglected, and intimating that the people treated their leaders in like fashion when these were past service.

The similarities between this passage and the stories concerning Agrippa Postumus have not been noted. This may provide further illustration of the way in which declamation, in this instance regarding *abdicatio*, might shape historical narratives when reliable information was lacking. At 2.5, Themistocles' wildness as a youth is noted, and described in terms of horses – *trachus* (rough/jagged) is a synonym of *agrios*, and so the parallel with Agrippa's *ferocia* is very striking indeed. Moreover, Plutarch notes that the link with *apokeryxis* was made by the story-tellers, although, as Duff has noted, he still makes use of it thematically ('rejection, dishonour, and suicide') even after pointing out its fictionality.[199] Agrippa Postumus' narrative may well have been moulded in a similar fashion (perhaps responding to the Themistocles story, or the other way around), as Valerius Maximus shows that the story of Themistocles' *abdicatio* was available in Rome at least by the Tiberian period. The inclusion of declamatory embellishments in Agrippa's case was not motivated by narrative concerns (e.g. as Plutarch used it, to prefigure a later event), but rather, I would suggest, to explain why Agrippa was not

[199] Duff (2003), 92-3, notes, 'The first story, which Plutarch explicitly claims to be false, is that Themistokles was renounced by his father and that his mother in consequence committed suicide 'at her son's dishonour'. Plutarch denies the truth of this, but the pattern of rejections, dishonour and suicide will recur in Themistokles' own life; this story prefigures, then, Themistokles' own end. The fact that Plutarch is prepared both to deny the truth of the story and at the same time make use of it is a good indication of the function that such anecdotes perform: their role in highlighting character and prefiguring later themes and patterns is more important than their reliability.'

promoted, either out of ignorance, or more likely deliberately, to conceal the reality of the political situation.

Chapter Three: Caligula's Assassination and the Future in 41 CE

Introduction

This chapter examines the way in which different conceptions of the future (including hopes and fears) motivated individuals to act in such a way as to bring about Gaius' assassination. At the time of the assassination, the future of Rome was discussed openly, in a manner perhaps unique in the early Principate (at least as far as our surviving evidence suggests), and which did not necessarily assume the same political continuities, or compromises, as some modern scholars have proposed with the disadvantage of hindsight. This demonstrates the problematic nature of the prevailing orthodoxy that military power was the only factor in deciding the outcome of this discussion; instead of moving straight on to the accession of Claudius, it is important to give sufficient space to the dynamic between the various groups, and in particular the role of oratory. When this is done, it reveals that the clarity of an individual's vision of the future and ability to articulate it, including planning intervening steps and gaining the consensus of a cross-section of society, was a major deciding factor in determining the outcome of this process. That is to say, by devising a compelling narrative of the future and making use of an audience's hopes and fears, an orator could trigger an appropriate response in Rome's populace which might become, in a sense, a self-fulfilling prophecy – much like Cicero's attempt to sway the course of future events in 44 – 43 BCE, discussed in Chapter 1. The imposition of a vision of Rome's future by force would not necessarily be successful, as the assassination of Gaius himself, and Caesar before him, had demonstrated.

Some of the conspirators, as passages in the works of Josephus, Suetonius, and Dio clearly suggest, were motivated by the idea of Rome's future government being led by two consuls, rather than any kind of *princeps*. The division within the senate after Gaius' removal (for some promoted themselves as *capaces imperii*, while others thought the consuls should rule) did not help the 'opposition' cause to begin with; alongside this stood the comparative ease with which particular institutions could continue, which helped those arguing for Claudius' accession. In this sense it was an uphill battle for the 'Republicans'. This episode also highlights the importance of precedent – the memory of Caesar's assassination, and its similarity with Gaius' downfall, evoked the liberators in such a way that 'Republicanism' became more popular than it perhaps would otherwise have been. In order to establish this point, some misconceptions in modern scholarship concerning terms such as *res publica, libertas*, and 'Republicanism' must be addressed. On the 'Caesarian' side, those supporting Claudius could appeal to the (idealised) precedents of Germanicus and Augustus – a more recent past opposed to the more distant past of the 'Republicans'. Drawing upon episodes from the past to explain and justify the present, and to predict and guide future action, reveals a consciousness of the similarities in human behaviour over time, and consequently of the (sometimes deliberate) repetition of particular scenarios.

Competing 'Futures'

When considering changes in Roman conceptions of the future, the assassination of Gaius is a useful case study for a number of reasons. It is arguably the first dramatic, destabilising development in the succession arrangements under Augustus and Tiberius that were made and reconfigured after deaths and conspiracies, and yet continued, more or less in one piece. By contrast with the accession of Tiberius, and even that of Gaius himself (neither of which

occurred without drama), this was a particularly jarring transition which exposed the fragility of the 'system' overall, and changed the way in which it was understood thereafter.[200] Furthermore, one might suggest that it is also the first episode in which a clearly defined 'Republican' conception of an idealised future, in particular, influenced the situation in such a way as to threaten the developing 'Principate'. This can be contrasted with many modern discussions of 'Republicans' in the principates of Augustus and Tiberius.[201] They were either involved in conspiracies which failed (for various reasons), or modern scholars have insufficient information to establish the key actors, their motivations, and if and how they were thwarted.[202] This is not to suggest that the sources we have concerning 41 CE give a straightforward account of proceedings, and there are various problems that one must acknowledge, such as the role of hindsight, conflicting accounts of key events and the participants' motivations, and the different interpretations and applications of key terms by contemporaries and later authors. Nevertheless, there is perhaps more of an attempt in this case to explain the inner workings of the conspiracy.

In addition to those committed to the sharper end of the 'Republican' spectrum who desired a form of consular-led government, there were others who merely desired a change of *princeps*, some of whom may also have appealed to some form of *libertas*, or 'Republicanism' to achieve this goal. It seems likely that in these instances some individuals used 'Republicanism' as a

[200] Levick (1990), 41, notes the suggestion of C.E. Stevens, that Claudius was the first true 'emperor,' in the sense that he argued that the proclamation of the praetorians established his authority in the 'office' a day before the senate confirmed this (rather than a bundle of powers conferred gradually, as in the case of Augustus, which in some respects allowed for a degree of ambiguity which was more acceptable to the senatorial class). Various reservations with this interpretation (at least in the case of Claudius – later emperors differ) are noted below, but the point remains that this was a paradigmatic shift by comparison with earlier accessions.
[201] Cf. Levick (2010), 164-201; also Raaflaub and Samons (1993).
[202] The other attested conspiracies under Gaius were the group around Macro and Gemellus in 37, and Lepidus, perhaps with Gaetulicus, in 39. Cf. Barrett (1989), 155, on the lack of details regarding conspiracies in general, and in these two cases. On Republicanism in the Principate, see now Wilkinson (2012), which provides an excellent overview of the evidence. On the necessarily secretive nature of conspiracies, and the limitations this places on historians (ancient and modern), Pagán (2004), 4.

pretext to disguise political self-interest (once Julio-Claudian supremacy was discounted, the range of contenders could be expanded), while for others it represented a shift to a position of compromise, if a consular-led government was to be deemed impossible by the senate. One aspect sometimes overlooked is that the role of the *princeps senatus* had existed in the Republic, although the accretion of powers by *principes* in the interim had made it a radically different position by 41 – something between these two interpretations of the title may have been envisaged.[203] The concept of an *optimus princeps*, attuned to the wishes of the senate, with a willingness to delegate significant powers and to cooperate with the senate in the management of Rome and her wider empire, appears to have been the goal of some senators in this episode.[204]

The opposition in 41 has also been seen by some modern scholars as merely a reaction against the excesses of Gaius, which consequently has made this 'Republicanism' appear somehow less sincere than that of earlier generations - somewhat ironically, considering it changed Rome's political direction more radically than had the 'Republicans' under preceding *principes*.[205] The meaning invested in the term *libertas* (discussed below) lies at the heart of this, adopted as a slogan by at least some of the conspirators. *Libertas* was contested, and changed over time partly as a consequence of being claimed or appropriated by different groups and individuals (not least, Claudius himself after this event). This idea of a half-hearted

[203] This has been seen, for example, in the hope of restoring *libertas* and potentially of a form of 'republicanism' involving a kind of *optimus princeps* that was directed towards the elder Drusus and Germanicus, noted in Chapter 2.
[204] Though perhaps most commonly associated with Trajan, the phrase *optimus princeps* is epigraphically attested as early as the Tiberian period; see Wirszubski (1950), 153.
[205] The extent to which the conspiracy against Gaius was *motivated* by Republicanism, as opposed to being simply a reaction against his excesses, is a moot point – for some of those involved, they may well have been intertwined. Josephus suggests, at least, that Cassius Chaerea was motivated largely by his personal humiliation under Gaius (as when distributing the watchwords at *AJ* 19.31), and being ordered to do things he did not wish to, such as enforce unreasonable taxes (*AJ* 19.28-9) and torture the actress Quintilia in the *maiestas* trial of Pompedius (*AJ* 19.32-7) – particularly significant if both were conspirators in the same conspiracy, as Barrett (1989), 158, suggests. This is of course, dependent upon the idea that Quintilia had indeed stepped on Chaerea's foot.

'Republicanism' possibly derives from the change of mind by some senators who moved from desiring a return to senatorial government under two annually elected consuls, to desiring a better *princeps* whose behaviour was predictable, and whose whims were less destructive.[206]

As a consequence of these complicating factors and ambiguities, the range of responses to the assassination (from hard-nosed 'Republicanism' through to Claudius' supporters) has often been discussed in such a way that the more conventional 'Republican' position has been almost discounted as a possible future for Rome from the outset, with *Realpolitik* pointing the way forward to the troops and Claudius. Levick writes:

> No male Julii Caesares survived, and some senators resolved, after the bitter disappointments of 37-41, on bringing the Principate to an end, even by exterminating the remaining members of the family. Others, having already accepted the Principate as an inevitable necessity, were content, according to Josephus' earlier account, to be able to elect Gaius' successor. Saturninus, though his speech has been worked up by Josephus' source, spoke for 'liberty' and the rule of law. That might mean either alternative. He knew that Claudius had reached the praetorian barracks and that the nine Praetorian Cohorts were not backing the senate.[207]

Perhaps more influential and more proleptic is Wirszubski's verdict when discussing the use of *libertas* in 41, which includes quite a sceptical account of the semantic range of the term (which had allegedly moved on from its use by Brutus and Cassius in a linear development), and the motivations of the conspirators:

> The only known occasion on which the restoration of the Republic was seriously contemplated was the short interregnum between the assassination of Caligula and the accession of Claudius. But even on that exceptional occasion the Senate did not arrive at a unanimous decision in favour of the Republic. The desire to restore the Republican form of government is easily understandable in view of the Senate's plight under Caligula's tyranny. Even so, the enthusiasm for the restoration of the Republic was not shared by all: some thought the Senate ought merely to appoint a new *princeps*. But whatever its opinions, the Senate soon realised it was not the master of the situation; it had to sanction with a good grace the choice of the Praetorian Guard. It may be that the events of those two days drove home a lesson the Senate never forgot. There were plots

[206] This notion, and Levick's, may stem from passages such as Cic. *de Lege Agr.* 2.102, 'libertas in legibus constitit'.
[207] Levick (1990), 31. Cf. Osgood (2011), 11: 'Members of the senate, appalled by the young man's final months of rule, contemplated a restoration of the Republic, or a candidate of more proven competence than Claudius.'

> against the lives of nearly all the emperors from Augustus to Domitian, but the object of the conspirators was to remove the Princeps of the day, not to abolish the Principate.[208]

At each point at which Wirszubski mentions the possibility that senators desired to return to consular government in 41, the account quickly slips to the impossibility of this proposition, or doubts about their sincerity, and provides the supposed 'real' motivation behind such a plan for the future. The opinions of the senate were apparently not all that important, according to this interpretation.

From these sorts of modern accounts it appears that for some, this 'Republicanism' was merely a reaction to Gaius in particular, and for others, a better *princeps* would have been preferred, or at the very least, would have been satisfactory – and none of these positions mattered much to the outcome of the situation, since the troops could ride roughshod over all of them. Yet the very fact that these ideas of a freedom and a consular-led government resonated politically points to the reality that they still carried some weight (including, at the very least, when they entered the historiographical record) – however much one might wish to argue that what was meant by terms such as *res publica* or *libertas* had been redefined, or had been decontextualised over time.[209] Even the claim that the desire to restore a consular-led Republic was not a unanimous opinion does not discount the importance of there being senators and others who held this position – and importantly, it seems that some of them were responsible for the removal of Gaius in the first place, which suggests that their opinions of what the future of Rome ought to be mattered a great deal.

[208] Wirszubski (1950), 126.
[209] *Contra* Wirszubski (1950), 124-9, and Gowing (2005).

Instead of starting with this assumption that compromise was inevitable, it is worth entertaining seriously the idea that Cn. Sentius Saturninus' speech, for example, aimed to bring about nothing less than a return to senatorial government as it was at some point prior to the 40s BCE, and that Josephus' account of it represents something close to the original thrust of the argument. The aftermath of Gaius' assassination enabled a range of opinions about what should happen in an idealised future to be aired, and perhaps for the first time since the Triumviral period, a return to senatorial government led by two elected consuls was prominent among them.[210]

Dio's account at the beginning of Book 60 gives a selection of perspectives of what different people thought ought to happen, demonstrating just how 'open' Rome's future might have appeared at this particular juncture (60.1.1-2):

> μετὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀναίρεσιν τοῦ Γαΐου φύλακας ἑκασταχόσε τῆς πόλεως οἱ ὕπατοι διαπέμψαντες τήν τε βουλὴν ἐς τὸ Καπιτώλιον ἤθροισαν, καὶ πολλαὶ καὶ ποικίλαι γνῶμαι ἐλέχθησαν· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ δημοκρατεῖσθαι τοῖς δὲ μοναρχεῖσθαι ἐδόκει, καὶ οἱ μὲν τὸν οἱ δὲ τὸν ᾑροῦντο.
>
> After the murder of Gaius the consuls dispatched guards to every part of the city and convened the senate on the Capitol, where many and diverse opinions were expressed; for some favoured a democracy, some a monarchy, and some were for choosing one man, and some another.

While the Greek constitutional lens that Dio applies to the situation colours the situation somewhat (seen in *demokratia* and *monarchia* – reminiscent of Dio's Agrippa-Maecenas debate concerning the Augustan constitution of the *res publica* at 52.2-40), just as there are Jewish emphases in Josephus' narrative, it is clear from parallel accounts in Josephus and Suetonius that all of these options were seriously considered, including a pre-Caesarian

[210] This particular form of Republicanism can be seen, for example, when Saturninus points to the dominance of Caesar as the first instance of the tyranny embodied by Gaius (Jos. *AJ* 19.173-4), and notes that they now answer to no one aside from each other (19.178) - provided Josephus is recording something not far from the sentiments of his speech.

consular government, the promotion of a *princeps* selected by some of the senate (creating rivalry), and eventually, the confirmation of Claudius. There was no obvious way forward, and no dominant conception of Rome's future.

'Republicanism' and *Libertas*

In the accounts of 41 provided by Suetonius and Josephus, the concept of *libertas* and a future involving a 'return' to the *res publica* as it was before the domination of the Caesars is raised at various points by the conspirators. As we have noted above, some modern scholars have questioned the extent to which a slogan such as *libertas* had changed meaning between the post-Ides period (in which it was employed by Caesar's assassins) and the days following Caligula's demise. Yet the fact that it is presented alongside allusions to this earlier Caesarian assassination, when read in combination with other details from these accounts, means it is very likely that at least the ancient authors who originally made use of it intended it to be understood in a similar manner to the way in which it was employed by the Liberators. This was, namely, returning the *res publica* to 'a state of non-domination' by removing a tyrant.[211] While it may have been true that 'Republicanism' was perhaps no longer as popular as it once had been by the end of the first century CE (in particular, the desire to restore a pre-Caesarian, consular government), it is entirely possible that a section of the populace, especially among the elite, maintained this conception of *libertas* within a broader semantic range. This level of scepticism concerning its semantic change ought to be maintained, primarily owing to the fact that ancient evidence directly attempting to define terms such as *libertas* and *res publica* is

[211] To borrow the formulation of Arena. On *libertas* represented by the *pilleus* on the famous coin of Brutus in 43/2 BCE, see Arena (2012), 42-3, which she notes, may also have been an attribute of the cult statue to *libertas*; on its metaphorical application to the *res publica* (as opposed to the legal state of non-slavery), 46-7, 261.

hard to come by in any period, and as a consequence, one cannot track the rate at which these terms evolved with any precision, or their breadth of meaning at particular moments.[212]

Modern accounts of the semantic change of words such as *res publica* and *libertas* have sometimes papered over the cracks in order to create metanarratives which are much tidier than the messy, complicated historical reality. One well-known treatment of the 'Republic' seen from the perspective of the early Principate, is Gowing's *Empire and Memory: The Representation of the Roman Republic in Imperial Culture*. While it should be noted that the work is brief and has introductory aims, the limited selection of sources and emphasis on particular works skew the image of 'Republicanism' in the Principate in line with his overarching teleological framework in which autocracy is gradually accommodated.[213] Despite acknowledging that the semantic shift of words such as *libertas* and *res publica* was not uniform, the texts he chooses to examine give the impression that there was quite a rapid swing towards the kind of political stance found in works by authors such as Velleius Paterculus or Valerius Maximus, and even more so, in Neronian literature. These figures may have constructed a narrative which led 'not from Republic to Principate, but from Republic to a better Republic' (with the general understanding of *res publica* as 'the state' or 'commonwealth'), but others (such as Cremutius Cordus) fashioned or reiterated different narratives, including teleologies of the decline of the *res publica* – some of which were exposed to public view after the death of Gaius.[214] There is little concern for these alternative

[212] Arena (2012), traces the semantic change of *libertas* as far as Cicero's *Philippics*, in which it was used to justify actions that were technically illegal but portrayed as being done for the greater good of the community. Brutus' adoption of the idea falls into this category as well. The 'free speech' or *parrhesia* element, while contained within these earlier conceptions (by virtue of being a part of 'non-domination'), was only emphasised more explicitly once Julio-Claudian dominance was consolidated and began to infringe upon this area of life.
[213] Gowing (2005), 6 on the brevity of the work.
[214] Gowing (2005), 43. Cremutius Cordus might be seen to be continuing the strand of historiography, with its implicit projections into the present and future, which was observed in Sallust's works in Chapter 1. On Cremutius Cordus, see, for example, Cramer (1945), Rogers (1965), Moles (1998), McHugh (2004), Rudich (2006). I would suggest his downfall was at least as much a result of his active political opposition to Sejanus as

perspectives in Gowing's summary of the shift that took place in Roman cultural memory, and 'Republicanism' is very broadly summarised as 'a deep-seated reverence for the past'.[215] Yet for many modern historians, 'Republicanism' is used primarily to designate a political stance concerned with returning the *res publica* to the state in which it existed at some point prior to the dominance of Caesar (during the 'Republic', in the modern temporal sense).[216] This often involved envisaging a future for Rome in which the 'traditional' balance of powers within the mixed constitution was maintained (or repaired), with magistrates appointed through free elections, rather than some form of autocracy, no matter how meritocratic.[217] By subsuming the range of opinions held by those in the Principate concerning the Republic under this banner of 'deep-seated reverence', one risks downplaying differences of opinion to the extent that the term becomes almost meaningless, since every Roman likely had such a concern with the past.[218] Yet it is important, where possible, to distinguish between the different perspectives that were held, and progress can be made by focusing on which particular 'past' was idealised by an individual, and how it influenced their actions in the present, and shaped their plans for the future. Thus, with issues concerning terminology, and minimal attention given to the dynamic political tensions that drove these cultural changes, it is perhaps not surprising that the work passes over Gaius' assassination rather rapidly, even while noting that this episode features some of the strongest evidence for a more uncompromising 'Republican' position in the Principate.[219]

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his portrayal of Rome's decline in his work (which had been read by Augustus at an earlier stage). Both were likely different facets of his 'Republicanism'.

[215] Gowing (2005), 3-4.

[216] On the late medieval coining of 'Republicanism', Arena (2012), 79, who also employs the term 'nostalgia', making it seem rather impotent. On the 'Republican' aims of Sextus Pompeius in the Triumviral Period, perhaps the last major armed force with this goal in mind, see Welch (2012). Also, Wilkinson (2012), noted below.

[217] See Arena (2012), 81-116, on various presentations of the 'mixed constitution' in the first century BCE, especially in Cicero's *de re publica*, and its relationship with *libertas*. On the moving target of what government in the 'Republic' looked like, see Flower (2010).

[218] Cf. Wilkinson (2012), 19, who rightly notes that it is unlikely various individuals in the early Principate whom moderns have described as having 'Republican' ideals, or of paying too much attention to the *mos maiorum*, would have ended up in so much trouble if it were merely some form of 'apolitical traditionalism'.

[219] Gowing (2005), 24, 65, 122, the only three (brief) references to Gaius in the work.

Other scholars, too, in older accounts both of the period and of the various kinds of opposition found in the Principate more generally, appear to undermine the idea of serious 'Republican' opposition in the Principate even before they turn to the evidence. Perhaps owing to this aforementioned perspective of hindsight (and the dominance of the Tacitean account of the early Principate overall), many analyses see the accession of Claudius as inevitable owing to the servile character of the senate, and the loss of 'knowledge' with the death of those who had lived in the Republic. For example, MacMullen's *Enemies of the Roman Order* is even more dismissive, and which devotes much more space to the aftermath of Gaius' assassination. Following a discussion of a passage in Josephus (examined below), MacMullen turns to the words such as *libertas*, and argues that 'Republicanism' had changed to the extent that a better *princeps* was the only option on the table following the assassination. MacMullen presents his rather fatalistic account in the following manner:

> What then did the opposition want? In essence, security to speak their minds. That meant the rule of law; hence the emphatic hostility to a ruler above law, as the Josephus source describes him. Next, more power and dignity for the senate, where that free speech might find its focus. The senate was the center of protest. And third, that the ancient magistracies should be more than merely decorative. The password *Libertas* must return to them. As for the principate, modified thus to the form it actually had at scattered times throughout its first hundred years, there was an early and almost unanimous agreement that Rome needed it. Possibly in Augustus' reign someone like Cremutius Cordus would still have preferred the Republic in its pure form, whatever *that* was, but later figures that have been discussed were willing to support, even to enjoy and flourish under, any rule that was supportable.
>
> They [the senate and assassins] still proclaimed the old slogans of their heroes, but the words had changed meaning. The key was freedom, but not the freedom of the nobility operating through senate and magistracies without check, as the tyrannicides had demanded; rather, freedom, especially of speech, guaranteed under monarchy. It was possible for the same motto hallowed by Brutus' coinage to be stolen and repeated by aspirants to the throne: Libertas personified, with the cap of liberty, in Galba's program, recalling legends of 43 BC; or LIBERTAS (PUBLICA) alone, or with SALUS or PAX. Vespasian boasted LIBERTAS RESTITUTA SC, even that antinomy, LIBERTAS AUGUSTI SC – "the freedom of the emperor by vote of the senate." By Trajan's time, we know that the ancient reality had become only a phrase, for his coins go right back to LIBERTAS, BRUTUS of 59 BC.[220]

[220] MacMullen (1966), 32-33.

It is clear from this passage that MacMullen's teleological framework sees a gap between the generation alive at least as late as Tiberius' principate (for this is when Cremutius Cordus' trial and suicide occurred, in 25), and the generation alive during the events of 41. It should be questioned whether such a dramatic shift in meaning could have occurred in just sixteen years. Further suspicion of MacMullen's approach arises when one considers that he immediately jumps forward to the use of *libertas* by Galba, Vespasian (both 28 years later, at the earliest), and Trajan (58 years later at the earliest), in order to explain what those in 41 meant by *libertas*. This does not take into account the use of the word in the intervening Claudian and Neronian periods. Perhaps even more damaging to the idea of a continuing senatorial opposition to autocracy is his claim that, even though no one seriously entertained bringing back the 'pure form' of the Republic in 41, earlier on those who did hope for such a change, such as Cremutius Cordus, had no firm idea of what they wished to return to in any case. This results in an image (seen above, for instance in Levick) of an entirely futile opposition comprised of romantics who could not realise that political life has changed forever (a rather 'Tacitean' construction). MacMullen also creates a straw man, in some respects, by discussing this desire to restore a 'pure form' of the Republic – the goals of Brutus and Cassius, echoed by later generations of aristocrats, included very tangible things such as the removal of an autocrat (be it Caesar or another), and consequently free elections and access to high office, which amounted quite simply to the pre-Caesarian situation. Yet within these bounds, which formed the touchstones of Republican opposition, flexibility was possible in different ways, for the Republic itself was born of compromise, and had changed significantly throughout its history.[221]

[221] As we have noted, Flower (2010), draws attention to these changes in the nature of the Republic in particular.

A much better account of the change is that of Hammond.[222] Hammond analyses the term *libertas* at various points in the first century, and writes of the outcome of Gaius' assassination:

> The Jewish historian Josephus gives the most detailed account of the assassination and its sequel, probably following contemporary accounts and perhaps one by a participant, the senator and historian Cluvius Rufus. He states that when Cassius [Chaerea] asked the consuls for a watchword to give the troops on sentry duty, they, surprised at this recognition in the hundredth year since the Republic (*ten demokratian*) was first dissolved, gave him the word "Liberty", *eleutherian edosan*. Clearly, at this second of the moments under discussion, liberty still connoted the recognition of the consuls as chief magistrates of a Republic freed from the domination of a prince become tyrant.
>
> But Cassius and the consuls were appealing to ideals already anachronistic. When the praetorian guard supported Gaius' uncle Claudius, the senate had no recourse but to confer upon him the powers which had gathered around the principate. Claudius may well have desired initially to restore the Augustan balance between prince and senate. Some bronze coins issued during his opening years bear on the reverse a female type indicated by the legend as *libertas Augusta* and Mattingly comments that this is meant to show that liberty could flourish under the principate, that is, constitutional republican government would replace Caligula's mad despotism. Thus for the ideal briefly revived in 41 that liberty meant the restoration of the Republic without a prince was substituted a development from the Augustan concept of liberty under the "Restored Republic" but with a prince built into it. In the Claudian legend, liberty is actually fostered by the "Augustus" of the moment and the identification of liberty and principate becomes overt.[223]

Here Hammond acknowledges that the words, for some, had not changed meaning to the extent that *libertas* could now only refer to free speech under an *optimus princeps* – this brings his analysis closer to the position presented in this chapter.[224] Yet he then undercuts the idea of entertaining 'Republicanism' somewhat in the following paragraph, by returning to the fact that Claudius had the praetorian guard on side – thus the reductionist approach to power, or 'political realism' seen in Levick's account, is evident. Forms of power other than simply the

[222] Hammond (1963).
[223] Hammond (1963), 98.
[224] Percival (1980), in a study of Tacitus' perspective on these concepts, sees 'Republicanism' during the Principate as being primarily wishful thinking – the romanticisation of the past, and an unfeasible set of political ideas. Tacitus' notion of *libertas*, Percival argues, is not freedom embodied in a particular political state or situation, but rather the state of an individual's mind with respect to the *princeps* and opinion of others – in other words, the avoidance of *servitium* made *libertas* possible on a personal level in the Principate, even at the same time as institutional *servitium* was quite possible. Yet even if this position is adopted with respect to Tacitus, this is not necessarily indicative of the *communis opinio* at his own time, and certainly not for those living more than half a century earlier.

force of arms mattered. Hammond's account in this passage also highlights another important dimension when considering 'Republicanism' in the events following Gaius' assassination: precisely because the 'Republican' position was articulated so clearly in the days before Claudius' power began to be consolidated, Claudius sought to respond to it by appropriating the language of the opposition, weaving their slogans into his own tapestry. In this respect it was similar to Octavian's response during his own consolidation of power, and indeed earlier during the propaganda war with the various parties in the Triumviral period, including Sextus Pompeius. The future of Rome had to be won not through force of arms, but through shaping the narrative of Rome's history according to one's own needs, in such a way as to be rhetorically forceful and yet simultaneously palatable by a wide cross-section of Roman society. Claudius' '*Libertas Augusti*' represents such an attempt, appropriating the slogan of those who sought to remove the Julio-Claudians altogether.

Two recent works have challenged the *communis opinio* on the nature of Republicanism in the Principate, and particularly in this episode of 41 CE, although the implications of their arguments are yet to filter down into more general accounts of the period. The first of these is Wilkinson's monograph, which portrays the phenomenon of 'Republicanism' as a kind of spectrum on which individuals in this period could position themselves, but one which was also dynamic and shifted over time in response to the messages put forward by the *principes* themselves.[225] Wilkinson has noted that modern scholars have tended to see opposition in individual terms, with greed and ambition being primary incentives, and that while it would be wrong to see all forms of opposition to *principes* in the first century as stemming from Republican *mores* (including political values), it is surely the case with particular instances. The conspirators and senators in 41 CE are a prime example, and he notes this is the last episode

[225] Wilkinson (2012), 35.

in this period for which there is sufficient evidence to support the idea that a return to the form of government of the late Republic was genuinely desired by some.[226]

The second is a recent article by Low, in which she reassesses the evidence for the existence of the harder end of 'Republicanism' in the aftermath of the assassination of Caligula, and demonstrates the role hindsight has played in its interpretation, as we have noted above in some of the modern accounts.[227] While both Wilkinson and Low have done much to demonstrate that a good case can be made for 'Republicanism' being a genuinely considered option in 41, more can be done to show how this option interacted with other competing visions of Rome's future.

Sources for Josephus' *Antiquitates Judaicae* and *Bellum Judaicum*

When examining the motivations of the various parties involved in Gaius' assassination, and the particular state of affairs in Rome they hoped to bring about in the future, it is important to address the question of the sources for Josephus' narratives, which are the earliest accounts that provide the narrative framework. One reason for this is that the language of *libertas/eleutheria* espoused by Chaerea, Saturninus and others, is concentrated more densely in particular sections of Josephus' narrative, and not throughout its entirety – which may suggest that such language has been drawn from particular earlier accounts.

One dominant theory in scholarship has been that a large section of Book 19 of the *Antiquitates* stemmed from a Roman source, which has often been identified as the work of the consular historian Cluvius Rufus. Moreover, Cluvius, it has been argued, is the ex-consul who appears

[226] Wilkinson (2012), 36, 55.
[227] Low (2013).

in Josephus' narrative (named *Klouitos/Klauitos* in the MS), conversing with the ex-praetor, Bathybius (/Vatinius), in the theatre prior to Gaius' assassination (*AJ* 19.92). This idea was entertained as a possibility by Wardle (along with a host of other historians of the early Principate), but he argued that, rather than adopting the procrustean approach of Townend, who creates an image of Cluvius as a sensationalist before searching for the evidence to support it, we should start with the narrative itself.[228] This idea of a Roman source is supported by Josephus' polytheistic references (*AJ* 19.19, 72, 175, 182, 219, 233), the attention given to omens (*AJ* 19.9, 87, 94), including those that preceded Gaius' death (some of which, it should be noted, are echoed in Suetonius' account), and Josephus' transliteration of *Lupus* into Greek to preserve Chaerea's Latin wordplay on his fellow conspirator's name (*AJ* 19.270). The overall picture Wardle presents is that a Latin annalistic account, which may or may not have been composed by Cluvius, greatly influenced the first long section of Josephus' narrative of Gaius' downfall, with a concern for *libertas* and a contempt for the *servitium* and political compromises of some senators.

Goud's article dealt with the sources for Josephus' account more directly, and with greater nuance, proposing that there are three probable sources which contributed to the extant accounts of Caligula's downfall and the accession of Claudius in the *Antiquitates Judaiorum* and *Bellum Judaicum*.[229] The three sources are characterised by different emphases. The first source is Roman, senatorial, and 'republican', with an idealised presentation of Chaerea and an unfavourable presentation of Claudius' accession, which includes the scene in which he fears for his life when discovered behind a curtain, and is whisked off to the Praetorian camp against his will (*AJ* 19.212ff.). This image of Claudius may also inform Suet. *Claud.* 10.1, and

[228] Wardle (1992), 479.
[229] Goud (1996).

Dio 60.1.2, though it is quite possible that a range of negative accounts existed.[230] The second source is notable for its favourable presentation of Claudius, in the account of his accession (*AJ* 19.162-165, and also *BJ* 2.204-217), which involves the discussion of the troops as to what the best course of action is, and contains a more calm and collected Claudius, for instance during negotiations with the senate. Goud argues that this comes from Claudius' autobiography (or at the very least a pro-Claudian source). The third focuses on the fluctuations in Agrippa's career (19.237-45, 265-6 and 274-7), such that his role is emphasised while it does not appear to be significant in the accounts of Suetonius or Dio. Goud suggests that this is a Jewish source (as does Wardle), and possibly the work of Agrippa II, since he knew Josephus, and the latter preserves two letters from him in the *Antiquitates*. In addition to this, there is Josephus' editorial comment, which colours the way in which all of the material is presented.

While scholarship has been reasonably united in the opinion that there is a Roman source behind at least part of the material, there is less certainty concerning whether the source is Cluvius Rufus. Syme highlighted various problems and also entertained other possible authors such as Servilius Nonianus or Aufidius Bassus.[231] One of the problems is that not even rough terminal points for Cluvius' histories are preserved, making it uncertain what exactly fell within the purview of the work.[232] As Syme notes, 'some would even take the work backwards to the death of Augustus, and forward beyond Nero to include the civil war of the year 69.'[233] His age is also unknown, and Syme uses Josephus' claim that he was a consul to attempt to pin this down – and suggests that if Josephus was correct in describing him as such, and is not simply

[230] Momigliano (1932), 305, had argued for Cluvius being a common source for the accounts of Gaius' downfall in Josephus, Suetonius and Dio. As Humphrey notes, in the case of Dio – a Greek source, and thus a place where one might expect to find verbal echoes – this is impossible to prove one way or another, since the relevant sections of Dio's work are only preserved in the epitomes of Zonaras and Xiphilinus. Cf. Humphrey (1976), 13.
[231] Syme (1958), 288.
[232] See *FRH* I, 550-60, and especially 553-8, where Levick notes the difficulties in attempting to date the composition of Cluvius' histories, and the chronological scope of their contents.
[233] Syme (1958), 293.

being anachronistic, then his consulship was in 39 or 40 (for the consuls of other years are known), making him roughly a contemporary of Galba. Thus, it remains an intriguing possibility, but not proven, that Cluvius was the Roman source in question. If he was, we would have a direct line to the rhetoric which was being espoused in 41. Nevertheless, even if the source is not Cluvius, we do have a source which is recognisably Roman and presents Chaerea and his 'republicanism' in a heroic light.

Yet some recent scholarship has seen this as an inherently doomed heroism. Scholars such as Wardle and Wiseman have argued that the Roman source, whether or not it was Cluvius, possesses a 'Tacitean' political outlook – resentful of senatorial *servitium* and yet aware of the supposed necessity of the Principate, for the sake of practicality and security.[234] Thus, it is claimed, it is a manifestation of 'republicanism' which advocated freedom of speech under an *optimus princeps.* If this were the case, it would affect how we read the language of *libertas*, the depiction of Chaerea as heroic, and Saturninus' speech. Yet even if there are certain stylistic and ideological elements which prefigure the Tacitean viewpoint, this does not prove that the source believed that 'Republicanism' was doomed; we should argue the case from the internal evidence of the text itself, rather than via a comparison with Tacitus.

Further progress can be made to this end by considering the issue of the reliability of the speeches in Josephus' account, including their use of *eleutheria* and its implied conception of the future, and the nature of the interpretative frame into which they have been placed. There

[234] Wiseman (1991), xii-xiii, suggests that Cluvius Rufus is the primary source relied upon by Josephus in *AJ* 19, with other sections dependent upon Fabius Rusticus, the equestrian friend of Seneca, who displays an interest in Stoicism and Cordoba. A possible third source, Wiseman suggests, stands behind the passages on Agrippa II.
The kind of Tacitean pragmatic 'republicanism' discussed here can be seen, for example, in *Agricola* 42.5; similar discussions of whether it was possible to serve the state when its government is corrupted, or whether retirement is a better option, can be seen in Seneca's *de Tranquillitate Animi*, and *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*.

are a few possibilities available. One of these is that the speeches that we possess, of Chaerea to the other conspirators, and more likely of Saturninus to the senate (for this would have been witnessed by many more cf. *AJ* 19.185), contain something quite close to their original sentiments – and that the interpretative frame of hindsight, which renders their bold statements somewhat futile in light of subsequent events, dates from this Vespasianic period. If Wardle's assessment of the nature of the Roman source is correct, then the 'political realism' of Levick is found in at least one section of our earliest account – though it does not necessarily come from those involved in the events of 41. It is also worth considering that this compromised form of 'republicanism' – familiar from Tacitus' later cynical approach – was only solidifying with the post-Julio-Claudian *principes*, and particularly, I would suggest, with the redefinition (yet again) of *libertas* under Claudius and later emperors. Thus not only when approaching the modern accounts of the period should we be sceptical of teleological frameworks and reductive approaches to power, but also when examining our earliest sources for the downfall of Gaius, from which many such teleologies and reductions are derived. Differences between the sources – such as the differing accounts of Claudius' accession, with the discussion of the praetorian guard on the Palatine concerning the best course of action – reveal more than just that the real transfer of power was military, if one is considering the question of conceptions of the future.

A major issue concerning how the speeches relate to the wider narrative framework, is that the speech of Saturninus, for example, seems so 'republican', in the pre-Caesarian manner discussed above – so much so that it appears to be incompatible with the 'Tacitean' idea that the Principate was politically necessary for the preservation of security. The ideas contained within it – that a pre-Caesarian state of affairs was the ideal – would be quite inflammatory under any of the *principes* from Claudius onward, even when placed within a framework that seeks to downplay their significance, or to create pathos from their sense of disappointment,

by making their chances of successfully restoring senatorial government seem very slim. This might give us reason to suppose that Saturninus' speech at least represents something reasonably similar to what was delivered. In light of this issue, it is necessary to examine further the use of *libertas/eleutheria* in the sources (and in Josephus in particular) to see where and how it is used, and if any general patterns emerge, in addition to these propositions concerning the relationship between *eleutheria* in Josephus and a particular Roman source.

Libertas/Eleutheria in Josephus, Dio and Suetonius, and the case for 'Republicanism'

Eleutheria appears throughout Josephus' works, and in a variety of contexts. The *Bellum Judaicum*, with its more limited scope, contains no references to Romans seeking liberty from any form of oppression, but features various groups of Jews pursuing freedom from the Romans or from particular groups involved in their internal conflicts, in which the word is used a total of forty-four times. Considering most books in the *Antiquitates Judaicae* are also concerned with the fate of the Jewish people and their customs, the most common context for the word and its cognates is in the deliverance of the Jews from the Egyptians, or some other group of oppressors. It often appears in conversations between Moses and the Jews, or in speeches delivered by the various leaders of the Jewish revolt to their troops, or to other assemblies of Jews.[235] Book 19 of the *Antiquitates*, the Caligula 'digression', one of the key sources under discussion in this chapter, is the exception to this rule – containing thirteen instances of *eleutheria*, as opposed to the forty-five instances throughout all of the other books.[236] In the

[235] Rajak (2001), 214, notes Josephus' continuity in theme between the Jewish rebels' goal of political freedom, and that of the conspirators in Rome in 41.

[236] *Eleutheria* is found in Book 19 of the *AJ* in the following contexts: 19.42.4 (Chaerea's speech to Clemens and Papinius), 19.54.4 (Annius Vinicianus/Minucianus tells Chaerea his password is *libertas*), 19.79.1 (Chaerea's speech to spur on other conspirators at games), 19.100.5 (Chaerea considers killing Gaius in theatre to achieve liberty for all), 19.169.1 (Speech of Saturninus in the Senate), 19.183.1 (Saturninus praises Chaerea as 'purveyor of liberty'), 19.183.2 (Saturninus again), 19.183.4 (Saturninus again), 19.186.3 (Consuls give Chaerea the watchword, *libertas*), 19.233.4 (the senate's message to Claudius – the gods favour those who fight for liberty), 19.250.5 (Senators even more distressed by compromise because they did not retain liberty about which they had spoken), 19.261.5 (Sabinus reproaches Chaerea, saying liberty is worth death etc), 19.263.4 (praetorians consider Quintus Pomponius particularly guilty for summoning the senate in the cause of liberty).

rest of the Josephan corpus, the terms are far less common, with two references each in the *Contra Apionem* and *Life of Josephus*, though this can be explained partly by considering the nature of their content.[237]

One of the more important points to note is the prevalence of the terms in the speeches found in Josephus' *AJ* and *BJ*, which may indicate a personal interest in the topic on the part of the historian (and also partly explain why they are less common in the *Contra Apionem* and *Life of Josephus*, which feature far fewer speeches). Especially significant is the speech of Josephus himself, delivered to those besieged at Jotapata in the *Bellum Judaicum* (5.365), in which he attempts to convince them not to carry out their suicide pact. His arguments – that Jewish resistance to Roman supremacy is ultimately futile, following developments under Pompey, and even that the Romans have some form of divine support from Yahweh, and therefore that an accommodation of Roman dominance is the best policy – seem to align with the later 'Tacitean' view of liberty discussed above. This line of argument might be expected from a man who sought to accommodate his Jewish theological position with his newfound allegiance to the Romans, and indeed his imperial patronage. It is quite possible that in light of this position of political compromise or expediency, Josephus also sought to present as futile the efforts of those who, in 41, sought a return to senatorial primacy. Along with the secondary objective of flattering Agrippa, Josephus' primary concern with narrating Gaius' downfall was, after all, didactic, illustrating once again the theme of how those who oppress the Jews receive divine punishment – in this instance no less than a Roman emperor. If one assumes that this is the case, this then brings us to the issue of whether Josephus' source for Saturninus' speech, and the conversations of Annius Vinicianus (whom Josephus calls Minucianus), the

[237] References to *eleutheria* in the *Contra Apionem* are 2.129.1 and 2.227.2; in the *Josephi Vita*, 185.4 and 386.5.

aforementioned 'Roman source', also included an interpretative framework which made the 'republican' senators' efforts appear futile, or whether Josephus himself was responsible for recasting what may well have been a more positive presentation, to align with his own political position. While it is impossible to identify with any certainty the extent to which Josephus has recast the material from his sources, Goud's aforementioned idea that the 'editorial comment' of Josephus colours the material (as opposed to merely being the glue that pastes various earlier sources together) seems to resonate with his inclusion of the language of *eleutheria* in a number of speeches throughout his work.

When we turn to our other sources, one might have expected Dio to preserve some of the language of *eleutheria*, which might have provided an instructive comparison with Josephus' use of the term in a Roman political context. However, part of this section of Dio's work is known only through the epitomator Xiphilinus, who does not preserve the language of *eleutheria*, if it was to be found in his original account of the assassination. This is unfortunate, since it appears relatively often in other books, but not in book 59.[238] For instance, Furius Camillus Scribonianus is attributed such 'republican' ideals (at 60.15.3, by contrast with their absence in Suet. *Cl.* 13.2), in another attempt to remove the Caesarian dynasty later in 41. Humphrey suggests that there is insufficient evidence to know whether Cluvius Rufus' work was used by Dio in his section on Gaius, but the fact that he mentions Cluvius only once, and as an ex-consul and herald of Nero (at 62.14.3), seems to indicate that he was not directly drawing upon his histories.[239]

[238] There are approximately 60 references to *eleutheria* (vel sim.) in Dio's work, including the epitomators. On Dio's use of *parrhesia*, see now Mallan (2016), who suggests that the historian considered unfettered freedom of speech (as seen in Cicero's *Philippics*) to have ceased after the deaths of Brutus and Cassius, and that oratory had become much more restricted by his own day.
[239] Humphrey (1976), 12-13.

Suetonius, on the other hand, does provide some useful information with which to supplement Josephus, which suggests that the language of *libertas* was appealed to during and after the assassination. The term is not particularly frequent throughout the Suetonian corpus, but there are two references, one each in the *Caligula* and *Claudius*, which pertain to the events of 41.[240] Suetonius himself apparently had little concern with *libertas* as a political idea – on the contrary, as Wallace-Hadrill notes, most of the episodes in which it features are related in a rather matter-of-fact fashion, and Suetonius' interest in the topic is a far cry from that of Tacitus.[241] Suetonius is also rather reticent, for the most part, about his own political opinions, and owing to his equestrian positions in the imperial household, perhaps benefitted from the continuation of the principate more directly than did Tacitus. This lends support to the idea that the two references were drawing closely upon an earlier source, which may have been Cluvius Rufus, or another author with a sympathetic view of the assassins.

The first of these is the episode in which the senate, seeking to restore *libertas*, called a meeting after the assassination on the Capitol, and not in the Curia Iulia owing to its Caesarian connotations (*Cal.* 60.1.6):

> et senatus in asserenda libertate adeo consensit, ut consules primo non in curiam, quia Iulia vocabatur, sed in Capitolium convocarent, quidam vero sententiae loco abolendam Caesarum memoriam ac diruenda templa censuerint.
>
> and the senate was so unanimously in favour of asserting liberty that the consuls called the first meeting, not in the senate house, because it had the name Julia, but in the Capitol; while some in expressing their views proposed that the memory of the Caesars be done away with and their temples destroyed.

[240] There are 27 instances of *libertas* and cognates in Suetonius' works - the two relevant cases are *Cal.* 60.1.6, (owing to the senate's desire to restore *libertas*, they call a meeting after the assassination in the Capitol, not the Curia Iulia), and *Cl.* 10.3.4 (the consuls, senate and urban cohorts take possession of the Forum and the Capitol and resolve to assert *libertas*).

[241] Wallace-Hadrill (1983) 110, 141, 201, on *libertas* in Suetonius. Notably, Wallace-Hadrill does not discuss the two references to *libertas* after the assassination at any length, but notes, (p. 111 n.14) '*Libertas* is used with reference to freedom from autocracy at *Tib.* 50.1, *Cal.* 60, *Cl.* 10.3, *Oth.* 12.2; but S shows no sympathy with attempts to restore it.'

This piece of evidence seems to indicate that Suetonius was drawing upon a 'republican' source which saw *libertas* in a similar manner to the assassins, Brutus and Cassius; any form of Caesarian autocracy (no matter how civil) was apparently unacceptable. The removal of the Caesars extended to the destruction of physical locations associated with any Caesar.

The second passage, in the *Claudius* (*Cl.* 10.3.4), makes much the same point about the senate after the assassination, which Suetonius may well have drawn from the same place.

> Nam consules cum senatu et cohortibus urbanis Forum Capitoliumque occupaverant asserturi communem libertatem…
>
> For the consuls with the senate and the urban cohorts had taken possession of the Forum and the Capitol and resolved on asserting universal liberty…

Josephus (*BJ* 2.205, *AJ* 19.258) and Dio (60.1.1) confirm that the senate met on the Capitol, in the temple of Jupiter Victor. It is unclear whether this occurred for the first meeting of the senate after the assassination, in which Sentius Saturninus spoke.[242] Wiseman proposes that the senate retreated to the Capitol only for the later meeting (*AJ* 19.248), once it had become clear that Claudius was to be supported by the Praetorians in a bid for the principate; the Capitol was defensible, the treasury had already been transferred there (Dio 59.30.3), and its symbolic power (seen in the aforementioned Suetonian passages) would also be valuable in persuading Rome's populace that traditional senatorial authority was once more to determine the future course of action.[243] This is further suggested by the fact that Claudius later summoned the senate to a meeting on the Palatine (*AJ* 19.266), perhaps drawing upon its topographical associations with the residence and role of the *princeps* – this was a reassertion of the continuity of the Caesars, and of business as usual.[244]

[242] Levick (1990), 31, implies that the meeting in which Saturninus spoke took place on the Capitol.
[243] Wiseman (1991), 70, 93.
[244] Wiseman (1991), 97.

What do these excerpts reveal about the plans of those making use of the slogan *libertas*? All of this evidence indicates that it was not merely the removal of Gaius that was the issue – in the eyes of some, including many senators, the Julii Caesares were to be erased forever from the *res publica,* and indeed physically from the topographical fabric of the city of Rome. The difficulty of such a task becomes apparent as soon as one considers the structures erected in the period from Caesar's ascendancy down to 41 CE, and it may have been that only the temples to deified Caesars were to be demolished (though their deliberate avoidance of the Curia Iulia perhaps adds that building to the list). An edict with words to this effect may have been passed, perhaps as a part of, or in addition to, the consular edict which brought charges against Gaius and aimed at maintaining public order, mentioned by Josephus (*AJ* 19.160; cf. *censuerint,* Suet. *Cal.* 60.1). If so, this may have been conceived as a kind of *damnatio memoriae*, with details no doubt to have been worked out later.[245] The evidence for this plan for the immediate future (carried out by Lupus, in the case of Caesonia and her daughter Julia Drusilla, *AJ* 19.190-201) is similarly presented by authors from the late fourth and early fifth centuries, Orosius and Aurelius Victor. Orosius (*Hist. adv. Pag.* 7.6.3) writes:

> nam cum interfecto Caligula multa de abrogando imperio ac republica in antiquum ordinem restituenda euerrendaque penitus Caesarum uniuersa familia senatus et consules decreuissent…
>
> After the murder of Caligula, the Senate and the consuls passed many resolutions with a view to abolishing the empire, restoring the commonwealth to its former status, and wiping out completely the entire family of the Caesars.

Aurelius Victor (*Liber de Caesaribus*, 3.14-6) includes a similar description of the desire to eliminate the Caesars, with an interesting parallel drawn not with Brutus and Cassius' assassination of Caesar, but with Lucius Junius Brutus' expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus:

> Qua causa auctore Chaerea moti, quibus Romana virtus inerat, tanta pernicie rempublicam confosso eo levare; relatumque excellens Bruti facinus eiecto Tarquinio

[245] Wiseman (1991), 71-2; Flower (2006), 152-4, notes this prospective *damnatio*, and also suggests the expense of such an undertaking, given the number of Caesarian buildings across the city by this time.

> foret, si per Quirites modo militia exerceretur. [15] Verum ubi cives desidia externos barbarosque in exercitum cogere libido incessit, corruptis moribus libertas oppressa atque habendi auctum studium. [16] Interim dum senatus decreto gentem Caesarum, etiam muliebri sexu, omnemque affinitatem armati persequuntur…
>
> Consequently, at the instigation of Chaerea, those who possessed Roman *virtus* were impelled to deliver the state from such a terrible scourge by stabbing him to death; and that outstanding exploit of Brutus when he expelled Tarquinius would have been repeated, if only the true Romans had been performing their military service. But when, through apathy, the citizens conceived the desire to draft foreigners and barbarians into the army, morals were corrupted, freedom was suppressed and the craving for possessions increased. In the meantime, while in accordance with a decree of the senate armed men were hunting down the family of the Caesars, even those of the female sex, and all of their relatives by marriage…

These late sources provide further confirmation that the future envisaged by some senators, at least, was to be a return to a pre-Caesarian *res publica* led by the senate. Aurelius Victor appears to place responsibility for the failure of the 'republican' plan at the feet of the Praetorians and perhaps the German bodyguard, along with those self-interested Romans responsible for 'outsourcing' military service in the first place; this particular perspective no doubt reflects fourth-century fears of mercenaries, and the distinctions made between *peregrini*, *barbari*, and *cives Romani*. Yet the central point remains intact that the lives of the Caesars, their memory, and their temples, mentioned in the passage of Suetonius, were targeted by some influential members of the senate, before Claudius gained the upper hand. Moreover, the parallel with Lucius Junius Brutus implies that a restoration of the consuls to their former authority, in particular, was the goal. It was only in the second meeting of the senate that the idea of a *princeps* elected from the senate was proposed, with pressure applied by soldiers from the Urban Cohorts who were present.

From these examples it is clear that Suetonius was, at the very least, probably making use of a source that believed many senators sought a return to a pre-Caesarian state of affairs, and that *libertas* was an important slogan, whether or not that account also thought their efforts were

futile. There seems no good reason to suggest either that these sentiments were not expressed by at least part of the senate, or that they were insincere.[246] This may well have been the same source that Josephus used when composing his account, though this need not necessarily be the case.

The excerpts from Suetonius, then, provide good evidence that the slogan of *libertas* was closely tied by some to a desire to remove not only Gaius, but all traces of the supremacy of the Caesars. With these various factors in mind, is it possible to further clarify what the conspirators and members of the senate meant when they used the term *libertas*? The use of *libertas* as a watchword by Chaerea and the consuls is quite striking (*AJ* 19.186).[247] *Libertas* is notably also the password given by Vinicianus to Chaerea during their secret conference earlier in the chapter (*AJ* 19.54), having asked Chaerea which watchword Gaius had given him. One might consider the choice as being made simply to create a contrast with the offensive watchwords devised by Gaius to insult Chaerea, since even the watchword had become a symbol of Gaius' tyranny, yet it is significant and perhaps not coincidental that *libertas* was the watchword employed by the followers of Brutus at Philippi.[248] This lends support to the idea that *libertas* was being used in a similar manner to the way it was employed by the assassins of Caesar (one of a number of parallels drawn in the sources) – this can be placed alongside the aforementioned reports in Suetonius of the senators spurning the Curia owing to its Julian connotations. On the one hand, considering the first episode (*AJ* 19.54) is an account of a meeting which occurred in secret, it is quite possible that the later use of *libertas* as a

[246] Hurley (2001), 98, notes that 'The senate took a vigorously Republican line at its first meeting', and compares it with the earlier passage at *Calig.* 60. Yet, when discussing the phrase *asserturi communem libertatem*, she also suggests that *libertas communis* is a Ciceronian expression (citing Cic. *Phil.* 10.18), and moreover that it is equivalent to *res publica*, which somewhat undermines the particular political point the senators may have been trying to make.
[247] On the significance of passwords/watchwords, including *libertas/eleutheria* used by Brutus' forces at the first battle of Philippi, and its presentation in Dio (47.43.1), cf. Clark (2007a), 11-2.
[248] A point noted by Wiseman (1991), 53.

watchword by the consuls, which would have been witnessed by many more people, has been retrojected by one of Josephus' sources into this conversation with Chaerea and Vinicianus; on the other hand, it would not be surprising if Vinicianus and other conspirators had held a consistent ideological position which continued to make use of such a slogan leading up to the assassination and after it had taken place.

In fact, the parallels with Brutus and Cassius are perhaps not merely evidence that the whole episode has been recast by someone who shared their political ideas, in order to evoke pathos – another successful assassination which did not achieve its desired aim once the dust had settled. Much more than this, it demonstrates that we should take very seriously the claims that some of those who undertook the assassination, or sought to make use of it, were aiming at nothing less than the restoration of a pre-Caesarian government, and perhaps even one which adhered to law.

Sentius Saturninus' Speech – Candidate for *Princeps* with Republican Rhetoric?

One of the most interesting pieces of evidence for 'republicanism', and the use of *eleutheria*, is the speech of Sentius Saturninus (cos. 41) in the senate following Gaius' murder (*AJ* 19.166-86). This may well have taken place at the same meeting at which the aforementioned edict was passed (*AJ* 19.160), as Josephus' narrative has spliced together various accounts of the same events, which results in repetition and the compression or omission of material at various points.[249] Barrett has suggested that Saturninus had intended to make a bid for power himself, but provides no compelling evidence that this was the case. The dissonance between the motive Barrett ascribes to him and the contents of the speech is striking, and difficult to reconcile.[250]

[249] Wiseman (1991), 72.
[250] Barrett (1989), 174. 'It is hard to believe that Saturninus, whose family had done so well under the principate, was moved by the republican ideals described so glowingly by Josephus, who adds two anecdotes that might confirm our skepticism. During the course of his speech it was noticed that Saturninus was still

It is possible that this is the result of a misreading of Josephus' introduction to the speech, in which the subordinate clause (ambiguous in the Loeb translation – 'despite an apparent unwillingness') refers to Claudius' apparent unwillingness to accept the role of *princeps* (having been carried off by the Praetorians, cf. Dio 60.1.3) despite his actual approval of the proposition, rather than referring to Saturninus' unwillingness prior to delivering the speech.[251] Josephus writes (*AJ* 19.166):

> Ναῖος δὲ Σέντιος Σατορνῖνος καίτοι πεπυσμένος τὴν Κλαυδίου ἁρπαγήν, καὶ ὡς ἐπιδικάζοιτο τῆς ἀρχῆς ἄκων μὲν δοκεῖν, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς καὶ βουλήσει τῇ αὐτοῦ, καταστὰς ἐπὶ τῆς συγκλήτου καὶ μηδὲν ἐκπλαγεὶς ἐλευθέροις τε καὶ γενναίοις ἀνδράσι πρεπόντως ποιεῖται παραίνεσιν τάδε λέγων.
>
> Gnaeus Sentius Saturninus now addressed the Senate. He was undeterred by the news that Claudius had been taken and had made his claim to power (unwillingly, it appeared, but no doubt he really wanted it). Saturninus stood up and gave a speech of encouragement appropriate to an audience of free and honourable men. This is what he said.

In fact, there are only a few pieces of circumstantial evidence that Saturninus might have hoped to assume the principate himself, which may have encouraged such an interpretation of his actions. For instance, Saturninus had been *consul ordinarius* alongside Gaius in 41, a position which implied trust on the part of the *princeps* and one that had in the past been used to designate potential successors, though usually those were within the *domus Augusta* itself. Alongside this stands Saturninus' apparent loyalty to Claudius in later years, especially during the revolt of Camillus Scribonianus and others in 42 (in which Q. Pomponius Secundus and other senators who expressed 'republican' sentiments in 41 were implicated).[252] Josephus'

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wearing a signet ring with the image of Caligula; Trebellius Maximus rose, tore it from his finger and smashed it to the ground. More seriously, Josephus admits that despite his public posture and pretence of unwillingness, Saturninus was really a candidate for the principate himself!'

[251] Wiseman (1991), 75, notes the absence of evidence in Josephus to support Barrett's claim that Saturninus aimed to become *princeps*, but does not note the source of the error.

[252] Cf. Black (2000), 2, who appears to accept Barrett's suggestion that Saturninus was a candidate for the principate in 41, before quickly changing tack and throwing his support behind Claudius. 'According to Josephus, Sentius delivered a noble speech urging the Senate to regain its liberty from the rule of one man but his true motives are questioned: was he himself really a candidate for imperial power? The ambiguity of his position is revealed by two details: at the end of the speech a senator noticed that the ring worn by Sentius carried an image of Gaius and angrily tore it from his finger and smashed it; when Claudius was perceived to

framework for the speech adds a second piece of circumstantial evidence, which is that Saturninus was wearing a ring engraved with an image of Gaius while delivering the speech – this has been used as the central piece of evidence to discredit Saturninus' speech. Yet a token of loyalty such as this might have been worn by those of any political persuasion, to secure their standing under an unpredictable and dangerous *princeps*. As we have seen, the notion that any individual could be inspired by 'republican' ideals to act for the good of the *res publica* has been dismissed by many scholars with hindsight as simply manoeuvring for personal gain, and Saturninus may fall into this category.

We turn, then, to the contents of the speech. Despite the fact that speeches in ancient sources are sometimes composed by historians to suit particular situations, often they contain the thrust of the original argument, and a speech delivered in the senate would have been widely known and reported, and less likely to be subject to historiographical distortions than one delivered in a less public context. It seems more plausible that a speech close in sentiment to Saturninus' own was recorded or composed at some point after the events of 41, to which a later cynical interpretative framework (the attention drawn to the ring) was added, implying that Saturninus' words were insincere.

It is, of course, possible that both Saturninus' motives and the speech are both exaggerations, in different directions, of what transpired. The speech in the senate may not have been as overtly 'republican' as the one passed down by Josephus, if, for example, it was composed for inclusion in the 'Roman source' which emphasised the parallels with Brutus and Cassius, and the notion of a tragic, failed restoration of senatorial government.[253] Such a speech may then

have won and the senators made their way to him in the Praetorian Camp to submit, Claudius had to restrain the troops from killing Pomponius whom they considered a more committed opponent than Sentius.'

[253] Levick (1990), 31, suggests that Saturninus' speech has been 'worked up by Josephus' source'.

have been picked up by Josephus' source, or by Josephus himself, and placed in a more *Realpolitik* framework which sought to show the futility of the 'republican' cause. If one considers the aforementioned political position of Josephus, then it is unlikely that he is responsible for constructing the speech *ex nihilo,* despite his apparent interest in *eleutheria* in a Jewish context. In Josephus' eyes, the conspirators had achieved something admirable – the removal of a tyrant, and oppressor of the Jews – but the idea of returning Rome to senatorial primacy was apparently not important to him.

The contents of the speech support the notion that, at the very least, Saturninus and other senators were attributed 'republican' ideals, and invoked Brutus and Cassius as precedents for the removal of Gaius. Levick, despite not agreeing with Barrett's assertion that Saturninus was a candidate for the principate, nevertheless suggests that his speech in the *Antiquitates,* arguing for ''liberty' and the rule of law', could be understood to support either a return to the republic or the elevation of a *princeps* selected by the senate.[254]

However, the incompatibility of the speech as it stands with a compromised position proposing an *optimus princeps* can be demonstrated at a number of points. For example, the first section of the speech discusses the evils of tyranny, and by implication includes all of the Julio-Claudians in this category, the only *principes* Rome had known (*AJ* 19.167-170):

> "Εἰ καὶ ἄπιστον, ὦ Ῥωμαῖοι, διὰ τὸ χρόνῳ πολλῷ ἥκειν ἀνέλπιστον οὖσαν ἡμῖν, ἀλλ᾽ οὖν ἔχομεν τοῦ ἐλευθέρου τὴν ἀξίωσιν, ἄδηλον μὲν ἐφ᾽ ὁπόσον παρατείνουσαν καὶ γνώμῃ θεῶν οἳ ἐχαρίσαντο αὐτὴν κειμένην, εὐφραίνειν δὲ ἀρκοῦσαν καὶ εἴπερ ἀφαιρεθείημεν αὐτῆς εὐδαιμονίᾳ συνάγουσαν· ἱκανὴ γὰρ καὶ μία ὥρα τοῖς ἀρετῆς αἰσθανομένοις καὶ μετ᾽ αὐτοτελοῦς τῆς διανοίας ἐν αὐτοδίκῳ τῇ πατρίδι καὶ μετὰ νόμων, οἷς ποτε ἤνθησε, διαιτωμένῃ βιωθεῖσα. ἐμοὶ δὲ τῆς μὲν πρότερον ἐλευθερίας ἀμνημονεῖν ἔστι διὰ τὸ κατόπιν αὐτῆς γεγονέναι, τῆς δὲ νῦν ἀπλήστως πιμπλαμένῳ μακαριστούς τε ἡγεῖσθαι τοὺς ἐγγενηθέντας καὶ ἐντραφέντας αὐτῇ καὶ τῶν θεῶν οὐδὲν μειόνως ἀξίους τιμῆς τούσδε τοὺς ἄνδρας, οἳ ὀψὲ γοῦν κἀν τούτῳ τῆς ἡλικίας ἡμᾶς γεύσαντας αὐτῆς."

[254] Levick (1990), 31.

> ‘Incredible as it may appear, Romans, because it has come upon us unexpectedly after so long a time, nevertheless we enjoy the dignity of freedom. We cannot tell how long it will last, a matter to be determined by the gods who bestowed the gift, yet what we have now suffices for rejoicing, and even if we should be robbed of it, to possess it is bliss. Indeed, for those who appreciate virtue, it is sufficient to live but for a single hour with freedom to think as we please, in a country that is subject to its own sense of right, and that regulates itself by the constitution under which it once became a flourishing state. For myself, though I cannot recall the former age of liberty because I was born after that era, yet, as I insatiably steep myself in our present liberty, I count those enviable who were born and brought up in it.’

Here Josephus’ Saturninus clearly demonstrates that he is not merely condemning the tyranny of Gaius, but the Julio-Claudian dynasty as a whole – as seen in the aforementioned passages of Suetonius. The sentiments, similar to those found later in Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.3), emphasise his having grown up under the Principate, and result in an equation of *principes* with tyranny. This seems especially the case when combined with the argument that Rome’s prosperity was connected with the former constitution of Rome. It is likely that Gnaeus Sentius Saturninus (cos. 41) was the son of the consul of 4 CE, meaning he was probably born in the principate of Augustus or Tiberius, which discounts the possibility that the tyranny to which he refers is merely that of Gaius himself. Later in the speech (*AJ* 19.173), this idea is confirmed by his reference to Julius Caesar having destroyed democracy and having thrown into confusion law/custom (*nomos*) and the constitution (*politeia*), bringing about a host of other evils. Thus Gaius is presented as the worst of a series of tyrants, rather than the only such figure (*AJ* 19.175), creating a trajectory of decline, in a similar manner to Cicero’s presentation of Antony alongside negative *exempla* in the *Philippics*, as observed in Chapter 1. The section on tyranny forms quite a substantial part of the speech (*AJ* 19.172-8), and were there any doubt as to the nature of the government Josephus’ Saturninus is proposing in this speech, it is clarified further by his claim that they had now obtained a government in which they have ‘no obligation but to one another’ (*AJ* 19.178). Saturninus’ exhortation to repair the state is followed by the claim

that tyranny had been brought about by indolence and cowardice, further indicating that the senate as a whole was to resume its authority and significance (*AJ* 19.180-2).

The speech ends with an encomium of Cassius Chaerea, in which he is praised as having risked his safety in order to bring about *eleutheria* (*AJ* 19.182-4). Saturninus even compares Chaerea favourably with Brutus and Cassius, since their assassination of Caesar had brought about further civil war (184). Again, as with the earlier reference in the speech to Julius Caesar, this demonstrates that the turning point in Rome's history for those espousing 'republican' ideals in 41, at least in the eyes of the author of the Roman source Josephus relies upon at this point, is the period of Caesar's dictatorship. As a consequence, the Principate as a whole is condemned by the speech, and nowhere is the suggestion made that a *princeps* chosen by the senate would be a positive future for Rome.

Wiseman suggests that it was not *libertas* alone (i.e. [senatorial] freedom from tyranny), but also the 'rule of law', seen in Sentius' speech, which was their goal. This is perhaps as close to a definition of authentic 'republicanism' as one might expect. He notes:

> Freedom from slavery is in itself a predictable enough ideal for a tyrannicide, but freedom with the addition of the *laws* makes the programme much more specific. It is not merely a casual reference. At the very beginning, Josephus' justification for the length and detail of his assassination narrative is that Gaius' death was a happy outcome for the *laws* and security of all (15). And he makes it a recurring theme: Chaerea is a champion of the rule of law (74); Gaius has abolished the protection of the laws (156); the survival of his wife and child would be a menace to the city and its laws (190); Claudius is urged by the senate to yield to the laws (230-1); and so on. To the Romans, the combination of those two ideas – freedom and the laws, *libertas et leges* – could only mean one thing: the Republic.[255]

[255] Wiseman (1992), 2-3.

In support of this argument, Wiseman cites Livy (2.1.1), and Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.1.1, 1.2.1).[256] One might argue, as has Wirszubski, that this idea could be shoehorned to accommodate an *optimus princeps*, and thus that the senators were perhaps thinking of a meritocratic autocracy rather than a return to the Republic - yet when taken with all of the other evidence, the rhetoric of it being the first freedom since Caesar's ascendency, the conscious allusions to Brutus and Cassius, and the plan to eradicate monuments to the Julio-Claudians, it seems clear that senatorial government was the primary objective of some of the conspirators, and some of the senate. [257]

With this programme for the future in mind – freedom from tyranny, restoration of the laws, and a return to government without a *princeps* – how many people thought that a return to a 'pre-Caesarian republic' was the best course of action? This is difficult to determine, though there is some indication in the sources. Among the conspirators themselves, it is likely that some sought the removal of Gaius, first and foremost, and among these, there was perhaps a smaller group who considered the removal of the Caesars to be the primary objective – whatever came afterwards, the long-term future could be decided by the senate, so long as its standing improved dramatically. Yet when considering the language used in the sources, some of these conspirators (perhaps a slightly smaller group, still) must have considered a senatorial oligarchy to be the ideal outcome of the assassination. This may have included the Praetorians mentioned, and members of the senate. After it had taken place, with knowledge of Claudius' capture and promotion by the Praetorians, a relatively small portion of the senate (less than 100

[256] Wiseman (1992), 2-3; see also the similar phrase in Cicero's *de Lege Agraria* 2.102, above in n. 7.
[257] cf. Wirzubski (1950) 122, who, on the contrary, suggests that such a phrase might still be used to justify the principate, so long as the *princeps* was thought to be upholding the laws (but which laws?): 'The manner in which the State was directed changed, but its purpose remained the same. And this meant that the essentials of libertas remained.' 'Under Augustus the essential rights and liberties of Roman citizens remained untouched. It is true, the nobiles lost their de facto privilege of self-assertion in the conduct of public affairs.' Cicero may well have objected to such an idea, but no doubt others too – Wirzubski describes Cicero's *de Legibus* as 'a voice crying in the wilderness', which is certainly not supported by the evidence for various sorts of opposition at least from the Triumviral period through to Gaius' death.

senators) attended the second meeting on the 25th (*AJ* 19.249), and these may have included those most committed to constitutional change (Levick describes them as 'the most strong-minded of a putative 600').[258] Yet this group likely also included those with hopes of their own promotion to *princeps*, discussed below, as that meeting involved various manoeuvres by individuals which were blocked by 'republicans'.

Notably present at this speech were not only members of the senate, but also *equites*, who apparently also approved of the speech (*AJ* 19.185). After the incident in which Trebellius Maximus snatches the ring from Saturninus, Josephus moves on to the evening, noted above, when Chaerea was given the watchword *Libertas* by the consuls. This anecdote apparently derives from the same source as that used by Josephus for the speech. Also significant is the comment that the sight of the consuls giving Chaerea the watchword filled people with wonder, considering it had been a hundred years since they had last given the watchword before being robbed of democracy – this too, in accordance with Saturninus' speech, dates the tyranny to 59 BCE, the first consulship of Julius Caesar. Any further details of who these individuals were is not supplied, but one might assume that at least some people from a cross-section of society supported the idea of restoring senatorial government – especially those who were connected with one of the senatorial families.

Yet there was serious opposition too, including from those who had approved wholeheartedly of the assassination. Gaius was incredibly popular with sections of the lower classes, owing to his munificence. Despite the fact that Chaerea and other conspirators came from the ranks of the Praetorian Guard, these troops overall displayed their loyalty to the Caesarian name, through their promotion of Claudius (discussed below). Chaerea's idea of wiping out the

[258] Levick (1990), 31.

Caesars altogether, or at least Caesonia and her daughter, is also questioned by unknown conspirators (perhaps other Praetorians?), who consider it too cruel (*AJ* 19.192). The proposal to elect a senator as *princeps* was pressed upon the senate by members of the Urban Cohorts, as time was running out (*AJ* 19.249). With this in mind, we now turn to the various other potential futures for Rome discussed at the time.

A Position of Compromise, and/or Opportunism – an *Optimus Princeps*?

While the question of whether Sentius Saturninus was aiming for a restoration of the Republic, or his own elevation to *princeps*, may ultimately remain uncertain, other senators clearly preferred a compromise position in which a *princeps* would be drawn from another aristocratic household. This idea had evidently been one form of opposition which appeared from time to time under earlier *principes*. For instance, the famous discussion which supposedly took place between Augustus and Tiberius as to which aristocrats were *capaces imperii* (Tac. *Ann.* 1.13.2-3) is a case in point. As the *domus Augusta* had intermarried with various leading senatorial families in the decades before Gaius' demise, this meant that more and more people were included in the uppermost stratum of society, and claims to some sort of connection with the Julii Caesares were increasingly common. Not only did this result in threats to the emperor and various purges (especially seen later under Claudius and Nero), but it also meant that the longer the Julio-Claudian dynasty existed, the less exclusive the access to the position of *princeps* became – and the less likely it was to be held by a blood-relative of Caesar (or even of Augustus). This may have motivated some of Nero's claims in his accession speech.

It was perhaps this development, alongside the evident incompetence of some of the later Julio-Claudians, which led to the idea that the Principate as a 'system' might be able to exist without that particular family in charge – this idea reached fruition with the demise of Nero (discussed

in Chapter 4) and the return to civil war. Yet even in 41, the idea of a *princeps* drawn from among the leading senatorial families was very much under consideration, demonstrating that the sources of legitimacy in succession, and indeed the essence of the Principate itself, were very much contested. Different futures could be envisaged.

In Josephus' account, it is the troops of the Urban Cohorts who propose that the senate elect one of their own to the position of *princeps*, perhaps with the knowledge that Claudius was being held by most of the other Praetorians in their camp with the plan to proclaim him *princeps*, or from a sense of frustration that the conspirators and the senate did not have a plan for a transition of power planned in advance (*AJ* 19. 249-53):

> συνελέγησαν δ᾽ ὅμως ἑκατὸν οὐ πλείους, καὶ διαβουλευομένων περὶ τῶν ἐν χερσὶν αἰφνίδιον αἴρεται βοὴ τοῦ συνεστηκότος αὐτοῖς στρατιωτικοῦ στρατηγὸν αὐτοκράτορα κελευόντων τὴν βουλὴν ἑλέσθαι καὶ μὴ φθείρειν πολυαρχίᾳ τὴν ἡγεμονίαν. καὶ τὸ μὲν καθ᾽ ἑαυτοὺς ἀπεφαίνοντο περὶ τοῦ μὴ πᾶσιν, ἀλλ᾽ ἑνὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐφέσιμον εἶναι, ὁρᾶν δὲ ἐκείνοις ἐπιτρέπειν, ὅστις τοσαύτης προστασίας ἄξιος. ὥστε ἐν ἀνίᾳ τὰ τῶν συγκλητικῶν ἦν πολὺ πλέον δι᾽ ἁμαρτίαν μὲν τοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν αὐχήματος, φόβῳ δὲ τοῦ Κλαυδίου. οὐ μὴν ἀλλ᾽ ἦσαν οἱ ἐφιέμενοι γένους τε ἀξιώματι καὶ οἰκειότησιν γάμου· καὶ γὰρ Βινίκιος Μάρκος καὶ τὸ καθ᾽ αὑτὸν γενναιότητι ἀξιόλογον ὄντα καὶ δὴ ἀδελφὴν Γαΐου γεγαμηκότα Ἰουλίαν, πρόθυμός τε ἦν ἀντιποιεῖσθαι τῶν πραγμάτων, κατεῖχον δὲ οἱ ὕπατοι πρόφασιν ἐκ προφάσεως ἀναρτῶντες. Οὐαλέριον δὲ Ἀσιατικὸν Βινουκιανὸς ἐκ τῶν Γαΐου σφαγέων ἀνεῖχε τοιούτων διανοιῶν. ἐγεγόνει δ᾽ ἂν φόνος οὔ τινος ἐλάσσων ἐπιχωρηθέντων τῶν ἐπιθυμούντων τῆς ἡγεμονίας, ὥστε ἀντιτάξασθαι Κλαυδίῳ, ἄλλως τε καὶ οἱ μονομάχοι, πλῆθος δ᾽ ἦν αὐτῶν ἀξιόλογον, καὶ τῶν στρατιωτῶν οἱ νυκτοφυλακοῦντες ἐπὶ τῆς πόλεως ἐρέται τε ὁπόσοι συνέρρεον εἰς τὸ στρατόπεδον, ὥστε τῶν μετιόντων τὴν ἀρχὴν οἱ μὲν φειδοῖ τῆς πόλεως, οἱ δὲ καὶ φόβῳ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀπέστησαν.
>
> Nevertheless, one hundred – no more – assembled; and, as they were deliberating about the matter in hand, suddenly a shout arose from the soldiers who had stood by them, bidding the senate choose an emperor and not to ruin the empire by entrusting it to a multitude of rulers. The senate replied that they agreed that the government must be in the hands not of everyone but a single man, but they must see to it that they put it in charge of someone who was worthy of such pre-eminence. Thus the position of the senators was much more distressing because they had not retained the liberty about which they were so eloquent and because they were afraid of Claudius. Nevertheless, there were some who aspired to the throne by reason both of their distinguished birth and of their marriage connections. For instance, Marcus Vinicius had a good claim both because of his noble birth and by his marriage to Gaius' sister Julia. He was eager to compete for the highest office but was restrained by the consuls, who brought up one pretext after another. Valerius Asiaticus was restrained by Vinicianus, who was one of

> Gaius' assassins, from similar designs. There would have been a massacre second to none had those who coveted the empire been allowed to range themselves against Claudius. Above all, there were gladiators – and their number was considerable – and the soldiers of the night watch in the city and all the rowers of the fleet who were streaming into the camp. And so, of those who were candidates for the office, some withdrew in order to spare the city, others out of fear for themselves.

Those listed by Josephus as being eager or willing to take on the role of *princeps* include Marcus Vinicius, opposed by the consuls, and Valerius Asiaticus, opposed by Vinicianus the conspirator, who allegedly desired the position himself. Yet while it may well have been the case that the idea of installing a *princeps* came from the troops present with the senate, there are reasons to be sceptical about Josephus' presentation (or that which he found in his source) of the motivations of these senators, or at the very least, the way in which this section of the manuscript has been understood in many modern accounts.

Swan has proposed that an emendation be made to Niese's text of Josephus, which, if accepted, changes the political alliances presented in the passage. According to interpretations based upon Niese's text, there was an alliance between M. Vinicius and L. Annius Vinicianus, the latter of whom blocked the elevation of D. Valerius Asiaticus, and both of whom were themselves blocked by the consuls, Cn. Sentius Saturninus and Q. Pomponius Secundus. Swan proposes that in line 2 of Niese's text, *Minoukianos Markon* 'represents not two persons, Vinicianus and Marcus (Vinicius), but one, Marcus Vinicius.'[259] He provides a range of good arguments as to why there is a textual corruption. For example, the grammar makes more sense, this is only one of two examples of Josephus referring to someone only by their praenomen (the other being specified in the previous sentence), and there is a long gap from Josephus' last reference to Vinicius. His proposed emendation to the text is *Ouinikion Markon* as the direct object of *kateichon*. With Swan's emendation in place, there is no alliance between M. Vinicius

[259] Swan (1970), 152.

and Vinicianus (and thus no deceitful plotting on the part of Vinicianus). M. Vinicius is still blocked by the consuls, yet Vinicianus becomes part of the 'consular group' who prevent the elevation of D. Valerius Asiaticus (through Vinicianus' intervention) and M. Vinicius (through the consuls' intervention). Thus Vinicianus becomes part of the consular 'Republican' *factio*. This accords well with the report (*AJ* 19.49) that Vinicianus was brought into the plot by Chaerea, that he was still involved just prior to the assassination (*AJ* 19.96-8), and that Chaerea looked out for his wellbeing in its wake (*AJ* 19.153). In sum, Swan proposes that, if Vinicianus was suggested as a candidate for *princeps*, he was supported by the Republicans who had genuinely desired to restore senatorial government but had been prevented by the situation from doing so, and so looked to find a candidate on the basis of merit, not blood.[260]

Thus the result of Swan's emendation is further evidence that there was a stronger Republican backbone to the opposition which brought about Gaius' assassination and later opposition to Claudius. Moreover, this illustrates that even interpretations of the manuscript tradition can be influenced by particular political preconception of the events of 41 – the image of a series of senators proposing themselves or their allies for the position of *princeps* further undermines serious consideration of a return to senatorial government. Senatorial primacy was the ideal, but with military pressure applied, and the threat from Claudius now apparent, the idea of a meritocratic principate was settled upon by some senators as a compromise position.

[260] Swan (1970), 157-8: 'The species of Republicanism which motivated the revolutionaries was neither democratic nor new. Taking as their model the heyday of the Roman Republic, they hoped to replace, or at least to control, the Principate with a renascent senatorial oligarchy.'

Supporters of a Caesarian/Claudian Future – The Reaction in the Theatre and the Praetorian Debate

Having identified some of these groups who held differing conceptions of what an ideal future for Rome might look like without the Caesars, we turn to those who desired some sort of continuation of the status quo after Gaius' demise, in the person of Claudius. It is reasonable to assume that nobody expected that Gaius would be assassinated aside from the conspirators, nor indeed that Claudius would become *princeps*, which can be seen in the reaction of the populace. The argument that there had been a conspiracy (or branch of the conspiracy) which aimed at installing Claudius after Gaius' death seems quite unlikely, for a number of reasons.[261] As has been argued above, the fact that those in favour of the conspiracy included a core of 'republicans', intent on removing the Caesars altogether, even if all of them did not desire (or consider feasible) a return to senatorial government *per se*, suggests that it is unlikely that those same people would have brought the small group loyal to Claudius into the fold. If this is the case, then a lack of prior knowledge of the assassination plot would mean that they were unable to 'hijack' or redirect the wider conspiracy in anything but an *ad hoc* fashion, as indeed appears to have been the case. Further evidence for this is the lack of senators proposing Claudius as a desirable option, until their hand is forced once the delegation is sent and internal senatorial negotiations have broken down. Perhaps even clearer is the advice Agrippa II offered to Claudius not to let such an unexpected opportunity slip through his fingers (Jos. *AJ* 19. 236). That the assassination had caught a majority of people by surprise is demonstrated, in particular, by Josephus' description of the stunned reaction to the news shown by those in the theatre (Jos. *AJ* 19.132-7). Some of the other groups who supported Gaius, and perhaps a

[261] Levick (1990), 37-8; perhaps the strongest piece of evidence in support of this theory is that all of the senatorial conspirators were pardoned for Gaius' assassination – yet surely this could just as easily display the fragility of Claudius' position upon his accession. Claudius' support base prior to the assassination must have been rather small, if he was considered *capax imperii* at all; the story of the freedman Callistus (Jos. *AJ* 19.68-9), who claimed to have refused Gaius' orders to poison Claudius, was rejected by Josephus as being invented to gain Claudius' support with hindsight.

'Caesarian future', are identified, aside from the Praetorians who are discussed at greater length below.[262]

The private thoughts of the anxious theatre audience are depicted in this account, even as a façade is maintained by most. Common to all members of the audience presented by Josephus is an outward display of disbelief or inaction, which belies a range of differing opinions. This is an important and revealing passage when considering the hopes and fears of different parts of Rome's populace concerning what might happen in the future at this particular moment in time, revealing a diversity of opinion. Josephus (or his source) divides the audience between those who favoured Gaius' murder (some of whom have already been discussed), and those who did not. The fear of Gaius felt by those in favour of the assassination, Josephus reports, was the cause of their disbelief that he had been killed (buttressed by a false rumour he still lived, which itself no doubt stemmed from this disbelief and fear).[263] The incredulity of Gaius' supporters allegedly stemmed from a conviction that it was impossible for anyone to have the courage to kill him.

Significantly, this group included the 'women, children, and all the slaves, and some of the army'. All of these groups were understood to be 'inferior' in one way or another (especially with respect to qualities expected of a good citizen), which suggests that the generalisation may come from a pro-senatorial source. The army, he goes on to say, is divided, and the particular troops who are incredulous are the mercenaries (μισθοφορέω, συντυραννέω etc *AJ* 19.129). Josephus notes that their livelihood was connected to the wellbeing of Gaius, and one might

[262] Judging from their reaction to Gaius' death, in this group one might include a large group of the Praetorians; the German bodyguard (*AJ* 19.119-26); those in the wider imperial household (particularly those who had been a part of the milieu of Antonia, Germanicus, and the elder Agrippina), including freedmen and slaves; much of the traditional support base, including citizens and provincials who directly benefitted from Caesarian patronage (such as Agrippa II); and purportedly women and slaves, and the lower classes more generally (*AJ* 19.130, 158-9).

[263] On the importance of rumours, including false ones, and their influence on the course of political events in Rome, cf. Gibson (1998).

think that he (or his source) includes the German bodyguard in this group (though this is not certain – the bodyguard arrives at the theatre after this moment, at *AJ* 19.138). The women, children and slaves, on the other hand, are presented by Josephus as being pleased with the material benefits he provided. In sum, there are negative connotations associated with the women, children, slaves and mercenaries – it is possible that they were grouped together by the pro-senatorial 'Roman source', in order to demonstrate the type of people that desired the continuation of Caesarian tyranny, as a way of discrediting that potential 'future'. While there might have been a kernel of truth in these generalisations, the historical reality may have been that the individuals who comprised these groups held a range of perspectives. On the other hand, Josephus notes (*AJ* 19.132) that the patricians, who were in favour of Gaius' removal, remained silent on hearing news of his death, or even pretended not to have heard it, belonging to some strand of the opposition noted above.

Alongside this passage about the theatre, stands Josephus' account (*AJ* 19.160) of Valerius Asiaticus' address to a gathering of some people and soldiers in the Forum, who desired revenge for Gaius' murder (cf. Dio, 59.30, where he addresses only Praetorians). In claiming that he wished he had been an assassin, Asiaticus simultaneously exonerated himself and temporarily quelled the manhunt for the conspirators. Yet evidently there were enough supporters of Gaius or the *domus Augusta*, of one kind or another, to make such a speech necessary – particularly as there had already been a great deal of bloodshed owing to the rampaging German bodyguard (Jos. *AJ* 19.119-26, 19.215-6). Thus there were a range of individuals who were shocked by these developments, partly owing to the dramatic political change that was taking place.

As we have noted, this group included the Praetorians. Contrary to Levick's use of terms such as 'realists,' 'realistic' and 'political realism' to describe those who saw Claudius, or at best, a senatorially selected *princeps* as the only possible options, there is no reason for modern scholars to suppose that a 'return to the Republic' was not taken seriously by some at the time.[264] Furthermore, simply because the cause of Claudius, and those among the praetorian guard who sought to promote him, prevailed, one should not assume that the objectives of the 'Republicans' were therefore unrealistic or impossible to achieve – unless with hindsight, one adopts a position of fatalism.[265] This is because military power was, and remains, only one form of power, even in Rome following the civil wars. 'Soft' power of various kinds could be brought to bear, including the *auctoritas* accrued by the noble ancestry of aristocrats unconnected to the imperial family, the persuasive eloquence of particular orators and appeals to Roman *mores*, and the sacrosanctity of religious offices.

Even if one were to make such a case that military power was, in fact, the only 'real' form of power, it is still undeniable that key members of the praetorian guard were behind one of the conspiracies to begin with (or one 'branch' of a larger conspiracy). For example, along with Cassius Chaerea, there was the praetorian prefect Clemens, and another military tribune, Papinius, whom Chaerea approaches (*AJ* 19.37). Moreover, as Levick notes, the Urban Cohorts supported the senatorial discussions in the aftermath of Gaius' removal.[266] Suetonius provides

[264] Levick (1990), 36-37; 'Still other senators must have inclined to be loyal to the dynasty in 41, either genuinely so or out of political realism […]', 37; or perhaps more explicitly, 'Given the real basis of imperial power – the army – and the manner of Claudius' and Vespasian's accession, it is doubly appropriate that the word commonly used to designate Rome's rulers is derived from their military title of Imperator.' p 42 This removes the importance of the role of the discussion in 41 in clarifying the role of the emperor, and solidifying the military basis of his power in a manner which, up until that point, had not been articulated in such an explicit manner.

[265] Osgood (2011), 23 similarly emphasises the military foundation of the Principate - 'the emerging monarchy was in an important sense a *military* monarchy: however much other groups had to be cultivated, all emperors ruled most fundamentally at the behest of the armies.'

[266] Jos. *AJ*, 19.17-19 notes three separate conspiracies, or perhaps 'cells' within the one conspiracy, at this point but, as Levick and Barrett note, the diverse reasons for wanting to remove Gaius which compelled cooperation,

us with the information that it was the Urban Cohorts who supported the senate and Chaerea (*Claud.* 10.3), while Josephus gives two different reports of the number of cohorts, as three (*BJ* 2.205) and four (*AJ* 19.188) in his respective works. In other words, schisms and changes of opinion within the military were as possible as they were within the senate or people, despite the prevailing ideology (oaths having been sworn, for instance) and the impression given by various 'loyalist' sources from the early Principate. The mutinies of 14 CE might be adduced as another piece of supporting evidence for differing opinions within the military, at another crucial moment of transition. Even within the group of soldiers who had Claudius in their possession, according to Josephus there was a conference on the Palatine in which they discussed the best course of action, which included weighing up the role of the senate, its historical mistakes, and the popular legacy of Claudius' brother Germanicus (Jos. *AJ*, 19.223-26):

> ἐν εὐρυχωρίᾳ δὲ τοῦ Παλατίου γενομένοις, πρῶτον δὲ οἰκηθῆναι τῆς Ῥωμαίων πόλεως τοῦτο παραδίδωσιν ὁ περὶ αὐτῆς λόγος, καὶ ἤδη τοῦ δημοσίου ἀντιλαμβανομένοις πολὺ πλείων ἡ ἐπιφοίτησις ἦν τῶν στρατιωτῶν χαρᾷ τὴν ὄψιν δεχομένοις τοῦ Κλαυδίου, περὶ πλείστου τε ἦν αὐτοῖς αὐτοκράτορα στήσασθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον εὐνοίᾳ τε τῇ Γερμανικοῦ, ἀδελφὸς δὲ ἦν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ μέγα πᾶσιν τοῖς ὠμιληκόσιν καταλελοιπὼς κλέος τὸ αὐτοῦ. ἀναλογισμός τε αὐτοὺς εἰσῄει τῆς τε πλεονεξίας τῶν ἐν τῇ συγκλήτῳ δυναστευόντων καὶ ὁπόσα ἐπὶ τῆς πρὶν ἀρχῆς ἡμάρτητο αὐτῇ. πρὸς δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀμήχανον τοῦ πράγματος κατενόουν, καὶ πάλιν εἰς ἑνὸς ἀρχὴν μεθισταμένων
> τῶν ὅλων κινδύνους αὐτοῖς φέρειν δι' ἑνὸς κτησαμένου τὴν ἀρχὴν μεθισταμένων τῶν ὅλων παρ' ὃν ἐπιχωρήσει καὶ εὐνοίᾳ τῇ αὐτῶν λαβόντα Κλαύδιον μνημονεύσεις τε χάριτος αὐτοῖς ἀποδιδόντα τιμήν, ἢ ἐπὶ τοιούτοις γένοιτ' ἂν ἀρκοῦσα.
>
> But when they had come to the open area of the Palatine – legend has it that this was the first site of the city of Rome to receive a settlement – and were just reaching the Treasury, there was a far larger concourse of soldiers, who were overjoyed at the sight of Claudius and who were determined to proclaim him emperor because of the popularity of his brother Germanicus, who had left behind him an immense reputation among all who had known him. They reflected on the rapacity of the powerful members of the senate, and what errors the senate had committed when it was in power before. Moreover, they took into account the impracticability of having the senate handle affairs, and also considered that if the government again passed into the hands of a single ruler they would take a risk upon themselves since one individual would have gained the throne for himself, whereas it was possible for Claudius to receive it by their

did not ensure unity in the aftermath – they agreed on a 'short-term future', but not a 'medium to long-term future'. Levick (1990), 31.

> motion and support. And Claudius would show his appreciation by an honorarium adequate to such a service.

Despite their general unity of purpose in parts of Josephus' account, the need for a discussion implies at least some differences of opinion among these troops. In some ways, this scene acts a parallel to the later one in which the senate assembles to discuss various options for *princeps*, including Marcus Vinicius and Valerius Asiaticus, accommodating Claudius, or having none at all (which occurs in the temple of Jupiter Victor in *AJ* 19.248 – but in *BJ* 2.205, Suetonius *Cal.* 60, and Dio 60.1.1 it is the Capitol, which seems more likely).[267] What is most interesting in this section, when thinking about conceptions of the future, is the factors that the troops introduce here in order to help them reach a consensus about what to do next. Although we do not have the other side of the debate articulated in this passage, it is implied that other options were considered. The legacy of Germanicus (a name which Claudius himself had acquired through the elder Drusus, but was more closely associated with his brother) trumps other ancestral exempla from the *domus Augusta* – certainly, none of the troops can be seen defending the conduct of Gaius *per se*. Germanicus is of central importance in *AJ* 19.223, and his legacy plays a similar role when Josephus describes the palace guard Gratus' reaction to discovering Claudius in hiding (*AJ* 19.217), who proclaims he has found a 'Germanicus' to install as *princeps* (as we have seen in Chapter 2).

Indeed, when Chaerea later confronts the troops to convince them not to promote Claudius, his reference to Eutychus the prominent charioteer is meant to stun them into acknowledging the excesses of the last *princeps* and his cronies, under whom the praetorians must also have suffered for the rhetorical use of the reference to make any sense. So it is a very selective

[267] Seneca (*de Cons*. 18.2-3) reports that Caligula would publicly taunt Asiaticus about the nature of his affair with Asiaticus' wife, and the story is paired with the insults Chaerea faced – while this would provide a reason for Asiaticus to be pleased at his assassination, there is no evidence to suggest that he sought a pre-Caesarian government, nor was he likely directly involved in the conspiracy.

history of the Julio-Claudians that even the most fervently pro-Claudian troops draw upon when articulating their future – a *princeps* in the manner of the untried, idealised Germanicus (as observed in Chapter 2). In this respect we can see the troops drawing upon an idealised future which had been articulated much earlier – *viz.* the idea of Germanicus as *princeps*, whose behaviour in that position was naturally an unknown quantity, and was therefore malleable – in order to paint a picture of the virtues of another potential *princeps*, Claudius, who was meant to follow in his footsteps. Augustus himself is not even mentioned, perhaps owing to the low regard in which he held Claudius. The other side of the coin is their discussion of the senate's errors, which shows them harking back to, and considering the virtues and vices of, a republican form of government – presumably this argument rested upon the idea that soldiers suffered if a divided senate ruled, by ushering in further civil war. The refrain that senatorial government was impractical (usually stated with respect to the size of the empire) is a common one, especially in the Greek sources from the early Principate onwards, with their interest in constitutional cycles in *poleis*; the senate itself later assents to this idea of impracticality in the aforementioned scene on the Capitoline. The soldiers' fear of the greed or arrogance (*pleonexia*) of the senators is no doubt related to their own safety and wellbeing, as well as good government. Their plan to seize the initiative seems inspired by the uncertainty of what might happen to them, were they not to begin shaping the course of future events by promoting Claudius immediately. In this respect, the soldiers have as much fear of the 'power vacuum', and the loss of a 'meta-narrative', as do those in the theatre after Gaius' assassination (Jos. *AJ* 19.132-7). It is important to note that all of these concerns come prior to the idea that they were motivated by the desire for a donative from Claudius upon his accession, which is the traditional 'reductionist' view of their actions. A donative is not much use, in any case, in an anarchic situation.

In fact, temporarily setting military power to one side enables us to reassert the importance of oratory in Rome, and in particular the need to articulate an image of the future, which those from the various orders of society could accept to some degree. Whatever the details of the speech Valerius Asiaticus delivered in the Forum, in which he attempted to convince the people there of the merits of Gaius' assassination (and exculpate himself from the actual deed), it did not articulate a 'republican' future in a clear or compelling enough manner to win them over.

This episode also shows the way in which different conceptions of the future were quite explicitly sketched out by the various parties involved in the discussion, very likely among the troops supporting Claudius, and more certainly within the senate, and in the exchange between Claudius and the senate (e.g. *AJ* 19.230). By contrast with discussions between Octavian and the senate in the 20s BCE (about which we know little), or between Tiberius and the senate in 14 CE (about which we know more, mainly from a tradition hostile to the *princeps*), there was no expectation of a compromise between senate and *princeps* from the beginning, since Claudius was not introduced as a factor until later in the piece.

The Importance of Oratory in 41 CE

From an analysis of some of the different conceptions of Rome's future in 41, it appears that the role of oratory was just as central as it ever had been in the conduct of public affairs. Drawing upon Rome's history to articulate a 'meta-narrative' or 'trajectory' of the city's past, present, and future was necessary in order to convince a large cross-section of society that things were under control following the disruption of the assassination. This was particularly the case with those advocating a restoration of a pre-Caesarian political arrangement. Despite

the speeches in the two meetings of the senate (in the presence of *equites* etc), the public address of Valerius Asiaticus attempting to quell the hunt for the conspirators, and the consuls publicly giving the watchword *libertas*, there was no sustained attempt to convince the people, through a public oration, of the benefits of the future they imagined for Rome, its historical precedent or justification, or anything of that nature. It seems that many senators took their newfound political independence for granted, since it appears they saw the removal of Gaius as the key obstacle to the restoration of their *dignitas* and *auctoritas*. However, the basis of Gaius' power – and the basis for Caesarian dominance more generally – would have had to be dismantled and then redirected towards the new state of affairs, in order for senatorial oligarchy to maintain its hold over the *res publica*. For this to happen, it may have been necessary for the senators to deliver a speech which incorporated some of the developments that had taken place in Rome since Pharsalus into a narrative of historical decline (though not everything could be discarded or discredited – including their own careers), culminating in Gaius' tyranny and the present reemergence of a political system beneficial to Rome (as seen in Saturninus' speech, involving themes such as the return of virtue, political responsibility, and perhaps even civic prosperity). In order to dismantle their support, the senators may have had to convince the Praetorians and populace more widely that they had their best interests at heart – in the short term, perhaps a role for the Praetorians guarding the consuls, the promise of donatives (or the avoidance of civil war), and so on. In the long term, structural changes could be made to reduce the power of the Praetorians, and indeed in an earlier manifestation, the Praetorians had formed a bodyguard for the consuls themselves.

If this is the case, one must ask why such a speech was not attempted. A central problem for the conspirators and the senate more generally lay in the nature of conspiracy. As Pagán has suggested, conspiracies by definition must remain known only to a select group until their

execution, in order to maintain secrecy.[268] This does not prevent planning for the medium to long-term future altogether, but wider support for such a dramatic change is difficult to cultivate before the conspiracy has been carried out. Thus there was a restriction on the time available to the senate to convince the wider public that such a change in direction was desirable.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the way in which individuals and groups, including the senate and Praetorian Guard, thought about the future of Rome's government after the assassination of Gaius. It has revealed that there was a strong 'republican' ideology among some of the conspirators and some, though certainly not all, of the senators, which has often been underemphasised or ignored by modern scholars. This attempt to restore consular government came into conflict with those who sought to maintain the Julio-Claudian family's supremacy, and to some extent with others who attempted to forge a new system of *principes* selected from among the senate (some in reaction to the threat from Claudius, with the hope that the praetorians might themselves compromise). Importantly, it has shown that on all sides – not only that of the conspirators and the senate, but even the Praetorians (on the Palatine), according to the most detailed account of the crisis in Josephus' *Antiquitates Judaicae*, these different imagined futures and plans of action needed to be debated among these groups, which were composed of people with differing opinions, and then publicly articulated in order to garner wider support. It has also demonstrated the longevity of particular idealised futures – namely, the idea of a return to a pre-Caesarian *res publica* via an assassination of a tyrant (seen with the liberators in Chapter 1), and also finally acquiring a 'Germanicus' as *princeps* (seen in Chapter 2).

[268] *Pagán (2004), 32.*

Coda: Other Imagined Futures and Opposition under Claudius and Nero

The main alternative visions for the future explored thus far, such as the removal of the Caesars and their replacement either with some other *princeps* selected on a different basis – perhaps senatorial approval, or drawn from a family of great eminence by another faction – or a return to a consular-led senatorial government, did not cease to be entertained by members of the elite after the installation of Claudius by the praetorian guard. On the contrary, variations on these alternatives continued to resurface, and unsettled (and at some points even threatened to overthrow) the government of Claudius and then Nero, and indeed subsequent *principes* thereafter.

As was the case with the conspirators who had plotted to remove Caligula, in many instances those who were dissatisfied with the *status quo* in the later Julio-Claudian period appear to have articulated their discontent by employing particular synecdochic slogans, and especially the concept of *libertas*, to encapsulate their desired alternative future. This emphasis on *libertas* stemmed from wider objections to tyranny and an aversion to the idea of a *rex* in Roman culture that was felt especially keenly by the senatorial elite, and in some cases these forms of autocracy were equated by disillusioned individuals with what the title of *princeps* now entailed (as was observed earlier in this chapter). This remained an important thread running through elite culture, even as many from the upper strata necessarily participated in the new political arrangement, with varying degrees of reluctance. Yet in some cases individuals took direct action in different ways, a spectrum ranging from conspiracies and revolts at one end, through to more passive forms of defiance, such as the symbolic withdrawal from public affairs, or 'safe criticism' in literature. Many of these figures under Claudius and especially under Nero appear to have been spurred on, if not initially inspired by, the philosophical perspectives that

they chose to adopt, and most prominent among them was Stoicism – or at the very least, such philosophical commitments were attributed to them by others. Some of these instances of opposition played an important role in forming the sorts of futures that were deemed possible, and the language that was employed to describe them, as the Roman world descended into another protracted civil war following Nero's death (the subject of Chapter 4).

Claudius' position was not at all guaranteed by the support of the praetorian guard, and claims to power might be made by those of sufficient standing, including those who had been involved in the conspiracy against Caligula, and some whose ancestry rivalled Claudius' own – both through connections to Augustus himself, and to earlier prominent figures in the late Republic including Sulla, Pompey, and Crassus. It seems clear that Claudius' initial policy was one of caution, involving amnesty and reconciliation (with a few notable exceptions, such as Cassius Chaerea, whom he executed, and Sabinus, who consequently took his own life). In the case of those of high birth, an attempt was made by Claudius to draw these figures closer to himself through promotion, honours, and indeed marriage.[269]

Yet such an approach did not survive for very long. It is possible that with the birth of Ti. Claudius Caesar Germanicus (i.e. Britannicus) on the 12th February 41, potential rivals from these elite families, who were further elevated as a part of Claudius' policy of appeasement, began to be seen by Messallina as a more direct threat to her own position and the likelihood that her son would eventually become *princeps*.[270] In other cases it seems Claudius himself

[269] See Dio 60.3 for this combination. Levick (1990), 57-8. Levick singles out for closer examination the cases of (Pompey's descendants via his daughter Pompeia) M. Licinius Crassus Frugi (cos. 27), who was made a legate in Mauretania and given *ornamenta triumphalia*, and his son, Cn. Pompeius Magnus, who was married to Claudius' elder daughter, Antonia; and the Iunii Silani (the descendants of Augustus via Julia the Younger's daughter Aemilia Lepida), including L. Iunius Silanus, who was betrothed to Claudius' daughter by Messallina, Octavia, and his older brother M. Iunius Silanus, and C. Appius Iunius Silanus, discussed below.
[270] His association with *Spes Augusta* (on coinage), on the model of Germanicus, has already been noted in Chapter 2.

changed his mind, or was convinced by Messallina or his freedman Narcissus to remove these figures in one way or another.

C. Appius Iunius Silanus had enjoyed at least symbolic promotion under Claudius in 41 – he was recalled to Rome from his position as governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, and was married to Messallina's mother, Domitia Lepida. Dio's account (60.14.3-4) evidently compresses the chronology, but at some point after this, having been held in high esteem by Claudius, Silanus allegedly refused the sexual advances of Messallina (it is not clear whether she made them for romantic or, more likely, political reasons), thereby offending her to the extent that she and Narcissus decided to convince Claudius to eliminate him. Levick suggests that this marriage to Domitia Lepida relegated him to the generation before that of Claudius, and thus made him less of a threat as a potential successor, but this does not seem to have mitigated the suspicion or jealousy of Messallina, at least.[271] She (or Narcissus) devised a scheme in which Narcissus pretended to have dreamt that he witnessed Claudius being murdered by Appius Silanus, and related the dream to Claudius at dawn, after which (in one version) Messalina feigned astonishment and claimed that she too had experienced the same dream – Appius Silanus had been sent for in advance and told to arrive at that time in the early hours, and was accused and killed when he appeared (Suet. *Cl.* 37, cf. Tac. *Ann*. 11.29). All of this Claudius reported to the senate shortly afterwards.

This infamous episode suggests not so much that Appius Silanus imagined a future in which he assassinated Claudius (and there is little with which to speculate about his own ideas), but rather that he was an unwitting participant in, and victim of, Messallina's schemes (and moreover, her anxieties concerning the future) - since Silanus refused to go along with her

[271] Levick (1990), 58. In fact, Osgood has proposed that the marriage was not so much an honour for Silanus as done by one or both of Claudius and Messallina, before the decision was made to remove him from consideration altogether. Osgood (2011), 43.

plans he was put to death, perhaps also owing to Claudius' fear of him and doubts about his own security. Yet perhaps more importantly for our purposes, his death in such shocking and petty circumstances allegedly triggered a series of other events.

As a consequence of what was evidently perceived to be a tyrannical action, Claudius was met with strong resistance in the form of the plot devised by Vinicianus and his friends – although the possibility remains that the death of Silanus was a pretext added to existing plans to stage a coup to remove Claudius. Vinicianus had been considered by some to be *capax imperii* after the assassination of Gaius, though as noted earlier in the chapter, he appears merely to have acted throughout that crisis to block others from being appointed as *princeps* by the senate (Dio 60.15.1). After the death of Silanus he attempted to join forces with L. Arruntius Camillus Scribonianus (cos. 32), the governor of Dalmatia, since Scribonianus had two legions (VII and XI) under his command, and had been making his own arrangements to remove Claudius. Dio's account of these events is very interesting when considered in light of the discussion earlier in this chapter about the reluctance of the praetorian guard to commit to a future in which Rome was led by consuls and the senate, because of the potential for further civil war. In that instance, after some consideration the praetorian guard eventually sought another *princeps*, and the Urban Cohorts appear to have followed their lead, despite initially having supported the senate during their deliberations. In the case of Scribonianus' troops in Dalmatia in 42, they were willing to rebel against Claudius, according to Dio (60.15.3), up until the point that he held out to them the idea of the *demos* (the *populus Romanus*? *res publica*? *SPQR*?) and offered to give them back their ancient *eleutheria*, after which they refused to listen to him – once again, from a fear of bringing back civil war or *stasis*. When Scribonianus could not persuade them, he fled to the island of Issa, where he took his own life. This demonstrates that there was still, at the very least in the mind of Dio's source, the possibility that Scribonianus attempted to make use

of the (pre-Caesarian?) *res publica* as a rallying point, which in this instance failed. This is quite unlike the account in Suetonius' *Life of Claudius* (13.2) in which it is superstition which changed the minds of the troops, as their standards could not be physically removed from the ground in order to march towards their new *imperator* (which importantly need not mean 'emperor' here, necessarily). A large-scale civil war loomed but was abandoned almost as soon as it had begun, owing perhaps to a failure to articulate the right points in a speech to the troops – one might suspect that this was a repetition in the provinces of the scenario that had occurred in Rome after the death of Caligula, with different political groups desiring different, mutually exclusive outcomes. Thus, the possibility of marching on Rome with an army was revisited, and perhaps prefigured some later developments with Vindex, Galba et al. discussed in the next chapter.

The accomplices of Scribonianus were brought to Rome or rounded up there, including Q. Pomponius Secundus (suff. 41), A. Caecina Paetus (suff. 37) and his wife Arria, who bravely stabbed herself before Caecina Paetus while exhorting him to follow suit, thereby earning a place in history as a type of (Stoic?) exemplum (Dio 60.16.5-7, Tac. *Ann.* 16.34, and for exemplary employment, cf. Plin. *Ep.* 3.16, Mart.1.13). As for the motivation of Vinicianus, who committed suicide, it is possible that he had not set out to become *princeps*, but merely (as with his initial opposition to Gaius) desired to remove Claudius, and perhaps sought some form of consular-led senatorial government. Levick notes that the 'aims of the conspirators cannot finally be determined because they were probably various, presented differently to different constituencies. In Suetonius Scribonianus is a candidate for the purple. Dio claims that the troops would not support a bid for restoration of the Republic. Any claim to be

'restoring the republic' was challenged in the House.'[272] Swan has proposed a compelling interpretation of the motivations for the uprising, by making use of the dialogue surrounding the concept of *libertas*, which was contested by different groups (not unlike *spes*, examined in Chapter 2). The assassins of Gaius had used *libertas*/*eleutheria* as their watchword, as was noted earlier in the chapter. After Claudius' accession, he had minted a series of coins which proclaimed LIBERTAS AUGUSTA S.C., thereby attempting to appropriate and defuse what had been a 'republican' slogan stretching back to Brutus and Cassius for those that aimed to remove tyrants, and indeed, by 41 CE, all of the Caesars. Thus, during the short-lived but significant 'Claudian civil war' of 42 CE, the *eleutheria* that was proclaimed to the troops by Scribonianus was not of this new 'Augustan' or 'Claudian' variety, but rather the 'old-fashioned' sort.[273] If this was the case, then the motivations of the conspirators who killed Caligula, and those who supported Scribonianus, seem to have been fairly closely aligned (indeed, we have observed the reappearance of Vinicianus, for instance), yet little can be said about other figures such as Caecina Paetus and Arria, aside from the fact that they also sought the removal of Claudius. Thus, the notion of restoring the *res publica* to some sort of pre-Caesarian situation was likely one thread running through those involved in this conspiracy, but others surely sought their own promotion first and foremost, others still a *princeps* elected by the senate, and so on, as in the discussions of 41 CE.

The case of Caecina Paetus and his wife Arria leads to another interesting issue, in that their daughter the younger Arria married Publius Clodius Thrasea Paetus. Thrasea Paetus had quite a prominent role under Nero as a notable Stoic senator, but ended up in strife by repeatedly

[272] Levick (1990), 60. While this is a reasonable point, the anecdote that Levick juxtaposes with this, in which Narcissus asked the freedman Galaesus what he would have done had Scribonianus become emperor (Dio 60.16.4), does not imply that that is what Scribonianus had sought, but merely that this is how Narcissus wished to present it (in Dio's source material).
[273] Swan (1970), 162-4.

challenging the servile nature of other senators (*Ann.* 16.22.1), absenting himself from meetings (as Brunt notes, marking Nero as a tyrant), including, most famously, the meeting in which Nero was congratulated for avoiding the conspiracy of his mother Agrippina (by having her murdered, Tac. *Ann.* 14.12, 16.21-2, Suet. *Nero* 37.1), and eventually committing suicide in the manner of Cato, whose biography he had written (16.21-35).[274] Thrasea Paetus was also the father-in-law of Helvidius Priscus, whose career spanned from the principate of Nero through to that of Vespasian, thus creating what appears to be an ongoing strand of opposition in prosopography, and some level of continuity in intellectual or even philosophical thought, from the early Claudian period through to the Flavian period. Some, such as Arria, very likely also acted with the future, or posterity, in mind. This has no doubt shaped the historiographical tradition to some extent, but it is important to note that earlier opposition figures were being 'received' by individuals in the intervening periods as well, not simply by those standing at the end of the tradition – it was an ongoing process of reception and reinterpretation.

Some scholars in the earlier part of the 20th century claimed that there was a faction of Stoics who opposed the constitutional arrangement under the later Julio-Claudians, and especially objected to the way the position of *princeps* was carried out by particularly despotic individuals, such as Nero. Yet as Brunt, Griffin, Bartsch, and others have sensibly argued, there was never a group organised along those lines *per se*.[275] On the one hand, not all of the individuals who claimed to be Stoic (or were attributed such a position by others) were necessarily interested in overthrowing autocracy. Indeed, the career of Seneca under Nero is a case in point, attempting to guide the *princeps* by steering a course between flattery and censure, as indeed had Cicero under Caesar before him.[276] On the other hand, nor were all of

[274] Brunt (1975), 27.
[275] Brunt (1975), Griffin (1976), Bartsch (2017).
[276] Cf. Griffin (1976), 149.

those individuals Stoic who sought to eliminate the *princeps* in favour of some older form of the *res publica* (or were attributed this goal by others), both in the case of the opponents of Claudius, and also those under Nero, such as the host of characters involved in the failed Pisonian conspiracy in 65 CE (Tac. *Ann.* 15.48-62). Rather than being the primary motivation for opposing Nero's rule, for instance, Stoicism (and to a lesser extent, Epicureanism) provided a language for articulating objections to the idea and practice of tyranny that were already central in the mindset of the Roman elite, and helped to frame it in such a way to give it greater meaning and significance for the individual involved.

Chapter Four: Conceptions of the Future in 68-9 CE

Introduction

With Nero's death, which was brought about primarily owing to the dissatisfaction expressed towards his increasingly tyrannical and negligent form of autocracy, the Julio-Claudian dynasty came to an end. The lack of an obvious successor to Nero resulted in a power vacuum, and appeals to different kinds of authority began to be made by various interested parties. This problem – what the basis of legitimate power in Rome actually was – could be described as one of the main themes explored in the sources which describe the crisis of 68-9 CE. For the purposes of arguments concerning 'conceptions of the future', this is inextricably linked with the question of which particular 'past' was to be drawn upon when imagining an ideal 'future' for Rome, and importantly, who had the capacity to bring about their plans, as has been discussed in Chapter 3. The future envisaged not only had to be attractive, it also had to provide stability, by being based on a broad consensus of the legitimacy of the solution.

There were a number of reasons why conceptualising of a new future for Rome was difficult at this juncture. Throughout the Republic, the evolving institutions of the state, which sought to regulate the relationship between the various orders, and especially the competition among aristocrats within the senate, had provided a kind of structural continuity – the *res publica*, its laws and customs, were greater than any one man, a sentiment expressed in various contexts, even down into the Principate.[277] The alternative paradigm, emerging from this aristocratic competition and developing throughout the late Republic and Triumviral period, and continuing up to Nero's death, was an ideology which drew attention to the alleged exceptional

[277] Including Tacitus' Tiberius, when discussing the death of his intended successor, Germanicus (Tac. *Ann.* 3.6).

nature of the Julio-Claudian family. In particular, it emphasised their divine support in both civil and foreign war, and underscored this with the apotheosis of Caesar, Augustus, and later Claudius, which expanded the claims to a divine ancestry within the *domus Augusta*, and provided an extra source of authority to which later *principes* could appeal.[278] One important element in the development of the Julian family's unique identity was the emergence of the so-called 'imperial cult', an umbrella term which covers a diverse range of religious practices, unified by their attention to various members of the *domus Augusta*.[279] Success in war resulted in peace on land and sea, and consequently, prosperity for the city and the empire more generally.[280] Alongside this assertion of martial prowess stood their other virtues (seen, for example, in the *clupeus virtutis*, on coinage, and adduced in the *SCPP*), which were understood to regulate their behaviour in relation to the traditional institutions of the *res publica*, and which provided an exemplum for the different social orders.[281]

Yet, neither of these two paradigms seemed to be feasible following the death of Nero. The military insurrections of Vindex and then Galba, which had startled Nero to the point of despair and suicide, meant that, unlike the assassination of Gaius in 41 (and despite the significant role of the Praetorians and German bodyguard in that episode, seen in Chapter 3), this crisis was more 'militarised' than 'civic' from the very beginning. Nevertheless, according to the accounts we possess, a range of potential futures was envisaged and discussed throughout this period. These included, even at this late stage, hints at a continuing ideology of senatorial dominance being the ideal state for the *res publica*. The advocates of this position seem to have

[278] See, for example, Fears (1981a), and Weinstock (1971), for the way in which the origins of many of these claims stemmed from the lifetime of Julius Caesar, and his representation posthumously.
[279] Cf. Weinstock (1971), Price (1980), (1984); Fishwick (1987); Brodd and Reed (eds) (2011).
[280] Cf. Lange (2009), 147-8, and especially Cornwell (2017), 81-120, for discussions of slogans such as *pace terra marique parta*.
[281] Some of these issues have been discussed in Ch. 2. On the *SCPP*, cf. Eck (1996); and especially Cooley (1998), 199-212; see also *AJPh* 120.1 (1999), the entire volume dedicated to discussing the inscription. On the *clupeus virtutis*, and the transition in rhetoric from war to peace, cf. Levick (2013), 73-4; Zanker (1988), 95-8; Wallace-Hadrill (1981).

been few and far between, and to have had insufficient weight to bring their plans to fruition. Unlike in 41 CE, much of the 'republicanism' in this period was, arguably, a vote of 'no confidence' in the current candidate for the Principate. Much more often, an idealised, virtuous *princeps*, taking the best aspects from the aforementioned 'Julio-Claudian model', was the preferred future imagined in Rome.

These connected themes of 'legitimacy' and 'the future' are explored in a number of ways in the sources for this period. One centrally important point, often understated in modern scholarship, is that the various conflicts, speeches, and discussions described by them suggest that it was not a straightforward progression towards a Principate based on a kind of meritocratic selection by the senate, army, and other groups, but neither was it simply a case of brute military force. Much like 41 CE, this was another watershed moment, in this case revealing, among other things, that generals could make a claim for power from somewhere other than Rome (cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.4), though this in itself was not enough. The mere fact that there were so many willing to claim the role of *princeps* for themselves, within such a short space of time, points to the fact that there was no obvious solution to the crisis that was acceptable to all. Certainly, the aspirations of various bodies of troops across the empire, and their willingness to promote their commanders and to risk life and limb in the hope of substantial rewards, was a large contributing factor to the continuing instability.[282] Alongside this, the geographical extent of Rome's empire played an important role in political developments. The time it took for news to be relayed across the empire can be seen to influence political changes, and the actions of various bodies of troops and their commanders. Yet this crisis also demonstrates that the successive *principes*, and other contenders who never

[282] Ash (1999) outlines the motivations and characterisation of the different bodies of troops in Tacitus' *Histories*.

managed to acquire the title (such as Nymphidius Sabinus), needed to appeal to a range of other sources of authority, aside from the legions, once there. This was sometimes overlooked by the participants themselves, owing to the initial 'military' nature of the coup. It is apparent in Galba's unwillingness to assuage the defeated and marginalised (and, of course, pay off the Praetorians), once victory had been 'secured', and the manner in which he chose a successor, leading to Tacitus' famous comment, *omnium consensu capax imperii nisi imperasset* (Tac. *Hist.* 1.49). Although Otho's demise was largely a consequence of external pressures, his unsuccessful attempts to reconcile the various political entities in Rome to the idea of an 'Othonian future' demonstrate that it was an extremely important task. In Vitellius' case, a far less successful negotiation, after his calamitous arrival in Rome, made his consolidation of power much more difficult. A broad consensus, or perhaps more accurately, acquiescence, was still necessary to retain power. One might also suggest that the awful reality of civil war – its violence and uncertainty – meant that, as with the tail end of the Triumviral period, after a series of conflicts and aborted political settlements, there were those who were eventually willing to accept a less than ideal future (ultimately in the form of the Flavians), provided it resulted in peace and stability.

At the same time as particular parties sought to articulate a new vision for the future of Rome without Julio-Claudians, there was a kind of structural and conceptual inertia in Rome which resisted such changes, similar to that discussed in Chapter 3 with respect to the aftermath of Caligula's assassination. Moreover, in this particular situation, Nero's popularity, especially among the lower strata of society, was an important factor in making life difficult for those who sought to formulate and convey a different sort of future for Rome. What were those in Rome to do with the institutions which had arisen since the supremacy of Caesar, and

particularly Octavian, had been achieved? How could continuity with the recent past be maintained, if that was in fact a desirable thing to attempt?

Both political inertia and Neronian popularity could be exploited by other leaders as they sought to establish their own legitimacy and articulate the futures they embodied. For instance, Otho, either by having himself proclaimed 'Nero Otho' or at least by not condemning such an acclamation (Tac. *Hist.* 1.78), sought to capitalise on the popular support which the last Julio-Claudian had in fact commanded (even if most of those in the upper orders were less enthusiastic).[283] The same problem of choosing between continuity and innovation manifested itself in the issue of which individuals were to be executed or exiled from the old regime. Galba's supporters, first, pardoned certain figures and removed others; this group was then purged further by Otho, and in turn his successor Vitellius, and finally the Flavians (some senators evidently capitalising on these changes to settle old scores). Yet continuity in administration and association cut both ways, reaping the positive and negative connotations of earlier *principes*, depending upon who was spared and who was removed, and their popularity among different segments of Roman society. A clear example of this is the resentment Galba caused by letting Titus Vinius determine which of Nero's associates were to be removed; he spared the prefect Tigellinus, a friend of Nero much despised among the elite (Plut. *Galba* 17).

More directly, an even clearer example of the lack of desire or ability to move beyond the Julio-Claudian paradigm is the appearance of two impersonators of Nero in 69 and 80 CE (and

[283] On this issue, see the excellent discussion by Roche (2008). As Roche suggests, the animosity which the various political constituencies evidently felt for one another was one of the key problems for Otho – the Neronian associations worked only to secure greater popular support, for the senate wanted more political independence, perhaps under a *civilis princeps*, while the army sought to maintain political influence over the *princeps*. For an account of some aspects of Nero's popularity, that cuts against the grain of his negative portrayal in ancient accounts, see Champlin (2003).

possibly a third in c.88), capitalising on the widespread popularity and charismatic authority of the *princeps* for personal gain.[284] If Nero was not in fact dead, and was about to return from the East at any moment, the future of Rome under his rule that had been envisaged by his supporters could yet be fulfilled. Indeed, as we have observed, there were earlier reports of a false Agrippa Postumus, a false Drusus, and many others – and the popular reaction to the rumour concerning Germanicus' survival, spread in Rome after his death in 19, provides a good indication of the sort of emotional response such impostors may have evoked.[285] These figures could not be discarded easily in a political and religious culture that placed such a great emphasis on particular leaders whose presence ensured the continuation of Rome's safety and prosperity.

Thus the crisis of 68-9 was marked by a political culture which had a particularly strong focus on personality and the assessment of virtues and vices – perhaps even more so than at any time since the Triumviral period, since the chain of Julio-Claudian succession which was imagined to lead off into the future had been broken. There was nobody like Claudius left to discover and set up. This point is significant for this thesis since it also influenced the way in which various individuals and groups – senators, the plebs, soldiers and others – thought about the future. Major structural changes to Roman governmental administration, and thoughts on how the situation might be improved in that area, were rarely articulated – rather, the discussion focussed on who was likely to act in one way or another, on the basis of their character and its apparent alignment with past experiences. In this respect the episode resembles some of the discussions which took place in the post-Ides period, as Cicero and others attempted to predict the future on the basis of the past actions and virtues and vices of key players. The crisis of 68-

[284] On Nero's impersonators, Tac. *Hist.* 2.8, Suet. *Nero*, 57.2, Dio 64.9.3; see for example, Pappano (1937), Gallivan (1973), Jones (1983), Tuplin (1989), Grünewald (2004).
[285] On which see the discussion in Chapter 2.

9 was in various ways quite a striking repetition of earlier events in Rome's history, even while there were notable divergences from anything which had come before. Conceptions of the future at the time were thus influenced by this array of old problems and new political developments.

The Source Material and the 'Brief Futures' of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius

When trying to reconstruct the futures articulated by the various claimants for power in 68-9, one of the key problems is the fact that their attempts were so short-lived, which in turn has affected the nature of our evidence. Our main narrative sources – the histories and biographies of Josephus, Plutarch, Suetonius, and Tacitus, and excerpts and epitomes from Dio – were based on earlier accounts, such as imperial biographies, battle narratives by generals, annalistic-type histories, and so on, some of which were composed at least in part to justify the new Flavian regime. Another principal motivation for writing may have been a defence of the author's own role throughout the period of civil war.[286]

Thus, unlike the historiography of the Triumviral period, owing to the very brief reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, which were followed by the comparatively lengthy Flavian period, most accounts were likely written after the conflicts had subsided – the 'long year' was too short for the composition or circulation of many works. This circumstance certainly explains much of the pro-Flavian spin which survives in the sources - a series of *principes* of varying levels of vice and virtue, culminating in the virtuous (or at the very least satisfactory) Vespasian. This may also have contributed to the comparatively limited detail found in Suetonius' lives of *Galba*, *Otho*, and *Vitellius.* Teleologies of progress towards the Flavians,

[286] On autobiographical elements in Josephus' work, in addition to the *Vita* itself (the only extant autobiography from the first century CE), see e.g. Marasco (2011). On the development of the genre in civil war, see Smith and Powell (2009).

or decline from the Julio-Claudians, could be constructed depending upon the author's own experience of the conflicts and relationship with the chief protagonists. Yet once the Flavians themselves were gone, other historians could lay their interpretations on top of this earlier material as they forged new accounts of 68-9, with sufficient distance from the Flavians so as not to require 'safe criticism'.[287]

Of the accounts that have survived, Tacitus' *Histories* provides the most detailed narrative, including many episodes not mentioned elsewhere, and perhaps most importantly, takes a more sceptical view of the pro-Flavian historical perspective which pervades our other sources to varying degrees – his approach is largely a response to the oppressive nature of the Domitianic period.[288] Tacitus is looking to the future and what he knows is to come as he discusses the rise of Vespasian.[289] His narrative of decline, which places the greatest emphasis on Roman society destroying itself owing to the unrestrained power of the legions, is unique in the sense that there are no figures who appear to possess superior virtue in any straightforward way – the principal characters are all morally complex at best, and the masses of troops often much worse.[290] As Ash has argued, 'In essence, Tacitus wrote the *Histories* as a moralising record of an intensely self-destructive and shameful period of history.'[291] Moreover, this moralising agenda plays a large role in shaping the way various individuals and groups within the narrative articulate their conception of what the future might, and should, look like.

[287] Cf. Ahl (1984). Tac. *Hist.* 1.1. implies that others have written polemical histories of the pre-Flavian emperors.
[288] On the posthumous reaction to Domitian in historiography, and its modern evaluation, see Wilson (2003).
[289] E.g. at Tac. *Hist.* 4.52.
[290] Otho's suicide (Tac. *Hist.* 2.46-53), for example, is a virtuous action which almost appears to redeem him from his earlier largely negative portrayal. This heroic suicide, carried out to minimise further bloodshed, had likely been developed as a positive portrayal by the Othonian elements in Vespasian's camp (making him someone worthy for Vespasian to avenge), but the added complexity in Tacitus' portrait provides an altogether different character.
[291] Ash (2007), 7.

A further historiographical issue with the crisis of 68-9 is simply the complexity of the situation, including a large number of characters, and events stretching across the empire.[292] This meant that there were too many elements for a traditional annalistic framework to work well, since it was excessively rigid in some ways, and not precise enough in others. While Tacitus does provide the conventional consular dating, evidently some of the material he was drawing upon only situated events relative to one another (a common feature in imperial biography, also); pinning down certain events to particular times of the year was impossible. As Ash has argued, this could be used by an historian such as Tacitus to great effect, since episodes that had been detached from a strict chronology could be moved (within reason) to wherever he saw fit, allowing for dramatic juxtapositions.[293]

Another key aspect of the source material for this period is that it is predominantly biographical. One should not overstress the differences between history and biography; it is clear that even in the imperial biographies of Plutarch and Suetonius there is a sense in which the authors are aware that the genre cannot contain the complexity of the situation in 68-9. For instance, when Plutarch mentions the revolt of Nymphidius, he follows this with the comment: 'Now, the accurate and circumstantial narration of these events belongs to formal history; but it is my duty also not to omit such incidents as are worthy of mention in the deeds and fates of the Caesars.' (τὰ μὲν οὖν καθ᾽ ἕκαστα τῶν γενομένων ἀπαγγέλλειν ἀκριβῶς τῆς πραγματικῆς ἱστορίας ἐστίν, ὅσα δὲ ἄξια λόγου τοῖς τῶν Καισάρων ἔργοις καὶ πάθεσι συμπέπτωκεν, οὐδὲ ἐμοὶ προσήκει παρελθεῖν. Plut. *Galba* 2.3). Here Plutarch evidently expresses his opinion that some historical forces (including the issue of the power of the legions), were greater than the concerns of biography, and had indeed shaped the careers of the Caesars who form the subject

[292] Ash (2007), 8-9.
[293] Ash (2007), 9.

of this pair of *Lives*.[294] This points to the fact that forces other than the character and decisions of the successive *principes* were at play.

Nevertheless, the intersection of the genre of biography and a particular view of individuals as embodying different conceptions of the future has affected the way the authors have constructed their teleologies for this period of Roman history. A pertinent example is Suetonius' introduction to his *Galba*, which begins, rather unusually, with a section on Nero's death marking the end of the family of the Caesars, and portents pertaining to it. In fact, most of the chapter is concerned with the *ad Gallinas* portent (discussed at greater length below), which predicted the rise and fall of the dynasty through arboreal behaviour. Suetonius' portent therefore acts as a kind of compressed package, or concertina, of Julio-Claudian history, with their beginning and end creating a discrete dynasty, which throws Galba and subsequent *principes* into sharp relief. Syme argued that this chapter was the end of Suetonius' *Nero*, displaced to the beginning of the next life (a suggestion followed by Wallace-Hadrill, among others); yet Power has recently proposed that this was a deliberate strategy on the part of Suetonius.[295] He suggests that the emphasis on the end of the Julio-Claudian succession was a way of setting up the biographies of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius (which he argues formed one book in the *Lives*), by drawing attention to the fact that their ancestry had nothing to do with the Caesars who preceded them. The end of the Caesars' 'bloodline' was therefore the problem that necessitated their reigns, and yet which continued to loom over them all.

Thus, one must be alert to the way that generic limitations, as well as the nature of this period itself and its preoccupations, have affected the later reconstructions of futures that were

[294] On the idea that Plutarch's *Galba* and *Otho* are more 'historical' than his other biographies, see Ash (1997), 190, and Pelling (2002), 195.
[295] Syme (1958) 501; Power (2009), 216-20.

entertained in historical episodes. Once again (as in Chapters 1 and 2) they are often focalised through the aspirations of individual leaders, and the hopes that others placed in them, with particular attention paid to their virtues and vices. At other times, Tacitus, in particular, zooms out to the scale of armies and provinces, bringing into question just how important these individuals were in shaping the future. Yet more than this, owing to the knowledge that the first three of these *principes* will be ushered off the stage in quick succession, as Plutarch might have it (*Galba* 1.5), there is little time spent on their broader hopes and fears, and their ideas for the future of Rome, *beyond* the point of victory and the attainment of power, since the next candidate is waiting in the wings.

Galba's Principate and Succession Planning

The earliest phase of the civil wars provides a number of interesting conceptions of the future, as the situation began to deteriorate, illustrating the aforementioned issue of sources of authority. One of the chief problems facing Galba in his rise to power and his attempt to consolidate it was the series of dramatic changes in the political and military situation that occurred simultaneously in different geographical locations across the empire. Messages took time to travel between cities and military camps in different provinces. This time delay meant that plans for the future were often constructed on the basis of an incomplete or incorrect impression of present circumstances.

Galba began his attempt to become *princeps* in the wake of Vindex's revolt in Gaul. Vindex and his followers were motivated, we are told, by a sense of the injustice of Nero's rule, and particularly the excessive taxation of Gaul.[296] The communication between Vindex and Galba,

[296] Plut. *Galba* 4.1.

and other commanders surrounding Gaul, is a case in point.[297] Vindex initially wrote to Galba requesting assistance in his uprising, a revolt against Nero which employed the language of *libertas*, and claimed to be defending the senate and people of Rome and her citizens in the provinces against the tyranny of Nero – rhetoric which Galba himself was to employ.[298] Plutarch provides the most detailed account of the correspondence travelling around the Mediterranean, and the problems of acting based on it (*Galba* 4.2-3):

> λέγεται μὲν οὖν καὶ πρὸ τῆς ἐμφανοῦς ἀποστάσεως γράμματα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀφικέσθαι παρὰ τοῦ Οὐίνδικος, οἷς μήτε πιστεῦσαι μήτε μηνῦσαι καὶ κατειπεῖν, ὡς ἕτεροι τῶν ἡγεμονικῶν ἐπιστολὰς αὐτοῖς γραφείσας ἔπεμψαν πρὸς Νέρωνα καὶ διέφθειραν ὅσον ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῖς τὴν πρᾶξιν, ἧς ὕστερον μετασχόντες ὡμολόγησαν αὑτῶν οὐδὲν ἧττον ἢ ἐκείνου προδόται γεγονέναι. ἀλλ᾽ ἐπειδὴ λαμπρῶς τὸν πόλεμον ἐκφήνας ὁ Οὐίνδιξ ἔγραψε τῷ Γάλβᾳ παρακαλῶν ἀναδέξασθαι τὴν ἡγεμονίαν καὶ παρασχεῖν ἑαυτὸν ἰσχυρῷ σώματι ζητοῦντι κεφαλήν, ταῖς Γαλατίαις δέκα μυριάδας ἀνδρῶν ὡπλισμένων ἐχούσαις ἄλλας τε πλείονας ὁπλίσαι δυναμέναις, προὔθηκε βουλὴν τοῖς φίλοις.
>
> It is said, indeed, that even before the open rebellion Galba received letters from Vindex, and that he neither put any trust in them nor gave accusing information about them, although other provincial governors sent to Nero the letters written to them, and thus did all they could to ruin the enterprise of Vindex; and yet they afterwards took part in it, and thus confessed that they had been false to themselves no less than to Vindex. But after Vindex had openly declared war, he wrote to Galba inviting him to assume the imperial power, and thus to serve what was a vigorous body in need of a head, meaning the Gallic provinces, which already had a hundred thousand men under arms, and could arm other thousands besides.

After this passage, Plutarch reports that Galba conferred with his friends and, while some urged him to be cautious and wait to see how events unfolded, Titus Vinius convinced him to act on Vindex's advice. Presumably one of these letters from Vindex was also sent to Verginius, who may have been responsible for the news being reported to Nero – this may have introduced the idea to the troops in Upper Germany, who later apparently used similar language concerning the senate and people choosing a *princeps* who was suited to all.[299] The next chapter moves on

[297] On which see Hainsworth (1962), 91.
[298] Plut. *Galba* 4.2. Ash (1999), 74.
[299] Plut. *Galba* 6.2, Verginius refuses his troops' proclamation as emperor and declares he will neither accept it himself nor let anyone take it not appointed by the senate; Suet. *Galba* 16.2, though here it is the Praetorians whom the Germans say must choose someone acceptable to all armies; Tac. *Hist.* 1.6 (ingens novis rebus materia, ut non in unum aliquem prono favore ita audienti parata).

to the manumission/*adlocutio* episode, in which he delivers a speech declaring his opposition to Nero. Therefore, Plutarch presents a process with at least two stages in the correspondence – the first being Vindex's preparations for war, during which he solicits support from Galba, the second being his invitation to assume the role of *princeps*. This set in motion a sequence of events in which Galba adopted the language of Vindex's revolt, and this can be seen in the speech attributed to him on the podium announcing his intentions, in which he appealed to the *res publica*, and, refusing the title of *Caesar* and *Imperator*, accepted that of legate (*strategos*/*legatus*) of the senate and people of Rome.[300]

Coins were issued with the legends *SPQR* and *Libertas PR Restituta*, which appear to correlate with the substance of the aforementioned speech attributed to him.[301] Later coinage apparently depicts the speech itself, with the legend ADLOCUTIO S.C.[302] Another example might be Suetonius' report that upon his approach to Rome, following Nero's death, he had a dagger suspended from his neck in front of his breast, very likely an allusion to Brutus and Cassius.[303] Some people even wore the *pileus* when Galba became *princeps*, illustrating how strongly this message had been emphasised (Dio 63.29.1). This seemingly 'republican' (or at the very least,

[300] Suet. *Galba* 10.1-2, Plut. *Galba* 5.2.

[301] There are many coins issued by Galba which apparently illustrate 'republican' or 'anti-tyrannical' language, sometimes in tandem with imperial titles, demonstrating the co-opting of this ideology in a manner similar to the earlier example of Claudius after Caligula. For example, *RIC* I^2 (Galba) 22, is apparently early, featuring Galba's laureate head with the legend IMP GALBA (and no other titles), and on the reverse, LIBERTAS PUBLICA [S.C.], with Libertas personified, holding a sceptre and pileus [*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 23, 56, 68-76, 136-7, 158-9, 237, 275, 309, 318, 328, 346-9, 363-7, 372, 387-91, 423-7, 459-61]. Variations (*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 310, 372, 436, 440, 442, 445) on this concept such as LIBERTAS P.R. (*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 157), and LIBERTAS AUGUSTA (*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 294-5, 436-7, 422-43) are also attested, and some have been dated from October to December 68. There are also a few different types featuring LIBERTAS RESTITUTA S.C. (*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 7-9, 37-9, 479-80) depicting Libertas personified, either a bust, or standing with a pileus and sceptre. A related theme of restoration after tyranny and war, is ROMA RENASCENS (*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 2), minted in Spain, possibly at Tarraco, featuring Roma holding a winged Victory and a spear, with GALBA IMPERATOR and his portrait on the obverse. Similar examples include *RIC* I^2 (Galba) 16, 26, 41, 161, 195, 199, 204, 229, 243, and of these the later examples feature Galba's additional imperial titles. Those with SPQR OB CS (Ob Cives Servatos) within an oak wreath, and similar types, are also common (*RIC* I^2 (Galba) 164, 167, 168, 170, 259, 262, 267, 279, 290,) On 'republican' coinage at this time, see also Wilkinson (2012), 78; Shotter (1996). The figure who disseminates what appears to be a desire to restore senatorial independence through his coinage is Clodius Macer in Africa.

[302] *RIC* I^2 (Galba) 462-8.

[303] Suet. *Galba* 11.

'anti-tyrannical') language then came back to haunt Galba in his interactions with the senate. His avowed role as defender of senatorial and provincial liberty was subverted by his decision to choose a successor himself – Piso – who evidently did not have widespread support within the order. It was the senate and people, at least officially, who had selected Galba in the wake of Nero's death, and presumably they imagined that they might have a role to play in the selection of a successor. The extent to which others had the right to offer alternative future options, in this decentralised and disordered *res publica*, hangs over such pronouncements. Certainly, this decision did not please Otho, and the sources report that Piso was primarily the selection of Galba's closest advisors and freedmen.[304] Even earlier on, Vindex's choice of Galba as a contender for the principate had undermined their claims to be representing the senate and people. This question of appointing a successor evidently concerned Galba, and may have reflected the concerns of his entourage more than anyone else – certainly others, including the troops, were more concerned with his *severitas*, if the sources we possess preserve their sentiments accurately.[305]

Galba's language of liberation from tyranny was also complicated by the executions which he ordered, which were carried out in his name by his allies. Various commanders and some Neronian troops were put to death in certain locations around the empire.[306] Moreover, as Syme has pointed out, Galba's period of 'retirement' from public life (perhaps in 49), following his commands in Upper Germany (40-42) and Africa (44 or 45), had very likely left him with fewer political allies in Rome than might be expected for a man of his age and standing, upon

[304] Tac. *Hist.* 1.13 notes that of Galba's advisors, Vinius favoured Otho, while the praetorian prefect Laco and his freedman Icelus agreed on someone other than Otho. At 1.14 he writes that in Galba's so-called *comitia* (Tacitean irony, used to describe the *consilium principis*), Laco favoured Piso after Galba began his recommendation, prior to announcing his adoption (1.15-16).
[305] Tac. *Hist.* 1.5, Suet. *Galba* 16.
[306] Plut. *Galba* 17, Tac. *Hist.* 1.7, Suet. *Galba* 11-12, 14.3.

his appointment to the post in Spain (in 59 or 60).[307] As a consequence, his reliance upon friends within his *consilium* and in neighbouring provinces led him to appoint many of them to key positions, which might also have been perceived as not championing the independence of the senate.

The problem of distance and delayed communications influenced events in Rome as much as it did the movements of troops and commanders in the provinces. For example, Nymphidius had promised the troops a donative in Galba's name while he was still en route from Spain.[308] Even though Nymphidius was killed before Galba's arrival, while making a bid for power himself within the praetorian camp, this set up an expectation that Galba was not able – or at least not willing – to fulfil upon his arrival. Their hopes turned out to be misplaced, which led to resentment. The use of the Praetorians by Otho to assassinate Galba was no doubt made possible by this development – which originally had nothing to do with Galba, nor indeed Otho, despite the latter having benefitted from its destabilising effects.

The fact that Vindex's revolt was the context in which Galba had been put forward as *capax imperii,* and from which he had successfully risen to the position of *princeps*, also made the relationship with Verginius' troops rather awkward, since they had been the ones to defeat Vindex at Vesontio. Their expectation of some kind of reward, or an acknowledgment of their service, was also to be disappointed by Galba. This problem of how best to reintegrate enemies after a civil war – which Vindex's revolt essentially was, despite sometimes being presented as a nationalistic Gallic uprising in modern accounts – was an ongoing one throughout the period, as it had been in the first century BCE.[309] Were Galba to reward them, this would

[307] Syme (1982), 461.
[308] Plut. *Galba* 8.1, Tac. *Hist.* 1.4.
[309] A view developed by Schiller (1872), Henderson (1903), and Momigliano (*CAH* X 739); yet as Hainsworth (1962) 86, has noted, is not stated as such by any literary source and is not at all suggested by numismatic

distance him from Vindex, who had been responding to the injustices of Nero's rule (in this case, Gallic taxation), and importantly, the removal of Neronian tyranny was the central justification for Galba's reign.[310] In this instance, the solution adopted was the removal of Verginius himself, who was replaced by a commander of greater loyalty, Hordeonius Flaccus, whom Tacitus describes as being incapacitated by age and lameness, and who had neither courage nor authority over his troops.[311] Yet the troops themselves had not been Galba's enemies, *per se*, but rather the enemies of his friends. This may have been why he did not seek to make any overtures towards them, perhaps alongside his supposed *severitas* in the realm of military discipline (including his claim that he levied troops and did not buy them).[312]

As noted above, the notion that rebellious troops were the central determining factor for how events unfolded in this period is an important theme in both ancient and modern treatments of the crisis, yet it is now clear that behind these rebellious actions lay the (often unrealistic) expectations of different bodies of troops, determined by their imagined view of how the future would unfold, that caused many conflicts and problems for each successive *princeps*. In this case, the troops' expectation of a reward from Rome (with Nero imagined as being in power at the time) did not match up to the reality of the situation (Nero's suicide, and the approach of Galba, an ally of their former enemy). Thus it is evident that misguided or frustrated conceptions of the future could and did shape the way in which political events developed in very important ways.

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evidence – which was also convincing enough for Chilver (1957), 29. Brunt (1990), 9-32, proposes that Vindex was motivated by a desire to free all Romans from Nero's tyranny. Syme (1958), 462f. cf. (for Verginius Rufus) 179. Syme (1982) 469.

[310] Seen, for example, in Galba's coinage, *RIC* I^2 (Galba) 293, 296-7, 422, 433, 438-41, and 450, all of which include the legend R XL, indicating *remissa quadragesima*, the abolition of the Gallic taxation (*quadragesima Galliarum*) which had been a source of discontent in Gaul.

[311] Tac. *Hist.* 1.8; Suet. *Galba* 16; Plut. *Galba* 18.3.

[312] Plut. *Galba* 18.2; Suet. *Galba* 16; Tac. *Hist.* 1.5.4.

Moreover, Galba failed to convince people of the viability and legitimacy of his plan for the future. In designating Piso as his successor, he undercut the idea that the senate and people could now be involved in a debate concerning who was suitable to lead, and who possessed the right virtues – which, in the absence of contenders with ancestry linking them to the previous dynasty, was one of the few rhetorical strategies that was available. Thus, while it is evident that Galba did see the importance of making a clear statement about the future direction of Rome at least in the category of succession, the selection of Piso was not planned or articulated in such a way as to win widespread approval. In the end, selecting the 'wrong' future caused him more harm than good.

Otho and the new Neronian future

One of the key problems for Otho was the developing situation he had inherited with those who were to become Vitellius' troops. Their annoyance can only have been heightened by the reward given to the Praetorians in Rome, considering these other troops were benefiting from exerting military force in a political context (treacherously, it might be added), while their own loyal service had gone unnoticed. As a consequence they began an ongoing search for an imperial candidate of their own. This idea of proclaiming their own commander as *princeps* was first articulated following Vesontio, and perhaps even before Nero's death, at Morguntiacum, when they attempted to compel Verginius Rufus to take on the role. This plan had survived as the best possible way forward for these legions until they refused to swear an oath on January 1 to the newly installed Galba; the recently appointed Vitellius accepted their offer the following day.[313]

[313] Tac. *Hist.* 1.8-12; Plut. *Galba* 22, Suet. *Galba* 16-17.

The other problem Otho faced was whether he ought to continue Galba's use of Nero as a foil, and to govern in a similar manner, or to revert to a more 'Neronian' style of government. In fact, both were impractical, in that for Otho to move decisively in either direction was to alienate one or more parts of the body politic, with their own notions of the ideal future for Rome. The evidence we possess indicates that Otho's plan was to try to appease as many political groups in Rome as possible – a task which he did not accomplish, though it was perhaps not an unreasonable long term objective in itself. The senate preferred the supposed continuation of the restoration of much of their authority, their freedom of expression, and similar things which apparently had been claimed by Galba (and Vindex) as marking a break from Neronian tyranny; this was opposed by members of the praetorian guard, who attempted to retain their political influence, having had a taste of power in their discussions with Nymphidius and during Otho's installation; the people, by and large, appear to have preferred a return to Neronian munificence and show, and in Tacitus' presentation are portrayed as fickle (e.g. *Hist.* 1.32), having little interest in political developments, and can be seen abandoning him (*Hist.* 1.41).

Roche has outlined the tensions that were created by Otho's attempt to placate different sections of Roman society.[314] A key part of Otho's problem was that there was not enough time for him to develop a position of compromise with these groups, owing to the fact that Vitellius' troops were approaching Rome. Had the situation from Vindex's revolt not developed in this way, he may well have managed to retain power for a much longer period. The ominous nature of the approaching army, as with the Vespasianic troops approaching Vitellius in Rome later on, is another factor which played a part in destabilising the leadership of Otho and Vitellius

[314] Roche (2008).

respectively, and which prevented them from articulating visions of the future that extended beyond simply the defeat of their enemies.

Moreover, as with so many coups and assassinations in Rome and elsewhere, the planning of the moment of assassination itself had been arranged with a reasonable amount of attention to detail, whereas the transition and consolidation of power in the longer term had not received a similar amount of thought.[315] Part of this was owing to the necessarily secretive nature of conspiracies (noted in Chapter 3), seen in the demise of Caesar and Caligula, whereas the 'reconstruction' or 'reorientation' of government in its aftermath depended upon the acceptance of the situation by a much larger array of individuals and groups. Otho's situation was worse even than these precedents, in that it appears to have been an opportunistic coup, rather than a carefully planned attempt with the cooperation of a range of individuals.

Otho was to a large extent restricted in his ability to make plans for the future by the circumstances of his accession and external pressures, perhaps more so than any other *princeps* in this period. This was not simply the aforementioned threat of war with Vitellius, but also the flooding of the Tiber, which caused famine in Rome once grain supplies were destroyed in March of 69.[316] His role in removing Galba caused him to be indebted to the Praetorians; the discontinuity with Galba's rule and continuing enthusiasm for Nero meant that capitalising on the memory of the last Julio-Claudian was a way of winning much needed popular support among the lower classes, and as we have noted, this led to his acceptance of the title of *Nero*, and subsequently a more 'Neronian' approach to the role of *princeps*, with an emphasis upon munificence; at the same time his lack of widespread support among the elite encouraged him

[315] Pagán (2012).
[316] Tac. *Hist.* 1.86; Plut. *Otho* 4; Suet. *Otho* 8.

to act in as 'constitutional' a manner as was possible in the senate, without offending the other political players in Rome (most notably, the Praetorians).

Yet there are some indications of a plan for a longer-term 'Othonian future', and perhaps one of the most striking is Suetonius' note that he planned to continue the construction of Nero's *Domus Aurea*.[317] This was a huge sum of money for a *princeps* in a precarious position, yet it was nevertheless the first grant that Otho had signed, marking it out as perhaps one of the closest things to a programmatic statement which he made, and which accords with his Neronian posturing more generally (though from a financial perspective, it is likely that at this point the dual threats of certain war with Vitellius, and the Tiber flood, had not yet occurred). Despite the tyrannical aspects of Nero's reputation which were emphasised by Galba, the other side of the coin was his popularity among the people. In accord with this, Champlin has proposed a compelling, more 'positive' reading of the *Domus Aurea,* suggesting, I would argue convincingly, that alongside its function as a palace, it symbolised the empire in microcosm, and was designed to be enjoyed more widely by the residents of the city as a 'villa of the people'.[318] Combined with his active participation in senatorial meetings, these elements suggest that if Otho did have plans beyond merely surviving in the short term, they involved a compromise position which might have been designed to evoke the early (or at least 'good') years of Nero.[319] In this sense, Otho's plans could be thought of as an attempt to graft his own principate onto the end of Nero's rule in a fairly straightforward fashion, through imitation.

[317] Suet. *Otho* 7.1.
[318] Champlin (2003), 209.
[319] On the problem of identifying the *Quinquennium Neronis*, see Levick (1983); Griffin (1984), 84.

Vitellius and the consulship for life

The key problem for Vitellius was a similar situation to that which Otho had faced, with military plans already being afoot when he assumed power in Rome. The (formerly Othonian) Vespasianic army under Antonius Primus had sprung into action to avenge the Othonian forces – having arrived too late to participate in the struggle between Otho and Vitellius, and now hoping for a chance to earn a reward – and this resulted in a faster response from Vespasian himself, and his commander Mucianus.[320] The fact that there was no adequate way for Vitellius to reintegrate these forces without paying them is indicative of the wider problem discussed above, and moreover, his decision to execute the leading centurions from the Danube legions cannot have helped his cause on that front.[321] On the other hand, contrary to the thesis that it was these Othonian-Flavian troops who set things in motion against Vitellius, it seems clear that Vespasian himself had been discussing the merits of some sort of coup from the moment news of Nero's death arrived – it was beneficial for him to support Otho in the short term, but Tacitus reports discussions about the installation of Vespasian among his milieu at least as early as March of 69.[322] Chilver, for example, attributes the responsibility for the war between Vitellian and Flavian forces to a long term plan by Vespasian and his advisors, rather than to a spontaneous declaration by his troops, which seems likely when the chronology is examined more closely (including Vespasian's pause in his waging of the Jewish war, and the approach of Titus to Rome and his subsequent withdrawal), and once the dominant theme of mutinous troops which pervades the ancient sources is given due attention.[323] In fact, this theme actually played a part in justifying Vespasian's rule, for in his case, the troops who had declared

[320] Tac. *Hist.* 3.1-3; Suet. *Vesp*. 6.
[321] Tac. *Hist.* 2.60, 2.85-6; cf. Levick (1999), 57, who downplays the significance of Tacitus' comment regarding the execution of these Othonian centurions, attributing it to rivalries between different regional units.
[322] Tac. *Hist.* 2.1-5, 2.74, 2.79.
[323] Chilver (1957), 34-5.

themselves as his adherents, and had precipitated his decision to advance, took the pressure off his own scheming.

The accounts of Vitellius' principate, particularly that of Suetonius, but also that of Tacitus, show signs of the aforementioned Flavian historiography that sought to denigrate Vespasian's immediate predecessor more than anyone else.[324] Suetonius' account of Vitellius' life, following Otho's demise (*Vit.* 10), moves quite rapidly, and pays particular attention to his vices. It begins with his destructive and reckless approach to the city of Rome (*Vit.* 10), moves on to his arrival in the city with troops under arms, the consolidation of his power through violence (with equal weight given by the author to his extravagance and luxury), and his cruel methods of raising revenue (*Vit.* 11-14), before the emergence of the Vespasianic threat (*Vit.* 15-16) and his eventual demise (17-18). This denigration leads to a compressed and primarily negative account of his rule which minimises any plans which Vitellius may have had concerning the future. Though providing more information, Tacitus also limits his discussion of civic developments in favour of military ones in the period in which Vitellius ruled, and focuses upon his cruelty towards the defeated, and especially his anxiety concerning the ominous Flavian threat. There is very little sense of the nature of his government and his plans for the future, aside from these issues.[325] In fact, Tacitus describes Vitellius as *improvidus* at one point, a quality certainly not desired in a *princeps*.[326] This is despite hints that Vitellius was evidently eager, at the very least, to participate in senatorial discussions.[327] When they are depicted, such as his decisions concerning the allies and provinces, he is portrayed as being

[324] Cf. Ferrill (1965), 268, who notes: 'no unqualified favourable comment can be found about him in the works of Tacitus and Suetonius'.
[325] With the exception of decisions concerning Vitellius' liberality towards Italian allies and provincials (Tac. *Hist.* 3.55), and those of lesser significance, such as his expulsion of astrologers (perhaps also a sign of anxiety concerning *omina imperii*), and ban on the participation of *equites* in gladiatorial combat (*Hist.* 2.62; cf. Dio 64.1.4, 64.6.3); Tacitus' depiction of Vitellius' rule, with its Flavian spin, can be seen at *Hist.* 2.67.
[326] Tac. *Hist.* 3.56.
[327] Tac. *Hist.* 2.91.

careless with respect to the future (*denique nulla in posterum cura lacerare imperium*).[328] Dio's account still retains the main themes of Vitellian vices, particularly his 'Neronian' style banqueting, but presents a section on his virtues as well, including his decisions to permit the coinage minted by previous emperors to circulate, to allow their gifts to various people to be retained, and not to confiscate the property of his enemies nor put many to death.[329] Yet none of Dio's points, aside from the apparent emphasis placed upon his young son, relate to Vitellius' plans for the future. These are examples of a wider historiographical problem, that Vitellius was shaped into being the primary Flavian foil, which limits our understanding of his principate perhaps more than that of any other *princeps* of this period, despite it lasting for eight months. His neglect for the future in this paradigm becomes a negative topos for a *princeps* unfit to rule – the best *principes* allegedly possessing qualities such as *pronoia*/*providentia*.

Notwithstanding the limitations Flavian historiography has imposed upon our understanding of Vitellius' principate, one of the most interesting aspects, when considering his conception of the future, is the fact that he had himself made consul for life (Suet. *Vit.* 11). Developments earlier on under Caesar, with his monopoly of the consulship in the 40s BCE and increasing use of the dictatorship (e.g. for ten years from 46, and in perpetuity from early 44), had created anxiety among the senatorial class when considering the longer term ramifications of these actions for their aspirations and the future of the elite, and were some of the main sources of their discontent. A number of important elements in the *res publica* had naturally shifted dramatically in the time since, as had the nature of the *cursus honorum*, owing to the emergence of the exceptional position of the *princeps* and his household; one or both of the consulships

[328] Tac. *Hist.* 3.55.
[329] Dio 64.6.1-3.

were often filled by members of the imperial family if not the *princeps* himself, though the use of *suffecti*, and especially the dislocation of an assortment of powers from annual magistracies and their attachment to the *princeps*, had provided Augustus with a pressure valve of sorts. Yet the prospect of Vitellius holding this office in perpetuity could be understood as a potentially threatening innovation, considering its projection of such a long term 'future', alongside Vitellius' decision to appoint Valens and Caecina to consulships by shortening those of others, and to designate consuls for many years into the future.[330] Levick suggests that Vitellius may have intended to resign the office on a yearly basis, but there is no way of determining whether this was to be the case.[331]

While his plan in this respect appears ominous, particularly in the Suetonian context of his arrival in Rome with a hostile army (Tacitus, for example claims that Vitellius changed into a toga before entering the city with his troops so as not to appear as if he were capturing Rome, while Suetonius states he wore a general's cloak and sword), what is interesting is that it may reflect an expressed reluctance on the part of Vitellius to take on the greater powers which were widely assumed to belong to a *princeps* by this time.[332] This can be seen in his deferral of the titles of *Augustus* and *Caesar* in his message sent to Rome ahead of his arrival, even though he was later to accept (allegedly under compulsion) the titles of *Augustus*, *pater patriae*, and *pontifex maximus*, and granted that of *Augusta* to his mother.[333] Vitellius was plainly testing the waters. Further evidence is found in the brief statement by Tacitus that prior to the consular elections he was canvassing alongside his candidates as though an ordinary citizen.[334] This may then point us back to the more 'Republican' rhetoric which had developed in the initial stages

[330] Tac. *Hist.* 2.71, 3.55.
[331] Levick (1999), 92.
[332] Tac. *Hist.* 2.89; Suet. *Vit.* 11.
[333] Tac. *Hist.* 2.62, 2.89-91; Dio 64.1.2 reports that he had earlier named his son as *Germanicus* and *imperator* after hearing of Otho's death.
[334] Tac. *Hist.* 2.91.

of the civil wars, since a consulship, in and of itself, was still within the realm of possibility for an ordinary senator. From Galba through to Vitellius, there had been some reluctance to assume various imperial titles, such as *Augustus* and *Caesar*, demonstrating an awareness on the part of these emperors that there was a discontinuity with the aforementioned Julio-Claudian dynasty. The situation required the gradual articulation of an office of *princeps* over time with senatorial and popular support, which became easier as precedents were established and sufficient distance was placed between each emperor and the purportedly anti-tyrannical language which had been used at the beginning of the conflict by Vindex. By the time of the *lex de imperio Vespasiani*, assuming the powers which the Julio-Claudians had possessed, despite one's ancestry, had become a simpler task.

Vespasian's Future: Tradition and Innovation

While many of the developments already discussed – involving delays in communication, and simultaneous developments in different provinces – had long term ramifications for the succession of *principes* in 68-70, and rendered many plans made or implicitly held by various factions impossible or impractical, there were still decisions made by each emperor which, to some extent, stood outside of the 'chain reactions' which created the instability and military chaos already discussed. Each *princeps* made choices concerning the type of government he would adopt, and the amount of planning for the future he would undertake.

Vespasian himself, on the other hand, did not face the same sorts of problems as the three *principes* who preceded him. The intertwined situation created by Vindex, Galba, and the German troops had largely unravelled by the time his main forces approached Rome, and the energy and opportunism of the legions in the provinces, and the Praetorians in Rome, had been tempered by their recent experiences of conflict in the intervening period. Alongside this, his

position was strengthened by the aforementioned planning he had undertaken for quite some time, as well as the strategic advantage that holding Egypt provided him over the city of Rome itself. Vespasian's troops, owing to the campaigns which they had undertaken with him in the East, had developed a loyalty to their commander which was essentially unmatched by the loyalty which earlier challengers had commanded.[335] Vespasian's problems were therefore more civic than military, following the death of Vitellius, and his task was to attempt to weave these ideological threads back together in a manner which consolidated his own position, and that of his family, at the head of the *res publica*. Moreover, he could attempt to rewrite the history of his predecessors and rivals in order to show that they had no equivalent vision for Rome, thereby portraying the Flavian dynasty in a more positive light.

Although the conflict had largely expended itself by the time Vespasian assumed power, the process of reconciling the different factions as a part of his consolidation of power was nevertheless a difficult one, and all the more so as he was a *novus homo* who lacked the authority that senators from more distinguished families might command.[336] However, there was one great advantage over the preceding *principes*, or other contenders, which Vespasian possessed: adult sons who were gaining experience in military affairs and who could assume the role of successors without too much trouble.[337] That this was an ongoing cause of concern throughout this period can be seen most clearly in the case of Galba and Piso – if success won in battle was to be secured, it required not only a process in which the new *princeps* was grafted onto the 'Julio-Claudian model' (or the articulation of a new vision of the principate which sought to minimise the exceptional nature of the successors of Augustus while maintaining the

[335] Tac. *Hist.* 2.78; Levick (1999), 58.
[336] cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 7.2, *Auctoritas et quasi maiestas quaedam ut scilicet inopinato et adhuc novo principi deerat; haec quoque accessit*.
[337] Waters (1963), 208.

substance of their power), but also the projection of some form of continuity of this authority into the future.

One area in which this can be seen is in the portents associated with Vespasian's rise, which demonstrate the way in which he or his supporters sought to create associations with the Julio-Claudian dynasty in a divinatory context. Tree portents containing a dynastic message are particularly significant for our purposes, since they not only portended his victory in the civil wars, but looked forward to the continuation of the Flavian line. Unlike other types of natural phenomena, trees were especially suitable for conveying dynastic messages since they usually existed for a longer period than a human lifespan, and could be 'updated' over time to account for subsequent generations. Suetonius' *Augustus* contains earlier examples which bear notable similarities to the stories concerning Vespasian. He notes that a withering oak tree regained its strength at Octavian's arrival on Capri, which delighted him to the extent that he obtained the island from Naples in exchange for Ischia/Aenaria; in the same passage he records that a palm tree sprang up in the pavement outside Augustus' house, which Augustus transplanted to his inner courtyard and cultivated beside the Penates.[338] Furthermore he provides an account of a palm tree which produced a dynastic omen, cultivated by Julius Caesar at the battle of Munda in 45 BCE.[339] A shoot from this palm resembled a tree in itself (much like a branch of Vespasian's oak, as we shall see) and this apparently led Caesar to adopt Octavian, who founded his own dynasty. These sorts of stories, and the Gallina Alba portent noted above, likely provided precedents for the tale of Vespasian's oak tree, preserved by Suetonius. During the conflict between Otho and Vitellius, Vespasian supposedly recalled a portent in which an oak tree on the Flavian estate, sacred to Mars, sprouted a branch each time Vespasia gave birth to

[338] Suet. *Aug.* 92.1-2. Cf Livy 43.13.5.
[339] Suet. *Aug.* 94.11.

a child, signifying their respective destinies.[340] The first was slender and soon withered, a daughter who died within a year; the second was very strong and long and foretold great success, but the third resembled a tree itself. Sabinus their father confirmed the portent by inspecting sacrificial victims, and announced to Vespasian's grandmother that a grandson had been born who would be a Caesar, but she merely laughed at him for proposing such a thing.

There are two angles from which we can approach the growth of this story, which may in fact be two sides of the same coin: Vespasian's desire for such a tale to be circulated, and/or as a locus for expectations which had been established by the various Republican and Julio-Claudian precedents, if we focus on a potential audience in Rome. The fact that the tree was sacred to Mars possibly relates to the martial context through which Vespasian obtained the supreme power. Another important element is the scepticism of Vespasia, which adds an air of authenticity to the portent, in that its veracity and full importance was not revealed until after he had succeeded Vitellius as *princeps*, with Titus and Domitian in tow. In the case of this oak tree, the 'dynastic' element appears to have been contained within the original story (unlike the story of the Flavian cypress, discussed below) perhaps as a consequence of the presence of Vespasian's sons at the point of his accession. Unlike both the Gallina Alba portent and Vespasian's cypress, the story of the oak is only recorded by Suetonius, which may point to it being less widely known by contemporaries.

The rival tale of Vespasian's cypress tree is an indication that an association between trees and dynasties, and thus speculation about the future of Rome, was perhaps more popular than usual in this period. This example was no doubt also influenced by Republican precedents of trees that, having fallen over, either stand up again or produce shoots when apparently dead, which

[340] Suet. *Vesp.* 5.1-2.

Pliny informs us were considered to be good omens by those who witnessed them.[341] Another important symbolic connection which may have linked the life and fortunes of a man to that of a cypress was the more general association between cypresses and funerary contexts in Rome.[342] The cypress tree on his grandfather's farm was torn up by the roots and overturned, despite there not being a storm, but on the following day rose again greener and stronger than before.[343] There are other parallel accounts of the cypress, with variations, in both Tacitus,[344] and Dio.[345] In Suetonius' version, this cypress is not merely a straightforward omen of empire, as it is in the other accounts, but reappears in his life of Domitian, accompanying the latter's demise by falling down once more.[346] The fact that the narrative has these two 'stages' relating to two *principes* means that it is also 'dynastic', though in a different way from the aforementioned oak. In this instance we can observe a narrative which began its life as one of a number of omens portending Vespasian's future rule, rather like Livia's hen and laurel sprig, before being reinterpreted at a later date (after it was of any use to the Flavians), to make sense of the end of another dynasty and the transition that was occurring. Both of these stories indicate the parallels that were drawn between the emerging Flavian dynasty and the earlier Julio-Claudians, and both point to the importance of possessing sons who could map out the future through succession, creating a sense of stability.

Following his military victory there were two essential movements that Vespasian and his allies evidently thought he ought to make. These were, first, the elevation of his own status, and his attachment to the Julio-Claudians through various symbolic and legal means, while managing

[341] Pliny *NH* 16.57.
[342] See Connors (1992), 1-2; Serv. *Aen.* 6.216; Pliny *HN* 16.139; Ash (1999), 131-2, suggests that Tacitus focussed on the cypress omen with its funerary connotations to prefigure the eventual fall of the Flavian dynasty at the moment of its inception.
[343] Suet. *Vesp.* 5.4.
[344] Tac. *Hist.* 2.78; Morgan (1996).
[345] Dio 65.1.2-3. Hunt (2016), 210-12.
[346] Suet. *Dom.* 15.2.

to distance himself from the tyranny of Nero, and secondly, ensuring the security of his vision for the future, which was perhaps somewhat predictably, the formation of a dynasty through the promotion of his sons. These two objectives can be seen playing out in a variety of ways.

Contrary to the aforementioned continuation of Neronian policies under Vitellius, and before him under Otho, Vespasian courted popular opinion in a different fashion by capitalising on his different background, as a 'man of the people'. For example, the *Domus Aurea* was to be replaced with the Flavian Amphitheatre (begun in 72, but finished under Titus in 80), which removed any ambiguity concerning the 'public' nature of the site; it was also a way in which to create a sharp contrast between Vespasian and his predecessor, Vitellius. Moreover, the Flavian Amphitheatre, it was claimed (at some point prior to Suetonius' account), was a project planned by Augustus himself. Thus, both the rejection of the 'Neronian', and later 'Vitellian' palaces, and the reassertion of the original 'Augustan' plan, was made even clearer (Suet. *Vesp.* 9.2).[347] At the same time, the Theatre of Marcellus was restored by Vespasian in an attempt to associate himself with Augustus, and perhaps to emphasise the dynastic associations which had been built up in that quarter of Rome. These associations were further strengthened by his restoration of numerous other damaged or dilapidated buildings, including, most famously, the rebuilding of the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol (Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5, Tac. *Hist.* 4.4, 4.53), originally suggested by Helvidius Priscus (Tac. *Hist.* 4.9) who intended it to be a senatorial task with help from Vespasian, prior to the latter's arrival. The attempt to recover copies of the records on bronze tablets, destroyed along with the temple, can be seen as part of his wider plan to be seen to be acting 'constitutionally', or in accordance with tradition. Equally famous was the *Templum Pacis*, with its emphasis on the fruits of military victory – even if *pax* does not, as many scholars suggest, include the idea of civil concord often attributed to it by moderns

[347] Levick (1999), 73.

so much as indicate pacification, and was designed to draw attention primarily to the victory in the Jewish War, it nevertheless had implications for the domestic political situation in Rome. In the same way that *Aegypta capta* was one of Augustus' main ideological distractions from the fact that Romans were killing each other, so too Vespasian's *Iudaea capta* (*RIC* II.1 2nd ed. - Vesp. 51, 81, 134, 159-69, 233-6, 271, 303); in the same way that the *Ara Pacis* was built purportedly in response to Augustus' return from his Spanish campaign, so too was Vespasian's *Templum Pacis* a response to foreign conquest in Judaea. The re-foundation of Rome after civil conflict, and refocusing on the foreign enemy, was a key element in Augustan ideology, and now provided Vespasian with a way to solidify his rule and tie himself to the 'best' of the Julio-Claudians – this ideological platform can also be seen in the selection of precedents in the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani*, discussed below. Yet it was not only Augustus who received imitation and veneration, but also Claudius, whose temple, begun by Agrippina but ignored and altered by Nero, was completed.

In addition to the circulation of omens which purportedly related to the Flavian dynasty continuing into the future, the decision to apply the title *Principes Iuventutis* to Titus and Domitian, which features on coinage at least from 71, if not earlier (e.g. *RIC* II.1 2nd ed. - Vesp. 54, 1377-8), is another obvious parallel with the succession plans made by Augustus with his adoptive sons Gaius and Lucius Caesar. In addition to this, it is very significant that the title of *Caesar* became detached from the *gens* itself, and took on the role of designating a successor – both titles appear on Flavian coinage together (e.g. the aforementioned coin in *RIC*, Vesp. 54, features the legend: T. ET DOM. CAESARES PRINC. IVVEN. S.C.). Thus even as Vespasian and his adherents made use of Augustan precedent in carving out public roles for his sons, he simultaneously altered the use of the earlier dynasty's family name. It is possible that the fact that Vespasian was absent from Rome or the battlefield at the moment of his

victory, whereas Domitian was present, may have influenced the decision to apply the title of *Caesar* to successors – rather than to the *princeps* himself. Tacitus reports that Domitian was addressed as *Caesar* by the supporters of Vespasian after Vitellius had been killed, suggesting it was pressed upon him.[348] Domitian also receives the title of *Princeps Iuventutis* on coinage alongside the personification of *Spes* on coinage from AD 75-78 (e.g. *RIC* II.1 2nd ed. - Vesp. 787-8, 917, 1489, 1519), which reinforces the cultivated association between the cult of *Spes* and successors, seen in Chapter 2.[349] In fact, *Spes* as a goddess or divine quality was used throughout Vespasian's principate to draw attention to the fact that the future had been secured, and was to be free from civil war, owing to the victory of Vespasian and the existence of these successors. The Flavian dynastic ideology also expanded with time, and the use of terms such as *libertas* faded not long after 71, as the significance of Galba and Vindex's opposition to Nero also dwindled. Vespasian's model, as Levick rightly notes, was closer to a 'Claudian' principate than an 'Augustan' one, and *libertas* could still be a difficult concept.[350]

Aside from these more symbolic honours, or ideological statements, another way of promoting successors was through what was by now the traditional Julio-Claudian method of elevating them above all others through the holding of high office – an elevation emphasised through the holding of office at a younger age than was typical, and multiple times. Waters has also noted that it was a way for Vespasian to add dignity to his household, which was formerly of equestrian status.[351] This is interesting for the reason that it demonstrates Vespasian's commitment to the ostensibly 'meritocratic' element contained within Augustan ideology – the *princeps* needed to possess greater *auctoritas* on account of his virtues, which were worthy of imitation, and experience in civil and military posts was proof of these virtues. This can be

[348] Tac. *Hist.* 3.86, 4.2.
[349] Waters (1963), 215.
[350] Levick (1999), 73.
[351] Much like that of Augustus himself (Suet, *Aug*. 1), a useful precedent. Waters (1963), 215.

seen in the joint consulships, censorships, and so on, held by the two sons with Vespasian. Titus held his first alongside Vespasian's second, at the beginning of AD 70.[352] Domitian was also given the role of urban praetor after the resignation of Iulius Frontinus.[353] As Wellesley and Waters have noted, the total number of consulships held by the three by the end of Vespasian's principate was eight for Vespasian, seven for Titus, and five for Domitian; a monopoly which caused some problems for the senatorial class, as it had with Vitellius.[354]

Aside from appeals to the memory of Galba as a figure who had also helped to remove a tyrant to bring about good government (suggested by Flavian appeals to *libertas*, e.g. *RIC* II.1 2nd ed. - Vesp. 52, 63, 82-9, 137, 141, 170-4, 237, 272, 309, in Domitian's proposal to restore the laws adopted under Galba, or Antonius Primus' restoration of Galba's portraits), he was largely ignored after 71. One of the most revealing aspects of the use of Galba at this time was the suggestion by Curtius Montanus that his adoptive successor Piso should be honoured, which was agreed upon at the time but then overlooked (deliberately or otherwise). Levick suggests that this might have been to avoid encouraging the surviving Pisones.[355] If this is the case, then it seems clear that Vespasian, and his supporters in the senate, were eager to shut off that particular Pisonian image of the future. Galba (and his own plans for the future) was a useful tool when the circumstances demanded it, but he was not a fundamental element in Vespasian's ideology, and could be dropped in a way in which the Julio-Claudians could not, owing to the richness and malleability of their iconography, building programmes, political slogans, and other cultural traditions and phenomena.

The *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* as a Blueprint for the Future

[352] Tac. *Hist.* 4.38.
[353] Tac. *Hist.* 4.39.
[354] Wellesley (1975), 209.
[355] Levick (1999), 73.

One of the most interesting documents when considering Vespasian's negotiation with, and use of, the past, in his attempt to construct a conception of the future out of the remnants of the 'Julio-Claudian model' as well as the various overlapping ideological platforms of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, is the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* (*CIL* VI 930). The bronze inscription which has survived indicates it was either a *lex* or a *senatus consultum*, or some combination of the two, which outlined the powers that were voted to Vespasian probably early in 70 CE. Many details concerning the law are unclear – for example, the full range of powers granted to Vespasian (and how these relate to his *imperium* and *tribunicia potestas*), and whether the law was to apply only to Vespasian himself or to all of his future successors – which is primarily a consequence of the beginning of the document having been lost. The extent to which the ideas of Vespasian himself informed the contents of the law is difficult to establish, but one must assume that his agents and proxies in Rome had some idea of the arrangement he wished to have set up in advance of his arrival in Rome.[356]

A large amount of scholarship has addressed this inscription, particularly concerning the development of Roman law and the relationship between senate and *princeps*.[357] The purpose of this section is to examine how this piece of legislation played a role in articulating the sort of idealised 'future' which was desired by Vespasian (presumably) and the senate. Perhaps the most interesting element, for our purposes, is the selective history of the Julio-Claudians which serves as a precedent for the nature and limits of Vespasian's power. While the text is incomplete, in the sections that remain, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius are not mentioned, which lends support to the idea that even though Vespasian was to some extent presented as an avenger of Otho or Galba, in his own propaganda and in his representation by other allied

[356] Tac. *Hist.* 4.3, 4.6, presents the initiative coming from among the senators as a group, though there was no doubt some discussion among the Flavians, including Domitian, Mucianus, and Primus.
[357] For example, Hellems (1902); Brunt (1977); Levick (1999), 86; and especially Colognesi and Scandone (eds.) (2009).

groups (depending on which particular pieces of evidence are emphasised), he did not consider their principates to be important enough to provide a precedent for his own in a legal context. This may in part have stemmed from the inherent instability of their political situations, alongside the fact that any unnecessary emphasis on the factional divisions that remained from the period of civil war which had just concluded was bound to cause Vespasian further trouble during the process of consolidating his authority. This point has been raised by Ferrill, who suggests that after a period of emphasising his role as an avenger of Galba, in which he denigrated Vitellius, first and foremost, and to a lesser extent Otho, Vespasian and his allies shifted the focus of their propaganda or ideology, and sought to distance themselves from the conflict altogether by denigrating Nero himself.[358] This was a wise move considering the large numbers of veterans from all sides who had survived the various campaigns, and marks a contrast with the respective approaches to the consolidation of power which Otho and Vitellius adopted.

Not only is the absence of the other *principes* of 68-9 notable, but so too is the omission of the more 'tyrannical' Julio-Claudian *principes* in the inscription, which seems to suggest that Vespasian and the Flavian senate were attempting to create an image of the *princeps* which differed significantly from that of Nero. A selective history of the Julio-Claudians has already been seen in the appeals made to the precedent of Augustus and Germanicus, instead of Caligula, when attempting to install Claudius (in Chapter 3). Despite Nero's ongoing popularity in certain sectors of Roman society, discussed above, and his use as an *exemplum* or inspiration by Otho and Vitellius in particular, he was very unpopular with certain groups in the upper orders, whose support was necessary if a compromise acceptable to most was to be reached. This process of negotiation between the senate and *princeps* bears some similarities

[358] Ferrill (1965).

to that undertaken by Augustus following his victory at Actium, or to Claudius' consolidation of his power. There is a similar attempt to define the extent of the power of the *princeps*, and (at the very least implicitly) the aspects of government that would be left to the senatorial order.

In the text which survives there are four uses of Augustus as a precedent, four references to Tiberius, and five to Claudius. All are mentioned together, as a set of three (in clauses 1, 2, 6, 7), concerning the power of the *princeps* in relation to the creation of treaties; calling the senate to meetings, and the proposal of laws, referral of matters, and proposition of decrees to that body, as well as the ability to call a vote by division; ensuring the *maiestas* of the *res publica* was upheld in human and divine affairs by whatever means the *princeps* thought suitable (a very wide-ranging power); and being exempt from whatever laws or plebicites these three *principes* had also been exempt. The exception, the fifth clause, which accounts for the extra reference to Claudius, concerns the right to extend the *pomerium*, which was a decision unique to Claudius in the early principate – the attribution of an extension of the pomerium to Augustus, which has little support, must have occurred in a literary tradition at some point between Claudius and Tacitus.[359] The extension of the pomerium, at least after Claudius, was connected to the idea of an expansion of Roman territory overall, thus implying that Vespasian was capable of carrying this out (for example, in his Eastern campaigns); and he and Titus did in fact extend the *pomerium* in 75, demonstrated by the discovery of *cippi*.[360] Alongside the emphasis on foreign (rather than civil) military victory, was the association with the 're-foundation' of the city of Rome itself, another important aspect of Flavian ideology which was necessary after a period of civil strife – seen, for example, in the rebuilding of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, also dedicated in 75. For our purposes it is interesting that Vespasian had

[359] On the idea of an Augustan extension of the *pomerium*, and the significance of such an act more generally, cf. Boatwright (1986).
[360] *CIL* VI 31538 a-c.

the clause concerning the *pomerium* included, since it may indicate he had planned to emphasise these two ideological elements of foreign conquest and re-foundation, *urbs* and *orbis*, years before they were brought to fruition.

In addition to the legal reality of these powers and their role in Vespasian's ability to create the kind of future he wished to see, there is the important fact that the law itself, and the process of negotiation with the senate (or at the very least, the senatorial approval implied by it), suggested a 'return' to proper legal processes after a period of chaos and violence – including the looting by Flavian troops in Rome in late December of 69 (Tac. *Hist.* 4.1). This theme accords well with the emphasis Vespasian placed on peace in other areas, such as in the construction of the *templum Pacis*. This is despite the fact that the *lex* itself extended and codified the powers of the *princeps* in very significant ways, so much so that Levick has questioned the concept of a 'negotiation' with the senate altogether.[361] Yet the image of senatorial approval conferred by this document is perhaps as important to acknowledge, no matter how heavy-handed Vespasian's treatment of that body actually was. Although we do not have an explicit indication of the intended audience for the *lex*, the Roman elite was clearly one of the intended recipients. If the document was deployed in a similar manner to that of the *SCPP* of 20 CE, which was set up in the barracks of the legions across the empire (among other places), then perhaps copies of this law were also sent to significant provincial centres of Roman power, where it might be designed to convey the senatorial support which existed for Vespasian, and the legal basis of his power, in an attempt to quell further civil and military unrest.

[361] Levick (1999), 86.

Intertwined with this idea of a return to legality and civic-minded government is the image which the Flavians sought to craft of Vespasian being a type of 'successor' to the 'good' Julio-Claudian emperors. As we have noted, the omission of certain *principes* in the *lex* implied their denigration, and questioned the legitimacy of their rule, but the other side of the coin was that this created a selective historical narrative in which the commendable *principes* who were included formed a narrative of good government in Rome – a narrative to which Vespasian appended himself. There is a tension apparent in this process, in that there is a sense in which Vespasian 'becomes' a Julio-Claudian through the law; yet, at the same time, the fact that he is attached to these precedents and has his position more clearly articulated, despite his ancestry, creates a more abstract 'office' of the *princeps*. To frame this another way, it takes the aforementioned 'Julio-Claudian exceptionalism' out of the equation, when attempting to trace the outlines of a 'system' in what was essentially a loose collection of symbolic/religious/legal powers and honours that had been gathered around a particular aristocratic Roman family.[362] Ultimately the *lex* provided a 'blueprint' for the future of Flavian Rome, and expressed the stability and accountability that formed a central part of Vespasian's articulation of the future of his principate.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined the different ways in which those who attempted to take on the role of *princeps*, and their supporters, tried to secure their rule through the articulation of particular ideas of what the future might look like, based upon the cultural memory of earlier periods – from evoking a return to some vague form of government by the senate and people through the use of slogans, to a return to a *princeps*-led government on the model of Augustus

[362] Simpson (2005), notes that the use of a signet ring or 'imperial seal' as a symbol of the authority of the *princeps* is first attested under Vespasian, and probably dates to this period, when the role of the *princeps* was being articulated as part of a system.

or Claudius, to a continuation of a Neronian-style future, building upon his popularity. The brevity of the reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius led to an interesting overlapping of cultural reference points, as each sought to define a future in opposition to their immediate predecessors or enemies. The importance of charismatic leadership is evident once more in this crisis, as it has been in the earlier crises examined. The interplay between these different perspectives on the future shows the way in which the culture and government of Rome could be shaped in significant ways by competing hopes and fears.

Ultimately Vespasian was successful in selling his vision of the future to Rome. He spliced together elements from the two branches of authority discussed at the beginning of this chapter, traditions found earlier in the Republic and in Julio-Claudian exceptionalism, forging a new hybrid form of government. The rise of the Flavians represents the culmination of many of the themes examined throughout this thesis: we have traced how conceptions of Rome's future were initially tied to the fate of prominent individuals, and then specifically to (often younger) members of the Julio-Claudian family, before moving on to examine how the end(s) of that dynasty created a crisis in government, and finally, how one might attempt to articulate a new vision of the future and make it acceptable to a population that had been exposed to variations of this ideology for over a hundred years. Vespasian's answer was to borrow the best bits of it, fashioning a future that positioned himself as a defender of stable and orderly government, much like Octavian himself towards the end of the previous civil war. It made him a part of this Julio-Claudian exceptionalism, while simultaneously establishing his own family as a *new* exceptional family, whose rule could extend into the future.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined a selection of ways in which Roman political actors (be they senators, *equites*, troops, *plebs* or others) conceived of the political future of Rome, in a series of crises from the Ides of March 44 BCE to the establishment of the Flavian dynasty, and the way in which contemporary and later authors represented the views of those figures in historical narratives.

It has demonstrated that there was a great deal of uniformity in the political language used in these crises, first, by those who sought to promote and maintain the Julio-Claudian family's exceptional position attained after the civil wars; secondly, those who sought to restore the consular government that had existed prior to the supremacy of Julius Caesar ('Republicans'); and thirdly, those who sought some form of compromise, perhaps in the form of a more virtuous *princeps*, or the devolution of some authority to the senate, as 'the Principate' developed from an *ad hoc* bundle of powers into a 'system' of government. There was often a strong moralising element in this political discourse, and it centred on the virtues and vices of those involved in the crises. In many cases these individuals came to embody competing images of the future in their own right, as in the case of the successors to Augustus or the rival contenders in 68-9 CE. In other cases, slogans such as *libertas* could encapsulate idealised images of the future in a synecdochic manner, and acted as rallying points for political action.

Owing to the prominent conservative or traditionalist streak in Roman political thought, the major visions of a preferred future were often, and to some extent necessarily, based upon the hope of returning to an idealised period in Rome's history. The historical period idealised

varied depending upon the nature of the crisis and the position of the individual entertaining an image of the future, but commonly involved the Republic at some time before the civil wars of the 40s and 30s BC, or for those writing later in the Principate, the rule of the first *princeps*, Augustus. The period of 'history' which formed a model could even be an earlier idealised future, such as the hope placed in the prospective but untested, and never realised *princeps* Germanicus, which was later transferred to Caligula and Claudius respectively at their accessions, in a kind of *mise en abyme*.

As has been shown, these hopes for a better future were frequently contrasted with fears of some other outcome; the two were often presented as a dichotomy, with a third option unavailable. Such dichotomies, when delivered in a speech or composed as part of an historical narrative, served the purpose of spurring on an audience to think or act in a particular way, in accordance with the direction desired by the orator or author who constructed these forks in the road. A future to be feared could be the protraction of an existing negative scenario in which the audience in question would continue to suffer or live in danger, such as civil war or life under a tyrannical *princeps*, or it could be a part of a larger teleology of progress or decline, this latter phenomenon being found more often in historiography.

This study has also shown that the inevitability, fatalism, and uniformity of opinion concerning the future built into some modern accounts of the period from the Ides to the Flavian dynasty is misguided, since there was a range of different perspectives that might have been just as successful. This alerts us to the important fact that extant ancient accounts of crises often have such fatalism built into them for very particular contemporary 'propagandistic' or 'ideological' reasons, and often to secure the status quo against threatening alternatives. 'Past futures' could still prove to be powerful ammunition when taking aim at official history, as Cremutius Cordus,

among others, discovered. Thus the extant historiography of this period is to a large degree shaped by the tensions between different conceptions of the future, both contemporary and historical. This has perhaps been seen most clearly here in cases such as Velleius Paterculus' representation of the Augustan succession crisis, or the divergent emphases in the material Josephus presents on Caligula's assassination, or in the complex palimpsest of portraits of the *capaces imperii* in 68-9 CE. These intricacies arose from contemporary oratory, public debate, and other expressions of popular opinion such as rumours, and these scenarios could be replayed or repeated in later historiography – skeletons in the closet that might be appropriated to serve new purposes.

Unrealised visions of the future and the failed plans that went along with them shaped the political landscape of Rome and its development in a host of ways, and continued to be influential as a part of Roman cultural memory. By consciously giving conceptions of the future the space that they deserve in our reconstructions, one can come closer to understanding the lived experience of the Romans in this period, and their hopes and fears – whether realistic or fanciful – and thereby restore some more of the colour to our often monochrome image of the early Principate.

While this study has necessarily dealt with only a limited number of historical examples, some of the approaches it has used could be applied to a range of other 'futures' found in different episodes of Roman history. Future areas of research could also include further work on divination, and the way in which it interacted with other philosophical, religious, and historiographical paradigms that pointed towards the future, both in historical episodes and in ancient narratives. Other kinds of evidence could also be examined, such as buildings, public art, coinage, or inscriptions, that contained future-oriented messages for their audiences.

Finally, more work could also be done on the issue of the 'afterlife' of charismatic authority, and especially the concept of imposture, from forgeries through to the physical impersonation of these figures, as a way of fulfilling the sorts of 'lost futures' that have been discussed in this thesis. While the study of conceptions of the future is an area that poses a number of challenges for modern scholars, it is a particularly rich and rewarding topic that could yet produce many interesting results.

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