

THE CAMBRIDGE
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VOLUME XI

THE CAMBRIDGE ANCIENT HISTORY

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VOLUME XI

The High Empire, A.D. 70–192

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Map 1 The Roman world in the time of Marcus Aurelius

PREFACE

This volume covers the history of the Roman empire in the period from A.D. 70 to 192, the period of well over a century of political stability, if we ignore the hiccup of Domitian's assassination, between the end of the first imperial civil war and the eve of the second. In its first edition, published in 1936, this volume was entitled 'The Imperial Peace', a title with contemporary resonance, if one which also echoed the favourable judgement of the age found in Dio and made famous by Gibbon. But however happy the life of some of the élite, a post-colonial assessment is more inclined to note that this was also an age marked by dangerous external attacks contained with difficulty and some of the most serious internal revolts ever raised against Roman rule. Our title, 'The High Empire', equally traditional and judgemental, leaves room for a more dynamic picture, in which the empire survived, even prospered, by evolving in response to external and internal challenges. The new edition has cut back the accounts of warfare and the principal external enemies of Rome in favour of much more extensive discussion of social and cultural developments in the empire as a whole, a shift of emphasis which reflects developments in the discipline of history since 1936, themselves epiphenomena of wider cultural and social changes.

This volume, following the structure of the new volume x, begins with the political and military history of the period, ordered by dynasties and emperors, and incorporating the wars and other frontier events which were treated separately in the first edition (Part I, chapters 1–3). Next, developments in the structure of the empire as a system of control are examined, dealing first with the organization and personnel of the central government (Part II, chapters 4–7) and then with province-based institutions and issues (Part III, chapters 8–11). There follows a series of provincial studies, including Rome and Italy, which, although not exhaustive (Egypt, notably, is treated in volumes x and XII, and there is no separate account of Rhaetia), is much fuller than that of the first edition and illustrates the kaleidoscopic development of provincial cultures (Part IV, chapters 12–22). Finally, the society, economy and culture of the empire as a whole, whose developments and achievements are at least as important as the political stability and military successes in justifying the title 'The High Empire', are

reviewed in a group of thematic chapters (Part v, chapters 22–35). These chapters are often equally relevant to the period covered by volume x, and sometimes also to the period of volume xii (A.D. 193 to 337). While most of this section is new compared to the first edition, some topics have been omitted. The origins and spread of Christianity and the development of Roman law have been treated in the new volume x, and their stories will be resumed in the new volume xii. The detailed history of the literature of the period is covered in *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*. Also, as is normal practice in this series, there is no separate survey of the sources, literary or other, which are usually summarised as appropriate in the individual chapters.

Since 1936 no new literary sources for this period have emerged, although there have been major advances in our understanding and interpretation of the extant works, notably the imperial biographies known as the *Historia Augusta*. The main accretions to our knowledge have come from inscriptions, new and old, and other archaeological data. Patient study of persons and titles has deepened our knowledge of the structures of the imperial government, and combining this with the literary sources in analyses influenced by sociology has produced a much sharper picture of its functioning. The legal status, the workings and the image-building of cities have been illuminated by inscriptions ranging from the Lex Irnitana in Spain to texts recording grand benefactions and foundations in the Greek world. The humbler material, mostly funerary, for soldiers and civilians has spawned new areas of expertise in military, social and demographic studies. The unexpected discovery of the Vindolanda tablets in Britain (plus others elsewhere) and the continuing publication of documentary papyri from Egypt have provided a wealth of local detail with some more general implications. New archaeological discoveries and the re-assessments of earlier finds which they provoke are fundamental to almost all the chapters on the provinces, and to the study of frontiers and their nature; without archaeology there would be precious little history of the western provinces to write. The interest of 'new' archaeology in using everyday artefacts to reconstruct settlement patterns, production and distribution systems, and cultural developments, is crucial to some of the thematic chapters and permeates the provincial studies too.

The bibliography for this volume has been organized on a different pattern to previous volumes, which we hope will make it easier to consult. There is a list of 'Frequently Cited Works' of central importance or frequently referred to by contributors, which are cited in footnotes by their abbreviated title. Other works, referred to in footnotes by the author's name and the year of publication, are grouped by the Parts into which the volume is divided, with the exception of Part iv, in which each chapter on an area retains its own separate bibliography, and Part v, where the bibliog-

ographies have been grouped into two sections, one for chapters 23–9 (economy and society), the other for chapters 30–5 (culture).

Contributors were, as normal for this series, asked to write accounts which summarized current knowledge and generally held views, but were not required to suppress any reference to heterodox beliefs. Inevitably there are overlaps of subject-matter between the narrative, provincial and thematic chapters, and the approach to and interpretation of the same topics sometimes vary. It would, however, have been spurious and misleading to try to blend the various authorial voices into a conformist monotone. Most of the chapters in this volume were written between 1991 and 1994. A few came later, and early contributors were offered the opportunity to update their contributions. The editors regret the time it has taken to get the volume to publication, but hope that the numerous checks and changes made in this long process have led to worthwhile improvements.

The editors have various debts of gratitude. John Matthews was one of the editorial team in the early stages when the volume was planned. Malcolm Todd and John-Peter Wild gave invaluable assistance with chapter 15. Chapters 4–7 were translated by Andrew Stevenson, chapter 14 by Greg Woolf and chapters 21 and 26 by Geoffrey Greatrex. David Cox drew the maps, and the index was compiled by Barbara Hird. Above all, we are grateful for the patience and support of the staff of the Cambridge University Press, in particular Pauline Hire, the pilot of the whole enterprise.

A.K.B.
P.D.A.G.
D.W.R.

CHAPTER 1
THE FLAVIANS

MIRIAM GRIFFIN

I. VESPASIAN

‘During the whole period of his rule he considered nothing more essential than first to make firm the state, which was tottering and almost in ruins, and then to adorn it.’ This characterization of Vespasian by his biographer Suetonius contrasts sharply with his description, in similar words, of the emperor Claudius attempting to erase from memory the mere two days of instability that had succeeded the assassination of his predecessor.¹ Indeed, nothing comparable to the disruption of A.D. 69, with three emperors meeting violent deaths, had confronted any of the successors of Augustus.

The natural comparison to make is between Vespasian and Augustus himself, for the civil wars which ended the Republic were much in people’s thoughts at the time.² Those had been worse in that they were prolonged and had involved much suffering in the provinces, where huge armies had fought, and in Italy, where large numbers of veterans had to be settled. But the later ones weakened Roman prestige on the Rhine and Danube frontier and left Vespasian with a Gallic secession still in progress. Worse still, there was actual fighting in Rome itself, which moved Tacitus to draw parallels with the earlier civil wars between Sulla and Marius.³ Not surprisingly, grim omens and religious superstitions gained credence, and the civil war itself could be viewed as a giant expiation and purification of the whole world.⁴

Again, Vespasian might appear more fortunate than Augustus in that he did not have to devise a new political system. But the old one had exhibited tensions that had contributed to Nero’s fall, and his short-lived successors had not resolved them or found new ways of maintaining equilibrium. What was the correct image for the *princeps* who was in fact, but not in

¹ See now Levick (1999), from which this chapter, revised in 1994 and again in 1997, unfortunately could not benefit. Suet. *Vesp.* 8.1: ‘per totum imperii tempus nihil habuit antiquius quam prope afflictam nutantemque rem publicam stabilire primo, deinde et ornare’. Cf. *Claud.* 11: ‘imperio stabilito nihil antiquius duxit quam id biduum, quo de mutando rei publicae status haesitatum erat, memoriae eximere’.

² Tac. *Hist.* I.50, cf. II.6; III.66.3. ³ Tac. *Hist.* I.89; III.51; 72; 83; II.38.

⁴ Tac. *Hist.* I.3; IV.3.3: ‘civilia arma . . . postquam . . . omnis provincias exercitusque *lustraverant, velut expiato terrarum orbe cepisse finem videbantur*’.

theory, a monarch? What of the many rival claimants encouraged by a system with no formal method of designating a successor? How was the Senate to be given importance without power? How was the *princeps* to practise liberality without rapacity? How were the emperor's freedmen, powerful through proximity, to be kept in their traditional social place? How was the candidate of the eastern legions to satisfy the aspirations of eastern provincials without retarding the steady rise of men from the western provinces?

1. Vespasian before his accession

Tacitus with justice describes the rise of Titus Flavius Vespasianus to the position of *princeps* as the work of fortune. His undistinguished family background was his chief liability, but, as his confederate Mucianus is made to say, standards had dropped by the time he made his claim, and Vitellius, though of the imperial nobility and patriciate, was not, like Nero and Galba, of the republican aristocracy.⁵ Tacitus underlines the fact by starting his *Histories*, which told the story of the Flavian dynasty and its rise to power, on the day of Vitellius' acclamation as *princeps*. Vespasian, born on 17 November A.D. 9, was nearly sixty when he made his bid. He was the second son of T. Flavius Sabinus and Vespasia Polla, from whom he derived his cognomen. He never attempted to hide the fact that his background was, at most, equestrian on his father's side, for even as emperor, he continued to visit regularly the house in Cosa where his paternal grandmother Tertulla had raised him after his father's early death. His mother's family, however, was more distinguished: her father was an equestrian army officer, and her brother entered the Senate and reached the rank of praetor.

Some traced his frugality as emperor to the financial expertise he inherited from his father, a tax-collector and a money-lender, and to his own experience of straitened circumstances which led him to seek help from his older brother in the later years of Nero.⁶ He had acquired military experience and success, though the latter can be exaggerated. He served as a military tribune, probably of equestrian rank, in Thrace, and after securing the *latus clavus* from Tiberius and holding the offices of quaestor, aedile and praetor was put in charge of the legion II Augusta stationed at Argentoratum (Strasbourg) in Upper Germany under Claudius. The legion took part in the invasion of Britain in 43, and Vespasian received triumphal honours which were normally reserved for consular commanders. Claudius, however, was notoriously generous with such awards, and Vespasian had courted Claudius' powerful secretary Narcissus.⁷ He may

⁵ Tac. *Hist.* II.1; 76. ⁶ Suet. *Vesp.* 1–2; 12.1; Tac. *Hist.* III.65; Suet. *Vesp.* 4.3.

⁷ Suet. *Vesp.* 4.1–2; Tac. *Hist.* III.44, cf. Suet. *Claud.* 24.3.

also have helped him achieve his suffect consulship in the last two months of 51 and his two priesthoods, the augurate and one of the minor colleges. At the appropriate time, he became proconsul of Africa, the usual honourable end to a senatorial career. He was, however, unpopular there because, without being seriously extortionate, he had neither the means nor the will to be generous: he was unlucky to be in Africa in the 60s, the same period as the rich Vitellii.⁸ The crisis of the Jewish revolt, which broke out in 66, combined with Nero's increasing fear of ambitious and well-born army commanders unexpectedly revived Vespasian's chance for military glory, and he was sent to Judaea at the head of three legions.

Vespasian's career had not so far suggested outstanding qualities of leadership. His reluctance to assume the *latus clavus* in early life foreshadowed the caution he showed in making his bid for the throne: he was lucky to have dynamic and impetuous allies. He was a survivor, flexible to the point of sycophancy in dealing with tyrants like Gaius or Nero, though later he was to lay claim to Nero's displeasure. Even the sons who were his greatest asset as a claimant to imperial power were the fruits of an unambitious marriage. Early in the reign of Gaius, Vespasian had married a freedwoman of Junian Latin status, who had been claimed by her father and vindicated as originally of free birth: otherwise Vespasian, as a senator, would have been debarred by the Augustan marriage legislation from entering such a union. She and her daughter, both called Flavia Domitilla, had died before Vespasian became *princeps*, leaving him two sons considerably distant in age, Titus, now nearly thirty years old, and Domitian, now approaching eighteen. As *princeps*, Vespasian continued to act cautiously and gradually – a matter of temperament and of his awareness that he had time. For, though nearly sixty when he acceded, he was establishing a dynasty.⁹

2. Source problems

The nature of our literary sources makes it impossible to reconstruct the detailed chronology of the reign of Vespasian. His biographer Suetonius used a non-chronological structure and the chronological account of Dio is only preserved in fragments. The sequence of events is most nearly recoverable for the period before the autumn of A.D. 70 when the surviving portion of Tacitus' *Histories* breaks off and Josephus finishes his account of the Jewish War. On the other hand, the problem of bias in our accounts is here at its most acute, because it reflects the rivalry among

⁸ Suet. *Vesp.* 4.2–3, cf. Tac. *Hist.* 11.97. The riot at Hadrumetum suggests that Vespasian could not help in a crisis.

⁹ Under Nero: Suet. *Vesp.* 4.4, cf. Tac. *Ann.* xvi.5; *Hist.* 1v.7. Marriage: Suet. *Vesp.* 3; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 10.1; 11.1; Tac. *Hist.* 11.1.

supporters of Vespasian claiming the principal credit for his victory,¹⁰ as well as the competition among pretenders to the throne. Though the Flavian emperors themselves did not commission or encourage historical accounts of their reigns, to judge by the fact that the elder Pliny left his flattering historical work unpublished when he died in August 79,¹¹ the partiality towards the Flavians that works written under that dynasty displayed is attested by Tacitus at *Histories* II 101 and exemplified in an extreme form by Josephus in his *Jewish War*.

Unlike Suetonius or Dio, Tacitus tried to adopt a critical approach towards this material. Even the quarter of the work that survives gives clear indications that his portrait of Vespasian was a very mixed one. It was best for Rome that Vespasian won the civil war (III.86) and he turned out better than had been expected (I.50; II.97). But there were darker aspects: Vespasian overcame inhibitions about the methods for obtaining money (II.84), and his close associates were no better than the discredited minions of Otho and Vitellius (II.95.3). Two are named there, T. Clodius Eprius Marcellus and C. Licinius Mucianus, and the first makes a plea, clearly meant to be prophetic, for a curb on liberty (IV.8.4).

3. Rome in the absence of Vespasian

Vespasian was acclaimed by the two legions at Alexandria, under the command of Tiberius Iulius Alexander, on 1 July 69 and by the three legions in Judaea on 3 July.¹² By the middle of the month he had been recognized by the three legions in Syria, under the command of Mucianus, and by the surrounding client kings. At the end of July a council of war was held at Berytus. Meanwhile Vitellius had entered Rome. In the middle of August Mucianus set out for Italy. A month or so later Vespasian and Titus started for Egypt, where they heard the news of the Flavian victory at Cremona, won by Antonius Primus and the Danubian legions on 24–5 October. They then moved on to Alexandria where they heard of the death of Vitellius on 20 December. There Vespasian remained until September 70, though Titus left to prosecute the war in Judaea in late March or early April of that year. Vespasian left when Jerusalem was under siege; he did not wait until the news of its fall on 8 September reached Alexandria. He probably arrived in Rome in late September or early October 70.¹³

¹⁰ Hence conflicting representations of Antonius Primus in Tac. *Hist.* III and IV (e.g. III.28; IV.2; 39.3); Wellesley (1972) 3–5. On *Hist.* IV.1–2; II.1 *vs* Joseph. *BJ* IV.654; Chilver (1984) 1.31–2.

¹¹ Tac. *Hist.* II.101; Pliny, *HN* I, pref. 20, telling Titus of the favourable bias of his unpublished history. ¹² Suet. *Vesp.* 6.3; Tac. *Hist.* II.79; Dio LXVI.8; cf. Joseph. *BJ* IV.601; 617.

¹³ Tac. *Hist.* III.48; IV.51, cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 7. Vespasian was probably in Alexandria for the rising of the Nile in late June/July but not for news of the fall of Jerusalem on 8 Sept. 70 (Joseph. *BJ* VII.21); he was not back in Rome by 21 June (Tac. *Hist.* IV.53); Chilver's (1984) commentary on *Hist.* IV.81.

Why did Vespasian go to Egypt, thus delaying his appearance in the capital for over a year from his proclamation as *princeps*? Tacitus says that it was decided at the council of war that Vespasian would hold on to the points of access to Egypt, and he later hints of a plan to cut corn supplies to Rome and to raise money in the rich province; Josephus speaks of the strategic importance of Egypt as a defensive position and of making the Vitellians in Rome surrender through the threat of starvation.¹⁴ It is hard to see how an embargo on grain could have been very effective quickly enough or, indeed, at all given the popularity of the Vitellian cause in Africa, a more important source of corn in this period for Rome, as Josephus himself tells us. The aim of sending Egyptian corn to Rome, adduced by Dio and realized by Vespasian early in 70 when shortages were falsely attributed to the Vitellians in Africa, fits the situation better than the idea of a Flavian embargo.¹⁵ That story may belong with other attempts to emphasize the Flavian hope of a bloodless victory.

Even if control of Egypt was important strategically and financially, why was it necessary for Vespasian to go there himself rather than send others? That the enthusiasm initially aroused by his visit – the first by a Roman *princeps* since Augustus – would be dampened by his exactions could have been predicted.¹⁶ Suetonius suggests that the new emperor acquired some of the authority and majesty that he lacked through the miracles of healing that he performed in Alexandria, while Tacitus notes that eye-witnesses went on recounting them years later. Though they report differently Vespasian's visit to the Serapeum to seek confirmation of his chances of becoming emperor, both agree that divine sanction was conferred: Tacitus gives the name of the priest as Basilides, Suetonius notes the presentation of items associated with Egyptian kingship. Yet these miracles seem to have been organized by the loyal prefect of Egypt, Tiberius Iulius Alexander, mostly for Egyptian and eastern consumption, perhaps to counter the appearance of a false Nero there in spring 69.¹⁷ Vespasian himself was not apparently eager to stress the eastern basis of his early support: of our literary authorities, only Philostratus mentions Vespasian's visit after the Serapeum to the Hippodrome, where, a papyrus records, the Alexandrians at the prompting of their prefect hailed Vespasian as son of Ammon, hence legal sovereign of Egypt, and 'Divine Caesar', 'Lord Augustus'.¹⁸ Philostratus is only interested in the incident as a good background to Vespasian's fictitious meeting with his hero, the sage Apollonius of Tyana. Josephus ignores all these

¹⁴ Tac. *Hist.* II.82, cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 7 ('claustra Aegypti'); Tac. *Hist.* III.48; cf. III.8; Joseph *BJ* IV.605 ff.

¹⁵ Tac, *Hist.* II.97; IV.49; II.58; cf. Joseph. *BJ* II.383; 386: Africa supplies two thirds, Egypt one third, of Roman corn imports. Sending of corn to Rome: Dio *LXV.9.2*; Tac. *Hist.* IV.38; 52.2.

¹⁶ Dio *LXVI.8*. ¹⁷ Suet. *Vesp.* 7; Tac. *Hist.* IV.81–2; Heinrichs (1968). False Nero: *Hist.* II.8.

¹⁸ P. Fouad 8=MW 41; Philostr. *VA* v.27–36; cf. Titus' visit in P. J. Parsons, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* 34 (1968), no. 2725, 127–9.

events, and though he probably wished to avoid overshadowing his own prophecy of Vespasian's elevation, he may also reflect Flavian reluctance to have Vespasian's entry into Rome overshadowed. Vespasian will have been aware of Roman sentiment, reflected in Tacitus, who specifically notes the lack of success of Romans whose base of support in civil wars was in the East and postpones his account of the miracles until long after the *princeps'* recognition at Rome. Only later did Vespasian put in his Temple of Peace, not completed until 75, a statue of the River God Nile.¹⁹

Then again, even if it made sense for Vespasian to visit Egypt in person, why did he stay there so long? He was not back on 21 June for the religious ceremony of moving the Terminus stone, the first step towards the restoration of the great Capitoline temple which had been burned during the defeat of the Vitellians. Yet he had sent a letter specifying the arrangements for the ceremony, and, on his return to Rome, he was to make a great point of initiating the rebuilding in person (see p. 14). Tacitus says that he was waiting for favourable winds, but he could have gone at the start of the sailing season in the spring. Dio says that he originally wanted to return with Titus after the capture of Jerusalem, but then why did he not wait a little longer?²⁰

The answer may emerge if we consider not why Vespasian *wished* to be in Egypt, but why he might *not wish* to be in Rome. Suetonius provides a hint when he says that Vespasian put no innocent person to death in his reign except when he was absent or unaware, while Dio notes that Mucianus, who could use the imperial seal and had the real authority to act, collected money for the Roman treasury, sparing Vespasian the *invidia*.²¹

Then again, the conduct of the Flavian armies in Rome after the death of Vitellius, and earlier in Italy where they sacked Cremona, had made Antonius Primus a liability to the Flavian cause. It was Mucianus who had to break the power of this hero of the soldiers, already the recipient of consular insignia from the Senate, first by promoting his supporters and hinting at an honourable term as governor of Hispania Tarraconensis, a position left vacant by Cluvius Rufus, then by sending away from Rome his own legion on which he most depended. This was not a matter of personal envy on the part of Mucianus, for when Primus fled to Vespasian he was not reinstated. Primus was suspected by Mucianus of encouraging one of the remaining members of the republican aristocratic clan from which the luckless adoptive son of Galba came. This man, Licinius Crassus Scribonianus, was apparently killed in this period, along with Calpurnius Piso Galerianus, the son of the Neronian conspirator, and his father-in-law,

¹⁹ Joseph *BJ* VII.63–74; Tac. *Hist.* II.6; IV.81 (the miracles are not even placed at the start of the visit to Alexandria); Pliny, *HN* XXXVI.58.

²⁰ Tac. *Hist.* IV.53; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5; Dio LXVI.10.2; *Hist.* IV.81 with Chilver's (1984) commentary.

²¹ Suet. *Vesp.* 15 (cf. 12 'civilis et clemens'); Dio LXVI.2.1–2; 5, cf. Tac. *Hist.* IV.11.1; 39.2.

L. Calpurnius Piso, the proconsul of Africa.²² Even if none of these was ambitious, they could, as the few remaining survivors of the Republican nobility, offer alternatives for those unhappy with a new upstart *princeps*.

Similar considerations will have dictated the elimination of the young son of Vitellius, who was only six or seven years old when presented by his father to the soldiers, entitled and accoutred as the heir apparent. To Vespasian was left the more grateful task of sparing Vitellius' daughter and finding her a suitable husband while, under Mucianus, Vitellius' praetorian prefect Iulius Priscus was driven to death and his trusted freedman Asiaticus crucified as a slave, despite having been given equestrian rank by his former master.²³

The praetorian guard also presented a problem. Vitellius had dismissed the old members who had murdered Galba and supported Otho, and Vespasian had ordered his army commanders to approach them with offers of reinstatement. In the meantime, Vitellius had enrolled sixteen cohorts from the German legions and even from his auxiliary troops, and now there were also Flavian soldiers who demanded service in the guard as a reward for their victory. Financial pressures made it imperative, moreover, that the number of cohorts be reduced from the sixteen to which Vitellius had increased them, even from Nero's twelve. Mucianus first tried demoralizing the Vitellians and then sending Domitian as Vespasian's representative with promises of honourable discharge and land. Eventually, he had to re-enroll them all *en masse* and then discharge or retain them individually. Inscriptions duly show Vitellian legionaries dismissed after three, eight or fifteen years of praetorian service, two of them having served even beyond A.D. 76, the date by which the number of cohorts was reduced to nine. By such gradual dismissals, Mucianus clearly hoped to avoid the trouble produced by the partisan treatment of the praetorians at the hands of Galba and Vitellius.²⁴

The hardest task facing Mucianus, however, was the disappointment of senatorial expectations, or rather the expectations of a small but very vocal minority in the Senate. Vespasian had written, probably before Mucianus even reached Rome, to promise the reinstatement of those, alive and dead, whom Nero had condemned for *maiestas* and the abolition of trials for the 'un-republican' verbal or trivial charges that had come to be covered by that charge.²⁵ In this he was following the example of Galba and Otho who pardoned Nero's victims. But there remained the question of punishing those

²² Antonius Primus: Tac, *Hist.* iv.39, cf. 4; 80. Republican aristocrats: *Hist.* iv.11; 39.3-4; 49-50.

²³ Tac. *Hist.* ii.59; cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 14; *Hist.* iv.11, cf. ii.47; 95.

²⁴ Suet. *Vit.* 10.1; Tac. *Hist.* ii.67.2; 82, 93.9; iv. 46; *ILS* 2036=MW 382; *ILS* 2034=MW 375; *ILS* 2035=MW 381; *ILS* 1993=MW 400.

²⁵ Dio lxxvi.9.1, cf. Tac. *Hist.* iv.3.4. On ἀσεβεία, Dio's word for 'unrepublican' treason charges, see Brunt (1984a).

responsible for the convictions. In 68, probably even before Galba had entered the Capitol, the Senate had set in train the trials of Neronian accusers, but Galba, moved by pleas from vulnerable senators, had been unenthusiastic and the issue had lapsed. Now it was renewed, and in a form that the new emperor might find hard to reject: whereas, under Galba, Helvidius Priscus intended to try Eprius Marcellus, the prosecutor of Thrasea Paetus, himself, now the *eques* Musonius Rufus was invited to speak against Publius Egnatius Celer, a philosopher who had testified against his pupil and friend, Q. Marcius Barea Soranus, a respected senator whose daughter had once been married to Titus.²⁶

There can be no real doubt that Vespasian was the architect of the policy that Mucianus, with the help of Domitian, now gradually revealed to the Senate. While Mucianus, surrounded by his bodyguard, was clearly the person in authority, it was the younger son of the *princeps*, then only eighteen, who guaranteed the legitimacy of what he did, a role from which his reputation was never to recover. In the last days of 69, Domitian had been called Caesar by the soldiers and named praetor designate by senatorial decree, and early in 70 he replaced Iulius Frontinus as urban praetor, after which his name appeared on the letters and edicts implementing the *princeps*' wishes. It was he who presided over the Senate on 9 January when Egnatius Celer was condemned and Iunius Mauricus, the brother of one of Thrasea Paetus' close associates, asked that access to the notebooks of previous emperors be granted to the Senate so that accusers could be brought to justice.²⁷ Each of the magistrates and the senators then, individually, took an oath that he had not used his influence to harm any of the victims or profited from a condemnation. This led to allegations of perjury, threats of prosecution, and denunciation of Aquillius Regulus, one of the younger generation of Neronian informers, who was to flourish again in Domitian's reign. Helvidius Priscus renewed his attack on Eprius Marcellus, though such a revival of a charge by the same prosecutor was illegal. Less than a week later, Domitian broke the news: there were to be no prosecutions of Neronian accusers. Although, in deference to senatorial sentiment, an informer was one of two Neronian exiles excluded from the amnesty, the point was brought home by the appointment of Eprius Marcellus to be proconsul of Asia where he was retained for three years, an appointment that could only have been made by interference with the system of allocation by lot by the *princeps* or his representatives.²⁸

There is evidence of consultation with Vespasian over such matters as the restoration of the Capitol and the securing of copies of old laws for

²⁶ Tac. *Hist.* 1.4.3; II.10.1; IV 42.6; IV.6; IV.10.1. See Evans (1979).

²⁷ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 9.2; Aur. *Vict. Caes.* 9.2. Domitian: Tac. *Hist.* III.86; IV.2; 39.2; 40.

²⁸ Tac. *Hist.* IV.41–4, cf. Tac. *Ann.* XVI.14; Eprius Marcellus: *ILS* 992=MW 271; cf. Dio LXVI.2.2.

the archives, but the distance involved must have made detailed referral difficult.²⁹ In the sphere of appointments, signs of a lack of coordination between the distant *princeps* and his representatives at Rome are sometimes divined. A notable example is Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus, a patrician related by marriage to Claudius, whom we find presiding over the ceremony on 21 June, perhaps as senior *pontifex* in the absence of the *princeps* (who was in any case not yet *pontifex maximus*). He was then sent out to the consular Spanish province, which still lacked a governor. Vespasian apparently had other ideas: he wanted to appoint Plautius Silvanus as prefect of the city in succession to his murdered brother. As his funerary inscription shows, Plautius Silvanus was recalled to hold the prefecture. More than that, on his return to Rome, Vespasian proposed that he receive triumphal honours for his outstanding service as governor of Moesia under Nero, whose lack of generosity is implicitly condemned.³⁰ Vespasian clearly wanted to have, on permanent display as his prefect, this show-piece of Flavian magnanimity: Plautius Aelianus went on to a second consulship in 74, which he shared with the emperor's elder son.³¹

Similar lack of harmony has been suggested in the case of the prefecture of the praetorian guard. An Egyptian papyrus describes Tiberius Iulius Alexander as praetorian prefect, though there is no parallel for an office held outside the province by a former prefect of Egypt being recorded there. However, he is unlikely to have held the post in Egypt, simultaneously with being prefect. The reference on the papyrus would be best explained if Alexander became praetorian prefect before he reached Rome and while still in the vicinity of Egypt. The praetorian prefecture is generally taken to be a separate post from the prefecture of the Judaeae army, mentioned by Josephus: that was an exceptional post created by Vespasian because of Titus' inexperience as a commander. Alexander could have held these two posts simultaneously while still with Titus in Judaea, or he could have assumed the praetorian post later when he accompanied Titus on his visit to Egypt in the spring of 71. Members of the ruling house were often escorted by praetorians led by one prefect, and though Titus had his two legions with him in Egypt and presumably had no actual praetorians escorting him to Rome either, it may have been thought appropriate for him, as the emperor's son, to have a praetorian prefect in attendance.³²

On the return of Titus and Ti. Iulius Alexander to Rome in the summer

²⁹ Tac. *Hist.* iv. 53.1; iv. 40, cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 8. The voyage from Egypt to Rome would take about 80 days in November to March; about 30 days from April to October: Duncan-Jones, *Structure* ch. 1.

³⁰ Tac. *Hist.* iv. 53; *ILS* 986=MW 261; on *AE* 1989 no. 425, see Eck (1993b) 249 n. 13.

³¹ On consuls of 74: L. Vidman, *Fasti Ostienses* 43 (Prague, 1982).

³² *PHib* 215=MW 329; cf. Joseph. *BJ* v. 46; vi. 237; vs the restoration of *OGIS* II 586=MW 330 as ἐπ]άρχου [τ]οῦ Ἰουδαί[κοῦ στρατοῦ: Kokkinos (1990) 131. See Turner (1954); Syme (1977) 1071; 1277 n. 9; Jones, *Titus* 85.

of 71, a complex situation would have arisen. At the end of 69 Arrius Varus had been appointed to the post, perhaps by Domitian, while Antonius Primus was in charge of Rome. In the spring or summer of 70 Mucianus replaced Varus by Arrecinus Clemens, the uncle to Titus' daughter Iulia, though Clemens was of senatorial standing. Some time after Titus returned home, he himself became praetorian prefect, and Alexander may have served as prefect in Rome at some point. What happened to Clemens? His tenure must have been short, to judge from the embarrassment contemporaries still felt about a non-equestrian holding the post when Titus took it over. Dio reports that Vespasian's ironic message to Domitian, thanking him for allowing him to hold office, was provoked by the appointments, including prefectures, given by Mucianus and his son. Yet Clemens became suffect consul in 73 and went on to a distinguished career, probably before as well as during the reign of Domitian. There is no need to posit disharmony. Vespasian could have sanctioned two prefects early in his reign, one (Alexander) for Vespasian and Titus in the East and one (Clemens) in Rome. Then Ti. Iulius Alexander may have served briefly with Clemens in Rome and perhaps even went on to serve jointly with Titus.³³

A more serious area of possible tension between Vespasian and his representatives in Rome concerns the repute of Galba. While in the East, Vespasian and Mucianus had recognized Galba, Otho and Vitellius in turn. By the time Vespasian was acclaimed by the eastern legions, the first two were dead but Vespasian had bid for and received substantial help from previous adherents of Otho, who naturally hated Vitellius. Otho had to be treated with some respect, but what was to be done about the memory of Otho's enemy Galba, from whom the Senate had removed the stain of usurpation by declaring his predecessor a public enemy?

The letter that Vespasian sent to Rome in December 69 clearly said nothing on this point or nothing favourable to Galba, on the assumption that the inscribed *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* was passed in reaction to that letter (see pp. 11–12 below). For Galba is omitted, along with Nero, Otho and Vitellius, from the respectable precedents cited in that law. However, on the Acts of the Arval Brothers for 69, which had been inscribed before Vitellius' death, only the name of that emperor has been erased, and when Domitian took the chair of the Senate on 9 January 70, he proposed the restoration of Galba's honours, a restoration which, unlike the simultaneous decision to revive Piso's memory, actually took effect.³⁴ Yet Suetonius says that, when the Senate voted, apparently on this occasion, to put up a naval monument in Galba's honour on the spot where he was slain,

³³ Arrius Varus: Tac. *Hist.* iv.2; cf. iv.68; Arrecinus Clemens: Tac. *Hist.* iv.68, cf. iv.11.1; Dio lxxvi.2; MW 302. Embarrassment: Suet. *Tit.* 6; Pliny, *HN* 1, pref. 3.

³⁴ Tac. *Hist.* iv.3,3, cf. *ILS* 244=MW 1; *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (MW 2–3); *Hist.* iv.40.

Vespasian annulled the decree because he thought Galba had sent assassins from Spain to Judaea to kill him. If this suggests long-standing resentment, then not only Domitian, but Primus, Cerialis and Mucianus all adopted an attitude to Galba contrary to that of the *princeps*.³⁵ But the real reason for Vespasian's attitude to the monument may be that in Rome it was better to be seen as the avenger of Otho than of Galba whose memory, though revered by a vocal group in the Senate, was hated by the praetorian guard and had been vindicated by Vitellius, the real enemy of the Flavians.

In fact, Vespasian was to adopt a pragmatic attitude to his predecessors in the matter of precedents and privileges, cancelling divisive concessions by Galba but restoring to a town in Corsica privileges 'retained into the time of Galba' but removed by Otho. Grants of citizenship made by Otho and Vitellius, unlike Galba's, were apparently not recognized by Vespasian or, though not formally rescinded, were not officially recorded. Similarly, Galba, but not Otho or Vitellius, is included in the lists of sources of law in the Spanish charters issued under Domitian, which at least shows that Vespasian's younger son, when carrying out the programme started by his father and brother, did not hesitate to include him.³⁶

4. *Flavian ideology*

The main lines of Flavian ideology were, however, clear from the start. Vitellius was the real target of abuse, as Josephus and, to a lesser extent, Tacitus clearly show. It was his name that was erased from the proceedings of the Arval Brothers, and his consular appointments, fixed for many years ahead, that were cancelled.³⁷ Continuity with the Julio-Claudian Principate in its respectable form, i.e. with Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius, was advertised. The *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* already mentioned (p. 10), which is preserved on a bronze plaque discovered c. 1345 and displayed in the Basilica of St John Lateran in Rome by Cola di Rienzo, cites all of these emperors as precedents in four of its eight clauses and Claudius alone in one.

The only clauses conferring specific powers on the *princeps* that do not list precedents (clauses III and IV) seem to reflect past imperial practice and could easily have been formally conferred on one of the emperors after Claudius who were not regarded as respectable.³⁸ There is therefore no serious obstacle to regarding this *lex* as the ratification of the senatorial

³⁵ Tac. *Hist.* III.7; II.76.4, cf. I.4; v.16. Suet. *Galba* 23; *RIC* II nos. 507–9; for another explanation: Sutherland (1987) 116–18.

³⁶ Tac. *Hist.* I.8; 65; *FIRA* I 72=MW 460; *Tabula Banasitana*: *AE* 1971 no. 534 with Sherwin-White (1973) 86; 90–1; *Lex Irnitana*: González (1986). ³⁷ *Hist.* II.91; III.55; IV.47.

³⁸ Tacitus mentions senatorial grants of traditional powers to Otho (*Hist.* I.47) and to Vitellius (*Hist.* II.55).

decree conferring ‘all the customary powers voted to *principes*’ in the last days of December 69: the linguistic form is that of the *rogatio* put to the assembly for ratification. The decree and law granted Vespasian (in the first part, now lost) *imperium* and tribunician power, the main constitutional powers of the *principes*, and (in the preserved part) a number of accumulated imperial prerogatives. Cola di Rienzo regarded the law as a testimony to the power of the Roman Senate and people, but, far from limiting imperial prerogatives, the law appears to confer on the *principes* the authority to do ‘whatever he deems to be in the interests of the commonwealth or in accordance with the dignity of Roman affairs, both secular and religious, public and private’ (clause VI). Moreover, this authority is backdated (clause VIII) to cover what Vespasian had done as emperor before the law was passed and whatever had been done under his orders. The law also indemnifies anyone who, in obedience to this law, violates any other legal requirement.

It has been suggested that none of these provisions was an innovation and that even the apparent illogicality of granting specific prerogatives and specific dispensations from the laws (clause VII) alongside the apparent blanket grant of authority (clause VI) goes back to A.D. 37 when Gaius became the first emperor to acquire imperial powers *en bloc* rather than piecemeal over time, as Augustus and Tiberius had done. In that case clause VI should perhaps be interpreted in a more limited sense: at the very least, the naming of all the respectable *principes* as precedents must be intended to suggest that the discretion granted the *principes* should be exercised according to traditional precedents.³⁹ However, even if the clause was hastily added for Vespasian without the logic being examined, the intention was clearly to grant him the authority that his respectable predecessors were believed to have had in practice, if not in theory.

Even the adoption of 1 July 69, the day of Vespasian’s acclamation by the Egyptian legions, as his day of accession (*dies imperii*) need not be construed as a deliberate break with tradition designed to emphasize the power of the soldiers over the authority of the Senate and people. It is true that, for his Julio-Claudian predecessors from Gaius on, the *dies imperii* had been the day when the Senate conferred the imperial powers on them, but it was only with the *coups* of Galba and Vitellius, staged outside Rome, that the problem arose of a period of time between taking executive action as *prin-*

³⁹ *ILS* 244=MW 1=Crawford (1996) 1 no. 39 (described as a *lex* in vv. 30, 34); Tac. *Hist.* iv. 3: ‘senatus cuncta principibus solita Vespasiano decernit’. Brunt (1977) 85 *vs* H. Last, *CAH* xii 404 ff. The discretion given to magistrates by the republican Senate to do ‘quod e re publica esse censeat’ when dealing with specific problems or chores is not parallel, despite Pabst (1991) ‘... ageret faceret quaecumque a re publica censeret esse’. J. A. Crook favours a minimalist interpretation of clause VI as ‘a grant of residual emergency powers’ (*CAH*² x 118–20). Levick (1999) 86 regards the *lex* as supplementing Vespasian’s formal powers and strengthening his hand against the Senate. On its use by Cola di Rienzo, see Collins (1998).

ceps and being recognized as such. Galba had ostentatiously avoided claiming the title of *princeps* until Nero's death and his own recognition by the Senate; when the Senate voted prerogatives to Vitellius on 19 April they may have added, for the first time, the backdating clause (VIII), in case the new *princeps* decided to count his reign from 1 January when he was proclaimed by the legions. The Arval Brothers held back celebrating his accession day until 1 May, by which time he had made it clear that 19 April was to be the official *dies imperii*: he had to consider the views of the Upper German legions, schooled by Verginius Rufus to wait for the decision of SPQR. Vespasian, however, had a longer period of time to cover, a period of five months in which he had been making appointments and other dispositions. Nonetheless, though he assumed right away the titles of Caesar and Augustus which Vitellius had refused until after his *dies imperii*, it was only in retrospect that he claimed to possess the tribunician power from 1 July 69.⁴⁰

Vespasian then wished to be seen as continuing in the tradition of the Principate as founded by Augustus. The Lex de Imperio Vespasiani neither enhances nor curtails the powers of the Senate and people or the freedom of action of the *princeps*. That is the political truth behind the fictional story told by Philostratus, in which Vespasian rejects one philosopher's advice to restore the Republic and another's to leave the choice of constitution to the Romans, in favour of the advice of Apollonius of Tyana not to give up the position he has won.⁴¹

A similar message is conveyed by the types of coins issued under Vespasian. Though those issued by Galba during the rebellion of 68 included a large number of republican types, that did not signify hopes of a restoration of the Republic, for there were also many revived Augustan types, while the resonant type depicting daggers, originally accompanied by the legend 'EID. MAR.', appeared instead with the anodyne legend 'LIBERTAS P.R. RESTITUTA'. Vespasian's coinage was even less specific, though the extent to which it repeated earlier republican and imperial types from 70 on is striking. Attempts to show that allusion was largely restricted to Augustus fail, and it is notable that types and even dies, not only of Galba, but even of Vitellius, were in use. Even the portraits continue the trend, set in the later reign of Nero, towards realism and away from the idealized portraiture of Augustus and his successors. The resemblance of early gold and silver coins showing busts of Titus and Domitian facing

⁴⁰ Vespasian's *dies imperii* and his *tribunicia potestas* were numbered from 1 July 69, but the latter is not attested on documents of 69 and first appears on a diploma of 7 Mar. 70 (*ILS* 1989), which may explain why Suet. *Vesp.* 12 says that he did not assume the power 'statim'. Vitellius' *dies imperii* 19 April (*Acta Fratrum Arvalium* in *MW* 2, vv. 85–6), cf. *Hist.* 11.53; 62.2; and 1.55 for the attitude of Verginius Rufus' legions. Vespasian assumed the titles of Caesar and Augustus possibly before 70: Isaac and Roll (1976); Buttrey (1980) 8–10. ⁴¹ Philostr. *VA* v.33–5.

each other to Vitellian coins portraying his children in a similar way, and the striking from Vitellian dies of bronze coins portraying Victory with a shield and a palm-tree, alluding to Vespasian's own victories in Judaea, make it hard to believe that the details of Vespasian's coins were very important either to him or to his mint officials.⁴² Before and after the emperor returned to Rome, their most striking feature is their lack of originality. In so far as they mattered at all, continuity must be what they were intended to advertise. To proclaim Pax, Libertas, Concordia, even Aeternitas P(opuli) R(omani) – an innovation – is to assert that the new regime is continuous with the past and that the Principate and Rome will survive together.

There are some new types, such as the FORTUNA REDUX coins celebrating Vespasian's return to Rome, the types depicting Titus and Domitian in various postures, and the copious advertisement in 71, the year of the triumph, of the repression of the Jewish revolt. But it is typical that, instead of the representations of buildings that had adorned the coins of Nero and were to appear again with Domitian, the building programme, by which Vespasian set great store, was reflected only in the ROMA RESURGENS legends, reflecting at most the symbolic significance of that programme. The depiction of the Temple of Isis on early coins commemorates the night that Vespasian and Titus passed there before their triumph. The appearance of the Temple of Vesta also on early coins, like the figure of Vesta on others, is probably just a way of celebrating Rome itself, while the repeatedly used type of the Capitoline temple commemorates, significantly, not a new building, but a careful restoration: the priests warned that the gods did not want the old form changed. Vespasian himself shifted the debris of the old temple to the marshes as they prescribed, and the *plebs* worked on the new one *en masse*, rebuilding their city, still only partially reconstructed after the catastrophic Neronian fire.⁴³

Two of the three *principes* recognized in 68/9 had anticipated Vespasian in adopting the Julian family name of Caesar. Claudius had been the first to assume rather than inherit it, but he had been a member of the imperial house. When assumed by Galba, Otho and now Vespasian, when conferred on Galba's adopted son Piso and on Titus and Domitian, as it was in 69, the family name Caesar had clearly become the name of an institution. It could have been dropped, as Vitellius originally intended to do for himself and his heir.⁴⁴ Instead it was adopted, and through it the continuance of the Augustan Principate was declared.

⁴² C. M. Kraay, 'The bronze coinage of Vespasian: classification and attribution', *Scripta Nummaria Romana* (1978) 47 ff.; Buttrely (1972) 89 ff.; *BMCRE* II 180 no. 748B=MW 83; cf. *BMCRE* I 372 no. 27=MW 80.

⁴³ *BMCRE* II 87 no. 425=MW 42 (Roma Resurgens); *BMCRE* II 17 no. 90=MW 426 (Vesta); Hill (1979) 208, 210; Hill (1989) 28–9; 23–4; 25; *BMCRE* II 123 no. 572; 133 no. 614=MW 425 (Capitoline Temple), cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5; Tac. *Hist.* IV.53 and Wardle (1996). ⁴⁴ Tac. *Hist.* II.59; 62, cf. III.58.

If Vespaſian's rule was to laſt, he muſt be ſeen as fit to continue this tradition. Tacitus has Mucianus emphasize, as aſſets of Veſpaſian's houſe, a triumph and two ſons, one of whom is already fit to rule and poſſeſſed of a diſtinguiſhed military record. Under Domitian, the adaptable ſenator and poet Silius Italicus attributed to Jupiter a retrospective prophecy: a Sabine will win victories in Germany, Britain, Africa and Idumaea, and end up with divine honours.⁴⁵ Veſpaſian himſelf made much of his Sabine toughneſs and frugality and the military proweſs that was ſuppoſed to accompany it. He was ſaid to want his officers to ſmell of garlic, not perfume. The military theme was brought into ſharp focus with the Jewish triumph of June 71 and the closing of the Temple of Janus ſymbolizing the attainment of peace through Roman arms. Indeed a Temple of Pax which would hold the ſpoils taken from the Jewish temple in Jeruſalem was duly planned and completed within four years.⁴⁶ The thematic connection was ſtreſſed by Joſephus who, writing in Rome after 75, living in Veſpaſian's old houſe, and endowed with the Roman citizenship, property and a penſion, will have ſtudied how to pleaſe the emperor. Publication of his *Jewiſh War*, a work based on the notebooks of Veſpaſian and Titus, was ordered by Titus who affixed his ſeal as teſtimony to its truthfulneſs. It includes, as a ſet piece, an extended account of the triumph, preceded by Veſpaſian's return to Rome and the ſentiments it generated in the ſenators, confident that his maturity and military achievement would reſtore proſperity, and in the army, glad to have a proven ſoldier in charge. The theme of the triumph in the Flavian poets clearly reflects the emphasis on this particular event, although ſome embarrassment about the preſentation of a provincial revolt as a new conqueſt may explain why the cognomen 'Iudaicus' was not aſſumed by the triumphators.⁴⁷

Joſephus' account of the triumph mirrors the particular importance it had for the reputation of Titus. Ten years later an arch was erected at the end of the Circus Maximus with an inſcription which echoes the ſenatorial decree acclaiming his military victory 'achieved under the auſpices and inſtructions of his father', with invidious comparison of thoſe who had failed to conquer Jeruſalem earlier in the war. The extant Arch of Titus at the top of the Sacred Way, completed after his death and reſtored in 1824, carries a frieze depicting the triumphal proceſſion with Titus alone as the conquering hero.⁴⁸

Joſephus notes accurately, however, that the triumph was a joint one of

⁴⁵ *Hiſt.* II.77; *Sil. Pun.* III.596–602.

⁴⁶ *Suet. Veſp.* 12; 8.3. Temple of Pax: *Dio* LXVI.15; *Joſeph. BJ* VII.158.

⁴⁷ *Joſeph. Vit.* 361–3; *BJ* VII.123 ff. (the triumph); 67; *Rajak* (1983) ch. 8. Cognomen 'Iudaicus': *Dio* LXVI.7.2, but cf. *Yavetz* (1975) 432 n. 70.

⁴⁸ *ILS* 264=MW 53; for the interpretation of 'quod praecceptis patris consiliisque et auspiciis gentem Iudaeorum domuit et urbem Hieruſolymam omnibus ante ſe ducibus regibus gentibus aut fruſtra petitam aut omnino intemptatam delevit' adopted here, *Inſtinsky* (1948) 370–1.

Vespasian and Titus and that the emperor rode ahead in his chariot followed by Titus in his, while Domitian accompanied them on a richly caparisoned horse. Another principal theme of Flavian ideology was the harmony existing between Vespasian and his two sons.⁴⁹ Galba's desperate adoption of Piso, Otho's plan to adopt his nephew and Vitellius' presentation of his infant son to the army all underline how important it was for the *principes* to be able to offer the prospect of a peaceful and secure succession. The troubles of Augustus had already shown, and the future was to confirm, that more than one possible successor had to be in the wings. Josephus sees Vespasian as passing his power to his sons and their descendants. Although it is Titus whose military exploits are exaggerated and whose closeness to his father is stressed, Domitian too is presented as responsible for the victory over the Batavians and showing prowess and responsibility befitting his father, whom he represents in Rome.⁵⁰

By 70 coins proclaimed the two young Caesars as *principes iuventutis*, a title invented in the time of Augustus to mark out Gaius and Lucius Caesar as leaders of the younger generation of the governing class. Each of Vespasian's sons feature on the obverses of substantial issues of coins.⁵¹ Moreover, by being *consul ordinarius* every year but two and sharing the post with Titus often, he amassed nine consulships for himself and seven for Titus. Domitian was *consul ordinarius* in 73 and suffect consul four times, though not yet of consular age. The contrast with the Julio-Claudian successors of Augustus, all of whom, except for the murdered Gaius, clearly limited themselves to five, is striking.⁵²

Vespasian was also determined to employ and honour other members of his family. Both his brother Flavius Sabinus and his son-in-law Petillius Cerialis, married to his deceased daughter Flavia Domitilla, had been important in his rise to power. Now the former was given a belated public funeral and a statue in the forum, while the latter was appointed governor of Britain, with instructions to quell the Batavian revolt on the way, and was then made suffect consul for the second time in 74. L. Iunius P. Caesennius Paetus, the husband of Vespasian's niece Flavia Sabina, became his first governor of Syria, replacing the illustrious Mucianus, while the brother of Titus' first wife, Arrecinus Clemens, was first named praetorian prefect and then advanced to a suffect consulship in 73. The chief magistracy also went to his brother's son and to the son of his niece and Caesennius Paetus. The Flavians, however, were to show themselves concerned to avoid an unnecessary proliferation of relatives of the imperial house. So the grandsons of his brother Flavius Sabinus were both married within the family: Sabinus to Titus' daughter Iulia, and Clemens to Flavia Domitilla, another of

⁴⁹ Joseph. *BJ* VII.152, cf. Dio LXVI.1a; family harmony: Joseph. *BJ* IV.597; VII.119 ff.

⁵⁰ Joseph. *BJ* VII.73; IV.654; VII.85. ⁵¹ *BMCRE* II xxxiii, xxxv, xliii, l–li.

⁵² Gallivan (1981); Pliny, *Pan.* 58.

Vespasian's granddaughters. It is possible that a fear of confusing the succession issue by producing another legitimate child is what deterred Vespasian from taking a second wife as *princeps*. Instead he resumed his youthful liaison with the imperial freedwoman Antonia Caenis, retained her as his concubine, and found others to replace her when she died.⁵³

The practical role assumed by the *princeps*' sons was to cause trouble for them in the future. For just as Domitian and Mucianus did the dirty work for Vespasian before his return to Rome, so Titus as praetorian prefect dealt with opposition in a way that protected the person of the *princeps* while preserving his reputation for clemency. At the end of the reign, Josephus was to try and combat the reputation for cruelty that Titus thus acquired by stressing his clemency as commander in the Jewish War.⁵⁴

Tacitus and Suetonius, however, reflect rumours not only about the ambitions of Vespasian's sons but about the tensions between the brothers and, in particular, about the jealousy of Domitian, who was denied the opportunity to acquire independent military glory.⁵⁵ That was inevitable, for Vespasian, who had seen under Tiberius and Claudius the problems that could arise from ambiguity over who was to succeed, made a clear distinction between his sons while advancing both. He doubtless expected Titus, who was only thirty years old and, though divorced, had shown himself capable of producing progeny, to be followed by his own son. Vespasian's wish to establish a clear difference was facilitated by the substantial and visible twelve-year difference in their ages and was reinforced by Roman tradition: Galba, according to Tacitus, cited the fact that he was adopting Piso and not his older brother as evidence that he had no dynastic designs. It was natural for Domitian to be praetor when Titus was given his first consulship in 70, and natural for Titus as a consular to become censor with his father while Domitian was holding his first ordinary consulship in 73. The inequality is clear to see in the attributes the two have on coins and in the fact that Titus is the first to appear in Rome on the obverses of gold and silver coins.⁵⁶

The principal difference, however, was manifested in their titulature, for it is only Titus' which includes the title 'Imperator', and not just as a way of recording the number of imperial salutations. The question of this title has more than anything else given rise to the problem of Titus' position *vis à vis* his father. Like Josephus in retrospect, the elder Pliny, dedicating his *Natural History* to Titus in 77, addresses him as 'imperator' and speaks of 'imperatores Caesares Vespasiani'.⁵⁷ Although he has to omit 'Augustus'

⁵³ For the Flavian family tree: Townend (1961); Castritius (1969); Caenis: Suet. *Vesp.* 3; 21; Dio LXVI.14 (she died before 75). ⁵⁴ Dio LXVI.24.4; cf. Suet. *Tit.* 6–7.1. See Yavetz (1975).

⁵⁵ Tac. *Hist.* iv. 85–6, cf. Suet. *Dom.* 2.2 ⁵⁶ Above, n. 51.

⁵⁷ Jones, *Titus* 81; Joseph. *Vit.* 359; 361; Pliny, *HN* III.66: 'imperatores et censores Caesares Vespasiani'; VII.162 'Imperatores Caesares Vespasiani pater filiusque censores'.

from Vespasian's name in order to achieve this plural, the designation reflects the fact that Titus' position was highly unusual. Coins probably from the Roman mint at Ephesus and inscriptions in the eastern and western provinces, and even in Italy, show Titus at various dates with the praenomen 'Imperator'. Some of these, notably the coins and milestones, have some claim to reflect official sanction; others are attributable to Roman military commanders who ought to have been aware of official protocol.⁵⁸ But in Rome the practice is unattested, though 'Imperator' is given considerable prominence, occurring between 'Titus' and 'Caesar' or between 'Titus Caesar' and 'Vespasianus' or at the head of the titles following the name. The fact that the numbering of Titus' *tribunicia potestas* follows but lags behind Vespasian's by two, and that the numbering of his imperial salutations follows Vespasian's, starting from the conjunction of his first with his father's seventh, suggests a parallel with the position of Tiberius between his adoption in A.D. 4 and the death of Augustus. Even being Vespasian's colleague in the censorship does not argue for full parity except in that office, traditionally collegiate like all Republican magistracies.

In his biography of Titus, Suetonius describes him as 'partner and protector of the imperial power'. The second term he glosses by a reference to his punishment of potential enemies as prefect of the praetorian guard. Vespasian had witnessed the threat to Tiberius from that quarter and had seen Nero undone by an ambitious prefect and Galba by a negligent one. He had also seen the friction between Tiberius' son and heir and his prefect. In addition to avoiding friction and providing security, Vespasian may have wished to reinforce the impression that Titus was the military arm of the regime: the prominence of 'Imperator' in his titlature may have had a similar function. The long-term consequence of the decision to make Titus the prefect of the guard, especially after the appointment of Tiberius Iulius Alexander to that post, was to establish it as the highest to which an *equus* could aspire, that of prefect of Egypt now coming second.⁵⁹

As for Titus' role as *particeps imperii*, Suetonius adduces the sharing of unspecified duties, and, specifically, the writing of letters and edicts in his father's name and the reading out of his speeches to the Senate. He points out that Titus was thought to take bribes to influence Vespasian's judicial decisions. The implication is that it was Vespasian, not Titus, who exercised jurisdiction, just as the letters and edicts were issued in the name of Vespasian. Again, Titus is shown commenting on a tax already established by his father.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ e.g. *ILS* 8904=MW 86; *ILS* 254=MW 87; *JGRR* III 223=MW 88. Coins show it down to 74 (*BMCRE* II n. 47), see Mattingly, *BMCRE* II LXV, who suggests imperfect instructions, not filial rebellion.

⁵⁹ Suet. *Tit.* 6: 'participem atque etiam tutorem imperii'; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 9.11; Chilver (1962) 243.

⁶⁰ Suet. *Tit.* 6.1; *Vesp.* 23.3, cf. Dio LXVI.14-5.

Although Titus was said to have found time for riotous living, he must certainly have been seen to be working and learning the job which he would eventually assume. The elder Pliny in his dedication claims to have provided the table of contents to his voluminous work ‘as it was my duty in the public interest to save time for your occupations’. For the justification of Vespasian’s continued tenure of power was to be the laborious attention to the needs of the *res publica* shown by himself and his son. His nephew describes how the elder Pliny, prefect of the fleet at Misenum, would go before daybreak to see the emperor who was already at his desk, and then attend to his own work, clearly in the city. He was one of the *amici* whom Vespasian admitted after reading his letters and the reports of all the administrative departments (*officia*). The portion of the day left over from business, the emperor devoted to exercise and relaxation, a way of life which, with one day of fasting a month and a rubdown after his workout, ensured Vespasian robust health. This was the new image of the *princeps* that was to replace that of his dissolute predecessors, its antithesis being the lazy and gluttonous Vitellius of our literary sources.⁶¹

It is not just Vespasian’s gratitude for his own advancement to military honours and the consulship, and Titus’ loyalty to Britannicus, that explain why Claudius was the Julio-Claudian *princeps* whom Vespasian particularly chose to honour. Claudius, as his literary portraits make plain, loved his work: he spent time on jurisdiction, on issuing edicts, on supervising useful construction works. He censured Tiberius and Gaius for impeding business, the first by his absence, the second by the terror he inspired in his officials. By honouring Claudius, Vespasian could also suggest a continuity between himself and the founding dynasty, while, at the same time, by discrediting Nero, he could justify the supersession of that line.

Admiration for Claudius was combined with criticism of Nero when Vespasian ordered the completion of the Temple of Divus Claudius. The false allegation that Nero destroyed the temple and cancelled Claudius’ deification forms part of the Flavian attack on Nero’s Golden House which had swallowed up the started temple, as Martial’s poem *De Spectaculis* 2 makes clear.⁶² Writing under Titus, the poet proclaims the message that the city of Rome, which the sprawling palace and gardens would have made a personal luxury for the tyrant, is now restored to the people. On the site of Nero’s lake the great amphitheatre, the Colosseum, was built up to the third tier by Vespasian, to be completed by his sons. To the north on the Oppian Hill, on the site of Nero’s palace and park, were to rise the Baths of Titus, and the colossal bronze statue of the megalomaniac emperor,

⁶¹ Pliny, *HN* I pref. 33; Pliny, *Ep.* III.5.9 ff., cf. VI.16.4; see Syme (1969) 227 = *Roman Papers* II 765–6. Suet. *Vesp.* 20–1; cf. Vitellius in Tac. *Hist.* II.77.3; II.76.5.

⁶² Suet. *Tit.* 2; Sen. *Ad Polybium* 7.2; *ILS* 206 = Smallwood, *GCN* no. 368; Suet. *Claud.* 45; *Vesp.* 9. See Charlesworth (1937) 57 ff.; Griffin (1994).

designed to be placed in front of the vestibule on the Velia, was redesigned as a statue of the Sun and erected there. Finally, as the elder Pliny stresses, many of the Greek works of art that had been looted for the Golden House were now displayed in the Temple of Peace, built on land made available by the Great Fire of 64. The great Flavian structures could be claimed as public munificence and opposed, in accordance with republican tradition, to private luxury.⁶³ This would divert attention from the fact that the public had gained at the expense of the private individuals whose houses and shops had been destroyed by the fire and by the Neronian building operations.

Vespasian claimed Augustan precedent for the idea of a huge amphitheatre in the heart of the city, but for his restoration to the public of a vineyard in Rome occupied by private individuals there was a Claudian precedent, and it was Claudius whose reputation as a builder of useful constructions Vespasian celebrated. Walls, ports and aqueducts attracted more approval than places of entertainment, even more than temples. Claudius had advertised, in an inscription on the Aqua Virgo, that he had restored and rebuilt the aqueduct whose arches were disturbed by Gaius.⁶⁴ Now, in 71, a new inscription on the Aqua Claudia and Anio Novus informed the citizens of Rome that the aqueduct, built by Claudius, had, after nine years of neglect, been restored by Vespasian at his own expense, and the point was underscored by a dedication to Vespasian celebrating his repair of the streets of the city ruined 'by the neglect of earlier times'. In addition to disparaging Nero, these inscriptions make the more general point that a *princeps* has duties, among them looking after and spending his own fortune on works of public utility, not on selfish projects for his own comfort. The elder Pliny, writing in 77, makes a similar criticism of Nero for letting the canal drained by the Fucine lake fill up again: the idea was to increase the area of cultivated land and make the river more navigable.⁶⁵

Again, the four surviving boundary stones that proclaim Vespasian's extension of the city's sacred boundary, an imperial prerogative for which the Lex de Imperio Vespasiani could give only Claudius as precedent, carefully repeat the inscription on the *cippi* of 49, thereby endorsing the view of Claudius, controversial in his time, that such extensions were justified by foreign conquest: Vespasian was doubtless thinking of the reduction of Judaea and two eastern client kingdoms to the status of Roman provinces (p. 39) and of the gains in Britain (pp. 37–8).⁶⁶ The extension belongs to

⁶³ Pliny, *HN* xxxiv.84; xxxvi.27. Republican tradition. Cic. *Flac.* 28; *Mur.* 76.

⁶⁴ Suet. *Vesp.* 9; *ILS* 249=MW 430; *ILS* 205=Smallwood, *GCN* no. 308b. Cf. Cic. *Off.* II.60.

⁶⁵ *ILS* 218=MW 408a; *ILS* 245=MW 412. Pliny, *HN* xxxvi.124–5; Dio *LX.11.5*, cf. Suet. *Iul.* 44; *Claud.* 20.

⁶⁶ *NSC* (1993) 241=MW 51; *ILS* 213=Smallwood, *GCN* no. 44; Tac. *Ann.* xii.23–4; Sen. *Brev. Vit.* 13.8; see Boatwright (1986).

the first half of 75, thus soon after the conclusion of his joint censorship with Titus in 73–74, in which not only the population was recorded but the whole city carefully measured. Pliny's account of these measurements perhaps reflects, not only his own, but Vespasian's interest in antiquarian detail, similar to that displayed by Claudius in his speech to the Senate justifying his extension. For Suetonius notes Vespasian's zeal for restoring and recovering the senatorial decrees, treaties and diplomas that had been damaged in the burning of the Capitol.⁶⁷

The tenure of the censorship in itself looked back to Claudius. After Augustus' ill-omened experiment with real censors in 22 B.C., no one had held the office until Claudius assumed it in 47/8 with Lucius Vitellius, whose period of ascendancy had coincided with Vespasian's rise to the consulship.⁶⁸ Claudius had used the opportunity presented by the office to make speeches, not only about adlection to the Senate, but against disorder, lasciviousness and greed. Vespasian reinforced at least one piece of legislation from his censorship, a law to inhibit the lending of money to any young man still *in patria potestate*: the moneylender would hope to recover it when the father died and the son came into property. This s.c. Macedonianum, named after a notorious profligate who resorted to parricide, must have refined Claudius' measures or perhaps added teeth to it by making any loan to such a person non-actionable after the father's death. The Flavian decree seems to be concerned with curbing the luxurious habits of the young who might be driven to murder of the *pater familias* in desperation, though clearly Claudius' concern with the cruelty of the moneylenders will also have been served.⁶⁹

A moral measure to discourage lust, according to Suetonius, by demoting to the status of slaves free women who cohabited with the slaves of others, is related in some way to a s.c. Claudianum.⁷⁰ Possibly Vespasian stipulated that the master not only not condone the relationship but manifest his displeasure by making the denunciation himself.⁷¹ The child of such a union would, like its mother, become the slave of its father's master; Claudius' ruling also made the child a slave when the master agreed to the union on that condition, but in that case the mother retained her freedom with the status of a freedwoman. This exception to the principle of *ius gentium* was upheld by Vespasian and with it the interests of the slave-owner, and of the imperial slave-owner in particular, for the slaves most likely to marry free women were those whose membership of the

⁶⁷ Pliny, *HN* VII.162; III.66–7; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5

⁶⁸ On *Hist.* III.66, where Vitellius' supporters call Vespasian 'Vitellii cliens', Wellesley (1972) 163.

⁶⁹ Tac. *Ann.* XI.13; Suet. *Vesp.* 11; *Dig.* XIV.6.1 pr.; *Cod.* IV.28; Gai. *Inst.* IV.7.7; see Levick (1990) 124; 223 n. 29; against Daube (1947).

⁷⁰ Suet. *Vesp.* 11; Tac. *Ann.* XII.53; Gai. *Inst.* I.160; 84; Talbert, *Senate* 443–4.

⁷¹ Tac. *Ann.* XII.53, cf. Gai. *Inst.* I.160; Weaver (1964).

imperial household lent them prestige.⁷² Other measures denied Junian Latin status to children of mixed unions, again to the advantage of slave-owners.⁷³

Vespasian's reign, however, saw a new opportunity for attaining Roman citizenship extended to Junian Latins. A senatorial decree, carried by the consuls Pegasus (a noted jurist) and L. Cornelius Pusio Annius Messalla, extended the privilege, conceded by the Lex Aelia Sentia of A.D. 4 to Junian Latins manumitted before the age of thirty, to any Junian Latin male who married a citizen or Latin and produced a child who attained one year of age. His wife and child also became citizens.⁷⁴ This same consular pair were responsible for legislation tightening up the regulations for legacies not listed in a will but entrusted for fulfilment to a beneficiary of the will (*fideicommissa*).⁷⁵ The consulship, if not earlier, could belong to 73 during Vespasian's censorship.⁷⁶

Finally, it may be Claudius the censor who inspired an edict of Vespasian and a senatorial decree directed against the demolition of buildings and removal of marble for the sake of commercial profit. The motive given in the legal source is to prevent the *publicus adspectus* from being spoiled. This concern with the architectural environment was perhaps meant to reinforce a senatorial decree of A.D. 47 imposing a financial penalty and requiring senatorial scrutiny when someone bought a building with the purpose of destroying it for commercial gain. That decree cites the concern shown by the *princeps* for the private as well as the public building of Rome and Italy. Promotion of the *aeternitas* of Rome and Italy was even more urgent for Vespasian who had to deal with the destruction caused by the civil wars. His concern shows also in his efforts to settle quickly claims for restitution of property and his moves to allow private citizens to occupy sites which lacked owners and build on them.⁷⁷

One key concern of the inhabitants of Rome, second only to the corn and water supply, was the maintenance of the banks of the Tiber to prevent flooding. Inscriptions attesting the work of the *curatores riparum et alvei Tiberis* under Vespasian date to the period of his censorship in 73/4. The form of the inscriptions follows an innovation of the time of Claudius: instead of the authorization *ex s(enatus) c(onsulto)* found under Tiberius,

⁷² Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 162 ff. Cf. Domitian's subscript enforcing Rubric XCVII of the Lex Imitana protecting the rights of patrons over freed slaves: Mourgues (1987).

⁷³ Gai. *Inst.* 1.84–5; see Crook (1967). ⁷⁴ Gai. *Inst.* 1.31.

⁷⁵ *FIRA* 1 99, v.18; Paulus, *Sent.* 4.3. The second of these measures (Gai. *Inst.* 11.258–9) speaks of a *senatus consultum Pegasianum*, and it is assumed that all three measures go together; Gai. *Inst.* 11.286, 286a.

⁷⁶ Champlin (1978) 269 inferred the *nomen* Plotius for Pegasus who he suggested was the brother of Plotius Grypus: on this and on his consulship, see Syme, 'Prefects of the City, Vespasian to Trajan', *Roman Papers* v 612.

⁷⁷ On *ILS* 6043=Smallwood, *GCN* no. 365; *Dig.* XVIII.1.52, see Levick (1990) 114; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 9.8; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5.

Claudius' five curators proclaimed themselves to be acting *ex auctoritate Ti. Claudii Caesaris*. Under Vespasian, in fact, the imperial authorization is put first, followed by the name of only one curator.⁷⁸ The board was originally set up by the Senate on the initiative of Tiberius, who arranged for the appointment of five senators by lot.⁷⁹ It is often assumed that some move towards greater autocracy, such as a change in the manner of appointment of the curators, is implied by the Claudian innovation, and that the failure to advertise collegiality through the listing of all members of the board marks another. However, as with other such boards, the senatorial decree was merely the ultimate authority, and it was in that sense that the operations of the *curatores* were conducted *ex s.c.*: the formula initiated by Claudius and retained under Vespasian, Trajan and Hadrian was just making public what the actual conditions of power had been from the start. Nonetheless, there may have been a practical reason for the change. Curators, faced with disputes over the delimitation of boundaries and over measures for flood control, may have realized that the authority of the *principes* would be invoked to greater effect than that of the Senate, which probably took no continuous interest in these operations. Some hint of their problems appears already on one of the pre-Claudian boundary stones where the curators specify 'without prejudice to public or private claims', and some light may be shed on their invocation of imperial authority by the remark of Iulius Frontinus that, on tours of inspection as *curator aquarum*, he found his own good faith and the authority conferred on him by the *principes* of more use than the lictors granted to him by the original senatorial decree. The culmination of the process was reached when the name of the emperor Antoninus Pius appeared first in the nominative and the *curator* in the ablative as the functionary carrying out the *terminatio* the emperor had arranged.⁸⁰

Vespasian did not follow Claudian precedent in everything. The remarks of the elder Pliny, who so admired that emperor's erudition and public works, about the excessive power of his wife Agrippina and of his wealthy freedmen, and his hints about more recent abuses of freedmen, are indirect evidence of Vespasian's determination to avoid the pattern that Nero had tried unsuccessfully to reverse.⁸¹ In Philostratus' fantasy, his hero Apollonius stresses the need to curtail the pride and luxury of imperial slaves and freedmen, while Vespasian is made to lament the subservience of Claudius to his wives. In fact even Vespasian's concubine Caenis was criticized for selling her influence with Vespasian, though her money-making

⁷⁸ *curatores riparum et alvei Tiberis*. Under Tiberius: *ILS* 5925; *EJ*² 296; *CIL* XIV 4704; Claudius: *ILS* 5926=Smallwood, *GCN* no. 307b; Vespasian: *ILS* 5927=MW 443; *ILS* 5928–9.

⁷⁹ Dio LVII.14.8, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.76; 79 vs Suet. *Aug.* 37. See Brunt (1984b) 439–40.

⁸⁰ Eck (1984) 137. Practical reason: *CIL* XIV 4704c; Frontin. *Aq.* II.101.

⁸¹ Pliny, *HN* XXXV.201, cf. Tac. *Ann.* XII.53; XXXIII.134; XXXVI.60.

ventures, unlike Messallina's, were said to have been encouraged by the *princeps*.⁸² No scandals are reported about the freedmen secretaries of Vespasian; indeed the only one of whom we know anything is the father of Claudius Etruscus, a native of Smyrna who had served under Claudius, perhaps as a procurator in the East, and returned to Rome to take some part in the Jewish triumph of 71, ending up as Vespasian's *a rationibus* in charge of the imperial properties and financial accounts in general. Vespasian promoted him to equestrian rank after his appointment, a move which looks forward to the gradual replacement of freedmen by *equites* in these posts.⁸³ This was to be the ultimate solution to the resentment provoked by employing freedmen in secretarial jobs close to the emperor, which gave them power and pride beyond what was felt to be appropriate to their social position.

Another contrast that Pliny explicitly draws between Vespasian and Claudius concerns accessibility. Whereas Claudius had given free access as a special privilege marked by the wearing of a gold ring with his portrait, Vespasian abolished the practice and, with it, the *maiestas* charges that had resulted. Indiscriminate searching of all who entered the emperor's presence, introduced by Claudius, was abolished. Furthermore, as Nero had promised in his programme of correcting Claudian abuses, Vespasian habitually exercised jurisdiction in public.⁸⁴ His general accessibility was the social aspect of being *civilis*, a quality for which Suetonius and Dio particularly praise him.⁸⁵ One of its most important manifestations was the recognition of merit in men of the senatorial class, the only potential rivals to the *princeps*. Here Vespasian avoided the practices of both his Julio-Claudian predecessors. It is Nero whose meanness in this respect is rebuked by the speech Vespasian made recommending that the Senate honour Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus, a patrician connected through adoption with Claudius. He had served Nero as legate of Moesia from 61 to 66 'with such distinction', Vespasian said, 'that the award of triumphal decorations should not have been left to me'. Another such case was Tampus Flavianus, Nero's governor of Pannonia.⁸⁶ This grudgingness was only characteristic of the last years of Nero: he had started his reign by showing confidence in Cn. Domitius Corbulo, who had been recalled from an offensive in Germany by Claudius. The consolatory triumphal decorations he had then conferred on Corbulo had not restored Claudius' reputation for recognizing merit, as he gave such honours too indiscriminately and not only for military victory.⁸⁷ Vespasian himself sought to avoid the errors of

⁸² Philostr. *VA* v.27; 32; 36; Dio LXVI.14.3.

⁸³ Stat. *Silv.* III.3; Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 284 ff. Vitellius had already done this of necessity (Tac. *Hist.* I.58; cf. *ILS* 1447=MW 338).

⁸⁴ Pliny, *HN* xxxiii.41; Dio LX.3.3 (Claudius); LXVI.10.5.

⁸⁵ Suet. *Vesp.* 12; Dio LXVI.10.6.

⁸⁶ Tac. *Agr.* 5.3; *ILS* 986=MW 261; *ILS* 985=MW 274.

⁸⁷ Tac. *Ann.* XI.20; Suet. *Claud.* 24.3.

both his Julio-Claudian predecessors, being generous with praise, yet reserving triumphal honours for ex-consuls.⁸⁸

As the head of government and the head of Roman society, the *princeps* inevitably set an example. The senate's decree of A.D. 47 (p. 22) appeals to the precept and example of Claudius, while Seneca had predicted the extension of Nero's gentleness of spirit through the whole body of the empire. The effusions of the elder Pliny against luxury and in favour of frugality and a simple way of life give some indication of Vespasian's efforts to change the habits of the Julio-Claudian age: Tacitus in fact attests to the success of Vespasian's own example in at least inhibiting the more conspicuous practices.⁸⁹ Even the portraits of members of the imperial house now began to exercise an influence on portraits of private individuals, who chose to represent themselves with the fleshy faces and bourgeois expressions of Vespasian, Titus and Domitian, the women sporting in addition the hairstyles of the Flavian women and even the large eyes of Titus' daughter Iulia.⁹⁰ The modest lifestyle and self-effacing industry and obedience of a public servant celebrated in Tacitus' biography of Agricola is suggestive of the attitudes Vespasian hoped to inculcate and market as the modern equivalent of the glory and patriotism of the Roman heroes of old.⁹¹

A related aspect of Flavian ideology can be seen in the charters eventually issued to the new Latin *municipia* in accordance with Vespasian's grant of Latin rights to Spain (see pp. 27, 29, 32): the magistrates of the towns are responsible only for building temples and utilitarian structures out of public funds, while citizens are encouraged or even required to provide other buildings for the enjoyment of the community.⁹² Vespasian had known straitened circumstances and so found it easy to set an example of private frugality. But he also laid great stress on his personal public munificence, for both traits were crucial to making acceptable the harsh financial measures his situation required him to impose. Even so, his sons were left to live down his reputation for avarice. Suetonius might give him the benefit of the doubt, judging that he made excellent use of what were necessary, though ill-gotten, gains, but Tacitus detected alongside his virtuous frugality and abstemiousness, reminiscent of Roman generals of the past, an unattractive avarice: his complete account would have shown that unsavoury methods of raising money were adopted by Vespasian himself as the reign went on, a notable exception to Tacitus' overall verdict that Vespasian was the only one of the *principes* to date who improved after his accession.⁹³

⁸⁸ Chilver's (1984) commentary on Tac. *Hist.* II.77; e.g. *ILS* 997=MW 50.

⁸⁹ *ILS* 6043=Smallwood, *GCN* no. 365; 'quibus ipse non solum praecepto augustissimo set etiam exemplo suo prodesset'; Sen. *Clem.* II.2.1; Pliny, *HN* xxxIII.47; xxxVII.6; 8; 14–16; Tac. *Ann.* III.5 with Syme (1958) 26–9. ⁹⁰ Zanker (1982). ⁹¹ Tac. *Agr.* 44.1–4; 45.3; 9.3–5 (under Vespasian).

⁹² Galsterer (1988) 84–5; Mackie (1983) 119; 126 n. 7.

⁹³ Suet. *Vesp.* 16.3; Tac. *Hist.* II.5; II.84, cf. I.50.

5. *Financial policy*

Mucianus and Vespasian himself had already requisitioned funds in the East for the war chest, but reconstruction after the civil war was no less costly, and the financial situation had been aggravated by the inevitable loss of tax revenue and the exceptional military expenses. Vespasian claimed, according to his biographer, that 40,000 million sesterces were required to put the state on its feet again, given the emptiness of the state and imperial treasuries. This sum, nearly twenty times Augustus' subventions to the public treasuries, the plebs and the soldiers during his forty years of rule, and even greater in comparison to normal annual state income on any possible calculation, is normally emended to 4,000 million sesterces. This more modest sum seems to fit with the facts. It is true that *aerarium* officials were already concerned with the dearth of funds in the context of the restoration of the Capitoline temple. But it is notable that when Mucianus on his return realized that he could not reduce the numbers of the praetorians all at once, the idea of raising a realistic public loan of 60 million sesterces from private individuals was dropped. Though Tacitus' consequent scepticism about the alleged poverty was probably unjustified, the only way of reconciling such behaviour with Vespasian's statement in its unemended form would be to assume that he had in mind the building up of a capital sum to invest. This, however, seems to be an anachronistic idea, for the ancient sources speak only of the accumulation of reserves, and these, even when amassed by the frugal Tiberius in a long reign, did not exceed 2,700 million sesterces.⁹⁴

Money had, nonetheless, to be found, not only to meet ordinary government commitments, but to fund Vespasian's ideas of what amenities the inhabitants of Rome's domains should enjoy. The silver coinage, right from its start in 70, was subject to an important but inconspicuous economy. Nero had reduced both the weight of the denarius and the proportion of silver in its content, and his standard had been maintained virtually unchanged through the civil war. Now the Neronian weight was maintained but the silver content was substantially reduced again.⁹⁵

Mucianus had given the victorious Flavian troops only a small donative, and Vespasian exploited the image of the old-fashioned commander and the authority of his own victory to refuse further favours.⁹⁶ More important was the eventual reduction of the praetorian cohorts to the Tiberian number of nine, on financial grounds. Four legions were also disbanded, but this was not for financial reasons, nor, as Suetonius has it, because they had fought for Vitellius.⁹⁷ Three of those cashiered, the I, IV Macedonica

⁹⁴ Suet. *Vesp.* 16.3; Tac. *Hist.* iv.47; Charlesworth in *CAH* xi¹ 13–14; Suet. *Gaius* 37.3.

⁹⁵ Walker (1976) 111 ff. puts the drop at 5 per cent. Butcher and Ponting (1995) 75–6 suggest that 15 per cent would be a more accurate estimate.

⁹⁶ Tac. *Hist.* ii.82; Dio lxxv.22; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.2

⁹⁷ Tac. *Hist.* iv.46; cf. ii.93; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.2.

and XVI Gallica, had mutinied, while XV Primigenia had surrendered to the Gallic rebels at Castra Vetera. Of the remaining three German legions, XXI Rapax and XXII Primigenia were only moved from Upper to Lower Germany and the V Alaudae was probably sent to Moesia. It has been argued that it too, like its companion legion from Vetera Castra, was disbanded, but it is a reasonable objection to this view that only a rump had been involved in the Rhine disgrace. The bulk of the legion and its eagle had been sent to Italy with Fabius Valens and was defeated at Cremona, the survivors being sent to Illyricum where they fought the Sarmatians under Fonteius Agrippa. At least one of its veterans was included in the new veteran settlement at Scupi in Moesia. If V Alaudae was spared, then Vespasian showed himself prepared to finance twenty-nine legions, including two that he had created, the IV Flavia Felix and XVI Flavia Firma. This was one more than Nero had in the last part of his reign.⁹⁸

Some of Vespasian's measures were probably not designed primarily to raise money but may have had that incidental result. The grant of Latin rights to Spain, by which the magistrates of the new Latin *municipia* acquired Roman citizenship, would incidentally have increased the numbers paying inheritance and manumission taxes. The annexation of Commagene and re-annexation of Achaea and Lycia will have increased revenues, though financial motives need not have been paramount (pp. 28, 39).

Vespasian had revived old taxes, increased a customary one and invented new ones for Alexandria, though he had climbed down over the imposition of the poll tax which the Alexandrians would have viewed as a great humiliation, for exemption was a privilege they shared with Roman citizens and from which the ordinary Egyptians, and indeed the Jews, were excluded. Imposition, however, is one thing; enforcement another. Vespasian no doubt tried to avoid the compulsory tax-farming and rent-collection that the edict of his supporter Ti. Julius Alexander had abolished, with allusions to Nero's last hated prefect.⁹⁹

What significance to attach to the establishment of the *fiscus Alexandrinus*, which first appears on inscriptions of Vespasian's reign, is uncertain. About another special treasury, the *fiscus Iudaicus*, there is no doubt: it held the tax that Jews once paid to support the temple in Jerusalem which had been destroyed in 70. The two drachmai that each Jew paid annually now went instead to the Capitoline temple in Rome.¹⁰⁰ Vespasian had solved the Senate's problem of financing its reconstruction in his own way.

Other provinces are said to have suffered treatment similar to Egypt, with tribute being increased, sometimes doubled. More striking are the re-annexations. In the autumn of 70 Vespasian left Alexandria and, on his way

⁹⁸ Chilver's (1984) commentary II 14–16; Strobel (1988); Birley (1986).

⁹⁹ Bosworth (1973) 58 ff. Egypt: Dio LXVI.8; Suet. *Vesp.* 19.2; *OGIS* 669=MW 328, vv. 14; 26 ff.

¹⁰⁰ *Fiscus Alexandrinus*: *ILS* 1518=MW 202; *fiscus Iudaicus*: Joseph. *BJ* VII.1218; Dio LXVI.7.

to Rome, he passed Rhodes and sailed along the Ionian coast in a leisurely way receiving ovations.¹⁰¹ He then visited Greece, and it was probably on this occasion that he justified the return of Achaëa to the status of a Roman province by saying that the Greeks had forgotten how to be free. Philostratus attests how very unpopular this cancellation of Nero's grant of freedom was, and regards the reason given as a pretext. There is, however, some evidence of unrest in Sparta and possibly elsewhere at the end of Nero's reign, while the false Nero who appeared in 69 may have contributed to Vespasian's impatience with the local disputes endemic in Greece.¹⁰² But our only clear indication of date is the fact that by the spring of 74 Sardinia had been returned to administration by procurators instead of the senatorial proconsuls to whom Nero had assigned it in compensation for the loss of the agreeable province of Achaëa. In view of Vespasian's route home and the evidence of troubles in Greece, Eusebius' date of 74 seems too late for the re-annexation of Achaëa and the inclusion of Rhodes in that province, just as it is too early for the reabsorption of Samos and Byzantium, still described as free in 77.¹⁰³

Re-annexation is also attested by Suetonius for Lycia, possibly freed by Nero or Galba. To accommodate the six imperial legates attested there under Vespasian it is necessary to assume that this too happened early, probably when Vespasian called there on his way home.¹⁰⁴ A natural motive to adduce here would be the reconstitution of the old province of Lycia-Pamphylia. That would free Galatia, united with Pamphylia and other areas by Galba, for reunion with Cappadocia, as during the special command held by Corbulo under Nero. However, this combination does not seem to have been effected immediately.¹⁰⁵

The severity with which Vespasian treated the eastern provinces does not seem to have been visited on the West with the same urgency, directness or lack of compensation. It is true that he reimposed some of the customs duties remitted by Galba in Gaul and Spain. The former, however, were part of Galba's divisive privileges to supporters of Vindex, while Galba's generosity in Spain was only apparent, being matched by collections for his war chest which affected even the temples. In Corsica, Vespasian was actually to restore privileges given by Galba but removed by Otho.¹⁰⁶

In Africa, the usual proconsul was replaced, probably in 73/4, not before

¹⁰¹ Suet. *Vesp.* 16.1; 8.4 Joseph. *Bj* VII.21.

¹⁰² Philostr. *VA* v.41; Paus. VII.17.4; Plut. *Mor.* 488 A; *SEG* XI.408=Smallwood, *GCN* no. 65. See Jones, *Plutarch* 18; 120. ¹⁰³ *CIL* X 8024=MW 337; Pliny, *HN* IV.46; v.135.

¹⁰⁴ *TAM* II.131=MW 287, cf. *TAM* II.396; Eck (1970); (1982) 285 n. 16; Jones (1973) 690. Dio LXVI.9.2a.

¹⁰⁵ *IRT* 346=MW 303, cf. Tac. *Hist.* II.9; Bosworth (1973) 65–6, adducing *AE* 1967 no. 492.

¹⁰⁶ Suet. *Vesp.* 16.1. Gaul: *RIC* I² 239 no. 134; 246 nos. 293, 296; Tac. *Hist.* I.8; I.65. Spain: *RIC* I² 236 nos. 77–84; Suet. *Galba* 12.1; Plut. *Galba* 22.1. Corsica: *FIRA* I 72=MW 460.

72 in any case, by an imperial legate, C. Rutilius Gallicus, also of consular rank, in order to take the census, assess tribute, and apparently readjust the boundaries between the old province and Numidia. He was assisted by the legionary legate of III Augusta in charge of Numidia, who then went on in 75 to replace the usual procurators in the two Mauretanian provinces, perhaps again to implement financial reorganization.¹⁰⁷ Though there was no regular pattern connecting the taking of the census in Rome with those in the various provinces, the African census, involving as it did a major administrative change, may have been timed to coincide with the holding of the censor's office by Vespasian and Titus. The same may also be true of the census in Hispania Tarraconensis, for the governorship of Vibius Crispus who took the census there is now reasonably, though not certainly, placed before or just after his tenure of a second consulship in March–May 74. Certainly there is no good reason to deny that the concession of Latin rights to the Spanish provinces was made during the joint censorship: none of the inscriptions set up by local magistrates commemorating their resulting acquisition of Roman citizenship predates A.D. 75, and when the *municipium* of Mulva in Baetica chose to honour Vespasian posthumously, it mentioned only the title of censor.¹⁰⁸

A similar gradualness is attested by the remarkable evidence from Orange, a veteran colony originally founded by Augustus. In the first half of 77, Vespasian ordered the publication of a detailed survey of the territory of the colony, undertaken by the proconsul of Gallia Narbonensis in connection with the emperor's recovery of public lands then illegally in private hands. Though what is celebrated on the great inscription on top of the plan is Vespasian's restoration to the colony of lands given by Augustus to the veterans of II Gallica, the survey, which described the original centuriation when the colony was established, was clearly also used to recover the lands which had then been left in the possession of the Roman state and which are marked on the plan. Vespasian doubtless also took an opportunity to reclaim for his own treasury the lands marked as *subseciva*, those parcels of land on the edge of the plots assigned that had been left unassigned, just as he did in the provinces and Italy generally (p. 31).¹⁰⁹ Elsewhere too, in North Africa, Spain and Italy,¹¹⁰ we find him reviving historic boundaries, claiming back original public lands for Rome and concerning himself with municipal finances. The combination found at Orange of restoring the community's own public lands and recovering

¹⁰⁷ *AE* 1936 no. 28=MW 449; *AE* 1979 nos. 684 ff.; *Stat. Silv.* 1.4.80 ff. Legate of III Augusta (Sex. Sentius Caecilianus): *ILS* 8969; *CRAI* 1940, 131–7=MW 276–7, cf. *AE* 1936 no. 28=MW 449.

¹⁰⁸ Vibius Crispus, *AE* 1939 no. 60=MW 334; *ILS* 256=MW 479. See Wiegels (1978) *vs* Bosworth (1973), 65 ff.

¹⁰⁹ *AE* 1956 nos. 84–5=MW 447; Piganiol (1962) esp. 58–88; 401; Dilke, *Surveyors* 161 ff.

¹¹⁰ Africa and Cyrene: *AE* 1936 no. 28=MW 449; *SEG* IX 166=MW 435; Baetica: *ILS* 6092=MW 461; Italy: *AE* 1945 no. 85 (Cannae); *AE* 1951 no. 200 (Salerno); *ILS* 5942=MW 339 (Pompeii).

Roman property is thus characteristic of Vespasian. It was also traditional and rational: as Cicero had observed, citizens of communities whose own revenues were in good order would be able to meet their obligations to Rome. They would also be able to provide themselves with the baths and bridges which the emperor felt appropriate to the re-establishment of peace and stability.¹¹¹

The large admixture of generosity in Vespasian's treatment of the western provinces had a narrower political purpose as well, for they had to be wooed by the candidate of the eastern provinces who had triumphed over their contenders. Exactions had to be balanced by measures to ensure loyalty. This purpose is particularly clear in the case of the offer of Latin rights to Spain. The elder Pliny, who provides the only literary evidence, describes the grant in the cryptic phrase 'universae Hispaniae Vespasianus Imperator Augustus iactatum procellis rei publicae Latium tribuit' (Vespasian 'offered to all of Spain the Latin right which had been tossed about in the storms that assailed the state').¹¹² The most likely interpretation of this cryptic sentence is that it alludes to the grants of Latin rights made by Vitellius, similar to grants of citizenship made by Galba and Otho to Gaul and other privileges to Spain and elsewhere.¹¹³ Of Vespasian's short-lived predecessors, two had been governors in the Spanish peninsula, while Africa had been the scene of Clodius Macer's attempt and Gallia Narbonensis had supported Vitellius. In the latter provinces, Vespasian was careful to institute the imperial cult on the provincial level, for Augustus had only been concerned to introduce it in newly pacified areas, such as the Three Gauls and Germany, and Claudius had extended it to Britain when he conquered it.¹¹⁴ Africa and Narbonensis had seemed fully pacified tranquil provinces to the Julio-Claudian emperors, but the recent civil wars had changed all that, and the new dynasty was in particular need of loyalty in the west. The same opportunity, however, was not open to Vespasian in the case of Spain, for there the cult had been introduced on the death of Augustus at least in Tarraconensis and probably in Lusitania. The same may well be true of the third Spanish province, Baetica, for Tiberius refused an offer of worship on the ground that reverence of Augustus would thereby be diluted.¹¹⁵ The Spanish grant will have secured loyalty, and it lost Rome no money. Indeed the new Roman citizens would actually contribute revenue (p. 27), though that can hardly have been the main purpose of this important privilege.

Rome and Italy too, according to Dio, felt the grasping hand of Vespasian. For Rome, Suetonius supplies anecdotes about the emperor's

¹¹¹ Cic. *Att.* vi.2.5; *IGRR* III 507=MW 437; *IGRR* III 840=MW 438.

¹¹² *HN* III.30. Against the emendation suggested by Bosworth (1973), Wiegels (1978) 208–10; Mackie (1983) 216. ¹¹³ Tac. *Hist.* III.5.2, cf. I.8; 78. ¹¹⁴ Fishwick (1978) esp. 1201–36.

¹¹⁵ Tac. *Ann.* I.78; *AE* 1966 no. 177 (A.D. 48), cf. *EJ* 112; Tac. *Ann.* IV.37.

determination to profit from appointments and favours, and his invention of a tax on urine whose proceeds did not stink.¹¹⁶ In Italy it was the reclaiming and sale of the *subseciva* in colonial foundations that caused the greatest outcry, so great that Vespasian stopped the process when confronted by delegations from all over the peninsula, though Titus later tried to revive it. The money is described as going to the emperor's own treasury (the *fiscus*) or 'to himself', apparently as the heir to the fortune passed down from Augustus who had bought the land for his veteran colonies in Italy with his own money.¹¹⁷

The cities of Italy, however, like those of the provinces, also benefited from the emperor's concern to maintain their financial resources, as well as from his personal expenditure on useful public works such as roads and bridges.¹¹⁸ As on the inscriptions on the aqueducts and streets of Rome (p. 20), the emperor here too advertised his conviction that such generosity was an imperial obligation that one's subjects could reasonably expect to be fulfilled, along with helping cities afflicted by natural disaster and rescuing impoverished senators. Whereas cautious emperors had been afraid of making their largess routine, Vespasian made annual subsidies to senators¹¹⁹ and, in addition to making occasional presents to poets and artists, he assumed for the *fiscus* the permanent burden of supporting professors of Greek and Latin rhetoric, Quintilian being among the first holders of the latter chair.¹²⁰

Whatever the precise relation of the two treasuries, it is clear that the emperor's determination to raise money, not only for the *fiscus* but for the *aerarium*, facilitated his personal liberality. For the pattern of imperial subventions to the *aerarium* from Augustus on meant that its insolvency would severely inhibit the *princeps'* conspicuous spending elsewhere. Moreover, in areas where the *princeps* could not claim credit for initiating personal expenditure, he would claim it for initiating generous financial policies, and he could pursue similar projects in both ways. Thus Vespasian's personal cultural patronage was complemented by the immunity from public taxation and billeting that he conferred on doctors and teachers throughout the empire, taking them under the special protection of the imperial house.¹²¹

When Helvidius Priscus suggested that the Capitol be restored by public initiative but that Vespasian should contribute, that was not financially bizarre or constitutionally impertinent. What the Senate feared would

¹¹⁶ Dio LXVI.8.4; Suet. *Vesp.* 16.2; 23.2–3.

¹¹⁷ *Corpus Agrimensorum Romanorum* 1.1 (ed. Thulin), pp. 41; 96–7; cf. *Res gestae* 16, see Millar, *Emperor* 196; 444. ¹¹⁸ *ILS* 3813=MW 432; *ILS* 250=MW 433; cf. in general, Dio LXVI.10.1–3a.

¹¹⁹ Suet. *Vesp.* 17, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 11.38: 'dedit tibi, Hortale, divus Augustus pecuniam, sed non compellat nec ea lege ut semper daretur' (Tiberius); XIII.34 (Nero).

¹²⁰ Suet. *Vesp.* 18.1 ('e *fisco*'); but cf. Dio LXVI.19); Tac. *Dial.* 9: 50,000 HS to the poet Saleius Bassus.

¹²¹ *FIRA* 1 73 and 77=MW 458. Earlier grants of privilege to these groups by Caesar, the triumvir and Augustus had proved ephemeral: Bringmann (1983) 69 ff.

cause offence was the suggestion that the *princeps* would not receive the personal credit for the restoration: Vespasian's eagerness to wield the shovel on his return to Rome shows they were correct.¹²²

6. *Short-term vs long-term aims*

The need to consolidate his own position and that of his family was clearly present to the mind of Vespasian, but it is often difficult to distinguish which measures were designed purely for this end and which only or also involved more general aims. For example, the grant of Latin rights to the Spanish provinces was a way of securing loyalty from an area that had supported other claimants, but the method chosen was not an accident nor explicable in simple financial terms (p. 27). Vespasian and his sons seem to have appreciated the long-term consequences of what was an ambitious project that would take time to complete. As the *Lex Irnitana* makes clear, the original edict of Vespasian and Titus granting the privilege provided the basis for the master law which was then modified to create the individual municipal charters issued under Domitian. These charters contained provision about the government of the communities as well as the grant of citizenship to ex-magistrates.¹²³ Thus Vespasian set in motion a system that would not only automatically convert a portion of the provincial élite into Roman citizens, but would also generate Latin *municipes* and *municipia* with constitutions similar to those obtaining in towns and colonies of Roman citizens.

Then again, Vespasian had immediate reasons for cashiering the mutinous legions (pp. 26–7). No doubt some members of the disgraced units were allowed to re-enlist, but he also recruited new soldiers for his new legions. And for the composition of these new recruits, long-term political aims, based on the lessons learned in the civil war, have been adduced. Rostovtzeff thought that Vespasian deliberately eliminated the Italian proletariat from the legions and, with the exception of the praetorian guard, created 'an army of provincials', because the sack of Cremona had demonstrated the class conflict between the Italian bourgeoisie and the proletariat soldiers. Last thought that Vespasian increased provincial intake to lessen the soldiers' awareness of Roman politics.

These theories rest on the established fact that the percentage of provincial to Italian legionaries increased under Vespasian. The study of inscriptions in recent years, however, has not only produced more evidence for the change but made scholars more aware of the limited amount of the

¹²² Tac. *Hist.* iv.9 with Chilver's (1984) commentary; Brunt (1984b) 439; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.5

¹²³ Above, n. 36, esp. chs. 19–20.

total data they possess, of the uneven representation it offers of different areas, and of the difficulties of interpretation it presents.¹²⁴

On the one hand, new legions and emergency levies continued to be raised primarily in Italy, perhaps for symbolic reasons, as well as for convenience.¹²⁵ On the other, the eastern legions in Syria, Cappadocia and Egypt, for which evidence is scanty, had from the start a high proportion of eastern recruits from Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, presumably because of geographical proximity, while linguistic competence in Greek would make life easier in the area. Some of the soldiers may only have been given the citizenship on entering the legions, though some will be bilingual descendants of Roman colonists. However, the enrolment for the legions for which the evidence is best, those in the Danube, German and African provinces, does show a steady decline in the proportion of Italians. Yet, even here, we know that Nero already recruited for the legions of Illyricum in Gallia Narbonensis, Africa and Asia.¹²⁶ Moreover, there is enough evidence to suggest that imperial initiative is not the cause of the change: rather, difficulties of recruiting in Italy, or perhaps the quality of manpower available after the long period of peace in the peninsula can be adduced.¹²⁷ Though losses in the civil war will have accelerated the process of provincialization, the general pattern of recruitment is compatible with these non-political explanations, for it progresses from those areas with the most Roman citizens and established Roman habits to those later brought within the Roman cultural orbit. The legions in Germany, which should have occasioned Vespasian most concern, show no dramatic change, still being largely recruited from Italy and the western provinces.

Rostovtzeff also argued that Vespasian neutralized any possible threat from the auxiliary forces, the non-citizen troops which contributed so heavily to Rome's fighting strength, by deliberately mixing up men of different nationalities and stationing them far from home. Recent studies, however, have shown that, from the time of Augustus on, units had shed more and more of their ethnic character, though there was no uniform pattern. Moreover, the Batavian cohorts, which had caused Rome such trouble in 69/70, retained the exceptional right to be commanded by their own chieftain rather than a Roman prefect and remained homogeneous in composition. The fact that discharge diplomas become more numerous and more detailed in this period should not be taken

¹²⁴ Rostovtzeff, *SEHRE*² ch. 4; H. Last, *CAH XI*¹ 396; Forni (1974). At Tac. *Hist.* 1.84.3 Otho contrasts his Italian soldiers (the praetorians) with Vitellius' foreign soldiers (the German armies).

¹²⁵ Mann (1963). ¹²⁶ Tac. *Ann.* xvi.13.

¹²⁷ Tac. *Ann.* iv.4 (general difficulties); Luc. *Bellum Civile* 1.23–9 (depopulation of Italian towns); Tac. *Hist.* ii.17.1 (enervating Italian peace).

to prove a break with past practice in the direction of formalization and professionalization.¹²⁸

Similar problems arise over the degree to which Vespasian's changes in the composition of the Senate were political in aim, designed to remove the partisans of Nero or to benefit those of Vespasian. Suetonius mentions his promotions to that body in the context of reconstruction after the war: the senatorial and equestrian orders were depleted by mortalities, that is by the Neronian persecution and the civil war. Later sources put the number of surviving senators at 200, 'most having died through the cruelty of tyrants', and the number of those adlected by Vespasian and Titus as censors at 800. These estimates are contradictory, however, and clearly of little value, as they take no account of adlections made by Galba and his successors or by Vespasian himself before his censorship.¹²⁹ Nonetheless, it is clear that a significant number of promotions were made.

Given the heavy losses, the number of expulsions by the censors was probably not large. Suetonius and the later sources speak of unworthy and immoral elements purged, and that is supported by the one named case we know, that of M. Palfurius Sura.¹³⁰ The notion that political collaboration with Nero was so punished is implausible: not only was the prosecution of informers halted at the start of the reign but advancement was accorded to notorious offenders like Eprius Marcellus, who was given a second consulship in 74 after three years as proconsul of Asia, or Vibius Crispus, who was sent to govern Spain at the time of the census (pp. 8, 29) and then similarly rewarded in the same year, or Cocceius Nerva, who in 71 shared a consulship with Vespasian, the only person outside the ruling house to do so.¹³¹

Of the adlections during the censorship, his biographer remarks that Vespasian chose the most distinguished of Italians and provincials. This is given as the counterpart to removing the unworthy, with no suggestion of a deliberate preference for provincials over Italians. The limited data, having been exhaustively studied in recent times, suggest that there was a steady increase in the number of Italian, then of provincial, senators under the empire, the process being a continuation of one that began in the Republic, particularly after the Social War early in the first century B.C. Losses in the two periods of civil war tended to accelerate the process, though the fact that an exceptional number of names are mentioned in the detailed accounts of those wars may exaggerate the effect.

¹²⁸ Saddington (1975) 176 ff.; 190 (on the Batavians; Tac. *Hist.* IV.12.3 'vetere instituto nobilissimi popularium regebant' might suggest the practice was obsolete by Tacitus' day).

¹²⁹ Suet. *Vesp.* 9.2; Aur. *Vict.*, *Caes.* 9.9; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 9.11; Syme (1982) 471 = *Roman Papers* IV 127.

¹³⁰ M. Palfurius Sura: Suet. *Dom.* 13; scholiast on *Juv.* 4.53.

¹³¹ *ILS* 992 = MW 271 (Eprius Marcellus); *AE* 1939 no. 60 = MW 334 (Vibius Crispus). A consulship for M. Aquilius Regulus can be inferred from Tac. *Hist.* IV. 42; Syme *JRS* 43 (1953) 161 = *Roman Papers* I 255.

That Vespaſian conferred ſenatorial rank as a reward on ſome of his partisans, ‘outſtanding men, and ſoon to attain the higheſt poſts’, is noted by Tacitus, along with grants of equeſtrian poſts, procuratorſhips and prefectures. Only two men certainly in this category are known: Plotius Grypus was made a ſenator of tribunician or aedilician rank and put in charge of a legion in 69, becoming a praetor in 70; Sextus Lucilius Baſſus, who had defected to Veſpaſian while in charge of the imperial fleet in 69, is found holding a praetorian poſt as governor of Judaea in 71.¹³² However, others promoted before or during the cenſorſhip had probably rendered ſervice to Veſpaſian in the civil war, among them a citizen of Ephesus who was ſerving in the legio III Cyrenaica in Egypt and one from the Roman veteran colony of Antioch in Piſidia who was commanding cavalry in Syria probably in 69.¹³³ Others can be ſuggeſted, not all of eaſtern background, ſuch as L. Antiftius Ruſticus from Corduba who was ſerving with Veſpaſian’s old legion, the II Auguſta, in Britain and was the firſt of that gariſon to come over to Veſpaſian.¹³⁴

As upwards of twenty ſenators only can be identified as additions to the ſenate by Veſpaſian, representing 15 or 20 per cent of known ſenators in the reign, it is difficult to draw a general concluſion about the principles on which theſe adlections were baſed. Where the rank is known, thoſe adlected during the cenſorſhip were put in as ex-tribunes or ex-aediles or, moſt often, as ex-praetors. Yet they were not advanced particularly quickly, unlike Veſpaſian’s known partisans, and ſo do not ſeem to have been adlected with a view to filling ſenior administrative or military poſts immediately. It may be that Veſpaſian needed to fill out the decimated upper ranks of the Senate, ſometimes with more mature men who could thus be ſpared the earlier ſtages of a ſenatorial career.¹³⁵ As regards origin, a high percentage of thoſe known were provincial, including the firſt two African ſenators known, but there were alſo Italians.¹³⁶ If not themſelves partisans, they may have been recommended by thoſe who were, for the ranks of the partisans ſhow an equal percentage of provincials. Deſpite the prominence of Veſpaſian’s partisans in the whole proceſs, nothing ſuggeſts that merely ſhort-term aims prevailed to the extent of diſcrediting Suetonius’ account.

Veſpaſian alſo adlected men to the patriciate, which was eſſential for filling certain prieſthoods of the ſtate religion. Their ranks muſt have been conſiderably depleted, for Claudius had been the laſt to augment their number and the Neronian purges had followed. Fourteen new patricians

¹³² Tac. *Hiſt.* II.82; Plotius Grypus (*Hiſt.* III.52; IV.39); Sextus Lucilius Baſſus (*Hiſt.* II.100; IV.3).

¹³³ The firſt is Ti. Iulius Celſus Polemaeanus (*ILS* 8971=MW 316); the ſecond C. Criſtianiſ Fronto (*ILS* 9485=MW 315).

¹³⁴ L. Antiftius Ruſticus (*AE* 1925 no. 126=MW 464); Syme (1983c)=*Roman Papers* IV 278–94.

¹³⁵ Houſton (1977).

¹³⁶ Africans: Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Fronto (*ILS* 1001=MW 298); Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Clemens (*CIL* VIII 7057).

are known for certain, among them the future emperor M. Ulpius Traianus.¹³⁷ For all Vespasian's *civilitas* and his support of the rights of equestrians to exercise free speech towards senators, Vespasian upheld the hierarchical structure of Roman society and recreated its aristocratic top class.¹³⁸

7. Foreign policy

Vespasian already had a military reputation behind him when he became *princeps*. During his reign he acquired twenty imperial salutations, a number comparable to the twenty-one amassed by Augustus during a reign four times as long, but there is no suggestion in our literary sources that they were regarded as undeserved or that the commanders involved in the actions were denied scope for enterprise or reward, the standard criticisms aimed at unpopular emperors. Fourteen of the salutations Vespasian took after 71, the year in which he celebrated his triumph over Judaea, but it is impossible to identify the specific occasions with any certainty.

Before his accession Vespasian had had experience of very different areas of the Roman empire: the Balkans, the African coast, Germany, Britain, and finally the eastern frontier. Developments during his reign were to demonstrate the grasp that he and his advisers had of the distinctive problems presented by the areas that bordered on the Roman area of direct control and manifest his characteristic slow but steady implementation of ideas: Vespasian had sons, one of them of tried military achievement, who could see that the policies were continued.

There was, however, an immediate problem, that of restoring Roman military prestige in areas where the chaos of the civil war had been exploited by tribes hostile to Roman rule.¹³⁹ The Danubian legions had supported first Otho, then Vespasian, contributing large contingents under provincial governors to fight in their support. Mucianus, on his march westward in 69, found that the auxiliary camps had been stormed in Moesia and the legionary quarters were under threat. The governor he appointed, Fonteius Agrippa, fell in battle against the Sarmatians early in 70, but Rubrius Gallus, his replacement in Moesia, managed to inflict a substantial defeat on them.¹⁴⁰ Veteran settlements, auxiliary forts along the Danube, and visibly formidable legionary camps in stone helped to consolidate control.¹⁴¹ There was also the rebellion of Iulius Civilis still smouldering. This was finally suppressed by Mucianus while Vespasian was still away

¹³⁷ Eck, *Senatoren*, a list with evidence on 108–9. ¹³⁸ Suet. *Vesp.* 9.2

¹³⁹ *Hist.* IV. 54.1: rumoured disasters on the Danube and in Britain used to encourage the Gauls to persevere in their rebellion. ¹⁴⁰ Tac. *Hist.* III.46; IV. 54.1; Joseph. *BJ* VII.90; 92–5.

¹⁴¹ The colony at Scupi was Colonia Flavia Felix Dardanorum (not Domitiana) and was probably founded by Vespasian: Birley (1986).

from Rome. After sending able commanders from Rome, including the urban praetor Sextus Iulius Frontinus who resigned his magistracy to Domitian, Mucianus himself marched north in the summer of 70 accompanied by the *princeps*' son. Before they could reach the Alps, however, the war was under control, and Domitian was cheated of the military glory he craved. Nonetheless, like Josephus before him, Frontinus later gave the credit for the victory to Domitian who was *princeps* when he wrote.¹⁴²

The architect of the victory was Vespasian's son-in-law Q. Petillius Cerialis, then on his way out to govern Britain. In the aftermath of Boudicca's rebellion in 60, consolidation had been the first need, and the later removal of the Fourteenth Legion by Nero had made further advance impossible. The withdrawal of troops by two successive Vitellian governors, M. Trebellius Maximus and M. Vettius Bolanus, had prevented rigorous action being taken when Queen Cartimandua of the Brigantes, a 'friend and ally of the Roman People', was deposed by her husband Venutius. Now in 71 the impetuous Cerialis arrived with the II Adutrix, bringing the British garrison up to four legions again. In fact, with her auxiliary forces added in, Britain now had the largest concentration of forces of any single province in the empire, compensation for her island position which made the usual Roman reliance on rapid movement of troops inoperative there: transporting them across the Channel was a cumbersome operation. Cerialis' record as legate of IX Hispana during the Neronian rebellion had not shown promise. Tacitus clearly thought that, like Caesennius Paetus, another of Vespasian's relatives given a chance to redeem himself in the region where he had suffered defeat under Nero, he had more dash than common sense. Nonetheless, in two years he had extended Roman influence as far as the later Hadrian's wall and set in motion the final subjugation of the Brigantes which his successor Sex. Iulius Frontinus was to complete. The major contribution of Frontinus, however, during his four-year term as governor (73/4–76/7) was the conquest of the Silures in Wales.¹⁴³

Frontinus' predecessor had served in Britain before. His successor, Cn. Iulius Agricola, who was to serve for seven years, had been in Britain twice before, first during Boudicca's rebellion when he was a young military tribune, and then again as legate of XX Valeria Victrix, appointed by Mucianus in 70 as a reward for prompt adherence to the Flavian cause. During his seven-year term in Britain, probably from the summer of 77 to 84, Agricola conquered north Wales and Anglesey before turning his attention to the north of the island, where he extended Roman control into the

¹⁴² Tac. *Hist.* IV.39.1, cf. *Strategemata* IV.3.14; *Hist.* IV.68; 85.

¹⁴³ Q. Petillius Cerialis: Tac. *Agr.* 8.2; 17.2, cf. *Hist.* III.78; 80; IV.71.1; 75.2; Birley (1973) 186 ff.; (1981) 66 ff. Sextus Iulius Frontinus: Tac. *Agr.* 17.2; Birley (1981) 69 ff.

highlands of Scotland. News of Agricola's final victory arrived just after Domitian's triumph over the Chatti in Germany in 83 for which he took the title Germanicus.¹⁴⁴ Expansion was matched by an increase in personnel, the first *legatus iuridicus* being appointed during Agricola's tenure to cope with civil administration in the south of the province.¹⁴⁵

In both areas, Germany and Britain, the policy pursued under Domitian was a continuation of that inaugurated by his father, and in Germany the policy aimed to solve a problem dating back to the first *princeps*. Augustus had annexed much territory and established the army at a size that could maintain Rome's control of its domains only by achieving a high level of mobility along the great Roman road system. His original plans for extending Roman control in Germany to the Elbe had failed, and he had left his successor a garrison of eight legions stationed along the Rhine and instructions not to advance further. The Rhine–Danube frontier, however, was unsatisfactory. The angle between the upper Rhine and the sources of the Danube made for lengthy and awkward lines of communication and hence prevented the most economical use of Rome's military forces. Vespasian, the former legate of II Augusta then stationed at Strasbourg, understood what needed to be done. Already in 73 or 74, there is evidence of the commander in Upper Germany driving a road from Strasbourg to Rottweil. As continued by Domitian, the work ultimately extended the area of direct Roman control to include the *agri decumates* between the Rhine and the Danube, where forts and roads facilitated transport between the German and Danubian provinces.¹⁴⁶

Vespasian had come to power as the champion of the eastern legions. His colleague in arms, Mucianus, had served under Corbulo, as had several of the legionary commanders. Although the outbreak of the Jewish revolt had caused a new command to be created there, and Corbulo's enlarged province of Cappadocia-Galatia had been dissolved, the new situation created by the Parthian settlement that Corbulo had brought into being would have been well appreciated by Vespasian and his associates. The Neronian arrangement was a compromise: Rome ceased to struggle to maintain the Augustan arrangement whereby a client king independent of Parthia ruled Armenia; Parthia, impressed by the speed and military skill of Corbulo, accepted as a condition of having Armenia ruled by a member of the Parthian ruling house, that this Arsacid must receive the crown of Armenia from the Roman emperor. The diplomatic solution had consequences for Roman arrangements all along the northern border with Parthia: with Armenia no longer serving as a buffer zone which could delay a Parthian invasion and ensure that the Romans would receive sufficient

¹⁴⁴ Tac. *Agr.* 39. The date currently favoured, on numismatic evidence, for Domitian's assumption of the title Germanicus is autumn 83 (p. 63, n. 304).

¹⁴⁵ Birley (1981) 404–7. ¹⁴⁶ *ILS* 5832=MW 416, cf. *ILS* 1992=MW 399.

warning, the loose nexus of dependent kingdoms through which Rome had held eastern Asia Minor had become inadequate. In 69 when approached by Vespasian, King Vologaeses, who had negotiated the settlement with Corbulo, offered cavalry to help the Flavian cause and was encouraged to continue diplomatic ties with Rome.¹⁴⁷ But Vespasian knew that more than diplomacy was required; nothing less than a strong Roman presence in the area would guarantee stability and peace.

Until Corbulo's command over the enlarged province of Cappadocia-Galatia under Nero, the only legions in this part of the world were the four in Syria and the two in Egypt. Now Syria was to lose one legion, while Judaea was to be upgraded from an imperial province governed by an equestrian procurator commanding auxiliary troops to one governed by a senator with a legion stationed at Jerusalem. Already in 70, Titus transferred a legion, the XII Fulminata, to Melitene, a vital crossing over the Euphrates in Cappadocia which had by then lost its military garrison entirely.¹⁴⁸ In 72/3 the kingdom of Armenia Minor to the north was annexed, and, at about the same time, that of Commagene to the south. The pretext for the latter is known: King Antiochus was supposed to be plotting with the Parthians against Rome. His deposition by Caesennius Paetus, the governor of Syria, and the limited resistance of Antiochus' sons that followed, were deemed to constitute a war. Antiochus, however, put up no resistance. He had been a loyal ally, assisting first Corbulo and then Vespasian and Titus, and he was now rewarded for trusting to Vespasian's justice: though arrested by Paetus, Vespasian ordered his release, and he was sent into comfortable exile in Sparta. It is unlikely that the emperor believed in the alleged Parthian treachery, for the sons, though given refuge in Parthia, were handed over without demur by Vologaeses to the Roman centurion, C. Velius Rufus, sent to give them safe conduct to Rome.¹⁴⁹ Then, sometime before 74, Galatia was separated from Pamphylia to which it had been joined by Galba.

The result of all these changes was the incorporation of Commagene in the province of Syria, the creation of the independent province of Cilicia extended to include Rough Cilicia (previously ruled by the king of Commagene), and, finally, the virtual reconstitution of Corbulo's consular province of Cappadocia-Galatia, now incorporating Lesser Armenia and Pontus Polemoniacus and protected by a permanent garrison of two legions, the one at Melitene and another probably at Satala.¹⁵⁰ This last development, however, seems to have come later than was once supposed, for the legion generally assumed to have been sent to Satala, the new XVI

¹⁴⁷ Corbulo's men; Syme, *Tacitus* 789–90. Joseph. *BJ* III.65 ff.; Tac. *Hist.* II.82.3; IV.51.2.

¹⁴⁸ Tac. *Hist.* II.81; Joseph. *BJ* VII.18.

¹⁴⁹ Joseph. *BJ* VII.219; 240; *ILS* 9198=MW 49 ([. . . bello] Co[m]magenico); *ILS* 9200=MW 372.

¹⁵⁰ Bosworth (1976).

Flavia Firma, is now shown by an inscription to have been in Syria between March and July 75, involved in the construction of a canal at Antioch on the Orontes.¹⁵¹ Soon after, however, in the first half of 76, a governor who is probably a consular is attested building a road close to Satala.¹⁵² It is likely then that the large province with two legions was established in 75/6 and that, until then, Vespasian had been content to have one legion and a governor of praetorian standing in the province, while the governor of Syria provided military support should it prove necessary. Vespasian may have been unwilling to diminish the Syrian garrison before the Jewish revolt was conclusively suppressed after the fall of the fortress of Masada in May 73 or 74.¹⁵³

The governor of Syria in the crucial years from 73/4 to 77/8 was Marcus Ulpius Traianus, whose active pursuance of Corbulo's policy of strengthening the Euphrates frontier is known from a series of inscriptions. Canals near Antioch built by the army or by the city with the encouragement of the governor may have been designed to improve water transport along the Orontes from the port of Seleuceia to military bases on the upper Euphrates, and his road-building from Arak to Sura in 74 gave the impulse to new building developments in the great caravan city of Palmyra. Moreover, the kingdom of Emesa was incorporated into Syria, and urban development is attested in the cities of Gerasa and Bosra farther south.¹⁵⁴

The fortification of Cappadocia-Galatia is regarded by Suetonius as a response to frequent barbarian invasions, unspecified. In 75, Roman troops built a fort at Harmozica near Tiflis for the Iberians whose king, Mithridates, is described on the inscription recording the event as 'friend to the Romans and to Caesar'.¹⁵⁵ That might suggest anxiety about the tribes of the Caucasus against whom Nero was planning an expedition when the Jewish War broke out, causing him to abandon it. Yet the only activity attested in this period is an attack by the Alani on Parthia from the east through Media. It is true that Rome's ostensible client, the king of Armenia, was nearly captured, but when Vologaeses asked Vespasian to send troops under the command of one of his sons for an expedition against the Alani, the eager Domitian was denied his chance for military glory on the ground that it would be interfering in the affairs of others. The relevant barbarians may be those along the Pontic coast whose brigandage had already caused Vespasian to send soldiers there in the summer of 69.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵¹ Van Berchem (1983); cf. *JRS* 76 (1986) 140.

¹⁵² *ILS* 8904=MW 86 (A.D. 76) but Cn. Pompeius Collega's consulship cannot be dated.

¹⁵³ Date of the fall of Masada is disputed between May 73 and May 74 (see Cotton (1989); Eck (1992–3)).

¹⁵⁴ See n. 151 above and van Berchem (1983); *AE* 1986 no. 694 (A.D. 73/4), cf. Paus. VIII.29.3; Bowersock (1973). ¹⁵⁵ *ILS* 8795=MW 237.

¹⁵⁶ Dio LXVI.15.3; Suet. *Dom.* 2.2; Tac. *Hist.* III.47–8; Bosworth (1976).

Another mystery is the victory for which the elder Trajan secured triumphal decorations and a Parthian laurel.¹⁵⁷ Two late interrelated sources appear, if the texts are sound, to give contradictory accounts, one specifying a war, the other the avoidance of a war.¹⁵⁸ Whatever the precise nature of the trouble with the Parthians, it is clear that the cordiality that had obtained between King Vologaeses and Nero's government had not been continued, for in 79/80 and again in 88 the Parthians were to support false Neros in the eastern provinces. The underlying cause was doubtless the energetic efforts Vespasian and his sons made to strengthen Rome's eastern frontier, building forts, annexing territory, establishing a fortress in the Caucasus. The Parthian king must have felt that he had paid dearly for his increased control of Armenia when he saw the whole area west of the Euphrates gripped in a military stranglehold by Rome.

8. *Opposition to Vespasian*

The fragments of evidence we have for reconstructing political tensions during the reign of Vespasian are quickly rehearsed. The loss of Tacitus' account in the *Histories* is particularly regrettable.

Suetonius speaks of the feud between Helvidius Priscus and the *princeps* after his return to Rome in 70, a feud which resulted in first the relegation, then later the execution of Helvidius, though Vespasian tried to rescind the order without success. This is clearly the sequel to the activities of Helvidius before Vespasian's return, as recounted in the surviving portion of the *Histories*, for Tacitus indicates there that great offence and great glory were to follow and that there would be more discussion of this controversial person.¹⁵⁹ Puzzling indications of Helvidius' criticisms in Dio's epitomator, Xiphilinus, indicate a link between his punishment and the expulsion of philosophers that took place between 71 and 75. The fact that Epictetus, who was himself later among the philosophers banished by Domitian, celebrates at length a confrontation between Vespasian and Helvidius Priscus, strengthens that link.¹⁶⁰

Tacitus' *Dialogus de Oratoribus* alludes to the inordinate influence with the *princeps* of Eprius Marcellus and Vibius Crispus, 'neither distinguished for good character' (8.3), men 'who never seem servile enough to our rulers nor free enough to us', and indicates that, at its dramatic date of 74/5, the poet Curiatius Maternus had the previous day caused offence to the powerful by reciting a Roman tragedy entitled *Cato* and was now working on a

¹⁵⁷ *ILS* 8970=MW 263; Pliny, *Pan.* 14; an inscription at Gerasa can be supplemented to include reference to a victory by the elder Trajan: Bowersock (1973) 138.

¹⁵⁸ *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 9.10 ('ac bello rex Parthorum Vologesus in pacem coactus'); *Epit. de Caesaribus* 9.12 ('Rex Parthorum Vologeses metu solo in pacem coactus est').

¹⁵⁹ *Suet. Vesp.* 15; *Tac. Hist.* IV.43; 5. ¹⁶⁰ *Dio LXVI.12.1-12.2-3; 13.* Epictetus I.2.19-24.

Thyestes that would make his points more fully (2–3). It has been suggested, not implausibly, that Tacitus set his dialogue, according to a common convention, before the death of one of his principal interlocutors and that hints in the work (11.4; 13.6) point to its being Maternus.¹⁶¹

Finally, at the close of his biography of Vespasian Suetonius alludes to constant conspiracies but gives no details, though the context suggests that they may have concerned the succession of his sons. In the life of Titus 6.1, he speaks of the praetorian prefect's habit of protecting his own security by the summary arrest and punishment of anyone he suspected. Here he gives one concrete example which, however, he regards as a genuine plot by A. Caecina Alienus who was planning to harangue the soldiers. Titus had got hold of the speech, invited the man to dinner and had him stabbed. This incident can be dated to 78 or 79 from evidence afforded by Dio who adds that Eprius Marcellus was also involved, though he was tried and, on condemnation, committed suicide.¹⁶²

Out of these scraps, what picture can be assembled? The conflict with Helvidius Priscus has its roots in the recall from exile by Galba of those punished on political charges by Nero. Those who returned included associates of the martyred P. Clodius Thrasea Paetus, such as Arulenus Rusticus, Curtius Montanus, and Helvidius himself, the son-in-law of Thrasea and the instigator in the Senate of the move to punish the Neronian accusers (pp. 7–8).¹⁶³ Galba had also recalled at the same time the philosophers exiled on charges of sedition by Nero in 65 and 66, Musonius Rufus and Demetrius the Cynic, both of whom were connected with Thrasea.¹⁶⁴ The conjunction is a reminder that the opposition of Helvidius Priscus can only be understood as a continuation of the antagonism between the *princeps* and Stoic philosophy that had erupted under the last of the Julio-Claudians.

Nero's advisers had persuaded him, tired as he was of listening to Seneca's advice, that Stoicism was a subversive and seditious doctrine that made its adherents arrogant, censorious and dissatisfied.¹⁶⁵ The truth behind this was, as Tacitus says in describing Helvidius, that the Stoic doctrine of the wise man's invulnerability to externals gave adherents of the sect the courage to apply to themselves, and to others, uncompromising standards of virtuous conduct, and to criticize fearlessly any lapse from those standards. Though not advocating any specific constitutional views or policies, Stoicism could make a difference to the style and vocabulary in

¹⁶¹ Cameron (1967).

¹⁶² Suet. *Tit.* 6.1; Dio LXVI.16, cf. Tac. *Hist.* IV.67. On the date: Rajak (1983) 195 n. 23.

¹⁶³ Tac. *Ann.* XVI.33; *Hist.* III.80.2; IV.40.1.

¹⁶⁴ Musonius Rufus: Tac. *Ann.* XV.71; Epictetus I.1.27. Demetrius the Cynic: Tac. *Ann.* XVI.34; his expulsion rests on the dubious evidence of Philostr. *VA* IV.42; V.19, perhaps supported by Epictetus I.25.22. ¹⁶⁵ Tac. *Ann.* XIV.57; XVI.22; 28.

which a Roman senator expressed his political attitudes: a *princeps* who abused the proper limits of his authority he would call a tyrant unfit to rule; he himself would stand by his conception of the proper role of a citizen and a senator in the face of threats and softer inducements. He might do this by refusing to condone the emperor's crimes, finally judging the state too corrupt to justify his participation and withdrawing from the Senate to show disapproval, as Thrasea Paetus had done; or, at the opposite extreme, by following Brutus and Cassius into tyrannicide, as the Pisonian conspirators had done, or by persistent verbal opposition, as Helvidius ultimately did. For all of these reactions, there were venerated Stoic models as well as Stoic formulae.¹⁶⁶

Marcus Aurelius, a Stoic determined to do his duty as *princeps*, was to regard it as an advantage 'to have been acquainted oneself with Thrasea, Helvidius, Cato, Dio, Brutus, and to have conceived the idea of a state based on equality, fairness and freedom of speech and of kingship respecting above all the liberty of the subjects'. Tacitus says that Helvidius derived from Thrasea, first and foremost, his freedom, clearly meaning freedom of speech.¹⁶⁷ Under Nero he had followed Thrasea's lead in his own way, first being active in the Senate, then, after his tribunate in 56, holding no higher office until he was made praetor for 70 by Galba. But under Vespasian there is an apparent change. The fragments of Dio include a passage comparing Helvidius unfavourably with Thrasea and ascribing to him not only abuse of the *princeps* and his friends but demagogic tirades 'against kingship and in favour of the Republic', aimed at stirring up revolution. The allegation is linked to similar criticism of Demetrius the Cynic and other philosophers who are accused of attacking monarchy and insulting everyone while priding themselves on virtue, charges that led Mucianus to instigate the expulsion of philosophers.¹⁶⁸ Both Demetrius and Helvidius are represented here and in Suetonius as insulting Vespasian personally.¹⁶⁹

The general criticisms made of the philosophers resemble the stock charges of contumacy and censoriousness. In addition the picture of the Stoics is distorted by the attribution of the type of unsocial behaviour characteristic of Cynics and particularly disliked by the Romans.¹⁷⁰ The political charges too clearly reflect Mucianus' own angry allegations and must be regarded as highly suspect. The respect in which Marcus Aurelius held Helvidius Priscus, and the glory that Tacitus predicted for him, are incompatible with this portrait. Tacitus shows us that Helvidius was not

¹⁶⁶ Wirszubski (1950), esp. ch. 5; Brunt (1975b); Griffin (1984) 171–7.

¹⁶⁷ Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* 1.14.2; Tac. *Hist.* iv.5, cf. Dio LXVI.12 (*παρηγορία*).

¹⁶⁸ Dio LXVI.12.1; 12.2; 13.2; 13.1 (where *ἄλλοι πολλοί* refers back to Helvidius Priscus in 12.1, both coming from Xiphilinus 208, 1); 13.1a. ¹⁶⁹ Dio LXVI.12; Suet. *Vesp.* 13; 15.

¹⁷⁰ Tac. *Ann.* xvi.22.2; Suet. *Ner.* 37.1; Sen. *Ep.* 73.1; Dio LXVI.13.1. See Griffin (1996).

attacking the Principate under which he was prepared to hold office, and that he was not at first intransigent. He had given up his attempt to prosecute Thrasea's accuser Eprius Marcellus when Galba had shown resistance, thus incurring criticism for lack of constancy. He was prepared to praise Cluvius Rufus, who had once been the herald at Nero's performances and had switched his allegiance from one *Princeps* to another.¹⁷¹ Nor was he an isolated figure in the senate. Curtius Montanus and Iunius Mauricus, the brother of Arulenus Rusticus, also showed their loyalty to Thrasea Paetus by attacking Neronian accusers, and Tacitus testifies that the majority of the Senate was behind Helvidius' renewal of his attack on Eprius Marcellus, though afraid to give open support.¹⁷²

Given a new and absent *princeps*, Helvidius thought that the Senate should seize the initiative: it should undertake the restoration of the Capitol and invite the new emperor to help; it should set up an economy commission and not wait for the *princeps* to take charge; it should have envoys chosen to congratulate the new *princeps*, not by lot, but by the serving magistrates under oath, in order to show Vespasian the kind of friends he should have.¹⁷³ He could not persuade the Senate to support these proposals, but when he had spoken of the new *princeps* respectfully but without adulation, while honours were being voted to Mucianus and other Flavian partisans, this was well received by the senators who resented the arrogant letter of Mucianus. Helvidius' failure to address Vespasian honorifically in his praetor's edicts, after the *princeps* returned to Rome, clearly shows a sharpening of the same attitude.¹⁷⁴ When Dio refers to insults to Vespasian's friends, the context suggests that Mucianus, and in particular his period of autocratic control, may have been his chief target.¹⁷⁵ But there was also Eprius Marcellus for whom Vespasian showed particular regard (pp. 4, 8).

The one specific encounter between Helvidius Priscus and Vespasian that Dio reports ended in the emperor having the abusive senator arrested by tribunes and leaving the Senate, saying 'My son will succeed me or no one at all.' It has frequently been suggested that Helvidius objected to Vespasian's clear attachment to the idea of founding a dynasty. However, for the notion that Helvidius objected to hereditary succession on principle, preferring adoption, there is no support either in accounts of his activities or in Stoic doctrines and attitudes; but he might well have objected to Titus' conduct in particular, which did not augur well for his

¹⁷¹ Tac. *Hist.* iv.6; 43. ¹⁷² *Ibid.*, iv.40; 42; 43.2 'multi bonique'; cf. *Dial.* 5.6.

¹⁷³ Tac. *Hist.* iv.9.2, cf. 4.3; 9; 6.3–8, cf. Chilver's (1984) commentary on iv.6, line 13; there were republican precedents for Helvidius' suggested procedure with regard to the envoys.

¹⁷⁴ Tac. *Hist.* iv.9.2; 4.3; Suet. *Vesp.* 15; cf. Epictetus, 1.2.19–24 shows Helvidius defying Vespasian in refusing to stay away from the Senate or be silent. ¹⁷⁵ Dio LXVI.13.2 and 4; 12.2.

¹⁷⁶ Dio LXVI.12. Rostovtzeff, *SEHRE*² 586 no. 16 for the adoption theory; Wirszubski (1950) 147 n. 4 shows sympathy with the idea. Not Stoic, Sen. *Ben.* iv.30 ff. Titus: Suet. *Tit.* 6–7.1; see Brunt (1975b) 30.

reign.¹⁷⁶ He may also have objected to the rapid promotion of Vespasian's sons (already indicated in December 69), to the exceptional position of Titus from 71 on, when he received the tribunician power and began to share in his father's imperial salutations, and to the virtual family monopoly of the ordinary consulships. Little was left of Helvidius' dream of a *princeps* advised by men devoted to free speech and senatorial initiative.

For the relegation and later death of Helvidius Priscus the only chronological indication is the fact that the encounter recorded by Dio, which could have brought his conflict with the *princeps* to a head, preceded 75. When Helvidius confronts Vespasian in the pages of Epictetus, there is a hint that the *princeps* was then censor, as the punctilious Helvidius is made to allude to his right to exclude men from the Senate. The second consulship of Eprius Marcellus in 74 during the imperial censorship might seem plausible for the relegation, given the atmosphere of repression at this time as depicted in the *Dialogus*.¹⁷⁷

Is it possible to connect the ultimate fate of Helvidius Priscus with the one definite conspiracy attested in 78/9? Caecina Alienus, who had betrayed Vitellius when he saw that the Flavian cause was certain to win, and Eprius Marcellus, another successful opportunist, were hardly natural conspirators. Elaborate theories have been constructed to connect this event with the visit of Queen Berenice who came to Rome in 75 in the company of her brother Herod Agrippa II, perhaps in connection with the final settlement of the Jewish revolt after the capture of Masada (p. 40).¹⁷⁸ Her relations with Titus called forth much xenophobia and prurient criticism and may have led to summary punishment by Titus of some of the street philosophers who had evaded the ban and returned to Rome. It could be at this time that Musonius Rufus was banished again and Helvidius Priscus killed. Some of Vespasian's original partisans may have started to reconsider the suitability of Titus to succeed his ageing father. It is perhaps significant that Suetonius connects Vespasian's remark about the succession, which Dio attributes to Helvidius Priscus, with 'constant conspiracies', unspecified. Suetonius also makes Vespasian refer to his 'sons'. Perhaps both sons were being severely criticized and fresh inspiration about the succession was being sought.¹⁷⁹

Titus knew that he would have to work hard to refurbish his image: even before the conspiracy of 78/9, Josephus was writing up the Jewish War so as to emphasize his clemency.¹⁸⁰ But few people except Hadrian ever seem

¹⁷⁷ Syme, *Tacitus* 212; cf. Brunt (1975b) 28–30 for 71. Millar (1965) suggests 71 or 72 when Vespasian was consul, but he was also consul in 74 and his calling for *sententiae* only suggests he was presiding, not that he was consul. Eprius Marcellus would not have been Helvidius' actual prosecutor in 74, as he had by then given up oratory (Tac. *Dial.* 8.3). ¹⁷⁸ Crook (1951) and the just criticisms of Rogers (1980).

¹⁷⁹ Suet. *Tit.* 7.1 and 2; Dio LXVI.15.3–5. Suet. *Vesp.* 25, cf. the singular in Dio LXVI.12.1.

¹⁸⁰ Above, p. 17 n. 54.

to have thought that Vespasian's fatal attack of diarrhoea was caused by poison administered by Titus. Vespasian was spending the summer as usual in his Sabine retreat near his native Reate, indulging excessively in the cold baths in which the Romans had so much faith. He died in June 79, characteristically working and struggling to his feet.¹⁸¹

II. TITUS

Coins issued under Titus showed Vespasian handing over to his son the government of the world, symbolized by a globe and rudder, with the appropriate legend 'PROVIDENTIA AUGUSTI'.¹⁸² The continuity of authority between *principes* was greater than at any accession since that of Tiberius. When his father died, Titus already possessed the tribunician power, perhaps granted for life in 71, and he had already been designated to hold the ordinary consulship for 80 with his father.¹⁸³ Though no surviving source explicitly records the Senate's conferral of the usual prerogatives on Titus, it is clear that this was done promptly. Within a week of his father's death on 23 or 24 June 79,¹⁸⁴ coins show Titus with the title Augustus and the office of *pontifex maximus*,¹⁸⁵ though he bowed to tradition by waiting a while (but only for six months at most) before becoming *pater patriae*.¹⁸⁶ As if to underline the smoothness of the transition, Titus took no imperial salutation on accession as had been customary since at least the time of Claudius: he already had fourteen imperial salutations to his credit, assumed simultaneously with those of his father, and the fifteenth, as we are explicitly told, was for one of Agricola's victories in Britain.¹⁸⁷

I. Continuity with Vespasian

It was vital for Titus to continue to show *pietas* towards his father, for the Romans attached great importance to *patria potestas* and the attendant duties of son to father.¹⁸⁸ Writing while Vespasian was alive, the elder Pliny stressed Titus' service to Vespasian as praetorian prefect and as an orator eloquent in praise of his father and brother; Josephus showed him rushing

¹⁸¹ Suet. *Vesp.* 24; Dio LXVI.17.1–2.

¹⁸² *BMCRE* II 259 nos. 178–81, cf. Pliny, *Pan.* 8.6: 'quae proxime parens verus tantum in alterum filium contulit'.

¹⁸³ *IGRR* III 223=MW 88 shows Titus designated to his eighth consulship before his father died.

¹⁸⁴ Suet. *Vesp.* 24 gives the day as 23 June, but Dio's calculation at LXVI.17.3 indicates 24 June.

¹⁸⁵ Buttrey (1980) 25; *BMCRE* II 432, n. to 223, no. 1: *trib pot. VIII* indicates a date before 1 July 79.

¹⁸⁶ *BMCRE* II 224–9 nos. 4–35; *ILS* 262 (between 1 July 79 and 1 Jan. 80). A suitable occasion might be his relief measures after the eruption of Mt Vesuvius, for Suet. *Tit.* 8.3 remarks that he showed the love of a *parens*.¹⁸⁷ Dio LXVI.20.3.

¹⁸⁸ Cic. *Off.* III.90; 112 where a son protects his father in danger; Valerius Maximus v.4.1–5; Pliny, *Pan.* 10.3.

to the side of his wounded father and being sent by Vespasian to win a victory in his name. That Titus' victories in the Jewish War were achieved 'through the instructions, directives and auspices of his father' was to be commemorated in 81 on an arch near the Circus Maximus.¹⁸⁹ For the elder Pliny to hint at the eventual deification of Vespasian as an honour for his services to Rome was natural, since the two earlier *principes* to have been in the *potestas* of their predecessors had been responsible for the only two imperial apotheoses to date.¹⁹⁰ Yet, surprisingly, there is strong numismatic evidence for the consecration being delayed for over six months until 80.¹⁹¹ An official inscription in Rome, however, shows Titus as *divi filius* between 1 July and the end of 79, which makes it plausible to suggest that at least the decision to carry out the consecration was taken within the expected interval of a month or two, however much the ceremonies may have been delayed.¹⁹² As confirmation, the later literary tradition attributes the expectation of godhead to the dying Vespasian without any suggestion anywhere that his son failed in his piety.¹⁹³ Titus probably planned the temple to his father at the foot of the Capitol, which Domitian finished, and 'DIVUS VESPASIANUS' figures prominently on his coins. To honour Vespasian still further, he is portrayed on some coins in a strikingly similar way to the 'DIVUS AUGUSTUS PATER' type issued by Tiberius and now given publicity on one of Titus' restoration coins (p. 48).¹⁹⁴

In praising Trajan for the deification of his father, Pliny attributes to Titus the motive of personal ambition, rather than the darker motives he assigns to Tiberius and Nero. But it was to Nero that Titus was naturally compared, for he was a young emperor of similar aesthetic tastes, tastes actually acquired in the court society of Claudius and Nero.¹⁹⁵ Titus was concerned to counter this alarming idea, not least by stressing his friendship with Britannicus, whose murder he claimed to have witnessed and whose memory he honoured: he set up a gold statue in the palace and commissioned for exhibition in circus processions an ivory equestrian statue which he attended on its first appearance. A physiognomist's prediction was circulated to the effect that Britannicus would lose his heritage to a

¹⁸⁹ Pliny, *HN* 1 pref. 3; Joseph. *Bj* III 238; 298–302 (cf. the chronologically impossible story in Dio LX.30); *ILS* 264=MW 53: 'quod praeceptis patris consilisque et auspiciis' (see p. 15 n. 48).

¹⁹⁰ Pliny, *HN* II.18 imagines Vespasian with his children on this heavenly road.

¹⁹¹ Coins show Domitian *cos.* VII (80) and *Augusti filius*, though others combine that consulship with *divi filius*. Buttrely (1976) rejects the arguments of Clarke (1966) that the coins were mistaken or struck in advance, but the unexpected expenditure caused by the natural disasters starting in summer 79 could have led to coins of 80 being issued early.

¹⁹² *CIL* VI 1246=MW 409. Buttrely (1976) *vs* Clarke (n. above) prefers to think that the inscription on the aqueduct was actually made in 80 and anachronistically included the new dignity.

¹⁹³ Suet. *Vesp.* 23.4; Pliny, *Pan.* 11.1 could have used such a delay to heighten the contrast with Trajan's *pietas*.
¹⁹⁴ *BMCRE* II 269–70 nos. 224–5; 281 nos. 261–3.

¹⁹⁵ Suet. *Tit.* 2–3; 7.1; Dio LXVI.18.4. In 77, the elder Pliny praised Titus for his eloquence, learning (*HN* 1 pref. 11) and poetic talent (1 pref. 5; II.22; 89).

usurper, but Titus would finally achieve what was due to the natural son and heir.¹⁹⁶

Titus also made a dramatic demonstration of his transmutation from obedient but dissolute son to pious and responsible successor. He renounced, along with his 'Prince Hal' image, his licentious revels and his flirtation with Queen Berenice, who was immediately sent home.¹⁹⁷ More difficult was the task of reassuring his subjects that he would no longer display the other traditional tyrannical traits of cruelty and rapacity. In retrospect Tacitus saw a resemblance to Vespasian, in that both improved after becoming rulers.¹⁹⁸ Yet a posthumous verdict on Titus, preserved by Dio, shows up the problem of Neronian expectations: Titus as *princeps* is compared to the model *princeps* Augustus in a way that clearly echoes Seneca's comparison of Nero to Augustus in *De Clementia*. But everyone knew that the young Nero had started well yet ended badly, and he, as Seneca had stressed, had at least started his reign unstained with blood. Hence the verdict on Titus here is that he preserved his reputation for clemency only by dying young.¹⁹⁹

Titus and his apologists might suggest that he had behaved tyrannically of necessity, serving his father as a dutiful son,²⁰⁰ but he could not seriously criticize his father's government in the manner of Nero, for he had been an active participant and would thus undermine his own position. Continuity continued to be demonstrated. In 80–1 the token coinage displayed on one side 'IMP. T. VESP. AUG. REST.' and on the other a series of restored types from earlier reigns. Apart from the aesthetic aim of preserving famous coin designs now becoming obsolete, the series was clearly meant to emphasize continuity with the respectable members of the first dynasty.²⁰¹ As on the *Lex de imperio Vespasiani*, Gaius, Nero, Otho and Vitellius are omitted, and Vespasian's models, Augustus (in the Tiberian coin celebrating his deification), Claudius and Galba are prominently represented.²⁰² In 81 the Aqua Claudia in Rome acquired, in addition to the

¹⁹⁶ Suet. *Tit.* 2; see Levick (1990) 190. Cf. 'parens verus' in Pliny, *Pan.* 8.6.

¹⁹⁷ Suet. *Tit.* 7. The structure of the chapter shows that her dismissal in 79 comes after Titus' accession (Braund (1984)); also *Epit. de Caesaribus* 10.7. Dio LXVI.15.4 is less clear but not incompatible. She may have returned later in the reign only to be dismissed (Dio LXVI.18.1).

¹⁹⁸ Tac. *Hist.* II.2, 'suo quam patris imperio moderatior', cf. I.50 of Vespasian, 'solus omnium *ante se principum* in melius mutatus est'.

¹⁹⁹ Dio LXVI.18.4–5, cf. Sen. *Clem.* I.9; for Dio's knowledge of this passage, see LV.14–22.1. Titus' contemporaries will have known it well. The theme 'felix brevitate regendi' is found in Auson. *Caesares* lines 86–7, cf. 16–17, with the notion that it was Domitian who fulfilled the Neronian prediction.

²⁰⁰ Suet. *Tit.* 7; note the contrast drawn by Titus in Dio LXVI.18.3.

²⁰¹ Mattingly in *BMCRE* II lxxvii–lxxviii; 261 ff.; Jones, *Titus* 121–2. Coins representing Agrippa, Drusus, Livia, Germanicus and the elder Agrippina are also included.

²⁰² Whether a rare sestertius showing Britannicus Caesar as 'Aug. f.' (not 'divi Aug. f.') belongs to the reign of Titus or Claudius is disputed (Sutherland, *RIC* I² 130, deems it Flavian, but Carson (1990) 13 follows von Kanael (1984) 27–50; Flavian vindication of Galba: pp. 10–11.

inscriptions of Claudius and Vespasian, one of Titus: it refers explicitly and otiosely to Claudius' work and to the restoration by his father, while recording substantial renovation at his own expense.²⁰³ Titus continued the utilitarian building programme of his father, contributing aqueducts and roads in Italy and the provinces.²⁰⁴ He added one further storey with two tiers of seats to the Flavian amphitheatre,²⁰⁵ and on the grounds of the Domus Aurea on the Oppian Hill, his Baths rose with impressive rapidity.²⁰⁶

2. *The generosity of Titus*

The splendid games that attended the completion of the last two structures in 80, when the Arval Brothers were assigned their seats, were celebrated by the poet Martial in his book *De Spectaculis*. His eulogy of Titus both for his munificence and for his justice towards the participants in the games accords well with Titus' efforts to improve his personal image and with it the reputation of the dynasty.²⁰⁷ The later tradition judged that Titus excelled his father in culture, clemency and liberality.²⁰⁸

Natural disasters had already offered unusual scope for Titus' generosity. On 24 August 79, a mere two months after his accession, there occurred the eruption of Vesuvius which destroyed the Campanian towns of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae. The letters of Pliny, providing Tacitus with an eyewitness account of the death of Pliny's uncle, who was on the scene as the prefect of the fleet at Misenum, testify to the impact made by the eruption on the mind of contemporaries.²⁰⁹ Titus went personally to the scene of the disaster, but while he was away, a serious fire broke out in Rome which burned for three days and three nights and destroyed many of the buildings on the Campus Martius and the Capitoline Hill, including the Temple of Jupiter recently rebuilt by his father.²¹⁰ The city was also struck by an epidemic, described by Suetonius as worse than any previous one and attributed by Dio to the effects of volcanic ash.

Coins of the year 80 commemorate the sacrifices through which Titus

²⁰³ *ILS* 218=MW 408.

²⁰⁴ Garzetti, *Tiberius to Antonines* 261–2; Jones, *Titus* 143 ff. Work is attested on the Via Flavia (*CIL* v 7987 and 7986) begun under Vespasian (*ILS* 5831=MW 415); reconstruction of the Via Aurelia and Via Flaminia; in Spain on the Via Nova (*CIL* II 4802–3; 4838; 4854; 6224) as well as on the roads in Numidia and Cappadocia-Galatia. The number of milestones for such a short reign suggests that much of the work was begun under Vespasian.

²⁰⁵ Titus' addition of two tiers (*gradus*) to Vespasian's three is mentioned by the Chronographer of the year 354 (*Chron. Min.* I 146), but Titus' coins show four tiers (*BMCRE* II 262 no. 190). The solution offered here is that of von Gerkan, *MDAI(R)* 1925, 11 ff.=*Von Antiker Architektur und Topographie*, 29 ff.

²⁰⁶ Suet. *Tit.* 7.3; Dio LXVI.25; Mart. *Spect.* 2.

²⁰⁷ *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* in MW 11, lines 25 ff.; Mart. *Spect.* 10; 20; 29.

²⁰⁸ Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 10.1; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 10, cf. Eutropius VII.21.3.

²⁰⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* VI.16; 20; Dio LXVI.21–3; Suet. *Tit.* 8.3. ²¹⁰ Dio LXVI.24.1–3; Suet. *Tit.* 8.3–4.

hoped to placate the wrath of the gods manifested by these disasters.²¹¹ But he did not confine his efforts to seeking divine assistance. He followed up his personal visit by dispatching two consulars, chosen by lot, to supervise restoration, generously making available for the work the estates of those killed in the disaster who had no heirs: for the ultimate beneficiary of *bona vacantia* at this date was the fiscus. Inscriptions commemorate his initiative in reconstructing demolished buildings at Naples and at Salerno.²¹² At Rome he gave a personal demonstration of the Flavian concern to put public amenities over imperial luxuries – this time at his own expense rather than Nero’s – by using the ornaments of his villas to adorn the rebuilt public buildings and temples. A commission composed of *equites* was to supervise the work.²¹³ Much of the reconstruction would have to be completed by Domitian, including the Capitoline temple, though vows were already taken by the Arval Brothers on 7 December 80 for its restoration and dedication.²¹⁴

Titus’ liberality consisted not only in spending but in abstaining from confiscations and refusing even traditional gifts.²¹⁵ More striking were the sacrifices of revenue involved in giving a generous interpretation of the exemption from poll tax granted by his father to Caesarea and conceding *ius Italicum* (exemption from land tax) as well; also in restoring to the city of Rhodes the free and immune status that Vespasian had taken from it.²¹⁶ These favours were probably prompted by petitions, and Titus is reputed to have lamented at the close of a day empty of such favours, ‘Friends, I have lost a day.’ One innovation, which became a precedent, was his confirmation of the *beneficia* of previous emperors, unasked and at once: he thus denied himself opportunities for earning gratitude.²¹⁷ Dio brings out the financial implications of this measure, by connecting it with Titus’ expulsion of certain informers from Rome, for many of the cases they initiated concerned inheritance and debts to the *aerarium* and the fiscus.²¹⁸ These *delatores*, before being sold into slavery or deported, were punished

²¹¹ Suet. *Tit.* 8.3; 4; Dio LXVI.23.5. Euseb.–Jerome, *Chron.*, under the year 77, speaks of an epidemic killing 10,000 a day. With Suet. *Tit.* 8.4, cf. Mattingly, *BMCRE* II lxxiii.

²¹² Suet. *Tit.* 8.4; Dio LXVI.24.1–3; *IGRR* I 435=MW 54; Paci (1991) 691 ff.

²¹³ Suet. *Tit.* 8.4; cf. Tac. *Hist.* IV.53.1.

²¹⁴ *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*=MW 11, lines 12–13. Coins of Domitian of 82 (*BMCRE* II 351 no. 251=MW 428) celebrate its completion. Hill (1979) 210; (1989) 25 suggests that *BMCRE* II 261, a sestertius of Titus, is a ‘blueprint’ of it, but note Mattingly on p. lxxvii.

²¹⁵ Dio LXVI.24.4; Suet. *Tit.* 7.3, cf. Pliny, *Pan.* 41.1, counts rejection of ‘collationes’ among Trajan’s *beneficia*.

²¹⁶ *Dig. L.* 1.5.8.7 with Millar, *Emperor* 409 and Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 338–9. It is inferred from *IGRR* IV 1129=MW 490 noting kind letters from Titus that he restored Rhodes’ former status.

²¹⁷ Suet. *Tit.* 8.1; cf. Pliny, *Ep.* x.58.7, for Nerva’s interpretation; Domitian had already followed suit (Dio LXVII.2.1).

²¹⁸ Dio LXVI.19.3; Suet. *Tit.* 8.5 who also mentions those who instigated the activities, cf. Mart. *Spect.* 34; Pliny, *Pan.* 34 ff. and Suet. *Dom.* 9.3. On these humble *delatores*, see Brunt (1984b) 480.

in the new amphitheatre as part of the morning entertainment before the regular games in the afternoon.²¹⁹

The publicity Titus gave to his generosity was necessary, and not only to counter rumours of his own earlier rapacity. He was correcting the reputation for meanness left by his father. Even the works of art in Titus' house, mentioned without excuse by the elder Pliny, can be regarded as a step on the way to the magnificence of Domitian.²²⁰

Less on display was Titus' practical financial acumen, similar to his father's. Dio tells us that in money-matters he was frugal and made no unnecessary expenditure, and Domitian's behaviour on his accession (pp. 69–72) suggests no shortage.²²¹ The silver content of his coinage was kept at the lower level instituted by his father, and he resumed the process of reclaiming *subseciva* for the fiscus.²²² In a letter to the Spanish town of Munigua, which had appealed to him in vain against a decision by the proconsul of Baetica in favour of their creditor, he expresses his concern for the poverty of the community and praises his own indulgence in remitting the fine payable for unjustified appeals and the interest on the debt since the original judgment. But it was the creditor who paid on both counts for the imperial generosity.²²³ In allowing the estates of those who died in the volcanic eruption to be used for reconstruction, Titus was following the method used by Vespasian to finance his reconstruction of the Capitol, namely, being generous with new revenue to reduce the drain on existing resources.²²⁴

3. *The clemency of Titus*

The attribute that Titus most needed to acquire in the public eye was *clementia*. Within the first month of the reign, when assuming the supreme pontificate, Titus pledged that he would not be responsible directly or indirectly for the death of any citizen, and, Suetonius tells us, he kept his word: the shortness of his reign was to help him to keep faith. Dio confirms Titus' record and puts in this context a refusal by Titus to take cases on the charge of *asebeia* (charges of defamation of the imperial house) or to allow others to accept such cases.²²⁵ Titus seems to have gone beyond the promise of Vespasian not to allow cases of *asebeia* to be brought – a promise which Vespasian must in any case have broken as regards Helvidius Priscus – in that he explicitly banned such cases from other courts as well as from his own and spelled out his unwillingness to protect

²¹⁹ Mart. *Spect.* 4. ²²⁰ Pliny, *HN* xxxiv, 29.55; xxxvi.4.37.

²²¹ Dio LXVI.19.3a; see Jones, *Titus* 171 n. 150. ²²² *Corpus Agrimensorum*, Hyg. 133.9.

²²³ *AE* 1962 no. 288 (7 Sept. 79). See Nesselhauf (1960) 148 ff.

²²⁴ Suet. *Vesp.* 8.4; Dio LXVI.24.3; Millar, *Emperor* 161–2. This had been done earlier by Augustus and Claudius (Pliny, *Ep.* x.84; *FIRA*² no. 70). ²²⁵ Suet. *Tit.* 9.1; Dio LXVI.19.1–2.

in this way even past emperors.²²⁶ Moreover, in the spirit of the promise exacted from the senators and magistrates in 70 before his father returned to Rome, Titus banned all capital cases of senators from his court and promised not to instigate them elsewhere.²²⁷ This would include cases of real statutory treason, like the famous example of the two patricians condemned by the Senate for plotting to usurp power and then pardoned by Titus.²²⁸ Titus had taken a step towards fulfilling the ideal of the philosopher-king as interpreted by Seneca in *De Clementia*. Indeed the recall of Musonius Rufus signified his wish to make peace with the philosophers with whom he had been at odds in the days of Vespasian.²²⁹

4. Appointments

The shortness of Titus' reign, and the close cooperation with his father before his accession, make it impossible to establish for him any distinctive policy in making appointments. As regards ordinary consulships, for example, it has been argued that the absence of Titus and Domitian and even of their relatives from the *fasti* of 81 shows a move away from the dynastic policy of Vespasian, who waited for eight years to allow two non-Flavians to give their name to the year.²³⁰ However, when Vespasian died, Titus replaced him as ordinary consul in 80 with his brother, already designated as suffect consul for that year, and Titus designated himself and Domitian as consuls for 82.²³¹ That does not look like an abandonment of the dynastic policy.

Moreover, it is not difficult to document the continued progress of Vespasian's *amici* to the consulship and other important appointments – not that any rational emperor should be expected to disrupt the working of the *cursus honorum* and reject the ripe soldiers and administrators it furnished.²³² The much-studied family connections of Vespasian's *a rationibus*, the father of Claudius Etruscus, show a similar continuity. He himself remained as *a rationibus* under Titus; his equestrian relative by marriage, C. Tettius Africanus Cassianus Priscus, advanced from *praefectus annonae* under Vespasian to prefect of Egypt; his senatorial relatives, Funisulanus Vettonianus and L. Tettius Iulianus continued their careers under Titus and

²²⁶ Dio LXVI.9.1, cf. Suet. *Vesp.* 15; Dio LXVI.13.3; LXVI.19.1–2.

²²⁷ Tac. *Hist.* IV.41. Dio LXVII.2.4 for senatorial approval of Titus.

²²⁸ Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 10.3; Suetonius' embroidered version (*Tit.* 9.1–2) is the basis of the Mozart opera, *La clemenza di Tito*. Cf. also the allegations against Domitian of fomenting army revolt (*Tit.* 9.3).

²²⁹ Euseb.-Jerome, *Chron.* under 79; see p. 45.

²³⁰ Garzetti, *Tiberius to Antonines* 260; Jones, *Titus* 123–5.

²³¹ *IGRR* III 223=MW 88: Buttrey (1980) 34; *CIL* III 12218=MW 117: Eck, *Senatoren* 48–54 showed that Pliny, *Pan.* 57.1 is a criticism of Nero for his action in 68, not of Domitian; Buttrey (1980) 25 ff.; 34–5. Flavius Sabinus may have been designated to the consulship of 82 by Titus (Devreker (1977) 233).

²³² On governors, Jones, *Titus* 126 ff.; on *amici*, Devreker (1977).

indeed Domitian.²³³ Titus also continued to advance Flavian relatives: Caesennius Gallus governed the key province of Cappadocia-Galatia, and Titus may already have designated Flavius Sabinus, who was to replace him in the ordinary consulship of 82, as suffect consul for that year.²³⁴

5. Relations with Domitian

Titus had sung his brother's praises along with his father's, and sestertii of 79 advertised 'PIETAS AUGUSTA' with a reverse showing Titus clasping hands with his brother.²³⁵ The dynastic flavour comes across even in the story that Domitian was repeatedly offered Titus' daughter Iulia in marriage, an alliance with good Claudian credentials. It is detectable, in perverted form, in the rumours of adulterous relations between Domitian and this same Iulia later and between Titus and Domitian's wife.²³⁶

Nonetheless, there are stories of bad relations between the brothers continuing after Vespasian's death, and the later tyranny of Domitian casts shadows backwards on our accounts which attribute envy, resentment, even disloyalty and homicidal designs, to the younger brother. Only an incidental remark in a letter of Pliny reveals that friends of Domitian were afraid of Titus.²³⁷ The source of the tension is obvious. From the very beginning of his reign, according to Suetonius, Titus described Domitian as his partner and successor, 'consors et successor', whereas Domitian wanted the status of 'particeps imperii' that Titus had enjoyed under Vespasian²³⁸ and which he claimed had been indicated for him in his father's will. The fact that Titus was an expert imitator of handwritings might have given substance to his insistence that the will had been altered. What Domitian presumably meant was that Vespasian intended to indicate an intention that the brothers share rule in the only way he could, i.e. by leaving them as joint heirs to his estate.²³⁹ There was a story that Domitian contemplated giving the troops a double donative on his father's death, perhaps suggested by coins of his which depict clasped hands and a legionary eagle on the prow of a ship.²⁴⁰

The facts are that Domitian continued, as under Vespasian, to have his own coinage and to appear on it as 'Caesar' and *princeps iuventutis*. He did

²³³ Evans (1978) showed the marital interconnections and used them to explain their promotions. Jones, *Titus* 131–4, attempts to give Titus the credit but Funisulanus had emerged from obscurity as consul in 78 under Vespasian.

²³⁴ *CIL* III 12218=MW 117; Syme (1977) 45–6=*Roman Papers* III 1055–6; Devreker (1977) 233.

²³⁵ *BMCRE* II 258 no. 177; Pliny, *HN* I pref. 5. ²³⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 22; *Tit.* 10.2.

²³⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* IV.9.2, cf. Tac. *Hist.* IV.52; Suet. *Tit.* 9.3; *Dom.* 2.1–3; Dio LXVI.26.

²³⁸ Suet. *Tit.* 9.3; *Dom.* 2.3, cf. *Tit.* 6.1. ²³⁹ Suet. *Tit.* 3.2, cf. the use of the plural in Suet. *Vesp.* 25.

²⁴⁰ Suet. *Dom.* 2.3; *BMCRE* II 288 no. 85; Mattingly calls it (p. lxxiv) a 'Concordia Militum' appealing to fleet as well as army and supporting Suetonius' remark. But it might advertise the united effort behind the Flavian victory, with the implication that Domitian had played a part.

not share Titus' tribunician power or acquire any imperial salutations. Nor was he asked to serve as praetorian prefect nor given any military command or governorship, though when Titus died Domitian was as old as his brother had been when legionary legate in Judaea. Titus was in a dilemma. Approaching the age of forty when he became *princeps*, he could still marry and hope for a son of his own. The dismissal of Berenice made it clear that he would not try to elevate a Caesarion to the purple. But as long as he had no son, the stability that Vespasian's accession seemed to promise could only be maintained by treating Domitian as the expected and welcome successor.

Titus died on 13 September 81 in the same family villa at Aquae Cutiliae where his father died, apparently from an attack of fever. Domitian was naturally rumoured by some to have shortened his life by advising an extreme form of the cold bath treatment that had carried off his father.²⁴¹

6. *Later repute*

Titus had disproved the expectation that he might become a second Nero, but that was a fact more welcome in the West than in the East of the empire. Already during his reign, a false Nero, Terentius Maximus by name, had managed to gain followers in Asia and provinces further east and finally secure the support of a pretender to the Parthian throne on the basis of Nero's Armenian settlement, which now seemed to represent a lost golden age in Parthian relations with Rome.²⁴² Similarly, the Jews held that Titus had earned his early death by the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem.²⁴³ That act, however, is represented as worthy of apotheosis on the Arch of Titus. The Roman verdict is in fact clear and unambiguous, as it comes across in the Latin writers: for them Titus was 'the delight and darling of the human race'.²⁴⁴

III. DOMITIAN

The poet Martial first put into verse the idea that the last of the Flavian emperors all but undid the good reputation of the other two. The idea was still celebrated as the agreed verdict of posterity nearly three centuries later.²⁴⁵ In the meantime Dio had taken the alleged last words of Titus, 'I

²⁴¹ Dio LXVI.26.1–2, cf. Plut. *Mor.* 123 D. Poison: Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 10.5; Philostr. *VA* VI.32; natural death: Suet. *Tit.* 10; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 10.15.

²⁴² Dio LXVI.19.3b–c. He sought refuge with Artabanus, a pretender to the Parthian throne (not recognized by Titus), who controlled a small district from Oct. 80 to Oct. 81. See Gallivan (1973).

²⁴³ Stemberger (1979), 351–8.

²⁴⁴ 'Amor et deliciae orbis terrarum': Suet. *Tit.* 1.1; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 10.6; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 10.6; Eutropius VII.21.1; cf. Auson. *Caesares* 40; 87.

²⁴⁵ Schol. on Juv. IV.38–9; Auson., *Caesares*, vv. 90–3 (Green).

have made but one mistake', to refer to the accession of his brother, and the authors of our other surviving accounts, Suetonius and Tacitus, had stressed the misgivings of both Flavian predecessors.²⁴⁶

1. The ancient evidence and its uses

The problems in handling the sources for Domitian's reign thus stand out clearly. Like Nero, to whom Juvenal compared him, Domitian was the last of his dynasty, and he was removed and disgraced.²⁴⁷ The rulers that followed justified their usurpation by treating his reign as a tyrannical aberration after which the tradition set by good *principes* would be resumed. Writers under Nerva and Trajan were only too happy to elaborate on the theme, especially those who had flattered and prospered under the old regime.²⁴⁸ How can we trust any of them?

Before seeing what truth can be salvaged about Domitian's reign it is worth making some preliminary points about this hostile tradition. First, it is not a question of senatorial bias, as is often maintained: Juvenal, Martial and Suetonius are as vehement as Pliny, Tacitus and Dio. Then, it cannot be assumed that hostility towards Domitian had to be generated posthumously by Nerva and Trajan: it is more likely that these emperors saw that their own position would be strengthened by allowing the feelings of hatred that had led to Domitian's assassination to be expressed and used as a subtle form of laudation by comparison.²⁴⁹ Finally, even if the literature that survives is largely explicit or implicit invective or panegyric, it can provide useful evidence, for skilful examples of those genres rarely praise and blame exactly the same things in the same way in different rulers. Moreover, if invective reflects what was most resented, panegyric, however remote from the facts, reveals something of the imperial image that Domitian wished to project.

The poets Statius, Martial and Silius Italicus praise Domitian's military victories, the latter two making explicit and flattering comparisons with the repute of his father and brother.²⁵⁰ The Flavian image as amplified by Titus surfaces in the praise of Domitian's literary ability: his martial poetry is celebrated alongside his military prowess by Silius, Statius and Quintilian, who also asserts that Domitian remained foremost in oratory, although the cares of state had deflected him from writing poetry when *principes*.²⁵¹

²⁴⁶ Dio LXVI.26.4; e.g. Suet. *Tit.* 9.3; *Dom.* 14.3; Tac. *Hist.* IV.52.2.

²⁴⁷ Juv. IV.38–9; Suet. *Dom.* 23.1. For the problems in our evidence resulting from the senatorial decree abolishing his memory: Pailler and Sablayrolles (1994).

²⁴⁸ Jones, *Domitian* 160–1; Ramage (1989); e.g. Pliny, *Pan.* 53.1–2.

²⁴⁹ Pliny, *Pan.* 44.1 and 53.5 need not be doubted in the light of Suet. *Dom.* 23.1 and Dio LXVIII.1–3.
²⁵⁰ Stat., *Theb.* I.16–24; 32–4; *Achil.* I.15–16; *Silv.* I.1; Mart. I.4; VII.1; 2; 5; VIII.1; 65. Comparisons: Mart. II.2; Sil. *Pun.* III.595 ff.; cf. Frontin. *Str.* II.3.23; 11.7; IV.3.14.

²⁵¹ Sil., *Pun.* III.618–21; Stat., *Achil.* I.16–17; Quint. IV pref. 2–3; X.1.91, cf. Pliny, *HN* pref. 5.

Martial celebrated Domitian's shows and buildings as he had those of Titus,²⁵² while Statius' *Silvae* allude copiously to new temples and include virtuoso performances on the Saturnalia entertainments (I.6), Domitian's colossal equestrian statue (I.1), and on the Via Domitiana built from Sinuessa to Naples (IV.3).

One new note is struck. Whereas Vespasian and Titus exemplified frugality and industry, with Domitian the moral uplift is censorious, prudish and punitive.²⁵³ The coins of the reign echo the writers, not only celebrating military prowess, family loyalty, games and buildings, but exhibiting consistently, from October 85 on, Domitian's title of *ensor perpetuus*.

2. Chronology

The coinage not only supplements contemporary literary evidence for Domitianic ideology; it is vital for reconstructing the chronology of this long reign, for which we lack sufficient historiographical evidence.²⁵⁴ The loss of the latter part of Tacitus' *Histories* leaves only his *Agricola*, which makes it possible to date the British campaigns and the start of the 'terror' in Rome; the summaries and excerpts of Dio's history, from which a vague sequential narrative can be constructed; and the biography of Suetonius, who treats the broad divisions of Domitian's life – birth, early life, reign – in sequence, but discusses the reign itself under topics, only vaguely indicating deterioration over time.²⁵⁵

3. Flavian continuity

Domitian saw the importance of demonstrating continuity between his own regime and those of his father and brother. One of the Cancellaria Reliefs shows him welcoming his victorious father home, a figure of authority in a toga standing between the Genius of the Roman People and the Genius of the Senate, basking in his father's approval.²⁵⁶ The stories in Suetonius, according to whom he alleged that his father had wished him to share the imperial position after his death and that his father and brother had only returned to him the power he had conferred on them, are malicious exaggerations of the theme. As for Titus, after delivering the

²⁵² Shows, e.g. I.6; 14; 22; 48; 51; 60; 104; IV.74; V.65. Buildings, e.g. IX.101.1 and 21; VIII.65.

²⁵³ On Vespasian, see pp. 19 with Tac. *Ann.* III.55.4. On Domitian, pp. 79–80, 83.

²⁵⁴ Buttrey (1980) 34–8 deals with Domitian's reign, showing how to interpret his coins for chronological purposes.

²⁵⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 1; 3.1; 13.1; 16–17. Time indications: 'early on' (9.1); 'for some time' (3.2; 9.1); 'somewhat faster' (10.1); 'after his victory in the civil war' (10.5).

²⁵⁶ See Toynbee (1957) 4–8, who gives the purpose of Frieze B as the glorification of Domitian's authority in his 'vice-regency' (6); Richmond (1969) 218 ff. The identifications of the two figures flanking Domitian are contested by Keller (1967) 211.

conventional funeral address, Domitian proposed his deification. It may be assumed that he did so with reasonable promptness, since any delay would certainly have been remarked by our sources. Indeed, Pliny (*Pan.* 11.1) attributes to Domitian no more damaging motive for deifying Titus than he does to Titus for deifying Vespasian, namely, the glory of having divine relations.²⁵⁷ A priesthood of the Titiales was now added to the Flaviales created for Vespasian.²⁵⁸

Titus' coins had celebrated the consecration of his father and the vote of a *carpentum* to his mother: on coins of Domitian it is probably she who appears as Diva Domitilla with her deified husband on the reverse.²⁵⁹ The status of the dynasty was further enhanced in 82/3 by the deification of Domitian's own son, who had died in infancy in 73,²⁶⁰ and later in 89 by the deification of Titus' daughter Iulia.²⁶¹ Domitian not only completed the temple at the foot of the Capitoline started by Titus in honour of his father:²⁶² he adorned and converted the house on the Quirinal in which he had been born into a temple to the Flavian gens²⁶³ and built a *Templum Divorum* with attached shrines of Divus Vespasianus and Divus Titus, on the site of the old Villa Publica where Vespasian and Titus had, as was traditional, spent the night before their triumph. The staircase connection to Domitian's new temple to Minerva Chalcidice made clear that the martial success of the Flavians was ensured by divine protection.²⁶⁴

Dynastic continuity, however, was to be more than a matter of honorific gestures. Domitian, in confirming all measures of previous emperors, not only gave validity to the acts of his father and brother but set the seal of approval on the new generous practice initiated by Titus.²⁶⁵ One substantial

²⁵⁷ Dio LXVII.2.6; Suet. *Dom.* 2.3; Pliny, *Pan.* 11.1; 35.4; *RIC* II 181 no. 216 (dated by Carradice (1983) 20 to A.D. 82–3). The Acts of the Arval Brothers show Titus, who died on 13 Sept. 81, not yet deified on 1 Oct., but see Clarke (1966) 319. ²⁵⁸ *ILS* 1010=MW 155.

²⁵⁹ The *carpentum* was a two-wheeled carriage whose use in Rome was a great privilege: *RIC* II 134 nos. 153–4; Diva Domitilla: *RIC* II 124 no. 69, there dated to 80/1. Kienast (1989) accepts the identification as Vespasian's wife, but dates her consecration after 90 because she is absent from the deified relatives in Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.97–8. Carradice (1983) 19–20 dates the coins to 82–3, but the weight of the aureus does not appear to rule out a later date (cf. the Diva Iulia Augusta aureus dated to 90/1 on p. 38).

²⁶⁰ His birth: Suet. *Dom.* 3.1 where the text that follows is problematic. Coins (MW 114=*RIC* II 180 no. 213) datable to 82/3 (Carradice (1983) 18–20) show his consecration, depicting him as an infant (cf. 'puer' in Mart., IV.3.8). See also Sil. *Pun.* III.625; 629; Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.74; 97; IV.3.139.

²⁶¹ Still alive on 3 Jan. 87 (*Acta Fratrum Arvalium*); Diva Iulia Augusta on coins of 90/1 (*RIC* II 204 no. 400); her consecration mentioned by Mart. VI.13, cf. 3 (published c. 90). On her absence from the deified relatives in Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.97–8: Kienast (1989).

²⁶² *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*=MW 25 vv. 51 ff. showing it was complete by the first half of Jan. 87; Stat. *Silv.* 1.1.31; *CIL* VI 938; Chronographer of the year 354 ('templum Vespasiani et Titi' against the earlier evidence). See Anderson (1983) 95; de Angeli (1992) 137–8; 160–1.

²⁶³ Suet. *Dom.* 1.1; Mart. IX.20.1 (decorated with gold and marble); IX.1.8; 3.12; Stat. *Silv.* IV.3.19; V.1.240–1 ('a sacred shrine for his eternal family'); Chronographer of the year 354. Perhaps used as the family mausoleum (Suet. *Dom.* 17; Mart. IX.34).

²⁶⁴ *CIL* VI 10234: 'templum divorum aede divi Titi'. It was part of Domitian's reworking of Regio IX. See Richardson (1976); Anderson (1983) 93. ²⁶⁵ Dio LXVII.2.2; above, p. 50.

effect is seen in the issuing of charters to the new Spanish *municipia* which had been granted Latin rights by Vespasian and Titus (above, p. 32). There were material examples of *pietas* in the completion of the Arch of Titus depicting the apotheosis of his brother and in the dedication of the Temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline in sumptuous style: the gilding alone cost over 288 million sesterces.²⁶⁶ Domitian also made additions to Titus' Baths and put the finishing touches on the Colosseum.²⁶⁷ The copious production of silver and token coinage in 81 and 82 is to be partly explained by the completion of Titus' buildings and of his reconstruction measures after the various natural disasters of his reign. The early coins themselves, which take over the reverse designs, the forms and directions of legends, and the portrait of Domitian from coins of the previous reign, thus represent functional as well as visual continuity.²⁶⁸

Suetonius and Dio, while admitting that no real dishonour was shown to Titus, nonetheless allege covert criticism.²⁶⁹ Dio interprets Domitian's legislation against castration as an insult to his brother's memory because he had been fond of eunuchs: given Domitian's similar propensities, the alleged motivation is implausible.²⁷⁰ Dio also interprets as an insult to Titus Domitian's observation that emperors who did not punish were lucky rather than good – a remark fit to rank with that other imperial *aperçu* that no one ever believed there was a conspiracy until it succeeded.²⁷¹ The most substantial charge is that of subjecting the particular friends of his father and brother to disgrace.²⁷² But on this point Suetonius appears to contradict Dio's testimony, for he states that the *amici* of Titus were so well-chosen that subsequent emperors retained them as necessary to themselves and to the state.²⁷³ It is hard to credit Dio's testimony here. If those related to the dynasty are included, at least three were elevated to ordinary consulships: at the start of 82 his cousin T. Flavius Sabinus replaced Titus as Domitian's colleague; Q. Petillius Rufus, probably a nephew, and T. Flavius Clemens, another cousin, held the office with Domitian in 83 and 95 respectively. Meanwhile Titus' relation by marriage M. Arrecinus Clemens was consul for the second time in 85 and then prefect of the City.²⁷⁴ The younger son of Caesennius Paetus and Flavia Sabina, whose early career incidentally confirms the existence of the post of *curator rei publicae* under

²⁶⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 1.1; 5.1; Plut. *Publ.* 15; Chronographer of the year 354; Jerome, *Chron.* It is shown on coins of 88 (*RIC* II 199 no. 365) and probably of 95/96 (*RIC* II 178 no. 207).

²⁶⁷ Baths: Chronographer of the year 354; Jerome, *Chron.*; see Anderson (1983) 103. Amphitheatre: Chronographer of the year 354; Jerome *Chron.*; Anderson (1983) 95.

²⁶⁸ Carradice (1983) 14; 16–17; 141; 159.

²⁶⁹ Suet. *Dom.* 2; Dio LXVII.2. A horse race on his birthday was cancelled, however (LXVII.2.7).

²⁷⁰ Dio LXVII.2.3, cf. Stat. *Silv.* III.4; Mart. IX.16; 17; 36. ²⁷¹ Dio LXVII.2.3; Suet. *Dom.* 21.

²⁷² Dio LXVII.2.1–3. The period indicated seems to be the reign as a whole, not just the early part (despite Devreker (1977) 232).

²⁷³ Suet. *Tit.* 7.2. The logic of Dio LXVII.2.1–3 is against the idea of Jones, *Domitian* 65–6, that Dio does not refer to Romans of higher rank. ²⁷⁴ Eck, *Senatoren* 63; Syme (1988) 608, 621.

Domitian, commanded a legion in the Sarmatian War of 92 and went on to govern Galatia.²⁷⁵

Dio, and indeed Suetonius, may have been impressed by some outstanding instances of *volte-face*.²⁷⁶ Thus Arrecinus Clemens was later and suddenly condemned on a capital charge by Domitian,²⁷⁷ while Flavius Sabinus was put to death because, it is alleged, Domitian was afraid of his imperial ambitions: his election had been announced, not as consul, but as emperor.²⁷⁸ His young brother T. Flavius Clemens was eventually executed also, soon after May 95 when he is still attested as consul and some years after his two sons had been adopted by Domitian.²⁷⁹ The uncertainty of life under Domitian is illustrated by the story of L. Iulius Ursus, prefect of the *annona* and prefect of Egypt under the previous Flavian emperors, who in 81 as praetorian prefect could dissuade Domitian from killing his wife only to face death himself two years later, escape it through the influence of his kinswoman, Titus' daughter Iulia, and then hold the consulship of 84. He survived to be given two more consulships under Trajan.²⁸⁰

Once assembled, the evidence is overwhelming that Domitian appointed to his *consilium* and to high office and important governorships men who had been favoured by his father and brother. The key evidence is Juvenal's fourth satire, a parody of a lost eulogistic poem by Statius on the German War of 83. Instead of matters of foreign policy, Domitian's *consilium* is convened to discuss the gift to the emperor of a large fish. Like Statius, Juvenal includes L. Fabricius Veiento who had been consul, under each of the Flavian emperors, Vibius Crispus who had been prominent under Vespasian and enjoyed his third consulship as Veiento's colleague in 83, and the blind Catullus Messalinus who held the office under Vespasian and Domitian. The other councillors include Pegasus, consul and governor of Dalmatia under Vespasian and now prefect of the city – perhaps, despite the poet's testimony, not a new appointment by Domitian. Also present is Cornelius Fuscus who had helped Vespasian to the throne and was now praetorian prefect.²⁸¹

Other striking examples of continuity are not hard to find. The man Domitian entrusted with the command against Decebalus belonged to a family nexus close to his father and brother.²⁸² Pliny, whose uncle had been

²⁷⁵ The career of L. Caesennius P.f. Sospes (*cos.* 114) on *ILS* 1017, is reconstructed by Syme (1977).

²⁷⁶ Brunt (1988) 51.

²⁷⁷ Suet. *Dom.* 11.1. A connection with the conspiracy whose detection was celebrated by the Arval Brothers on 22 Sept. 87 has been suggested, Syme (1983b) 132 = *Roman Papers* IV 264; Jones, *Domitian* 43–4.

²⁷⁸ Suet. *Dom.* 10.4. That the relevant consulship was not the one in 82 but a second consulship was shown by Eck, *Senatoren* 53 (*pace* Jones, *Domitian* 46–7); Syme (1983b) 131 = *Roman Papers* IV 263 suggested the elections held in 87. ²⁷⁹ Suet. *Dom.* 15.1; Dio LXVII.14.1–2; Jones, *Domitian* 47–8.

²⁸⁰ Dio LXVII.3.1; 4.2; *PIR*² I 630.

²⁸¹ On continuity in the emperor's *consilium* from Vespasian to Domitian, see Crook, *Consilium* 49; Devreker (1977). ²⁸² Dio LXVII.10. See pp. 52–3.

close to Vespasian and Titus, enjoyed a rapid career. Tacitus himself confesses to continuous advancement under the Flavians, and his father-in-law's career shows that he too wore the 'pallor of that grand and grievous friendship'.²⁸³

4. *Causes of tyranny*

Suetonius builds his biography of Domitian around a change in his conduct, first from clemency to cruelty and, somewhat later, from generosity to rapacity. While regarding his character as in general a mixture of virtue and vice, he believes these two vices to have been not inborn but created, the cruelty by fear and the rapacity by need. The change from clemency to cruelty he places before the rebellion of Antonius Saturninus in 89, after which Domitian became even crueller.²⁸⁴

That fear and insecurity afflicted the emperor from the very start of his reign is suggested by his refusal to respond to senatorial pressure and repeat at least the most limited of Titus' promises of clemency, that not to try any senator on a capital charge.²⁸⁵ *A fortiori* he made no move to inhibit the senate from taking such cases: Dio's point that it made no difference which court tried them anyway is dramatized by Tacitus in the *Agricola*.²⁸⁶ Though the historian is there describing the terror that followed the death of his father-in-law in August 93 – a turning-point after 89 not even mentioned by Suetonius – he contrasts this period of unremitting oppression with earlier sporadic persecution and the cruelty that characterized all fifteen years of Domitian's reign. Support for this view is to be found in the surviving excerpts from the account of Dio which indicate murders, executions and enforced suicides of prominent men before and after the war against the Chatti in 83, and again after the initial victories in the Dacian War:²⁸⁷ the latter episode can perhaps be connected with the sacrifices offered by the Arval Brothers for the detection of a conspiracy in September 87.²⁸⁸

How becoming emperor increased the timidity and anxiety to which, according to his biographer, he was naturally prone is not difficult to imagine.²⁸⁹ His abandonment of literary composition on his accession

²⁸³ *Hist.* 1.1; *Juv.* iv.75–6: 'in quorum facie miserae magnaue sedebat / pallor amicitiae'. The seven-year governorship of Agricola, consul under Vespasian, spanned the reigns of all three Flavian-emperors.

²⁸⁴ *Suet. Dom.* 3.2 where 'super ingenii naturam' seems to mean "beyond the demands of his nature", cf. *Tib.* 75.1, 'super memoriam pristinae crudelitatis etiam recenti atrocitate'; 9.1; 10.1; 10.5.

²⁸⁵ *Dio* LXVII.2.4. On Titus' promises, see above, pp. 51–2.

²⁸⁶ *Agr.* 45.1–2, cf. *Suet. Dom.* 11.2.

²⁸⁷ *Agr.* 44.5; 3.2, cf. *Dio* LXVII.13.1–4; 14.1–3. A.D. 83; LXVII.3.3; 83/4; LXVII.4.2; 85; LXVII.4.5; 88/9; LXVII.9.6.

²⁸⁸ *MW* 14=CIL VI 2065: 'ob detecta scelera nefariorum'. See nn. 277, 302.

²⁸⁹ *Suet. Dom.* 14.2

probably points to a fear of being compared, as Titus had been, to the earlier young aesthete on the throne, though Suetonius and Tacitus prefer to cast doubt on the sincerity of his earlier literary interests.²⁹⁰ Domitian may also have recognized the genuine temptations facing a literary practitioner on the throne. It is true that Pliny's insistence that Domitian was intolerant of criticism of Nero is clearly exaggerated, in order to create a flattering comparison with Trajan: not only was Statius confident that a comparison of Domitian's building of the Via Domitia with Nero's operations would be taken as a compliment, but he and Martial could treat Nero's cruelty to Lucan, while the satirist Turnus, influential in the courts of Titus and Domitian, could allude to the poisoning of Britannicus.²⁹¹ It was different, however, when a biography by a senior senator eulogized a senator condemned for treason by Nero at the same time as another celebrated a senator whom Vespasian had put to death.²⁹² The punishment of those authors in the latter part of 93 recalled for Tacitus Nero's style of tyranny, and towards the end of his reign, Domitian himself was to punish the freedmen who had helped Nero to commit suicide. The parallel weaknesses in the situations of the two emperors will have been obvious to Domitian and others for some time.²⁹³

Nero had been faced with numerous descendants of the republican nobility and a host of dynastic relatives accumulated over the long period of Julio-Claudian rule. Given that there could be no law of succession in a political system whose monarchical character could not be avowed, all of these represented a potential threat, particularly if the emperor was childless. Domitian's failure to produce another heir after the loss of his infant son many years before his accession may well account for his temporary divorce of his wife around 84,²⁹⁴ and though Martial might optimistically proclaim the advent of an heir around 90, nothing came of it.²⁹⁵ The rumours that Domitian was offered Iulia in marriage when young, that he

²⁹⁰ Quint. *IV* pref. 2–3; X.1.91; Tac. *Hist.* *IV*.86.2; Suet. *Dom.* 2.2.

²⁹¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 53.4; Stat. *Silv.* *IV*.3.7; *II*.7.100, cf. 58; 119; Mart. *VII*.21; Coffey (1979): see Ramage (1989) 643 n. 6.

²⁹² Tac. *Agr.* 2, Dio *LXVII*.13, Suet. *Dom.* 10.3, all associate the biography of Thræsea Paetus by Q. Iunius Arulenus Rusticus with that of Helvidius Priscus by Herennius Senecio, and Suetonius even attributes them both to Helvidius Priscus. Although that could be explained by the fact that the two authors were punished and their books burned in the same year (*Agr.* 45.1), there would have been little point in trying to suppress a work written years before. It seems more likely that both were published c. 92 or 93.

²⁹³ Tac. *Agr.* 44.5–45; Suet. *Dom.* 14.4, cf. *Ner.* 49.3; Dio *LXVII*.14.4; Pliny, *Pan.* 53.4. See Griffin (1984) 189–96.

²⁹⁴ Suet. *Dom.* 3.1; Dio *LXVII*.3 (for the date cf. *LXVII*.4.2: Iulius Ursus was *cos. ord.* in 84). See Jones, *Domitian* 35; 204 n. 52 for the question of divorce or separation and Vinson (1989) 447–8.

²⁹⁵ Mart. *VI*.3 need not show that Domitia Longina was pregnant (and miscarried), see Jones, *Domitian* 37, though Mart. *IX*.86 no more guarantees that Domitian had only lost one child than Stat. *Silv.* *I*.1.74 shows that he had lost more than one. What the poets do show, however, is the importance of an heir.

established a liaison with her as emperor and indeed fathered a child whom he had aborted, may have owed their plausibility to the policy of dynastic intermarriage encouraged by Vespasian and Titus (pp. 16–17, 53).²⁹⁶ But despite the resulting concentration of the dynasty, there were enough members to incite Domitian's fear (pp. 59, 68). And, despite the good offices of Mucianus, there were still some descendants of republican senatorial families around.²⁹⁷ Throughout his reign Domitian respected the senatorial view that high birth was a qualification for high office and conferred ordinary consulships on these men and on the descendants of consular families of later vintage.²⁹⁸ He even conferred them on two members of a republican clan, descendants of Pompey through Augustus' wife Scribonia, which had been decimated by Claudius, Nero and Mucianus.²⁹⁹ However, the ten consular victims listed by Suetonius include four members of the high aristocracy, two said to have been accused of plotting revolution³⁰⁰ and two said to have offended Domitian in trivial ways suggestive of imperial ambitions.³⁰¹

Two other consular victims were provincial governors, C. Vettulenus Civica Cerealis, who was said to be plotting rebellion while proconsul of Asia, and Sallustius Lucullus, who was killed while governing Britain sometime after Agricola: he was alleged to have claimed the credit for inventing a new kind of spear. Evidence suggesting the removal from the province of the unit with whose loyalties he was thought to have tampered seems to confirm Domitian's anxiety.³⁰² The latter cases reflect the other cause of anxiety that the young emperor shared with Nero, namely, his lack of obvious qualifications for the job. The contrast with the pre-accession military achievements of his father and brother was particularly marked. Although Titus had also undertaken tasks for his father which tarnished his reputation, his overzealousness as praetorian prefect only highlighted his military image, while Domitian had been systematically denied the oppor-

²⁹⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 22; Dio LXVII.3.2; Juv. II.29–33; Pliny, *Ep.* IV.11.6; *Pan.* 52.3.

²⁹⁷ Eck, *Senatoren* 63 nn. 45–6 lists eight *consules ordinarii* under Domitian who came from republican senatorial families including Ser. Cornelius Dolabella Petronianus (*cos. ord.* 86) of the republican patriciate.

²⁹⁸ Tac. *Ann.* IV.6.2; Pliny, *Pan.* 69.5; Eck, *Senatoren* 63; Jones, *Domitian* 163–5.

²⁹⁹ These were the Licinii Crassi-Calpurnii Pisones. In 87 C. Calpurnius Piso Frugi Licinianus (*PIR*² C 259) was consul and in 88 his brother Libo Frugi (*PIR*² L 166).

³⁰⁰ Suet. *Dom.* 10.2–3; Ser. Cornelius Scipio Salvidienus Orfitus (*cos. suff.* before 87) was the son of a Claudian consular executed under Nero who claimed descent from the Cornelii Scipiones (*PIR*² C 1444); M. Aclius Glabrio (*cos. ord.* 91) of republican nobility and imperial patriciate was first exiled and then executed, the first because of the emperor's jealousy of his physical prowess (cf. Juv. IV.94–102), the second on charges of atheism (Dio LXVII 12.1; 14.3).

³⁰¹ L. Aelius Lamia Plautus Aelianus (*suff. cos.* 80) of the imperial patriciate (cf. Juv. IV.154), the former husband of Domitia Longina; L. Salvius Otho Cocceianus, the nephew of the emperor Otho: Suet. *Dom.* 10.2–3, cf. Plut. *Otho* 16.2.

³⁰² Suet. *Dom.* 10.2; Tac. *Agr.* 42.1. Date of the proconsulship: Eck, *Senatoren* 86, cf. Syme (1983b) 125 = *Roman Papers* IV 256; a link with the 87 conspiracy, or the Saturninus revolt or the false Nero of 88 is possible. Birley (1981) 82–3 adducing *CIL* XVI 54. Further speculation in Jones, *Domitian* 186.

tunity for military glory. Moreover, Domitian had appeared to be the tool of Mucianus, implementing political measures unpopular with the Senate and the praetorian guard. It may be his personal experience of Vespasian's methods that explains his habit of dissociating himself from offences he was believed to have instigated.³⁰³

A more serious effect was the heavy emphasis Domitian placed on his military achievements. He managed to acquire twenty-three imperial salutations, more than Augustus or Vespasian had taken in the course of their long lives. And whereas Vespasian, like Claudius (the first reigning *princeps* to celebrate a triumph), had limited himself to one, Domitian celebrated at least two triumphs and perhaps four: the first for the victory over the Chatti came in the autumn of 83 when he took the title Germanicus;³⁰⁴ the problematic second over the Dacians would have to be in 86 after his return to Rome from the Danube,³⁰⁵ and the last two triumphs (or possibly one double triumph) over the Dacians and the Germans was celebrated in 89.³⁰⁶ Poets could even celebrate Domitian's refusal of yet another in 92 for the Sarmatian campaign.³⁰⁷ This emphasis is clear on the coinage from its first celebration of the title Germanicus late in 83. From then on the gold and silver was almost exclusively devoted to the celebration of that victory and to the portrayal of Domitian's patron goddess Minerva in four military poses,³⁰⁸ while in 84 and 85, and to a lesser extent in later years, the large surface of the sestertius was used, not only for standard representations of captives and Victory, but to depict the emperor himself riding in combat, receiving the submission of the enemy, sacrificing in gratitude for victory or receiving a victory crown.³⁰⁹ The sestertii also depict at intervals a quad-riform triumphal arch topped with chariots: Domitian set them up in such

³⁰³ Pp. 8–17; Dio LXVII.1.4.

³⁰⁴ Tac. Agr. 39.2; Stat. Theb. 1.18; Dio LXVII.4.4: the first of the triumphs in Suet. Dom. 13.3. The title *Germanicus* does not appear on inscriptions until 3 Sept. 84 (CIL XVI 30); it appears on all coins of 84 and on a rare aureus (HCC 13) dated after 14 Sept. 83. Buttrey (1980) 52–6 adduces Alexandrian coins in favour of a *terminus ante quem* of 28 Aug. 83, but see Martin (1987).

³⁰⁵ Suet. Dom. 13.3 mentions changes in the names of two months after two triumphs. September was renamed Germanicus after 87 (*Acta Fratrum Arvalium*=MW 14) and by 88 (*P. Gen. Lat.* 8); Eusebius puts the change in 86/7. The second triumph was presumably celebrated after Domitian returned to Rome in summer 86 for the successes on the Danube indicated by salutations X–XII assumed late in 85 and early in 86 (before the disaster of Cornelius Fuscus). The changes in the names of the months, alluded to by Pliny (*Pan.* 54.4), did not survive Domitian's fall.

³⁰⁶ Stat. *Silv.* IV.2.66–7; Suet. Dom. 6.1: if Suetonius' 'duplicem triumphum' indicates one double triumph, he has either omitted here both the triumphs mentioned in 13.3 or mentioned only one of them and misdated the changing of the name of the month at 13.3 (n. 305 above). But the phrase at 6.1 could indicate two triumphs over each people: Stat. Theb. 1.18–19 speaks of the Rhine and Danube each being brought under control twice ('bis').

³⁰⁷ Stat. *Silv.* III.3.167–71; Mart VIII.15.5–8; IX.101. 19 cf. Suet. Dom. 6.2: Domitian offered a laurel crown to Capitoline Jupiter instead.

³⁰⁸ Mattingly, *BMCRE* II lxxxv–vi, who notes that Minerva's role as patron of the arts, which was also important to Domitian (Dio LXVII.1.2) and is celebrated by Flavian writers (e.g. Quint. x.1.91, Mart. IV.1.5; VI.10), does not feature on the coins. ³⁰⁹ Carradice (1983) 122.

numbers that a wit wrote on one of them, in Greek, ‘arci’, ‘That’s enough’. It was probably such an arch that carried, as a companion piece to Vespasian’s *adventus*, the relief of Domitian in military dress, setting out on one of his campaigns, encouraged by Mars and Minerva.³¹⁰

It is therefore not surprising to find copious testimony to Domitian’s fear of talent, particularly military talent, and his reluctance to give others credit for success.³¹¹ The story in Dio of Domitian’s discontent with Iulius Ursus for not looking pleased enough with the emperor’s own German successes in 83 and Suetonius’ explanation of the fall of Sallustius Lucullus make the point.³¹² But the prime specimen is Tacitus’ father-in-law, Cn. Iulius Agricola, who was discouraged from allowing his name to be included in the sortition for either Asia or Africa, the plum posts at the end of a successful senator’s career. Tacitus exaggerates the injustice done to Agricola, who received, as he admits, *triumphalia ornamenta* and the accompanying triumphal statue, the only one of Domitian’s generals known to have done so. But there is no reason to doubt that the absence of Agricola’s name from the sortition was due to imperial pressure, for there are parallels for such interference, and Agricola did not receive a second consulship. It is true that Domitian generally ceased conferring them after 85, but it is significant that the exception is A. Buccius Lappius Maximus who suppressed the revolt of Antonius Saturninus³¹³ (see pp. 65–6).

Anxious to demonstrate his possession of the imperial virtue *par excellence*, Domitian went on campaign himself four times: to Germany in 83, to the Danube in 85/6, to the Rhine and Danube in 89, and to the Danube again in 92.³¹⁴ In 85 he was so determined to be seen to be avenging in person the death of the legate of Moesia, Oppius Sabinus, that he put in charge of the war the praetorian prefect who accompanied him, remaining

³¹⁰ On coins of 85, 90 and 95 (*RIC* II 187 no. 261; 203 no. 391; 206 no. 416); Suet. *Dom.* 13.2. That Frieze A of the Cancellaria Reliefs originally represented a *profectio* of Domitian whose head has been altered to depict Nerva is now generally agreed: see works cited in n. 256.

³¹¹ Dio LXVII.6.4; Tac. *Agr.* 39; 40–2; Pliny, *Pan.* 18; 14.5, 44.6. Agricola is the only Domitianic general known to have received *ornamenta triumphalia*: two key generals in the Dacian War received only consular *dona militaria*, while nothing is known about the rewards of the victor of Tapae, Tettius Iulianus, see Syme (1983b) 127; Jones, *Domitian* 58. ³¹² Dio LXVII.4.2; p. 62 above.

³¹³ *Agr.* 42.1–2, cf. *Ann.* VI.40.2; III.32; 35; Dio LIII.14.3–4, LV.28.1. See von Fritz (1957). Lappius Maximus was *cos. II* in 95, an interval of six years since his victory; Agricola had waited nearly nine when he died.

³¹⁴ Tac. *Agr.* 39.2: ‘ducis boni imperatoriam virtutem esse’. Domitian’s four expeditions (Suet. *Dom.* 6): (1) against the Chatti in 83; Dio LXVII.4.1–2; (2) first against the Dacians in 85/6: LXVII.6; 10; (the problematic chronology is discussed by Jones, *Domitian* 138, 141, less plausibly than by Syme, e.g. *CAH* XI¹ 168–78; *Roman Papers* VII 560; (1980) 1; (3) second against the Dacians after dealing with the revolt of Antonius Saturninus: before returning by Nov. 89, Domitian took action against the Marcomanni and Quadi (Dio LXVII.7.1–3); (4) Pannonian War of 92 against the Suebi and Sarmatians: Suet. *Dom.* 6.1; Tac. *Agr.* 41; *ILS* 1017: the emperor was away for eight months (Mart. IX.31) and was back in Rome by Jan. 93 (Mart. VIII.8).

near the scene to direct operations for some months.³¹⁵ He also reversed Vespasian's tough policy concerning military expenditure and raised the pay of the soldiers by a third in 83/4 after his victory over the Chatti.³¹⁶ Domitian was at pains to advertise his generosity. A coin with the legend STIP(endium) IMP(eratoris) DOMITIAN(i) Aug(usti) showing him in military dress addressing the soldiers may depict an actual ceremony marking the first additional payment of three *aurei* to legionaries.³¹⁷

5. *The revolt of Saturninus and its aftermath*

When armed rebellion came, however, in 89 it was led by a general impressive neither in lineage nor in valour, and it followed, not a military disaster, but the victory at Tapae over the Dacians in the previous year. L. Antonius Saturninus, the governor of Upper Germany, probably made his bid for the throne on 1 January, for the emperor left Rome on 12 January 89 to deal with the revolt.³¹⁸ No other provincial governor can be connected with the revolt,³¹⁹ and no reliable source records the punishment of accomplices except at Moguntiacum where torture and executions took place.³²⁰ Saturninus, probably a *novus homo* of provincial extraction, was not a natural candidate for the position, and his personal grievance against the emperor was not political: he is said by a late source to have been teased for his homosexual proclivities.³²¹

The obvious precondition for success would have been the cooperation of the governor of Lower Germany but this was not achieved or perhaps even attempted. Only the enlistment of the Chatti is attested, and they are said to have left crossing the frozen Rhine until the last moment when in

³¹⁵ Dio LXVII.6.3–5; note Martial's description of his position: 'Ille sacri lateris custos Martisque togati / credita cui summi castra fuere ducis' (VI.76). The emperor was regularly accompanied by a praetorian prefect when on campaign, Halfmann, *Itinera* 103–4.

³¹⁶ Dio LXVII.3.5 (Zonaras); Suet. *Dom.* 7.3. The date rests on Zonaras' indication that it came after Domitian's victory in Germany, confirmed by a sestertius of 84 celebrating the additional *stipendium* (Kraay (1960) 114–16). See p. 71.

³¹⁷ Kraay (1960) 114–16. Suet. *Dom.* 7.3 suggests a fourth annual payment, not an increase in each of the existing three. Carradice (1978) 162 suggests that this payment was made in new gold coin, not the silver traditional for army pay.

³¹⁸ Dio LXVII.11; Suet. *Dom.* 6.2; 7.3; 10.5; Mart. IV.11.2; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 11.9; *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* for 12 Jan. 89 (MW 15).

³¹⁹ The only likely collaborator would be Sallustius Lucullus, the governor of Britain, but Suet. *Dom.* 10 contrasts him with consulars punished for conspiracy, and if he is identical with P. Sallustius Blaesus who was suffect consul in 89, his governorship would fall after the revolt: Birley (1981) 82.

³²⁰ Dio LXVII.11.2–3; Suet. *Dom.* 10.5. Though Jerome reports under 88/9 that Domitian killed or banished many of the nobility, Xiphilinus says that Domitian used the destruction of the papers of Saturninus as a licence to execute people (presumably army personnel) in Germany.

³²¹ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 11.9. His alleged tendencies are mentioned in Dio LXVII.11.4, cf. Suet. *Dom.* 10.5.

fact a thaw prevented it. Hence the suggestion that there was no plot and no premeditation, just a soldiers' revel that got out of hand, turning Saturninus into a 'reluctant usurper' and encouraging the Chatti to exploit the chaos in the Roman camp.³²² On the other hand, the troops had no known grievance, while Saturninus is said to have been tempted to revolution by the money available in the double legionary camp at Moguntiacum.³²³ Perhaps Saturninus was counting on the alienation of his legates and officers, and on the distraction of the emperor's attention by a false Nero in the East and developments on the Danube.

If the cause of this incident is mysterious, the effects are clearer. The emperor reacted strongly, inflicting brutal punishments and rewarding those who helped to suppress the revolt in signal ways: Lappius Maximus, the governor of Lower Germany, was given the prize governorship of Syria and a second consulship in 95 (p. 64); M. Ulpius Traianus, who as legionary legate brought the legion VII Gemina stationed in Hispania Tarraconensis to the Rhine, became *consul ordinarius* in 91; and Norbanus, the procurator of Rhaetia, whose loyalty to his master is recalled by Martial half a decade later, may have become prefect of Egypt before his promotion as praetorian prefect.³²⁴ The institution of double legionary camps was abandoned and soldiers were forbidden to deposit more than 1,000 HS each at headquarters, a large sum nearly equivalent to a year's pay at this time. Antonius Saturninus' name was effaced on monuments.³²⁵

The rising on 1 January must inevitably have recalled the events shortly before and after the fall of Nero. That may help to explain Domitian's conciliatory elevation to the consulship of a pair of friends of the Neronian victim Thrasea Paetus: Q. Iunius Arulenus Rusticus, consul in September 92, and T. Avidius Quietus, consul early in 93, were both considerably past the age when they could have expected to hold the post. Domitian was trying to ingratiate himself with the more pliable members of the group, friends of the mild-mannered Thrasea, who were prepared to accept his invitation to hold office, though perhaps reluctant earlier. But in the very next year, Rusticus was condemned for treason as the author of a laudatory biography of Thrasea, at the same time as Herennius Senecio was condemned for a similar work on Vespasian's victim, Helvidius Priscus. Their books were burned in public. Rusticus' biography, if first published now,

³²² Suet. *Dom.* 6.2; Syme (1978)=*Roman Papers* III 1070–84.

³²³ Suet. *Dom.* 7.3 Dio LXVII.11.1 implies the willingness of the army of Lower Germany to suppress the revolt.

³²⁴ *ILS* 1006=MW 60 ('confector belli Germanici'); Syme (1983b), 122–3=*Roman Papers* IV 254–5. Domitian could not have known that Lappius had destroyed Saturninus' papers, so the story in Dio LXVII.11.2 was perhaps put about after Domitian's death (Brunt (1959)). For Trajan's role, Pliny, *Pan.* 14.2–5. On Norbanus, see *PIR*² N 162, rejecting the idea of Winckler, accepted by Brunt (1975a) 144, that Norbanus was prefect of Egypt in 93 before becoming praetorian prefect; Mart. IX.84.

³²⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 7.3; Syme (1978)=*Roman Papers* III 1070–84.

may have been inspired by Senecio's and designed to soothe his own conscience, for Senecio, like the subject of his biography, had abstained from public office as a form of political protest, refusing to rise above the quaestorship. His biography was written with the approval of Helvidius' widow Fannia, who provided him with documents. Senecio had also had the courage to defend one of the alleged lovers of a Vestal Virgin punished a year or two earlier by Domitian, and to proceed with zeal against one of Domitian's informers, Baebius Massa, securing his conviction for extortion in this very year.³²⁶

The younger Helvidius Priscus, Fannia's stepson, had gained a consulship early in the reign as part of the customary moves by a new emperor to gain support.³²⁷ After playing no further part in public life, he too was executed in 93 for a farce construed as a reflection on Domitian's divorce of Domitia Longina years before.³²⁸ Relegated at the same time were Rusticus' brother Iunius Mauricus, Fannia, her mother Arria (the widow of Thrasea Paetus himself), and Verulana Gratilla, perhaps the widow of Rusticus. At the same time philosophers, among them Epictetus, were expelled from Rome, a sign that Domitian, like Nero, inferred from the attitude of these adherents of Stoicism that the philosophy itself was a seditious doctrine.³²⁹ The element of truth in this view was that the decision to withdraw from public life on the grounds that the government did not deserve participation could be, and had been, expressed in recognizably Stoic terms. Others without Stoic affiliations may have been influenced to abstain from public life, for the standards by which these Stoic senators judged the emperor a tyrant were not distinctively Stoic, but the standards of the Roman governing class. Thus Pliny writes of the eminent consular Vestricius Spurinna that he held magistracies and governed provinces 'as long as it was honourable to do so'.³³⁰

Pliny and Tacitus have blackened for all time the names of the prosecutors responsible for the conviction of these and other senatorial martyrs before the Senate: Mettius Carus, Aquillius Regulus, Publicius Certus,

³²⁶ See above, p. 61, n. 292. Tac. *Agr.* 2; 45.1. Senecio: Dio LXVII.13.2; Pliny, *Ep.* VII.19.5; IV.11.12; VII.33.

³²⁷ Consul before 87 (*PIR*² H 60). From 82 to 85, Domitian, as was usual in the early years of a reign, had eight to ten suffect consuls, see Eck (1980).

³²⁸ Suet. *Dom.* 10.4. Syme, *Roman Papers* VII 575 supposes the farce was written around the time of the divorce and raked up now by a prosecutor.

³²⁹ Pliny *Ep.* III.11.3 (which dates the expulsion to 93); Dio LXVII.13.2–3; Suet. *Dom.* 10.3; Tac. *Agr.* 2.2. Only Euseb. *Chron.* reports a previous expulsion, including astrologers, in Oct. 88–Sept. 89. The *αἰθῆς* in Dio LXVII.13.2–3 probably refers to the expulsion under Vespasian (LXVI.13.15). Epictetus (Gell. *NA* xv.11.5) and Artemidorus (Pliny, *Ep.* III.11.3) were expelled; Plutarch may have withdrawn from Rome, see Jones, *Plutarch* 25; cf. Philostr. *VA* VII.8; 11.

³³⁰ On the use of Stoic vocabulary by dissidents under Nero: Griffin (1976) 315–66; (1984) 171–7. On the career of Vestricius Spurinna: Pliny, *Ep.* III.1.1.2; Syme (1985) 276–7 = *Roman Papers* V 511–12; Syme (1991b) favouring a date under Nerva rather than Domitian (as in *Tacitus* 634) for his victory over the Bructeri.

Catullus Messalinus.³³¹ Even Quintilian, writing at the end of the reign, condemns orators who use their talent for gain as *delatores*, even as he follows the emperor's own highly critical view of philosophers: most of them pretentious hypocrites who, unlike the real philosophers of the past, preached virtue as a means of concealing their vices.³³²

Without Tacitus to supply details of names, dates, charges and trials, it is difficult to reconstruct the pattern or frequency of opposition, real or alleged, throughout the reign, just as it would be for Tiberius or Nero, if we had only Suetonius and fragments of Dio.³³³ The senatorial outcry, 'Let those of us who survive be safe', when Pliny hinted at prosecuting Publicius Certus, supports the allusion to large numbers of senatorial victims.³³⁴ The downfall of the aristocrats, army commanders and dynastic rivals mentioned by Suetonius will have involved others, such as Dio Chrysostom who was banished from Italy and his native Bithynia for association with Flavius Sabinus or some other executed aristocrat.³³⁵

After the death of Sabinus, Domitian's ideas for the succession seem to have focused on his younger brother T. Flavius Clemens, married to Domitian's niece and blessed with two sons. Their names were changed to T. Flavius Vespasianus and T. Flavius Domitianus, possibly on the occasion of their coming of age, and Quintilian was asked to instruct them in rhetoric. But in 95, Clemens was put to death and his wife Flavia Domitilla was banished for atheism, the gloss put on the adoption of Jewish customs: perhaps an aversion to pork at Domitian's banquets was remarked. Clemens himself, described as a man of contemptible laziness, must have seemed the ideal protector of the two boys should Domitian die while they were still young, but perhaps some sign of assertion during his tenure of the consulship in 95 made Domitian fear that he might not be content to wait.³³⁶ The emperor's paranoia shows in his execution about the same time of Acilius Glabrio and Epaphroditus who were already in exile, and the punishment of his praetorian prefects.³³⁷

Suetonius regards the punishment of Clemens as the act that deter-

³³¹ Pliny, *Ep.* I.5; IV.7.5; IV.22.5; IX.13; Tac. *Agr.* 45. Syme (1991c) 576–7 stresses the role of factional rivalry within the Senate.

³³² Quint. I pref. 15; IV.1.22; XII.3.12; 7.3, cf. Domitian in Pliny, *Ep.* x.58.6 on an unusual counter-example.

³³³ Thus Suetonius names only those executed, not those like Mettius Modestus and Julius Bassus who were relegated (Pliny, *Ep.* I.5.5; IV.9.2).

³³⁴ Pliny, *Pan.* 48.3; Suet. *Dom.* 10.2, 'complures senatores'; Pliny, *Ep.* IX.13.8 (pp. 87–8).

³³⁵ Dio Chrys. *Or.* XIII.1; Jones, *Dio Chrysostom* 45–6. See p. 59, n. 278. Sidebottom (1996) 450–3 suggests Nerva's nephew, L. Salvius Cocceianus Dio.

³³⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 15.1; Dio LXVII.14.1–2 (pp. 58–9); Quint. IV pref. 2, referring to his pupils as the sons of their mother: their father was perhaps already dead; *PIR*² F 240; 257; 397; Klose (1984) on coins of Smyrna representing the elder of the two brothers. On Quintilian: Adamietz (1986) 2246 ff.; Coleman (1986) 3108–9.

³³⁷ Suet. *Dom.* 14.4; Dio LXVII.14.3–5, cf. LXVIII.3.3; one of the prefects was Casperius Aelianus.

mined Domitian's end. The conspiracy involved Petronius Secundus and Norbanus, the new praetorian prefects, and the cooperation of Domitian's wife is alleged – not implausibly, as the fate of Domitilla may well have alarmed her. The assassination was carried out by Stephanus, freedman procurator of the exiled Domitilla, by the emperor's secretary in charge of petitions and by his personal attendants. Clearly, as Juvenal remarked, the humblest minions now felt as insecure as highly placed senators.³³⁸

6. *Domitian's finances: rapacious through need*

Pliny fulminates against 'that despoiler and executioner of the best men', and it is easy to see that the two principal vices attributed to Domitian, cruelty and rapacity, were linked both in their causes and their effects.³³⁹ A lack of self-confidence about his claim to rule contributed to his desire to excel in the lavishness of his games and monuments; his anxiety about the support of the army for a virtually untried commander led to the expensive rise in army pay (pp. 65, 71). These are the main causes listed by Suetonius and Dio for Domitian's financial difficulties. Both also follow Pliny in regarding prosecutions, confiscations and murders as motivated just as much by greed as by cruelty and envy.³⁴⁰

Three categories of evidence are relevant to the question of Domitian's rapacity: (1) evidence that he spent heavily from the start of his reign at least until the period when exactions are first alleged; (2) evidence of financial stress; (3) evidence for financial exactions of a novel type, especially those explicitly renounced by Domitian's successors.

Domitian added more factions to the usual chariot races; he celebrated expensive triumphs in 83 and later.³⁴¹ He also instituted literary contests. Of these, the Alban Games were annual and took place at his villa in the Alban hills on the Quinquatria, the festival in March honouring Minerva. In 86 Domitian instituted the Capitoline Games in connection with the restoration of Jupiter's temple on the Capitol. They were celebrated every five years (computed in the fashion of the Greek games), hence repeated in 90 and 94.³⁴² Suetonius notes that by his day some of the competitions had been withdrawn, but the tradition of music, chariot racing and gymnastic competitions was apparently retained. In addition Domitian celebrated Secular Games in 88, claiming in justification that a *saeculum* had elapsed since those held by Augustus and taking no account of their celebration by

³³⁸ Dio LXVII.1 5.1–3 adds the discovery of a list of intended victims; Suet. *Dom.* 17.1–2; Juv. 4.1 54: 'sed perit postquam cordonibus esse timendus / coeperat; hoc nocuit Lamiarum caede madenti'.

³³⁹ Pliny, *Pan.* 90.5. ³⁴⁰ Suet. *Dom.* 12.1–2; Dio LXVII.4.5; Pliny, *Pan.* 42.1; 50.2; 50.5.

³⁴¹ Dio LXVII.4.4; 8.1–2, cf. Suet. *Dom.* 4.1.

³⁴² Suet. *Dom.* 4.4; Dio LXVII.1. See Coleman (1986) 3097–100; Jones, *Domitian* 103–4. On the Alban games and Domitian's use of his Alban villa, see Darwall-Smith (1994).

Claudius in 47.³⁴³ The 110 years from Augustus' Ludi Saeculares were calculated from the date when he intended to give them (22 or 23 B.C.), rather than from 17 B.C. when he actually held them; the calculations adduced by Claudius to justify his celebrations were rejected.³⁴⁴

The building programme similarly started early with the completion of Titus' restorations and with new projects. It continued to the end of the reign: the *Templum Gentis Flaviae* was probably completed a little before 94 and the *Via Domitiana* between Sinuessa and Puteoli belongs to 95. Archaeological evidence confirms the testimony of later sources to the number of Domitian's buildings, although individual items are hard to date.³⁴⁵ Domitian had only his own name inscribed on buildings he restored, not that of the original builder. This was contrary to the policy of Augustus and Vespasian and shows the importance he attached to the programme as a way of enhancing his authority.³⁴⁶

Domitian was even more concerned than his brother to shed the grasping reputation of his father and replace it with one of liberality. On the positive side, he went further in the direction of the magnificent monarch, the image to which Caligula and Nero had aspired. The very quantity of surviving Flavian poetry owes much to literary patronage by Domitian, who, unlike his literary predecessor on the throne, managed to avoid entering into competition with poets and thereby ultimately destroying them. Martial and Statius both acknowledge Domitian's inspiration, Statius making it clear that many of his occasional poems, and not only those glorifying the emperor himself, were submitted to Domitian's judgement.³⁴⁷ They also record privileges they received as poets,³⁴⁸ while Quintilian, held in honour by Vespasian, was invited by Domitian to tutor his great nephews and was rewarded by consular insignia.³⁴⁹ Josephus too records the protection and privileges he received from Domitian as he had from Vespasian and Titus, though he gives no sign that Domitian took any interest in his current literary project, which came to fruition in 93/4.³⁵⁰ In fact, historians and writers in related genres did not often find their works appreciated by Domitian (pp. 61, 66–7).

³⁴³ Tac. *Ann.* XI.11.1 where he mentions his own involvement as one of the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, the presiding priests, and as praetor in that year; Suet. *Dom.* 4.3.

³⁴⁴ Syme, *Tacitus* 65 n. 6.

³⁴⁵ Martial's Book IX contains poems celebrating the first (n. 263); Dio LXVII.14.1 dates the road. See Anderson (1983); Jones, *Domitian* 79–98, with a catalogue of the buildings.

³⁴⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 5, cf. *Res Gestae* 19.1; 20.1; Dio LXVI.10.1a. Jones, *Domitian* 80, stresses the fact that the 'Domitianus . . . restituit' of inscriptions shows that he did not claim to do more than restore.

³⁴⁷ Stat., *Silv.* I pref. 18–20; IV. pref. 28–9.

³⁴⁸ Martial received the *ius liberorum* (II.91–2), apparently already promised by Titus (III.95.5–6; IX.97.5–6); Statius was granted a water supply for his Alban home (*Silv.* III.1.61–4), cf. Martial's request in IX.18.

³⁴⁹ Quint. IV pref. 2.; Auson. *Grat. Act.* x.7.204 ff. This privilege, achieved through the agency of Flavius Clemens (p. 68 and n. 336), may have inspired the gibes of Juvenal (VII.197) and Valerius Licinianus (Pliny, *Ep.* IV.11.2).
³⁵⁰ Vit. 429. For the date, see *AJ* XX. 267, with Rajak (1983) 237–8.

Like his brother, Domitian was at least initially concerned to practise the negative virtue of *abstinentia* by forgoing what he could have acquired.³⁵¹ He, too, was concerned to control the informers who enriched the fiscus by bringing cases concerning inheritance and arrears of taxes, but he apparently abandoned the policy later, to judge from Pliny's testimony that the *aerarium* and the fiscus were enriched through the operation of the Augustan marriage laws and the Lex Voconia which restricted female inheritance.³⁵² Again, he at first refused to accept inheritances from those who had children, but this practice too he had abandoned by the end of the reign.³⁵³

The most striking example of his early abstinence is his departure from the practice of his father and brother with regard to *subseciva* in Italy. Domitian issued an edict ending the attempt to reclaim and sell for the fiscus the uncenturiated land in Italy, a process instituted, then interrupted, by Vespasian, and reinstated by Titus. Instead he granted title to those in possession of such land. This was apparently very early in his reign, for an inscription of the year 82 shows the citizens of the Augustan veteran colony of Firmum reopening a long-standing claim to *subseciva* which Augustus had told them to sell off. Presumably they now sought to avail themselves of the new privilege and gain ownership of the lands once reclaimed. Instead the current possessors, the Falerienses, acquired title to the lands.³⁵⁴

It was, however, an act of liberality, not of mere abstinence, that contrasts most strongly with Vespasian's frugality – the rise in army pay, regarded by both Suetonius and Dio as the prime cause of Domitian's financial shortfall. The burden of raising the soldiers' pay by a third in 83/4 was aggravated by the fact that Domitian had just raised an additional legion (I Minervia) for the German War. Moreover, new evidence shows that the pay of auxiliary troops, as well as that of the legionaries, was affected, while careful study of Domitian's coinage reveals that in 82 he had increased the percentage of silver of the denarius by about 10 per cent from the level it had maintained since the civil wars of 68/9. This dramatic reversion to the standard of fineness under Augustus, compounded by a simultaneous increase in the weight of these coins, meant that the silver content of the denarius in fact was increased by about 12 per cent: the weight of the aureus rose abruptly at the same time.³⁵⁵

The reign had opened with the second round of military donatives and distributions to the plebs in two years because of the early death of

³⁵¹ See p. 50; Suet. *Dom.* 9.2. ³⁵² Suet. *Dom.*, 9.1–2, cf. Pliny, *Pan.* 42.1; 34 ff.

³⁵³ Suet. *Dom.* 9.2, cf. 12.2; Tac. *Agr.* 44.4; Pliny, *Pan.* 43.1.

³⁵⁴ See pp. 31 and 51. Suet. *Dom.* 9.3; Frontin. *de contr. agr.* 53–4; Hyg. *de gen. contr.* 111.6; 133.9–13; *CIL* ix 5420 = *FIRA*² 1 no. 75 = MW 462, on which see Millar, *Emperor* 435–6.

³⁵⁵ Speidel (1992); Walker (1976) 120; Carradice (1983) 9; 19; 142. But see now Butcher and Ponting (1995) on methodological problems that cast doubt on the accuracy of Walker's calculations.

Titus.³⁵⁶ But this will have been paid in the debased silver coinage in use under his two predecessors, and the distributions were not exceptionally large. Domitian clearly felt then that he could afford to raise the value of his coinage. Some have detected disagreement with his *a rationibus* who was sent off to Campania in disgrace about this time after holding the post for over ten years.³⁵⁷ If so, it would be a measure of the importance attached by Domitian to the upgrading of the coinage for reasons that were either economic, but controversial and novel, or, more likely, not economic at all, but related to his general desire to restore ancient standards. It was not a reform meant to impress the general public, for that would have been better achieved by increasing further the weight of the denarius rather than improving the proportion of silver in it.³⁵⁸ But for those who knew about such things, as for the *princeps* himself, it will have signified Rome's return to its pre-civil war standards. Hence the coins were not allowed to slip below the Neronian standard even after the new higher levels had proved impossible to maintain.³⁵⁹

Between April and September 85 the denarius was lowered to the level of fineness of 64 and the weight of the aureus and denarius were slightly reduced. The fact that the reduction followed so soon on the rise in army pay, an increase in expenditure that was calculable and entirely within his control, suggests that Domitian had misjudged his resources in attempting such an increase after his improvement of numismatic standards.³⁶⁰ Perhaps the military disaster on the Danube, in which Oppius Sabinus was killed, took place early enough in 85 to make the emperor realize that he had not left himself enough financial leeway.

That Domitian first found himself under serious financial pressure in 85 is confirmed by the fragments of Dio which attest in that year the first prosecutions in Rome for financial motives, as well as exactions in the provinces, including Africa, where a serious revolt of the Nasamones had to be repressed in 86.³⁶¹ That Domitian's financial difficulties continued to the end of the reign is strongly suggested by his failure to replace the one or probably two legions destroyed on the Danube during his reign. The connection is made in a distorted way by Suetonius and Dio, both of whom claim that Domitian tried to reduce military expenses by reducing the number of his troops, and stress the danger from barbarians that resulted. Suetonius also implies that he stopped the process when he realized this

³⁵⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 2.3 (not doubled). Carradice (1983) 159–60 suggests that the large output of denarii late in 81 was to meet the cost of this second accession donative.

³⁵⁷ This was the father of Claudius Etruscus: Stat. *Silv.* III.3.86–105. See Carradice (1979) 101–3; (1979) 142; 161, accepted by Jones, *Domitian* 76. ³⁵⁸ Walker (1976) 115 ff.; (1978) 118.

³⁵⁹ Cf. Walker (1976) 115, cf. 88–94 on the fluctuating standard of coinage under Vespasian and Titus; Carradice (1979) 143. ³⁶⁰ Walker (1976) 115; 120; (1978) 119; Carradice (1983) 28; 165.

³⁶¹ Suet. *Dom.* 12.1; Dio LXVII.4.5 (after Domitian became *ensor perpetuus*, i.e. late 85); LXVII.4.6: the legate of Numidia defeated in the revolt was Cn. Suellius Flaccus, known to have served in 86/7.

and turned to other means.³⁶² The loss of a legion and its legate in the Sarmatian attack of 92 is mentioned elsewhere by Suetonius, while it is not until his account of Trajan's Dacian Wars that Dio reveals that a military standard was lost on the fatal expedition of Cornelius Fuscus.³⁶³ It is generally agreed that Suetonius is alluding to the loss of XXI Rapax, which had adhered to Vitellius, then served in Domitian's war against the Chatti and finally had been moved from Moguntiacum in Upper Germany to Pannonia after the revolt of Saturninus.³⁶⁴ Whether the standard that Dio mentions was a praetorian eagle or belonged to another legion is less certain, but there is a strong possibility that it was then and not under Vespasian that the legion V Alaudae perished.³⁶⁵

On either hypothesis, Domitian's army was reduced to the Neronian size of twenty-eight legions in 92, and it remained at that size. It is hard to believe that, at a time when he was of necessity strengthening the Danube forces so considerably, Domitian preferred to keep down the total number of legions at the expense of other areas. In the case of Britain, the consequences for him in terms of lost prestige are made manifest in Tacitus' celebrated sneer, 'Britain was conquered and immediately abandoned.'³⁶⁶ Between 86 and 88 the legionary camp at Inchtuthil was demolished even before its buildings were complete, and Agricola's plans for control of the Scottish highlands after his victory at Mons Graupius were abandoned. The reason is clear: the legion II Adiutrix was sent to Moesia and not replaced in Britain.³⁶⁷ It has been suggested that the revolt of Saturninus reflects dissatisfaction on the part of the senatorial officers in Germany who resented the perfunctory way in which Domitian dealt with the Germans and his determination to move the focus of military effort to the Danube.³⁶⁸ Tacitus' dream of a return to the expansionist policy on the Rhine, abandoned after the Varus disaster, clearly reflects this frustration, for by the time he wrote the *Germania* in 98 both Germanies had become provinces with three legions each, while the Danubian legions had grown in number from six or seven to nine. Of the provinces of the empire, only Pannonia and Moesia had more than three legions each.³⁶⁹

If Domitian's heavy spending and financial stress have proved easy to document, the third type of evidence for his rapacity – that for novel

³⁶² Dio LXVII.3.5; Suet. *Dom.* 12.1. ³⁶³ Suet. *Dom.* 6.1, cf. Tac. *Agr.* 41; Dio LXVIII.9.4.

³⁶⁴ Syme, *CAH* xi¹ 177.

³⁶⁵ See p. 27. The argument stands independently of the dubious identification of the casualties of the Adamklissi Altar with men of that legion.

³⁶⁶ *Hist.* 1.2.6: 'perdomita Britannia et statim omissa'.

³⁶⁷ Ogilvie and Richmond (eds.) *Tacitus' Agricola* (1967) 71. See Chilvers' (1984) commentary on *Hist.* 1.5. The evidence for demolition is numismatic: the legion is first attested on the Danube in 92 (*ILS* 2719). ³⁶⁸ Birley (1974) 13–25.

³⁶⁹ Syme, *CAH* xi¹ 180; 186; *Danubian Papers* 104–5. The two military zones of Germany had become provinces by 90 when Iavolenus Priscus is attested as 'legatus Augusti pro praetore provinciae Germaniae Superioris' (*ILS* 1998).

financial exactions renounced by his successors – is more difficult to handle. For example, Frontinus in his treatise *On Aqueducts*, written under the next regime, remarks that the justice of Nerva restored to the people annual revenue of 250,000 HS which helped the *aerarium* to meet the costs of the public slaves who maintained the system: previously it had been appropriated by the ‘loculi’ or ‘cash-boxes’ of Domitian. The word is chosen to suggest that Domitian appropriated the money for his personal use, but it may have gone towards the support of the other maintenance troop which, as Frontinus tells us, was supported by the *fiscus*. Moreover, Frontinus indicates that before Domitian this modest revenue from the rent of water rights to buildings near water outlets had simply been lost altogether.³⁷⁰ Indeed, the renunciation of Domitianic financial practices, which is one of the main themes of Pliny’s eulogy of Trajan, involves freeing private citizens from excessive and unjust demands in the name of the *aerarium* and *aerarium militare*, as well as the *fiscus*.³⁷¹

This is not to deny that it was the interests of the *fiscus* which Domitian is alleged to have pursued most energetically, or at least most invidiously. Dio Chrysostom defends his own reputation by asking, ‘When did I ever put any man’s estate at risk by pretending that it belongs to Caesar?’ and a rescript of Trajan declares, ‘I know that the avarice of former times claimed the property of those suffering relegation for the *fiscus*, but this does not suit my clemency; and so, in addition to the other measures by which I have maintained the honesty of my accounts, I have renounced the precedent.’³⁷² During his reign the practice introduced by Claudius, whereby procurators managing the emperor’s properties became judges in cases where these same properties were concerned, became so oppressive that it was finally changed by Nerva and Trajan.³⁷³

One group that suffered particularly were the Jews who had been required by Vespasian to contribute the two drachmas, previously paid annually to the Temple in Jerusalem, to the temple and cult of Jupiter on the Capitol. Delation for non-payment to the *fiscus Iudaicus* became so notorious that Nerva felt it worth while to advertise on his coins the ending of such malicious prosecution.³⁷⁴ A vivid picture of the situation under Domitian is given by Suetonius, who in the 80s was an eye-witness to the examination before the procurator of an old man of ninety to see if he was circumcised. He presumably fell into the second of the two categories of

³⁷⁰ Frontin. *Aq* II.118. See the discussion in Carradice (1983) 154–5, though Pliny at *Pan.* 50.2 is not about the appropriation of public funds but of private property.

³⁷¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 42.1; 36.1; 55.5; 37–8 (the 5 per cent tax on inheritance which financed the *aerarium militare* (Dio LV.25.5)). ³⁷² Dio Chrys. *Or.* XLVI.8; *Dig.* XLVIII.22.1.

³⁷³ Pliny, *Pan.* 36; *Dig.* I.2.2.32: see Brunt (1966) 481 ff. Tacitus’ resentment of the Claudian measure in *Ann.* XII.60 may have been influenced by what he witnessed under Domitian (see Griffin (1990) 493).

³⁷⁴ See above, p. 27; *RIC* II 227 no. 58: coins of 96 reading ‘fisci Iudaici calumnia sublata’.

persons who, Suetonius tells us, were delated for non-payment, those who had not declared their liability but were following Jewish customs (such as the observing of the Sabbath and the dietary laws) and those who had concealed their origins (as here, by hiding their circumcision) and hence were not on the tax-register.³⁷⁵ It is not clear how Vespasian had defined liability to the tax, but the circumstances in which it was imposed suggest that he had in mind the Jews in the homeland, who had been in revolt, and the ethnic Jews of the Diaspora, though he presumably meant to include all those who paid contributions to the Temple in Jerusalem, including any proselytes and sympathizers who did.³⁷⁶ Once the traditional contribution had become a humiliating punishment, many ethnic Jews will have apostatized and tried to conceal their origins (like Suetonius' old man), while those attracted to Jewish ways will have avoided too close an identification with the Jewish community, for fear of being included with its members on the tax register. In the latter half of the 80s informers may have found the emperor interested when they pointed out that many more could be construed as liable to the tax than were actually paying.³⁷⁷

Though the imposition of a tax on the Jews had a punitive origin, it also implied the legality of their practices.³⁷⁸ As the Roman government had frequently issued pronouncements about the rights of Jews to follow their religion, this represented no fundamental change of policy, but there had been occasions when Jewish proselytes or Jews were expelled from the city, the latter for causing disturbances, especially by proselytizing.³⁷⁹ If Domitian was collecting the tax from Jewish proselytes and sympathizers, as well as ethnic Jews, must he not have forfeited the right to object to proselytism? Yet Dio reports a measure of Nerva forbidding prosecutions for *asebeia* (the type of *maiestas* Titus had renounced) and for adopting a Jewish way of life. That would seem to imply prosecutions on both counts under his predecessor, and indeed Dio also has Flavius Clemens and Domitilla punished for atheism in 95, 'a charge on which many others who had

³⁷⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 12.2: Suetonius was an 'adulescentulus', cf. *Ner.* 57.2 where he speaks of himself as 'adulescens' in 88. The fascination with circumcision and its concealment is reflected in Mart. VII.35; 82.

³⁷⁶ Joseph. *BJ* VII.218 speaks of Jews wherever resident; Dio LXVI.7.2 speaks of those who practised the ancestral ways (of the Jews).

³⁷⁷ The logic of Suetonius *Dom.* 12.2 ('qui vel improfessi Iudaicam viverent vitam vel dissimulata origine imposita genti tributa non pependissent') is a contrast between (1) those Jewish in lifestyle, but not by origin; (2) those Jewish by origin, but not in lifestyle. The view of Williams (1990) that the two categories are (1) proselytes and Judaizers and (2) Jews by birth, is therefore preferable to the view of Goodman (1989) that they are (1) ethnic Jews who hid their Jewish practices and (2) ethnic Jews who hid their origins.

³⁷⁸ Tert. *Apol.* 18: 'vectigalis libertas', cf. A.D. 19 (Tac. *Ann.* II.85.4) when exemption from punishment was granted to Jews who renounced their religion, as later to the Christians. Under Domitian, the point was not persecution (and forced apostasy), but revenue.

³⁷⁹ Tac. *Ann.* II.85.4; Suet. *Tib.* 36.1; Dio LVII.18.5a; Suet. *Claud.* 25.4; Smallwood, *Jews* 201–10.

drifted into Jewish ways' were condemned.³⁸⁰ In practice the prosecutions concerned members of a different social class from those delated to the *fiscus Iudaicus*, and it may be significant that the charge is given as 'atheism' – that is non-observance of the pagan gods, including the imperial cult about which Domitian was particularly exigent, not Jewish practices in themselves. The context in Dio suggests it was combined with charges of *maiestas*. Domitian could have objected to the failure of members of the senatorial class and, in the case of Clemens, of a serving consul, to participate in state ritual, even as he accepted the religious heterodoxy of little men, provided they paid their tax.³⁸¹ Moreover, in the case of the former, condemnation with confiscation was the more lucrative course.

Doubts have been expressed about the ancient tradition of Domitian's rapacity, with emphasis laid on the liberality that Nerva and Trajan could practise despite the large sums dispensed twice in two years on military donatives and *congiaria* to the plebs.³⁸² But these arguments are irrelevant, for the ancient writers do not assert that Domitian failed to balance his budget, only that he did so in ways that were oppressive and unjust.³⁸³

7. *The careful administrator?*

That Domitian was autocratic and oppressive is scarcely denied even by his defenders.³⁸⁴ But, it is argued, his determination to remain in control of affairs had its beneficent side: he was a careful administrator, and Rome's subjects benefited from his industry and vigilance.³⁸⁵ Suetonius lends some support by saying that the emperor punished dishonesty in jurors and magistrates and controlled city officials and provincial governors to such effect that at no time were they more honest or just. He goes on to note that after his reign they were charged with crimes of all kinds. If the biographer is inferring good conduct from a dearth of prosecutions for extortion, and bad conduct from the well-attested trials under Trajan, the conclusion is not worth much.³⁸⁶ The one attested trial for extortion under Domitian is that of Baebius Massa, the notorious informer, who was successfully prosecuted for his conduct as proconsul of Baetica. But it emerges from a letter of Pliny that Herennius Senecio, his fellow prosecutor and a native of

³⁸⁰ Dio LXVIII.1.2; LXVII.14.2–3. Cf. Pliny, *Pan.* 33.3–4 on prosecutions for *impietas*. Jewish sources reflect the tradition that Domitian was hostile to converts of high social position (Smallwood, *Jews* 382–3). ³⁸¹ Williams (1990) 207–9, followed by Jones, *Domitian* 118–19.

³⁸² Syme (1930), tempered in *Tacitus* 629–30, in response to the criticisms of Sutherland (1935) and others; cf. Garzetti, *Tiberius to Antonines* 281–4; Jones, *Domitian* 73.

³⁸³ The point is seen by Rogers (1984) and Carradice (1979) 163–6.

³⁸⁴ Syme, *Tacitus* 8; Jones, *Domitian* 123–4; 196–8. His staunchest defender is Waters (1964).

³⁸⁵ Mommsen (1909) 1 108, endorsed by Syme, *Tacitus* 210, 629; Garzetti, *Tiberius to Antonines* 276; Rogers (1984); Carradice (1979) 156; 165–6; Jones, *Domitian* 73, 107, 109–10, 197.

³⁸⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 8.1–2, with Brunt (1961) 221 = *Imperial Themes* 87; Levick (1982) 63–4. Syme (1983b) 134 n. 79 = *Roman Papers* IV 266 suggests that the trial of Marius Priscus impressed Suetonius.

Baetica, became concerned that Massa's ill-gotten gains might never reach the provincials unless special provisions were made to guard them, so the convicted man could not take them into exile. That does not necessarily mean that Domitian tolerated lower standards than other emperors in this respect, but it does not suggest that he raised them, especially as it took a man of exceptional courage and at odds with the emperor to oppose the abuse.³⁸⁷

Other evidence too is against improvement. Whatever suspicion may attach to Pliny's explicit comments on the laxness of discipline in the army when they form part of a general account of the evils of Domitian's reign, this does not affect his incidental remarks on the negligence and dishonesty of bookkeeping for the auxiliary troops when he was a military tribune.³⁸⁸ Again, Trajan had no hesitation in departing from Domitian's view of the status and obligations of foundlings; nor in believing that Domitian could have unwittingly enriched and commended an ex-convict alleged to have escaped his sentence illegally, because he had not checked up on him.³⁸⁹ The problem of the condemned evading sentence in Bithynia had clearly been as characteristic of the Flavian period as of the Trajanic.³⁹⁰

Similar difficulties arise when considering the conduct of city officials. Iulius Frontinus implies that Domitian increased the revenue for granting water rights, but he also shows that the honesty and industry of those concerned with the water supply had not been high. He speaks in *De Aquis* of negligence over a long period (II.130), and of dishonesty going back to the time of Nero (II.75–8). As a result the imperial records for amounts of water being drawn were inaccurate, and he was asked by Nerva to correct them (II.64, cf. I.9); the purity of the water supply also needed improvement (II.89; 93).³⁹¹ Of course, Frontinus is concerned to portray the virtues of this emperor, but the details he gives of the types of dishonesty practised ring true, especially as he does not use them specifically to blacken Domitian.

Documents have been adduced to show that Domitian was zealous in protecting his humble provincial subjects, if only to ensure that they were able to pay their taxes regularly,³⁹² – the kind of long-term expediency that had always been a more potent force than abstract morality in encouraging good government. However, it cannot be shown that the confiscation of the estates of Ti. Claudius Hipparchus in Athens was designed to benefit

³⁸⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* VII.33, cf. Tac. *Hist.* IV.50.2; Juv. *Sat.* I.35–6. Brunt (1961) 204 = *Imperial Themes* 70 compares Juvenal's 'at tu victrix provincia ploras' (I.49–50) on Marius Priscus under Trajan.

³⁸⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.14.7–8, cf. *Pan.* 18.1; VII.31.2; Speidel (1992) 96–7 shows that the corrupt pay system was not changed until the next century.

³⁸⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* x.66 with Williams (1990) 119 *ad loc.* vs Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 653; *Ep.* x.58; 60.

³⁹⁰ Velius Paulus, who condemned Flavius Archippus (Pliny, *Ep.* x.58) was proconsul of Bithynia c. 79/80. For the continuing problem, *Ep.* x.32. ³⁹¹ Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 489.

³⁹² Pleket (1961), against which see Levick (1982) 50 ff. and Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 489–90.

small farmers: Hadrian's oil law only shows that some of his estates were sold for the *fiscus* on attractive terms, while Vespasian's attested interest in his wealth suggests a similar concern in his son.³⁹³

Other documents show governors taking sensible action during Domitian's reign, but provide no evidence for his personal intervention. Thus a decree of 85 in the Phrygian city of Acmonia protected the endowment left to the city by one of its wealthy citizens T. Flavius Praxius, placing it in some sense under the protection of Rome, but there is no sign of the direct intervention exercised by emperors from Hadrian on.³⁹⁴ Then in the last years of Domitian, the governor of Cappadocia, L. Antistius Rusticus, took sensible measures against profiteering during a famine, but there is no evidence that he waited to consult the emperor in such an emergency.³⁹⁵

By contrast, an inscription from Syria gives an excerpt from the instructions (*mandata*) of Domitian to his procurator Claudius Athenodorus, demanding that the care shown by his father for the cities be enforced by preventing unauthorized requisitions of transport. Emphasis is laid on the injustice of laying additional burdens on the provinces, which can scarcely cope with legitimate demands, and on the neglect of the fields caused by calling peasants away from tilling. All of this is familiar from the pronouncements of earlier emperors: all that seems new is Domitian's insistence throughout that only he can issue *diplomata* and that any compulsion that is used must be authorized by him. In fact, this document is redolent of the financial concern and autocracy that the literary sources depict, and nothing in it rules out the kind of demands that Pliny claims Domitian's personal journeys made on the provinces nor the new tax burdens he is said to have invented.³⁹⁶ If Domitian sent out the first *curatores rei publicae* to sort out the finances of individual cities, he was only continuing the paternalistic concern attested for his father (pp. 29–31).³⁹⁷

It is legitimate to defend Domitian's subsidies to Decebalus as a traditional Roman way of dealing with barbarians, especially justifiable when unfaithful allies needed chastising,³⁹⁸ just as one can defend his German policy as a continuation of a sensible policy of Vespasian's. But the devaluation of the coinage in 85 suggests that Domitian was not efficient at balancing his budget, and the revolt of the Nasamonnes shows that, in trying to do so, he did not spare Rome's provincial subjects (p. 72).

³⁹³ Philostr. *VS* II.1, 547; Smallwood, *NTH* no. 443 = *SEG* xv 108; xxi 501 with Levick (1982) 58–60; Suet. *Vesp.* 13. ³⁹⁴ *SEG* XIII.542; xv.803 = MW 500.

³⁹⁵ *AE* 1925 no. 126 = MW 464; Mart. ix.30 (published in 94) attests his death in the province. Antistius Rusticus: Syme (1983c).

³⁹⁶ *SEG* xvII 755 = MW 466; Mitchell (1976) 106 ff., esp. 126; Levick (1982) 51–3; Pliny, *Pan.* 20.4; 29.2.

³⁹⁷ First epigraphically attested on *ILS* 1017, see n. 275; cf. Philostr. *VS* I.19, 512 (one under Nero).

³⁹⁸ Syme, *Tacitus* 630 n. 3; see p. 112.

Domitian's reign was characterized, not by exceptional efficiency nor by an increased concern for justice and welfare, but by the censoriousness of a disciplinarian. Pliny's praise of Trajan for ensuring the good conduct of Roman magistrates, by rewarding good conduct rather than punishing bad, finds an echo even in the praises of Statius, who speaks of Domitian's justice in terms of punishment and fear.³⁹⁹ Martial too captures the tone when he makes a comic actor say that he could only enjoy imperial favour if he was well-behaved, while Statius represents the wife of Domitian's *ab epistulis* Abascantus following the example of his master in the frugality of her table.⁴⁰⁰ Even Domitian's vine edict is described by Statius in terms of sobriety and the neglect of the chaste goddess Ceres, and the reproving tone of Domitian can be heard behind Suetonius' allusion to the neglect of the fields. This edict, which forbade the planting of more vines in Italy and ordered the destruction of half the vineyards in the provinces, was passed on the occasion of a grain shortage which coincided with an abundant vintage: it was probably designed to discourage dependence on hazardous imports and encourage increased production to meet local needs.⁴⁰¹ Yet the moral disapproval clearly came across more than the economic aims, to judge from the anonymous poem that is supposed to have induced Domitian not to enforce the edict and the fact that Philostratus, like Statius, treats it as an attack on drinking and disorderly conduct.⁴⁰²

Statius and Suetonius put the edict in the context of Domitian's prohibition of castration, while Statius speaks of the chaste goddess. In fact, sexual morality was Domitian's speciality. His own harping on the misdemeanours of others probably accounts for the insistence in the sources on Domitian's sexual transgressions:⁴⁰³ evidence for his hypocrisy was clearly dug up or invented. Old laws like the Augustan legislation on adultery and the Lex Scantinia against homosexual intercourse with free-born males were enforced;⁴⁰⁴ new legislation forbade the castration of young males.⁴⁰⁵ But the most dramatic demonstration of Domitian's determination to raise sexual standards was one which saw him acting as *pontifex maximus* to defend the state religion and indeed the sacred hearth on which the welfare of Rome and its empire depended. In 83, and again in

³⁹⁹ *Silv.* v.2.91, 'exegit poenas . . . quem timet omne nefas'.

⁴⁰⁰ *Mart.* ix.28; *Stat. Silv.* v.1.121–2, cf. *Suet. Dom.* 21.

⁴⁰¹ *Stat. Silv.* iv.3.11–12 (with Coleman (1988) 107); *Suet. Dom.* 7.2; Levick (1982) 66–73. The edict 'vites in urbibus seri', dated to 91–2 by Eusebius–Jerome (p. 191 Helm) and 90 by *Chronicon Paschale* (p. 466 Dindorf) may be different: Tchernia, *Vin* 221 ff.

⁴⁰² *Suet. Dom.* 14.2; *Philostr. VA* vi.42; *VSI*.21, 520. The moral aim of the legislation is stressed by Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 35 n. 4.

⁴⁰³ McDermott (1969) 331–2 (on Pliny, *Ep.* iv.11.6 and 9, cf. *Pan.* 90.5); Vinson (1989) 431–50.

⁴⁰⁴ *Suet. Dom.* 8.3; *Dio LXVII*.12.1; *Stat. Silv.* v.2.102; *Mart.* vi.7; 22; 45; *Juv.* ii.29 ff.

⁴⁰⁵ *Suet. Dom.* 7.1; *Dio LXVII*.2.3; *Stat. Silv.* iii.4.74–7; iv.3.13–15; *Mart.* ii.60; vi.2; ix.6; ix.8; *Philostr. VA* vi.42. See p. 91 n. 53.

89 or 90, Vestal Virgins were tried and punished for breaking their vows of chastity. The first time the Vestals were allowed to choose their mode of death, and their lovers were banished.⁴⁰⁶ On the second occasion, the chief Vestal Cornelia, acquitted earlier, was buried alive and her lovers were beaten to death with rods, in the traditional way.⁴⁰⁷ In this respect Domitian is plausibly said to have corrected abuses condoned by his father and brother.⁴⁰⁸ But even justifiable reform was carried out in a typically brutal manner.

8. *Dominus et deus*

The deterioration of Domitian's relations with the governing class was intensified by his lack of *civilitas*: Pliny complains of his physical inaccessibility and arrogance. A key symptom is the resurgence of the influence of the imperial freedmen which had been so marked under Claudius and in the later reign of Nero.⁴⁰⁹ Although, under Domitian, the process by which *equites* took over the influential positions in the palace advanced with the appointment of Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito as *ab epistulis*,⁴¹⁰ the Claudian pattern whereby writers such as Seneca and Scribonius Largus addressed their work to imperial freedmen in order to gain the ear of the emperor became manifest again: Domitian's *cubicularius* Parthenius received eight epigrams from Martial, who also praised other freedmen such as Entellus the *a libellis* individually (VIII.68) and together (IX.79.5–6). He and Statius flatter the imperial eunuch Earinus, the *ab epistulis* Abascantus, and the son of Domitian's *a rationibus*.⁴¹¹

Domitian did not fail to preserve the hierarchical distinctions of Roman society, distinctions which Augustus had emphasized. The special seats for *equites* at the theatre were protected, and rank was respected when food and gifts were distributed at his various entertainments.⁴¹² But he was concerned to emphasize the supremacy of his own position. He was escorted by twenty-four lictors like a dictator, instead of the customary consular twelve. He took the consulship for ten years in 84, though in fact he only held the office seven times more. But his omission of 'cos. des.' thereafter signified a disinclination to go through the ritual of election.⁴¹³ Being

⁴⁰⁶ Dio LXVII.3; Suet. *Dom.* 8.4. Dio seems to indicate that some of the lovers were tried in the Senate.

⁴⁰⁷ Suet. *Dom.* 8.4; Juv. IV.9–10; Pliny, *Ep.* IV.11, indicating a date before the death of Herennius Senecio in 93 and after the death of Titus' daughter Iulia c. 89. Eusebius–Jerome dates the trials to 91–2; *Chronicon Paschale* to 89.

⁴⁰⁸ Suet. *Dom.* 8.3. Despite Pliny's vindication, Licinianus' guilt was clearly accepted by Nerva who did not pardon him (*Ep.* IV.11.5; 11–14); Tacitus (*Hist.* 1.2 'pollutae caerimoniae'), like Suetonius, clearly believed that the Vestals were guilty. ⁴⁰⁹ Pliny, *Pan.* 48.3; 51.5, cf. 79.7; 88.1–2.

⁴¹⁰ Pp. 24, 106–7; Suet. *Dom.* 7.2; *ILS* 1448=MW 347.

⁴¹¹ Coleman (1986) 3104; Jones, *Domitian* 61–2. ⁴¹² Suet. *Dom.* 8.3; 4.5; Mart. V.8.1–3.

⁴¹³ Dio LXVII.4.3; Buttrey (1980) 37. Domitian was consul thereafter in 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 92 and 95. Pliny, *Pan.* 63–4 praises Trajan for going through the electoral process 'like one of us'.

censor without a colleague contrasts with Augustus' scruples and the practice of his predecessors.

The most striking departure from the senatorial ideal of a *princeps* who was one of them was Domitian's encouragement of the flattering mode of address 'dominus et deus'. Martial, addressing Trajan in the new style of flattery, banishes flattering compliments to the Parthian court and rejects the address 'dominus et deus' with the gloss, 'here is no dominus but an emperor and a senator, the justest of all'.⁴¹⁴ Martial alludes here, not to the flattering terms of description in the third person,⁴¹⁵ which had been used since the start of the Principate and continued after Domitian, but to something more in the control of the *princeps*. What was at issue was the way the *princeps* was addressed, not only orally but in writing. For Dio, this form of address was apparently in use by 86/7 and was well established by 93, while Suetonius gives as the starting-point a letter sent by Domitian to his procurators starting, 'Our Master and God orders this to be done.' It accords with this evidence that Martial refers to an edict of 'our master and god' in about 89.⁴¹⁶ Later writers exaggerated the lead given by the emperor into an explicit order.⁴¹⁷

What lies behind the exaggeration is the fact that Domitian, in a more than passive way, abandoned the practice of 'good' emperors who deliberately discouraged or rejected 'dominus' as a form of address, aligning himself instead with Caligula.⁴¹⁸ The addition of 'deus' to 'dominus' only made the salutation more offensive,⁴¹⁹ but, as the ancient writers make clear, it was a matter of flattery on one side and arrogance on the other, not of theological aberration.⁴²⁰ How widespread the custom was is difficult to tell. Dio Chrysostom says that Domitian was called 'dominus et deus' by all, Suetonius has him hailed with his wife as 'dominus et domina' in the amphitheatre, and Statius shows the crowd at the entertainment given at the Saturnalia using 'dominus'.⁴²¹ The fact that Domitian rebuked them, far from controverting the ancient testimony to his encouragement of such

⁴¹⁴ Mart. x.72: 'non est hic dominus sed imperator, / sed iustissimus omnium senator'.

⁴¹⁵ E.g. in the third person: Mart. v.5; VIII.82 (dominus et deus); IX.28 (dominus et deus, ascribed to an actor); VII.2 (deus); VII.5 (deus, terrarum dominus); VIII.2 (terrarium dominus, deus rerum); VII.34 (dominus deusque noster, used by a 'malignus'); Stat. *Silv.* v.1.37–42.

⁴¹⁶ Dio LXVII.5.7 (ἡδῆ); LXVII.13.4 (ἡδῆ); Eusebius gives a date of 86/7. Suet. *Dom.* 13.2: 'dominus et deus noster hoc fieri iubet', cf. Mart. v.8.1: 'edictum domini deique nostri'.

⁴¹⁷ Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 11.2; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 11.6; Eutropius VII.23; Oros. VII.10.2.

⁴¹⁸ Suet. *Aug.* 53; *Tib.* 27, cf. Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 3.13; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 3.8.

⁴¹⁹ So Last, *CAH XI*¹ 412 n. 8. Domitian referred to his marriage couch as a 'pulvinar' (Suet. *Dom.* 13.1).

⁴²⁰ Pliny, *Pan.* 2.3: 'nusquam ut deo, nusquam ut numini blandiamur', cf. 11.3; 33.4; 49.1; 52 where he has Domitian convinced of his own divinity. Dio LXVII.4.2. says that Domitian despised flattery as much as he desired it.

⁴²¹ Dio Chrys. 45.1; Suet. *Dom.* 13.1, cf. Suet. *Aug.* 53.1; Stat. *Silv.* 1.6.84. Though Statius himself does not use 'dominus' or 'deus' as forms of address (cf. n. 415), he is prepared to use 'rex' in IV.1.47, a novelty even for imperial encomium.

flattery, confirms it, for on the Saturnalia normal social relations were deliberately obliterated or even reversed.⁴²² Thus on this occasion senators, knights, plebs, even women and children ate together, and the Emperor joined in their feast. In fact the poem makes the resonance of ‘dominus’ particularly clear, for on the Saturnalia master and slave changed places: it was the fact that ‘dominus’ was the word for a slave-owner that made it so politically offensive as a way of addressing the *princeps*.⁴²³

The coming of the Principate therefore created difficulties for the long-standing social use of ‘dominus’ as a flattering term of address showing respect and deference. Thus, Augustus’ children and grandchildren had used it of him, and even used it among themselves, until Augustus stopped the practice after the public implicitly described him as *dominus* in the theatre.⁴²⁴ The social usage continued, nonetheless, before, during and after the Flavian period, and Pliny’s use of it as a less formal alternative to ‘imperator sanctissime’ or ‘optime imperator’ when addressing Trajan fits into a long tradition.⁴²⁵ It was the way that Domitian used it of himself, combined it with ‘deus’ and encouraged that form of address by others which, added to his own manifest intention to behave as a ‘dominus’, created the resentment that still echoes in the ancient texts.

Only the soldiers, whose favour had been bought, are said to have regretted his death. Not the plebs, despite his shows and buildings. Indeed, his reintroduction of the obligation on quaestors to give gladiatorial games, like his other humiliations of the upper orders, did not increase his popularity with the populace: good emperors did not encourage such social divisiveness.⁴²⁶ Whatever similarities were noted between Domitian and Nero, popularity was not among them.⁴²⁷ That is not surprising, for, in line with his general lack of *civilitas*, Domitian abandoned the tradition whereby *principes* heeded popular demands and complaints voiced at the games: his characteristic response to these was ‘Silence.’⁴²⁸ And Pliny describes the autocratic severity with which he banned pantomime shows as obscene and immoral. His reading of Tiberius’ papers attests a temperamental similarity – not only eventual paranoia but severity.

⁴²² Pace Thompson (1984); Jones, *Domitian* 108–9. For Domitian’s normal aloofness, Pliny, *Pan.* 49.

⁴²³ Pliny, *Pan.* 2.3, ‘non de domino, sed de parente loquimur’, cf. Cic. *Rep.* III.37, distinguishing the rule of a dominus over his slaves from the proper authority of a king or a parent, cf. 55.7; 45.3.

⁴²⁴ Friedlander (1913) app. XV; Bleicken (1978) 19–21; Suet. *Aug.* 53.

⁴²⁵ Seneca to his brother: *Ep.* 104.1; 3.1 where it is described as a meaningless greeting used when one cannot remember someone’s name; Epictetus IV.1.56 attests its use in flattering philosophers and soothsayers; Martial of patrons (I.112 (with ‘rex’); II.68), and the tablets of Vindolanda show ‘frater domine’ and ‘domine’ as normal modes of address among the officers in the army. Fronto uses it in addressing his son-in-law (Loeb II 171) and Marcus Aurelius addresses Fronto as ‘domine magister’ and refers to his brother as ‘dominus meus frater’ (Loeb I 300). Pliny, *Ep.* X.1 (‘imperator sanctissime’; X.14 (‘optime imperator’)).

⁴²⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 23.1; 4.1, cf. Tac. *Ann.* XI.2.2–3, cf. XIII.5; Suet. *Claud.* 24.2 (cf. Vacca, *Vita Lucani*, for continuation of the custom after its abolition by Nero). See Talbert, *Senate* 61–2; 63; Griffin (1991).

⁴²⁷ Pliny, *Pan.* 46; Suet. *Dom.* 7.1; 20. ⁴²⁸ Dio LXIX.6.1.

Domitian, in fact, had conferred on himself the title that most accurately conveyed the character of his rule: he was Censor Perpetuus. He had no inhibitions about the autocratic and reprobating image that his predecessors in that office had tried to avoid. That may explain why subsequent emperors declined the office altogether.

CHAPTER 2

NERVA TO HADRIAN

MIRIAM GRIFFIN

I. NERVA¹

Vespasian and his two young sons appeared to offer the empire a long period of stability, but the dynasty lasted only one generation. Many survivors of the civil war that had preceded their peaceful sequence were still alive when Domitian was murdered on the afternoon of 18 September 96. There were fears that history might repeat itself as once again an extravagant young aesthete, who had produced no heir, was replaced by a childless patrician sexagenarian.² Like Galba, M. Cocceius Nerva was said to have been targeted by the tyrant for destruction³ and indeed to have been in danger during the reign, despite having held high office.⁴ In fact, Nerva had been honoured in 90 with a second consulship (rare at that point in Domitian's reign), and at the time of his supposed exile from Rome, the unheroic Martial had not been afraid to celebrate his merits as a poet: only later, writing of the emperor, would he celebrate his courage and virtue 'under a hard prince and in evil times'.⁵

Nerva had no doubt been chosen because he was of high birth but unrelated to the Flavian dynasty and because his service to Domitian had

¹ Tacitus never produced the promised narrative of the 'richer and safer period' (*Hist.* 1.4), while Suetonius ended his biographies with the Flavians. The account of Dio is preserved only in excerpts, forcing reliance on late fourth- and fifth-century digests, of which the anonymous *Építome de Caesaribus* seems to have preserved some valuable information (see Jones (1970) 99 n. 14). The reactions to what Nerva did and the way his actions were presented then and later can be recovered to some extent through the surviving works of Tacitus, Pliny's *Panegyricus* and his letters, which also supply some dated incidents. A rough chronology is provided by coins and inscriptions. Shotter (1983) 215 ff. could distinguish six issues of coins chronologically, thanks to their precise dating by tribunician power and consulship; Smallwood, *NTH* (1966) is still a valuable collection of inscriptions. Above all, the skilful and imaginative analysis of careers recorded on inscriptions (which are still coming to light in large numbers) has rescued many public figures of the period from oblivion, e.g. Eck, *Senatores*: lists updated in *Chiron* 12 (1982) 281 ff.; 13 (1983) 147 ff. The pioneering work on this period, Syme's *Tacitus* (1958) is still the most valuable scholarly study of the period of Nerva and Trajan. The same author's articles, collected and helpfully indexed by A. R. Birley in the seven volumes of *Roman Papers*, include most of the prosopographical information available down to his death in 1989.

² Given his patrician status (*ILS* 273=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 90), Nerva should have held his praetorship in 66 (*Tac. Ann.* xv.72) at the minimum age. Hence Dio's birthdate of 8 Nov. A.D. 30 (LXVIII.4.2) is too early and A.D. 35 (*Épit. de Caesaribus* 12.11) to be preferred: Syme, *Tacitus* 653 n. 5.

³ Dio LXVII.15.5–6 (for his horoscope), cf. Suet. *Ner.* 43.1; *Galba* 9.2.

⁴ Philostr. *VA* VII.8; 11, cf. Suet. *Galba* 8.1; 9.1.

⁵ Mart. VIII.70 (published in 93); IX.26 (94/5); XII.6.11–12.

not been notorious. He was descended from a triumviral consul and imperial jurists and related, through a maternal uncle, to Iulia, the granddaughter of Tiberius. His celebration of Divus Augustus on coins was to show his desire for continuity with the Julio-Claudians, and he was eventually buried in the Mausoleum of Augustus with those emperors.⁶ Nerva also had tenuous, but reassuring, connections with political victims: the maternal connection with Iulia and her husband Rubellius Blandus meant a link with one of Nero's victims, Rubellius Plautus, while Nerva's nephew L. Salvius Otho Cocceianus had perished under Domitian for his loyalty to the memory of his imperial uncle.⁷

The new *princeps* himself evoked the situation in 68/9 when he chose to share his first tenure of the consulship as emperor with the venerable Verginius Rufus, the victor of Vesontio. And when Verginius died later in 97, he was voted a grand public funeral, complete with an address by the consul Tacitus commemorating his exploits, and a public monument on which was inscribed the famous epitaph proclaiming his self-denying patriotism.⁸ The celebration of Verginius Rufus, however, also highlighted how different Nerva's situation was from that of Galba, the candidate of the army of Spain, who had removed Verginius from his German command. For Nerva had not come to power as a result of an armed revolt. Indeed, the soldiers had remained loyal to Domitian because of the rise in their pay and would have, according to Suetonius, pressed for his deification had they not lacked leaders.⁹ The army commanders, though no doubt sharing the sentiments of their senatorial peers, had not taken the initiative, and it was to be hoped that, like Verginius, they would accept the *princeps* recognized by the Senate. Suetonius may also mean to include the praetorian guard in this dissatisfaction of the soldiers, for a year later they were to demand the punishment of their prefect Petronius as a member of the assassination plot. Meanwhile, his fellow prefect, also an accomplice, had been replaced by Casperius Aelianus, who had once held (and lost) the post under Domitian and was presumably chosen by Nerva for his popularity with the guard.¹⁰ Like the army commanders, the prefects were able and prepared to control their men, at least at first. The memory of 69 reminded them that one bid would surely lead to another.

Nerva seems to have counted his *dies imperii* and his *tribunicia potestas*, like

⁶ *RIC* II 232–3 nos. 126–37; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.12.

⁷ Syme, *Tacitus* app. 1; Syme (1982). The key evidence is *ILS* 281 and 952; Suet. *Dom.* 10.3; Tac. *Hist.* II.48.2. Juv. VIII.39 ff. ridicules the aristocratic torpor of a Rubellius Blandus, possibly a descendant (Tac. *Ann.* XIV.59.1).

⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* II.1; Dio LXVIII.2.4; Pliny, *Ep.* VI.10. The monument was thereafter neglected, its publicity value being exhausted.

⁹ Suet. *Dom.* 23; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 11.9; cf. Philostr. *VS* I.7, 488 where Dio Chrysostom prevents the Danubian legions from revolting.

¹⁰ Cf. Suet. *Galba* 16.1: 'militēs' includes the praetorians; Dio LXVIII.3.3.4; Joan. Antioch. fr. 110 M.vv.1–6; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.8. In *Or. Sibyll.* 12.145–6 Nerva is said to have been assassinated (!) 'on account of the former king'.

the Flavian emperors, from his recognition by the soldiery, which was followed the next day by the senatorial conferral of requisite powers.¹¹ But initiative had not belonged to the Senate either, though coins of 97 advertised 'Providentia Senatus'.¹² Indeed, the paranoid Domitian had been so vigilant that even an assassination in Rome had to be a boudoir affair. Though soundings are said to have been taken among possible candidates, circumstances had not allowed many people to claim involvement in the removal of Domitian, or any of the emperor's supporters to be killed off. Therefore the difficulties presented by a Senate full of men with guilty consciences were to be more acute than those facing Galba.¹³

The first senatorial use of freedom was a unanimous expression of hatred. Probably at the same meeting at which Nerva was voted his powers, the gold and silver statues of Domitian, signifying divinity, were pulled down, dismembered and melted down; his votive shields were moved; his many arches were slated for demolition. Surviving examples attest the implementation of the order to erase his name on inscriptions.¹⁴ The tyrant himself was buried with little ceremony and his ashes entombed by his old nurse in the *Templum Gentis Flaviae* which he had built.¹⁵

The themes of *Libertas Publica*, celebrated on coins of Nerva from 96 on, and of *Libertas Restituta*, commemorated on an inscription set up in the name of SPQR perhaps in the *Atrium Libertatis*,¹⁶ were echoed a year into the reign by Tacitus in a tone still expressive of exhaustion and relief.¹⁷ Tacitus was also concerned in the *Agricola* to stress the corporate guilt of senators and the need to appreciate the work of those who, while not embracing defiance and martyrdom, had managed to serve the state in a selfless way. Initially, however, the new freedom to hate was employed by some to take revenge, to establish their credentials as enemies of tyranny, or just to attract the limelight. As always, the small fry suffered first: a disloyal philosopher called Seras recalls the punishment of Egnatius Celer in 70.¹⁸ As senators competed to prosecute their enemies, one of the last consuls of 96 remarked that 'it was bad to have an emperor under whom nobody was allowed anything, but worse to have one who permitted everything to everyone'.¹⁹

¹¹ The *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 15) record:

XIII K. Oct. Domitianus o[ccisus].
Eodem die M. Cocceius N[erva] imperator
appellatu[s] est]. XIII K. Oct. s.c. fact[um] . . .

¹² *RIC* II 229 no. 90 (issued only early in 97): both Nerva and a senator are seen holding on to the globe (see *BMCRE* II xlix). ¹³ Dio LXVII.15.5, cf. Tac. *Hist.* 1.2.3–3.1.

¹⁴ Suet. *Dom.* 23; Dio LXVIII.1.1; Pliny, *Pan.* 52.4–5 (cf. Suet. *Dom.* 13.2); *DE* II.3, p. 2000.

¹⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 17.3, cf. *Epit. de Caesaribus* 11.13.

¹⁶ *RIC* II 223 no. 7; 224 no. 19; 225 nos. 31, 36; 226 no. 43, 227 no. 64; 228 no. 76; 229 nos. 86, 100; *ILS* 274=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 27b.

¹⁷ Tac. *Agr.* 2–3; 45; cf. Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.14.2–3; 9–10 (written a decade later).

¹⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* IX.13.4, 'dumtaxat minores'; Dio LXVIII.1.2: perhaps identical with the ex-senator Palfurius Sura, turned Stoic and informer under Domitian (schol. on *Juv.* IV.53; *PIR*² III p. 68).

¹⁹ Dio LXVIII.1.3. The consul is Ti. Catus Caesius Fronto.

1. *Clemency, compromise and conciliation*

Nerva soon saw that there must be a more positive reaction to the fear and repression experienced under Domitian. 'Mitissimus', the epithet constantly applied to him, is glossed by Martial as 'good faith', 'genial clemency', 'cautious use of power', and the quality of generosity with which he rounds off his portrait completes the contrast with Galba's severity and avarice.²⁰ An edict of Nerva himself promises to put first the security of all and confirms all the privileges conferred by past *principes*. Though Titus and Domitian had also done so, the generosity of Nerva stands out, in that those who had received benefits from the hated Domitian were thus protected.

However, Nerva was repudiating Domitian's example when he followed Titus in swearing an oath not to put senators to death himself, and in banning prosecutions generally for the type of *maiestas* that consisted in defamation, particularly of the imperial family. He also prohibited the related charge, introduced by his predecessor, of adopting Jewish ways (pp. 75–6, 92). In fact, he tried to undo the damage already done to individuals by releasing all those on trial for *maiestas* and restoring the exiles, returning whatever property of theirs remained in the imperial treasury.²¹ The only punitive action he seems to have licensed himself was likewise directed against political prosecutions: the punishments of slaves and freedmen who had accused their masters and patrons, accompanied by legislation preventing such accusations in future. This was a traditional senatorial cause which finds full expression in writers of the period.²²

The exiles were expected back in January 97 when Pliny was approached on behalf of M. Aquilius Regulus, who feared retaliation for his notorious attacks on Domitian's victims, Arulenus Rusticus and Herennius Senecio in particular.²³ Soon after Rusticus' brother, Iunius Mauricus, returned, accompanied by the heroic women of Thrasea Paetus' family and the philosophers who had been expelled in the pogrom of 93, Pliny thought that the time was ripe to land a larger fish. In spring 97 he determined to prosecute Publicius Certus, currently one of the prefects of the Aerarium Saturni, for his overzealous role in the condemnation and execution of the younger Helvidius Priscus.²⁴ In seeking to vindicate the members of the so-called 'Philosophical Opposition', he was appealing to Nerva's own ancestral link with Rubellius Plautus and Stoic circles.²⁵ Nerva included Mauricus in his

²⁰ Mart. XII.6; Pliny, *Pan.* 6.1 'mitissimus senex'; Dio LXVII.15.5 'ἐπιεικέστατος'. On Galba, Tac. *Hist.* 1.5.2. ²¹ Dio LXVIII.2.3; 1.2 (on ἀσέβεια, p. 7); 2.1.

²² Dio LXVIII.1.2; cf. Claudius' measures against freedmen who informed (Dio LX.13.2; *Dig.* xxxvii 14.5) and Galba's (Dio LXIII.3.4A). Tac. *Hist.* 1.2.3; Pliny, *Pan.* 42.2. ²³ Pliny, *Ep.* 1.5.

²⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* IX.13.2 ff. Pliny describes him as a *index* during the trial, not apparently the prosecutor: Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 491–2.

²⁵ Rubellius Plautus was a friend of Barea Soranus and Musonius Rufus (Tac. *Ann.* XIV.59.1; XVI.30).

consilium; he not only recalled Dio Chrysostom, who mentions their long-standing friendship, but invited him to Rome.²⁶ It is therefore possible that it was Nerva who extended to the category of philosophers the privileges which the Flavians had given to teachers and doctors, though the evidence for the extension is Trajanic.²⁷

The stories in Philostratus of Nerva's dangers in 93 and his friendships with philosophers reflect the image that Nerva himself probably propagated, as does Martial's description of his morality as a genial version of Cato's.²⁸ At this date Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito, the *ab epistulis* whom Nerva had inherited from Domitian, gained permission to erect a statue in the forum of Lucius Iunius Silanus, a Neronian victim of Stoic sympathies, and was busy collecting portraits of Brutus, Cassius and Cato, and writing verses in their honour in the spirit of Thræsea Paetus and Helvidius Priscus.²⁹ Martial himself, who had once endorsed Domitian's views of philosophers, was too identified with the old regime to regain his position on the literary scene. However much he might appeal to the influence of Domitian's treacherous chamberlain Parthenius, omit poems flattering Domitian in reissues of his poems, or try to master the new vocabulary for flattering the new emperor, he had to go home to Bilbilis.³⁰

Yet Nerva was by nature inclined to compromise. When Pliny apparently secured, after a heated debate, a senatorial decision in favour of pursuing the case of Publicius Certus, Nerva was invited to comment on the resolution: he never replied and the matter was allowed to drop.³¹ Pliny had to content himself with publishing his speech in two books entitled 'On the Avenging of Helvidius Priscus', and it was probably his death a few days after publication, rather than imperial disfavour, which deprived Certus of the expected consulship which his colleague obtained.³² No harm befell Aquillius Regulus. Nerva, in fact, showed the same desire as Galba and, later, Vespasian to stop senatorial vendettas.³³ Writing later under Trajan, Pliny recounts the story of Mauricus' witty riposte to his imperial host at dinner. The place of honour next to the *princeps* was filled by Fabricius

²⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* IV.22.1; Dio Chrys. *Or.* XLV.2; XLIV.12; XLI.7.

²⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* x.58.1 'ut philosophus', cf. *FIRA* I 73, 77=MW 458, Bowersock, *Sophists* 30 ff.; Bringmann (1983), esp. 69–73; Griffin (1989) 21–2.

²⁸ Philostr. *VA* VII.8; I 1; Mart. XII.6.7–8.

²⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* I.17.3 (cf. *ILS* 1448=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 270). L. Silanus, according to the scholiast on *Juv.* I.33, was a pupil of the Stoic philosopher Heliodorus. Cf. *Juv.* v.36–7.

³⁰ Philosophers: Mart. I.8; I.78; IX.47; Parthenius: XI.1; XII.11. Book x, published in 95, was reissued in 98 after he had compiled an anthology of poems from Books x and XI for Nerva (XII.5; 11). See L. Friedlaender, *M. Valerii Martialis Epigrammaton Libri* (1886) 162–6; Sullivan (1991) 44–52; Coleman (1998).

³¹ Pliny, *Ep.* IX.13.8; 13–23. For the problematic procedures reported: Sherwin-White, *ad loc.*, *Letters of Pliny* and Talbert, *Senate* 257, 260, 272.

³² Pliny, *Ep.* IX.13.1; 14; 24; IV.21.3; VII.30.4–5. Prefects of the *Aerarium Saturni* normally proceeded to the consulship, but Bittius Proculus, unlike Pliny and his colleague who went immediately, held it nearly three years later, in September 99 (Eck (1993a) 1 ff.) Certus was ill at the time of Pliny's attack.

³³ Tac. *Hist.* IV.6.1–2; IV.44.

Veiento, Domitian's trusted adviser, who had tried to stop the Senate following Pliny's lead. Talk turned to the sinister Catullus Messallinus, notorious in the last reign for proposing ferocious penalties for the condemned. 'What do you suppose would have happened to him, if he were still alive?' said Nerva. Mauricus replied, 'He would be dining with us.'³⁴ Tacitus, too, allowed his ironic view of the situation under Nerva to show through the speech he composed in the *Histories* for Curtius Montanus, who, attacking in Plinian vein the Senate's failure in 70 to avenge the victims of Nero by punishing the then young Aquilius Regulus, remarks, 'The best day after a bad *princeps* is the first.'³⁵ Certainly, he was to report in full the triumphal honours and special statues on the Palatine awarded to Nerva for his part in the suppression of the Pisonian conspiracy of 65.³⁶

The difficulties Nerva faced would tax his considerable diplomatic talents to the full. His friend Arrius Antoninus is said to have commiserated with him on his elevation to the throne, saying that it was hard enough always to have managed to survive bad emperors without taking on the burdens and perils of rule and the enmity of friends who would resent whatever they could not extort. Arrius had been consul in 69 and could speak from experience.³⁷ It was, in fact, on such elderly cautious men of his own generation, whose distinguished careers lay in the period before Domitian's worst excesses, that Nerva relied. Arrius Antoninus probably held his consulship in 97.³⁸ Corellius Rufus, who Pliny knew would disapprove of his vendetta, had been consul in 78 and governor of Upper Germany in 82. He was put on Nerva's land commission, but soon after, at the age of sixty-seven, took his own life to escape a painful illness.³⁹ Vestricius Spurinna, who had held no office under Domitian after it became dishonourable to do so, found himself for a spell in charge of Lower Germany at the age of seventy-three, and was awarded a triumphal statue before moving on to his second consulship in 98.⁴⁰ In that year two other sexagenarians were selected by Nerva to hold that office for the second time, after being elected to an economy commission by the senate: Sextus Iulius Frontinus, whom Nerva in 97 had put in charge of the aqueducts, and L. Iulius Ursus.⁴¹

Nerva's work of conciliation extended beyond the senatorial collaborators and survivors. The plebs were indifferent to Domitian's death but

³⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* iv.22.4–6; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.5. On A. Fabricius Veiento, three times consul under the Flavians, Juv. iv; Pliny, *Ep.* ix.13.19–20; on L. Valerius Catullus Messallinus, *cos. II* in 85, Tac. *Agr.* 45; Juv. iv.113–22; Pliny, *Ep.* iv.22.6: 'sanguinariisque sententiis'.

³⁵ *Hist.* iv.42, on which see Martin (1967). ³⁶ *Ann.* xv.72.1; *ILS* 273=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 90.

³⁷ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.3. ³⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* iv.3.1; *HA Ant. Pius* 1.4.

³⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* vii.31.4; i.12.11.

⁴⁰ Pliny, *Ep.* iii.1.10, 12; ii.7.2, cf. Tac. *Germ.* 33.1. See Syme (1991b).

⁴¹ *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 17); Pliny, *Pan.* 61.7; 62.2. On Frontinus: Eck (1986). He and Corellius Rufus were 'quos tunc civitas nostra spectatissimos habuit' in the last years of Domitian (*Ep.* v.1.5).

expected their *congiaria*, which coins of 96 attest. In the next year they advertise some action by Nerva to guarantee the corn supply to the plebs, perhaps in particular the free rations that went, like the *congiaria*, to those on the list.⁴² In addition, the emperor provided, perhaps again for the privileged *plebs frumentaria*, a testamentary benefaction of 250 HS each.⁴³ Of wider benefit were the granaries ascribed to Nerva and the permission granted to the pantomime actors to return to the city.⁴⁴

Every issue of Nerva's brief reign included a type with clasped hands glossed by the legend *CONCORDIA EXERCITUUM*, very reminiscent of the *FIDES EXERCITUUM* and *CONSENSUS EXERCITUUM* types of 68 and 69. Though in this case the wishful thinking seemed initially to be confirmed by events, it points to an awareness that the armies would have to be appeased.⁴⁵ Nerva will not have imitated Galba's foolish example and denied the soldiers the expected donative on his accession.⁴⁶ Although new governors were installed in Upper and Lower Germany, other key military provinces such as Britain, Cappadocia-Galatia and the Danubian provinces were left in the hands of commanders appointed by Domitian.⁴⁷ The only hint of trouble was in Syria. In the spring of 97 Pliny was warned that his target Publicius Certus had powerful friends, and someone named 'a man whose eastern command in charge of a very large and notorious army was generating serious and suspicious rumours', presumably a man loyal to Domitian and averse to the persecution of his friends. The identity of this legate of Syria is disputed, though M. Cornelius Nigrinus Curvatus Maternus, who had been promoted by Vespasian and Domitian and had earned double military honours in the Dacian War in 85/6, is a favoured candidate.⁴⁸ In any case, the governor disappeared in circumstances suggesting a crisis, for a young ex-quaestor was brought in as deputy governor.⁴⁹

⁴² Suet. *Dom.* 23.1; *RIC* II 227 no. 56; 228 no. 71; 229 no. 89: 'PLEBEI URBANAE FRUMENTO CONSTITUTO'. See Mattingly, *RIC* II 220; Rickman, *Corn Supply* 213–16.

⁴³ Chronographer of the year 354, 'funeraticium plebi urbanae instituit', see Garzetti (1950) 68–9.

⁴⁴ *ILS* 1627=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 171. The *ANNONA AUGUSTI* coins of 96 and 97 (*RIC* II 226 no. 52; 227 no. 68; 228 no. 78 are too standard to attach to any particular action); Pliny, *Pan.* 46.

⁴⁵ *RIC* II 223 nos. 2–3; 224 no. 14; 225 no. 26; 226 no. 48; 227 nos. 53, 69; 228 nos. 70, 79; 229 nos. 95–7; 230 no. 108. Compare from A.D. 68/9: *RIC* I² 213 no. 126; 268 no. 4; 269 no. 40; 270 nos. 42, 47, 52–4; 271 no. 67.

⁴⁶ Suet. *Galba* 16.1; Tac. *Hist.* 1.5; Plut. *Galba* 2.2. On the amount see Campbell, *Emperor and Army* 169; 192.

⁴⁷ Syme, *Tacitus* 51–2; see p. 106. Pompeius Longinus was moved between the summer of 96 and Feb. 98 from Upper Moesia to Pannonia: Eck (1982) 326–7.

⁴⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* ix.13.11; *AE* 1973, no. 283. The identification is opposed by Barnes (1981) 382 ff. who would identify the legate with the orator in Tacitus' *Dialogus* and the sophist Maternus killed by Domitian in 91/2 (Dio LXVII.12.4) and place his tenure of Syria in 89–91 (see Eck (1982) 324, n. 172; Syme (1983b) 142–5=*Roman Papers* IV 274–7).

⁴⁹ Syme, *Tacitus* 631, adducing *AE* 1908 no. 237=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 218; *ILS* 1040=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 212; see n. 71.

The praetorian guard proved to be more troublesome. It may have had a candidate to replace or succeed Nerva, for an alleged conspiracy by the nephew of Galba's adopted son Piso Licinianus, one C. Calpurnius Crassus Frugi Licinianus, gave Nerva an opportunity to demonstrate his clemency. A member of a doomed family, descendants of republican nobility, which was decimated by Claudius and Nero, he and the others denounced with him were, according to one version, invited by Nerva to sit beside him at the games and inspect swords for sharpness. Another source says that he confessed to seducing the soldiers with grand promises and was sent with his wife to Tarentum, the Senate reproving Nerva's leniency. From the context in both these narratives, the soldiers would appear to be the praetorians: their mutiny in October may have been the sequel to this abortive coup.⁵⁰

As for Italy and the provinces, the circumstances of Nerva's accession ruled out any such divisive measures as had earned unpopularity for Galba. Instead, Nerva's regime promised stability through continuity of the acceptable aspects of Domitian's rule. The ratification of the benefits of previous emperors meant that whatever Domitian had granted as favours to cities and individuals stayed in place (p. 50, n. 217), and his decisions in general do not seem to have been disallowed as precedents.⁵¹ The standard of Domitian's gold and silver coins after the reduction of 85 was maintained by Nerva, and the type and legend *AEQUITAS AUGUSTI*, with her weighing scales, probably advertised the reliability of his issues.⁵² Nerva is credited with legislation against castration, reinforcing by senatorial decree what Domitian had tried to control by censorial edict.⁵³ A ban on marriage of uncle and niece was probably not aimed at Domitian's liaison with Iulia, for he had refused to marry her.⁵⁴

Nerva completed the new forum started by Domitian to connect the Forum Augusti with the Forum Pacis and the Subura with the Forum Romanum.⁵⁵ Even his one bid for military repute was a continuation of Domitian's campaign against the Germans on the Danube and was celebrated by the cognomen Germanicus, so valued by his predecessor. Before the victory over the Suebi that it commemorated, there had been a victory

⁵⁰ Dio LXVIII.3.2; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.6.

⁵¹ Pliny, *Ep.* x.5 8.7–10; 65–6; 72. In x.66 Trajan has doubts about observing Domitian's letter to two proconsuls because they were not governors of Bithynia; otherwise ('et ideo') he would have felt bound to follow its ruling.

⁵² On the history and significance of the type: Wallace-Hadrill (1981) 20 ff., esp. 31; *RIC* II 223 no. 1; 224 no. 13; 225 nos. 25, 37; 226 no. 43.

⁵³ Dio LXVIII.2.4 (a law); *Dig.* XLVIII.8.6 (a senatorial decree datable to spring of 97), forbidding the handing over of slaves for castration. Domitian: p. 79; he is credited with a *lex* by Amm. Marc. XVIII.4.5, but Stat. *Silv.* IV.3.14 speaks of Domitian's censorship.

⁵⁴ Dio LXVIII.2.4: see Garzetti (1950) 44 connecting it with Philostr. *VA* VII.7; Suet. *Dom.* 22.

⁵⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 5. It was known as the Forum Transitorium or Forum Nervae.

over the German tribe of the Bructeri in the spring of 97.⁵⁶ No wonder that Tacitus, writing after the succession of Trajan, the governor of Upper Germany, thought that the scene of the first military triumphs under the new dispensation would be *Germania*.

2. *Liberality and frugality*

The abuses of Domitian's rule, however, were stopped. Instead of rapacity accompanied by cruelty, the new emperor set an example to all of personal liberality.⁵⁷ And instead of having his own procurators adjudicate cases concerning the *fiscus*, he appointed a special praetor to judge cases between the *fiscus* and private citizens. Probably the system current under Trajan, by which the praetor assigned a *iudex* from the ordinary album unless the parties freely chose to have an imperial procurator judge the case, was already in place.⁵⁸

Since Domitian had only just balanced his budget, Nerva financed his generosity to the city plebs and soldiers through an ostentatious frugality. He sold imperial possessions, everything from estates to clothing, both what he had inherited from his own family and what he had acquired when he took over, as *princeps*, the accumulated imperial fortune.⁵⁹ The sales continued into Trajan's reign, when Pliny particularly stressed the volume of landed property that passed from imperial possession because it helped to restore the social parity of *princeps* and subject, and celebrated in the same context the reversal of Domitian's arrogance by Nerva, who inscribed on the imperial palace the words 'Aedes Publicae'.⁶⁰ Yet the moral and political effects of shedding imperial wealth, though important, should not be held to exhaust the purpose of the exercise. Hard as it may seem to regard these palace jumble sales as serious providers of funds, it is important to remember that wealth in the ancient world was not measured and stored primarily in stocks and shares, industrial equipment or even coin, but in land, bullion and other treasures.

Nerva's twin example of generosity and frugality extended to the sphere of state finance. The removal of abuses in tribute collection and the relief of cities is attested, and the punishment of the informers who augmented both imperial and public revenue.⁶¹ The ending of malicious and unjust persecution in connection with the *fiscus Iudaicus* was specifically celebrated on coins.⁶² In connection with the *aerarium militare*, which was supported

⁵⁶ Strobel (1989) 105–9; see p. 89; *ILS* 2720=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 248; on Vestricius Spurinna, n. 40.

⁵⁷ Mart. xii.6.9; Pliny, *Ep.* x.8.1; *Pan.* 43.4. ⁵⁸ *Dig.* i.2.2.32; Pliny, *Pan.* 36.3–5; p. 74.

⁵⁹ Pliny, *Pan.* 51.2; Dio lxxviii.2.2. ⁶⁰ Pliny, *Pan.* 50; 47.5–49.

⁶¹ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.4; Pliny, *Pan.* 35.4; Suet. *Dom.* 9.3; see p. 50. The edict of Nerva (*Dig.* xl.15.4) forbidding challenge to legal status five years after decease is clearly relevant to inheritance cases.

⁶² *RIC* II 227 no. 58; 228 nos. 72 and 82; Smallwood, *NTH* no. 28.

largely by a 5 per cent tax on inheritance payable by those who were not close kin, Nerva addressed the question of newly enfranchised Roman citizens who had not specifically been granted the privilege of retaining their kinship relationship with non-citizen members of their family. Inheritance between mother and child was specifically exempted from the tax, as well as the inheritance from father to son: Trajan was to extend the exemptions.⁶³ As regards Italy in particular, coins reveal the granting of some relief from the burden of the imperial public transport system used by officials and other persons granted passes by the emperor. Why such relief in money or labour or both, frequently attested as granted to provincials, was particularly required for Italian cities at this date, is not known.⁶⁴

There is somewhat more evidence for the law, reminiscent of many Republican measures, providing for the distribution of land to poor citizens. The amount of land involved was worth 60 million HS, and senators were put in charge of its purchase and distribution: one of these, described as '[sent by] the divine Nerva', is known from an inscription on which his name is not preserved; another was Corellius Rufus, who chose an equestrian to assist him in buying and dividing lands in 'accordance with the liberality of the emperor Nerva'. If the inscription is to be taken literally, then Nerva himself must have appointed the commissioners, and the sum involved makes it possible that this was a case of personal liberality, one of the gifts that precipitated Nerva's auction.⁶⁵ A similar problem arises over the alimentary programme providing payments to enable poor children in Italy to be reared, but this will be discussed in connection with Trajan, as its initiation may, and its implementation certainly does, belong to that reign.⁶⁶

The state treasury too was subject to economies. A commission to reduce public spending was set up by decree of the Senate, which also elected the five members, of whom we know two, Iulius Frontinus and Iulius Ursus: Verginius Rufus excused himself.⁶⁷ Some sacrifices, horse-races and spectacles were cancelled, possibly of mostly symbolic value, and the modest sum of 250,000 HS from water-rights was restored to the treasury for the support of the slaves provided by the state to maintain the aqueducts.⁶⁸

Nothing suggests that the finances generally were in a parlous state or

⁶³ Pliny, *Pan.* 37–8.

⁶⁴ The legend 'VEHICULATIONE ITALIAE REMISSA' accompanied by a picture of two mules released from a cart: *RIC* II 229 no. 93; 230 no. 104; Smallwood, *NTH* no. 30. See Eck, *Organisation* 94–5.

⁶⁵ Dio LXVIII.2.1; *Dig.* LXVII.21.3.1; *ILS* 1019=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 434; Pliny, *Ep.* VII.31.4: 'ex liberalitate imperatoris Nervae emendis dividendisque agris'. See Kloft, *Liberalitas* 75 n. 7; 103.

⁶⁶ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.4 (Nerva); Dio LXVIII.5.4 (Trajan). The inscriptions are all Trajanic. See below, pp. 115–17.

⁶⁷ Dio LXVIII.2.3: the involvement of the Senate is not new, cf. *LV*.25.6; Tac. *Ann.* xv.18; Pliny, *Pan.* 62.2; Pliny, *Ep.* II.1.9. ⁶⁸ Frontin. *Aq.* II.118; p. 74.

that Nerva, while using the Senate and people to legislate, did not have a firm grip on government. The picture that emerges from the handbook written by that exceptionally conscientious custodian of the aqueducts, Iulius Frontinus, is of personal involvement by ‘that best and most industrious emperor Nerva’ who suggested his researches into the true amount of water delivered by each aqueduct.⁶⁹ Certainly when political crisis came, it was Nerva who took action and the Senate which followed his lead.

3. *The adoption of Trajan*

The general weakness of Nerva’s regime lay in his age and his childlessness. It is less clear what in particular provoked the mutiny of the praetorian guard under its prefect Casperius Aelianus in the autumn of 97: perhaps the fiasco of the plot to put Calpurnius Crassus on the throne (p. 91). Although Nerva at first resisted demands for revenge on the murderers of Domitian, offering his own throat instead to the enraged soldiers, in the end Petronius, the other prefect, was killed at one blow and Parthenius was first castrated and then murdered. Nerva’s impotence was unambiguously revealed when he was forced to give thanks to the soldiers for destroying such criminals.⁷⁰

It has been suggested that Nerva himself or Trajan put Casperius up to demanding the executions. But Nerva would have realized that even to appear to be compelled to act against his will would weaken his authority, while Trajan was to make it quite clear who in fact had a claim on his gratitude. While Casperius and the ring-leaders were put to death, he rewarded with the signal honour of serving as his colleagues in their third consulships, two elderly men who had served and been conspicuously honoured by Nerva (p. 89). Speaking before the emperor, Pliny explains that they were rewarded for their services to him in the toga, that is, for suggesting to their friend and coeval Nerva the adoption of Trajan as a solution to his problems.⁷¹

Adoption was the traditional Roman solution when there was no natural heir, although Nerva made a virtue of necessity by describing it as a free choice of the best. In this he imitated Galba, who had in fact chosen a favourite already designated heir in his will. To restore his authority, Nerva

⁶⁹ *De Aquis* was written by Frontinus at the start of his term as *curator aquarum* (Pref. 2 *fin.*), which began in 97 (II.102 *fin.*). In ch. 1 Nerva is clearly the ‘optimus et diligentissimus Nerva princeps’ who appointed him and suggested his investigation (II.64, cf. II.87), but Trajan became emperor before he finished writing (‘divus Nerva’ at II.102; 118; Trajan emperor in II.93 *fin.*).

⁷⁰ Dio LXVIII.3.3–4; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.8.

⁷¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 6.2; Dio LXVIII.5.4 (in 98). The two rewarded with third consulships in 100 (Pliny, *Pan.* 60.5; 61.7; 62.2) were Sex. Iulius Frontinus and L. Iulius Ursus who replaced him (L. Vidman, *Fasti Ostienses*², 45; 94). Schwarte (1979) 149–55 suggests the conspirators had supported the succession of Nigrinus, the legate of Syria, who was now removed (p. 90).

had to do better than had the elderly emperor of 69, as Pliny expressly says.⁷² He must either accept the candidate of the guard, if they had one, or find a successor who would have both the power to deter or overcome rival claimants and the patience to wait until his adoptive father met his natural end. Nerva chose Marcus Ulpius Traianus, the commander of the three legions of Upper Germany, the nearest large consular army. He was not related by blood to Nerva or to any former *princeps*, though there was possibly a marriage connection with Titus.⁷³ To emphasize the military significance of his choice, Nerva chose as the occasion for the adoption the announcement of a victory on the Danube. At the end of October 97, a laurel sent with the despatch from Pannonia was deposited in the lap of the statue of Jupiter on the Capitol; Nerva made a solemn speech, and then announced the adoption of Trajan as his son.⁷⁴ Had the proper forms for *adrogatio*, the form of legal adoption appropriate to a person no longer in *patria potestas*, been observed, Pliny would surely have noted them in his encomium of Trajan: instead he adduced the judgement of men and the counsel of the gods. The Senate signified its assent by conferring on Trajan the title of Caesar. Both Nerva and his son assumed the title Germanicus,⁷⁵ and Nerva acquired his second imperial salutation.⁷⁶ Perhaps the *profectio* on the Cancellaria Reliefs, where Domitian's head has been recarved as Nerva's (p. 64 n. 310), would have celebrated this as a personal victory.

The parallel with Galba's situation in 69 drawn by Pliny was perhaps also implied by Tacitus when, writing the *Histories* less than a decade later, he composed a long speech for Galba justifying the adoption of Piso and embellished with many of the motifs elaborated in the *Panegyricus*.⁷⁷ Was Tacitus implying that Nerva's situation resembled that of Galba, whose hand had been forced by the revolt of the German armies? Was he telling us that Trajan staged a coup, perhaps as the candidate of the praetorian guard, with some support from his own soldiers?⁷⁸ Probably Tacitus was

⁷² Suet. *Galba* 17; Pliny, *Pan.* 8.5.

⁷³ Dio LXVIII.3.4; *ILAE Hadr.* 2.5 ff. For the idea that the clay-bearing estates in north Italy, the *figlinae Marcianae* which Trajan owned, were inherited from his mother Marcia, the sister of Titus' wife Marcia Furnilla, both probably daughters of Q. Marcius Barea Sura, and nieces of Barea Soranus: Champlin (1983).

⁷⁴ Pliny, *Pan.* 8.2–4, cf. Pliny, *HN* xv.133–4. The date of c. 27 Oct. is deduced from *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.2; 9: Nerva ruled sixteen months and ten days (i.e. from 18 Sept. 96 to 27 Jan. 98) and lived for three months after the adoption. ⁷⁵ *Pan.* 8.1, 9.2; Dio LXVIII.3.4. See above, p. 91.

⁷⁶ Coins show it with *trib. pot. II, cos. III, cos. des. IV*, hence in the last months of 97 (*RIC* II 225 nos. 37–40).

⁷⁷ There is no need to posit borrowing to explain similarities between the speech in the *Histories* (1.15–16) and the published version of the *Panegyricus*, given the popularity of the 'locus adoptionis' in the rhetorical schools (Sen. *Controv.* II.4.13).

⁷⁸ The thesis of Syme's *Tacitus* 13–14; 150–6; 206–7; App. IV adducing *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 12.2. He points out that Casperius Aelianus, military tribune under Vespasian in the Jewish War, would have been known to Trajan's father (35 n. 4).

just indulging his sense of irony, pointing to the clichés and sophistries with which political actions are customarily adorned, for the other thesis would be hard to sustain. Pliny would have been taking grave risks when he stressed Trajan's lack of ambition and posterity's incredulity that such a man was not proclaimed by the army.⁷⁹

There is, moreover, Trajan's record to consider. Nerva had himself put Trajan in the vital command because he trusted him, as well he might, given Trajan's loyal support of Domitian during the revolt of Saturninus in 89, when he marched his Spanish legion over the Pyrenees to join the emperor. For that Trajan had been awarded a consulship, on which Pliny is understandably silent.⁸⁰

Finally, one can argue from the outcome. Nerva was in fact carried off by a violent attack of fever three months later, on 27 January 98. But Trajan could not know that at sixty-two Nerva would not live another decade, as had most of the emperors who had died natural deaths. Yet Trajan, already forty-four, was prepared to hold indefinitely a position analogous to that of Titus in his thirties, but as the associate and ally of a man dependent on him for retaining power. Pliny with some justice celebrates the *pietas* and *obsequium* of such conduct.⁸¹ Tacitus, too, may have seen that Trajan bore more resemblance to Agricola than to Vitellius.

II. TRAJAN

1. *A problematic tradition*

The reign of Trajan, rather than the brief episode of Nerva, must be held the effective beginning of that period 'during which', said Gibbon, 'the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous'. If, in the case of Domitian, contemporary sycophancy was almost immediately overwhelmed by posthumous invective, in the case of Trajan, the more subtle and persuasive laudation of his contemporaries largely prevailed.⁸² Tacitus might have been expected to cast some shadow on the picture drawn in Pliny's *Panegyricus*, in the four *Orations on Kingship* of Dio Chrysostom, and in the zealous effusions of the converted poet Martial.⁸³ But he never wrote, and probably never intended to write, an account of the supremely fortunate epoch 'when you can feel what you like and express what you feel'.⁸⁴ Of contemporaries who survived the emperor,

⁷⁹ *Pan.* 7.1; 9.2, cf. Pliny, *Ep.* x.1. ⁸⁰ *Pan.* 9.5; 14.3–5 (the plural 'legiones' is an exaggeration).

⁸¹ *Pan.* 8.6; 9.1; 10. ⁸² Gibbon (1909) 1 83. For the problem, Waters (1975) 233 ff.

⁸³ Martial published the second edition of Book x in mid-98 before he left for Spain; Book xii was written in 101 or 102 when the poet was in Spain (Sullivan (1991) 44–52).

⁸⁴ *Hist.* 1.1.4, cf. *Agr.* 3.3; 44.5; on his writing plans, see Syme, *Tacitus* 220–1; 227.

Plutarch was not tempted to add to his biographies, and Suetonius did not choose to describe the happier age that he predicted would follow Domitian's death.⁸⁵

It would not, in any case, have been easy to write critically of Trajan. For more than seventy years after his death, there was dynastic continuity, and though it was achieved almost to the end by adoption, great emphasis was placed on family tradition: thus Fronto sets up a contest in virtue between Lucius Verus and his great-grandfather Trajan. It is, however, Fronto who also provides some welcome hints of criticism. To build up Verus as an eastern conqueror, Fronto diminishes the stature of Trajan, alleging that he sacrificed his soldiers' lives to his personal ambition, dealt with a problematic client king by assassination rather than clemency, and failed to rescue two consular commanders in his Parthian War. Also revealing is his defence of Trajan's energetic drinking and of his penchant for actors, practices he even recommends to Marcus Aurelius as forms of essential relaxation.⁸⁶ Similarly, both drinking and the love of boys are mentioned apologetically by Dio, and these faults are made use of by the fourth-century author of the *Epitome de Caesaribus* to represent Theodosius as a superior version of Trajan.⁸⁷

The fact that the tradition includes these negative features, and that they are so unimportant, restores some credibility to the generally favourable character of the picture it paints, especially if we compare the more serious criticisms of Hadrian that have come down to us, when he too had dynastic successors. Trajan's posthumous repute lends support. Pliny's prediction that the title 'Optimus' would always be associated with him was fulfilled: for centuries after, new emperors were hailed as 'Felicior Augusto, melior Traiano'.⁸⁸ This was, as Gibbon said, 'one panegyric far removed beyond the suspicion of flattery'. The Severi fabricated descent from Trajan, and even later flatterers chose to praise Theodosius in this vein.⁸⁹ The popularity engendered by Trajan's shows was long remembered: he is the emperor most often celebrated on games-tokens in later centuries.⁹⁰ The buildings were still there to be admired: in the fourth century Constantius II was struck dumb by the sight of Trajan's Forum.⁹¹ Above all, Trajan's military conquests were the most extensive and innovative since those of Augustus. The excitement of what Florus hailed as the return of Rome's youth was still felt by Eutropius in the fourth century.⁹²

⁸⁵ Suet. *Dom.* 23.2. ⁸⁶ *Princ. Hist.* (van den Hout 200.21–4; 198.16–18; 198.20–199.7; 214.17–20).

⁸⁷ Dio LXVIII.7.5; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 13.5; 48.10. ⁸⁸ *Pan.* 88–9; Eutropius, *Breviarium* VIII.5.3.

⁸⁹ *CIL* III 211; VI 954; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 48.1, cf. 48.8–9 alleging similarities in mind and body. The theme occurs in the *Historia Augusta*, e.g. *Gordian* 2.2; *Aurel.* 10.2. See Syme (1968) 113–14; 161–2.

⁹⁰ Alföldi and Alföldi (1976). He is represented on 159 out of 629 types bearing portraits.

⁹¹ Amm. Marc. XVI.10.15, 'singularem sub omni caelo structuram'.

⁹² Florus pref. 2; Eutropius, *Breviarium* VIII.2.2–3, cf. Auson. *Caesares* 98–101.

Nonetheless, he rated Trajan's civic virtues, his *civilitas* and *moderatio*, still higher. For Ammianus Marcellinus and the *Historia Augusta*, Trajan was not eclipsed by the later Antonine models of the peacetime virtues, and the legend grew up that St Gregory had prayed successfully for Trajan to be moved from hell to paradise because of an act of justice for which he delayed his departure for war.⁹³

2. *An ambiguous image*

There is little reason then to doubt the basic outlines of the tradition about Trajan just because it is favourable. But the literary tradition, in building up Trajan's successes by exaggerating Domitian's failures, obscures elements of continuity between Domitian's reign and those of his immediate successors.⁹⁴ This heightens the tension between Trajan's repudiation of the example of Domitian and the continuity with his reign in building projects, in foreign policy, even in the celebration of the Capitoline Games, maintained even though they continued to attract the traditional Roman prejudice towards Greek athletics and musical competitions.⁹⁵

More disconcerting is the contradiction in the military image of Trajan. There is the Trajan of the column frieze, of Pliny's *Panegyricus* and of the poem on the Dacian War being composed by his fellow townsman: the soldier-emperor serving Rome in an unostentatious way, labouring alongside his soldiers, accessible to his officers, striving for peace rather than glory in war.⁹⁶ But there is also the Trajan on the frieze remodelled for the Arch of Constantine – larger than the other human figures, escorted by figures of Virtue and Victory, and trampling his enemies in battle.⁹⁷ This is the emperor whose coins celebrate the addition of four new provinces to the Roman empire.⁹⁸

The same tension appears in Trajan's relations with the Senate. His ostentatious respect for that body is exemplified by his observance of proper forms during his election to and tenure of his third consulship in 100, as recounted at length by Pliny in the *Panegyricus*.⁹⁹ Yet against Trajan's modesty and his encouragement of the Senate to resume its liberty and take responsibility for the empire, must be set the triviality of senatorial busi-

⁹³ Paul the Deacon, *Vita S. Greg.* iv.44 is the earliest appearance. Dante alludes to the legend at *Purgatory* x.70–6; *Paradise* xx.43–8; 106–117.

⁹⁴ This point is argued in defence of Domitian by Waters (1969). ⁹⁵ Pliny, *Ep.* iv.22.

⁹⁶ *Pan.* 15.5; 16.1–2; 19.3; 12.2, cf. Dio LXVIII.11.3; 23.1–2; Pliny, *Ep.* viii.4, on which see Syme (1964). Even if the frieze was Hadrianic, Claridge (1993) 22 thinks Trajan's own commentaries were its compositional guide.

⁹⁷ That the frieze was originally intended for Trajan's Forum is suggested by Zanker (1970) 513–14; 525–6. See also Hamburg (1945) 162–72.

⁹⁸ *RIC* II 288 no. 621: 'Dacia August. Provincia'; 250 no. 94: 'Arabia Adquisit(a)'; 289 no. 642: 'Armenia et Mesopotamia in potestatem PR redactae'. ⁹⁹ *Pan.* 63–77.

ness and the open dependence of the Senate on the *princeps*, as revealed, and indeed explicitly stated, in Pliny's *Letters*.¹⁰⁰

Then again, Trajan's celebrated parsimony and simple style of life, his parade of equality with his senatorial peers, does not appear to harmonize with the exhibitionist demagoguery noted by Fronto: neither Nero nor Domitian had put on games or erected monuments the size of Trajan's. His forum alone was larger than the combined area of the imperial fora so far built by Augustus, Vespasian and Nerva. It is true that his respectable predecessors were honoured there, as they are on Trajan's 'restoration' coins, alongside Republican worthies, – a pictorial version of the passage of the *Panegyricus* in which Pliny inserts the emperor into the line of Roman heroes.¹⁰¹ But Pliny's point, that Trajan had no rivals, is made forcibly by the scale of the forum. The largest victory monument in Rome, the forum and its buildings can be seen as a move to outbid the generals of the Roman Republic, and in their own idiom: here were works of public utility built with the spoils of war, an honorific column crowned with a portrait statue of a general, but of this general there were several statues in the forum and the column may have been designed for its eventual use as his monumental grave within the *pomerium*, such as had been allowed to some great *triumphatores*.¹⁰²

There is also a hint of family pride linked to dynastic ambition. Trajan incorporated his adoptive father's name into his own, being known as Emperor Caesar Nerva Traianus Augustus, but, despite Pliny's celebration of choice by merit rather than blood, and the example set by previously adopted emperors, his *gens* remained 'Ulpian', as is shown by the names of his freedmen, the Colonia Ulpia founded in Dacia and the Basilica Ulpia in his forum at Rome.¹⁰³ Then again, although his wife Pompeia Plotina, his sister Ulpia Marciana and his niece Matidia were presented as modest matrons, living in harmony, seeking to exercise no influence on politics, and apparently made no notable financial benefactions nor enjoyed the prominence of Livia and some of the other Julio-Claudian princesses,¹⁰⁴ they were elevated corporately as part of a 'royal family'.¹⁰⁵ Plotina and Marciana were each given the title of Augusta, probably in 102, and appear on the obverses of coins from 112; Marciana was deified on her death in 112 and, after that date, Matidia, now Augusta, appears on obverses of

¹⁰⁰ *Ep.* III.7.14; III.20.10; V.13.6–8; VI.19; cf. *Pan.* 66.2. ¹⁰¹ *Pan.* 88.6; 12.1; 13.4–5; nn. 145, 284.

¹⁰² Zanker (1970) 529; 542, comparing Pliny, *HN* xxxiv.27; Plut. *Popl.* 23.3; Dio XLIV.7 (Julius Caesar). See p. 128 n. 273.

¹⁰³ Pliny, *Pan.* 7.4; Dio LXVIII.3.4. See the discussion in Hammond and Béranger (1965) 43, 44.

¹⁰⁴ Pliny, *Pan.* 83–4, cf. *Ep.* IX.28.1 'sanctissima femina'; Dio LXVIII.5.5; Hadrian's *laudatio* of Matidia, Smallwood, *NTH* no. 114 and Dio LXIX.10.3a, but cf. *Epit. de Caesaribus* 42.21. The role of women in this period is analysed by Temporini, *Frauen*; Boatwright (1991).

¹⁰⁵ Trajan is flanked by his wife and sister in *ILS* 288=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 106 and *ILS* 298=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 106 and *ILS* 298=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 387.

coins celebrating her mother and her own two daughters. One of them had been married soon after Trajan's accession to Hadrian, himself a relative of Trajan. Ultimately, the deification of his natural father, as well as his adoptive one, would make Trajan 'divi filius' twice over.¹⁰⁶

3. Chronological problems

This inconcinnity has been explained in psychological terms as 'something elusive and perhaps discordant' behind the official façade: a devouring ambition behind the discipline and modesty.¹⁰⁷ Some have tried to resolve the tensions by positing chronological stages,¹⁰⁸ but here we encounter the difficulties of constructing a reliable chronology from 'the glimmerings of an abridgement or the doubtful light of a panegyric'.¹⁰⁹ Nonetheless, it is clear that some of the more exhibitionist and demagogic aspects can be detected early on in the reign. Coins already portray a triumphal arch in 100, while numerous victory types start to appear already in 98–9. Indeed the association of Trajan with Alexander the Great already features in the *Orations on Kingship* of Dio Chrysostom, of which at least the first is usually dated as early as 100.¹¹⁰ The massive reconstruction of the Circus Maximus which, with its new façade of brick-faced concrete and its increased capacity, was now deemed 'adequate for the people', was completed by 103.¹¹¹ In completing this project of Domitian's, Trajan took the opportunity to remove the special box built by Domitian for watching unwatched by the people, and to replace it with a seat from which he was clearly visible, in the Augustan fashion.¹¹² On the other hand, the unpretentious modesty and careful respect for his social peers, so prominent in the *Panegyricus*, are still present in Trajan's replies to Pliny's letters from Bithynia a decade later, while the encomiast's theme of the emperor sharing toil, hardship and

¹⁰⁶ Title Augusta assumed between Sept. 100 (Pliny, *Pan.* 84.7) and 105 (*ILS* 288=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 106); on coins of Plotina and Diva Marciana: Temporini, *Frauen* 100 ff.; 255 ff.; of Marciana Augusta, *RIC* II 299 no. 742; of Matidia Augusta, 301 nos. 759–60 (with children); no. 761. The two *divi*: Temporini, *Frauen* 139. ¹⁰⁷ Syme, *Tacitus* 41. ¹⁰⁸ See Zanker (1970) 543 on Picard (1957) 417 ff.

¹⁰⁹ Gibbon (1909) I 82. Pliny's *Panegyric* illuminates the early part of the reign, but, delivered in 100, it was elaborated and expanded before publication (probably 101), and anachronisms datable to 103 have been detected (Pliny, *Ep.* III.13; 18. Durry (1938) 3–5; 14–15; Fedeli (1989) 400–10). The problematic passages are 16.3–17 (an apparent anticipation of the Dacian triumph) and 88.4–10 (awarding of the cognomen *Optimus*). For dating events after those years, including such crucial ones as the second Dacian and the Parthian campaigns, there are only Xiphilinus' excerpts from Dio and inscriptions, including the informative fragments of the *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* nos. 15–25). The coinage of Trajan is less helpful than that of Nerva because after his fifth consulship of 103, Trajan held the office only once, and not until 112, and his *tribunicia potestas* regularly appears unnumbered on coins.

¹¹⁰ *RIC* II 274 nos. 419–20; 245 no. 10; 246 nos. 22–6. Jones, *Dio Chrysostom* 55. Moles (1990) 333 suggests a date before Trajan's entry to Rome on foot (*Pan.* 22) because of *Or.* I.67.

¹¹¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 51.3; 5; Dio LXVIII.7.2, cf. *ILS* 286=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 374a, a dedication to the thirty-five tribes dated to 103, noting that the amenities were increased by the *principes'* generosity; *BMCRE* III 180 no. 853=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 374b.

¹¹² Pliny, *Pan.* 51.4–5. See Humphrey, *Circuses* 78 ff.

glory with his fellow-soldiers is illustrated on Trajan's Column, which was only dedicated in 113.¹¹³

Exploring the reign in more detail should render these tensions, to which we shall return at the end, more intelligible.

4. *Accession in absence*

Trajan came from Italica in the province of Baetica which occupied the fertile southern part of the Spanish peninsula. The town had been settled by Italian veterans of the Second Punic War, and the Ulpii were themselves of Italian origin, deriving originally from Tuder on the border of Etruria and Umbria.¹¹⁴ They had intermarried with another family of the town, from which Trajan's successor was to come. Pliny's encomium does not specify Trajan's origins, but states that his virtue excelled the distinction of his family and offers him a spiritual pedigree of aristocratic generals of the Republic, reminiscent of the way in which the *novus homo* Cicero had adopted aristocrats like Metellus Numidicus and Aemilius Scaurus as his spiritual ancestors.¹¹⁵

Dio preserves the contemporary sneer that Trajan was a Spaniard, the first foreigner to become *princeps*: in fact he was 'hispaniensis', not 'hispanus', and the accession of a colonial from the provinces was only the most visible sign of the steady invasion by such men of the precincts of government, as of the world of letters. Tacitus, probably himself from the Gallic province of Narbonensis, celebrated their rise, and that of the enfranchised natives who followed in their wake, when interpreting for his Trajanic readers the significance of a speech of the emperor Claudius half a century earlier.¹¹⁶

Trajan's father, M. Ulpius Traianus, was made a consul and a patrician by Vespasian and governed the key province of Syria from 73 to 77, gaining triumphal decorations for a victory over the Parthians. Trajan, born on 18 September c. 53, served as a military tribune under his father, acquiring first-hand knowledge of the problems of the eastern empire.¹¹⁷ After holding the quaestorship and praetorship, he became, unusually for a patrician, commander of the legion in Hispania Tarraconensis and answered Domitian's call for help in 89 against the rebellious governor of Upper Germany. Although he apparently saw no other action there, he was rewarded with an ordinary consulship in 91. Before Nerva appointed him to Upper Germany, he had spent some of the last years in the capital, if any

¹¹³ *Fasti Ostienses*=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 22; see pp. 113–14.

¹¹⁴ Syme, *Tacitus* 398, App. 81, adducing *CIL* XI 4725 and 4686 in support of *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 13.1.

¹¹⁵ *Pan.* 70.2; 12.1; 13.4–5; 88.6.

¹¹⁶ Dio LXVIII.4.1: but see *Vell. Pat.* II.51.3; *Tac. Ann.* XI.23–4, cf. *ILS* 212.

¹¹⁷ *Pliny, Pan.* 14.1; *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 9.10; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 9.12; pp. 40–1.

credence is to be placed in Pliny's remarks, 'You shared our life, our perils, our fears.'¹¹⁸

The new emperor did not return to Rome until the autumn of 99, some two years after his adoption on 27 October 97. That event was announced to him at Moguntiacum in his province.¹¹⁹ By the time Nerva, then his colleague in the consulship died on 27 or 28 January 98 he was at Colonia Agrippinensis in Lower Germany, having entrusted his province to Iulius Servianus, Hadrian's brother-in-law. Trajan's cousin Hadrian, who was serving under Servianus, rushed to be the first to bring the news to Trajan. The new emperor now went to the Danube, visiting the troops in Pannonia and engaging in manoeuvres. He also followed up Nerva's announcement of the victory of the previous autumn by awarding decorations and working out formal terms of peace with the Suebi, who were later to prove reliable allies in the Dacian Wars.¹²⁰ In 98 or 99 the loyal Servianus was moved from Germany to Pannonia, the province with the largest concentration of legions in the empire.¹²¹

The absence from Rome of a new *princeps* was not without precedent, though Trajan was away even longer than Vespasian, who stayed over a year in the East. Neither this parallel, nor that made by Pliny with the campaigning consuls of the Republic, is close, for Trajan was neither avoiding disagreeable measures in Rome, nor fighting a war. Pliny's 'love of the camps' is a better explanation: Trajan was showing himself to the soldiers whose support he needed.¹²² He may also have been assessing the situation on the Danube left by Domitian, and planning his next move.

In his case, the absence was a foretaste of what was to come. Trajan spent almost half of his reign out of Rome, and his longest period in the capital was the six years between the Dacian and Parthian Wars. There were to be many opportunities to ask, 'When shall come the sweetness of waiting for the long trail of dust behind Caesar and all Rome out to be seen on the Flaminian Way?' and many occasions to hear the voice of the people calling in unison, 'Does he come?'¹²³

5. *Civilitas*

Trajan's return to Rome, more than eighteen months into his reign, was dramatic. The emperor, whom many now saw for the first time, entered Rome

¹¹⁸ *Pan.* 14.2–5; 9.5; Dio LXVIII.3.4; *Pan.* 44.1

¹¹⁹ Pliny, *Pan.* 60.1; 63.1. He was back in Rome for the consular elections, probably held between Sept. and Dec. (Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 26).

¹²⁰ *HLA Hadr.* 2.5; Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.23.5; *Pan.* 12–13; *ILS* 1019=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 434; see Strobel (1989) 105–9.

¹²¹ Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.23.5. ¹²² *Pan.* 56.4; 20.1.

¹²³ Mart. x.6, cf. 7 written when Trajan's first return was expected. His absences occupied about nine years of a reign of nineteen-and-a-half years: eighteen months or more in 98–9; about eighteen months in 101–2; two years in 105–7; almost four years from 113 until his death in Aug. 117.

on foot and mingled with the crowds, greeting the citizens with the courtesies befitting their ranks, a kiss between peers for the senators, salutation by name for the *equites*, signs of recognition for clients, approachability for the rest. Consulars at least were clearly expected to be present, though excuses were accepted.¹²⁴ This is *civilitas*, the modesty and restraint of a *princeps* who behaves as if he were on equal terms with his subjects, while they all accept that he is not. It was a type of behaviour cultivated by Augustus as a way of reconciling his new position with republican tradition, but the notion was refined and codified as an imperial virtue precisely in this period.¹²⁵

In Pliny's formulation, Trajan behaved as 'one of us', 'just like a private citizen', voluntarily stepping down from his high position, choosing to submit himself to the law.¹²⁶ He and others place particular emphasis on the emperor's good relations with the Senate, for the active acceptance of his rule by his theoretical peers was vital for effective and stable government, yet difficult to achieve. The title of *Optimus*, unofficially conferred by the Senate in 98, is described by Pliny as particularly *civile* and senatorial.¹²⁷ Trajan had already given proof of his attitude when he wrote to the Senate on his accession to say that he would not subject to execution or disenfranchisement any 'good man', an oath he renewed later.¹²⁸ In fact, only two cases of treason involving senators are explicitly mentioned and at least one of them was tried by the Senate.¹²⁹ He also showed the conventional modesty in not accepting for some months the title of *pater patriae*.¹³⁰

The consulship he held in 100, however, was what Pliny chose as the centre-piece of his *Panegyricus*, the customary speech of thanks, which was to serve as a vehicle for advice and admonition.¹³¹ This may reflect the importance attached by Trajan himself to his opportunity for displaying the return of *civilitas*. Like other senators, Trajan stood for election and was present during the lengthy procedure before the *Comitia Centuriata* in the *Campus Martius* after the effective election by the Senate (63); he shared his

¹²⁴ *Pan.* 2.2–3, cf. Dio *LIX*.27.1; Suet. *Ner.* 37.3; Pliny, *Ep.* III.7.6: Silius Italicus was ill and allowed to stay in Campania. ¹²⁵ Wallace-Hadrill (1982) 43–4; Dio *LIII*.12.1 (of Augustus).

¹²⁶ *Pan.* 2.4; 59.6; 64.4; 65.1.

¹²⁷ *Pan.* 2.7; 88.4–10 (a possible anachronism, as it could be linked with 'SPQR Optimo Principi' on coins datable to 103–11 (*RIC* II 250–9 nos. 91–228; 277–85 nos. 459–589). For the different steps in the official acquisition of this title, see Drury (1938) App. 1.

¹²⁸ Dio *LXVIII*.5.2. Eutropius 8.4 emphasizes the fact that he did not harm senators, whom Dio may also intend by his phrase in this context (although at *LXVIII*.15.5.3 the expression is not so restricted). *Epit. de Caesaribus* 13.8 speaks of his concern for 'optimus quisque'.

¹²⁹ Dio *LXVIII*.16.2: C. Calpurnius Crassus Frugi, the same man who had troubled Nerva (p. 91), was deported to an island under Hadrian, and finally killed by a procurator while escaping. The other was M^p. Laberius Maximus, also sent to an island (*HA Hadr.* 5.5).

¹³⁰ *Pan.* 21.1. It appears on coins with *cos. II* (*RIC* II 245 n. 1; 246, nos. 28–31). Missing from *CIL* XVI 42=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 349 of 20 Feb. 98, it appears on *CIL* II 4672 of Oct. 98.

¹³¹ *Pan.* 1, 2; 4.1. The custom dates at least from the time of Augustus: *Ov. Pont.* IV.4.35–41; *Laus Pisonis* lines 68–71. It was first called the *Panegyricus* by Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* VIII.10.3). See n. 109.

third consulship with two men in succession, each holding office also for the third time (60–2); he took the oath to uphold the laws before the seated presiding consul and again in the Forum on the day he took office, just as he was to swear that he had upheld them on leaving office (63–5).¹³² He insisted that the vows for his safety taken every 3 January include the condition ‘if he has ruled the state well and in the interests of all’, just as he had told his first praetorian prefect Sextus Attius Suburanus to turn the sword he handed him against him, if he did not rule well.¹³³ Trajan presided over the elections for the rest of the consulships of 100 and for the next year, apparently did the same for the lower magistracies, and also chaired a lengthy senatorial trial.¹³⁴

Trajan was only to hold the consulship three more times in seventeen years, a contrast with the Flavian monopoly of the office.¹³⁵ A further sign of *civilitas* has sometimes been seen in the curious change of the date on which Trajan’s tribunician power was renewed, so that it ceased to be the anniversary of the original grant, made shortly after his adoption in late October 97, and became instead the date on which the tribunes had assumed their office in the Republic.¹³⁶ That the new date was 10 December is only an inference, but a plausible one in view of the fact that it became the date of renewal from the reign of Hadrian on. If the shift did occur in 98, with *trib. pot. II* starting in late October and *trib. pot. III* on 10 December, Pliny’s silence becomes significant. Dio points out that in his day emperors counted up the years of their reign in terms of the tribunician power ‘just as though they also received it annually along with the ordinary tribunes of the year’.¹³⁷ Would Pliny have omitted to mention the shift, if the point was to show Trajan’s republicanism, his desire to put himself on a level with the annual holders and break the association with his personal acquisition of power?¹³⁸ Even if the change was made by

¹³² There must be some substance in Pliny’s claim that these gestures were unprecedented, at least in recent memory, because in 66.3 he admits that his exhortation to the Senate was not.

¹³³ *Pan.* 67.3–8; Dio LVIII.16.1.2; *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 13.9. ¹³⁴ Pliny, *Pan.* 77; 69–72.1; 76.

¹³⁵ Pliny, *Ep.* II.1.2; *Pan.* 78.5.

¹³⁶ Pliny, *Pan.* 8.6 implies that the tribunician power was assumed shortly after the adoption and conferment of the title Caesar by the senate. The theory of a shift to 10 Dec. was first suggested by Mommsen (*Römisches Staatsrecht* II 2 (3) 796–802 (ascribed to Nerva)) confirmed by Hammond (1938); (1949) (Trajan); Chastagnol (1984) 282 ff. reverts to Nerva. As coins show, during the period between his election in autumn 102 as *cos. V* and his taking up office on 1 Jan. 103, the number of Trajan’s tribunician power was *VII*, not *VI*, as it would have been on the original reckoning (*RIC* II 276 no. 448). The evidence of *diplomata*, certificates of discharge for veterans, would seem to date the shift between Feb. 98 and Aug. 99 when *trib. pot. III* (not *II*) is attested (*CIL* XVI 42=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 349; XVI 44=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 350) and to fix the renewal date, once the shift had occurred, to after 19 Nov. and before 19 Jan. while coins showing that *trib. pot. VII* continued into *cos. V*, assumed on 1 Jan. 103, lower the *terminus ante quem* for the shift to 1 Jan. (*CIL* XVI 47=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 352; XVI 48=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 353; *RIC* II 277 nos. 451–8; see the discussion in Lepper and Frere, *Trajan’s Column* 230 ff.). ¹³⁷ Dio LIII.17.10, writing under the Severi.

¹³⁸ These are the explanations suggested by Hammond and Béranger (1965) 37.

Nerva, Pliny could have managed, as usual, to turn the continuation of policies of Nerva to Trajan's advantage.¹³⁹ And would Trajan's coins habitually show his tribunician power unnumbered, if the date of the annual change was ideologically significant? Such considerations add plausibility to the suggestion that the shift was a sop to conveyancers rather than a gesture of republicanism or *pietas*: it would make it easier to assign a year to the *trib. pot.* number of any emperor on a legal document, provided the year of accession was known – like the system of regnal years obtaining in Alexandria.¹⁴⁰

There were more substantial gestures to be made in the direction of republicanism. The senate of the late Republic had come to regard matters of war and peace and of foreign policy in general as its sphere. Trajan respected that, and in 102 he insisted that the defeated Dacian king send envoys to the Senate to secure ratification of the peace terms negotiated with the emperor after the First Dacian War. Moreover, before setting out in 105 to fight the Second Dacian War, he had the Senate declare Decebalus an enemy.¹⁴¹

Most of the business that came before the Senate, however, was not so important. Pliny's remarks on the few rivulets that trickled down from the imperial fountainhead seem borne out by his account of senatorial discussions. Looking for matter to equal in interest that of Cicero's letters, he relies principally on those non-republican functions that took the place of real power for the imperial Senate – elections and trials.¹⁴² In 105, he reports, one of the tribunes proposed that the *princeps* be invited to deal with judicial corruption, as laws and senatorial decrees were being ignored. Nor was service on the emperor's *consilium* when he was judging cases very interesting.¹⁴³

What the emperor could provide, however, was the opportunity for individual senators to achieve recognition for service in civil or military posts. Pliny, making an implicit contrast with Domitian, notes that Trajan rewarded good provincial governors and thus raised the standard of administration more effectively than by punishing the bad.¹⁴⁴ Trajan's generals were liberally honoured as individuals with statues and second consulships, and the entrance to Trajan's forum, built to celebrate the Dacian victories, featured their busts above statues of their defeated enemies.¹⁴⁵ For L. Licinius Sura, Trajan's coeval and Spanish compatriot, there were

¹³⁹ *ILS* 280=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 406; *CIL* x 6820; 6826 (*trib. pot.* III and *cos.* IV) could date the change to Nerva, but cf. *BMCRE* III 10 no. 68=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 91(f).

¹⁴⁰ The explanation favoured by Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 235.

¹⁴¹ Dio LXVIII.9.7; 10.3–4. ¹⁴² *Ep.* III.20.10; IX.2.2.

¹⁴³ Pliny, *Ep.* v.13.7; VI.19.3; IV.12; VI.12.2; 31.6. ¹⁴⁴ *Pan.* 70.

¹⁴⁵ Dio LXVIII.16.2. For *imagines clipeatae*, see Zanker (1970) 508. Four repeated consulships after the First Dacian War went to Sura, Servianus, Glitius Agricola and Laberius Maximus; Sosius Senecio was so rewarded after the Second War.

extravagant posthumous honours. It was possibly as governor of the neighbouring province of Lower Germany that Sura is said to have 'encouraged Trajan to seize the power', i.e. to accept the adoption by Nerva.¹⁴⁶ He may have been sent to Lower Germany by Nerva in the summer of 97, succeeding Vestricius Spurinna in his brief tenure, perhaps at the same time as Trajan was sent to the Rhine.¹⁴⁷ In the next year he may have accompanied Trajan on his tour of the Danubian armies, and he took an important part in both Dacian Wars, perhaps even being depicted posthumously on Trajan's column. Certainly when he died, possibly in 108, he received a public funeral, and Trajan built baths named after him on the Aventine, probably on the site of his mansion there.¹⁴⁸ By contrast, Trajan himself took only thirteen imperial salutations in contrast with Domitian's twenty-three – two more than Augustus, whose contribution to Roman expansion was challenged by Trajan alone. The heavy emphasis that Tacitus places in all his works on the reluctance of envious emperors to honour successful generals can be seen as a delicate compliment to Trajan.

6. Continuity with Domitian

Although the *Panegyricus* is principally concerned to stress Trajan's relations with the Senate, it also points to other features of Trajanic ideology that remained important during the reign. The reversal of Domitian's rapacity is as central to the speech as the replacement of his cruel arrogance by *civilitas*. Pliny shows Trajan continuing Nerva's discouragement of informers and generosity to new citizens, and 5,000 free-born children of Rome were now added to the list of those eligible for corn distributions.¹⁴⁹

The orator's implicit contrasts do not mean, of course, that Trajan refused promotion to those like himself who had been favoured by Domitian. Indeed, a famous anecdote has Trajan pointing out that Domitian was the wickedest of emperors but had good friends: one notable example was Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito, appointed by Domitian as the first known equestrian *ab epistulis*, retained by Nerva and Trajan and then promoted by Trajan to the command of the night watch.¹⁵⁰ Trajan, in fact, followed Domitian in continuing this process of replacing freedmen

¹⁴⁶ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 13.6, 'cuius studio imperium arripuerat', as interpreted by Jones (1970) 99.

¹⁴⁷ Jones (1970) 98 ff. Syme (1985) 272 ff.=*Roman Papers* v 507 ff.; Syme (1991b) 548–50.

¹⁴⁸ Dio LXVIII.9.2; on the column, Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 276. Sura is last attested alive in 108 (*HA Hadr.* 3.10). Posthumous honours: Dio LXVIII.15.3²; *Epit. de Caesaribus* 13.6; Sura's mansion: Mart. VI.64.13. An honorific arch was set up in accordance with his will at Tarraco (*CIL* II 4282), probably in the province of his origin (Syme, *Tacitus*, App. 85; Hammond and Béranger (1965) 83).¹⁴⁹

Pan. 34–5; 26–7.

¹⁵⁰ *HA Alex. Sev.* 65.5; *ILS* 1448=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 270. But for some, careers only resumed late in Trajan's reign, see Syme (1977) 43.

with *equites* in these important secretarial posts: the first known equestrian *a rationibus*, probably L. Vibius Lentulus, is attested under Trajan. Although under Domitian a Claudian atmosphere still obtained, this process, completed under Hadrian, eventually reduced the resentment provoked by the inevitable influence wielded by such secretaries. Trajan made a point of condemning the excessive importance of the Julio-Claudian freedmen: 'I am not Nero nor he Polyclitus', when the plaintiff in an inheritance case showed reluctance to proceed against an imperial freedman. Pliny and Tacitus followed suit.¹⁵¹

Coins show that Domitian's foreign policy was not repudiated. His arrangements in Germany were officially regarded as successful: the figure of a pacified Germany featured on the early issues clearly represents the stage after that illustrated on Domitian's *GERMANIA CAPTA* coins, and sends a clear message that no further work needed to be done, whatever Tacitus might say in the *Germania*.¹⁵² Iulius Frontinus, who claimed a practical didactic purpose for his *Strategemata*, had included among his examples Domitian, then emperor, and illustrated his competence as a general in the German campaign. We are assured by Vegetius that the work won Trajan's approval: certainly its author did, as his third consulship shows.¹⁵³

Other elements of continuity were less advertised. Domitian's Capitoline Games in the Greek style were retained, though support for their abolition could have been found, given the prejudices of Roman conservatives about Greek gymnastics and musical competitions.¹⁵⁴ Like his predecessor, Trajan clearly wished to leave his architectural mark on Rome. Pliny makes a contrast with Domitian's private buildings which involved the destruction of others, and stresses that Trajan built on the grand scale for public use. Yet the only striking example he could give at that date was the renovation of the Circus Maximus.¹⁵⁵ When Trajan had finished his projects, he could be compared by Constantine to a creeper that grows over walls, because of the number of buildings that bore his inscriptions. Ammianus took this remark as a reproach to Trajan for claiming credit for buildings built by others and only restored by him.¹⁵⁶ Indeed, Trajan took over and finished several of Domitian's projects: the Odeon was completed or restored by Trajan's architect Apollodorus; the Baths of Trajan, which marked the final conversion to public use of the site of Nero's Golden House on the Oppian Hill, are ascribed by late sources to Domitian, an

¹⁵¹ Pflaum, *Carrières* I 156–8 no. 66; *AE* 1924 no. 81=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 286 (*HA Hadr.* 22.8 is in error); see p. 80; Cn. Pompeius Homullus may be another Trajanic *a rationibus* (Pflaum, *Carrières* I 187–9 no. 89); Pliny, *Ep.* VI.31.9 (Trajan's remark); *Pan.* 88 ff.; *Ep.* VII.29; VIII.6; *Tac. Ann.* XIV.39.

¹⁵² *RIC* II 245 no. 5; 246 no. 15; 247 no. 35. See Nesselhauf (1952) adducing *Germ.* 33; 37.6.

¹⁵³ Frontin. *Str.* I.1.8; II.3.23; II.11.7; Vegetius, *de re militari* I.8.

¹⁵⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* IV.22.3 (cf. Pliny, *HN* XV.19; XXIX.26).

¹⁵⁵ *Pan.* 51: 'delubra' presumably includes the projected temple to Divus Nerva noted at II.1 and 3.

¹⁵⁶ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 41.13; *Amm. Marc.* XXVII.3.7.

attribution that archaeology appears to vindicate. They were claimed by Trajan as his own.¹⁵⁷

7. *Attitude to Nerva*

By contrast, the Via Appia sports inscriptions recording the beginning of work by Nerva and its completion by Trajan.¹⁵⁸ The *Panegyricus* notes that Trajan had his adoptive father deified and started to build a temple and create a priesthood in his honour, while Trajan's titulature regularly includes 'divi Nervae filius'.¹⁵⁹ Yet Trajan's attitude to Nerva is often seen as lacking in *pietas*. This view rests on the fact that Divus Nerva does not appear on coins until 107, as part of the series of restoration coins celebrating Trajan's respectable predecessors on the throne.¹⁶⁰ He appears again in 112 or 113 when aurei show facing busts of 'Divi Nerva et Traianus Pater'.¹⁶¹ The problem is, however, more complex, for Trajan's father also had to wait for his numismatic appearance: he was probably dead before Trajan's accession, certainly before 100. Yet Pliny shows that he was held in conspicuous honour early on, and Trajan retained and paraded his original family name despite his adoption. In fact, Pliny's disclaimers only show that he took pride in being the son of the god Nerva, and the filiation 'divi Nervae filius' continues right through the reign and was continued by Hadrian who is 'divi Nervae nepos'.¹⁶² From the very start, if Pliny has read the signs correctly, Trajan intended his adoption to be seen as an act of state policy in which 'Nerva became your father in the same sense that he was father to us all', and Nerva was to enjoy glory equal to that of Trajan's natural father, though it differed in kind.¹⁶³

8. *Trajan the soldier*

Pliny lays stress on Trajan's share in his father's military glory and looks forward to the day when he will bring home genuine victories, unlike the sham ones of Domitian. The theme no doubt goes back to the original speech, however embellished for publication, for Nerva had clearly

¹⁵⁷ Odeon: Suet. *Dom.* 5.2; Dio LXIX.4.1, cf. Paus. v.12.6; Forum: Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 13.5, cf. *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 22); Baths: see Anderson (1983) 103–4, cf. *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 22).

¹⁵⁸ *ILS* 280=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 406; cf. *CIL* x 6820 and 6826. On Trajan's work see Vita-Evrard (1990) 73–93, who relates Dio 68.15 to *CIL* x 6827.

¹⁵⁹ *Pan.* 11; *ILS* 9406; 6659=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 132. Note Pliny's allusion to Trajan's *pietas* towards Nerva in a letter to him of 98 (x.1). For the idea that the temple was the one in Trajan's Forum dedicated by Hadrian to Trajan and Plotina: Ward-Perkins (1976) 349 ff.; Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 197–203. ¹⁶⁰ *RIC* II 313 nos. 835–6.

¹⁶¹ *RIC* II 297 nos. 726–7. Coins give *cos. VI* (112) but *ILS* 307, showing *cos. VI* but no consecration, shows that Trajan's father was not yet deified at the start of the year; see Temporini, *Frauen* 250 n. 253.

¹⁶² *Pan.* 89; 11.2–4; 14.2. ¹⁶³ *Pan.* 7.4; 89.2.

invested the adoption with military significance (p. 95), and Trajan had set out at once to visit the armies. Nonetheless, there was little evidence for Pliny's confidence in terms of past achievement, and Trajan's situation was thus closer to that of the last Flavian than to that of the first two. Not surprisingly, he followed Domitian's lead in deciding to campaign in person and to win imperial salutations in the field, a gesture that went beyond the use of imperial princes by Augustus and Tiberius, and the symbolic presence of Claudius in Britain.

9. *The Dacian Wars*

The survival of Trajan's Column, alone of the magnificent structures in his forum, has ensured that the Dacian Wars are not forgotten, but the reliefs that spiral up the column are difficult to use as evidence, and all that survives of the written narratives is one sentence from Trajan's own *commentarii* and the remnants of Dio's accounts, preserved in the summaries of Xiphilinus and in Byzantine excerpts concerning diplomatic exchanges.¹⁶⁴ Fortunately, epigraphic and archaeological evidence is continually increasing to add badly needed chronological and topographical precision.

Each of the two Dacian Wars occupied two summers. The start of the first is marked by the record of the Arval Brothers, who took vows on 25 March 101 for Trajan's safe and victorious return. The end can be fixed to 102 by Trajan's acquisition of the title *Dacicus* in December of that year,¹⁶⁵ and his celebration of a triumph in the last days of December.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, between 101 and the autumn of 102, Trajan had acquired three imperial salutations in addition to the first, which marked his adoption or his accession, and the count was still at four in May 105.¹⁶⁷ The start of the second war was marked by Trajan's departure for Moesia on 4 June 105, when the Arval priests again prayed for his safe return.¹⁶⁸ Warfare was still proceeding in the early autumn of 106, but Decebalus was captured and his severed head exhibited in Rome by the end of that year.¹⁶⁹ By the summer of 107 Trajan had added a fifth and sixth salutation to his tally.¹⁷⁰

Only a few details can be definitely ascertained about the course of the campaigns. Trajan probably started from Viminacium, crossed the Danube

¹⁶⁴ For a clear and succinct account of the problems involved in using the reliefs as evidence and their relation to the written sources, see Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 211–29.

¹⁶⁵ *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 1); *RIC* II 276 nos. 447–8; 277 no. 449. The title appears with *trib. pot. VII* (10 Dec. 102–9 Dec. 103) and with *cos. IV des. V* (autumn 102).

¹⁶⁶ *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 18); *AE* 1978 no. 61.

¹⁶⁷ *CIL* XVI 47=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 352; XVI 55=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 355.

¹⁶⁸ *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 19) *Acta Fratrum Arvalium* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 3).

¹⁶⁹ *CIL* XVI 160=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 344; *SEG* IX 101=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 39; *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 20), with discussion in Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 242–3.

¹⁷⁰ *CIL* XVI 55=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 355.

and marched, as he himself wrote, through Berzobis and Aizi, and then on to Tapae where the Dacians were encamped. Despite receipt of a Dacian ultimatum, written on a large mushroom (perhaps a tree fungus), Trajan advanced and there was a major battle with serious losses on both sides. Trajan erected an altar to the Roman dead, and then marched through the mountains towards Decebalus' capital of Sarmizegethusa, recapturing the standard lost by Cornelius Fuscus (p. 73). Decebalus now sued for peace, accepted Trajan's terms and sent envoys to Rome to secure ratification by the Senate. He agreed to give up his arms and siege equipment, to demolish his forts, hand back deserters, adopt the same friends and enemies as the Roman people, and, in future, not to harbour deserters or enlist anyone from Roman territory among his soldiers. Trajan established a camp near the Iron Gate Pass which would later be the site of Colonia Ulpia Traiana Augusta Dacica Sarmizegethusa (not to be confused with the royal Dacian capital of that name),¹⁷¹ and further east Apollodorus built a stone bridge across the Danube at Drobeta, with the optimistic aim of facilitating Roman support for Romans on the far side of the Danube. Hadrian was to demolish the superstructure, fearing its aggressive use by the barbarians, but he left the piers to demonstrate, as they still do, the skill of Roman engineering.¹⁷²

After the Senate had declared Decebalus an enemy for violating the terms of the peace, Trajan initiated his second Dacian campaign by using the new bridge to cross the Danube. The excerpters of Dio concentrate on two attempts against the emperor – one to assassinate him, and another to blackmail him by capturing one of his officers – both of which failed. Trajan finally managed to capture the royal capital, and the king avoided capture by committing suicide.¹⁷³ This last episode is illuminated by a tombstone found near Philippi in 1965. It was erected in accordance with the instructions of the deceased, a certain Ti. Claudius Maximus, who claimed to be the captor of Decebalus, and it shows the king committing suicide, a scene rendered rather differently on Trajan's Column (Pl. xiv), and again on the Tropaeum at Adamklissi.¹⁷⁴ The king's gold and silver treasure was recovered from the river bed where it had been hidden, and Dacia became a province with two legions under a consular governor. The intention to maintain strong garrisons on the Danube was marked by the splitting of Pannonia into Upper and Lower provinces, the former governed by an ex-consul, the latter by an ex-praetor.

Many uncertainties surround the details of these campaigns. In particular, evidence concerning operations on the lower Danube has been

¹⁷¹ Dio LXVIII.8–9. On the problem of the name, see Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 304 ff.; for the remains of the grand forum: Etienne, Piso and Diaconescu (1990).

¹⁷² Dio LXVIII.13.6.

¹⁷³ Dio LXVIII.10.3–12.5; 14.3.

¹⁷⁴ Speidel (1970).

interpreted in widely differing ways. A papyrus known as Hunt's Pridianum, the 'strength-return' of an auxiliary unit stationed at Stobi in Macedonia, shows that Roman outposts considerably north of the Danube were regarded as being within the province of Lower Moesia. At the present time, scholarly opinion inclines towards a date for the document of 105 or 106, the time of Trajan's Second Dacian War or its aftermath when Fabius Iustus, as a building inscription from Rasova now shows, was governor of the province.¹⁷⁵ One inference drawn is that legions must already have been stationed at Durostorum and Troesmis by this time, if not already after the First Dacian War. The threat to Roman control of the lower Danube from the Sarmatian Roxolani to the north had been, of course, clear from Nero's time, and two problematic monuments at Adamklissi, south of the Danube, not far from the Black Sea and east of the two camps, suggest serious conflict in the time of Domitian or Trajan. The Tropaeum is a great circular victory monument, 30 metres in diameter, surmounted by a trophy on a hexagonal pedestal, all mounted on a circular platform. It is expressive in its display of armour and its statues of chained captives, of triumph and revenge. The metopes on the drum show crudely carved war scenes, including the emperor in open combat. The dedication to Mars Ultor was made by Trajan in 107/8, and the emphasis on revenge, plus the proximity of the Tropaeum to a massive altar commemorating 'the men of supreme courage who died for the *res publica*', point to a story of defeat avenged.¹⁷⁶ The location, it is now agreed, tells against the idea that one of the Domitianic defeats is being commemorated, as both Cornelius Fuscus and Oppius Sabinus suffered at the hands of Dacians, who would have been encountered further west. Hence the idea that Trajan's First War comprised a serious offensive on the lower Danube.¹⁷⁷ Others have supposed a Roman defeat by the barbarians of Lower Moesia under Domitian or later under Trajan, as part of the support given Decebalus by the Roxolani or as a tail-piece to the Second War.¹⁷⁸ What seems clear is that Trajan meant to leave Rome's enemies and allies in the area in no doubt about his determination to keep control of the region east of the new provinces.

To determine the policy behind these wars is as difficult a task as the reconstruction of the campaigns, for our evidence is not only scanty but not of a kind to reveal true motivation. The patient labours of the column fit well with Pliny's portrayal in the *Panegyricus* of a man not quick to go to

¹⁷⁵ *PLond* 2851=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 302; see discussion by Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 244 ff.; Rasova: *AE* 1981 no. 746, confirming the date supported by Syme, *Danubian Papers* 122.

¹⁷⁶ *CIL* III 12467=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 303; *ILS* 9107.

¹⁷⁷ Particularly urged by Strobel (1984) 7; 34 ff.

¹⁷⁸ For a Domitianic date, Syme, *Danubian Papers* 82–3; for an invasion of Moesia by Sarmatians in the First War, Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 78–85 on Pliny, *Ep.* x.74; for operations as a tail-piece to the Second War, Richmond (1935) (repr. 1982). For a review of the problems, Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 296 ff.

war and concerned to establish peace, while Dio's account preserves the official version that both wars were provoked by Decebalus, who violated first his agreement with Rome made under Domitian and then the one concluded after Trajan's First War. Against that version can be set Trajan's early tour of the Danubian armies and his setting out for the First War in the early spring, just the time a commander would select himself. Yet arguments for premeditation based on troop movements or frontier engineering works, such as the canal at the Iron Gates,¹⁷⁹ are inconclusive,¹⁸⁰ while reading back to prior purpose from ultimate results, such as the acquisition of Dacian gold or the annexation of territory in the First War¹⁸¹ and of the substantial area of the province of Dacia in the Second, is clearly speculative. Nor is it obvious that Domitian or Trajan would have thought controlling the area north of the Danube through a powerful client king unworkable, if his loyalty could be secured, and Trajan seems to have had no doctrinaire aversion to paying subsidies to barbarians, since he later had them paid to the Sarmatian Roxolani.¹⁸²

The coins featuring Mars Ultor issued in 100 may not be of any specific significance, but Trajan will have been aware that Rome was expecting a real victory from him. Therefore, the fact that he celebrated a triumph for the First War, taking three salutations and the title *Dacicus*, suggests a confident belief that to retrieve the lost standard, and then to impose on the Dacian king obeisance before the Roman emperor, supplication of the Roman Senate, disarmament and loss of independence in foreign policy, would be seen as a substantial victory. The coinage accordingly features Victories in various poses, including one crowning the emperor.¹⁸³ There is nothing implausible in supposing that Trajan had seen at first hand that Decebalus was using his Roman subsidy and experts to build up his fortifications and employ soldiers from the Roman provinces,¹⁸⁴ and decided that he would seek his triumph in this area. That he chose his moment to invade only shows that Decebalus' provocation was long-term rather than sudden.

If this is correct, then the Second War and the creation of a new province were not foreseen in 102, and certainly departure in June, as in 105, does not suggest premeditation. The stability of all of Rome's alliances would be jeopardized should Decebalus be allowed to defy Rome's power again, annexing the territory of an ally, rebuilding forts, accepting alliances.

¹⁷⁹ Šašel (1973). The inscription is dated to 101, presumably marking completion. A canal would help the upstream movement of supply barges. ¹⁸⁰ Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 282 ff.

¹⁸¹ Dio LXVIII.9.7. ¹⁸² *HA Hadr.* 6.8.

¹⁸³ Coins with *cos. IV* must celebrate victory in the First War: *RIC* II 247 nos. 46–7; 248 nos. 57–69; 249 nos. 70–2. Trajan as Hercules, which first appeared in 100, clearly had military significance at least now: 247 no. 49; 248 nos. 50–1.

¹⁸⁴ Dio LXVII.7.4, cf. LXVIII.6.1; 8.1 and evidence of the column (Lepper and Frere, *Trajan's Column* 278).

This time a more radical solution was clearly required. Although the military emphasis on Trajan's Column and the Adamklissi monument is different, both show the enemy as unequal to Rome in organization and discipline, and paying for defiance by total subjection, decapitated in battle and bound in chains. Trajan's Dacian victories continued to be celebrated on a series of coins giving his fifth consulship (hence 103 to before 112) and bearing on the reverse 'SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI'. The dative should signify a dedication to the emperor of some honour, thus marking the second stage in the status of the epithet *Optimus*, which was finally to become part of Trajan's name. Presumably the Senate decreed this honour in the name of Senate and people, and one of the types shows Trajan presenting a Dacian to the Senate (no doubt celebrating its role in fixing the peace-terms).¹⁸⁵ But most of the types have no specific senatorial flavour, and the series celebrates general themes of piety, peace and prosperity. Even the military types probably point to the qualities of character that made Trajan's victories possible, rather than his talents as a soldier, for Dio indicates that 'Optimus', voted to him as a title in 114, referred 'not to his arms but to his character', and adduces Trajan's sharing the hardships of his troops.¹⁸⁶

10. *Imperial benefits*

Pliny had stressed Trajan's ability to make his subjects feel that genuine reciprocity of favours was possible as between equals (60.7). The celebration on the coinage for nearly a decade of an honour bestowed by Senate and people seems to reflect that philosophy, as does the inscription on Trajan's Column, describing it as dedicated to the *princeps* by the Senate and people of Rome 'to show how high a mountain – and the site for such great works was nothing less – had been cleared away'.¹⁸⁷ This monument, showing the amount of excavation necessary to produce them, reciprocates the emperor's great benefaction of his forum and its buildings (a basilica for legal transactions, Greek and Latin libraries, colonnades), designed in the shape of the military headquarters of a legionary camp and given, as an inscription once proclaimed, from his spoils.¹⁸⁸

It is uncertain how much Trajan's finances were affected by the treasure of Dacia, particularly the acquisition by Rome of the last new significant source of precious metal. It can hardly be denied that the more imposing

¹⁸⁵ For the first senatorial conferment of *Optimus*, p. 103, which *Pan.* 88.4 (if it is not anachronistic) similarly describes as a gift of Senate and people, though elsewhere (at 2.7; 88.6) it is ascribed to the Senate alone. *RIC* II 258 n. 215. ¹⁸⁶ *LXVIII.23.2.*

¹⁸⁷ *ILS* 294=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 378: 'ad declarandum quantae altitudinis mons et locus tant[is] oper]ibus sit egestus'. By ascending the spiral staircase within the column to the platform above, one could see the cut-back escarpment of the Quirinal: Frere and Lepper, *Trajan's Column* 203 ff.

¹⁸⁸ Gell. *NA* XIII 25.1. On the layout, see Zanker (1970).

buildings belong to the period after the Dacian Wars, as the *Fasti Ostienses* attest. In 109 Trajan's Baths and his *naumachia* were dedicated along with the aqueduct to supply them, the Aqua Traiana; in 112 the forum with the Basilica Ulpia; in 113 the Temple of Venus in Caesar's forum and the Column. Of the new Italian roads, the Via Nova Traiana 'a Volsiniis ad fines Clusiorum' was completed in 107/8 and the Via Traiana from Beneventum to Brundisium is first celebrated on coins of 112.¹⁸⁹ The improvement of the harbour at Ancona was finished in 114/15 and the new harbour at Ostia may have been finished shortly before.¹⁹⁰ Nor should the tremendous cost of the extraordinary games added to the calendar in five of the seven years between 107 and 113 be ignored.¹⁹¹

Was Trajan in fact only rescued by the Dacian windfall from financial disaster? The technique of x-ray spectroscopy has revealed that there was a significant drop in the silver content of the denarius in the later issues of coins recording Trajan's fifth consulship. Although, unfortunately, the sequence of these issues cannot be determined with chronological precision, numismatists agree that this change should be related to the testimony of Dio: that on Trajan's return to Rome in 107, he caused all the money that was worn to be melted down.¹⁹² The change in the denarius has been explained as a reaction to the effect of the influx of gold from Dacia on the relative values of gold and silver bullion on the open market.¹⁹³ Although no unusually large sums of gold seem to have been coined immediately before the change in the silver coinage, the price of gold could have been affected by imperial sales of gold bullion, as in the time of Julius Caesar.¹⁹⁴ On the other hand, if Trajan was not under financial pressure, why did he not restore the correct ratio by raising the weight of the aureus, which he had reduced in 99 from the improved Domitianic standard to the Neronian, instead of lowering the silver content of the denarius? Moreover, some coins datable to 104 by the obverse portraiture already show a reduction, albeit temporary, of the silver content – before the influx of Dacian gold, but when Trajan had already started to build (pp. 100; 107) and was incurring other heavy expenditure, including the raising of the two new legions II Traiana and XXX Ulpia. Indeed Pliny, who had held prefectures of both the *aerarium militare* and the *aerarium Saturni*, had already allowed himself to ask if Trajan's large disbursements could really be covered by frugality.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ *ILS* 9496=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 407; *AE* 1926 no. 112; *ILS* 5866=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 408a; *RIC* II 263 n. 266. There were two other new roads in Etruria (*ILS* 1059; 1093; Eck, *Organisation* 33–4).

¹⁹⁰ *CIL* IX 5894=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 387; for the date of Portus, see Meiggs, *Ostia* 489, who favours 113. On Trajan's building projects, see Bennett (1997) 143–60.

¹⁹¹ *Fasti Ostienses* (Smallwood, *NTH* nos. 21–3), supporting Dio LXVIII.15. It is not possible to date the cancellation of debts to the treasuries probably depicted on the *anaghypha Traiani* (Torelli (1982) 89–118). ¹⁹² Dio LXVIII.15.3(1); Walker (1976–8) II 55–7; III 117–23. ¹⁹³ Lo Cascio (1981) 80.

¹⁹⁴ Walker (1976–8) III 122; 151–2; Suet. *Iul* 54.2.

¹⁹⁵ Syme (1930); Walker (1976–8) III 122; Pliny, *Pan.* 41, on which see Walker (1976–8) III 121.

Fronto pays tribute to Trajan's outstanding grasp of the political importance of 'bread and circuses'. This might support the view that even the innovative alimentary scheme to support the raising of children in Italian towns was of more ideological than economic significance, a move to extend the largess of the *princeps* from Rome to Italy on an institutionalized basis.¹⁹⁶ Such a view of the motivation behind the scheme could stand even if Trajan was just continuing an innovation of his adoptive father, for Nerva had certainly advertised his generosity to Italy in the matter of public transport (p. 93). The evidence for authorship is conflicting, and the fact that Trajan implemented the scheme would inevitably have led to his being presumed its author.¹⁹⁷ However, Nerva's other activities do not support his authorship: his general concern for the *plebs frumentaria* at Rome is less pertinent than Trajan's extension of eligibility to the children of Rome (p. 106), and his scheme of land distribution might suggest that he had a more traditional approach to financing the rearing of children, reminiscent of the colonial and viritane land assignments of the Republic. Nerva may not have gone beyond encouraging by exhortation and example private munificence such as Pliny's alimentary scheme for Comum.¹⁹⁸

The imperial scheme, like Pliny's, involved burdening an estate with a permanent annual charge calculated as a percentage of a sum secured by the estate. In Pliny's case the point was to avoid giving either land or money into the hands of municipal authorities who through dishonesty or incompetence might neglect the intended recipients,¹⁹⁹ a point which would not have escaped the shrewd emperor, so quick to detect corruption in Bithynian cities. In fact, he may have prohibited overlap between those who would administer the scheme and those who would contribute to it.²⁰⁰ The landowners received a loan from the *fiscus*, worth about 8 per cent of the stated value of the land by which it was secured, and paid interest on the loan of 5 per cent a year towards support of the children.²⁰¹ Though not

¹⁹⁶ Fronto, *Princ. Hist.* 199.21–200.5 (van den Hout). The view is that of Bossu (1989) 372–82 and Woolf (1990).

¹⁹⁷ Dio (LXVIII.5.4) and the *Historia Augusta* (*Hadr.* 7.8; *Pert.* 9.3) assume that Trajan founded the scheme. The three datable inscriptions recording its inauguration at Ligures Baebianorum near Beneventum, Veleia in Liguria and Ferentinum all date from 101 or later (*ILS* 6509=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 435; 6675=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 436; 6106=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 437). The only genuine coins celebrating the scheme date from 103 and later (*RIC* II 250 n. 93; 259 no. 230; 261 no. 243; 277 no. 459; 278 nos. 460–2; 286 no. 604; 287 no. 605; the 'tutela Italiae' coin of Nerva is regarded as a forgery). Against this stands the testimony of the *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.4, but that seems unusually reliable for Nerva. In support of Nerva, see Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 291–3; Hammond (1953) 147–51 argued the case for Trajan.

¹⁹⁸ *Ep.* x.8; 1.8. Sherwin-White's reasons for thinking Pliny's scheme Domitianic (*Letters of Pliny* 104–5) are not convincing, but such schemes existed before Nerva (*ILS* 977=Smallwood, *GNC* no. 223).

¹⁹⁹ *Ep.* vii.18 and for Pliny's scepticism of local government, cf. iv.13.5.

²⁰⁰ Pliny, *Ep.* x.38 (p. 129); Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 304–5, but cf. Eck, *Organisation* 178 ff.

²⁰¹ Pliny's estate was more heavily burdened, as he paid 6 per cent on a notional gift to Comum of 500,000 HS, a sum corresponding to 30–50 per cent of the value of the estate that secured it (*Ep.* vii.18), and Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 306, calculates his total wealth at around 20 million HS.

heavy, the charge was in perpetuity and will have reduced the value of those estates. Therefore, it has been suggested that the imperial scheme involved compulsion, especially as the round number of recipients at Veleia – 264 boys and 36 girls, 300 in all – might suggest fixed targets for each town which had to be met. Against this is the fact that in Bithynia Trajan was to rule that it was not in accord with the justice of his reign to compel men to take municipal loans in order to generate revenue for the town.²⁰² The inscriptions, giving the names of those contributing, and showing that the emperor sent agents to organize the schemes, suggest that more subtle means were employed instead. Given the high repute that generosity to one's community earned in this period, it would be hard for local landowners to refuse to join, especially when the emperor's generosity was held up as an example to follow. Trajan's scheme distributed credit, for it involved both imperial and civic munificence, while the agents found themselves acquiring influence.²⁰³

The emperor's ostensible purpose was 'to provide for the eternity of his Italy'. Alongside coins specifically celebrating the *alimenta*, there are others showing the emperor raising up the kneeling figure of Italy, with two children between them, and carrying the legend 'Italia Restituta'.²⁰⁴ The idea that it was poor children who were particularly singled out for help is stated in the *Epitome de Caesaribus* but does not seem to be supported by the choice of areas benefited or by the status of the beneficiaries, for illegitimate children who were likely to be poor were less well represented and received less. Similarly, Pliny gave only to free-born children. Therefore it has been suggested that the *alimenta* was really designed to show off the provincial emperor's generosity to the old heartland of the empire, just as Trajan made a point of ensuring that provincial candidates for office regarded Italy and Rome as their *patria*. Moreover, Trajan followed the norms of aristocratic euergetism, giving primarily to citizens according to rank – the reason, according to this view, that boys were treated more generously than girls.²⁰⁵

It is likely, however, that, Trajan had a serious demographic purpose in choosing to demonstrate his generosity to Italy through an alimentary scheme. Writing under Nerva a letter published under Trajan, Pliny stresses the importance to the public interest of inducing parents to rear children.²⁰⁶ Empires in an expansionist mood are commonly concerned about

²⁰² Pliny, *Ep.* x. 54–5; see the debate between Garnsey (1968) and Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 306–10.

²⁰³ T. Pomponius Bassus was invited to become patron of Ferentinum (*ILS* 6106=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 437). ²⁰⁴ *RIC* II 278 no. 470. ²⁰⁵ *RIC* II 278 no. 470.

²⁰⁵ *Epit. de Caesaribus* 12.4: 'puellas puerosque natos parentibus egestosis sumptu publico per Italiae oppida alii iussit', cf. Pliny, *Pan.* 26.5–7 (on the help for children at Rome); *Ep.* vi. 19: candidates had to invest one-third of their capital in Italian land. This type of ideological significance is stressed by Woolf (1990). Bennett (1997) 81–4 returns to the view that the scheme was primarily designed to help Italian landowners survive an agrarian crisis.

²⁰⁶ *Ep.* 1.8.10–12. Cf. the moralistic view of Tacitus in *Germ.* 19.5, adduced by Harris (1994) 16, 20.

manpower, and the tradition that Italy was the source of Rome's military strength was still respected in this period of heavy provincial recruitment to the legions by retaining the custom of raising new legions in Italy and distributing Italians among the recruits in each province.²⁰⁷ Just as Propertius had naturally associated measures against the unmarried with the production of soldiers, Trajan may well have meant his scheme to have such a result: Pliny says that he intended his earlier support of the children of the capital as a means of filling the army as well as the tribes.²⁰⁸ The idea of the citizen-soldier was as important to a Roman as the gun-carrying frontiersman to the American dream. The reliefs on the Arch of Beneventum, in whatever order they were meant to be read, celebrate some measure helping children (colonies or, more probably, the alimentary programme) and the emperor welcoming new recruits, in panels clearly meant to correspond.²⁰⁹

11. Imperial paternalism

The growing 'paternalism' demonstrated by the Flavians continued under Trajan. The first *curator rei publicae* (*logistes* in Greek), appointed to supervise the finances of a particular city or cities, is firmly attested under Domitian.²¹⁰ It is in Pliny's Letters, however, that we find the best evidence for the rationale of even more sweeping types of imperial intervention, such as his own mission to the province of Bithynia. Pliny writes a letter to his friend Maximus, who was sent to the province of Achaëa, as a 'legatus ad ordinandum statum liberarum civitatum'. His post is probably that of *corrector*, for Epictetus speaks of a *diorthotes* Maximus on his way out to deal with the free cities in Achaëa. He will not have replaced the proconsul of Achaëa, but have worked alongside the governor, concerning himself with the free cities of the province.²¹¹ Epictetus mentions jurisdiction; Pliny concentrates on generalities, but it is likely that financial problems and local disputes, endemic in Greek cities, occasioned his mission. Pliny concentrates on the diplomacy needed to intervene in local municipal affairs without offending the dignity of the Greeks and their heritage of freedom. He prescribes an attitude to these proud subjects rather like the *civilitas* of emperors towards the Roman governing class. If Maximus is to be identified with the Sextus Quinctilius Valerius Maximus attested in an inscription as patron of the colony of Alexandria in the Troad, he hardly

²⁰⁷ Mann, Recruitment 54–6. *HA Marc.* 11.7 is without value and probably does not refer to army recruitment: see Syme, 'Hadrian in Italica', *JRS* 54 (1964), 147–8 = *Roman Papers* II 626–8.

²⁰⁸ Prop. II.7.14; Pliny, *Pan.* 26.

²⁰⁹ On the side facing Brindisi, the recruits are depicted on the left pier, the children on the right at the corresponding level. See Veyne (1960); Richmond (1969) 229 ff.

²¹⁰ For the Domitianic date of *ILS* 1017, see pp. 58–9. The *curator* in Smyrna under Nero, mentioned in Philostr. *VS* 512, may be anachronistic: in any case, the anecdote is dubious (Eck (1985) 231 ff.).

²¹¹ Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.24; Epictetus III.7.21; Philostr. *VS* 554.

needed this instruction, but Pliny was keen to exhibit attitudes regarded as correct in his day.²¹²

Like Maximus, Pliny was selected by the *princeps* and sent out with specific instructions by him.²¹³ But Pliny's appointment was at a higher level. With the authorization of the Senate, he was sent out to replace the normal proconsular governor with the title 'legatus Augusti pro praetore consulari potestate', that is, Bithynia-Pontus was temporarily made one of the emperor's own provinces. The normal governor of Bithynia would have been selected by lot and appointed by the Senate. He would have been in the province for only one year. Pliny was retained by the emperor for at least two years, since the letters show that he was there from 17 September 109 or 110 until some time between 28 January and 18 September 111 or 112.²¹⁴ As a public province, Bithynia had only rated ex-praetors; Pliny was an ex-consul, but the reason why 'consulari potestate' was specified in his appointment probably concerned the visual indications of his authority, the need to provide him with the six lictors that the provincials were used to seeing in attendance on their normal proconsular governors, for imperial *legati pro praetore* had only five.²¹⁵

The placing of a public province under imperial control for some special purpose was not unknown even under the Julio-Claudian emperors, but the cluster of such appointments attested in this period may reasonably be judged a product of the same increased concern as produced the *curatores* and *correctores*. Maximus may have been followed in Achaëa by a *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of consular rank, replacing the usual proconsul,²¹⁶ while Pliny was succeeded by his friend Cornutus Tertullus.²¹⁷

Pliny's correspondence with Trajan during his governorship is a rich source of information on all aspects of Roman provincial government and life in the Greek-speaking provinces of the empire. Here only three inter-related questions can be briefly addressed:

- (1) why did Trajan make a special appointment to Bithynia-Pontus at all?
- (2) what, if anything, was special about Pliny's activities as governor?
- (3) why did Trajan choose Pliny?

²¹² *ILS* 1018=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 235. The identification is supported by Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.24.8, indicating that Trajan praised Maximus' quaestorship in Bithynia. Maximus could be the provincial quaestor of *Pan.* 70.1, in which case the date would fit the quaestor of Bithynia on the inscription.

²¹³ Millar, *Emperor* 316. ²¹⁴ For a good discussion of the dating, see Williams (1990) 13.

²¹⁵ *ILS* 2927=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 230, cf. *CIL* XI 5272 confirming the reading 'ex sc'. See Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 82.

²¹⁶ *ILS* 915 under Augustus; Tac. *Ann.* 1.76; 80 under Tiberius. Maximus went out c. 108 and C. Avidius Nigrinus is attested between 111 and 114 (*SIG³* 827 c=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 446): see Syme (1982c) 185=*Roman Papers* IV 24–5 and the reservations of Eck (1983) 187 n. 479.

²¹⁷ *ILS* 1024=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 209, an ex-consul; *IGRR* III 173–5=Smallwood, *NTH* nos. 215–16, an ex-praetor.

The letters give some clues as to the problems in the province as Trajan saw them. In x.18 the emperor says that Pliny is to examine above all ('in primis') the accounts of the cities, for it is well established that they are in a state of confusion. Then, in three other letters, Trajan talks about 'that province' ('ista provincia'): in x.32, he says that Pliny was sent 'to that province' because many things need correction – in particular in the enforcement of the law, for Pliny has found men not serving their sentences; in x.34, arguing against the formation of a fire brigade on the grounds that it will turn into a political club, Trajan says, 'we must remember that that province and especially its cities are troubled by cliques of that kind'; in x.117 Trajan says that Pliny was particularly chosen to regulate and shape the habits of *that* province and lay down rules to secure the permanent tranquillity (*quies*) of the province.

The concern with finance centres on extravagance, particularly in building projects, an extravagance that the speeches of Dio Chrysostom show was fed by inter-city rivalry.²¹⁸ The abuses of order concern laxness of enforcement by local authorities (x.60): as x.32 shows, Trajan had no trouble in believing that men had been evading their sentences for more than ten years without pardon, and were in fact being paid by communities as public slaves. However, these abuses were endemic, particularly in the eastern part of the empire. Cicero had encountered similar financial extravagance and corruption in 51–50 B.C., and it is not difficult to demonstrate that Bithynia-Pontus was not unique.²¹⁹ Moreover, the problems seem to stem, not from hardship, but from prosperity and energy, not in themselves conditions to cause concern.²²⁰

One suggestion is that Bithynia was singled out for attention, not because of problems peculiar to the province, but because of its growing importance as Rome's military focus moved further east.²²¹ An obvious difficulty, however, is the dispatch for such a job of two such unarmy men as Pliny, who had never governed a province before, and Cornutus Tertullus, whose two praetorian posts had been in the peaceful provinces of Crete-Cyrene and Gallia Narbonensis. Moreover, it is difficult to explain on this assumption the dispatch of a *corrector* at Achaëa in 108, followed by a special legate c. 111–14. Yet there must have been something special about Bithynia, because not all of the eastern provinces were treated in this way.

The answer should perhaps be sought, not in Bithynia, but with the emperor, whose activities, except in the military sphere, were largely acti-

²¹⁸ Or. 38–51 are well discussed by Jones, *Dio Chrysostom* chs. 10–12; see also Harris (1964).

²¹⁹ Amply demonstrated by Jones, *Greek City* chs. 8 and 11, and Levick (1979). Even in the West, the Lex Iritana (González (1986) ch. 83) lays down strict quora for voting on new municipal building constructions (Galsterer (1988) 84–5).

²²⁰ Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 527.

²²¹ The thesis of Levick, more plausible than older explanations in terms of specific preparation for the Parthian War (n. 236).

vated from below.²²² What was special about Bithynia-Pontus and Achaëa may have been the fact that Trajan had his attention drawn to the problems there,²²³ and, in the case of the first, it is possible to see how. In the early years of his reign, two proconsuls had been tried for extortion, Iulius Bassus and Varenus Rufus. Both cases had set precedents, as Pliny says, and hence were noteworthy.²²⁴ Moreover, Bithynia ranks high in the number of known extortion trials from Augustus to Trajan.²²⁵ Above all, Trajan became deeply involved in the second case. Varenus Rufus, who had been acceptable to the Bithynians as their counsel for the prosecution against Bassus in early 103, found himself, three years later, being prosecuted by the provincial *consilium*. In an unprecedented move on the side of the defence, he asked for permission to summon witnesses from the province. The Senate agreed, despite the objections of the provincial prosecutors, and was then split over the issue; finally, both sides appealed to Trajan, then in Dacia, for his support. He referred the Bithynians back to the Senate.²²⁶ Rufus presumably asked for the privilege because he was confident that he had at least as many influential friends in the province as he had enemies, an assumption that was borne out in the sequel, when new representatives from the provincial *consilium* appeared in Rome with a decree containing instructions that the case be dropped. The original prosecutors wished to continue, and, finally, the Bithynian representatives put their opposing views to Trajan who pronounced, 'Neither side will complain of delay. I will undertake to explore the will of the province.' This was after Trajan's return from Dacia, probably early in 107, and nothing more is heard of the Varenus Rufus trial. As the early letters of Pliny's correspondence show, Trajan knew from the start what abuses Pliny would find in Bithynia-Pontus.

There has been considerable reluctance recently to connect these trials with Pliny's mission.²²⁷ First, there is the gap in time, especially if Pliny did not leave Rome midway through 110. Yet Trajan will have had to collect evidence at a distance before deciding that the problems which had led to the impasse needed investigation on the spot. And he would have needed to give an extensive landowner with heavy forensic commitments notice before sending him away for several years. Even three-and-a-half years between the start of Trajan's investigation and the arrival of Pliny in the province is not too long. Nor were the facts of municipal expenditure

²²² The thesis of Millar, *Emperor*.

²²³ For Achaëa, Syme (1982c) 185—*Roman Papers* IV 25 notes that the tenure of Avidius Nigrinus coincides with the archonship at Athens in 112 or 113 of Hadrian, the heir-apparent to the throne.

²²⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* VI.29.10–11. For the peculiarities of the Varenus Rufus case, Talbert (1980) 414 ff.

²²⁵ Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 90 ff., gives seven known cases. ²²⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* V.20; VI.5.5; VI.13.2.

²²⁷ Longden, *CAH* XI¹ 202–3, 219, thought the occasion for the dispatch of Pliny was the Varenus Rufus case, and Williams (1990) 15 admits the cases as one factor. Garzetti, *Tiberius to Antonines* 346, Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 527 and Levick (1979) reject the reason.

irrelevant to an extortion trial, for governors were regularly deeply involved in municipal affairs, holding assizes in different cities, examining city accounts and approving building projects.²²⁸

What, if anything, then distinguished Pliny's activities from those of other provincial governors? Even proconsuls may have received *mandata* from the emperor by this date, and they were concerned with jurisdiction, finance and buildings as Pliny was.²²⁹ At one point Pliny hesitates to follow guidelines for jurisdiction addressed to proconsuls (p. 91 n. 51), but that does not show that his role was different from that of an ordinary imperial legate.²³⁰ The argument can be carried too far, as can be seen in the case of two cities whose exceptional status normally protected them from the interference of the governor. The only Roman colony in the province, Apamea, claimed that no proconsul had examined its accounts, when Pliny turned up to do so (*Ep.* x.47). Trajan insisted on the examination being carried out, while leaving open the possibility that they had exemption and confirming the privilege on that assumption (x.48). Amisus, a free city, submitted a petition to Pliny that their communal meals should be allowed since they had autonomy to use their own laws, which prescribed them (x.92). They were presumably reacting to Trajan's *mandata* forbidding meetings (x.96.7), which Pliny had enshrined in his edict. Later letters (x.110–11) show an official of Amisus trying to apply Trajan's *mandata* on another subject, and here Trajan makes it clear that he would have forbidden the communal meals had they been illicit assemblies (x.93). Therefore when Trajan goes on to contrast Amisus with cities 'which are bound by our law', he must mean those subject to the day-to-day intervention of Roman officials.²³¹ But Amisus must have realised that it was not as totally free from governmental interference during Pliny's term as it had been in the past.

Nonetheless, the principal difference between Pliny and ordinary governors was clearly his zeal and his diligence, rather than the scope of his powers. He did what other governors did, but relentlessly and untiringly. Other governors had looked at accounts, but under Pliny public debts were recovered (x.54).²³² The reason may be implied in Trajan's second letter to Pliny in his province, 'You will make it clear to the provincials that you have been chosen to be sent to them in my place' (x.18.2). Pliny's mission may have been a continuation of Trajan's investigation in 106–7. He went as Trajan's eyes. Thus Trajan asks Pliny to tell him the outcome of his inquiry

²²⁸ Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 527, cf. Burton (1975); Millar (1968); Saller, *Patronage* 161; Pliny, *Ep.* x.47; Dio Chrys. *Or.* XLV; XLVIII.2. ²²⁹ Burton (1976) 63 ff.

²³⁰ So Millar (1968); Burton (1975); and Talbert (1980).

²³¹ Cf. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* 77 (on Doc. 8); 114–15 (on Doc. 14); 118 (on Doc. 15).

²³² Talbert (1980) 425 ff. Bennett (1997) 117 also regards Pliny's role as atypical and traces this partly to his position as 'the emperor's special representative'.

about the Nicomedian aqueduct (x.38), and he says that Apamea is to know that Pliny will inspect their accounts 'by my wish' (x.48). Even if the privilege enjoyed by Pliny of referring any queries to the *princeps* (x.31.1) was routine for imperial legates, it was really meant to be used in this case.

If this was Trajan's conception of Pliny's job, why did he choose Pliny? It has always been accepted that Pliny's experience in civil administration, especially finance, was crucial: here he rarely needed to consult Trajan.²³³ His involvement as defence counsel in the cases of Iulius Bassus and Varenus Rufus would have been an asset. Although his success in getting lenient treatment for the first and procedural privileges for the second would not have made him popular with the provincials, he would know what snares were laid for unwary governors, and by whom. Nor would his lack of experience in governing provinces have mattered to this unusual assignment. What counted for Trajan was Pliny's diligence, which he mentions at least four times (x.20.2; 38; 62; 99). Then again, Pliny was known to write good, clear letters, regularly, and not only literary ones (1.10). Finally, if he was to work closely with city officials, he had to speak fluent Greek and know how to show an interest in Greek culture. But he would also know not to forget social rank (cf. ix.5), and he would not be too impressed by the Bithynians, whom he had described as 'servile, not free men', like the true Greeks (viii.24.8). Pliny and his emperor were at one in resisting the snobbery of the Bithynians themselves.²³⁴

Did Trajan choose well? Pliny might be misled by his informers into seeing what was chicanery as a matter of technical expertise (x.37–8; p. 129), but by the next letter he had learned to be more sceptical (x.39.4). He sometimes gave more detailed information than was wanted (x.40.1), but he was intelligent, industrious and reliable. Moreover, he had a natural sense of justice. Though he had never been present at the examination of Christians, he knew what the standard procedure was and applied it, executing non-citizens who refused to recant their faith. But when a large number were accused, including women and youngsters, and some of them admitted to having been Christians but claimed that they no longer were, he felt compelled to ask what the rationale was for punishing them at all. For if Christianity involved criminal activity, apostasy could not justify exemption from punishment for behaviour in the past. Pliny's investigations yielded no evidence of crime. Were the current Christians then being punished just 'for the name', presumably as a deterrent to idiosyncratic and unpopular religious practices? Trajan never answered the basic question explicitly, but allowed both punishment for Christianity and pardon for apostasy. Tertullian rightly complained of his lack of logic. But the emperor

²³³ Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 553.

²³⁴ In *Ep.* x.79–80 Pliny and Trajan are unmoved by the argument that it would be better to have young aristocrats than older plebeians in the local senates.

was a pragmatist: provided legal procedures were strictly observed, he had no time for the scruples of his legate.²³⁵

12. *The eastern campaigns*

Trajan was corresponding with Pliny during his last and longest sojourn in Rome. Attempts to find indications in the Letters that the emperor was already concerned with the Parthian question have not proved convincing.²³⁶ However, in 111, possibly before his legate was dead, coins began to appear which showed that the Dacian conquest, energetically commemorated since the end of the Second War, did not mark the end of Roman expansion during Trajan's reign. These coins, bearing the legend 'Arabia Adquisita', probably marked the completion of the reorganization necessary to form the new Roman province of Arabia,²³⁷ for the same date (111) is the earliest to appear on the milestones of the Via Nova Traiana running from Bostra to the Red Sea and built by the first governor of Arabia, C. Claudius Severus.²³⁸ The celebration of acquisition rather than of conquest and the fact that Trajan did not add 'Arabicus' to his titles suggest that no serious war was involved, and indeed Trajan was still engaged in fighting the Dacians when the governor of Syria, A. Cornelius Palma Frontonianus annexed the area in 106 with a minor show of force.²³⁹ Presumably the death of the last king, Rabbell II, provided the occasion for changing the status of the territory of the Nabatean Arabs from a client kingdom, as it had been ever since the days of Augustus, into a province ruled by an imperial governor of praetorian rank with a garrison of one legion.²⁴⁰

In the latter part of 113 Trajan himself set out for fresh triumphs further east than Arabia, on the very edges of the empire. He was never to return. The evidence available for reconstructing the course of the Parthian War is even less abundant and more problematic than that for the Dacian Wars. Literary sources are limited to Xiphilinus' excerpts from Dio, a few precious fragments of Arrian's contemporary account of the Parthian Wars, and late fourth-century allusions. For dating, we are dependent on inscriptions and coins.

Fixed chronological points are few: one is provided by the appearance of 'Optimus' as part of Trajan's name, probably in the summer of 114, certainly before 10 December; according to Dio, it was conferred for Trajan's

²³⁵ *Ep.* x.96–7. Pliny clearly only asked himself the questions in paragraphs 1–2, after the second batch of Christians was brought before him (5–8); Tert. *Apol.* 2.6 ff.

²³⁶ E.g. Cuntz (1926) 192, on which see Lepper (1948) 165–70; Levick (1979).

²³⁷ *RIC* II 250 no. 94 (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 42); 261 no. 244; 278 nos. 465–8; 287 nos. 610–14. For the chronology: Metcalf (1975).

²³⁸ E.g. *ILS* 5834=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 420. He stayed in Arabia from its annexation to at least 115.

²³⁹ Dio LXVIII.14; Amm. Marc. XIV.8.13: 'obtemperare legibus nostris Traianus compulit imperator'.

²⁴⁰ Bowersock, *Arabia* 76 ff.

first campaign in Armenia.²⁴¹ Trajan was given the title ‘Parthicus’ by the Senate on 20 or 21 February 116, as the *Fasti Ostienses* explicitly record,²⁴² but the fact is difficult to correlate with Dio’s account, for he mentions the title twice. He says that, after receiving ‘Optimus’ and capturing Nisibis and Batnae in northern Mesopotamia, Trajan was named ‘Parthicus’, and that later, after taking Ctesiphon in southern Mesopotamia beyond the Tigris, he confirmed his right to the title.²⁴³ Which of these events belongs in February 116? Coins showing the title ‘Parthicus’ and celebrating the creation of the provinces of Armenia and Mesopotamia date the completion of these annexations to after February 116,²⁴⁴ and inferences can be drawn from Trajan’s imperial salutations.²⁴⁵ Finally, Trajan died before or on 9 August 117 at Selinus in Cilicia, on his way home.²⁴⁶

A plausible reconstruction has Trajan leaving Rome in the autumn of 113²⁴⁷ and arriving at Antioch in Syria at the beginning of 114. The provocation officially adduced was that the king of Armenia had secured his diadem from the Parthian king, not from Trajan as the Neronian settlement prescribed, and had even deposed Axidares, who had been sanctioned by Rome. Trajan was met at Athens by an embassy from the king Chosroes, requesting peace and suggesting that the usurper Parthamasiris, a son of Chosroes’ predecessor on the Parthian throne, be recognized and given his diadem by Trajan. The emperor reserved his position and travelled on to Syria. From there he prepared his invasion of Armenia and marched from Melitene in Cappadocia eastward into Armenia, then from Arsamosata north to Satala and finally to Elegeia.²⁴⁸ There he received Parthamasiris in his camp, but when the king took off his diadem and laid it at the emperor’s feet, Trajan refused to crown him and declared Armenia a Roman province. Parthamasiris was allowed to depart, but was killed later by the Romans.²⁴⁹ His abasement is celebrated on coins with the legend ‘Rex Parthus’, dated by the absence of ‘Optimus’ to before December (perhaps before July) 114. Trajan did not take an imperial salutation for this success, not wishing to follow Nero in debasing the standard of military glory.²⁵⁰

²⁴¹ Dio LXVIII.23.1. Roxan, *Diplomas* no. 14 would give a *terminus ante quem* of 19 July 114, but for problems with dates on diplomas, see Lepper (1948) 34–9; Lepper and Frere, *Trajan’s Column* 230–1; 235–6.

²⁴² Smallwood, *NTH* no. 23; ‘[I?]X K. Mart. laureatae missae ad sen[atum ab imp.] Traiano Aug, ob q[uam] causam Par[thicus] apell. e[st] pro salute eius s.c. f[actum]’.

²⁴³ Dio LXVIII.23.2; 28.2. ²⁴⁴ *RIC* II 289 no. 642 (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 50).

²⁴⁵ Trajan acquired one salutation after becoming ‘Optimus’ and before 10 Dec. 114 (the seventh appears with *trib. pot. XVIII* on *CIL* xv1.6=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 346); four more before 10 Dec. 115; and two after acquiring the title ‘Parthicus’.

²⁴⁶ Dio LXVIII.33.3; Hadrian heard of his death at Antioch in Syria on 11 Aug. 117 (*HA Hadr.* 4.7; 5.10). ²⁴⁷ See Lepper (1948) 29–30 arguing the case for the anniversary of his adoption by Nerva.

²⁴⁸ For the route, see Lightfoot (1990) 117.

²⁴⁹ Arr. *Parthica* fr. 39 (Roos); Fronto, *Princ. Hist.* (Haines) II 214–15, ch. 15; Eutropius. VIII.3.1.

²⁵⁰ *RIC* II 262 no. 263 (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 47); n. 241 above. See Henderson (1949) 125, reviewing Lepper (1948).

If the entry in the *Fasti Ostienses* for 20 or 21 February 116 refers to the offer of the title 'Parthicus' for the conquest of Nisibis and Batnae – the likely meaning of Dio's words – then Trajan's drive down the Euphrates to Ctesiphon belongs later in 116, leaving the time between the ceremony at Elegeia and February 116 to be filled. The winter of 114/15 Trajan spent at Edessa and that of 115/16 at Antioch, where the former *consul ordinarius* of 115, M. Pedo Vergilianus, was killed in an earthquake. But, apart from the taking-over of Armenia, the recognition or conquest of neighbouring kings²⁵¹ and the conquest of Nisibis and Batnae, Trajan's movements remain hypothetical. The conquest of territory which would become the provinces of Armenia and Mesopotamia clearly accounts for some of the salutations and for the offer by the Senate of the title Parthicus.²⁵² But for Trajan the title was only earned when the Great King was chased from his capital at Ctesiphon, and coins could advertise 'Parthia Capta'.²⁵³

This area of southern Mesopotamia is clearly the Assyria which, according to Eutropius and Festus, was made a province along with Armenia and Mesopotamia.²⁵⁴ Whether or not the area had been organized as a province before the revolts broke out in northern Mesopotamia and Armenia, Trajan now tried to contain the situation by crowning Parthamaspatas as king of Parthia.²⁵⁵ Trajan learned of the revolts on his return to Babylon after imposing tribute on Mesene, an island in the Tigris in southern Mesopotamia, and sailing down to the Persian Gulf. His generals Lusius Quietus, Erucius Clarus and Iulius Alexander recovered some ground, but the siege of Hatra defeated Trajan as it was later to defeat Septimius Severus. Failing in health, Trajan sent Lusius Quietus to Judaea to put down a Jewish revolt that had started under a messianic leader in Cyrene and spread to Cyprus, to Palestine and to the new province of Mesopotamia.²⁵⁶ He himself withdrew to Syria, planning to mount another expedition when he recovered. He then left Hadrian with the army and started for Italy. All was lost, according to Dio. Even Parthamaspatas was rejected by the Parthians.²⁵⁷

Trajan's motives in making war on the Parthians are difficult to uncover. The official version – failure by the Armenian king to honour his obligation to Rome – was regarded as a pretext by Dio, who attributed the war disapprovingly to Trajan's love of glory. Fronto, writing in the reign of

²⁵¹ Dio LXVIII.23.1; note the 'Regna Adsignata' coins (with 'Optimus' but not 'Parthicus'), *RIC* II 269 nos. 366–7 (Smallwood, *NTH* 48).

²⁵² The first governor of the combined province of Cappadocia-Armenia was L. Catilius Severus; Galatia was separated off from Cappadocia and entrusted to a praetorian legate; Mesopotamia was assigned to Terentius Scaurianus (Speidel (1970) 151–3).

²⁵³ Smallwood, *NTH* no. 49; *RIC* II 267 no. 324 (with 'Parthicus'). ²⁵⁴ Lightfoot (1990) 121 ff.

²⁵⁵ Coins celebrate 'Rex Parthis Datus', *RIC* II 291 no. 667 (Smallwood, *NTH* no. 51).

²⁵⁶ Smallwood, *Jews* 393 ff. ²⁵⁷ Dio LXVIII.28.4–33.

Marcus Aurelius, also accused Trajan of pursuing glory to excess and making insufficient efforts to secure peace, though that did not prevent him from blaming Hadrian for giving up his predecessor's conquests: these he proudly described as bringing the Roman empire beyond two hostile rivers, the Danube and the Euphrates.²⁵⁸

That Trajan's eagerness for glory was a Hadrianic invention is difficult to believe. Apart from the indirect criticism that can be detected in the contemporary *Orationes* of Dio Chrysostom, it is alleged that he compared himself to Alexander in a dispatch to the Senate.²⁵⁹ Love of glory, however, does not of itself rule out a concern with security and defence.²⁶⁰ No one could have wrung more glory out of the Dacian Wars, yet Trajan does not seem to have determined from the first to annex Dacia or to go beyond a more stable version of Domitian's settlement (pp. 111–13). Did something similar happen in the case of the Parthian War? Did Trajan, finding the annexation of Armenia relatively easy, find himself drawn on further than he originally intended?

It has been suggested that, even while the Second Dacian War was in progress, the annexation of the Nabataean kingdom, 'the final piece – the missing piece – in securing Roman control throughout the entire Mediterranean' looked ahead to 'the fulfilment of Trajan's great dream to re-enact the conquests of Alexander the Great and conquer the kingdom in Iran'.²⁶¹ Client kingdoms, however, were already part of the empire and claimed as such; they were converted into provinces when a dynasty died out or a ruler proved unsatisfactory.²⁶² The decision to annex Arabia, rather than appoint the son of the deceased vassal king, may only show that Trajan had learned from Decebalus to be more careful in appraising the circumstances in which such an arrangement would succeed. That earlier experience may also have led him to overreact to the trouble in Armenia, particularly in view of the long unsatisfactory history of Rome's attempts to control in this way that border zone between her empire and her only existing rival, the Parthian empire over the Euphrates.

There is a sense, however, in which the creation of the provinces of Dacia and Arabia must have meant for Trajan a reassessment of Augustan ideas of foreign policy, which had continued to dominate Roman thinking for a century. When, in describing Trajan's military achievement, the ancient writers lay stress on his extension of the empire beyond the Danube and Euphrates, this must be seen in the light of the emphasis in

²⁵⁸ Dio LXVIII.7.5; 17.1; Fronto, *Princ. Hist.* (Haines), II 213, para. 14; 207, para. 10.

²⁵⁹ *Op.* 1.8–9; IV where the excessive martial ambitions of Alexander are treated, cf. Dio LXVIII.29.1.

²⁶⁰ By his eastern wars, Septimius Severus claimed to have added much territory, providing a bulwark for Syria (Dio LXXV.3.3, who is as hostile to these wars of his own time as to Trajan's).

²⁶¹ Bowersock, *Arabia* 82, 85. Isaac, *Limits* 119 is more sceptical but thinks (50–3) that Rome's stance in the East, especially from the Flavian period, was expansionist. Bennett (1997) 190 thinks the war was planned as early as 111. ²⁶² Strab. VI.4.2 (288 c).

Augustus' *Res Gestae* on rivers (and the ocean) as natural limits of the territory directly ruled by Rome.²⁶³ Even the creation of the German provinces by Domitian, which crossed the Rhine boundary, did not breach Augustus' original intention, still traceable in the *Res Gestae*, which was to extend to the Elbe: Trajan's contemporaries, as Tacitus' account of the campaigns of Germanicus shows, were still aware of it.²⁶⁴ And although the Neronian acceptance of an Arsacid client king for Armenia had led to stronger and more direct Roman military control on the border with Parthia, a reorganization in which Trajan's father and Trajan himself were involved, this was only a modification of the Augustan arrangement.

To annex beyond the Danube was to cross a psychological barrier and must at least have removed an obstacle to devising radical changes in the eastern empire. Whether Trajan already contemplated them before the problems with Armenia provided a stimulus cannot be known. What is clear is that the annexation of Armenia was such a departure from past arrangements that it is impossible to assume that Trajan was not going to depart still further from them. It is also so different from later arrangements, which did not include the provincialization of Armenia, that to infer Trajan's intentions from any of these – for example, the establishment of a bastion in northern Mesopotamia by Septimius Severus – is unsound.²⁶⁵ When Trajan ventured into southern Mesopotamia, he may have been hoping to go beyond earlier Julio-Claudian attempts to put a vassal king on the Parthian throne, and to push the Parthian king back from Ctesiphon and acquire some of his territory. When he sailed down the Persian Gulf, he was probably acquiring information in the only reliable way Roman generals could and regularly did acquire it, given the absence of scientific maps, namely, by a reconnaissance expedition. He will have needed to make allies and to decide what to annex and what to hold through vassal princes. Indeed, the kingdom of Mesene, on which Trajan imposed tribute, may have remained a Roman client state for a generation.²⁶⁶

Not everyone judged that Trajan's plans were overambitious: the four Trajanic commanders put out of the way as disloyal at the beginning of Hadrian's reign were probably among those who thought Hadrian should have tried to retrieve the lost provinces.²⁶⁷ Hadrian arranged for Trajan to triumph posthumously and may have altered the design of the Beneventum arch in order not only to show the *optimus princeps* receiving a thunderbolt from Jupiter Optimus Maximus, but to highlight his own role in the Parthian War, giving advice and accompanying Trajan's own victorious if

²⁶³ *Res Gestae* 26.2–4; 30, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.9.5 which echoes it. On rivers, see Nesselhauf (1952) 234–5 n. 1. Having unambiguous boundaries with allies across the river, which thus became usable for transport, had obvious advantages.

²⁶⁴ *Res Gestae* 26.2, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 1.59; II.14.4; 22.1; 41.2.

²⁶⁵ Hence the telling criticisms by Henderson (1949) of the thesis of Lepper (1948).

²⁶⁶ Potter (1991). ²⁶⁷ *HA Hadr.* 7.1–2; see Brunt, *Imperial Themes* ch. 18, 473–4.

posthumous return: ‘the prudent councillor in youth; the soldierly guardian of age’.²⁶⁸

13. *The succession*

Trajan had not made things easy for Hadrian. When preparing to set off on a lengthy war, in a region from which many elderly Romans had not returned, he apparently, like Julius Caesar, made no arrangements for the political sequel. The father of Dio, governor of Cilicia when Trajan died, told him that, right to the end, Trajan did not adopt Hadrian; that the emperor’s death was concealed by his entourage – the praetorian prefect Acilius Attianus, Trajan’s niece Matidia and his wife Plotina – until the adoption could be announced; that the letter informing the Senate of the adoption was signed by Plotina.²⁶⁹ Short of adoption, Trajan could have indicated his wishes clearly by advancing Hadrian’s career rapidly. In fact, Hadrian only became a suffect consul, and not before the minimum age.²⁷⁰ He was not named Caesar, and he was only given the consular command in Syria when Trajan became ill.²⁷¹ Perhaps, like Caesar, Trajan was still hoping for the son Pliny had prayed for many years ago.²⁷² Or perhaps he was waiting for Hadrian to acquire in the eastern campaigns the solid military achievements that would justify his choice.

Trajan’s ashes were eventually placed in a chamber in the base of his Column. Even if Trajan was cognisant of this plan,²⁷³ and had therefore turned his thoughts to his own death, he had not started to build a mausoleum to hold his dynastic successors. Perhaps he thought any overt sign of a dynastic policy would be unpopular, given that he had no son to make such considerations inevitable.²⁷⁴ Honours were given to the women of his family, and Hadrian was taken on the great campaign and given responsibility. The rest could be left to the Senate.

²⁶⁸ The arch was dedicated in the autumn of 114 as an inscription in duplicate shows (*ILS* 296=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 408b), though it celebrates the conquest of Mesopotamia as well as of Dacia. Scholars are divided over the question of alterations by Hadrian. See Veyne (1960); Richmond (1969); Hannestad, *Art* 117 ff. The principal exponent of the view that there were no later alterations is Hassel (1966): the remark comes from Lepper’s review in *JRS* 59 (1969), 253.

²⁶⁹ Dio *LXVIII*.69.1, cf. *HA Hadr.* 4.10; *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 13.13. The death of Trajan’s freedman and personal attendant at Selinus on 12 Aug., the day after Hadrian learned of Trajan’s death (*ILS* 1792=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 176), has been thought to point to more sinister steps, unless he caught the emperor’s fever. ²⁷⁰ In 108. Dio *LXVIII*.33.1; Syme, *Tacitus* 240.

²⁷¹ Dio *LXVIII*.33.1; *ILS* 308=Smallwood, *NTH* no. 109 gives his career until 112–13.

²⁷² *Pan.* 94.5, cf. *Suet. Iul.* 83.2; *HA Hadr.* 4.9 notes the view that Trajan was conscious of a parallel with Alexander.

²⁷³ For Claridge (1993) the chamber, designed for another purpose, was converted to a tomb by Hadrian, but, given Trajan’s affinities with Julius Caesar (pp. 130–1), a wish to be buried within the *pomerium* is not so implausible for him.

²⁷⁴ Temporini, *Frauen* 120 ff. thinks Trajan did as much for Hadrian as he could, given the difficulties of absence and the animosity a clear choice would unleash.

III. CONCLUSION

Amid all the uncertainties about Trajan's plans and intentions, our sources do provide some direct evidence for Trajan at work. Some of it is trivial: a poem from his pen shows that he could write Greek, albeit with a false quantity – thus modifying, though not discrediting, the tradition of his educational deficiencies;²⁷⁵ a fragment of his *commentarii* on the Dacian War shows the straightforward factual emphasis associated with the genre;²⁷⁶ a robust contempt for legal pedantry can be detected in a pronouncement protecting the testamentary wishes of his 'commilitones', whereas great care and precision characterizes his many regulations protecting military discipline.²⁷⁷

The most valuable insight into the emperor's thinking, however, is provided by his replies to Pliny's enquiries from Bithynia. Despite the fact that the division of responsibility between Trajan and his secretaries for drafting these letters remains problematic, certain things are clear.²⁷⁸ First, no secretary could invent general pronouncements of policy without knowing that the emperor endorsed them, and Trajan speaks three times of possible action not in accord with the high standards of his epoch: using compulsion to secure the investment of municipal funds; accepting anonymous accusations; entertaining *maiestas* charges of irreverence towards himself. Elsewhere he explains how his *mandata* are to be applied. 'I want the interests of individuals in each locality to be protected no less than the public funds.'²⁷⁹ It can also be assumed that no secretary would upbraid the consular governor sent on a special mission by the *princeps* without precise authorization. Early on in his mission, the conscientious Pliny was blinded with science into believing that the two failures to construct an aqueduct at Nicomedia stemmed from engineering problems. Trajan, reading between the lines of Pliny's account, saw that the problem was not one of technical expertise, but of dishonesty. 'For heaven's sake', he writes, 'your attention to duty should also include investigating whose fault it is that the people of Nicomedia have wasted so much money up to now, in case it was collusion for profit that led them to start and abandon the aqueduct. Keep me informed of what you uncover.'²⁸⁰ But the letters also show that, however willing Trajan was to become involved in the details of administration, he

²⁷⁵ *Anth. Pal.* xi.418, cf. Pliny, *Ep.* vi.31.12 *vs* Philostr. *VS* 1.7 and Dio *LXVIII*.7.4 (more moderate). See Moles (1990); Jones, *Dio Chrysostom* 116.

²⁷⁶ Priscian *GL* II.205, 7–8: 'Inde Berzobim, deinde Aizi processimus.' Berzobis is now known to be the site of the legionary camp of IV Flavia, see Syme, *Danubian Papers* 106.

²⁷⁷ *Dig.* xxix.1.1 with Syme, *Tacitus* 37–8, though Trajan had to refine the statement later (xxix.1.1.24). Discipline: *Dig.* xlix.16.4.5–6, cf. Pliny, *Ep.* x.29–30 with Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 599–600, who compares *Pan.* 6.2 and 18.1 and *HLA M. Ant.* 11.7. See also Wolf (1978) 19.

²⁷⁸ For discussion of this problem, see e.g. Syme, *Tacitus* 37–8; Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 536–44 who think Trajan's personal contribution less than do Millar (1967) 11 ff.; (1968) 223 and W. Williams, (1990) 16–17. ²⁷⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* x.55; 97.2; 82; 111. ²⁸⁰ *Ep.*, x.37–8.

also knew how to save his time. When consulted on the next building project, he refers the decision back to Pliny, and when sent an enormous dossier on the privileges of the Roman colony of Apamea (not all of it relevant to their request), he avoids reading it through and contents himself with a practical ruling: ‘The petition of the people of Apamea which you had attached to your letter has relieved me of the need to weigh the reasons why they wish it to be seen that the proconsuls who have governed this province have refrained from inspecting their accounts, since they have not refused to let you examine them’; Pliny is to make his inspection ‘without prejudice to their existing privileges’ (i.e. whatever they are).²⁸¹ The combination of humanity and efficiency was doubtless not unique to Trajan, but it shows that he was *capax imperii*.

The ambiguities of Trajan’s conduct can be seen as those of the Augustan Principate itself. Not a monarchy, there could be no official dynastic succession and no official royal family. So Pliny praises an open choice of the best, but he then goes on to pray that Trajan will have a son to succeed him.²⁸² These are the two sides of the Augustan forum celebrating in parallel republican heroes and Augustus’ own ancestors. Many of the other ambiguities detected in Trajan’s image are tensions in the system, but these, so sharply revealed under the last of the Julio-Claudian emperors and during the reign of the last Flavian, were relaxed, if not resolved, in Trajan’s reign. The *princeps* justified his position by success in traditional Roman terms; he managed to be liberal without becoming rapacious, or denying opportunities to others; his *civilitas* made it possible for the Senate and senators to retain at least their dignity, especially as the power of freedmen had been considerably reduced; the eastern provinces become comparable to the western in their contribution to the Roman legions and to the Roman governing class.

The conflict in Trajan’s military identity (p. 98), however, goes back beyond the Principate to the Republic. The prestige accorded to conquest and expansion had only ever been reconciled with those other Roman ideals of peace and good faith by the legal sophistry of the just war. The emphasis on personal ambition and glory had eventually proved irreconcilable with the demand for public service and patriotism. Under the new system, however, these stresses could be resolved in the person of the *princeps*, who was himself beyond competition in glory but also served as an example of service to others. It is no accident that Trajan’s period saw the insertion of Julius Caesar in the line of imperial rulers, as the Suetonian biographies show.²⁸³ Indeed, the restoration coins celebrate Caesar both in the series of denarii from the Republic and in the series of aurei featuring

²⁸¹ *Ep.*, x.48.

²⁸² *Pan.* 94.5.

²⁸³ Geiger (1975), 444 ff.

respectable emperors.²⁸⁴ Caesar must have appealed to Trajan, for he was not only a conqueror like Augustus, but a soldier as well: it is easy to imagine him riding bare-headed in ordinary combat dress around the wall of Hatra.²⁸⁵

No *princeps* since Augustus had understood so well how to harness traditional Roman ideals to his own purposes and those of Rome. Trajan made even the shrewd and sceptical Tacitus feel that Rome was again fulfilling her destiny under an emperor who advanced her boundaries to the Indian Ocean. He accepted that the demands of that destiny were industry and vigour in others too, but combined with honourable compliance and modesty, such as Agricola displayed. As Pliny said, selfless toil in the service of Rome was the best way to requite the labours endured and benefits conferred by the *princeps*.²⁸⁶ Under the Flavians, Nerva and Trajan, the Principate had finally produced what the empire needed: the tenacious Agricola, the diligent Frontinus, the conscientious Pliny. As for the reconciliation of *libertas* and *principatus*, Martial had written under Nerva that if Cato were to return from the dead, he too would be Caesar's friend.²⁸⁷

For his compatriot Florus, the reign of Trajan was a rejuvenation for Rome. Some must still have felt, with an older compatriot, that the Principate was Rome's second childhood, a virtual return to the period of the kings.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁴ On the restoration coins, see *BMCRE* III lxxxvi, 132 ff.; *RIC* II 302 ff. Caesar on denarii: *BMCRE* III 141 nos. 36, 31; on aurei: *BMCRE* III 142 nos. 696–8; 144, no. 1. ²⁸⁵ Dio LXVIII.31.3.

²⁸⁶ *Pan.* 93.3, cf. his emphasis on his own hard work and conscientiousness in writing to the emperor (*Ep.* x.3a; 8) and in his published letters (I.10.9–10; IV.1.3; V.14.9). ²⁸⁷ XI.5.

²⁸⁸ Florus, I pref. 8; Seneca (the elder?), in Lactant. *Divinae Institutiones* VII.15.4.

HADRIAN TO THE ANTONINES

A. R. BIRLEY

I. THE ACCESSION OF HADRIAN¹

Hadrian was forty-one at his accession, having been born (at Rome) in January 76, the son of a senator from Italica in Baetica, Aelius Hadrianus Afer, and his wife, Domitia Paulina of Gades. The Aelii of Italica had supposedly had senatorial rank for five generations before Hadrian. On the death of his father in 85 the boy was assigned two guardians, both men from Italica, M. Ulpius Traianus (the future emperor Trajan), his father's cousin, and P. Acilius Attianus, a Roman knight. Hadrian's early devotion to Greek studies earned him the nickname 'little Greek' (Graeculus). At fourteen he went to his 'home town' (*patria*) for the first and evidently the only time in his life. There he underwent 'military training' and engaged in hunting.

¹ With Hadrian the literary sources assume a new dimension. A mass of information on the second and early third centuries is supplied by the so-called *Historia Augusta* (abbreviated *HA*), a series of biographies of emperors, Caesars and usurpers from Hadrian to A.D. 285 (with a gap for the years 244–60); Teubner ed. E. Hohl, 1927; repr. 1955; Loeb ed. and tr. D. Magie, 1921–32; no full commentary exists – that by H. W. Benario on the *Vita Hadriani*, 1980, is unsatisfactory. The *Historia Augusta* 'is without question or rival the most enigmatic work that Antiquity has transmitted', as Syme (1971b) 1, put it, in one of the four volumes he devoted to the subject (for the other three, see below). Apparently by six separate authors ('Aelius Spartianus', 'Iulius Capitolinus', etc.) writing under Diocletian and Constantine, the work was in fact written by one, unknown man at the end of the fourth century, as first shown by Dessau (1889) and (1892). The so-called 'good' or 'major Lives' (of Hadrian, Pius, Marcus, Verus, Commodus, Pertinax, Didius Iulianus, Severus, Caracalla) as well as a little of the Macrinus and Elagabalus, are based on a fairly reliable source, generally identified as Marius Maximus. His 'vitae principum', a popular work in late fourth-century Rome (Ammianus xxv.4.14), was a continuation of Suetonius' *Caesares*, covering the emperors from Nerva to Elagabalus. The biographer can be identified with a prominent senator whose career spanned the period from the 170s to the 220s, L. Marius Maximus (*cos. II ord.* 223), cf. *PIR*² M 308. The author of the *Historia Augusta* set out to outdo Maximus, producing not only condensed Lives of the emperors up to 222 but going further, down to 285, and adding *vitae* of Caesars and usurpers (L. Aelius Caesar, Avidius Cassius, Niger, Albinus, etc.); in these 'minor Lives' fiction, particularly bogus persons, invented authors and spurious 'documents' proliferate, and parts of the 'good Lives' are affected. Syme (1968), (1971a) and (1983) argues that the basic source of the 'good Lives' was not Maximus but an unknown biographer, 'Ignotus'. He has been followed by some, e.g. Barnes (1978); others prefer to stick to Maximus. At any rate, the *vita Hadriani* is mainly factual, though written hastily and carelessly, veering from hostility to Hadrian (derived from Maximus, as is explicit in several places) to a more balanced attitude. The short *vita Aelii*, however, is largely fictional.

The other main work, Dio's *Roman History*, is preserved only in summary and extracts (Book LXIX). On this see Millar (1964), esp. 60–72, with the best available discussion of the sources for Hadrian.

In 94 he launched on his public career with a post in the vigintivirate, the compulsory pre-senatorial office, and also held two further, honorific positions. Then came a military tribunate, in the legion II Adiutrix, by then based on the Danube. Exceptionally, this was followed by a second tribunate, in the Lower Moesian V Macedonica, ‘at the very end of Domitian’s Principate’, i.e. the year 96. He was still there when his kinsman Trajan was adopted by Nerva in October 97, and was chosen to take his army’s congratulations to Trajan in Germany. There he remained, with a third tribunate (until then unexampled), in the Upper German army now commanded by his own brother-in-law, Ser. Iulius Servianus (*cos.* 90), who had succeeded Trajan as legate at Mainz).² There can be no doubt that this unusually long spell of preliminary military service was important for the future emperor’s special concern for the army and its role.

Under Trajan he began his senatorial career proper in 101 as the emperor’s quaestor. He was with Trajan in the First Dacian War as one of the emperor’s ‘companions’ (*comites*) and thereafter continued in the *cursus honorum*. In the Second Dacian War he commanded the legion I Minervia, and went on to be governor of Lower Pannonia, one of the two provinces into which Pannonia had just been divided. Here ‘he restrained the Sarmatians’ – the Jazyges of the Hungarian Plain, east of the Danube – ‘preserved military discipline and checked over-officious procurators’.

His progress up the promotion ladder now accelerated: he became consul in 108, aged thirty-two; thus, even though he was suffect, not *ordinarius*, he had achieved parity with the nobility. More important, he had married Trajan’s grand-niece Sabina, a match sponsored by the empress Plotina, who had a fondness for Hadrian; Trajan was allegedly less enthusiastic over the marriage. While consul he is said to have learned from Trajan’s intimate adviser, L. Licinius Sura (*cos.* III 107), that he was to be adopted by Trajan. When Sura died soon afterwards, Hadrian took over the latter’s role as imperial speechwriter.

Hadrian is next heard of in Athens in 112, where he held the archonship, and he may well have remained in Greece until Trajan arrived, on his way to the Parthian campaign. Hadrian went to the war with him, as a ‘legate’. Thanks to Plotina’s support he was made governor of Syria, but not until 117, when his predecessor Iulius Quadratus Bassus went to Dacia. Further, he was designated to a second consulship, for 118, also through Plotina’s favour – which made ‘his adoption a foregone conclusion’. Hence he was in a powerful position, with no serious rival, albeit lacking the rank of Caesar, or any of the powers which previous heirs such as Tiberius, Titus or Trajan himself had held before their accession. There was doubtless

² On Hadrian’s early life: *HA Hadr.* 1.1–3.11; *ILS* 308 (his *cursus*-inscription from Athens); *PIR*² A 184. Servianus: *PIR*² J 631. For discussion of details: Syme, *Tacitus* 233–4; Barnes (1978) 33–4. (Some uncertainty remains over the dating of his posts in the period 102–7).

some antipathy between him and Trajan. Nonetheless, in spite of the rumour that Trajan intended to make L. Neratius Priscus (*suff.* 97) his successor, Hadrian's kinship with Trajan, reinforced by Sabina, together with his Syrian command, must have made his position incontestable. The final, decisive factor was that Trajan's fatal illness ensued on his return from the war, in Cilicia, with Plotina and Matidia (Hadrian's mother-in-law) in attendance and Hadrian's former guardian Attianus, now prefect of the guard. Hadrian was supposedly adopted by the dying Emperor on or before 9 August. The claim was advertised by an issue of coins giving him the style 'Hadrianus Traianus Caesar'. The modern discovery that Trajan's manservant, the freedman Phaedimus, died at a young age a few days after his master, but that his remains were not taken back to Rome for many years, has encouraged sceptical scholars to support the disbelief in the ancient sources about the 'adoption'.³

Hadrian chose 11 August, probably the day he was acclaimed by the troops, as his *dies imperii*. After a brief visit to Cilicia he returned to Syria. One of his first steps must have been to order the withdrawal of Roman forces from Trajan's new eastern provinces. He justified this by citing the policy of the elder Cato, 'who declared the Macedonians free because they could not be protected'. Further measures were taken to crush the Jewish rising in the Diaspora, which was seriously affecting Cyprus, Cyrene and Egypt. The latter province had already been given special assistance, led by Q. Marcius Turbo, who had been with the expeditionary force as fleet commander and had been sent to Egypt by Trajan the previous year. Hadrian placed L. Catilius Severus (*cos.* 110), who had been governing Cappadocia and the new province of Armenia, in Syria as his own successor, and then departed, going through Asia Minor, via Tarsus and Tyana to Ancyra, and on to Bithynia. At the beginning of 118 he was in Moesia, and negotiated with the king of the Roxolani. There seems little doubt that the upshot was an evacuation of Roman territory, namely the eastern part of transdanubian Lower Moesia, annexed after the First Dacian War. This led to rumours that he planned to evacuate Dacia too. The governor Quadratus Bassus had died and the situation may have seemed alarming. In fact, there was a reorganization of the remaining Roman territory. What was left of Lower Moesia across the Danube was designated 'Dacia Inferior' and Trajan's Dacia became 'Dacia Superior'.⁴

In the meantime, Hadrian's position as emperor was apparently far from secure. Acilius Attianus, who had gone straight to Rome from Cilicia,

³ *HA Hadr.* 4.1–10; Dio LXVIII.33.1–3; LXIX.1.1–4. Phaedimus: *ILS* 1792. Coin: *RIC* II Hadrian no. 1.

⁴ *HA Hadr.* 5.1–3; 8–10. Itinerary: Halfmann, *Itinera* 190, 194. Turbo: *CPh* no. 94. Catilius: Halfmann, *Senatoren* 133 ff. Dacia: Eutropius VIII.6.2; Syme, *Danubian Papers* 108. Bassus: *PIR*² J 508.

escorting Trajan's remains, wrote to Hadrian warning of potential danger from the city prefect Baebius Macer and from two men already in exile, Trajan's former marshal Laberius Maximus and the aristocratic Crassus Frugi. These three were spared – although Crassus was later killed. But four other ex-consuls were put to death on Attianus' orders, two of them men who had been consul twice, Cornelius Palma (*cos. II* 109) and Publilius Celsus (*cos. II* 113); a third was a former governor of Dacia, Avidius Nigrinus (*cos.* 110). All three were killed in Italy. The fourth was the Moorish chieftain Lusius Quietus, recently 'shoved into a consulship' and made governor of Judaea. He was 'on a journey' – doubtless returning to Mauretania after being deprived of his Judaeian command. They were alleged to have plotted jointly against Hadrian, a charge which was understandably disbelieved, both then and afterwards. Hadrian seriously damaged his relations with the Senate by this action, which he attempted to disclaim. But the only open hostility was displayed in Mauretania, Quietus' home. It was rapidly suppressed by Marcus Turbo.⁵

It was to Turbo, again, that Hadrian turned to restore the situation on the Danube. He was given a special command, with 'the same status as a prefect of Egypt', covering both Pannonia Inferior and Dacia. His mission was brief: he was to become praetorian prefect the next year, and there was a governor of senatorial status in Dacia by 120, Sex. Julius Severus (*cos.* 127). But Julius Severus only had one legion, XIII Gemina, and the province Dacia Superior, and this soon lost its northern part which became the procuratorial province of Dacia Porolissensis. There were now three Dacias.⁶

Hadrian finally reached Rome on 9 July 118. One of his first tasks was to conduct a posthumous triumph for the deified Trajan, at which an effigy of the Emperor was paraded through Rome. Hadrian's allies can be detected from his early appointments to the consulship. He opened the year 118 as *ordinarius*, his colleague being Cn. Pedanius Fuscus, husband of Hadrian's niece Iulia Paulina. Fuscus must have been the 'heir apparent' at this time, but may not have survived long. He and Paulina had a son, but they themselves are not heard of again. In 119 Hadrian held his third and last consulship, this time with P. Dasumius Rusticus, adopted son of Hadrian's kinsman Dasumius Hadrianus (*cos.* 93). The influence of the Spanish Dasumii was further boosted with the second consulship in 120 of Catilius Severus, who had married into that family. Catilius' colleague was T. Aurelius Fulvus Antoninus (the future emperor), son-in-law of M. Annius Verus (*cos.* 97), head of another Spanish family linked to the

⁵ *HA Hadr.* 5.5–6; 7.1–3; Dio LXIX.2.5–6; Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 295 ff. Quietus: *HA Hadr.* 5.2, 6.8 (on his consulship, Syme, *Roman Papers* V 571).

⁶ Turbo: Syme (1983) 168–79. Severus: *PIR*² J 576. On Dacia: Piso (1993) 30–41.

Dasumii. Verus, who was city prefect, gained his second consulship in 121. Thus the key components of what was to become the Antonine dynasty were already enjoying prominence at the start of Hadrian's reign.⁷

The choice of suffectus may not have been so significant, but several of those who held office in the first three years were to go on to major appointments, notably C. Bruttius Praesens, who had been legate of Cilicia when Trajan died there. He was to become governor of Cappadocia and then of Moesia Inferior, and may be regarded as a friend of the emperor. Another early suffectus, A. Platorius Nepos, a close friend of Hadrian before his accession, went on after his consulship in 119 to govern Germania Inferior and Britain. In the meantime, Britain, also in a disturbed state, was assigned to Pompeius Falco, who had been in charge of Moesia Inferior in 117.⁸

In 119 Hadrian chose two new praetorian prefects, Marcius Turbo and C. Septicius Clarus. The latter is best known for his literary connections: he had received the dedication of the first instalment of Pliny's letters, and was to gain a similar compliment at about this very time from Suetonius Tranquillus. That former protégé of Pliny had risen to be a *studii* and a *bibliothecis*, which may have helped to prompt his imperial biographies. Suetonius now became Hadrian's *ab epistulis*.⁹

Hadrian remained in Italy for about three years, from summer 118 until the spring of 121. Apart from Trajan's posthumous triumph, there were other festivities. He put on a gladiatorial show lasting six days to mark his birthday in January 119, and at the end of that year gave funeral games in honour of his mother-in-law, Matidia. Taxation arrears for the past fifteen years were cancelled and the records were publicly burned in the Forum. The emperor attended meetings of the Senate assiduously and took part in official functions given by the praetors and consuls. He was still at Rome on 21 April 121, when he conducted the *Parilia* and inaugurated the sacred precinct of the temple of Venus and Rome. Hadrian is said to have played a personal role in the temple's design, one of many examples of his vaunted omniscience.¹⁰

II. THE FIRST PROVINCIAL TOUR, 121–125

Hadrian's movements are not always easy to pinpoint accurately. All that is certain about the date of his departure from Rome is that Alexandrian coins of his fifth year (ending 29 August 121) show, with the depiction of

⁷ *HA Hadr.* 6.1–3; Syme (1971a) 113–14; Halfmann, *Itinera* 190, 195; Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 299 ff.

⁸ Syme, *Roman Papers* v 563 ff.; *HA Hadr.* 4.2, cf. Birley (1981) 100 ff.

⁹ *HA Hadr.* 9.3–5; Syme (1983) 168 ff.; Syme, *Roman Papers* III 1340 ff.

¹⁰ *HA Hadr.* 6.1–3; 7.6; Dio LXIX.8.1²–2; *HA Hadr.* 9.7.9; Dio LXIX.4.3–5; *HA Hadr.* 14.8–9; 15.10. Venus and Rome: Kienast (1980) 402; Boatwright, *Hadrian* esp. 99–102, 120–8.

a ship, that he was on the move. He went first to Gaul, and from there to Upper Germany, Raetia and Noricum. In this region he had the opportunity of carrying out, for the first time, his new frontier policy – although it is possible that he had experimented already in Dacia in 118. Along the line of the Upper German and Raetian frontier he ordered the erection of a continuous barrier: ‘during this period, and frequently at other times, in a great many places where the barbarians are separated off not by rivers but by frontier-barriers, he set them apart by great stakes driven deep into the ground and fastened together in the manner of a palisade’.¹¹

The *Historia Augusta* inserts in the context of this journey of 121 a lengthy section on Hadrian’s military policy. On examination there is nothing that can be labelled a significant innovation. Rather, the emperor, ‘while eager for peace rather than for war, trained the soldiers as if war were imminent, and took army discipline in hand. He himself set the example, living off camp fare, fat bacon, cheese and rough wine, marching up to twenty miles in armour and wearing the humblest uniform.’ Luxuries were done away with – ‘dining-rooms in the camps, and porticoes, covered galleries, and ornamental gardens’. He reinforced the regulations on age for recruitment, checked military stores and made good deficiencies, and improved arms and equipment. Dio, without supplying as much detail, states that Hadrian ‘by his example and his instructions trained the army throughout the empire and disciplined the men, so that even today [the 220s] the measures he introduced still stand’. One may note, as a change possibly attributable to him, the assignment of the *frumentarii*, legionaries seconded for commissariat purposes, to the role of a secret police. Further, it may be Hadrian who instituted a new rank and pay scale for the *praefecti* who commanded the handful (at most about ten) of double-strength cavalry regiments, *alae milliariae*. This now counted as ‘the fourth grade’, *quarta militia*, and its holders formed a new élite. Otherwise, it may be noted that Hadrian’s frontier policy not only put in place artificial demarcation lines to supplement pre-existing chains of forts and signal-stations, and thus seemed to symbolize a halt to further expansion. It also effectively brought to an end, with a few exceptions, major shifts of troops to new bases. This meant that the armies were increasingly to become identified with the narrow region in which they were stationed, around the periphery of the empire.¹²

One of the few exceptions may be noted in the following year, the transfer of VI Victrix from Germania Inferior to Britain. It may be assumed that the move coincided with the promotion of Platorius Nepos. A diploma of

¹¹ Halfmann, *Itinera* 190, 195; *HA Hadr.* 10.1, 12.6.

¹² *HA Hadr.* 10.2–11.1; Dio LXIX.9.1–6; *HA Hadr.* 11.4, 6. *quarta militia*: Birley (1953) 149. Frontiers: Birley, *Army* 12 ff.

17 July 22 shows that an unusually large force of auxiliaries, thirteen *alae* and thirty-seven cohorts, had men discharged by the outgoing governor, Pompeius Falco, who were now under Nepos. He had presumably arrived shortly before. What is uncertain is the whereabouts of IX Hispana. VI Victrix was to move into the Ninth's former base at York, but it is not known whether its predecessor had moved to a new base in Britain, perhaps Carlisle, or, rather, that it had already left Britain under Trajan, to reinforce the Rhine army when troops had been sent to the Dacian Wars. It was no doubt Pompeius Falco who had fought some kind of campaign against 'Britons who could not be kept under Roman control', as the *Historia Augusta* puts it.¹³

Hadrian himself, together with the rest of the imperial party, including the empress, one of the praetorian prefects and the *ab epistulis*, probably crossed to Britain with Nepos. At the same time, an ex-chief centurion (*primipilaris*), T. Pontius Sabinus, brought a task-force of 3,000 men (*vexillationes* from three legions). It may well be that Hadrian himself now inaugurated a new policy to ensure that the Britons would remain under Roman control. At all events, as the *Historia Augusta* – the sole literary source – states, in Britain 'he set right many things, and, the first to do so, drew a wall along a length of eighty miles [130 kilometres] to separate barbarians and Romans'. Six of the surviving building inscriptions from the Wall bear the name of Platorius Nepos. Hadrian, with his passion for detail and his interest in architecture, may well have taken a personal hand. His involvement seems to be attested by the name, Pons Aelius, given to the fort at Newcastle, the original eastern end of the system, later extended a few kilometres along the north bank of the Tyne to Segedunum (Wallsend).¹⁴

Hadrian's British tour attracted comment at Rome, where the poet Florus composed a piece of doggerel:

I don't want to be emperor, please,
To tramp around among the Britons,
Or in Scythian frosts to freeze.

Hadrian dashed off a riposte:

And I don't want to be Florus, please,
To tramp about the pubs and bars,
And get myself infested with fleas.

Something else presumably provoked further comment. Hadrian dismissed the praetorian prefect, Septicius Clarus, and the *ab epistulis*, Suetonius. The reported reasons sound implausible: 'because they had at that time behaved, in the company of his wife Sabina, in a less formal

¹³ *ILS* 1094+1100; *CIL* xv1 69; *HA Hadr.* 5.2; Birley (1981) 99, 101, 220.

¹⁴ Sabinus: *CPb* no. 118+add.; Jarrett (1976). *HA Hadr.* 11.2; Birley (1981) 100 ff.

fashion than respect for the imperial household required'. The *Historia Augusta* adds that 'he would have dismissed his wife, too, for being moody and difficult, if he had been a private citizen – as he himself used to say'.¹⁵

How far the building of the Wall had progressed before Hadrian left can only be guessed at, but it is clear that the whole new *limes*, with curtain-wall, turrets and mile-castles, ditch to the north, and double mound with ditch between (the so-called 'Vallum') to the south, not to mention the forts later added, and the line of towers and fortlets along the Cumbrian coast, took at least six more years to complete. The *Historia Augusta* appears to suggest that Hadrian's stay in Britain was curtailed by news of rioting at Alexandria in Egypt. If so, he presumably heard reassuring news before long, making a visit to Egypt unnecessary.

He remained in the West, stopping in Gaul at Nemausus, where he inaugurated a basilica in honour of Plotina, whose family apparently derived from that city, and going on to spend the winter of 122–3 at Tarraco. Here he restored the temple of Augustus, and, while taking a stroll, suffered an assassination attempt from a deranged slave. He held an assembly to which representatives of the Spanish communities were invited. When they showed reluctance to provide recruits for the army, Hadrian reacted sharply, particularly towards the delegates from Italica, his *patria*. The town, which had long been a *municipium*, was later to petition Hadrian for the status of *colonia*. Characteristically, Hadrian took the opportunity of displaying his learning, lecturing the Italicenses on the historical development of local government: the *municipia*, he pointed out, enjoyed greater freedom to run their affairs as they wished, whereas the *coloniae* had standardized institutions. But they persisted, and the town received the new title of *colonia Aelia Augusta*. What is more, although Hadrian never returned there as emperor, Italica benefited from his largess, acquiring not least an amphitheatre that was one of the largest in the empire. Hadrian's tour of the western provinces may have been the occasion for a modification which he made to Latin status: he instituted *Latium maius*. All the councillors in communities with this status received Roman citizenship, as compared with only the annually elected magistrates in the normal Latin towns. How many benefited is unknown – only one example is attested, African Gigthis in the next reign.¹⁶

While in Spain Hadrian also dealt with a rebellion in Mauretania and appointed a king for one of the German client peoples. How long he had planned to remain in the west is unclear, but news apparently came that his presence was urgently required at the opposite end of the empire. The Parthian king was threatening to renew the war. Hadrian took immediate

¹⁵ *HA Hadr.* 16.2–4; 11.3; Syme, *Roman Papers* III 1340 ff.

¹⁶ Breeze and Dobson (1987) 27 ff.; *HA Hadr.* 12.1–5. Syme, *Roman Papers* II 627 ff.; VI 106, 113–14. Gell. *NA* XVI.13.4. García y Bellido (1965). *Latium maius*. Sherwin-White, *Citizenship* 255; *ILS* 6780.

steps to deal with the situation: Ti. Claudius Quartinus, who was in Spain as *iridicus*, was ordered to collect two of the eastern legions, II Traiana and III Cyrenaica, and take them to the frontier. Hadrian met the king at the Euphrates, and the emergency was over; he evidently followed the Euphrates northwards and reached the Black Sea coast at Trapezus. He was perhaps to winter at Nicomedia, the home of his friend Arrian, the historian (L. Flavius Arrianus). In spring 124 Hadrian went on to visit Nicaea and then a series of cities in the province of Asia, including Cyzicus, Ilium, Pergamum, Smyrna and Ephesus. He was at the last-named city on 29 August. He also visited Stratoniceia, which was renamed Hadrianopolis; and his passion for hunting, which had been especially well catered for in Mysia, was commemorated by the foundation of a new town, Hadrianotherae, 'Hadrian's Hunt'.¹⁷

From Ephesus Hadrian moved, in late summer or early autumn, to Rhodes, and then across to Greece. At latest in October he was at Eleusis, where he was enrolled in the cult of the Mysteries. He was to remain in Greece for about nine months, visiting a large number of places, including Sparta and Delphi. As for Athens, he held the office of Agonothete at the Dionysia in March, and unquestionably launched his major building programme at this time, including the completion, delayed for many centuries, of the great temple of Olympian Zeus.¹⁸

In the summer of 125 he returned via Sicily to Rome, after an absence of four years. Little is known about his activity in the following three years spent in Italy. The *Historia Augusta* leaps over this period in silence. But between 14 August and 12 September 125 Hadrian was already at Tibur, that 'nest of Spanish notables', where he was to spend his last years in the famous villa. This is a suitable place to register a number of items that belong to the rubric of 'administration'. One striking innovation was the appointment of four men of consular rank with jurisdiction over Italy. Only two holders of the office are known, L. Vitrasius Flamininus (*cos.* 122), legate of Transpadana, and the future emperor Antoninus, who was assigned to 'that part of Italy in which he had most of his possessions', presumably including Etruria. It is possible that Hadrian brought in these arrangements after a prolonged absence from Rome, in 127, when he was away for six months, evidently visiting the Po valley. The system was to be short-lived.¹⁹ More generally, under Hadrian the senatorial *cursus honorum* settled down into a regular pattern, which lasted throughout the next reign

¹⁷ *HA Hadr.* 12.7–8; Alföldy (1969) 79 ff. (cf. *AE* 1976 no. 427); *HA Hadr.* 20.13; Dio LXIX.10.2; Halfmann, *Itinera* 190 ff., 196 ff.

¹⁸ *HA Hadr.* 13.1; Dio LXIX.11.1, etc.; Halfmann, *Itinera* 117 n. 429 (for the date); *HA Hadr.* 13.1; *JG* 11/III² 3287. See generally Willers (1990).

¹⁹ *HA Hadr.* 13.3–4. Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 94 ff., 322; *HA Hadr.* 22.13; *Ant. Pius* 2.11; *Marc.* 11.6; App. *BC* 1 38, 172; Eck, *Organisation* 247 ff. Po valley: Syme, *Roman Papers* II 694; v 432.

and beyond. The tenure of only two posts, a legionary command and an imperial province or its equivalent (for example one of the treasuries), between praetorship and consulship, seems to have been a sign that a senator was on his way to govern one or more of the major military provinces after the consulship. The *Historia Augusta* mistakenly attributes to Hadrian a policy of extreme lavishness with third and second consulships. In fact only two men benefited from a third tenure of the *fascēs*, M. Annius Verus in 126 and Hadrian's brother-in-law Julius Servianus in 134; and only five second consulships are known, hardly 'an immense number'. Nonetheless, it should be remembered that no further third consulships at all were given to non-members of imperial families for several centuries. Another aspect of Hadrian's senatorial policy deserving mention is his treatment of Greeks or easterners. Trajan might seem in some respects to have shown more favour to the eastern magnates, and more Greeks seem to have held the ordinary consulship under Pius than under Hadrian. Still, Hadrian was evidently able to persuade Greeks of old Greece to enter the Roman Senate for the first time: Claudius Atticus of Athens was adlected and became suffect consul c. 131 and his son Herodes entered the Senate as quaestor. It was probably Hadrian too who gave senatorial rank to the leading figure at Sparta, Eurycles Herculanus. C. Iulius Severus of Ancyra, descendant of the Attalids and of Galatian tetrarchs, was also adlected to the Senate by Hadrian and held several important posts. Furthermore, Greeks are found for the first time holding posts in the western provinces: L. Flavius Arrianus of Nicomedia (the historian Arrian) was proconsul of Baetica and Eurycles was proconsular legate in the same province; and Sex. Iulius Maior of Nysa commanded III Augusta in Numidia.²⁰

As for the equestrian career, mention has already been made of the new grading of the *praefectus alae milliariae* as the *quarta militia*. Holders of this post seem to have been marked out for important procuratorships. On the civil side, the earliest record of an *advocatus fisci* comes from Hadrian's reign, and he may well have instituted the post. It was to become an important means of entry into the equestrian career.

The thoroughgoing reforms of the administration attributed to Hadrian in late antiquity boil down, on investigation, to something less impressive. The direction taken by Domitian and Trajan was followed further, but there were no sweeping changes, merely adjustments.²¹

In the sphere of jurisprudence Hadrian's reign does seem to mark an important development. His rulings occupy a more prominent place in the

²⁰ Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 316–24; *HLA Hadr.* 8.4; Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 10–11; 13–14; 15–16; 315–16; V 553; 558–62; Halfmann, *Senatoren* nos. 27, 29, 54, 56, 68, 81 (whose dating requires revision in some cases; for no. 27, Atticus' consulship, *AE* 1990 no. 763).

²¹ *quarta militia*: Birley (1953) 149; 158–9. *advocatus fisci*: *AE* 1975 no. 408. Hadrian as reformer: *Epit. de Caesaribus* 14.11; cf. Hirschfeld, *Verwaltungsbeamte* 476 ff.; Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 58 ff.

Digest than those of his predecessors, perhaps not by an arbitrary choice of the compilers. The *Historia Augusta* places great stress on his innovative activity as a law-giver. His contemporary, the jurist P. Iuventius Celsus, was honoured with a second consulship in 129. The much younger P. Salvius Iulianus was given the task of codifying the praetor's edict, probably when he was quaestor, c. 131. In this post Iulianus received double the normal salary 'on account of his outstanding (legal) science' (*ob insignem doctrinam*).²²

III. THE SECOND PROVINCIAL TOUR, 128–132

In 128 Hadrian set off on his second major tour of the provinces, going first via Sicily to Africa and Mauretania. No information is available about his visit to Mauretania, which is mentioned solely on the inscription of his *comes*, one of the Caesernii brothers from Aquileia. But the African journey opened under favourable auspices: 'on his arrival it rained for the first time for five years, and for this reason he was esteemed highly by the Africans'. Furthermore, chance has preserved portions of his speeches to units of the Numidian garrison. No doubt he addressed the troops regularly, whenever he visited military provinces, after inspecting exercises and manoeuvres. On 1 July he was at Lambaesis, and spoke to the men of the legion III Augusta. Later in the month he was haranguing the *cobors II Hispanorum equitata*, congratulating the unit

because you finished in a single day entrenchments which others take many days to construct, and you built a wall perfectly suitable for a permanent winter-quarters in a time scarcely longer than is taken to build a turf rampart. A turf rampart is easy enough to construct, for the turves are cut to a standard size and are easy to carry and handle. They can be placed on top of one another with no trouble as they are naturally soft and flat. But you had to build a wall of big heavy stones, of all shapes and sizes, and to lift and carry these and to put them in position they have to be fitted very carefully together.

Here speaks a commander-in-chief who had served in Trajan's Dacian Wars, the record of which, on the Column, depicts men building just such turf ramparts as he describes. Further, he had not long since supervised the early work on his new frontier in Britain. His visit to Numidia was probably the occasion for him to implement on the southern frontier of the empire the same policy as in the far north, with the same motive: 'to separate Romans and barbarians'. A network of small posts resembling the mile-castles and turrets of Hadrian's Wall was set up along the Numidian frontier, with long stretches of continuous wall linking them. Furthermore, on the Roman side civilian development, notably in the form of olive

²² *HA Hadr.* 18.1–11; Iulianus: *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 19.2; Eutropius VIII.17; *ILS* 8973; Syme (1991) 206 ff.

plantations, flourished, aptly symbolizing the separation of Roman and barbarian.²³

From Africa Hadrian returned initially to Rome. It was in this year that he at last accepted the title *pater patriae*, which he had deferred until this point, in an imitation of Augustus more assiduous than that of earlier emperors. In other respects too, Hadrian assumed the role of a second Augustus. It is noteworthy that from 123 onwards – the one hundred and fiftieth year since the assumption of the name by the first emperor – he styled himself on the coinage ‘Hadrianus Augustus’, omitting the remainder of his titulature.²⁴

After a short stay Hadrian set out again for his beloved Greece. Here he visited Sparta and wintered at Athens, before sailing, probably in March 129, for Ephesus. In this year Hadrian began to be given the new title ‘Olympios’ throughout the Greek-speaking half of the empire. From Ephesus he went to Miletus, eastwards through Caria to Tralles and on to Laodicea-on-Lycus in Phrygia. On 23 July he was at Apamea. Then he headed for Syria, passing through southern Cappadocia, stopping en route to visit the tomb of Alcibiades and to erect a marble statue of him at Phrygian Melissa. He wintered at Antioch, carrying out considerable diplomatic activity. A number of eastern client kings came to see him and treaties of friendship were made. Pharasmanes of Iberia ‘haughtily ignored his invitation’, the *Historia Augusta* adds.²⁵

In the first half of 130 Hadrian set out for the desert frontier. He stayed for some time at Palmyra, before going to the province of Arabia, where his presence at Gerasa is indicated by an inscription of his *equites singulares*. From Arabia he proceeded to Judaea, a visit which was to have fateful consequences. He ordered the construction of a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus at Jerusalem and instituted a new city there which was to share his own name and that of the Roman god, as the *colonia Aelia Capitolina*. Either then or at some time over the next two years he prohibited the ancestral Jewish practice of circumcision. There seems no other explanation for such a move other than his obsessive philhellenism: circumcision was repugnant to the Greeks. At Athens Hadrian had revived a project of Antiochus Epiphanes, the completion of the great temple to Olympian Zeus. Now, apparently, he was seeking to achieve what Antiochus had attempted, with disastrous results in Judaea, the hellenization of Jewry. He can hardly have anticipated the violence of the reaction, still less the care and deliberation

²³ *HA Hadr.* 13.4–14.7; *ILS* 1069; *AE* 1957 no. 135; Alföldy, *Konsulat* 347 ff.; *HA Hadr.* 22.14; *ILS* 2487; Baradez, (1949); Birley, (1988) 12 ff.

²⁴ *HA Hadr.* 13.6; *AE* 1940 no. 99; *HA Hadr.* 6.4; *PIR*² A 184 (p. 30); *RIC* II 323 ff.; Syme, *Tacitus* 496.

²⁵ Halfmann, 192 ff., 203 ff.; Barnes (1989) 249; Syme, *Roman Papers* III 1436 ff.; *HA Hadr.* 13.7–9; Braund (1991).

with which the rebellion was prepared. To be sure, he had witnessed the massive outbreak of Jewish resistance in the Diaspora revolt of 115–17. Epigraphy reveals the measures which he took in Cyrenaica to repair the devastation there, including the foundation of a new city, Hadrianopolis, perhaps for some of the refugees. However, there is little evidence for disturbances in Judaea itself at that time.²⁶

At latest in July 130 Hadrian made for Egypt, aiming for Alexandria by way of Gaza and Pelusium. At the latter place he rebuilt the tomb of Pompey. In Alexandria the polymath emperor amused himself by debating with the professors at the Museum, testing their wits by posing problems they could not solve, then supplying the answers. It was a favourite practice: there is an instructive story of his exchange with the sophist Favorinus, who gracefully conceded to the superior wisdom of Hadrian. As he explained afterwards, when his friends remonstrated with him for not sticking to his opinion, it was hard not to accept the literary judgement of the lord of thirty legions.²⁷

In October 130 tragedy struck the imperial party. Hadrian's favourite, the beautiful Bithynian youth Antinous, was drowned in the Nile. The death was presented as an accident, but it was believed at the time that Antinous had been sacrificed or had sacrificed himself. However this may be, Hadrian 'wept for him like a woman' and ordered commemoration of the most extravagant kind. The dead youth was deified, and shrines sprang up all over the empire, principally in the East. It has been plausibly conjectured that Hadrian had already intended to found a new city in Egypt, to promote the cause of Hellenism. At any rate, one was founded close to the spot where Antinous died and given the name Antinoupolis. The designation of the tribes and demes must surely have been Hadrian's own work: their nomenclature partly honours the imperial family, but also reflects his passionate attachment to Greece and above all Athens and Eleusis.²⁸

Hadrian's return journey from the fateful Nile voyage is attested by inscriptions and papyri. He was at Thebes between 18 and 21 November, at Oxyrhynchus at the end of that month and at Tebtynis on 1 December. He wintered at Alexandria and left by sea in the spring of 131. His movements are difficult to establish, but he was probably in Syria again, in Cilicia and in Pamphylia and, certainly, at Lycian Phaselis, perhaps once again at Ephesus and even in northern Asia Minor. At all events he seems to have wintered, for the third time in his reign, at Athens. There he consecrated the temple of Olympian Zeus and attended the opening ceremonies of the Panhellenion, the new commonwealth of all the Greeks. In the course of

²⁶ Halfmann, *Itinera* (1986) 193; Dio LXIX.12.1–2; *HA Hadr.* 14.2; Epiphanius, *De mens. et pond.* 14 (PG LXIII.260–1); Applebaum (1976) 5 ff.; Y. Meshorer (1989) 19 ff.

²⁷ *HA Hadr.* 14.4; Dio LXIX.11.1; *HA Hadr.* 20.2; 15.12–13.

²⁸ Dio LXIX.11.1–4; *HA Hadr.* 14.5, etc.; *PIR*² A 737; Weber (1907) 248 ff.; Zahnt (1988).

this year he appointed his friend L. Flavius Arrianus governor of Cappadocia. Arrian was in due course to ward off a threatened invasion of his province by the Alani, on which, as on his tour of the Black Sea coast, his report has survived.²⁹

But much more serious was the outbreak of the uprising in Judaea. The Jews were now united – as they had not been in their great revolt against Nero – under a single, dynamic and highly intelligent leader, Simeon Bar Kochba, the ‘son of a star’. He received the support of the foremost religious teacher, Rabbi Akiba, and the whole Jewish population was evidently fired with a passionate determination to expel their Gentile rulers once and for all. The legate of Judaea, Tineius Rufus, could not cope, in spite of his two legions, and many Roman soldiers were killed. The governor of Syria, Publicius Marcellus, gave assistance, but something more was needed. Hadrian sent for ‘the first of his leading generals’, Sex. Iulius Severus, who was then governing Britain. Severus had enjoyed a favoured career, his only posts between praetorship and consulship being the command of a legion and the governorship of Dacia Superior, which he held for some seven years. After his consulship (127), he governed Moesia Inferior before going to Britain, where he may have been responsible for a final detail in the frontier system. Some interest is attached to the description (by Dio) of Iulius Severus as Hadrian’s best general. The fact that he was governing Britain suggests that it was now the practice to assign the top military man to that province if there was no particular crisis elsewhere. In spite of the distances involved, Rome was prepared to send the right man for the job from one end of the empire to the other. An exact parallel was to occur thirty years later.³⁰

How long Hadrian himself spent in Judaea during the war is unknown, but his presence at some point is certain from the label *expeditio Iudaica*. Only when an emperor took the field in person was the word *expeditio* applied to a campaign. His despatch to the Senate, Dio records, omitted the customary opening formula referring to ‘the health of the armies’ because of the heavy losses at Jewish hands. He presumably moved from Athens, in 132, to some convenient place near Judaea and supervised operations there in person in 133, perhaps until Iulius Severus had taken over. Hadrian’s return to Rome seems to have been through ‘Illyricum’, i.e. the Balkan and Danubian provinces, as can be inferred from the inscription of his *comes*, the young senator T. Caesernius Quinctianus.³¹

²⁹ Halfmann, *Itinera* 193–4, 207–8; corrected by Syme, *Roman Papers* VI 352 ff.; Barnes (1989) 254; Arrian: Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 38 ff.

³⁰ *SEG* xv 849; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* IV.6.1–4; Dio LXIX.12.1–13.3; *PIR*² J 576; Birley (1981) 106 ff., cf. 123 ff. (the parallel case in A.D. 161–2, cf. also p. 159 below).

³¹ Dio LXIX.14.3; Halfmann, 209, corrected by Syme, *Roman Papers* VI 352 ff. Stavianus: *AE* 1957 no. 135.

Iulius Severus had a difficult job, in spite of his experience in mountainous Dacia. Bar Kochba controlled substantial portions of Judaea for over two years, and administered justice in liberated territory as ‘prince over Israel’. Severus ground down opposition, ‘intercepting small groups . . . and slowly but surely crushing, exhausting and exterminating them . . . 580,000 were killed in military action and countless more by famine, from disease or by fire’. When it was all over, in 136, with Bar Kochba dead and resistance ended, the province was renamed. As if to symbolize that the terrible loss of life had finally deprived it of its predominantly Jewish population, it ceased to be ‘Judaea’ and became thenceforward ‘Syria Palaestina’. Hadrian manifestly refrained from much overt celebration. Iulius Severus and Publicius Marcellus were, it is true, granted ‘ornamenta triumphalia’ – the last such awards on record. But he himself took only one imperatorial acclamation from the war, and in general grants of *dona militaria* were the reverse of lavish. Q. Lollius Urbicus, a senior staff officer under Iulius Severus, instead of the sets of three *coronae*, *hastae* and *vexilla*, which as an ex-praetor he could have expected, received only one *vexillum* and one *hasta*; other officers were likewise meanly treated. Iulius Severus remained in the area after his victory, as legate of Syria. But he may have expired in that insalubrious province. Late in the reign of Hadrian there is record of two other legates, in rapid succession, Sex. Iulius Maior, descendant of eastern potentates, and Brutius Praesens, Hadrian’s friend. The latter is a particular surprise. Not only had he already governed two consular provinces more than a decade earlier, but he had even been proconsul of Africa. It had by this time become the norm that a consular proconsulship marked the climax and completion of a senator’s career. Praesens’ recall suggests that trouble was brewing once more with Parthia. Equally, the retention of Arrian for six years as governor of Cappadocia, from 131–7, twice the standard term of office, may indicate Hadrian’s concern that Rome’s eastern frontier should be in experienced hands.³²

IV. THE SUCCESSION CRISIS

Hadrian’s presence back at Rome is attested on 5 May 134. At the beginning of 134 his venerable brother-in-law, Iulius Servianus, nearly ninety years old, became consul for the third time. Servianus’ daughter Iulia Paulina and son-in-law Pedanius Fuscus were no doubt by now dead, but their son, Servianus’ grandson and Hadrian’s grand-nephew, must have seemed the obvious successor. Yet two years later both Servianus and young Fuscus were forced to take their own lives: Hadrian had chosen another heir. The order of events is uncertain. Dio gives the choice of the

³² Birley (1953) 24; Maxfield (1981) 147–8, 176; Syme, *Roman Papers* v 573–4; iv 50 ff., 38 ff.

heir first, followed by the deaths of Servianus and Fuscus, ‘on the grounds that they were displeased at it’. In the *Historia Augusta*, the adoption is not announced until the pair are dead. One might reconcile the two versions by supposing that Hadrian’s intention was known within a small circle before the public announcement. The man chosen was one of the consuls of 136, L. Ceionius Commodus, who now became L. Aelius Caesar. He was the son and grandson of homonymous *consules ordinarii* (of 78 and 106), and his mother Plautia was from the distinguished family from Trebula Suffenas, near Tibur. The mother, indeed, is the key to one startling modern interpretation: L. Commodus was Hadrian’s bastard son, it has been argued. However, the evidence cited to support the hypothesis is invalid. More pertinent, perhaps, is the observation that Plautia had married, as her second husband, after the death of L. Commodus’ father, C. Avidius Nigrinus, a friend of Hadrian, but one of the ‘four consulars’ put to death for alleged conspiracy in 118. L. Commodus was now married to Nigrinus’ daughter by a previous wife, and was thus the son-in-law as well as stepson of the man Hadrian had allegedly had in mind as successor in the first few months of the reign. The adoption of L. Commodus could thus be construed as the product of remorse.³³

Another consideration may have been important. L. Commodus had a son of his own, then aged at most seven, and two daughters, one of whom was betrothed to the fifteen-year-old M. Annius Verus, grandson of the former city prefect and *cos. ter.* Through the Dasumii of Corduba, and perhaps through other links, the Annii Veri of Bactican Ucubi (not far from Corduba) may have been related to Hadrian himself – Dio even appears to state this. Hadrian is said to have had a particular affection for the young Marcus, whom he called ‘Verissimus’. The betrothal of Marcus and Ceionia Fabia is said by the *Historia Augusta* to have taken place at Hadrian’s wish, immediately after Marcus took the *toga virilis*, ‘in his fifteenth year’, in other words between April 135 and April 136, and certainly before L. Commodus’ adoption, which was in the second half of 136. Given that the new heir was known to be consumptive and that his own son was a small child, it must have seemed a strong possibility that Marcus would in due course become emperor.³⁴

Hadrian made L. Aelius Caesar consul for the second time in 137 and equipped him with *imperium* and the *tribunicia potestas*. He then despatched

³³ *HA Hadr.* 8.11; 15.8; 23.1–3, 8 ff.; 26.8; Dio LXIX.17.1–3; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 232 ff.; Hadrian’s alleged bastard: Carcopino (1949), demolished by Syme, *Roman Papers* I 325 ff.; III 1170 ff.; VI 173 (Carcopino relied on the spurious ‘Letter of Hadrian’ in *HA Quad. tyr.* 8).

³⁴ Lucius was born when his father was praetor and adopted by Antoninus ‘post septimum annum’ in 138. However, his patrician father, consul in 136, should have been praetor only two or three years earlier: ‘quartum’ may be the correct reading (‘III’ corrupted to ‘VII’), cf. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 246. Dio LXIX.21.2; LXXI.35.2–3. ‘Verissimus’: Dio LXIX. 21.2; *HA Marc.* 1.10, 4.1. *Toga virilis*: *HA Marc.* 4.5. Consumptive: Dio LXIX.17.1; *HA Ael.* 3.7, 4.6, 6.1–7.

him to Carnuntum with authority over both Pannonian provinces. It was the area where Hadrian himself had had both his first military service (as tribune in II Adiutrix) and his first independent command, as governor of Pannonia Inferior. There may have been important work to do – a little later, early in the reign of Antoninus Pius, it appears that the Quadi, immediately across the Danube from Carnuntum, had a new king appointed by Rome. The Caesar cannot have spent even a full year in the provinces. He was back at Rome in the winter and was due to make an important speech in the Senate on the first day of 138, but died before he could deliver it. Hadrian himself was by now a sick man, suffering from dropsy and longing for death. After waiting just over three weeks, until his sixty-second birthday, 24 January, he summoned a meeting of his *consilium*. Lying on his couch he gave a short address, presenting the usual arguments in favour of the adoptive principle, and revealing the name of his new heir: Aurelius Antoninus. Antoninus was son-in-law of Annii Verus and thus uncle by marriage of Marcus, whom he was now asked to adopt, along with the child Lucius Commodus, surviving son of Aelius Caesar. It is noteworthy that at this juncture a number of persons incurred Hadrian's displeasure. They included Catilius Severus, dismissed from office as city prefect after showing disapproval of Antoninus' adoption and because 'he had designs on the imperial power for himself'. Another was Ummidius Quadratus, whose son was married to the sister of Marcus, while he himself, it appears, had married another daughter of old Annii Verus; thus he was in a position similar to that of Antoninus. As for Catilius, as 'great-grandfather' of Marcus, he too was linked to the young man who was surely perceived as the principal component of the dynastic network. Ummidius and Catilius had doubtless seen themselves as more suitable than Antoninus to occupy the role of 'place-holder' for Marcus.³⁵

Antoninus had asked for time to consider the offer and the formal ceremony of adoption did not take place until 25 February. Hadrian survived just over four months more, having left the business of government to Antoninus, dying on 10 July 138, at Baiae. On his death-bed he had composed a message of farewell to his restless spirit:

*Animula vagula blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quae nunc abibis in loca,
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec ut soles dabis iocos?*

³⁵ *HA Hadr.* 23.10–14; *Ael.* 3.1–7, 4.7; Dio LXIX.20.1. Quadi: *BMCRE* IV Antoninus Pius no. 1274. *HA Hadr.* 23.15–16; *Ael.* 4.7; *Hadr.* 24.1–5; *M. Ant.* 4.1–7; Dio LXIX.20.1–21.2; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 43 ff. *HA Hadr.* 24.6–7 (Catilius), 15.7 (Quadratus).

No adequate English translation exists and it is not even certain whether the adjectives in the fourth line refer to the soul or to the *loca*, echoes of Ennius – a favourite author of Hadrian's – may certainly be detected and hence perhaps *nudula* should be emended to *nubila*.

Hadrian has been called 'the most remarkable of all Roman emperors' and 'the intellectual emperor'. Ancient writers stressed his restless travelling, his insatiable inquisitiveness ('omnium curiositatum explorator') and his complex, many-sided personality ('varius, multiplex, multiformis'). His military and frontier policy, his obsessive generosity to the Greeks and his ruthless treatment of the Jews were the three elements which had the most long-term impact. As for the travel: Hadrian had spent a good half of his reign in the provinces, while Italy, with his new system of consular legates, effectively provincial governors, had lost its privileged status. That reform was cancelled by Antoninus; but it was a portent.³⁶

V. ANTONINUS PIUS

Antoninus was aged fifty-one, but his experience of public life and personal knowledge of the empire were limited. So far as is known, the only occasion on which he had been outside Italy during his entire life was the year as proconsul of Asia, probably from 134–5. Other than that, his only administrative experience had been as one of the four consulars responsible for jurisdiction in Italy. It may indeed have been his very lack of military background which had prompted Hadrian to select him, rather than some other member of the nexus round Marcus, such as Catilius Severus, as the 'place-holder' to secure the ultimate accession of his favourite 'Verissimus'. Hadrian can hardly have expected that Antoninus would survive for a further twenty-three years. This was to ensure that Hadrian's policy of avoiding wars was adhered to, giving the empire a total of over forty years of peace (apart from the – undoubtedly very serious – Jewish war).

The very absence of warfare and the prolonged calm of Antoninus' reign no doubt were partly responsible for the brevity of the ancient sources that deal with it. Compensation comes from the letters of M. Cornelius Fronto, tutor to Antoninus' adopted sons, the orations of Aelius Aristides, and other literary works of the Antonine era. The character depiction of Antoninus by Marcus in his *Meditations*, of which two versions survive, deserves quotation here. From his adoptive father Marcus learned

³⁶ The poem: *HA Hadr.* 25.6–9, its authenticity defended by Cameron (1980) 167 ff.; 'most remarkable': Hirschfeld, *Verwaltungsbeamte* 477; 'intellectual': Syme, *Roman Papers* VI 103 ff.; 'inquisitiveness': Tert. *Apol.* 5.7; 'complex': *Epit. de Caesaribus* 14.6, cf. *HA Hadr.* 14.11.

gentleness and to be unshakeably resolute in judgements made after full investigation; no vainglory about outward honours; love of work and perseverance; readiness to listen to any who had something to contribute to the good of the state; his practice of rewarding every man impartially according to his deserts; knowing from experience where to tighten the reins, where to relax them . . . At meetings of his council he made a careful scrutiny and was persistent . . . His practice was to keep the same friends and not to tire of them . . . He kept a good watch on the needs of the empire and was a good steward of its resources . . . He was acknowledged to be a mature and complete personality, who was above flattery and competent to deal with his own affairs and those of others . . . In everything he followed traditional ways, without making a fetish of it. He was not inclined to alter his position or change his mind. He liked to stay settled in the same places and to do the same things . . . He did not have many secrets, only very few, quite exceptionally and for reasons of state. He was prudent and economical in his provision of shows, in carrying out public building, in largess to the people, and so forth. It was the behaviour of a man who is interested in what has to be done, and not in the reputation that he gets.³⁷

Antoninus' family, the Aurelii Fulvi, derived from Nemausus. His paternal grandfather had been a legionary legate under Corbulo and an early adherent of Vespasian, whence success and distinction under the Flavians: consul for the second time, as colleague of Domitian in 85, and city prefect. The second Aurelius Fulvus (*cos. ord.* 89) had died when the future emperor was a boy, and he lived under the protection of his two grandfathers, the maternal one, Arrius Antoninus (*cos.* 69), also, it seems, from Nemausus. The family was rich, and Antoninus' marriage to a daughter of M. Annius Verus (*cos. III ord.* 126) will have reinforced his wealth. Antoninus' reported reply to his wife Faustina's reproach that he was ungenerous, shortly after his adoption by Hadrian, illustrates his character well: 'Foolish woman, now that we have gained an empire we have lost even what we had before.' His apparent fear that his vast private wealth would be swallowed up by the demands of his imperial position may have led him to create the *res* (or *ratio*) *privata*, as a separate department to administer his private fortune, distinct from the *patrimonium*. At all events, although the *Historia Augusta* attributes the institution of the *res privata* to Severus, evidence for its existence no later than the 170s indicates that its origin must be sought earlier, and the accession of Antoninus is a suitable occasion.³⁸

³⁷ The section of Dio's *Roman History* dealing with Antoninus Pius was already missing when the Byzantine epitomator John Xiphilinus wrote, 256, 6 ff.=Dio LXX.1.1, 'so that the history of his reign is almost wholly unknown'. The short *vita* in the *Historia Augusta* is largely factual, it seems. Fronto's *Epistulae*, ed. M. P. J. van den Hout (Teubner, 1988), are an important source for the period c. 138–66; see esp. Champlin, *Fronto*. M. Aurelius' *Meditations* are also valuable on Pius: the quotation is from 1.16.

³⁸ *HA M. Ant.* 1.1–7; *PIR*² A 1509, 1510, 1513; 1086 (Arrius Antoninus), cf. Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 132. *FLA M. Ant.* 4.8; Nesselhauf (1964).

Antoninus' first hurdle was to persuade the Senate to deify his predecessor, a matter over which it showed serious reluctance, indeed 'total opposition'. Only Antoninus' insistence that failure to deify would involve the annulling of Hadrian's acts, including his own adoption, enabled him to overcome. After the ceremony of consecration Hadrian's ashes were placed in the massive tomb which he had prepared before his death (now the Castel Sant' Angelo), accompanied by the remains of L. Aelius Caesar and of Antoninus' three older children who had died before his adoption. As for the surviving child, the younger Faustina, who had been betrothed in February 138 to Aelius Caesar's son, at Hadrian's wish, she was now transformed to her cousin Marcus; the betrothal of Marcus and Ceionia Fabia was naturally dissolved. It was plain that Marcus was to be Antoninus' heir. He became quaestor in 139, was designated to the consulship for 140, became *princeps iuventutis*, and received the name Caesar. From now until Antoninus' death he was styled M. (Aelius) Aurelius Verus Caesar, while his adoptive brother remained only L. (Aelius) Aurelius Commodus. Meanwhile Antoninus took the additional name 'Pius', probably – in spite of a variety of explanations in the sources – intended to underline his loyalty to Hadrian.³⁹ Antoninus made few initial changes, replacing none of Hadrian's appointments, with the exception of the city prefect Scipio Orfitus (at the latter's 'own request'). The new prefect was probably C. Bruttius Praesens, colleague of Pius in the consulship of 139. Such was Pius' *constantia*, the *Historia Augusta* claims, that he left 'bonos praesides' in their provinces for seven or even nine years. This is not borne out by the evidence. However, he did unquestionably retain the same man as praetorian prefect for most of his reign, M. Gavius Maximus. It is not certain when Maximus took office, but he remained prefect from very early in the reign (if not appointed by Hadrian) until his death in 156 or 157. He must be accorded a large share in the responsibility for military decisions under Pius.⁴⁰

In this sphere there was a rapid departure from Hadrian's policy. A new governor was appointed to Britain in 139, Q. Lollius Urbicus. In itself there was nothing remarkable about the choice. Urbicus had served in the Jewish War under Iulius Severus, and, after his consulship *c.* 135, had gone on to govern Germania Inferior. The move from this province to Britain was one which may be regarded as 'standard'. However, Urbicus at once began a forward policy in the north of the province. He invaded southern Scotland, winning victories and beginning the construction of a new frontier,

³⁹ Dio LXIX.23.3; LXX.1.1–2.1; *HA Hadr.* 27.1–2; *Ant. Pius* 5.1–2, 8.2; *ILS* 329, 350–2; *HA Marc.* 6.2, cf. *Verus* 2.4; *Ael.* 6.9; *Ant. Pius* 6.10, *Marc.* 6.1, 3; Paus. VIII.43.5; Dio LXX.2.1; *HA Hadr.* 24.3–5, 27.2–4, *Ael.* 6.9–10, *Ant. Pius* 2.3–7.

⁴⁰ *HA M. Ant.* 5.3, 8.6–7; Syme, *Roman Papers* v 491, 574–5; *CPh* no. 105 bis+Suppl. pp. 32–3.

between the Forth and the Clyde, only half the length of Hadrian's, and built of turf rather than stone. These achievements prompted Pius to accept the acclamation as 'imp. II', in 142, probably late in the year: it first appears on the coinage in 143. It was the only such title that Pius was to take during his entire reign of twenty-three years. He was credited with personal involvement by Fronto: 'Although he committed the conduct of the campaign to others while remaining in the palace at Rome, yet as with the helmsman at the tiller of a warship, the glory of the whole navigation and voyage belongs to him.'⁴¹

There was also trouble in Dacia. Disturbances of an unknown nature made it necessary to send legionaries back to Dacia Inferior, where the procurator governor was given the title *pro legato*. He was a kinsman of Marcus Turbo, who had had similar powers there in 118. Meanwhile, on the middle Danube, the Quadi were assigned a new king, an event announced on the imperial coinage with the legend REX QUADIS DATUS. In the east, the Armenians likewise accepted a Roman nominee, and the Iberian king Pharasmanes came on a state visit to Rome in 140. He treated Antoninus with great respect, in contrast to his alleged behaviour towards Hadrian. Firm action had backed the diplomacy: a legionary legate, Neratius Proculus, had taken reinforcements to the Syrian army.⁴²

Antoninus' policy towards the Greek East was early on made manifest, with the appointment in successive years, 142 and 143, of two prominent Athenians as *consul ordinarius*, L. Staius Quadratus and Herodes Atticus. The distinction given to Herodes was the more remarkable in the light of Philostratus' anecdote: when Antoninus had been proconsul of Asia, Herodes had been holding office in the same province as a special commissioner, and the two men had been in conflict. Furthermore, Herodes had recently been involved in controversy at Athens over the testamentary provisions of his father. In 143 or 144 the young orator from Hadriani in Mysia, Aelius Aristides, delivered at Rome his famous speech in praise of the empire, which has largely contributed to the favourable verdict of posterity on the Antonine era. He spoke of the vastness and universality of Rome's empire, comparing it favourably with those of Persia and Macedon. Its government was just and orderly, its ruler no despot but a 'great governor', ruling free men not slaves. The whole world was like a city-state, but one in which the emperor protected the weak. Its greatest single work of perfection was the army: in its recruitment, conditions of service, training and discipline. War had become only a memory, even if a few wretches like the Libyans (Moors), madmen like the Getae (Dacians), or others caused minor troubles.

⁴¹ Birley (1981) 112 ff.; *ILS* 340; *RIC* III Antoninus Pius nos. 107 ff., 715 ff.; *Pan. Lat.* VIII (v) 14.2.

⁴² Syme, *Roman Papers* II 548 ff.; *RIC* III Antoninus Pius nos. 620, 1059, 619 Syme, *Roman Papers* III 1441; Dio LXIX.15.3; *FLA M. Ant.* 9.6; *ILS* 1076.

To place walls around the city itself you considered ignoble . . . Nevertheless, you did not forget walls, but placed them around the empire, not the city . . . Beyond the outermost ring of the civilised world, you drew a second line . . . An encamped army like a rampart encloses the world . . . from Ethiopia to the Phasis, and from the Euphrates to the great outermost island towards the west; all this one can call a ring and circuit of the walls, not built with asphalt and baked brick nor gleaming with stucco. Yet these ordinary works too exist at their individual places, yes in very great number, and, as Homer says of the palace wall, ‘fitted close and accurately with stones, and boundless in size and gleaming more brilliantly than bronze’.

He would not prophesy, but was convinced that Rome’s ‘Golden Race’ would be there until the world’s end. He concluded with the prayer that ‘the great governor and his sons’ should be preserved and provide good things for men.⁴³

A second speech was delivered by Aristides on this visit, addressed to the emperor himself. He devotes almost the entire speech to praise of the emperor, making hostile comparisons, scarcely veiled, with his predecessor.

So purely and virtuously did he begin his charge of affairs that neither while becoming emperor nor when he started to reign did he require the death of anyone . . . the gods took such care that he should come to power purely and piously that they left to others acts of madness and insanity, and reserved for him actions of justice, beneficence and general piety.

His steadying hand had checked the empire’s ‘continuous, irrational and violent lunges’ – perhaps a reference to Hadrian’s erratic conduct in his last months. Like a good pilot, the emperor had settled the empire, ‘just as a ship is moored after a great storm’. He goes on to stress the emperor’s piety, alluding to the assumption of the name ‘Pius’; his excellent financial and judicial policy and his great love of the Greeks and support for Greek education, in contrast to what had been happening before. This is at first sight a surprise, in view of Hadrian’s fanatical philhellenism. Yet at the end of his reign he had turned against a number of Greek intellectuals, just as he had attacked other friends and his own relations, while Pius’ favour to prominent Greeks has already been mentioned.

The compliments and contrasts certainly ring true: the new atmosphere of freedom and confidence, compared with the fear inspired by spies – a clear enough allusion to Hadrian’s conversion of the *frumentarii* into secret agents; the emperor’s gentleness, approachability and consistent character; his personal morality and self-restraint, his prudence with regard to war and preference for diplomacy, combined with exemplary firmness when needed, as with Celtic peoples (an allusion to the north Britons) and with

⁴³ Syme, *Roman Papers* IV 344; V 546 ff., 555 f.; 680. On Herodes: cf. Bowersock, *Sophists* 93 ff. and Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* I 61 ff., II 30 ff., whose dating is followed here. It turns out that Herodes’ father was consul as late as 130 or 131: Syme, *Roman Papers* VI 352 n. 29. For the date of the *Roman Oration*, Jones (1972) 150 n. 159.

those beyond the Euphrates and Tigris. As he ended, after reverting to the emperor's virtues of wisdom, bravery, piety and good fortune, he added a prayer that 'You, boy, noble of the noble, follow in your father's footsteps.'⁴⁴

Aelius Aristides' reference, in his *Roman Oration*, to troublesome Libyan wretches, presumably alluded to the beginning of the Moorish uprising; not, to be sure, notably more serious than others that took place at various times in that region, but reaching its peak in 145. Reinforcements were sent to Mauretania from a number of northern provinces, and a senator was appointed as governor of Tingitana in place of the normal presidial procurator – in fact, probably replacing the procurators of both Caesariensis and Tingitana. A puzzling episode occurred in September of 145, when at a meeting of the Senate a certain Cornelius Priscianus was condemned 'for hostile action disturbing the peace of the province of Spain' – in the laconic résumé on the *Fasti Ostienses*. The *Historia Augusta* refers with equal brevity to 'the death of Priscianus by his own hand, after being charged with attempted usurpation', adding that Pius 'forbade any investigation of this conspiracy'. Immediately before this, the *Historia Augusta* registers the proscription of another man on the same charge, Atilius Titianus, presumably T. Atilius Rufus Titianus (*cos. ord.* 127); in his case Pius had forbidden the investigation of his accomplices. It is conceivable that the two men were linked in an abortive plot to overthrow Pius. But it is puzzling that Spain should have played a part. Possibly Priscianus attempted to tamper with the loyalty of troops passing through the peninsula to Mauretania.⁴⁵

The year 145 had opened with Antoninus and Marcus as consuls, for the fourth and second time respectively, and it was also marked by the marriage of Marcus and Faustina, in the spring. It was to be another eighteen months, on 30 November 147, before there was issue from this union, a daughter, Domitia Faustina – the first of at least fourteen children. Antoninus rewarded the couple, Marcus with the tribunician power and *imperium*, Faustina with the title Augusta (there had been no bearer of this title since 140, when her mother died). In the following year, 148, the nine hundredth anniversary of the foundation of Rome was celebrated with magnificent games, at which exotic beasts, including elephants, giraffes, tigers, rhinoceroses, crocodiles and hippopotami, were slaughtered. The imperial coinage had been preparing for the anniversary since the start of the reign with allusions to Rome's legendary origins. These reminders reflected the religious aspirations of the age and the emperor's own conservative attachment to traditional practices (which earned him the comparison with Numa). The prudent ruler seems to have found it necessary

⁴⁴ Aristides, *Or.* xxxv κ., generally taken to be not authentic but of third-century date, defended as genuine by Jones (1972).

⁴⁵ Moors: Alföldy, *Heeresgeschichte* 472–3. Priscianus: *Ital* XIII 1 p. 205, cf. 235; Birley (1981) 115–16.

to debase the silver coinage by 5 per cent, as a temporary measure, to pay for the festivities. His general policy of avoiding overspending was not affected: he was to bequeath a substantial surplus to his successors.⁴⁶

The year 148 was also made noteworthy by the appointment as *consul ordinarius* of the *novus homo* and outstanding jurist Salvius Iulianus. He had previously served as prefect of both treasuries, and was to go on, after an urban *cura*, to be legate of the Germania Inferior. It was evidently no impediment to his holding that command that he had had no military experience whatever. Further, two governors of Germania Superior in the 150s had not commanded a legion previously, although they had at least, unlike Iulianus, been *tribunus militum* and one of the two, C. Popillius Carus Pedo, had been appointed to, but then withdrawn from, a legionary legateship. Upper Germany was, as it so happens, a part of the empire where developments can be detected in the mid-150s, and Popillius Pedo perhaps the man who carried them out. A new artificial frontier was constructed, a modest twenty-four kilometres further forward, but with the remarkable feature that one section runs absolutely straight for some eighty kilometres. There was a corresponding adjustment in the adjacent province of Raetia.⁴⁷

Meanwhile in Britain, by paradox, precisely the opposite happened. Under the governor Cn. Iulius Verus, son of the eminent general of Hadrian, Iulius Severus, the territory reoccupied by Lollius Urbicus at the beginning of Pius' reign, together with the new 'Antonine Wall', was abandoned. Hadrian's Wall and its hinterland was reoccupied. Whether any connection should be made between these changes is uncertain. An inscription from Newcastle records troop movements between the provinces while Iulius Verus was governor of Britain. But it is impossible to be certain whether they involved the two German armies (*ex. Ger. duobus*) being reinforced by the legions of Britain or vice versa. It is perfectly possible that the withdrawal from southern Scotland (seemingly hinted at on the imperial coinage at this time, with the depiction of a mournful-looking Britannia) was decided upon after reports from Iulius Verus suggesting that the Antonine frontier was impracticable. But it remains a surprise – one should note that the architect of the forward policy, Lollius Urbicus, was still active at this time, as city prefect, and thus should have been able to contribute his opinion.⁴⁸

If the changes on the frontier reflect changes in the direction of affairs at Rome, the explanation might lie in the death of the long-serving praetorian prefect, Gavius Maximus. His immediate successor, C. Tattius

⁴⁶ *HA Marc.* 6.6; *Ant. Pius* 10.2 *Ital* XIII 1 pp. 205, 207. For the children: Bol (1984) 31–2; Fittschen (1982) 23 n. 8, 26–7. *HA M. Ant.* 10.8–9; *RIC* III 6–7, 8; *HA M. Ant.* 2.2; 13.4; Walker (1978) III 124–5.

⁴⁷ *ILS* 8973; Eck (1985) 171–2, 60 ff.; Alföldy, *Heeresgeschichte* 394 ff.

⁴⁸ Birley (1981) 118 ff.; *RIB* I 1322; Birley (1981) 112 ff.; Vidman (1977); *HA M. Ant.* 8.7–9; *CPh* no. 105 bis+211+Suppl. pp. 32–34. Daniels (1991) argues that the Antonine Wall was not abandoned until the end of the 160s (cf. n. 58, below).

Maximus, also died in office before the end of the reign, when joint prefects, T. Furius Victorinus and Sex. Cornelius Repentinus, are attested.⁴⁹

In 160 Pius entered his seventy-fifth year, and it may be that he showed signs of illness. At any rate, Marcus and his adoptive brother Lucius were designated to the consulship for the following year, for the third and second time respectively – Lucius had held his first consulship in 154. The city prefect – either Lollius Urbicus or his successor – died in 160, as the *Fasti Ostienses* record. The new prefect was Q. Iunius Rusticus, son of the Stoic ‘martyr’ of Domitian’s reign, and a mentor of Marcus, whose enthusiasm for philosophy, especially Stoicism, had first shown itself when he was a boy.⁵⁰

Antoninus died on 7 March 161. His death was ‘very sweet, and like the softest sleep’. He had given the watchword ‘Equanimity’ to the tribune of the Guard, turned over as if to go to sleep, and expired. In his fever, when delirious, he had spoken of nothing else besides the state and those foreign kings with whom he was angry. He had commended the state and Marcus and his daughter to his counsellors and the praetorian prefects.⁵¹

VI. THE ACCESSION OF MARCUS AND VERUS

With Pius’ death Marcus lacked only the name Augustus and the position of *pontifex maximus*, having held *imperium* and tribunician power for nearly fourteen years: there was no doubt that he was emperor. But at the meeting of the Senate which followed he refused to accept office unless equal powers were conferred simultaneously on his adoptive brother Lucius Commodus. Antoninus Pius, in those house Lucius had ‘remained a private citizen for twenty-three years’, had done little to forward Hadrian’s clear wishes in respect of his younger adoptive son. He was all for Marcus. The fact that Lucius is attested as a member of the imperial *consilium* under Pius, along with Marcus, does not alter the fact that the latter’s position had been that of ‘crown prince’. Marcus himself had not been particularly devoted to Hadrian at a personal level (Hadrian is a significant absentee from Book 1 of Marcus’ *Meditations*, in which he thanks the gods for the various relatives, friends and teachers from whom he has learned). Presumably his sense of duty led him to implement the Hadrianic scheme.⁵² Yet it may well

⁴⁹ *CPb* nos. 105 bis+211+Suppl. pp. 32–3; 138; 139; Birley, *Army* 173 ff. (on Repentinus).

⁵⁰ Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 275 n. 9; Alföldy, *Konsulat* 287. Syme, *Roman Papers* VI 584.

⁵¹ Dio LXXI.33.4–5 gives the date; LXX.3.3; *HA M. Ant.* 12.4–8; *Marc.* 7.3.

⁵² The association: *FLA Marc.* 7.5; *Verus* 2.11. On the sources for the reign, cf. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 226 ff. Dio is fragmentary, while the *HA* offer Lives not only of Marcus but of L. Verus and Avidius Cassius (and the *vitae* of Commodus and his three successors also supply relevant information). The *vita Marci* is seriously defective for the period c. 170–80. 17.1–18.2 is adapted from Eutropius VIII.13.1–14.2, summarizing the second half of the reign, as if the author intended to conclude; but the *vita* in fact continues for another eleven chapters. The *vita Veri* was shown by Barnes (1967) to be based

be that he believed that it made good sense to share the responsibilities of the imperial position. After all, Augustus' heirs Gaius and Lucius, and Tiberius' heirs Germanicus and Drusus, had been seen as prospective joint rulers.

Lucius was duly granted tribunician power, *imperium* and the name of Augustus. Further, he and Marcus now altered their own personal names. Out of respect for Pius, Marcus assumed the name Antoninus, while Lucius gave up the name Commodus which he had borne from birth, and took instead Marcus' name Verus. The two emperors were thus 'Marcus Aurelius Antoninus' and 'Lucius Aurelius Verus'.⁵³ Marcus naturally had greater *auctoritas*, having been endowed with imperial attributes for so long, and having had the name 'Caesar' since 139. He was nearly ten years older than Verus, had been consul once more, and he, not Verus, was *pontifex maximus*. There was also, perhaps, a question what the long-term outcome might be. Marcus had been married for more than fifteen years. Faustina had already had nine children, of whom four, all girls, were still alive, and she was once again pregnant. The birth took place on 31 August 161: she bore twin sons, who were given the names of T. Aurelius Fulvus Antoninus (i.e. Pius' names) and L. Aurelius Commodus (the names Lucius had had until he became L. Verus). The imperial coinage, which had already celebrated the *concordia Augustorum*, could now advertise *felicitas temporum*. But what the future position of Marcus' sons vis-à-vis Verus might be was not clear. Verus himself was still unmarried, apparently, although thirty years old. But he was now betrothed to the eldest of Marcus' surviving daughters, Lucilla, who was just eleven.⁵⁴

The new emperors were popular with the people of Rome, who particularly approved the fact that they conducted themselves *civiliter*, with lack of pomp, and permitted freedom of speech. A writer of comedies named Marullus criticized them openly and got away with it. Hence 'no one missed the lenient ways of Pius'. Fronto, as was to be expected, was overjoyed to see two of his pupils wearing the purple and expressed himself in his usual style. Marcus had been re-reading the speech delivered by Fronto in 142, when he was suffect consul, in which, to his eulogy of Pius Fronto had added praise of Marcus himself. Fronto now commented that 'there was

on a reliable source, in his view the 'Ignotus' postulated by Syme (n. 1 above), although it could just as well be adapted from Marius Maximus' two volume *vita* of Marcus (*HA Avid. Cass.* 9.5). The *vita* of Cassius is mainly fictional, except for a few passages dealing with the revolt in 175. Fronto's *Letters* and Marcus' own *Meditations* are naturally of prime importance.

⁵³ This change of names was to lead to confusion, notably on the part of the ecclesiastical historian Eusebius and the author of the *Historia Augusta*; the latter, although registering the renaming more or less accurately, goes astray with the assertion that L. Verus was also called Antoninus, a mistaken idea which crops up elsewhere in the work. Even worse, the name Verus, first borne by Lucius from 161 onwards, is assumed to have been his from birth and to have been borne by his father (L. Aelius Caesar). – *HA Marc.* 7.6–7; *Verus* 3.8–4.1; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iv.14.10, etc.; *HA Marc.* 7.7; *Verus* 1.3.

⁵⁴ Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 247–8; *RIC* III M. Aurelius nos. 1–11, 12–14, etc.; *HA Marc.* 7.7.

then an outstanding natural ability in you; there is now perfected excellence. There was then a crop of growing corn; there is now a ripe, gathered harvest. What I was hoping for then, I have now. The hope has become reality.' In a letter to Verus he expressed his gratitude that 'you and your brother, placed amid such powerful resources, surrounded by such a multitude of men of all sorts and all ranks, on whom you strew your love, bestow on me also some portion of it'.⁵⁵

In a letter written soon after his accession, from Lanuvium, Marcus asked Fronto for some reading matter, perhaps 'some poet, for I need distraction . . . by reading something that will uplift and diffuse my pressing anxieties'. There were indeed soon plenty of reasons for Marcus to be anxious. He had begun 'by giving himself wholly to philosophy, and seeking the affection of the citizens'. He continued to attend lectures, notably those by Sextus of Chaeronea. 'If you had both a mother and a stepmother', he was to write later, 'you would wait upon your stepmother but would still constantly return to your mother. This is now what philosophy and the palace are to you.' Trouble began with a severe flood of the Tiber, destroying many buildings in the city, drowning large numbers of animals and leaving serious famine in its wake. 'All these matters Marcus and Verus dealt with personally.' Italian communities that had been hit by serious food shortages were relieved by the use of the *annona*. But the most disturbing problem was external. The 'foreign kings' with whom the dying Pius had been 'angry' were clearly those on Rome's eastern frontier. The change of ruler at Rome had perhaps emboldened the Parthian king Vologaeses III. At any rate, he entered Armenia, expelled its ruler and installed his own nominee, Pacorus.⁵⁶

The governor of Cappadocia, M. Sedatius Severianus, took action, moving into Armenia with one of his legions. But he was trapped by the leading Parthian general Chosrhoes at Elegeia, high up by the headwaters of the Euphrates. After a short attempt at resistance, he realized that his position was hopeless and committed suicide. His 'legion was wiped out', the sources indicate. If this must be taken literally, the identity of the legion is a puzzle. The answer may be that IX Hispana, last attested at York in the reign of Trajan, and at some time in the early second century based at Nijmegen in Lower Germany, had been moved to Cappadocia. It had certainly ceased to exist by the time that a list of legions was set up at Rome shortly before 165. Severianus is described by Lucian, in a memorable phrase, as 'that silly Celt'. He was a Gaul, whose home was somewhere near Poitiers, who had had some military experience, but had become a devotee of the oracle-monger Alexander of Abonutichus, object of one of

⁵⁵ *HA Marc.* 8.1; Fronto, *Ad Ant. Imp.* 4.2.3; *Ad Verum Imp.* 1.2–3.

⁵⁶ *Ad Ant. Imp.* 4.1; *HA Marc.* 8.3–5, 11.3; *DIO LXXI.1.2*; *Med.* VI 12; *HA M. Ant.* 12.7, *Marc.* 8.6; *DIO LXXI.2.1*.

Lucian's most biting satires. Alexander, whose other backers included the proconsul of Asia, P. Mummius Sisenna Rutilianus (who had married Alexander's daughter) had apparently led Severianus to believe that he could easily win military glory.⁵⁷

Before long the Parthians went further, and invaded Syria. The governor, L. Attidius Cornelianus, who had been in the province since 157, was defeated and put to flight. Meanwhile news came of threats on other frontiers. In Britain, it seems that at this very time an attempt was being made to reoccupy the Antonine Wall. It was to be short-lived. The man appointed to govern Britain soon after the death of Pius, M. Statius Priscus, was selected to replace the fallen Severianus in Cappadocia. The new governor of Britain, Sex. Calpurnius Agricola, had not long before been serving in the recently enlarged Upper German province. In Britain he was soon at work refurbishing Hadrian's Wall. In Upper Germany itself, there was a threat from the Chatti beyond the *limes*. Marcus' close friend C. Aufidius Victorinus, a fellow-pupil and son-in-law of Fronto, was assigned to deal with it.⁵⁸

There were no doubt many major military decisions to make. Yet neither Marcus nor Verus had been given any training. It is striking that Pius had not seen fit to follow Hadrian's example – the despatch of Aelius Caesar to Pannonia in 137 was manifestly an attempt to give him suitable experience. It might have been well if Marcus had at least visited some of the frontier provinces. Pius, partly on financial grounds, no doubt, was stubbornly averse to such activity. An interesting piece of evidence suggests that Marcus may have felt the need to improve the quality of military appointments. The *ab epistulis* that he and Verus inherited from Pius, Sex. Caecilius Crescens Volusianus, was replaced by a man with a quite different background from any previous holder of the office. T. Varius Clemens, from Celeia in Noricum, had had a long military career, including active service in the Mauretanian war. More recently he had been in five successive provinces as procurator, in two cases as procurator-governor with a substantial auxiliary force (Mauretania Caesariensis and Raetia). The inference may be that Marcus felt a greater need to rely on the advice of his *ab epistulis* in making appointments than had been the case with his predecessors – that this official was involved in the appointments process is clear enough from Statius' poem in praise of the freedman *ab epistulis* Abascantus.

In addition to this measure, a variety of administrative and legislative activity is recorded. The creation of *iuridici* for regions of Italy was, at first

⁵⁷ IX Hispana: Birley (1981) 220 ff. Poitiers: *AE* 1981 no. 648. Lucian, *Alex.* 4, 27, 30 ff.; *Quom. hist. conser.* 21, 24, 25.

⁵⁸ *PIR*² A 1341. Britain: Breeze and Dobson (1987) 124 ff.; Birley (1981) 123 ff., 127 ff.; *HA Marc.* 8.7–8; Dio LXXII.11.3; Eck (1985) 65–6, 67 ff. Daniels (1991) 48 ff., surveys the evidence for frontier disturbances in Britain and Germany in the 150s and 160s, concluding that Scotland was not abandoned until c. 168–9.

sight, a revival of the Hadrianic scheme. But the new officials were junior, ex-praetors, with limited authority, unlike Hadrian's consular legates, who had been in effect governors of four Italian 'provinces'. Further, Marcus 'appointed *curatores* from the Senate for many communities, so that he might give wider scope to the exercise of authority by senators'. This motive, which echoes that attributed by Suetonius to Augustus, when he 'invented new offices' ('nova officia excogitavit') may be correct. However, growing economic difficulties, which had already led to the debasement of the coinage in the years 161–6, may have made the appointment of *curatores rei publicae* from the highest order in the state seem a desirable means of keeping local finances under control. The *Historia Augusta* lays great stress on Marcus' conscientious attention to the administration of justice and to his respect for the Senate. One may note here the assignment of one of the praetors to cases of trusteeship, as *praetor tutelaris*. The legal codes preserve a number of cases with which Marcus dealt; together with others recorded epigraphically (notably at Athens) they produce an overall picture of the emperor at work: 'a painstaking thoroughness and attention to detail; an overcareful insistence on elaborating obvious or trivial points; purism in the use of both the Greek and Latin languages; an earnestness which produces an attitude to the pretensions of the Greeks far more serious-minded than Pius'.⁵⁹

VII. THE PARTHIAN WAR OF L. VERUS, 162–166

At some stage in the winter of 161–2, when the news from the east was bad and the Syrians were in a rebellious mood, it was decided that one of the emperors must go to the front in person. L. Verus was chosen, 'because he was physically robust and younger than Marcus, and better suited to military activity', Dio says. Marcus himself was to remain at Rome, where the presence of an emperor was required. There was thus an almost immediate demonstration, so it might be argued, of the value of joint rule. Not surprisingly, the *Historia Augusta* has other explanations: Marcus sent Verus to the war 'either so that his immorality could not be carried on in the city, under the eyes of all, or so that he would learn thrift by travel abroad, or so that he would return as a reformed character through the fear inspired by warfare, or so that he might realize that he was an *imperator*'.⁶⁰

A full and experienced staff was chosen. One of the two praetorian prefects, Furius Victorinus – vastly more experienced than his colleague

⁵⁹ Volusianus, Clemens: *CPb* nos. 142, 156. *Stat. Silv.* v.1.83 ff.; Birley (1953) 142 ff., 151 ff.; 105–6, 154, 174 ff. *invidici*: *HA Marc.* 11.6; Eck, *Organisation* 249 ff. *curatores*: *HA Marc.* 11.2; Suet. *Aug.* 37. Coinage: Walker (1978) III 125–6; *praetor tutelaris*: *HA Marc.* 10.11. See in general Williams (1976) 74, 78 ff. *HA Marc.* 9.7–12.6 deals with his legal and administrative activity, discussed by Schwendemann (1923) 28–51. ⁶⁰ Dio LXXI.1.3; *HA Verus* 5.8.

Cornelius Repentinus, who was said to owe his promotion (from *ab epistulis*) to prefect to the influence of Pius' mistress Galeria Lysistrate – and a portion of the Guard was naturally essential to an imperial *expeditio*. Likewise *comites* of senatorial rank would be needed. Interestingly enough – another reflection of the fact that Marcus and Verus themselves lacked experience, and that Marcus at least was aware of this – the *comites* from this reign were all men of consular standing, and could be said to form a kind of 'General Staff'. The most senior of all for this war was M. Pontius Laelianus (*cos.* 144), whose army service had begun forty years earlier as tribune of VI Victrix when it was moved to Britain from Lower Germany; he had subsequently commanded a legion and governed both Pannonias and then Syria in the early 150s. Laelianus was suitably described by Fronto a few years later as 'a serious man and an old-fashioned disciplinarian'. Another *comes* was M. Iallius Bassus (*cos. c.* 159), who had just begun service as governor of Moesia Inferior. There was, however, a curious choice as new governor of Syria to replace Attidius Cornelianus: Marcus appointed his first cousin, M. Annius Libo (*cos.* 161), who as a patrician recent consul was presumably a coeval of L. Verus and equally lacking in military experience. Libo and Verus were to quarrel, Libo offending Verus by announcing that he would write to Marcus for advice when in doubt. Then Libo died suddenly, and poison was suspected. Whatever the explanation for his death, it looks as if Marcus may have intended Libo to have been his 'man on the spot', to keep an eye on Verus. How long the appointment lasted is not clear; the experienced Cn. Iulius Verus was in office as legate of Syria between 163 and 166, and may have taken up the post at an early stage in the war.⁶¹

L. Verus departed at a leisurely pace in the summer of 162, 'feasting in the country houses' along his route to Brundisium, and falling ill at Canusium. The journey east was by way of Corinth and Athens, a 'royal progress' it might be said, with musicians and singers in attendance. At Athens Verus stayed with Herodes Atticus and was initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries. Thence he sailed to Ephesus, where his presence is recorded by the inscription of the local notable Vedius Antoninus, and around the coasts of Asia, Pamphylia and Cilicia to Syria. Whether he reached Antioch by the end of 162 is not clear.⁶²

In the meantime the eastern armies had been strongly reinforced. Three entire legions were transferred from the north: I Minervia from Germania Inferior, II Adiutrix from Pannonia Inferior, and V Macedonica from Moesia Inferior. The first and last of these, under their legates M. Claudius

⁶¹ Victorinus: *CPh* no. 139. Repentinus: *HA M. Ant.* 8.9; Camodeca (1981); Birley *Army* 173 ff. Laelianus: *ILS* 1094+1100; Fronto, *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.1. Bassus: *PIR*² 1 4. Libo: *HA Verus* 9.2; *AE* 1972 no. 657. Iulius Verus: *CIL* III 199; Birley (1981) 118 ff.

⁶² *HA Verus* 6.9; *I Eph* 728, 3072; Halfmann, *Itinera* 210–11.

Fronto and P. Martius Verus, served initially under Statius Priscus in Armenia, where great successes were achieved in 163. II Adiutrix was evidently assigned to the Syrian army, which also received detachments of the Danubian legions, brought by Geminus Marcianus, legate of X Gemina. Priscus stormed and captured the Armenian capital Artaxata and by the end of 163 Verus took the title ‘Armeniicus’ – which Marcus modestly declined to accept until the following year, although he did take the acclamation as ‘imp. II’ at the same time as Verus. Verus, indeed, had done little enough to earn any glory, staying mostly at Antioch, but part of the winter at Laodicea and the summer at Daphne, the resort on the outskirts of Antioch. He had acquired a mistress, hardly the ‘low-born girl-friend’ that the *Historia Augusta* unkindly calls her, but the beautiful Panthea, described in rapturous terms by Lucian. There was no doubt work to be done at Antioch, not least to retrain and reorganize the Syrian army – described by Fronto in terms recalling the situation before Corbulo’s arrival over a century earlier. The men had spent more time lounging at tables in open-air cafés than with their units. Pontius Laelianus undertook formidable kit inspections and clamped down heavily on drinking and gambling in camp. Verus is claimed by Fronto to have taken a personal hand and to have set an example, ‘marching on foot as often as he rode, enduring blazing sun and choking dust, exposing his head to sun, rain, hail and snow – and to missiles’.⁶³

In the early stages of the war Fronto heard little from Verus, but after a long interval received an apology for the silence. ‘I was unwilling to describe in detail plans which were liable to be altered daily’, Verus wrote, ‘and I did not wish to make you . . . a partner in my anxieties, which have made me completely miserable day and night, and almost made me despair of success.’ He had apparently attempted negotiation with Vologaeses after the Armenian victory. But the Parthians were in no mood to give way. During 163, while Priscus was driving them out of Armenia, they evidently deposed the pro-Roman ruler of Osrhoene in north-western Mesopotamia, Mannus, and installed their own client. The Roman response was to move their forces further down the Euphrates – but, if Lucian’s reference to an engagement at Sura can be taken seriously, the Parthians may still have been on the Roman side of the river as late as 163. Then, probably before the end of 163, Dausara and Nicephorium on the northern, Parthian bank were occupied by Roman forces.⁶⁴

⁶³ Claudius Fronto: *PIR*² C 874; Martius Verus: *PIR*² M 348. II Adiutrix: *ILS* 8977. Marcianus: *CIL* VIII 7050–1. *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus nos. 233 ff.; *HA Marc.* 9.1; *Verus* 4.6 ff.; 6.1–5; 7.1–6; Fronto, *Princ. Hist.* 13; *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.1.22.

⁶⁴ Fronto, *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.1, esp. 22–3; *Princ. Hist.* 14. Osrhoene: *PIR*² M 169. Sura: Lucian, *Quom. bist. conscr.* 29. Dausara: Fronto, *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.1.5 (a letter of 164, Champlin (1974) 147, but the victories belong to 163, Astarita (1983) 41; Dausara, however, lies on the Euphrates, near Nicephorium, Dillemann (1962) 109).

Before Verus had been away long, Marcus decided that it was time for him to marry. Lucilla, whose thirteenth birthday fell in March 163, was sent out with her mother Faustina (who had in the meanwhile borne another son, given his father's original names M. Annius Verus) and Verus' uncle M. Vettulenus Civica Barbarus (*cos.* 157). 'In the middle of the war', either in late 163 or in 164, Verus and Lucilla were married at Ephesus. The union was to produce three children in the next few years: Lucilla was henceforth Augusta.⁶⁵

In 164 Armenia, now firmly under Roman control, was given a new capital, 'Kaine Polis', in place of Artaxata, and a new king who was a Roman citizen – indeed a senator of consular rank – and of Arsacid descent, C. Iulius Sohaemus. The installation was depicted on the imperial coinage of 164 with the legend REX ARMENIIS DATUS, and Verus sitting on a platform surrounded by his staff, while Sohaemus standing in front of him saluted. It is not clear where the ceremony took place: it may well have been at Antioch, or even Ephesus, rather than in Armenia itself. Marcus was now persuaded by Verus, in a despatch to the Senate, to accept the title 'Armeniacus'; his decision, and Verus' letter, formed the subject of a characteristically effusive letter from Fronto to his younger imperial pupil.⁶⁶

In 165 the Romans advanced into Mesopotamia. Edessa was occupied and the pro-Roman Mannus reinstalled in Osrhoene. The Parthians were pursued westwards to Nisibis, which was also captured. When the retreating enemy reached the Tigris their general Chosrhoes only escaped by swimming the river and taking refuge in a cave. This part of the campaign may have been led by the legate of V Macedonica, P. Martius Verus. In the meantime, C. Avidius Cassius, a Syrian from Cyrrhus, son of Hadrian's friend and *ab epistulis* Heliodorus, who was legate of III Gallica, took an expeditionary force down the Euphrates. A major battle took place at Dura. By the end of the year Cassius had taken his force far south, moved across Mesopotamia to attack the twin cities of Ctesiphon, on the left bank of the Tigris, and Seleuceia on the right. The Greeks of Seleuceia welcomed the Romans and opened their gates. The vast city, with a population supposedly as large as 400,000, still retained its Hellenic character. This support must have made it much easier for Cassius to complete the victory by capturing Ctesiphon and burning the royal palace. Yet he was to blacken his own reputation and that of Rome by failing to prevent his troops from sacking Seleuceia. Not surprisingly, a Roman version was to claim that 'the Seleuceni had broken faith first'. Whatever the truth, the action marked the

⁶⁵ *HA Marc.* 9.4–6; *Verus* 7.7. Barnes (1967) 72 dates the wedding to autumn 163, followed by Halfmann, *Itinera* 211. Augusta: *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus nos. 303 ff.

⁶⁶ Dio LXXI.3.1. Sohaemus: *RE* 3A.1 (1927) 798 ff.; *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus nos. 261 ff., 300 ff. Armeniacus: Fronto, *Ad Verum Imp.* 2.1.5–6.

end of one of the major outposts of Greek civilization in the East, not quite five hundred years after its foundation.⁶⁷

Cassius' army was suffering from shortage of supplies and from disease – some of his men had contracted the plague at Seleucia – but he led his forces back in good order. Laureled despatches were sent to Rome. Verus took the title Parthicus Maximus and he and Marcus became 'imp. III'. The bearer of the triumphant message was a young *tribunus laticlavus*, Iunius Maximus, who was serving with Cassius' legion III Gallica. As an inscription at Ephesus reveals, young Maximus was rewarded with lavish military *dona*, a cash bounty, and immediate designation to the quaestorship. By good fortune, his mission is also recorded in a letter from Fronto, whom he had visited, to Cassius: the young officer was a 'tireless eulogist of your labours, your plans, your effort and your ceaseless care', telling of Cassius' 'expeditionary marches and the discipline which you had restored and kept up to the ancient standard; then your most strenuous vigour in leading the column and your deliberate care in choosing the right moment for battle'. The largely bogus biography of Cassius in the *Historia Augusta* focuses not least on the general's reputation as a disciplinarian, which is indeed referred to in Fronto's letter. But, while he may have been a dashing and successful commander, his failure to prevent the sacking of Seleucia suggests that discipline may actually have been a weak point. At all events, Cassius went on in 166 to cross the Tigris into Media, leading to the assumption of a further title by Verus, 'Medicus', and the acclamation as 'imp. IV' for both emperors (Marcus now sharing 'Parthicus Maximus' after a token delay). Cassius and Martius Verus both became consul in 166, both of them doubtless still in their mid-thirties, as was their colleague M. Claudius Fronto, who had become consul in 165, probably as his reward for capturing Edessa. Claudius Fronto, together with the governor of Syria, Cn. Iulius Verus, had also been sent back to Italy, and had a new task assigned to them. In 166, Lucius Verus was now able to prepare for his own departure – with some reluctance. Cassius and Martius Verus were given further favour, being appointed governors, respectively, of Syria and Cappadocia.⁶⁸

The war resulted in a modest extension of Roman territory with the annexation of land as far as Dura. But, although Verus is called *propagator imperii* in an inscription at Ostia, there was no attempt now, as under Trajan,

⁶⁷ Mannus: *PIR*² M 169. Nisibis, Chosroes: Lucian, *Quom. hist. conscr.* 15, 19. Dura: Lucian, *Quom. hist. conscr.* 20, 28; Syme, *Roman Papers* v 689 ff. McDowell (1935) 124 ff. gives the date (end of 165). On the city: *RE* 2A.1 (1921) 1149 ff., esp. 1181–2. Roman version: *HA Verus* 8, 3–4.

⁶⁸ 'imp. III': *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus nos. 384 ff., 1248 ff., 1271 ff. Iunius Maximus: Alföldy and Halfmann (1979)=Alföldy, *Heeresgeschichte* 203 ff. (with addenda, 220–1); Fronto, *Ad amicos* 1.6. Cassius: Syme, *Roman Papers* v 699. 'imp. IV': *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus nos. 401 ff. 'Medicus' is not on coins but is frequent on inscriptions: P. Kneissl (1969) 99 ff. Consuls: Alföldy, *Konsulat* 179 ff. Claudius Fronto: *PIR*² C 874. Iulius Verus: *AE* 1956 no. 123. L. Verus: *HA Verus* 7.8–9. Cassius, Martius: Alföldy, *Konsulat* 24, 221.

to add new provinces to the empire. It was enough that Parthia had been taught a lesson: Rome's eastern neighbour was to remain quiescent for thirty years. Verus and his entourage probably reached Rome in late summer 166. In the meantime, the troops seconded from the Rhine and Danube were returning home, where they were badly needed. The sophist Flavius Damianus, secretary of the council at Ephesus, provided food over a period of thirteen months for the armies that passed through the city.⁶⁹

The triumph for the eastern victories was celebrated on 12 October. On this occasion, at the request of Verus, Marcus appointed his sons Commodus and Annius Verus as Caesars (Commodus' twin brother had died the previous year). Fronto had been making plans to write a history of the war, and Verus had directed Martius Verus and Avidius Cassius to furnish him with memoranda for the purpose. He was to complete no more than a kind of preface, the *Principia Historiae*. Almost certainly death prevented him writing more. He is likely to have been a victim of the plague, which reached Rome with the returning army, in particular the guard, and was to wreak havoc in the capital, reaching a peak in 167.⁷⁰

VIII. THE MARCOMMANIC WAR

'While the Parthian War was being waged, the Marcomannic War was born. For a long time it was held back by the skill of those who were on the spot, so that it could be waged after the eastern campaign was over', the *Historia Augusta* reports. The removal of three whole legions and a considerable quantity of other troops had made the long-drawn-out frontier dangerously weak. As early as 165, it seems, Iulius Verus and Claudius Fronto were commissioned to raise two new legions, evidently in northern Italy. They were at first named II Pia and III Concors, suitably advertising dynastic unity; later both were to have the name Italica.⁷¹

The 'German or Marcomannic War – or rather, war of many nations', as the *Historia Augusta* expresses it, is generally regarded as marking a turning-point for the empire. From Trajan's accession until the 160s the Germans seem to have been quiescent. The new province of Dacia neutralized a large area north of the lower Danube; and, while Hadrian abandoned transdanubian territory attached to Moesia Inferior, he had been able to reduce the legionary establishment in Dacia itself to the single unit, XIII Gemina. Late in his reign, his despatch of Aelius Caesar to Pannonia suggests the possibility of trouble from the Quadi and their eastern neighbours, the Sarmatian Jazyges of the Hungarian plain. Roman approval of a new king for the Quadi early in the reign of Pius apparently indicates the

⁶⁹ Ostia: *CIL* XIV 106. Damianus: *AE* 1959 no. 13.

⁷⁰ Triumph: *HA Marc.* 12.7–10; 12.8 with *Comm.* 11.13 gives the date. Fronto: Champlin, *Fronto* 115–16, 139 ff. Plague: Littmann (1973).

⁷¹ *AE* 1956 no. 123; *PIR*² C 874; *RE* 12.2 (1925) 1468, 1532.

settling of the problem. Some fighting in Dacia at the beginning and end of his reign may have had purely internal origins. As for the Rhine frontier, the modest extension of the *limes* in Germania Superior in the 150s may have been successful in deterring trouble in that area in the 160s and 170s. There were some disturbances to the north, from the Chatti, as the *Historia Augusta* records: archaeology attests to destruction at forts in the Wetterau; but Marcus' friend Victorinus evidently warded off any further attack. In the 170s the Chauci caused trouble extending into Belgica, and emergency measures had to be taken. But in general it was the Danube provinces, particularly the central and upper Danube, which were affected.⁷²

Appian, writing his *Roman History* in the early 160s, had seen ambassadors from 'poor and unprofitable barbarian peoples at Rome, offering themselves as subjects – but the emperor [presumably Antoninus Pius] would not accept men who would be no use to him'. The evidence from the very fragmentary literary sources for the wars confirms this hint that pressure was building up between the Danube and the Baltic. The *Historia Augusta* speaks of 'tribes which had fled before the pressure of remoter barbarians threatening war unless they were taken into the empire'. One early incursion involved one of these 'remoter' tribes, the Langobardi. Significantly, some of the invaders had their women with them. Marcus was to settle 'vast numbers', not only in the northern provinces, from Germany to Moesia, but in Italy itself – until some given land at Ravenna seized the town; the rest were then expelled and no more were accepted. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the long migration of the Goths, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, was part of the process, of the upheaval, which was to see Italy invaded by 'barbarians' for the first time since the Cimbri and Teutones in the late second century B.C.⁷³

The threat from the north had not been ignored: the removal of the troops to reinforce the army of the East was a calculated gamble. The raising of two additional legions in 165–6 was a sign that major steps were planned. A further measure was the transfer of V Macedonica, on its return from the East, from Moesia Inferior to Dacia, the three constituent parts of which were reunited under a legate of consular rank. The first consular governor seems to have been the experienced Calpurnius Agricola, who had already governed two major frontier provinces, Germania Superior and Britain. Whether Marcus and his advisers were planning an expedition across the Danube – or even annexation of new territory – as early as 165, when the raising of the new legions began, it is not clear. The intention may simply have been to strengthen the upper Danube, as was subsequently done when Raetia and Noricum each received a legion. However, before

⁷² *HA Marc.* 22.7; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius*, esp. 249 ff. Chauci: *HA Did. Inl.* 1.7–8; *Marc.* 22.10.

⁷³ *App. pref.* 7; *HA Marc.* 14.1; *Dio LXXI.3.12*; *HA Marc.* 24.3; *Dio LXXI.11.4–5*.

any measures had been implemented, the first invasions came. Late in 166 or early in 167 a band of 'six thousand Langobardi and Obii' burst into Pannonia. They were repelled by a mixed force under a cavalry officer, Macrinus Avitus (whose father was soon to become praetorian prefect), and an infantry commander named Candidus. A diploma from Panonia Inferior of May 167 gives the emperors the title 'imp. V', otherwise not attested until the following year: it may provide an indication of the date and location of the incursion. It was followed by a delegation of eleven tribes, whose spokesman was the Marcomannic king Ballomarius; they sued for peace with the legate of Pannonia Superior, Iallius Bassus. It was granted, and ratified with oaths. But perhaps at this very time there was trouble in Dacia, where the gold mines were evidently attacked soon after the end of May.⁷⁴

Marcus planned to go to the northern provinces in person in 167, but the virulence with which the plague affected Rome and Italy caused him to defer his departure. The great doctor, Galen, who was at Rome in 166, left for his native Pergamum shortly afterwards to avoid the outbreak. The *Historia Augusta* gives a confused but graphic account: 'The dead were carried away on carts and wagons . . . the plague carried off many thousands, including many prominent figures: Antoninus erected statues to the most eminent among them. Such too was his kindness of heart that he ordered funeral ceremonies for the common people to be carried on, even at public expense.' A number of rescripts of Marcus and Verus in the *Digest* reflect the increase in the death-rate and difficulties over burial. Religious ceremonies were carried out to assuage public hysteria – according to the *Historia Augusta*, because of the 'extreme dread of a war with the Marcomanni' (*tantus timor belli Marcomannici*): the plague is the more probable reason. Priests were summoned, foreign religious rites performed, and the city purified. The *lectisternium* was celebrated for seven days. It may be that the combination of public panic and special religious measures influenced an instance of anti-Christian activity, leading to the accusation and sentence of Justin and others before the city prefect Iunius Rusticus.⁷⁵

Marcus was still at Rome on 6 January 168, when he addressed the guard in their barracks. No doubt other matters formed the major part of his speech: all that is preserved is a new privilege for veteran praetorians – their fathers-in-law were to have the same privileges from the birth of a grandson as would have accrued from the birth of a son. This was conceivably to offset unpopularity of guardsmen, perhaps regarded as responsible for

⁷⁴ *RE* 12.1 (1924) 1297 ff. Agricola: Alföldy, *Konsulat* 222–3; Eck (1985) 65 ff. Avitus: *PIR*² M 22. Diploma: *CIL* XVI 123, cf. *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus no. 450, etc. Delegation: Dio LXXI.3.1a. Mines: *CIL* III 921–60.

⁷⁵ Galen: Littmann (1973). *HA Marc.* 13.1–6; Zwiicker (1941) 63 ff.; *Dig.* XLVII.12.3.4; XI.7.39; XI.7.14.14; XI.7.6.1 (cf. I.8.6.5, I.8.7); II.4.3. Justin: Musurillo (1972) 42 ff.

bringing the plague to Rome. The nature of the epidemic is uncertain: smallpox, exanthematous typhus and bubonic plague have been suggested. Its seriousness is unquestionable, although there is debate as to its scale.⁷⁶

Marcus and Verus finally departed in the spring of 168, accompanied by the praetorian prefect Furius Victorinus and a number of senior *comites*, including another veteran of the Parthian campaign, Pontius Laelianus, a former governor of Pannonia Superior, as was also Dasumius Tullius Tuscus; besides these there were Aufidius Victorinus, Vitrasius Pollio (husband of Marcus' cousin) and Claudius Fronto. Reports from the north were discouraging. The Marcomanni and a lesser known tribe, the Victuali, as well as others 'were throwing everything into disorder: under pressure from more distant barbarians, they threatened war unless they were allowed into the empire'. The arrival of the emperors at Aquileia caused 'most of the kings, with their peoples, to withdraw, and execute those responsible for the disturbances', and the Quadi, whose king was 'lost', would not confirm the new ruler until their choice had been approved by the emperors. Such is the condensed account in the *Historia Augusta*. It does not permit the inference that the tribes had actually been besieging Aquileia, an event which seems not to have occurred until later. Verus, at this juncture, was unwilling to proceed further, 'because Furius Victorinus had been lost and part of the army had perished' – surely from plague, rather than enemy action. Galen, who had been summoned to the emperors' side, records the large numbers of deaths from this cause later that year at Aquileia.⁷⁷

Marcus was adamant that the barbarians were merely feigning retreat, and that the great expeditionary force should press forward. 'Finally, having crossed the Alps, they proceeded a considerable distance and settled everything pertinent to the defence of Italy and Illyricum.' It was Marcus' first journey outside Italy – as for Verus, he may have been in Pannonia as a boy thirty years earlier, when his father Aelius Caesar was there. The measures taken – *omnia quae ad munimen Italiae atque Illyrici pertinebant* – echo closely the titlature of the special command datable to c. 168, held by Q. Antistius Adventus, imperial legate of the *praetentura Italiae et Alpium* ('defence zone of Italy and the Alps') in the German expedition. Adventus had commanded II Adiutrix in the Parthian War, and then governed Arabia. His force evidently included the new legions II and III Italicæ.

The emperors returned to winter at Aquileia. But by midwinter the ravages of the plague caused Marcus to accept Galen's recommendation that they should leave – Verus urging this, the *Historia Augusta* claims. After only two days' journey Verus had a seizure in the imperial carriage, near

⁷⁶ *Frag. Vat.* 195. Plague: Littmann (1973).

⁷⁷ *HA Marc.* 14.1–4; *Verus* 9.7. Furius: *CPh* no. 139. Laelianus: *ILS* 1094+1100. Dasumius: *ILS* 1081. Aufidius: Alföldy (1969) 38 ff. Pollio: *ILS* 1112–13. Fronto: *ILS* 1098. *HA Marc.* 14.1–4; Galen *xix.18k; On prognosis* 9.6.

Altinum, where he died three days later, at the end of 168 or in January 169.⁷⁸

Marcus returned to Rome with the body and Verus was duly deified. The college of priests established eight years earlier for the cult of the deified Antoninus Pius now became the *sodales Antoniniani Veriani*. Marcus spent the next eight months preparing for a renewed expedition. There was now a serious financial problem. The silver coinage, already debased from 161–6, then restored for a few years, was once again given this treatment. As a symbolic gesture, Marcus held an auction at Rome, in the Forum of Trajan, of imperial property, including ‘clothing, drinking cups and gold vessels, statues and paintings by great artists’. The new legions meant a considerable increase in expenditure. New auxiliary units were also enrolled. Slaves were accepted as volunteers and received their freedom on enlistment. Gladiators were formed into special units, and there is mention of the recruitment of ‘brigands’ from Dalmatia and Dardania, and of the forming into regular units of *diogmitae*, the police forces of the Greek cities.⁷⁹

Before the mourning period for Verus was over, Marcus found a new husband for his widowed daughter, the Augusta, Lucilla. The bridegroom was Ti. Claudius Pompeianus, a *novus homo* from Antioch. Marcus had perhaps recently had the opportunity of seeing Pompeianus at close quarters: he was governing Pannonia Inferior in May 167 and may still have been in office when Marcus was in Pannonia in 168. To Lucilla and her mother the match was unwelcome – Pompeianus was certainly more than twice Lucilla’s age, even if *grandaevio*, the term used in the *Historia Augusta*, is an exaggeration. Pompeianus was to become one of Marcus’ main military advisers. No doubt he and Lucilla accompanied the imperial party when the expedition resumed. It is worth mentioning Marcus’ choice of husbands for his other daughters. Annia Faustina was married to Cn. Claudius Severus, son of Marcus’ philosophic mentor of the same name; he was from a Greek family in Paphlagonia, and its third consul. Severus and Pompeianus were to receive second consulships in 173. Fadilla’s husband was to be the nephew of Verus, Plautius Quintillus, son of Ceionia Fabia and descended through his father from the Avidii and the Plautii of Trebula Suffenas. She and her younger sister Cornificia, born in 159 and 160 respectively, were presumably not given husbands until the early 170s. Cornificia was married to Petronius Sura Mamertinus, grandson or grand-nephew of

⁷⁸ *HA Marc.* 14.6, *Verus* 9.8; *AE* 1982 no. 777, Carnuntum, supposed to attest the presence of Marcus and Verus there in June 168, has been mistakenly restored; the inscription has no bearing on the emperor’s presence there (and its date is not 168 anyway). Šašel (1974); Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 251. Galen: see n. 77. *HA Marc.* 14.7–8; *Verus* 9.10–11; Barnes (1967) 73.

⁷⁹ *HA Marc.* 15.3–4; 20.1–5; Pflaum (1966); *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and L. Verus nos. 513 ff., 1359 ff. Coinage: Walker (1978) III. Auction: Eutropius VII.13.2; *HA Marc.* 17.4–5; 21.6–9.

Antoninus' praetorian prefect Petronius Mamertinus, and a kinsman of Fronto. The youngest daughter, Vibia Aurelia Sabina, was at most three years old at this time. Her eventual husband, whom she may not have married until after her father's death, was L. Antistius Burrus, son or nephew of the commander of the *praetentura Italiae et Alpium*. Certainly, Pompeianus' non-senatorial origin made him unsuited to the imperial position, as it was then conceived. This is hardly true of the others: they were all from consular families. Not long after the re-marriage of Lucilla, the younger of Marcus' surviving sons, M. Annius Verus Caesar, died after an operation for a tumour. This left the eight-year-old Commodus as sole heir: Verus' and Lucilla's only surviving child was a daughter.⁸⁰

It was almost autumn when Marcus left once more for the north, accompanied by at least one of the praetorian prefects, M. Bassaeus Rufus, who had replaced Furius Victorinus. The other prefect Marcus had inherited from Pius, Cornelius Repentinus, had also been replaced, by Macrinus Vindex. Consular *comites*, the empress Faustina and at least her youngest child Sabina, were in attendance. Marcus' base for the winter of 169–70 was probably Sirmium, and it seems that it was then that he had to adjudicate in a famous case. The great Athenian Herodes Atticus was once more embroiled with his enemies at home, Demostratus in particular. He prosecuted them before the proconsul, but Demostratus and his friends had the support of the influential Quintilii brothers, at that time in Achaëa as special commissioners. Demostratus and Herodes' other enemies appealed to Marcus, and the case came to Sirmium, as Philostratus records. 'Now the emperor was based among the peoples of Pannonia, with his headquarters at Sirmium, and Demostratus and his friends lodged near the imperial residence. Marcus provided them with supplies and often asked if they needed anything . . . His wife and little daughter, who still could not speak properly' urged Marcus to support the appellants. 'His little daughter especially used to fall at her father's knee and implore him with many blandishments to save the Athenians for her.' From a later reference to a 'three-year-old child' this must be Sabina. Before the hearing Herodes was driven frantic with grief by the sudden death of favourite servants, twin girls, and he launched a violent outburst against Marcus, leading Bassaeus Rufus to the conclusion that Herodes was asking to be sentenced to death. Marcus was indeed upset, but the verdict seems to have been a mild punishment for Herodes' freedmen; Herodes himself merely seems to have been advised to stay away from Athens for a while.⁸¹

The campaigning season of 170 was to open with a massive Roman

⁸⁰ Pflaum (1961); Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 247–8. *HA Marc.* 21.3–5.

⁸¹ Autumn: his son's death was in mid-Sept. during the games of Jupiter Optimus Maximus (*HA Marc.* 21.5; *Ital* XVIII 1 pp. 506 ff.). Rufus: *CPh* no. 162+add. Vindex: no. 161; *PIR*² M 25. Trial: Philostr. *vs* II.1.11–12K; the date has been established by di Vita-Evrard (1987).

offensive across the Danube. Some fighting had doubtless been taking place in the course of the previous year. Claudius Fronto, who had gone north in 168 as *comes* of Verus, had remained as governor of Moesia Superior, but before long added part of the recently reunited Dacian province, Apulensis, to his command, probably because the legate of the Tres Daciae, Calpurnius Agricola, had died. Then Fronto took over the whole of Tres Daciae, relinquishing Moesia Superior. The events of 170 and of the years that followed are nowhere fully or clearly recorded, and any account that can be pieced together must be in considerable part hypothetical. Coins of 170 record Marcus' *profectio* of the previous autumn and show an *adlocutio*, the normal sign that a campaign was being launched. Other coins herald Roman victories, perhaps won by Claudius Fronto. But the offensive across the Danube directed by Marcus met with disaster. The only clear statement is in Lucian's attack on the 'pseudo-prophet' Alexander, who apparently persuaded Marcus to win divine favour for his enterprise by casting two lions into the Danube. They merely swam to the other side and were despatched with clubs by the barbarians. 'Thereupon our side incurred its greatest blow, with the loss of almost twenty thousand men. Then followed what happened with Aquileia, and the city's narrow escape from capture', Lucian claims. Some of the detail may be exaggerated, but there is no denying that a Roman offensive met a severe setback followed by a barbarian invasion of Italy. The siege of Aquileia is also reported by Ammianus. Referring to the Quadi of his own day, he recalls their former strength, demonstrated by 'plundering raids once carried out with headlong speed, and Aquileia besieged by the same people, with the Marcomanni, and Opitergium wiped out, and many bloody deeds carried out in extremely swift military encounters – against which, when the Julian Alps had been breached, the earnest emperor Marcus could hardly make any resistance'.⁸²

If the *praetentura Italiae et Alpium* had been in place, the Marcomanni and Quadi should have been stopped. This has led many to conclude that it was only created after the invasion had taken place. It is more probable that it had been dismantled, after a short existence from 168 to the end of 169. The invaders seem to have outflanked Marcus on the west. Furthermore, in this year, 170, it is certain that the Balkans and Greece were invaded, by the Costoboci, a people of uncertain origin who lived to the north or north-east of Roman Dacia. In this crisis, Claudius Fronto once more was assigned to Upper Moesia, now jointly with the whole of the Tres Daciae. But 'after several successful battles against Germans and Jazyges, he fell,

⁸² Scheidel (1990) shows that the dating of the invasion of Italy to 170 is supported by analysis of the imperial coinage, confirming the arguments put forward by Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 250–1. *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius nos. 1371 ff., 531 ff. Lucian, *Alex.* 48; *Amm. Marc.* xxix.6.1.

fighting to the last for the republic', as his monument at Rome recorded. The Costoboci overran the frontier provinces, Thrace and Macedonia, even reaching Achaëa, where they destroyed the shrine of the Mysteries at Eleusis. In one or two places vigorous resistance was hurriedly organized by local levies, but havoc was created. A procurator, Vehilius Gratus Iulianus, was given a task force to clear Macedonia and Achaëa.⁸³

Meanwhile, the even more serious business of evicting the invaders from Italy and the Alpine provinces was assigned to Marcus' son-in-law Pompeianus, who took the procurator P. Helvius Pertinax (the future emperor) as his principal assistant. An equestrian officer, M. Valerius Maximianus, who had served in the Parthian War and was conveniently at hand in his home town of Poetovio, was given a variegated task-force from several of the fleets with strong cavalry support, to conduct supplies down the Danube to the Pannonian armies, cut off from Italy by land. The port of Salonae in Dalmatia was fortified in 170 by detachments from the new legions II and III, clearly to ensure the maintenance of sea-transport from Italy to the Danube–Balkan zone. Elsewhere in the danger area, as at Philippopolis in Thrace, fortifications were built – but to discourage panic measures where they were unnecessary Marcus laid down that towns which wanted walls must seek imperial authority first.⁸⁴

In the course of 171 the Marcomanni were trapped at the Danube as they attempted to return home. Their force was destroyed and 'the booty returned to the provincials', the *Historia Augusta* records. Marcus accepted the acclamation as 'imp. VI', which appears on the coinage late in the year, together with VICTORIA GERMANICA. But, significantly, during most of 171 the coinage carried appeals to the unity and loyalty of the army. In the course of this year Marcus moved his headquarters to Carnuntum where he was to remain until 173.⁸⁵

During 171 other parts of the empire were also put to the test. The Moors invaded southern Spain. Marcus' response was to send his friend Aufidius Victorinus, who was given authority over Baetica as well as Tarraconensis, while the procurator Vehilius Gratus Iulianus, fresh from his emergency role in the Balkans, took his task-force to Spain. In Egypt, in the following year, there was an uprising of the so-called 'Herdsman' (Bucoli) of the Nile delta. Whoever these people were, the situation was serious enough to warrant the sending of Avidius Cassius, the governor of Syria, to assist in their suppression. In Armenia at this time the recently installed pro-Roman king Sohaemus was expelled. Martius Verus, legate of Cappadocia, was able to deal with the situation. A certain Tiridates was

⁸³ *praetentura*: n. 79 above. Costoboci: Paus x.34.4; Aristides, *Or.* xxii.31 (dated by proconsulship of Nonius Macrinus, 170–1); *ILS* 8030; *AE* 1964 no. 252. Fronto: *PIR*² c 874. Julianus: *CPh* no. 180.

⁸⁴ Dio LXXI.3.1–2; *HA Pert.* 2.4; *AE* 1956 no. 124; *ILS* 1327; *CIL* III 6121=7409; *Dig.* I 10.6.

⁸⁵ *HA Marc.* 21.10. *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius nos. 540–1, 1308, 1394 ff. Eutropius VIII.13.1.

arrested and sent to exile in distant Britain. Martius Verus also had to cope with mutiny among the garrison left in the newly built Armenian capital. Either at this time, or indeed perhaps at the time of the invasion of Italy, Marcus assigned to Avidius Cassius special powers over the whole of the East, presumably analogous to those given to L. Vitellius in A.D. 35 and Corbulo in 63.⁸⁶

In late 171 a period of intensive diplomatic activity began at Carnuntum, where the emperor received barbarian envoys. Extracts from Dio's account of the negotiations have been preserved.

Marcus Antoninus remained in Pannonia to receive the barbarian embassies. For many of them came to him at that time, some of which, led by a twelve-year-old boy named Battarius, promised alliance. They were given money, and succeeded in restraining Tarbus, chief of a neighbouring people, who had entered Dacia, demanding money and threatening war if he was not given it. Others asked for peace, such as the Quadi. It was granted them, first in the hope that they could be detached from the Marcomanni, second, because they gave Marcus many horses and cattle, and promised to surrender all deserters and captives as well – thirteen thousand at first, the rest later. But they were not given the right to attend markets, because it was feared that the Jazyges and Marcomanni, whom they had sworn not to receive and not to allow to pass through their country, would mingle with them, pretend to be Quadi, spy out Roman positions and buy provisions. As well as those that came to Marcus, many others sent envoys, some by tribes and some by nations, offering surrender. Some were sent on campaign elsewhere, as were also those captives and deserters that were fit; others received land

in the northern provinces or in Italy – in the latter case, as already mentioned (p. 166 above), the barbarian settlers had to be expelled.

Diplomatic activity was also conducted in Dacia by the new governor Cornelius Clemens, who rejected the request by the Astingi for land in Dacia. The fighting men left wives and children under Roman protection while they occupied the territory of the Costoboci, only to be attacked themselves by the other branch of the Vandals, the Lacinges. The result was to bring the Astingi firmly into alliance with Rome. To the west of Dacia, the Cotini, a people with strong Celtic elements, bordering the Quadi, received Taruttienus Paternus, *ab epistulis Latinis* (later praetorian prefect and an authority on military law) as negotiator, offering to join Rome in a campaign against the Marcomanni. But they failed to deliver and 'handled Paternus roughly, thereby bringing about their own destruction later'.⁸⁷

In 172 the long-postponed offensive into enemy territory at last began. The coins of the year show another *adlocutio* and Roman troops crossing a

⁸⁶ Moors: Alföldy, *Heeresgeschichte* 101 ff.; *CPh* no. 180. 'Bucoli': Dio LXXI.4, cf. LXXI.3.1; Philostr. *VS* II.1.13; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 174–5, 284 n. 32. Armenia: Dio LXXI.4; 3.11.

⁸⁷ Dio LXXI.11.1–5, 12.1–3, cf. 11.6. Paternus: *CPh* no. 172 (*gentilicium* from *AE* 1971 no. 534).

bridge, with the legend *VIRTUS AUG*. This scene is also depicted at the start of the column of Marcus in the Piazza Colonna.

The Marcomanni were evidently the first to be attacked, and it was probably in this campaign that they ‘were successful in a certain battle and killed Marcus Vindex the prefect’, as Dio reports. Vindex was difficult to replace. Marcus was to say a few years later that he would like to have made Pertinax praetorian prefect, but he was already ineligible, having become a senator after his work in expelling the invaders of Italy. The prefect of Egypt, Calvisius Statianus, might in other circumstances have been the natural choice, but had difficulties in his own province at this time. It is possible that Varius Clemens was given the post.⁸⁸

Two extraordinary episodes seem to belong to 172. Marcus is said to have ‘summoned a thunderbolt from heaven by his prayers and destroyed an enemy military engine’. This ‘Lightning Miracle’ is depicted in an early scene on the Aurelian Column and a series of coins from 172 shows Marcus being crowned by Victory and carrying the thunderbolt of Jupiter. The other event is even more remarkable and receives full attention from a variety of sources: the battle of the ‘Rain Miracle’, shown in graphic detail a few scenes after the first miracle on the Column. Weary Roman soldiers are shown in marching order. A legionary points to the sky and immediately to the right rain is falling. One man waters his horse, another drinks, some hold up their shields to collect the water. The downpour is personified as a frightening figure with gloomy face and long beard, whose hair melts into descending streams. This rain-spirit rushes forward over men and animals, while beneath him appears a prospect of dead barbarians and stricken horses. Dio referred the miracle to a battle against the Quadi, and reported that an Egyptian ‘magician’, in attendance on the emperor, had invoked the deity *Hermes Aerios* to confound the enemy and revive the Roman army. Dio’s epitomator, the Christian monk John Xiphilinus, indignantly accused Dio of suppressing the truth: Christian soldiers, he claimed, had prayed to the true God. This Christian version was clearly current soon after the event, being attested in a forged letter of Marcus attached to the manuscript of Justin’s *Apology* and by Tertullian, at the end of the second century. The pious fraud was not assisted by the claim that *legio XII* received its title ‘*Fulminata*’ as a result – it is already attested with this name in the first century. Besides, Dio’s version is substantiated by two separate pieces of evidence. The ‘magician’ Harnouphis (as he is better called) is attested as the dedicator of an altar to Isis at Aquileia, on which he styles himself ‘sacred scribe of Egypt’, while coins of 173 portray *Hermes* and seem to indicate that Marcus built a shrine to the god – the Egyptian *Thoth-Shou*. Orosius specifically states that only a small Roman

⁸⁸ *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius nos. 1425–7; Dio *LXXI*.3,5; *HA Pert.* 2.6, 9; *CPh* no. 166.

force was present, while in his *Chronicle* Eusebius asserts that the Roman commander was Pertinax, at this time legate of the Brigetio legion I Adiutrix. Further, the forged Christian letter places the event among the Cotini, rather than the Quadi. The conclusion is legitimate that after disposing of the Marcomanni Marcus turned against the Quadi, who had 'received in their own land any Marcomannian fugitives who were hard pressed while that tribe was still at war with Rome'. By the end of 172, the victory over the Marcomanni led to Marcus being given the title 'Germanicus', assumed also by his son Commodus, whose biography dates the occasion to 15 October.⁸⁹

During 173 the war against the Quadi presumably continued, with other tribes being involved, among them the Naristae, against whom a striking success was achieved by the equestrian officer Valerius Maximianus. The latter, now commanding a cavalry regiment, killed the chief of the Naristae, Valao, with his own hands (an event possibly depicted on the Column); he was 'publicly praised by the emperor and presented with a horse, *phalerae* and arms', as well as being promoted to command a military *ala*. A.D. 173 was the third successive year that Marcus spent at Carnuntum, where he began writing his *Meditations*. Book II, probably the first to be written, bears the heading 'At Carnuntum', while the third is described as composed 'Among the Quadi on the Granua'. The River Gran or Hron flows through Slovakia into the Danube, near the boundary of the Quadi and the Jazyges, against whom Rome turned next, after imposing on the Quadi similar terms to those given the Marcomanni. But the Quadi once again broke faith by assisting the Jazyges, evidently in 174. Further, they failed to hand over all the captives and deserters as promised – 'only a few, that could neither be sold nor employed usefully'; or, if they did hand back any in good condition, they kept their relatives, 'so that the men handed over would desert again to join them'. The mention of deserters is an important indication of the lowering of Roman morale. This situation is reflected by a rescript of Marcus enacting that ransomed captives did not regain their rights until they had repaid their ransome money.⁹⁰

When the Quadi expelled their pro-Roman ruler Furtius and the hostile Ariogaesus took power, Marcus set a price on his head and rejected the conciliatory offer of the surrender of fifty thousand captives in return for a renewal of the peace treaty. As it turned out, Ariogaesus was duly captured and sent to detention in Alexandria. By 174 Marcus had moved from Carnuntum to Sirmium, a more suitable base for a campaign against the Jazyges of the Hungarian plain. Virtually nothing is recorded of this

⁸⁹ *HA Marc.* 24.4; *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius nos. 566–7; Dio LXXI.8–10; *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius nos. 609 ff.; Orosius VII.15.10; Jerome, *Chron.* ad. a. 2189 (a.d. 173). Forged letter: a convenient text in Haines' edition of Fronto, II.300 ff. Fugitives: Dio LXXI.13.2. Germanicus: Dio LXXI.3.5; *HA Comm.* 11.14.

⁹⁰ Maximus: *AE* 1956 no. 124; *CPb* no. 181 bis; Rossi (1977). Captives: Levy (1943).

second, 'Sarmatian' phase of the war, other than an excerpt from Dio describing, as a curiosity, a winter battle on the frozen Danube. In the course of 174 the Jazyges sued for peace. Since the chief who made overtures, Banadaspus, was imprisoned by his own people, Marcus' decision to reject them was no doubt prudent. In the course of 174, Marcus accepted a seventh imperial acclamation, attributed by Dio to victory over the Quadi. Further, in an unprecedented move, Faustina was entitled *mater castrorum* ('mother of the Camp'). The campaigning season of 175 brought a renewed assault on the Jazyges. According to the *Historica Augusta*, Marcus was now determined to annexe substantial tracts of land beyond the Danube: north of Noricum and Pannonia Superior was to be the province of 'Marcomannia', while the great plain east of the Danube and west of Dacia was to be 'Sarmatia'. Part of the territory of the Marcomanni was already occupied by a detachment from the North African legion, III Augusta. Dio credits Marcus with the aim of exterminating the Sarmatians. But the campaign can have been under way for only a few weeks when news came that Avidius Cassius had rebelled, and had been recognized as emperor in most of the eastern provinces, including his native Syria and Egypt, but excluding Cappadocia.⁹¹

IX. THE REBELLION OF AVIDIUS CASSIUS

The rebellion is puzzling. Marcus had no warning in advance and was extremely disturbed when the news reached him in a despatch from Martius Verus, the loyal legate of Cappadocia. Both Dio and the *Historia Augusta* assert that Cassius made his move through the instigation of Faustina, who 'was in despair over her husband's ill-health', and, 'expecting him to die at any moment, she was afraid that the empire would fall to someone else as Commodus was rather young and naïve – and she would be reduced to a private station'. She is supposed to have persuaded Cassius to make preparations 'to take over both the empire and herself. While he was considering this, a message came that Marcus was dead . . . In spite of the fact that he learned the truth not long after, he did not change course but within a short time took control of all the region south of the Taurus, and began preparing to seize the throne by war.' Marcus had certainly been unwell, as both his doctor Galen and Dio attest, and his *Meditations* are full of references to the proximity of death. Faustina was, however, with Marcus, while his heir Commodus was at Rome. He was at once summoned to the front. The legate of Pannonia Inferior was sent to Rome with a special force, *ad tutelam urbis*, and Commodus left Rome on 19 May. On 7

⁹¹ Dio LXXI.13.1–14.2; 7.1–5; 10.5; 15.1–16.2; *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius 609 ff., 1463 ff.; Dio LXXI.16.1; *HA Marc.* 24.5–6; *ILS* 2747, cf. *CPh* no. 198.

July he was invested with the *toga virilis* and was commended to the army, thus indicating his capacity to succeed.⁹²

Cassius had been accepted as emperor in Egypt by 3 May, when a document is dated by his first year. But a papyrus from Oxyrhynchus makes it probable that he was confident of Egyptian support as early as April or even March, and indeed that he may have visited the province in person. In part of a letter written in the month Pharmouthi, which ended on 23 April, the writer, convincingly identified as Cassius, commends the good will shown towards him and announces his impending arrival, 'having been elected emperor by the most noble soldiers'. Then, he proceeds, 'being about to come into the sovereignty among you', he looks forward to commencing his beneficence by favour towards his 'native city' – Alexandria. Cassius may well have been born there when his father Heliodorus accompanied Hadrian, in the capacity of *ab epistulis*, in A.D. 130. Further, he may have spent some years there as a child when his father was prefect. The current prefect, Calvisius Statianus, an old friend of Fronto, backed Cassius. A fragmentary edict shows him instructing the people of Egypt to rejoice at the accession of the 'Lord Emperor Caesar Gaius Avidius [Cassius]' and to give thanks to the gods.⁹³ Cassius was of course at once declared a public enemy by the Senate, but he was supported not only in Egypt and Syria, but probably in Syria Palaestina and Arabia too, which gave him a potential total of seven legions. Still, Martius Verus remained loyal to Marcus, and so influential a figure as Herodes Atticus is reported to have indicated his attitude with a one-word letter: 'Mad!', according to Philostratus. Marcus had apparently tried to keep the news of the uprising secret, but when 'the troops became disturbed by the rumour' he addressed a speech to them. Dio's version, while a free composition, probably reflects the outline of what was said. Marcus lamented above all the disloyalty of 'a dearest friend' – Cassius could well have been a *sodalis Antoninianus Verianus*, appointed *ex amicissimis*. Dio reports that Marcus would have been willing, if the danger had been his alone, to set the 'issue' between Cassius and himself before the army or the Senate, and would have yielded the empire, 'if this had seemed to be for the common good. For it is for the common good that I continue to labour and undergo danger, and have spent so much time here outside Italy, although I am already old and weak, and unable to take food without pain or to sleep undisturbed.' The 'issue' between Marcus and Cassius may conceivably have been one of policy. The *Historia Augusta* records that there was a 'peace party' among the emperor's advisers. In the eastern provinces there must by now have been considerable opposition to

⁹² *HAMarc.* 24.6; Dio LXXI.22.3; 1.2; 6.3–4; 24.4; 36.2–3; *Med.* II.2; XI.17; *HAMarc.* 25.2; *Comm.* 1.10; 2.1; 12.1–3; *AE* 1920 no. 45.

⁹³ *SB* x 10295, convincingly identified by Bowman (1970). Further: Syme, *Roman Papers* v 695–6. Statianus: Sijpesteijn (1971).

the continuance of the northern wars, let alone to the policy of extending the empire by annexing new provinces.⁹⁴

The news that Marcus was facing civil war caused various barbarian tribes to offer assistance, which, according to Dio, Marcus declined. During his preparations to depart for the East, news was brought that Cassius had been killed by a centurion ‘after a dream of empire lasting three months and six days’. He was probably dead some time in July 175. Martius Verus had taken control of Syria. One of his first acts was to burn Cassius’ correspondence. Marcus still determined to go to the eastern provinces – where, in Egypt, he was already recognized as emperor again by 28 July. The news of Cassius’ death had apparently reached him ‘at the same time as news of many victories over different barbarians’ – the northern war had thus continued. But Marcus now decided to make peace. He took the title Sarmaticus and an eighth imperatorial acclamation. ‘The Jazyges were defeated and came to terms’, their king Zanticus came in person as a suppliant, and they were given the same terms as the Quadi and Marcomanni, except that the prohibited zone beyond the Danube was twice as large. They surrendered 100,000 captives and supplied 8,000 cavalry, 5,500 of which were sent to Britain, suggesting that trouble in that province was still unabated. There were also disturbances in northern Gaul, where an invasion of the Chauci was repelled by the governor of Belgica, Didius Iulianus, with hastily raised local levies.⁹⁵

Marcus was accompanied on his eastern journey, which probably began no later than the end of July, by Faustina, Commodus and one or more of his daughters, together with *comites* and a considerable body of troops. The latter included – despite Dio’s statement to the contrary – a force of Marcomanni, Quadi and Naristae, led by the redoubtable M. Valerius Maximianus, now with the rank of procurator, ‘to punish the eastern uprising’ (*ad vindictam orientalis motus*). It may be that the tribes which offered men were those already allied to Rome: their help may have been refused, whereas the Marcomanni and their neighbours may have been compelled to supply them. Marcus’ *comites* included Helvius Pertinax, who held a suffect consulship in 175, as colleague of Didius Iulianus. Marcus delivered a eulogy of Pertinax, son of a freedman, on the occasion of his consulship, which related ‘all that he had done and had suffered’. Some expressed their distaste that a man of such origin should hold the *fascēs* – not that he went to Rome: it was to be some years more, a total of ten after he became a senator, before he set foot in the *curia*. The Quintilii brothers, natives of Alexandria Troas, and senior advisers of the emperor, were also in the

⁹⁴ Herodes: Philostr. II.1.13K. Speech, ‘peace party’: Dio LXXI.23,3–26.4; *HA Marc.* 22.8. *Sodales*: Pflaum (1966), esp. 41, comparing *HA Marc.* 7.11 with *ILS* 8830, lines 5–8.

⁹⁵ Dio LXXI.27.14–18.1, 16.1: *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and Commodus 1513, 1523; *HA Did.* 1.7–8; *HA Marc.* 22.10.

party; their sons were evidently left on the Danube governing the two Pannonian provinces.⁹⁶

Marcus' route seems to have taken him down the Danube first, perhaps as far as Novae, then overland to Byzantium and into Bithynia. He proceeded to central Anatolia, perhaps to Ancyra, and then south-east towards the Taurus mountains. A little way beyond Tyana in Cappadocia, at a village called Halala, Faustina died. Dio suggests that she committed suicide to avoid punishment for her 'agreement' with Cassius. But she had borne at least fourteen children, was forty-five years old, and probably succumbed to natural causes – perhaps gout, which Dio also mentions. It is not excluded that she was once more pregnant, for in a passage of the ninth book of his *Meditations*, which seems to carry allusions to Cassius' revolt, Marcus was apparently expecting his wife to give birth again. She was deified by the Senate and her place of death was renamed Faustinopolis. Dio records that Marcus was very distressed by her death. Shortly after the bereavement Marcus wrote to the Senate on the question of Cassius' supporters, stressing that he wanted 'to keep his reign unstained by the blood of any senator'. One of the usurper's sons, Maecianus, had been killed soon after his father's death; the other, Heliodorus, was banished, and his daughter and son-in-law were placed under the protection of their uncle by marriage, presumably the Lycian senator Claudius Titianus. A decree was now enacted prohibiting anyone from governing his province of origin.⁹⁷

It was at about this time that Marcus received a letter from Herodes Atticus, asking 'why the emperor no longer wrote to him'. Marcus replied 'at length and on several subjects, infusing what he wrote with a marvellous urbanity', Philostratus reports. After discussing his military winter-quarters where he then was and lamenting his wife, whom he had just lost, he referred to the trial at Sirmium and added: 'But if I have hurt you in any way, or am still doing so, demand recompense from me in the temple of Athena in your city at the time of the Mysteries. For I made a vow, when the war was blazing particularly fiercely, that I too would be initiated, and I would like you to be my initiator.' From Halala Marcus went south through the Cilician Gates and on to Tarsus, where he listened to a fifteen-year-old sophist, Hermogenes. He deliberately avoided Antioch, Cassius' former headquarters, and Cyrrhus, his home town, but certainly travelled through Syria Palaestina. He might therefore be the emperor 'Antoninus son of Asverus' with whom the Jewish patriarch Rabbi Juda I is said to have been on intimate terms. It was evidently already 176 before he reached Egypt, where Alexandria was treated with moderation, and 'he conducted himself like a private citizen and a philosopher at all the schools and temples, in fact

⁹⁶ *AE* 1956 no. 124; *HA Pert.* 1.1–2.10; Dio LXXI.22.1; Philostr. *VS* II.2.9.2K; Dio LXXI.33.1.

⁹⁷ Date and route: Astarita (1983) 137 ff., 151 ff., 155 ff. As she points out, Philostr. *VS* II.1.12K shows that Faustina died in winter, hence in 175 not 176; Dio LXXI.29.1; 31.1–2; *Med.* IX.3.1, cf. IX.42.

everywhere'. While there 'he conducted much negotiation and ratified peace with all the kings and ambassadors of the Persians [i.e. Parthians] when they came to meet him'.⁹⁸

In spring 176 he left for Syria, one of his daughters staying behind for some time at Alexandria. He did visit Antioch, in spite of his earlier reluctance, and then made for Smyrna. There he met Aelius Aristides, who, to the emperor's surprise, allowed three days to pass before presenting himself, and waited for the Quintilii to arrange his visit. From Smyrna the imperial party crossed to Athens. Emperor and heir apparent were both initiated in the Eleusian Mysteries, presumably at the normal time, September. Marcus had himself initiated 'to demonstrate his innocence of wrongdoing, and he entered the sanctuary unattended'. It was probably during this visit that the Christian apologist Athenagoras addressed his defence of the faith to Marcus and Commodus. The concluding remarks, 'show your assent by a royal nod of the head', might suggest that he secured a personal audience, but doubtless are merely a *topos*. Marcus' close interest in the affairs of Athens had already been expressed before his visit in a lengthy edict issued after the Herodes hearing at Sirmium. He wrote there at one point of his 'great enthusiasm for the glory of Athens, that she may continue in possession of her ancient majesty', adding his personal hope that Herodes, 'with his famous enthusiasm for education', and the Athenian people should be reconciled. Dio records that during his stay Marcus 'established teachers at Athens in every academic discipline, for the benefit of mankind, and granted them an annual salary'. Philostratus stresses that Marcus asked the advice of Herodes for several appointments, namely the four chairs of philosophy, but he named Theodotus, one of Herodes' enemies, to a chair of rhetoric on his own initiative.⁹⁹

Back in Rome in the late autumn of 176 Marcus addressed the people, referring to his long absence: some of his audience called out 'eight', meaning his years away (169–76) and held up four fingers of each hand as a sign that he should distribute a *congiarium* of eight *aurei*, duly granted. The triumph for the German and Sarmatian War was held on 23 December. Commodus had been granted *imperium* a month earlier so that he could participate. Marcus also arranged for Commodus to be excused from the provisions of the *lex annalis*, so that he could take office as consul on 1 January, at the age of fifteen – even younger than Nero had been in A.D. 55; his colleague was Verus' nephew, the husband of Marcus' daughter Fadilla, Plautius Quintillus. Quintillus' mother, Marcus' former fiancée of forty years before, Ceionia Fabia, is said to have attempted to interest Marcus in

⁹⁸ Philostr. *VS* II.1.12K; II.7.1K; *HA Marc.* 25.11–12; Astarita (1983) 119 ff.; Dio LXXI.28.2–4; *HA Marc.* 25.4 ff.; 26.1–3, 10 ff.

⁹⁹ *HA Marc.* 26.1, 3; Philostr. II.9.2K; *HA Marc.* 27.1; Barnes (1975). Athens: Oliver (1970) 3 ff.; Jones (1971); Williams (1975); Dio LXXI.31.3; Philostr. *VS* II.2.1K.

a second marriage at this time. But he preferred to take a mistress, the daughter of one of Faustina's procurators. Commodus evidently secured the tribunician power at the beginning of 177, and later in the year the name Augustus and all other imperial positions save that of *pontifex maximus*. He was now co-regent with Marcus, just as Verus had been from 161–9. The occasion was celebrated with largess – the eight *aurei* – and 'wonderful spectacles'.¹⁰⁰

X. THE LAST YEARS OF MARCUS' REIGN, 177–180

Marcus was able to remain at Rome for little more than eighteen months. The years of his joint rule with Commodus produced a number of rescripts cited in the *Corpus Iuris*, although some, no doubt, were composed after he had returned to the northern front. One rescript, of general application, laid down that 'governors and magistrates and police are bound to assist slaveowners in searching for their runaway slaves', illustrating a problem of growing seriousness at this time. A rescript to Piso refers in some detail to the case of a villa-owner, Iulius Donatus, who was wounded by bandits, also an increasing danger. A much-quoted ruling was from his rescript to his old friend Aufidius Victorinus, referred to as 'the so-called law on liberty', which was evidently intended to ensure that slaves should obtain their freedom if their masters had intended this, whatever legal obstacles were raised by third parties. On 6 July 177 Marcus and Commodus, with a *consilium* consisting of twelve eminent senators and knights, including the praetorian prefects, Bassaeus Rufus and Tarutienus Paternus, and a man later to become prefect, Sex. Tigidius Perennis, granted Roman citizenship to the wife and children of a Moorish chief, Iulianus of the Zegrenses. The document which reveals this information, known as the Tabula Banasitana, offers valuable insights into the manner in which citizenship was granted and registered, and the terms – carefully stating that no tax exemption was involved and that local obligations remained in force (*salvo iure gentis*). There is evidence that the Moors were again proving troublesome. The procurator of Tingitana, Vallius Maximianus, had to pursue a band that had invaded Spain across the Straits. They had penetrated up the River Baetis as far as Italica and across to Singilia Barba, which was subjected to a 'long siege', as an inscription in honour of Maximianus reveals.¹⁰¹

At about this time one of the after-effects of the emergency of 169–70 became apparent. The conscription of gladiators into the army had caused serious financial problems for the local élite which had to supply games. A

¹⁰⁰ *HA Marc.* 27.2–3, 5; 29.10; *Comm.* 2.3–5, 12.5; Dio Cass. LXXI.32.1. Fadilla: Pflaum (1961).

¹⁰¹ *Dig.* XI.4.1.2–4; XXIX.8.2; *CJ* IV.57.2, cf. *Dig.* LXIV.11.1, XXVI.4.3.2, XL. 1. 20. *pref.*; *AE* 1971 no. 534; *ILS* 1354; *CPb* no. 221+add.; Alföldy, *Heeresgeschichte* 475 ff.

senatorial decree was passed, apparently in response to an appeal from the *concilium Galliarum*. The decree granted a special concession to the Gallic provinces, allowing them to purchase condemned criminals at six aurei a head for use as gladiators. This reflected an ancient Gallic ritual involving human sacrificial victims known as *trinqui*. The provisions of the *senatus consultum*, fixing prices for gladiators, had empire-wide application; its terms are known from partial copies at Sardis in Asia and Italica in Baetica. It has even been suggested that the arrest and martyrdom of Christians at Lugdunum, which Eusebius appears to assign to the year 177, was a by-product of the decree: Christians were accused, it is argued, precisely to afford an easy supply of criminals condemned to death. However this may be, the difficult economic conditions, manpower shortages, lingering plague and the effects of the northern wars all contributed to an atmosphere in which attacks on Christians were likely to proliferate. Eusebius quotes an anguished appeal by bishop Melito of Sardis, who was under the impression that ‘new decrees’ had been aimed at the Christians in Asia.¹⁰²

In 178 there was a disastrous earthquake at Smyrna. Aelius Aristides composed an eloquent plea for assistance, which caused Marcus to shed tears. A senator of praetorian rank was appointed to supervise the rebuilding of the city at government expense. Dio comments that this generosity was only one example ‘of the gifts of money that he made to various cities . . . Therefore I am surprised that even now [sc. the 220s] people criticise him on the grounds that he was not open-handed. Although in general very economical, he never avoided a single necessary expenditure – in spite of the fact that he did not burden anyone by financial levies and that he had to pay out very large sums beyond the normal regular expenses.’ Indeed, in 178, following the example of Hadrian in 118, Marcus cancelled all debts due to the treasury and *fiscus* over the past forty-six years, from 133 (it is not known why the period 118–33 was not included). The documents were publicly burnt in the Forum.¹⁰³

In the meanwhile, however, the military situation on the Danube had deteriorated. The younger Quintilii had won victories, and Marcus had received a ninth imperial acclamation in 177 (when Commodus became *imp. II*), but they ‘had been unable to bring the war to an end, although they possessed much shrewdness, courage and experience’. In the course of 178 the titles Germanicus and Sarmaticus disappear from the coinage. Marcus felt obliged to return to the front in person, taking Commodus, who was first provided with a wife, Bruttia Crispina, granddaughter of Hadrian’s friend Praesens. The wedding was modest, ‘celebrated in the manner of private citizens’. But largess was distributed to the people of Rome and the

¹⁰² Oliver and Palmer (1955); Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* v *pref.* and 1.1–63; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 261; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iv.26.5–6, *Les martyrs de Lyon* (1978) *passim*.

¹⁰³ Dio LXXI.32.3; Philostr. *VS* II.9.2K; Dio LXXI.32.2.

event was commemorated on the coinage. Before Marcus set off, he swore a solemn oath on the Capitol that he had not been responsible for the death of any senator. Aurelius Victor describes another remarkable scene. Marcus was

so outstanding for his wisdom, lenience, innocence of character and literary attainments that when he was about to set off against the Marcomanni with his son Commodus . . . he was surrounded by a crowd of philosophers, protesting that he should not commit himself to the expedition and to battle, before he had expounded the difficulties and obscurities of the philosophical schools.

Dio registers a third item from just before the *profectio*. Marcus had asked the Senate for funds from the treasury: 'As for us, we are so far from having any possessions of our own that even the house we live in is yours.' He then 'threw the bloody spear kept in the Temple of Bellona into ground symbolically regarded as enemy territory, as I have heard from people who were there, and departed', on 3 August 178.¹⁰⁴

His headquarters for the winter of 178–9 is not known. Those with him included praetorian prefect Paternus, now the senior of the two, following the retirement of Bassaeus Rufus. His colleague was presumably Tigidius Perennis. Marcus' *comites* included Claudius Pompeianus, Vitrasius Pollio, his cousin's husband, and Bruttius Praesens, Commodus' father-in-law. Some of his best generals were already in the north. Pertinax, who had successively governed both Moesian provinces, now moved to become legate of the *Tres Daciae*. Soon after his arrival in the north Marcus gave senatorial rank to the remarkable Pannonian, Valerius Maximianus, who had held three procuratorships in rapid succession since going east with his force of Germans in 175. Maximianus had recently pursued 'Brisean bandits on the borders of Macedonia and Thrace', while Didius Iulianus, legate of Dalmatia, had also had to deal with brigandage. Clearly, the Balkans were in a disturbed state. Maximianus was now made legate of I Adiutrix. In the course of 179 Taruttienus Paternus won a victory for which the emperors took an imperial acclamation, Marcus' tenth and Commodus' third, but no details are recorded of the location or enemy. Some extracts from Dio seem to refer to Marcus' activity during this *expeditio Germanica secunda*.

The Jazyges asked for concessions and both they and the Buri only agreed to become allies of Rome on condition that Marcus 'would definitely carry the war through to its conclusion, for they were afraid that he might make a treaty with the Quadi as he had done before and thus leave them with enemies on their borders'. Most of the restrictions imposed on the Jazyges in 175 were lifted and they were given a major privilege:

¹⁰⁴ Dio LXXI.33.1; *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and Commodus nos. 1632 ff., cf. pp. cxxx, cxliii; Dio LXXI.33.1; *HA Marc.* 27.8; *PIR*² B 165, 170; *HA Marc.* 29.4; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 16.9–10; Dio LXXI.33.2–3; *HA Comm.* 12.6, *Marc.* 27.10.

permission, subject to the approval of the governor of Dacia, to pass through Roman territory to their Sarmatian cousins the Roxolani. The same extract begins with reference to ‘Marcus receiving envoys from the nations on differing terms: some received citizenship, others freedom from taxes, permanent or temporary exemption from tribute or even permanent subsidy’. If ‘the nations’ refers to peoples outside the empire, the details of their various treatment suggests that Marcus did indeed have in mind annexation of territory. This appears to be confirmed by the immediately following extract, referring to the Quadi and Marcomanni. Twenty thousand troops were stationed in their territory, in forts ‘which had bath-houses and all the necessities of life in abundance’. The occupation of enemy territory throughout the winter of 179–80 is confirmed by two inscriptions of Valerius Maximianus. High on a crag above the River Váh (Waag) at Trenčín in Slovakia over 850 men from II *Adiutrix* (to which he had already moved) made a dedication, naming him as their commander, to ‘Imperial Victory’. Maximianus’ elaborate *cursus*-inscription, set up a few years later when he was legate of Numidia, describes him as ‘commander of the *vexillationes* wintering at Leugaricio’ (the ancient name of Trenčín). The Quadi, ‘being unable to endure the forts built to keep watch on them, attempted to migrate in a body to the land of the Semnones’ (fellow-Suebi originally located between the Elbe and the Oder). But the emperor ‘learned beforehand of their intention and by barring the passes kept them back’. Dio then adds his own comment: ‘This showed that he desired, not to acquire their land, but to punish the men.’ It is questionable whether Dio’s interpretation may be accepted. The *Historia Augusta*, admittedly a somewhat suspect source – particularly when it refers to unfulfilled intentions – once again refers to Marcus’ hope of creating new provinces of ‘Marcomannia’ and ‘Sarmatia’. Herodian also seems positive that annexation of barbarian territory had been intended. Further, a medallion of Marcus and Commodus from this period bears the legend *PROPAGATORES IMPERII*, which should indicate extension of the empire.¹⁰⁵

However this may be, Marcus fell ill in March 180, when the new campaigning season was about to begin. When he realized the seriousness of his condition, he asked Commodus not to regard the completion of the war as a task beneath his dignity. Commodus replied that his own health was his first concern. Marcus consented but asked only that ‘he should wait for a few days and not set off at once’. The implication must be that plague was still rife, as it had been at Aquileia in the winter of 168, when Verus had expressed similar sentiments. Marcus died on 17 March 180, evidently at

¹⁰⁵ Pompeianus: *PIR*² C 973. Pollio: *ILS* 1112. Praesens: *PIR*² B 165. Pertinax, Victorinus: Alföldy, *Konsulat* 224, 240. Bandits: *AE* 1956 no. 124; *HA Did. Ital.* 1.9. Dio *LXXI*.33.3–4; *BMCRE* IV M. Aurelius and Commodus nos. 1695 ff.; Dio *LXXI*.18–19.2; 19.1; 20.1–2; *AE* 1956 no. 124; *CIL* III 13439; *HA Marc.* 24.5; Herodian 1.5.6; Cox (1959) 114 no. 230, discussed by Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 253 ff.

Sirmium – or perhaps at that city's Danube port, Bononia – as Tertullian stated less than twenty years after, rather than at Vindobona, as Aurelius Victor believed. If this is right, it may suggest that 'Sarmatia' was to be the main preoccupation in 180.¹⁰⁶

Apart from the headings of the second and third Books, Marcus' *Meditations* contain only one explicit reference to his campaigns: 'A spider is proud when it catches a fly, a man when he snares a hare, another when he nets a fish, another wild boars, another bears, another Sarmatians. If you test their principles, are they not all brigands?' However, the emperor's private notebook is suffused with death and there are sufficient references to the effects of war to make it clear that his experiences made a deep impact on him mentally, as well as adversely affecting his physical health.¹⁰⁷

Marcus was a man of high ideals, whose education had made him admire men like Cato and Thræsea. He could 'conceive the idea of a state based on equity and freedom of speech, and of a monarchy which cherishes above all the liberty of the subject'. He could see beyond the state of which he found himself ruler: 'I have a city and a fatherland. As Antoninus, I am a Roman, as a man I am a citizen of the Universe.' But he was aware that the ideal society was a distant dream: 'Do not hope for Plato's Utopia, but be content to make a very small step forward and reflect that the result of even this is no trivial success.' His willingness to rely on the advice of others is several times expressed: 'If anyone can bring home to me that an action or an idea of mine is wrong, I will amend it gladly. I seek the truth, which never harmed anyone'; 'If you can see your course, take it gladly, and do not turn aside, but if you cannot, suspend judgement and use the best men to advise you.' This impression is confirmed by the *Historia Augusta*: 'he always conferred with the leading men not only on matters of war but on civilian affairs too, before taking action. Indeed, this was always his particular saying: "It is fairer that I should follow the advice of so many and such good friends, than that they should follow the wishes of a single man, myself."' Ammianus Marcellinus, writing more than two hundred years after Marcus' death, was impressed with the spirit of these times: 'after calamitous losses things were restored anew, because the temperance of old had not been infected with the irresolution of negligence and laxity . . . with unanimous ardour highest and lowest hastened, as if to a calm and peaceful haven, to an honourable death in the service of the republic'. Dio, who was a youth in his teens when Marcus died and grew to manhood and service as a senator during the reign of his successor, was adamant that Marcus' death and Commodus' accession marked the change from an age of gold to an age of iron and rust. It seems clear that the collapse of the

¹⁰⁶ *HA Marc.* 27.11–12; Dio LXXI.33.4–34.1; *Tert. Apol.* 25; *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 16.12, interpreted by Bannert (1977).

¹⁰⁷ *Med.* x.10; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 215 ff.

consensus, which had prevailed, to a large extent from the accession of Nerva, and above all from the accession of Antoninus, and had successfully survived the stress of continuous warfare under Marcus, was the determinant factor in his judgement.¹⁰⁸

XI. A CAESAR BORN TO THE PURPLE

Commodus, the seventeenth emperor, was the first to have been born in the purple. Not for nothing was he called ‘most noble of all emperors’. Apart from his birth, the adoptive ancestry to which he was entitled allowed him to call himself ‘great-great-great-grandson of the deified Nerva’. Commodus was only two years older than Nero had been in 54, but the omens appeared more favourable than they had then, in spite of the rumour that Marcus, like Claudius, had been poisoned. Commodus had no ambitious mother, and there were numerous influential and respected advisers, including his brothers-in-law and his father’s friend Aufidius Victorinus, now city prefect.¹⁰⁹

Apart from the office of *pontifex maximus*, the only obvious change in Commodus’ titlature was that he became ‘son of the deified Marcus’ and, to mark the continuity, took his father’s principal names, becoming ‘M. Commodus Antoninus’. For some time Commodus remained with the armies on the Danube. Then peace was concluded, and the plan for annexing new provinces quietly abandoned. Commodus celebrated a triumph for the ‘victory’ on 22 October 180, at which the palace chamberlain, a Bithynian named Saoterus, played a prominent role. He apparently exercised great influence over the young emperor, a likely source of resentment in both Senate and imperial family.¹¹⁰ Whether for this or for other personal reasons, there was an attempted coup less than two years after Commodus’ return to Rome. The driving force was apparently Commodus’ eldest sister, the Augusta Lucilla. Her motive is alleged to have been resentment at loss of her privileges in favour of Commodus’ wife Crispina. Two young lovers of Lucilla are named as accomplices, Ummidius Quadratus, adopted son

¹⁰⁸ *Med.* 1.14; VI.44; IX.29; VI.21; X.12 (cf. VIII.16); *HA Marc.* 22.4; XXXI.5.14; Dio LXXI.36.4.

¹⁰⁹ Dio’s *History* assumes special importance from 180, since much of his account (Book LXXII), although only preserved in condensed and fragmentary state, is that of an eyewitness; cf. Millar (1964), esp. 122–34. The *vita* in the *Historia Augusta* incorporates valuable documentary evidence, taken from Marius Maximus (esp. *Comm.* 1.10–2.5, 11.13–12.9, 18.1–20.5, for the last of which Maximus is cited as source; he is also referred to in *Comm.* 13.2 and 15.4). A third major source is Herodian, whose *History* covering the years 180–c. 238 begins with the death of Marcus. His merits are defended by C. R. Whittaker, editor of the Loeb text and translation; but cf. Kolb (1972) and Alföldy (1989) 14 ff., 69 ff., 81 ff., 240 ff., for exposure of his weaknesses. These three sources sometimes exhibit marked divergence over important details, which it will be necessary to refer to several times in the remainder of this chapter. *nobilissimus*: *ILS* 397, cf. Herodian 1.5.5–6. On Commodus the massive study by Grosso (1964) remains fundamental. Poisoned: Dio LXXI.33.4. Victorinus: Alföldy (1969) 38 ff.

¹¹⁰ *PIR*² A 1482. Saoterus: Grosso (1964) 99 ff., 113 ff.

of Marcus' nephew and by birth stepson of Commodus' sister Annia Faustina, and Quintianus, nephew of Pompeianus, Lucilla's husband, and prospective bridegroom of Lucilla's daughter. The assassination attempt resembled – perhaps not by coincidence – the murder of Caligula in 41. As Commodus entered the hunting-theatre, Quintianus, a boon companion of the emperor, appeared in the narrow passage: holding out his weapon he cried, 'The Senate sends you this – dagger!' This allowed the bodyguards time to seize him, justifying the verdict of the *Historia Augusta*, *fatuus*. Quintianus and Quadratus were executed, along with others, Lucilla was exiled and later put to death. Her husband Pompeianus withdrew from public life. For the time being the praetorian prefect Paternus, who was said to have been involved in the plot, escaped detection; and he and his colleague Perennis had Saoterus murdered by *frumentarii*. Paternus was soon made a senator, leaving Perennis as sole prefect, and shortly after that was accused of plotting to make his prospective son-in-law Salvius Iulianus (son of the jurist) emperor. Iulianus and Paternus himself, and the *ab epistulis* Vitruvius Secundus, were all executed.¹¹¹ More heads soon rolled. The Quintilii brothers, among the most senior of Marcus' *amici*, were executed, and the younger Quintilius Condius, then in Syria, was hunted down. Dio, who was then in neighbouring Cilicia, of which his father was the governor, gives a detailed account of Condius' feigned death and escape – his eventual fate was unknown. By the end of 182, among further changes, Pertinax, perhaps the most remarkable of all the new men who had come to the fore during the wars under Marcus, was dismissed from his governorship of Syria.¹¹²

XII. THE ASCENDANCY OF PERENNIS, 182–185

The fall of Paternus and the aftermath of the conspiracy of 182 evidently left Tigridius Perennis as sole praetorian prefect and, in view of Commodus' lack of interest in government, in charge not only of military affairs but of the state as a whole. Dio appears to have regarded Perennis with some favour, apart from criticizing the ambition which led him to ruin Paternus. The *Historia Augusta*, on the other hand, while echoing Dio over the extent of Perennis' power, describes him as corrupt and murderous. Both have something to say about events in Britain during Perennis' period of power. Dio declares that the British War was the most serious of Commodus' reign. It began with the killing of a general – evidently the governor – 'by tribes which had crossed the wall dividing them from the Roman army'. It is not clear whether this was Hadrian's or the Antonine Wall, although the latter seems not to have been occupied for some twenty years. Commodus

¹¹¹ Grosso (1964) 153 ff. Herodian 1.8.3–8; *HA Comm.* 4.1–10; 3.2; Dio LXXV.5.1–2.

¹¹² Grosso (1964) 156–7. Dio LXXII.6.1–7.2; *HA Comm.* 4.9; *Pert.* 3.1–3.

appointed Ulpus Marcellus, whose harsh and eccentric character is vividly portrayed by Dio, to deal with the crisis. Marcellus won victories which led to Commodus taking the title Britannicus in 184: how long the war had gone on is not clear. It may have been Marcellus' ruthless nature which led the British legions to become disaffected, and to attempt to invest a legionary legate named Priscus with the purple. The Priscus affair is presumably alluded to with the remark that Commodus was named Britannicus even though 'the Britons' wanted to make someone else emperor. It may also be the explanation for the statement that Perennis dismissed senatorial commanders in the British War and replaced them by equestrians.¹¹³

Some other fighting had been taking place at this period, in which the future rivals of Severus in the civil wars of 193–7, Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus, distinguished themselves against 'barbarians beyond Dacia'. These encounters, and the war in Britain, presumably account for Commodus' fifth and sixth imperatorial acclamations in 183, when he also took the title Pius. Perennis' downfall (datable to 185) supposedly came about because he plotted to make his own son emperor. Herodian attributes his fall to the arrival of men from Pannonia who revealed his plans.

The *Historia Augusta* refers to Perennis giving his own son credit for successes 'in Sarmatia' won by others, but makes no mention of any alleged plan to make the son emperor. Dio also says that soldiers accused Perennis – but that it was fifteen hundred legionaries chosen by the insubordinate British army and sent to Italy to denounce Perennis. Commodus then handed Perennis over to be lynched by the angry British soldiers. The *Historia Augusta* has the story that Perennis was handed over to soldiers for lynching, but connects it with the dismissal of the legionary legates. The affair must remain enigmatic, not least the strange journey from Britain to Italy of so large a force. A possible explanation may be that they had been involved in pursuit of brigands, whose activities at this time were serious in several of the western provinces. Those involved were principally army deserters – the *Historia Augusta* even refers to 'the deserters' war', while Herodian has an elaborate and romantic account of the rise and fall of a deserters' leader named Maternus. Evidence from Germania Superior appears to indicate that there were serious disturbances there, which have been explained as part of the 'deserters' war', in 186. It is worth registering the possibility that the final phase in the Upper German *limes*, the erection of a rampart and ditch inside the Hadrianic palisade, was initiated in this period.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ Grosso (1964) 164 ff.; Birley (1981) 140 ff., 260, on Dio LXXII.8.2–6, 9.2a and *HA Comm.* 6.2.

¹¹⁴ Niger, Albinus: Dio LXXII.8.1. Herodian 1.9.2–5 has a romantic yarn about a Cynic denouncing Perennis at the games, fiction according to Hohl (1954) 16–17. *HA Comm.* 5.1–6.2; Herodian 1.9.7; Dio LXXII.9.2–3; Maternus is regarded as fiction by Hohl (1954) 17 ff.; Alföldy (1989) 75–6, is more cautious. Deserters' war: *HA Comm.* 16.2; Niger 343–5; Alföldy (1989) 71–2; Barnes (1978) 51.

XIII. THE ASCENDANCY OF CLEANDER, 185–190

The leading role was now taken by the freedman chamberlain, M. Aurelius Cleander – who had played an important part in bringing about the overthrow of Perennis. Commodus was by now devoting himself exclusively to the arena, showing remarkable proficiency as a gladiator. Cleander and his fellow-freedmen, and the emperor's concubine Marcia, enjoyed the fruits of power, selling offices of all kinds. Some appointments were, perhaps, made on merit. Pertinax, for example, who had been out of office for three years while Perennis held sway, was recalled and sent to Britain to restore discipline among the legions, a task he fulfilled with some difficulty, having to resist an attempt to make him emperor.¹¹⁵

For a time Cleander was content to exert the real power while others held the office of praetorian prefect, some 'for only a few days or even hours'. Eventually he was bold enough to take the prefecture himself, together with two colleagues – 'the first time that there had been three prefects at once, of which the freedman had the title "holder of the dagger" (*a pugione*)' – confirmed by epigraphic evidence. This move seems to have taken place in 188, after he had disposed of Atilius Aebutianus. It seems to have been at about this time that Commodus is said to have planned a 'third' expedition – following the sequence of Marcus' two wars against the Germans, of 168–75 and 178–80. 'Vows were taken', evidently in connection with this proposed campaign, on 5 April 188, and an inscription even records an official concerned with preparations for the *expeditio Germanica tertia*. But nothing came of it and there is no indication where it might have been directed.¹¹⁶

Cleander's abuse of power came to a head in 190, when there were twenty-five consuls, the emperor himself holding office (for the sixth time) for a few days, to be replaced for the remainder of January by a suffect, after which a new pair presumably assumed the *fasces* at the start of each month. The future emperor Septimius Severus was one of the twenty-five, who were 'appointed by Cleander'. But in the same year Cleander was removed through the machinations of an enemy, Papirius Dionysius. This man, after a distinguished career in the previous reign, had been serving as prefect of the *annona*, and was then appointed to Egypt, a normal promotion. But it seems that the Egyptian posting was rapidly cancelled, perhaps even before Dionysius had reached the province, and he was reinstalled at the *annona*. This gave him the chance to engineer a grain shortage at a time of famine, so that Cleander might be blamed. The resultant hardship and discontent

¹¹⁵ Cleander: *CPb* no. 180 bis+mantissa add. (pp. 1007–8); Alföldy (1989) 81 ff. Pertinax: *HA Pert.* 3.5–6, 8–9.

¹¹⁶ Aebutianus: *HA Comm.* 6.111–12; Grosso (1964) 239 ff. 'Third' expedition: *HA Comm.* 12.8–9; *ILS* 1574.

reached a climax with a demonstration against Cleander at the Circus Maximus. Cleander sent a few soldiers against the crowd, but it was undeterred, especially as other ‘soldiers’ were strong enough to give them courage. Either there was a split in the ranks of the Guard, or perhaps the Urban Cohorts of the city prefect backed the *plebs* against the forces Cleander had sent – if so, a decisive part may have been played by Pertinax, for he it was who now held that office.¹¹⁷

XIV. THE LAST YEARS OF COMMODUS, 190–192

The fall of Cleander had inevitable repercussions. At first, his two fellow-prefects, Iulius Iulianus and Regillus, remained in office. But by 15 July Iulianus was sole prefect. He was a man with a long record of distinguished service, notably as commander of vexillations to clear the Balkans of invaders in 170. In public he was embraced by the emperor and called ‘Father’. But he had to submit to a variety of indignities – he was pushed into a swimming pool in the presence of his staff, and made to dance naked before the emperor’s concubines. Before long he was murdered; and other executions followed. A notable case is that of a prominent Emesene, Iulius Alexander, hunted down and killed, apparently because his exploit in killing a lion with a javelin while on horseback incurred the jealousy of the sport-obsessed Commodus – who was increasingly identifying himself with the lion-slayer *par excellence*, Hercules.¹¹⁸ Another victim was the prefect of the *annona*, Dionysius. The *Historia Augusta* lists another fifteen men of senatorial rank, and Annia Fundania Faustina, Marcus’ cousin, who were put to death soon afterwards, adding, in the case of six consulars who died at the same time, ‘with their families’. After giving the names of the prominent victims, who included the proconsul of Asia, Sulpicius Crassus, and Commodus’ brother-in-law Petronius Sura Mamertinus, the *Historia Augusta* curtly notes: ‘and countless others’.

The atmosphere of panic engendered by these murders was accentuated by a recurrence of plague, which Dio, perhaps too young to remember the outbreak in 166–7, called the worst that he ever experienced: ‘two thousand people often died at Rome in a single day’. He noted that ‘at this time, not only in the city but throughout most of the empire, many others died at the hands of criminals who smeared deadly drugs on needles and were hired to infect people with them’, which, he says, ‘had happened before in the reign of Domitian’. The prevalence of such a rumour reveals a good deal

¹¹⁷ Dio LXXII.12.4; *HA Sev.* 4.4. Dionysius: *CPh* no. 181. Pertinax: *HA Pert.* 4.3.

¹¹⁸ Regillus: *HA Comm.* 7.4. Iulianus: *CPh* no. 180. *HA Comm.* 11.2–3, 7.4; Dio LXXII.14.1. Alexander: Dio LXXII.14.1–3; *HA Comm.* 8.3. Letta (1985) argues that the lion-killing was a deliberate challenge to Commodus.

about the climate of the times. In the meantime, Commodus now began to assert his own authority. Coins of late 190 proclaimed a new ‘Golden Age of Commodus’. In 191 the emperor rejected the names ‘Marcus’ and ‘Antoninus’ that he had assumed on his father’s death, and reverted to his original style: Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus. It was a clear indication that he was determined to dissolve his allegiance to his father’s memory. His model was now to be Hercules.¹¹⁹

A new praetorian prefect was now in office, evidently without a colleague: Q. Aemilius Laetus, a native of Thaenae in Africa. Pertinax remained in office as city prefect, and was given the customary accolade, a second consulship, the more honorific in that Commodus himself was his colleague, holding his seventh consulship. However, either at the time of his designation to the consulship, or soon after he entered into it at the beginning of 192, Pertinax was approached by Laetus and Marcia, who invited him to participate in a new plot against Commodus. In spite of Dio’s assertion that Pertinax was uninvolved, it seems clear from the other evidence that Pertinax and Laetus planned the removal of Commodus with great care and over a long period. The *Historia Augusta* supplies the information that Severus owed his appointment as governor of Pannonia Superior in 191 to Laetus. L. Septimius Severus, a native of Lepcis Magna, was a junior consular – of the scandalous vintage of the previous year – whose previous career made him a not very likely candidate to command three legions. Furthermore, at least two other Africans were appointed at about this time to command other large armies: D. Clodius Albinus (from Hadrumetum) went to Britain, and P. Septimius Geta, Severus’ brother, to Moesia Inferior. A new prefect of Egypt, Mantennius Sabinus, was appointed in 192, replacing Larcus Memor, who had a tenure of less than two years. Sabinus’ wife came from Praeneste, where Pertinax’s father-in-law Flavius Sulpicianus had estates. The origins and connections of other men put in key positions at this time are less certain – except that the proconsul of Asia, Asellius Aemilianus, who had immediately beforehand been governor of Syria, was a kinsman of Albinus. Aemilianus’ successor in Syria, C. Pescennius Niger, was given the job precisely because he was a mediocrity, Dio states. It seems legitimate to infer that Laetus and Pertinax did their utmost to ensure that key provincial posts were in the hands of men who could be relied on when the coup was carried out.¹²⁰

In the course of 192 Commodus’ pathological inclinations became even more extreme. He now identified himself completely with Hercules. As ‘Hercules Romanus’ he wished to become the divine founder of Rome,

¹¹⁹ *HA Comm.* 7.5–8; Dio LXXII.14.3–4; *BMCRE* IV pp. clxvi, clxxvii, clxxxii–ii.

¹²⁰ Laetus: *AE* 1949 no. 38. Pertinax: *HA Pert.* 4.3–4. Severus: *HA Sev.* 4.4. See Birley (1969) 250 ff., 259 ff.; (1988) 81 ff.

now renamed *colonia Comodiana*. The months were also given new names, taken from his own by now extravagant and inflated nomenclature; as well as ‘Lucius Aelius Aurelius Commodus Pius Felix Augustus’, the new, in some cases bizarre, ‘Amazonius, Invictus, Hercules, Romanus, Exsuperatorius’, rather than the victory-titles, which he retained (Germanicus Maximus, Sarmaticus, Britannicus). Places and institutions throughout the empire now had to exchange their original names for that of Commodus. Both Dio and Herodian – but, curiously, not the *Historia Augusta* – report an event of 192 which made a deep impression. ‘A fire that began at night in some house leaped into the Temple of Peace and spread to the Egyptian and Arabian warehouses. From there the flames were carried up into the palace and consumed very extensive portions of it, so that nearly all the state records were destroyed.’ Many of the writings of Galen, housed in the palace libraries, were destroyed. Dio took the event as an omen, that the destruction of the archives meant that the calamity would extend over the whole world. Herodian, too, saw it as a portent of disaster. The fire was preceded by a slight earthquake (excluding the possibility that arson was responsible, one may note), and the Temple of Peace, which he calls ‘the largest and most beautiful building in the city’ was totally destroyed: ‘Some conjectured that the destruction of the Temple of Peace was a prophecy of war.’ Herodian supplies the further information that the Temple of Vesta was consumed, and that the Vestal Virgins had to carry the Palladium, exposed to public view for the first time since its legendary journey from Troy, along the Via Sacra into the palace.¹²¹

Dio and Herodian both give detailed descriptions of Commodus’ last public display in the arena, probably the *ludi plebei*, which lasted for fourteen days in November. People came from all over Italy and neighbouring provinces to watch the emperor shoot down deer, roebuck, lions and leopards. On one occasion he killed a hundred lions with a hundred javelins. On another he shot off the heads of ostriches with crescent-headed arrows, and the birds continued to run around. These performances won him admiration for his marksmanship, according to Herodian. Dio and his fellow-senators felt otherwise.

Having killed an ostrich and cut off its head, he came up to where we were sitting, holding the head in his left hand and raising his bloody sword in his right. He said nothing, but wagged his head with a grin, showing that he would treat us likewise. Many of us would have been killed on the spot for laughing at him – for it was laughter rather than fear that took hold of us – if I had not chewed some laurel leaves that I took from my garland, and persuaded those sitting next to me to do likewise. By moving our jaws steadily we could thus conceal the fact that we were laughing.

¹²¹ Titles: Dio LXXII.15.1 ff.; *HA Comm.* 8.5–9, 11.8–12.9; Grosso (1964) 360 ff., 365 ff., 369 ff. Fire: Dio LXXII.24.1–3; Herodian I.14.1–6; Galen II.216K, XIII.362K.

Dio prefaces his account of these transactions by defending himself against those who might think that he was ‘sully[ing] the dignity of history’ with such details. Since the performer was the emperor himself, and he was an eyewitness, he thought it proper to suppress nothing.

The wild beasts were despatched in the mornings. In the afternoons Commodus fought as a gladiator, taking particular pride in his total of victories, a record for a left-hander. ‘Standing beside him as he fought were Aemilius Laetus the prefect and Eclectus the chamberlain. When he had fought his bout, and of course won, he would kiss them just as he was, through his helmet visor.’ Senators and knights were obliged to watch. ‘Only the elder Claudius Pompeianus never appeared, but sent his sons. He did not come himself, preferring death to seeing the emperor, the son of Marcus, do such things.’ The remaining senators were obliged not only to attend but to join in choruses of admiration: ‘From everlasting you are victorious, Amazonian!’ The common people, according to Herodian, flocked in large numbers. But Dio reports that many did not come and others left after a brief look, especially as a rumour spread that Commodus intended to pursue his self-identification with Hercules to the extent of shooting some spectators, cast in the role of the Stymphalian birds. He had already, on a previous occasion, assembled a group of men who had lost their feet from disease or accident, dressed them up with serpent-like costumes and killed them with clubs, ‘pretending that they were giants’.

During these games Commodus displayed an old champion racehorse from the Greens, now put out to grass, but paraded with gilded hooves and a gilded skin on its back, at the last race of the year in the Circus Maximus. A great cry went up: ‘It is Pertinax!’ It is difficult to resist the suspicion that the event may have been engineered. Dio also notes, as an omen, that on the last day of the games, when about to begin his gladiatorial bout, Commodus handed his club to the city prefect, Pertinax.¹²²

Dio’s version of the plot to murder Commodus is that it was prepared rapidly in response to Commodus’ increasingly deranged behaviour. When Laetus and Eclectus tried to restrain him, they themselves were threatened. It was subsequently claimed that Commodus intended to kill both new consuls, Sosius Falco and Erucius Clarus, on New Year’s Day 193, and to take their place, as sole consul, clad in gladiatorial costume. After taking Marcia into their confidence, Laetus and Eclectus persuaded her to administer poison to Commodus the previous afternoon. Herodian adds that during Commodus’ midday siesta a boy favourite had found a writing tablet on which the emperor had written the names of those to be killed. Marcia passed it to Eclectus and Laetus, who were at the head of the list, followed

¹²² Herodian 1.15.1–6; Dio LXXII.20.1, 18.1–4; LXXIII.4.3–4; Birley, (1969) 248 n. 5. Kolb (1972) 25–37 argues that Herodian gives merely a distorted and garbled version of Dio.

by large numbers of leading senators. They hurriedly arranged for Marcia to give Commodus poisoned wine when he returned from the bath. He fell asleep, but awoke vomiting. The athlete Narcissus (who, according to the *Historia Augusta*, had been influential enough to secure Pescennius Niger the governorship of Syria) was then sent in to strangle him when he began to look threatening.

Neither Dio nor Herodian suggest that Pertinax, who was at once offered the throne, had any inkling of what was in train. The *Historia Augusta* knew better; and Julian in his satire the *Caesars* likewise assumed Pertinax's involvement. The truth cannot be discovered.¹²³

It is often asserted that once the Principate had become well established it made little difference who was emperor. In one sense this seems to have been the opinion of Tacitus when he put into the mouth of Petillius Cerialis the remark: *saevi proximis ingruunt*. Addressing an assembly of rebellious Gauls, the general admonished them to reflect that 'monsters' on the imperial throne only 'vent their savagery on those nearest to them', the senatorial élite, while for the provinces the imperial system brought only the benefits of security and peace. However, as with Nero, so with Commodus, the instability at the centre, above all the executions of senators, was bound to end in civil war. On this occasion it was to be even more destructive than in A.D. 68–9: it was to last, after the three months' reign of Pertinax, for four years and to involve a much greater part of the empire. In the longer term, the reign of Commodus, following the debilitating wars under his father, turned out to have fatally weakened the ruling élite, destroying the consensus which had prevailed for over eighty years.¹²⁴

¹²³ Dio LXXII.22.1–6. Narcissus: *HA Comm.* 17.1, Dio LXXII.22.4, *HA Niger* 1.5. Pertinax: *HA Pert.* 4.4; Julian, *Caes.* 312C.

¹²⁴ 'Little difference': Syme, *Roman Papers* 1 56 ('With the passage of time the character of the individual ruler forfeits influence . . . It does not matter so much who is the Emperor . . . etc.' Cerialis: Tac. *Hist.* IV.74.2. Civil wars of A.D. 193–7: Birley (1988) 97–128.

Endnote

This chapter was submitted in 1988, and modified in 1991. Some amendments made in 1995 took account of work published between 1988 and 1994. Among more recent work, note Birley (1994) and (1997a–c); the *Historiae Augustae Colloquia, nova series* (Macerata and Bari, 1991–) has now reached vol. VII (1999).

CHAPTER 4

THE EMPEROR AND HIS ADVISERS

WERNER ECK

The bulk of our sources, whether historiographic, juristic or epigraphic, give the impression that the Roman emperor was all-powerful and always busy.¹ Yet this picture of a ruler who was always personally active is only a very superficial and hence a partly misleading one. In reality the emperor relied on others in almost all aspects of his decision-making and actions. He needed advice and was dependent on his advisers; indeed he could not operate without them. Despite his omnipotence, this was evident to all who knew something of the emperor's work.²

The sources give a generally accurate impression of imperial business because the emperor is always the central figure in them. He appears as the focal point of consultations and decisions. Even the way in which decisions were reached is dependent on the person of the emperor in each of his specific guises: he is the dominating point of reference for policy-making and central administration. In this respect the orientation of the works of Tacitus and Suetonius, while quite different in composition, and their emphasis on the individual emperors, are entirely appropriate to the matters they relate.

At the same time, however, the far-reaching dependence of imperial policy and government on the person of the ruler implies that, in essence, anyone who came into contact with the emperor could influence his decisions. How far this influence might go naturally depended to a great extent on the emperor's character, but equally on those who wanted to induce him towards certain courses of action. Their personality played a part in this, as did the nature and intensity of their relations with the emperor and their social status. Members of the higher social groups, such as senators or *equites*, necessarily had more of an opportunity to influence the emperor, yet men of lower social status, for instance freedmen or slaves, could also make their mark on account of their constant proximity to the emperor. Since the person of the emperor was decisive, the location where the influence was exercised, or the surroundings in which the emperor found himself, were essentially unimportant. Official receptions in the imperial

¹ Millar (1967). ² Cf. on the general picture, Crook, *Consilium* 48 ff.; Millar, *Emperor* 110 ff., 228 ff.

palace could be used just as much as banquets in the houses of friends, and public performances in the circus or amphitheatre were equally suitable for coming into contact with the emperor. This applied to individuals, but in particular to the great mass of the people, whose influence on the ruler could almost only be exercised at such events. The main location where people could hope to influence the emperor was, however, the court, that is the imperial palace in Rome, or the villas near Rome to which the emperors frequently retired.

However the emperor could not do without more established structures for advice on ongoing policy and government. Although, from certain traditional points of view, the Senate would have liked to appear as the obvious partner,³ it was ruled out on political and practical grounds for day-to-day matters and for delicate questions which needed secrecy, such as problems of succession or discussion of military undertakings (at least in the early stages). The more obvious model was that of the group of advisers, the *consilium*, whom every Roman magistrate consulted regarding his decisions, mainly but not exclusively on judicial matters. Annual elections and the associated constant change of officials never allowed such *consilia* to become more than a short-lasting phenomenon in terms of those who served on them. The possibility that his advisory role could be performed by the same people for long periods only arose with the existence of the *princeps*, who was not affected by the annual cycle of elections, and who embodied continuity. In principle, the emperor was in a position to continue to draw on the same people over a long period of time, yet it was also possible for him to call on different advisers as he felt appropriate. From the point of view of political structures this raises the important question whether the *princeps* had in principle a free choice of his more or less permanent advisers, or whether political and social developments produced certain constraints which generally made the emperor's selection of certain individuals seem sensible and necessary.

There are only a few contemporary sources from the first and second centuries which give any real insight into the composition of the emperor's circle of advisers. Juvenal's fourth *Satire* contains the only depiction, however distorted, by a literary source of a specific meeting of the *consilium* and its individual members, in this instance a meeting early in Domitian's reign.⁴ According to Juvenal, Domitian was staying at his estate in the Alban hills south-east of Rome, when a fisherman presented him with an extraordinary present: the largest barbel ever to have been caught. The imperial kitchens had no suitable pot in which to cook the fish, so Domitian called on the *proceres*, the leading men of the state, to discuss the matter and find a solution. Eleven men appear in Juvenal's account:

³ Cf. Talbert, *Senate* 163 ff., 195 ff. ⁴ Juv. IV 37 ff., esp. 75 ff.

Pegasus, a Vespasianic consular, *praefectus urbi* and noted jurist, comes first, followed by Vibius Crispus, consul for the third time in A.D. 83, like Fabricius Veiento, who had come to the Albanum in the company of Valerius Catullus Messalinus, and who had held his second consulship with Domitian in A.D. 85. Two patrician Acilii, father and son, appear: the former was by now an old consular, while his son was to gain the *fascēs* a few years later. After them come Cornelius Fuscus, one of the praetorian prefects, and one Crispinus, who is often taken to be a commander of the praetorian guard, but should perhaps rather be seen as the 'court jester'.⁵ The group is completed by Rubrius and Pompeius, both probably Vespasianic consulars,⁶ and (Venuleius?) Montanus, who had certainly already been consul. At the end of this bizarre assembly Domitian is given the advice, formulated by Montanus, that a massive bowl should immediately be manufactured for the occasion, and in addition that from then on a potter should always be present at the imperial court.

Juvenal's account is undoubtedly a grotesque distortion of reality, probably based on a council actually held by Domitian, such as the one held in Rome before the opening of the campaign against the Chatti, or rather its description in Statius' poem on Domitian's German War. Thus Juvenal is describing a very concrete reality, both in the individual characteristics and in its general substance: the emperor needed the advice of the leading men of the state. Many of the individuals named must already have belonged to the emperor's inner circle under Vespasian and Titus. The second consulates of Vibius Crispus and Fabricius Veiento in A.D. 74 and A.D. 80 respectively, for instance, are clear indications of the close connection of both men with the Flavian cause. And after Domitian's assassination many of his advisers, in so far as they were still alive, continued to exert their influence on his successors. Fabricius Veiento, for example, belonged to the inner circle around Nerva.⁷ In the cases of these men, the position of adviser cannot have rested solely on the relationship of trust between an important personality and an individual ruler. Rather knowledge, ability and the socio-political position of individual advisers must often have recommended their continued use.

Domitian assembled leading senators, including the *praefectus urbi* as the most respected holder of senatorial office in the city of Rome, together with several former *consules iterum* and *tertium*, who had reached the end of their official career, and as such must necessarily have gained experience in numerous different posts. Beside the senators, however, stood one of the two holders of the praetorian prefecture in the shape of Cornelius Fuscus, who had risen to the top position in the developing equestrian

⁵ Cf. Baldwin (1979). ⁶ On Pompeius: Eck (1974b).

⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* iv.22.4 ff.; cf. Suet. *Tit.* 7.2 on the continuity of advisers under various emperors; and Devreker (1977).

career under the Flavians. As the emperor's protector, who never strayed from his side⁸ and was the only person who was permitted to carry a sword in his presence, the praetorian prefect occupied a fairly natural place in the emperor's circle of advisers, as had already been the case under Claudius and Nero.⁹

Juvenal has not invented this bringing together of senators and equestrians in an advisory body for appearances' sake. Rather this was in accord with a long-standing practice, which had already become the norm at least by the time of Domitian, and could quite naturally be documented publicly. In A.D. 82 Domitian resolved a dispute between the towns of Falerio and Firmum in Picenum regarding the legal ownership of some state land. The letter from the emperor to Falerio survives, and in it (as was required of every Roman official)¹⁰ he names the individuals who made up the group whose opinion he had sought prior to making the decision itself: *adhibitis utriusque ordinis splendidis viris*, 'after leading individuals from both orders had been assembled'.¹¹ In other words, not just anyone, but leading members of the senatorial and equestrian orders. The individuals themselves are not so important here: what is more significant is the representation of the higher social groups by outstanding members of both *ordines*.

This practice, whose first official attestation in a public communication from the emperor occurs under Domitian, can also be illustrated from documentary evidence under many of his second-century successors.¹² Thus, a papyrus from the time of Antoninus Pius contains the beginning of an imperial decision regarding which the emperor had consulted both his adopted sons, Marcus and Verus, as well as 'leading individuals from both *ordines*' for their advice on a lawsuit.¹³ Precisely the same phraseology is used here, albeit in Greek, as in the letter of Domitian to Falerio.

An identical passage is found in the Tabula Banasitana, although here the form of words differs.¹⁴ The inscription contains a number of documents, all of which relate to the granting of citizenship to a chief of the Zegrenses in western Mauretania and to members of his family; at its end is added a list of twelve people who had set their seal to the documents on 6 July 177 in Rome. Evidently they are listed according to their standing: at the head of the list stand three former ordinary consuls from the years 150, 152 and 154, all three clearly patricians, followed by two former suffect consuls from the 160s. Even T. Varius Clemens, a former *ab epistulis Latinis* who is named in sixth place, could have held the consulship. After him come six further individuals, who without exception belong to the equestrian order. At their head is Bassaeus Rufus, probably still praetorian prefect at the time; then P.

⁸ Mart. VI.76.1 ff. ⁹ Millar, *Emperor* 122 ff. ¹⁰ Kunkel (1967).

¹¹ *CIL* IX 5240=*FIRA* I² 75. ¹² Cf. also *HA Hadr.* 8.8.

¹³ Thomas (1972)=Oliver (1989) no. 163=*SB* 11069. Cf. also Millar, *Emperor* 120 n. 76.

¹⁴ *AE* 1971 no. 534.

Tarrutienus Paternus, who may already have taken up the same office at this time. It is not clear whether, at the time that the text was issued, the *equites* named in ninth to twelfth places also held high offices in Rome and had in this way been admitted to the company of the emperor, although it is highly probable at least for a few of them, for instance as *praefectus annonae* and as *praefectus vigillum* or as *a rationibus*.¹⁵

An equal number of senators and equestrians put their seals to the document and, together with the very high rank of all these individuals, it is precisely the balance between the two orders that rules out the possibility that they were assembled purely and simply for the purpose of sealing this document. Rather the group must have been brought together for another reason, and this reason can only have been to advise the emperor on a number of matters. Hence we can see the assembled body as a *consilium* of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, with which, on 6 July 177, further items on the agenda were discussed. The sealing of the documents of the Tabula Banasitana was probably not the reason for the assembly, just one product of it.

For many years, on the basis of such evidence, modern scholarship largely presumed that a fixed, standing group of advisers had developed around the emperor, especially from the reign of Hadrian onwards, who has been seen as an eager reformer of administrative structures. This group was presumed on the one hand to have consisted mainly of persons with juristic expertise,¹⁶ and on the other hand to have included the holders of high equestrian office who surrounded the emperor. Both the late antique *consistorium*, with its more or less fixed group of participants, and the idea of the nineteenth-century cabinet of monarchs may have contributed to the development of this concept. In fact there is nothing in our sources that points to the existence of a group of officials and magistrates close to the emperor, or jurists with special expertise, who made up a fixed body on whom the emperors in the first and second centuries could always call for advice. Instead there is a great deal of evidence that the ruler continued to exercise his basic freedom to draw on those whom he regarded as suitable for whatever question had to be resolved. In this he would not, of course, simply choose at will, but would take into account existing hierarchies, particularly in the Senate, and also the new developments in the areas of the administration which were under the control of equestrians.

It was in accord with tradition and the political circumstances of the time that a considerable proportion of the advisers always came from the senatorial class.¹⁷ After all, the emperor was himself a member of the Senate, 'one of us' (*unus ex nobis*), as the younger Pliny puts it in the case of

¹⁵ Several attempts have been made to determine precisely the position of the individual persons, but all have their uncertainties. Cf. Pflaum (1970) 217–18 and *Carrières* 44, 48; Williams (1975) 70–1; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 204. ¹⁶ See most recently, Bauman (1989) 320. ¹⁷ Talbert, *Senate* 163.

Trajan.¹⁸ The majority of officials, who were appointed to almost all the politically or militarily important positions, particularly in the provinces and the army, were drawn by the emperor from the ranks of the Senate. Many of them, particularly senators of consular rank, had for decades repeatedly dealt with military, administrative, juristic and financial problems in their various appointments, in Rome itself and in Italy and the provinces. As a result, they had accumulated a broad base of experience which could be applied to almost all conceivable questions. Most of them also owed a far-reaching political loyalty to the emperor, although this did not mean that individual senators or groups of senators would not compete with each other.¹⁹ Their political attachment and loyalty found its outward expression in the fact that many senators, even if they were engaged upon some concrete official duty such as the proconsulship of Asia, were described in letters as *amici* by the emperor himself. While the emperors used this term almost as a title, it never had any official recognition, and indeed its use developed according to the circumstances of each individual case. In this way, it was possible for every emperor to create around himself, although not in any formalized manner, a wide group of mainly senior senators who appeared especially loyal. This group could then be consulted as magistrates or other state officials, or equally also in an unofficial form, as advisers. Marcus Aurelius emphasizes that his adoptive father, Antoninus Pius, allowed his *amici* the freedom not always to have to be close at hand and not always to have to accompany him on his journeys.²⁰ Yet at the same time it is assumed that *amici* normally had to be at the disposal of the emperor. The circle of *amici* had of course never been restricted to senators, but had always encompassed men of equestrian standing.²¹ And among the *equites*, it was primarily those who held high office who belonged to the emperor's *amici*.

When the emperor was in Rome, the circle of senators who stood at his disposal was relatively large, since, for any particular purpose, he could call upon not only those senators not in office, but also the magistrates who operated in Rome itself. It would be surprising if the individual emperors had not chosen their advisers according to the requirements of the matter on which they were seeking advice. The emperors probably also took into consideration the desirability of giving as many of the high-ranking senators as possible the feeling that they were held in high esteem, in order to bind them still more closely to the emperor. This perhaps explains why the younger Pliny was invited several times by Trajan to take part in the deliberations of the *consilium*, both in Rome itself, and also outside the capital on the imperial estate at Centumcellae.²² As far as we can tell, all these cases

¹⁸ Pliny, *Pan.* 2.4.

¹⁹ Cf., e.g., Champlin (1985).

²⁰ *H.A.M. Ant.* 1.16.8.

²¹ Cf. Crook, *Consilium* 148 ff.; Syme (1956) 264 ff.

²² Pliny, *Ep.* IV.22; VI.22.31.

were judicial investigations which had been brought before the emperor; they were not concerned with general administrative or, in a narrower sense, political or even military matters, with which the emperor would normally also have to deal. From what Pliny has to say, it does not seem that he was a regular participant in Trajan's judicial *consilium*. He seems only to have been called on occasionally, and an individual request from the emperor was always required. For other senators too, the role of adviser to the emperor was not a continuous, regular activity. If it were, we would expect to find it mentioned at least occasionally, in one form or another, in the public account of careers given in inscriptions. But having been an adviser of the emperor is never mentioned in inscriptions which describe a senatorial *cursus*, just as the 'position' of *amicus principis* is never mentioned, although such special activity in the service of the emperor, outside the normal course of the senatorial career, would have raised an individual senator above the mass of his contemporaries, and should, therefore, have been recorded whenever possible.^{22a} But to serve as an adviser of the emperor was quite a different matter from holding a republican magistracy or another official position. This does not exclude the possibility that individual senators might often have taken part in a *consilium*, or that a few did so very frequently or even regularly, as would appear to be the case with Fabricius Veiento. Sometimes the *praefectus urbi* was also involved, as is mentioned by Juvenal in his fourth *Satire*. It would have made socio-political sense for the highest representative of the *ordo senatorius* to be seen as a natural adviser of the emperor in Rome itself, though the city prefect had his own duties to perform, and was, therefore, of necessity not constantly available to the emperor.

From the age of Augustus onwards, there was a relatively large number of high-ranking senators in Rome who were always available and from whom the emperor could choose his advisers. In contrast, in the first century there was only a comparatively small number of equestrians who held a post which was sufficiently important, and had sufficient social standing, for it to be even partly comparable with the consular rank among senators.²³ Before equestrians replaced freedmen in charge of important offices, such as the *ab epistulis*, a *libellis*, or a *rationibus*, the only equestrian officials in Rome itself were the two praetorian prefects, and perhaps the prefects in charge of the corn supply and the urban fire service. Other equestrians, on the other hand, who had concluded their imperial service, for example with the governorship of Egypt or one of the Mauretanian provinces, seem often to have returned to their home towns on completion of their imperial service and were, therefore, generally no longer available. In any case, only a small number of equestrians can be shown to have risen

^{22a} But see new Herrmann (1997). ²³ See Alföldy (1981).

to high office and to have been resident in Rome for any considerable time.²⁴ For equestrians there was no such body as the Senate, attendance at whose meetings was obligatory, and thus required the almost uninterrupted presence of senators in Rome. So, to a certain extent, it was obvious that an emperor would have to select his equestrian advisers largely or exclusively from among those members of that *ordo* who were in office at any given time. At the head of these would be the two praetorian prefects, since on the one hand they always had to remain in the vicinity of the emperor by virtue of their function as his protectors, and on the other hand, from the later first century they generally had behind them a long career with a variety of previous posts.²⁵

From the time of Domitian, and particularly in the course of the second century, the number of equestrians who were suitably qualified, both socially and politically, was increased by the holders of the so-called Palatine offices or, as two documents from the time of Caracalla put it, the *principes officiorum*.²⁶ Yet the number of available equestrians continued to be relatively limited, and in any event was always smaller than the number of consulars available. It seems to have been expected that the rank of equestrians who took part in a *consilium* would not be markedly below that of a consular, and this probably led to the holders of the less important procuratorships in Rome being excluded from participation. The limited number of available equestrians could well have led to certain members of the equestrian class regularly serving as advisers on the emperor's *consilium*, at least when the emperor sought to maintain a numerical balance between the representatives of the two *ordines*, as in the case of the *consilium* reported in the Tabula Banasitana.

We can assume that, in the course of time, besides the two *praefecti praetorio*, the same equestrian officials were always represented on the *consilium*, although there is little in our sources to confirm this. But it evidently mattered to all emperors to have men of comparable standing from both *ordines* represented on their *consilium*, in order that it would reflect the main socio-political powers represented at the imperial court.²⁷ If the impression given by our meagre sources is correct, then from the late second century onwards, there appears to have been something of a shift in emphasis towards the *equites*. This can largely be attributed to the political and administrative developments since the end of the first century, but ultimately the balance of equestrians and senators was always dependent on the character of the emperor. So it is perhaps not fortuitous that when a letter of Commodus names the participants in a *consilium*, three, or perhaps four, equestrians are mentioned alongside only two senators. The text is fragmentary, yet it seems clear that each of these equestrians held some

²⁴ Cf. Eck (1982b) 204–5; *LTUR* II s.v. *domus*. ²⁵ See Millar, *Emperor* 125–6.

²⁶ *SEG* xvii 759; *c.f.* 9.51.1. ²⁷ Cf. also *HA Hadr.* 18.1.

office.²⁸ It cannot be disputed, however, that the dominance of the senatorial class remained largely uncontested, at least until the end of the Antonine dynasty under Commodus.

Of course, the nature of the situation could also determine which men the emperor summoned. The exceptional circumstances of Vespasian's council in Berytus before the start of the campaign against Vitellius naturally led to the presence of the legates of the legions, and also the tribunes and centurions, in addition to Mucianus.²⁹ Similarly, when Lucius Verus set out for the East and the war against the Parthians, he gathered around himself mainly men of military experience, although Marcus Aurelius also assigned to him the heads of all the *officia*, of whom at least an *ab epistulis Graecis* can be identified by name.³⁰ According to the *Historia Augusta*, when the defendant in a case was a senator, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius only appointed senators, and no equestrians, to their judicial *consilia*.³¹ The *Historia Augusta* explains that these emperors considered that an equestrian should not pass judgement on a member of the Senate. On the other hand, some cases would require the advice of men with special knowledge or experience. Thus Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus decided on an inheritance case according to a practice which went back to the jurist Proculus, but when the matter resurfaced one of the emperors' advisers was Volusius Maecianus, who had followed an equestrian career up to the prefecture of Egypt and had eventually gained the consulship and a seat in the Senate, but whose high esteem derived above all from being Marcus Aurelius' teacher of law.³² In addition, other imperial *amici*, all legal experts – *iuris periti* – were also consulted, and their advice, on the basis of the majority of juristic authors, resulted in a different decision.³³ We are not told the social group of these *iuris periti* apart from Volusius Maecianus, but the deciding criterion for being invited to take part in this *consilium* was their specialist knowledge and competence.

To an outsider it appeared that all decisions and declarations, whether letters to client kings or to the cities of the empire, instructions to governors, or legal judgements, were solely the business of the emperor: his advisers remain in the background, even in the specific cases where they are mentioned.³⁴ Hence it is difficult to determine individuals' personal contributions, even if we have comparative material, as is the case with the juristic writings of Hadrian's senatorial advisers, Neratius Priscus, Iuventius Celsus and Salvius Iulianus.³⁵

²⁸ Oliver (1989) no. 209. ²⁹ Tac. *Hist.* II.81.3.

³⁰ Syme, *Roman Papers* v 685; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 125; *HA Marc.* 8.10; Eck (1992c).

³¹ *HA Hadr.* 8.8–9; *Marc.* 10.6. ³² Cf. Williams (1975) 76; Millar, *Emperor* 248–9.

³³ Ulpian, *Dig.* xxxvii. 14.17 pref. ³⁴ Cf. Millar (1990), with a longer version in *Emperor* 636 ff.

³⁵ See the attempt of Bauman (1989) 263 ff. to demonstrate the influence of Celsus and Iulianus in Hadrian's *consilium*. But the surviving sources are here quite different from those which allowed Honoré (1981) to identify individual *a libellis* with probability. Who actually made the decision is, incidentally, not mentioned. Cf. Millar (1986); Peachin (1992) 95–6.

The statement of the *Historia Augusta* that Hadrian invited not only his *amici* and *comites* onto his legal *consilium*, but also *iuris consulti* had led scholars to detect a trend towards imperial advisers becoming technically competent and permanent, in particular from the reign of Hadrian, and above all in the area of juristic competence.³⁶ This has been connected with evidence from the time of Marcus Aurelius and Septimius Severus, which attests the presence of *consilarii* who are described as such in the immediate vicinity of the emperor. The earliest is supposed to be one M. Aurelius Papirius Dionysius, who was appointed to a *consilium* (*adsumptus in consilium*) at the start of his equestrian career under Marcus Aurelius, and was paid 60,000 sesterces.³⁷ It is always assumed that the *consilium* mentioned was that of the emperor, but there is no evidence for this. It is equally possible that this was the *consilium* of the praetorian or urban prefects, since there is other evidence for men of equestrian rank holding such a position, and a similar level of payment can be presumed.³⁸ Dionysius is only called *consiliarius Aug(usti)* at a later stage in his career, expressly emphasizing the connection with the emperor, in contrast to his previous position. In this later position he earned 100,000 sesterces. Furthermore, it was laid down by Septimius Severus and Caracalla that jurists who were brought into the emperor's circle of advisers (*in consilium principum adsumpti*), should be released from the duties of *tutela* under the civil law, since they had to remain close to the emperor, and this honoured position should be limited neither by time nor by location.³⁹ In particular, the statement that their position should not be restricted by location shows clearly that such *consilarii* were expected to be at the emperor's disposal when he had to leave Rome, and this required their regular financial remuneration. Occasionally advisers also received presents, as did the younger Pliny from Trajan.⁴⁰

It cannot be doubted, then, that the position of a salaried *consiliarius* existed from the time of Marcus Aurelius, and the granting of privileges to *consilarii* suggests that it was treated as an official position. Official recognition of the post meant that it could be mentioned in a career inscription, unlike the emperor's senatorial 'advisers' or the 'status' of an *amicus principis*. Admittedly it is not clear whether several *consilarii* were active and paid at any one time. This would be unlikely if, as is generally assumed, in the third century there was a direct route from the position which Aurelius Papirius Dionysius filled as *consiliarius Augusti* to that of a *consilius*.⁴¹ For the role of the *a consiliis* must have been similar to that of, for example, the equestrian *a libellis* or *a cognitionibus*, and these positions were always designed to have a single high-ranking equestrian holder. Yet there is no

³⁶ *HA Hadr.* 18.1. ³⁷ *CIL* x 6662=*ILS* 1455; cf. Pflaum, *Carrières* 1 472 ff.

³⁸ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1030.

³⁹ Papinianus, *Dig.* xxvii.1.30 praef.; cf. Ulpian, *Dig.* iv.4.11.2; *CIL* vi 1634=*ILS* 1423.

⁴⁰ Pliny, *Ep.* vi.31.14. ⁴¹ *CIL* v 8972=*ILS* 1459; *OGIS* 549.

evidence that the *a consiliis* took over the duties of one or more *consilarii*. Hence there is nothing in the later post of the *a consiliis* to deny the existence under Caracalla of several contemporary *consilarii* as suggested by Papinian.⁴²

The evidence for the position of *consiliarius* from the time of Marcus Aurelius onwards can in no way be connected with the claim of the *Historia Augusta* that Hadrian enlisted *iuris periti*. Iuventius Celsus, Salvius Iulianus and Neratius Priscus are cited as examples of *iuris periti* in Hadrian's *consilium*, but they were all senators, and the word *consiliarius* is never used of senators in documentary sources.⁴³ The senators just mentioned, all of high standing as jurists, belonged rather to the circle of *amici* and/or that of *comites*; they do not represent any separate group of legal experts. The designation *consiliarius* (and also the later *a consiliis*), however, is used only of officials of equestrian rank. Hence it remains unclear when in the second century it was first felt necessary to have special *consilarii* permanently available to the emperor. There is no need to connect this with Hadrian.

As far as we can tell, men with special juristic competence were not generally permanent members of the imperial *consilium* with the designation *consiliarius*. None of the men whose careers are known to have included the position of *consiliarius* had any particular juristic expertise.⁴⁴ The exception is the first known *consiliarius Augusti*, M. Aurelius Papirius Dionysius, who is expressly called *iuris peritus*. The title *iuris peritus* was bestowed on him by the citizens of Antium, who honoured him with a statue, perhaps in recognition of his assistance and advice in some legal case. Hence there is no reason to suggest that his juristic qualifications formed the main reason for his appointment as *consiliarius* under Marcus Aurelius.⁴⁵

It is clear that during the second century the membership of the emperor's *consilium* began to become regularized. Certain officials, mainly the equestrian functionaries, who were constantly to be found in the emperor's vicinity, appear as advisers more frequently than others. We cannot now discern how the giving of advice was organized in detail. In principle the emperor was responsible for all decisions on political, administrative and judicial matters. Numerous questions and petitions of every type were directed to him by individuals, groups and communities. The range of matters about which decisions had to be made can only be discerned when we know something about the participation of advisers. They range from declaring war against the Chatti, through rulings on territorial disputes between communities, decisions on petitions for Roman citizenship, to the innumerable lawsuits which the emperor was expected to resolve. The appointment of the numerous officials in Rome and the prov-

⁴² Cf. n. 39 above.

⁴³ *HA Hadr.* 18.1.

⁴⁴ Hirschfeld, *Verwaltungsbeamte* 340–1.

⁴⁵ Cf. n. 37.

inces might also have been discussed in this circle of more or less permanent advisers, although it was precisely in this area that the unofficial exertion of influence would have been particularly prevalent. The large amount of work involved suggests that we should assume that meetings between the emperor and his 'permanent' advisers would have been frequent, if not almost daily, and perhaps linked with the morning *salutatio*.

Yet the circle of men whom the emperor collected around himself for formal advice, and on official occasions to represent the imperial majesty, was not fixed and its composition was not permanently established. This can be seen particularly clearly when the emperor went on his travels, which often involved a year-long absence from Rome.⁴⁶ All important decisions would doubtless then have to be made wherever the emperor happened to be, not in Rome by individual officials in the imperial bureaucracy.

When the emperor left Rome for some length of time he would probably have been accompanied by some of the equestrian officials, above all by the praetorian prefects, or at least one of them. It is likely that the holders of the offices of the *ab epistulis Latinis* or *Graecis*, and that of the *a libellis* would also have been present, for to a great extent they could only carry out their duties in the presence of the emperor. On the other hand, the equestrian prefects of the *annona* or of the *vigiles* would naturally be expected to remain in Rome, just as the senatorial *praefectus urbi* could not under normal circumstances leave the capital. The *a rationibus* responsible for all the emperor's finances also seems normally not to have left Rome.⁴⁷ The only surviving second-century document in which the *a rationibus* is named among those in the *consilium* was clearly produced in Rome.⁴⁸

Hence part of the group of men, particularly the official on whom the emperor probably would call repeatedly in Rome for counsel and judicial hearings, were not available on tour. This was the case for senators as well as for equestrians. Yet each emperor saw to it that there was always a sufficient number of men of high social rank in his entourage. This would in any case have been necessary to maintain the desired image of imperial power and its visible representation to the public. Men who accompanied him in this manner, and who, not simply because of their duties, had always to be in his vicinity even outside Rome, received the designation of *comes Augusti*.⁴⁹ This position was regarded as sufficiently important for a number to record it in their *cursus honorum*, although it was not an official position. Senators and equestrians were both to be found among the *comites*, even if the latter, at least in the surviving evidence, formed a minority. In reality this could, at least occasionally, have been different. The emperor selected these *comites* from among his *amici*, a large circle of men which was not

⁴⁶ In general, see Halfmann, *Itinera* 90 ff.; Millar, *Emperor* 110 ff. ⁴⁷ Millar, *Emperor* 105–6.

⁴⁸ Oliver (1989) no. 209. ⁴⁹ There is a list of *comites* in Halfmann, *Itinera* 245 ff.

defined precisely and which could change rapidly in its composition.⁵⁰ Many *comites* may perhaps have first achieved the 'rank' of an *amicus* through their selection as a *comes*, particularly if they were enlisted into the *comitatus* at an early age. This was the case with the two senatorial Caesernii from Aquileia: one was Hadrian's *comes per Siciliam, Africam, Mauretanium* after the quaestorship, while the other served as *comes . . . Hadriani in Oriente* between the vigintivirate and the quaestorship.⁵¹ Like other *comites*, they were on tour with the emperor for years, and were thereby in far closer contact with him than would have been usual in Rome. Consequently, they were probably very frequently involved in *consilia*, since the circle of possible advisers outside Rome was limited. Their influence could thus have been correspondingly greater.

The *comites* were in general expected to support the emperor in all areas. Thus they could also be given special roles in the immediate vicinity of the emperor, in addition to that of representing him, for instance during military campaigns, as we know was the case for M. Pontius Laelianus during the wars in the East under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus.⁵² Yet above all these *comites* had to be available as *amici* to advise the emperor. Thus Marcus' two sons-in-law, Claudius Pompeianus and Claudius Severus, were notable participants in the last meeting of his advisers before his death, at which the emperor was supposed to have recommended Commodus to them as his successor.⁵³ In documents from the time of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, the *amici* appear outside Rome at the *salutatio* of the emperor and at official imperial *consilia* alongside those who were enlisted in the *consilium*, the praetorian prefects and the *principes officiorum*.⁵⁴ Fabricius Veiento, *consul III* in A.D. 83, not only took part in Domitian's *consilium* on the Albanum but evidently also accompanied the emperor to Germany, either in the war against the Chatti in 83 or in the campaign against the usurper Antonius Saturninus in the winter of 88/9.⁵⁵ Previously he had taken part in Domitian's deliberations over whether there should be a war against the Chatti.⁵⁶

The emperor's official advisers came to the notice of contemporaries mainly when proceedings took place in public. This was particularly the case with judicial sessions or the reception of embassies, something all emperors reserved for themselves, as long as this continued to take place in public. Thus we are told that Vespasian often tried cases in the forum, and it would be only natural for his advisers to be present, as would those of any Roman magistrate.⁵⁷ Hadrian, too, judged cases in public, in the

⁵⁰ Crook, *Consilium* 21 ff., 148 ff.; Syme (1956) 264 ff.; Millar, *Emperor* 110 ff.

⁵¹ *CIL* v 865 = *ILS* 1069 and *AE* 1957 no. 135; *ILS* 1068 = *IL Alg* II 623.

⁵² *CIL* vi 1497 and 1549 = *ILS* 1094 and 1100. ⁵³ Herodian 1.4.1 ff.

⁵⁴ Cf. Millar, *Emperor* 121. ⁵⁵ *CIL* XIII 7253 = *ILS* 1010. ⁵⁶ *PIR*² F 91.

⁵⁷ Dio LXVI.10.5; cf. Suet. *Tit.* 7.1.

forum, in the Pantheon or elsewhere, in the presence of the 'leading men' of his age.⁵⁸ Yet when Trajan carried out his judicial investigations on the imperial estate at Centumcellae, to which he invited Pliny among other advisers, the general public hardly had access. It is possible that the great buildings erected in Rome by Domitian limited the general, uncontrolled access the public enjoyed in the forum. Yet such dealings of the emperor, even when they took place in the reception rooms of the palace,⁵⁹ always remained fundamentally public, and so the alternating advisers were open to public scrutiny, or at least to that of some of their social and political equals.⁶⁰ At the accession of Commodus in Carnuntum in March 180, Herodian stresses that on the tribune, from which the new emperor wanted to address the troops, he was surrounded by friends of his deceased father. These were the men to whom Marcus Aurelius before his death had recommended his son, and whom he had asked for their advice.⁶¹ The performance before the army served as a portrayal of political continuity, precisely because this circle of friends and advisers was the same group as that of the new emperor's father.

This scene, incidentally, is one of the few in which real people appear as advisers of the emperor in non-judicial cases. Specific individuals generally only appear by name in our sources when the emperor seeks advice on general questions of law or on juristic problems during court cases. We do not, however, know who was in attendance, for example at the reception of the numerous embassies, which were no doubt often heard in public by the emperor. A wide variety of cases could be laid before the emperor, from the permission for a town to begin minting coins again, as was certainly secured under Domitian by ambassadors for Patrai,⁶² to the financial questions raised by the *gerousia* of Ephesus under Hadrian,⁶³ or to the voting rights of the community of Bubon in the provincial assembly of Lycia.⁶⁴ The sheer number of these embassies and the complexities of the problems they presented made it absolutely essential for the emperor to seek advice,⁶⁵ either directly before the representatives of the cities, especially when contentious issues were raised by several embassies, or later in a closer circle of advisers. We know even less about whose influence was brought to bear on political questions in the narrower sense, for instance on the policy towards client states, on war or on large building projects. The emperor must have received advice on such matters, and naturally this would not have occurred in the Senate. We can no longer discern who took part in such discussions and decisions, just as we usually know nothing about the criteria according to which the decisions were made.⁶⁶ Generally such discussions did not take place in public and were not normally

⁵⁸ Dio LXIX.7.1. ⁵⁹ See Turcan (1987) 28 ff. ⁶⁰ Cf. Philostr. *VS* 8.4.

⁶¹ Herodian I.5.2; I.4.1 ff. ⁶² Levy (1987) 43 ff. ⁶³ *Syll.*³ 833 = *IEph* v 1486.

⁶⁴ *AE* 1979 no. 624. ⁶⁵ Millar, *Emperor* 375 ff. ⁶⁶ Cf. Millar (1982).

intended to be made public. Hence, quite naturally, no documents were published about them, in which something might have been said about the nature of the advice given or about the advisers themselves.

As far as we can tell, all emperors after Nero thought it important to allow only members of the senatorial and equestrian order to feature as their official advisers. Imperial freedmen seem to have been excluded from 'public' appearances as active participants in a *consilium*. Even Juvenal has no imperial freedman appear in his parody of the Domitianic *consilium* before the start of the war against the Chatti, although this would have strengthened the satirical effect. Only Commodus seems to have broken this unwritten rule, for in a letter of A.D. 186/7 to Athens one M. Aurelius Cleander is named among the advisers, after two senators of consular rank and two or three equestrian officials. Cleander had probably been freed by Marcus Aurelius and under Commodus became *de facto* praetorian prefect, if without the title. The reason why he had so great an influence over the emperor that, despite his past as a freedman, he could take on this position, and thereby also be officially named as part of the imperial *consilium*, is clearly stated in the letter: he had been Commodus' teacher (*tropheus*=*nutritor*).⁶⁷ There is naturally no mention of Cleander's (earlier) social status as an imperial freedman. If Cleander had been declared free-born by a law, then there would have been no formal obstacle to his taking part.

The blatantly obvious influence of freedmen on some of the Julio-Claudian emperors largely disappears from the public picture from the time of the Flavians onwards. Senatorial writers missed no opportunity to repeat anything negative about Domitian after his death, but they could cite no concrete instances of a great influence of freedmen (or slaves) over him,⁶⁸ at least not of the type well known from the reigns of Claudius and Nero to people such as Pliny the Elder and Pliny the Younger.⁶⁹ The far-reaching influence of men of this lower social status on the emperor and his business is no longer reported, if we disregard the above-mentioned Cleander and one Saoterus, also from the age of Commodus. Saoterus is said to have become so powerful that he gained from the Senate, no doubt through the intervention of Commodus, the right for the city of Nicomedia in Bithynia to organize games and to build a temple to the emperor.⁷⁰ According to Dio, who had personal experience of him in his youth, Cleander is said to have had in his gift the allocation of all the official positions in Rome and the provinces. This squares with what can be ascertained regarding his public standing. The extent to which he appeared to be the most powerful adviser of Commodus and, as a consequence, the power

⁶⁷ Oliver (1989) no. 209; on Cleander, cf. also Dio LXXII. 12.3 ff. and *AE* 1961 no. 280.

⁶⁸ Cf. Pliny, *Pan.* 88.1–2.

⁶⁹ Pliny, *HN* xxv.199 ff.; Pliny, *Ep.* VII.29; VIII.6; cf. Also Tac. *Ann.* XII.53 which refers to the meeting of the Senate, at which the freedman Pallas was voted extraordinary honours. ⁷⁰ Dio LXXII.12.2.

behind the throne, is demonstrated by his violent death: the plebs of Rome saw him as the cause of a famine which had struck the capital.⁷¹ Nothing comparable can be found in our sources. While Statius may describe the imperial freedman Abascantus in his position as Domitian's *ab epistulis*, he is never portrayed in a position which might, in public, have become dominant; he appears merely as the reliable, trusted servant of his master.⁷²

As equestrians began to replace the *liberti Augusti* in charge of the offices of the imperial administration, the important position of freedmen as the visible advisers of the emperor, particularly under Claudius and Nero, disappeared.⁷³ This did not mean that freedmen were excluded from being among the emperor's most important advisers, though this was not widely advertised. Many freedmen must have continued to present the emperor with information and advice for both his routine and his personal decisions. They could have been particularly effective in arranging *beneficia* for individuals or communities, for what was decisive in such matters was not an official position with concrete public duties and a known area of competence, but merely the opportunity to approach the emperor and to be able to make the appropriate suggestions.⁷⁴ Hence, it is reported of Vespasian that one of his most trusted *ministri* had requested for someone whom he claimed to be his brother the post of *dispensator* in the treasury, which was responsible for receiving and paying out money. Since the *dispensator* always had to be a slave, the supposed brother must also have been a slave or freedman. The request was completely successful, although in this case Vespasian himself collected the sum which had been agreed for the appointment, since he had seen through his *minister's* intention.⁷⁵ We are also told of Antonia Caenis, the concubine of Vespasian, arranging privileges and offices in return for financial recompense.⁷⁶ Similarly, Marcia Aurelia Ceionia Demetrias could influence the decisions of Commodus by virtue of her role as his concubine. Among other matters, she is said to have persuaded the emperor to allow the return of Christians who had been sent to Sardinia for forced labour.⁷⁷ Abascantus, *ab epistulis* under Domitian, and the *cubicularius* Parthenius, who took part in the assassination of Domitian in A.D. 96, were not mentioned and portrayed to the public by the poets Statius and Martial without a reason.⁷⁸ For the poets it was quite clearly a matter of winning a patron for their own literary activity, a patron who would be prepared to further the poetic friend's cause with the emperor.

The exercise of such influence on the emperor of the day continued to be possible, though it no longer represented the dominating and hence fiercely contested phenomenon that it had so clearly been in the pre-Flavian era.⁷⁹ For the emperor's household staff were almost never now

⁷¹ Dio LXXII. 12–13. ⁷² Stat. *Silv.* v praef., 5.1. ⁷³ Cf. ch. 5 below. ⁷⁴ Cf. Eck (1982b).

⁷⁵ Suet. *Vesp.* 23, 2. ⁷⁶ Suet. *Vesp.* 3; Dio LXVI. 14.1 ff. ⁷⁷ *PIR*² M 261.

⁷⁸ Stat. *Silv.* v praef.; Mart. v.6; cf. IV.45; VIII.28. ⁷⁹ See Saller, *Patronage* 67.

recognized as having influence, or at least markedly less frequently than before, and they did not gain any semi-official or visible position unsuited to their social standing.

Naturally the female members of the *domus Augusta* did not lose their influence, but often they were able to effect decisions of the emperor. Hence Iulia, the daughter of Titus, whom Domitian had long allowed to behave as his consort, could preserve Iulius Ursus, the former prefect of Egypt, from execution and, after he had joined the Senate, secure a suffect consulship for him in A.D. 84.⁸⁰ Similar mediation could also be achieved under Antoninus Pius by Domitia Lucilla, the mother of Marcus Aurelius, when she arranged for Didius Iulianus a post in the vigintivirate.⁸¹ According to Philostratus, Marcus Aurelius' consort Faustina, together with her three-year-old daughter, influenced her husband in the favour of Athens when the case brought against Herodes Atticus by the Athenians came before Marcus Aurelius. Similarly, Plotina successfully intervened and gained a reorganization of the succession of the leadership of the Epicurean philosophical school. Her letter to Hadrian, dating from A.D. 121, in which she sets out her reasons, was published in Athens together with Hadrian's letter to the head of the Epicurean school, in which he granted the privileges, and Plotina's own letter to the school. Hadrian seems to have complied with her numerous wishes in other matters also, even to the extent of supposedly having influenced Trajan's judicial decision in a trial to the detriment of the Alexandrian party, that is if we are to believe an admittedly dubious third-century source.⁸²

The publication of Plotina's two letters in Athens shows that such influencing of the emperor's decisions was accepted, at least in broad circles, and even respected. This is not only the case for Plotina, but also for all influential people in a socially accepted position. Hence Pliny, too, could publish letters in which he asked Trajan to grant magistracies to young men seeking office, just as did Cornelius Fronto under Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius. Influencing and advising the ruler in this way was expected and was necessary for the functioning of the socio-political system, since it was in this manner that the emperor could be informed about matters of which he would not otherwise be aware. This was the case in the area of 'personal politics', the appointment of high officials, but also for the bestowal of material *beneficia* and legal privileges. Fronto, the tutor of Marcus Aurelius, sought to have procuratorial duties granted by Antoninus Pius to his *amicus* Sex. Calpurnius Iulianus, and to have an honorary procuratorship granted to the historian Appian.⁸³ Similarly, Pliny sought from Trajan the award of the praetorship for the young senator

⁸⁰ Dio LXVII.4.2. ⁸¹ *HA Did. Iul.* 1.4.

⁸² Philostr. *VS* 560-1; *CIL* III 12283 = *ILS* 7784 = *IG* II² 1099 = Oliver (1989) no. 73; cf. Dio LXIX. 13.3²; Musurillo (1954) 44 ff.; Temporini *Frauen* 90 ff. ⁸³ Fronto, *Ep.* pp. 228 ff. (van den Hout).

Attius Sura, and a second period of service as an officer for the young equestrian Nymphidius Lupus.⁸⁴ Pliny interceded on behalf of Voconius Romanus, a young Spanish *eques*, and on behalf of Suetonius, to have Trajan grant them the *ius trium liberorum*; Pliny had himself received the same privilege through the offices of Iulius Servianus, who had brought his prestige to bear on Trajan in Pliny's favour.⁸⁵ Servianus had great influence on Trajan as Pliny's 'petitioner' by virtue of his long-held consular rank, his distant relationship with Trajan and the loyalty he had proved in the turmoil of A.D. 97/8. While Pliny directly requested Roman citizenship, and later Alexandrian citizenship, for his doctor, Harpocras, two governors of Mauretania Tingitana wrote in support of the petitions by the prince of the Zegrenses and his son.⁸⁶ In this manner, the emperor's attention was aroused, since letters from governors necessarily had preference in the administrative mail system.⁸⁷

Personally presenting a case to the emperor, however, could be far more effective than doing so in writing. The daily *salutationes*, or the banquets which frequently took place in the imperial palace or in the houses of the emperor's *amici*, or the many official functions of the priesthoods, or public games, which the emperor attended with some regularity, all brought manifold opportunities to offer advice to the emperor.⁸⁸ In this there were undoubtedly different grades of opportunity, largely dictated by one's social and political standing. These opportunities could, however, also be unevenly distributed as a result of formal distinctions. Thus the participants in the morning receptions seem to have been arranged into various hierarchically ordered groups, which would of necessity influence the possibilities for contact with the emperor.⁸⁹

It was at the *salutationes* that the officials who were present in Rome and the *amici principis* were in a favoured position. Suetonius tells us that Vespasian would begin his imperial business in the night, and after reading the letters that had arrived and the reports from the individual administrative divisions (*officia*), he would admit his *amici* to the *salutatio*.⁹⁰ Among these *amici* were the various officials, such as the elder Pliny, who, like Vespasian, worked early in the morning, went before daybreak to the emperor for the *salutatio* and went thence to the tasks that had been allotted to him.⁹¹ It is easy to imagine that letters received and problems arising would regularly be discussed at these early morning meetings between the *princeps* and his officials.

If we leave aside the emperor's own family and also the slaves and freed-

⁸⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* x.12.87. ⁸⁵ Pliny, *Ep.* II.13.8; x.94; x.2.1.

⁸⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* x.5.1-2; *AE* 1971 no. 534. ⁸⁷ Cf. Philo, *In Flacc.* 100.

⁸⁸ Turcan (1987) 132 ff., 173 ff., 240 ff.; Saller, *Patronage* 61.

⁸⁹ *CIL* VI 31746=*ILS* 1078; *CIL* VI 2169=*ILS* 1320; Turcan (1987) 132 ff. ⁹⁰ Suet. *Vesp.* 21.

⁹¹ Pliny, *Ep.* III.5.9: *ad delegatum sibi officium*.

men who worked in his immediate vicinity, then senators and leading equestrians had markedly more opportunities to win in the competition for the emperor's decisions. Yet they had no monopoly, for people of low social prestige could also present a case before the emperor, if necessary by interesting others of a higher standing in their case. Thus Aetrius Ferox, a senior military clerk with the *praefectus vigilum*, enlisted the help of his superior to gain the concession of a road-use tax for his home town, Tuficum in Umbria.⁹² The only thing that was important in such cases was direct or indirect access to the seat of power. Yet such possibilities always remained limited, since they required the assistance of people of greater social and political importance. The primary and enduring circle of people whose advice could influence the decisions of the emperor always remained an oligarchy, though increasingly not restricted just to senators, but also including equestrians. This corresponded to the way in which the overall political and administrative structure of the empire had developed since the time of the Flavians.⁹³

⁹² *CIL* XI 5694=*ILS* 2666a.

⁹³ On the general development, cf. Vittinghoff (1990) 214 ff.

EMPEROR, SENATE AND MAGISTRATES

WERNER ECK

The senator Pliny the Younger called the emperor Trajan ‘one of us’ (*unus ex nobis*), and his elder contemporary Martial sought to distinguish Nerva from his predecessor Domitian with the observation that he was not ‘the *dominus*, but rather the *imperator* and the most upright senator of all’.¹ Yet the same Pliny when discussing secret voting in the Senate, can also speak of everything depending on the will of one man.² Thus the emperor was portrayed as the *princeps* in the Senate and, at the same time, as its ‘ruler’. A benevolent yet astute observer such as Pliny can preach the ruling ideology, but at the same time he cannot avoid seeing and describing the stark contrast between this and the reality. But, while individuals could overcome the gap between the ideology and reality, it was never bridged in public proclamations. The relationship between emperor and Senate was always the result of the tension between what the majority of senators thought the emperor should be, and what he really was, or could become: *princeps* or *dominus*. This tense relationship found succinct expression either in the emperor’s readiness to swear an oath that he would not allow a senator to be killed, or in the refusal so to swear. The actions of Titus and Domitian well illustrate this contrast.³ But, as ever, the proprieties and the forms of words used in relations between the emperor and senators were fixed. Hardly anyone could deny the necessary dependence of the Senate on the emperor, not least because of the annual oath of senators in the *acta* of the emperor.⁴

The end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty saw no change whatsoever in the traditional, official, position of the Senate. Despite all the disruption during the years of the four emperors, all the contenders for the throne knew that they had to win over the Senate as well as the army, for they needed the former’s support to legitimize their position. It is perhaps not chance that, precisely from the beginning of Vespasian’s reign, part of the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani* survives on a monumental bronze inscription.⁵ This was the law which established the legal authority of the new emperor. The

¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 2.4; Mart. x.72.8–9: *Non est hic dominus, sed imperator, sed iustissimus omnium senator.*

² Pliny, *Ep.* III.20.12: *Sunt quidem cuncta sub unius arbitrio.* ³ Birley (1962).

⁴ Talbert, *Senate* 201; cf. also LeGall (1985). ⁵ *CIL* VI 930= *ILS* 244= *FIRA* I² no. 15.

form of this law is, however, essentially not that of a popular enactment, but that of a *senatus consultum*. This was the clearest possible representation to the outside world of the formal importance of the Senate.

After the disruption of A.D. 69, which affected much of the empire, none of the contenders for the throne had considered questioning the Senate's central political position in the empire, just as was the situation at the close of the civil wars which marked the end of the Republic. This would have been impossible purely because each of the pretenders to power relied on numerous senators to lead their armies or serve as legates in the legions or as advisers. Without their support none of their attempts could have been successful. In addition, each of the claimants for the imperial throne had themselves long been senators. Vespasian, for instance, had been a senator for more than thirty years. As such, they had undoubtedly experienced the political impotence of the body, and at the same time been inculcated with the idea that the Senate was the source of the legitimization of imperial rule and that its members naturally took on the most important offices and so became a support for the Principate. A *princeps* without the Senate was unthinkable, and it is quite possible that nobody even began to conceive of a political model in which the Senate would have been superfluous. None of the subsequent emperors sought to change the Senate's traditional position and competence, not even emperors such as Domitian or Commodus, who for different reasons fought hard battles with the Senate.

However, at the start of the Flavian era, during the censorship of A.D. 73/4, there was a large-scale renewal of the members of the Senate, including filling empty places. The two *imperatores*, Vespasian and his son Titus, were the censors, and there could have been no clearer demonstration of how, quite naturally, power became increasingly concentrated in the hands of the emperor. At the last census in A.D. 47/8, the senator and three-times consul L. Vitellius had served as censor alongside Claudius. Now the census had from all points of view become solely a concern of the emperor. He acted not as 'one of us' in Pliny's sense, but as master. Pliny's words found no parallel in the reality.

Apart from the changes made to the structure and membership of the Senate, we know all too little of the specific measures taken during Vespasian's censorship, such as those which affected Italy or Roman citizens in the provinces. During his censorship Claudius had been the first to include in the ranks of the Senate individuals who did not yet belong to the *ordo senatorius*, without them previously having held one of the Republican magistracies. Vespasian followed suit on a large scale to fill the empty seats in the Senate which were the result of the numerous executions and deaths under Nero, and the losses sustained during the civil wars of A.D. 69. In a few cases Vespasian carried out such an *adlectio* before holding the censorship. For example, shortly after his acclamation by the troops in July 69,

Vespasian bestowed on Plotius Grypus tribunician rank, a place in the Senate and also the command of a legion.⁶ A little later Sex. Lucilius Bassus, who was prefect of both Italian fleets by the start of A.D. 71, seems to have been promoted to praetorian rank and given the governorship of Judaea.⁷ In both cases the decisive factor would have been the immediate necessity to fill militarily important positions with trustworthy men who had earned the position. The great mass of *adlectiones*, however, took place during the censorship, just as the drawing-up of the new list of senators was one of the traditional tasks of the republican censors.

We cannot tell from our sources how wide-ranging the replenishment of the Senate in A.D. 73/4 was. Around fifteen new senators, however, can be shown to owe their place in the Senate to direct adlection.⁸ But as we probably know of only a fraction of the real number, we should assume that there was a large number of new senators whom Vespasian adlected to quaestorian, tribunician, aedilician or praetorian rank.⁹ At this stage there were no direct appointments to the highest rank of senators, the former consuls (*adlectio inter consulares*). This only became common under Commodus and particularly from the Severan era onwards, and required a significant strengthening of the socio-political position of equestrians and the high equestrian offices.¹⁰

As far as we know, Vespasian's censorship was the last time that a major reorganization of the Senate was undertaken in a short period of time, that is during the holding of the censorship. The reorganization was carried out by the introduction of new senators, the promotion of individual members to other ranks, and not least by the promotion of individual families to the patriciate. To the best of our knowledge, this was the first time that senators from the provinces had joined the top ranks of the Senate in this way. Those who did so included Iulius Agricola from Forum Julii in Gallia Narbonensis, and M. Ulpius Traianus from Italica in Baetica. In this way, Vespasian was, *inter alia*, able to reward his followers from the time of the civil war and simultaneously to strengthen their loyalty to him for the future.¹¹ Many of the families promoted to patrician status, such as the Annii from Ucubi in the province of Baetica, soon became highly influential in the Senate.¹²

When Domitian assumed the title *ensor perpetuus*, the censorship in its old form became no more than a sham. Previously the opportunity to appoint new members or advance families to patrician status had been tied to the period of tenure of the censorship. Now it was regarded as a perma-

⁶ Tac. *Hist.* III.52.3. ⁷ *PIR*² L 379. ⁸ Eck, *Senatoren* 103 ff.; Houston (1977); Devreker (1980).

⁹ On the representativeness of the sources and on the percentage of individual ranks of senators represented, particularly in inscriptions, cf. Eck (1973); Jacques, *Privilege* 199 ff.

¹⁰ Leunissen (1989) 3 n. 8; 66 ff. ¹¹ Cf. Pistor (1965) 42 ff.; Eck, *Senatoren* 106 ff.

¹² See Caballos Rufino (1990) 64 ff.

ment right of the emperor, and after the reign of Domitian was no longer even identified as a specifically censorial right. Henceforth all emperors raised *homines novi* to the ranks of the Senate, whenever and for whatever reason it seemed either necessary or appropriate.¹³ Until the reign of Marcus Aurelius the prime motive only rarely seems to have been to have trustworthy or suitable men directly available for responsible official duties. Rather the tendency was to reward individuals for service in previous posts, mainly equestrian but also in the army, to satisfy the social ambition of municipal élites and to expand the general recruiting base for the *ordo senatorius*, for a certain trend to withdraw from the empire's highest *ordo* was becoming apparent. Losses through the plague and through the decades of war in the East and on the Danube were noticeable among senators. The tendency, above all with Marcus Aurelius, was to address this by the *adlectio inter praetorios* of equestrians with military experience, and their immediate appointment to posts which were traditionally reserved for senators. Around A.D. 170 P. Helvius Pertinax, the future emperor, was given command of legio I Adiutrix immediately after being adlected to praetorian rank, and our sources stress that M. Valerius Maximianus, the first known senator from Pannonian Poetovio, was appointed legionary legate (also of legio I Adiutrix) immediately after being raised to praetorian rank.¹⁴

The promotion of individuals of non-senatorial origin directly into the ranks of the Senate was one of the prime causes of the change in the composition of the Senate from the time of Vespasian onwards. *Adlectio* was not, however, the usual way in which the Senate's membership was renewed in politically calm years. The appointment of young men, mainly the sons of successful procurators, merely to the senatorial order (*adlectio in amplissimum ordinem*), was far more important. These men would then follow the usual career from the vigintivirate and military tribunate onwards. Yet they are often very difficult to identify, particularly in epigraphic sources, since the transition from one *ordo* to another is rarely a matter for comment. This makes it difficult, among other matters, to discern the number of new, non-senatorial families who entered the highest body of the empire.¹⁵

At the end of the Neronian era there was an evident need to renew the membership of the Senate. Great losses had been sustained through the *maiestas* trials, particularly following conspiracies, and the murder of senators under Nero, just as were incurred during the chaos of civil war in A.D. 69 and the revolt on the Rhine, which had resulted in many deaths. We know of similar, though markedly smaller, losses incurred in the political battles between emperor and Senate under Domitian. But there were also

¹³ Chastagnol (1975) 375 ff.; Coriat (1978).

¹⁴ *HA Pert.*, 2.5–6.; *AE* 1956 no. 124; cf. Pflaum, *Carrières* I 476 ff., no. 181 *bis*.

¹⁵ On the question in general, see Leunissen (1993b).

a number of other reasons for the constant turnover of families belonging to the senatorial order. Doubtless many families simply died out because there were no male offspring to continue the tradition. For this reason it is not rare for the offspring of other senators to be named as heirs to a family which was dying out, with the stipulation that they at least take the name of that family.¹⁶ Many other families had to leave the Senate for other reasons. The family fortune falling below the level of one million sesterces set by Augustus, and also members of senatorial families deciding to withdraw from political life, will probably have played a not insignificant role.¹⁷

It is disputed how long individual families remained in the Senate and in what numbers they left it and thereby made place for newcomers.¹⁸ It can be shown that more ordinary consuls had consular sons than suffect consuls did, which cannot be explained merely by the differing survival of evidence. Although all ordinary consuls are known, whereas in many periods the names of at least some of the suffect consuls are unknown, their omission from our sources is not sufficiently great to form the sole explanation for this difference in succession. We have to assume that many families intentionally left the Senate, making room for others. Other reasons no doubt played a greater role in the renewal of the membership of the Senate, such as mortality and the economic exhaustion of families.¹⁹ In law there was no legal inheritance of senatorial rank, although membership of the *ordo senatorius* continued for a few generations, even if no representative of a family actually sat in the Senate. Yet the political system of Rome, through the importance it put on the rank which a family had reached, led to the situation where a son could generally expect to reach a comparable position to that reached by his father, assuming he were prepared to follow a senatorial career.

These factors made it possible to restructure the Senate and change the regional basis of its composition radically in the course of four or five generations. Under Nero the Senate was still predominantly Roman–Italian, though southern Spain and the province of Narbonensis in southern Gaul were already represented. This pointed to the way in which the membership of the Senate was going to develop. Nero's destructive policies significantly accelerated the rate at which the Senate was 'provincialized', since the need to fill empty places was greater than under normal, peaceful conditions. This led to the influx of a considerable number of ambitious provincials under Vespasian, which itself helped to satisfy the political desires of those who supported his usurpation in the East.²⁰

¹⁶ Cf. Syme (1982); Salomies (1992). ¹⁷ Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* 120 ff.

¹⁸ Alföldy, *Konsulat* 84 ff.; Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* 134 ff.; Hahn and Leunissen (1990); Alföldy (1993).

¹⁹ Jacques (1987) points above all to the minimal prosopographic source material below the rank of consular. ²⁰ Syme, *Tacitus* II 585 ff.; Devreker (1980); Eck (1991b) 76 ff., esp. 104 ff.

If the image presented by our sources and their analysis by modern scholars are correct, then a third of the members of the *amplissimus ordo* under Vespasian came from the provinces. The main increase will have been in the number from the well romanized areas of southern Spain and southern Gaul. What was new was the marked increase in the numbers of new families from the Greek-speaking provinces: mainly Asia, but also Achaëa and Pontus-Bithynia.²¹ Vespasian's proclamation as emperor in the East and the support he had received from the eastern provinces were the prime political factors in this. A few of his supporters whom he appointed to the Senate had served in his army as equestrian officers. One example was Ti. Iulius Celsus Polemaeanus, who lived in Ephesus, but came originally from Sardis, and had been a military tribune in legio III Cyrenaica in Alexandria. It was in the latter capacity that he was probably involved in the acclamation of Vespasian by the troops in Alexandria on 1 July 69.²²

Initially the number of senators from the eastern provinces was not very large, and was mainly the result of Vespasian's policies. It was sufficient, however, to lead to a marked expansion in the numbers of eastern senators under Domitian and Trajan.²³ In part this was inevitable. Many of the leading families of the cities of the East already had Roman citizenship, the physical appearance of the eastern cities was not the only sign of their economic power, and in terms of education the Greek East was still superior to the western provinces or Africa. The representatives of the Second Sophistic are ample evidence for this.²⁴ Because they acted as patrons, not only for their own relatives but also for ambitious social climbers from other families, the Vespasianic *homines novi* from the East formed the spearhead of a rapid rise in new senatorial families from the East. Domitian and Trajan played a considerable part in the integration of these eastern families. It is symptomatic of this change in the composition of the Senate that Ti. Iulius Candidus Marius Celsus and C. Antius A. Iulius Quadratus, the eponymous consuls of A.D. 105, who were also holding the *fasces* for the second time, both came from the province of Asia.²⁵ When the great Hellenophile Hadrian came to power, the broad base of eastern families in the Senate was well established. In the first half of the second century A.D. the proportion of senators from the provinces of the Greek East rose continually and towards the end of the century amounted to about half of all the non-Italian members of the Senate. Under Marcus Aurelius, the town of Tyana in Cappadocia provided the first known senator from the easternmost province of the empire in the form of one Ti. Claudius Gordianus.²⁶

²¹ Devreker (1980) 261 ff. ²² *IEph* VII. 2, 5101 ff.; *PIR*² J 260; Halfmann, *Senatoren* 111–12.

²³ While Devreker (1980) (n. 21) sees the breakthrough in numbers as occurring under Domitian, Halfmann, *Senatoren* 71 ff., places it under Trajan. ²⁴ Bowersock *Sophists* (1969); Syme (1988).

²⁵ *PIR*² J 241, 507; W. Eck, *RE* Suppl. XIV 207 no. 166; Halfmann, *Senatoren* 107, 112–13.

²⁶ *AE* 1954 no. 138.

An increased number of provincials from the African provinces, particularly from Africa Proconsularis, started to appear somewhat later than those from the East.²⁷ Admittedly the first known African consul, Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Fronto from Cirta in Numidia, held office in A.D. 80, but there is not a considerable number of senators before the Trajanic–Hadrianic period.²⁸ The real breakthrough came in the period when there was a powerful patron available in the shape of M. Cornelius Fronto, *consul suffectus* in A.D. 142 and Marcus Aurelius' teacher of rhetoric, who came from Cirta in Numidia.²⁹

From the reigns of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus onwards, most areas of the empire were represented by at least one family in the Senate.³⁰ There is only a small number of provinces, mostly on the edge of the empire, which we cannot be entirely certain provided a senator. This is particularly true of the north-western provinces: both Germanies, Raetia, Britain, partly also northern and middle Gaul, and many of the Danube provinces. Among the eastern provinces, Syria Palaestina (as Judaea was called from Hadrian onwards) and Egypt are conspicuously absent from the *album senatorium*.³¹ If we disregard ethnic prejudice, for example against 'Egyptians', or other factors, such as the religion of the Jews, then the determining factors for participation in political life and hence for membership of the Senate were the structure of property-ownership, the development of civilization and urbanization, and the extension of Roman citizenship along with the level of education. The development of these basic preconditions was independent of the political desires of the individual emperors. Doubtless, however, particularly events such as the elevation of Vespasian in the East and the Batavian revolt of A.D. 69/70, or particularly influential individuals such as Cornelius Fronto, will have accelerated, reinforced or even retarded the process in particular regions.³²

The changes which enabled new families from most of the provinces to become members of the Senate would hardly have been noticed by a contemporary observer, who merely saw individuals entering the *curia* for the first time. As a result contemporaries would have seen the emperor as the principal person who decided who should join the Senate, and indeed numerous inscriptions portray the emperor in this role. The younger Pliny made several attempts to secure a seat in the Senate for the young equestrian Voconius Romanus from Saguntum in Spain; evidently the attempts failed, though we are not told for what reason.³³ We cannot tell how many

²⁷ Corbier (1982); Le Glay (1984). ²⁸ *CIL* VIII 7058=*ILS* 1001.

²⁹ Champlin, *Fronto* 79 ff.; Pflaum (1964).

³⁰ Cf. the individual contributions in Panciera, *Epigrafia* II.

³¹ Birley (1982); Eck (1982d); J. Šašel (1982); Bowersock (1982) 651 ff., 669 ff.; Reynolds (1982). On the problems of the *Tres Galliae* cf. Eck (1991c). ³² Cf. n. 29 above.

³³ *PIR*² L 21c; Syme (1960) 365 ff.=*Roman Papers* II 480 ff.

failed to gain a place in the Senate after such attempts. Naturally, failures were not publicized, particularly on the inscriptions which provide our main source of information about the senatorial order. We know from Pliny's correspondence with Trajan that, in the Trajanic period at least, there were more candidates for individual senatorial offices than there were posts available, and there is no indication of any shortage of candidates for the republican magistracies, as is known to have been the case under Augustus and Claudius.³⁴ Hence we cannot preclude considerable competition for membership of the Senate, at least in the period between the accession of Nerva and the reign of Commodus, when relations between emperor and Senate were under little strain. This could well have meant that the deciding factor became whose patron was more powerful and had more influence with the emperor.³⁵

Not everyone who fulfilled the prerequisites, notably a sufficient fortune, felt the compulsion to become a member of the Senate. Historical knowledge could have brought many off-putting examples to mind. Life in Rome would not have been attractive to everyone, and many would have been deterred by the unsettled life of a senator, which could take him to many parts of the empire in the course of a few decades. Minicius Macrinus from Brixia in Upper Italy, whom Vespasian promoted to praetorian rank, preferred to live in the privacy of a country town, and one Q. Valerius Macedo, a citizen and municipal magistrate in Vienna in Gallia Narbonensis, turned down Hadrian's offer of membership of the *ordo senatorius* and the quaestorship that went with it. A man could still make full use of the importance and social prestige to be derived from the emperor's offer in order to distinguish himself from his fellow provincials.³⁶ It is impossible to tell from our sources whether the individuals just mentioned were representative of a more widely held view. Similarly, we should not conclude from the number of inscriptions which proudly record the socio-political advancement achieved by many, following their adlection to the Senate, that there was a widespread urge to seek senatorial membership. Many large and powerful families in the provinces never supplied senators.

We do not know how the emperor controlled the influx into the Senate, how an overview of the number of members of the *ordo* was achieved, or how many families in all belonged to the senatorial order. As an assembly, the Senate had been restricted to six hundred members by Augustus and, as far as we know, there were no fundamental changes to this.³⁷ On the other hand, this number cannot have been so firmly fixed as, for example, the *centumviri* of Veii or the sixty-three decurions in the Baetican town of

³⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* III.20; Talbert, *Senate* 341 ff. ³⁵ Champlin, *Fronto* 29 ff.; Saller, *Patronage* 119 ff.

³⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* I.14.5; *CIL* XII 1783 = *ILS* 6998; Stein (1963) 201–2; Talbert, *Senate* 76 ff.

³⁷ Jacques (1982) and (1987).

Irni.³⁸ Twenty quaestors were elected every year, regardless of the actual numbers of senators, and in addition we should assume that an unidentifiable number of *adlecti* of various ranks were created. We do not know whether whatever free places there might have been in the Senate had any bearing on these adlections. It is clear, then, that the figure of six hundred senators never became an absolute limit.

It is, however, far more difficult to determine how many families belonged to the *ordo senatorius*. Indiscriminately creating new senators from all over the empire would have led to heavy competition for places. We do not know whether the emperors allowed or perhaps even encouraged this. Furthermore, no one could foresee how many candidates for seats in the Senate would come from the individual families. There are numerous instances of several members of a family simultaneously being members of the Senate: father and son, father and several sons, several brothers, and so on.³⁹ In general, then, the maximum estimate of the number of active senatorial families in the whole of the Roman Empire should not exceed about four hundred, perhaps less. This means, for instance, that far from all cities of the empire were represented in the Senate, given that many communities might have several senatorial families at the same time, as was the case for Vienna and Nemausus in Gallia Narbonensis, Italica in Baetica, Pergamum or Ephesus in Asia or for Bulla Regia and Cirta in Africa. Yet this also created a firm basis for the unity of the empire and helped to counterbalance the interests of different regions. It is debatable whether many senatorial families lived outside Rome as early as the second century A.D., regarding participation in political life as unimportant, and whether the emperors tolerated this.⁴⁰

The promotion of provincial families by the emperors also had consequences for their home towns. Senatorial membership required residence in Rome, which was henceforth seen as their home town.⁴¹ Apart from the time spent on official business in Italy and the provinces, senators were required to be in Rome all the time to attend meetings of the Senate, for the cult duties of the many senatorial priestly colleges (for example the Arval Brethren),⁴² and above all in order to fulfil their duties towards the imperial court, for instance as advisers or as companions on the emperor's travels. Not all provincial senators, particularly the newly adlected, felt compelled to set themselves up for good in Rome or Italy. Many sought to keep the door open, so that they could end their involvement in the capital without too great a loss, and then return to their original homelands. Perhaps the elevated social status was sufficient for many people, and they

³⁸ Nicols (1988).

³⁹ We need recall here only the Volusii, Neratii, Settidii and Quintilii in the late first and second centuries A.D. Cf. also Jacques (1987) 1297 ff. ⁴⁰ Cf. Jacques (1987) 1293 ff.

⁴¹ Eck, Drew-Bear and Hermann (1977) 365 ff.; Chastagnol (1977). ⁴² Scheid (1990).

took on the duties and responsibilities which traditionally went with a seat in the Senate, without actually wanting them. This led to Trajan's ruling that every new candidate for senatorial office must, at the time of his candidacy, have transferred one third of his fortune to Italy and have invested it in property: Rome and Italy had to be seen as a senator's home, and not merely as a temporary lodging.⁴³ Marcus Aurelius repeated this ordinance, but reduced the amount of capital which had to be transferred to Italy to a quarter.⁴⁴ That such measures were necessary shows that for many prospective members of the *ordo*, Rome was not sufficiently attractive in itself to eclipse the importance of their home towns. For economic reasons this was impossible. Quite naturally the financial base of all senatorial families largely remained wherever the family came from.⁴⁵ This helps to explain why the provinces of Asia Minor have so far provided a total of nine copies of an imperial rescript of A.D. 204, which, with reference to an otherwise unattested *senatus consultum* freed the property of senators from the obligation to provide lodgings for those travelling on state business, whether high officials or military personnel.⁴⁶ Whatever the actual motives were for so many senators in the eastern part of the empire deciding to publicize this text protecting their property, it is clear that these senators remained connected to their towns of origin by their financial interests there. The periods of, or even permanent, absence in Italy did not break these links. The inscriptions also show how the senatorial families were, at least partly, remote from the daily life of the cities. Others had to bear the burden that was not to be imposed on their property.⁴⁷ So the imperial policy to recruit senators from across the empire could have a negative effect on the life of the cities these senators left, although this should not be overemphasized, for many other sources show how great was the participation, whether direct or indirect, of the senatorial families in life in communities outside Rome, and precisely in their original home towns.⁴⁸ The younger Pliny's commitment to Comum was far from being an exception, and he was concerned not only with the needs of individual townspeople, but also with schools and education in the town, and with the erection of public buildings and temples.⁴⁹

On the other hand, we should remember that at least part of the senators' disposable income was spent in Rome and Italy and, therefore, removed from the economy of their home towns. It has been assumed that this happened mainly through the transfer of natural resources from the provinces to Rome, but there is no evidence for this.⁵⁰ Even if all senatorial offices had a salary attached, such as that of the proconsuls of Africa and Asia under Commodus which amounted to one million sesterces, these

⁴³ Pliny, *Ep.* VI.19.1 ff. ⁴⁴ *HA Marc.* 11.8. ⁴⁵ Cf. Eck (1996). ⁴⁶ Cf. Jones (1984).

⁴⁷ Eck, Drew-Bear and Herrmann (1977) 365 ff. ⁴⁸ Eck (1980).

⁴⁹ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 17 ff. ⁵⁰ Whittaker (1985).

earnings could hardly have covered the necessary expenses for an appropriate lifestyle, particularly in the first stages of a senatorial career.⁵¹ The cost of a suitable home in Rome itself, and then for one or more villas in the *suburbium* beyond it, would have exceeded whatever the state paid them. Furthermore, a salary was only paid in years when they held office. Clearly at least part of the profits from senators' property in the provinces was spent in Rome.

In the course of a few generations, then, the emperors radically altered the composition of the senate, while largely preserving its appearance to outsiders. It provided them with a human resource on which they could draw to fill the most important posts in Rome, Italy and the provinces. From the Flavian period onwards new areas of responsibility emerged, which were mainly assumed by men of equestrian origin, but there is no indication of any real reduction in senatorial competence.⁵² With the exception of Egypt, all the militarily important posts from legionary commanders upwards to provincial governors, which was where real political power lay, were still filled by legates of senatorial rank. And indeed their numbers increased dramatically, as more and more provinces, which had been governed by remarkable numbers of equestrian procurators since the reign of Claudius, were transformed and allotted a senatorial governor. Often, though not always, this was necessitated by the transfer of legions into these regions. This was the case for Judaea and Cappadocia which Vespasian made into provinces governed by a praetorian and consular *legatus Augusti pro praetore* respectively. Legio X Fretensis was stationed in Judaea, and the XII Fulminata and XVI Flavia in Cappadocia. Judaea was promoted to consular status when it was reinforced by the transfer, possibly arranged by Trajan, to Caparcotna of legio II Traiana before the Bar Kochba revolt broke out.⁵³ As a result the governor of Judaea (Syria Palaestina) had under his control what, in comparison to the geographical area of his province, was the most powerful military force in the empire: two legions and at least fifteen auxiliary units.⁵⁴ Noricum and Raetia became praetorian provinces under Marcus Aurelius, when the situation on the Danube frontier required the transfer of a legion into each province. Around A.D. 110, under Trajan, Thrace was transformed into a province with a senatorial legate, although the region was only defended by a few auxiliary units and not a legion composed of Roman citizens.⁵⁵ The number of important posts available to senators also increased with the annexation of new provinces, such as Dacia and Arabia, and with the

⁵¹ The payment of those holding senatorial offices is in my view evident from the mention in the career inscription of Salvius Iulianus that Hadrian had for him alone doubled the *salarium quaesturae* (*CIL* VIII 24094=ILS 8973). ⁵² Cf. Eck (1987). ⁵³ Eck, *Senatoren* 1 ff.

⁵⁴ Isaac, *Limits* 106 ff.; Eck (1993c).

⁵⁵ Roxan, *Diplomas* I 44–5 no. 14, which provides the names of the first two governors.

division of existing provinces into smaller administrative units. Thus Moesia Superior and Inferior were created in A.D. 86 under Domitian, and Pannonia was divided, probably in A.D. 106, by Trajan into Pannonia Superior, a consular province, and Pannonia Inferior, a praetorian province. Pannonia and Moesia were divided for a number of military reasons, but principally because of the increase in the number of legions stationed in the provinces to four and five respectively. This would have placed more power in the hands of individual governors than would have been acceptable to Domitian and Trajan.

The number of provinces governed by proconsuls never altered, although proconsular and imperial provinces were occasionally exchanged. This happened, for instance, under Trajan when Sardinia took the place of Pontus-Bithynia, or when, probably just before A.D. 159, Pontus-Bithynia became imperial territory, and Lycia and Pamphylia received proconsular status.⁵⁶ In contrast to the *provinciae populi Romani*, the number of *provinciae Caesaris* increased dramatically. At the start of Vespasian's reign there were only fourteen imperial provinces, eight with consular status and six with praetorian status. Under Hadrian this had increased to twenty-two, shared equally between consulars and praetorians. By the time of Commodus, there were thirteen imperial provinces with consular status and thirteen with praetorian status.⁵⁷ In the same period, the number of provinces governed by procurators fell sharply. Under Nero there were ten provinces with procuratorial governors (ignoring the small, unimportant, Alpine provinces). The change in status of Judaea, Cappadocia, Thrace, Noricum and Raetia had reduced this number by half by the middle of the reign of Marcus Aurelius. There could be no clearer demonstration of the wholly traditional tendency, which was dominant throughout the first and second centuries, to retain the crucial positions of power in the empire in the hands of a ruling class which was senatorial, albeit ever more centred on the emperor.

Senators also played their part in the other civilian and military posts which had developed in the time from Augustus to Nero. In general changes were slight. The original system for the collegiate responsibility of the *curatores viarum* for the roads of Italy was replaced by individual *curatores* for each road. The first known examples come from the reign of Vespasian, but the change could well have taken place under Claudius or Nero.⁵⁸ These *curatores* were clearly not overworked, and, as a result, Trajan transferred to them the control of the now large-scale *alimenta*, which had begun under Nerva, which led to them often being called *praefecti alimentorum*. Occasionally we find a *praefectus alimentorum* whose post does not seem to

⁵⁶ This is the result of the reinterpretation of *IGRR* III 84 by Marek (1985) 144 f.=Marek (1993) 161–2. ⁵⁷ Eck, *Senatoren* 1 ff.; Alföldy, *Konsulat* 218 ff. ⁵⁸ Eck (1992b).

have included the oversight of a road, although their duties relating to the *alimenta* were restricted to an area through which a road passed. In addition, perhaps as early as Antoninus Pius, individual alimentary prefects with consular rank appear, without any geographical restriction, but whose relationship to the *curatores et praefecti* cannot be determined.⁵⁹

The number of senatorial posts in individual provinces only increased in a few cases where there were compelling reasons. This happened in Britain and Cappadocia, where the consular governor was occasionally, though apparently not as regularly as in Hispania Tarraconensis, assisted in legal matters by a praetorian *iuridicus*. Between Vespasian and Trajan, while Galatia was linked with Cappadocia, the governor of the latter controlled an unusually large territory, comparable to the situation in Tarraconensis, which also enjoyed the services of a *iuridicus*.⁶⁰ In Britain the reason for the appointment of a *iuridicus* was probably the predominantly military duties of the consular legates, at least under Vespasian and Domitian.⁶¹

Only in Italy were things changed to any significant degree, first by Hadrian and later by Marcus Aurelius. Despite the establishment of the eleven *regiones* by Augustus, Italy had no real territorial subdivisions. Hence it also had no officials who could take on the duties of regional governors, and as a result all the inhabitants of the cities of Italy had recourse only to the magistrates of Rome when they sought judgement on matters outside the competence of the municipal magistrates. The *Historia Augusta* tells us that Hadrian was the first to address this issue, by introducing four *consulares* for the whole of Italy, who would give legal judgements.⁶² Their title was *legatus Augusti pro praetore*, as is attested for L. Vitrasius Flamininus, the suffect consul of A.D. 122, who held the post in Italia Transpadana.⁶³ As is suggested by its title, the post included all the administrative and judicial duties of a governor in one of the imperial provinces. Many in the Senate felt that this went against tradition, and consequently Antoninus Pius annulled the Hadrianic reform. Traditional freedom outweighed the needs of the bulk of the population.⁶⁴ Marcus Aurelius reinstated the essence of the Hadrianic reform around A.D. 166 in a somewhat reduced fashion. The four new *iuridici* had only praetorian rank, mostly took up office soon after the praetorship, and, as far as we can tell, could only judge cases brought to them voluntarily. It is clear that their area of competence was not firmly established and could vary with each appointment, although it is difficult to discern what effect this had on the activities of the *iuridici*.⁶⁵ For example,

⁵⁹ Eck (1990a); Eck, *Organisation* 170 ff.

⁶⁰ Sherk (1980) 963 ff.; Sašelj and Eck (1982) 483; Alföldy (1969) 67 ff.

⁶¹ Birley (1981b) 211 ff. ⁶² *HA Hadr.* 22.13; *M. Ant.* 2.111; cf. *Marc.* 11.6.

⁶³ *CIL* x 3870 and 4414. Cf. Camodeca (1982). ⁶⁴ Eck (1991a).

⁶⁵ Corbier (1973) presumes a fixed system, based on five adjacent regions. But cf. also Camodeca (1976); Eck, *Organisation* 249 ff.

under Marcus Aurelius, the *regio Flaminia* was at one time connected with Umbria, at another with Italia Transpadana, and it was not until the later third century that the regions were more firmly defined.⁶⁶

If we disregard the posts at the start of the senatorial *cursus honorum*, the so-called vigintivirate and the military tribunate, the holders of which were not yet senators, then under Vespasian there were in any one year around 145 senators in Rome, Italy and the provinces who held some office, and by the end of Marcus Aurelius' reign this figure had risen, gradually, to over 160.⁶⁷ The occasional special posts, such as for the recruitment of troops or for carrying out a census in particular provinces, are numerically insignificant.⁶⁸ If we assume that a number of senators were not available for office, either through long-term illness or old age, then there was always nearly a third of all active senators engaged on official business, for which they were paid from the *aerarium Saturni* or, presumably, directly by the emperor, just like the emperor's *comites*, for whom these two different sources of pay are attested directly. Given that all official appointments were in one form or another in the gift of the emperor, or at least required his approval, it would have been inevitable that most senators felt dependent on and responsible to the emperor.⁶⁹

The basic structure of the senatorial career had been fixed under Augustus. The new posts in Rome, Italy and the provinces were inserted into the succession of magistracies inherited from the Republic. Yet in the first hundred years of the Principate, the relative importance of individual positions could vary considerably. Thus, up till the early years of Vespasian's reign it was possible to hold a legionary legateship before the praetorship. During the Jewish revolt the future emperor Titus, who had just completed his quaestorship, commanded legio XV Apollinaris.⁷⁰ Later, these variations become rarer, as every office took its place in the framework of the republican magistracies. The exceptions were the purely honorary position of *sevir equitum Romanorum*, one of the six heads of the equestrian divisions at the annual parade before the emperor, and the *curator rei publicae*, a post which first appears in the reign of Domitian.⁷¹ Since these were not restricted to senators, but could also be held by procurators or even men from the municipal élites, they had no fixed place in the *cursus honorum*, but could be held at any time, including simultaneously with another office.⁷²

At the praetorian and consular level also, the various posts had a relatively fixed hierarchy.⁷³ Naturally, in individual cases there could be flexibility. The *curae* of the various roads in Italy, for instance, were by no

⁶⁶ *CIL* VI 1509=*ILS* 1123; XI 377; *AE* 1969/70 no. 601. ⁶⁷ Eck (1974) 227–8.

⁶⁸ Cf. Thomasson (1991) 73 ff., 85 ff. ⁶⁹ As did, e.g., Pliny, *Ep.* III.20.12. ⁷⁰ *PIR*² F 399.

⁷¹ See below, ch. 7, p. 279. ⁷² Camodeca (1980) 484 ff.; Jacques, *Privilège* 43 ff.

⁷³ Eck (1974a) 181 ff.; Alföldy, *Konsulat* 33–4; Leunissen (1989) 24 ff.; Birley (1981b) 15 ff.

means regarded as equally prestigious: most of them, for example those of the Via Salaria and the Via Tiburtina, were held by recent praetors, while the *curatores* of the Viae Aemilia, Appia and Flaminia had generally already held several other posts and sometimes could expect to progress directly to the consulship.⁷⁴ Imperial praetorian provinces with a legion, or the prefecture of the *aerarium Saturni*, were generally also held immediately prior to the consulship.⁷⁵ A similar structure of consular posts also developed. Hence the supervision of the temples and other public buildings in Rome (*cura aedium sacrarum et operum locorumque publicorum*) was almost always held immediately after the consulship, and the consular governorship of an imperial province would generally follow.⁷⁶ There was also a hierarchy of consular governorships, largely based on the number of legions in the province. Most consular governors had under their command two legions, though in Britain, Syria, Pannonia Superior and Moesia Inferior from the time of Trajan, they controlled three legions. There were two exceptions to this system of consular provinces. The size of Tarraconensis, which had one legion, probably accounts for its consular status, while Dalmatia with no legion was traditionally governed by a consular, and this may have contributed to the province's continued consular status, even after the legions were withdrawn in the Flavian period. When the army in Dacia was reduced to one legion in A.D. 119/20, the province was reduced from consular to praetorian status, and only regained its former status and the new title *Tres Daciae*, when the number of legions was doubled in the wake of the German wars from A.D. 169 onwards.⁷⁷

The order in which these consular governorships were held was so arranged that in normal circumstances a man would not progress from a province with three legions to one with two. After being governor of Britain or Syria, the only further governorship that a senator could normally expect was of one of the proconsular provinces of Africa or Asia, which had no legions. Their prestige as the final post of a career had increased since the Augustan era, mainly because *suffect* consulships increased the number of candidates and hence the length of interval between consulship and proconsulship, which from the reign of Trajan onwards was always about fifteen years.

These 'rules' which were not laid down in law, applied in peacetime. However when the governor of Judaea, Tineius Rufus, and the governor of Syria, Publicius Marcellus, were unable to quell the Jewish revolt in the years following A.D. 132, Hadrian sent Sex. Julius Severus from Britain to Syria Palaestina, although this would not normally have happened, for Syria Palaestina, with only two legions, was of a lower status than Britain.

⁷⁴ Eck, *Organisation* 49–50. ⁷⁵ Corbier (1974) 522 ff. ⁷⁶ Kolb (1993) 59 ff.

⁷⁷ For precise dating, see Piso (1993) 82 ff.

Similarly, the destruction of a legion by the Parthians in A.D. 161 led Marcus Aurelius to transfer Statius Priscus from Britain, with three legions, to Cappadocia with two legions.⁷⁸ The relative status of individual posts could be flexible when the occasion demanded, although in normal circumstances the hierarchy of posts determined the structure of the consular career.

The careers of individual senators developed within the republican framework and the relative importance of the separate posts. There were, however, considerable variations. These could occur for a large number of reasons. The most fundamental factor was social origin. Descent from a senatorial family or recent elevation to the *ordo senatorius* was one of the most important differences. For a man of senatorial origin the most influential factors, at least in accelerating a career, were whether the family had patrician status and whether his father had held the consulship. Patricians could become consuls two to three years after holding the praetorship, which from Augustus onwards was normally held at around thirty years of age. From the reign of Vespasian, when it became normal to hold a legionary legateship after the praetorship, it is rare to find a patrician in command of a legion, for that would have delayed progression to the consulship by a few years. But since it was also a requirement to have had such experience before holding the governorship of an imperial consular province in which legions were stationed, virtually no governors of the major military provinces were men of old patrician families. The new patricians created by Vespasian are well represented among the consular governors, since their careers up to the consulship were governed by the same rules as for non-patricians. Iulius Agricola, for example, was a patrician and governor of Britain; but he had commanded a legion before receiving patrician status during the censorship of Vespasian in A.D. 73/4.⁷⁹ In some cases a patrician's accelerated career up to the consulship, the most socially prestigious post, could be seen as a drawback to subsequent employment in one of the real positions of power, but in general fast personal promotion was apparently preferred. It is unclear why the future emperor Trajan, despite his patrician status, commanded legio VII Gemina before holding the consulship.⁸⁰ We should not conclude from this career structure that the emperors deliberately excluded patrician families from powerful positions. Many patricians who became consuls at an early age would still have reached positions of power and influence as a result of their constant presence in Rome and around the emperor. It is probably not chance that the first three senators named as witnesses on the Tabula Banasitana were all patricians.⁸¹ Such consulars were in Rome

⁷⁸ Birley (1981b) 106 ff., 123 ff. ⁷⁹ Birley (1981b) 76–7.

⁸⁰ Pliny, *Pan.* 14.2 ff.; Eck (1974b) 218–19. ⁸¹ *AE* 1971 no. 534; cf. above, ch. 4.

virtually all the time and were, therefore, always available to lend their presence or give advice.

Since the times of the *leges annales* in the late Republic, the existence of legal and social rules for the holding of office in the *res publica* was well known. Even then the legislation sought to keep in check the superiority of individual families and to maintain a degree of aristocratic equality. From the time of Augustus the emperors controlled this, and, in the interest of social peace within the élite, largely respected the traditional rules and the newly developed mechanisms for promotion. But the emperor's decision could be influenced from various sides.⁸² The patronage of people of very different social rank was undoubtedly effective, whether that of the regular senatorial advisers, the praetorian prefects, the *principes officiorum*, the heads of the individual chancelleries, the emperor's wife, a concubine such as Caenis under Vespasian, or the court jester.⁸³ Yet it is noteworthy that in the second century A.D., the period of greatest 'regularity' in the senatorial career, we hear of few complaints about bribery and the exercise of undue influence by such as the imperial slaves or women around the emperor.⁸⁴ There was also the patronage of people of equal rank and by those close to the emperor or of a higher social status. This was widely accepted and even expected. The younger Pliny would not have published his letters of commendation to his equals and to Trajan, if this had not been socially acceptable. But men like Pliny knew the legal and social 'rules' of the senatorial career and incorporated them in their recommendations, just as the emperor himself did.⁸⁵ This is the only explanation for the virtually unchanging structure of the senatorial career, as it is known to us. If it were a free competition among patrons, then the evident regularity of the careers of senators could not be explained. The effectiveness of patrons was then necessarily restricted, although they could be particularly important in individual cases, notably in helping a man start his career. Few patrons, however, would have risked pushing the emperor for advancement against the generally accepted norms, or recommending a higher, more important office for a 'failure'.⁸⁶

Yet the continuing career of a senator, particularly during the peace at home and abroad which existed from the end of the first century A.D., is no indication that he was particularly successful at every stage of his career.⁸⁷ All that can be certain is that he made no particularly startling or notorious mistakes. Where this was the case, there could be consequences both for the man himself and his descendants. It would seem, for example, that Boudicca's victory over Petillius Cerialis and the rout of legio IX Hispana in Britain in A.D. 60 retarded Cerialis' career, at least until the accession of the Flavian dynasty.⁸⁸ Similarly, the grandson of Oppius Sabinus,

⁸² See the discussion in Saller, *Patronage* 79 ff.; Alföldy (1986a). ⁸³ Suet. *Dom.* 4.2. Cf. above, ch. 4.

⁸⁴ Eck (1982a). ⁸⁵ Leunissen (1992). ⁸⁶ Leunissen (1992) (1993a).

⁸⁷ Cf. Eck (1993d) 367–8. ⁸⁸ Tac. *Ann.* xiv.32.3; Birley (1981b) 66–7.

who was defeated and killed in battle by the Dacians during Domitian's reign, seems to have had a very slow career, which has been connected with the family's loss of prestige as a result of the defeat of his grandfather.⁸⁹

Weak, less able men could, however, often reach high office. In the absence of any crisis (particularly military disasters), lack of ability could remain concealed below the cloak of administrative routine or the solidarity of equals. We should assume that, despite the increase in the number of consuls from eight to ten per year under Marcus Aurelius, there was only a limited number of senators who were qualified to hold the posts after the consulship, and who wanted to assume further duties. On the other hand, it does not follow that a disaster, such as befell the governor of Cappadocia in A.D. 161, M. Sedatius Severianus, in the war against the Parthians, need have been the result of any previously unrecognized lack of ability on his part.⁹⁰ This was not the only time that blaming the dead general proved to be the simplest explanation for the government and contemporaries.

In the second half of the second century A.D., around ninety to ninety-five senators held some official position in the provinces each year.⁹¹ The individual offices lasted from one year, for proconsuls, their legates and provincial quaestors, to several years for those holding office in the imperial provinces.⁹² The latter's period of appointment was never fixed because it was dependent on the emperor's wishes. Yet, in periods of calm, particularly in the first half of the second century, senators could not be appointed to positions where the period of service was decided purely arbitrarily, for this would have meant that it would be impossible to satisfy the senators' own expectations of promotion, based on their observation of previous practice, or the necessity to fill the various offices with men with experience of other posts.⁹³ We may, therefore, conclude from our sources that consular imperial legates rarely held office for longer than three years, not even under Antoninus Pius, although the author of the *Historia Augusta* maintains that this was the case in his reign.⁹⁴ On the other hand, two years was the normal length of a governorship in the praetorian imperial provinces, for example in Lycia-Pamphylia or Numidia with the command of legio III Augusta.⁹⁵ The average duration of a legionary legateship is also unlikely to have been longer than two years, for otherwise there would simply not have been enough properly qualified praetorians to take on the praetorian governorships of imperial provinces and the *aerarium Saturni*. This did not mean that in particular circumstances longer, or even shorter,

⁸⁹ *PIR*² O 122, 123. ⁹⁰ Fronto, *Princ. hist.* 2.17; Lucian, *Alex.* 27. ⁹¹ Eck (1974a) 228.

⁹² It is only in the Flavian period that we find a few isolated instances of proconsuls holding office for more than one year: cf. Talbert, *Senate* 505–6 (Plancius Varus should be deleted) and Eck (1985a).

⁹³ The widely differing lengths of service of the prefects in Egypt do not form a valid comparison, for the only further promotion possible from this post was to the praetorian prefecture; and the *praefecti praetorio* often remained so long in post that there was little need for replacements.

⁹⁴ *H.A.M. Ant.* 5.3. Cf. the contrary argument of Birley (1966) 43 ff.

⁹⁵ Cf. Thomasson (1984), (1990), *passim*.

governorships than average were never possible or necessary. Thus C. Claudius Severus, the first praetorian governor of the province of Arabia annexed by Trajan in A.D. 105/6, remained in office from 106 to 115/16,⁹⁶ Cn. Iulius Agricola was allowed seven years to extend the province of Britain,⁹⁷ and Hadrian left Flavius Arrianus in office from around A.D. 130 to 137.⁹⁸ In all three cases, however, the governors preceding and succeeding them were in office for no more than three years. On the other hand, in the first ten years of Trajan's reign, the governors of Germania Inferior and Moesia Inferior were in post for somewhat less than three years.⁹⁹

Many senators, then, often spent over twenty-five years of a period generally of about forty years as an active member of the Senate, in various offices, and of these rather more than ten years were spent in the provinces.¹⁰⁰ Yet they all always returned to Rome and took part in meetings of the Senate there. This also meant that the Senate could maintain its characteristic power over the course of centuries, and that *homines novi* were also quickly integrated into the mode of thought peculiar to senators. As a result, a great fund of experience, knowledge and influence was collected in the Senate, and if the problems of an individual province or particular issues were discussed, there would always have been senators present who could provide detailed information and advice.

In theory at least, this could have developed into a decisive role in the government of the empire: the Senate as the *consilium principis* par excellence. Our sources generally give us a different impression, although in the post-Julio-Claudian era there can be no doubt that the Senate often made decisions on a large number of matters. The younger Pliny does complain that under Domitian the Senate was only consulted about and made decisions on ridiculous honours and not on anything serious, but we should not be surprised by such a representation of the hated tyrant after his death.¹⁰¹ Yet under Trajan Pliny is hardly able to report anything other than routine business or even banalities, with the exception of the numerous trials against fellow senators who had transgressed the accepted bounds of behaviour in the provinces.¹⁰² He says, in connection with the short-lived introduction of the secret ballot in the Senate, 'It is true that everything depends on the will of one man, who for the general good has taken upon himself the cares and concerns of all. But there still flow down to us from that well-meaning source a few healthily restricted rivulets.'¹⁰³ This points to a complete dependence on the emperor and a very restricted sphere of

⁹⁶ Sartre (1982) 78 ff. ⁹⁷ Birley (1981b) 73 ff. ⁹⁸ Eck (1983) 169 ff. ⁹⁹ Eck (1983) 330 ff.

¹⁰⁰ Agricola was in the provinces around thirteen years, L. Minicius Natalis, suffect consul in A.D. 106, for about eleven years (*CIL* II 4509=*ILS* 1029). Q. Pompeius Falco, the governor of Britain in A.D. 122, spent about fourteen years in the provinces (*CIL* X 6321=*ILS* 1035) and Sex. Iulius Severus, suffect consul in A.D. 127, around sixteen years (*CIL* III 2830=*ILS* 1056).

¹⁰¹ Pliny, *Pan.* 54.3–4.

¹⁰² There is a list of such cases in Talbert, *Senate* 507 ff. ¹⁰³ Pliny, *Ep.* III.20.12; cf. IV.25.5.

activity. This cannot have been the full reality, however, for it is contradicted both by other reports from Pliny and by other evidence. For example, it cannot have been an entirely unimportant decision to grant permission to Pergamum to hold an *agon* every five years, which had been established by Iulius Quadratus, a citizen of Pergamum and also a senator who was consul for the second time in A.D. 105.¹⁰⁴ Yet the impression that everything done in the Senate was dependent on the emperor, or actually at his instigation, does not seem to be completely false. The *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani*, dating from late A.D. 69 or early 70, tells us in detail what the emperor's rights were in his dealings with the Senate.¹⁰⁵ These were essentially those established by Vespasian's predecessors, and there were no real legal changes in the emperor's position under his successors. It was not, however, the legal foundation of the emperor's competence that produced the impression of dependency. Rather it was the *de facto* superiority of imperial power. Part of this was the impossibility, given the vastly increased workload, of being able to give the Senate all the necessary information, even if the emperor had the political will to do so. This information was always arriving. Even matters of foreign policy were occasionally dealt with before the Senate, particularly those which were important for the prestige they could offer both emperor and Roman rule. In A.D. 102 the ambassadors from Decebalus, the Dacian king, had to appear before the Senate, which debated the signing of a peace treaty. Similarly, Hadrian directed an embassy from the Parthian king Vologaeses to the Senate.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, news of victory came to the Senate, as in A.D. 166 when the victory of Lucius Verus over the Parthians was reported to the Senate by the young senator Iunius Maximus.¹⁰⁷ The Senate also voted the granting of imperial *cognomina* in recognition of victories, or the celebration of a triumph, as it did the bestowal of triumphal ornaments on senators such as Plautius Silvanus, Iulius Agricola or Sex. Iulius Severus, and also the erection of honorary statues for senators killed in battle, such as Claudius Fronto, or for a long-serving praetorian prefect such as Bassaeus Rufus.¹⁰⁸ Yet all this was of an essentially ceremonial nature, even if as a result the senators' perception of themselves could be reconciled with the power of the emperor. Of course, all the proposals for these honours came from the emperor.

Naturally the historical knowledge of the dangers which could result from the omnipotence or despotism of the emperors far outweighed all the efforts of emperors who wished to cooperate with the Senate. In this respect the history of the Principate after Augustus aroused suspicion, and Domitian's reign had confirmed all the opinions and prejudices about the possibility of tyranny inherent in the Principate. Not all senators realized

¹⁰⁴ *CIL* III 7086=*IGRR* IV 336. ¹⁰⁵ *CIL* VI 930=*ILS* 244=*FIRA*² 1 no. 15.

¹⁰⁶ Dio LXVIII.9–10; LXIX.15.2. ¹⁰⁷ *IEph* III 811; Alföldy and Halfmann (1979).

¹⁰⁸ *ILS* 986; Tac. *Agr.*40; *ILS* 1056, 1098, 1326.

like Tacitus that the Senate itself, particularly individual senators, had shared in the creation of tension and had not prevented despotic acts on the part of the emperor. Men who had been executed were remembered almost solely as the victims of imperial despotism, and rarely as active participants, even if they had taken part in treasonable acts or conspiracies. The same was true of the senators disposed of by force at the start and the end of Hadrian's reign. There was no real change under the Antonines. The constant menace of tyranny continued, and indeed there was no legally enforceable security against it. The emperors from Nerva to Antoninus Pius had been senators for decades before ascending to the throne, and therefore understood the psyche of their fellow senators and tried to take account of it, or to increase the self-confidence of senators. Even Marcus Aurelius, although his experience of the Senate was from the start as the future successor of Antoninus Pius, had a very clear understanding of how the Senate ought to be handled. But all the emperors' efforts to increase the Senate's involvement in policy were unsuccessful. This was partly due to the deeply ingrained trauma of the past, and partly because too much power and control had already been entrusted to people who did not belong to the Senate and were responsible only to the emperor. As a result, both they themselves and the affairs for which they were responsible were removed from the Senate's sphere of influence. Furthermore, many senators were obliged to the current emperor for official appointments, or owed their very entry into the Senate to him, and were therefore not in a position to do otherwise than to trust the emperor's decisions, and to agree with his proposals when they came before the Senate. Moreover, many emperors were often away from Rome: Trajan for eleven years while campaigning, Hadrian just as long on his travels, and the situation was no different under Marcus Aurelius.¹⁰⁹ It would have been difficult to discuss the proposals of an absent emperor, or at least to present a contrary opinion.

The freedom many senators felt after the death of Nero, particularly while the new *principes* Galba and Vespasian were still elsewhere, soon gave way to a more sober outlook.¹¹⁰ In A.D. 70, when Vespasian was still in the East, Helvidius Priscus proposed in the Senate that a decision should be made about restricting expenditure from the *aerarium*. The consuls presiding over the meeting were about to put the matter to the senators present when the *tribunus plebis* Vulcaciis Tertullinus interceded, arguing that such an important matter should not be discussed in the absence of the emperor. A second proposal by Helvidius Priscus, that the Capitol should be built from public funds and that Vespasian should make only a contribution, was also taken no further. Nobody in the Senate wanted to discuss or take decisions on such contentious issues, which could affect the essence

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Halfmann, *Itinera* 184 ff.

¹¹⁰ Tac. *Hist.* 1.4.3.

of imperial rule, without having heard or read the emperor's own views.¹¹¹ We should, then, not be surprised by what took place in the Senate towards the end of Marcus Aurelius' reign, while he was still on the Danube front. An *oratio*, that is a communiqué containing a number of proposals from the emperor was read in the Senate, probably by one of the quaestors of the *princeps*. These included the request of the Milesians to convert some games into an *agon* with particular privileges. As Marcus tells the Milesians, since he had reported on many other matters in the same *oratio*, the Senate had not made separate decisions on each proposal, but had issued a *senatus consultum* covering all points of his *oratio*. Hence Marcus Aurelius could only relate to the Milesians the corresponding extract from his *oratio*, which was not in the form of a *senatus consultum*.¹¹² There was then a discrepancy between the language used and the legal validity of a decree, similar to that in the *Lex de Imperio Vespasiani*.¹¹³ These proceedings can hardly have been novel, and furthermore it is noteworthy that from the time of Hadrian, who was away from Rome for long periods, even at the start of his reign, the jurists begin to cite imperial *orationes* as the basis of law, rather than the formal *senatus consulta*.¹¹⁴ They were probably read in the Senate in the course of Hadrian's numerous tours, and since the emperor was not there in person, were regarded as authoritative from the outset.

Yet the old form of the *senatus consultum* was never superseded, not even from the time of Marcus Aurelius, when we first hear of the approval of several proposals by one decree. For, probably at the same time as the 'decree' in favour of the Milesians, another senatorial decree was passed setting the top prices for gladiators. This proposal, too, was derived from an *oratio* of the emperor, but in this instance it was presented by a senator in his *sententia*, in the form of a *senatus consultum*. Evidently the emperor's proposals needed only slight alteration or expansion. The senator actually stresses that in the style of his *sententia* he was departing from the norm. It so happens that in an inscription from Sardis, in which the same occasion is recorded, only the *oratio principis* is cited, not the senator's *sententia*, which is known from an inscription from Italica in Baetica.¹¹⁵ The discrepancy is best explained by assuming that the senator, whose *sententia* it was, wanted his version to be widely distributed in Italica, while in Sardis they were concerned only with the decisive *oratio* of the *princeps*. The form of words was not important, for the emperor's political will also lay behind the *sententia* of the anonymous senator.

The important question is whether the Senate also made decisions independently of the views expressed by the emperor. Of course, these

¹¹¹ Tac. *Hist.* iv.9.

¹¹² Herrmann (1975)=*AE* 1977 no. 801=Oliver (1989) no. 192; Herrmann (1988) 309 ff.=*AE* 1989 no. 683. ¹¹³ See above, p. 233. ¹¹⁴ Talbert, *Senate* 290 ff., 440–1.

¹¹⁵ *ILS* 9430; *CIL* II 6278=*ILS* 5163; cf. Oliver and Palmer (1955) 328–9.

decisions were never contrary to the general opinions of the *princeps* of the time. Such independence will have been possible at least in routine affairs, as is known from a *senatus consultum* dating from the beginning of the reign of Antoninus Pius. A senator from the province of Africa had sought to have the Senate grant him the right to hold a market on his property in the *saltus Beguensis*. We hear nothing of the emperor's involvement in the proceedings, just as in the case of the Trajanic senator Bellicius Sollers, who had made a similar petition with regard to his land near Vicetia.¹¹⁶ Antoninus Pius was involved in another decree, which cannot be dated precisely, concerning the ratification of an association in Cyzicus in the province of Asia. The nature of his involvement cannot, however, now be discerned.¹¹⁷ These proceedings, too, can be regarded as everyday matters, although the matter of clubs in the cities of the eastern provinces aroused Trajan's suspicion. On the other hand, we know of numerous *senatus consulta* from the sphere of civil law which bore the name of their proposers and thereby indicate that these were not, at least formally, on the emperor's initiative. They dealt with, for instance, matters of inheritance, the extension of the right to emancipation, or the consequences of a woman holding the *ius trium liberorum*.¹¹⁸ We cannot tell how this role in the development of the law was seen by contemporaries, or what value they placed on it. Similarly we do not know how important it was for the Senate's own view of its political importance.

If the letters of the younger Pliny give a correct impression, Trajan was not present at many meetings of the Senate, and particularly not at the numerous trials of senators who had committed some offence during a provincial governorship. When, in the proceedings against Varenus Rufus, a former proconsul of Pontus-Bithynia, the ambassadors from Bithynia were unhappy with a *senatus consultum*, they turned to Trajan, who referred the matter back to the Senate. This can only mean that he had not himself taken part in the proceedings in the Senate.¹¹⁹ Assuming that his absence was not due to being outside Rome, it appears that Trajan at least saw fit to allow the Senate the impression that it could make decisions independently of him. On the other hand, Hadrian always attended meetings of the Senate when he was in Rome, and Marcus Aurelius endeavoured to take part in the regular meetings of the Senate as often as possible, even returning to Rome from Campania when he wanted to make proposals to the Senate. At least, this is the picture presented by the late antique author of the *Historia Augusta*.¹²⁰ Assuming that the *Historia Augusta's* picture is not ideologically coloured, the different behaviour of these emperors could

¹¹⁶ *CIL* VIII 270=11451=23246=*FIRA* 1² 47; Pliny, *Ep.* v.4.1. Pliny himself calls the matter a *res parva*. ¹¹⁷ *CIL* III 7060=*ILS* 7190.

¹¹⁸ See the collection of such instances in Talbert, *Senate* 443 ff. ¹¹⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* vi.13.2.

¹²⁰ *Dio* LXIX.7.1; *HA Hadr.* 8.6; *Marc.* 10.7–8.

only have reflected their different views of how an emperor should behave in his dealings with the Senate.

Such cooperation on the part of the emperors, and the complementary appearance of the Senate's own view of its importance in an author such as Dio, reflect the high esteem in which the Senate was held.¹²¹ This esteem cannot, however, obscure the fact that towards the end of the second century A.D. there was no longer any real political activity in the Senate as a whole, although the administrative routine had probably not been significantly reduced. The Senate and its members were, whatever their ideological position, as much a part of the whole system organized and run by the emperor, as were the *ordo equester* and the officials appointed directly by the emperor.¹²²

¹²¹ Talbert, *Senate* 85.

¹²² Champlin, *Fronto* 79. See also ch. 6.

CHAPTER 6

THE GROWTH OF ADMINISTRATIVE POSTS

WERNER ECK

Throughout the imperial period the structure of the senatorial career and the numbers of posts which senators might hold remained essentially what had been established by Augustus. Any changes which were made were relatively slight. Similarly, the increasingly common employment of men of non-senatorial origin in administrative posts had already been introduced in Augustus' reforms. This is well exemplified by the posts of the *praefectus Aegypti*, the two *praefecti* for the grain supply and the fire brigade in the city of Rome, together with the financial procurators, who performed various duties in both the imperial and public provinces. Further examples are the imperial freedmen and slaves, who, after the death of Augustus, could provide information on the financial health of the *aerarium* and the various imperial treasuries, for which they were responsible, as well as for outstanding taxes.¹ Yet Augustus had only laid the foundations for this new style of government, which was largely alien to the Republic. It would not have been possible to foresee how the administration would expand and develop. In his biography of the first *princeps*, Suetonius typically makes no reference to equestrian posts – that is, the new officials whose appointment foreshadowed what was to come – although he very carefully notes the new senatorial posts created by Augustus.²

The degree and speed at which the non-senatorial areas of administration developed alongside those controlled by senators is still not entirely clear. The main reasons for this are, on the one hand, the way in which information has been passed down to us and, on the other, the fact that the duties of these posts were probably often not constituted through formal enactments, in particular those which would be recorded in the Senate. When Octavian had delegated jurisdiction by a *lex* to the prefect of Egypt, this had been because of political considerations in a situation which still lacked clarity.³ Presumably the question never arose again in the same form.

The literary tradition, including historiography, only mentions the estab-

¹ Suet. *Aug.* 101.4. ² *Ibid.* 37. Cf. on this also Brunt (1983) 43–4; Eck (1986a).

³ Ulpian, *Dig.* 1.17.1.

lishment of or changes in the work of non-senatorial officials on isolated occasions. The main explanation for this is that such measures will no doubt usually have been the result of the emperor's own suggestions, or those of his advisers, and will have been taken solely on the emperor's decision. Normally they would require neither public announcement nor the approval of the Senate, which would have been the only way in which they could receive public, political notice, and thence be included in the historiographic tradition. It is not surprising, then, that even Frontinus, who was responsible for Rome's water supply for a number of years as *curator aquarum*, could not find any precise information on when an imperial freedman first worked alongside the senatorial *curator* as a *procurator aquarum*: he can only record that it seemed to have been the emperor Claudius who had first appointed freedmen as procurators.⁴ It is worth noting that for other matters Frontinus had access to extensive source material, probably from the archive of the *cura aquarum*, as can be seen from the often great detail found in his work. But he could find nothing regarding the *procurator aquarum*.

The majority of the source material available today consists of epigraphic and, more rarely, papyrological documents. Unfortunately, these can generally only point to the existence of particular officials or areas of responsibility at the time the document was produced: there is little they can tell us about when these were first established. Hence we can often know only the *terminus ante quem* for particular administrative duties being performed by state officials who were not senators. And there may have been many decades between the actual establishment of a post and our first encounter with someone holding it, since, despite their large number in total, the inscriptions which mention the sort of posts with which we are concerned here are relatively scarce. This makes the study of the development of these posts and the various policies of individual emperors extremely difficult, if not impossible.⁵

This difficulty is increased still further by the way in which scholars have hitherto seen the development of the individual areas of the administration from the point of view of the increasing use of equestrians, while in reality this was only part of a wider process.⁶ The prime interest has been in the first appointment of equestrian officials, which was supposed to have brought with it a new quality in the government of the imperium Romanum. But from the point of view of the expansion of the administration *per se* and its impact throughout the empire, the development of the areas of the administration is more important than their being taken over,

⁴ Frontin. *Aq.* 105.2.

⁵ Eck *Organisation* 5; *ibid.* (1990) 58–63; Brunt (1983) 68 ff. Cf. also below, n. 39. On the other hand, in Pflaum, *Procurateurs*, the material is structured according to the reigns of the individual emperors.

⁶ Only Hirschfeld, *Vwaltungsbeamte*, consistently saw the parts as making up a whole.

generally much later, by members of the equestrian order. This is not to deny that in some cases the appointment of an equestrian procurator and the creation of a new office may have happened at the same time. This may, for example, have been the case for a particular treasury, the *kalendarium Vegetianum*, established in Baetica, possibly during the reign of Antoninus Pius.⁷ But we know that many functions, for which equestrian holders are only attested much later, already existed in the post-Julio-Claudian era, when the duties associated with them must have been carried out by someone. The duties could have been performed either by imperial slaves and freedmen alone, or under the command of other equestrian officials, whose duties were initially quite wide, and which only came to be shared between several men with the same socio-political status later as the burden of those duties increased.⁸ This process is particularly clear in the course of the second century A.D. in relation to fiscal administration, when special procurators often appear for individual taxes, such as the inheritance tax, alongside the general provincial procurators who had previously been responsible for all or part of the taxes or other sources of imperial income.⁹ In the light of the problematic nature of the sources and of previous research, any portrayal of the development of administrative posts can only be tentative.

In the period from Augustus to the end of Nero's reign, four principal areas developed within the part of the administration entrusted to equestrians, imperial freedmen and slaves:

- (1) Offices around the emperor, such as the *ab epistulis*, *a rationibus* or *a libellis*, the work of which could affect the whole empire. They are often referred to by scholars as court offices or *officia Palatina*. The praetorian prefecture may also be counted among their number, for the holders of the office could take on remarkably disparate tasks, although the original competence of the two *praefecti praetorio* was very limited.
- (2) Positions which were mainly connected with the city of Rome, such as the *praefectus annonae*, the *praefectus vigilum*, the procurators for the great gladiators' barracks in Rome, or for the capital's water supply or its buildings.
- (3) Offices whose responsibilities extended beyond the city of Rome itself, and in particular to the rest of Italy, but whose holders were, as far as we know, usually based in Rome. These included the administration of inheritance and emancipation taxes, of the imperial *patrimonium*, or the command of the state courier and transport systems in Italy, through the *praefectus vehiculorum*.

⁷ See the sources cited by Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1049; Suppl. 118.

⁸ Cf., e.g., the concentration of different responsibilities under the *a libellis* et *a censibus* or the *ab epistulis* et *a patrimonio*, *a libellis* et *cognitionibus*, *proc. hereditarium* et *a censibus*; Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1020 ff.

⁹ See below, p. 245 ff.

- (4) Numerous other administrative posts in Italy, but above all in the provinces, which were limited to specific regions and whose holders were based, together with their staff, in those regions. The provincial procurators belong to this group, regardless of their particular responsibilities, as also does the prefect of Egypt, together with the other equestrian officials directly below him.

Alongside these there developed a large number of hierarchically structured and sharply differentiated posts, which organized daily life in the imperial court, without actually holding any particular administrative position. For this reason, we need not concern ourselves with the latter here.

It is very difficult to form a picture of how many of the areas of administrative responsibility in the hands of non-senators existed at the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The first evidence for the restructuring of the imperial administration comes from the reign of Vespasian or his immediate successors, but in the majority of cases, we simply cannot tell whether these changes were merely the result of the involvement of an emperor who was extremely interested in the running of the empire, or whether they had been introduced earlier, perhaps under Nero.

Thus, we know that a separate office of the *vicesima hereditarium*, under the command of an equestrian procurator, existed under Vespasian and was responsible for collecting this tax in Rome at least, and perhaps in Italy as a whole. Similarly there is evidence that a procurator in charge of collecting the 5 per cent emancipation tax was in office in Italy before A.D. 79.¹⁰ But it is quite unclear whether both procurators were first appointed by Vespasian, or whether the procuratorships had already been created under Nero, perhaps in connection with the latter's measures directed against the abuses of tax-contractors in A.D. 58. The appointment of an equestrian official to supervise the *quattuor publica Africae* may date from the same period. The post's responsibilities probably included the 5 per cent taxes on inheritance and the emancipation of slaves, customs revenues and the 4 per cent tax on the sale of slaves. This has often, however, been seen as the result of changes which took place during the reign of Hadrian.¹¹ Were this the case, then we might expect there to have been a similar arrangement made for the collection of the 2.5 per cent duty in the Gallic provinces: imperial slaves and freedmen in Rome were in any event already occupied with this during the first century A.D. and even as early as Nero's reign.¹² On the other hand, in A.D. 62 in Asia, the patrimonial procurator based in the province seems to have been concerned with customs duties, and this particular role had not yet been entrusted to its own procurator. This, and the creation of a special administrative unit to deal with customs revenues, was

¹⁰ Eck, *Organisation* 116, 130, with reference to *CIL* IV 9592 and *AE* 1973 no. 485.

¹¹ Eck (1990b). ¹² de Laet, *Portorium* 373 ff.; Boulvert (1970) 127 ff.

only established considerably later: the first equestrian procurator for customs who is named as such does not appear in our sources until the third century A.D.¹³ So when was the oversight of these matters transferred to their own equestrian procurator? It is clear that even before Vespasian there had been administrative units in Rome which dealt with customs duties in the above-mentioned areas. They were not, however, separate, independent offices, or at least cannot be identified as such by there being an equestrian official in charge of them. The particular responsibilities themselves were by no means necessarily dependent on the existence of an equestrian bureaucrat. Rather they could have existed as sub-divisions of, for example, the office of the *a rationibus*, each with their own staff of *servi et liberti Caesaris*.

The situation was different in the provinces. For example, we know of an imperial freedman, Ti. Claudius Saturninus, who served as *proc(urator) (vicesimae) bere(ditatum) provinciae Achaiae*.¹⁴ It is commonly assumed that he performed his duties in Achaea itself, and the title itself is a compelling argument in favour of this assumption. Hence he may have been an independent official responsible for the collection of the inheritance tax in the province. His administrative masters in Rome, that is those to whom he was accountable for the inheritance tax collected in Achaea, could have been the *a rationibus* or, perhaps even the *praefecti aerarii militaris* themselves – the senators in charge of the treasury into which the inheritance tax was paid. It is also conceivable that in the second half of the first century A.D. this freedman procurator was subordinate to the equestrian procurator for the emperor's *patrimonium* in the province of Achaea. In other words, Claudius Saturninus would have controlled a part of what were the general administrative responsibilities of an equestrian procurator in Achaea. Unfortunately, the present state of our sources precludes the formulation of any clear picture.

If we set aside all these uncertainties, then we can identify with some probability at least the following individual administrative areas of work as already in existence at the end of the reign of Nero. These are areas not controlled by senators, but it does not necessarily follow that they were all under an equestrian official.¹⁵ The areas of work are arranged according to the four administrative areas outlined above:

- (1) The praetorian prefecture, with two equestrian *praefecti praetorio*
the control of the emperor's correspondence: *ab epistulis*
the responsibility for the reception of embassies from the Greek-speaking provinces, and responses to them: *ad legationes et responsa Graeca*

¹³ Engelmann and Knibbe (1989) 30 line 148; Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1073.

¹⁴ *CIL* VI 8443 = *ILS* 1546.

¹⁵ On the equestrian officials at the end of Nero's reign, see the compilation in Démougin (1988) 712 ff.

- the processing of petitions: *a libellis*
a studiis (the duties of which are not clear)
a memoria (the concerns of this post are also unclear)¹⁶
 contribution to judicial investigations: *a cognitionibus*
 the central administration of the emperor's finances: *a rationibus*
 the superintendence of the mints in Rome: *moneta* (if not subordinate
 to the *a rationibus*).¹⁷
- (2) The prefecture for the grain supply of Rome, with an equestrian *praefectus annonae*
 the prefecture for fire-fighting in Rome, with an equestrian *praefectus vigilum*
 the superintendence of the large barracks for gladiators: a *procurator ludi magni* and a *procurator ludi matutini*
 the superintendence of the imperial libraries in Rome: *a bibliothecis*.
- In addition, there developed in Rome an administrative staff, comprised of imperial slaves and freedmen, under the charge of a few senatorial *curatores*. We know on the one hand of that for the water supply, the *cura aquarum*, and on the other of the *cura operum locorumque publicorum*.¹⁸ No administrative units, however, developed independently of the senatorial *curatores*.
- (3) The procurator for the 5 per cent tax on inheritance in Rome and Italy: *procurator vicesimae hereditarium*
 the procurator for the 5 per cent tax on the emancipation of slaves in Rome and Italy: *procurator vicesimae libertatis*
 the superintendence of the public communications service in Italy, with a *praefectus vehicularum*
 responsibility for the emperor's private property in Rome and Italy (*patrimonium*, though this may have been below the *a rationibus*)
 the collecting of legacies to the emperor: *procurator hereditarium*, probably also for Rome and Italy.
- (4) (a) *Italy*
 The command of the two fleets in Misenum and Ravenna, both by an equestrian prefect.¹⁹
 (b) *The provinces*
 The prefect of Egypt
 the *iuridicus* of Egypt
 three (?) *epistrategoï* for the administrative divisions of Egypt²⁰
 the supervision of the *idios logos*

¹⁶ Lo Giudice, in Panciera (1987) 86 no. 28. Cf. Peachin (1989).

¹⁷ It is unclear whether there was any connection with the senatorial *triumviri monetales*.

¹⁸ Frontin. *Aq.* 105, 116–18; Lo Giudice in Panciera (1987) 86 no. 28.

¹⁹ The commanders of the fleets may be included here since, like the legionary legates, they were regularly involved in administrative matters in a wide sense.

²⁰ This is the view of Thomas (1982) 29 ff.

*archiereus Alexandreae et Aegypti*²¹

the head of the Museum in Alexandria

praesidial procurators of twelve provinces: Corsica (?), Alpes Maritimae, Alpes Cottiae, Alpes Graiae, Raetia, Noricum, Epirus (?), Thracia, Cappadocia, Mauretania Caesariensis, Mauretania Tingitana
 eleven or twelve financial procurators in the imperial provinces, some of whom may have been responsible for more than one province, or for only a part of a province: Lusitania, Hispania Citerior, Asturia-Gallaecia, Aquitania-Lugdunensis, Belgica (-Germaniae), Britannia, Dalmatia-Pannonia, Moesia, Galatia-Pamphylia, Syria, Judaea, Cilicia (?)

patrimonial procurators in the ten provinces governed by proconsuls: Baetica, Gallia Narbonensis, Sardinia, Sicilia, Macedonia, Pontus-Bithynia, Asia, Cyprus, Creta-Cyrenae, Africa

the procuratorship for four different tasks in Africa: *procurator quattuor publicorum Africae*

the procuratorship for the imperial properties in Africa

the commanders of the provincial fleets in Germany, Britain, Pannonia, Moesia, Syria, Pontus and Egypt, though these all came under the command of the senatorial or equestrian governors of those provinces.²²

Thus, at the start of the reign of Vespasian, we can distinguish with relative certainty about seventy areas of work, with widely differing importance and scope, which were concerned with the administration of the empire alongside the areas entrusted to members of the Senate. The real number may well have been even larger, for it is possible that freedmen procurators in at least some provinces may have been involved in the supervision of the inheritance tax, without being under the command of another official such as the provincial procurator, as has already been discussed with regard to Achaea. The situation could have been similar in many of the great mining areas, which at least in the later empire were under the supervision of a procurator, often for several provinces. But it is equally possible that the individual mining districts, say in Spain or Gaul, were under the control of an imperial freedman, who in turn could have been subordinate to the provincial procurator. In addition there might also have been individuals of equestrian rank at work, perhaps on a temporary basis. We can assume that this was the case for the procurators who were appointed for some particular reason to the *cura* of the less important roads in the neighbourhood of

²¹ It is disputed when the post received equestrian rank. Cf. Stead (1981); Rigsby (1985); Bowman and Rathbone (1992) 125 n. 98.

²² Cf. the analogy of the prefects of the fleets in Italy, who occasionally performed administrative or institutional duties. On the date of the establishment of the individual fleets, cf. Saddington (1991).

Rome. In these instances there was no need for a permanent post.²³ If we disregard most of the officials working in the immediate vicinity of the emperor, it is clear that almost all of the administrative departments listed above were concerned primarily with the finances of the empire and of the emperor: besides the fiscal and patrimonial procurators, the equestrian provincial governors had, in addition to the duties of senatorial governors, responsibility for the collection of taxes in their provinces.

This system, which had evolved in the hundred years or so after the reign of Augustus, already had in place the entire foundation for the developments which were to take place in the following period up to the end of the Antonine era. These developments were essentially an expansion of the existing structures, the differentiation of roles by reducing the responsibilities of individual officials or by subdividing duties, and a more formalized hierarchy within the separate areas of the administration. Following existing practice, a financial procurator was appointed to all newly won or divided provinces, or to provinces where the status of their governor had changed (these were almost exclusively the provinces for which the emperor was responsible). This happened under Nero and Vespasian when Cappadocia and Judaea were made into provinces governed by senators, and under Trajan, who annexed Dacia, initially as a consular province, and also Arabia, which received praetorian governors. Around A.D. 110, a senatorial governor was appointed to Thrace, and under Marcus Aurelius, senators were also sent to Raetia and Noricum as provincial governors, thereby replacing the existing procuratorial governors, whose posts were transformed into those of financial procurators. In other words, the equestrian official who had previously held the post continued to fulfil the financial part of his duties. The division of provinces could have similar consequences: for instance, when Pannonia was divided around A.D. 106, the post of financial procurator, who had previously been responsible for all of Pannonia and Dalmatia, was probably abolished and replaced by three new independent posts, responsible for Dalmatia, Pannonia Superior and Pannonia Inferior, each occupied by an equestrian.²⁴ The situation was similar in Moesia, which was divided in A.D. 86 by Domitian for strategic and security reasons. We do not, however, know what happened when control of a province passed from a proconsul to an imperial legate, or from a procurator to a proconsul, as happened in Sardinia and Pontus-Bithynia under Trajan, or in Baetica and Sardinia under Marcus Aurelius. These arrangements were only short-lived, and the governorship of these provinces reverted to its former state after a few years. On the other hand, the situation was later different in Pontus-Bithynia and Lycia-Pamphylia. In the former province, no proconsul had held office since the last years of

²³ Eck, *Organisation* 53–4; 86–7.

²⁴ Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 54.

the reign of Antoninus Pius; rather the province was governed by an imperial legate. But from the end of Marcus Aurelius' reign onwards, Lycia-Pamphylia, after a number of changes back and forth, was governed by a proconsul who, like the former proconsul of Pontus-Bithynia, was accompanied by a quaestor.²⁵ From what Dio tells us, it would appear that at the start of the third century this quaestor, along with the proconsul, was responsible for the collection of the regular taxes.²⁶ In both cases, the type and role of the procurator must have changed, in Pontus-Bithynia from a patrimonial procurator to a fiscal procurator, and vice versa in Lycia-Pamphylia. It is not difficult to imagine that the procurator's duties were extended in Pontus-Bithynia, while in Lycia-Pamphylia, the procurator and his staff must have had their role reduced considerably. We do not know whether or how this did, in fact, happen. We cannot discern the concrete results in any particular case, let alone a possible change in the status of the equestrian official.

The opening-up of a new area of mining in Dacia by Trajan to exploit the new province's gold reserves seems to have brought with it from the beginning the creation of a new independent administrative office.²⁷ The same may also be true of the *calendarium Vegetianum* in Baetica, which certainly existed from the time of Marcus Aurelius, and perhaps as early as the reign of Antoninus Pius.²⁸

While the number of administrative departments in the provinces had increased considerably, from the time of Vespasian onwards, there were only a few new offices created at the heart of the empire. Prime among these were probably the *advocati fisci*, whose introduction is ascribed to Hadrian, from whose reign the first known holder of the post comes.²⁹ It is unlikely that this position was created with the intention of providing a direct means of entrance into the procuratorial career for those who had no military experience, for the first known *advocatus fisci* had previously served as an equestrian officer in the army. On the other hand, as early as the reign of Antoninus Pius, we find the post being used for just such direct entry.³⁰ A separate post concerned with the census seems to have been developed in the Trajanic or Hadrianic periods: the postholder received the title *a censibus*.

The administration of the so-called *res privata* formed an entirely new area of activity. This was a new category of the emperor's private fortune, after the *patrimonium* had effectively turned into crown property. It is hard today to discern what distinguished *patrimonium* from *res privata*, and what the real reason was for the establishment of the office. While it had been

²⁵ See above, ch. 5, p. 225. ²⁶ On this see most recently Eck (1986) 530–1.

²⁷ Cf. Noeske (1977) 296 ff.

²⁸ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1049. The first known procurator belongs to the early years of the reign of Marcus Aurelius: *AE* 1956 no. 123. ²⁹ *HA Hadr.* 20.6; *AE* 1975 no. 408.

³⁰ *CIL* VIII 1174; *AE* 1980 no. 235. Cf. Camodeca (1981) 53–4.

assumed, on the basis of a late antique report, that this new branch of the imperial administration had been created by Septimius Severus, today it is thought that it had already existed under Antoninus Pius, if not earlier.³¹ Later we find equestrian officials with special responsibility for the *res privata* operating in many provinces, but particularly in the numerous regions of Italy, which suggests what the financial importance of this imperial private fortune might have been. We cannot, however, be certain when these procurators were first appointed.

Most of the increases in administrative posts were no doubt the result of differentiation between the constituent duties of an existing function and their redefinition as independent areas of responsibility. As far as our sources allow conclusions to be drawn, it seems that there were many reasons for this. One cause was no doubt the increase in the number of duties. Others may have included the systematization of the administration and rule of the empire, or the need to reward deserving or loyal men and to keep them close to the emperor by appointing them to an official position.

The increase in the burden of duties undoubtedly played a major role in this, as, for example, we have good cause to suspect in the case of the 5 per cent inheritance tax. Since this was only paid by Roman citizens, the marked expansion of the Roman citizenship, particularly among the élites of the cities in the provinces, made it so important that it became necessary to appoint officials, each with their own staff, who were apparently responsible for the collection of this tax alone in individual provinces or groups of provinces. We know of such officials in, for example, Tarraconensis, Belgica and the two Germanys together, or for Asia, including Lycia, Pamphylia, Phrygia, Galatia and the *insulae Cyclades*.³² Similarly, we know of officials responsible for this tax operating in Italy whose territorial organization seems to have varied through the second century.³³

But in all these cases the introduction of regional procurators for the *XX hereditatium* had not been the first step towards state involvement in the collection of the tax. Rather, other officials had previously been concerned with the tax, or at least with farming out its collection and accounting for it. In Rome and Italy this had probably been the responsibility of a separate equestrian *procurator XX hereditatium*, perhaps as early as the reign of Nero,³⁴ while in the provinces the fiscal or patrimonial procurators had probably been responsible for it initially.³⁵ It is hardly likely that the prefects of the *aerarium militare* in Rome would have dealt with the private tax collectors, for example in the province of Achaëa, as they might well have done in Rome and Italy. As the number of duties increased, it will have

³¹ Nesselhauf (1964); Pflaum, *Carrières*, Suppl. 32.

³² The sources are listed by Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 61–2.

³³ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1036 ff.; Eck, *Organisation* 132 ff.

³⁴ Eck, *Organisation* 131.

³⁵ On this, cf. also Burton (1993).

seemed more sensible to set up smaller regional units within Italy too, each with its own procurator, who could react more quickly on the ground, which seems to have been particularly important when wills were being read. But in other cases, such as for example in Tarraconensis or Baetica and Lusitania, the duties seem to have been taken away from the provincial procurator who had previously been responsible for them, regardless of whether it was a fiscal or a patrimonial procurator, and given to a special *procurator XX hereditarium*. It is, however, far from certain whether this division of responsibility took place in all provinces. In the Pannonian provinces, for example, we know of no equestrian procurator or imperial freedman concerned with this tax, but only of an imperial slave, based in Poetovio.³⁶ It is uncertain to whom he reported, and it may be that he was responsible to the fiscal procurator of Pannonia Superior, since his staff may have been organized according to the types of taxes for which he was responsible. For other provinces, such as Britain or Cappadocia, there is a lack of any evidence, which may suggest that the fiscal procurator's role in the supervision of the collection of the inheritance tax from Roman citizens remained unchanged there.

We may presume that the duties of other state officials were divided up on a similar basis. From the time of Trajan, or at least Hadrian, we know of special equestrian procurators supervising the production of iron in the Gallic provinces, and the silver mines in Dalmatia and Pannonia.³⁷ There must have been a separate administration of mining operations in these provinces at least as early as this period, and perhaps for a considerable time before that. This was not, however, when the exploitation of these provinces' mineral resources had begun, which had been considerably earlier. Hence the agreements with the lessees, who, we should assume, were active in all mining areas, must have been made by other imperial officials, probably the provinces' fiscal procurators. The independence of the administration of the mining in these provinces does not necessarily reflect an empire-wide trend, for in contrast to the Balkan provinces just mentioned, we know of no such organizational structure in the whole of the Iberian peninsula with its large mining areas, only of imperial freedmen responsible for individual *metalla*, such as that of Vipasca.³⁸ Also, according to the sources available today, the iron ore mines in Dalmatia, in contrast to the silver mines in the province, were only organized into a separate mining district under the control of their own procurator somewhat later.³⁹

³⁶ *CIL* III 4065. ³⁷ Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 57; *Carrières* III 1053, 1063, Suppl. 122.

³⁸ Domergue (1990).

³⁹ Cf. the sources cited by Pflaum, *Carrières*, Suppl. 122. Until 1957, two texts pointed to this reorganization having taken place in the middle of the third century A.D., though newly discovered inscriptions show that the district existed by at least A.D. 209. It remains uncertain whether this was when it was first created: it could have been considerably earlier.

Areas of responsibility were also shared out between officials in Rome and in the immediate vicinity of the emperor, just as in the provinces. For many years the administration of the emperor's properties in Rome and Italy (*patrimonium*) had been under the direct control of the head of the imperial finances, the *a rationibus*. But, under Domitian at the latest, the *patrimonium* was split off and placed under the supervision of its own equestrian procurator, who was initially also responsible for the emperor's correspondence.⁴⁰ Equestrian officials seem to have been appointed, perhaps as early as the second half of the second century A.D., albeit only for the estates in individual regions of Italy, who could have been deputies of the central *procurator patrimonii* in Rome if they acted in the regions on his behalf.

At first, in the early sources, the office of the *a censibus*, which was responsible for determining the level of the equestrian *census*, always appears in combination with other duties, such as those of the *a libellis* or the *procurator hereditarium*. It is only in the course of the second century A.D. that these administrative responsibilities seem to have been permanently separated and entrusted to two different officials.⁴¹ The responsibility for the emperor's correspondence in Latin and Greek was divided in the same way. There had been the occasional precedent from as early as the reign of Claudius, but we first find a clear distinction between the two posts in the early part of the reign of Marcus Aurelius: there is, however, no indication of the precise date when this occurred. In any event, from this time onwards there were always an *ab epistulis Latinis* and an *ab epistulis Graecis*, the former being superior in rank to the latter.⁴²

The creation of new posts within an area of activity could lead to the development of a strict hierarchy of posts. This occurred in various administrative departments in Rome and Italy, and occasionally also in a few provinces. Officials whose title contained the prefix *sub-* are the clearest examples of this: *subprocuratores*, *subpraefecti* or *subcuratores*. Such posts were, however, created only in Rome and Italy.⁴³

These subordinate posts are also found in some of the permanent administrative departments in Rome which were under the control of senators, but, in contrast to the posts they might hold in the provinces, these senators usually had equestrian officials and a staff made up of imperial slaves and freedmen under them. In these instances, the administrative role already existed, and was developed and expanded in this way. Two *curae* in

⁴⁰ The first known holder of the post was Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito under Domitian: *CIL* vi 798=*ILS* 1448; *AE* 1934 no. 154; Pflaum, *Carrières* I 143 ff.

⁴¹ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1021–2, 1025. But cf. also the text of a Hadrianic inscription from Ephesus, in which one T. Petronius Priscus is called *a libellis* and nothing else (*JÖAI* 62 (1993) 127). It is possible that this might merely be an abbreviated form of his full title.

⁴² Eck (1992). Cf. Birley (1992) 41 ff.

⁴³ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1028 ff. *Sub-*posts were created for the *ludus magnus*, the *opera publica*, the *annona*, the *vigiles* and for a number of *vicia* in Italy.

the city of Rome fall into this category, the supervision of temples and public buildings (*cura aedium sacrarum et operum locorumque publicorum*) and the administration of the water supply (*cura aquarum*),⁴⁴ and two areas of the administration of Italy, the institution of *alimenta* and some of the more important roads.⁴⁵ As far as we can tell, these equestrian *subcuratores* or *procuratores* were subordinate to the senatorial *curatores*; at least the senatorial *curator aquarum* could give orders to the procurator, or pass on to him instructions he had received from the emperor.⁴⁶ We can be certain that the higher equestrian officials who had their own *subpraefecti* or *adiutores* had the authority to delegate. These included the commander of the urban fire brigade, whose *subpraefectus* appears after him in inscriptions from Ostia, thereby indicating that he was his subordinate.⁴⁷ Similarly, it is clear that the prefect in charge of the food supply of Rome not only had a sub-prefect under him, but also a procurator with his own office in Ostia. We know that initially this procurator was an imperial freedman, but later the holders of the post were drawn from the equestrian order.⁴⁸

There is also evidence that the praetorian prefects and the *a rationibus* had similar subordinate officials. From at least the reign of Antoninus Pius, but perhaps considerably earlier, there was an equestrian *a commentariis* under the *praefecti praetorio*.⁴⁹ This may have been the result of the increasing number of decisions to be made by the top officials around the emperor, but perhaps also of their exalted rank, for normally soldiers below the rank of centurion were entrusted with the task of keeping the *commentarii*, the public record books of high officials. From at least the time of Marcus Aurelius the *a rationibus* also had another senior equestrian procurator below him, with the title *procurator summarum rationum*.⁵⁰

In contrast to Rome and Italy, there is hardly any evidence in the provinces, at least for equestrians, that new senior administrative posts were created which were subordinate to a higher official working in the same area. Only in Egypt may we presume that all procuratorial posts were arranged in a hierarchy from the provincial governor downwards, from the *epistrategoi*, through the posts of *iridicus*, *dioiketes*, *idioslogos* and *archieurus*, down to the procurators responsible for Rome's grain supply (*procurator Neaspoleos*, *procurator ad Mercurium*) or for the emperor's private property in the province (*procurator usiacus*).⁵¹ With equestrians in control of the individual offices, the areas of the administration of Egypt probably gained a greater degree of independence in comparison to the previous situation

⁴⁴ See above, n. 16. ⁴⁵ Eck, *Organisation* 87; 186–7. ⁴⁶ Frontin. *Aq.* 105.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., *CIL* XIV 4378, 4381, 4386, 4387. ⁴⁸ Pavis d'Escurac, *Préfecture* 105 ff.

⁴⁹ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1030. On the *commentarienses* see Haensch (1995).

⁵⁰ Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1019–20.

⁵¹ On this cf. Thomas (1982); Kupiszewski (1953/4); Hagedorn (1985); Swarney (1970); Parássoglou (1978). On the *archieurus* see above, n. 21. On the *archidikastes* see Bowman and Rathbone (1992) 117, 125.

when a single imperial freedman under the *praefectus Aegypti* had coordinated the corresponding duties.

If we consider the general development in the administration of the empire which took place up to the end of the Antonine dynasty, it is evident that there was a not insignificant increase in the number of administrative functions in which equestrians were active, as well as imperial freedmen and slaves. There must have been at least 110 administrative departments, although there is the same level of uncertainty as we have already noted for the early years of the Flavian period.⁵² It cannot be excluded that many of the areas of responsibility which first appear in the third century were established much earlier, perhaps even in the pre-Severan period, and consequently that the corresponding administrative posts also existed, although these are only attested in our sources for a later period.⁵³ In general, however, the number of these areas of administrative responsibility increased rather less than the number of equestrian officials. Yet it is according to the latter that the expansion of the non-senatorial government and its importance has hitherto been assessed. But not every single equestrian post represented its own branch of the administration: rather, as we have seen, several equestrian officials were often employed in a hierarchy within one department. According to the most recent survey, at the end of the reign of Commodus there was a total of 135 individual posts for equestrian procurators, though this number is very uncertain.⁵⁴ It may be that under Commodus the number of equestrian posts was considerably higher.

The number of officials is not sufficient evidence in itself, since the expansion and differentiation of equestrian officials means that, for example, the appointment of a *subpraefectus vigilum* in Rome, or a *subcurator* below the senatorial *curator* of the Via Flaminia, is markedly less important than, say, the appointment of a procurator to oversee the inheritance tax in the two provinces of Baetica and Lusitania. In the first case, all that happened was that an existing, separate, sphere of activity was consolidated by the appointment of additional staff, without any real change or expansion being externally noticeable. On the other hand, the creation of a separate administrative unit for inheritance tax in a province could only increase the public perception of this part of the administration, for we may assume that at least part of the headquarters of the new procurator will have been separated from that of the general fiscal or patrimonial procurator, and would have received his own staff in addition, so that this would quite naturally be interpreted as a new area of work. When the responsibility for the inheritance tax was devolved from the duties of the more general

⁵² See above, p. 242ff. ⁵³ Cf. n. 39, above.

⁵⁴ See, e.g., Pflaum, *RE* xxiii 1261–2; (1974) 43.

procurator, jurisdiction in disputes regarding inheritance probably went with it to the new official. Despite this, however, it must be stressed once again that even the appointment of a separate procurator for a defined area of work is not the same as a completely new creation, since it involved little more than splitting off part of what had already existed within a larger administrative unit, normally that of the earlier provincial procurator.

In the period from Vespasian to the fall of Commodus, a period of over 120 years, the development and increase in administrative departments and the appointment of new officials did not always continue at a constant pace. Rather, the personalities of certain emperors, and also particular external circumstances, will have increased the pace. Vespasian, for example, had to solve a number of pressing problems which were probably largely the result of the disruption which preceded his accession, and one of the ways he could do this was by reorganizing the administration. Hadrian's travels could have made him aware of new requirements, while the military and economic difficulties faced by Marcus Aurelius required a degree of reorganization. There is no real evidence for any acceleration of the pace of change in these periods, which is largely due to the impossibility of giving even probable dates for the creation of new administrative departments and posts. It is only when a new province was established, such as Dacia and Arabia, or a large province was divided into smaller units, or the status of a province was changed, that we can date the consequent creation of the new non-senatorial posts. These were, however, only the result of decisions which had nothing to do with the overall development of the administration and any realization that the individual emperors might have had that such reform and innovation were necessary. On the other hand, the creation of new administrative roles, such as the removal of responsibility for mining from provincial procurators, the subdivision of regional administration in Italy and Africa, or the appointment of separate procurators to deal with inheritance tax or gladiatorial schools, must have been the result of developments in the way the administration was structured, and perhaps also of the emperors' personal motives. It is precisely these changes which cannot be dated sufficiently closely to be able to identify the emperor responsible for the individual stages. A *terminus ante quem* is not sufficient to be able to assess their historical importance.⁵⁵ This state of affairs results, *inter alia*, in there being hardly any evidence for the far-reaching and fundamental reform of equestrian involvement in the empire's administration which Hadrian is supposed to have carried out.⁵⁶

One of the essential features of the development of administrative

⁵⁵ On this, cf. Eck, *Organisation* 4–5; Brunt (1983) 44–5.

⁵⁶ The most important notes for our view of Hadrian as an administrative reformer all come from late antiquity. In many cases it can be shown that they are erroneous, and in others there is no other supporting evidence. Cf. also Brunt (1983) 70.

posts throughout the period was the increased use of equestrians for tasks for which previously only imperial freedmen had been employed, that is people who were personally dependent on the emperor. While the important posts in the financial administration of the provinces, the non-senatorial governorships and the prefectures in Rome had from the beginning been almost exclusively filled by equestrians, a number of positions had developed around the emperor which were only ever filled by his freedmen. With the passing of time, these positions developed into important administrative units with not inconsiderable staffs, dealing with a variety of tasks. As a result of their proximity to the emperor, their knowledge of what took place at the heart of power, and also the importance of what they did, there developed a discrepancy between their legal status as freedmen and their exceptional importance as individuals within the system. This was the main reason for the stiff opposition that many important freedmen faced, above all from members of the senatorial aristocracy. On the other hand, as the position of the emperor became more and more secure, and as the imperial court became less comparable with other aristocratic households, posts such as the *ab epistulis*, the *a rationibus* or the *a libellis* lost their specifically servile nature, which would previously have made it undesirable, if not impossible, for a free-born Roman citizen to take on such posts. Rather, these posts came to be valued, both as a result of the perception of the emperor as the representative of the *res publica* and of the consequent view of the posts themselves as comparable to others in the service of the state. Hence it was not a surprising step when in A.D. 69 Vitellius appointed equestrians instead of freedmen to a number of *ministeria principatus*, that is, officials whom the emperor needed close at hand.⁵⁷ One of Vitellius' motives could have been the desire to distinguish himself from Nero, around whom freedmen had regained and increased their importance, particularly in the latter years of his reign. It is possible that Otho might have foreshadowed, at least in part, Vitellius' innovation.⁵⁸ One of the equestrians whom Vitellius appointed was probably one Sex. Caesius Propertianus, who became *procurator a patrimonio et hereditatibus et a libellis*, that is he was responsible both for the emperor's private funds, including the claiming of any legacies to the emperor, and for petitions (*libelli*) delivered to the emperor.⁵⁹ It is unclear whether this measure taken by Vitellius remained an isolated incident for the meantime, with Vespasian returning to the earlier use of freedmen. There is evidence from the Flavian period for imperial freedmen in comparable posts, even with the same titles, such as *a libellis*, which could well mean that, like other freedmen with the same titles under earlier emperors, they were responsible for all the

⁵⁷ Tac. *Hist.* 1.58.1. ⁵⁸ Plut., *Otho* 9.3. Cf. Jones (1968).

⁵⁹ *CIL* XI 5028=ILS 1447. Cf. Pflaum, *Carrières* I 88 ff.

duties of the office. This interpretation is not, however, particularly convincing, since these *liberti* could just as easily have served under a procurator with the same title, as indeed we know was the case later. From the time of Domitian onwards, there is increasingly clearer evidence for the appointment of equestrians instead of, or alongside, freedmen with similar titles, a trend which was begun by Vitellius.⁶⁰ All the important posts around the emperor may have been filled by equestrians by the end of Trajan's reign. For example, C. Suetonius Tranquillus, the author of the biographies of the emperors, held the posts of *a studiis* and *a bybliothecis* under Trajan,⁶¹ and one L. Vibius Lentulus and a Cn. Pompeius Homullus served as *a rationibus* under the same emperor.⁶² On the other hand the change in the latter post could well have taken place under Domitian.⁶³

We know from what Suetonius tells us that Domitian had an important part in this process: he employed freedmen and equestrians from Rome equally in the leading state offices.⁶⁴ This note is probably based on Suetonius' experience, and it might be suggested that Suetonius was seeking to emphasize that Domitian had opened up a whole new perspective in so doing. But, since Suetonius does not mention the measure taken by Vitellius, it is more likely that the biographer was not fully aware of what had taken place previously and that what he attributes to Domitian merely reflects what he had himself observed. As a result, it is quite possible that similar initiatives could also have taken place under Vespasian, or, in other words, that Vespasian continued the measures which had been begun by Vitellius. Yet Domitian was responsible for making the previously servile functions around the emperor, which were in origin the roles performed by slaves in every other aristocratic house, more publicly acceptable as posts for free-born Roman citizens. Domitian's successors continued this process, but without any of them making any especially noticeable contribution or accelerating the process in any particular way. This is also true of Hadrian, although the late antique *Historia Augusta* maintains that he appointed equestrians to the posts of *ab epistulis* and *a libellis* instead of freedmen. This has led many scholars to presume that a major change took place during Hadrian's reign, and other measures have been attributed to him on no firm evidence, such as the transfer of tax collection in Gaul (*quadragesima Galliarum*), or the running of the *quattuor publica* in Africa, from imperial freedmen to equestrians.⁶⁵

Although almost all the leading posts were in the hands of equestrians

⁶⁰ Compare the career of Cn. Octavius Titinius Capito: *CIL* vi 798=*ILS* 1448; *AE* 1934 no. 154. On this cf. also Pflaum, *Carrières* 1 143 ff. ⁶¹ *AE* 1953 no. 73.

⁶² *AE* 1913 no. 143 a. b.=*IEph* vi 2061; *AE* 1924 no. 81=*IEph* vii 1, 3046; *IEph* iii 736; *CIL* vi 1626=*ILS* 1385. ⁶³ Cf. Brunt (1983) 70.

⁶⁴ *Suet. Dom. 7: quaedam ex maximis officiis inter libertinos equitesque R(omanos) communicavit.*

⁶⁵ *HA Hadr.* 22.8. Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 61; (1974) 22. For the contrary argument, cf. Eck (1990b) 58 ff.

by the end of the second century A.D., this does not mean that imperial freedmen were widely excluded from important government positions. The collection of the inheritance tax in Asia, Lycia-Pamphylia, Galatia and the Cycladic islands was indeed under the control of one equestrian official, but he will have had subordinates who were responsible for individual provinces, or even for just parts of provinces. These subordinates seem generally to have been imperial freedmen. We know, for instance, that a freedman of Trajan, with the title *procurator*, oversaw the collection of the tax in Caria and the Cyclades, and that a freedman of Antoninus Pius served as *subprocurator* for the *regio Lyciaca*.⁶⁶ These imperial freedmen were very probably subordinate to the equestrian procurator for the whole region, though they each administered the *vicesima hereditatum* in quite large regions, with a fair degree of independence, as would have been required for practical reasons.

More importantly, the use of equestrians did not result in the complete exclusion of the *liberti* who had previously been in charge of the various areas of the administration of the empire. Rather it seems often to have been the case, if not indeed the rule, that the freedman who had previously been in charge remained in position, but was made subordinate to an equestrian procurator. Occasionally documentary evidence mentions both officials together, or even as working alongside each other. Thus the regulations for the letting of the imperial *saltus* in Africa affected both the equestrian procurator and the *Augusti libertus procurator*.⁶⁷ Similarly, in order to complete a building project in A.D. 193 funds were made available by two equestrian procurators, together with their respective freedmen. The procurators are called *rationales*, which it would seem reasonable to assume refers to the *a rationibus* and the *procurator summarum rationum*.⁶⁸ In addition, we hear increasingly often of freedmen whose post bore the same title as that of an equestrian official. Moreover, this evidence comes from a period when there can be little doubt that the control of the administrative areas involved was in the hands of equestrian officials. We know, for example, that in the Flavian period or in the first decades of the second century A.D., one T. Flavius Pergamus served as procurator of the island of Corsica, of Gallia Narbonensis, of the *regio Syriatica* and of the province of Asia.⁶⁹ At the same period, we also know the equestrian procurators for all of these provinces or regions. Hence Pergamus must have operated under their control, though the areas and activities for which he was responsible cannot be distinguished from those of his superiors on account of the description being the same in each case. From the second half of the first century A.D.,

⁶⁶ Maiuri (1925) no. 562; *CIL* III 14180 = *IGRR* III 676.

⁶⁷ See, most recently, Flach (1990) 103 ff.

⁶⁸ *CIL* VI 1585 a. b. = *ILS* 5920 = *FIRA* III no. 10. Cf. Hirschfeld, *Verwaltungsbeamte* 267 ff.

⁶⁹ *IEph* III 855, 855a. Further source material is collected by Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 276–7.

these positions, as second in command to an equestrian procurator, were evidently the norm. There is, however, no evidence as to whether it became a general practice for officials in all areas.

It is also unclear what purpose was served by appointing two people of different social status to effectively the same post. The practice has been called an 'unequal collegiality', or 'pseudo-collegiality', and it has been suggested that it served as a form of political control of the equestrian procurators by the imperial freedmen procurators, in a similar fashion to the way in which senatorial officials were supposed to be kept in check by their equestrian subordinates.⁷⁰ Yet such a one-sided control seems to have little point, for there is little reason why the emperor should have had such a one-sided mistrust of only procurators drawn from the equestrian order. It is far more likely that these double appointments represent a system of reciprocal checks, since almost all of these officials dealt with considerable financial sums, or other valuable commodities such as corn, marble or precious metals.⁷¹ Furthermore, we may suggest that the freedman procurator, who probably held his post longer than the equestrian official and hence provided an element of continuity, was in charge of the central offices of each *cura*.⁷² In many cases, however, at least in the early stages of the development of the system, the size of the workload alone may have been sufficient reason for such double appointments. Later, the concept of systematizing the administration of the empire and of unifying the way in which similar duties were portrayed may have played a role.

Below this hierarchical management structure were the staffs which, apart from the military *officium* which all procurators had at their disposal in one form or another, in this period were composed exclusively of imperial slaves and freedmen. The number and variety of these staffs was greatest in Rome, though there is also abundant evidence from the hundreds of inscriptions, dating from the first and second centuries, from the two cemeteries for the *familia Caesaris* in Carthage. All the *servi* and *liberti* attested in these inscriptions must have belonged to the staff of the procurator of the province of Africa, and perhaps also of the estate procurator for the *tractus Karthaginiensis*.⁷³ In Ephesus too, there were so many such subalterns that they could make up several *collegia*.⁷⁴ This does not necessarily imply, however, that there were always large numbers of petty functionaries below all procurators, since they and their staff were primarily concerned with the supervision of finances and other revenues, not with the direct collection of money and the direct administration of all areas of their responsibilities. For this they largely relied on tax farmers and, increasingly, on individual

⁷⁰ Cf. above all Pflaum, *RE* xxiii 1270–1; (1974) 65–6; Boulvert (1970) 403–4; Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 277 ff., 281 ff. ⁷¹ Cf., in particular, Brunt (1983) 45–6. ⁷² Cf. Haensch (1995).

⁷³ *CIL* viii 12590 ff., 24678 ff.; Boulvert (1970) 193 ff.

⁷⁴ *CIL* iii 6077=ILS 1505=IEph vi 2200 A; IEph vii 2, 4117; cf. 4112.

citizens of the cities, who had to take on certain duties on behalf of their communities as a *munus* or liturgy.⁷⁵

The wide-ranging administration run by equestrians and imperial personnel included posts of widely varying nature and importance. On the one hand, the prefecture of Egypt was not only comparable in all respects with all the governorships normally held by consulars, but was even more important, for in contrast to the other provincial governorships, the *praefectus Aegyptii* was also responsible for taxation in his province. Alongside this ranked the praetorian prefecture, which from the time of Sejanus had developed into the most important political post in the empire, with the exception of the emperor himself. On the other hand, equestrians took on the command of legions in Egypt, the management of individual building projects in Rome, the supervision of the collection of the inheritance tax in Rome, Italy and the provinces, or occasionally the oversight of a number of less important roads in the vicinity of the capital.⁷⁶ Hence there was a great variety in the importance, financial responsibility and political significance of the posts filled by equestrians, not unlike the variation in the importance of different senatorial posts, for example between the duties of the *quaestor urbanus* and those of the consular governor of Syria.

Just as there was a standard sequence of magistracies and other posts held by senators, or by municipal magistrates, so it was only logical that there should develop a similar succession of posts, or in other words a career structure, for the equestrian class, and also, though to a lesser extent, for the *liberti* and *servi Augusti*. As was the case for the senatorial magistracies, this career structure was a result of the *de facto* requirement for such, as well as of the general understanding of the importance of the individual posts and the prestige which had become attached to them.⁷⁷ If posts were allotted purely arbitrarily or as the result of personal preference, then either those affected would easily have become disenchanting, or the emperor would have been under the constant obligation to justify his appointments. Of course, at least while the system was still developing in the first century A.D. and in particular while considerable numbers of posts and duties were being created, the emperor still had a far greater freedom of choice than in the appointment of senators. This was because the republican magistracies provided a basic framework for senatorial appointments: some slight changes had taken place under Augustus, but thereafter there were no further changes, and even newly created posts quickly found a place in the existing structure, not least since most of them had already been created in the reign of the first *princeps*. There were no such restrictions in the case of the posts filled by equestrians and freedmen,

⁷⁵ Cf. below, ch. 7.

⁷⁶ See the various lists in Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 216 ff.; cf. Alföldy (1981) 173 ff.=(1986b) 166 ff.

⁷⁷ On this, for the Julio-Claudian period, cf. Démougin (1988) 739 ff.

particularly the latter, who were naturally dependent on the emperor as their patron. Hence the emperor had a far greater freedom to act and to appoint freedmen as he saw fit in response to individual circumstances, and this was largely also the case for the holders of equestrian posts. But the necessities of the situation could never allow appointments to be made purely on whim: the emperor had to be sure that his appointees would carry out their duties with his interests paramount. As a result, the importance of many posts required more experience and knowledge than others. Thus it goes without saying that the governorship of one of the small Alpine provinces would be entrusted to a less experienced, that is in general a younger, equestrian than would that of Mauretania Caesariensis or of Egypt.⁷⁸ Similarly, an *eques* would serve as procurator of an imperial estate before being appointed prefect for the grain supply of the city of Rome, corresponding to the different functional importance and political significance of the posts, the latter depending solely on proximity to or distance from the emperor.

Thus a form of system developed during the course of the first century A.D., in which the individual posts took their relative place. At this point the hierarchy was not firmly established, apart from the ranking of a few, mainly very high positions. From the Flavian period onwards, a praetorian prefect was never transferred to another equestrian post, and the *praefectus Aegyptii* could be promoted only to the command of the praetorian guard.⁷⁹ Similar routes of progression between posts developed for the prefecture of the grain supply in Rome or that of Rome's fire brigade, and also for the more important posts around the emperor, such as the *ab epistulis*, a *libellis* or a *rationibus*, or between the two prefectures of the Italian fleets, with the command of the fleet of Misenum always ranked above that of the fleet at Ravenna.⁸⁰

In the course of time, the various posts which were taken on by equestrians found their own position within the equestrian career structure, based largely on the duties of each post. The relative ranking of posts was, however, always changing as new posts were created and inserted into the existing structure. Many posts also lasted only for a short period, such as the assignation of estates or the carrying out of a census in the provinces. They were included in an individual's career, but did not become a permanent feature of the equestrian career structure.⁸¹ Of course, the place in this career structure of, for example, the praesidial procurator of Dacia

⁷⁸ Cf., e.g., Magioncalda (1989) 34 ff. ⁷⁹ Brunt (1975) 141 ff.=*Imperial Themes* 245 ff.

⁸⁰ Eck and Lieb (1993).

⁸¹ See, e.g., a *procurator ad silices* (CIL VI 1598=ILS 1740), a *procurator regionum urbis* (CIL XIV 2922=ILS 1420), a *procurator ad agros dividendos* (AE 1975 no. 251; cf. Pliny, *Ep.* VII.31.4). Cf. Pflaum, *Carrières* III, e.g. 1048, 1051, 1052, 1055 on *procuratores ad census accipiendos*; Burton (1977); Dardaine and Pavis d'Escurac (1983).

Inferior or the fiscal procurator in the new province of Arabia, was not arbitrary but corresponded to their importance, in terms of the number of troops stationed in the provinces, analogous to the ranking of senatorial governorships. Contemporaries, particularly those involved in the equestrian areas of the administration, could discern the relative ranking of such posts not as a result of any legal definition of their precedence, but through observation, which in turn provided a certain level of expectation for those seeking further advancement and new responsibilities.

Thus, in the course of the first and early second centuries A.D., there developed an equestrian career, though not as formally regularized as the senatorial *cursus*.⁸² This allowed the emperor a greater freedom in shaping the careers of equestrian officials, for there were no norms fixed by legislation, such as the interval between the individual senatorial magistracies which were set by the *leges annales* as reformed under Augustus. There was also never any limitation on how long an individual could stay in a post comparable to the principle of annual tenure of magistracies, and so the emperors were less restricted in their appointments. On the other hand, the expectations of men in equestrian positions meant that the promotion possibilities could not be blocked by colleagues in higher positions remaining in office for arbitrarily long periods. As a result, the equestrian career structure had an average period of tenure of office, though this was never fixed precisely. The prefects of Egypt generally held office for between two and four years, though periods ranging from less than one year to five or even seven years are also known.⁸³ We may presume that the situation was similar for many other comparable positions, with the exception of the praetorian prefecture. In the case of the latter, where the post-holder's trustworthiness and loyalty to the emperor were of paramount importance, old age and illness were often the only reasons for giving up office. It is, then, not surprising to find that many *praefecti praetorio* were in the post for over ten years. Indeed, Gavius Maximus, a praetorian prefect under Antoninus Pius, held office for twenty years.⁸⁴

It is usually not easy to discern the rationale lying behind the appointment of certain individuals to a series of posts. What is clear is that specialist knowledge and technical abilities, which might have been acquired in earlier offices and which would today form the basis for an administrative career, rarely played any decisive role. As with the holders of senatorial posts, a man's general abilities and experience in a variety of posts were far more important. Had the emperors of the second century considered the training and employment of specialists, whether for particular tasks or for particular provinces, this would not have been difficult to achieve, either by

⁸² On the careers and the effectiveness (or not) of their structures, cf. Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 224 ff.; Brunt (1975) = *Imperial Themes*, 215 ff.; Saller (1980); Saller, *Patronage* 83 ff.; Brunt (1983) 44 ff.; Birley (1992) 11 ff.

⁸³ Brunt (1975) 126 ff., 142 ff. = *Imperial Themes* 218 ff., 245 ff. ⁸⁴ *HLA M. Ant.* 8.7; *PIR*² G 104.

appointing the same man repeatedly, or for long periods, to posts in the same province, or to posts with similar duties. This did not, however, occur, as is clear not only from the known careers of the prefects of Egypt,⁸⁵ but also from the succession of posts held by the *a rationibus* or the *ab epistulis*.⁸⁶ Rather, we commonly find that in the course of a long equestrian career, after starting as an equestrian officer in the legions and auxiliary units, an individual held a mixture of military, legal, fiscal and general administrative duties. An emperor's decision to appoint an individual in a specific instance would probably have been affected by a number of factors. It may have been apparent that the man in question was ready to take on further duties in the service of the state, perhaps even as the result of applying to the emperor for the post, although the recommendation of friends was equally important. The most influential of these will have been those who had been in the vicinity of the emperor for some time, and those who held high office, both equestrian and senatorial. In particular, the praetorian prefects, who were often in office for many years, could undoubtedly be highly influential. We can see this in the case of Gavius Maximus under Antoninus Pius, who had evidently engineered a break in the career of the equestrian procurator Censorius Niger, while in other cases he had arranged promotions.⁸⁷ Letters of recommendation, *epistulae commendaticiae*, were undoubtedly a significant factor.⁸⁸ But, as with appointment to senatorial office, both the candidates and their supporters were aware of those *de facto* prerequisites which had developed.⁸⁹ Thus it is unlikely that an equestrian would ever have been recommended for the procuratorship of Mauretania Tingitana or of the province of Sardinia if he had not previously acquired a certain amount of experience with the army, for the governorship of a praesidial procurator always involved the command of auxiliary units. General experience and proven ability were required and taken into consideration by those who advised the emperor on appointments to high office. It is not surprising, then, that in the letter of appointment from Marcus Aurelius to the future controller of the imperial estates in Gallia Narbonensis, the virtues of a good character (*innocentia*), conscientiousness (*diligentia*) and experience (*experientia*) are emphasized as those which would lead to further advancement.⁹⁰ On the other hand, the emperor also had to bear in mind that deserving equestrians, who had already reached a fairly high level, could not be appointed to lower positions than those whose careers and posts held were widely known. In the upper echelons of the Palatine offices and the prefectures around the emperor there was such a small circle of equestrians in active service that the emperor could easily gain an overview of all of them, and hence the appointments that he made among them could have

⁸⁵ Brunt (1975) 127 ff. = *Imperial Themes* 220 ff. ⁸⁶ Birley (1992) 41 ff.

⁸⁷ See Champlin, *Fronto* 100–1; Eck (1988). ⁸⁸ Cf. on such examples, Cotton (1981a).

⁸⁹ See above, ch. 5, p. 230. ⁹⁰ *AE* 1960 no. 167 = 1962 no. 183 = Pflaum (1971) 349.

been for very individual reasons. Yet such regularity in the patterns of appointment to equestrian posts occurs in these high positions, that here too there was little room for arbitrariness. This also had the effect of suffering over-intense feelings of competition. It is disputed whether the office of the *ab epistulis* played a role as a coordinating authority for personnel matters.⁹¹ It cannot be disputed, however, that the office was involved in the drawing-up and dispatch of letters of appointment, the *epistulae* and the *codicilli*. The appointment itself, however, will always have been the result of the emperor's personal decision, possibly at fixed intervals, when a number of appointments at various levels came up for review.⁹²

The salary was an important factor in the ranking of posts in the equestrian career, and hence also for the perceived value of their individual duties. In contrast to the senatorial magistracies, which were all *honores*, it is probable that all equestrian posts were salaried from the beginning, just as the *liberti* and *servi* of the emperor soon received a fixed salary.⁹³ We know of certain procurators, called *procuratores ducenarii* by Suetonius, receiving a salary of 200,000 sesterces as early as Claudius.⁹⁴ From the later second century onwards, we often encounter in inscriptions the titles *sexagenarius*, *centenarius*, *ducenarius* and *trecenarius* in connection with certain posts.⁹⁵ According to Dio these salary levels had been introduced by Augustus, which is in principle highly likely, or at least possible.⁹⁶ Only the salary of 300,000 sesterces, that of the *procuratores trecenarii*, is generally assumed to have been introduced during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.⁹⁷ We do not know how much the highest equestrian officials, the praetorian prefects, the *praefectus Aegyptii* and the *praefectus annonae* were paid. All these posts went back to Augustus, and by the time of Claudius they must have received a higher salary than the *procuratores ducenarii*. Hence the salary level of a *procurator trecenarius* from the reign of Marcus Aurelius onwards may merely have matched that already long established for the senior prefects.

It is unclear whether, in the early years of the Principate, the amount which individual equestrians were paid depended more on their personal importance to the *princeps*, or whether certain posts, such as the patrimonial procurator in Sicily or Baetica, had a certain level of salary attached to them, as we know from inscriptions was the case from the late second century onwards. Neither is in principle inconceivable, for the amount men were paid continued to vary according to their particular duties and their

⁹¹ Birley (1949) 8 ff.=*Army* 147 ff., esp. 151–2; Cotton (1981b); Saller, *Patronage* 105–6; Eck (1989) 222; Birley (1992). Appendix 2: 'Das Amt des ab epistulis und dessen Inhaber', 41 ff.; Haensch (1992) 269 n. 168. ⁹² This can be deduced from Suet. *Dom.* 4.2, and from the observations of Bastianini (1978) regarding the frequent changeover of the prefects of Egypt in summer.

⁹³ Cf. *CIL* vi 8619; Pflaum, *REL* 47 bis (1970) 308. ⁹⁴ Suet. *Claud.* 24.1.

⁹⁵ The earliest example (from the reign of Marcus Aurelius) is *AE* 1960 no. 167=1962 no. 183=Pflaum (1971) 349. Cf. also *AE* 1928 no. 97=*IEph* III 627; *AE* 1956 no. 124. ⁹⁶ Dio LIII.15.5.

⁹⁷ Cf. Pflaum, *Procuratores* 74; (1974) 63.

rank.⁹⁸ Logically, however, we may presume that even in the pre-Flavian period an individual moving in his career from one post to another with equal or greater responsibilities and prestige would inevitably have received the same, if not a higher salary in his new post. We can only become more certain about how much specific posts were paid in the second half of the second century A.D. at the earliest.⁹⁹ This was when the structures became partially fixed, and when at least some individual posts can be linked with a salary level expressly documented in the evidence rather than merely inferred. From this period onwards it becomes possible to describe certain procurators in accordance with their salary as *centenar*, *ducenar* or *trecenar*, and also thereby to determine their position within the overall structure of equestrian duties.

Around the same time, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius or perhaps a few decades earlier, the titles *vir egregius*, *vir perfectissimus* and *vir eminentissimus* began to be used, analogous to the senatorial title *vir clarissimus*. The first documentary evidence for the title *eminentissimus vir* comes under Marcus Aurelius, perhaps in A.D. 168, and is clearly used as a title of the two praetorian prefects, though it is possible that the title had already been used by Hadrian to describe one of his *praefecti praetorio*.¹⁰⁰ At approximately the same time, procurators in Africa were being described as *egregii viri*, while we first meet a *perfectissimus vir* at the start of the third century, in the shape of a prefect of Rome's corn supply.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, we may presume that all the titles were officially in use as early as the reign of Marcus Aurelius.¹⁰² Until the start of the third century the title *eminentissimus vir* was reserved for the praetorian prefects, and *perfectissimus vir* seems to have been used of the holders of the other high prefectures in Rome, the prefecture of Egypt and the top Palatine posts. All other procurators were described as *vir egregius*, the lowest title, regardless of their salary, which could be between 60,000 and 200,000 sesterces. The title was, therefore, only given to those who had taken on equestrian duties after service as an officer in the army, and not to all those who belonged to the *ordo equester*, and hence not to all those who served as judges in the city of Rome. The title served to distinguish men who had fulfilled important duties in the service of the emperor, and was not merely a description of their social rank, unlike the analogous title for the senatorial order, which was extended even to women and children from senatorial families who were described as *clarissima*

⁹⁸ Cf., e.g., *AE* 1928 no. 97=*IEph* III 627, where the emphasis on the establishment of the salary by Commodus suggests such a conclusion.

⁹⁹ On the definition of the levels of the posts and their salaries, cf. above all Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 210 ff.; *Carrières* I–III, *passim*. Note also the critique of Millar (1963).

¹⁰⁰ *CIL* IX 2438=*FIRA* I² no. 61. Cf. also, perhaps, *CIL* XIII 12057=*ILS* 9000. For the Hadrianic period, cf. the Fragmentum Dositheanum (*Corp. Gloss. Latin.* III 388).

¹⁰¹ Hirschfeld (1913); Millar, *Emperor* 289–90; Pflaum, *Carrières* II 624 n. 10.

¹⁰² Cf. *Cod. Iust.* 9.4.11.

femina, clarissimus puer or *clarissima puella*. This was not the case for equestrian procurators, who could not, logically, pass on to their successors a title that was linked with a concrete official position. This hierarchy of titles demonstrates the great differences which were perceived in the prestige and power of the offices open to men from the equestrian order. In theory, the same differences existed between senatorial offices, though the principle of aristocratic equality surviving from the Republic was too firmly entrenched, and as a result, they were officially less dependent on the emperor. Hence the title *vir clarissimus* was uniformly used of all senators, regardless of whatever office they had reached within the senatorial career. The designation *vir clarissimus* was not dependent on any particular office, but on belonging to the *ordo senatorius*.

A major portion of the life of many equestrians was devoted to working in the emperor's service. This did not, however, mean that all procurators proceeded from one post to another without interruption. Many did not hold office continuously, but often went through periods when they held no office, as was also the case in the careers of most senators. But, while senators were also obliged, both *de iure* and *de facto*, to participate in meetings of the Senate, equestrian procurators between appointments were not bound to the city of Rome and could return to their home towns. Some equestrians only held a few posts in the emperor's service, and others, notably the scholars of literature or rhetoric, sometimes only ever held one such post.¹⁰³ Some financial procurators, for example those in the province of Baetica, also seem not to have held any other office.¹⁰⁴

It is clear, then, that the procuratorial offices did not form a typical civil service, whose members concerned themselves exclusively with state duties throughout their working lives, in contrast to the senatorial magistracies. Rather, the ideal of an educated aristocrat, capable of undertaking all public duties, remained fundamental to the equestrian administration, although some procurators rose from the ranks of time-served centurions.¹⁰⁵ The real civil service, which started to develop under Augustus, was composed of the emperor's slaves and freedmen.¹⁰⁶ This body was self-perpetuating, for the children of *servi* or *servae Caesaris* largely kept their parents' servile status, even when the latter were subsequently freed and took up their duties as *liberti Augusti*. We cannot be certain whether free-born people or freedmen of private individuals could become imperial slaves and freedmen, at least in any substantial numbers.¹⁰⁷ The number of

¹⁰³ Cf. Millar, *Emperor* 83 ff. But note that the known examples all come from literary sources, which each mention only one post: a longer career cannot always be excluded. See also Lewis (1981).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Eck (1994). ¹⁰⁵ Syme, *Tacitus* 54. Dobson (1978) 92 ff.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. most recently Brunt (1983) 51.

¹⁰⁷ See Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 137 ff; *POxy* 3312 may mention a free-born Egyptian, who went to Rome as *libertus Caesaris* to take up *officia*.

slaves and freedmen employed in the administration cannot be estimated precisely. In total, in Rome, Italy and the provinces, there may have been many thousands. They all served in the imperial administration without interruption until they were forced to retire either by old age or by death.¹⁰⁸ Since they often served for several decades in the same branch of the administration, they acquired tangible specialist knowledge, on which their equestrian superiors were dependent.¹⁰⁹ This was, of course, also the situation in the army, where all governors, and also the procurators below the governor, relied on the military expertise of subordinates. When Sex. Iulius Frontinus was appointed *curator aquarum* by Nerva in A.D. 97, he produced his book *De Aquis Urbis Romae* for his own information, in order not to have to rely on the knowledge of his subordinates.¹¹⁰ Few other officials, at whatever level, will have felt the same zeal, sense of duty and ambition.

We know from our sources that individual *servi* and *liberti* often took on a succession of different duties, no doubt primarily as a result of the large number and the varying significance of the duties of imperial slaves and freedmen. But inscriptions rarely mention more than one post for an individual, which makes it difficult to see whether this developed into a career structure for the various areas of the administration in the sense of a more or less regularized succession of posts.¹¹¹ The psychological processes at work within a large group of men, and particularly the requirements of increasing responsibility and the knowledge necessary for this would, however, ultimately necessitate that, as we have seen was the case for the equestrian procurators, appointments were made at least partly on the basis of previous experience and not on a purely arbitrary basis. There is, however, insufficient evidence to discern whether the known careers of slaves and freedmen in general, but in particular of the freedmen procurators, in any way reflect a permanent career structure or are merely individual, unrelated instances.¹¹²

Senators and equestrians could translate their official position into social prestige and pass this on to their successors, but this was by and large not possible for the imperial freedmen. On the other hand, as under the Julio-Claudian emperors, they continued to be able to exercise power and amass fortunes. A good example is provided by an imperial *libertus* from the reign of Hadrian, who, despite claiming to have only moderate means, was still able to leave in his will 200,000 sesterces to his home town Nacolea in the province of Asia.¹¹³ But testamentary rules only allowed the *Augusti liberti*

¹⁰⁸ Chantraine (1973).

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Christol and Démougin (1990) 207–8, for examples of long service. ¹¹⁰ Frontin. *Aq.* 2.

¹¹¹ The relevant texts are collected by Boulvert (1974) 121–6.

¹¹² For the issues, cf. Weaver, *Familia Caesaris* 267 ff.; Boulvert (1974) 119 ff.; Boulvert (1981); Burton (1977) 163–4; Christol and Démougin (1990).

¹¹³ *CIL* III 6998 = *ILS* 7196.

to leave at most part of their accumulated wealth to their legitimate children, whose social status was different from that of their father. The children of imperial *liberti* who were born after the emancipation of their father could not, as *ingenui*, follow their father into the offices he held, for these were open only to someone with freedman status. And if they were born before their father received his freedom, they remained imperial slaves, who had no legal connection with their father and did not, therefore, have any legal right to a share in whatever property he may have acquired. Power and prestige could not, then, be passed on from one generation to another within this section of the imperial household, and hence no 'freedman dynasties' could develop. Thus the emperor's power over the deployment of his slaves and freedmen remained unbroken, and they contributed in a substantial manner, and as an element of continuity, to the whole imperial administration.

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

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In the summer of A.D. 110, following a decree of the Senate, Trajan sent the senator C. Plinius Secundus, who had already been consul some ten years earlier, on a special commission to the province of Pontus-Bithynia in Asia Minor.¹ In his first letter to Pliny after he had arrived in the province, Trajan describes the task of his appointee and says that it should be made clear to the provincials that Pliny had been sent to them as his representative.²

The idea lying behind this, that the emperor was the ideal representative of Rome in the provinces, and in practice the necessary representative with ultimate responsibility, was not new. The basis for the special mission in the East entrusted to the prince Germanicus under Tiberius was that the situation in the overseas provinces demanded the presence of the *princeps* or one of his two sons.³ However, it was not just at Rome that the emperor was seen, in terms of power politics and law, as the centre of all political and administrative business, but also among the inhabitants of the provinces. It is not chance that Dio Chrysostom, a leading member of the provincial aristocracy in Bithynia, used so many vivid images in describing Trajan. The emperor is compared to the sun, working constantly on behalf of mankind. He is also a shepherd who cares for the welfare of his flock, or a bull who rules over and cares for his offspring in a friendly way. A few decades later, under Antoninus Pius, Aelius Aristides characterized the ruler in Rome as the *prytanis* of the whole empire, on whom everyone, including his legates, was dependent. If the emperor's legates had the slightest doubt about what decision to make in legal cases or petitions brought by his subjects, they wrote straight to the emperor to see what they should do. They waited for his instructions as a chorus waits for those of its conductor. One result of this was that the emperor had no need to embark on long journeys around the empire, and could rule the whole empire from Rome through correspondence with his subordinates.⁴

¹ *CIL* 5262=*ILS* 2927.

² Pliny, *Ep.* x.18.2: *ut manifestum sit illis electum te esse, qui ad eosdem mei loco mittereris.*

³ Eck (1993a) 195: *ad rerum transmarinarum statum componendum missus esset desiderantium praesentiam aut ipsius T. Caesaris Augusti aut filiorum alterius utrius.*

⁴ Dio Chrys. *Or.* III.72 ff.; IV.44; II.66 ff.; Ael. Arist. *Or.* xxvi.31–2.

Both writers present an idealized picture, or at least not the full reality. Aelius Aristides' depiction of Antoninus Pius as a 'sedentary' emperor is entirely accurate, but he was preceded by the 'travelling emperor' Hadrian, who visited almost all the provinces of the empire and made his presence felt among the provincial populations. Domitian, Trajan and later Marcus Aurelius ruled the empire for lengthy periods from various military camps while on campaign. The essential elements of the reality are, however, present in these descriptions provided by Dio Chrysostom and Aelius Aristides: the emperor is the focal point of the whole empire, both for his subjects in the provinces and for the officials whom he chose to send there. Hence it mattered little where precisely the emperor happened to be. Wherever he was became the centre of the empire and all those who needed him to make a decision had to make their way there, or write to him there. Thus rescripts of Hadrian were sent out from cities such as Dyrrhachium, Juliopolis, Laodicea on the Lykos, Athens, Tibur, Rome and Ephesus.⁵ At the end of the second or the start of the third century A.D., a representative from the city of Ephesus in Asia Minor travelled on a number of missions across virtually the whole empire to reach the emperor. Besides Rome, he also visited Britain, Upper Germany, Sirmium, Nicomedia, Antioch and Mesopotamia.⁶ Sirmium, on the middle stretches of the Danube, was not only the location for the hearing before Marcus Aurelius of the case which the Athenians had brought against Herodes Atticus, but was also the destination for an embassy from the provincial assembly of Hispania Tarraconensis, which evidently extracted a favourable judgement from Marcus Aurelius on something to do with the census.⁷

The means available to the provinces for communication with the emperor varied according to the post, social standing and prestige of those who were communicating with him. Governors and other provincial officials corresponded with him by letter, although it is not entirely clear how intensive this exchange of letters was. Aelius Aristides' statement that governors turned to the emperor on even the smallest matters should warn us against seeing the surviving correspondence between Trajan and Pliny from the years 110 to 112 (?) as something of an exception. In just under two years, Pliny sent to Trajan sixty-one letters which survive, and Trajan replied on forty-eight occasions. This does not include any letters which Trajan might have sent to the province of his own accord. If all state officials in the provinces maintained a similar level of correspondence with the emperor, then there must have been a flood of letters arriving wherever the emperor happened to be.⁸ In the reign of Antoninus Pius,

⁵ See Oliver (1989) 147 ff. nos. 56, 58 B, 68, 74, 74–9, 81, 86; Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest* 4.

⁶ *AE* 1971 no. 455 = *IEph* III 802.

⁷ Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 180–1; *AE* 1971 no. 190 = Alföldy (1975) 182–3, no. 332.

⁸ Cf. Eck (1992d).

forty-four governors, of both senatorial and equestrian rank, were in office. In addition there were around thirty-two procurators, who were responsible in various ways for financial matters in one or more provinces. Other subordinate senatorial or equestrian officials, such as *uiridici*, *praefecti orae* or procurators of imperial estates or mining areas could also correspond directly with the emperor. The emperors themselves for their part also sent letters about fairly banal matters to their officials in the provinces. Thus, in a case involving citizenship, Trajan wrote to the prefect of Egypt on behalf of the younger Pliny who had acted as an intermediary in the matter. Similarly, Marcus Aurelius asked the governor of Mauretania Tingitana for the ages of the wife and children of an applicant for Roman citizenship, since this information was required before the desired privilege could be granted.⁹ It is clear that the administrative correspondence between the emperor and the officials in the provinces must have been massive.

Others without any official position generally had to turn directly to the emperor, either in person or through the mediation of a third party, to deliver a petition (*libellus*). This was the procedure not only for individuals, but also for *collegia*, communities or the assemblies (*concilium – koinon*) in individual provinces. Governors themselves would presumably have passed on to the emperor decrees or petitions from provincial bodies only in exceptional circumstances.¹⁰ There were no general rules governing the way in which communication between emperor and communities of his subjects should be carried out. The result of this was an extraordinarily large amount of travelling to wherever the emperor happened to be staying. Besides matters of diplomatic routine, such as sending good wishes on the emperor's birthday, communities in the provinces, like those in Italy, brought before the emperor their queries and problems, together with requests for decisions, for *beneficia* and for financial support. The petitions were delivered by embassies from the cities, either members of the municipal élite or well-known rhetors and sophists, whose prestige or oratorical skills would support the written request. Thus, at the request of the province of Asia, the rhetor Scopelianus was able to dissuade Domitian from carrying out his decision to have half of all vineyards in the provinces destroyed.¹¹ Many cities sought to emphasize their request by sending a large number of ambassadors, and this could help compensate for a city's lesser prestige. The financial burden on the communities for these embassies could be great, if the *legati* did not agree to bear their own travel costs.

⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* x.7; *AE* 1971 no. 534=*ILM* II 94. Cf. Christol (1988).

¹⁰ See, e.g., the documents in Oliver (1989) nos. 138, 146–53 (via governors); nos. 135 A, 139 (via procurators). According to Dio (LII.30.9) Maecenas recommended to Augustus that it would be better for governors to forward petitions from cities to him, rather than the communities sending embassies to him. Cf. Millar, *Emperor* 217, 380. ¹¹ Philostr. *VS* I.21.6.

As a result Vespasian felt compelled to limit the maximum number of ambassadors to three, and thereby to keep the costs in check.¹² Our sources are not sufficiently unambiguous to allow us to discern whether all embassies were received directly by the emperor, or whether the holder of the post *a libellis* was empowered to act with some degree of independence in such matters. That other officials, just like the Senate, could be the target of provincial embassies, is shown by the case of an embassy from Sparta under Antoninus Pius which directed itself to the praetorian prefect, Gavius Maximus.¹³

A direct result of this contact between the emperor and the cities were the numerous letters, preserved today in epigraphic form, which the embassies took back to their home communities. Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius in particular seem to have used this method of making their concrete responses and decisions known, from thanks for congratulations on their accession to rulings on questions of taxation, the financing of public buildings or the granting of city rights to communities without those privileges. Sometimes, perhaps even regularly, the emperors informed proconsuls, their legates and also the procurators in the provinces of the content of their decisions, even if at the time they were not yet involved in the matter in question. Evidently the imperial headquarters in Rome sometimes thought that it was important to keep Rome's highest representative in the province informed of the state of affairs independently of the parties involved and even if it was not necessary for him to take any further action in his official capacity.¹⁴ They did not, however, always write direct to these officials, but left it to the petitioners to deliver their letters.¹⁵ The emperors generally appear in these letters as the benefactors of their subjects, not only those who lived in the cities but also those who lived in the *territorium* of the cities. Hence Domitian attempted to protect the provincials in Syria through a ruling addressed to the provincial procurator, Claudius Athenodorus, on the matter of unauthorized demands for transport and accommodation.¹⁶

Only rarely do we have any evidence for a city failing to gain what it had petitioned for, receiving negative replies, being forced to pay fines, or simply being referred back to whatever provincial official had the relevant authority. There can, however, be little doubt that this is merely the result of the bias of our sources. Evidently nobody would in normal circumstances have had any interest in publicizing such unwelcome decisions on

¹² *Dig.* L.7.5.6. On this, cf. Souris (1982). ¹³ *SEG* XI 501.

¹⁴ Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* 113 ff. no. 14; *IGRR* IV 1156a=*FIRA* I² no. 80; *CIL* III 356=*IGRR* IV 571=Laffi (1971) 9 ff.; cf. Haensch (1992) 249–50.

¹⁵ Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* x.7: Trajan is going to give the prefect of Egypt directions on the granting of Alexandrian citizenship to an individual; but the letter to him will be sent via Pliny, who had negotiated the granting of the *privilegium*. ¹⁶ *SEG* XVII 755=*IGLS* V 1998=Oliver (1989) 40.

such permanent materials as stone or bronze. Occasionally negative responses or something less than flattering to a city are preserved on inscriptions, such as the emperor Titus' criticism of the payment practices of the Spanish town of Munigua.¹⁷ In these instances, we should perhaps presume that the answers were set up by the victorious opposing party. We only know of a negative decision made by Trajan against the city of Smyrna in Asia Minor because in the same decree the emperor had confirmed the privileges granted to the inhabitants of Aphrodisias, who had, therefore, published the emperor's letter in permanent form in their city.¹⁸ It would seem reasonable to assume that in reality the emperor rejected petitions presented to him, or made decisions which were less than welcome to his petitioners, far more frequently than our sources would suggest. The letters of the younger Pliny, which did not go through the same process of selection as the responses which are preserved epigraphically, provide robustly realistic evidence for this view.

It was not just communities, but also countless individuals who took their requests to the emperor, wherever he happened to be. They too were generally forced to hand their written requests to the emperor in person, or perhaps also to the *libellis*. They could, however, engage someone else, who would in any case have to travel to Rome or wherever the emperor was, to perform this task for them. On occasion, as for cities and other communities, provincial officials took on this task, and could make use of official channels to bring matters before the emperor. Pliny did this a few times during his governorship in Pontus-Bithynia, and the praesidial procurators of Mauretania Tingitana under Marcus Aurelius, Coiedius Maximus and Vallius Maximus, made use of their administrative links with the emperor by appending to their own communications the request of a prince of the Berber tribe of the Zegrenses for Roman citizenship, initially for himself, but later also for his wife and children.¹⁹ The intervention of a provincial governor on behalf of a private individual does not, however, seem to have been a normal means of communicating with the emperor. It may be that the governor's decision to offer his assistance in individual cases depended on the social status of the petitioner or on their close relationship. In such cases, the emperor's response went to the intermediary, who in turn passed on the decision to the original petitioner. Normally, however, it would seem that the emperor's decisions, which were written underneath the text of the petition presented to him (hence they were known as *subscriptiones*), were only published wherever the emperor happened to be staying at the time. The interested parties could then make, or perhaps receive, copies of these. This, and no longer constant personal

¹⁷ *AE* 1962 no. 288. Cf. Eck (1993b).

¹⁸ Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* 113 ff. no. 14=Oliver (1989) 140-1 no. 48.

¹⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* x.43-4, 59, 106-7; *AE* 1971 no. 534=*ILM* II 94.

contact between the emperor and his subjects, was the only way in which the great mass of individual cases brought before the emperor could be discharged.

Starting in the reign of Trajan, but particularly from that of Hadrian onwards, we can detect a marked increase in the number of imperial letters responding to petitions preserved on inscriptions, mainly to communities, but also to individuals.²⁰ This is unlikely to be the chance result merely of the transmission of our sources, but rather probably represents a sign that the provincial population were beginning increasingly to consider the emperor, in his role as ruler of the empire, as accessible even to individual subjects. This is precisely the view expressed by Dio Chrysostom and Aelius Aristides, as quoted above.

There must, however, have been many occasions when the emperor was overwhelmed by such requests and petitions. Some matters could only be decided on the ground, having heard what all parties had to say, above all those involving complicated local circumstances, or cases with several parties involved, not all of whom may have been able to present themselves before the emperor. It is, therefore, no surprise that petitioners were increasingly often referred back to their own provinces. This probably occurred more frequently than is recorded in the surviving sources, which almost exclusively preserve those decisions reached by the emperor which were favourable to the petitioner. Only in rare instances are we told of cases being referred back to the provincial governor. Thus Vespasian wrote to the Baetican town of Sabora to inform them that they should turn to the proconsul of the province in a dispute over new city taxes, saying that he was unable to reach any decision on the matter in Rome, without better knowledge of the circumstances and of the necessities of the situation.²¹ Similarly, not all provincial officials received a decision on matters which they put to the emperor, again because the circumstances of the case could more easily be ascertained on the ground. Trajan repeatedly reminded his especially commissioned governor, Pliny, that he had been sent to Pontus-Bithynia to restore order in the cities precisely because it was in the province that he would be able to take best account of the specifics of each individual case.²² It seems probable that many rulings on boundary disputes in the provinces, which were settled by the provincial governor or by other judges appointed by him on the authority of the emperor, were in the first instance put to the emperor for decision, but were then referred back to the appropriate imperial official in the province.²³ The reason for such referrals will no doubt have been the complexity of the affair, which could only be clarified by someone who was in a position to understand the local circumstances.

²⁰ See Gualandi (1963) 17 ff.; Marotta (1988). ²¹ *CIL* II 1423=*ILS* 6092=*FIRA* I² no. 74.

²² Pliny, *Ep.* x.40, 76, 84, 109. ²³ Eck (1990c).

The emperor and his advisers in Rome apparently showed no great readiness to formulate general regulations which would have applied throughout the empire. In general they were content to make decisions in individual cases, which could, of course, then be called upon by resourceful petitioners in support of their own cases. In this way such judgements could become applicable to the whole empire. Notwithstanding this, a basic set of legal rules was developed during the course of the first century A.D., which were no doubt handed down to governors and other officials in the imperial provinces as *mandata*. Probably during the early Principate, and not just from the Hadrianic period, these became applicable also to the provinces of the Roman people which were governed by proconsuls.²⁴ This body of generally valid rules was constantly expanded as new circumstances dictated, or the frequency of enquiries made it seem necessary to clarify matters with a general ruling. This was why Trajan expanded the *mandata* with the regulation that all soldiers should have complete freedom when drawing up their wills, after Titus, Domitian and Nerva had made similar pronouncements but without having created any rule that was valid throughout all the provinces.²⁵

Although the emperor with all the officials working around him was the focal point of an empire-wide administration, and could make many decisions and regulations from Rome, for the provincials he remained the distant ruler, whose interest it seemed could generally only be aroused on relatively rare occasions. The *de facto* centre of the political and administrative life in the provinces was to a very great extent the governor, and sometimes the imperial procurator. The basic system of provincial administration had been established by Augustus, and was only slightly modified by his successors. The emperors after Vespasian also made no changes to the Augustan system. Besides the provinces which were under the direct control of the emperor and governed by senatorial legates or equestrian praesidial procurators, there remained the provinces of the Roman people. There were ten of these, governed by senatorial proconsuls of either praetorian or consular rank, and this number never changed, even if sometimes a province was exchanged with an imperial province.²⁶

The transformation of provinces, which had initially been governed by equestrians, but which were then regularly under the control of senatorial imperial legates, represents the most notable change in provincial administration, though this was not a fundamental change. At the end of the reign of Nero, there were twelve such equestrian governorships, although by the time of Marcus Aurelius this figure had gradually been halved. As far as we can tell there were hardly ever any administrative reasons for these changes, understood in the restricted sense of changes in the way specific state

²⁴ Burton (1976); Millar, *Emperor* 643.

²⁵ Ulpian, *Dig.* xxix.1.1 praef.

²⁶ Cf. ch. 5, p. 225.

duties needed to be carried out, but they were mainly the result of the continuation of the traditional belief that the legions, that is units of Roman citizens, should only be under the command of senatorial magistrates. This certainly lay behind the change from equestrian to senatorial status in the provinces of Raetia and Noricum in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.²⁷ It is unlikely that the inhabitants of a province would notice any great difference in the precise way in which their province was governed. The man in the street would be unlikely to have any interest in this, for it would scarcely affect him whether the praesidial procurator of the province was responsible for the normal administration of the province as well as for tax collection, or whether there was an equestrian financial procurator with special responsibility for the fiscal administration of the province alongside an imperial legate as the governor. It is conceivable that splitting the two areas might allow the two officials to concentrate better on their particular duties, although there is no suggestion of this in our sources.

The general duties of a governor of whatever type changed little. When Ulpian says, at the start of the third century A.D., that a good governor should concern himself with ensuring that his province remained calm and peaceful, he is merely repeating what was always the principal duty of a governor.²⁸ This duty found concrete expression in a governor's jurisdiction, which covered both criminal and civil trials. A governor fulfilled his duties mainly by undertaking an annual journey around his province. This seems to have been required of all provincial governors, even if there is direct evidence for it in only relatively few cases. But a recently discovered inscription from Perge shows that this *conventus* system was in operation in Lycia-Pamphylia.²⁹ On the other hand, it is conceivable that the system was not fully developed or implemented in smaller provinces, where it is possible that there were only a few fixed places where courts could be held.

Criminal cases could, where they were brought before the governor, be dealt with in accordance with Roman law, which obviously meant that the personal status of those affected was important, as we can see from the trial of the apostle Paul in Judaea. In civil cases, however, and particularly those involving non-contentious litigation, the local officials of the cities or other communities could still play an important role.³⁰ In such cases it depended on those bringing a suit to which court they applied. If the extremely fragmentary evidence from outside Egypt can be assumed to give us an even partly reliable picture, it would seem that the legal principles which were applied in the court of the Roman governor were mainly Roman.³¹ We cannot tell from the few surviving documents whether this was the result

²⁷ See above, chs. 5 and 6. ²⁸ Ulpian, *Dig.* I.18.13 pref. ²⁹ *SEG* xxxiv 106.

³⁰ Cf., e.g., the regulations in the *Lex Irnitana*, cap. LXXXIV ff.; see González (1986) 175 ff.=*AE* 1986 no. 333; Rodger (1991); Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 47 ff. no. 12.

³¹ On this question, cf. e.g., Wolff (1980), and most recently, Cotton (1993b).

of pressure applied by the Roman authorities, or whether the common experience of the provincial population led them to think that this route was more likely to lead to the success of their suits, and that they consequently adapted their lawsuits appropriately.

The documents from the so-called Babatha archive from the province of Arabia, which date from the first decades of the second century A.D., together with other papyri from the same region, seem to indicate, however, that the process of 'self-romanization', at least for documents to be used in court, was a very speedy one. The Babatha documents show that within two decades of the annexation of the province, not only formal Roman characteristics, such as giving the date by reference to the consuls, had been adopted, but the procedures of Roman law were also in general use, procedures which could only have been of value when disputes were brought before the imperial legate.³² Possibly it was thought that the Roman governor was less partisan than the local authorities. The documents just mentioned are of very great interest because all those involved in the cases were Jews, whom it was previously widely thought were granted, on religious grounds, special rights and responsibilities for passing judgement within their own communities. These documents, which are written in Greek, do not, however, display any notably Jewish characteristics. We should presume from this that, apart from the autonomy of religious communities, the special standing in matters of private law did not yet exist, at least to the extent that is known later to have been the case.³³ Rather, for the legal resolution of disputes, Jewish inhabitants of the recently annexed province of Arabia turned to the Roman governor, whom litigants could find in Petra or in other towns of the new province.³⁴

The governor, who travelled through his province and who was, as a result, more accessible to the provincials than if he only heard cases in one place, remained the characteristic feature of Roman provincial administration throughout the whole period.³⁵ But this also shows the limitations inherent in the system. For this system of visiting the different areas of a province applied to all provinces, regardless of their size or how many cities they contained. The differences are particularly stark in some of the proconsular provinces such as Asia with around three hundred communities and, in contrast, Cyprus which had only twelve cities.³⁶ Despite the very different geographical size and the imbalance in the range of matters to be dealt with, purely as a result of the number of possible petitioners, the proconsul in each province had at his disposal essentially the same administrative staff. Almost everything depended on the will and capacity

³² Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 65 ff. no. 16; Cotton (1993a) 115 ff., (1994b), (1994a). ³³ Cotton (1993b) 97 ff.

³⁴ Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* nos. 23, 25, 26.

³⁵ Burton (1975); Foti Talamanca (1974). ³⁶ Cf. Habicht (1975) 67; Jones, *Cities* 372.

of the governor. The three legates given to the proconsul of Asia to support him in his task made very little difference in what the administration could manage in this large province in comparison to the proconsul of Cyprus, who only had one legate. In the provinces governed by imperial legates, too, there were significant differences in the number of communities, the size of the population and hence in the possible load on the governor. We may compare the provinces of Hispania Tarraconensis and Lusitania, which were both governed by imperial legates, or the two procuratorial provinces of Noricum and Epirus. The size of the provinces varied enormously, as did the number of cities within them. It is clear that active involvement in the control of buildings in the cities, which Ulpian tells us was one of the routine duties of a provincial governor, simply did not happen regularly in the cases of hundreds of communities, and any intervention which the governor might make was often reactive rather than proactive.³⁷

Such administrative business was not, however, the main role of provincial government in this period. As is suggested by the largely similar staffing of provinces, it was more important that the governors provide a clear representation of the power and dominance of Rome, carry out their cult duties towards the provincials and the army units stationed in the province, and that they were accessible when needed by the inhabitants of the province.³⁸ The everyday point of reference for provincials was and remained their own home community, within which and through whose officials and resources the public needs could normally be satisfied. Only when individuals or whole groups in the city thought that something here was not satisfactory would the governor be brought in to investigate. Thus a governor generally reacted to the wishes, concerns and disputes of the provincials, when they found themselves unable within their own communities to reach or to implement decisions using their own powers. In this reactive role the governors were very similar to the emperor. When famine threatened Antioch in Pisidia in A.D. 92/3, the governor of Cappadocia–Galatia was brought in, and ruled in an edict that under penalty of punishment the existing grain supplies had to be made available to all.³⁹ Such powerful intervention, which severely limited landholders' freedom to sell grain as they saw fit, was no doubt beyond the competence of the city aediles, the municipal magistrates responsible for such matters. In Ephesus the city officials responsible for the water supply turned to the proconsul twice in the course of seven years because they felt themselves unable to enforce the legislation requiring there to be a free zone either side of aqueducts bringing water into cities.⁴⁰ That a proconsular edict was needed to clarify the same ruling twice in such a short period, in A.D. 113/14 and then again

³⁷ Ulpian, *Dig.* 1.16.7.1.

³⁸ Eck (1992).

³⁹ *AE* 1925 no. 126.

⁴⁰ *IEph* VII 3271 a, b.

in 120/21, shows how ineffective a decision made by the highest Roman official in the province could be, even when a large fine was laid down for those transgressing the ruling. Similarly, a few decades later, another proconsul, again in Ephesus, had to issue a harsh decree about keeping the harbour basin clear; he had first directed the town clerk, the most important civic magistrate, to take the necessary measures, but the clerk had had no success in the face of opposition from craftsmen and shipowners.⁴¹ Individual governors repeatedly had to take action if promises made to the community in connection with election to civic office, or on other occasions, were not honoured.⁴² The initial impetus for this action will have come from the communities themselves, although sometimes a governor who had become aware of an abuse might, with unusual energy, deal with it. Thus, in the years between A.D. 160 and 162, the governor of Numidia, D. Fonteius Frontinianus enforced the discharge of official euergetical acts in several cities, including Cuicul and Thamugadi, which had been promised some time previously but which could now only be delivered in part by the heirs of the original benefactors.⁴³ There were also numerous rulings on border disputes between neighbouring communities, between cities and nomadic tribes, or even between private individuals.⁴⁴ In these cases, it went almost without saying that there could be no way of resolving the conflict within the communities, and so the 'neutral' higher authority was brought in, in many cases probably after the emperor had been consulted but had then delegated the actual decision to the regular provincial governor or to a specially commissioned official.⁴⁵

Although our evidence shows an increase in the late first century A.D. and through the second century in the number of cases where a state official was involved in the public affairs of cities, there is little sign of any expansion in the jurisdiction of the normal state authorities, particularly of governors, or at least not such that they resulted in continuous intervention in or monitoring of the affairs of the cities. The proconsul or imperial legate was only involved in city affairs with any degree of regularity on a few central issues. Thus, from the Flavian period onwards and with increasing regularity from the beginning of the second century, it seems that it was necessary to consult the governor before proceeding with large building projects, particularly when they were to be financed using the city's funds. In many cases the governor would then turn to the emperor for advice, as a safeguard against any misuse of public money, such as we meet in the correspondence of the younger Pliny and Trajan.⁴⁶ On the other hand, this

⁴¹ *IEph.* 1 a 23. ⁴² Jacques (1975).

⁴³ *CIL* VIII 20144, 2353 = *ILS* 5476; VIII 4582. Cf. Jacques (1975) n. 42.

⁴⁴ Cf. also Aichinger (1982). ⁴⁵ Cf. n. 23, above.

⁴⁶ See, e.g. Pliny, *Ep.* x.37–8, 39–40 (on the waste of money), 23, 41, 70, 90, 98 (requests made to the emperor). Cf. Macer, *Dig.* 50.10.3 praef.; for Egypt see, e.g., *POxy* 3088, together with the discussion of the latter by Bowman and Rathbone (1992) 123–4.

increased involvement does not find any great expression in the inscriptions recording building activity. The governors were also frequently involved when citizens of individual cities were unhappy about the magistracies allocated to them, or other *munera* either relating to their home town or to the whole province. Aelius Aristides, the philosopher and a citizen of Smyrna, for example, kept several proconsuls occupied in this manner, by repeated requests to be exempted from service, which were only successful following the intervention of Antoninus Pius and other high-ranking personalities, such as the Pergamene senator Cuspius Rufinus and Avidius Heliodorus, the prefect of Egypt at the time. Aelius Aristides met the property requirements for municipal magistracies or the post of *eirenarchos* in the province of Asia, and since he did not practise his profession as a philosopher for public benefit, there was no reason for him to receive special privileges. The generally accepted forms of socio-political influence, however, overrode any rational judgement based on the actual facts. Nevertheless, the proconsuls who were directly confronted with the problems of the province had been refusing Aristides' requests for exemption for some time, but once he had received the privilege from the emperor, their (better) views were of no consequence.⁴⁷ The town council of Smyrna also had to comply with the decision, although it had previously stuck to the letter of the law, maintaining that only an active teacher could receive the privilege of immunity from public service. In the papyrological evidence there are numerous cases of men seeking to avoid taking on liturgies, and if this picture can be extended to other provinces, then provincial governors must have had to deal with a considerable quantity of such cases.

There was never any need to extend the authority of a governor, of whatever type, in order that he could deal with everything that might occur in the administration of a province under normal conditions. There were, however, two factors which might restrict the effectiveness or functioning of the standard governor. Most notable of all was the limited capacity of one man, the governor, whose ability to delegate to others was limited, except for jurisdiction, and who in general had himself to make the decision. Even in Egypt, where there were several high officials working alongside the prefect, from the beginning of the second century the prefect was no longer able to deal with petitions directly but to a large extent had to content himself with a *subscriptio* below the petition which generally advised the petitioner to apply to a specific subordinate official, sometimes also indicating what the eventual decision might be.⁴⁸ There was undoubtedly a large number of such petitions arriving constantly: Subatianus Aquila, prefect of Egypt between 206 and 211, received 1,804 petitions in the space of three days.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Ael. Arist. *Or.* 50 *passim*, esp. 75, 83. ⁴⁸ Haensch (1992) 254 ff.; (1994). ⁴⁹ *PYale* 61.

The second restriction on the governor's ability to fulfil all that was ideally required of him was the granting of special privileges to many cities, especially the 'free cities' (the *civitates liberae*), which were particularly numerous in the eastern half of the empire, but for which there was no uniform legal basis. The treaties which were the basis of their position were all entirely different in form, according to the situation when they were established and their subsequent political stance, as well as the individual decisions of the various emperors. In general, however, the *civitates liberae* did not come within the governor's sphere of influence, although this does not imply that there were no permanent relations between city and governor. We know, for example, that the shrine of the Cabires in the free *polis* of Samothrace was visited regularly by the governor of Macedonia, to whose province the island 'belonged', or by his senatorial companions, quaestors and proconsular legates.⁵⁰

These two factors led to a certain difficulty in the effective management of the problems which arose, particularly when the cities as a whole began to find themselves in financial difficulties, which there was often no adequate internal means to resolve, and as a result they sought external assistance, principally from the emperor. Governors simply did not have the time to keep a check on the complex finances of a large number of cities, and emperors wanted to preserve the local rights of these cities and did not want to subject them to the rule of the governors, even if this became necessary because of such unresolved internal difficulties. In the course of the second century the increasingly common solution was for the emperor (and occasionally the governor himself) to appoint a special commissioner. A so-called *curator rei publicae* (known as a *logistes* in Greek) could be appointed for individual cities. If all the cities of a province, or all the *civitates liberae* of a region, needed to be placed under stricter control for a period of time, an official was appointed, who is generally known today as a *corrector*, although this term does not appear until the time of Diocletian.⁵¹ The most common Latin term for this official was *legatus*, though the Greek term was *epanorthotes*, which corresponds to the later *corrector*.

Although both types of special commissioner were appointed in response to a similar situation, that is the need to deal with a problem which had arisen, or an existing problem which had become more acute, there were a number of differences between them. *Legati-correctores* were generally of senatorial rank and possessed an *imperium* delegated to them by the emperor, which could even be conferred in addition to tenure of a provincial governorship or some other office.⁵² In the province of Achaëa, these officials concentrated on the *civitates liberae*, while in other provinces they

⁵⁰ Fraser (1960) nos. 28, 50, 51, 53; Harris (1992).

⁵¹ Thomasson (1991) 73 ff. has a list of special legates and *correctores*.

⁵² See, e.g., *IÖhmp* 941; *AE* 1920 no. 45; 1969/70 no. 601; *IEph* VII 3037.

took on the full duties of a governor, albeit with special powers, as was the case for the younger Pliny, or his successor C. Iulius Cornutus Tertullus in Pontus-Bithynia.⁵³ These special commissioners never developed into a permanent institution in any province. They were a temporary means of providing assistance by restoring the normal state of affairs either alongside or instead of the regular governor. Their special powers allowed them to enforce the necessary measures, even in the privileged cities. Thus the Roman colony of Apamea in Bithynia pleaded that the proconsuls of the province had never been involved in their financial affairs, but Trajan insisted that his special commissioner, Pliny, should audit their finances, a task which evidently seemed essential.⁵⁴

Such imperial special commissioners are recorded as early as the reign of Vespasian, when they were appointed for a wide-ranging reorganization of the frontiers, perhaps also for a general reorganization of the whole province of Africa, and directly afterwards in the otherwise procuratorial Mauretanian provinces too.⁵⁵ They became more numerous, particularly in the Greek-speaking provinces of the eastern empire from the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian onwards. Where these *legati-correctores* served alongside the regular governors, their brief was to deal with those matters that either required so much time that the normal governor could not address them without neglecting his other duties, or to deal with the free cities as a governor might, but without reducing their status to the level of the other subject communities. In summary, then, they are the expression of an increased need to control city life by using independent officials.

In contrast to the imperial special legates, who were without exception all of senatorial rank, the *curatores rei publicae* were drawn from various social groups. As well as senators, we encounter equestrians and members of the municipal aristocracies of neighbouring cities. The senatorial *curatores* may well be predominant in our sources, but it is likely that the number drawn from among the city élites was much larger. While the *correctores* appear mainly, but not only in the public provinces in the East, the *curatores rei publicae* are found throughout all areas of the empire.⁵⁶ It should, however, also be stressed that they were by no means appointed everywhere in the same period, but, as far as we can tell from our present state of knowledge, were appointed in different provinces in quite different periods, and probably with differing regularity. The earliest certain example probably belongs to the reign of Domitian and seems to relate to Italy, as do the next unequivocal cases, which come from the reign of Trajan.⁵⁷ We know of individual

⁵³ *CIL* v 5262=*ILS* 2927; *CIL* xiv 2925=*ILS* 1024. ⁵⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* x.47–8.

⁵⁵ *CIL* viii 23084, 25967=*ILS* 5955; Vita-Evrard (1979) 77 ff.=*AE* 1979 no. 648–9; *AE* 1941 no. 79.

⁵⁶ Cf. on this, Eck, *Organisation* 190 ff.; Jacques (1983); Jacques, *Privilege*.

⁵⁷ *CIL* iii 6818=*ILS* 1017; Syme (1977). But cf. Jacques (1983) 19 ff. and Eck, *Organisation* 195–6. The supposed first *curator rei publicae* in Smyrna under Nero is too suspect in this respect to play a role in this discussion (cf. Eck (1985b) 231–2).

holders of this office in Gallia Narbonensis, Asia and Syria under Hadrian, while in other provinces, such as Baetica, Lusitania or Africa, the earliest known examples come from the second half of the second century, that is more than a hundred years after the first appointment of a *curator* known to us.⁵⁸ Assuming that our sources draw a partly reliable picture, then initially these imperial special commissioners for individual towns were employed far more frequently in Italy than in the provinces. This is not surprising, for unlike the provinces which had governors, in the heartland of the empire there was no regular official between the central authorities in Rome and the individual cities who could be consulted locally. In the provinces, in contrast, the *curator* served alongside the governor or even, when he took over part of the latter's duties, in his stead. The basic reason for this was probably that in provinces such as Asia, Syria or Narbonensis, where there were significant numbers of cities, it was so frequently necessary to intervene in the finances of the cities that the governor could not carry this out on his own.⁵⁹ Either interested parties within the city or the governor himself would then request the emperor to appoint a special commissioner, or the latter may himself have taken the initiative on account of the seriousness of the news about the problems. An imperial letter shows how serious the financial situation and abuses of the city finances could become even in a city like Ephesus, where the proconsul was based for part of the year, generally with one of his legates and the provincial quaestor. The inscription which contains the text of this letter does not contain the name of the emperor, but it is probable that it was written by Hadrian, at the earliest, or Antoninus Pius. The text orders an examination of the accounts of all city magistrates who had anything to do with financial matters over the previous twenty years; even men who had subsequently died were not to be exempted, unless they had died more than ten years previously. In order to prevent any delay in the reorganization of the finances, which covered temple lands too, the emperor forbade any appeal against the decisions made by the *curator*.⁶⁰ Once the latter's investigations were completed, he was to report to the emperor. Evidently not everyone in Ephesus approved of the way the *logistes* carried out his duties, for the imperial ordinance is contained in the text of a letter which had been brought back by an official embassy from Ephesus to the emperor. Presumably his opponents had hoped to have the *curator*'s rules of operation tempered, but, as we have seen, the emperor merely confirmed the original commission.

All the evidence from the second and early third centuries, whether epigraphic or preserved in the writings of the jurists, clearly shows the nature

⁵⁸ *CIL* x 6006=*ILS* 1066; *OGIS* 492; Gregori (1995); *CIL* VIII 7059=*ILS* 1067; Jacques, *Privilege* 251 ff. ⁵⁹ Cf. Burton (1979). ⁶⁰ *AE* 1932 no. 50=*IEph* 1a 15 and 16.

of the duties of the *curatores rei publicae*. Their involvement did not extend to all areas of a city, and they did not take the place of any municipal magistrates. Rather, in this period their role was to audit the financial side of public city life and the conduct of the city magistrates, in so far as they were involved in financial matters. They investigated benefactions, the assets of temples in the city and the city's estates, as well as the repair of buildings or new building projects, for which their permission was necessary. In other words, they were entrusted with precisely those areas which, under normal circumstances, were supposed to fall under the general supervision of the governor but which were usually left to the municipal magistrates. The difference was that the *curator* was specially appointed to carry out these duties and could, therefore, devote more time and attention to any issues which arose. In addition, he also had a special mandate from the emperor, which was given to him in the form of a letter. This mandate was valid only for a designated period of time, as we can see from, for example, the emperor's letter to Ephesus. It does not seem to have been the case that when a *curator* had completed his commission, a new *curator* followed him into the same city, either immediately or soon thereafter. The appointment of *curatores* occurred at irregular intervals and only where there was a particular need for one. We know of more such commissioners in Italy than in the provinces, and they are encountered more frequently in Italy from the reign of Marcus Aurelius onwards; but even there they did not, yet, develop into a general, continuous post in the cities.⁶¹ In the provinces, their appointment seems not to have become common until the end of the second century A.D., not even in Asia, where they are comparatively well attested. In many provinces they only ever appear in the second century on isolated occasions. For the time being they remained a temporary response to a particular need.⁶²

This is not insignificant if we are to understand the importance of the role of these new imperial representatives in provincial administration as a whole. They appear to have been a means by which the central government could find short-term solutions to the financial difficulties of individual cities without any significant alteration to the normal system of provincial government, which was based on the idea that the governor had an all-encompassing competence. The *curatores* were not intended to provide a close-knit and permanent web of direct state control over a province, or to replace the decentralized administration machinery of the governor. The general character of normal provincial administration did not change. It was represented by the governor, who generally always had his staff around him, but did not have permanently occupied administrative offices in

⁶¹ Eck, *Organisation* 195 ff.; Camodeca (1980); Jacques, *Privilege* 199 ff.

⁶² Burton (1979) 482; Jacques, *Privilege* 222 ff., 249 ff.

various locations within the province. To have representatives of the governor based in the cities would have required a considerable expansion of his staff, which never took place. From around the middle of the second century A.D., particularly in border provinces, there is increasing evidence for governors stationing special soldiers, the so-called *beneficarii consulares*, outside towns, at major road junctions and on the frontiers of the empire. These should not, however, be seen as administrative outposts: their purpose was to fulfil the governor's duty to provide for the public safety in his province.⁶³ On the other hand it would seem that the local population often saw the soldiers as representing the personal insecurity, government control and the often unjustified demands for financial contributions, which are attested in the eastern half of the empire by the Talmudic sources in particular, but also from numerous inscriptions from the third century.⁶⁴ The imperial legate or the proconsul remained the representative of Rome in the province, though for the larger part of the population he remained, principally on account of the distance between governor and local communities, a very distant and hence not always particularly concrete source of power.⁶⁵

Taxation was the only area in which virtually every provincial, whether a Roman citizen or not, was continuously affected by the Roman government. Unless a citizen of one of the relatively few communities exempt from regular taxation, every provincial was, in one form or another and at varying rates, subject to the *tributum capitis* and the *tributum soli*. These were the two most important taxes, collected every year. In addition, there were a number of other types of taxation which were imposed on an irregular basis, as 'required' or when the taxable situation arose.⁶⁶ These included the 4 per cent tax on the sale of slaves, the 5 per cent tax on the emancipation of slaves (the *vicesima libertatis*) and, most important of all, the 5 per cent tax on inheritances (the *vicesima hereditatum*), which was, however, only paid by Roman citizens. The evidence from Egypt suggests that there were also other, smaller taxes, imposed only when 'required', or perhaps also on a regular basis; these taxes may have varied between the different provinces.⁶⁷ Thus, following the discovery of the numerous imperial letters at Aphrodisias, we know that a 'nail-tax' was imposed in Asia Minor, from which the inhabitants of Aphrodisias were exempt on the basis of their general immunity from taxes. This immunity was confirmed by Hadrian after its infringement by tax-farmers.⁶⁸ If it was not a matter of a customs

⁶³ Schallmayer (1990). ⁶⁴ Isaac (1989); Herrmann (1990).

⁶⁵ On this cf. above all the study of Millar (1981).

⁶⁶ In general, scholars speak of direct and indirect taxes, for which there is no foundation in fact. For the so-called 'indirect' taxes, such as the taxes on inheritance or emancipation, were not paid indirectly to the tax collector but very directly by those eligible to pay. The real difference between particular forms of taxation was that between annual regularity of collection and irregularity of liability.

⁶⁷ Wallace (1938) 277 ff. ⁶⁸ Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* 115 ff. no. 15.

duty, but a tax on specified products or for a particular purpose,⁶⁹ then a supplementary tax was regularly imposed, although this is not known from any other document. There is evidence for something similar more than two decades after the Nabataean kingdom was incorporated into the province of Arabia. In what was probably the first census since the establishment of the province, the tax declaration of Babatha, the woman whose documents have survived, also mentions, besides the tribute in kind, a crown tax, payable in Nabataean currency. This is probably a peculiarity of the tax system in this province, and may represent a continuation of the pre-Roman situation, for this does not refer to the *aurum coronarium* which is known from elsewhere.⁷⁰ The latter was not collected annually, as without doubt was the tax to which Babatha refers. We should perhaps presume that such additional taxes were paid to the state far more frequently than would appear to be the case from the surviving evidence.⁷¹ These taxes could be limited to individual provinces or occasionally also applicable across the whole empire, as Pliny tells us was the case during the reign of Domitian.⁷² Military crises in particular often led to an additional tax burden on provincials, whether monetary or in kind, as happened in Dacia under the governor M. Statius Priscus in the years 157/8.⁷³

But the tax system which had been in place since Augustus remained unchanged in its essentials. There were no significant changes even during the great crisis of the wars against the Marcomanni in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, who, when faced by an acute shortage of money in A.D. 169 before setting out to meet the Germans, proceeded to sell imperial treasures rather than introducing new sources of tax revenue.⁷⁴ Even Vespasian apparently did not introduce any new taxes in the wake of the extravagance of Nero and the financial losses sustained during the civil wars. Instead, he merely increased existing taxes, to the extent of allegedly doubling them in some provinces, although it is far from clear where this happened.⁷⁵ Only the tribute formerly paid by the Jews to the Temple in Jerusalem was transformed into a new imperial tax, for the benefit of Capitoline Jupiter.

Scholars have long assumed that in the second half of the first century, or at the latest in the first half of the second century, there was a significant change in the way in which taxes were imposed, namely that tax collection was transferred from private tax-farmers to state officials working directly

⁶⁹ E.g. to finance the increased demand for nails for Trajan's Parthian campaign (cf. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* 117). ⁷⁰ Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 65 ff. no. 16.

⁷¹ Cf. Brunt (1981) 163=*Imperial Themes* 238–9. We know, for instance that in the second century there was a special tax on prostitutes in Egypt: Bagnall (1991).

⁷² Pliny, *Pan.* 29.4; cf. Tac. *Germ.* 29.2; *Hist.* IV.17; V.25 on the exemption of the Batavians from additional *conlationes*.

⁷³ This is the conclusion to be drawn from *CIL* III 1412=*ILS* 7155, which includes the measures of his successor. Cf. Piso (1972) 464–5. ⁷⁴ *HA Marc.* 21.9; 14.7–8; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 160–1.

⁷⁵ Suet. *Vesp.* 16.1; cf. Neesen, *Staatsabgaben* 68, 124.

for the government in Rome. The collection of customs duties, the *portoria*, is supposed to have changed in this way under Marcus Aurelius, at least in a few regions, although it is not disputed that in other parts of the empire tax-farmers were still working at customs posts at the end of the second century, for this is the only way in which the remarks of a number of Severan jurists about tax-farmers can be explained. While previously, at least in part, tax-farmers would have undertaken, alongside the communities themselves, direct collection of the sums due from taxpayers, the emperors would have created a direct channel for the payment of taxes by the appointment of procurators for the irregular taxes, such as the 5 per cent taxes on the emancipation of slaves and on inheritances, just as for customs dues (*portoria*), for the procurators, with their staffs made up of imperial slaves and freedmen, had the ability to take on the direct collection of and accounting for such taxes.⁷⁶ The same would have applied to the regular taxes.

We can indeed detect from the second half of the first century onwards an increase in the number of equestrian procurators, and also some procurators with the status of freedmen, who were responsible for a number of areas of state government, particularly for fiscal matters. This was the case for the *vicesima libertatis* and the *vicesima hereditatum* in Italy from the reign of Vespasian at the latest, and for the *quattuor publica Africae*, probably from the same period. In the course of the second century, besides the provincial and patrimonial procurators, other officials increasingly took up office in the provinces, who were responsible for only specific parts of the fiscal system or of imperial properties, such as those responsible for the *kalendarium Vegetianum* in Baetica, or for the inheritance tax in many provinces, or for the supervision of the more important mining districts.⁷⁷ But virtually nowhere is there any evidence or even reason for these procurators and their subordinates taking the place of private tax or duty collectors, or that of the private contractors running the mines. On the other hand, it can repeatedly be shown that procurators and tax-farmers, whether *publicani* or *conductores*, worked together, which can only imply that their respective activities were complementary. This was the case in the proconsular provinces, where the proconsul and his quaestor were still responsible for tax collection in the second century, although they did not, of course, collect the taxes themselves since they did not have the requisite staff, but received the sums due from the cities or tax-farmers responsible. It can be shown that for several decades procurators and private tax-farmers had worked together in Italy, collecting the inheritance and emancipation taxes.⁷⁸ In Egypt too, the inheritance tax was still collected by tax-farmers

⁷⁶ See e.g., Pflaum, *Procurateurs* 153–4; de Laet, *Portorium* 403 ff.

⁷⁷ On this, see above, ch. 6, *passim*. ⁷⁸ Eck, *Organisation* 114 ff., 129 ff.

in the middle of the second century, although in this province the use of liturgies would have played an important role. The emperor's staff, the procurator and his freedmen, will have been present at the opening of the will, since this was how the fiscal administration of the province would have been informed about the tax liability and could have overseen its collection. The tax on emancipation was probably dealt with in a similar fashion.⁷⁹ The metal ingots from the British mines bear the names of either a society of lessees or private individuals (probably *conductores*) alongside that of the emperor who owned the mines.⁸⁰ By making a combination of different people responsible in this way, the effectiveness of the operation could be increased, and perhaps also the revenues owing to the state could be made more secure, without any need for the establishment of a widespread operation, for which there is no evidence, not even in Egypt with its completely different fund of evidence.

Only in a large geographical area, from the Danube provinces of Raetia and Noricum, through the two Pannonian provinces, Dalmatia and Dacia to the two Moesian provinces and Thrace, is there any evidence, however slight, for imperial procurators and their staff taking on the collection of internal and external customs duties, either partly or wholly.⁸¹ For the greater part of the second century the collection of *portoria* in this large region, as also in Gaul, Africa and Asia, was clearly in the hands of private individuals. We know of a series of *conductores* and their dependents, all of whom were slaves, who raised the tax, apparently set at different rates up to 12.5 per cent on goods passing through the region.⁸² It is, however, unclear how the collection of these taxes was organized, that is whether there were tax-farming companies comprising a number of individuals who could make a large investment in the concern, or whether we should understand the *conductores* to be individual tax-farmers who bore the financial risk alone, without the security of a *societas*. If we presume that the stricter control of tax collection by imperial procurators from the late first century at the latest could have led to a reduced profit margin, then it is difficult to see why individual tax-farmers, rather than companies, should have been attracted to a contract so full of risks. Hence we may assume that in the second century the collection of taxes was largely undertaken by companies.

The first evidence for imperial procurators being appointed specifically to administer the collection of duties in Illyricum comes from the reign of Commodus.⁸³ In itself, this is not sufficient for talk of a significant change

⁷⁹ *PRoss-Georg* II 26. On this, cf. Eck (1977); Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 405–6; *BGU* I 326=*FIRA*² III 50.

⁸⁰ *RIB* II.1 2402 ff.

⁸¹ See the arguments of de Laet, *Portorium* 403 ff. and the clear methodology of Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 406 ff. ⁸² Birley (1981a).

⁸³ *CIL* III 752=7435=*ILS* 1856 (A.D. 182); *CIL* III 7127=*ILS* 1421; *CIL* III 8042.

in the way taxes were collected, for the identification of procurators responsible for customs duties, as distinct from the competence of the normal provincial procurators, may merely be the result of limiting the role of the latter. Evidence for such a change comes rather from the presence of imperial slaves and freedmen, who were stationed at the customs posts from perhaps as early as the last decades of the second century, and evidently fulfilled the same role there which had previously been fulfilled by the staff of the *conductores*.⁸⁴ This leads to the conclusion that the constant warfare in the Danube provinces under Marcus Aurelius had made the farming of taxes, in whatever form, increasingly difficult and eventually impossible, with the result that the emperor was forced to entrust the job to his own equestrian procurators. There is, however, no evidence for this having taken place under Marcus Aurelius.⁸⁵ Nor can we discern how widespread and how permanent this development was in the Illyrian region. And we should be wary of extrapolating from what may have been special circumstances in the Danube provinces to form the view that in other regions, such as Gaul, Spain, Africa or the East, the use of private individuals to collect *portoria* was discontinued around the same time. The imperial government was in essence concerned to maintain the structures which had proved themselves over the centuries, and there would have been no reason why a change, which may have been the result of necessity in the Danube provinces, should have also been implemented in other regions where there were none of the concrete problems faced in the Danube provinces. We do, in fact, know of a tax-farmer in Asia Minor during the reign of Commodus who collected the 2.5 per cent duty there for thirty years, which equates to his having gained the contract for six periods of five years each. This man did indeed hold procuratorial office in other provinces at the same time, but this does not represent the transfer to state control of the collection of taxes which he undertook.⁸⁶ Apparently, as also in the case of the procurators and tax-collectors in the Danube provinces under Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, no one saw any problem here of incompatibility between employment by the state and simultaneous private tax-collecting on behalf of the state.

Although the census was of prime importance in establishing the taxable capacity of the provinces, it was in general not carried out by officials who were involved in the collection of the taxes. This may well have been a legacy from the republican census of Roman citizens, but it may also have

⁸⁴ de Laet, *Portorium* 412 ff.; Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 416.

⁸⁵ C. Antonius Rufus, whose designation as a procurator has often been taken to refer to the collection of duties in Illyricum (*PIR*² A 871; de Laet, *Portorium* 405), in fact has nothing to do with this development (cf. Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 411 n. 190; 415 n. 203).

⁸⁶ Pflaum, *Carrières* 1 523 ff., with the interpretation of Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 407–8. Cf. also Nicolet (1991).

been the result of the fact that the census was far more than just the basis for taxation, but also the basis for the obligations of individuals to the community, and those too of cities. A money-changer, Chryseros, appears in Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, who keeps his wealth secret for fear of duties which might be imposed on him for the benefit of his community (*officia* and *munera*), and who as a result appears to lead a meagre existence.⁸⁷ This could only have been to his advantage if his financial wealth had been concealed during the *census*, which would not have been possible with property-based assets. No uniform method of assessing the provincial population's liability to *munera* was developed in the first and second centuries. In Egypt there was a regular census of the whole province, carried out by the governor every fourteen years, which took account both of individuals and their wealth. But there is no evidence that the census records were updated on such a regular basis in any other province, not even for the provinces of Gaul, Germany or Thrace, where we have relatively frequent evidence, in the form of the appointment of special officials, for the census being carried out. There would, however, have been sound administrative reasons for holding the census at regular intervals. In Syria, for example, the poll-tax was imposed on women aged twelve years or above, and in order to compile records of those liable to pay the tax a census would have been required at least every twelve years. There is, however, no trace of this in our sources.

A great variety of officials seem to have been responsible for carrying out the census. There are numerous cases in many provinces of census officials appointed for that task by the emperor. These were mainly of senatorial rank, and often carried out the census in tandem with the normal duties of governor. This could also happen in provinces with praesidial procurators, such as Thrace, where during the reign of Vespasian an equestrian both acted as governor and carried out the census at the same time.⁸⁸ Known officials who were specially appointed to carry out the census are concentrated in only some of the provinces, notably the imperial ones, and in particular the Gallic and German provinces, *Tarraconensis* and Thrace. The corollary is that we have very little evidence, particularly in those provinces that had proconsular governors, that a special mandate for revising the census records was given to existing officials or to those who may have been sent for this purpose.⁸⁹ Our evidence cannot give the full picture of the whole phenomenon of the census during the first and second centuries, and other officials must have often carried out the census without this being mentioned in the title of their post. A clear example of this comes

⁸⁷ Apul. *Met.* 4.9; cf. Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 533. ⁸⁸ *AE* 1974 no. 583. Cf. Le Glay (1981).

⁸⁹ For lists of those known to have been appointed to carry out a census, including their subordinate officials, see Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 345–6. Cf. also Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1044 *passim*, and Thomasson (1991) 85 ff.

from the province of Arabia in 127/8. In the *cursus honorum* of the governor, T. Aninius Sextius Florentinus, the standard record for such officials, it is merely recorded that he was *legatus Augusti pro praetore* for the province. Documents from the Babatha archive, however, show that in A.D. 127 what was clearly a province-wide census was carried out, in which the commanders of the auxiliary units stationed in the province served as local or regional *censitores*.⁹⁰ We also know of the same situation in other provinces, although only when the senatorial governor and his equestrian subordinates mention this themselves in inscriptions. But if someone who is described only as a normal governor could carry out a census in Arabia, then we can presume that the same occurred in other provinces whose governors were legates or proconsuls. This would also make it easier to assume that the census records were revised at regular intervals in all parts of the empire. In those cases, where someone was appointed specially for the task, this could have been in response to some exceptional circumstances.⁹¹

We may presume that in every *census* the Roman citizens living in the province were counted separately, for they continued to enjoy certain privileges, as we can see from the Egyptian sources. However we should probably not lay undue emphasis on the maintenance of reliable census records and their regular review being one of the most important tasks of the administration of the empire. The above-mentioned census in Arabia in A.D. 127 was probably the first to have taken place in this province, twenty-one years after its annexation.⁹²

If we compare the administration of the provinces as a whole at the end of the second century with that at the beginning of the Principate, then we can detect many elements which had remained the same but also many which had developed. The governor continued to stand at the centre of administrative life, and his competence, whatever his precise title, remained essentially the same. It was precisely his all-encompassing remit, unsupported by a large staff, that prevented him from fulfilling all the possible roles which were legally his. He was far better suited to a representative role and the overall government of his province. On the other hand, in the course of the first and second centuries, individuals and provincial communities looking for a decision on some matter turned increasingly less frequently to the local authorities, that is the city magistrates and assemblies, and increasingly often, even if there was no legal necessity for this, to the representative of Rome, whether the governor or the emperor himself. Plutarch was not the only person to have complained loudly about this and

⁹⁰ *CIL* III 14148; 10; Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 65 ff., no. 16; Cotton (1993). ⁹¹ Cf. also Aichinger (1992). ⁹² Cf. n. 90, above.

to have feared that the autonomy of cities would be undermined as a consequence.⁹³ In addition, various internal matters had led to maladministration and the squandering of financial resources in many cities. All this could naturally lead to a situation which the governor alone might not have been able to manage. Thus from the beginning of the second century, we find special imperial commissioners being appointed for individual cities, for cities of a certain type, or even temporarily for whole provinces. Initially their number was small, but in the course of time the frequency and number of such appointments increased in several provinces.

These special appointments supplemented the normal regime of provincial governors, but did not change its essence or its actual organization. This did not lead to the development of a hierarchical system of officials, for the special commissioners were directly appointed by the emperor and directly accountable to him, not to the governor. The same was true of the relationship between the provincial governor and the imperial procurator of a province, or other equestrian procurators, appointed to manage different parts of the finances or imperial estates in a province. In terms of lines of responsibility they were all independent of the provincial governor and could correspond directly with the emperor, as did, for example, the *praefectus orae Ponticae* in the province of Pontus-Bithynia at the time of the younger Pliny.⁹⁴ This does not mean that the governor and the procurators or prefects did not cooperate with each other in judicial matters, border disputes or the organization of the *cursus publicus*. For example, Pliny and Viridius Gemellinus, the equestrian procurator of the province, had carried out a joint investigation in the city of Nicaea in Bithynia into privileges which had supposedly been granted by Augustus to children whose parents had died without leaving any legal heirs. In the Spanish city of Emporiae also, the governor of Tarraconensis, his *iuridicus* and the provincial procurator all dealt with what was probably a territorial dispute during the reign of Vespasian.⁹⁵ But no line of command or responsibility or any hierarchy developed between these officials.

It would seem that some form of limited hierarchy did exist in Egypt between the prefects and other officials, the *iuridicus*, the *dioiketes*, the *archibereus* and the *epistrategoi*.⁹⁶ But we cannot detect the same structures in other provinces, in which in the course of the second century a number of different procurators served, with different rates of remuneration: fiscal procurators for the province, various domanial procurators, such as those for mines, and the procurators responsible for the inheritance tax. Furthermore it is unlikely that such structures existed, because the territories for

⁹³ Plut. *Mor.* 814e–15a. See also Herrmann (1980). ⁹⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* x.21–2.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* x.84; *AE* 1952 no. 122. ⁹⁶ Hagedorn (1985), esp. 183 ff.

which these officials were responsible were not always the same. While in general the province as a whole would be an official's sphere of operations, this sphere was sometimes decreased, and more often extended for procurators, and it might encompass a number of provinces. Thus, in the second century for the province of Narbonensis, which was under the control of a proconsul, there was a patrimonial procurator whose mandate did not extend beyond the province, and at the same time there was a procurator responsible for the inheritance tax working both in Narbonensis and in the imperial province of Aquitania, while the overall tax administration in Aquitania was in turn under the control of a procurator, who was also responsible for Lugdunensis, another imperial province. In addition a separate procurator was responsible for the collection of the 2.5 per cent customs duty in all three provinces.⁹⁷ Such a varied range of requirements and duties makes it unlikely that there was a hierarchy among the equestrian procurators in a province; rather, they all reported direct to Rome. It is unclear whether they came under the command of a central procurator in Rome for their respective areas, or were only accountable for the financial results of their work to the *a rationibus*. We also know very little of any connections between administrative units in Rome and officials in the provinces, for example between those in charge of Rome's grain supply and governors or procurators whose provinces supplied the grain.

There was an increase, not very great but noticeable, in the number of officials sent from Rome to the provinces, accompanied by an expansion of the subordinate staff drawn from imperial slaves and freedmen and also from soldiers. This increase must have had some effect on the life of the provincial population, even if the network of state administrative subcentres in a province was not particularly dense: it is unlikely that they were ever as numerous as the private customs posts which were in existence in Asia in A.D. 62, as is known from the *lex portorii provinciae Asiae*.⁹⁸ It is virtually impossible to tell from our sources what concrete effects this increase in the number of state officials had on the individual provinces. We can presume that in general there was a marked increase in the number of written documents circulating in and from the administration, and we even have some evidence for this in individual cases. But there were no uniform rules applicable to all the provinces as to how to publish and distribute decrees and documents, which would affect the whole population or even just individuals.⁹⁹ There were also no guidelines for archiving administrative documents, something which must have become increasingly necessary. There can, however, be no doubt that at least in the course of the second century, and perhaps from as early as the reign of Claudius, more

⁹⁷ The sources are collected by Pflaum, *Carrières* III 1051 ff.; Suppl. 119–20.

⁹⁸ Engelmann and Knibbe (1989) 55 ff. ⁹⁹ Eck (1992); Strassi (1993).

and more material was deposited in the archives of the provincial governors.¹⁰⁰ The situation around the emperor in Rome may have provided something of a model, though uniformity seems never to have been one of the leading principles of the Roman administration in general and in the provinces in particular.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, the emperor was always prepared to lay down detailed regulations and prescriptions in individual cases, even to a free city such as Athens.¹⁰² The Roman administration had no conceptual difficulties with individual or provincial traditions, such as the exemption from the poll-tax of women in Egypt, different levels of land taxation, vastly differing rates of duty on trade within the empire, the variety of privileges granted to many cities, or the variously resolved question of where one's *origo* was.¹⁰³ Under Marcus Aurelius, in Italy the top prices for gladiators could still be set by any official who happened to be present, whether it were the prefect of the food supply, the *iuridicus*, the *curator viarum* or even the prefect of an Italian fleet.¹⁰⁴ Similarly in the reign of Vespasian in the city of Sardeis in Asia Minor the grant of a contribution from the city magistrates to the mysteries of Men was confirmed by the proconsul on one occasion, and on another by the imperial patrimonial procurator.¹⁰⁵ In other words, in both cases no one type of official had exclusive responsibility; instead the Roman government demonstrated great flexibility in such matters.

The choice of who made the decision on a case brought before him was dependent, at least in part, on those who needed a decision. Yet the emperor and his representatives in the provinces must have felt a certain need for uniformity in administrative matters. The *mandata* given to provincial governors were not sufficient for this, since their content was largely a matter of individual regulations which were formulated at different times, and did not represent a systematic presentation of a number of, let alone all, conceivable forms of governing a province. Many jurists in the late second century and at the start of the third century began to address this problem by producing handbooks on the duties of the holders of individual posts. Thus under Marcus Aurelius, Venuleius Saturninus produced a work on the duties of proconsuls, Ulpian, who was governor of Britain in A.D. 178,¹⁰⁶ composed a general work *de officio praesidis*, and then came the works of Ulpian and Paullus on the duties of a wide range of officials, including quaestors, proconsuls and the *curator rei publicae*. While these jurists did, of course, also contribute to numerous individual

¹⁰⁰ Haensch (1992).

¹⁰¹ Brunt, *Imperial Themes* 386, 395–6; Millar (1983) 88; Corbier (1988) 259. Cf., e.g., *POxy* 3015.

¹⁰² Oliver (1989) 232 ff. no. 92. ¹⁰³ Cf. Millar (1983) 80.

¹⁰⁴ *CIL* II 6728 = *ILS* 5163 = *FIRA* I² no. 49.

¹⁰⁵ Text, edited by H. Malay, to appear in *TAM Ergänzungsbande* no. 23 (forthcoming).

¹⁰⁶ Roxan, *Diplomas* III 184.

decisions made by the emperors, their works did not represent binding regulations for all officials, but rather the individual points of view of a number of prominent jurists. These works did, however, pave the way for greater standardization and the regulation of the way the state was governed in detail, including how provinces were administered.

CHAPTER 8
FRONTIERS*

C. R. WHITTAKER

I. ANCIENT AND MODERN CONCEPTS OF SPACE AND FRONTIERS

Our preconceptions about frontiers have been shaped by our own history. Not only must we recognize this fact but also appreciate that a different historical experience determined Roman perception of space. British and French imperialism in the nineteenth century brought to these two superpowers control over vast areas of the world. By the end of the century Britain was responsible for 34,000 kilometres of frontiers and the French had determined over 17 per cent of the borders of contemporary states. Yet there was no sophisticated study of frontiers.¹ What existed was the collective empirical wisdom of soldiers and imperial administrators.

For the British these experiences came from places such as the north-west frontier of India where the term 'scientific frontier' was first coined to describe a line which supposedly maximized military, political and natural advantages but which in reality proved completely elusive. Frontiers were always dividing lines between civilized and barbarian worlds, linear barriers 'to hold back the flood of barbarian inroads',² and it has been in this light that Roman frontiers have often been conceived.

The French were influenced by a different tradition, derived from their own geopolitical predicament of a continental nation whose history has been dominated, from the fourteenth century and from the rise of the absolutist state, by a search for natural boundaries. The great rivers and mountain chains which bounded the French on all sides seemed to provide such lines, irrespective of their military viability, which they then proceeded to apply to their own empire in North Africa and elsewhere. And it was from this experience that they often produced academic interpretations of the Roman frontiers.³

The opening up of the West in the United States was in many respects

* See pp. 317–19 for an appendix on the sources. ¹ Curzon (1907) 5.

² Davies (1975) 6; this volume, first published in 1932, incorporates Victorian ideas. The best theoretical study of this generation is Holdich (1916).

³ Recent surveys of French imperialism and frontiers include Allières (1980) and Foucher (1986). For 'potomologie' see Nordman (1980).

the closest parallel to the Roman experience of a moving frontier; and it was significantly there that the first serious theory of a frontier was conceived by Fredrick Jackson Turner in 1893. His most important conclusion was that frontiers, by definition, are never still; they are a process, not an area nor a line. But Americans were preoccupied by frontiersmen and their influence on the ideals of American manhood, and less with the interaction of frontier communities and native populations. At root lies an inherent admiration for the pioneer ever pushing outwards and a distaste for static borders. That, too, has had its influence on historians of antiquity.⁴

Since the nineteenth century things have changed, even if not as universally as they should. Under the influence of the French *Annales* school, modern historians have learned to make a distinction between a military front and a fixed, territorial frontier, which did not merge until the nineteenth century and the rise of the nation-state. The quest for natural or moral frontiers was nothing more than a political motive for imperialism.⁵ It is in this historiographic tradition that we are now beginning to examine Roman frontiers, also.

If we now turn to the Romans, we can see how they were, in the matter of frontiers as in so much else, heirs to the thought of Greeks and Etruscans. Greek frontiers were more cultural than physical, the divisions between measured and unmeasurable space. The 'otherness' of the non-Greek world was often perceived in terms of a mirror image of the known world of the city-state, but between these 'barbarians' and Greek civilization there was an impenetrable divide, symbolized by the walls of the city. Maps, in so far as they existed, were 'geographic' not 'chorographic'; that is, they were small-scale representations of the lands of the known world around Greece (with Delphi and the *omphalos* at the epicentre) but not detailed cartographic guides to those lands. Beyond lay a mythical world of the unknown or the uninhabited and bordered by the great river of Oceanus. Although a simple system of projections and latitudes, based on the length of shadows, evolved from the later geographers of Alexandria, which led to the remarkably accurate calculations of the circumference of the earth by Eratosthenes in the third century B.C., to most Greeks the concept of limit remained that of land cadasters and allocated space (*horos oikopedon*).⁶

From the Etruscans the Romans inherited their strong sense of the divine limits, the belief that terrestrial space was a mirror of the celestial (*mundus*), to be ritually quartered and cadastrated from the hallowed platform (*templum*) of the centre of the city with its sacred walls, from where

⁴ After Turner (1893), American frontier historiography was most influenced by Webb (1931) and (1953); cf. studies in Powell *et al.* (1983).

⁵ Febvre's classic of 1922 is translated into English – Febvre (1932); cf. La Pradelle (1928).

⁶ Hartog (1988) 109–111; Vernant (1965) 97–181. For maps see Nicolet (1991), Dilke (1985) ch. 2.

auguries were taken. The cult of Terminus coexisted with Jupiter upon the Capitol.⁷

Roman town planning and the art of Roman *agrimensores* reflect the legacy of these earlier traditions, preserved for us by the writings of state land surveyors which date from the empire and are accompanied by illustrations – or ‘teaching maps’ – which, although not contemporary, probably derive from early originals.⁸ From them we see the prominence in Roman perceptions of *limitatio* (which means not ‘limitation’ but the ‘organization’ of space) and the setting up of *limites*. The word *limes*, which came to be a term for frontier in the third century A.D., was really a road or path *between* allotments, not a boundary of the territory. Nevertheless we can see some features in the art of the *gromatici* (‘surveyors’) which helps us understand what Romans thought about frontiers.

The concept of a natural, territorial boundary, for instance, was clearly prominent. Several illustrations portray a river (designated *flumen finitimum*), or a mountain range marking the edge of urban cadasters.⁹ But the organized, centuriated land is not the limit of the urban territorium. We see two types of *fines*, one the boundary of the assigned land and the other, beyond it, of an unassigned district, called ‘excluded’ (*extra clusa*). Such unorganized land, called *arcifinius*, was thought to be so named because it ‘protected’ (*arcere*) the organized land.¹⁰ In short, to Roman minds there was a difference between administered and unadministered land, while both could be within the political orbit and ownership of the city. That has a bearing on the way they located the boundaries and the walls (which came to be called *clausurae*) of their empire.

Before we look at that practice, however, we must note other Roman ideas of space which are relevant to the subject of frontiers. Maps, as in Greece, were a rarity: yet where they are mentioned they are always associated with conquest. Julius Caesar commissioned the first known world map, probably as part of his great triumphal monument on the Capitol, portraying himself in a chariot with the globe of the world (*oikoumene*) at his feet. Latent in this imagery is the ideology that there were no limits to his conquests; and, indeed, Ovid says Caesar was planning to ‘add the last part of the orbis’ by a campaign against the Parthians when he died in 44 B.C.¹¹ The notion of taking the Roman *imperium* to ‘the ends of the earth’

⁷ Piccaluga (1974), Rykwert (1976), with which see the review by J. B. Ward-Perkins in the *JLS* of 11 Mar. 1972, 265.

⁸ Editions of the *agrimensores* are those by Blume, Lachmann, Rendorff (1848–52; reissue 1962), Thulin (1913). See Dilke, *Surveyors*.

⁹ See e.g. figs. 89, 91, 92, 94 in Thulin (1913). Attached to the illustration of Anxur (fig. 92), the text says, ‘The cultivable territory has been centuriated: the rest is bound by rough rocks terminated by visible and describable landmarks like unallocated land.’ Hyg. Grom. (Thulin, 1913) 144.

¹⁰ Hyg. Grom. 161 and fig. 129. Frontin. Grom. (Thulin, 1913) 2.

¹¹ Dio XLIII.14.6, 21.2. Ov. *Ars Am.* 1.171.

(*ultimos terrarum fines*) had gained currency in the second century B.C. as Rome's empire grew; but it reached its climax in the age of the dynasts of the first century. Pompey, we are told, 'wanted to reach with his victories Oceanus which flows round the world' and he set up an inscription recording his 'deeds' with a full list of the *gentes* he had subdued saying, 'He has taken the boundaries of the empire to the limits of the earth.'¹² No doubt Pompey's example played its part when Augustus came to write his 'deeds', the *Res Gestae*.

II. FRONTIERS AND IMPERIALISM

With the emperor Augustus, Roman concepts of space and geographic measurement took on a new dimension. It is not surprising that, as a single, autocratic emperor took control of decisions of war and peace, we can pose questions about a frontier 'policy' as such. When Tacitus in the second century A.D. tried to imagine what people said at the death of Augustus, who had brought order to the state under the 'rule of a single man', he associated this with the organization of the empire. 'The power of Rome was bounded by Oceanus and far-away rivers; the legions, provinces, fleet and all things were interlinked.' In the second century A.D. the emperor was likened to 'a helmsman at the tiller of a warship'.¹³ But there is a sense in which the Augustan empire marked a change in intellectual outlook, too, much as was later to take place with the rise of the absolutist state. In both cases administrative efforts were made to coordinate scattered citizens, accompanied by an intense interest in geography and cartography with the aim of fiscal efficiency.¹⁴

Augustus' personal interest in the organization of space was explicit. His attention to cadastration is referred to in the work of the *agrimensores*, who talk of 'distances given by *limites* according to the law and decision of Augustus'. The emperor himself is said to have been 'the first to display the world by chorography' and at his death he left a *breviarium totius imperii* – a detailed account of the empire's resources.¹⁵ Strabo, who wrote the finest work of the political geography of the Roman empire that we possess, was a contemporary of Augustus, inspired by his organization of the empire which, he says, 'would be difficult to govern in any other way than by entrusting it to one person'. He terminated his last book with an account of the Augustan administration of the provinces of the empire. Notably, however, the one physical feature he does not list is frontiers. What he does say is equally significant: 'Augustus has allocated to himself the part of the land in need of a military guard; that is the barbarian sector, adjoining the

¹² Plut. *Pomp.* 38.2–3; Diod. XL.4. ¹³ Tac. *Ann.* 1.9; Fronto II.251 (Haines).

¹⁴ Nicolet (1991) *passim*. For the absolutist model, see Alliès (1980) 36, 57 and *passim*.

¹⁵ Hyg. *Grom.* (Thulin, 1913) 157; *Div. Orbis* 1; Tac. *Ann.* I.11.

tribes who have not yet been subdued . . .¹⁶ The implication of that ‘yet’ is unmistakable. Augustus was a child of the republican conquistadores. Never at any stage of his life is it easy to prove that he lost the ecumenical dream of world conquest or that he recognized permanent limits to growth. In the list of his achievements, the *Res Gestae*, which he left to be inscribed on his mausoleum and in various centres of the Empire, his proudest boast was *imperio nostro fines auxi* – ‘I have extended the boundaries of our rule.’ The boast was echoed by poets and artists. On the celebrated Vienna Cameo the emperor is flanked by figures personifying Tellus (Earth) and Oceanus, while being crowned by a figure who is thought to represent Oikoumene. Above him is a globe surmounted by his personal astrological sign of the capricorn.¹⁷

It was Augustus, too, who was responsible for the display of Agrippa’s map in 7 B.C., the first world map about which we know very much, although it was obviously in the tradition of Caesar’s earlier map. While it was set up in the Porticus Vipsania alongside other great public buildings of Agrippa in the Campus Martius, it was very much a public monument to Augustus’ own conquest of space – *orbis urbi spectandus*.¹⁸ Besides a detailed ‘chorographic’ commentary which the elder Pliny was able to consult, and which may be the same work which was later said to have been written by the emperor, the map itself would have depicted only the major landmarks, like the great rivers and mountains. This is perhaps the reason why so often later authors, like Josephus, Tacitus and Herodian, described the Roman empire with frontiers, ‘hedged about by the sea of Oceanus and remote rivers’. But there is no reason to think Augustus or Agrippa thought in terms of such ‘natural’ limits.¹⁹

At Augustus’ death he left three documents along with his will; two of them, the *Res Gestae* and the *breviarium totius imperii*, have been mentioned already. The third was a book of instruction, a kind of codicil to the *brevarium*. Contained in this, probably, was what Tacitus says was a *consilium*, a piece of advice, which Tiberius took as a command, ‘that the empire should be confined within limits’.²⁰ It is generally agreed that this was the opinion Augustus reached at the end of his life as the result of the rebellion of the Pannonian auxiliaries in A.D. 6 and the appalling military losses by Varus in the Teutoberg forest of free Germany in A.D. 9. It constitutes the first real evidence of an imperial frontier policy, and certainly Tiberius made no significant changes to Augustus’ conquests.

¹⁶ Strab. VI.4.2, XVII.3.25.

¹⁷ Aug. *Res Gestae* 26; Verg. *Aen.* I.278; Hor. *Odes* IV.15. Further citations of poets in Brunt (1963). The Vienna Cameo is illustrated and discussed by Zanker (1988) 230–1.

¹⁸ Pliny, *HN* III.17; Dilke (1985) 41 ff.; Nicolet (1991) 171–3.

¹⁹ Tac. *Ann.* I.9; Joseph. *BJ* II.371 ff.; Herodian II.11.5.

²⁰ Dio LVI.33.5, Tac. *Ann.* I.11 – *addideratque consilium imperii intra terminos coercendi*.

But it remains extremely doubtful whether Augustus was really laying down a 'policy' for all time that his successors should abandon world conquest. Was he not rather giving temporary advice to Tiberius that the provinces of the empire were as yet insufficiently romanized to allow further expansion? Roman historiography contained a deeply pessimistic consciousness of the fragility of imperial rule, if allowed to outgrow its own resources, and this may well have been reflected in Augustus' practical counsel to consolidate. But it would have been astonishing if Augustus had really intended all his successors to abandon the Roman virtue of military glory. Strabo, who wrote during Tiberius' reign, gives no hint of any ideological restraints (as seen in the passage quoted above). Tiberius himself did not terminate all military activity in his reign, and he did in fact annex the allied kingdom of Cappadocia. Tacitus in the next century makes no comment on the fact that Gaius and Claudius apparently ignored the advice when planning the invasion of Britain. On the contrary, Tacitus laments the long delay in conquering Germany.²¹

The ideology of *imperium sine fine*, therefore, remained central to the Roman stereotype of a good emperor, proclaimed on coins or inscriptions and inserted in panegyrics. The younger Pliny in A.D. 100 imagined Trajan on the banks of the Danube dealing with some insolent barbarian king, whom 'nothing will protect from our very territory taking him over' – as indeed happened a few years later when Dacia was annexed. Dio's analysis of Trajan's motives for the conquest of Mesopotamia boiled down to 'his desire for glory'. The same motive was attributed by Dio to Septimius Severus a hundred years later.²²

Trajan was not a pathological megalomaniac; in Roman upper-class mythology he was the most popular emperor after Augustus, with whom he was often associated. It was true praise thereafter to applaud an emperor as *fortior Augusto melior Traiano*. Hadrian obviously realized this and anticipated, but was unable to prevent, the unpopularity of his withdrawal from Mesopotamia by claiming a republican precedent. Antoninus Pius, the most unwarlike of Roman emperors, also appreciated the force of the ideology and gave great publicity to the fairly ordinary military achievement of his reign when the frontier in Britain was advanced. Marcus Aurelius, we are told, was contemplating annexation of two new provinces north of the Danube when he died. His son, Commodus, was proposing to carry on the policy of going on 'as far as Oceanus', until he discarded his father's senatorial advisers. With Septimius Severus the slogan *propagatio imperii* rose to new heights of publicity.²³

²¹ Tac. *Agr.* 13, *Germ.* 37 – *tam diu Germania vincitur*.

²² Pliny, *Pan.* 16; Dio LXVIII.17.1 (Xiph.), LXXV.1.1 (Xiph.).

²³ Hadrian: *HA Hadr.* 5.3; Antoninus Pius: *BMCRE* IV 1675; Marcus Aurelius: *HA Marc.* 24.5, 27.10, Dio LXXI.33.4; Commodus: Herodian 1.5.6. The Severan refs. are collected by Birley (1974).

If there was a discordant note, it appears to have been confined to Greek authors, whose tradition reflected more strongly than that of Roman nobles the sense of moral ‘otherness’ and the barrier between urban order and the disorder beyond the city walls. Appian and Aelius Aristides, both of them Greeks writing in the reign of Antoninus Pius, the first an imperial official and the second a professional orator, are often cited as examples of a new mentality of defensive imperialism and frontier fortifications which came to the fore in the mid-second century.

Beyond the outermost ring of the civilized world you drew a second line, quite as one does in walling a town . . . An encamped army, like a rampart, encloses the civilized world in a ring.

(Aelius Aristides)

The Romans have aimed to preserve their empire by the exercise of prudence rather than to extend their sway indefinitely over poverty-stricken and profitless tribes of barbarians.

(Appian)²⁴

But there are good reasons to reject these as typical Roman views of the empire; both may have been expedient ways by which those dependent on imperial favour interpreted the quiescent roles of Hadrian and his adopted heir, Pius. Even Aelius Aristides, however, praised Rome because ‘You recognize no fixed boundaries, nor does another dictate to what point your control reaches.’ This argues against the view that Hadrian, who was disliked for his love of Hellenism by the Roman élites, had adopted the Greek ideal of the cosmopolis. Roman authors, who lived under Hadrian, still spoke in the Roman tradition. Tacitus, although rarely explicit, was undoubtedly sympathetic to imperial expansion. Suetonius, his contemporary, was circumspect in praising Augustus for not seeking imperial glory at any cost, but he admired the wars of Germanicus which Tiberius had halted. Florus openly regretted the folly of Varus which had halted Roman expansion into Germany, while recognizing that there were *gentes* who could be left beyond direct rule provided they respected the majesty of Rome.²⁵

It remains to be seen how far the ideology of Roman frontiers corresponded to the reality.

III. THE WESTERN FRONTIERS

Not surprisingly after the civil wars, Augustus found himself immediately faced with a series of urgent military problems which had to be solved

²⁴ Ael. Arist. *Ad Romanam* 81–2; App. *BCiv.* pref. 7.

²⁵ Tacitus’ disapproval of Tiberius as *princeps preferendi imperii incuriosus*, *Ann.* iv.32; Suet. *Aug.* 21.2, *Tib.* 52.2; Florus ii.30.39, 34.61; discussed by Campbell, *Emperor and Army* 394 ff. Birley (1974) argues for Hadrian’s Greek outlook; but *contra*, see Ael. Arist. *Ad Romanam* 10.

without reference to deep-seated policy studies. Spain, where he was involved in fighting until 19 B.C. as a result of the factions of the civil war, led on naturally to Gaul, where Caesar's conquests had not halted the progress of Germans crossing the Rhine. Not content with crossing the Rhine, Augustus' commanders had by 9 or 8 B.C. reduced the region between the Rhine and the Elbe to 'practically a tributary province', says Velleius Paterculus. What our sources do not ever say is what modern writers have tried to infer, that Augustus was looking for a strategic riverine frontier, or a shorter line of communication. Indeed, the Elbe had been crossed in 9 B.C. and in c. 2 B.C. the Roman army had set up an altar on the north bank.

The significance of this religious act, as illustrated later in A.D. 16 by Germanicus' consecration of a trophy between the Rhine and the Elbe, was to bring the territory within the spatial *cosmos* of Roman discipline.²⁶ In fact, it seems plausible that Augustus genuinely intended to reach Oceanus. He boasts of sailing in Oceanus as far as the Cimbri of Jutland, and in about A.D. 4 the fleet made an attempt to sail round from Jutland in order to find the passage to Scythia, to the Caspian Sea and to India but was deterred by bad weather. If Strabo is correct that the emperor forbade that the Elbe should be crossed in order not to antagonize the tribes beyond, it can only have been at the end of his life for reasons of temporary prudence, as we have seen.²⁷

In Dalmatia and the Balkans much the same situation existed as in Gaul and Germany. Even before the defeat of Antony, the territory of what was vaguely called Illyricum had required military action and a peace had been patched up with a diplomatic return of captured Roman standards. The urgency lay in the threat to the heart of Italy through the key passes of Raetia and Noricum (roughly Switzerland and Austria), which was rapidly resolved in 15 B.C. by the coordinated movement of two armies from the Rhine and north Italy. The upper Rhine and the upper Danube were now connected. By 9 B.C. the middle Danube had been reached in tandem with the trans-Rhine campaigns launched from Gaul. Italy was henceforward firmly linked to the Balkans.²⁸

In both these cases it is easy to see the value of the single commander-in-chief in Augustus and the possibilities of a strategic policy. That in turn has led modern scholars to wonder whether further pincer movements between 7 B.C. and A.D. 6 were ultimately aimed at providing a shorter line of communication between Germany and the Balkans, specifically along

²⁶ Vell. Pat. II.97; Dio LV.10a.2-3; Tac. *Ann.* IV.44. Augustus' German policy is discussed in Wells (1972) 156-61. The religious act in the annexation of space is illustrated by Tac. *Ann.* II.22; cf. Helgeland (1978) 1503. ²⁷ Aug. *Res Gestae* 26.4; Pliny, *HN* II.167; Strab. VII.1.4.

²⁸ Reconstruction of the Danube campaigns from inscriptions was basically the work of Syme (1934); summarized and expanded by Wilkes (1965).

the River Elbe and its tributaries. Plausible as the strategy may appear, it is unfortunate that almost all our sources are defective for the period. Reconstructions based on inscriptions to some extent clarify the movements, which certainly included penetration into southern Slovakia. It may well be, too, that the campaign to the north bank of the Elbe had begun from the Danube.

Never once, however, does any ancient source suggest that the search was on for a frontier. What Augustus himself said was that he believed all lands from Illyricum 'to the banks of the Danube' were part of the Roman empire. But he did not confine his activities to the west bank of the river. 'My armies,' he says, 'crossed the Danube and compelled the Dacian *gentes* to submit to the Roman people.' The campaign was designed, as against the Germans beyond the Rhine, to keep back the penetration of new peoples pushing southwards, and took the route along the River Mureş, crossing the Danube somewhere south of Budapest into the Carpathians.²⁹ The Danube was clearly not the limit of empire.

Nothing better illustrates the difference in Roman thinking between the limits of organized space, and their claims to imperial control beyond these limits, than the progress of the army in Africa. By A.D. 14 the main legion of the province had advanced its base camp as far as Ammaedara (Haidra) on the high Tunisian upland plain. A boundary road was constructed linking Tacape (Gabes) and the camp, followed soon after by a massive work of centuriation of the land in the south-east. In a sense, therefore, we are right to regard this as a frontier line. But not the Romans. The extraordinary southern expedition of Cornelius Balbus in 19 B.C. had taken Romans deep into the interior to the Fezzan. Despite the absence of any known posts or direct administration, Pliny – and no doubt Agrippa's map – signified this action as evidence that 'We have subjugated the *gens* of the Fezzani.'³⁰

After Augustus it is often argued that, apart from Roman Britain, there was no substantial territorial addition to the Roman empire in the West until Trajan's annexation of Dacia in the early second century. The rest is put down to retrenchment, adjustment and administrative organization.³¹ The value and validity of this view is to stress the point made by Suetonius in his biography of Augustus, that allied native kings were regarded as *membra partesque imperii* – an integral part of the metaphorical body. So, when Claudius changed the government of Raetia and Noricum, Mauretania and Thrace from that of native alliance to provincial rule, he

²⁹ Aug. *Res Gestae* 30–1; Florus II.28–9; Strab. VII.3.13 refers to the Mureş and Danube being used for military supplies, presumably via the River Tisza which flows from the north into the Danube at Belgrade.

³⁰ Cadastration and road – *ILS* 9375 = *EJ*² 290; cf. Troussel (1978). Pliny *HN* v.35, with the commentary by Desanges (1980). ³¹ E.g. Nicolet (1983).

merely reclaimed what had originally been ‘the gift of the Roman people’ and was not making any great new advance.³²

On the other hand, it was on the appeals from British kings, too, who had shown their submission to Augustus, that Claudius invaded Britain. It is surely stretching the imagination to see this action as merely an administrative adjustment when Claudius was so obviously an emperor who desperately needed military glory, as the twenty-seven military salutations in his reign prove. Nor was Britain, once invaded, left again to its kings and, although Suetonius claims that Nero considered abandoning Britain, since it was beyond *terra cognita*, there was no sign in his reign, either, of any search for a frontier.³³

It does not appear that Claudius felt any restraints in crossing the Rhine and the Danube, either, although the legionary camps now began to acquire stone buildings and an air of permanence along the river line. More and more archaeological evidence shows a Claudian and Neronian presence in the Taunus–Wetterau salient and in the Black Forest–Neckar region of Germany.³⁴ Much propaganda was made of the return of the standards and some of the prisoners captured by the German Chatti from Varus in A.D. 9, which carried the same symbolic significance of submission as the return of the Parthian standards in Augustus’ day. One reason for thinking that first-century emperors were involved in more than mere consolidation of Augustan *termini* is that, as some allied territories were annexed as provinces, further allied kings were brought into play as the ‘arms’ of Rome – the Cherusci in north Holland, the Vannian kings of the Suebi on the middle Danube, the Quadi and Marcommani in Bohemia and Slovakia. In the early reign of Nero we know that thousands of peoples from across the Danube were settled in Lower Moesia. ‘The might and power of the kings’, says Tacitus, ‘depend on the authority of Rome.’³⁵

The Flavian emperors more or less carried on from where the Julio-Claudians had left off, despite the destabilizing effect of the civil wars which had set alight the Germans of the lower Rhine and the tribes on the Danube. It is not easy to detect any real change in policy nor the establishment of a ‘scientific frontier’ by radical, new measures, as has often been claimed.³⁶ In Britain Tacitus is explicit that Agricola in A.D. 81 ignored what might have been considered a ‘scientific’ frontier at the Forth–Clyde, driven on ‘by the courage of our armies and the glory of Rome’. A halt was finally

³² Suet. *Aug.* 48; on the integral role of the kings on the frontiers, see Braund (1984) 91–103. The phrase *donum p.R.* is used by Tac. *Ann.* iv.5 of Juba’s kingdom in Mauretania.

³³ Dio LX.19; cf. Aug. *Res Gestae* 32. For Claudius’ military glory, see Smallwood, *GCN* no. 43b and Dio LX.22.1. For Nero: Suet. *Nero* 18.

³⁴ Schönberger (1969) and (1980); cf. Tac. *Ann.* xii.28 and xiii.56.

³⁵ Tac. *Ann.* xi.16 (Cherusci), xii.29–30 (Vannius), *Germ.* 42 (Marcommani–Quadi), *Germ.* 29. Moesia: MW no. 261. ³⁶ The term is used by Luttwak (1976) and discussed below, pp. 311–17.

called, not for reasons of local strategy but because the military manpower was needed in Germany.³⁷

In Germany the Taunus salient and the *Agri Decumates* territory around the headwaters of the Neckar, Rhine and Danube now acquired permanent Roman posts and there appeared along the Taunus heights a 'chain' of fortlets and palisades, the first example of a visible, linear frontier. But we must beware of reading too much into the development. Frontinus, who took part in Domitian's German Wars, regarded this line and the forest clearance which went with it as a tactical device to avoid surprise raids. The fortifications were probably not continuous and are now regarded as much as a protection for roads leading into the Wetterau as a lateral defence.³⁸ We might recall here the analogy of the Roman land surveyors who distinguished between the *finēs* of *limitatio* – organized territory – and the unallocated but controlled land beyond. So, it is in the context of the organization of the new Flavian provinces of Germany that Tacitus talks about the creation of a *limes*, when he says, 'After the *limes* was made and the guard-posts were moved forward, they [sc. the *Agri Decumates*] were considered a projection of the empire and a part of the province.'³⁹ The word *limes* here surely carries its original sense of an administered boundary rather than that of a military frontier.

In the Balkans and Africa it is even less easy to detect any sign of natural and scientific frontiers under the Flavians, despite the claim that this period marked a 'new strategic concept' and 'the beginnings of a closed linear fortification system'. What this amounted to, in fact, was the concentration of legionary and auxiliary forces along the Danube, which was the main route of supply and hardly constituted an effective barrier. Domitian's long Dacian Wars between A.D. 85 and 92 show how the military balance of the empire was changing and requiring more and more troops. But there is no evidence that the Danube was now being consolidated as the limit of advance. It appears that the Dacians were expected to confine themselves to the River Tisza, over a hundred kilometres east of the Danube in the Hungarian plain, and that the Romans claimed to control the native princes, rulers in that region. Before Dacia was annexed under Trajan, we have a papyrus, the so-called Hunt's *pridianum*, which is an annual return on the state of an auxiliary unit on the lower Danube, and which records garrisons and the collection of military supplies far across the river. In the other direction, as we saw in Nero's reign, peoples were moving across the Danube.⁴⁰

³⁷ Tac. *Agr.* 23.

³⁸ Frontin. *Str.* 1.3.10, Schönberger (1969) 158–61. The meaning of *limes* as a road discussed by Isaac (1988) 126. ³⁹ Tac. *Germ.* 29.

⁴⁰ Mócsy (1974) 41 ff., Gabler (1980) 637–40; Hungarian plain: Ptol. *Geog.* III.7.1, Dio LXVIII.10.3 (Xiph.). Hunt's *Pridianum*: Fink, *Military Records* 63.

In Africa the military outposts moved further west along the lines of the Aures range in Numidia and Mauretania Caesariensis, while in the eastern, Tripolitanian sector there were a number of recorded military and commercial expeditions. Like Balbus' expedition earlier, they provide evidence of Roman penetration into the Fezzan and the Libyan Valleys, which has left its mark by imported archaeological artefacts.⁴¹

It is, of course, with the emperors Hadrian and Antoninus Pius that most people think of the Romans as arriving at a new frontier policy of visible, defensive and static frontiers in the West. It is true that between Trajan in the early second century and Marcus Aurelius at the end there were no western wars of conquest on the scale of those in the East – that is, if we count the Dacian Wars and the lower Danube, as Romans did, as part of the eastern front. It looks, therefore, as if Roman expansionist policy in the West at any rate had come to a halt. On the other hand, this had not begun with Hadrian. As we saw earlier, Domitian had begun the chain of forts in Germany. And Trajan, who was so obviously uninhibited by any defensive notions of the *termini imperii* in the East, is now believed to have laid the wooden palisades along the line of the Solway Firth and to have stabilized the road of the Stanegate between Carlisle and Newcastle in north Britain before the building of the Wall under Hadrian. Quite probably it was Trajan, too, who completed the line of auxiliary forts on the line of the *limes* in Upper Germany, the so-called Odenwaldlimes, linking the Main with the Neckar.⁴²

The great works of the visible frontiers in the West are Hadrian's Wall in Britain between the Tyne and Solway; the so-called *fossatum* in Africa, running intermittently along the pre-desert between the Libyan Valleys and the Hodna Basin of Algeria; the Antonine Wall in Britain between the Firths of Clyde and Forth; and the so-called 'outer *limes*' of Upper Germany, which runs between Miltenberg-Altstadt on the River Main and Lorch (just east of Stuttgart) before turning due east to the Danube at Regensburg. The puzzles lie in how to interpret the purpose of these massive constructions and to understand why, after the enormous efforts of constructing such walls in Britain and in Germany in the first place, they should have been almost immediately abandoned or – as we are coming increasingly to believe – supplemented by a second line.

In Africa the walls, forts and ditch of the *fossatum* in southern Algeria and Tunisia are – in origin at least – rightly attributed to Hadrian. But they are intermittent and quite unlike the continuous Wall in Britain. In Tunisia the *clausurae* walls are also associated with a series of tribal allotments, marked by boundary stones, which were made by order of the emperor Trajan and

⁴¹ Ptol. *Geog.* 1.8.2, 10.4; cf. Pliny, *HN* v.38. Recent pottery dates from the Libyan valleys are given by J. N. Dore in Buck and Mattingly (1985) 107–25.

⁴² Britain: Jones (1982), Higham (1986) 159. Germany: Schallmeyer (1984) 19.

which lay to the *south* of the wall system. In other words here is a vivid and visible example of the care one must take not to think that walls were the outer *finis* of Roman territory.⁴³

Whatever we may think about the debut of a new policy or strategy of defensive frontiers in the mid-second century A.D., it is obvious that on the middle Danube the Romans felt no restraint about crossing the river line. In southern Slovakia and Moravia a remarkable number of Roman-style buildings and legionary building tiles have been found on sites in the northern valleys of the Danube's tributaries. Across the Hungarian plain Trajan's annexation of Dacia led to the construction of a west-east road from the Danube to the mouth of the River Mureş, where a Roman *vehiculatio* station is recorded on an inscription. Marcus Aurelius' proposal, after defeating the Marcomanni and Quadi, to annex two great new provinces north of the Danube would have carried Roman-administered territory as far as Bohemia and must surely indicate that there was no agreed, new, defensive frontier policy. Although he did not carry out the project, there is no reason to think Romans gave up believing their sovereignty extended that far. In the fourth century the emperor Valentinian died of apoplexy when the kings of the Quadi behaved as though they were independent.⁴⁴

In Britain we find the same fluidity about the frontier. After the curious advances and withdrawals between the occupation of Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall which are becoming clearer as more epigraphic evidence is unearthed, the Scottish line was finally abandoned in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. But then in 208 Septimius Severus launched a new campaign in the footsteps of Agricola and worked his way right up the east coast of Scotland, only to return to the line of Hadrian's Wall. Severus' aim was explicitly to win glory and victories in Britain, according to his contemporary Herodian, and he probably first thought of extending the provincial boundary. As we know from a fragmentary inscription, the large camp at Carpow on the Tay and the fort at Cramond on the Forth remained in commission well into the rule of Caracalla. Although the visible line of Hadrian's Wall, therefore, was consciously and expensively refurbished, Severus intended that the Roman writ should run in Scotland.⁴⁵

IV. THE EASTERN FRONTIERS

The theory of a single 'grand strategy' of the Roman empire is a priori implausible, when geographic and political conditions were so different between various parts of the empire, particularly between the eastern and

⁴³ *CIL* VIII 22782–8; Troussel (1978).

⁴⁴ Móscy (1974) 90, 100, Pitts (1989), Kolník (1990); cf. n. 24 above.

⁴⁵ Herodian III.14.2. Carpow: R. P. Wright in *Britannia* 5 (1974) 289–92. The relationship between the two walls – Hanson and Maxwell (1983).

western halves. Much of the western borders consisted of unformed states, loosely organised *gentes* and federations, which were poor and little urbanized. In the East, Greek culture and trade had penetrated most of the states with which Rome came into contact, quite apart from the fact that over long periods the Persian, Greek and Macedonian empires had imposed forms of centralized controls and urban organization. In the West, the driving force of Roman imperialism was primarily the glory of conquest, although tinged with some expectations of profit. In the East it was almost the reverse. The motive for an expedition under Augustus to Arabia Felix was 'the report that they were very wealthy'. The myths of El Dorado were fuelled by the more immediate and sometimes tangible reality of the luxury trade and tales from enterprising travellers, from the Caucasus Mountains, where it was said the rivers ran with gold, to the shores of the Yemen with their caravans from the East.⁴⁶

But above all other differences was the existence of the Parthian empire. The Parthians had their own ambitions – or so the Romans persuaded themselves – of recovering the lands of their Persian predecessors with an imperial administration and army which, while not perhaps the equal of the Romans, was centralized, hellenized and familiar with the Roman legal concept of negotiated borders. By the time of Augustus they had also demonstrated their ability to inflict severe damage upon incautious Roman generals, such as Crassus at Carrhae. This was a different world from that of the West. The Parthian king Orodes, it was said, was watching a performance of Euripides' *Bacchae* when the head of Crassus was brought to him. Ten thousand Roman prisoners were settled in Parthia and married local women after the battle. In A.D. 36 the Roman governor of Syria, L. Vitellius, negotiated with a Parthian noble who was also a Roman citizen. It comes as something of a shock to realize that C. Iulius Antiochus Philopappus, Roman consul of A.D. 109, who has left his visible mark on the skyline of Athens, was the grandson of a Parthian king.⁴⁷

Hence the critical question, 'Did the Romans have a different policy and a different concept of frontier in the East from that in the West?' In the East we would expect, perhaps, an administrative boundary, legally negotiated as between equals and determined by political rather than military conditions. For this idea of power-sharing there is some evidence in the sources and several historical examples of treaties negotiated around the assumption that the River Euphrates was the legal boundary, the most obvious being that of Augustus in 20 B.C., when the standards of Crassus were returned.

But we need to take some care in assuming this is the whole story. The

⁴⁶ Caucasus: Strab. 1.2.39, Pliny, *HN* vi.62; Arabia: Diod. III.46–7, Strab. XVI.4, 22; cf. Braund (1986).

⁴⁷ Parthian ambitions: e.g. Tac. *Ann.* VI.31.1, Joseph. *AJ* XX.81–91. But see the reservations of Isaac (1986) 384–5 and *Limits* ch. 1. Debevoise (1969) is still the standard political history of Parthia.

eastern front was more than just Syria and the Euphrates. There was Palestine and Nabataean Arabia to the south, while to the north there was Armenia and the shores of Pontus as far as the Caucasus. The Euphrates was perhaps a plausible dividing line to negotiate in northern Syria; but in the southern desert part it was the main route of east–west movement.⁴⁸ The contrast between deserts, steppes and mountains was as great on the eastern front as between Hadrian's Wall and the African *fossatum* in the West.

There is another difficulty in answering the question: the relatively undeveloped state of archaeology in the East compared with the West, despite important new work which has radically changed some old concepts and ideas about the eastern frontiers.⁴⁹ One simple fact which militates against the notion of a fixed, linear frontier in the East is that in the first and second centuries of the empire more Roman military inscriptions have been found beyond the Euphrates and Arabian *limes* road than on the immediate line of what was once called the eastern frontier.

Whether this is an accident of research or a reflection of reality is impossible yet to judge. The irony about our ignorance is that the eastern front was occupying proportionately greater and greater Roman attention and manpower than the West from the first to the fourth centuries. While Pompey's settlement considered three to four legions in Syria sufficient as the sole garrison for the whole Middle East, by the second century there were eight legions and as many auxiliaries stretched out from the Black Sea to the Gulf of Aqaba, a force of some hundred thousand men, to which Septimius Severus added two more legions in Mesopotamia.

Between Pompey's settlement in the late Republic and the emperor Nero there were no fundamental territorial changes in the area controlled by the Romans, although some allied kingdoms (Cappadocia, Lycia-Pamphilia, Judaea, Pontus) were absorbed into Roman provincial administration. But even Corbulo's campaigns under Nero in the 60s did not annex any new province. Indeed, it is a measure of the absence of the need for a specific military frontier that Tacitus should say that Nero intended to 'retain' Armenia but makes no direct allegation that he wished to make it a province. This, however, certainly did not mean there was an aversion to military action or advance. As we saw, Pompey's answer to Parthian demands for a treaty recognizing the Euphrates as the mutual frontier was strangely equivocal. At his death, Caesar was planning a campaign against the Parthians in which Octavian was to participate. Augustan poets reflect the

⁴⁸ Negotiated frontiers: Crow (1986). Euphrates: Poidebard (1934) 21.

⁴⁹ Recent works of research are: Mitchell (1983), Kennedy (1982), Bowersock, *Arabia* (1983), Gregory and Kennedy (1985), Freeman and Kennedy (1986), Parker (1987), Kennedy and Riley (1990), Isaac, *Limits* (1990). They have modified much of the important pioneering studies by Poidebard and Stein.

dreams of eastern victories taking Roman arms to India. 'The ends of the earth are preparing triumphs for you, Tiber, and the Euphrates will flow subject to your jurisdiction.' And the return of the Roman standards was publicized in Rome as the submission of the Parthian king.⁵⁰

Even after the diplomatic settlement of 20 B.C., we are informed that the emperor's grandson, Gaius, when he died in 2 B.C., was planning campaigns, 'extending the *termini* beyond the Rhine, Euphrates and Danube'. After Augustus had claimed that he could have made Armenia a province but had preferred to leave it a dependent kingdom, all future emperors regarded the country as a Roman 'gift', revocable at any time. It was a Roman right to instal and control the kings of Armenia, a right which they were prepared to enforce with arms. Further south, on the Syrian front, it is certain that Rome controlled, if only indirectly, the caravan city of Palmyra by A.D. 18, which would theoretically, therefore, have extended her military authority, through Palmyrene militia, along the desert routes and water points as far as the lower Euphrates and perhaps beyond. It is a measure of the fluidity of the frontiers that Palmyrene militia were permitted to operate from Dura Europus on the Euphrates, even while it was still a Parthian city in the first century A.D.⁵¹

Claudius was probably the first to construct a fort on the line of the Euphrates; but he also seems to have reinforced the Armenian king beyond the Euphrates with a Roman garrison.⁵² Indeed, the campaigns of Corbulo under Nero were conducted primarily to hold Armenia, which Tacitus says was already in A.D. 62 being regarded by Caesennius Paetus as ready for direct provincial rule. There were also at this date Roman fortified sites in Mesopotamia. Although in the settlement after Corbulo's wars the Parthians demanded Roman withdrawal to the Euphrates line 'as before' and the Romans are said to have set up a line of forts 'against the Armenians' (whatever that means), it is not said that Nero formally accepted the Euphrates as the Roman frontier. Strabo, who wrote under Tiberius, probably captured the ambiguity of the situation when he said that, while the Parthians regarded the Euphrates as their 'limit' (*peraia*), 'The Romans hold parts within [sc. Mesopotamia] and, of the phylarchs of the Arabs as far as Babylonia, some incline to Parthia, some to the Romans.'⁵³

As in the West, the Flavian achievement in the East has to be judged

⁵⁰ Suet. *Aug.* 8, Prop. III.4. Nero's intention: Tac. *Ann.* XIII.8 (*retinendae Armeniae*), although at *Ann.* xv.6 Tacitus says that Caesennius Paetus was alleged to have promised to impose a Roman administration on Armenia. Parthian standards – Zanker (1988) 182–96.

⁵¹ Gaius: Sen. *Brev. Vit.* 4.5. Armenia: Aug. *Res Gestae* 27, Tac. *Ann.* XII.45. Palmyra: *CIS* II iii.3913 cites a tax law of Germanicus in A.D. 18. The best discussion of Palmyra's influence and control is in Teixidor (1984); cf. Matthews (1984), Isaac, *Limits* 142.

⁵² Dobrawa (1986) 96–7; Mitford (1980) 1174.

⁵³ Tac. *Ann.* xv.6, 17, *Hist.* II.6 (A.D. 69); Strabo XVI.1.28. Mitford (1980) 1179 argues for formal recognition of the Euphrates; cf. n. 63 below.

almost exclusively by archaeology. Here, too, theories have been put forward of a new, scientific policy, including a supposed dismantling of the system of alliances with friendly kings. But many are now inclined to revise earlier claims of a Flavian master strategy and to regard the idea of a fortified frontier along the Euphrates, which anticipated and resembled that of the fourth century, as a myth. There is certainly evidence of alliances with kings in Armenia and along the line of the Caucasus.⁵⁴

The most striking change was in the disposition of the legions. Cappadocia was developed as a first-class military province and the two legionary bases were built at Satala and Melitene, roughly along the lateral line of the upper Euphrates and its extension road to the Black Sea. In Syria-Commagene there was probably a parallel pair of legionary bases at Samosata and Zeugma, although the precise archaeological date for the forts is lacking. Both were important crossing-points of the Euphrates, certainly occupied earlier and probably customs posts on the provincial border. But these sites did not form a military front so much as provide a base for invasion routes into Armenia or Mesopotamia and control of caravan routes coming out of the East. Legionary bases were not normally placed on the leading edge of a military front.⁵⁵

In fact, there is more evidence of the Flavian army beyond the upper Euphrates and Pontic road than on it. In Azerbaijan a rock inscription records a legionary detachment overlooking the Caspian Sea 1,600 kilometres from its base at Melitene. Another detachment was placed in the Caucasian Gates (Darial Pass), where a wall, too, was built for the Iberian king at the southern end of the pass. A fort was rebuilt at Gornea near the Armenian capital of Artaxata and another inscription (now lost) records a Roman detachment on the Araxes. The evidence gives substance to the poem of Statius which says that Domitian was planning an expedition down the Araxes to India and the Far East. Another possibility is that Colchis and the Caucasus were being brought under control to prevent piracy of corn supplies for the legions from the Black Sea, which was arriving at the port of Trapezus (Trebizond).⁵⁶

What seems sure is that Romans did not think they had reached the limits of empire in the East when Trajan came to power in the early second century. His annexation of Armenia and Mesopotamia between A.D. 114 and 117 provide illustrations of the sort of frontier thinking that existed in the East. But it is worth noting that, as Armenia was organized, so too were

⁵⁴ M. P. Speidel in Mitchell (1983) 8, Crow (1986) 80, Isaac, *Limits* 50.

⁵⁵ Legionary bases in Cappadocia: Joseph. *Bj* vii.1.3, Mitford (1980) 1186. Bases in Syria/Commagene: *ILS* 8903 (the road between Melitene and Samosata) and perhaps the Josephus ref. above. Customs posts: Philostr. *VA* 1.20, *ILS* 279, *AE* 1947 no. 181 (*curatores ripae*).

⁵⁶ Caspian rock inscription – *AE* 1951 no. 263; Darial Pass and wall: *ILS* 8795; Gornea: *SEG* xx 110; Araxes lost inscription: Mitford (1980) 1194; Roman aims: Crow (1986).

the military garrisons on the Euphrates, now far to the rear, strengthened. An obvious example is the new fort at Zimara, where the upper Euphrates makes a sharp bend southwards as it flows out of Armenia. No question now, therefore, of concluding from the archaeological evidence that a fortified river front-line was intended. Armenia itself came under the governor of Cappadocia, as far as we can see, but no attempt was made to define the eastern borders.⁵⁷

Although Hadrian reverted to an Augustan type of Roman control of Armenia through allied kings and abandoned Mesopotamia, there is no reason to think he renounced all claims to control east of the Euphrates. If we can trust the story that Hadrian's excuse for pulling back Roman troops was the example of Cato's withdrawal from Macedonia in the second century B.C., the analogy was one of control by indirect rule. Both in the far north (Iberia, Armenia) and beyond the middle Euphrates (Edessa, Osroene, Bactria, Hyrcania) we are told of the submission of allied kings, not all of it empty propaganda.⁵⁸ It is not warranted to conclude from this evidence that Hadrian had adopted a purely defensive policy.

Whatever we may think of Hadrian's intentions, however, it is obvious that during the rule of Marcus Aurelius and Verus (A.D. 161–9) Trajan's policy of direct rule and administration of Mesopotamia as a province was thought both possible and desirable. Although the final *coup de grâce* of annexation had to come from Septimius Severus, probably in A.D. 198, there were already Roman garrisons, forts and some sort of imperial administration (at Nisibis) in the northern part of the interriverine territory before it became a province – 'occupation without annexation', it has been termed – a good example of how indeterminate the frontier remained and how little the Romans felt constrained by the differences between directly administered provinces and indirectly controlled territory beyond. In Armenia Marcus Aurelius deliberately left the king in place but bolstered by a Roman garrison in the new capital of Kainopolis.⁵⁹

Trajan's attempt to add Mesopotamia to the list of provinces was paralleled by his organization to the south of Syria of the new province of Arabia, where recent study has clarified his work.⁶⁰ Trajan's interest must have been particularly stimulated by the start made by his father in his period as governor. What emerges is that the Arabian 'frontier' was in reality no more than a road – the *Via Nova Traiana* – studded with fortified posts, which ran from the Gulf of Aqaba to Bosra. The road followed the old 'King's Road' which had been worked by the Nabataean Arabs to control the trade routes from the Red Sea and the Yemen to Petra, and in many ways resembled the earlier construction. The road was supplemented

⁵⁷ Zimara – Mitford *JRS* 64 (1974) 171–2. ⁵⁸ *HA Hadr.* 5, 17, 21.

⁵⁹ Kennedy (1979). Kainopolis: Dio *LXXI*.14.2. ⁶⁰ Isaac, *Limits* 147–53; cf. above, n. 49.

by long-distance outposts in the Hedjaz (Saudi Arabia) and perhaps along the Wadi Sirhan. These look like posts for Roman patrols, not so much for defence-in-depth as for surveillance of nomadic movements and to provide caravan escorts, although the evidence from the Azraq oasis is Severan.

In other words, the Arabian frontier was a true *limes*, a road for movement and not a blocking, defensive system. On the Palestine sector it has been suggested that the road forts were posted as much for internal security against the bandits of Judaea as to protect the territory against external, nomadic raiders.⁶¹ This fits in well with the notion expressed earlier that the eastern frontier, as it is traditionally described, which ran from the Pontic shore, down the Euphrates, across along the Gebel steppes to Damascus and Bosra and finally down the Via Nova Traiana to the Red Sea, was in reality a line of communication and supply, the base from which the Romans extended their controls without any sense of boundaries.

This does not mean that such lines were never defensive when external attacks came. We have already seen how the concept of a *praetentura* of forts 'stretched out' like a battle line had been applied by Tacitus to the Armenian front. But it is not proven that *finis imperii* were perceived as having a permanently defensive role. Indeed, it has been calculated that recorded Parthian attacks on Roman provinces over three centuries were only half the number of those launched by Romans on Parthia; and it is never proven that the Parthians took the initiative.⁶² In short, while strategy between East and West obviously differed, the concept of frontiers was remarkably similar.

V. WHY DID ROMAN FRONTIERS STOP WHERE THEY DID?

Although, as we saw, the Romans never abandoned the ideology of expansion, yet *de facto* it is evident that they did stop, even if sometimes it is not easy to see exactly where. The question is, therefore, do these limits represent some sort of rational, 'scientific' or natural stopping-place? Or did the Roman armies simply run out of steam, constructing their frontiers wherever they happened to be without thought for a grand strategy? Both points have been argued forcefully.⁶³ Analogies of more modern frontiers, however, suggest that while geographic 'natural' features, such as mountains and rivers, may have political and juridical convenience, they are rarely

⁶¹ Eadie (1986), Isaac, *Limits* 119–32; e.g. Joseph. *Bj* 11.4.3, for attacks by Jewish dissidents.

⁶² The concept, although not the word *praetentura*, is contained in Tac. *Hist.* 11.6: *et quicquid castrorum Armeniis praetenditur*; cf. Tac. *Hist.* 11.14. Parthian attacks: this repeats one of the main themes of Isaac, *Limits*.

⁶³ These two points of view are those presented by Luttwak (1976); cf. Jones (1978); against Mann (1974) and (1979).

suitable as military lines. Cultures do not divide at such natural lines and there are always ambiguous ‘marches’ which are regions of transition and exchange between one culture and another. Frontiers, in short, are ambiguous zones which incorporate constant movement and development.⁶⁴

One of the main difficulties about the ‘grand strategy’ thesis is, as its opponents have demonstrated, that Roman frontiers seem to lack any kind of uniformity, even where there were visual similarities.⁶⁵ Hadrian’s Wall in Britain, for example, was manned by thousands of forward troops, always auxiliaries; the African *clausurae* in Tripolitania were apparently maintained by small detachments drawn from a single legion and not before the late second century; Mauretania Tingitana never seems to have possessed a linear structure of frontier at all; in Arabia the frontier was primarily the trunk road.

Although there is no doubt that one of the major achievements of Augustus was a new concept of the organization of space, which transformed the Roman empire into some sort of cohesive cosmopolis,⁶⁶ there is a danger of exaggerating what was achievable at the time. ‘Rome’, it has been said, ‘had no Institute of Strategic Studies’; manuals of *stratagemata*, such as that of Frontinus in Domitian’s day, were books of stratagems not strategy; despite the advances of Agrippa’s map, the details were rudimentary and often inaccurate; there is no reason to believe that emperors were particularly closely or well advised by their generals in the field.⁶⁷ Augustus’ boast of conquests beyond the administrative horizon were couched in terms of peoples – *gentes* or *ethne* – not of precise territorial control.

Roman writers and inscriptions after Augustus illustrate this absence of fixed, linear geographic features on the frontiers. Appian in the second century says that, ‘The Romans rule some of the Keltoi *beyond* the Rhine.’ Keeping Dacians and Sarmatians at a distance from the Danube was Roman policy, according to Florus in the second century. And clearly this was the function of client kings and chiefs, who continued to remain, as in Augustus’ day, an essential element in the long arm of Roman control beyond the administrative province.⁶⁸

On the eastern frontier, for example, Rome bestowed on native, Arab chiefs on their Syrian desert borders a variety of titles – such as ethnarch, arabarch, strategos – and the main picture of the frontier is of a series of long-distance, caravan routes controlled from pivotal points such as Palmyra and Dura Europus, guarded by the militia of the *nomadoi*, and

⁶⁴ The issues are discussed by Whittaker, *Frontiers*, and Isaac, *Limits*.

⁶⁵ Mann (1979) 179 and *passim*. ⁶⁶ This is the theme of Nicolet (1991).

⁶⁷ The quotation is from Mann (1979) 180. *Stratagemata*: Millar (1982). Inaccurate maps: Dilke (1985) 46–7.

⁶⁸ App. *BCiv.* pref. 4; Florus II.28–9. Luttwak (1976) believes in the diminishing role of client kings but the evidence suggests otherwise.

extending deep into the desert of the lower trans-Euphrates region. An inscription from Palmyra in A.D. 199 honours a certain Ogelos, son of Makkaïos 'for the continuous expeditions he has raised against the nomads, always providing safety for the merchants and caravans on every occasion on which he was their leader'.⁶⁹

Another inscription set up in the reign of Marcus Aurelius and Verus at Ruwwafa in the Hedjaz, far to the east of the Trajanic road, shows the existence of a temple dedicated to the emperors by the confederation of the Thamudeni. A third Nabataean inscription from Jawf in the Wadi Sirhan of modern Saudi Arabia, referring to a Roman military officer as early as A.D. 44, over 800 kilometres away from Bosra or Petra, shows just how far and how early Roman influence penetrated into the forward areas.⁷⁰ The more excavation that is completed, the more clear becomes the extent of Roman rule beyond the lines of administration. The pioneering work of Poidebard and Stein in the 1930s had already revealed the extraordinary density of road and patrol posts in a deep zone beyond the desert frontier road, and this is now confirmed by recent campaigns. The important point to note is that at the same time as the Romans probed further and further into regions which lay beyond their immediate administrative control, much of the complex was to control the movement of the nomads who moved seasonally onto the high steppes of Syria and across the Roman frontier.⁷¹

It was just because of this transitional character of the frontiers, which lay in zones where the populations on either side had historic, cultural and even political links, that the Romans advanced naturally beyond their administrative boundaries. The ambiguity of cultural and political frontier zones is exactly what history records as the Romans were expanding their empire in the West. Julius Caesar's 'Germans' were a political invention, a device to account for his own 'Gallic' wars which took him as far as the Rhine. In fact he, and later Tacitus, give us much evidence to show that the Rhine was a region of mixed culture and of populations who occupied both banks of the Rhine – like the Menapii who had *agros aedificia vicoseque* on both sides; or like the peoples in the *Agri Decumates* beyond the upper Rhine–Danube, who were joined by the 'vagabonds' of Gaul.⁷²

Archaeology is now making increasingly clear the signs of this mixed civilization. The so-called Celtic *oppida* culture of the late Iron Age La Tène

⁶⁹ *SEG* VII 139; cf. Matthews (1984) 168 and *passim*.

⁷⁰ Ruwwafa inscription: text given by J. T. Milik in P. J. Parr *et al.* *BLAL London* 10 (1972) 54–7. Jawf inscription: reported in Kennedy (1986) 8. Note also the late second- or early third-century dedication there by the III Cyrenaican legion in M. Speidel, *ANRW* II 8 (1977) 694.

⁷¹ Gregory and Kennedy (1985) 383–4, 408–9, Poidebard (1934) 67–8. Parker in Freeman and Kennedy (1986) 633–60 summarizes recent work.

⁷² Caes. *BGall.* IV.4, Tac. *Germ.* 29. In general, Wells (1972) ch. 1, Hachmann (1971), Todd (1987).

period clearly did not halt at the Rhine or the Danube; nor was it wiped out by the arrival of the Germanic-speaking peoples, who appeared more or less at the same time as the Romans. In the Danube region, although many Celtic *oppida* were destroyed by the arrival of Germans in central Europe, the Romans encountered there, too, a mixed culture. The Danube was neither a cultural nor a military dividing line between Rome and the barbarians. Tacitus describes the intrusive Germanic tribe of the Eravisci south and west of the Danube ‘knee’ and around Budapest, whose fraction, the Osii, occupied the north bank. The Eravisci group, moreover, spoke Celtic, but we also hear of a Roman officer in the second century who was *praepositus gentis Onsurum* [sc. *Osiorum*].⁷³

The story is repeated in Britain in the region of Hadrian’s Wall. Whatever the name Brigantes means (Highlander?), it is clear that the Wall was not the cultural dividing point between their subsets and others to the north. In the West the Carvetii, too, extended both south of their tribal centre, Carlisle, and north of the Solway into the Anan valley. At the very moment that Trajan laid out the perimeter road and set stakes out on the Solway, the Romans were carrying out a census in the Anan region to the north. The meaning, therefore, of the famous (and unique) literary reference in the *Historia Augusta* to Hadrian’s Wall as a line ‘to divide barbarians and Romans’ is obscure and looks suspiciously like one of the many fourth-century A.D. ideological anachronisms which are scattered through the biographies of that strange work.⁷⁴

Africa, like Britain, had its frontier walls, which were associated with, although not necessarily dating from, the agrarian developments under Trajan of the region of the salt marsh ‘Chotts’ and oases of southern Tunisia and Algeria. The first boundary road built from the gulf of Gabes to the Roman camp at Ammaedara (Haidra) in the last years of Augustus’ rule had obviously cut across the southern Gaetuli and Musulami federations and the lines of transhumance of these peoples. It was this which provoked the rebellion of Tacfarinas under Tiberius. But even after Trajan’s advance further south, what becomes clear about the *clausurae* walls is that they were by no means the front line but well behind forts such as that at Turris Tamalleni (Telmine).⁷⁵

These examples, therefore, seem to confirm Febvre’s general conclusion about pre-nineteenth-century frontiers as being zones not lines, which were not based upon natural, physical features and which were culturally regions of interchange. There is no real basis for the view that the Romans developed these frontiers scientifically and strategically into engines of defence and exclusion. Nor was there a moral barrier at the frontiers, as has

⁷³ Tac. *Germ.* 28, *AE* 1914 no. 248. Discussed by Mócsy (1974) 59–60.

⁷⁴ Census: *CIL* XI 5213; *HA Hadr.* 11.2: *qui barbaros Romanosque divideret*. Carvetii: Higham and Jones (1985) 74–8. ⁷⁵ The map in Trouset (1974) fig. 38 illustrates the point.

often been argued.⁷⁶ On the contrary, they were designed on the assumption that Roman power extended far beyond the administered frontier and they were intended to permit movement of dependent allies through the lines.

Does this mean, then, that the choice of frontier was accidental? To help answer this question we can profit from the acute study made by Lattimore of the frontiers of China, in which he concluded that the determining factors in their location were not military but economic and ecological. The frontier, he argued, represented a compromise between the range of conquest and the economy of rule; the limiting factor being supplies, whether local or from long distance. By definition such points of location were never clear lines and they could change. In this light the frontiers may not have been militarily strategic but neither were they accidental.⁷⁷

When applied to the Roman empire the model is attractive. Our ancient sources give some hints that Romans were aware of the economy of conquest, if only crudely, and sometimes set purely in terms of expected tax returns. For instance, the well-known passage of Appian, who was an imperial administrator in the Antonine period, was quoted earlier in which he talks of the unprofitability of maintaining direct rule over poverty-stricken barbarians.⁷⁸

But whether there was a strictly conscious calculation about the economy of conquest or not, archaeological studies reveal the extent to which the limits of Roman rule in prehistoric Europe corresponded with the points where productivity of the land was marginal and social development limited. In Picardy, for instance, pre-Roman *aedificia* were relatively dense compared with the sparse settlements of tribes further north such as those of the Nervii and Menapii. Field systems grew smaller as the Rhine was approached and north of the Rhine it would have been difficult, according to a recent survey, to have found enough food for the army on the spot.⁷⁹ Distribution maps of artefacts, graves and botanic remains in 'free' Germany show striking empty zones beyond the upper Rhine in the Mittelpfalz, Franken, East Hessen and Lower Saxony, where the Romans would have been hard put to it to find food locally, and give some substance to Tacitus' view that much of Germany was either bristling with forests or dank with marshes. These areas contrast interestingly with the Lippe–Ruhr valley where, of course, the Romans did advance into Germany.⁸⁰

The same sort of ecological marginality can be illustrated in north Britain. A detailed survey which has been done in the Solway basin reveals

⁷⁶ The thesis of the moral barrier between Romans and barbarians, which was argued by Alföldi (1952), is the generally accepted view. ⁷⁷ Lattimore (1940) and (1962).

⁷⁸ App. *BCiv.* pref. 4, quoted above, p. 299; cf. App. *BCiv.* pref. 5, Strab. iv. 5. 3.

⁷⁹ Champion (1984) 323, Willems (1986) 223. ⁸⁰ Tac. *Germ.* 5.

that the site density changes significantly (more than double) as one moves from south to north across the frontier zone. In the opinion of the archaeologists not all of the difference can be explained as the consequence of the Roman wall and some must predate its foundation. In fact, it must be the cause of its foundation. Land in the frontier zone of the Wall is classically of the type where crop culture is exchanged for cattle breeding.⁸¹

In Africa a recent survey similarly concludes that the frontiers fell in a region of 'economic ambivalence', explaining why nomadic herding people moved across the lines of the frontiers in regions where rainfall was limited and herding communities needed to move from the desert to the high steppes. This view is confirmed by a study of the Severan frontier in western Algeria, where the author concludes that the Severan *limes* coincided with what he calls 'the natural limit of profitable culture of cereals in dry farming land'. Dramatic new evidence of this same transition from profitability to marginal farming is coming out of the detailed studies made by the UNESCO Libyan Valleys project. On the high Gebel Tarhuna, for instance, two and a half times the number of olive presses have been discovered as in the Wadis ZemZem and Soffegin to the south where the Roman forts were established in the third century. The Romans advanced to a zone of mixed farming where the culture was in transition from agriculture and olive farming to pastoralism.⁸²

This is what Poidebard, also, found in the 1930s to be the explanation of the Syrian desert frontier. The line of road corresponds closely to the edge of what he called 'Saharan climate', between the 100 and 250 mm isohyet rainfall lines. Further south in Arabia the frontier road lay on the edge of sedentary farmlands. In both these cases it was the marginal conditions which made it inevitable that nomadic movements seasonally traversed the open frontier, thereby providing the Romans with their means of political control.⁸³

What this tells us, therefore, about the nature of Roman frontiers is, first, that the long range of Roman power lay well beyond the formal military and administrative lines. The problem of where to stop was to some extent arbitrary in that the marginality of the ecology created a zone of choice. This could explain the curious fluctuations of the choice of walls in north Britain between Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall; or the reason for the odd advance of the *limes* in Germany under Antoninus Pius so soon after recent building of forts on the Odenwald line.

Secondly, it shows why Roman frontiers were in principle open and not closed, even though they might on occasion need to resist attack. Naturally, this does not mean that the Roman generals (or, in Hadrian's case, the

⁸¹ Higham and Jones (1985) 78, Greene, *Archaeology* 128 (with map).

⁸² Troussset (1987) 10, Salama (1977) 578, Mattingly (1985) 35–6.

⁸³ Poidebard (1934) 22, Parker in Freeman and Kennedy (1986) 637.

emperor) ignored the geographic value of a site. The African *clausurae*, for instance, were usually located in a way to link up ranges of hills. In Britain both walls were built at points where the coastal links were at their narrowest. It is this fact that has misled us into supposing they were intended as strategic barriers. But they were constructed at these points for reasons of administrative control and economy of effort, since so often they were badly sited militarily. Above all, the Romans needed to encourage exchange for the purposes of their own military supply and in order to use such exchange to maintain political control. The construction of the Wall in Britain seems to incorporate the design of planned crossing-points. At Castle Nick, for instance, traces of the ancient route can still be picked out going through the fort. In Africa, the so-called ‘guichet’ on the plain between the Djebel Tabaga and the Matmata Mountains served the same purpose and was deliberately the only point of traverse. But on many frontiers there were no formal, physical checks at all and control was maintained by surveillance, signalling and long-distance patrols.⁸⁴

We see, too, the importance of rivers in this design, not as natural or ‘scientific’ defensive features, which rivers rarely are, but as lines of supply behind the forward lines in the marginal zones. This is most clearly illustrated by the Euphrates in the northern sector of the eastern frontier, where the conventional interpretation of the river as the frontier is not supported by the increasing archaeological discoveries. The same is true of the western frontier in Germany. The founding of large legionary camps on the Rhine does not mean that this was the frontier so much as the arterial lifeline of the forward arms of the army.⁸⁵

But, finally, by this explanation of why the frontiers stopped where they did we discover also an explanation of why they finally collapsed. Because they attracted supplies, because they brought order and prosperity, including economic change, they also contained a built-in obsolescence. They brought prosperity – and therefore social advance – to the populations beyond the frontiers. In time these people became strong enough to turn against the Romans.⁸⁶

APPENDIX ON THE SOURCES

There is no obvious, ancient, literary source to which one can turn for information about frontiers or about how Romans perceived them. This is partly an accident of historiography. The great epoch of frontier-building,

⁸⁴ Breeze and Dobson (1976) 77, Rebuffat (1977) 508.

⁸⁵ For Arabia: V. A. Clark and S. T. Parker in Parker (1987) 165–82; for Africa: Rebuffat (1982) and Trousslet in *Limeskongress XIV* (1990).

⁸⁶ For further discussion about supply of frontiers and economic development, see Whittaker, *Frontiers* ch. 4.

from the Flavians to the Severi, is also a period which has been singularly ill served by surviving ancient historians. Tacitus, though a contemporary of Trajan and Hadrian, nevertheless chose to devote his major effort to earlier reigns, and even that section of the *Histories* dealing with Vespasian's reign has been lost. Only Dio, a Greek senator of the Severan period who wrote a vast compendium of Roman history, provides us with the outlines of a continuous history. But his work for this period (Books LXIV to LXXVII) has survived only in the epitomized versions of later authors, often in fragmentary form. All the same, there are many flashes of illumination from his text, sometimes from his own personal and third-century point of view. The biographers of the Caesars – Suetonius on the Julio-Claudians and Flavians and the author of the *Historia Augusta*, who wrote the lives of emperors and pretenders from Hadrian to the third century – were uninterested in foreign affairs, although their biographies contain snippets of information which are as much disputed as they are cited.

In many ways the most informative literary sources are the two early monographs by Tacitus, the *Agricola* and the *Germania*. The first was written in praise of his father-in-law and included Agricola's campaigns in Britain, but as panegyric cannot always pretend to present objective judgements; the second is a study of tribes beyond the northern frontiers, which owes as much to Tacitus' romantic concept of the 'noble savage' as to his spirit of ethnographic enquiry. Both works, therefore, have their problems, but both contain the authentic voice of a sophisticated Roman of the time.

Roman ideas of space and geography are better represented. The corpus of *agrimensores* is a text of the collective wisdom of a number of Roman state land surveyors, starting with that of Sextus Iulius Frontinus who was also governor of Britain, c. A.D. 74, and a soldier who wrote a useful work on stratagems. The manuscripts of the land surveyors have come down to us containing a number of working diagrams and pictures, which, although drawn in a later period, certainly derive from Roman originals. Much of the information in this corpus is technical and little understood by the medieval copyists, who have often mangled the text badly. But it is in these pages that we glimpse the Roman administration at work on mundane matters like boundary markers and native settlements, which are issues which concerned the frontiers.

The compendious, political geography of Strabo was written just after the death of Augustus and is the work of an easterner, dependent on Hellenistic sources. Nevertheless it gives us a good idea of the state of knowledge in the early empire. There is little that directly refers to frontiers; but much that helps us appreciate how Romans perceived the world. That is also true of the *Natural Histories* of the elder Pliny, a Roman equestrian and administrator in the empire, who died in the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79. His work on the German Wars is lost but it is through Pliny that

we know most about the 'chorographic' commentary which accompanied the great map of Agrippa in the *Campus Martius*.

Inevitably in these circumstances it is archaeology and inscriptions which provide the detailed – and sometimes the only – evidence with which to fill the gaps in our knowledge. One of the ironies of modern politics and economics is that, while the eastern frontier from Vienna to the Nile Valley steadily absorbed an increasing proportion of Roman resources and military manpower as the period progressed, the Balkans and the Middle East have been the least accessible regions to modern research. By contrast, Roman Britain, the most distant and inaccessible frontier province of the West, has benefited from years of the sort of meticulous attention which has only in the last decade begun to be given to major frontier provinces of the East, such as Arabia, Syria and Cappadocia. It goes without saying that each season brings its own surprises to upset any general theory of frontiers as evidence of deeper-than-ever penetration and of different military occupation comes to light.

There has been a regular series of Congresses of Frontier Studies since the first in 1949 (published 1952), whose Acts contain the latest reports of research on every frontier of the empire. A full list to date of these publications is given in the bibliography (Frequently Cited Works) under the heading *Limeskongress*.

CHAPTER 9
THE ARMY¹

MARK HASSALL

When Trajan decided at the beginning of the second century to create a new legion it was accorded two titles, *Ulpia* after the family name of its creator, and *victrix* – ‘the Victorious’ – an epithet to which the legion might hopefully aspire; numerically it was to be known as the Thirtieth, for there were now thirty legions in the empire. As will be shown below, the theoretical strength of each legion was, including officers, something over 5,300 men, so the total number of soldiers at the beginning of the second century serving in this branch of the Roman army was about 160,000 men.

Yet the army that pushed back the borders of the empire under Trajan, and then took on the task of defending them under Hadrian and his successors, did not consist of legions alone. There were, in addition, the auxiliary regiments recruited mainly from the frontier provinces of the empire. The soldiers in these units were less well paid and less thoroughly trained than the legionaries and unlike them they did not, for the most part, possess Roman citizenship, but, for all that, they were a vital element in the defence of the empire and its wars of expansion. The size of these regiments differed from that of the legions, for they consisted at most of a theoretical 1,000, more often only half that number. In terms of *total* manpower, however, they outnumbered the legions by a figure that lay somewhere between a third and half as much again, so that, all told, the Roman army may have consisted of some 380,000 men. Yet this figure excluded the

¹ Our knowledge of the Roman army is derived from literary and documentary sources and the archaeological evidence. The documentary material includes epigraphic and papyrological texts for which *Military Records* is indispensable, referred to here by the item number. Comparable records, but written in ink on wooden writing tablets, have been published by Bowman and Thomas, *Vindolanda* I and II. Secondary works based largely on the documentary evidence, include Watson (1983), the survey articles in *ANRW* II.1 and the collected papers on the Roman army by various scholars in the *Mavors* series, Amsterdam, subsequently Stuttgart, 1984 in progress. The archaeological material is widely scattered but the proceedings of two series of international congresses are useful in providing accounts of new discoveries and work in progress. For proceedings of congresses of Roman frontier studies, see the bibliography, under *Limeskongress* in Frequently Cited Works. For proceedings of Roman military equipment congresses, see Bishop (1983), (1985), Dawson (1987) Coulston (1988) and Driel-Murray (1989). These are supplemented by the new (1990) *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies*. Two synthetic works which draw on the archaeological evidence are Webster (1985) and Connolly (1981), while Robinson (1975) is a comprehensive and well-illustrated presentation of the relevant material.

guards and paramilitary police and fire service in the city of Rome itself – something in excess of a further 10,000 men.² Nor should one forget the rowers of the warships based at Misenum on the Bay of Naples and Ravenna on Italy's Adriatic coast, at Alexandria and on the Black Sea, or of the flotillas that patrolled the Rhine and the Danube and the waters of the Channel and North Sea.³ Finally, there were the semi-irregular units or *numeri* raised from tribes on the fringes of the empire,⁴ so that, altogether, the fighting strength of the Roman army can have fallen little short of half a million men. Not only was this the largest standing army that the world had yet known, it was also the best trained and the best equipped. To understand something of its character is to appreciate an essential element in the success of the empire as a whole.

I. DISTRIBUTION

The accession of Vespasian in A.D. 70 marked the end of a traumatic period for Roman arms when legion had turned against legion during the struggle for power that had followed on the death of Nero and others had basely surrendered to the rebels during the Batavian revolt. The result had been the creation of a number of new legions and the disbandment of some of the old, as well as changes in their location throughout the empire. If, towards the end of Vespasian's reign, Tacitus in one of the lost books of the *Histories* had given a breakdown of the legionary dispositions province by province, as he did in the *Annals*⁵ for the year A.D. 25, the picture would have been something like this.

In Britain there were four legions: legion II Augusta based at Isca (Caerleon) in south Wales, legions XX Valeria Victrix stationed at Viroconium (Wroxeter, near Shrewsbury), II Adiutrix at the new base of Deva (Chester) and the fourth, legion IX, at Eburacum (York). Each of the two Germanies was also held by four legions: in Germania Inferior, legion X Gemina at Noviomagus (Nijmegen), in the territory of the Batavi whose rebellion had recently been crushed, legion XXII Primigenia at Vetera (Xanten), in a new fortress built in succession to the old double legionary base nearby, VI Victrix at Novaesium, (Neuss) and XXI Rapax at Bonna (Bonn); in Germania Superior, legions I Adiutrix and XIV Gemina at Mogontiacum (Mainz), another double fortress, legion VIII Augusta at Argentorate (Strasbourg) and XI Claudia at Vindonissa (Windisch). The provinces of Raetia and Noricum lacked legionary garrisons although auxiliary units were based in both, so that XI Claudia's nearest neighbours to the east were the two legions in Pannonia, XV

² See *CAH* x² 376–96. ³ Starr (1941); Viereck (1975); Reddé (1986). ⁴ Southern (1989).

⁵ Tac. *Ann* IV.5.

Apollinaris at Carnuntum (Petronell) on the Danube and XIII Gemina at Poetovio on the Drave, and the single legion in Dalmatia, IV Flavia based at Burnum. In Moesia, there were again four legions: the base of V Alaudae is uncertain, but the other three certainly lay in fortresses on the Danube, VII Claudia at Viminacium and V Macedonica and I Italica at the neighbouring fortresses of Oescus and Novae. Moving further to the east, the newly formed Anatolian frontier province of Cappadocia was held by two legions, XVI Flavia in the north, probably at Satala, and XII Fulminata at Melitene (Malatya), on the upper Euphrates. In Syria and Syria Palaestina there were four legions: III Gallica and VI Ferrata perhaps sharing the same fortress at Raphanaeae, IV Scythica north of the capital at Antioch, perhaps at Cyrrhus (rather than Zeugma on the Euphrates), and X Fretensis at Jerusalem. In Egypt there were still two legions, III Cyrenaica and XXII Deiotariana at Nicopolis outside Alexandria, while for the whole of the North Africa littoral, westwards from the borders of Egypt for 3,200 kilometres to the shores of the Atlantic, the might of Rome was represented by only one legion, III Augusta, based at this date at Theveste 210 kilometres south-west of Carthage. Much of the eastern end of this stretch was desert while at the western end in the two Mauretanian provinces strong auxiliary garrisons made good the deficiency in legionary strength. Finally, the Iberian peninsula was also held by a single legion, VII Gemina, based at the spot that in time came to be known simply as 'Legio' – Leon in Hispania Tarraconensis.

In all, then, in the mid-70s there were some twenty-nine legions, of which four were in Britain, eight on the Rhine, seven in the Danubian provinces and eight in the eastern provinces (including Egypt), with one each in North Africa and Spain. This pattern was to be altered subsequently by two periods of warfare, both followed by periods of consolidation and recovery: firstly, the conquests of Trajan in the early years of the second century followed by retrenchment under Hadrian, and secondly, the invasions of the Marcomanni from the north of the upper Danube followed by the reorganization of the frontier under Marcus and the creation of two new legions, II and III Italica, in A.D. 165/6.

The situation, therefore, sometime after the end of the first of these two periods, was as follows:⁶ in Britain there were now three legions, II Augusta at Isca, XX Valeria Victrix at Deva and VI Victrix at Eburacum. In Germania Inferior and Germania Superior there were two each, XXX Ulpia and I Minervia at Vetera and Bonna, and XXII Primigenia and VIII Augusta at Mogontiacum and Argentorate. In Pannonia Superior there were three legions, X Gemina at Vindobona (Vienna), XIV Gemina at

⁶ *ILS* 2288, which lists the legions province by province without giving their locations within them. Some of the legionary bases are given in Ptolemy's *Geography*, others are known through finds of inscriptions, see Ritterling (1924/5) where the evidence is presented legion by legion.

Carnuntum and I Adiutrix at Brigetio, while in neighbouring Pannonia Inferior there was only a single legion, II Adiutrix at Aquincum. In Moesia Superior, IV Flavia lay at Singidunum and VII Claudia at Viminacium while in Moesia Inferior I Italica was based at Novae, XI Claudia at Durostorum and V Macedonica at Troesmis. Only one of the three Dacian provinces, the northernmost, Porolissensis, was garrisoned by a legion – XIII Gemina stationed at Apulum. In the East, Cappadocia still had its complement of two legions, XV Apollinaris taking the place of XVI Flavia at Satala while XII Fulminata remained at Melitene. In the neighbouring province of Syria one, or perhaps two, legions were now based on fortresses like Melitene on the Euphrates itself, XVI Flavia at Samosata (Samsat) and IV Scythica perhaps at Zeugma (unless at Antioch, the provincial capital). Legion III Gallica remained in the south at Raphanaeae. In Palaestina, legion X Fretensis at Jerusalem had been joined by VI Ferrata at Caparcotna beneath the ancient *tel* of Megiddo, while east of Jordan, in Arabia Nabataea, III Cyrenaica lay at Bostra (Bosra). Egypt now only had one legion, II Traiana, based at Nicopolis. Legion III Augusta, now at Lambaesis in western Algeria, remained the single legion stationed in North Africa, while legion VII Gemina was still based at Leon in Spain. In total, then, during the reign of Pius, there were twenty-eight legions.

Turning from the legions to the auxiliary forces, it is at this period, in the middle of the second century after the programme of frontier consolidation carried out by Hadrian and before the disruption caused by the barbarian invasions of Marcus' reign, that our information is at its best, and it is possible to make some assessment of the number of auxiliary units based in each of the frontier provinces. The Roman army now included over 440 auxiliary regiments. Of these, between 50 and 60 are known to have been stationed in Britain, 40 or so in the Rhineland, more than 220 in the Danube provinces, perhaps 65 in the eastern provinces, 15 in Egypt, 44 in the North African provinces and just 4 in Spain. There appears to have been no fixed ratio between the number of legions in a province and the number of auxiliary units stationed there.

The biggest differences in the distribution of the forces available in the mid-second century compared with the situation in the mid-70s lay in the greater emphasis placed on the Danube and eastern provinces at the expense of other areas, especially the Rhineland where the legionary establishment had been cut to a half, from eight to four legions. In contrast, there were now nine legions stationed at fortresses on the Danube (whereas previously there had been only six) with a tenth based north of the river in Dacia. Similarly, in the eastern provinces, excluding in this reckoning Egypt, the number of legions had risen, though by a lesser amount, from six to eight. This imbalance in the distribution was to grow greater during the second half of the second century. In A.D. 165/6 Marcus created two

new legions which were eventually to be sent to the upper Danube. Here they were to garrison two frontier provinces in which auxiliary units alone had previously been stationed: in Noricum, II Italica at Lauriacum (Enns) and in Raetia, III Italica at Castra Regina (Regensburg). The upper Danube from Regensburg to Aquincum just below the Danube 'bend' was now garrisoned by a heavy concentration of no less than six legions.

There was one further development relating to the fortresses of the legions that took place during the earlier years of the period under review, the final abandonment of the practice of brigading pairs of legions together in the same fortress. Under Tiberius half the legions had been paired off and stationed together, though only one 'double' legionary fortress has been at all extensively investigated archaeologically, the base of legions XV Primigenia and V Alaudae at Vetera in the Rhineland. The practice gradually declined, though there were still a few such bases left under Vespasian and Titus. But then in A.D. 91 the governor of Upper Germany, Antonius Saturninus, tampered with the loyalty of the men of legions XIV and XXII which were based together in the double fortress at Mogontiacum and used the savings of the legionaries deposited 'at the standards' to finance his abortive rebellion. From now onwards Domitian prohibited the deposit of more than ten gold pieces (aurei) by individual soldiers at headquarters and in general discontinued the practice of uniting two legions in the same fortress.⁷

II. THE LEGIONS

1. *Organization*

The legions of the early empire were subdivided into ten cohorts and it was the cohort, rather than its constituent centuries, that is usually regarded as the tactical unit on the field of battle.⁸ The cohorts, which were conventionally numbered from one to ten, with the first being reckoned the senior and the tenth the junior, comprised six 'centuries' of 80 men each. There were thus 480 men in each cohort and sixty centuries in each legion. The centuries themselves were subdivided into sections (*contubernia*) of 8 men, who shared a tent when in the field and barrack accommodation when in permanent quarters.

During the reign of Domitian, however, by the time that the legionary fortress was established at Inchtuthil in Scotland, a change had taken place in the way the first cohort of the legion was organized.⁹ At Inchtuthil, as

⁷ Suet. *Dom.* 7.3. However, the double legionary fortress at Nicopolis remained in existence.

⁸ Note that cohorts are not mentioned in Arr. *Tac.*, the only surviving 'battle orders' from this period. Arrian's army was to be drawn up in a manner reminiscent of earlier practice with the centuries simply arranged in successive lines of battle. ⁹ Pitts and Joseph (1985); Frere (1980).

revealed by excavation, there were sixty-four barrack blocks, one for each century. The barracks were arranged in nine groups of six, each group for one of the ten cohorts in the legion. The remaining cohort, the first or senior cohort, however, had an allocation of ten barracks. And whereas each of the other cohorts had accommodation for six centurions, in the form of a bungalow set at the end of each of the six blocks, the first cohort had an allocation of only five centurions' houses. This agrees with the evidence of an inscription from Lambaesis, the base of legion III Augusta, which suggests that the first cohort of the legion only had five centuries,¹⁰ but the plan of the fortress at Inchtuthil shows that each of the five must have been double strength and so have numbered 160 and not 80 men. In summary then, it seems likely that from the late first century A.D. onwards, a first cohort of five double centuries, or 800 men, was the norm,¹¹ while the other nine cohorts consisted of six centuries or 480 men each, for a total of 5,120 infantrymen. To this must be added the 120 cavalrymen known to have been attached to each legion, so that the full complement rises to 5,240, exclusive of officers.

2. Officers

The post of legionary commander was, except in Egypt, held by the legionary legate, a man of senatorial rank in his mid-thirties who had already held the praetorship in Rome. In provinces where there was only one legion, the posts of legionary legate and provincial governor were combined. The legate would expect to serve for three years and would, if married, normally be accompanied by his wife and family. Such a man, in his first or only legionary command, would have little direct experience of military matters, having served previously only once, and that some ten years previously, as tribune. A prudent legate, then, would rely heavily on the advice and experience of the senior centurion (*primus pilus*).

In the absence of the legate the camp prefect (*praefectus castrorum*), an officer of equestrian status, might be expected to deputize for him. The *praefecti* were chosen from senior centurions and were accordingly men of great experience, unlike the legates. Theoretically they were appointed to specific legionary bases rather than individual legions, so that where two legions were brigaded together there was only one camp prefect. It was for this reason that, at the period when there were two legions in Egypt based at the fortress of Nicopolis, they were commanded by one man, the equestrian *praefectus castrorum*, and not senatorial *legati*. There was good reason

¹⁰ *ILS* 2446, dated to the mid-third century.

¹¹ These five double centuries are the equivalent to the ten normal centuries of a military infantry cohort of auxiliaries (see below, p. 332). It is possible that legionary cohorts of this size had precedents in the early first century B.C. and were not a complete innovation.

why this should be so when the governor, the prefect of Egypt, was himself only of equestrian status, but it was also a sign of things to come: towards the end of the second century Perennis, Commodus' unpopular adviser, was said to have removed senatorial legionary legates from their commands and replaced them by equestrians – presumably the camp prefects.¹² Whether this was in fact so is debatable, but in the course of the third century under the emperor Gallienus this change did take place.¹³ With their background as long-service career soldiers, the elevation of the *praefecti* to command the legions would appear to have been a sensible change, if not long overdue.

Technically outranking the camp prefect was the senatorial tribune (*tribunus laticlavus*),¹⁴ a young man of only eighteen or nineteen years old and one of six tribunes in each legion. Previous to his appointment he had normally held one of the twenty minor magistracies at Rome known collectively as the vigintivirate. Though a member of a senatorial family by birth, he was not yet himself a senator and would only technically become eligible to become one after holding the quaestorship. The significance of the post, from the point of view of the army, was that it served an ambitious young man with his eyes set on a career in the emperor's service as a sort of apprenticeship for possible later military commands. By rank, age and prospects, then, the senatorial tribune was marked off from his five equestrian colleagues (*tribuni angusticlavii*), and this was doubtless reflected not only in the duties expected of him, but also in his relationship to his legate – indeed, between the two there might often be ties of blood as well as of social standing.

In contrast to the senatorial tribune, the five equestrian tribunes had actual, rather than nominal, responsibility, as befitted men who had already seen service as the commanders of auxiliary cohorts and would see it again with the auxiliaries as the commanders of cavalry units. These three spells of service (the *tres militiae*), each lasting for a period of about three years, were normally preceded by time spent in holding the full range of magistracies in their home towns. For these there were usually age qualifications, so that by the time they embarked on a military career, the equestrian tribunes will have been in their mid-thirties and similar in age to the legate himself, but with more experience. To them will have fallen various administrative duties, and to aid them in these they were provided with a staff of clerks and orderlies. It would be wrong, however, to think of the post of

¹² *HA Comm.* 6.2

¹³ This can be inferred from *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 33.33–4 where it is stated that the emperor removed senators from military commands.

¹⁴ The senatorial tribunes were technically known as *tribuni laticlavii*, literally 'broad stripe' tribunes to distinguish them from the equestrian *tribuni angusticlavii* or 'narrow stripe' tribunes, the stripes in question being the pair of vertical bands or *clavi* which ornamented the front of their tunics and which were the symbols of their respective orders.

equestrian tribune as merely administrative, for they were sometimes put in charge of single or pairs of cohorts for detached service, and perhaps sometimes, too, commanded sections of the legion in the field, since, curiously, there appears to have been no specially appointed cohort commander.

3. *The centurionate*

The fifty-nine legionary centurions did not normally belong to the equestrian order although exceptions are known.¹⁵ The centurions themselves were called by titles derived from the cohort in which they served and from the relative position within the cohort that their century occupied. These last were indicated by terms which went back to the army of the earlier Republic before Marius introduced the cohort as the major subdivision of the legion and abolished the tactical role of the maniple, or pair of centuries.¹⁶ The new cohorts were composed of six of the old maniples, one each of the three old classes of legionary: the senior men, *pili* or *pilani* who owed their name to the *pilum*, or javelin, with which they were armed, the *principes* ('men of the front rank') and *bastati* ('spear men'). Further, within each maniple, the front century (*prior*) on the field of battle was distinguished from the one drawn up behind it (*posterior*). All these terms were retained to indicate subdivisions of the cohort, so that each centurion could be identified not only by his cohort number, but whether, like the men that he commanded, he was theoretically a *pilus*, *princeps* or *bastatus*, and whether he was *prior* or *posterior*. The titles of the centurions thus ran from *primus pilus prior*, the chief centurion in the first cohort, to *decimus bastatus posterior*, the most junior centurion in the tenth. After the reduction of the number of centuries in the first cohort to five double-strength centuries, there was no *primus pilus posterior* and from now on the chief centurion was known simply as *primus pilus*. Finally, the five centurions of the first cohort and the *pilus prior* centurions of the other nine ranked higher than the other centurions and were collectively known as the *primi ordines* ('first rankers').

Unlike their superiors, the senatorial or equestrian officers, whose individual commissions each lasted only three years, the fifty-nine centurions in each legion were committed, like the ordinary legionary, to a minimum of twenty-five years' continuous service. In fact, they often served for considerably longer periods. An example of such a man, the very essence of the hard-bitten professional who can have known no other life than that of the camps, was Lucius Maximius Gaetulicus who, as a young man during the reign of Hadrian, had enlisted as a private soldier in the ranks of legion

¹⁵ On inscriptions such centurions are designated as *ex equite Romano*, but this does not mean that they relinquished their equestrian status but that they had not served in the ranks, cf. Zwicky (1944).

¹⁶ *CAH* ix² 36–9.

XX with his eyes firmly set on the post of *primus pilus*, and who eventually achieved his ambition in legion I Italica stationed at Novae on the Danube, fifty-seven years later.¹⁷ If the career of Maximius is exceptional, there were always some legionaries who rose to the rank of centurion, if not to the coveted post of *primus pilus*, by sheer merit. Such were the men who were appointed, in accordance with ancient practice, by the election (*ex suffragio*)¹⁸ of the soldiers when a vacancy which could not be filled in the normal way occurred, for example if the original centurion had fallen in battle. But the promotion of ex-legionaries to the centurionate will, especially in peacetime, have been rare, and once promoted the chance of subsequent promotion to the ranks of the *primi ordines* slim. For such men each promotion may have simply meant a progression from posts of notionally lower to higher status within the cohort, and changes from the more junior cohorts (i.e. ones with higher numbers) to more senior ones.¹⁹

A private soldier, if promoted to the centurionate, will often have been previously chosen by his centurion to act as deputy (*optio*). In the inscriptions some *optiones* are specifically described as *optio ad spem ordinis* ('*optio* with the expectation of rank') and such men were clearly marked out for promotion. One group of men for whom the chances of achieving this goal were better than most were members of the various corps of guards in Rome, such as the emperor's horse guards (*equites singulares imperatoris*). It has been shown that centurions who describe themselves as *ex trecentario* had previously served in three other bodies of troops based in the city, the *vigiles*, whose duty it was to act as Rome's fire brigade, the urban cohort, and the emperor's own praetorian guard.²⁰ But to achieve real promotion within the centurionate, to the ranks of the *primi ordines* and the coveted post of the *primus pilus*, something more was normally required. Those with the best chance were men of equestrian status or young men who had been directly commissioned to the centurionate after being recommended to the governor or someone of influence who could submit names to the emperor's *ab epistulis* who officially issued the letters of appointment.²¹

If the long-service nature of his appointment marked the centurion off from more senior officers, there were two things that separated him from the men under his command. One was the fact that, unlike the private soldier, he was almost certainly officially allowed to marry even before Severus removed the general ban on marriage among serving soldiers.²² The second was pay. The ordinary legionary centurion probably received

¹⁷ *AE* 1985 no. 735; cf. *RIB* II 120 and 1 725. ¹⁸ E.g. *ILS* 2658+Add. ¹⁹ Cf. *ILS* 2653.

²⁰ Mann (1983a). ²¹ Cf. *Juv. Sat.* xiv.193–8.

²² See for example, *JRS* 54 (1964) 178 no. 7, an inscription set up by the wife of a centurion on the Antonine Wall during the second century. Note, however, that the unofficial wives of private soldiers are described in terms which would suggest that their marriages were officially recognized too, were it not known that this was forbidden.

three payments of fifty gold pieces (aurei) a year, increased to four payments by Domitian, that is a rise in annual salary from 150 aurei to 200.²³ This will have been over sixteen times as much as the ordinary legionary soldier received and the gulf that existed between the centurion and his men will accordingly have been considerable.

4. *The legionary soldier*

The rank and file were colloquially known as *gregales*, literally ‘men of the flock’ (or ‘common herd’ as we might put it), or *caligati* ‘booted ones’ in contrast to the *calceati* ‘those who wear the shoes’, or officer class. They were officially designated by a bewildering series of titles according to the duties they performed. However, a useful and basic distinction can be made between the so-called *principales* whose position carried actual status reflected in the pay that they received, and those tradesmen and clerks whose skills were recognized simply in their exemption from fatigues, the *immunes*.

In the legionary century the *optio*, the *signifer* (standard-bearer), and the *tesserarius*, a sort of adjutant or orderly, all ranked as *principales*. The *tesserarius* owed his name to the *tessera*, or rectangular tablet on which he inscribed the daily password issued along with standing orders each morning at headquarters,²⁴ but was, no doubt, responsible for numerous other duties of a similar nature. There were, in addition, other *principales* attached to the staffs (*officia*) of the *praefectus castrorum*, the individual tribunes, and the headquarters staff of the legionary legate, not to mention those supernumeraries who might be detached for service in the governor’s *officium*. These *officiales*, as they were in general known, included the *beneficiarii*²⁵ of the senatorial and equestrian officers in the legion, so called because they had received the *beneficium*, or favour, of being selected by them to serve on their staffs, and who in rank came immediately below the centurions. Other *principales* were the higher grades of clerks and the *aquilifer* and *imaginiferi*. The former carried the eagle standards of the legions; the latter the busts of members of the imperial house rendered in gilded metal and, like the eagle itself, mounted on a pole which served as carrying handle when the legion was on the march.

Among the large group of *immunes* were the armourers and artillerymen, *ballistarii*, the trumpeters and horn-blowers, *tubicines* and *cornicines*, and the *cornicularii* whose name should have meant that they were horn-blowers also but who had, in the course of time, taken on the duties of clerks. This last group were important since the army was as an institution extremely

²³ Dobson (1974), esp. 408, and (1972) table 203; Speidel (1992) 101–2.

²⁴ Cf. Fink, *Military Records* no. 50, morning reports of cohorts XX Palmyrenorum.

²⁵ See below, p. 342.

bureaucratic. The value placed on literacy is graphically illustrated by the well-known letter home of the young Apion who had left Egypt to join the Roman fleet at Cape Misenum on the Bay of Naples in which he expresses the confident hope that his ability to write will soon bring him preferment.²⁶ The sort of fatigues that he will have then avoided are spelled out in the duty roster for the men serving in a century of one of the legions in Egypt. Of the forty men potentially available for duties, nine were *immunes* and so exempt, but the others were allocated tasks which ranged from cleaning the centurion's boots to emptying the latrines.²⁷

5. *Pay*

Until the late first century legionaries received a salary of nine aurei paid in three instalments a year, a sum that was increased by Domitian to twelve aurei by the addition of a fourth instalment.²⁸ This remained the standard rate of pay until Severus made a further increase. In fact, only a proportion of this money was ever received by the soldier, the rest going in compulsory stoppages for clothes, boots, food and so on, as we learn from the pay records of legionaries where these deductions are listed.²⁹ Such savings as he might be able or compelled to make would be credited to the individual's savings account along with what remained from his *viaticum*, or journey money. This was the sum of three aurei, equivalent to four or, after the increase under Domitian, three months' pay, made over to the recruit on enlistment to reimburse him for travel expenses from home. The savings of the legionaries would, like the savings of their colleagues in the auxiliary units, be deposited *ad signa*, that is in the shrine of the regimental standards. Here the savings of the men would be held on deposit for them by the *signiferi*, the standard-bearers of his unit. Among the surviving military papyri are the receipts apparently issued by the *signiferi* to the centurion in charge of a draft of recruits for cohorts I Lusitanorum for the residue of their journey money which was being put on deposit.³⁰

6. *Patterns of recruitment*

The fact that the army was so bureaucratic means that it is possible to say something about the background and origin not just of high-ranking senatorial and equestrian officers, but even of ordinary legionary soldiers. When the information on origins is examined, a changing pattern emerges in the areas that supplied recruits to the legions at different periods.³¹ The evidence comes partly from lists (*laterculi*) of soldiers preserved on inscriptions set up for a variety of reasons, which record various details

²⁶ BGU 423=Sel Pap II 112. ²⁷ Fink, *Military Records* no. 9. ²⁸ Suet. *Dom.* 7.

²⁹ Fink, *Military Records* no. 69; Cotton and Geiger (1989) 35–56 no. 722.

³⁰ Fink, *Military Records* no. 74. ³¹ Forni, *Reclutamento*; Mann (1983b).

about the men named, often including their place of origin, and partly from the humble tombstones of individual legionaries. The tombstones carry similar information about the deceased, but unlike many of the *laterculi* do not give the date when they were set up, though it is often possible to deduce this at least approximately.

From a study of this sort of evidence it can be shown that in the period before A.D. 70, legionary recruits for western legions were largely drawn from the Roman *coloniae* of northern Italy and southern Gaul, which had been settled by veterans from the later first century B.C. Gradually other regions such as the Danubian provinces play their part and even come to replace the older recruiting areas, until the cities of north Italy were called upon to supply men only in exceptional circumstances: the precedent provided by Nero, of raising a legion from Italians for a projected campaign in the Caucasus and naming it I Italica, was followed a century later by Marcus Aurelius, who, when faced by the invasions of the Marcomanni, raised II and III Italica from the same region. In contrast to Italy, Spain seems to have supplied more than her fair share of recruits and under Trajan and Marcus special measures had to be taken to alleviate the situation.³²

The evidence for legions based in the eastern provinces and Egypt, though less plentiful than for western legions, shows a somewhat different pattern. In the Greek-speaking part of the empire there were few colonies of retired veterans upon which to draw, and recruiting from among the provincials themselves had started already under Augustus. This is particularly true of Asia Minor which supplied recruits not only for the legions in Syria but also for those in Egypt and even in the Danube provinces. Where recruits did not already possess Roman citizenship, it was simply given them on enlistment, and this will certainly have been the case with the sons of serving soldiers who chose to follow in their fathers' footsteps and join the legions. These young men will have been reckoned as illegitimate before the removal of the ban on soldiers' marriages by Severus, and will have lacked Roman citizenship, unless their mothers already possessed it, and technically should not have been able to enlist. That they did so is shown by the inscriptions where they are sometimes accorded the voting tribe *Politia* and the *origo castris*, 'from the camps', while, since they had no legal father they are described as *Sp(urii) filius*, 'son of Spurius', or, 'son of a spurious (father)'. Yet this practice was not universal and it would be wrong to assume that in provinces like Britain with a strong legionary presence, but where these particular phrases do not occur on the funerary inscriptions, the illegitimate sons of legionaries did not enlist. From the late second century a soldier's origin, if local, was simply omitted.³³

³² *HA Marc.* 11.7, cf. *Hadr.* 12.4.

³³ Dobson and Mann (1973), esp. 203, for tombstones. *AE* 1985 no. 637, the sole *laterculus* from the province, also omits *origines*.

III. THE AUXILIARIES

The word *auxilium* means literally ‘help’ and indicates something of the intended function of the auxiliary regiments of the Roman army and the way in which they were intended to act as a complement to the legions. The legions in the later first and second centuries were essentially large bodies of highly disciplined and well-equipped infantry, trained primarily to engage the enemy in formal ‘set-piece’ battles. The legionaries themselves were also experienced craftsmen and engineers, and the success of Roman arms owed as much to their skills in the construction of military works as it did to their prowess in the field. The auxiliaries, on the other hand, were organized into far smaller and more versatile units than the legions and, since they were recruited from provincials and not Roman citizens, were regarded as more expendable: Agricola could claim as a matter of credit that his victory over the Britons at Mons Graupius had been won entirely by the auxiliaries without shedding ‘Roman’ blood.³⁴

1. *Organization*³⁵

Auxiliary infantry regiments were known as cohorts and were organized in a similar way to the cohorts that formed the legions, so that while most of them consisted of six centuries of 80 men each for a total of 480, some consisted of ten centuries of 80 men, for a total of 800, equivalent to the five double-strength centuries of the first cohort in the legion. As was the case with legionary centuries, the auxiliary centuries were subdivided into *contubernia* of 8 men each. The commoner and smaller type of cohort was known as the *cobors quingenaria*, ‘quingenary cohort’, since it numbered a nominal 500 men, a figure which corresponds quite closely to its paper strength of 480, especially when centurions and headquarters staff are added to this figure. Its larger equivalent was the *cobors milliaria*, the ‘milliary cohort’, whose name should imply that it consisted of about 1,000 men, considerably more than its paper strength of 800 men. In the middle of the second century, the period for which we have the best evidence, there were about 130 quingenary cohorts as compared with eighteen milliary auxiliary cohorts in the Roman army.

Cavalry regiments were known as *alae*, literally ‘wings’, since they were traditionally stationed on the wings of an army drawn up on the field of battle. As with the cohorts, there were two sizes of *ala*, the *ala quingenaria*, the ‘quingenary *ala*’, and the *ala milliaria*, the ‘milliary *ala*’. Cavalry *alae* were divided into squadrons called *turmae* of 30 men.³⁶ There were sixteen *turmae*

³⁴ Tac. *Agr.* 35. ³⁵ Cheesman (1914) 25–31; Holder (1980).

³⁶ Cf. Fink, *Military Records* no. 80, where a member of a *turma* in the *Ala Veterana Gallica* issues a receipt for hay on behalf of the 30 members of his *turma*. In some cases however, depending on the size of the constituent *contubernia*, the *turma* may have numbered 32 men, see following note.

in the quingenary version for a total strength, excluding officers, of 480, so that this type of unit had the same paper strength as the quingenary cohort. The milliary *ala* was made up of twenty-four *turmae*, which, if they also consisted of 30 men, will have given a total strength of 720, somewhat short of the 800 men in the infantry equivalent, the milliary cohort. The *turmae*, like the centuries, will have been subdivided into *contubernia*, but the size of these is not known, and may even have varied.³⁷ There were always more auxiliary infantry than cavalry regiments and the larger version of the cavalry regiment, the milliary *alae*, perhaps an innovation of the early second century, were excessively rare. Thus, in the middle of the second century there were only some ninety cavalry *alae* compared with about 135 infantry cohorts, and of the ninety only eight, less than one in ten, were milliary.

More versatile than either the infantry cohorts or the cavalry *alae* were the units known as *cohortes equitatae*. The term literally means ‘mounted cohorts’ but regiments of this type were not composed of mounted infantry – soldiers who rode into battle and then dismounted to fight – but of two distinct elements, infantry and cavalry, so that ‘part-mounted units’ is a better translation of the term. That this is so is indicated by two short tracts written by Flavius Arrianus, Hadrian’s governor of Cappadocia, the frontier province on the upper Euphrates. The first, the *Ektaxis*, is a literary version of the orders of march issued by Arrian when he set out to face a threatened invasion of Alans in 135. In this he describes how the troopers from the part-mounted cohorts rode in the van with the rest of the cavalry or acted as scouts and outriders. In the second, the *Taktika*, Arrian describes how he intended to dispose his troops once he confronted the enemy when the troopers from the part-mounted units were to be stationed with the rest of the cavalry on the wings.³⁸ This was presumably normal practice and when, for example, Tacitus states that 3,000 cavalry were stationed on the wings at the battle of Mons Graupius, it is likely that some of these will have been contributed by the part-mounted cohorts under his command.

As far as internal organization of the part-mounted cohorts was concerned, the quingenary version was divided into six centuries of infantry and four *turmae* of cavalry, while the larger milliary unit was divided into ten centuries and eight *turmae*. The *turmae* in these units were probably the same size as those in the cavalry *alae* and there are slight reasons for thinking that the centuries in these units were at the same 80-man strength as the infantry cohorts. If this is correct, the quingenary part-mounted cohort will

³⁷ The evidence from forts in southern Germany and Britain such as Echzell (for a cohort and an *ala quingenaria*), Kunzing (a *cohort equitata*), Heidenheim (an *ala milliaria*) and Wallsend (a *cohort equitata*) is at variance and may indicate *turmae* and *contubernia* of different sizes, the barracks for each *turma* being divided into four *contubernia* of 8 men, five of 6 men, six of 5 men and nine of 3 men respectively at each site. ³⁸ On the mixed cohorts and the evidence of Arrian see Davies (1971).

have consisted of 480 infantry and 120 cavalry for a total strength of 600, and the milliary unit of 800 infantry and 240 cavalry for a total of 1,040 men, both considerably larger than their infantry counterparts. There were about 150 mixed regiments in the Roman imperial army of the mid-second century, more or less equivalent in number to the infantry cohorts, and of these twenty-two were of the larger milliary size.

So much for the theoretical organization of the six types of auxiliary unit known to have existed, but theoretical schemes are one thing and the question arises how far they corresponded to reality. Here the documents, particularly the few surviving *pridiana*, or annual strength reports, of the auxiliary regiments provide some confirmation,³⁹ but also some surprises. Thus, the First Cohort of Tungrians⁴⁰ stationed at Vindolanda on the Stanegate frontier in the early years of the second century had 751 men on its books and so would appear to be a milliary cohort slightly under strength if size were the only criterion. In fact it had only six centurions (and so, presumably, six oversized centuries), instead of the expected ten. There are all sorts of possible explanations for this apparently anomalous state of affairs, but perhaps they are unnecessary and it may be that the Tungrian cohort simply had its own establishment, somewhat resembling the double-sized first cohort of a legion. That the cohort was not alone in this respect is suggested by the rosters of cohorts XX Palmyrenorum stationed at Dura from the later second century, which consisted of five centuries not only very much over strength, but, just to complicate the issue, also including small numbers of camel riders.⁴¹

In addition to the documentary evidence, the plans of excavated auxiliary forts⁴² can throw light on the nature of garrisons that were stationed in them. Thus, the Flavian fort at Fendoch neatly illustrates the expected accommodation for a standard milliary cohort, with ten barrack blocks for each of its ten centuries. Elsewhere the fort plans show that it was sometimes the practice to unite two cohorts in the same winter quarters.⁴³ It is certain, too, that the opposite was also true and units were often divided, a clear case being the forts on the Antonine Wall in Scotland, many of which would not have been large enough to house complete units. Obvious candidates for division would have been the part-mounted cohorts where the infantry and cavalry sections could each have operated as self-standing units. The fort plans, however, often do not present a clear picture and the general impression gained from both this type of evidence and from the documentary sources is that there was great flexibility in the brigading of

³⁹ Fink, *Military Records* nos. 63 and 64, two *cobortes equitatae*, the latter under strength.

⁴⁰ Bowman and Thomas (1991). This document also shows that over half the soldiers in the unit were absent, including 337 men outstationed at a place called Corio.

⁴¹ Fink, *Military Records* nos. 1–4. ⁴² Johnson (1983).

⁴³ So the Flavian foundations of Pen Llystyn in north Wales and Elginhaugh in southern Scotland.

units or parts of units together, and in splitting them up so as to occupy small forts or outposts, as well, perhaps, as in the actual organization of the units themselves.

2. *Officers and other ranks*

Auxiliary units were normally commanded by men of equestrian rank, although their place was sometimes taken by centurions seconded from the legions. The equestrian commanders of all cavalry *alae*, whether of quingenary or milliary size, were known as *praefecti*. The title *praefectus* was also used for the commanders of all quingenary cohorts, whether the normal infantry units or the hybrid mixed infantry and cavalry *cohortes equitatae*. Milliary cohorts, however, were usually commanded by tribunes.⁴⁴ In his three-stage military career (*tres militiae*), an equestrian officer of the later first or second century began by commanding a quingenary cohort, went on to become a tribune either in a legion or in charge of a milliary auxiliary cohort, and finally held the post of commander of a cavalry *ala*. Men of exceptional ability could then proceed to a fourth spell of service (*militia quarta*) as prefect commanding one of the rare milliary *alae*. Each spell of service perhaps normally lasted three years.⁴⁵ As men in their thirties the equestrian officers of the Roman army will often have been married and as such could be accompanied by their wives and families. Thus Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of Flavius Cerealis, the commander of the Ninth Cohort of Batavians stationed at Vindolanda, not only accompanied her husband, but had her little son with her and she counted among her social circle the wives of other auxiliary officers based at neighbouring forts.⁴⁶ Flavius Cerealis is interesting in another way since a good case can be made for arguing that he was a Batavian like the men that he commanded. If this were so, then it would be wrong to suppose, as has often been done in the past, that auxiliary units in general, and regiments of Batavians in particular, ceased to be commanded by men of their own nationality after the Batavian revolt of A.D. 69.

Under the overall command of the prefect or tribune in charge of each auxiliary unit were the centurions who commanded the *centuriae* of infantry, and the decurions (*decuriones*) who commanded the *turmae* of cavalry. The name decurion signifies that this officer had originally been in charge of a *decuria* of only ten men. During the days of the earlier Republic this had indeed been so and three decurions had been attached to a *turma*, each being in charge of a troop of men. By the time of the Principate, however, only one of the decurions survived and he was responsible for the whole

⁴⁴ Exceptionally, all Batavian and Tungrian Cohorts, including the First Cohort at Vindolanda, whether quingenary or milliary, were commanded by *praefecti*: Strobel (1987), esp. 287 ff.

⁴⁵ Jarrett (1965). ⁴⁶ Bowman (1987), esp. 137–40.

squadron. He was assisted by two senior rankers, known as the *sesquiplicarius* and the *duplicarius* respectively. They received, as their names imply, one and a half times and twice as much pay respectively as the ordinary cavalry trooper (*eques*). These two were the only *principales* in the *turma* since the *signifer* and other posts only ranked as *immunes*. In contrast the *signifer* in the century of an auxiliary cohort ranked as a *principalis*, as did the *optio* and *teserarius*.

3. Pay and conditions of service

Two important differences between the legionary and auxiliary soldier were that the former was always a Roman citizen while the auxiliary often was not and that, as a reflection of his higher status, the legionary was paid more. Both statements, however, need qualification. Thus, though it is true that before Domitian increased army pay in A.D. 84, the ordinary foot-soldier was paid seven and a half gold pieces (*aurei*), one and a half *aurei* less than the nine paid to the legionary, the trooper in an *ala* actually received one and a half *aurei* more. In fact, it is possible to detect three basic pay grades among the auxiliaries in this period: lowest paid were the foot-soldiers in the cohorts or part-mounted cohorts at seven and a half *aurei*, then came the troopers in part-mounted cohorts at nine, while best paid were the troopers in the *alae* at ten and a half. There was thus a differential of one and a half *aurei* between each grade. After Domitian's increase, the lowest paid, the infantry soldier, received ten *aurei*, five sixths of the new legionary pay of twelve *aurei*, and the differentials between grades were increased to two *aurei*, so that troopers in a part-mounted cohort received twelve *aurei* and in an *ala*, fourteen.⁴⁷

The pay differential between auxiliaries and legionaries was clearly not overwhelmingly great and certainly did not approach the enormous gulf that existed between the pay of the legionary foot-soldier and his centurion. More fundamental was the question of Roman citizenship. Only Roman citizens could join the legions, even if they sometimes only received this status at the time of their enlistment, but the auxiliary soldier was not usually a citizen and citizenship was normally only awarded to him after twenty-five years' service. The grants were made periodically by the emperor to groups of eligible soldiers in particular provincial army commands, and those who benefited could receive individual certified copies of the relevant imperial decree (*constitutio*) inscribed on pairs of bronze tablets known as diplomas.⁴⁸ Besides citizenship, the decrees also conferred

⁴⁷ Speidel (1973) and (1992).

⁴⁸ Sometimes referred to as 'discharge certificates', but erroneously – partly because genuine discharge certificates actually existed, see Mann and Roxan (1988), and partly because the grant of citizenship could anticipate discharge, when for example Roman citizenship was awarded to all the men serving in a particular unit for distinguished service during a particular campaign e.g. *CIL* XVI 160.

on the soldiers *conubium*, the right of contracting a marriage recognized in Roman law, either in the future or, if necessary, retrospectively with any women with whom they were living at the time of their discharge. Though the wives were not themselves accorded citizenship, this status was extended, again retrospectively, to any children of the marriage alive at the time. The names of the children and the wives are duly recorded along with that of the individual recipient of the diploma himself. This at least was the practice down to A.D. 140. In the course of that year the wording of the diplomas was altered.⁴⁹ Veterans continued to receive Roman citizenship and *conubium*, but any children they might have had at the time of the grant no longer benefited.

Why was this apparently retrogressive move made? The explanation is probably to be found in a comparison with the situation that applied to the legionaries:⁵⁰ down to A.D. 140 the sons of serving legionaries, like the sons of serving auxiliaries, will have been illegitimate due to the ban on soldiers' marriages, but unlike them they did not receive a retrospective grant of citizenship and were therefore at a disadvantage, though it was always possible to remedy this situation by joining their father's legion and getting citizenship on enlistment. It was then, perhaps, to remedy this anomaly that the change of A.D. 140 was made. But while the emperor deprived the sons of auxiliaries with their retrospective grant, he may have brought them into line with the sons of legionaries in another way: in the 160s the number of military diplomas found, in the western provinces at least, drops dramatically and it has been suggested that from A.D. 140 onwards the sons of auxiliaries were given Roman citizenship on enlistment like the sons of legionaries and did not have to wait twenty-five years for their grant.

The reason for the change in the wording of the diplomas in A.D. 140 has in the past been explained as a means of overcoming the supposed unwillingness of the sons of auxiliary veterans to enlist, since as Roman citizens they no longer had the inducement of earning citizenship through service. In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that the sons of soldiers were reluctant to join their fathers' old regiments and recruitment from among the sons of serving soldiers or veterans will have been just as important for the auxiliary units as it was for the legions. Initially, of course, there had been a distinction between legions and *auxilia*, for whereas the preferred recruiting grounds for the legions had been the veteran colonies with their populations of Roman citizens, the cohorts and *alae* were raised specifically from among those peoples and tribes whose ethnic titles they bore. If the unit remained in the area where it was first recruited, it would retain its ethnic character, but this would gradually decline if, as usually happened, it was posted away from home. The tombstones and diplomas show

⁴⁹ Roxan *Diplomas I* no. 39=AE 1962 no. 264 (incomplete text) dated to 13 December A.D. 140, with, in error, both forms of wording. ⁵⁰ Roxan (1986).

that in its new station, the regiment would soon pick up local recruits, so that, for example, native Thracians who had been recruited in the homeland into Thracian *alae* and cohorts might find themselves rubbing shoulders with Frisians from Lower Germany.⁵¹ And local recruitment will have increased dramatically if a unit remained long enough in an area for its members to form attachments to local girls and raise families. The case has been made that certain units, notably regiments of eastern archers, regularly received fresh drafts of recruits from the provinces in which they were originally raised. In fact there is no evidence for this, despite notions about archers 'being born not made': men found in these regiments two or three generations after they had left the East may still have had eastern-sounding names, but the simplest explanation is that most of them will have been the descendants of easterners who had married local girls and that they were given the names of fathers or grandfathers.⁵²

IV. THE MILITARY ROLE OF THE ARMY

The effectiveness of the Roman army of the later first and second centuries A.D. was as great as it had ever been and was never to be surpassed. Not that it was always successful: no less than four legions⁵³ were destroyed or disbanded during this period. But after every defeat there was a recovery: the disasters suffered on the Danube during Domitian's reign were followed by the annexation of Dacia under Trajan while the incursions of the Marcomanni in the 160s provoked a vigorous Roman response which would have resulted in the formation of a new province had Marcus lived. The extraordinary success of the Roman army can be ascribed to a number of factors, not least of which will have been the military qualities of the emperor and his legates and the spirit that they instilled into the men under their command so that under an emperor like Hadrian, who shared the rigours of camp life with his men, military discipline became very much the order of the day.⁵⁴ The converse was, of course, also true so that under the unstable Commodus, discipline declined.⁵⁵ Other factors in the army's success were the sort of rigorous training nostalgically recalled by Vegetius in the fourth century, and the skill of the legionaries as engineers and builders: to men who could construct such works as the siege ramp by which the seemingly impregnable mountain of Masada was stormed, or who could bridge the Danube as the Romans did as a prelude to Trajan's Second Dacian War, nothing can have seemed impossible.

Yet another reason for Rome's success, especially against barbarian enemies, lay in the superiority of the arms and equipment with which her

⁵¹ *RIB* I 121, I 201 Thracians, contrast I 109 (a Frisian) and 2143 (a Brigans).

⁵² Kennedy (1989), esp. 242.

⁵³ Legions V Alaudae, XXI Rapax, XXII Deiotariana and IX Hispana.

⁵⁴ *HLA Hadr.* 10. ⁵⁵ Dio LXXII (LXXIII).9.

soldiers were provided. Here archaeology constantly provides fresh information, such as the exact form of the so-called *lorica segmentata*, the corslet of steel bands so familiar from scenes on Trajan's Column, which appears to have been the regular – but not exclusive – body armour of the legionary soldier during this period.⁵⁶ Again, the rectangular shield, also borne by legionaries on the Column, has its exact counterpart in the unique find from Dura on the Euphrates.⁵⁷ Made of ply, with horizontal hand-grip, and lacking only its central boss, there is in fact no certainty that it was borne by a legionary rather than an auxiliary soldier. If auxiliaries might perhaps be equipped with the rectangular *scutum*, the opposite is also true: some legionaries were equipped with round shields, a development that became universal in the course of the third century.⁵⁸ In two areas especially, torsion artillery and the Roman military saddle, knowledge of Roman military equipment and its effectiveness has increased through archaeological discoveries and new interpretations.

According to the late Roman writer Vegetius⁵⁹ each century in the legion of the imperial period was equipped with a bolt-shooting catapult mounted on a cart (*carroballista*) and each of the ten cohorts with a heavier stone-throwing machine called an *onager* (literally 'wild ass'). The *onager* was, in effect, a mechanical sling. The sling itself was attached to a wooden beam or arm whose other end was inserted into a spring formed by a skein of twisted hair or sinew rope mounted in a heavy horizontal wooden frame. The motive force was supplied by pulling the beam back, so increasing the tension in the spring. The catapult or *ballista* worked on the same torsion principle as the *onager* but employed two vertically mounted springs and two arms. Together these acted in the manner of the single resilient bow of a crossbow, to which the machine bore a superficial resemblance. When the bow-string which connected the arms was retracted, tension on the springs was increased and it was this that supplied the motive force. These two-arm machines had certainly been adopted by the Romans from the Hellenistic Greeks but it is not certain when the single-arm version came into use. However, archaeology has provided good evidence for the two-armed version in the form of some of the metal elements employed, and from this it is possible to deduce that a revolution in catapult design occurred under Trajan, when the heavy but narrow wooden 'spring frame' of earlier versions was replaced by a wide open one of metal. It seems likely that this reflects a different mode of operation and that the reason for the change was to enhance the effectiveness of the machine.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ See esp. Allason-Jones and Bishop (1988). Maxfield (1986) shows that this type of armour occurs on fort sites in Raetia at a time when no legions were stationed there and hence will have been used by auxiliaries.

⁵⁷ Brown (1936).

⁵⁸ Balty (1988) with plates XIII 2, 3; XIV 2, soldiers in legion II Parthica.

⁵⁹ Vegetius, *Epit.* II.25.

⁶⁰ Schramm (1980); Baatz (1978), where the 'wide-frame' *ballistae* are interpreted as operating in a conventional manner.

The massed fire of a legion's sixty *ballistae* shooting over the heads of the legionaries drawn up in battle will certainly have made a psychological impact on an enemy who could not return fire because of the range at which the machines could operate. Torsion artillery, however, will have been more useful in siege warfare⁶¹ and can seldom have had a decisive effect on the field of battle due to its slow rate of fire. More significant for an understanding of tactics is a new appreciation of the capabilities of Roman cavalry. It has often been claimed that, in the absence of the stirrup, the effectiveness of this arm will have been greatly impaired and in particular that cavalry cannot have been used as shock troops. In fact this was not so, for the Roman military saddle⁶² possessed pairs of horns or pommels at front and back which gave the rider a very secure seat indeed, virtually locking him into position on the back of his horse.⁶³ The ordinary trooper, armed in conventional fashion with light spear and long sword (*spatha*), will have been far more formidable than has usually been reckoned, though shock cavalry as such will not have been much employed during the second century, the first known unit of heavy armed horsemen (*catafractarii*) only having been introduced into the Roman army under Hadrian, perhaps on an experimental basis as a result of experience during Trajan's Dacian Wars.⁶⁴

It was, of course, the accession of Hadrian that marked a change in strategic thinking, and the contrast between Rome's old expansionist policy and the new one of consolidation behind fixed frontiers was all the more apparent in that it had been Hadrian's predecessor, Trajan, who, as much as any other, had exemplified the traditional image of Roman emperor as that of conqueror. It had been Hadrian who, as an act of policy as much as through military necessity, had abandoned Trajan's conquests in Mesopotamia, and who on other frontiers where no suitable river such as the Rhine or Danube existed, had constructed artificial barriers that divided *barbaricum* from what was, theoretically at least, Roman.⁶⁵ To Aelius Aristides the security of the provincial towns – and indeed of Rome itself – depended on the frontiers of her empire⁶⁶ and from now onwards the primary function of the army was given over to frontier defence. The *limites* were garrisoned by auxiliary units or *numeri* stationed in forts and fortlets on the frontier lines themselves and men detached from these units will have manned the lesser installations such as signal stations or watchtowers which formed an essential element in the frontier defences. A secondary role of the auxiliaries was to police those areas behind the frontier which seemed to require a continued military presence. The legions were some-

⁶¹ Cf. Joseph. *BJ* v.3.269–73. In general, Marsden (1969).

⁶² Connolly (1986); Connolly and van Driel-Murray (1991).

⁶³ Perhaps too secure: Drusus may have been crushed by his horse because he was unable to roll clear from his own saddle 9 B.C., Livy, *Epit.* cXL. ⁶⁴ *ILS* 2735.

⁶⁵ *HA Hadr.* 11.2; 12.6, cf. above, pp. 293–317. ⁶⁶ Ael. Arist. *ad Roman* 79.

times, as was the case in Lower Germany, the Danube provinces and Cappadocia, stationed on the frontier line, sometimes, as in Upper Germany, Britain or Numidia, at a distance from it, but wherever they were based, their role was seen in relatively local terms, as a support in case of need, to the auxiliaries. This passive role is in contrast to the situation in the early first century when the garrisons of the double legionary fortresses can be regarded, in effect, as provincial field armies, ready to respond to or anticipate enemy activity beyond the frontier.

The weakness of the system lay in the absence of a strategic reserve in the case of really serious trouble breaking out. Two courses of action were then possible. Either one frontier province could be strengthened at the expense of another by transferring whole legions, or more often, legionary detachments to the threatened area;⁶⁷ or new legions could be raised as happened in A.D. 165 when Marcus created II and III Italica for service against the Marcomanni. There could be difficulties with either solution and it was not until the early fourth century that this problem was really solved with the creation of a field army by Constantine.

V. THE ROLE OF THE ARMY IN PEACETIME

The significance of the army to the empire and particularly to those frontier provinces in which it was based was not, however, limited to its military role, whether offensive or defensive. For these peripheral areas the presence of the military was to have a profound effect both on the local economy and the nature of provincial society itself. The economy even of distant provinces might be affected by the requirements of the army and the spending power of its personnel. Thus, the popular fine red-gloss tableware known as Samian was widely exported from manufactories in central Gaul to the armies in the Rhineland or Britain, and clothing might come on occasion from Gaul to Lower Moesia⁶⁸ or from Egypt to the armies in Cappadocia.⁶⁹ As far as possible, however, a province, whether Egypt, for which there is abundant evidence in the form of authorizations for payments or receipts for goods received, or Britain, where the Vindolanda tablets now provide comparable evidence for the West, would supply the needs of the army stationed there whatever the problems.⁷⁰ The exactions of grain and other foodstuffs, even when collected fairly, may have created hardships for those upon whom they fell, yet were not an unmitigated evil, for grain was paid for,⁷¹ and the increased demand will have provided a stimulus to agricultural production. Again, though local communities may

⁶⁷ Saxer (1967). ⁶⁸ Fink, *Military Records* no. 63. ⁶⁹ *BGU* 1564.

⁷⁰ The letter of Octavius to Candidus published by Bowman, Thomas and Adams (1990) well illustrates the difficulties of finance and transport.

⁷¹ Despite the impression gained from Tac. *Agr.* 19, see Mann (1985).

have been compelled to supply unskilled labour to help in the construction of the roads along which the supplies passed, this, in itself, will have been a form of compulsory investment which will have been to the long-term advantage to the area.

Contacts between the army and the civilian population were not confined to the provision of unskilled labour or supplies and could sometimes be of direct benefit to the provincials. Detachments of soldiers were involved in major civilian projects like building the road from Carthage to Theveste,⁷² harbour-dredging in Egypt,⁷³ or supplying stone for the forum at Colonia Ulpia Traiana at Xanten in the Rhineland.⁷⁴ One sphere in which the military will have been always involved was administration. The commanders of auxiliary units in Britain⁷⁵ or Judaea⁷⁶ might find themselves in charge of the census at local level, while centurions on secondment from their legions served as district officers (*centuriones regionarii*).⁷⁷ Other legionaries, the *beneficarii* of the governor, were also outposted and may have had the task of collecting and despatching supplies to the frontier garrisons,⁷⁸ while the governor himself was not only attended by guards supplied by the auxiliary units in his province,⁷⁹ but was surrounded by a staff of detached legionaries ranging from clerks and accountants to public executioners.

The relationship between soldier and civilian, however, was not simply that which exists between the ruler and the ruled and, in the frontier districts especially, the contrast between an alien army of occupation and the native population must gradually have lessened as soldiers married local girls and units began to recruit from the area in which they were stationed,⁸⁰ until eventually both frontier garrisons and nearby civilian communities will have come to regard their interests as largely identical. Within provincial society itself the ex-legionary centurion will have been a man of consequence by any reckoning, whose horizons were not limited to the province in which he had last served, but even the ordinary legionary, retiring after twenty-five years' service on his bounty, may have acquired skills while in the army that could be put to good use afterwards⁸¹ and will anyway have had a certain standing among mere civilians, if only because, as a veteran, he was exempt from taxation.⁸² Of especial significance was

⁷² *ILS* 5835, men of legion III Augusta.

⁷³ Fink, *Military Records* no. 11.12, legionaries from Nicopolis.

⁷⁴ *ILS* 2907 set up by a detachment of the Classis Germanica. ⁷⁵ *ILS* 1338, 2740.

⁷⁶ Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* no. 16.

⁷⁷ E.g. at Carlisle, Bowman and Thomas, *Vindolanda I* no. 22, the earliest known example.

⁷⁸ As at Osterburken in Upper Germany, *AE* 1985 nos. 685–96, and in general, Schallmayer (1990).

⁷⁹ Cf. most recently, Bowman and Thomas (1991) for 46 men detached from cohorts I Tungrorum.

⁸⁰ See above pp. 331 and 338.

⁸¹ E.g. Nonius Datus, a veteran of legion III Augusta and an ex-*librator*, who resurveyed the underground aqueduct channel at Saldae in Mauretania, after it had proved too difficult for civilian engineers, *ILS* 5795. ⁸² *ILS* 9058.

the practice of granting Roman citizenship to retired auxiliary veterans on discharge, for this was the only mechanism by which citizenship was regularly extended in the frontier provinces.⁸³ These new citizens, it is true, may not have enjoyed all the privileges of their colleagues in the legions. They did not, as far as present evidence goes, receive a bounty on discharge, and their theoretically privileged position in law may not always have saved them a beating at the hands of local magistrates,⁸⁴ but, as a Roman citizen, the auxiliary veteran rightly felt that he had a stake in the empire whose frontiers he had defended. The success of the army as an instrument in imposing and maintaining the Roman Peace was due not only to the professionalism of the legions and auxiliary units but to the system whereby those who served in the auxiliaries were converted from barbarians into loyal citizens of the empire.

⁸³ See above pp. 336–7. For the province of Britain with fifty-seven auxiliary regiments attested in the second century, the number of new grants of citizenship each year has been variously estimated at somewhat under 500 to over 1,000. Frere, *Britannia* 238; M. Hassall, 'Romans and non-Romans' in Wachter (1986) 685–98, esp. 696. ⁸⁴ *Aegyptus* 12 (1932), 129–30, A.D. 153 = *Sel Pap* II 254.

LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND
GOVERNMENT

HARTMUT GALSTERER

This chapter complements Chapter 7, which deals with provincial administration and finance; it analyses the same phenomenon, but from the point of view of those governed rather than those who governed them. The period to be dealt with here extends from one military crisis to another. On the whole it was a period of peace, both within the empire and – after Trajan's reign – in the frontier areas. Some dramatic moments in the reign of Marcus had announced the perils of war on two frontiers, insurrection within the empire and the plague, but fortunately the inhabitants of the Roman empire did not know what was to follow. This was the golden age in the opinion of Gibbon and of Mommsen,¹ but it is a golden age for historians also, in the sense that it abounds in primary sources of all kinds, literary, epigraphical, papyrological and archaeological. That there are still so many problems inherent in the subject of this chapter is mostly to be attributed to the Romans themselves, who wrote little on the administration of empire (compared with the literature on the administration of justice), and suppressed most of this when putting together the *Digest* in the time of Justinian. Modern historians are no more explicit: literature abounds on points of detail, and there are magisterial works like Millar's on the role of the Roman emperor in his world, but the last exhaustive treatment of the administration of Rome and its empire dates from the end of the last century.² Even concise introductions to the working of the Roman empire are rare.³

Government and administration today are somewhat different concepts, the one meaning more or less policy-making, the other the implementation of government decisions. There is no such difference in Roman political thinking and vocabulary, but in the world of facts there is something not

¹ Cf. the famous characterization in vol. v of Mommsen's Roman history: 'Seldom has the government of the world been conducted for so long a term in an orderly sequence. . . . Even now there are various regions of the East, as of the West, as regards which the imperial period marks a climax of good government, very modest in itself, but never withal attained before or since; and, if an angel of the Lord were to strike the balance whether the domain ruled by Severus Antoninus was governed with the greater intelligence and the greater humanity at that time or in the present day . . . it is very doubtful whether the decision would prove in favour of the present', Mommsen (1886) 4.

² Marquardt (1881–5). ³ E.g. Lintott (1993).

exactly similar but going in the same direction. As was shown by Eck in chapters 6 and 7, Rome succeeded in the early empire in holding together the lands between the Caucasus and the Firth of Forth by means of an extraordinarily small number of administrators: some 350 senators and knights all told. Imperial *servi* and *liberti* might have numbered up to 10,000, but a considerable part, maybe the majority of them, were in the emperor's personal service, in palaces, villas and domains. The army made a contribution mostly with public building and with staffing the governor's *officia*, but on the whole emperor and Senate had to rely upon self-administration by citizens and subjects alike, on the provincial level, in the juridical districts (*conventus*) and, most of all, in the cities.⁴

Administration was made easier for those responsible because its aims were fairly restricted: economy and transport, culture, education and science, social relations and welfare were not targets of state intervention. The main aims of governors, *procuratores* and so on in the provinces were to keep the peace (including the administration of justice) and to make sure that taxes were paid. In the enforcement of governors' and judges' decisions Roman officials were sometimes sorely tried: a decree of the governor of Sardinia in A.D. 69 reiterates decisions of Roman provincial administrators since 114 B.C. to the effect that one Sardinian tribe should leave some lands which had been found to belong to others – but they were still in possession of the land under dispute.⁵

One last point should be made concerning uniformity of administration in the empire. For a long time Egypt, with the immense paperwork known from papyri, tended to be thought of as an exception, to be explained by Pharaonic and Ptolemaic traditions. Browsing in the Vindolanda tablets with their duty rosters and their military accounts, or reading in the oil law from Athens of certificates in triplicate, raises doubts about this. The simplicity – or under-development – of administration in the West may be an impression derived from the kind of sources we have: mostly rather jejune career inscriptions in the West, colourful and detailed narrative sources (from the New Testament to Apuleius' *Golden Ass*) in the East. But there were local differences anyhow, different traditions of 'how things ought to be done' in the various provincial *officia*. It might be worthwhile to look into this in more detail.

To begin with Italy outside Rome. In 42 B.C. it was decided to send no more governors to Gallia Cisalpina (northern Italy);⁶ since then all the peninsula had the same status: its free inhabitants were almost all Roman citizens who paid no direct taxes and were administered by their towns and by the Roman organs of government, i.e. the Senate, consuls and praetors,

⁴ India was governed in 1892 by 776 higher administrators (the Indian Civil Service); Jones (1964) 1057: Some 30,000 civil servants in late antiquity. ⁵ Levick (1985) no. 50.

⁶ Cf. now Laffi (1992).

and now of course the emperor.⁷ Augustus had divided Italy into eleven regions without, however, giving them any responsible magistrate or pro-magistrate, in contrast with his arrangements for the fourteen regions of the city of Rome. The Italian regions served, as far as we can see, as statistical units for the arrangement of census results, for the leasing of some taxes, but nothing more.⁸ There were no regional associations of delegates from the cities for the imperial cult, and there were few *curatores* sent from Rome to administer roads, the *vehiculatio* and so on.

Only in the second century, under Hadrian and then regularly under Marcus, do *iuridici* appear, responsible for some – not especially important – jurisdiction in the four districts into which Italy was divided for this purpose. Rome, together with Latium, Campania and parts of Samnium, was excepted (as the *urbica dioecesis*, *frg. Vat.* 205, 232), and this region is perhaps identical with the zone of 160 kilometres around Rome, where criminal jurisdiction by the second half of the second century was in the hands of the *praefectus urbi*, while outside this zone the *praefecti praetorio* were responsible.⁹ The number of *iuridici* grew to six, and from the time of Caracalla they are gradually replaced by *correctores* – the provincialization of Italy was well on its way. But the development of the powers of jurisdiction from the first *iuridici* to the later governors is rather obscure.

As in the other parts of the empire, *curatores* were sent to cities in the second century to look after their finances, but – as will be shown later on – they were not especially concerned with municipal administration; their job was not ‘to perform or usurp the functions of cities’.¹⁰ So the administration of Italy in the second century had not changed significantly since Augustus.¹¹

The empire outside Italy was divided into provinces. The distinctions between provinces administered by the Senate and those belonging to the emperor’s own *provincia*, and between governors of equestrian, praetorian and consular rank are described in chapter 6. Day-to-day administration was probably not very different between the various types of province. The governor’s main job was always to keep the peace of the province against the ubiquitous robbers: *curare, ut pacata atque quieta provincia sit quam*

⁷ Freedom from *tributum* which Roman citizens enjoyed since the second century B.C. was to a certain extent diminished by the introduction of the inheritance tax (*vicesima hereditatum*) under Augustus, cf. Simshäuser (1980). ⁸ Cf. Galsterer (1994).

⁹ When municipal magistrates of Saepinum in the reign of Marcus Aurelius allegedly harassed some flocks and their shepherds which belonged to the emperor, the *libertus Augusti* responsible for these flocks complained to the *a rationibus* and he in his turn to the *praefecti praetorio*. Their rather threatening letter to the magistrates of Saepinum is preserved, together with the whole dossier, in an inscription from Saepinum (*CIL IX 2438*; I am not convinced by the interpretation given by Corbier (1983), that the whole dispute was about taxation). It is not clear whether the action of the *praefecti* in this case sprang from a specific authority given them together with criminal jurisdiction, or whether the *a rationibus* just preferred to apply to them instead of to the consuls or the Senate. ¹⁰ Millar (1986) 316.

¹¹ The best survey of state activity in one Italic region is Zaccaria (1986).

regit.¹² Besides that, he had to look after jurisdiction in cases too important to be dealt with by municipal courts. To do this governors did not stay put in the *caput provinciae* or metropolis of the province, but went around the cities of their province, or, where they existed, the *conventus* (or *dioeceseis*, i.e. judicial districts), numbering between three (in Lusitania and Dalmatia) and nine (Asia), where people might litigate, meet the governor on other business and friends from other towns.¹³ Being capital of a *conventus iuridicus* not only brought honour, but also economic advantages, so many cities sought this status.¹⁴

Another important job of the governor, to ensure that taxes were paid, involved deciding beforehand how many people there were and how much they had to pay. That is, the governor (or sometimes a special *censitor*) had to implement a *census* in the cities of his province when it was first organized, and then to keep up its records.¹⁵ One copy of the census returns went to the provincial assembly which it seems had to organize the distribution of demands from the imperial government to the single towns.

Indirect taxes were no concern of the governor (nor of most cities): usually they continued to be collected by *publicani*, the notorious lessees of public taxes. How this was done is now much clearer after the publication of the Code of Regulations for the Asian Tax (*nomos telous Asias*) of A.D. 62, a collection of regulations (sometimes dating back to the early first century B.C.), describing with a wealth of detail the functioning of this semi-private service, the rates, goods liable to taxation, penalties, customs ports and the many exemptions given to private individuals and communities.¹⁶

The imperial cult in the provinces had one interesting administrative consequence. Because in the East the cult was assigned mostly to existing *koïna*, quasi-political associations of the cities of a given province, the same type of organization was chosen in the West.¹⁷ So the *concilium* of Hispania Citerior or of the Tres Galliae, like the *koïnon* of Asia or of Lycia, brought together representatives of all the cities, who then elected the provincial priest (and president of the assembly) for that year, duly celebrated the ritual of the cult with processions and plays and then discussed general problems. One of the topics discussed might have been the administration of the current governor, and an interesting dossier from Thorigny in Gaul

¹² *Dig.* 1.18.13 pref. For robbers in even a 'quiet' province like Thessaly, see the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius, with Millar (1981).

¹³ Cf. Burton (1975) and Lintott (1993) 54–69; on three days of a *conventus* held at Arsinoë, the governor of Egypt, Ti. Claudius Subatianus Aquila, had 1,804 petitions delivered: *PYale* 61.

¹⁴ On the advantages of being a *conventus* town, cf. Dio Chrys. *Or.* xxxv.15, and *SEG* xxviii 1566=Oliver (1989) no. 123–4, the answer of Antoninus Pius to the petition of Berenice in the province of Cyrene to be made seat of such a *conventus*, cf. now Haensch (1993) 33–4.

¹⁵ Cf. Brunt (1981), and ch. 6 of this volume. ¹⁶ Engelmann and Knibbe (1989).

¹⁷ Deininger (1965).

allows us a glimpse at the intrigues that went on behind the scenes, as governors were praised or accused – usually we hear only of the result.¹⁸

Conventus also had some collective functions, such as the choosing of patrons. In the East they had some importance in administration, too, serving as distribution centres of official correspondence and organizing the coining by civic mints in their district, but it is not clear whether such competence was given to all *conventus* capitals and in perpetuity.¹⁹

Provinces consisted of more or less autonomous towns and tribes, of imperial demesne, mines and military land, sometimes nearly autonomous private possessions of senators and, mostly in the East, of a colourful series of principalities under lay or priestly rulers. The relation between these various units depended on the history of the province. Imperial lands included palaces and villas in Italy but also large tracts of agricultural lands and, even more important, mines and quarries, as for example in Africa and Lusitania, where inscriptions testify to the administration by procurators and private contractors or of mines and quarries with adjacent settlements.²⁰ Military land was given to legions and *auxilia* as training camps and as pasture for the many animals the army needed (*prata legionis*); at least part of these lands was given over to private persons for their use, and on military land settlements arose (*canabae legionis* or *vici*), much like smaller towns but under the supervision of military officers. As the military had much of the land, few of these pseudo-towns developed into autonomous *municipia*, unless the unit left the place to take up garrison duties somewhere else. Private property in theory belonged to the territories of towns but if the possessor was an important person with much influence in Rome, and if the town itself was rather small, *saltus* of this type might well become nearly autonomous. These large *fundi* flourished in Northern Africa, ‘where private people own possessions on a level with the territories of cities’.²¹ But even in Italy, small Vicenza dared not resist a senator on its territory who had established a regular market (*nundinae*) on his lands, much to the detriment of the urban market.²² Small principalities, more or less independent of the provincial governor and often lying in the midst of provincial land, were a speciality of southern Asia Minor and of Syria, but existed also in the West, especially in the first years after the organization of Roman rule.²³

But the normal practice, as the Romans saw it, was administration by autonomous units, tribes or – preferably – towns. Both had territories, and towns had an urban centre where magistrates and council had their seats,

¹⁸ *CIL* XIII 3162, cf. Pflaum (1948). ¹⁹ *ILS* 6109; Engelmann and Knibbe (1989) 108–9.

²⁰ Cf. Flach (1978) on the *Lex Manciana*, and (1979) on the organization law of the mining settlement at Vipasca in Portugal. ²¹ Agennius Urbicus, Thulin (1913) 45 with Garnsey (1978) 225.

²² Pliny, *Ep.* v.4; v.13, cf. Millar (1986) 311 and de Ligt, *Fairs* ch. 6.

²³ Millar (1987); Braund (1988).

where the local aristocracy lived and where the main temples of the group were located – in short, where life according to Mediterranean standards was possible. There were big towns and small towns, from the up-to-one-million inhabitants of Rome down to some hundred in small Greek *poleis*. Territories might be the equivalent of modern provinces, as with Carthago or Merida in Spain, or a few square miles as in Umbria or in southern Spain:²⁴ all had their magistrates and could live – depending on juridical status – more or less according to their own laws (*suis legibus uti*).

The hierarchy of cities was not ordered according to population, wealth or age: what counted was the juridical status of the community as a whole and of its citizens. These could be Roman citizens (or Latins, a variety of citizens), i.e. they could belong to the dominant group in the empire, or they could be *peregrini*, foreigners, such as the Athenians or Icenii of Venta. *Peregrini* comprised simple tribute-paying communities (*civitates stipendiariae*), free cities (*liberae*) and those whose freedom was guaranteed by treaty (*foederatae*). Roman citizens had all the opportunities imperial service offered, but – at least in theory – had to comply with all the rules of Roman law, while *peregrini* were left their own laws; however, in practice there was not so much difference in local administration between Roman and non-Roman towns.²⁵ Bithynian Amisus, although *Amisenorum civitas libera et foederata*, in practice was as subject to imperial supervision as the other towns of the province, even if Trajan, in response to Pliny's inquiry, chose to uphold their privilege *legibus suis uti*.²⁶ Roman towns were called *municipia* or *coloniae*, those of *peregrini* were called *civitates* or – in the East – *poleis*. Local magistrates had different titles and slightly different competences, but on the whole the response to similar challenges was much the same.

Cities tended also to become remarkably similar in their outward appearance, with forum and basilica, temples and baths, theatres and circuses. The scale of 'modernization' depended on funds, of course, but a Greek coming to Lyons or to Seville might recognize (if in a tolerant mood) that these towns were not completely different from his home *polis*.

The organization of civic administration was laid down in the *lex provinciae*, if there was one, and in municipal laws for the single towns. The law for Bithynia, for example, was a general regulation made by Pompey after

²⁴ We have few figures for populations: Pergamum had 40,000 male citizens in the second century (Galen v 49 (Kühn)), so together with women, children and slaves, a total of perhaps 200,000. For Apamea in Syria a census conducted under Augustus revealed '117,000 citizens of both sexes' (Levick (1985) no. 60). The one million inhabitants of Rome is no more than a guess, but subscribed to now by a majority of ancient historians. Estimation of territories is even more difficult, in the absence of maps and boundary markers, but cf., for Merida, Canto (1989) and for Histria, the so-called *borotbesia* of the governor Laberius Maximus (*AJ* 68). In Italy medieval dioceses may give an impression of Roman municipal boundaries. ²⁵ Lintott (1993) ch. 8.

²⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* x.92; in the Republic Colophon and Chios were autonomous to the degree that even Romans had to live according to local law on their territories, cf. Lintott (1993) 62.

he had established Roman rule there, and went into some detail regarding, among other things, the number and age of municipal councillors.²⁷ Of municipal laws we already had some fragmentary texts when a few years ago a much more complete law from a Spanish town called Irni was published, giving us at least for Flavian Latin-type *municipia* in the province of Baetica some quite detailed information on what procedures were to be followed and by whom.²⁸ In more than ninety paragraphs the duties of magistrates, council and assembly are spelled out and details of financial administration and jurisdiction are described.

Cities everywhere had a complement of magistrates, a council and meetings of the people. These meetings by the second century in most western communities had lost all political meaning – they were convened almost exclusively for the election of the magistrates.²⁹ Western cities usually had six magistrates, two for general politics and jurisdiction (*duoviri iure dicundo*), two for internal administration (*aediles*) and two for finance (*quaestores*). More or less the same number ruled over small towns like Irni and large ones like Ostia – the only difference was in the number of free and freedmen clerical and subclerical staff, *scribae, librarii, lictores* etc., and of municipal slaves, which in a town like Ostia might amount to hundreds. Greek cities had the same administrative needs but usually had more officials and with more colourful names; it is interesting, too, how important a role the secretary (*grammateus*) played in some cities: it was he who presided over and later dismissed the rather noisy *ecclesia confusa* at Ephesus which threatened to lynch St Paul.³⁰

All magistrates conformed to rules that had been laid down much earlier in Athens, Rome and all the other city-states: they were elected for a certain time, usually one year, and they came in a college. Increasingly predominant in the government of cities was the council (in the East there might be more than one council, as at Athens), which was composed now mostly of former magistrates sitting for life, even in the old democracies in the Greek East.

At the head of the municipal administration, and at the peak of the local *cursus honorum*, were the *duoviri*. Their more important prerogatives of the former days of independence had long since gone, i.e. the direction (or the implementation of the council's or the people's direction) of foreign policy and the command in any wars the city had to wage. Chief magistrates in republican colonies still had some kind of *imperium*, in case they had to call out the local militia when a *tumultus* was declared at Rome. But now there was left for *duoviri* only jurisdiction on a small scale, keeping the peace and, of course, giving the year its name in the local *Fasti*.

²⁷ Marshall (1968); on *leges provinciae* cf. Lintott (1993) 28 ff. ²⁸ González (1986).

²⁹ There seem to be major differences between the various regions of the empire, especially in this field. ³⁰ Acts 19: 30–9.

Jurisdiction had lost much of its former importance. *Duoviri* in small towns like Irni were restricted to cases of very little importance as concerns civil law, and were excluded from practically all criminal jurisdiction.³¹ This cannot be the whole picture, as other sources speak of executions evidently ordered by municipal magistrates, of municipal executing grounds and so on.³² So there was probably a lot of difference between big and small cities, quiet towns in the interior and busy harbours, cities in the East and those in the West. And if some municipal magistrates still had capital jurisdiction, there is no reason why they should not also have operated the *actiones famosae* forbidden to Irni magistrates in the paragraph just cited.³³ But the general trend was against them: already the Severan jurists whose opinions we have in Justinian's *Digest* agree in giving only inferior civil jurisdiction to the municipal magistrates.

In the judicial proceeding typical of the late Republic, the first part of the case, *in iure*, when the legal position had to be clarified, was conducted by the magistrate. To investigate the facts of the case was the job of one or more private judges, *indices*, who also gave judgement. This bipartite process gave way gradually to another procedure called *cognitio*, which was undivided, much less complicated and potentially faster. *Cognitio* was exercised by the emperor and by governors in the provinces, but was forbidden to municipal magistrates. This, together with low limits for values in dispute, sometimes also distrust of local jurisdiction and an inclination to have one's cases tried by the 'right people', moved many litigants to approach the court of the governor or even the emperor, and one of the recurrent themes in rescripts and letters of emperors and governors is to stop this bypassing of local jurisdiction.³⁴ So Domitius Corbulo, when proconsul of Asia, in a letter to the city of Kos admonished their magistrates not to allow direct appeals to the emperor in defiance of the governor's court. Furthermore 'if the case lies with me, the [quaestor] will have to exact adequate sureties of 2,500 denarii, as laid down by me in my edict dealing with those who fail to put in an appearance at judicial hearings'. Hadrian in a rescript directed to a Greek city declined to accept any appeal from cases whose value was inferior to 900 (?) denarii (except of course capital cases), and even with cases of superior value there had to be a deliberation of the local *synedroi* in order to decide whether appeal was to be permitted or not.³⁵

The other major area of activity of the chief magistrate was the keeping

³¹ Lex Irnitana 84. On municipal jurisdiction cf. Simshäuser (1989).

³² Two fragments of *leges locationis* concerning local torturing, executing and burying enterprises were published by Bove (1967), cf. Millar (1986) 311. Capital jurisdiction of the Jewish ethnarch is attested in Origen, *De hist. Susannae*, PG XI.82–4. ³³ Cf. Galsterer (1987).

³⁴ Even the prefect of Egypt had to announce in a list which types of cases he would decide himself in the first instance, and when he would accept only appellants from inferior courts: *PYale* inv. 1606 and Lewis (1972). ³⁵ Levick (1985) no. 6; *IG* V 1.21=Oliver (1989) no. 91.

of the peace. Strangely, in the municipal law of Irni this is not even mentioned.³⁶ In the East at least since the second century A.D. many cities had called into being a new office, the *eirenarchos*, a police officer equipped with a troop of (mostly) municipal slaves. They were to protect the peace in the countryside (a symptom perhaps that security there was diminishing), but sometimes they went out of control and terrorized the peasants.³⁷ In special cases the authorities might also mobilize the local paramilitary youth organizations, the *iuventus* or *neoi*, especially if there was aggression from outside, as in the case of the magistrate of Cyrene who had to defend the city with local militias against plundering Garamantes.³⁸ But very often the peace was threatened by internal strife – between political or economic groups – and in the last instance it was the governor who might have to quell these disputes, with a threatening edict or through the troops at his disposal.³⁹

The main occupation of the *aediles* or *agoranomoi* was and remained to ensure an adequate supply of cheap grain or bread, and many Greek cities had special *sitonai* for that purpose.⁴⁰ Whether one has in mind Trimalchio's companions remembering the *aediles* of their youth, who provided bread for two at the price of one *as*, or the edict of Antistius Rusticus, legate of Cappadocia, who intervened upon request of the authorities of Antiochia Pisidia in a serious grain shortage, or the law of Irni with its special paragraph 'That nothing may be bought up or hoarded' – there always existed the danger of dearth and of galloping prices and the suspicion that bakers, merchants and producers were looking after their own wellbeing rather than that of the population as a whole.⁴¹ This suspicion easily led to riots: 'You see fit to avenge yourselves by actually cremating him on the spot, along with his children, and force some of his women, persons of free status, to let you see them with their clothing all torn, and going on their knees to you,' Dio Chrysostom tells his fellow-citizens of Prusa, and threatens them with dire consequences at the hands of 'the authorities', the governor or even the emperor.⁴² Bread – or grain – was only the most important of the commodities municipal magistrates were expected to procure at reasonable prices. Letters of Hadrian to the Athenians contain regulations for the price of oil (with allusions to administrative paperwork not dissimilar from that of Egypt) and for the price of fish, which try to eliminate middlemen to keep prices low.⁴³

³⁶ But ch. 18 dealing with the 'rights and powers' of *duoviri* (where one might expect this subject to be dealt with) is mostly missing, with the exception of the small fragment published in Fernández Gómez and Del Amoy de la Hera (1990) 37, and tablet III (the first preserved) starts only with the duties of the *aediles*.

³⁷ Levick (1985) 43 on *OGIS* 527, cf. also Hopwood (1983), in Mitchell (1983). ³⁸ *OGIS* 767.

³⁹ Typical is the edict of a proconsul of Asia relating to a bakers' (?) strike at Ephesus, *SEG* IV 512 = *IEph* II 215. ⁴⁰ Cf. Garnsey, *Famine*.

⁴¹ Petron. *Sat.* 44.11; Levick (1985) no. 108; González (1986) 224 § 75.

⁴² Dio Chrys. LXVI.12 and Levick (1985) no. 107.

⁴³ Smallwood, *NTH* nos. 443 and 444 = Oliver (1989) nos. 92 and 77.

Supervision of the corn-supply was the first of the duties imposed upon this type of magistrate, but there were others: control of weights, looking after public buildings and public roads, street-cleaning and the sewerage system, supervising private building and organizing, whenever necessary, public contribution to public works.⁴⁴ Moreover, *aediles* might have jurisdiction either limited to cases arising from their own field of competence or without any limitation, as at Irni. Why, we do not know.

The proper title of the financial officer in the West was *quaestor*, but in the East several terms coexisted with *tamias*, like *oikonomos* or *epi tes dioike-seos*.⁴⁵ As the *quaestura* was the most junior job in the municipal *cursus honorum*, many cities preferred to have public finances controlled by more senior magistrates, delegating to *quaestores* or *tamiai* routine jobs, or suppressing the post altogether.

The main problem of municipal finances was that income and expenditure never tallied. On the income side cities depended on customs duties, rents, fees from municipal monopolies and contributions from citizens. Cities played an important part in the collection of the *tributum*, the main direct tax.⁴⁶ But this went to the government: cities had no direct taxes of their own.

Customs duties included fees to be paid on goods entering the town from the territory, but some privileged cities might even take duties on goods coming by sea instead of leaving it to *publicani*; Augustus' colony Augusta Troas in Asia Minor is an example, as is shown in the newly published customs law for Asia.⁴⁷ Rents came in from land or houses in the possession of the city, but also from places in the market. Monopolies were various: Myra derived an important part of its income from renting out the passage of the Limyra river, and so had to protect the lessee against interlopers who lured away his clientele with lower prices. At Mylasa the exchange of imperial and local money was given to a private entrepreneur as a monopoly.⁴⁸ All these *vectigalia* were rented out, on the model of the Roman *publicani*, for a lump sum to some local financier, whose concern it was to get in the taxes he had paid for.

Personal contributions in Greek were called *leitourgiai*, in Latin *munera*, and they implied personal as well as financial contributions. They might come in as a foundation for general purposes, *kalendarium*, and its proceeds entered the municipal budget. Most foundations, however, were set up for quite specific purposes: to keep up a street, to pay entrance to the public baths for all citizens, to give oil to citizens at each Neptunalia. Most

⁴⁴ Lex Irnitana 19 speaks of *vigiliae*, without explaining what that may mean. In any case it was part of the *munera*, the days of work citizens had to do for their city. ⁴⁵ Jones, *Greek City* 241–2.

⁴⁶ An inscription from Messene (mid-first century A.D.), given by Levick (1985) no. 70, explains very well how the lump sum of 100,000 denarii demanded by the government was distributed by the secretary of the council among the various divisions of the citizenship.

⁴⁷ Engelmann and Knibbe (1989) § 44.

⁴⁸ AJ 128; Smallwood, *NTH* no. 451=Oliver (1989) no. 84.

impressive is the dedication of an *agon* in Oinoanda in Lycia: in 117 lines the inscription goes into every detail of income and expenditure.⁴⁹

The main problem of foundations was to keep them safe from embezzlement by magistrates and others. Some benefactors, like the man of Oinoanda, tried to protect their trust by putting it under the surveillance of emperor and governor, but both were far away and could do little to keep the funds together.

More important were single donations, mostly given on the entrance of the donor or a relative to the council or some municipal office. Very often, if not always, they had to pay an entrance fee, *summa honoraria*, which – according to the cities' wealth and size – in some cases might be as high as HS 100,000 or 200,000.⁵⁰ Moreover, they were expected to pay for buildings and monuments, to organize *ludi* and gladiatorial shows and, if possible, to spend lavishly on their fellow citizens' wellbeing, this being the privilege of the rich: *hoc est habere, hoc est vivere* is the comment in a mosaic showing such a local *dives* giving shows. Quite characteristically the mosaic with the comment was laid down in his own house.⁵¹

Regular items of local expenditure, as listed in two chapters of the new Irni law,⁵² comprise religious observances and games or dinners to which councillors and citizens were invited; remuneration for the town's clerical staff (*aera apparitoria*); embassies; building and repair of public works, sacred buildings and monuments; food and clothing for public slaves and the sums necessary to buy new slaves (in the place of the dead or emancipated); other official or religious observances. Entire categories of public spending, familiar in our world, are absent: education, a health service, poor relief. At least, at Irni they were not regularly provided for by the town, even if the councillors were not forbidden to spend money on such things. Schools were almost everywhere paid for by the pupils' parents, or by foundations like Pliny's at Como. Payment for public physicians was also made mostly by clients; a small salary may have been available from public funds to look after those too poor to pay them. Poor relief as such in pre-Christian times was rather exceptional. Distributions of grain, of food, even of subsidies provided by the alimentary schemes, went not to the indigent, but to those entitled *qua* citizens. It is not by chance that a group at Oinoanda which figured immediately after the members of the council and before the rest of the citizens are called *sitometroumenoi*, those getting grain at distributions.⁵³

From the Irni law one derives the impression that at least this small town

⁴⁹ *CLL* x 3851 (Capua, street); xi 720 (Bologna, baths); v 5279 (Como, oil); Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest* (Oinoanda).

⁵⁰ 100,000 attested in Italian, 200,000 in African towns, cf. Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 147–55.

⁵¹ Beschaouch (1966).

⁵² González (1986) § 19 on the *aediles'* duty and § 79, 'How large a quorum of *decuriones* or *conscripti* is appropriate when the spending of common funds of the *municipes* is raised.'

⁵³ Lines 25–6 of the inscription in Wörrle, *Stadt und Fest*, but cf. also Garnsey, *Famine* 262 ff.

was managed between the *duoviri* and the council. The *senatus, ordo decurionum* or *boule* almost everywhere was now a rather exclusive club, with members having to possess a certain census (varying with the economic situation of the town) and sitting for life. In Irni, and doubtless in other such towns, being a member of the council was now a necessary qualification for candidates in elections – in evident analogy to the situation at Rome, where – since Caligula – the *latus clavus* was a prerequisite for applicants for magistracies.⁵⁴ Filling up the council if its numbers fell below a certain limit was to be carried out by councillors and some other citizens – participation of the citizenship as a whole was not intended.⁵⁵

The standard number of councillors in the West was 100, in the East perhaps somewhat larger, but there were cities with as many as 450 and others with as few as 30 members of council.⁵⁶ As new councillors paid an entrance fee, a large membership carried advantages for the finances of the city.

The hierarchy of the councillors was regulated in a similar way to that of Roman senators, being based on order, office and seniority: the *album decurionum* of Canosa in South Italy first names Roman senators and knights who are patrons of the town, then *quinquennales*, former and current, *duoviri* former and current and so on down to *pedani*, councillors who had held as yet no office, and the *praetextati*, sons of councillors not yet of age to stand for office.⁵⁷

The council discussed and decided on everything which might happen in a town, from ‘foreign policy’, i.e. embassies to the emperor, to festivals and buildings. Anything to do with the spending of money had to be considered with special care, because supervision by *curatores* and by the governor became much stricter in the second century.

The citizens as a whole and, as the council comprised usually the richest, in practice the council, were responsible to the imperial administration for the taxes, i.e. the *tributum*. This responsibility was shifted on to a smaller group of ten or twenty, *decemprimi* or *eikosiprotoi*, who had to meet any arrears. If the local census list was arranged according to wealth it was probably they who were first on this list.

Quite evidently there was not much left for the people to do except to vote for the magistrates if given the choice. In Pompeii, to judge from the election posters painted on walls, there was still fierce competition, and the same may be true of Africa down to the third century. Dio Chrysostom and Plutarch⁵⁸ imply that municipal magistrates still had to harangue the people,

⁵⁴ Lex Irnitana § 21 cannot be explained in any other way, as far as I can see. The beginning of this § is in contrast to Mommsen’s restoration of the equivalent § in the Lex Salpensana, cf. *FIRA* 1² 204.

⁵⁵ Lex Irnitana § 31, which unfortunately breaks off after ‘that on that day the *decuriones* or *conscripti* or whoever by age . . . are to elect new councillors’. ⁵⁶ Nicols (1988).

⁵⁷ *ILS* 6121; cf. *Dig.* L.7.5.5. For a commentary cf. Jongman, *Pompeii* 317–29.

⁵⁸ Dio Chrys. *Or.* VII and LXVIII; Plut. *On the government of a city* 814 a.

sometimes with arguments more fitting for Athens in the fifth century B.C. than for a quiet country town in the second century A.D. But juridical sources, among them the Flavian law of Irni, speak of a waning interest among those qualified to stand for election, and diminishing competition probably meant fewer promises to do this or to give that.⁵⁹

Not all inhabitants of cities were citizens. Some might have emigrated to more prospering towns in the neighbourhood or in some other part of the empire without renouncing their former citizenship. Some quite simply could not afford to be citizens, as not a few towns, especially in the East, asked rather high fees from those wanting to enter their citizenship.⁶⁰

The countryside, *territorium* or *chora* of towns, was divided into *pagi*, rural districts, and *vici* or *komai*, villages, which were sometimes provided with facilities more properly characteristic of towns (as for instance some *vici* in Gaul), and which had some kind of administration of their own.⁶¹ If the territory of the city was very large, there might be local jurisdiction in distant villages by *praefecti* of the *duoviri*, but usually peasants had to go to the city itself if they had business to do with administration. City–country relations were not very good: with some reason the peasants in the countryside claimed that they paid the bulk of the taxes and got nothing back, while those in town had all the amenities of civic life.

This was one of the reasons why villages strove to be promoted to the rank of cities. Orcistus in Asia Minor, when it asked Constantine for elevation to the rank of city, cites the favourable position of the place, already existing urban amenities and a great number of prospective citizens and decurions. Moreover, the people were fervent Christians, so Constantine graciously complied with their wishes.⁶²

Other cities were not completely autonomous but depended in some way or other on neighbouring towns. This was true especially of growing towns in newly conquered or newly urbanized regions. When Transpadane Italy got Latin rights in 89 B.C. all the communities in the mountain valleys in the back country of Bergamo, Brescia and Verona were ‘attributed’ to these cities, and this kind of relationship evidently held good till far into the second century A.D.⁶³

The cities served the empire by controlling whole areas of administration, as we have just seen. In addition, cities acted as agents of the Roman state in particular with regard to tax-collection. Not all cities paid direct taxes, as was explained above.⁶⁴ *Civitates liberae*, for example, were treated as being outside of the province. Italy, of course, was without direct taxation from 167 B.C. down to Diocletian,⁶⁵ and Roman colonies and *municipia* in

⁵⁹ Cf. Garnsey (1974).

⁶⁰ Tarsus charged prospective citizens 500 drachmae (Dio Prus. *Or.* xxxiv.23).

⁶¹ Cf. Poulter (1986). ⁶² Cf. Chastagnol (1981). ⁶³ Laffi (1966).

⁶⁴ Cf. Eck in this volume, pp. 278, 282–3.

⁶⁵ With the exception of some years after 43 B.C. when the *triumviri* reintroduced taxation into Italy.

the provinces with the *ius Italicum* were treated as if they were part of Italy. But if cities had to pay, they were required to deliver a lump sum, as for example the 150 drachmae of the fishing village of Gyarus in the Aegean, and then had to extract the sum somehow from the contributors. An inscription of the mid-first century A.D. tells us how the municipal secretary of Messene arranged to distribute the 100,000 denarii levied on the town among the citizens.⁶⁶ If the local magistrates did not succeed in getting the money, they might ask for a reduction in taxes, or they just paid part of the sum and let arrears build up, in the hope of cancellation by the emperor at some stage. But in principle ‘the local people’ were responsible for payment of taxes, and this responsibility was passed on more and more to the members of the council – a collective liability which was to cause them much trouble from the third century onwards.

Another field of state activity which caused much resentment in the cities was the obligation to keep running the transportation system instituted by Augustus, the *vehiculatio* or *angareia*. If this is translated by ‘postal service’, as it sometimes is, it was a very exclusive postal service for official use only. In theory cities had to supply transport animals and wagons to officials and soldiers (according to rank) and to provide *hospitium*, accommodation and food. There were official schedules to be posted at all stations laying down how many animals for what distance the villagers had to give, and how much they were to be compensated for that.⁶⁷ But soldiers and officials seldom complied with the regulations, and as many soldiers were on detached duty far away from their commanding officers, control was extremely difficult, and complaints from cities are continuous from the first century onwards. Italy under Nerva was spared the *vehiculatio*: *vehiculatioe Italiae remissa* we are told on a coin of 97. Probably the whole system was privatized in Italy, i.e. given over to private *manicipes*, and paid for by the state.⁶⁸

A third obligation rested upon the cities, or usually did. While new roads in Italy and in the provinces were mostly built by the state, i.e. paid for by the emperor and built by private contractors in Italy and by the military in the provinces, the upkeep of roads was given over to the communities along those roads. They might have to pay for that out of public funds, as with the important road from Beirut to Damascus which was repaired in the territory of Abila by a Roman governor; but they might pass on this obligation to those who profited mostly from the undertaking, the land-owners (*kektemenoi*) along the road, as happened in Macedonia.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Strab. x.5.3; Levick (1985) no. 70.

⁶⁷ The long inscription of Sagalassus in Asia Minor published by Mitchell (1976) is very explicit on that count. ⁶⁸ Cf. *RIC* II 229 ff. and Eck, *Organisation* 91–110.

⁶⁹ Levick (1985) no. 102; Oliver (1989) no. 56. Channels, too, were built by governors with the help of *corvée* labour from the cities, like the ‘Fullers Channel’ (*dioryx gnaphikeos*) at Antioch under Traianus *pater*, cf. Feissel (1985).

Cities, it is easy to see, could not be administered without the ‘ruling class’, the *decuriones*, and even less against them. This was acknowledged by Rome in giving Roman citizenship to more and more of its members, in making the members of all the councils in all the cities one ecumenical – and of course wholly fictitious – *ordo decurionum*, one of the three privileged *ordines* in the empire, and in making them the reservoir for promotion to the equestrian and senatorial order.⁷⁰ The members of the older senatorial families did not easily forget their prejudice against foreigners, be they Gauls from Gallia Transalpina, Cretans or Syrians. The emperor Claudius tried very hard to convince the senators that enrolling some new senators from the Tres Galliae did not mean a general sell-out of all old values, but one doubts whether he succeeded.⁷¹ Nevertheless Italians and then provincials became a majority, first among the legionaries, then in the equestrian service, and by the time of the Severans in the Senate too. If such people came from good families (i.e. from among the leading families in their towns), had the proper education and, most important, were affluent enough, resistance to them grew less, especially if they showed their social superiors in the Roman Senate the deference that was expected.

Cities as such had no institutionalized influence upon the administration of the empire, and there was no empire-wide equivalent of the provincial *concilia* at Rome. The one, and very feeble, step Augustus had made in permitting Italian towns to propose candidates for the junior military post of *tribunus militum* was not continued in later times.⁷² But as friends and relations of senators, governors and even the emperor, the local élites might work to the best interest of their cities – and their own. Opinions sometimes differed about the aims of some given persons: the Athenians were not great admirers of their richest and most influential co-citizen, Herodes Atticus, and about the same time Antoninus Pius had to reprove the people of Ephesus because they did not show the proper gratitude towards Vedius Antoninus for his generous donations of buildings, preferring shows, distributions (of money) and *agones*.⁷³

One of the new insights given to us by the Irni law is that neither governor nor Senate nor emperor shows up very much in this text. The *proconsul*, of course, has capital and overriding civil jurisdiction; he is to give exemption from certain restrictions (for example the new debts the city might incur every year), but not much more. The emperor’s role is even

⁷⁰ The main privilege of the so-called Latin right (*ius Latii* or *Latinum*) was that magistrates of Latin cities at the moment of leaving their office became Roman citizens; later the privilege was sometimes extended to all the *decuriones* (*Latium maius*).

⁷¹ This remarkable speech is given by Tacitus, *Ann.* XII.24, and partly preserved on a bronze tablet that comes from the meeting-place of the Gallic council near Lyons (*ILS* 212), cf. Levick (1985) no. 159.

⁷² Cf. Nicolet (1967) and Millar (1986) 307.

⁷³ On Herodes Atticus, Bowersock, *Sophists* 91–100 and Ameling, *Herodes Atticus*, esp. 136 ff. On Vedius Antoninus, secretary of the town and grandfather of senators, *AJ* 101.

more restricted. If there were links between central and local governments, then they worked quite evidently some other way.

One of these was, as has long been thought, supervision by *curatores civitatis*, senators or equestrians appointed by the emperor to keep the local administrators from foolish (and costly) decisions. But, as is obvious from their Greek title *logistes* and from the not too numerous documents of their activities, they controlled city finances, and that not very closely.⁷⁴ They were not the connection we are looking for between ‘the authorities’ and the cities. Another possible candidate might be the institution of *patroni*, well-placed Romans who were expected to represent the interests of ‘their’ towns in the metropolis.⁷⁵ The number and importance of patrons depended, of course, upon the importance of the city, but even small Canosa (Canusium) had thirty-one senators and eight Roman knights for *patroni* (cf. above, p. 355). Patrons were useful, as can be seen from Pliny,⁷⁶ if someone from the city needed a recommendation, or if an embassy from the city wanted speedy access to the emperor. They might even provide their towns with information on relevant developments at Rome, but quite certainly they were not part of the administrative routine.

So there remain the two ‘classic’ ways to keep up relations, duly underlined by F. Millar in his book on the emperor: letters and embassies. Letters were written by the emperor or by other important people to cities, while cities, if they could, sent an embassy or an ambassador to present the city’s case in a polished speech. Hence towns, especially from the eastern part of the empire, very often sent professional orators to plead for them.⁷⁷ But mostly it was from the local élite that embassies were recruited. Being on or leading such an embassy meant honour at home and the chance to meet the emperor and make a favourable impression upon him, which might lead to promotion in rank and conferment of office. But there were far too many embassies, to the emperor, to the governor or to other worthies; thus the small town of Irni had to divide its *decuriones* into three *decuriae* so as to distribute the burden equally among them.⁷⁸ And embassies might be rather lengthy too, as can be seen from an inscription mentioning a representative of Ephesus who had travelled the length and breadth of the empire, from Britain to Mesopotamia, on diverse errands to Severus and Caracalla.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ According to *ILS* 5918a in A.D. 113, Curiatius Cosanus, the *curator* of Caere, was living in Ameria, about 100 km away, and it took him five months to answer an *epistula* sent to him by Caere’s magistrates. On *curatores* cf. now Jacques, *Privilège*.

⁷⁵ Saller, *Patronage*. The *hospitium* which is attested mostly in Spain and in North Africa, cf. Nicols (1980), may have been something similar. ⁷⁶ E.g. *Ep.* x.4.

⁷⁷ Cf. Scopelianus pleading before Domitianus for the *commune Asiae* against the emperor’s ban on vines. ⁷⁸ González (1986) 186 ch. F.

⁷⁹ *AE* 1971 no. 455 = *IEph* III 802; cf., too, the embassy of the *concilium* of Hispania Citerior which had to go to Sirmium to meet Marcus Aurelius: *AE* 1971 no. 190. On embassies in general cf. Millar (1988), 345 ff.

Embassies were sent on particular problems, but quite a number went on regular occasions too: on the emperor's accession, on his birthday, on days of rejoicing and on days of mourning in the imperial family, to governors when they arrived in the province and when they left, and so on. On such occasions privileges were confirmed or new ones given, but all this amounted to rather less than a regular transmission of information.⁸⁰

Leaving aside the rather mysterious *stationes* some towns are said to have kept at Rome and elsewhere,⁸¹ there remain letters, *epistulae*. Some went to the cities themselves, as for instance all the emperors' letters 'published' on the impressive 'archive wall' at Aphrodisias.⁸² But others went to the governor keeping him informed of the names of new consuls, new *senatus consulta*, etc. Such information was probably posted publicly, perhaps near the governor's residence, and the individual cities had to secure copies of them for themselves.⁸³ How this was done we do not know.

The golden age of peace ended with the death of Marcus Aurelius, in the opinion of a senator and historian writing half a century later: 'Our history now falls away, as affairs did for the Romans of that time, from a realm of gold to one of iron and rust.'⁸⁴ Quite characteristically he stresses the personal aspect, the incompetence of Commodus, where we are looking more for structural changes. The administration went on as before, but the terrible experience of external and civil wars, of plague and economic crisis at the end of the century, heralded the changes to come in the third century.

⁸⁰ Many documents from Aphrodisias are such confirmations of privileges given at the emperor's accession, cf. Reynolds (1982).

⁸¹ In *OGIS* 595 the city of Tyre is said to keep a *statio* at Puteoli. ⁸² Reynolds (1982).

⁸³ In the Irni law § 85, the local magistrates are expected to have copied and set up in public the *album* of the governor, containing all his *edicta, formulae iudiciorum* etc., probably a longish text.

⁸⁴ Dio LXXII.36.3–4.

CHAPTER 11
REBELS AND OUTSIDERS

BRENT D. SHAW

I. INSIDERS AND OUTSIDERS

1. Introduction

The Roman state of the first and second centuries was a political unit of unprecedented scale in the West, with, I believe, over eighty million inhabitants. The boundaries of this feat of political unification, however, were not coterminous with anything that could reasonably be called a ‘Roman society’. The empire was a militarily created hegemony of immense land mass that harboured hundreds, if not thousands, of different societies. These two fundamental and contradictory facts – massive unity and diversity – must be grasped before any understanding of the problem can be attained. Aelius Aristides, a good example of one of those local aristocrats who were integrated into the political mainstream of the empire in the mid-second century by means of citizenship, and who praised the empire for its integrity, its unparalleled perfection, was still compelled to deny the obvious:

Vast and comprehensive as is the size of it, your rule is much greater for its thoroughness than it is for the area its boundaries enclose. For the Mysians, Sakai and Pisidians do not maintain any rule inside it, nor are there any lands held by others who have occupied them by force or detached them by revolt, and who cannot be captured.¹

Not only was central political rule defective in precisely this way, it also fell considerably short of the ideal of the ‘quasi nationalism’ which men like Aelius Aristides felt the empire should represent:

Everyone, everywhere in the empire is equally under your rule. In not setting themselves in opposition to imperial rule, those who live in the mountains have been made more humble than those who dwell in the flattest plains . . . Nothing any longer divides mainland from island. Rather, as one continuous country and one people, all are subject in silence.²

Even if there existed unintegrated ethnic enclaves within the empire, and recalcitrant highlands that refuted Aristides’ extravagant claims, it is

¹ Ael. Arist. *Or.* 26.29; cf. Oliver (1953) 913–14.

² Ael. Arist. *Or.* 26.30; contrast MacMullen (1963a).

still possible to seek common elements that provided the empire with a coherent frame, and which enabled men like him to feel that they were part of a common endeavour. If one had to specify the ‘load-bearing’ unit of culture that constituted the core of the empire, it would have to be the mosaic of cities, the network of urban settlements in East and West, from which emanated the power of administration and control over the countryside. Membership in the empire was therefore measured most directly in terms of membership in a city. When Aelius Aristides referred to the lack of boundaries and divisions, to the new unity of the Mediterranean, he was able to point to this one badge of membership as proof: ‘But there is that thing which, much more than all other things, deserves attention and admiration – I mean your citizenship, and its grand conception, because there is nothing like it to be found anywhere else at all.’³ Sentiments like these went much further than Cicero’s traditional perspective, voiced some two centuries earlier, that citizenship was one of the three or four human bonds that linked man to society.⁴ There are no more signs of a vigorous debate, to which Cicero contributed, over possible conflicts between imperial and local citizenships. Even so, the badge of citizenship was only one marker amongst many others that signalled belonging to this imperial world. Another was the hardly insignificant behaviour entailed in the recognition and worship of a near-divine monarch who required the personal sworn allegiance of his subjects. But perhaps the most omnipresent fact, and test, of belonging was the payment of imperial tribute. Both of these criteria, however, assumed the prior existence of the political and social network of towns and cities that formed the true ‘sinews of empire’. Set firmly at one end of the spectrum of belonging and ‘not-belonging’, therefore, was the town or city and its environment: the inhabitants who formed the cells of the rural–urban diptychs that composed the true core of the Roman world. Being part of this urban world was signified by a host of common values: of architectural forms, urban geometry and space, iconographic symbols, religious boundaries, and popular values of language, exchange and entertainment.⁵ Formal status, more precisely the degrees of generosity in the dispensation of citizenship to the various peoples of the empire, therefore offers only one measurement of membership in that larger city, the *patria communis*, that the empire pretended to be.

2. *Citizenship and culture*

Everywhere in the empire, but especially in its western parts, the last decades of the first century marked a watershed in the spread of Roman

³ Ael. Arist. Or. 26.59. ⁴ Cic. Off. 1.17.53–8; others were family and kin, ritual and real friends.

⁵ Clavel-Lévêque (1982).

citizenship – the period when it began to be granted on a large and continuing basis to non-Romans from the provincial areas of the empire. From the beginning, however, the principal aim in thus extending formal membership to the inhabitants of lands outside Italy was never to incorporate large populations in the formation of a national state, as in modern times. Rather, it was to be a means by which local men of power could be tied to the central state and its interests – a function consciously recognized by Aelius Aristides himself.⁶ The grant of citizenship affirmed by Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus in 168–9 to one Iulianus Zegrensis, a headman of the *Zegrenses*, an ethnic group in the highlands of the Atlas mountains in Mauretania Tingitana, was made ‘because he had been most faithful in his ready obedience and loyalty to our [i.e. Roman] side’, and in the hope that other *familiae* of the *Zegrenses* would thereby be provoked to emulate the good behaviour of Iulianus’ *domus*.⁷ In the first and second centuries, the control and integration of local élites, signalled by bequests of citizenship such as that to Iulianus, was already sufficiently advanced to permit the central government to move away from, and finally to abandon, the device of establishing whole new Roman cities (*coloniae*) as centres of Roman civilization and political domination. In the western provinces, following on the great spate of colonial settlements under Caesar and Augustus, the device of the colonial foundation was revived briefly under Claudius and later, for peculiar reasons, under Trajan. After the latter’s reign, the foundation of Roman colonies as actual settlements of emigrant Roman citizens ceases. Concurrently, there seems to have been a major shift, especially marked in the reign of Trajan’s successor Hadrian, to the more civil and expedient device of promoting existing provincial communities to formal Roman civic statuses – usually to that of a *municipium*, less frequently to that of a *colonia*. This trend is correlated with the supplanting of personal *ad hominem* grants of citizenship, more characteristic of the first century, by larger *en bloc* grants made to whole communities in the second.⁸ It is also correlated with the appearance of a communal type of grant of Latin status, the so-called ‘greater’ Latin right, first attested in the decades after Trajan.

There is not much debate over the status of *coloniae* in provincial contexts. The grant of colonial status to a city effectively turned all local citizens into Roman citizens, and probably also gave the city, as a distinct corporate unit of government, control over its own territory in respect to the imperial burden of tribute collection and payment. The greater uncertainty, and debate, is over the significance of a provincial community achieving the status of a *municipium*. It seems best to interpret the status

⁶ Ael. Arist. *Or.* 26.64.

⁷ *AE* 1971 no. 534, lines. 5–7 (Banasa); see Millar, *Emperor* 479–80 for other examples.

⁸ Millar, *Emperor* 482–3.

as a rather fluid one, not bounded by a consistent set of rules, and as one largely dependent on the workings of systems of patronage that linked local urban élites with the central government. All forms of 'Roman status', including both Roman citizenship and the Latin right, derived from a grant by the emperor (or, indirectly, from the consequences that flowed from an original grant). All such gifts were in effect rewards for loyalty, either effective or prospective, to the individuals and communities concerned. Citizenship and the Latin right could be bestowed either *en bloc* or to individuals; both routes ultimately depended on imperial benefaction – the emperor alone was the final source of new membership in a Roman community.⁹ The bifurcation of communal and individual forms of Roman status extended even as far as the quintessential formal status, the rarely granted 'Italian right' which equated provincial land to tribute-free land in Italy, and equated the status of the Roman citizen of that provincial community to the nominally tribute-free status of the citizen resident of Italy. Normally bestowed on whole communities for their group loyalty, it could also be granted to individuals, as in the well-known case of Claudia Paula from Didyma in Asia Minor in the latter part of the first century.¹⁰

The precise link between the grant of the Latin right to a town and the civic status of persons in such a community is also a much-disputed matter. There are some facts, however, that can be stated with a degree of certainty. First, just as with full *civitas*, the *ius Latii* (or *Latium* or *Latinitas*, as the right is variously called) was an acquisition that reposed ultimately on an imperial gift. The emperor's beneficence could be just as arbitrary in this case as in that of citizenship. It could span the whole range from grants to individuals, to awards made to whole towns of ethnic communities, and even to the entire population of a large geographic zone spanning several Roman provinces – as when the emperor Vespasian gave the Latin right to all of Spain.¹¹ Even when bestowed on entire towns or peoples, however, the grant was like a conglomerate of individuals' rights; it did not therefore necessarily entail the establishment of a Roman-type city or *municipium*. Often, as in Spain, the constitution of formal municipalities might follow some years after the initial grant; and, even more often, as in the whole of

⁹ There may indeed have been no firm connection between Latin status and the communal status of a *municipium*, see Galsterer (1972), Humbert (1981) and Le Roux (1986).

¹⁰ On *Ius Italicum* see Dig. I.15.1, 6, 7–8 and Pliny, *HN* III.25 and III.179; arguably a status held by all *coloniae* that were settled by Roman citizen colonists, see Watkins (1979) and (1983); for the personal grant see Triantaphyllopoulos (1963) on *IDidym* 331.

¹¹ *Gai Inst.* I.95; for communities, see Tac. *Ann.* xv.32; cf. Pliny, *HN* III.20.135: *nationes* of the Maritime Alps; Pliny, *NH* III.4.6–7: *oppida*; III.8.91: peoples; cf. *HA Hadr.* 21.6 'Latium multis civitatibus dedit'; ethnic communities, such as the *Carni* and *Catali*, might then be attributed to a Roman city that would provide a model for their organization: *CIL* v 532=ILS6680. For Vespasian's grant to Spain, see Pliny, *HN* III.30, with Zecchini (1990).

the Celtic world, that development might come very tardily, if at all.¹² The core ‘right’ imparted by Latin status, the so-called *ius adipiscendae civitatis per magistratum*, or the acquisition of Roman citizenship upon the holding of municipal office, presumed a trajectory of development that would carry at least the local élites along the path to the creation of a Roman-style community. Hence, it is too restrictive to interpret the *ius Latii* as a purely personal right; it was, rather, a collective privilege and a political instrument in the hands of the imperial state that aimed at the integration of provincial communities via the cooptation of their leaders.¹³ And it was flexible enough that this could be done through individual or collective grants, and with no prior assumptions about the actual, or prospective, degree of urban development of the peoples concerned. Of course, the other trend was equally possible: that, by an anticipatory mimicry of Roman forms and institutions, the local élites could prepare their community in such a manner that an appeal to the emperor for a collective grant of Latin status or for a municipal ‘charter’ would be more likely to meet with a favourable response.¹⁴

The paths to the citizenship itself in the Principate are specified by the jurist Gaius as either a direct gift of the emperor (*beneficium principis*) or, more indirectly, a grant of the Latin right by the *princeps*. By the latter ‘right’ the members of the local ruling élite achieved citizenship automatically by holding office in their city – or, in a more generous form, the so-called ‘greater’ Latin right (*Latium maius*), merely by being a member of, or being adlected into, their local town *ordo* or senate.¹⁵ One of the more common instances of the individual grant of citizenship in this period, however, which was, once again, a type of personal benefice from the emperor for good behaviour, was the reward of Roman citizenship given to soldiers in the auxiliary units of the army after the completion of twenty-five years of service and honourable discharge (*honesta missio*). The considerable number of the so-called ‘diplomas’ recording these grants that have been recovered by archaeologists (N=c. 300) can be analysed to indicate some general trends in the distribution of this particular type of individual grant of citizenship. They give us some measure of the degree to which Roman citizenship spread within a given institutional context in the empire. There is

¹² Braunert (1966) founded his thesis of the *ius Latii* as a purely personal right on this gap between the initial grant and the later appearance of chartered *municipia* in Spain. On the hiatus in Celtic lands, see Galsterer-Kröll (1973); Vittinghoff (1976) and Humbert (1981) 219. ¹³ Humbert (1981) 226.

¹⁴ Millar, *Emperor* 405–7; as seems to have been the case in some of the Spanish town that received municipal ‘charters’; cf. the cases of Gigthis under Antoninus Pius (*ILS* 6780, cf. 6779) and Gemellae (*ILS* 6848), both in North Africa.

¹⁵ Gai. *Inst.* 1.93–6, cf. III.20, though the information is given obliquely in a discussion of the effect of acquisition of citizenship on *patria potestas*; Pliny, *Ep.* xxxvii.3, again indirectly, in a discussion of the relevance of the 5 per cent inheritance tax to newly created citizens. For *Latium maius* see the case of Gigthis cited above.

a remarkable decrease in the rate of issuance of these ‘diplomas’ after the mid-160s. The decline seems to be explained best by the fact that they were no longer required in significant numbers because most of the recruits to the auxiliary units already possessed citizenship, probably because most of them had acquired it from their fathers who preceded them in service in the *auxilia*.¹⁶

Quite apart from these formal modes of acquisition, however, there seems to have been an unofficial drift towards the adoption of cultural symbols that practically identified one with a Roman citizen in appearance. This movement was intentional in some cases, rather unconscious in others. There was, for example, the adoption of a full Roman name. The looseness of acquisition and display of the formal *tria nomina* was already a problem by Claudius’ reign; he made it illegal for foreigners to adopt the names of Roman families and executed others who were usurping the rights of Roman citizens.¹⁷ Much of this movement seems to have been provoked by a natural impulse to identify with a status that would mark one as a full member of the community that was the powerful centre of the Mediterranean world. Yet another sign of this propensity, as pointed out above, was the widespread imitation of Roman-style municipal institutions and technical vocabulary by élites of the local towns in the years before their communities actually acquired a formal Roman municipal status (if indeed they ever did attain the desired rank).¹⁸ Indeed, in the absence of modern bureaucratic record-keeping and checking procedures, there was no way in which any systematic control could be maintained on those who, over many generations, lapsed into this self-identification. An exemplary case is provided by the men from the Alpine peoples of the Anauni, Tulliasse and Siduni, who had acted under the clear assumption (mistaken as it turned out) that their forebears had been made Roman citizens; on this basis some of them had advanced to service in the praetorian cohorts, and others had even been adlected to the élite panels of judges at Rome. It was embarrassing when they turned out not to be Roman citizens, a situation that Claudius hastened to rectify *ex post facto*.¹⁹ The important element in this little fiasco is that these men had made their careers as ‘Romans’, must have borne *tria nomina*, had acted as citizens, and would not have been uncovered had it not been for an accidental accusation that, quite tangentially, raised doubts about their status.

The fraud was possible because there was no continuing effort by the state to prove status. There were, it is true, records of imperial *beneficia* at Rome; but there is no evidence that they could be used in any pervasive

¹⁶ Roxan (1981) 269, 273–4; for the texts of the diplomas see *CIL* xvi, Roxan, *Diplomas I and II*; comparable diplomas were issued to men serving in the fleets. ¹⁷ Suet. *Claud.* 25.2

¹⁸ Gasco (1972) and (1979) and Galsterer (1971) for examples.

¹⁹ *CIL* v 5050= *ILS* 206 (Vallis Anaunorum, nr. Tridentum).

manner to guarantee civic rights throughout the empire.²⁰ A fortunate auxiliary veteran might have a copy of his ‘diploma’ with its grant of citizenship, which would be proof of that status for himself and his immediate offspring. Or, in those regions of the empire where there was a tradition and technology of record-keeping, such as Egypt, the dubious citizen might be able to appeal to copies of his birth-registration.²¹ These birth declarations and registrations had been made mandatory by Augustus for all full Roman citizens (therefore persons of proven legitimate birth); and, in an increasing *reserrement de citoyenneté* occurring in the latter part of the second century, Marcus Aurelius extended the requirement for registration to all Roman citizens, even those of bastard birth.²² Persons who happened to live in regions where there were good archival facilities might be able to appeal to these records as proof of citizenship. But it is too much to believe the optimistic assertion that, ‘when St Paul alleged his Roman citizenship before the Roman authorities, he must have produced his birth certificate . . . which he doubtless carried with him wherever he travelled’.²³ The more likely, and normal, circumstance was that the acquisition of such documentary evidence of citizenship (if indeed it existed) could only be obtained on request, and in response to a specific need.

Even the strictest of state definitions still depended on the deeper structures of family and kinship to be made a living part of local communities. Both the *en bloc* grants to communities through the awarding of colonial status or the Latin right, and the individual benefactions of citizenship, assume the centrality of the family as the means by which this citizenship was then transmitted automatically to succeeding generations. The terms of the Lex Municipii Salpensani of 82–4, the municipal ‘charter’ that confirmed the Latin right for the town of Salpensa in the district of Hispalis in Baetica (southern Spain), makes this clear:²⁴

All persons made duoviri, aediles or quaestors in accordance with this law shall become Roman citizens after the completion of the year of their magistracy, together with their parents and wives, and the children born from a legal marriage and in the power of their parents, and likewise grandsons and granddaughters who are the children of a son and who are in the power of their parents . . .

The so-called military ‘diplomas’ also assume the same mechanism. The typical phraseology found in them reads:

²⁰ See the *commentarium civitate Romana donatorum* referred to in the Tabula Banasitana: *AE* 1971 no. 534, line 19; there is no evidence that copies were regularly issued from it.

²¹ Schulz (1942) and (1943).

²² It was hailed as a move to defend the status of the free inhabitants of the empire: *HLA Mar.* 9.7–9; see Schulz (1942) 80 ff. for interpretation.

²³ Schulz (1943) 63–4; the rest of his evidence (1942) 78–9, all from Egypt, clearly shows that copies had been requested, and provided, only in exceptional circumstances.

²⁴ Lex Municipii Salpensani, § 21 (*CIL* II 1963=*ILS* 6088=*FIRA* I² no. 23).

to the men whose names appear below, who have completed twenty-five or more years of service . . . to them, to their children and to their descendants, the emperor . . . grants citizenship and the right of marriage with the wives whom they now have [to whom citizenship was sometimes also granted] or, if they are still unmarried, those wives whom they subsequently marry, so long as it is limited to one wife for each man.

This precise formula remained in force only until the 140s, after which the special grant of citizenship to children born to the retiring soldier before his own acquisition of citizenship was rescinded. The substituted part of the new formula seems to assume that most auxiliary soldiers were by now Roman citizens, and so no detailed grants were required for their children.²⁵ The wording of the ‘diplomas’ throughout their history continued to emphasize the family of descendants as the automatic recipients of citizenship, and the means by which it would be biologically transmitted to succeeding generations.

The problems of what citizenship meant in day-to-day practice, as opposed to the legal technicalities of its spread, are far more difficult to answer. Certainly the advantages which accrued to members of local ruling orders were palpable: the more ambitious amongst them could rise, via military service and procuratorial duties, to positions of power in the central government. Their formal and patronal resources enabled them better to protect their fiscal position and their property. As Roman citizens they gained access to the uniform protections of the Roman law – although here, too, there were disadvantages to be weighed against the benefits. Many new Roman citizens who acquired citizenship by way of formal requests made as individuals, or as members of a newly enfranchised community, often tried simultaneously to acquire exemptions from those duties incumbent upon citizens which they had previously escaped as *peregrini* or ‘foreigners’. For example, the new citizen no longer had automatic exemptions from the 5 per cent inheritance tax that was imposed on all property devolution (except that to close relatives) and so had to appeal for a maintenance of his previous advantageous tribute status.²⁶ Our problem in measuring precise benefits, however, should not obscure the fact of the omnipresence of Roman legal norms, and the extent to which the provincial subjects of the empire tried to ensure that they were covered by at least the semblance of Roman legal forms and procedures. One of the more striking examples of this behaviour is provided by the legal documents in the ‘archive’ of the woman Babatha preserved in a cave depository on the western shores of the Dead Sea – they date to the first generation after the

²⁵ For a discussion of the change in the formula and the reasons for the change see Wolf (1974) 490–6, Arnaud-Lindet (1977) 299 ff., Roxan (1981) 265–6, and Link (1986) 185–6; the new formula is found in Roxan, *Diplomas I* no. 39 (A.D. 140) and following. ²⁶ Millar, *Emperor* 484–5.

formation of the Roman province in the region (Arabia).²⁷ Moreover, there are numerous indices, each perhaps slight in itself, that indicate a fairly wide popular acquaintance with the vocabulary and concepts of ‘the law’.²⁸ That knowledge, when combined with the public performance of its enforcement, most spectacularly in the punishment of condemned criminals, achieved what the Hadrianic jurist Celsus wanted – that subjects should know not the minutiae of the words, but rather the force (*vis*) and power (*potestas*) of the law.²⁹

One of the positive benefits that is thought to have been acquired by new citizens is protection from arbitrary maltreatment by Roman magistrates and officials. This was a traditional power of citizenship that had been acquired by a relatively small and well-defined body of citizens in Rome and Italy by long, and sometimes violent, struggles in the early and middle Republic. But the extent to which such a ‘right’ was practicable for hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of citizens scattered throughout remote communities in a vast Mediterranean empire is another matter. Protection from arbitrary actions and punishments was embodied in the citizen’s right of appeal – in our period an appeal to the emperor at Rome against the jurisdiction of provincial governors and their assistants. The plain fact that so little is known about the mechanisms and actual function of ‘appeal’, however, is perhaps some indication of its actual utility and potency.³⁰ By its nature an appeal was a challenge to the judgement of the local governor, the very man through whom the appeal had to be made. A governor was likely to be less than eager to cooperate in the forwarding of a petition that questioned his own competence. The repeated strictures issued by emperors warning governors not to use force and other modes of obstruction in their intimidation of appellants indicates more of the reality of the situation. The general trend in the history of appeal also reveals that emperors wished to rid themselves of its more vexatious aspects by instituting minimum levels for property appeals that could be sent to Rome, and, eventually, by appointing officials who, *vice principis*, were to have a jurisdiction that was ‘without appeal’ to the emperor.³¹ The more

²⁷ Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba*; the legal commentary is provided by Wolff (1976) and (1980). ²⁸ Crawford (1988). ²⁹ *Dig.* 1.3.17.

³⁰ Our knowledge of the legal norms depends on two fragmentary passages in the *Digest* relevant to the Lex Julia de Vi: *Dig.* LXVIII.6.7 (Ulpian) and XLVIII.6.8 (Maecianus); and a passage from the much later *Pauli Sententiae*, v.26.1–2; see Garnsey (1966) 168–9, 188–9 and Millar, *Emperor* 510.

³¹ *Dig.* XLIX.1.21. pref.–1; XLIX.2.1.4; for a case from North Africa see *AE* 1964 no. 223; here, as elsewhere, there were no absolute rules, since the emperor could still agree to hear appeals from his own ‘inappellable’ officials, see Millar, *Emperor* 514–15 and *CJ* XI.26.3. For minimum levels in property cases, see *AJ* no. 121-IGV 21 (from Mistra, near Sparta): no appeal to the emperor’s jurisdiction in cases involving less than a thousand denarii, and for criminal charges not involving the death penalty or loss of civic rights (as early as A.D. 11); cf. *AJ* no. 119=IGRR IV 1044 (Cos): appeal had to be made through the governor first, and a *cautio* or deposit of 2,500 denarii had to be made.

general circumstance surrounding appeal is that it was used, apparently with some success, by members of local urban élites, such as the leading families of Athens in their appeals to Marcus Aurelius in the 170s, to protect their status privileges and their fiscal and property interests.³² When one considers the case of lower-class citizens, however, the situation is far less optimistic. Much scholarly effort has been expended on the precise legal mechanisms suggested by the appeal of the Christian Paul in the 60s. In his case, and in those of other lower-class persons, such as the anonymous citizen who appealed against the judgement of the governor of Lower Germany in 68, there seems to have been rather less scholarly emphasis on the simple fact that their appeals failed. They were both executed.³³ The general historical trend that emerges is this: the emperor was willing to listen to and, on occasion, to placate members of the regional upper classes in their appeals, but tended to repress or discourage appeals from ordinary citizens. Where the latter were heard, emperors seem to have supported the prior decisions of their governors. When it came to balancing the claims of local aristocrats against the judgements of temporary governors, emperors were more flexible and open to persuasion. All of this, however, seems to have little to do with the intrinsic worth or power of citizenship, or with the right of appeal. The evidence, such as it is, emphasizes the increasing conformity of citizenship in the provinces with overriding economic and political forces that were producing a more uniform class structure in the empire as a whole.

The spread of citizenship, and of Roman-style urban communities with which citizenship was correlated, was a very uneven process. Existing urban centres in the entire eastern half of the empire did not readily adapt to a pure Roman model of municipal organization. The hiatus produced by this implicit rejection of Roman models was not filled by a concomitant establishment of new Roman cities. Roman citizen colonies in the East remained relatively few in number, and their long-term history reveals just one trend: their progressive reduction by local cultural forces to the point where they merged with their local surroundings.³⁴ The topography and ecology of the eastern Mediterranean, and the deep cultural traditions of the region, militated against an easy adaptation to Roman civic norms. In addition, large areas of the East, regions such as Isauria, the Lebanon, Palestine and Egypt (in the last case partly for political reasons) remained largely outside the ambit of urban developments of Roman types.³⁵ Citizenship in the East therefore tended to remain mostly a means of

³² Oliver (1970) and Jones (1971).

³³ On the case of Paul see Acts 22: 25–6; 23: 27; 25–6–22; and Garnsey (1966) 182–5; on the anonymous: Dio LXIII.2.3, cf. Garnsey (1966) 176.

³⁴ The Roman colonies of Asia Minor are a good example: see Levick (1967).

³⁵ The case of Antinoupolis in Egypt is an exception that proves the rule, see Braunert (1962).

attaching local élites to the central state. The ruling élites of these eastern towns and cities, reaching back to their Hellenistic past, tried to establish a negotiated relationship between themselves and Rome based primarily on direct personal links with Roman men of power, especially with the emperor and his household. Within this traditional nexus, local roles (e.g. that of civic benefactor) and public offices (e.g. that of *neokoros* or temple-keeper) could adapt to new functions in Roman civic and imperial structures. But, on the whole, the eastern Mediterranean world was one that was isolated from the major forces and institutional apparatuses of citizenship, such as the Latin right, that were hallmarks of formal integration in the West. Because of the personal power structures that characterized much of the East, direct personal patronage remained the principal mode of entrance to higher Roman status. Typical of this development is the way in which most of the first men from the region to rise to greater positions of Roman power via the citizenship – to the Senate, to consulships and gubernatorial posts – were derived almost wholly from eastern dynastic or regal houses.³⁶

The extension of citizenship and urban developments of Roman-type in the western Mediterranean, by contrast, was marked by considerable successes in the plains regions of this general geographic area: southern Narbonensis, southern Spain around the Baetis river, and the eastern parts of North Africa, as well as in Italy itself. These became the primary zones of municipal development, of dense urban networks with a marked tendency to uniformity along a central Roman civic model, and of a concomitantly rapid acculturation of local élites to a common Latin culture.³⁷ Even small towns in North Africa, Spain and southern Gaul readily displayed the typical mix of formal literate culture and a popular culture of participation that characterized the Roman town: *belles-lettres* and gladiators. The written high Latin culture, which was forged with such rapidity and depth in the later Republic in Italy, moved with relative ease (principally because of the lack of serious competitors) into its new western milieu. But the transfer of this same Latin culture to the eastern Mediterranean was only partially effected. Its written aspect, being partially a derivative form of an œcumenic Hellenistic culture, was not able successfully to challenge its older and more deeply rooted ancestor. Perhaps paradoxically, it was the gladiator and the arena, the circus and charioteer, and other hallmarks of Latin popular culture, that were the most successful transplants to the cities of the East. Even in the western Mediterranean, however, where the new Latin culture of the empire faced few challengers, its extension was not rapidly effected in vast expanses that remained beyond the pale of Roman

³⁶ Syme, *Tacitus* 508 ff.; cf. Sherwin-White, *Citizenship* 259–61, with corrections to the evidence assembled by Walton (1929). ³⁷ See Strab. III.2.15 (C151) on southern Spain.

urbanization, above all in the Celtic and Germanic lands that stretched in a great arc from northern Spain, through Britain, northern Gaul, Germany, and thence eastward over the Alpine ranges and western Danubian basin. In these lands there was a singular lack of municipal development of the same solid and long-lasting type found in the Mediterranean. This absence is correlated with a Mediterranean prejudice against northern types, against Celts, their language and their culture, that inhibited their ready absorption into the networks of the central Roman élites.³⁸ In this largely cityless Celtic and Germanic fringe, the advance of citizenship tended to proceed slowly, much as in the eastern Mediterranean, through individual grants to local big-men, and to other individuals who were rewarded for their services to the state, either in arms or in some other field of civic virtue.³⁹

It should not be forgotten, in all of this, that citizenship was never perceived as an automatic right. It was an imperial *beneficium* – a reward bestowed by the emperor, or his surrogates, in exchange for good service to him or, correlatively, to the Roman state. One of the results of the continual extension of citizenship on this basis (in conjunction, however, with other factors, not the least of them being superior forces of compulsion) was the production of a more coherent community of interests in the Mediterranean at the level of local holders of power and wealth – therefore a more stable and efficient structure for the exploitation of inferiors. In this matrix, it was probably neither the formal nor the popular aspects of Latin culture that counted as much as the pervasive legal culture that straddled the two. The expectations, or model, of this integration is perhaps best exemplified by the evidence from the Iberian peninsula following upon Vespasian's universal grant of Latin status. A series of local municipal 'charters' (of which the Tabula Irnitana, from Baetica in southern Spain, is a good example from our period) are striking witness to the detailed application of the minutiae of Roman civil law norms to all of these communities.⁴⁰ The fine details were expected to be applied even in rather small-scale local affairs. Indeed, local courts were only permitted very low levels of competence; property matters of any consequence were expected to go to the governor's courts.⁴¹ Whatever benefits might have stemmed from the extension of citizenship were therefore open in practice only to an infinitesimally small part of the whole population. Even for these high-ranking individuals, however, it was the force of customary values and economic advantage that prevailed over the bare rights of citizenship in determining their place in the imperial order. Production of senators is as good a measure as any. The northern Celtic frontier of the

³⁸ Sherwin-White (1967) 52–61. ³⁹ Galsterer-Kröll (1973) 281–2.

⁴⁰ González (1986) and (1987).

⁴¹ Simshäuser (1989); cf. Galsterer (1987) for a more strident argument on the existence of a general covering law that enforced such municipal norms empire-wide.

Germanies, Raetia and Noricum produced none at all (or none as yet attested). Egypt produced only two senatorial families, both, significantly, *kosmopolitai* from Alexandria – a sure sign of anti-Egyptian prejudices. Britannia produced not only no known senators, but made no known contribution either to imperial procuratorial services or to the officer ranks of the army.⁴² For those western provinces which seem to have produced fairly large numbers of indigenous senators, namely Africa Proconsularis, Numidia, Gallia Narbonensis and Baetica, almost all the senators turn out to be derived from Italian settler stock; the genuine Spaniards, Gauls and Africans amongst them are very few indeed.⁴³

For the mass of the population, therefore, the formal meaning of citizenship was largely confined to the symbolic function of being part of the empire. Whatever real value it had in terms of power for the individual declined in inverse proportion to the numbers who acquired the privilege. Large problems, not only with the unevenness of citizenship as a fact of empire, but also with the operation of the citizenship itself (as in the case of appeal) point to the need to understand the larger cultural context of *civitas* in the first and second centuries. If it is true that the empire was a mosaic of cities, and it was urban culture that counted first in determining membership in the *imperium Romanum*, it is perhaps truer to say that the empire was much more than this. It embraced not only the rural territories of all those cities (some of them rather wild and remote) but also vast tracts of cityless lands that had to be controlled through the agency of local landowners and their domains. The empire also claimed even more remote regions inhabited by ethnic groups variously labelled *gentes*, *nationes*, *ethné* or, in anomalous usage, in an attempt to find in them an equivalent to the core unit of the Roman world, as *civitates*.⁴⁴ Given our definition of ‘belonging’, the existence of this other great world within its frontier made the question of ‘being Roman’ a rather problematical one for a considerable proportion of the whole population of the empire.

3. *Ethnicity and ‘barbarism’*

From the early empire to the late, in both private and public documents, the *imperium* was seen as a composite of ‘cities and peoples’.⁴⁵ This division was also a way in which the empire itself, a world of towns and cities, could be distinguished from the world outside. Those persons wholly

⁴² On the north see Eck (1982); on Egypt, Reynolds (1982); on Britain, Birley (1979) chs. 3–5 and (1982).

⁴³ For Africa see Pelletier (1964), Corbier (1982) and Le Glay (1982); for Spain, Castillo (1982); and for Gaul, Burnand (1982); almost all the known ‘Gauls’ are from Narbonensis, a veritable Mediterranean extension of Italy. ⁴⁴ Frere (1961) and Mann (1961).

⁴⁵ Sherwin-White, *Citizenship* 437–44; and Ael. Arist. *Or.* 26.33 and 28.

outside the mosaic of towns that formed the heartland of the empire were castigated as persons who lacked the organizing principle of Roman city, the city or *civitas*. By definition they were ‘uncivilized’ and were therefore stigmatized as ‘barbarians’. As a general category, the ‘barbarian’ is a type of totalized stranger that characteristically appears in the culture of a host society during the period of its territorial or commercial expansion.⁴⁶ The very fact that the host society is successfully expanding its hegemony produces a manifest ‘proof’ of the ‘inferiority’ of the frontier peoples at whose expense these gains are acquired, and therefore the validity of their stigmatization as ‘lesser humans’. The conception and complex idea of the *barbaros*, in part inherited and developed out of Hellenistic culture (for example, in its ethnographic literature) and in part developed locally by the process of violent conquest that marked the expansion of the Roman state to the end of the Republic, was undergoing marked changes in the early imperial period. From the last decades of the first century onwards the spectre of the ‘barbarian’ does not figure as prominently as in the earlier age of great conquests. The picture of the ‘barbarian’ tends to one caught in an equilibrium, a static portrait that would only begin to change radically again towards the end of the second century and through the mid-third. The great geographic and ethnographic compiler of the period, the elder Pliny, is much less concerned with ethnography, and even less with ‘barbarians’ than was Strabo some two generations earlier. The phlegmatic and cynical Seneca was not alone in believing that ‘barbarians’ were no longer as serious a threat to Rome as were its internal moral problems.⁴⁷ In iconographic representation, portraits of the ‘barbarian’ actually diminish physically in size; from Marcus Aurelius’ wars onwards only a dwarf-like figure remains, contrasted with an emperor who is usually portrayed on a heroic scale.⁴⁸ The very remoteness of the emperor, his removal from direct contact with the figure of the ‘barbarian’, distinguishes the Roman emperor as a figure of domination from his more personal Near Eastern counterparts.⁴⁹

That the moral distinction is made in terms of images is no accident. They simply reflect the overwhelming importance of visual images in a morality that was a culture of public face, of judgements and punishments made in the light of what was seen.⁵⁰ In evaluating Roman values one must think in terms of a veritable physics of morality, or an aesthetics of power. Images of ‘barbarians’, however latent, therefore still dominated the back-

⁴⁶ See the studies by Walser (1951) and (1956); Thompson (1965); Speyer and Opelt (1967); Lovejoy and Boas (1935) collect some of the basic texts; specialist interpretation is offered by Clavel-Lévêque (1974) and (1983); unfortunately, the massive work by Dauge (1981) is fatally flawed in fact and interpretation. ⁴⁷ Sen. *Ep.* 71.37. ⁴⁸ Levi (1952) 25–6. ⁴⁹ Kiss (1989).

⁵⁰ Dupont (1985) 18–38; Barton (1989) report on the ‘entertainment’ and ‘punishment’ aspects of this moral world – but clearly its foundations are wider than either.

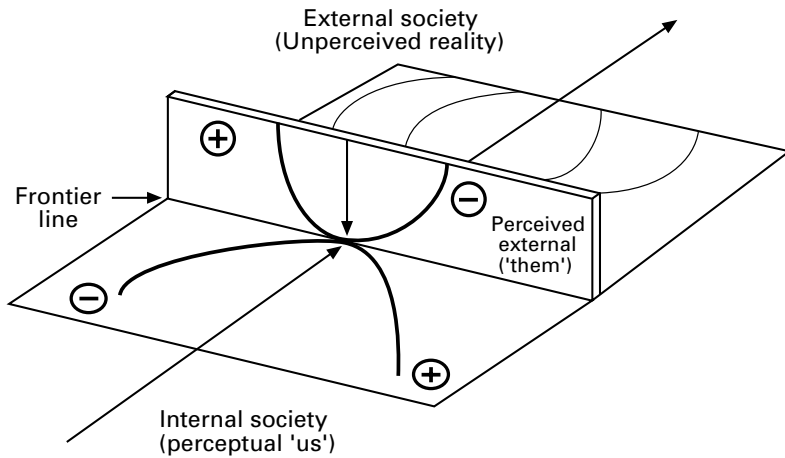


Fig. 1 Perceptions of the 'barbarian' as inverse of the insider

ground of thinking about outsiders, and helped determine more general evaluation of aliens in Roman society. The singular characteristic that continued to mark literary portraits of them (as with Caesar's ethnography of the Gauls and Germans in an earlier age) was the inability of Roman writers to provide an empirically true reflection of conditions amongst the various ethnic groups beyond the frontiers. Although ignorance, misinformation and bad communications played their part, they are not a sufficient explanation for the consistent manner in which 'barbarians' are idealized.⁵¹ The main cause for this false and one-dimensional picture of outsiders was surely the ideological necessity for a negative image of the 'barbarian'. This need was integrally connected to a similar compulsion to see 'internal' alien groups as other than they were; the warping had to be deliberate, and formed a consistent barrier to the development of literary techniques and genres of 'realism' in portraying underclasses (Fig. 1).⁵² The 'barbarian' was therefore seen to be the negation of civility even by those imperial agents and officials who had had first-hand experience and who could have known better.⁵³

One of the primary structural characteristics of the 'barbarian' image, and one which is also true of the views held of almost all other alien groups in the Roman empire, is its dichotomous nature. Each of the two sides of this duality was firmly anchored to perceptions of the normal structure of Roman society and core values in other mainstream societies in the empire. On the one hand, 'barbarians' were seen as embodiments of all that was

⁵¹ E.g. Tac., *Agr.* 11.1. ⁵² Auerbach (1953) 25–49, esp. 33–4.

⁵³ Sherwin-White (1967) 38–9 on the elder Pliny.

anarchic and evil; on the other, though firmly linked to the other half of this ethnographic diptych, was the vision of the 'barbarian' as one who was so far removed from the corruption induced by the developmental process of becoming civilized that he did not share any of the morally decadent faults of the dominant society. In the former sense, 'barbarians' were seen as the external counterparts of the internal proletariats of the empire. The typical raised, open-handed gesture used on military monuments to signify the subordination and supplication of the defeated 'barbarian' to the victorious Roman commander is repeated on domestic public monuments where poor Roman citizens are shown gratefully receiving their handouts (*congiaria*) from a beneficent, though distant and powerful emperor. The only difference is that the citizen is portrayed as standing, while the 'barbarian' is crouching and cringing.⁵⁴ In numismatic iconography, which repeats and reflects sculptural prototypes, miniaturized 'barbarian' figures bow and kneel before (or, are stepped on by) remote and oblivious Roman authority figures: the emperor, Victory, or some other imperial divinity.⁵⁵

As with all historical portraits of the 'barbarian', the negative side of the Roman image of the foreigner was rooted in the proven inferiority of the external society. 'Barbarians' did not, it was thought, share in the material characteristics that were deemed both good and necessary to the host Roman society: a settled and sedentary life founded on productive agriculture, a city dwelling space marked by walls and houses, temples and altars, and specified public places providing for a social and commercial life guaranteed by formal law. These physical differences could then be seen as manifested in the perceptible differences of the 'barbarian' as a person. This *persona* was a superficial physical appearance that mirrored a world in which values were pervasively social – a matter of public face and of collective vision rather than internal self. It was therefore the distinctions of the foreigner's body that marked him or her as someone apart from normal Mediterranean types. Tacitus recognizes Britons by their hair (colour and type), their physique (large limbs) and facial features (colour). The cultural factors he notes that also set them apart were their different language, their unusual beliefs and rituals, and their lack of any form of civic organization – a peculiar deficit that prevented them from co-operating to form a larger political state.⁵⁶ 'Barbarian' peoples, marked by these physical characteristics, were, it is true, potential Romans. The transformation of the physical world was the aim of Tacitus' father-in-law's response in Britain: to provide the cultural institutions that would transform the Britons, that would reverse the traits of 'barbarism' – the building of Roman-style city settlements to overcome dispersed and nomadic habitation, the provision of

⁵⁴ Brilliant (1963) 122–5 and 150–1.

⁵⁵ Levi (1952) 23–4.

⁵⁶ Tac. *Agr.* 11–12.

temples and other urban amenities to change their mental orientation, thereby encouraging the shift from local languages to Latin, and from local dress to a more acceptable Roman style.⁵⁷

The fuller treatment that Tacitus accords the Germans reveals all these same characteristic structures. A forbidding and hostile environment has produced a savage people.⁵⁸ The Germans are a 'barbaric' people distinguished by the unusual physical appearance, embodied in a fearsome bigness. Their economy, despite plentiful natural resources, is characterized by underdevelopment: the lack of agriculture or severely adumbrated forms of it, with a premium placed on pastoralism.⁵⁹ The lack of development is blamed on the natives' laziness: the men are struck with inertia; when not fighting they do nothing but eat and drink, and leave the women to do the ploughing.⁶⁰ German society is characterized by the absence of political order and by the dominance of private violence.⁶¹ Without the foundations of agriculture or peace, no truly settled life was possible, so it logically followed that the Germans must lack true cities and houses.⁶² All other aspects of German society are marked by opposites of normal (i.e. Roman) social rules. Time is not reckoned by days, in the Roman manner, but by nights; night ushers in the day, rather than the reverse. The confusion in time leads to a loss of a sense of chronological order, and produces a profound laziness in the character of the local populace.⁶³

This picture of a savage 'barbarism' was integrally linked to a reconstructed ethnography that re-made German society into a direct inversion of 'bad' aspects of society at Rome (see Fig. 1). The list of good things that the savages represented were a check-list of degenerate characteristics induced by the civilizing process. Amongst the Germans, Tacitus avers, marriage is a strict institution, dowry is brought by the husband, clandestine love affairs are unknown, adultery is extremely rare (and, if caught, wives are punished immediately), seduction and sexual escapades are not considered stylish, the artificial restriction of numbers of children by infanticide is considered evil, and every mother still breastfeeds her infant.⁶⁴ Freedmen are treated like slaves, and are not allowed to rise above servile types of behaviour appropriate to them (except where there are kings), thus proving that the Germans still retain a genuine *libertas*.⁶⁵ Money is never lent out at interest for the sake of profit; there is no ostentation at funerals, and so on.⁶⁶ The positive side of the 'barbarian' served the function of providing the host society with a mirror image of its 'evil' side. But

⁵⁷ Tac. *Agr.* 21. ⁵⁸ Tac. *Germ.* 2 and 4; *Agr.* 12. ⁵⁹ Tac. *Germ.* 5–6; 14.4; 26.2.

⁶⁰ Tac. *Germ.* 15.1; cf. Strab. III.4.17 (C165) on Gaulish, Iberian and Thracian women; Pomp. Trog. (Just.) XLIV.3.7 on the Parthians. ⁶¹ Tac. *Germ.* 13.1 and 14.

⁶² Tac. *Germ.* 15; only scattered huts, no houses that join each other; no use of stone in building.

⁶³ Tac. *Germ.* 11.2; cf. Caes. *B Gall.*, VI.18.2. ⁶⁴ Tac. *Germ.* 18–20. ⁶⁵ Tac. *Germ.* 25.3.

⁶⁶ Tac. *Germ.* 26.1 and 27.1.

there is no reason to believe that this aspect of the story, simply because it is meliorist, is a more faithfully empirical picture of German societies than is the detailed ethnography of the 'hostile savage'.

The serial ethnography which Tacitus then appends to his in-depth description of *Germania* marks out a spectrum of barbarism, extending from those ethnic groups closest to the Roman provinces who were simultaneously being corrupted and civilized, to those societies located at a further distance from the Roman frontier and which displayed symptoms of increasing barbarism. Amongst the latter are the Aestii of the Baltic shores who, the historian grudgingly concedes, practise a form of agriculture 'with a perseverance unusual amongst the lazy Germans'. They were also, it is true, involved in the trade in amber, but 'like true barbarians' they were uninterested in how amber was produced or even about what it was.⁶⁷ The Sitones, a people further north along the Baltic exude a more profound barbarism: 'Woman is master among them; so far have they fallen, not so much beneath freedom, as below slavery itself.'⁶⁸ And the Fenni, near the distal end of the range of these aliens, who reveal the final degradation of barbarism: 'Astonishingly wild and disgustingly poor; no arms, no houses, no household gods; their food wild plants, their clothing skins; their bed the ground'.⁶⁹ As one reaches the end point on the spectrum, men begin to turn into animals: the Hellusii and Oxiones have the faces and features of men, but the bodies and limbs of wild beasts.⁷⁰ This tendency towards animalism, however, was inherent in the treatment of 'barbarians' from the beginning; they were all seen, to some degree, as less than human.

Tacitus therefore provides us with a good example of a coherent barbarology, one that was shared by the educated and literate classes of the empire, even in the face of pragmatic experiences to the contrary. We might know that many, if not most, of the peoples immediately beyond the imperial frontiers did have houses, towns and cities, developed economies (sometimes with coinage), agriculture and complex polities. But these 'barbarians' failed in the Roman mental world to attain to civilization, and were therefore the proper object of conquest, seizure, resettlement and, where necessary, death. On the other hand, though in a primitive, pre-civilized, man/animal state, individual 'barbarians' were capable, by a process of acculturation, of transformation into Romans. But that transformation almost always depended on the coercive break, the violent threshold, of conquest and domination that formed the antechamber of cultural death – the first step to 'becoming Roman' entailed the annihilation of their own cultural identity. Hence these outsiders were considered to be deserving of

⁶⁷ Tac. *Germ.* 45. ⁶⁸ Tac. *Germ.* 45.9. ⁶⁹ Tac. *Germ.* 46.1–5.

⁷⁰ Tac. *Germ.* 46.6; cf. *Ann.* 11.24.6, 'ambiguae hominum ac beluarum formae'; cf. Mela 1.48; 3.56, 88, 103; Pliny, *HN* IV.13.95 (in northern Europe); v.8.44 (south of the Nile).

severe maltreatment, death or the living death of enslavement. The sentiment was openly expressed that recalcitrant ‘barbarians’ ought simply to be exterminated. One example amongst many is provided by the raid made by Suellius Flaccus, governor of Numidia, on the Nasamones in 85–6: ‘He attacked them and annihilated them, even destroying all the non-combatants. Domitian was elated at this success and announced to the Senate “I have forbidden the Nasamones to exist.”’⁷¹ Or the repeated assertion of that philosophical and humane emperor, Marcus Aurelius, upon his decision that, since the Jazyges along the Danube were ‘untrustworthy’, he wished utterly to exterminate them.⁷² Internal ‘barbarians’, such as the Jews, fared no better. The record with respect to the Jewish *ethnos* is clear: the not infrequent sentiment publicly expressed by emperors, amongst them Gaius and Trajan, that they wished to liquidate this people ‘born to slavery’.⁷³ But physical genocide was only one end of a spectrum of treatment that included economic and cultural murder as well. A small part of the latter processes included massive enforced expulsions from homelands, often carried out with considerable violence that included the systematic destruction of villages and homes of the offending people. Known cases include the forced movement of more than a hundred thousand persons – men, women, children and their leaders – across the Danube by the governor of Moesia, Ti. Plautius Silvanus Aelianus, in the late 60s; master of a massive scorched-earth policy in the region, he was rewarded with triumphal insignia for his efforts by Vespasian.⁷⁴ In the period between the 170s and 190s there is further evidence of these programmes in the deliberate creation of a demilitarized zone cleared by the Roman army to a distance of 16 kilometres on either side of the Danube.⁷⁵ These clearing operations were linked to the massive removal of whole populations from their original homes to lands within the empire where the suspect peoples could be more closely controlled, and pay tribute for the privilege.⁷⁶

What this meant in ordinary life can be seen most graphically in the scenes of operations of the Roman army along the Danube carved in the spiralling relief panels decorating the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius at Rome. The horrors which they record as a matter of course, for

⁷¹ Dio LXVII.6–7=Zonar. 11.19; that some Nasamones seem to have survived does not alter the substance of the attitude or the action.

⁷² Dio LXXII.13.1–2 (A.D. 172–3); LXXII.16.1 (A.D. 175); for other examples, see Alföldi (1950) and (1952) 8–10.

⁷³ Gaius: Joseph *AJ*, xviii.275; Trajan: Arr. *Parth.* F79=Stern (1980) no. 332a, and App. *BCiv.* II.90 (380)=Stern (1980) no. 350.

⁷⁴ *ILS* 986=*CIL* XIV 3608; cf. *ILS* 985=*CIL* X 6225; for commentary see Zawadzki (1975); Mócsy (1974) 38–41; Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* 510 no. 5; for a more optimistic interpretation see Conole and Milns (1983) 183–200. ⁷⁵ Dio LXXII.15 (A.D. 175); LXXII.16 (A.D. 175); LXXIII.3.2 (A.D. 180).

⁷⁶ Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* nos. 7–8; Mócsy (1974) 66.

public consumption, include scene after scene of 'barbarians' cringing before the emperor or his soldiers, hoping for some act of mercy that would spare their lives; the repeated clearing of local villages and the massacre of the adult male population; the torching of houses and the leveling of whole villages by fire; scenes of 'barbarian' men praying to their gods for divine intervention and rescue; the systematic execution of long lines of defenceless men, each decapitated in turn as he steps up to the soldier-executioner's sword; the mass murder of unarmed prisoners, thrown into open grave pits which, no doubt, they themselves had been forced to dig; the head-hunting done by Roman soldiers who proudly display their trophy 'heads' to an appreciative Roman emperor; the abuse and killing of unarmed prisoners, their hands held or tied behind their backs; the violent seizure of women, children, infants and cattle, led on forced marches back across the Danube to new ownership. The same themes are picked up and replayed on the elaborately decorated sarcophagi of the upper classes of the period.⁷⁷ The list could easily be extended. But in the routine history of violence and maltreatment which these monuments carefully preserved for all to see, as a matter of public honour and pride, there is something other than the bare record of the events. It is the reflection of a manifest attitude towards outsiders that sees them as something less than human, the actions as commendable and the recipients as deserving of what they got.⁷⁸

The importance to the Romans of the external 'outsider', however, naturally leads to the problem of ethnicity and of internal 'barbarians'. One of the strongest modes of identification for individuals in the Roman world, one that was prior, logically and historically, to that of the city or state, was that of belonging to a 'people'. This identity was culturally and biologically transmitted, and was most often bounded by a common language or dialect. It was a common factor that cut across the political frontiers of an empire that was constituted of both cities and of ethnic groups. It is extremely difficult to measure this fact of ethnicity, given the considerable degree of perception involved in contemporary reportage. A modern survey of ethnic groups found in North Africa, for example, lists between 350 and 400 of them that are referred to in literary and epigraphic sources.⁷⁹ That order of magnitude is affirmed for other regions in the perception of sources of the time: 112 'tribes' in northern Italy, 49 *gentes* in a small part of

⁷⁷ Andrae (1977) 432–3, plates 500–4.

⁷⁸ Caprino, Colini *et al.* (1955) cringing figures: 29, 120; destruction of villages: 14, 29, 30, 54, 55, 88, 120, 121; torching of houses: 29, 120; begging/praying for mercy: 30, 51, 58; killings of defenceless prisoners: 14, 30, 54, 55, 78, 120, 121, 123; headhunting: 83; systematic execution of prisoners by decapitation: 76; mass murder of prisoners: 85; women, infants and children led off as captives: 25, 54, 55, 90, 104, 105, 116, 120, 123, 124; enforced migration of 'barbarians': 86, 105, 137–41; for similar scenes from Trajan's Column see Nardoni (1986) Fig. nos. 33–4, 37, 55, 58–60, 72, 97, 103, 113, 117–18, and Settis and La Regina (1988) fig. nos. 346, 377–8, 390–1, 489. ⁷⁹ Desanges (1962).

the Alps, 150 *populi* in Macedonia, and 30 'peoples' in the diminutive Crimea.⁸⁰ That is to say, a very large number of mini-communities and societies, each with its own modes and norms of social behaviour, spread throughout the Mediterranean. What is at issue here is not absolute numbers, but the clear sense of the divisions of great rural expanses of the empire into ethnic niches, in a quantity that easily rivalled the number of cities and which in quality far surpassed them in local distinctiveness. In Hither Spain in the latter part of the first century, for example, there were 482 communities in total, of which only 44 possessed some formal Roman status. Of the rest, 135 had no higher distinction than that of being a tribute-paying unit, and some 293 were so primitive that they had to be attached to existing towns. In Baetica, arguably the most developed of the Spanish provinces, were found 175 communities, of which 55 had some Roman status and 120 were classed as mere tribute-paying centres. In Lusitania, of 45 communities only 9 were 'Roman'. In all Spain, therefore, of 706 distinct ethnic units or 'peoples' only a few more than a hundred were significant enough to merit a Roman status; nearly six hundred, one must assume, were profoundly rural and ethnic in nature. The balance for the region of eastern North Africa alone at the beginning of the first century was not much different. Of all the communities recognized by the Roman state in this region, there were about fifty towns with formal status and perhaps an equal number of taxpaying communities (*civitates stipendiariae*); the rest, 516 in number, were ethnic groups classed as *gentes* or *nationes*.⁸¹

Above the level of the family, therefore, ethnicity was one of the most powerful identifiers within the societies of the empire, and served as a yardstick by which some rather clear-cut hierarchies of treatment were sorted out. Certain peoples were identified by their ethnic background as deserving contempt as such, as, for example, the Mysians of Asia Minor.⁸² A prudent man would even change his name to make certain that he would not perchance be identified as, say, a despised Ligurian.⁸³ Views about ethnicity and moral worth were particularly strong because knowledge about 'other people', especially neighbours, was firmly embedded in the folk knowledge of each ethnic island: such knowledge, for example, as the firm aetiology of why all Arabs were born liars.⁸⁴ Or why certain peoples, such as the Arabs, were consistently disposed to huckstering, and to be unscrupulous and despicable cowards, fickle and treacherous; why Syrians, Jews and Idumaeans were bold schemers; or Phoenicians simple, kind and

⁸⁰ Pliny, *HN* v.4.29–30, III.15.116, III.20.136, IV.10.33 and IV.12.85 respectively; *HN* III.1.18 indicates the presence of about 880 such ethnic groups in the area of southern Gaul and eastern Spain; on Gaul see Joseph *BJ* II.372 (305 ethnè) and App. *Celt.* 1.2 (400 ethnè).

⁸¹ For Spain see Pliny, *HN* III.1.7; III.1.18; III.3.24–8, and IV.22.117; for North Africa, see *HN* v.5.29–30, all of which are based on official lists, probably of Caesarian–Augustan date.

⁸² Dio Chrys. *Or.* XXXI.160; cf. Cic. *Flac.* 27.

⁸³ Cic. *Clu.* 26.72.

⁸⁴ Babrius, *Fab.* 57.

addicted to astrology. The science of the stars confirmed as much.⁸⁵ These were ‘internal barbarians’: peoples like the Cilicians and Cappadocians, who were not wholly dominated by Roman power, or who, like the Jews and Egyptians, because of their systematic rejection and prohibition from the common polity and culture of the *oikoumene*, were in turn reviled as ‘peoples born for slavery’.⁸⁶ Treatment based on perceived ethnic origin ran the gamut from bloody reprisals and enslavement to niggling prejudices and angst over the fine social qualifications of persons in the top ranks of the political élite. Hence the disquiet for example, over the adoption of Trajan by Nerva caused by the former’s Spanish origins. Nerva, Dio reports, chose to consider a man’s *arete* rather than his *patria*.⁸⁷ In this game of perceptions, the increasing Latin homogenization of élites in the western provinces was set against the more unacceptable traditional cultures of the East, in particular those of the Syrians⁸⁸ and the Egyptians.⁸⁹

II. OUTLAWS, ALIENS AND OUTCASTS

Alienation and outlawry are essentially derivatives of the exercise of power. They involve divergence from norms of acceptable behaviour that are set and defined by power holders, great and small, who form the operative core of a society. In the Roman world these powers were much more diffuse and fragmented than in a modern state where a degree of linguistic, cultural and ideological uniformity is enforced which would be unthinkable for the Roman empire, a world composed of thousands of distinct communities, and one devoid of consciously wrought and imposed mass ideologies. The widely shared popular values of the time were much more localized in each place, and flowed out of the social networks that formed the local community: the proto-ideologies of language, family and kin, sexual roles and communal beliefs. These conditions guaranteed that the existing multiplicity was seen in itself as normal and good. *Haeresis* or the ability ‘to choose’ amongst several different alternatives in this multifaceted world, within the modest constraints imposed by each community’s values, was what was

⁸⁵ Ptol. *Apotel.* II.3.65–6=Stern (1980) no. 336a.

⁸⁶ Cic. *Flac.* 28.69; *Prov. Cons.* 5.10–12; Tac. *Hist.* v.7. ⁸⁷ Dio LXVIII.4.1–2.

⁸⁸ ‘Syrian’ often appears as an umbrella-term for an ‘easterner’, or confused or lumped together with other peoples; for Syrians and Arabs cf. *CIL* x.3456 (Misenum), see Solin (1980) 303=(1983) 602; Joseph, *AJ* XVIII.103; Pliny, *HN* VII.74; Syrians and Jews/Palestinians: Ov. *Arx. Am.* 1.75–6; 1.413–16 (cf. Hdt. II.104.2); Syrians and Greeks: Solin (1977b) 205–6; Juv. III.58–125, at 61–4; cf. Pliny, *Ep.* x.40.2 and *Pan.* 13.5; Lucian, *Merc. Cond.* 7 and 24.

⁸⁹ Egyptians compared to *dediticii*: Jones (1968), but see Sherwin-White (1973) 380–6; absence of cities: Weber (1983) 34–5 and 196–7; gap between Alexandrians and ordinary Egyptians: *PGiss* 40.ii.16–29=A] no. 193=*SelPap* no. 215; pinned down by registration system: Lewis (1983) 32; *WCbr* 52=*SelPap* no. 301; marriage restrictions: *Gnomon of the Idios Logos* 38–9=*FIRA* I no. 99, p. 476 cf. Lewis (1983) 34 ‘veritable ancient apartheid’. Uncomplimentary texts include: *Passio Perpetuae* 10.6; *POxy* 1681=*SelPap* no. 152; Lewis (1983) 23–4 with *SB* I 1114=*SelPap* no. 254 (A.D. 153); Juv. I.26; I.130; IV.24.

normal. To conceive of these variegated alternative value systems as if each one was a potential threat, as if it had to be ‘tolerated’, is not an appropriate form of analysis.⁹⁰

Deviancy in the Roman world must therefore be measured primarily in terms of degrees of perceived separation from the norms established within the primary values of language, family and kinship, gender and sexuality, and local beliefs that formed the thought-world of each community. Penetrating into, and shaping, these local values were the more general ones shared by most societies in the empire, and even recognized as common social denominators by a written system as formal as that of the Roman law (being the practices common to ‘all peoples’, the *iura gentium*). Of these criteria, those based on wealth, and the corresponding stigmata of poverty, were probably the most pervasive.⁹¹ There was no place for the wholly impoverished. The only poor that were recognized as such were the citizen indigent – in a Roman empire that was no longer a simple *civitas* that recognition no longer depended on the holding of the civic status, but rather the possibility of being seen in the cities. The rural poor were unseen and of utterly no account whatever.⁹² Integrally linked to poverty was the degrading compulsion to perform manual labour.⁹³ But here, too, there were strong local variations that led to the castigation of tanners in this village, or to the linen-workers in that town, as *the* labouring group stigmatized by their type of work.⁹⁴ Both these factors were greatly affected, in turn, by the existence of systems of slave labour and compelled servitude (e.g. debt-bondage), and the ways in which they determined values placed on almost every social role and action.⁹⁵ The problem of deviancy thus became one of a measure struck between social privileges on the one side, and social debts, deprivations and compulsions on the other. The combined force of imperial definitions and community values produced relative categories, and hierarchies, of acceptable and unacceptable persons.

1. *Marginal social groups in the rural world*

Members of ethnic groups were stigmatized by inherited cultural characteristics. As with ‘barbarians’, external or internal, the traits that were most consistently emphasized were physical appearance (including physique and dress), language, and local customs and beliefs (the latter mostly visible

⁹⁰ Simon (1979), von Staden (1982) and Garnsey (1984).

⁹¹ On poverty see Dio Chrys. *Or.* VII.31–40, on which see Day (1951) and Jones (1978); in general, see Hands, *Charities* 62–76, largely dependent on the theories of Bolkestein (1939); and Finley, *Ancient Economy* 36–41; on some measures of the divide see Bastomsky (1989).

⁹² Pietri (1983) and Grodzynski (1987).

⁹³ Finley, *Ancient Economy* 81–2; de Robertis (1963) 21–97 offers a different view, but see Nörr (1965) and Mrozek (1985).

⁹⁴ Cracco-Ruggini (1980) 60–4.

⁹⁵ Finley, *Ancient Economy* 80–1 and (1980) 96–7.

through their public expression). In each region a very large portion of the whole population was marked by a consistent set of stigmata simply because they lived and worked in the countryside. The peasant farmers and rural labourers who produced the surpluses upon which the rest of urbane society reposed were branded as unacceptable persons by that same 'cultured' society. This castigation of rural people as inferiors was encouraged by the asymmetrical relationship between town and country. Most of the critical supplies that supported the rural–urban hierarchy of the empire moved from the latter to the former: population, goods, services and tribute. Very little, except that which was bad, moved in the other direction.

This peculiar separation of town and country, considerably strengthened by the existence of an overriding empire, produced a 'schizoid' view of the countryside and its inhabitants that paralleled the picture of the 'barbarians' in its structure, and for much the same reasons. The idealistic view of the countryside as an Arcadia, an ethereal embodiment of the virtues of rural life that were opposed to the corrupt values of the decadent, though civilized, city, was produced by upper-class poets to satisfy the mental and intellectual images required by their patrons. For individual members of urban élites who did not care to share this mirage, there was the alternative: the countryside was seen as the mirror opposite of the 'good city'. The *rusticus* became an object of contempt marked, above all, by his appearance: filthy, crude, clumsy, with long unkempt hair, unshaven, clothed in rags and skins, and in most respects 'like a barbarian'.⁹⁶ Their poverty caused them to be bracketed with slaves and the pauperized in the towns, not unnaturally because 'they behave like beggars'.⁹⁷ As with the external 'barbarian', the material conditions of his life were seen to be manifested in the physical body of the rural worker: the coarse, excessively hard and misshapen body of such a servile person, roughened by manual labour, would betray an under-class person who tried 'to pass' in élite society – his body was immediately recognizable to the urban connoisseur.⁹⁸ The speech, the dress and the mannerisms of the peasant were turned against him in a world where power cumulated hierarchically, where urbanity, sophistication and correct speech were identified straightforwardly by those who held power with intelligence and intrinsic worth. In a court of law, the urbane and the educated could appeal on this basis to the sympathy of the judge in order to alienate him and his actions from the interests of the *rusticus* – as Apuleius did repeatedly in a speech delivered in his own defence before the governor of Africa in the 150s. He successfully stigmatized his main accuser, one Sicinius Aemilianus, as a bumbling, ignorant, yet menacing, countryman.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Juv. III.67–8; Mart. VII.5.8.8; Dio Chrys. *Or.* xxxv.11; common terms of abuse related to rural life that emphasized filth were systematically linked to 'dirtiness' of character, see Lilja (1965) 29–30.

⁹⁷ Petron. *Sat.* 12–13.

⁹⁸ Joseph. *BJ* II.101–10 and parallel in *AJ* XVII.324–38.

⁹⁹ Apul. *Apol.* 1.3, 3.6, 9.1, 10.6, 16.10, 23.5, 30.5–6, 43.7, 70.3.

But of all rural types it was the shepherd who was at once caught up in the schizophrenic categorization of 'the other', conceived of simultaneously as the most degraded and the most elevated form of rural life. The pastoralist was seen as the species of humankind closest to nature. He therefore was at once the embodiment of an ideal Nature and of the uncivilized and primitively violent. Shepherds were part of the chaotic, primeval forces that ruled the world before the advent of civilized cities, like Rome herself.¹⁰⁰ Like *rustici* they were identified by their savage appearance: shaggy, crude, long-haired and dirty.¹⁰¹ But, whereas *pagani* ('pagans') or rural people were in general viewed in a derogatory light, herders suffered the additional stigma of being mobile. Constrained by the movement of their animals, they could never develop a sedentary existence that was believed to be the essential prerequisite of a civilized life.¹⁰² There was an element of reality in this categorization which imparted to it a general credibility. Groups of shepherds did tend to live in peripheral regions that were far removed from the heartlands of the cities and towns – with which their contact, was, in any event, rather sporadic. They were frequently involved in seasonal transhumant movements from mountain to plain, and back.¹⁰³ Many of them, if not actually slaves of the owners of the animals they were herding, were bound by contractual terms of service that made them virtual slaves.¹⁰⁴ They were not, therefore, the opulent owners of vast herds, but rather poor and dependent persons, marked out as such by their simple lack of resources as by their shabby and tattered clothing.¹⁰⁵ Shepherds had to be tough and violent men, armed to protect themselves and their animals against the attacks of wild-animal predators, rustlers and competitors for their pastures in the rural regions of the Mediterranean where self-help mattered more than the fiat of the state. Their normal habitat was literally marginal; they maintained their herds on the wild and empty lands usually located on the frontier zones between one city and the next, places where disputes over land and land rights tended to erupt.¹⁰⁶

Such men were so remote, in both physical and cultural senses, from the centres of literacy that they hardly ever appear in epigraphy or formal literature.¹⁰⁷ When they did come close to settled communities, their appearance was often feared because of the depredation and damage their animals caused to fields and property, and for the violent scuffles that sometimes followed.¹⁰⁸ The violence was just as often a sort of anticipatory defence

¹⁰⁰ Juv. VIII.275. ¹⁰¹ Lucian, *Adv. Indoct.* 3. ¹⁰² MacMullen *Social Relations* ch. 1; Origen, *Cels.* 1.23.

¹⁰³ Varro, *Rust.* II.1.16–II.2.20 is the classic description; cf. Gabba and Pasquinucci (1979) 152–60, and Skydsgaard (1974).

¹⁰⁴ Robert (1955) 29; most known dedications by shepherds (not many, in any event) were to their *kyrioi* or 'masters'. ¹⁰⁵ Robert (1949) 157 and (1955) 30. ¹⁰⁶ Robert (1949) 155–6.

¹⁰⁷ Robert (1949) 154–5.

¹⁰⁸ *CIL* VIII 23956 (Hr. Snobbeur, Tunisia); *MAMA* IV 297 (Hieropolis, Phrygia), and Robert (1949) 155; cf. Keenan (1985) for a later instance.

by local communities and their agents, such as those of Saepinum and Bovianum in south-central Italy, who wished to ward off undesired outsiders – in this case the municipal magistrates and the local militia had been harassing and attacking flocks of sheep and their guides as they made their way along the transhumant trails (*calles*). The locals were certain that the shepherds were fugitive slaves and their sheep rustled animals. In this case, however, some of the shepherds happened (fortunately for them) to be tending sheep belonging to the emperor, and so were able to appeal to the imperial freedmen agents set over them, finally to obtain the intervention of the office of the praetorian prefect, no less. But the threatening letter sent to the offending towns by the prefect, sometime in the years 169–72 warning them against their continued *contumacia*, was an unusual sort of superior protection on which most shepherds could not depend.¹⁰⁹

The rural world that lay outside the webwork of towns and *territoria* was sometimes frighteningly alien. Especially foreign were the great walls of mountain highlands that traversed the Mediterranean – the Alps, the Taurus, the Atlas and minor ranges like the Apennines, the Pindos and the Amanus – that cut peninsulas into isolated valleys and plains. On a smaller scale, though no less forbidding, were expanses of forest and swamplands that bordered the plains, many of them still uncleared by the advance of extensive cereal culture. Most of these darker zones harboured great reservoirs of peoples whose power networks were arranged along personal lines of a pre-state type, largely dependent on the brute exercise of force and violence. It was immediately recognized by town-dwellers, and greatly feared by them as a primeval force of disorder and chaos labelled *latrocinium*, a term we rather conveniently translate as ‘banditry’.¹¹⁰ Both ecological frontiers and major temporal ‘fault lines’ that rent the political structure of the empire bred such societies. Of primary importance were the geographical zones that were beyond the practical limits of the armed power of the central state and beyond the reach of the urban centres upon which the government depended so much for its local rule. They included not only remote highlands, such as Isauria, but also forest and marshlands that might be found rather close to densely settled plains, such as those around the Nile delta that were reputed to be the homeland of the wild cattle-herder brigands, the *Boukoloi*.¹¹¹ This physical defect in the power of the state was matched by periods of temporal breakdown in the unity of central authority, such as the great ‘civil wars’ of A.D. 69–70 and 192–3. On such occasions whole armies could be classified as ‘bandits’ and the Latin term *latro* could be exploited as a pejorative label to be pasted on hated

¹⁰⁹ *CIL* IX 2438 (Saepinum)=*FIRA* I no. 61, pp. 327–8; see studies by Laffi (1965) and Corbier (1983).

¹¹⁰ *CJ* 9.2.11; cf. Strab. XIII.1.25 (C592), in a developmental scheme that goes back explicitly to Pl. *Leg.* 677–9, and is part of a general shared idea in the Mediterranean about shepherds and nomads.

¹¹¹ MacMullen (1963a); Winkler (1980) 175–6.

political enemies.¹¹² More usual, of course, were the normal situations of individuals, or small bodies of men and women, who chose, through whatever impulsion, be it persecution or poverty, to enter geographical or temporal spaces such as these: soldiers who refused to retire to a life of peace, army deserters, or those amongst the defeated in internecine conflicts; shepherds and transhumant pastoralists whose cyclical movements regularly took them beyond the ambit of lowland civilization; fugitive slaves who sought refuge, perhaps to create permanent maroon communities beyond the reach of the state; or fishermen who drifted in and out of mercenary service or piracy as alternative occupations. All these outlaws were straightforwardly identified by the state, and its laws, as *latrones* or brigands.¹¹³

Bandits were therefore a common and characteristic feature of the empire and its power. Their violent raids were frequent enough to be regarded as a sort of natural disaster, like a flood or an earthquake, whose misfortunes might befall anyone in the course of everyday dealings. Travellers on land or sea went out with some apprehension of encountering brigands once they ventured beyond the town walls or the safety of harbour.¹¹⁴ Sudden fits of violence like this were not just the lurid imaginings of novelists of the period. Persons of high rank who travelled with armed escorts simply ‘disappeared’ from the road. The younger Pliny refers to two cases of which he had personal knowledge: a Roman *eques*, one Robustus, and his friend Atilius Scaurus vanished on the Via Flaminia just north of Rome, and Metilius Crispus, who left Comum one day with his armed bodyguard never to be seen again.¹¹⁵ When combined with the generally expressed fear of travel, and with tombstone epitaphs found throughout the empire that record deaths inflicted by brigands, such incidents, though isolated, seem to hint at an ubiquitous aspect of violence.¹¹⁶ The problem was common enough that it was not unknown for governors going out to their provinces to recruit professional bandit-hunters to be part of their staff.¹¹⁷ Quite apart from this daily reality of violence, however, was the deep impact made by the figure of the brigand on the mentality of the urban-centred populations of the empire. Patterns of xenophobia were pushed to an extreme in popular stories that emphasized the connections between brigands and the ghostly world of the dead, strange blood sacrifices, ritualistic cannibalism and the worship of strange and malign deities.

Drawing on these popular notions and stories, historians of the time featured ‘bandit-tales’ as central elements in their historical narratives – but for an effect rather different from that of the novelists and storytellers. In their

¹¹² MacMullen (1963b). ¹¹³ Shaw (1984) 19–20. ¹¹⁴ *Apul. Met.* 3.27–4.23; 6.25–7.10.

¹¹⁵ Pliny, *Ep.* vi.25. ¹¹⁶ Shaw (1984) 10 n. 25, with Sen. *Ep.* 57 and Epictetus iv.1.94–5.

¹¹⁷ Fronto, *Ep.* 8=Naber, 169, on Iulius Senex of Mauretania.

accounts of the high politics of the period, bandit actions are focused in the use of typical stories that highlight the feats of great brigands. So, for example, Herodian's history featured the army deserter Iulius Maternus, active in Gaul and Spain, who challenged the rule of the 'bad' emperor Commodus in the early 180s. Dio chose the figure of one Bulla Felix ('The Lucky'), whose bold and daring raids in Italy during the 190s made life difficult for the new emperor and dynastic founder Septimius Severus.¹¹⁸ But these men merely exemplified, albeit on a larger scale, a common process of alienation that was a permanent aspect of empire. Behind every celebrated brigand like Bulla, there existed dozens, if not hundreds, of anonymous and much less successful challenges to Roman order. And, just as with the *barbaroi* and the *rustici*, their existence could be reinterpreted by the literate élite in the towns within a dual perspective that reflected on the 'goodness' and 'badness' of the host society. Bandits were an evil and unacceptable form of power in a just and civilized world. But, in the case of 'bad' emperors, who symbolized an imperial rule that was oppressive and evil, the pristine and 'pure' figure of the brigand could be exploited as a warning about the more just social and political order it was felt the empire should be.

2. *Marginal social groups in the urban world*

Surrounded by the twin worlds of ethnicity and rusticity were the urban centres that constituted the core of Roman society. Each town and village, depending on the wider regional and ethnic context in which it was embedded, had its own spectrum of unacceptable persons, of social outcasts. For Roman towns and cities that were 'pure' examples of the type, above all the municipalities of the western provinces, and towns aspiring to this model, there were consistent definitions of the outcast promulgated by the central government in the formal medium of the town 'charter'. Here too, however, social unacceptability could not be defined in a hard and fast way. In each community, region or environment, the labelling, behaviour and treatment of such persons depended on a complex blend of legal statuses, local beliefs, regional economic forces and social hierarchies. Even in as fundamental a 'Roman' trait as the manner in which the dead should be buried (i.e. outside the town boundaries) there was no uniform acceptance of the Roman rules; each community had its own practices, and might well gain imperial exemption for them.¹¹⁹

The greater problem of creating norms was that of making them known in a world that was largely illiterate, and had no means of mass communication above the level of that which could be commonly heard and seen.

¹¹⁸ Herodian I.10–1 and Dio LXXVII.10–11. ¹¹⁹ Galsterer (1986) 19.

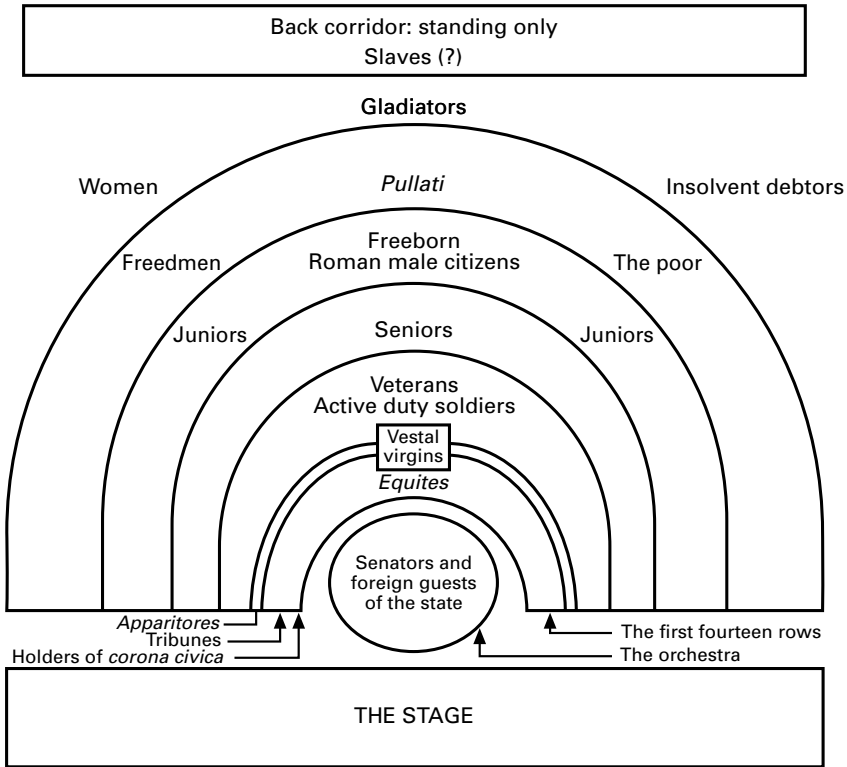


Fig. 2 The Roman theatre as an ideal social world

Theatrical space was perhaps the best venue where the hierarchical order of values could be made manifest, controlled not just by the norms of social pressure, but also by the fiat of law (Fig. 2). A Lex Iulia, probably Augustan, made the order of seating conform to social order, making norms empire-wide which had already been implicit in individual town charters.¹²⁰ The places of highest worth, those closest to the stage, in the orchestra and the front rows of the *cavea*, were reserved for persons of the highest rank. At Rome the orchestra and front was set aside for senators and guests of state; the first fourteen rows of seats were reserved for members of the equestrian order. In municipalities, which imitated Rome, the *decuriones* of the local senate held this privileged seating. Behind the first fourteen rows sat the male citizens, the plebs, ranked by the criterion of

¹²⁰ Rawson (1987); cf. Scamuzzi (1969) 305–6 for a republican precursor, the Lex Roscia Theatralis; for provincial contexts see e.g. Lex Iritana 81.

age, seniors in front of juniors. Finally, above and beyond all of these, the acceptable members of society, were located the disreputable – in general, those *obscuro loco nati*.¹²¹ These ‘dishonest’ plebeians, though citizens, were a poor rabble labelled *pullati* because of their unclean garment or *pullum*.¹²² Amongst those banished to the smoky rafters of the upper theatre were women and gladiators.¹²³ Also confined to the back rows were debtors, dishonest persons who by a fraudulent, feigned poverty had avoided meeting their obligations, known as *decoctores* because, it was popularly believed, they had fraudulently ‘cooked away’ part of their debt.¹²⁴ This concern to have values reflected in public performance was necessary because of the way values, especially the critical ones of honour and dishonour, were conceived and created in the Roman world. With the *decoctores*, and the others, it was a way of demonstrating their shame.

As the public display of rank in the theatre demonstrates, the critically important division was not between an inner soul, psyche or conviction, and its coherence with external ideas, but rather between the public and demonstrable face of behaviour and that which was unseen, hidden and secret. Hence the active disciplining of the deviant, the imposition of punishments, had to be public and theatrical to make their point.¹²⁵ Different types of punishment, inflicted by various persons, and with specific instruments, were absolutely critical in determining the value of the public system of reputation or honour. To be crucified or to be whipped was to be degraded and purposely marked by shame in public. The levels and types of pain were finely graduated, as in the careful measurement of types of whips and status of those wielding them that marked different social ranks in the city of Alexandria. Honourable persons, Alexandrian citizens, could only be beaten by other Alexandrian citizens and with a flat-bladed whip that did not inflict the harshest punishment. For such high-status persons to be beaten by an Egyptian, or to be more grievously punished with a sharper-bladed instrument, was to be severely dishonoured.¹²⁶ All things which did not overtly pertain to this public and open sphere of activity were therefore seen, in varying degrees, as suspicious, dangerous, conspiratorial and deadly.

The linkage of death and dishonour was a public one. It was made obvious in the basic appearance of the typical Roman town, clearly divided between a good city of the living within the town walls, and the city of the dead, purposely located at specified distances outside the town boundary.¹²⁷ Those who were seen to touch or have to deal with dead bodies,

¹²¹ Suet. *Ang.* 44; for some of the finer distinctions in the seating arrangements, see Kolendo (1981) 304–5.

¹²² Sen. *Tranq.* 11.8; Quint. *Inst.* 11.12.10; Calp. 7.23–4 refers to the filthy-clothed crowd, *pulla sordida veste*, away up in the rafters of the theatre, with the women. ¹²³ Suet. *Ang.* 44.

¹²⁴ Crook (1967) and Scamuzzi (1970) 47. ¹²⁵ Coleman (1990). ¹²⁶ Philo, *In Flacc.* 78.

¹²⁷ Robinson (1975), Phillips (1973), cf. Bodel (1990).

normally the funerary men (*libitinarii*) and their servile helpers contracted by each town to undertake this task, were automatically considered to be polluted persons.¹²⁸ Petronius, in his *Satyricon*, facetiously suggests that the slave of an undertaker (*servus libitinarii*), the dishonoured servant of a social outcast, was the ‘most respectable’ person present at the freedman Trimalchio’s banquet.¹²⁹ The whole nexus of death, punishment and pollution is particularly well evoked in a fragmentary inscription from Puteoli (Pozzuoli) and another from Cumae in southern Italy which detail how the *libitinarii* served, via the medium of public contracts, to take care of the dead and the bad.¹³⁰ The clauses of the contract specify the precise duties of the undertakers with respect to the collection of dead bodies and the fees that applied in each case. They also make clear how the *libitinarii* were ritualistically separated from the normal life of the town. They were restricted to a habitation well beyond the city limits, beyond a well-known landmark. They were never to come into the town proper, except for the purpose of carrying out bodies and administering punishment under contract. Whenever they entered the town they had to wear a specially coloured servile cap (*pilleus*); when they had to draw a body away with an iron hook in a public place where they might be observed they had to ring a bell to warn off possible observers.¹³¹ As with the ‘barbarian’ and the *rusticus*, however, the *libitinarii* embodied a duality of pollution and perfection. They had to be males in the prime of life, between twenty and fifty years of age, with no sores or blemishes on their bodies, or any other handicap or infirmity that would disfigure their form: they could not be one-eyed, blind, maimed, crippled, or have any other marks (scars, brands or tattoos) on their bodies.¹³² Perhaps the most interesting aspect of these contracts is the explicit connection drawn between the ‘body-taking’ duties of the *libitinarii* and their duties as agents of punishment of the body – as those who supplied, at publicly fixed prices and rates, the whippings and beatings, and the executions (normally crucifixions), as required by municipalities or private individuals.

But we must not forget that local customs, the multitude of local cultures that were part of the empire, created their own categories of dishonoured persons not envisaged by imperial or municipal law. Each community, however, tended to accept the dangers posed by the unheard and the unseen, identifying such threats with uncontrollable contagions that were likely to sweep through their communities, unless appeased by exclusion of the dishonourable. These sometimes included literal outcasts who were scapegoats for the collective ill-will or potential suffering of the whole community. A well-known case is reported for the city of Massilia:¹³³

¹²⁸ Juv. VIII.175; Artem. 1.51, 2.20, 4.56; Mart. VIII.76.14–15. ¹²⁹ Petron. *Sat.* 78.6, cf. 38.14.

¹³⁰ Bove (1966) and (1967) = *AE* 1971 nos. 88 and 89 (Puteoli and Cumae); for excellent commentary and context see Bodel (1990) app. 2. ¹³¹ *AE* 1971 no. 88, lines 17–18.

¹³² *AE* 1971 no. 88, lines 3–7. ¹³³ Petron. *Sat.* fr. 1, from *Serv. ad Aen.* 3.57.

Whenever the people of Massilia are suffering from a plague or epidemic, one of their poor [*unus ex pauperibus*] offers himself to be fed on pure foods [*purioribus cibis*] for a whole year at public expense. At the end of that period, the man is dressed in twigs of sacred foliage and in ritual clothing. He is led around the whole city and made the object of curses and imprecations so that the evils afflicting the whole community might fall on him. Then he is thrown out of the city.

Other similar cases record a more final outcome for the ritual outcast – he was killed either by stoning or by being hurled off a local cliff, or by some other form of sacrifice.¹³⁴ Underpinning the whole existence of local communities was this prior ‘natural order’ that was far more significant for many types of popular action than the formal law of the municipal ‘charter’ or its equivalent. The outcast was therefore integrally linked to general conceptions of pollution and ritualistic threats to communal order – being thrown out of the community was a relatively sure way of exorcizing the evil affliction. One of the more spectacular cases occurred during a plague afflicting the city of Ephesus. The desperate citizens, at their wits’ end, appealed to the holy-man Apollonios (from Tyana) to come to assist them. He was able to employ his divine perspicacity to spot the source of the trouble.¹³⁵ He pointed:

to what appeared to be an old beggar, pretending to have his eyes closed. He carried a bag with a crust of bread in it, and had ragged clothing and a wrinkled face. Apollonios made the Ephesians stand around the man and said, ‘Collect as many stones as possible and throw them at this outcast.’ The Ephesians were puzzled by this meaning and shocked at the thought of killing someone who was a guest and so destitute. The man also pleaded with them, saying everything to gain their pity. But Apollonios urged the Ephesians relentlessly to crush the man and not to let him escape. When some of them hit him from a distance and the man, who appeared to have his eyes closed suddenly opened them and showed them to be full of fire, the Ephesians realized that it was an evil spirit and threw so many stones that a large pile covered him. After a while Apollonios told them to remove the stones and to discover the beast they had killed. When they uncovered the man they thought they had stoned, he had vanished; instead they saw a dog resembling a Molossian hound but the size of the largest lion, crushed by the stones and spewing foam like a dog with rabies.

It is not without relevance that the outcasts who were believed to embody evil and who deserved ‘relentlessly to be crushed’, like the poor man at Ephesus, were strangers, paupers, widows and the elderly, and that the crushing process that extorted their supposed ‘inner reality’ revealed madness, animalism and evil.

Thus the civilized world of the city responded to threats to its civility by

¹³⁴ Bremmer (1983) 301, 305, citing the scholia on Stat. *Theb.* 15.793, and on Lucian 10.334.

¹³⁵ Philostr. *LA* IV.10 (trans. C. P. Jones, with slight modifications).

literally throwing out of its midst, into the wilderness of the countryside, those unwanted elements that were firmly believed to be disturbing its proper existence. Dozens of times, in our extant sources, we find that undesirable aliens variously labelled as foreigners (that is non-Romans whether under given circumstances they were Latins, Jews or others) or as philosophers, ‘numbers men’, *magi*, sorcerers, diviners or seers were thrown out of the city of Rome. The known instances span the period from the latter decades of the second century B.C. to the last decades of the second century A.D.¹³⁶ The fact that after Marcus Aurelius no emperor seems to have been much bothered with such expulsions of unwanted persons is a simple and direct measure of the fact that the cultural identification of the heartland of the empire with Rome, or even with Italy, was fading away into a wider, more profuse, sense of the *imperium* as a universal state. What replaced actual expulsions was a process, actually begun much earlier, of defining astrology, ‘black magic’, malicious divination and other like activities as illegal and unacceptable *per se* throughout the whole empire.¹³⁷ The principal utility of these covering laws in the early Principate seems to have been less to deal with classes of undesirable social groups than to serve as a convenient and convincing basis of accusation used ‘to expose’ individuals in the ruling élite who could then be liquidated on charges of *maiestas*.

The great importance of the ‘natural outcast’ does not mean that the norms of formal crime did not exist, or count. Every town and city had its own underworld of hucksters, thieves, gamblers, vagabonds, con-artists, sailors, fugitives, professional killers, occasional men of violence and other assorted outlaws – a floating world of penumbral characters so well evoked in Petronius’ *Satyricon*. In the largest cities of the empire, and in some aspiring municipalities, police forces of sorts were sometimes to be found, usually paramilitary in nature, often part of the army itself, which attempted to keep order.¹³⁸ They made the round of the usual *loca infamosa*: the *deversoria*, *popinae*, *stabula*, *tabernae*, *balnea* and *lupanaria*. In keeping notice of the denizens of such places the ‘police’ were not too concerned with the legal niceties of catching proven criminals. What they were after was a knowledge of what was happening and here the net, as Tertullian reports of his contemporary Carthage, might be cast too widely for the liking of some:¹³⁹ ‘I don’t know whether it should be a matter of anger or shame when Christians are listed by the officers (*beneficiarii*) and their official spies (*curiosi*) in their registers (*in matricibus*) along with the bar-hounds, bouncers, bath thieves, gamblers, and pimps, and are compelled to pay the same

¹³⁶ Cramer (1951) 9–13; cf. (1954) pt. 2, 233–48.

¹³⁷ Cramer (1951) 13; (1954) pt. 2.6, 248–83; Dio LVI.25.5; Paulus, *Sent.* LXV.21.1–3, 23.17–19; *Dig.* XLVIII.8.3. pref.-3.

¹³⁸ Lopuszanski (1951); on the overlap between ‘soldiers’ and ‘police’ see Bagnall (1977); Nippel (1984) for Rome; cf. Sperber (1970) for a provincial context. ¹³⁹ Tert. *de Fug.* 13.

“taxes” as these other creatures.’ But this sort of intelligence, linked to the use of brute force, hardly amounted to a genuine policing. Instead, it brought members of the militia-like ‘police’ into close contact with possible malefactors in a popular manner in which the army men were as concerned to root out evil in defence of their own and local values as on behalf of any impartial legal order.

If the process of the formal definition of outcasts is to be understood as part of the dialectic between local communities and an expanding imperial state, attention must be paid to central Roman concepts of disreputable persons that are found in legal definitions, both in the municipal ‘town charters’ which established the ground rules for the operation of a Roman town, and in the more general imperial laws that defined types of infamous persons. The sort of regulatory norms established for Roman towns are reflected in provisions regarding undesirable persons generally laid down for municipalities in Italy found in the so-called Tabula Heracleensis of late Republican date.¹⁴⁰ Municipal regulations such as these, however, derived their exclusionary patterns from norms regarding ‘infamous’ persons that had been generated first for the citizen élite in the old Republic by the censors, and, subsequently, by praetors who refused the right to address their courts to various types of shameful persons.¹⁴¹ But it would be a fundamental error to think that any of these levels of state power generated a consistent set of ‘the infamous’. The development of formal social disrepute or dishonour was a haphazard thing that reflected the fragmented interface between state and society. Official disrepute (at first usually called *ignominia*, later *infamia*) was a dishonour that struck an individual as the result of a bad encounter with the state in a context where it was also trying to regulate moral conduct. A unified conception of *infamia* or disrepute was therefore slow to emerge, and probably only became formalized as a comprehensive definition towards the end of the second century B.C. The jurists and drafters of legislation in fact drew on variegated terms found in the current Latin of their day to give expression to the rather amorphous ways in which persons might become dishonoured. Moreover, any precise sense of *infamia* was bound to be disintegrated because of the fragmented nature of Roman social structure itself. Conceptions of dishonour therefore varied according to the different expectations attached to each person’s social status. There were persons of quintessential social honour (e.g. office-holding senators) who had a lot to lose, or of no honour at all (e.g. female slaves) who had none to lose. Exclusions also operated according to the situation in which shameful behaviour might occur. So, for example, in the denial of their right to represent third parties in court, adult women were grouped with ‘those who have been marked as shameful

¹⁴⁰ *CIL* I 593=*ILS* 6085=*FIRA* I 13=AJ no. 24; cf. Hardy (1912) 136–63.

¹⁴¹ Greenidge (1894), Kaser (1956).

persons in the praetor's edict' – which does not mean that all women were always dishonourable persons – indeed, to the praetor, they did not have to be specifically marked with infamy since women had no such rights to be denied in the first place.¹⁴² Those who were denied powers of representation in the praetor's court, however, shared characteristics that strongly suggest a common denominator of shame. Other persons who suffered this strong form of praetorian exclusion, for example, included men who allowed their bodies to be used passively in homosexual intercourse. That is to say, men who had behaved 'like women' were to be treated like them.

Just as praetors either limited or entirely excluded one from speaking on behalf of another in their courts, depending on the extent of the damage to one's reputation, so the municipal regulations worked with a spectrum of exclusion extending from strong forms that forbade outcast persons from holding offices or magistracies, from being a member of the local town senate, from voting or otherwise formally participating in municipal elections, to the less harsh measures of forbidding attendance at public celebrations, games or banquets staged by the municipality.¹⁴³ Those who suffered the harshest forms of exclusion were those who had been convicted in courts of theft, on any other similar charge of malicious breach of contract (of trust, partnership, mandate) or who were guilty of abuse of relationships involving trust (e.g. guardianship); as well as those who had not been able to pay their debts and those who had falsely accused others. All such persons were otherwise acceptable citizens who had breached the codes of trust and good faith on which most dealings in their world, public and private, reposed. Other persons were so labelled, not because of a single unacceptable act on their part, but because of the very nature of their normal daily occupations. So, for example, anyone who had the job of crier (*praeco*), who was an organizer of funerals and other such events (*dissignator*), or who was an undertaker who handled corpses (*libitinarius*), was by that very fact excluded from the town senate, from magistracies and from participation in local elections. Added to this list of outcasts were prostitutes and pimps (*lenones*), those who were trainers of gladiators (*lanistae*) and those who were public entertainers in popular shows (purveyors of the *artes ludicrae*).¹⁴⁴ Such occupational infamy, however, was generally enforced only for the period during which the person was actively involved in the infamous activity. And, again, the categories varied from centre to periphery. At Rome strong measures were taken to exclude those directly involved in paid jobs or in disreputable occupations that involved trading and commerce.¹⁴⁵ Such exclusionary criteria, however, were not as rigorously applied in the local towns and cities of the empire.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Greenidge (1894) ch. 7. ¹⁴³ *Tab. Heracl.* (a) 89 (b) 94 (c) 123, 134, 138–9.

¹⁴⁴ *Tab. Heracl.* 94–105, 123; on *praecones*, see Hinard (1976). ¹⁴⁵ Greenidge (1894) 193–5.

¹⁴⁶ Finley, *Ancient Economy* 59–60 (noting the infrequency of the exceptions).

To understand the linkage between popular and legal shame, however, it is particularly important to pay attention to persons stained with infamy simply because of their daily work. Prime amongst persons struck with occupational shame were those involved in the public entertainment of others: actors in the popular theatre and gladiators in the arena. The men of the sword illustrate the extremes of the problem, for gladiatorial games, no matter how irregular or infrequent, were probably *the* hallmark of a Roman town.¹⁴⁷ Yet the gladiator was severely stigmatized, no doubt because of a close association with blood and death. Without the convincing legitimation of the state fiat of war, they killed and maimed solely for the purpose of entertainment. Moreover, they were recruited, for the most part, from condemned men, from amongst the living dead – most of them compelled to this end either because, as criminals, they were under capital sentence or because, as slaves, they had no choice.¹⁴⁸ Of the normal input, it seems that slaves were the main human fodder – either those who were sold in regular commerce to *lanistae* and their schools, or those who were purposely sent into the arena by their masters as a form of punishment. The most interesting gladiators for our purposes, however, are the free men who decided to enter the arena of their own volition. Their case is both intriguing and revealing precisely because it is such a clear instance of the wilful crossing of a major status frontier in imperial society.¹⁴⁹ The transition was accomplished by an act labelled *auctoramentum*, a labour contract wherein the free man ‘sold’ his own body, binding himself over totally to his new master, the owner of the gladiatorial stable.¹⁵⁰ On crossing the threshold, for the duration of his contract the free man surrendered all his civic rights and became in effect, a slave – marked, significantly, by the declaration that he would allow his body to be burned, beaten or cut with iron.¹⁵¹ Since most gladiators were compelled to enter the arena, usually under the compulsion of servitude, it is not surprising that this basic fact determined the value placed on higher-status free persons who voluntarily entered the ‘profession’. For those who chose to enter this temporary and most dangerous slavery, the motive was not the allurements or excitement of the arena, but sheer material need. It was the compulsion of poverty.¹⁵²

Often grouped with gladiators as a general class of occupational outcast were ‘actors’ or, more precisely, those persons whom the laws specified as engaged in the *artes ludicrae*. This derogatory labelling of a whole segment of culture reflected the same distinction between ‘high’ culture, which was

¹⁴⁷ Barton (1989) on the apparent paradoxes; Clavel-Lévêque (1984), esp. 200–1, Ville (1981) 168–9, 175–88; Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* 12–13; legal requirement: Lex Coloniae Genetivae, ss. 70–1, 128 (*ILS* 6087=*FIRA* 1 no. 21); popular expectations: Petron. *Sat.* 45. ¹⁴⁸ *Dig.* LXVIII.19.8 and 11.

¹⁴⁹ Ville (1981) 247; Manil. 4.225–6; Ps.-Ascon. *ad Hor. Sat.* II.7.58–9; Petron. *Sat.* 117.5.

¹⁵⁰ Diliberto (1981) 17–18 and 52–3; cf. Sanfilippo (1982), Lemosse (1983) and Guarino (1983).

¹⁵¹ Juv. XI.8; Petron. *Sat.* 117.5; Sen. *Ep.* 4.33.7.

¹⁵² Tac. *Hist.* II 62.5; Sen. *Controv.* X.4.18.; cf. Ville (1981) 251.

serious, even tragic, in tone, and popular culture which could not be seen straight, but had to be degraded and made 'comical'. Entertainers (as we shall call them, to make the distinction) did not belong to the literate 'high' cultural world of the formal stage; rather, they emerged from 'below', from the popular culture that coalesced around the *ex tempore* acts that flourished in the fora and marketplaces, in the streets and piazzas of the towns and villages of Italy. It was in these open venues that the storytellers, stilt-walkers, tightrope artists, sword-swallowers, fire-eaters and dancers attracted their crowds; it was where popular poets battled in verbal cutting contests, where puppeteers struggled to attract a makeshift audience.¹⁵³ Out of this milieu emerged a form of popular theatre roughly contained under the rubric of *mimus*, in part because of the imitation, aping, parodying of everyday and official life that was at its heart, going back to its plebeian origins in street and forum.¹⁵⁴ These entertainers were, for a host of reasons, including their material and mobility, unacceptable persons. The professionalization of the genre only further emphasized the boundaries between it and acceptable theatre, not a few of the troupes of actors being composed of slaves who were owned by stage entrepreneurs and wealthy households.¹⁵⁵

Mime was therefore a type of theatre that was anathema to public authorities, and its entertainers were the object of official fear, contempt and repression. Spontaneous in its action, the *mimus* reflected, imitated, the flow of everyday life in a way that was an implicit threat to social order (*publica disciplina*). Improvised performances parodied and poked fun at core social institutions: the father figure, the husband, marriage and sexual mores – the critical links in Roman social structure. Sometimes the jibes and jests were directed further afield, directly or by suggestion, to reach the wealthy and powerful and their agents (such as imperial tax collectors) and even, on occasion, the emperor himself.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, mime was a form in which mythical figures of popular heroism, and even protest, such as the bandit, were given a stage where plebeian resentments or approbations could be voiced. The mimicry of everyday life, however, was equally open to a parody of the violence often found in it, and so often advanced to cruder forms of slapstick comedy. It also advanced to the scatological and sexually explicit display. Public exposure of the innards of domestic and familial faults naturally incurred the repression of an official prudery that served the interests of public order, though which, no doubt, considerably exaggerated the 'badness' of such dramatic presentations. The younger Pliny's efforts to calm Iulius Genitor's moral indignation over the delicate motions of effeminate male entertainers, the impudence of mime

¹⁵³ Corbett (1986) 54–5; *Apul. Met.* 1.4; *Dig.* LXVII.11.11; cf. Adams (1983) 332; in general, see Dupont (1985) ch. 4.

¹⁵⁴ Boissier (1904) 1903–4; Reich (1903) 50–1.

¹⁵⁵ *Dig.* IX.2.22.1.

¹⁵⁶ Reynolds (1943) and (1946); Tengström (1977) 47–8; cf. Corbett (1986) 61–2.

artists, and the stupidities of professional morons at a dinner party to which he was invited are one sign of the doubts. Some regarded such entertainers as an integral part of their 'scene'; some, like Genitor, bellowed shock and outrage; while still others, like Pliny, professed indifference and a sort of tolerance for a broad range of theatrical behaviour.¹⁵⁷

But there were simple aspects of the imitation of social life that were an immediate threat. Mimic theatre was more direct, not just in its subject-matter, but in its presentation. No masks concealed the entertainer's true persona; he or she confronted the spectators directly. The latter pronoun is significant. In direct contrast to the formalities of 'high' or tragic theatre, in *mimus* women played women's roles, thereby directly violating one of the most basic patterns of acceptable gender/spatial order in the Roman city. Symbolic of this more direct type of contact was the entertainer known as the *stupidus*. Dressed in a multicoloured patchwork costume, with his hair cut short or shaven off in the manner of a condemned criminal, he appeared on stage to receive the collective insults and blows hurled at him by vengeful spectators who got their entertainment by brutalizing a figure who could receive their pent-up violence. It was a role which, nonetheless, had its own peculiar honour, such as that celebrated on his gravestone by a certain Ursus (Mr Grizzly) a player in a company that traversed the roads connecting the villages and hamlets around Cirta in North Africa. He was their Mr Stupid, and was paid for it, if not owned outright, by the colony of Cirta.¹⁵⁸ The *stupidus* was an outcast of outcasts, and served much the same function for his audiences as did the scapegoat for whole communities.

The full force of legal and social exclusion fell upon such entertainers. The laws make clear that it was the exhibition of one's body for the sake of others (whether on a public or a 'private' stage did not matter) that caused the personal degradation. Entertainers were *infames* who (as well as their sons and daughters) were debarred from intermarriage with persons of the highest social orders – senators and their children and grandchildren.¹⁵⁹ A minor inconvenience, perhaps, for a very few aspiring actors and actresses; the real concern of the legislation was to protect the purity of high social rank. The measures are found, it might be noted, not amongst laws on actors or on *infamia*, but in those devoted to the protection of upper-class marriage and family formation. That was the perceived threat. If a respectable *matrona* took up 'acting' subsequent to her marriage, she thereby gave just grounds to her husband for divorce; indeed, the laws stated that the husband ought to repudiate her for such an affront to his dignity.¹⁶⁰ The

¹⁵⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* ix.17.

¹⁵⁸ Reich (1903) 116, 124; Boissier (1904) 1905–7; cf. Juv. viii.197; Mart. ii.8, xi.8; for Ursus see *ILAlg* II 1819=*AE* 1951 no. 221; for the road company see *ibid.* 817=*CIL* VIII 7151 and 818=*CIL* VIII.7153. ¹⁵⁹ *Dig.* xxiii.44. pref. and i. ¹⁶⁰ *Dig.* xxiii.44.7.

legal exclusions were, therefore, part of a long series of laws enacted throughout the formative period of the Principate in order to define more clearly the boundaries of the ruling élite of senators and *equites*, and to keep those orders 'pure' from the pollution of social inferiors and the infamy associated with their kind. The text of a *senatus consultum* of A.D. 19 (found at Larinum) which regulated the involvement of members of the ruling order, male and female, in the occupations of stage and arena is one of the last pieces of specific legislation that was part of this process.¹⁶¹ By our period the vocabulary and conceptions developed for such systematic exclusions had become part of the normal terminology of jurists and legislators.

Amongst the most despised of persons struck with legal *infamia* in both municipal and imperial laws were *lenones*, a *leno* being narrowly defined as one who managed and controlled prostitutes. The females (or males) who were the prostitutes themselves were not especially singled out as objects of legal infamy for the obvious reason (the prevailing assumption) that most of them were unfree persons who had no civic status to lose in the first place. Prostitutes were defined as those 'who make a profit (*quaestus*) from their body'.¹⁶² Such females were demarcated in laws which expressly simultaneously denied the right of marriage to them and any protections against sexual assault. Their stigmatization was made clear in precisely those sections of the law dealing with marriage and family formation; that was where their threat to the moral order was felt. In these laws it is the publicity of their actions that excited especial blame. They made money from their bodies openly; it was this public loss of a sense of shame (*pudor*) that was emphasized, more than the making of money as such. The public notation of their profession, a self-abuse likened to a sort of moral cannibalism, made their shame (*turpitude*) more permanent.¹⁶³ More than sordid money-making labour outside the confines of a proper household, it was the public loss of a sense of shame (*pudor*) that was at the heart of the accusation.¹⁶⁴ Unlike actresses, whose branding could be left behind by ceasing to pursue the occupation, the stigmata attached to prostitutes were lifelong, whether or not they had desisted from the trade.¹⁶⁵

Lenones, or pimps, were the primary controllers of the traffic in prostitution. They managed the physical acquisition of the girls and boys on the slave markets, gave them their names, provided them with their clothing, stabled them, and received their takings (*captura*) and kept the accounts.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ *AE* 1978 no. 145 (Larinum); Levick (1983) and Lebek (1990).

¹⁶² Also, like slaves, minors and the condemned, they could not be witnesses in trials: *Dig.* xxii.5.3.5; Suet. *Claud.* 15.4. ¹⁶³ *Artem.* 3.23.

¹⁶⁴ *Dig.* xxiii.2.43 (Ulpian on the *Lex Julia et Papia*); see xxiii.2.43.2–3 for the debate over publicity and privacy of the acts, versus the receipt of monies. ¹⁶⁵ *Dig.* xxiii.2.42.4; Suet. *Gaius* 40.

¹⁶⁶ *Dig.* iii.2.4.2; Sen. *Controv.* 1.2.2, 1.2.7.

Because of this intermediary role, the *leno* was regarded as outcast as the prostitutes themselves, and was habitually referred to in moral judgements as amongst the lowest scum of society, a quintessentially polluted and impure person.¹⁶⁷ The sources of prostitution further underscored the stigmata of the occupation since the raw materials were provided for the most part under the compulsion of poverty, ownership or outright coercion. The prevailing assumption is that the bodies under the control of *lenones* were slaves or, as the laws phrase it ‘profitable properties’ (*quaesturia manicipia*). The jurists only note, as an afterthought, that the same conditions of infamy applied even if the females happened to be of free status.¹⁶⁸ In his discussion of the place of prostitution in a Greek city of the empire, Dio Chrysostom assumes that the major source of supply were women and girls captured in warfare or raids and sold in the marketplace. Laws on the sale of slave women similarly assume that they could be used in prostitution by the buyer; only if a specific stipulation was added to the contract of sale was this use of property denied to the buyer. Dio further asserts that prostitution is a type of violence (*hubris*) vented on ‘dishonoured and slavish bodies’, signifying by his use of the word *atimia* that non-citizens, as well as slaves, were being recruited.¹⁶⁹ The very process of sale to the *leno* was a further degradation, doubly demeaning for the females, for it involved all the usual detailed inspection and handling, *contrectatio*, found in slave purchases. As has been noted, ‘*contrectatio* is a nasty word. It denotes a disgusting activity. It means touching, handling, fondling, pawing, interfering with . . . it is a thoroughly unpleasant and distasteful subject.’¹⁷⁰

Already subject to this deliberate maltreatment of their bodies, prostitutes were then further marked by the places of their labour, and the clientele usually associated with their trade (often from other outcast elements of society). The *lupanar* was itself seen as a ‘public place’, but a bad one equated with the pollution of death. It was a *locus infamosus*, where, merely by entering into it, one acquired pleasure and shame; the place itself was seen as a violation of honour.¹⁷¹ To control the floating world of ‘loose women’, prostitutes were often forced to make a *professio* or declaration of the occupation and, in those large urban centres where it was pragmatically possible to maintain such records, to have their names entered on official registers. A further stigma was the special tax imposed on them and their labours, first instituted at Rome by the emperor Gaius.¹⁷² In the local towns of the empire, much the same attitudes prevailed. In Egypt, prostitutes were supposed to register with a local official and purchase an

¹⁶⁷ Lilja (1965) 31, 60–1; Juv. VI.216; Sen. *Controv.* I.2.1. ¹⁶⁸ *Dig.* III.2.4.2.

¹⁶⁹ Dio Chrys. *Or.* VII.138.

¹⁷⁰ Sen. *Controv.* I.2.1, I.2.3, I.2.7, I.2.11; Dio Chrys. *Or.* VII.133–4; Pugsley (1980) 341.

¹⁷¹ Sen. *Controv.* I.2.3 (*locus inbonestus*), I.2.5, I.2.7, I.2.20, 9.2.17; *Dig.* IV.8.21.11.

¹⁷² Suet. *Gaius* 40.

ad hoc permit for which they paid a fee (like other itinerant pedlars and craftsmen). These were one-day permits which gave the woman licence 'to go to bed' with whomever she wished 'on this date'.¹⁷³ In the metropolis of the empire itself, their activities were legally limited in the lupanars to times after the ninth hour, towards evening, leading to their appellation as *nonariae* ('ninth-hour women'). Since they bordered on the animal world of twilight, they were perceived rather fearfully in a world of domineering male sexuality as an aggressive, predatory threat. As foul and rapaciously wild females, ready to devour male virtue, they were called 'wolf women' (*lupae*) and their place of work the 'wolf house' (*lupanar*). They were supposed, by convention or by law, to affect an unacceptable appearance and were not to wear the garments reserved for a respectable Roman matron.¹⁷⁴ Finally, the valuation of them as objects of ill repute was reinforced by words used in common speech where they were spoken of as *meretrices* (female wage-earners), *scraetae* (trash), *scorta* (skins) and other such derogatory names.¹⁷⁵

It is not without final significance for social hierarchy within the Roman world that the greatest permanent source of recruits to all of these outcast groups – urban criminals, the ranks of slaves and the world of prostitutes – were children. Without considering the very weak status of children in general, and the severe forms of maltreatment and exploitation to which many of them were subject, one can still specify a clearly definable group who were simple outcasts, whose births were deemed to be in excess by their parents. Our documentation on their status is perhaps best for Egypt, but the phenomenon was widespread throughout most provinces of the empire. Sometimes such 'excess children' were exposed by their parents with the intent that they would die, but it would seem that a good number, perhaps a majority, of such infants were cast out by their parents with the aim that they would be 'picked up' by other persons. *Expositio* or 'placing out' of this type was therefore a possible alternative to intentional infanticide.¹⁷⁶ The normal recipients, it seems, were not usually free persons who intended to 'adopt' such children (though that practice did exist), but rather slave-dealers or other persons who wished to acquire the children in order to raise them in various forms of servitude. Quite often, it seems, parents felt compelled (perhaps because of legal prohibitions) to go through a fictitious abandonment or 'adoption' procedure with the same intent. In the practice of exposing unwanted children, there can be little doubt that girls were on the whole valued less than boys, for a whole range of reasons involving labour, inheritance, continuity of family and dominant male values. In these circumstances, the type of (to us) harsh sentiments

¹⁷³ *WJO* 1157; cf. Lewis (1983) 172. ¹⁷⁴ Herter (1960) 93–4.

¹⁷⁵ Adams (1983) 321–7 (on *meretrix* and *scortum*, the most common terms), 333–5 (on *lupa*, a 'lower' word, occurring mainly in mime, farce, satire and epigram). ¹⁷⁶ Boswell (1984) 13 and (1989) pt. 2.

expressed by one Hilarion to his wife Alis in Egypt must have been reasonably common:¹⁷⁷

I'm still in Alexandria. Don't worry if all the others return, while I remain here. I entreat and beg you to take good care of our baby son. As soon as I receive payment, I'll send the money to you. If you go into labour and childbirth before I get back home, if it's a boy keep it, if a girl, discard it.

Not did parents, upon separation, divorce or death, ever surrender what they perceived to be their natural right to dispose of their newly born infants as they pleased, including exposing them at birth.¹⁷⁸ Although it seems certain that more girls than boys were exposed, the reverse seems true in terms of the 'picking up' of exposed children. Here the reverse evaluation applied, and more of the (relatively fewer) exposed boys were adopted or taken off into slavery.¹⁷⁹

In Egypt we know that children were exposed in local garbage pits, cess-pools and dumps where, in many cases, they were left to die. But these same venues could also serve as places where collusory acts of acquisition could be undertaken by parents and slave-dealers.¹⁸⁰ In fact, there would seem to be a clear relationship between the 'picked-up' children and a significant group of Egyptians who bore what are politely labelled 'copronyms', that is, names derived from the word *κόπρος* ('shit').¹⁸¹ By the period when they are widely attested in our papyrological records (mainly from the third and fourth centuries) these names seem to have lost some of their pejorative force. The apparent foul meaning did not prevent persons bearing such names from listing normal family relations in bureaucratic records, from advancing to important governmental posts, or indeed parents from deliberately giving copronyms to their legitimate children.¹⁸² Originally these names must have been extraordinarily demeaning, but perhaps long-term and repeated use inured users to the harder meaning, of which there can be little doubt, since, apart from the 'garbage children', these names were normally applied as monikers for fools, buffoons and dwarfs.¹⁸³

In other provinces of the empire, outcast children are more difficult to

¹⁷⁷ *POxy* 744 = *SelPap* no. 105; those who think this case exceptional or non-paradigmatic might consider the assumptions behind the story retailed by *Apul. Met.* 10.23–4; as well as Hierokles in *Stobaios, Anth.* (C. Wachsmuth and O. Hense (eds.), Berlin, 1884–1912) IV 603; Musonius Rufus., *ibid.*, 665; and Poseidippos, *ibid.*, 614: 'Everyone even if he happens to be a beggar raises a son, but even if he is rich exposes a daughter.' ¹⁷⁸ *BGU* 1104 (8 B.C.).

¹⁷⁹ See Harris (1982) and Golden (1981), with the nuances added by Patterson (1985), against Engels (1980).

¹⁸⁰ *Gnomon of the Idios Logos* 41, 92 and 107 (specified as a male child) on children 'picked up' from the *kopriai* or dung mounds.

¹⁸¹ Perdrizet (1921) 85–6; equivalent names in the Latin West were *Stercorius* and *Stercorina*: see *ibid.* 89; *CIL* III 1871, 1968, 2739; xiv 2327.

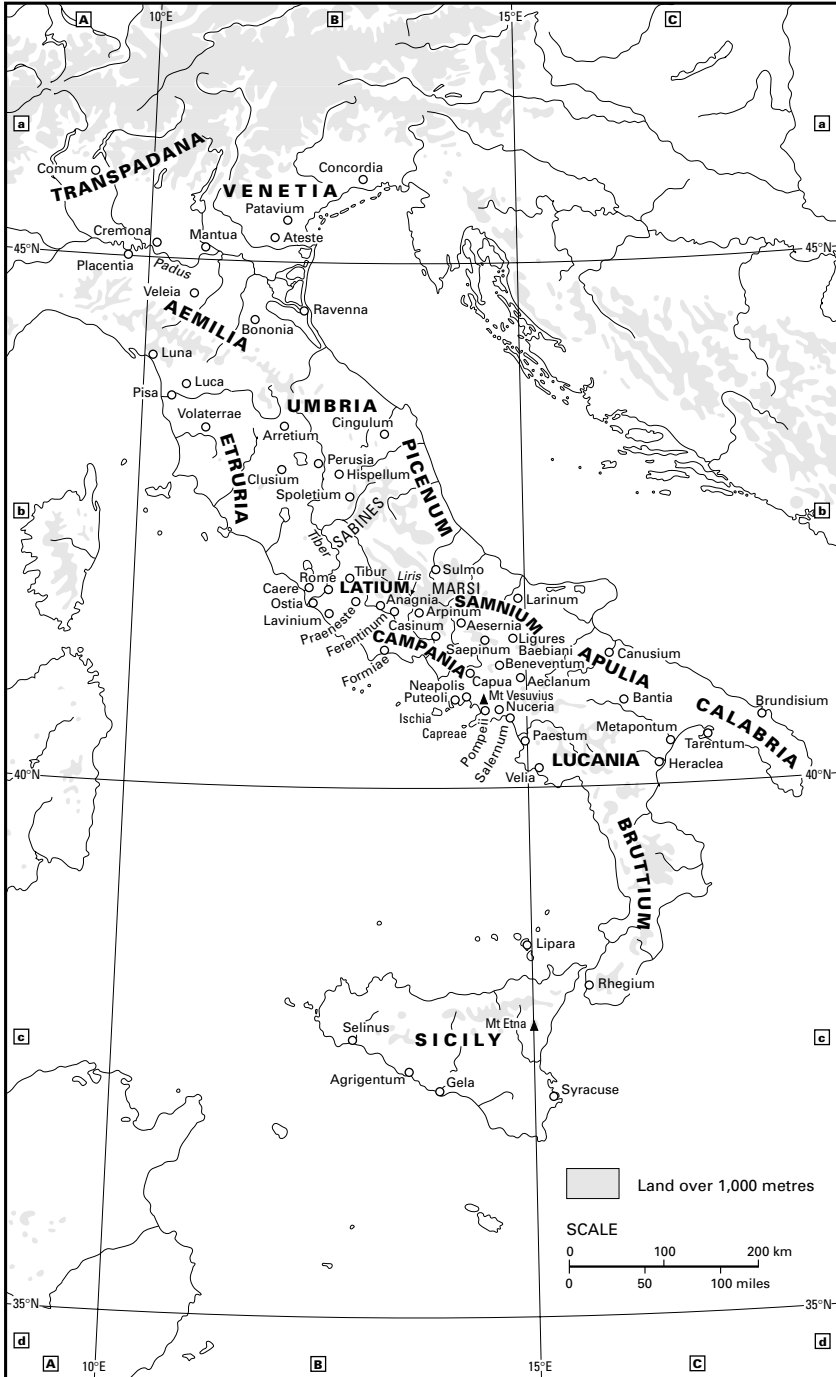
¹⁸² Pomeroy (1986), superseding Carcopino (1924–7) and Eyben (1981–2).

¹⁸³ Bienzunska-Malowist (1969) and (1984) 73; Perdrizet (1921) 93; *POxy* 413; *Mart.* IX.13.3; *Suet. Tib.* 61.

identify in our existing source materials, primarily because of the general terminology that lumped them with ‘adopted’ and ‘foster’ children – that, and the fact that pseudo-adoption and ‘fosterage’ arrangements were frequently used as legal covers for what was in fact a major source of slaves. So, for example, in Asia Minor there are numerous attested cases of children called *threptoi*, many of whom appear to come under the legal categories of ‘fosterage’ and ‘adoption’. But some do not.¹⁸⁴ In his correspondence with Trajan, the younger Pliny reports the widespread existence of exposed children throughout the province of Bithynia. He was especially concerned ‘about the status and nourishment of those whom they call *threptoi*’. Pliny’s worry, as is made clear by the emperor’s reply, was precisely over those children who were not in a free-status relationship to the persons who had ‘adopted’ them. Trajan assumes these children to be ‘children who were exposed at birth, and later picked up by “whatever persons” and raised in slavery’. In his discussion of the problem, Pliny refers to imperial orders to governors in Asia and mainland Greece on the subject; and Trajan refers to the problem as ‘having been treated frequently’ by other emperors and imperial officials.¹⁸⁵ Although the emperor, in an offhand manner, re-affirms the ruling that such children were not to fall into slavery and were to be able to assert their claim to freedom, no practical way in which this might be done is ever suggested. From their infancy, children in this situation would have had no other experience than slavery and no realistic circumstance in which to ‘assert their liberty’. They were outcast not just in the literal sense of having been thrown out by their parents, but also in the sense that they suffered the same type of natal alienation characteristic of most slaves – they lost all links with their family of birth, all sense of connection with a community to which they might have belonged. As the elder Seneca phrased it, ‘You will not find them in any census, or in any wills . . . they are not counted anywhere.’¹⁸⁶ These unwanted children fed back into the very slave system which was the foundation of the otherness and alienation that largely determined core Roman values and behaviours.¹⁸⁷ They were, in many ways, the quintessential outcasts of that world.

¹⁸⁴ Cameron (1939). ¹⁸⁵ Pliny, *Ep.* x.65–6. ¹⁸⁶ Sen. *Controv.* x.4.13–14.

¹⁸⁷ Saller (1987): they were one of the basic internal sources for the slave system in the empire.



Map 2 Italy

CHAPTER 12

ROME AND ITALY

NICHOLAS PURCELL

I. THE CITY OF WONDERS AT THE HEART OF A MOBILE WORLD¹

In the middle of the fifth century of our era, Hierios, son of Ploutarchos, the Neoplatonist philosopher, studied at Rome with Proclus. An anecdote of his stay tells us that ‘in the house called that of Quirinus’, he was shown ‘a miniature human head, on its own, rather like a chick-pea in size and shape . . . but in other respects a real human head, with eyes and a face and hair on top and a complete mouth, from which came a voice like that of a thousand men, it was so loud’.² Here is not the place to examine the specific context of the bizarrerie of this story; but it is an appropriate place to begin. The period under discussion should be seen as that in which Rome the late antique city was formed. The display of astonishing wonders to credulous visiting intellectuals, in the mysterious setting of the city’s ancient past – Hierios’ tale is set in the Temple of Quirinus – is already characteristic of the second century. It derives ultimately from the establishment under the Flavian emperors of Rome’s role as a cultural capital for the whole Greco-Roman empire. In this period too, Italy, at least Italy south of the Cisalpine plain, became more than ever a backdrop to the metropolitan theatricals of Rome, and should be considered alongside its largest agglomeration.

Augustus had started the process of making Rome, as a matter of policy, a worthy capital of the world.³ The wonders assembled in Rome, which could be experienced on journeys there, became one of the symbolic structures of empire. The traveller Pausanias, for instance, admired the great bronze roof of Trajan’s Basilica Ulpia in his Forum at Rome, which was one of the most remarkable architectural complexes of the city; but he had also studied the collections of wonderful things at Rome, for which he uses the formal term ‘The Wonders’ (*ta thaumata*).⁴ They included a Triton (a

¹ This account is intended to avoid duplication of material discussed in the chapters I have contributed to volumes ix and x. The bibliography of the subject will shortly be enriched by the publication of the volume of *ANRW* devoted to Rome and Italy under the Principate (II 11.2).

² Dam. *Isid.* 88, from Phot. *Bibl.* ³ Purcell (1996a) sets out some of this process.

⁴ For the marvels of the Forum of Trajan, cf. Amm. Marc. XVI.10.5–16.

creature part man and part fish) and one of the tusks of the Calydonian Boar (which was preserved in a shrine of Dionysus in one of the imperial suburban estates; the Keepers of the Wonders told Pausanias that the other was broken). The Triton reminds him that he also saw rhinoceroses, shaggy cattle from Paeonia, and Indian camels; on another occasion he remarks on his surprise at the spectacle of white deer.⁵ But the selection of curiosities extended to an elephant's skull in the Temple of Diana Tifatina near Capua, and it is clear that for Pausanias all Italy shared in the remarkable qualities of the capital.⁶ You could also see, in the imperial resort of Antium, the Pythagorean work that the sage Apollonius of Tyana had brought out of the oracle of Trophonius at Lebadeia or the bones of two individuals called Pusio and Secundilla, about three metres tall, in the Horti Sallustiani on the edge of Rome.⁷

Many wonders were in Italy directly because of the conquest of the world, from the curtain of the Temple in Jerusalem and Solomon's throne through innumerable works of art to the raw materials, some of them through their rarity on the verge of the world of wonders, which were sent as gifts to the emperors.⁸ When such things were sent or extorted, the former owners retained a sense of proprietorship and links with their former property; Pausanias, once again, preserves for us something of the satisfaction felt by the people of Boeotian Thespieae at the revenge taken by Eros on both Caligula and Nero, who had removed his statue from its proper home – appropriate revenge for the God of Love, and an indication of how scandal about the emperors was a bond in the matrix of empire too.⁹ The provincials' consciousness of the wonders that were in Italy, and which Nature herself had given it, is not to be taken as trivial; these accounts reflect the true sense of awe that informed the relationship between Italy and her empire at this period, expressing the comprehension of the political greatness of Rome in terms of a vision of the order of creation. Thus, the single most astonishing thing about Italy for Pausanias was the natural freak of its volcanic springs – the acid water, harnessed in his own day near Puteoli, which had destroyed the lead pipe through which it had been made to flow, the boiling water in the sea at the same city, over which the Romans had built an artificial island so as to use the water for baths; but most of all, the sulphurous water of *Aquae Albulae* below Tibur in the Roman Campagna, where the periegete had himself bathed: 'when a man first enters this water it feels cold and makes him shiver, but after a little it heats him like the most fiery drug'.¹⁰

⁵ Trajan's Forum v.12.6, cf. x.5.11; Calydonian boar VIII.46.5; animals IX.21.1–2, VIII.17.4. The dried Gorgons that Marius had captured in Africa were on show in one of the temples of Hercules, Ath. 221f. ⁶ v.12.3. ⁷ Philostr. *VA* VIII.20; Pliny, *HN* VII.75.

⁸ Talmud, *Yoma* 57a; *Esther Rubba* 1.12. Millar, *Emperor* 140, 185 has useful remarks on imperial treasures; but the collections went far beyond even what the emperors had hoarded. ⁹ IX.27.3.

¹⁰ IV.35.12; VIII.7.3; *Aquae Albulae* IV.35.12.

The unique source of Italy's prestige was the blessings of Nature. The great doctor Galen (who was realistic in his assessment of Rome, for instance in noting the prevalence of semitertian fever in the city), is highly enthusiastic about its water-supply:

for just as there are many other advantages in the city of Rome, so too the springs are of fine quality and copious quantity, and the water of none of them is malodorous, polluted with sewage or mud, or hard (which goes for my home Pergamum too). But in many other cities the water has not a few harmful qualities. The waters that are brought from the Tiburtine mountains in stone channels to the city of the Romans are free of all other badness, but are rather hard and do not warm quickly like the springs of the city itself, nor does whatever you throw in, whether pulses, green vegetables or meat, cook or boil quickly in them, as it does in the waters of the wells.¹¹

Herodian in a vivid passage represents the scene of the corruption of Commodus on the Danube. Should he remain in the inhospitable north and continue his father's war? 'Others are enjoying the hot springs and breezy atmosphere of the cool glens, the things with which Italy alone is well-endowed.'¹² The Virgilian theme of *laudes Italiae*, taken up and magnified by the likes of the younger Pliny, became an important ingredient in what Romans themselves believed about the world. Rome's greatness encompassed and transcended the worlds of myth and natural explanation, and bound the two together. Moreover, the special nature of Italy – holy, therapeutic, wondrous, a spa for the whole of humanity, its ruler and its resort – was intimately linked with the attraction which it exerted on people and things from all over the world. The fullest statement of this view dates from the reign of Vespasian: the *Historia Naturalis* of the elder Pliny, whose praises of Italy (which include passionate testimony to the excellence of its springs) are founded on his account of the other dispositions of Nature.¹³

The attitude is not without its ambiguities. Strabo, at the beginning of the first century of our era, had already painted a picture of the Italy of wondrous natural blessings that was too favourable by half, especially in a culture which well remembered Herodotus on the environmental determinism of military success. Herodian, as we see again in the overdone picture of the suburban amenities of Aquileia before it was destroyed by the troops of Maximinus, depicted a decadence which would be still more prominent in the satirical evocations of life at Rome in Ammianus in the next century.¹⁴ Soranus of Ephesus quotes a number of explanations of the malformation of the limbs of children in the city of Rome which reflect a scepticism about the benefits of life there – too much sex, too much wine and all the cold water flowing under the houses.¹⁵

¹¹ xvii.2.159 (Kühn). For Galen's attitude to Rome, Nutton (1995). ¹² I.6.2.

¹³ *HN* xxxi.5–8. ¹⁴ viii.4.5; *Amm.* xiv.6.2–27; xxxiii.4.3–34.

¹⁵ *Peri gynaikeion pathon*, ed. P. Burguière, D. Gourevitch, Y. Malinas (Paris 1988 and 1990), xx.44 [xl.113].

But for all the negative colouring which jealousy or hostility gave to the recognition of the supremacy of Rome, the fact remains that the Romans had at last succeeded in the pursuit of their own place in the repertoire of the old, the beautiful and the mysterious on which so much of the culture of the ancient world was based. Already by this period, as still more apparently in later antiquity, Italy had become recognized as a land of ancient wonders, and had lost the parvenu character of the years when Rome was still consolidating a worldwide dominion.

Travelling to Rome, city of wonders in a land of wonders, was therefore a special experience. Two evocations of the journey from Gades in southern Spain in different media illustrate: a poem celebrating the arduous accumulation of thousands of stadia on the route through Spain, Gaul and Italy, and a pair of glass goblets found at Vicarello north of Rome, decorated with a much more workaday listing of the way-stations. It is significant that this was a dedication to Apollo at his sanctuary at the thermal springs on the shore of Lake Bracciano, one of the natural marvels which we have already seen in action in the life of visitors to Rome.¹⁶

Life in Italy and Rome also reflected their status in relation to the conquered world in more tangible ways. These visitors were not tourists, coming to experience the natural wonders or the grandeur of the monuments in a spirit of recreation. It was the exercise of power that attracted them: the business of petition and response, the availability of patronage, the opportunity to acquire influence. Thus the collection of materials which underlies the world of wonders is an expression of the complex of imperial exactions, a complex which includes the payment of tribute and tax and the provision of the annonal distributions. Galen, once more, reflects on the advantages of living in Rome

to which very many things are brought every year from every nation . . . Some things come only seasonally, once a year, like the produce of Sicily, Greater Libya and Crete, when the herb-dealers who are maintained by the Emperor there send full baskets (of the sort called woven because they are made of a mesh of agnus-castus twigs) not just to the Emperor, but for all the city of the Romans.¹⁷

The dispensing of imperial favours to doctors like Galen or to learned visitors like Pausanias is part of the tremendous outpouring of patronage which expressed the emperor's overwhelming power. The visitors themselves are bidden, and seen to be bidden, present because of the necessity of going to Rome to achieve anything practical in administrative or governmental terms, and implicated at once as part of the display of supplicants, humble or grand, always available in the capital. The negative judgements of some of these visitors are not so surprising.

¹⁶ *Anth. Pal.* XIV.121.

¹⁷ Galen XI.14.9 (Kühn). Compare the stores of cinnamon, XIV.64 and 71, Hymettus honey 26, Falernian wine 25; cf. Millar, *Emperor* 139–53.

In the world of the Second Sophistic this kind of process inevitably possessed a cultural dimension. In the world of thinking, speaking and writing, Rome was the centre too, the norm and exemplar of Antonine cities. Athenaeus' Ulpian, described as a denizen of the 'streets, porticoes, bookshops and baths', conversing in all of them, sums up Rome as a city of cultural interaction.¹⁸ Favorinus the philosopher left Herodes Atticus a telling legacy: his Indian slave Autolecythus (whose mispronunciations of Attic were endlessly amusing at dinner); his library; and his house at Rome.¹⁹ It was here that many of the most acrimonious and celebrated encounters of the great cultural figures of the age took place. We hear that Hadrian of Tyre could attract senators and *equites* away from the dancers at the *ludi* to hear him recite at the Athenaeum – not just those who were philhellenes, but those who were learning the other language in Rome, too – at a run, it is alleged, and reproving those who were only walking! Commodus made him *ab epistulis* on his deathbed, and he died clutching the document which conveyed the honour.²⁰ The *catbedra* of rhetoric at Rome that he held was one of the key posts in the Antonine cultural world. But so cosmopolitan was this aspect of the city's life that it was a singular aspect of the achievement of Aelian that he could boast that he had never left Italy or been on a ship.²¹

It is not surprising, then, that the emperors took conscious steps to make Italy and Rome spectacular to approach. Trajan's role was particularly important. Completing the project of Claudius at Ostia with a completely sheltered inner harbour, he also equipped Italy with other refuges for coastwise navigators at Centumcellae, Tarracina and Ancona.²² 'The Senate and people of Rome dedicated this to that most far-sighted of *principes* because he made journeying to Italy safer for those who sail, through the addition of this harbour too', says the inscription on the monumental arch on the mole at Ancona.²³ Following again the example of Claudius, with his improvements to the roads across the Apennines and the eastern Alps, Domitian and Trajan invested heavily in roads.²⁴ The Via Domitiana linked the ports of Campania by land with the havens further north along the coast, reinforcing the infrastructure of coastwise communications as Nero had intended to do with his canal, and as the Via Severiana was to do around the Tiber mouth at a later date.²⁵ Trajan's most important projects lay along the Via Appia corridor, greatly improving communications with the packet-port of Brundisium and its routes to the East; the attention that both emperors paid to the midway point in this corridor, Beneventum, is a

¹⁸ Ath. 1.1d. ¹⁹ Philostr. *VS* 490. ²⁰ Philostr. *VS* 589–90. ²¹ Philostr. *VS* 625.

²² The sequence of improvements included also Gaius' port at Rhegium, Joseph. *AJ* XIX.205, Hadrian's at Lupiae, Paus. vi.19.9, and that of Antoninus Pius at Caieta, *HA M. Ant.* 8.3. For Ostia, Testaguzza (1970); Meiggs, *Ostia*. In general, Ciampoltrini (1991); Purcell (1996b). ²³ *ILS* 298.

²⁴ Radke (1971) 96–8 remains the best account.

²⁵ Coleman (1988); remains of Nero's canal, Johannowsky (1990).

sign of their strategy, but many other cities in the area also benefited from their new or revived importance.²⁶

Within the city, the emperors created a suitable architectural façade to the world outside. The more lavish estates of the urban periphery (*horti*), which we have noted in the context of the display of heirlooms and curiosities, were mostly imperial property by the time of Domitian, and made the last stretches of road before the city gates splendid. The highly visible arcades of the aqueducts, winding across the suburban landscape, provided a foretaste of the advantages of the city ahead; their huge terminal fountains were among the grandiose monuments which marked the approach to the city of the radial roads. The city landscape had been dominated for centuries by the Capitoline temple, to which Augustus had added some further conspicuous shrines on the other hills. During the second and third centuries hilltop locations which would provide spectacular contributions to the cityscape were occupied one after another by enormous temples on great artificial platforms.²⁷ Even buildings on the plain, like the Basilica Ulpia, as we have seen, contributed to the very striking skyline. Not the least addition to the skyline which greeted visitors, however, was the *domus Augustana*, the Palatium, the imperial residence itself, the type of a style of architecture in which the towering façades made possible by the new brick construction were used to imitate the vertical grandeur previously accessible only through landscape architecture.²⁸

The architecture of Rome was the greatest of its wonders: its effect as a demonstration of power was threefold. In Rome was the booty of the world; the buildings themselves excelled in scale and beauty, providing the setting for the cultural activity which reflected the focality of the capital; and, above all, the wondrous setting itself was subdued by the power of Rome. These become the commonplaces of the encomia of Rome: in the *magnum opus* of the elder Pliny, at the end of the reign of Vespasian, for instance, we read:

It is indeed appropriate to turn to the wonders of our own city, and to examine the forces that have been deployed in the interests of the civilizing process [a slightly tendentious translation of *vires dociles*], and to demonstrate that in this respect too the world has been beaten – a demonstration repeated with every individual marvel. If the totality were to be piled up and gathered into a single heap the colossal size would be like the description in a single place of a whole alternative world.²⁹

²⁶ Via Appia, *ILS* 280; Via Nova Traiana, *ILS* 4496; Via Traiana, *ILS* 5866; Beneventum arch, *ILS* 296; Egyptianizing monuments (the style is significant) of Domitian at Beneventum, Müller (1971).

²⁷ The principal remains are on the Palatine, in the Vigna Barberini, and the enormous complex on the Quirinal whose vast approach ramps lie behind the Gregorian University. The identification remains a very thorny problem: cf. Beard, North and Price, *Religions of Rome* I 254–5. Another important precursor was the Temple of Claudius on the Caelian.

²⁸ Imitations in the Antonine suburbs include the colossal villas known as those of the Quintilii and Sette Bassi; Hadrian's Tiburtine villa also had a great pedimented frontage of this sort (*CIL* XIV 3911).

²⁹ *HN* XXXVI.101–25, at 101. On the theme of city and world, see now Griffin (1991) 19–22.

The principal motive force behind the promotion of Rome as world-capital was, of course, the self-presentation of the emperor. This centred on a constantly evolving panoply of religious, political and institutional ceremonial displays. Prominent among these were the emperors' own movements to and from the heart of the empire. Their work in improving communications aimed as much to provide a worthy stage for their own entrances and exits as at the convenience of their subjects. The ceremonial emphasis on the *profectio* and *adventus* of the emperors goes back to Augustus, and draws on the ancient symbolism of *imperium*, but, like so many aspects of imperial rule, seems to have been institutionalized first under the Flavians, and particularly by Domitian.³⁰ The first arrival of a new emperor required special pomp. Vespasian was greeted with ceremonial honours by the urban *plebs*. Trajan's reception started at an unprecedented distance from the city. Commodus, happening on the right season, was greeted with an abundance of fresh flowers. Septimius Severus combined his *adventus* with a sort of triumph by calling the march on Rome an *expeditio urbica*, a paradoxical concept which underlined the fact that the military significance of Rome and Italy was as much as the reward of victory as the base of conquest. Triumphs in the full sense were not as common as might be supposed: L. Verus' Parthian triumph of October 166 was the first for over fifty years.³¹

But these imperial visits were often transient moments. The architecture of route and welcoming façade bore witness to the departures of the ruler as much as to his arrival, and the improvements to the great highways to Brundisium and Ancona reflected the importance of the business that took the emperor away more than they did the lure of the capital to the populations of the empire. The speed of the emperor's departure again revealed how little need, beyond the symbolic, there was for his presence; Severus left after only thirty days, to return only for similarly short spells in 196 and 197, and then again for the necessary celebration of the *decennalia* in 202.³² Hadrian, having also taken his time before his *adventus* (8–10 July 118), like Vespasian and Trajan before him, spent even less time in Rome between his provincial trips.³³ When he was present the opportunity was not missed. The document known as the Capitoline Base, to which we shall have occasion to return, was dedicated to him after his final return from Syria, just before his death, by the urban populace, through the 'magistri vicorum of the City of Fourteen Regions', rather as Vespasian had been honoured sixty-five years before.³⁴ Because of the frequency of their movements, it was perceived as particularly satisfactory when the emperor's magnetic attraction of business from the whole world coincided with the pull of the imperial heartland and

³⁰ Rüpke (1990); Halfmann, *Iinera*; Künzl (1988).

³¹ Vespasian: *ILS* 6049–52; Trajan; Dio LXVIII.29.3; Commodus: Herodian 1.7.3.

³² Birley (1971) 214–16 with Dio LXXVI.1.1–5. He subsequently resided in the city from 203–7.

³³ Benario (1980) 147–9 is a convenient introduction. ³⁴ *ILS* 6073 = Smallwood, *NTH* no. 146.

he was resident in Italy: '(Antoninus Pius) had huge authority in the whole world because he took up his place in the City and could deal with information the more quickly from the centrality of his location.'³⁵

It is of great importance for understanding the history of Italy in this period that Rome itself did not monopolize the benefits of imperial residence. Even when the emperor was in some sense 'at Rome', he was often to be found in the belt of suburban estates or further out in the more picturesque recesses of the Campagna. The suburban skulking of Tiberius was Domitian's practice at the Albanum, Hadrian's at the Tiburtinum, and Commodus' on the *litus Laurentinum*.³⁶ Fronto's correspondence shows vividly how the emperor and his family frequented both the well-known resorts and more remote retreats, whether for the annual periods of traditional *villeggiatura* in April–May and in the late summer, or on a more permanent basis. In all these cases they could not but interact with local life. The imperial presence at the Villa Magna below Anagnia, for instance, vividly evoked in the account Marcus sent to Fronto of his antiquarian rambles in local hill-towns, is equally reflected in the local epigraphy.³⁷ The journeys of the emperors, moreover, with their ceremonial character, made a major impact on the Italian towns on the main routes.

II. THE RELIGION OF CENTRALITY IN THE GREATEST ANTONINE CITY

But the actual presence of the ruler was not so essential when the ideological system which centred on him was so all-pervading. It made full use of that religious sense of the centrality of Rome that we discerned in analysing the accounts of the *thaumata*. The Divine had long been a central ingredient in representations of Rome's identity. The city in this period was in no sense less of a cult-centre for the world than it had been in the days of Sulla or Augustus, or than it was to be in the days of Damasus or Gregory, despite the changing role of Rome and Italy in the wider imperial context. In assessing the social role of religion in Italy in this period, however, we must enter a caveat: between the efflorescence of religious themes in literature that survives from the Augustan period, and the beginnings of Christian writing, there is an epoch of religious history for which the evidence, while relatively abundant, is much less explicit. The subject is addressed in full in chapter 35; but that caveat needs to be entered before the discussion of the religious expression of the changing role of Rome and Italy in the wider imperial context that must find its place in this analysis.³⁸

³⁵ *HAM. Ant.* 7, 12.

³⁶ On the *arx Albana*, *Juv.* iv is the *locus classicus*; see also Lugli (1917–20). Hadrian's Tiburtinum, *HLA Hadr.* 26, 5; later resorts Herodian 13.1 *ta basilika proasteia*.

³⁷ Fronto, *ad Marc.* iv.4 (Naber) = Loeb I 174–6; *ILS* 406 and 1909.

³⁸ See in particular Beard, North and Price, *Religions of Rome* I 245–312.

The author of the *Historia Augusta Life of Marcus* produces a concatenation of epic disasters to play up the challenge faced by Marcus: the Marcomannic War follows on the Parthian, and the peoples are troubled by famine, and worse still by plague. A suitable religious response was called for: Marcus ‘summoned priests from all quarters, carried out all the non-Roman rites, and purified Rome with every kind of technique’. Note how the sacral response comprises a gathering to Rome, an inclusive pairing of Roman and non-Roman, and the particularly scrupulous attentiveness to the religious cleansing of the capital itself – an ascending order. Another part of the milieu is displayed here, as a case of Marcus’ clemency, when he pardons a rabble-rouser who climbed a tree of ancient sanctity in the Campus Martius and predicted the imminent destruction of the world by flame, whereupon he would take to the air in the form of a stork – a beast which he had taken the trouble to conceal about his person for the better performance of the miracle.³⁹

Capitoline Jupiter had made the Roman conquest of the world possible, and his cult had been the most potent expression of Rome’s religious centrality. The traditionally minded Antoninus Pius is recorded using the ancient techniques of expressing the subordination of a client ruler, allowing Pharasmenes of Iberia to sacrifice to Jupiter and giving him a statue in the precinct of the Temple of Bellona.⁴⁰ But Rome’s religious centrality could not now but derive principally from being the home and capital of the ubiquitously worshipped emperor. His house was as magnificent and awe-inspiring as Jupiter’s; the symbolism of the Palatine rivalled that of the Capitol. Due honour to Jupiter of course continued, and was augmented, for instance by Domitian and Hadrian. But the former’s Capitoline *agon*, and the ideologically complex Panhellenism of Hadrian’s Zeus, further illustrate that shift of emphasis towards an all-embracing inclusiveness that we have seen in Marcus’ response to crisis.⁴¹ Marcus, indeed, had an equestrian adviser in religious matters, appropriately a *pontifex minor*, one M. Livius with the traditionally appropriate *cognomen* Larenis, whose job was the overseeing of all the cults of the city, both Greek and indigenous.⁴² The host of Athanaeus’ deipnosophistic dinner-party, in which *métier* he instantiated the principal calling of élite residents of Rome and Italy in our period, he is a characteristic figure: ‘by the dinner-invitations he made Rome seem everyone’s own home country’.⁴³ It was equally typical that his qualifications as a host and as a religious adviser depended on the learning

³⁹ *HA Marc.* 12.13–13.6; 13.1 purification, 13.6 enthusiast. ⁴⁰ Dio LXX.2.2.

⁴¹ Caldelli (1993a), for representations of the *agon Capitolinus* and possibly Aurelian’s *agon Solis*.

⁴² Ath. 1.2b ‘set in charge of sacred rites and sacrifices by Marcus, altogether best of emperors: to deal with those of the Greeks not less than the ancestral ones’.

⁴³ Ath. 1.3c. On Larenis in general, *PIR*² L 297; title *pontifex minor* from *CIL* VI 2126. By gathering for his dinners the best of the yield of highly productive provinces, Larenis ‘turned Rome into Lusitania’, Ath. VIII.331b.

in constitutional and religious lore which his antiquarian research had given him.

The increasing prominence of other external deities, Dionysus and Heracles, Serapis and Sol, all of whom were to receive great imperial temples in the city, is a further aspect of this stage in the long symbiosis of Greek and Roman elements in Roman religion. The documents reveal the religious exuberance of the time – attesting a Dionysiac association run by a senatorial lady in her estate on the edge of the Alban Hills, for instance.⁴⁴ There was more to the religiosity of the empire's core in the second century than anxiety. Even the Syrian cults of Elagabalus or the ideologically allergic Christianity could be incorporated – albeit with resistance – as the sort of alien religion that belonged in the world-capital: Rome was big enough for them, too.⁴⁵ From the Acts of the Apostles on, we see how Christianity acquired a paradoxical status: external in its flavour, and never attempting to deny it, it became – only too successfully – domesticated in the centre of the empire and the world. In Rome and Italy, its nascent topographical expression in catacomb and *collegium*-like *schola* gave ritual form to the religion's social location in the space of the metropolitan city. Before the end of our period people were travelling to Rome not just because it was a centre for its own venerable cults but because it had become the centre also for cults which Romans regarded as foreign. Paul's progress to Rome finds its parallel in the *profectio* which takes the healed Lucius in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* to Rome to become a member of that most ancient college, founded in the days of Sulla, the *pastophori* of Isis.⁴⁶ The imperial worship itself was naturally one of the prime religious expressions of the cosmopolitanism of the world capital, and in this period was made apparent in new ceremonies of ever-increasing importance, such as the Decennalia, and – inescapably – in architecture like that of the Hadrianic Pantheon.⁴⁷

The dynasties of the imperial period showed a pronounced escalation in the grandiloquence of their commemorative statements at Rome. The temples of the imperial cult proliferated under the Flavians, to equip the new order through religious awe with the prestige that history had denied it: Vespasian's temple amid the treasuries and record-offices of the Roman people at the foot of the Capitoline (the cult of Titus was rapidly added), the twin shrines of Vespasian and Titus in the Porticus Divorum on the Campus, the Temple of the Gens Flavia itself sanctifying the family home on the suitably Sabine Quirinal hill.⁴⁸ It was incumbent on the Flavians' successors to outshine this: hence the process by which the Forum of Trajan

⁴⁴ Torre Nova *ibiasos*, Vogliano (1933). ⁴⁵ Rousselle (1992). ⁴⁶ Apul. *Met.* 11.26, cf. 30.

⁴⁷ Boatwright, *Hadrian* 43–51; De Fine Licht (1968).

⁴⁸ Link between Flavius Sabinus' house and the Templum Gentis Flaviae, Coarelli (1984) 146–55; similar celebration of Trajan's house from his pre-imperial days, Coarelli (1984) 156–65; imperial cult in the Forum Romanum, Purcell (1995a).

and Basilica Ulpia, whose impact on visitors we have observed, which had been dedicated with pomp as the monument of the Dacian Wars on 1 January 112, became also the personal epitaph of the divine Trajan, through the addition of the unprecedented and spectacular Column and the great Temple behind it.⁴⁹ Trajan's Parthian triumph was celebrated posthumously and in his honour the seats in the theatre were made to flow with balsam and saffron.⁵⁰ When the Temple was dedicated in 126, 1,835 pairs of gladiators fought in the Circus.⁵¹ The Flavians had not attempted to replace the venerable Mausoleum of Augustus, but Hadrian was not ashamed to build his own mausoleum in a style and in a location which emphasized continuity and improvement from the days of the foundation of the empire. Meanwhile, alongside the monuments of the Campus, further and ever larger cult-places enshrined the new pseudo-dynasty in the architectural landscape: the rebuilding of the Pantheon in its present form, and the Hadrianeum itself, the Column of Antoninus Pius and the imitation of Trajan's Column which commemorated Marcus Aurelius.⁵² Within the ancient city, Antoninus and Faustina received a temple analogous to that of Vespasian but much larger, at the other end of the Forum; while Elagabalus was to follow the precedent of Claudius in establishing a great hill-top *porticus* as the setting for his own worship.

The imperial womenfolk were the cement in the dynasty, and acquired a new role in public commemorations. It was largely they who made possible the claim to continuity, as stated in Severus' commemoration of Nerva's accession, for instance.⁵³ Weddings, such as that of Antoninus and Plautilla in 202, now became grand ceremonial occasions.⁵⁴ The process is clearly to be attributed to Trajan: all the honours of Plotina, Marciana, Matidia and Sabina were immensely visible in the urban landscape. *Diva* Plotina was included with Trajan in the great temple behind the Basilica Ulpia. The Regionary Catalogues know of Basilicas of Marciana and Matidia, and a Temple of Matidia is attested; the last clearly post-dates 119, but the Basilicas could be a Trajanic work even of the years before 112. Marciana received a *funus censorium*, an important fragment of Hadrian's *laudatio* of Matidia survives (from a copy set up at Tibur), and we hear that he distributed perfumes to the *plebs* on the occasion.⁵⁵ The public prominence of the Severan imperial ladies was clearly foreshadowed in the Antonine age.

At the same time, some at least of the rituals of the ancient cults were

⁴⁹ *HA Hadr.* 19.10 for the Temple; for the ascription of the Column to Hadrian, Claridge (1993). Packer (1996). ⁵⁰ *HA Hadr.* 19.5.

⁵¹ *Fasti Ostienses*: this occasion is clearly a grander event than a restoration of the porticus Divorum in the Campus, to which the notice is often referred.

⁵² On the Pantheon, De Fine Licht (1968); Boatwright, *Hadrian* and Kienast (1980) for Hadrian's building activity in general; for Antoninus' column, Hannah (1989). ⁵³ Birley (1971) 92.

⁵⁴ Dio LXXV.14.5; LXXVI.12, Herodian III.10.7, *HA Sev.* 14.8.

⁵⁵ *HA Hadr.* 19.5; *laudatio*, Smallwood, *NTH* no. 114.

maintained with some punctilio, as might be expected in an age when religious antiquities were celebrated by connoisseurs with the discrimination of the age of Varro and the passion of that of Macrobius. The *Fasti Ostienses*, that crucial text, a monument to traditional thinking itself, in which the city-fathers of Ostia set on elaborate public display the annals of their impression of Roman history, reveal the quinquennial celebration, still in the right years after more than 300 years in the mid-second century, of the *ieiunium Cereris* and the *ludi Tauri*. The *Ludi Saeculares* of Domitian and Severus made a still more emphatic point.⁵⁶ Here too, though, it is hard not to notice the Hellenism of the particular ancient rites that are attested: the connection between Demeter and Ceres; the Apolline nature of the *ludi Tauri*; the Greek formulae and deities of the saecular commemoration.⁵⁷ Not the least characteristic of the ways in which Christianity reflected its metropolitan matrix was its increasing tendency in the second and third centuries to bid for a share in the cultural pre-eminence which distinguished the Antonine capital.⁵⁸

The ancientness of Rome was also specifically celebrated when Hadrian reformed the Parilia, Birthday of the City, in honour of the Fortune of Rome. The festival now commemorated his great new Temple of Venus and Rome, dedicated in A.D. 121, and was celebrated with particular inclusiveness by – significantly – the resident population and those who happened to be in Rome. But he then left Rome on a great journey, and the cult actually showed how changed Rome's role in the world was. The temple was, it seems, built by a team of architects experienced in the monumental boom which was transforming the cities of the eastern provinces. Not for nothing was the Shepherd-goddess' old rite now known by a Greek name, the *Rbomaia*.⁵⁹ Meanwhile, the fact that Rome was worshipped at Rome too, from Hadrian's temple on the Velia, could not but emphasize the fact that the idea of Roman power was becoming abstracted and detachable from the place Rome.

The vigour and variety of the religious life of Rome was the result of the collection of a populace from a catchment area as wide as that of the other materials that were on view in the capital. The impact of the plague was understood as being particularly great 'because the city was naturally over-peopled and a recipient of folk from everywhere': that the inhabitants could survive there normally was the result of that highly specialized ideol-

⁵⁶ *Ludi Saeculares*: La Rocca (1984).

⁵⁷ Le Bonniec (1958) 379–455, with 446–51 on the *ieiunium*; Coarelli (1993).

⁵⁸ For Hippolytus as an exemplar of this process, see p. 442 below.

⁵⁹ Ath. viii.361e–362a; Boatwright, *Hadrian* 121. This was the model for Pertinax' elaborate plans for the Parilia. Architects: Nollé (1995) 'this tomb holds Pericles [of Mylasa] whom once queenly Rome housed, and the height of craft, out of tens of thousands of men number five on the team which completed the Temple . . . ?'.

ogy of benefaction for which the imperial city is famous.⁶⁰ Indeed, Rome acted as a model of the support-benefactions which formed such an important element of the civic euergetism of the Antonine empire. But the world's capital did not enjoy only distributions of necessities. The perks available in Rome were a very visible sign of the city's past and present power, and both the emperors and the populace were extremely conscious of the ideology of the *commoda*: 'the 35 tribes dedicated this to Trajan because by the generosity of the best of *principes* their *commoda* were further improved by an increase in the number of circus-places available'.⁶¹ The pleasures of the city were among its most symbolic perquisites.

The Circus Maximus indeed now reached its greatest architectural complexity, thanks to this work by Trajan.⁶² The huge amounts of money spent on the *spectacula* and their architecture were intended to foster the cultural pre-eminence of Rome in the mobile Antonine world. The 'hunting-theatre' of Vespasian and Titus, the amphitheatre later called 'Colosseum', inaugurated in A.D. 80 on the site of Nero's pleasure-gardens with their inversions of the order of nature, was also intended to make the display of the collection of natural *thaumata* more spectacular, restating Rome's place in the order of things.⁶³ Trajan's rebuilding of the Circus Maximus inserted Rome firmly at the head of a hierarchy of cultural display which was becoming increasingly symbolic of the empire itself; movement to participate or to compete in these games expressed membership of the culturally defined Roman world. The worthiness of the Roman people over all was expressed: Dio thought the new Circus 'suitable for the Roman people'.⁶⁴ But many of the festivals belonged in a much wider, and largely Hellenic cultural context: Domitian's *agon Capitolinus*, for which he built the Circus Agonalis and Odeon, and the later festivals such as the *Commodia*. Rome might have unrivalled bath-complexes, again especially after the vast project of Trajan which buried the last vestiges of Nero's *Domus Aurea*, but the fact remained that they were essentially great *gymnasion*-complexes like those of the cities of the East.⁶⁵ The claim is more than Roman: the advertisement for a suburban bath-house offers 'washing in the style of the City and the provision of every human comfort'.⁶⁶

The Circus, dominated by the southern frontage of the Flavian palace and in close conceptual and architectural relationship with it, formed the principal location for the informal politics of the relationship between emperor and people in this period: it was 'the place where above all the

⁶⁰ Plague, Herodian I.12.1. For the origins, nature and consequences of the ideology of the *commoda*, see Purcell (1994) and (1996a). ⁶¹ *ILS* 286 = Smallwood, *NTH* no. 374a.

⁶² Humphrey, *Circuses* 102–16. ⁶³ Dio LXVI.25.1; cf. Rea (1993).

⁶⁴ Dio LXVIII.6.2; Ciancio Rossetto (1993). ⁶⁵ De Fine Licht (1974).

⁶⁶ *CIL* XIV 4015 (Ficulea), *In his praediis Aureliae Faustianae balineus lavat more urbico et omnis humanitas praestatur*.

masses come together to behave as an assembly'.⁶⁷ Under Septimius Severus lively expressions of popular opinion involved the display of placards and the virtual occupation of the building.⁶⁸ At gladiatorial games, too, the crowds were frequently extremely importunate, and imperial authority precarious.⁶⁹ The emperors' care and subtlety in dealing with this political situation are very striking.⁷⁰ To some extent there was a mutual benefit arrangement: we have noticed the way in which the populousness of Rome itself was one of its wonders, and the praise and enthusiasm of so many people, especially on crucial occasions like the *adventus*, was a tangible asset. But to portray the city populace as a childish and frivolous, fickle and merely petulant political force is to miss the hard realities of life, which generated serious political responses: even ancient writers allow that the *plebs* itself had a real sense of pride in its numbers and power.⁷¹

The informal relationship between the emperor and the people was essential for the maintenance of stability; it was omnipresent, through the activities of the routines of city-life, and through the whole fabric of the city.⁷² The image of the emperor and his family was inescapable. Informal settings which archaeology does not preserve are incidentally but eloquently evoked when Fronto says to Marcus:

you know how in all the money-changers' stalls and counters, at every counter, in every shack, shop, porch, hallway and window, at every turn and everywhere portraits of you are publicly on view – they are badly painted, and most composed or carved in a coarse or even crude style, but however poor the likeness, when your image comes to my attention as I am walking, it never fails to make me smile and wistfully think of you.⁷³

But not even this saturation coverage of the imperial image could counteract the increasing tendency of the emperor to be absent; the violence of the city increased, and so did the power of the deputies who represented the imperial authority in the city. The prefects of the praetorians and of the city, and to a lesser extent of the *vigiles*, derived considerable power – it became usual for *praefecti urbi* to hold second consulships – from this indispensable role in dealing with the *plebs*; but they did not always survive the challenges of the office and the fame that it brought them.⁷⁴ Certain

⁶⁷ Herodian II.2.7.3; cf. Whittaker (1964). For the relationship, Millar, *Emperor* 133–9; Veyne, *Pain et cirque*; Cameron (1976).

⁶⁸ Dio LXIX.16.3 popular demand for freedom for a charioteer and Hadrian's reply by way of *pinakion*.

⁶⁹ Dio 6.1–2, Hadrian's authority respected after his request for silence.

⁷⁰ On the use of the traditional plebeian messages of the Forum, and the linkage of the themes of imperial *largitio* and the public interactions of the emperor and *plebs* as shown on the Anaglypha Traiani, Torelli (1982) 89–118. ⁷¹ Pride of the *plebs*: Herodian VII.12.3.

⁷² Acme of Rome's sacred centrality under the Severi: Desnier (1993); Coarelli (1987).

⁷³ *Ad Marc.* 4.12 (= Naber 72, Loeb I 206). For imperial images, see now Gregory (1994).

⁷⁴ Unpopularity of Maximus because of his oppressive policies, as urban prefect, Herodian VII.10.6. On the *praefecti urbi*, Vidman (1982), Vitucci (1956).

episodes, like the removal of Vitalianus and the fall of Commodus' praetorian prefect Cleander, were as violent as any disturbances of the Roman urban population ever recorded. The agitator with the stork (above, p. 413) was inciting the populace of the capital with his millenarian preaching to a destruction like those which the generation of Catiline or Clodius had dreamed of. The golden age of the Antonines was not golden for all: and the glimpses in the writings of Justin Martyr of the arbitrary power wielded in the age of Antoninus Pius itself by city prefects like Lollius Urbicus or Iunius Rusticus provide the sort of view from beneath, from the population of ex-slaves of distant origins, which we usually lack.⁷⁵

Ancient commentators blamed the ethnic mix itself for the intensity of urban violence.⁷⁶ Certainly there is no difficulty in attributing many problems to the mobility and rootlessness of the metropolis, intensified by the risks of city life (the years of the plague's worst impact on Rome and Italy, 166–7, were marked by singular turmoil).⁷⁷ We should also recall the structural tension that resulted from the facts of the urban property market. A legal source reminds us: 'On the estates of many men of upright character space is let for the operation of brothels', and the city that Soranus perceived as a city of taverns and Aristides as a city of *ergasteria* was one in which exploitation of all residents by the urban proprietor or landlord was the most basic fact of life.⁷⁸ The alleviation of debt continued to be a major preoccupation of the emperors. The city population continued to depend on cash for rents, for food beyond what the *annona* could provide and to pay for entertainment. A huge multiplicity of employments provided this, of which the most important throughout this period remained the building industry itself.⁷⁹ At the same time, the actual violence of the city was fed by the symbolic violence of the conflicts staged on a large or small scale as 'entertainment'. Violence in the tavern started with the discussion of circus and amphitheatre competitions and their extension and emulation in gambling and gaming. The violence of A.D. 238 involved both gladiators and the disastrous opening of the depositories of weapons intended for triumphal displays.⁸⁰

Rome was therefore thoroughly typical of the age in the uneasiness of its identity. Capital of a conquering race, it was indebted to and in danger of being upstaged by the lands it ruled; the display of their subjection

⁷⁵ Justin, *II Apol.* 2; *Acta S. Iustini et all.*, 1–5. Yavetz (1988) rather cautiously assesses the apparent contrast between the troubled Julio-Claudian period and the stability of the urban populace under the Flavians. It should be noted that a contrast between the riots at the death of Pedanius Secundus in A.D. 61 (*Ann.* XIV.42) and the quiet at the similar death of Afranius Dexter, A.D. 105 (*Ep.* VIII.14.12–26) is exactly what Tacitus and Pliny wanted to project.

⁷⁶ Herodian VII.6.4; Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 147–51.

⁷⁷ For living conditions, Packer (1967); Scobie (1987). ⁷⁸ Ulpian, *Dig.* VI.3.27.1. Cf. Frier (1980).

⁷⁹ The *fabri tignarii*, the builders, were far and away the largest *collegium*: Royden (1988); Pearse (1976–7). Employments in general: Joshel (1992).

⁸⁰ Herodian VII.11.6–7; Townsend (1955). For gaming, Purcell (1995b), Toner (1995).

gathered people and things there in a way which made the heart of a peaceful empire one of its most volatile and violent places. These paradoxes applied to Italy too.

‘Quam inops Italia, quam inbellis urbanae plebes!’ exclaims a rebel against Roman power in Tacitus.⁸¹ But in fact the ideology of a military state never disappeared. The manpower of Italy, fostered through the generosity of emperor and élite, was the symbolic guarantee of Rome’s power as much as it had ever been, and this was the reason for the introduction of schemes such as the *alimenta*, to which we shall return. Fundamental structures of life, such as the rhythms of departure for war and triumphal return, or the pattern of recruitment, service and settlement, continued. They changed from the Republic in accordance with the ever more exalted status of Italy, but they remained. And since the cycle of recruitment and discharge provided one of the key patterns in the social history of Italy and the inner provinces in the late Republic and early empire, its survival and the changes that it did undergo form a subject of considerable importance.

The towns of Italy ceased to provide large numbers of recruits for the regular legionary army during the Julio-Claudian period.⁸² Later, specialized cohorts of Roman citizens were raised for service in the provinces. In the Severan period the Second Parthian legion stationed at the Alban villa on the Appian Way outside Rome offered further opportunities.⁸³ But citizen recruitment continued throughout. A recently discovered inscription shows us a senator responsible for a tract of Italy defined by a major road carrying out the *dilectus* there.⁸⁴ But the bare fact is liable to misinterpretation. Recruitment was in practice a carefully calibrated indicator of hierarchy. The youth of Italy – and the inscriptions show eighteen to twenty as the typical age – was expected to serve as a sign of favour in the garrison of Rome, thereby expressing the high status of each and the mutual interdependence of Rome and Italy.⁸⁵ Service in the *vigiles* was available to freedmen: the free began in the urban cohorts and if all went well might be transferred to the praetorian cohorts: ‘death obstructed him in the year when he would have made the transition to the *praetorium* and laid down his beard’, says the epitaph of a soldier of the urban cohorts from Saepinum, who died at 23 years 8 months.⁸⁶ By the Severan period some 7,000 people served in the *vigiles*, 4,500 in the urban cohorts and 9,000 in

⁸¹ *Ann.* III.43.

⁸² Mann, *Recruitment* 49–68; Forni, *Reclutamento*. On the *dilectus* in Italy, Simshäuser (1980) 418 n. 87.

⁸³ Speidel (1976).

⁸⁴ Herodian VI.3.1 cf. *ILS* 1173; *AE* 1986 no. 686. Note ‘curator viae Valeriae Tiburtinae qui et per eundem tractum dilectum egit’, cf. *ILS* 8828, *EE* VIII 158a. He was *cos.* 146. A good survey of the evidence in Brunt (1990) 193–9; Millar (1986) 308–9.

⁸⁵ *EE* V 250, discussing origins from 200-odd towns; Durry, *Cohortes* ch. 8; Passerini *Le coorti pretorie*. It is worth noting that we know about this process because it was an eloquent phenomenon worth recording.

⁸⁶ *AE* 1927 no. 120.

the praetorian guard, so this service was overall a not inconsiderable social phenomenon round Rome, which itself provided many recruits, especially with Ostia, Puteoli and Capua. Some favoured provincials served too, especially from the *coloniae*.⁸⁷ Patronage was – of course – the secret. A text preserved as a translation exercise gives us a petitioner's dialogue with Hadrian:

when someone petitioned for military service, Hadrian said, 'Where do you wish to be a soldier?' 'In the *praetorium*.' So Hadrian asked him, 'What is your height?' and on his reply, 'Five-and-a-half feet', said, 'For now, serve in the urban garrison, and if you are a good soldier, you can cross to the *praetorium* in your third year of service.'⁸⁸

Back in their home towns, these men had wide opportunities: one case of which we know in some detail is the *vigilis* who was discharged in A.D. 134 and returned to Beneventum – no minor backwoods town – where he served as a town councillor until his death in A.D. 146.⁸⁹ When the praetorian cohorts were abolished, the youth of Italy joined the other side and took to banditry.⁹⁰

The Antonine age is famously regarded as an age of peace, especially in the heartland of the empire, and by contrast with the military age that followed. This picture is misleading. Criminal violence, on a scale not easily compatible with boasts about the *pax Romana*, remained, in country as in town; travellers might disappear on journeys from Rome, and our period ends with the countryside of Italy at the mercy of the notorious brigand Bulla Felix.⁹¹ The violence of life in the Italian countryside at any period should not be underestimated. Even in the centre, where the horrors of war were theoretically as distant as possible, emperor and people played at war.⁹² The *spectacula* alluded to war; even the games of the tavern were a simulacrum of conflict. The theory of the *commoda* itself rested on the understanding of the might that had made Rome the capital of the world; the culture of centrality explicitly depended on the right of conquest.

Italy also offered a privileged billet for favoured soldiers from the provinces. The legions, still theoretically from Italy, but in practice increasingly recruited from the citizens of the provinces, provided settlers in parts of Italy that could be thought underpopulated – Antium and Tarentum – in the reign of Nero.⁹³ The fleet, whose lower status made it officially

⁸⁷ Bohn (1884); Pagnoni (1942); for numbers see Robinson (1992) 181–8.

⁸⁸ [Dositheus] *Hermeneumata Leidensia, Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum* III p. 31 (Goetz).

⁸⁹ *CIL* x 1617. ⁹⁰ Dio LXXV.2.4–6.

⁹¹ On brigandage, see Shaw (1984). Bulla Felix: Dio LXXVII.10.1–2. Dangers of travelling by road, Pliny, *Ep.* vi.25. 'Police' action against bandits, *ILS* 509.

⁹² Commodus and the gladiators, with Herodian 1, Le Roux (1990), Wiedemann, *Emperors and Gladiators*: for the Republic, Val. Max. II.3.2. ⁹³ Tac. *Ann.* XIV.27.

accessible to outsiders, as if it were an auxiliary regiment, brought many provincial recruits, particularly from the Danube lands, to swell the population of Italy and Rome.⁹⁴ They were settled in coastal tracts, especially at Paestum.

Later, the élite cavalry force of the Severan emperors, the *equites singulares*, fulfilled the same function. Two recently published inscriptions vividly illustrate some of the possible movements. By a rather unusual coincidence, they both concern the same cavalryman, Titus Aurelius Sancinus, who laments the death of his beloved boy-slave ‘most compliant and most loyal’, who had died at eighteen, and commends him to his fellow-cavalryman Flavus who has predeceased them: Miles had been the *delicium* of Flavus too. Miles was a Marsacan, a member of a small tribe in the Rhine delta. Sancinus later put up a joint memorial to Miles and his successor in his affections, who came from the northern shores of the Black Sea, in the Catacomb of SS Peter and Marcellinus, at the Third Milestone (a designated burial ground for the *equites singulares*), commemorating their wanderings in a short poem about their lying as if they were brothers under one slab of travertine – the distinctive stone of the land of their adoption and demise.⁹⁵

To accommodate people like this special statuses were created, institutions which mirrored the special enclaves in which they lived – a great camp on the Caelian in Rome – and were buried – the cemetery at the Third Milestone.⁹⁶ The settlement and incorporation of the recruits to the imperial army of the second century no longer involved the creation of new cities, of which there were plenty in the Italian landscape. Instead, they followed the precedent of the praetorians in the age of Seianus, and insinuated themselves into the suburban texture of the environs of Rome. In the same way the Second Parthian legion was billeted in a fortress on the Appian Way alongside the Alban villa of the emperors, on a site that eventually became the town of Albano.

The significance of all this is to show that the people of Italy were kept aware of the precariousness of their peace and the absence of the military features of life everywhere else in the empire. The demonstrations of the archetypally non-military population of the city, and the unpopularity of the continuing recruitment and the military and pseudo-military antics of the emperors reflect the sense of the privilege and its fragility. When the deluge came, the same sentiments are visible in what has been called the revolt of the civilians.⁹⁷ The phenomena that are usually seen as an empire-wide militarization in the third century owe some of their high relief to the

⁹⁴ Starr, *Imperial Navy* 95; Keppie (1984) 98; Sirago (1983–4).

⁹⁵ *AE* 1989 no. 30, cf. 91, with Speidel and Panciera (1989).

⁹⁶ Keppie (1984). Forni, *Reclutamento*, the pseudo-tribe Fabia.

⁹⁷ Mullens (1948).

contrast with the artificial experience of Italy, and most to their description by those who were keenest to retain that state that had never perhaps existed to the extent that their ideal, designed as a foil to the new reality, suggested.

III. THE CITIES OF ITALY: AN IMPERIAL ANOMALY

Until the early first century B.C. Italy had been a collectivity of states of different cultures, settlement-patterns and social organizations, united only in being bound to Rome by *foedera* of many different kinds. No longer Oscan or Etruscan speakers, but the descendants of triumviral veterans or Augustan slaves, the Italians of the imperial period were (except for a few families of high lineage whose genealogical enthusiasm was encouraged by the wealth and more than local power that the generations had bestowed upon them)⁹⁸ tenacious of the cults and memories of the distant past only out of learned sentiment. This sentiment was a literary product, constructed at Rome to provide the Romans with that romantic homeland that we have already encountered in the tradition of praise for Italy's natural blessings. It survived in the élite culture of the Antonine and Severan period, and indeed bore fruit in some of the institutions which we shall have to consider in this section.

Imperial Italy was quite deliberately made a paradigm, an exemplar of urbanization, its 450 or so cities conforming through the mutual imitation of their benefactors; and, as the newly invented Virgilian homeland of Romans everywhere, a blueprint of how the citizen diaspora might work in relation to the reformed institutions of the centre.⁹⁹ In an imperial world of Roman cities, the sum of the *coloniae* and *municipia* wherever they might be found, Italy was the core and the type: truly representative also in that the populations of the towns were more than ever before inhabitants of the world-state. During the first century, the development of the organs and practices of provincial government, and the inexorable spread of the citizenship, combined to make this new model Italy obsolete. It was no longer the symbolic heartland of a world of Roman cities: the phenomenon of urbanization, from Britain to Arabia, had made the collectivity of *coloniae* and *municipia* irrelevant; there were far more *cives Romani* outside Italy than within.¹⁰⁰ The ideological value of Italy as Roman homeland, by contrast, remained, and the privileges that went with it continued to exist throughout this period.¹⁰¹ It is through this continuing phenomenon that the economic and social history of Italy must be interpreted.

⁹⁸ The best known case is the *Elogia Tarquiniensia*: Torelli (1975).

⁹⁹ See Crawford (1996), Nicolet (1988) 201–23 and, in general, Dyson (1992).

¹⁰⁰ For numbers, see now Lo Cascio (1994).

¹⁰¹ On *ius Italicum*, Simshäuser (1980) 404–5; Gabba (1978).

In this period, the cities of Italy have left copious epigraphic evidence. But it apparently attests a continuing institutional stability: only the rise and fall of administrative expedients appear to pose questions for the historian. In the creation of new types of official, some have seen the evolution of governmental structures which betoken the decay of Italy's special status and its homogenization with the provincial empire – and which may therefore be used to help explain other forms of decay which may be visible in the record.

The 'curators of the state', *curatores rei publicae*, of both equestrian and senatorial rank, are known from about 160 towns. The inscriptions make clear their striking interventions in local government, especially in areas connected with finance.¹⁰² Our earliest dated Italian example is one of the most interesting (and that is surely no coincidence – the city council which paid for the inscription thought it wise to err on the side of fullness of recording while the sensitive situation was still a novelty). It is worth quoting at length:

Vesbinus the freedman of the emperor made a gift of a club-house for the *Augustales* of the town of Caere, decorated at his own expense entirely but on land given by the town council. The event is witnessed and attested in the porch of the Temple of Mars from the minutes which Cuperius Hostilianus ordered to be published through the agency of T. Rustius Lysipo the scribe: there is to be found the original version of the following document. On 13 April in the consulship of L. Publilius Celsus for the second time and C. Clodius Crispinus, when M. Pontius Celsus was *dictator* at Caere, and C. Suetonius Claudianus aedile with judicial powers and prefect of the town treasury; daily minutes page 27, chapter 6. M. Pontius Celsus the *dictator* and C. Suetonius Claudianus convened the town council in the temple of the Deified Emperors. Vesbinus the freedman of the emperor made an application for a grant of land against the colonnade of the Sulpician Basilica, at the public expense . . . The lot was granted to the applicant by permission of the councillors, and it was decided *nem. con.* to write to Curiatius Cosanus the *curator* on the subject . . .

(they write, pointing out that the project is worthy of the standing of the town and that the place in question does not bring in any revenue to the town council)

The same minute-book, page 8, chapter 1. Curiatius Cosanus greets the magistrates and town councillors of the people of Caere. It is my duty not just to show my agreement with you but to congratulate you when someone gives a fine benefaction to our community. I accept your decision, therefore, not in my capacity as *curator*, but as one of your number, since it is right to encourage further instances of this kind by means of conspicuous rewards.¹⁰³

¹⁰² Eck, *Organisation* 190–246 is the standard account, cf. Camodeca (1980); Burton (1979) for the general context, and remarks on the methodology of assessing the degree of intrusion on local autonomy; also Duthoy (1979); Jacques (1983). ¹⁰³ *ILS* 5918a = Smallwood, *NTH* no. 475.

The emperor's *curator* (an imperial freedman) makes a great display of civility to this ancient town of the outer Roman *suburbium*; indeed the courteous mutual recognition of status takes up most of the letters. The Caeretans can have their building if they will thereby suffer no financial loss. Is this then the real point? Is this an intervention by the central authorities to attempt to slow the effects of widespread financial crisis? Or is the financial punctilio a thin excuse for the serious business, which is the restraint of the centrifugal fissiparous forces of municipal ambition, through their subjection to the authority system that emanated from the capital?

A very few years after the inscribing of the Caere dossier, Hadrian took the dramatic step of appointing four *legati Augusti pro praetore* to govern Italy.¹⁰⁴ Strong hostility to the move is to be seen in the fact that Pius abolished them – and was hailed as *restitutor Italiae*. Reintroducing the idea, Marcus took care to label them less offensively as *iridici*. The third century was less scrupulous. Under Caracalla, C. Octavius Ap. Suetrius Sabinus is described as ‘electus ad corrigendum statum Italiae’; Pomponius Bassus as ‘curator totius Italiae’, c. 268–9.¹⁰⁵ The *iridici* took on a variety of roles, including intervention in the food-supply of cities in times of exceptional need.¹⁰⁶ There were more jobs to be done in Antonine Italy: the *alimenta* are another *cause célèbre*. But the changes in the government and the personnel of government, which steadily eroded the institutional differences between Italy and the provinces, were concerned with power politics in the senatorial and equestrian circles much more than with practical administrative goals.

For Pliny the Younger the important thing about the appointment of Cornutus Tertullus as curator of the great highway of northern Italy, the Via Aemilia, was the reward of *virtus* in the senatorial advancement of an old friend and ally.¹⁰⁷ It seems to have been thought appropriate by the Hadrianic period to employ, as administrators of particular districts of Italy, senators who had property in that area.¹⁰⁸ The functioning of the *alimenta* presupposes a similar philosophy of local duty, and the alimentary tables, especially that of Ligures Baebiani, show the layout of the local ties of families such as the Neratii of Saepinum.¹⁰⁹ The enactment that senators should hold a third of their property in Italy is likely to be related: it is also a powerful reminder of the imperative of mobility by which the emperors imposed unity on the empire through playing up the role of Italy

¹⁰⁴ Following the very important analysis of Eck (1991). *HA Hadr.* 22, 13; App. *BCiv.* 1.38.172 ascribes a historical perspective to Hadrian and a short life to the institution in its first incarnation, in which Pius served ‘in the part of Italy in which he had most property’, *HA M. Ant.* 2, 11. Marcus restored the practice, *HA Mar.* 11.6. ¹⁰⁵ *ANRW* II 13.435; Eck (1979) 266 n. 98.

¹⁰⁶ *ILS* 1118 a good instance; see Eck, *Organisation* 247–66, against Corbier (1973); Simshäuser (1973); (1980) 426–33. ¹⁰⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* v.14. ¹⁰⁸ *HA M. Ant.* 4, cf. Eck, *Organisation*.

¹⁰⁹ Senators as mortgagors under the alimentary schemes of which we know: Patterson (1987); Woolf (1990); Champlin (1981); Smallwood, *NTH* no. 227 = *ILS* 1034, cf. 1033, and *AE* 1990 no. 217.

as temporary abode and pole of attraction for all the movements of people and things in the Roman world.¹¹⁰

Commenting on the absence of history in imperial Italy, Fergus Millar identified ‘fundamental puzzles’: namely ‘can it really be true that there was no significant exchange of economic and human resources between Italy and the empire of which it was a part? And if the state did not exercise power and physical force there, who did?’¹¹¹ The competence of the new posts was indeed no doubt usually circumscribed, and their holders corrupt or inefficient. If with Millar we judge provincial administration harshly, we shall not think its extension to Italy significant.¹¹² But the purpose of making these institutional changes may not have been ‘administration’ in the modern sense, and from other perspectives they may have been more momentous. The appointees to Roman governmental posts may be fulfilling more telling roles than their relatively limited job-descriptions and the sorry tale of impotence, incompetence, ignorance and greed in the performance might suggest.

The deployment of office was one of the only instruments which the emperors could use in their political relationship with powerful aristocracies, and – as is plain in the cities of the East in the second century – that political relationship was a serious preoccupation for the imperial government. In his account of some new *officia* created by Augustus, Suetonius stated that the purpose was to give more people a share in the affairs of state. The biographer of Marcus Aurelius claimed that his appointment of *curatores* to various communities was *quo latius senatorias tenderet dignitates*.¹¹³ ‘To give a more extensive sphere of operation to the prestigious positions occupied by senators’ gives some idea of how this should be translated; like Augustus, Marcus seems to be concerned with the contours of the status system rather than the demands of utility.

Take the case of C. Marius Eventius, *clarissimus vir*, who from his early years pleaded the case of Ravenna and neighbouring cities devotedly. Appointed *curator rei publicae* by the emperor, he was a major benefactor of *ordo*, *possessores* and *cives*. The town of Fanum Fortunae made a dedication to him to incite others to follow his example.¹¹⁴ This very normal commemoration shows nicely how such functionaries were expected to fulfil, on behalf of the authorities of the centre, the same role of receiver of petitions and maker of benefactions. If the civic order were to be maintained, in Italy as elsewhere, patronage needed to be regulated. Alongside members of local dynasties, many patrons and benefactors were now drawn from among the new ‘administrators’, and this is likely to have been a pattern predicted and desired by the emperor and his advisers. In this age,

¹¹⁰ See Pliny *Ep.* vi.19; *HA Marc.* 2.8, revival by Pius; cf. Carlsen (1988). Champlin (1982) observes that much of the land held to obey this regulation will have been within easy reach of the city of Rome.

¹¹¹ Millar (1986) 318. ¹¹² Millar (1986) 316. ¹¹³ *HA Marc.* 11.2. ¹¹⁴ *CIL* xi 15.

when the centrality of the emperor's patronal role was more and more apparent as the principal focus of government, it was natural for imitations of the networks of petition and response which centred on the emperor to form around lesser luminaries on the imperial model, and this is the key to the administrative ideology of the Trajanic period as we see it, for instance, in the letters of the younger Pliny.

The tripartite summary of the beneficiaries of Marius Eventius' curatorship is revealing: *ordo*, *possessores* and *cives* were all part of the necessary purview of those whose job was maintaining the authority of the centre. Local autonomy was not a problem: the Romans long retained their tendency not to multiply executive agencies beyond necessity. The emperors encouraged the cities; the *curatores* helped maintain their financial solvency, based on the cities' own extensive holdings of land (amply attested in the alimentary tables). Direct imperial fiat regulated the ownership of the debatable land around the fringes of the centuriated landscapes (*subseciva*) which were so normal in Italian territories. Certain networks of cities, in federal organizations, or along major routes whose maintenance was important to wider concerns of communications, received concerted favour, as with the towns of the Appian Way corridor under Domitian, Trajan and Hadrian. The technique of encouraging due institutional pride within a framework legitimated by the imperial ideology of the centre went back to Augustus (one need only consider the Augustales). A very helpful new interpretation of this institution sees it as a deliberate equipping of the towns with a *secundus ordo*, composed of non-*ingenui*: *faute de mieux*, but also, we may add, to offer some sort of alternative with local power structures to the unbridled authority of *possessores*.¹¹⁵ Their institution, the *ordo*, which was, in the end, to become legally hereditary, needed little encouragement.¹¹⁶ The strength of a locally focused landed class, almost a squirearchy, can be seen clearly in a mosaic-pavement inscription of decidedly local and rustic character from Sele valley, inland from Salernum: 'T. Fundanius Optatus, senator of the Roman people and the proprietor of the district (*regionis possessor*), to Lord Hercules. The Aufeian District rebuilt the temple: good luck to you too!'¹¹⁷

Less remote, Aeclanum on the Via Appia provides some further characteristic glimpses of the life of this milieu. Ti. Claudius Maximus had been *quaestor* and *duumvir quinquennalis* by the time he was twenty, when he died in the middle of a gladiatorial display for which Antoninus Pius had given personal permission. His mother paved three miles of the road to

¹¹⁵ On the Augustales, Ostrow (1985), Duthoy (1974) and (1978), Garnsey (1975), Abramenko (1993) and, for the sumptuous sanctuary recently published from Misenum, De Franciscis (1991). For economic interests, D'Arms, *Commerce*.

¹¹⁶ On the process, not yet accomplished by the time of the album of Canusium (A.D. 223), Garnsey (1974). ¹¹⁷ Frascetti (1982).

Herdoniae in his memory.¹¹⁸ Another local magnate here with senatorial connections wrote Menandrian verse and had an appropriate tomb.¹¹⁹ In this area the vital artery, the Via Appia, reminded people constantly of the affairs of the centre. Another road-building scheme started with statues of the emperors; an inscription on a new bridge commemorated a Severan *profectio* from Beneventum.¹²⁰

The cities of Italy in the Augustan period had functioned as channels of horizontal and vertical social mobility. We have seen that they were able to continue a form of that behaviour. But after the Flavian period the recruitment of *novi homines* from the equestrian and municipal élites seems to have declined. However, members of families that had been promoted in this way continued to maintain their connections with the city in which they had originated or with those in which they had extensive estates. The dynamic process by which one town after another benefited by the sudden rocketing to exalted rank of a favoured son, a Varius Geminus or a Helvidius Priscus, was replaced by the more stable continuance of local interests by increasingly intermarried senatorial, equestrian and decurional families who came despite their activities elsewhere to have something of the character of a local landed aristocracy. Take the network of relations exhibited by Dolabella Metilianus of Corfinium, for instance.¹²¹ If this network resembled a 'squirearchy' in some ways, a 'feudal' isolation was not one of them. These people had wide horizons.

In the end, the senatorial milieu became an Italian aristocracy, apt to be at odds with the *princeps* not just over the ancient issues of its constitutional prerogatives, but as a representative of a social grouping to which he was an outsider. It might be unusual to be able to list five generations of citizen paternity in your nomenclature – certainly to do so on inscriptions becomes a more popular, presumably because more unusual and resplendent, form of self-advertisement – but that did not affect the complexity and economic power of the family nexus which could on occasions produce aspirants to the imperial power itself. The political stance of the Gordians or of Pupienus and Balbinus would not have been possible while the emperors were still from an Italian élite or prepared to accept the superiority of one.¹²² There is more history, and more conflict, in imperial Italy in the age of the Antonines than appears at first sight.

The vigour of aristocratic culture in Italy was also strengthened by the monopolizing of the city of Rome as a field for euergetism by the emperors, and the continued practice of recruitment of senators from the élites of the Italian towns. In practice the effect is likely to have been the artificial fostering of the economic and honorific life of the cities through the

¹¹⁸ *CIL* x 1156, cf. Panciera, *Epigrafia* II 133. ¹¹⁹ *CIL* x 1164. ¹²⁰ *CIL* x 1175; *profectio*, 1560.

¹²¹ Metilianus, whose relatives included two *consulares*; *ILS* 5676 = Smallwood, *NTH* no. 201.

¹²² Aspirants to the imperial power from the Italian aristocracy, cf. Herodian viii.7.2.

regulation of the expenditure of their élites – and as such should be seen as part of the same strategy of controlling élite promotion and competition that we have already seen at work in the ‘administrative’ sphere. Strategy is a handy word; we cannot of course be sure that this engineering was perceived so clearly by the originators of the decisions that brought it about. But it is more plausible to attribute such decision-making as there was about the government of Italy to a preoccupation with the composition and behaviour of the ruling class than to some anachronistic administrative ideology, and to see its origins as lying well before the period under discussion, when Augustus laid the social foundations of the Principate and made himself as unpopular with the Italian aristocracy through the imposition of the *vicesima hereditatum* as he had with the Roman élite through the rest of his social and moral legislation.¹²³

In the Italy of privilege, as in the capital, there was a symbolic place for the common people who were to receive the patronal care of the Italian élites. A dedication survives to

L. Tiberius Maefanas Basilius, *vir egregius* [that is, equestrian], one of the Praetors of the Fifteen Peoples, defender of the Counsellor-class and the citizens, member of a *decuria* in the Eternal City: for this reason, namely that he faithfully administered with honesty, favoured with affection, assisted with generosity and fostered through his humanity his fellow citizens and the people of Clusium . . .¹²⁴

Beginning with the *plebs urbana* and the revival of the thirty-five tribes, the institutions of the ordinary free people of the Italian towns also received attention in these years.¹²⁵

In many respects the towns of Italy came to participate in the same economic and social processes as the capital. Local calendars (as well as institutions like the *alimenta*) show clear awareness of the affairs of the old Roman *res publica*.¹²⁶ Their populations shared tastes and privileges; all Italy came to participate in the *commoda*. Ambitious cities built amphitheatres on the scale and model of Rome, competing bitterly with each other, as is clear from the remains at Puteoli and Capua.¹²⁷ New festivals at Naples, Puteoli, Tarentum, took their place on the international circuit, and the fans in Rome followed the news of their heroes’ successes elsewhere with zeal.¹²⁸ It was, however, remembered to Hadrian’s credit that he never summoned a stage-player or an arena-hunter away from Rome: the city’s pre-eminence in this sphere, increasingly under threat from the prestige of other centres,

¹²³ Dio LVI.1–10.

¹²⁴ *CIL*. XI 2115, cf. 15 ‘cives suos populumque Clusinum integritate gubernarit, amore dilexerit, largitate sublebarit, humanitate fovérit’. ¹²⁵ Cf. *ILS* 604–6.

¹²⁶ *Fasti Ostienses* (Vidman (1982)); *Fasti Potentini* (Alfieri (1948)). It is still too often claimed that such *fasti* are a feature of the late Republic and very early empire alone.

¹²⁷ Frederiksen (1984), chs. 13–14.

¹²⁸ The *grex Romanus* dedicates to a pantomime at Milan, *ILS* 5195.

was generally still maintained.¹²⁹ But the cohesiveness of the empire was nowhere more plainly displayed than in the uniformity of its experience of these entertainments: as in the inscription, albeit fragmentary, which commemorates one performer:

the emperor Antoninus Pius for two years . . . with his fellow trainees he danced at Rome in [more than 100] places . . . he received 80 golden crowns on the Palatine . . . he displayed his skill in Umbria and Picenum for [] years, in Apulia and Samnium for 4 years, in Valeria and Salaria . . . and Liguria for 8 years; also in . . . Lower Germany for [] years. With his crowns he received honorary *sevirates* without fee in Italy; in the province he was crowned at Massalia . . .¹³⁰

Against this background of cultural uniformity, it is scarcely surprising that Italy does not in this period display any signs of regional fragmentation.¹³¹

The institution of the *alimenta*, which we have already mentioned several times, is a further important example. First known as a benefaction of the emperor to the needy of the population of Rome, the scheme was quickly imitated outside Rome: its epigraphy provides important evidence for second-century Italy. The two outstanding documents are the tables of local landowners who contributed through mortgaging their lands in return for sums made available by the state. A complete specimen comes from Veleia in the Apennines above Placentia, and another very considerable fragment from Ligures Baebiani in the mountainous terrain north of Beneventum.¹³² Through these and the many other relevant documents we see something of the ideological preoccupations of the time: with *Italia restituta*, 'Italy restored', *aeternitas* 'the eternal destiny of Rome', and so on.

Criticizing the style for its archaism – of course itself deeply characteristic of the age – Fronto preserves a fragment of a speech of Marcus in this area, the opening words of an edict suggesting that aspirations of maintaining the population took as the obvious background for Italian life the centuriated landscape: the improved, assigned, commercial landscape created around the roads and chartered towns which patterned Italy.¹³³ The *alimenta* evoked and guaranteed an Italy of towns, with local landowners caring for their civic duties, and a population resident in each landscape: a landscape essentially recognized as having been formed by the process of

¹²⁹ *HA Hadr.* 19.4. ¹³⁰ *AE* 1989 no. 60. ¹³¹ Galsterer (1994), cf. Golvin, *L'amphithéâtre*.

¹³² The alimentary tables are *CIL* IX 1455 = *ILS* 6509 (Ligures Baebiani); *CIL* XI 1147 = *ILS* 6675 (Veleia). In general, Bourne (1960), Bossu (1989); Woolf (1990); Patterson (1987); Houston (1992/3).

¹³³ *Ad M. Ant. de orationibus* 12, p. 155 Naber, Loeb II 112, 'Florere in suis actibus inlibatam iuventutem'. Historical themes: Fronto on Anagnia, *ad Marc.* IV.4, pp. 66 Naber, Loeb I 174; Septimius Severus restores the ancient *foedus* of Camerinum, A.D. 210, *CIL* XI 5631; restoration of temple of Circe at Circeii, A.D. 213, *CIL* X 6422, the XV viri at Cumae, *CIL* X 3698–9 (A.D. 289); Pliny and the cult of Clitumnus, *Ep.* VIII.8, cf. Italy as repository of wonders (above).

centuriation and assignation. Thus the Flavian emperors' measures with regard to the *subseciva*, with references to the dispositions in just these areas of Augustus, and a concern for the rights of each urban community in the larger landscape.

In this context the ideology of restitution need imply no more than a vindication of traditional values in these areas designed more with the emperor's image in mind than with any practical effect. It would be poor rhetoric that suggested a major structural crisis, doubts about the recovery from which could not but be sown by careless grandiose claims. But there is little to link the *alimenta* with any crisis – except perhaps the crisis of identity caused by the changing role of Italy in the empire. On this line of thinking, Trajan's innovation was intended to reassure a population surprised at being ruled by a citizen of Italica.¹³⁴ Positively or negatively, there can be little doubt that the Italian evidence is special because the status of Italy was special in the workings of the Antonine world, and not because its social or economic problems were distinctive.

The view that sees the provincialization of Italy as a matter of changing administrative fashion, reflecting essentially constitutional evolutions in the working of the Principate, also sees these years as moving towards the *Zwangstaat* or constitution of compulsion which emerged, on this analysis, in late antiquity. Here, too, a less ineluctable and more explicable process of changing structures of patronage may be seen at work. The incorporation of representative segments of the plebs in various ways, but particularly through the success of the *collegia*, above all the widely attested *fabri tignarii*, *dendrophori* and *centonarii*, should be set alongside the initiative of the *alimenta*. These processes found a counterpart in the segmentation of space, with the rise of the *schola*, the meeting-place of this sort of organization, in the architecture of cities like Ostia.¹³⁵

The history of the cities of Antonine Italy, then, is inseparable from the history of the élite dynamics of the empire as a whole.¹³⁶ That vast system centred on the role of the emperor as broker of statuses and guarantor of upward social mobility. The centrality of the image of the emperor is not surprisingly, therefore, particularly marked in imperial Italy, and the articulations of the high rank of the cities of the peninsula, and especially those close to Rome, are directly connected with proximity to the emperor's theoretical base. This too is apparent in the alimentary schemes, which label the beneficiaries – for instance as 'pueri Ulpiani'.¹³⁷ This was yet another way in which the presence of the imperial household was evoked: the alimentary institutions commemorated the imperial women too, and received

¹³⁴ Thus Woolf (1990) 226–7.

¹³⁵ Thus Zanker (1994); also Patterson (1994); Kneissl (1994). For organizations of *iuvenes*, Ginestet (1991). ¹³⁶ Arslan (1982). ¹³⁷ *Pueri Ulpiani*, *CIL*, XI 4351.

official recognition of the most formal kind: *puellae Faustinianae* receive a quite high-profile treatment in the *Fasti Ostienses*.¹³⁸

The succession of emperors from Nerva to the Severi chose to represent itself – as the pictures of Marcus remind us – in terms of family continuity, for all that the actual deployment of the principle of adoption should have been ideologically more congenial in certain circles. The resulting pseudo-dynasty was portrayed as an Italian phenomenon, even when – especially when – its members or their interests were conspicuously provincial. Imperial sponsorship was of special importance in the periphery of Rome. We hear of the foundation by Domitian of a *collegium salutare* of Minerva Quinquatria at Alba, which clearly acted as a precedent for other places where such institutions are on record.¹³⁹ But the imperial presence was dispersed throughout Italy, much more directly than through the organs of public life, in the great and probably ever growing holdings of land by the imperial *patrimonium*.¹⁴⁰ On the lists of neighbours which define estates in the alimentary tables, Caesar is a frequently listed proprietor. A famous inscription gives us a glimpse of the imperial flocks transhuming through the territory of Saepinum.¹⁴¹ Members of the imperial family could be outstanding local benefactors, as at Suessa Aurunca where Matidia, in standard mode for the Trajanic age, gave the city a library, but is also on record as equipping the local main road, even to the extent that – uniquely – it is her name and not the emperor's that appears on its milestones.¹⁴² Ancient cities like Anagnina could become overshadowed by the functioning of a local imperial estate. It is natural to inquire what was the economic consequence of this state of affairs.

IV. THE ECONOMIC FOUNDATIONS

The nature of production in Italy in this period constitutes one of the most problematic sets of questions in ancient economic history. In the Flavian and Trajanic period, the evidence suggests a burgeoning of the cash-crop-based, villa-centred, agrarian economy which had characterized the rural landscape of large parts of Italy since the middle Republic. We know of very large numbers of villas, often of great luxury and size, that densely covered much of Italy around A.D. 100; few have been satisfactorily exca-

¹³⁸ Vidman (1982). *HA Hadr.* 7.8 increase in payments to Trajan's beneficiaries; *HA Pius* 8.1, the Faustinianae; *HA Marc.* 7.8 orders of *alimentarii* named after Marcus and Verus; *HA Pert.* 9.3 Pertinax pays Commodus' arrears; *HA Alex.* 57.4–7 Severus Alexander commemorates his Persian victory with orders of boys and girls named after Iulia Mamaea.

¹³⁹ Suetonius, *Dom.* 4.4; Diana and Antinous, 133–6, Smallwood, *NTH* no. 165 = *ILS* 7212.

¹⁴⁰ Hirschfeld, *Verwaltungsbeamte*; Crawford (1976) 67–9.

¹⁴¹ Gabba and Pasquinucci (1979); Corbier (1983).

¹⁴² Library, *CIL* 10, 4760; road-building, *AE* 1991 no. 492; Pagano (1991). Champlin (1981) was a pioneering study.

vated, but those that have give a picture of steadily increasing specialization in the pursuit of carefully chosen lucrative returns from urban markets. Fine wheat and wine continue to be specialities of Italy, and increasing attention seems to be given to the production of meat, a clear sign of the spending-power of the intended market.¹⁴³ At Settefinestre near Cosa in Etruria, the villa which has, thanks to the sophistication of the excavation and interpretation, become far and away the best-known example of its kind, a very elaborate granary was part of the estate from its establishment; during the first century sophisticated sites for pig-rearing were added to the impressive range of agricultural enterprises conducted from a well-planned and lavishly appointed residential centre which had been established in the triumviral period in a centuriated landscape not far from a good harbour and a trunk road, the Via Aurelia, giving easy access to Rome and its neighbourhood.¹⁴⁴

Estates like this seem to corroborate the praises of Italian productivity in literary works keen to laud the symbolic heartland of the empire; and archaeological field-survey has demonstrated that there were very many which at least aspired to this level of success, even if they were not quite so grand or so remarkably closely fitted to the recommendations of the Latin agronomic tradition. In many of the towns whose complex horizons we examined in the last section the level of public expenditure, which we might think to be at least to some extent correlated with the prosperity of primary producers, appears to continue to rise for most of this period.

But the picture is not so simple. The sneer which Tacitus attributed to Sacrovir reflects a real mood of concern for the maintenance of the free population from which romantic history taught that Rome's victorious armies had once been drawn. The productivity which scattered the countryside with the densely serried villas depended on markets so specialized as to be morally dubious, like the all-consuming city of Rome and its dependencies, and if the thinking senator could deplore the replacement of the cultivation of ancient staples with ever more specialized foodstuffs for the élite market, he was also apt to be aware that dependence on high-priced rarities could also be a dangerous strategy for the proprietor. Certainly by the end of the Antonine age many villas are dead: Settefinestre is among them. And the wealth won from purveying status-symbols to the choosy élite of a Mediterranean empire is increasingly spent on relieving the poverty and ameliorating the conditions of the ever more destitute citizenry of not-so-happy Italy.

The burden of debt was perceived as threatening future well-being as well as causing present distress. In the second century, debt to the *fiscus*

¹⁴³ Evans (1981), Spurr (1986) on wheat; Purcell (1985), Tchernia, *Vm* on wine; Small and Buck (1994) on pigs. Wine and oil, Panella and Tchernia (1994). ¹⁴⁴ Carandini and Ricci (1985).

was from time to time publicly renounced, with grand burnings of records – echoing those of proscribed books under the Julio-Claudians – in the Forum of Trajan, or the old Forum Romanum.¹⁴⁵ The emperors sought to reassure people by destroying a symbol of the over-intrusive imperial state, and no doubt relieved real hardship; if most debtors of the *fiscus* were probably not too low in status, the spirit of the benefaction is undoubtedly related to the more famous innovation of a sort of provision of welfare, the *alimenta*. The adscribing of whole segments of the populace to the imperial house by making them *alimentarii* or *alimentariae* expressed a concern for the next generations. This began in Rome, where Trajan extended the practical and symbolic reach of the patronage inherent in the frumentary system by making allowances to 5,000-odd indigent children of the *plebs frumentaria*.¹⁴⁶ The ‘better’ emperors of the next century were eulogized in similar ways for creating similar tranches of *ingenui* who were indebted to them; spared exposure, such children would, in the theory enunciated by Pliny, keep up numbers in the civic body of Rome the city (the *tribus*), provide material for recruitment (presumably the specialized recruitment of Italy that we have already examined) and in some cases go on to improve their lot so that their children needed no such help. While some have doubted that economic hardship was important in this nexus of thought, it does seem to play a part; but we are not speaking of the fringes of society, of the destitute. These are people of moderate status and a firm social location; they are *penetes*, not *ptochoi*. As Pliny said in his *Panegyricus*, ‘for the poor, the only means of bringing up children is to have a good emperor’.¹⁴⁷ Nerva identified a group whom Dio calls the ‘altogether poor’, *panu penesi*, to receive a benefaction of allotments on 60 million HS worth of land, consciously or unconsciously fostering the suburbanization of Italy.¹⁴⁸ He also set up *collegia funeraticia*. But all these ‘poor’ are people with a location in society, as the nature of what they received demonstrates.¹⁴⁹ So the phenomenon of Roman concern for poverty may not after all be so easy to use to argue for a general economic crisis in Italy of this period.

The still very prevalent view that there was such a crisis in the second

¹⁴⁵ Hadrian, A.D. 118, Dio LXIX.8.1; *ILS* 309 = Smallwood, *NTH* no 64a, ‘qui primus omnium principum et solus remittendo sestertium novies millies centena milia n. debitum fiscus non praesentes tantum cives suos sed et posteros eorum praestitit hac liberalitate securos’. Cf. coins (Smallwood, *NTH* no.64b); site of burning the Forum of Trajan, *HA Hadr.* 7. Dio LXXII.32.2 for a further cancellation and burning of records under Marcus (in Forum Romanum). Earlier examples: *Chron. Pasch.* s.a. 106, with the scene on the so-called Anaglypha Traiani; Torelli (1982) 89–92; 106–9.

¹⁴⁶ Pliny, *Pan.* 28.4.

¹⁴⁷ 26.5. Just under 5,000 *ingenui* were registered for imperial support, 28.4, through adding them to the roster of the *plebs frumentaria* while they were still children.

¹⁴⁸ Dio LXVIII.2.2, cf. Keppie (1984) 105.

¹⁴⁹ Whittaker (1989). *Collegia funeraticia*, Chronographer of the Year 354. Yavetz (1988) 146 stresses the innovation of Nerva’s interest in welfare.

century is also based on the disappearance of many villas, which has been linked with the inevitable comeuppance of the use of slaves, the competition of the provinces, the drain on manpower of the plague of the second half of the century, the ineptitude of the Roman wealthy, alluviation, soil erosion, lead poisoning, childlessness, malaise, malaria and decadence. The problems are seen in the anecdotes of rustic difficulties which the younger Pliny tells to show what a complete man he is, and the praises of Columella and Pliny the Elder are taken as apologies cynically offered to an audience which could see the writing on the wall for the prosperity of Italy. The background is a pessimistic assessment of productivity which sees the indigence of Italian producers as terminal.¹⁵⁰ There is little hope of straightening this area of controversy out in this place: it is tangled with strands of teleology involving the demise of the ancient city, the fall of the Roman empire, the moral bankruptcy of the pre-Christian world and the nature of the transition to the Middle Ages. A detailed region-by-region account is not possible here, but would show great variety in agrarian fortunes.¹⁵¹ As for the plague, the surviving accounts suggest that it was worst in densely concentrated centres of population, above all in Rome; the epidemic of the late 160s and its sequels in the next years appear to have been very serious, but it is not yet possible to claim it as a turning-point in the history of either the empire or Italy.¹⁵²

It is essential to turn to the same aspects of élite recruitment, composition and behaviour which in the previous section helped us deal with the question of the administration of Italy. There was a link between the changes in the élite milieu and its relationship to towns that we traced before and the seemingly capricious blows that archaeology shows the economy to have suffered. It was the agriculture that was the expensive toy of the villa-owners that died first, or yielded to their whim: it is our misfortune that because of their conspicuous consumption, that is much the most visible sort of rural life to us. Reliance on mobile labour, in the form of tenants or slaves, made this shifting occupation possible. The concerns of the state for free poor reproductivity and recognition of local underpopulation with the free-born, the *infrequentia locorum* which led to some of the settlement schemes, whether of veterans or the city populace, need not

¹⁵⁰ Evans (1981) is an extreme case 'the imperial government, following local precedent, designed a programme [the *alimenta*] to counteract . . . malnutrition-related exposure and infanticide'; cf. Jongman, *Pompeii*. Patterson (1987); Vera (1995) views the 'provincialization' of Italy as advantageous for agrarian production and prefers a gradualist to a catastrophic account of change. For precursors, Bellen (1979); Brunt (1987).

¹⁵¹ Thus D'Arms, *Commerce* 26. Decline at Reate much later, Coccia and Mattingly (1992) 272–3, Attolini (1991); for Apulia, Sirago (1993).

¹⁵² Galen 19.18 (Kühn), Aquileia; Dio LXXII.14.3–4, the plague of 189 the worst in his time. See Gilliam (1961); Duncan-Jones (1996).

indicate overall demographic decline, but rather, as Tacitus himself implied, the tendency of those who could to horizontal mobility.¹⁵³

We may add that the extent of corporate ownership – by the old Roman *res publica*, by the towns as corporations, by *collegia*, by sacred institutions such as the temples of Rome, and by the emperor – was very great, and lent itself to loose and occasional management of a sort that is still not properly recognized in the archaeological record of the landscape.¹⁵⁴ The great estates of late antiquity reflect a much more specialized process than has often been assumed: the consolidation of interests in certain sections of the productive landscape in the place of more diverse portfolios of holdings, and local changes in the behaviour of families of moderate means.

In the Antonine period, moreover, there was more to economic life than landowning. From just before our period, the Murecine tablets show the development of the commercial world of the Bay of Naples; the infrastructural concerns of brickworks and potteries are better understood, and take their place in the intricate economy of maintenance which supported the city life of the ‘common workshop of the world’ and the rest of Italy.¹⁵⁵ When Pliny remarks that he is ‘almost wholly in land’ the clear implication is that he might well not be.¹⁵⁶ His estates dotted across the peninsula remind us that the fortunes of even someone who was primarily dependent on rural rents, a classic local benefactor from the point of view of his native Comum, needs to be assessed as a participant in a net of intermeshed local economies: the interdependence being the salient fact.¹⁵⁷

The Trajanic aspirations are all to be found in the Letters of the younger Pliny. Italy appears in these as a beautiful and wondrous land, rich in tradition; the flavour of these passages is akin to the praises with which we opened. It is, as we saw, the sentimental homeland of Pliny’s milieu, and he draws credit from this: this, too, is an aspect of his claim ‘I am almost wholly in land’. For him – as for Tacitus, too – Italy is the seed-bed of the new élite which, under the enlightened guidance of the Flavians and Trajan, restored Roman ethical and governmental standards. It produced even the emperors whose *patria* was in Baetica, as Hadrian made plain in his choice of honorific city-magistracies: the ancient offices of the Latin towns and

¹⁵³ Settlement schemes in *liber Coloniarius* at Portus (223, 3), Superaequum (229, 2), Ardea (231, 1), Lavinium (234, 21), Lanuvium (235, 7), Ostia (236, 7), all except the second in the prestige periphery of Rome where the human resource was of particularly useful impact: Keppie (1984). For maintaining high population aggregates in at least the early empire, Duncan Jones, *Economy* 259–77; Lo Cascio (1994).

¹⁵⁴ Bodei Gigliani (1977). Formation of an imperial domain at the expense of large proprietors, deliberately, Sirago (1958).

¹⁵⁵ Camodeca (1992); Wolf and Crook (1989); Garnsey and Woolf (1989).

¹⁵⁶ *Ep.* III.19.8. ¹⁵⁷ De Neeve (1990); Kehoe (1988).

praetor Etruriae, *demarchos* at Naples, bridging the gap between Italian and Hellenic (he was also archon at Athens); *quinquennalis* in Italica but also, symmetrically, at Hadria, the city of his *cognomen*. The selection shows considerable delicacy.¹⁵⁸

Soft lands produce soft people; and Italy, though wonderful, and never more highly praised than by Pliny's uncle, was not a place to rear *fainéants*. So amid the *amoenitas* there is, throughout the letters which deal with Italy, a sense of the onerous preoccupations of the responsible landowner, mirroring the weary but punctilious senator and the careful and concerned governor as images of self in this carefully selected self-portrait. But despite the defaulting tenants and the variable yields, and the countryman's constant worries about weather, strong positive ideologies of a network of sensible patrons, who manage agriculture and city life with equal responsibility, emerge. We are reminded of the care exercised by the *curator rei publicae* and the *iuridici*; and if municipal finances, at Caere as in Bithynia, could give cause for concern, that was not to say that the means were not there if they could be correctly channelled. And changes in the arrangements by which you could make a town your heir helped the process of increasingly responsible patronage.¹⁵⁹ The natural duties towards Tifernum or Comum are to be tempered by a sense of what is owed to the state, and withdrawal is criticized: a natural set of preoccupations in the nesting horizons of the anxious early imperial world, where there were in the end too many stages for the élite's acting. And what we have not considered so far is the size of the towns. They were probably often pretty small, and there is a real possibility that they were primarily symbolic foci for a smallish group of people of some social standing rather than large agglomerations of population: Oenoandas in Italy. Thus it is hard to argue from evidence of size of the high-status cadres such as the album of Canusium or remarks on the numbers of *equites* at Patavium to a total population, and some places seem to have been tiny: one inscription may be taken to suggest a population of 500–1,000 at Saturnia in A.D. 234.¹⁶⁰ That said, the cadres that are attested amounted in aggregate to a significant group across the peninsula, a few thousand families, perhaps, rather than the infinitesimal minority of wealthy represented by the senatorial *ordo*.¹⁶¹ As consumers and as entrepreneurs in the varied exploitations of social and economic opportunity, they have a formative role in Italian culture of this period, and are to be seen neither as the bourgeoisie that failed, nor as a group of decadent and *fainéant* parasites. Their control of labour in the pursuit of survival in a relatively complex but largely stable world was extremely varied; slavery

¹⁵⁸ *HA Hadr.* 19.1. ¹⁵⁹ Ulpian xxiv.28.

¹⁶⁰ Saturnia: Jacques (1993) 217, but contrast Lo Cascio (1994).

¹⁶¹ The calculations of MacMullen, *Social Relations* 88 are misleadingly exclusive.

remained important, but as always needs to be seen against the background of many other forms of labour-dependency, particularly tenancy, out of which the late Roman colonate was to emerge.¹⁶²

The economy of Italy in the Principate was complex and unusual. An important study has established the importance of periodic trade, and the relative independence of networks of exchange from the armatures of urbanization.¹⁶³ Communications were relatively easy, and the local roads and small harbours are becoming more prominent as archaeological research reveals more of the ancient landscape.¹⁶⁴ Villages were always an important part of the landscape, both ancient settlements of the type which underlay many cities, and opportunistic new agglomerations at favoured locations on major routes (some of which replaced more venerable but more inaccessible cities).¹⁶⁵ The donatives of the emperors made Rome a city of cash, vital to the maintenance of the complex social life of the *plebs urbana*.¹⁶⁶ But the interpermeation of Rome with the population of Italy ensured that Italy likewise was a land of cash, heavily monetized.¹⁶⁷ The increases in the scale of benefaction in this period, and especially the *alimenta*, are likely to have intensified this effect.¹⁶⁸

The economic unification which some have seen as the result of the political and fiscal nature of Rome's power in the wider Mediterranean world worked in an intense and peculiar way in the heartland. Italy (though Augustus had considered changing this) still paid no tribute, but it did pay various indirect taxes; and the appeal of selling to the Roman market was all the more intense because of the relative ease of transportation afforded by simple proximity and from the fact that communications from more far-flung places to the centre involved intensive traffic on the roads and frequent ships bound for the Tiber in its ports. The inscriptions attesting financial agents of various kinds attest the monetization that we have already noticed, and the way in which the process united Rome with the other communities of Italy. The *argentarii* of the Forum Vinarium in Rome are a noteworthy phenomenon; but we also find Syrian bankers at Tivoli.¹⁶⁹ The mobility of the *negotiatores* who dealt in provisions is clear from the

¹⁶² Foxhall (1990); for the traditional view Carandini (1988); cf. Frier (1979).

¹⁶³ de Ligt, *Fairs*. The case of Bellicius Sollers (Pliny, *Ep.* v.4), shows how serious conflict could be between the sometimes precarious maintenance of urban economic interests and the plans of the proprietors: de Ligt, *Fairs* 202–24. ¹⁶⁴ Ciampoltrini (1991) on the ports of Etruria.

¹⁶⁵ Caloi, Donati and Poma (1993) collects some of the evidence.

¹⁶⁶ *Congiarra* and donatives: Domitian three of 300 HS, Suet. *Dom.* 4.5.3; Trajan 650 den., Chronographer of the Year 354; Pius 800 den. in all; seven under Marcus, each worth 1 million; Severus' liberalities amounted to HS 200 million, Dio LXXVII.[LXXVI].1.1. Kloft, *Liberalitas*; Millar (1991).

¹⁶⁷ Duncan-Jones, *Money* 77–8 (despite marked decline in hoards from Republic to empire); 120–2, relative scarcity of coin in Julio-Claudian Italy remedied thereafter. Cf. also Howgego (1994).

¹⁶⁸ Bruun (1989); Rickman, *Corn Supply*; Griffin (1991); Galsterer (1990) 21–40 taking the view that a policy was at work. ¹⁶⁹ *SEG* 1982.1061.

inscriptions.¹⁷⁰ It was men like the *negotiator vicinalis*, attested in a recently published inscription, who maintained the dense network of exchanges in fairs, village- or estate-markets and the local towns that we have already noted.¹⁷¹

Strikingly, the state attempted to regulate, exploit or even discourage this process through the maintenance of a tight customs cordon around Rome, at which a *vectigal foricularii ansarii promercalium* was exacted on certain types of commerce in foodstuffs. Vigorous disputes were occasioned, which attest the attractiveness of the city's markets.¹⁷² The role of Roman consumption in promoting cashcrop agriculture in Italy is notable: from the intensive horticulture of the urban periphery, through the production of wine and fruit and the finest intensively cultivated cereals, to high-quality pastoralism which brought to the city on the hoof from all over the peninsula cattle, sheep and pigs.¹⁷³ By the late empire, Italy supplied wine, meat and animal-products to the *canon urbanus*, with particular designations such as the pork of Samnium or the beef of Bruttium: the system enshrined in precise institutional form practices which had much older roots.¹⁷⁴ When Italy was divided into *Italia annonaria* and *Italia suburbicaria* the division reflected a long-standing fact of historical geography; there was a part of Italy, and one much larger than the *regio Romana* itself, which beat with the same pulse as the agglomeration Rome. The rest of the peninsula was tied to the former as its principal source of food.¹⁷⁵

The emperors and their advisers were well aware that this centrality of the Roman market was connected with the long-standing expression of Rome's imperial ascendancy in the availability there of the produce of the whole empire, that abundance of exotica that we explored at the beginning of this chapter, and the steady provision of staples at low cost. At times they considered attempting to mitigate the effect; the vine-edict of Domitian is a notorious case.¹⁷⁶ In practice throughout the period there was an escalation of the expectations of the beneficiaries and the efforts that were made to supply them. Occasional distributions of oil were added to the main annonal system, and made regular by Septimius Severus; Aurelian was to make the provision still more diverse. This was the period

¹⁷⁰ *ILS* 3696, T. Caesius Primus, Praenestine and Italian grain-dealer, also involved at Rome.

¹⁷¹ *AE* 1991 no. 786.

¹⁷² Palmer (1980), interpreting the dues as charges on amphorae of oil and wine and on animals by the head. The institution is little known, apart from inscriptions defining the line (approximately that of the Aurelian Walls) in A.D. 175; it is certainly Flavian (cf. the 37 *portae* of Pliny, *HN* xix.59) and may be Augustan.

¹⁷³ Wine, Purcell (1985), Tchernia *Vin*; the example of Settefinestre, Carandini and Ricci, *Settefinestre*; animals, Frayn (1984), Gilliver (1990), Barnish (1987). Columella 10, pref. 1. ¹⁷⁴ Barnish (1987).

¹⁷⁵ For the date (Probus/Carinus) Chastagnol (1960) 23; Cracco Ruggini (1995). Cf. Giardina (1986).

¹⁷⁶ Suet. *Dom.* 7.2; 14.2. Levick (1982); Purcell (1985).

when most was done to provide an infrastructure for the retail of food in Rome, and documents attest for the first time the Forum Suarium and Forum Vinarium.¹⁷⁷ Our period sees most of the lifetime of that monument to the importation of olive oil, Monte Testaccio, and the principal development of the granaries of the Tiber-banks and of Rome's harbour at Portus, with the neighbouring community of Ostia.¹⁷⁸ Already when Caligula commandeered ships for his bridge in the Gulf of Baiae, the resulting shortages of food demonstrate that seaborne material was supplementing local production in many places outside Rome, and it is clear that Rome's attraction of goods supplied Italy as well as consuming from it. Marcus provided annonal grain for Italian towns in the crisis of 161, in an increasingly interventionist spirit of imperial beneficence. It could even be thought that Septimius Severus extended the privilege of annonal coverage to all Italy.¹⁷⁹ The emperor and his institutions were as central to the economy of Italy as they were to its government and its society.

V. CULTURE WITHOUT ETHNICITY?

'Resident as I am at the moment in Rome, ruler of the world, I use the local language as a matter of course': the self-defence of a guest at Athenaeus' dinner, excoriated by his fellow-diners for using the Latin word *decocta* in the middle of his Greek conversation.¹⁸⁰ The difficult question of the identity of the inhabitants of Rome and Italy in this period makes an appropriate conclusion to our discussion, as it sums up that ambiguous interdependence between the empire and its heartland which has constituted our principal theme. Did demographic self-replacement keep Severan Italy for the descendants of those who fought the Social War? Despite the usefulness of the word *decocta* in our opening anecdote, Rome was very Greek, and had been for a long time. When another speaker at Athenaeus' dinner uses the word *ballizō*, I dance (from which 'ball' and its cognates ultimately derive), he is taken to task for 'buying his vocabulary in the Subura'. The Greek of south Italy, long naturalized at Rome, is the context.¹⁸¹ The important point to note is that even Greek and Latin were not simple labels: the indigenous poor spoke Greek, and their Greek was not that of the contemporary eastern Mediterranean. The *koine* was not so common after all.

For all that, the processes which maintained the 'common workshop of the world' kept Rome in constant contact with provincials. Marcion, a

¹⁷⁷ *CIL* VI, Monte Testaccio, Rodríguez-Almeida (1984); Macellum Magnum, De Ruyt (1983); granaries, Portus Vinaris, *CIL* VI 9189–90, 37807. Templum Solis, Rougé (1957). Forum Suarium, *CIL* VI 1156a, 3728, 9631, 31046. Forum Vinarium, *CIL* VI 9181–2.

¹⁷⁸ Meiggs, *Ostia*; Purcell (1996b).
¹⁷⁹ *Sen. Brev. Vit.* 18.5; Suet. *Gaius* 19. *HA Sev.* 22.3; Sirks (1991). *HA Marc.* 10; Garnsey, *Famine*, Rickman, *Corn Supply*.
¹⁸⁰ *Ath. Deipn.* II.121 f. ¹⁸¹ *Ath. Deipn.* VIII.362 a.

sea-captain from Pontus, gave the Roman church 200,000 HS.¹⁸² A Phrygian recorded his seventy-three business trips to Rome on his tomb.¹⁸³ The importation of slaves and the subsequent freeing of many provided another source of ethnic diversity, even though it is no longer thought that the Greekness of servile nomenclature entails some Hellenism in cultural or genetic origin. The modality – more inclusive than slavery – by which Rome consumed, or at least processed, large segments of the population of other places, undoubtedly continued throughout this period.¹⁸⁴ When Parthian royal hostages, worshipping Armenian deities in the Roman countryside, or upwardly mobile luminaries of eastern city-élites with their eye on the consulship arrived here, they cannot have found the place repellently Roman in ethnic composition, language or customs.¹⁸⁵

If Rome by the end of our period was unquestionably the most splendid and famous city of the Mediterranean world, that did not guarantee its eminence for ever. This period saw visibly manifested in the physical fabric of Rome some of the processes of decentralization which we examined in the first sections of this chapter. Commodus' threat to make Rome a *colonia* was a story born out of insecurity, but reflected certain realities. From at least the reign of Hadrian, the *tissu urbain* of Rome was dominated by regular blocks of rented housing bounded by rectilinear grids of streets, like those of Ostia largely uniform in appearance.¹⁸⁶ The old city-centre's winding alleys were increasingly regularized by great monuments: the laying-out of the new grids over much of the Campus Martius, though mentioned in no ancient source, created a new suburban Rome (which was to be the centre of population and urban life through the troubled years of the early Middle Ages) alongside the old, as effectively as Hadrian had created a new Athens east of Theseus' city. In their regularity, Rome's streets now resembled those of a thousand others. Meanwhile, in the grander sectors, the reciprocal imitations of capital and provincial centres had levelled the differences in all but crude (if probably carefully maintained) quantitative terms, as the cultural life of the metropolis began to conform to fashions created on a wider stage. Vespasian's Temple of Peace and Hadrian's Pantheon were imitated, for Hadrian's Library at Athens and in the Asklepieion at Pergamum; but Trajan's Forum imported to the capital the layout of public buildings familiar from the colonial and military townscapes of the north and west. While Hadrian's Pantheon, unlike Agrippa's, with its cosmic and imperial pretensions, used as the throne

¹⁸² Tert. *De praescr. haeret.* 30.1–2. ¹⁸³ *IGRR* IV 841.

¹⁸⁴ On this Purcell (1994). La Piana (1927). For one group, see now Ricci (1994).

¹⁸⁵ Tigranes at Falerii: Chaumont (1992). Polemaeanus of Sardis and Ephesus, *cos.* 92: Syme (1980) 88, 90–3

¹⁸⁶ S. Paolo alla Regola insula, Quilici (1990 [1991]); S. Lorenzo in Lucina (Hadrianic building overlain by Severan *insulae*), Conforto and Martines (1992).

room of the God-King, brought the reality of the imperial cult home to a city that was prepared to receive it by the ruler's now increasingly usual absences.¹⁸⁷ The idea of Rome was proved to have transcended the city by the worship of Dea Roma in Hadrian's Temple of Venus and Rome. As the later emperors finally realized the dreams of their predecessors and made all Italy a land on which their mark was clearly visible, the uniqueness of the display of Latium and Campania, shored up by the hierarchies of status in the promotions system, was terminally eroded.

Three remarkable Romans of the end of this period betoken the fluidity of cultural identity which had come about over the 150 years since Nero's death. The first is Theodotus the shoemaker, who, around 210, abandoned Christianity for geometry, and took to correcting the Bible using Euclid and Aristotle.¹⁸⁸ The second is Hippolytus, bishop of Rome, a Second Sophistic figure if ever there was one; a portrait statue survives in the Lateran as a philosopher seated on a chair inscribed with the *Computus Paschalis* and a list of publications (like the Vatican Aelius Aristides).¹⁸⁹ In both we see the contribution of people outside the traditional élites, and the allegiance to the intellectual life which transcended other affiliations; in which the burgeoning and universalistic system of Christianity closely resembled it. The third figure illustrates some of the same tendencies: Iulius Africanus, a Jew from Palestine, later a Christian, who was a courtier under Alexander Severus. He had frequented the court of Edessa and served Rome on diplomatic missions in the East, and wrote a strange compilation of ideas called *Cestoi*, which has been described as a combination of learning, magic and rhetoric. In it he speculated on the reasons why the Romans had been defeated by the Persians, when they had conquered the Greeks, who had previously subdued the Persians; recommended ways of poisoning enemy wells and maintaining the health of cavalry horses; and boasted – which is how he comes to our attention – of the fine library for whose metaphorical architecture he had been responsible in the Baths of Nero at Rome, a project commissioned as part of the rebuilding of those Baths which gave them the name *Thermae Alexandrinae*.¹⁹⁰ The inextricably cosmopolitan Africanus exemplifies the cultural medley which was inseparable from the social medley of Rome – and to a large extent Italy – in the early part of the third century. With its obscurantism, self-indulgence and bizarrerie it looks ahead to the world of Hierios and his peculiar experience in the Temple of Quirinus, with which we began.

Samuel Coleridge wrote in 1833 that the eventual fall of Rome was to be

¹⁸⁷ Dio LXIX.7.1. ¹⁸⁸ Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* v.28.13–14; Epiph. *Rem. Haer.* LIV.3.1.

¹⁸⁹ Bovini (1940); De Spirito (1995).

¹⁹⁰ Vieillefond (1970) 65 'les *Cestes* . . . provoquent souvent une impression de bizarrerie déconcertante: l'œuvre d'un maniaque, pourrait-on croire? For the *Thermae Alexandrinae*, Vieillefond (1970) 291, cf. *POxy* III 412.

attributed to the overlaying of a national character by an imperial one: 'Rome under Trajan was an empire without a nation.' That the imperial character could subsist without the foundations of ethnic pride perhaps seems to us a strength in the empire of the Antonines rather than a weakness. Rome and Italy in this period offer the chance to observe the national vacuum which the vast power of the imperial institution maintained at the heart of the second-century empire; and also to see with some clarity the social and cultural synapses which made any form of national identity redundant – for a time.

CHAPTER 13

SPAIN¹

GÉZA ALFÖLDY

The period of two generations following the civil wars of A.D. 68–9 was in many respects the zenith in the history of Roman Spain. The proclamation as emperor of Galba, the governor of Hispania Citerior, demonstrated the political significance which Spain had already assumed by 68. The notion that Spain had become ‘Roman’ in almost the same sense as Italy was demonstrated by the grant of the Latin right to ‘all’ inhabitants of the Spanish provinces by Vespasian and, more particularly, by the foundation of several *municipia* by the Flavian emperors, first of all in the interior and then in the north-west of the Iberian peninsula, where romanization had, on the whole, made rather modest progress in the past, but also in the south, where several small towns received municipal status. The advent and the influence of senators from the Iberian peninsula in Rome, already apparent under the Flavian dynasty, emphasized the political power of Spanish élites, and with the accession of Trajan, born at Italica (Santiponce near Seville), a Spaniard achieved the position of emperor. He was succeeded by Hadrian, his compatriot, and, after the reign of Antoninus Pius, by Marcus Aurelius, whose ancestors also came from one of the towns of Baetica, Ucubi (Espejo). Economic prosperity and cultural growth, no less emphatically expressed by the splendour of most Spanish towns under the Flavians and in the early second century, complete the picture of this development. It may be symptomatic that the two perhaps most impressive monuments of Roman Spain were constructed during this period: the bridge over the Tagus (Tajo) at Alcantara, built under Trajan, and the aque-

¹ This chapter was written in 1986; some amendments were made up to 1991. The following bibliographic references give an indication of what should be considered in a new survey. Epigraphic sources: new volumes of *CIL*, edited by G. Alföldy, M. Mayer, A. U. Stylow and other scholars (1995–8), are now available: II^2 5 (*conventus Astigitanus*), II^2 7 (*conventus Cordubensis*) and II^2 14.1 (*conventus Tarraconensis, pars meridionalis*); see also *Hispania Epigraphica* 1–5 (1989–95). History of Roman Spain: see Richardson (1996). General surveys of the archaeology, including historical issues: Trillmich (1993); Arce, Ensoli and La Rocca (1997); Almagro-Gorbea and Alvarez Martínez (1998). Archaeological guides, with scholarly bibliographies: Collins (1998), though with shortcomings and mistakes; Schattner (1998). On the aqueduct of Segovia, one of the most important monuments of the age of the Flavians and Trajan, see Alföldy (1997). Political, economic and social developments, including urbanization: Arce and Le Roux (1993); Bendala Galán (1993); Le Roux (1995); Ortiz de Urbina and Santos (1996); Mayer, Nolla and Pardo (1998); Alföldy (1999).

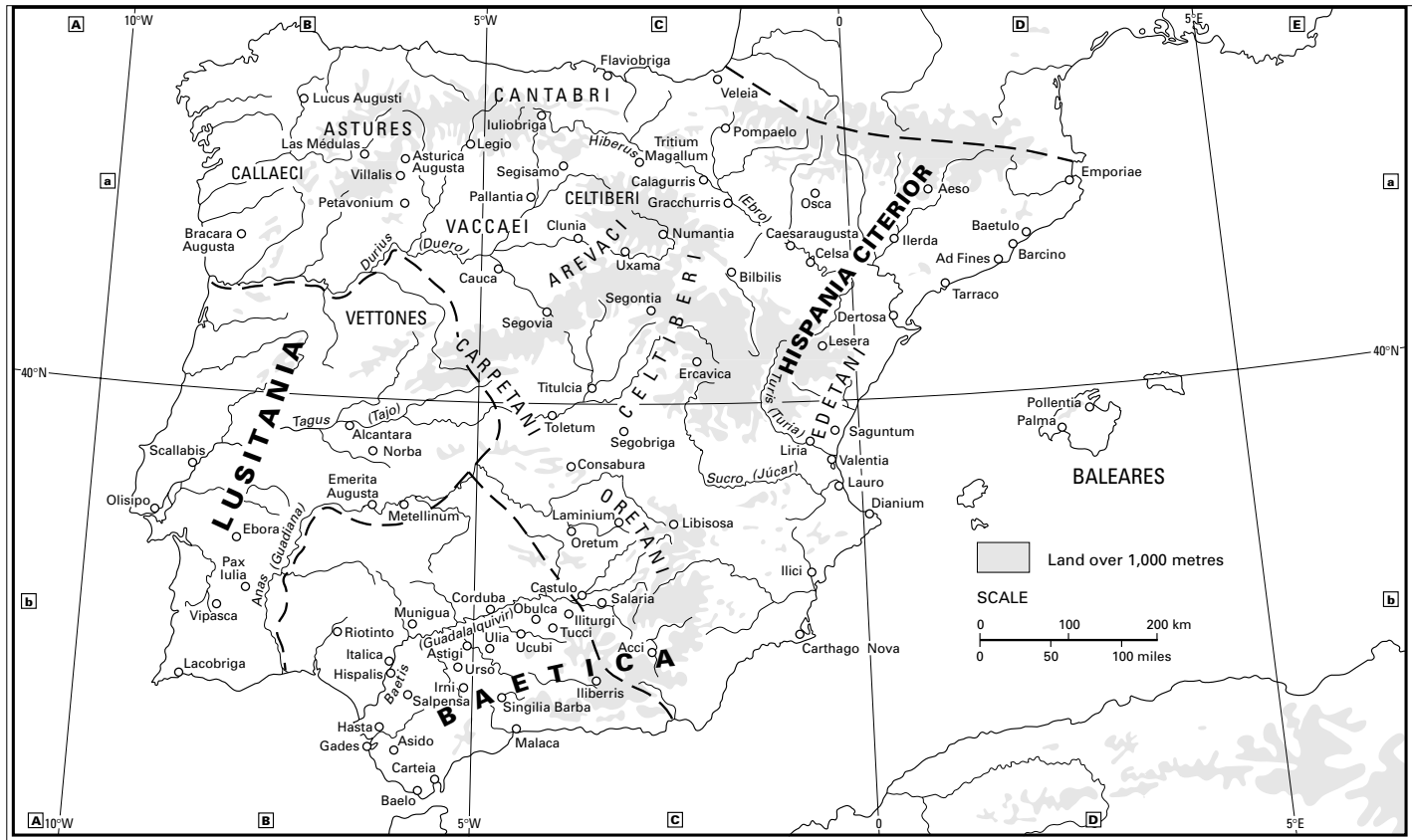
duct of Segovia, probably built under Domitian and inaugurated under Trajan.

I. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND ARMY

The system of provincial government which secured the administrative framework for political, economic, social and cultural development was, on the whole, the same as that established under Augustus. Baetica was governed, just as it was both earlier and later, by a proconsul, supported by his legate and by the quaestor of the province. As a senator of not very high rank who had to govern a province with the cooperation of upper-class locals of power and influence, the proconsul had no easy job; the legal proceedings initiated against the proconsuls Baebius Massa and Iulius Classicus at the end of the first century, in which Pliny the Younger was the advocate of the provincials, exemplify the kind of disputes which might arise. Other proconsuls, however, including men of letters (such as Lucius Flavius Arrianus, apparently the author Arrian) had no problems of this kind, as it seems.

The praetorian legate of Lusitania, like the proconsul of Baetica, was a senator who had normally no prospect of a very promising political career. It is significant, for instance, of the modest standing of this post that Otho had been shunted off to it by Nero in order to keep him away from Rome. It was most unusual for a former governor of Lusitania to rise to the highest offices of the imperial government. P. Septimius Geta, the brother of Septimius Severus, did so at the end of the reign of Commodus and after the proclamation of his brother as emperor.

In contrast to these governors, the consular legate of Hispania Citerior belonged to the élite of the senatorial order. Qualified by his former career and often also by high birth, he was normally a man of prominent political influence, as for example Aulus Cornelius Palma under Trajan or Caius Aufidius Victorinus, the son-in-law of Fronto, under Marcus Aurelius. It is revealing for his own rank and also for the estimated significance of his post that a governor of Hispania Citerior, Cornelius Priscianus, tried in A.D. 145 to seize the imperial power. The legate of this province had two senatorial office-holders serving under him. They were the commander of the legio VII Gemina, the legionary garrison of Spain from the reign of Vespasian, and the *iuridicus* who helped the governor in the tasks of jurisdiction, a role illustrated by the rescript of a *iuridicus*, Tiberius Claudius Quartinus, to the *duoviri* of Pompaelo (Pamplona), dated in A.D. 119. At first, as we can see from the title *legatus Augusti Hispaniae citerioris*, the duties of the *iuridicus* were not restricted to a specific area within the province; but at least from the last years of Hadrian until the reign of Caracalla, his competence was limited to north-western Spain, the region most remote from



Map 3 Spain

the residence of the governor at Tarraco. We derive this information from the emergence of the new title *legatus Augusti iuridicus Asturiae et Callaeciae*.

The governors were also assisted by procurators. Besides the procuratorships of the three provinces, each of which was to assume ducenarian rank, there were also special posts as well as some short-term *procuratelaes*, such as those fulfilling functions connected with the management of the census. From Vespasian onwards, at the latest, the region of Asturia and Callaecia had its own procurator of ducenarian rank, a reflection of the importance of the gold mines in this area. The first attested office-holder seems to be Pliny the Elder, who served as procurator in the province of Hispania Citerior c. A.D. 73. He shows himself to be extremely well informed precisely on the north-western area of the peninsula. He knows, for example, the figures of the census of 73/4 for Asturia and Callaecia (and only for this region), giving the number of free persons in the *conventus Asturum* as 240,000, that in the *conventus Lucensis* as 166,000 and that in the *conventus Bracarum* as 285,000.² In Baetica, a procurator was installed in the administration of the *kalendarium Vegetianum*, looking after the accounts of the property which the senatorial family of the Valerii Vegeti, a leading family of the Flavian and Antonine period from Iliberris (Granada), had left to Marcus Aurelius. The *procurator ad ripam Baetis* had to look after navigation on the Guadalquivir, which was of great importance for the transportation of agrarian products, in particular oil, from Baetica to Rome.

To assist them in carrying out their duties, the authorities of the provincial government had their own staff. Imperial freedmen and slaves served not only in the offices of the provincial capitals, at Tarraco, for example, in the administration of the *tabularium* and of the *arca* of Hispania Citerior or in the bureaux of the *vicesima hereditatum* and of the *vicesima libertatis*; members of the *familia Caesaris* were also employed as administrators of mines and other economic resources belonging to the imperial *patrimonium* in the countryside. In the two imperial provinces of the Iberian Peninsula, however, a large portion of the administrative activity was committed to the army. At Tarraco and also at Emerita Augusta, the capitals of these provinces, several soldiers of the army of Hispania Citerior are attested as being employed in the governor's *officium*. In north-western Spain the army was also engaged in the direct control of economic resources. The cooperation of both groups of personnel, civilian and military, may be illustrated by the votive inscriptions set up from A.D. 163 to 191 on military festival days at Villalis, south of Asturica Augusta, in an area with important gold mines: these inscriptions attest detachments of the legio VII Gemina and of auxiliary units which were commanded by a centurion; in the dedicatory act, however, there also took part the procurator of the

² Pliny, *HN* III.28.

metalla, an imperial freedman and further members of the military staff, including *beneficarii* of the *procurator Augusti* of Asturia and Callaecia.

The *exercitus Hispanicus*, reorganized by Vespasian after the vicissitudes of A.D. 68–70, consisted during the Flavian and Antonine periods, as well as later, of a legion and of at least five auxiliary units, i.e. a probable total of some 8,500 men. The legion was VII Gemina, raised by Galba in A.D. 68 under the name legio VII Hispana or Galbiana in Spain (its *dies natalis* was fixed as 10 June 68, the first day after the proclamation of Galba by the Senate at Rome). This unit, which had left Spain with Galba and had been reorganized under its new name by Vespasian after the casualties in the year of the four emperors, was sent by this emperor at first to Germany; it came to Spain, where no legionary garrison had existed after A.D. 70, between A.D. 74 and 79. Its strong-point in Asturia, occupied by the legion until the end of Roman rule, was called simply ‘Legio’ (modern León, where walls and towers of the fortress are still preserved). The auxiliary units of the Spanish army are known to have included at least the following: *ala II Flavia Hispanorum civium Romanorum* based at Petavonium (Rosinos de Vidriales) in Asturia where once legio X Gemina had had its fortress; *cohors I Gallica equitata civium Romanorum*, based at Veleia (mod. Iruna) in the area of Alava at least during the later empire; *cohors I Celtiberorum equitata civium Romanorum* and *cohors II Gallica*, as well as a *cohors Lucensis*, all three probably in Callaecia. Thus, the Spanish army was concentrated, under the command of the governor of Hispania Citerior, in north-western Spain, as it had been during the early empire. But the main motive for this dislocation was, of course, not the same as under the early Principate, when its main task had been to prevent revolts of the native population in the area first made subject in the triumviral period and under Augustus. The justification for this dislocation was that the army, in this area which comprised the most important gold-mines of Spain and which, at the same time, was the least urbanized region of the Iberian peninsula, was intended to fulfil a civilizing role: it provided for control and administration of the mining districts and contributed to the romanization of the local population. A complementary feature is the fact that this area and its population was the main source of recruits and supplies for the *exercitus Hispanicus* during and after the Flavian period.

II. ECONOMY

The mining industry flourished in Spain under the Flavian and Antonine emperors as it had in the earlier period. According to Pliny the Elder, ‘nearly the whole of Spain is covered with mines of lead, iron, copper, silver and gold. Hither Spain with muscovite mines also; Baetica abounds in cinnabar as well.’³ The way mining was organized and directed for the

³ Pliny, *HN* III.30 (trans. E. H. Warmington).

profit of the imperial fiscus, with the *procurator metallorum* for the administration of the mining district, with *conductores* who acquired different monopolies, and with *coloni* as minor contractors and workers, is revealed by the mining laws from Vipasca (mod. Aljustrel) in south Portugal where important silver and copper mines existed. There survive a general Lex Metallis Dicta, preserved in an official letter written under Hadrian, but of earlier origin, and the so-called Lex Metalli Vipascensis of the end of the first century A.D. Several Roman mines, for example those in the area of Carthago Nova (Cartagena), in different parts of the Sierra Morena and at Riotinto in south-western Spain, testify not only to the extraction and transport of the above-mentioned and other metals, but also to mining techniques. The best examples of the latter are furnished by the gold mines in north-western Spain such as that at Las Médulas; they exemplify the procedure called by Pliny (who saw these mines) *arrugia* (a Celtic word meaning 'artificial water split') and *ruina montium*, which means the falling-in of auriferous mountains hollowed out by an enormous system of water-supply with hydraulic works, of aqueducts and channels.⁴ As Pliny remarks, Rome acquired from the gold mines of Asturia, Callaecia and Lusitania alone (but mainly from those of Asturia) 20,000 pounds (i.e. 6,320 kilogrammes) of gold annually.⁵

The most important mines in Spain were, of course, imperial property; mining, therefore, did not contribute to the wealth of the country itself as immediately as did other branches of the economy, despite the references to a relatively satisfactory standard of living even for the *coloni* employed in the mines. The largest part of the population lived on agriculture, including cereal cultivation. Hunting, popular in Spain, was a preferred sport for rich men, such as the commander of legio VII Gemina who boasted of having killed wild goats, deer, wild boars and wild horses;⁶ for ordinary people in the countryside, however, hunting was also a means of acquiring food, as was fishing, especially along the coasts. The production of pickled fish and of the fish-sauce called *garum*, particularly on the Atlantic coast of Baetica as at Baelo (Bolonía), was directed not only to local consumption but also to exportation on a large scale. Stock-farming was a very important source of food-supply, but, like horse-breeding in Asturia for example, it served other purposes as well. Cattle-breeding must have been a source of wealth for a number of landowners in the interior of the Peninsula. In addition, in the coastal areas and in the highly fertile province of Baetica the production of oil, wine, fruits and vegetables brought profits.

There were also diverse manufacturing enterprises, such as textile articles at Tarraco and in the south-east of the New Castilian Highland, the Hispanic *terra sigillata* at Tritium Magallum (Tricio) and other centres in

⁴ Pliny, *HN* xxxiii.70 ff. ⁵ Pliny, *HN* xxxviii.78. ⁶ *CIL* II 2660 (cf. p. 708 and p. 912) = *ILS* 3259-60.

the Upper Ebro area. Trade also flourished. Imports included foreign *terra sigillata*, metal objects, art products, marbles and luxury articles. The volume of exported goods must have outweighed the imports, however. Besides metals, there were special stone materials such as the *lapis specularis* (a stone from Segobriga which was suitable for making windows and roofs), local ceramics, textile articles, wine and *garum*. Spain's most famous export was oil from Baetica. The Monte Testaccio at Rome, with its countless fragments of inscribed and stamped oil amphorae, as well as several archaeological discoveries in the north-western provinces of the empire, testify that under the Flavian and Antonine emperors the oil supply of Rome as well as that of the Roman armies on the Rhine and the Danube was secured particularly by the production, above all on private estates, of the oil of the valleys of the Baetis (Guadalquivir) and Singilis (Genil) and its export, under state control, to Rome and the imperial frontiers.

III. URBANIZATION AND CITIES

The wealth acquired through all this economic activity benefited primarily the upper classes in the towns. The urban evolution of Roman Spain reached its zenith under the Flavian dynasty and in the early second century. In terms of the economy, this was due to the flourishing of production and trade. Its institutional and juridical aspect is represented by the creation of cities which achieved fulfilment under the Flavian emperors. The first great step in the urbanization of the region had been taken at the end of the Republic and at the beginning of the Principate, between the last years of Caesar and the end of the reign of Augustus, a period in which about twenty-four colonies and a large number of *municipia* were founded in the eastern and southern parts of the peninsula. The second, and final, step was taken by the Flavian emperors. The result of this policy was the existence of a network of autonomous urban centres throughout the Iberian peninsula.

Vespasian conceded the Latin right, as Pliny tells us, to 'all' Spain.⁷ This grant was certainly made during the censorship of Vespasian and Titus in A.D. 73/4. Pliny's much-discussed account shows that the *ius Latii* was granted to all communities of the Iberian peninsula which possessed a peregrine status by then and had not yet received – as had several *coloniae* and *municipia* – either Roman citizenship or Latin rights. And Pliny's account must be understood in the sense that by achieving the Latin status such communities now acquired the right to establish a *municipium iuris Latini*, i.e. a community with regular urban magistracies, an *ordo decurionum* and a popular assembly; this gave their citizens the opportunity to gain the *civitas Romana* by holding a magistracy, but it did not mean that the communities

⁷ Pliny, *HN* III.30.

were automatically transformed into *municipia* immediately upon, and by virtue of, the grant of the *ius Latii*. The concession of the Latin right in A.D. 73/4 was apparently a general and provisional measure. Each particular community might then apply for permission to establish a municipal organization on the basis of its possession of the *ius Latii*; the process would then be completed by the grant of the town charter. Evidently the whole process was only completed under Domitian. That there was a delay is clear, in particular from the date of the Flavian urban charters from Baetica which derive from a general Flavian law for the Latin *municipia* of Spain but belong to the reign of Domitian: in the case of Irni (El Saucejo, south of Urso), although the municipal organization was already in existence, the *lex municipii Flavii Iρνitani* was not published until in A.D. 91, and this also seems to be the approximate date of the *leges* of Malaca (Malaga) and Salpensa (Facialcazar, near Utrera). It is to be noted also, apart from all this, that the communities were certainly not obliged to apply for municipal status, and that the success of an application was in principle not guaranteed if the appropriate institutional and economic conditions did not exist. It seems likely, however, that primarily for the anticipated prestige, the normal practice was to apply for the rank of a *municipium*, and that normally the application was successful.

Unfortunately, our sources do not furnish a complete list of the Flavian town foundations in Spain. Nevertheless, the scale of the urbanizing policy of the Flavians can be appreciated, especially on the basis of the epigraphic evidence. This attests the rank and name of a *municipium Flavium* for several cities and shows a large number of towns whose citizens belong to the *Quirina tribus* which, being the *tribus* of the Flavian emperors, points to the grant of urban status by one of the members of this dynasty. According to our current state of knowledge, at the end of this phase of urbanization Baetica possessed, apart from 10 colonies, more than a hundred cities with the status of a *municipium*; at least 32 of them were apparently Flavian *municipia*. In Lusitania we can count, besides 5 colonies, at least 28 *municipia*, of which at least 13 are likely to have been Flavian foundations. And in Hispania Citerior, besides 12 colonies, there were at least 125 communities with the juridical status of a *municipium*, including at least 35 Flavian foundations.

More important than the number of cities which can be counted, hypothetical and incomplete as it is, are the general characteristics of the Flavian urbanization. First, Flavian towns were, with only one dubious exception, *municipia*. The exception may be Flaviobriga on the Cantabrian coast; but Pliny's reference to the status of this town as *colonia* may possibly be incorrect.⁸ At any rate, in contrast to Caesar and Augustus who founded several

⁸ Pliny, *HN* IV.110.

colonies in the Iberian peninsula, Flavian policy was directed towards the elevation of the status of native communities. This fact reveals, above all, the high level of romanization of the country. More particularly, it is striking that in Baetica, especially, Flavian *municipia* were also founded in areas, primarily the Guadalquivir valley west and south of Corduba, where an urban network of important cities was already in existence from the beginning of the imperial period. This means that the grant of the *ius Latii* offered less important and even very small communities the opportunity of achieving municipal status. Irni is a good example. It is revealing that the Flavian *municipium Irnitanum*, whose town charter has recently come to light, was absolutely unknown before the discovery of this document. It is noteworthy that the Lex Irnitana raises the possibility that there were fewer than sixty-three *decuriones* and *conscripti* in this *municipium*, and that this property qualification was fixed by the urban charter at not much more than 5,000 sesterces, which was the property qualification of the next group of 'rich' below the level of the *ordo decurionum*.⁹ Finally, we can also detect a large number of Flavian *municipia* in the backward areas of the Iberian peninsula, which in earlier periods were scarcely or not at all urbanized: that is in north-western Spain, first of all with northern Lusitania and the Old Castilian Highland. Flavian policy clearly aimed at the integration of the whole peninsula into the Roman world in a full sense. It is symptomatic that, apart from the elevation of Italica from the rank of a *municipium* to that of a *colonia* by Hadrian, who came from this town, we do not know of any further urbanizing initiatives by the emperors in Spain after the Flavian period: the urbanization of this country was completed by the emperors of the Flavian dynasty. And there is no doubt that a large part of the population, taking advantage of the opportunities afforded by *ius Latii*, had already received Roman citizenship by the date of the Constitutio Antoniniana.

IV. SOCIETY

The existence of a highly developed urban network, to which the countryside (apart from the imperial estates and mining districts) was subordinated as the *territoria* of the *municipia* and *coloniae*, lightened the duties of the provincial government in so far as a large part of the burden of administration was borne by the local magistrates and councils. In their relation to the provincial authorities, the towns were represented, at a lower lever, by the organization of the *conventus iuridici* which had at the same time, at least in Hispania Citerior, a *sacerdos Romae et Augustorum* for the imperial cult.¹⁰ At

⁹ González (1986) 158 and 176.

¹⁰ For the establishment of these *conventus* under Augustus, see *CAH* x² ch. 13c, with n. 5.

another, higher level, urban communities were represented in the *concilium provinciae* at Corduba, Emerita Augusta and Tarraco, respectively. Under the *flamen provinciae* (whose full title was, in Hispania Citerior, *flamen Romae, Divorum et Augustorum provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*) the provincial assembly not only looked after the imperial cult, but also tried to further the political and financial interests of the provincials, primarily those of the upper classes of the towns, against countervailing measures of the imperial government, for example. Epigraphic evidence tells us that the assembly of Hispania Citerior, a province of very high reputation according to Pliny the Younger,¹¹ sent embassies to the emperors, to Marcus Aurelius at Sirmium during the Danubian Wars, for instance, apparently protesting – with success, it seems – against census measures.¹²

In Hispania Citerior, at least, the *flamines provinciae* constitute the best known status group within the local upper classes. Mainly through inscriptions discovered at Tarraco, we know the names of more than 70 of the c. 110 *flamines* from the period between A.D. 70 and 180. These people belonged to the élites of the *coloniae* and *municipia*. As evidence of their wealth, it may be revealing that the monumental amphitheatre of Tarraco was constructed thanks to the munificence of a *flamen* of Hispania Citerior, in the early second century. Normally, a man who was elected by the *concilium provinciae* to be high priest of the province had begun his career with magistracies in his native town. In particular, the representatives of smaller cities, primarily from the interior of Spain, who do not appear among the *flamines* in any considerable number before the second century, normally only passed through a municipal career or at most achieved the additional position of *iudex* at Rome. But numerous *flamines*, among them several men from Tarraco or from other important urban centres such as from *conventus*-capitals, held the flamate, either after a municipal career or without having held municipal magistracies, before proceeding to equestrian officer posts in the army or even procuratorships of lower rank. In other words, a large number of the *flamines*, as well as of the members of Spanish urban élites in general, belonged to the equestrian order. Senators, however, did not hold the flamate, which was apparently considered too low-ranking a post for them. Consequently the enrolment of a former *flamen provinciae* in the senatorial order, such as is clearly attested in the reign of Vespasian for Raecius Gallus from Tarraco, previously an officer of Galba, represented a rise in the social scale; normally, however, the flamate was seen as the peak of their career for men from a status group different from that which provided senators. It might have been more common for the son of a *flamen provinciae* to enter the senatorial order as a *novus homo*. Lucius Antonius Saturninus, the governor of Upper Germany

¹¹ Pliny, *Ep.* II.13.4.

¹² Alföldy (1975) no. 332 = *ILS* 6928 = *CIL* II 4208.

who revolted against Domitian in A.D. 89, was perhaps the son of a homonymous *flamen* of Hispania Citerior.

Local magistrates, knights and senators were the élite of urban society and at the same time, as landowners, constituted the upper class which dominated the countryside. At the peak of the social hierarchy, we find the senatorial families, outstanding in wealth, influence and rank. The rise and the position of such a family is exemplified by the case of the Baebii of Saguntum. The Roman citizenship of this family, doubtless of native origin, seems to go back to the beginnings of Roman rule in Spain. In the last decades of the rule of Augustus a member of this family paid for the construction of the forum at Saguntum;¹³ the Baebii must already have been one of the leading families of this *municipium*. As to their political influence, it is symptomatic that they had already furnished several magistrates of Saguntum under the early emperors. In the Flavian period and in the next decades some members of this family belonged to the senatorial order, probably beginning with Vespasian's enrolment into the Senate of Lucius Baebius Avitus, a knight who had risen to the procuratorship of Lusitania. The wealth of the family and its main source, agriculture, is revealed by the very large *clientela* of the Baebii, consisting of slaves and freedmen and their descendants, attested in different parts of the fertile *territorium* of Saguntum where the Baebii possessed land and villas. At the same time, the Baebii cultivated contacts with other leading families of Spain, acquired influence in other towns such as Lesera (Forcall near Morella) in the neighbourhood of Saguntum and more distant Oretum (near Granátula de Calatrava) in the Mancha. They became landowners in Italy, too.

In Baetica and in the coastal areas of Hispania Citerior, we know of several families of this kind in the Flavian and Antonine periods, the *floruit* of the Spanish senatorial aristocracy. In other parts of the Iberian Peninsula, because of less favourable social, political and cultural conditions, there were only a few senatorial families, such as the Iulii at Eborá (Evora) in Lusitania and the Tutilii in the capital of that province, Emerita Augusta. But it was possible for members of rich landowning families even from the interior to rise into the senatorial order, as is attested for the Octavii from Segobriga under the Flavian emperors. Nevertheless, the concentration of the senatorial families of Spanish origin in Baetica and in the eastern parts of Hispania Citerior is conspicuous. Several towns must have been dominated by such families, as was Ucubi by the Annii Veri, the ancestors of Marcus Aurelius, in the Flavian period and later, or Barcelona by the Minicii Natales under Trajan, Hadrian and Antoninus Pius. In some cities we find more than one senatorial family at the same time: at Italica under the Flavians, the Ulpii and the Aelii (at least); at

¹³ Cf. *CAH* x² ch. 13 c, with n. 23.

Iliberris (Granada) in the second century, the Valerii Vegeti (until the reign of Marcus Aurelius), the Papirii Aeliani (from Hadrian onwards) and the Cornelii Anullini (from Marcus Aurelius onwards). The role played by Spanish senators in the history of Rome, above all in the reigns of the Flavians, Trajan and Hadrian, is highlighted by the careers and connections of the latter two emperors. Trajan, appointed in A.D. 97 as the successor of Nerva, was at this time only one of the very powerful Spaniards who held in their hands the destiny of the empire. That the choice fell upon Trajan was due to a large extent to Lucius Licinius Sura, a Spaniard, whose family seems to have possessed land between Tarraco and Barcino. In addition, the ambitious commander of the Syrian army, who could have been a dangerous rival to Trajan, one Marcus Cornelius Nigrinus Curvatus Maternus, the great marshal of Domitian, came from the small town of Liria Edetanorum (Liria), near Valencia.

There were also several Spaniards who belonged to the imperial aristocracy as high-ranking equestrian officials. We know of imperial procurators and prefects of the Flavian and Antonine period descended from families of Corduba, Hispalis (Seville), Italica and Obulco (Porcuna) in Baetica, of Tarraco, Caesaraugusta (Zaragoza), Aeso (Isona), Iuliobriga (Retortillo) and Castulo (Cortijos de Sta. Eufemia y de Yanguas, near Linares) in Hispania Citerior, among them men like Publius Acilius Attianus, the powerful *praefectus praetorio*, friend and compatriot of Hadrian. Many Spaniards of equestrian rank served in lower equestrian offices, as *praefecti* and *tribuni* in the Roman army, as *praefecti fabrum* and as *indices* at Rome, not to mention the very high number of 'ordinary' equestrians whose engagement in public life was limited to the tenure of magistracies in their city. Their admission into the equestrian order was a sign of the wealth and the political contacts of several Spanish families, including some from backward areas. Whereas Spanish knights came, under the early empire, with very few exceptions, only from the southern and eastern regions of the Iberian Peninsula, from the Flavian period onwards we know a considerable number who originated in the towns of the interior. In the New Castilian Highland, for example, the first attested knight is one Caius Iulius Italus from Segobriga, in the Julio-Claudian period; the next is Manius Octavius Novatus from the same town, a *praefectus fabrum*, probably the father of a senator, attested under Vespasian or some years later.¹⁴ Not much later in the same area knights are attested in the public life of several cities, not only in the colony of Libisosa (Lezuza), but also in fairly small municipalities such as Laminium (Alhambra), Consabura (Consuegra), Ercavica (Castro de Santavér near Cañaveruelas), Alaba and Attacum (in the eastern part of the modern Spanish province of Cuenca).

¹⁴ *CIL* XII 4536; Almagro Basch (1984) no. 33.

Senatorial and equestrian families were recruited from the urban élite which furnished the magistrates and *decuriones* of the towns. Most of these men, in particular in the smaller and more remote cities, such as the *decuriones* of Irni with their modest property qualification, had no chance of rising into the imperial aristocracy of Rome. For people of this kind, a political career was limited to posts in the urban administration. One of these posts was that of *quaestor*, attested only for a small number of Spanish cities, but sometimes, as at Saguntum and Tarraco, a significant office, due to the importance of the communal finances and to the responsibility of the *quaestores* for the local coinage. The chief magistrates and their deputies were normally called *IIvir iure dicundo* and *aedilis*, respectively, but sometimes they appear under the title *IIIvir*. The office of the *IIvir quinquennalis* is attested only for some communities of Roman citizens in Hispania Citerior such as at Tarraco, whereas at Saguntum it must have been the *quaestor* who was in charge of the census of the citizens. In addition to these posts there were, of course, the decurionate and the cult offices, primarily that of the municipal *flamen Romae et Augusti*. This is attested at Barcino, for example, whereas at Tarraco all *Divi imperatores* had their own *flamen*. In some towns we know of special priesthoods, such as that of the *salii* at Saguntum, established as a local cult to emphasize the glorious past of the town. The differences in the municipal career, exemplified by the characteristics of the *cursus honorum* of the magistracies at Tarraco on the one hand and Saguntum on the other, reflect the different structure of local élites. To be sure, the élites consisted in both cities of landowners also engaged in industry and trade. But at Saguntum we can recognize an ‘oligarchical’ system with a limited number of ruling families participating in political life on the basis of a ‘balance of power’, that is by a more or less uniform *cursus honorum* of their representatives. At Tarraco, however, some privileges of noble families, the chance of entering the imperial service and the opportunities for newcomers and people of low birth gave to the local *cursus honorum* a lack of uniformity which reflected the complex structure of the population in this colony.

Those of low origin at Tarraco or at Barcino who rose socially could, in contrast to Saguntum, enter the political élite of the community; they were normally sons of successful freedmen. In several towns, irrespective of the status of the city (as *colonia* or *municipium* whether of Roman citizens or of *ius Latii*), rich *liberti*, who as former slaves were excluded from the political élite, formed an organization of *seviri Augustales*. In smaller communities, mainly in the interior and in the north-west of the country where rich freedmen were a rarity, these organizations probably did not exist, while in a city such as Saguntum, which had numerous *liberti* but no *seviri Augustales*, the old-fashioned local aristocracy must have blocked the establishment of a body representative of its leading freedmen. In other cities such as

Tarraco or Barcino, however, these people played a very important role in public life. It is a pointer to the position, influence and wealth of some *seviri Augustales* that at Barcino a Lucius Licinius Secundus, *sevir Augustalis* both at Barcino and at Tarraco, a freedman and apparently an intimate friend of the senator Lucius Licinius Sura, undoubtedly a man of great influence and wealth, was commemorated by more than twenty statues, dedicated by urban communities, associations and individuals. The resources of freedmen of this kind are suggested by an inscription from Castulo of A.D. 155, which shows a *sevir*, certainly a freedman, paying not only for a statue of the emperor Antoninus Pius, but also for a series of public performances over a period of several days.¹⁵

The rise of freedmen of this kind could be due to economic activity, or simply to chance, if a *patronus* died without descendants and left his wealth to his *liberti*. Thus a rich citizen of Tarraco gave to his wife's freedmen property in the immediate neighbourhood of the colony in her memory.¹⁶ This was, however, not the normal lot of the mass of *liberti*. Most of them lived at the level of freeborn plebeians, modestly or even in poverty; they were engaged, as were slaves, in the normal occupations attested in a Roman town: manufacturing, trade, finance, intellectual life or casual labour. The list of professions attested by inscriptions of Tarraco is indicative: merchants, linen-retailers, publicans, money-changers, goldsmiths, gilders, plumbers, roofers, painters, educators, teachers, actors, physicians. Craftsmen, in particular, were associated in *collegia* such as the *collegium fabrum* at Tarraco, Barcino or Corduba; there were associations of specialized workers too, even in smaller towns, such as the *collegium sutorum* at Uxama (Burgo de Osma). In smaller cities which were centres of agriculture, a proportion of the citizens who lived in the town were peasants. Slaves too were used in the sundry occupations mentioned above, or as domestics, or in the public administration of the towns. As for their origins, it seems likely that the slaves came in large part from Spain, even if they bore, as they frequently did, a Greek name; many of them were either home-bred or foundlings.

Slaves were also employed in the countryside, mainly on the large estates, but also on smaller properties. It seems that workers on landed properties of middle and small size, that is slaves of 'ordinary' members of urban élites and of peasants, could often hope for manumission, whereas slave workers on the large estates could not. In the interior and in the north-western parts of the Iberian Peninsula, at least, most of the countrymen were free-born peasants, living either in small villages (including native *castros*) or on farmsteads or in the towns. There were craftsmen and

¹⁵ *AE* 1976 no. 351.

¹⁶ Alföldy (1975) no. 368 = *ILS* 368 = *CIL* II 4332 (cf. p. 973).

merchants in the countryside too, as well as workers employed in the mines. The mining law of Vipasca gives a glimpse of the structure of the population of a mining district and, to some degree, of the countryside in general. Apart from the imperial freedmen and slaves employed in the administration under the procurator of the mining district, the population consisted not only of the ordinary miners or *coloni*, but also of specialized workers such as the *scaurarii* (slag-workers) and the *testarii* (stone-splinter-workers) who processed ore residues and other raw material remains. There were also slaves and freedmen of the workers as well as *mercennarii* (paid workers) for special jobs, together with shoemakers, fullers, barbers, teachers and leaseholders of the public baths.

V. CULTURAL LIFE

Economic development, urbanization and social differentiation show that the Roman social order extended throughout the Iberian Peninsula. Nevertheless, in the central and north-western parts of the country, native traditions survived, giving these areas a certain individuality during the Flavian and Antonine periods and later. One can begin with outlandish names of people and indigenous divinities – *Aegiamunniegus*, *Candeberonius Caeduradius* or *Munidia Berobriga Toudopalandaiga*.¹⁷ Then native organizations, such as the *gentilitates* (and in Callaecia the associations of people in the communities of *castella*) existed even in Roman towns. The statue of the knight Manius Octavius Novatus in the theatre of Segobriga was dedicated in the 70s or 80s, approximately three generations after the grant of municipal status to this town, by a man who still indicated his membership of a clan named (in the genitive plural) *Duitiq(um)*.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the process of romanization under the Flavian and Antonine emperors transformed Hispania, by and large, into a country of clearly Roman character. This is evident, in particular, from the degree of cultural standardization, despite the differences between south and north and east and west.

The cultural level attained and the intellectual ambitions displayed by leading Spaniards, even in areas far from the early romanized Mediterranean and Andalusian regions, are illustrated by the cases of Marcus Fabius Quintilianus and Marcus Valerius Martialis: the professor of rhetoric came from Calagurris (Calahorra) in the Ebro valley and went to Rome with Galba; the poet, his contemporary, was born at Bilbilis (near Calatayud) in the northern part of Celtiberia and returned from Rome to his native country after Trajan's proclamation as emperor. An outsider's impression of Roman Hispania is conveyed by the historian Florus, who

¹⁷ *CIL* II 2523; *AE* 1973 no. 306; *Boletín de la Real Academia de Historia* 65 (1914) 305 ff.

¹⁸ See n. 14, above.

originated from Africa, went to Tarraco under Hadrian and wrote that Spain had produced great individuals such as Viriatus, a potential *Hispaniae Romulus*, and communities like the defenders of Numantia, but that Spain realized, however, its destiny as an important country only under Roman rule, and was, thus, 'the only province that discovered its strength only once it had been defeated'.¹⁹

The extent to which Spaniards, at any rate upper-class Spaniards, became Romans can be documented from the fields of religion and art. Roman cults spread everywhere, some of them fairly archaic like that of Tutelus,²⁰ unique recipient of a dedication at Tarraco; the vague designation of the divine force of a place, called normally Tutela, masculine or feminine, was an archaic notion in Rome and is scarcely attested during the empire. As for art, architecture and statuary in the towns, developed first of all under the Flavians and continuing until the late second century A.D., they clearly reflect the self-conscious 'Romanness' of the Spanish aristocracy. At Tarraco, for example, an enormous architectural project was realized under the Flavian emperors, transforming the upper part of the colony into a magnificent centre for the *concilium provinciae*, devoted to the imperial cult, advertising the splendour of the Spanish élites and imitating Rome with huge public squares and the monumental circus constructed within the town. But even a small town like Munigua (Mulva), a mining centre in the Sierra Morena, received a monumental cult building, in its architectural conception a copy of the famous temple of Fortuna Primigenia at Praeneste in Italy. And masses of statues were set up in the public places of most cities, emphasizing the loyalty of Spain to the imperial monarchy, and the identification of the upper classes with the ideals of Rome as well as publicizing their own fame and prestige.

VI. THE AGE OF THE FLAVIANS AND ANTONINES: DIACHRONIC ASPECTS

Economic growth, the completion of the administrative development, urbanization, social differentiation and cultural ambitions – these are the themes of the history of Hispania under the Flavian emperors and beyond. In contrast, political history is uneventful. The departure of legio VII Gemina, under the command of Trajan as legate, to deal with Antonius Saturninus in Upper Germany, in A.D. 89; Hadrian's visit to his native country in A.D. 122/3; the vain attempt of Cornelius Priscianus, the governor of Hispania Citerior, to seize imperial power in A.D. 145; the participation of Spanish units in other foreign military actions such as that

¹⁹ Florus, *Epit.* 1.33.15; 1.34.16; 1.33.4 (trans. E. S. Forster); cf. also II.10.3.

²⁰ Cf. M^a. J. Pena, *Mem. de Hist. Ant.* (Oviedo) 5 (1981) 84–5 no. 9 (with an incomplete reading).

against the Mauri in Africa under Antoninus Pius; none of these events interrupted the peaceful development of the country. Only under Marcus Aurelius was the peace of Hispania seriously disturbed by unexpected events. In A.D. 171 a raid by the Mauri on the coast of Baetica necessitated administrative and military countermeasures. Baetica was temporarily placed under the control of the imperial legate of Hispania Citerior, who was at this time Caius Aufidius Victorinus. A *vexillatio* under the knight Lucius Iulius Vehilius Gallus(?) Iulianus,²¹ and legio VII Gemina, apparently under the command of Publius Cornelius Anullinus from Iliberris, the former proconsul of Baetica, expelled the enemy. About A.D. 177 a second raid by the Mauri disturbed the southern parts of the Iberian peninsula. The intruders pressed forward from the area of Malaga as far as Singilia Barba (Antequera) and besieged the town. In this second *bellum Mauricum* in Spain, it was the army from the neighbouring province of Mauretania Tingitana, under the command of Caius Vallius Maximianus, the equestrian governor, which attacked the invaders from the rear and restored the *pax pristina*²² of Spain.

The consequences of these raids have been overestimated by several scholars. It is hard to identify any long-term economic and social consequences as opposed to short-term psychological effects. It would certainly be wrong to hold that these wars initiated a general crisis in Spain, which deepened to become a permanent crisis during the third century. To be sure, the Antonine period saw important changes in the economic, social, political and cultural life of Roman Spain; but these had already begun under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius and were clearly internal in origin. There are several symptoms of these changes. From Hadrian onwards, for example, considerably fewer Spaniards than before appear to have entered the Roman Senate as *novi homines*; this may indicate that the possibilities for the accumulation of wealth by rising new families were limited. The readiness of the rich and powerful urban élites to devote themselves to public offices like the flaminiate of Hispania Citerior decreased, as did their inclination to pay for expensive foundations. Even self-representation of these élites on public monuments and statues erected in public places appears to have become less attractive after the middle of the second century, and the cultural decline is obvious after the generation of Quintilian and Martial. As for economic and social problems, illuminating sources include the often quoted passage in the biography of Marcus Aurelius concerning the 'exhaustion' of Spain which seems to refer to the consequences of the emigration of senatorial families to Italy,²³ and the famous inscription of Italica attesting the measures of Marcus Aurelius to alleviate the burdens

²¹ *CIL* VI 41271. ²² *CIL* II 1120 = *ILS* 1354.

²³ *HA Marc.* 11.7. Cf. on this, Syme (1964) 146–8 = *Roman Papers* II 626–8.

of the urban upper classes by reducing the expenses for gladiatorial games.²⁴ As archaeological research has shown, some of the towns in eastern Spain like Emporiae (Ampurias) and Baetulo (Badalona) were, as early as the late first century, anything but flourishing urban centres.²⁵ Several towns were impoverished, it seems, as a result of the horrendously expensive and luxurious public buildings, the emigration of a number of rich citizens from the towns of the interior to the eastern coast and to the south, and probably above all the withdrawal of senatorial wealth from the Iberian peninsula to Italy. In addition to this there was a general change in the structure and mentality of the upper classes and some changes in the structure of production.

Thus, in the history of Roman Spain, the reigns of the Flavian and Antonine emperors were not homogeneous. An apogee was reached under the Flavian emperors and in the first decades of the second century; thereafter, under Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, a decline set in. This did not lead into a general crisis or to a collapse, not even during the third century. But the long period of growth and often spectacular prosperity and success in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres dating back to the late Republic, and receiving fresh impetus under Augustus, the Flavian emperors and Trajan, was at an end.

²⁴ *CIL* II 6278 = *ILS* 5163. ²⁵ Cf. Aquilué Abadias (1984) 95–113.

CHAPTER 14

GAUL

C. GOUDINEAU

Camille Jullian, the greatest historian of Roman Gaul, wrote in 1920 of the reign of Vespasian, ‘Silence fell everywhere, a good omen for a new age of toil and energy.’ In fact, apart from a few brief references in the *Historia Augusta* to Hadrian’s travels there in A.D. 121–2, the only texts which mention the Gallic provinces between A.D. 70 and 192 deal with just two events; the persecution of the Christians of Lyons in 177, and the banditry of Maternus and his followers in the reign of Commodus. This is little enough. The creation of the Germanies in the course of Domitian’s provincial reorganization did, to be sure, place the Gallic provinces well behind the frontier zone, and so protected them from becoming involved in Rome’s defence strategy, in the development of the *limes*, or in the disturbances which took place in that region in Marcus Aurelius’ reign. At all events, the Tres Galliae and Narbonensis remained for over a hundred and twenty years outside the mainstream of political history. In the absence of texts, we are dependent for evidence on history’s auxiliary disciplines, that is to say epigraphy and archaeology. It is important not to forget their limitations.

Latin inscriptions are very unevenly distributed. Not only do more than half of them come from Narbonensis, but many of the cities and small towns of the Tres Galliae have produced barely twenty or thirty examples. What hope is there of recovering worthwhile information from samples of such low statistical significance? Besides, these inscriptions are heavily biased towards official acts such as dedications, and so are representative of only the uppermost social strata.

As for archaeology, it is true that it is now less vulnerable than it has been in the past to chance discoveries, since large-scale construction projects, which over the last twenty years have affected much of France, have allowed the excavation of hundreds of hectares. Nevertheless, the distribution of archaeological research remains very uneven. Urban excavations have been favoured at the expense of rural sites and the south of the country has received more attention than the north. Most work has been conducted in Narbonensis, in particular at Aix, Arles, Fréjus, Orange, Nîmes and Vienne. In the Tres Galliae, by far the most important work has

concerned Lyons, and then Amiens, Bordeaux and Toulouse, and to a lesser extent Chartres, Tours, Périgueux and Limoges. Aerial photography, surface survey and palaeo-environmental studies have mostly dealt with settlement patterns and landscape archaeology. But there, too, research is far from general and systematic. Without either an overall plan or enough professional archaeologists to carry it out, we remain dependent on a small number of regions – Picardy, Burgundy, eastern Brittany and Poitou – for most of our evidence. The greatest temptation, and therefore the greatest danger, whether we are dealing with urbanism or the countryside, is to overgeneralize from this uneven data. It should also be acknowledged, with considerable regret, that many excavations and survey projects have either not been published or have only produced the briefest of reports.¹

I. THE GAULS AND ROME²

Let us begin with a resumé. In A.D. 48, the emperor Claudius made a speech to the Senate of Rome, a speech which has been preserved by Tacitus (*Ann.* xi.23–5) and on a bronze tablet from Lyons (*CIL* XIII 1668). His proposal was that Gauls from the Tres Galliae who had already gained Roman citizenship might be allowed to enter the Senate and to hold magistracies at Rome. He took great care to hedge this about with all sorts of rhetorical precautions, even going so far as to say: ‘it is with apprehension, senators, that I have gone beyond the boundaries of those provinces that are familiar and well known to yourselves, to plead candidly now on behalf of Long-Haired Gaul (*Gallia Comata*).’ A century after Caesar’s conquest of Gaul, in

¹ The bibliographical references in the footnotes complement the bibliography of my contribution to *CAHx*². The only items from it that are reproduced here are those which are particularly important for the period A.D. 70–192. In view of the number of publications on Gaul during this period, I have cited mainly books or articles which provide syntheses and mostly works published after 1980 (taking no account of anything published after December 1993). Note that Camille Jullian’s great *Histoire de la Gaule* (8 vols. 1907–26) has been reissued in 2 vols. by Hachette-Reference, 1993 (Paris) and that P. M. Duval’s numerous publications have been brought together in *Travaux sur la Gaule (1946–86)* Ecole Française de Rome, 116 (1989).

² Gaul is one of the subjects covered in the following surveys and works of synthesis: Blagg and Millett (1990), Garnsey and Saller, *Empire*, Hartley and Wachter (1983), Jacques and Scheid (1990), Le Gall and Le Glay (1987), *Oppositions et résistances* (1987), Werner (1984), Wood and Queiroga (1992). In addition to the research tools noted in *CAHx*² note should be taken of the expansion of the *Carte Archéologique de la Gaule* published by the Institut de France and the Ministère de la Culture. One third of French *départments* have now been covered. The series *Gallia Informations* (CNRS) now publish recent discoveries from many regions. Finally, a major national exhibition on all aspects of archaeological research was held in Paris in 1989. The catalogue, with full bibliography, is *Archéologie de la France. Trente ans de découvertes*, published by Réunion des Musées Nationaux, Paris, 1989. Several exhibitions covering research at a regional level have also produced catalogues.

A number of regional monographs have appeared: Cuppers (1990), Février (1989), Galliou (1992), Lambert (1990), Provost (1993), Rivet (1988), Wightman, *Gallia Belgica*. Some general popular works are also worth noting: Beck and Chew (1989), Coulon (1990), Goudineau and Guilaine (1989), Gros (1991), King (1990).

other words, and sixty years after Augustus' organization of the Tres Galliae, these 'long-haired' Gauls remained 'unfamiliar and ill-known' to the senators of Rome. At about the same period, Pomponius Mela was happy to repeat the same old ethnographic descriptions which still mentioned human sacrifice and the capture of the Capitol by Brennus. All this, despite the fact that Claudius himself had been born at Lyons! Tacitus tells us that the senators did not accede to his request: the Aedui alone benefited from the measure the emperor had advocated. Equally, there is no proof that it was in Claudius' reign that the Latin right was extended to the whole of the Tres Galliae, which may have had to wait for that until the Flavian period, even though Narbonensis had enjoyed the privilege since Caesar.

The differences between the south, regarded as similar in many respects to Italy, and the more northern provinces never disappeared completely, but they became less marked with the passing of time. The reasons are complex. The events of A.D. 68–9 showed that the fate of the empire might well be decided in the mists of these distant lands where the legions were stationed and where popular uprisings might occur in support of one or other candidate for power. Regions which had barely existed in the Roman imagination, then, suddenly acquired a more concrete existence. They were no longer simply faraway places inhabited by strange peoples whom Rome had subjugated in the course of her conquest of the world. Instead, those peoples had shown they might take a hand in making history. Likewise, the attention of the ruling classes was now drawn away from the shores of the Mediterranean by projects such as the systematic construction of the *limes* on the Rhine and the Danube; the annexation of the *Agri Decumates*; Domitian's organization of Germany into separate provinces; Trajan's campaigns, and so on. That ruling class was not merely compelled to consider these distant provinces afresh, but also to serve in them both as civil administrators and military commanders. A number of the legates, *en route* for Germany, passed through the Gallic provinces and got to know them. Trajan was one of them, and another was the historian Tacitus, who may himself have been of Gallic descent, and whose father-in-law Agricola came from Fréjus. Pliny the Elder probably served as a procurator in Gaul, and in any case visited the area. These men, among others, did much to portray Gaul in a gentler light. The Spanish roots of Trajan and Hadrian, and Antoninus Pius' Gallic ancestry – his family was from Nîmes – contributed to making Gaul seem a little less strange, even if the personal ties established by Caesar and maintained by his descendants came to an end with Claudius.

Through experience of the Gauls, through personal contacts and perhaps even marriages, and finally through education, the senatorial class and the equestrian order were gradually persuaded that the Gallic interior was not inhabited by primitives. Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* reflects

this new viewpoint. Gaul still had its own peculiarities, such as Druids and superstitions, but he most often mentions Gaul for its agriculture, its technological innovations, the success of its manufactures, its commerce and, above all, for its wealth. His nephew, Pliny the Younger, even if he was surprised to learn that his works were on sale in the bookshops of Lyons ('I never dreamed that there *were* bookshops in Lyons!') nevertheless kept up a correspondence with a citizen of the colony (*Ep.* IX.2.2).

Moreover, geographical knowledge had advanced since Strabo's descriptions and since Agrippa's map and commentary. The northern coasts and the mouths of the Rhine became more familiar in the course of repeated campaigns in Germany, and the overall shape of Gaul and its position in relation to Britain and to the Iberian peninsula were known with a greater degree of precision. Pomponius Mela noted that Gaul had one north-facing coast and another facing west, a fact of which Strabo had been ignorant, and some other details are mentioned, for example that the Garonne was tidal (Mela II.21). The information gathered by the great second-century school of mapmakers, of which Ptolemy is the best-known representative, was not to be bettered before the seventeenth century.

One great contribution to an increased knowledge of the country was the establishment and mapping of the road system, revealed to us by the Antonine Itinerary and the Peutinger Table, as well as by a large number of milestones, which enable its actual position to be fixed on the ground. It is clear from this evidence that Gaul possessed a very diverse and ramified communications network that contrasts markedly with those of most of the western provinces of the Roman world. If the chronological distribution of milestones has any statistical validity, it seems that the major routes – the 'Agrippan road system' and the Claudian projects directed to the West in particular – were constructed under the Julio-Claudians. It was at the end of the first century, and above all during the second century, that the dense network of minor roads was created, confirming the importance of the smaller towns and indicating a level of rural integration to which I shall return below. In that sense, Gaul was more easily 'penetrated' and so more familiar than other parts of the world.

The country also became better known as a consequence of administrative expedients designed to serve fiscal ends. Censuses of property and population went back to the earliest days of romanization, and provoked unrest. One of the liveliest of current debates concerns how to interpret the imposition of regular patterns on to the countryside, patterns which are coming to light more and more frequently as a result of aerial photography. Do these patterns relate to the division of land in connection with colonization, to a reorganization of landholding related to changing patterns of agriculture, or to a system connected with the census of land and of wealth? No consensus has been reached and the three explanations

offered are not mutually exclusive. The cadastral tablets found at Orange at least seem to indicate the fiscal status of landholdings in the middle and lower Rhône valleys in the form that Vespasian – according to the inscription that headed the dossier – ordered them to be inventoried, and that many of those estates went back to the period of colonization a century before. Even if most districts of Gaul were not ‘cadastrated’ with the same geometrical precision as is evidenced in the south, it is likely that regular land divisions did develop there both to serve agricultural ends and under the influence of taxation systems. It seems probable, then, that land-divisions of the type labelled by the specialists ‘romano-indigènes’ (Romano-native), will be found all over the Tres Galliae, systems which divided up the land in traditional ways, of the kind which have already been found in the Jura, in Burgundy, around Reims and Caen and elsewhere.

Finally, the spread of Latin clearly also played an important part in changing Roman attitudes to the Gauls. It is important to assess the extent of this process by the second century. Latin was certainly required from Augustus’ reign for all official business and for anything concerned with political and religious affairs. The educational establishments set up for the sake of the children of the nobility, like those that Tacitus mentions at Autun (*Ann.* III.43), had instilled the élite with Latin. How far did this affect the lower classes? No document produced during the second century can be shown without doubt to have been written in a Celtic language, not even curse tablets, but epigraphy, it has been pointed out, does not tell the whole story. When Ireneus, bishop of Lyons in Septimius Severus’ reign, referred to the ‘barbarous speech’ of those to whom he preached, did he mean Celtic or simply dreadful Latin? Probably the latter, some sort of ‘pidgin’ which the educated classes, including all bishops, mistook for Celtic or Gaulish out of ignorance of the latter. Philology, after all, shows that although some Celtic words survived, as they survive today, in place-names and as technical terms, Old French descends in the main from Latin, even if not quite from the Latin of Cicero. The influence of the Church, which used Latin as a liturgical language, would not have been sufficient on its own to achieve this.

The Gallic provinces, then, were thoroughly romanized by the end of the second century A.D. When a people loses its native tongue and the means by which their culture is passed on is utterly transformed, it is their very past which has disappeared. Any approach to Gallo-Roman culture based on ‘survivals’ or ‘resistance’ is therefore meaningless. Nevertheless, Gaul was not indistinguishable from Italy, Spain and Dacia, but had its own identity. The reason for making this point now is that in what follows I shall necessarily concentrate on these differences. But an attention to what is specific to the Gallic provinces should not bring into question their membership of the *imperium Romanum*.

II. THE GALLIC PROVINCES: PHYSICAL AND HUMAN GEOGRAPHY³

Experts on environmental and climatic change have only become interested in antiquity so recently that definite information about the climate in the first and second centuries is not yet available. The various sources of evidence do not, at the moment, all point in the same direction. It seems that a cool, humid period was replaced in the second century B.C. by a climatic phase characterized by less rainfall and by less of a contrast between seasons. That phase lasted until the beginning of the first century A.D., when the climate once again became cooler and damper until the end of the century, when it was followed by a new warm period in the second and third centuries.

Our knowledge of ancient hydrography is also poor, as the application of that science to archaeology is in its infancy. What information is currently available refers mostly to the Rhône, the level of which seems to have arisen at regular intervals from the turn of the millennium, probably in response to changes in rainfall. The rise in water level necessitated the terracing and raising of the banks that has recently been noticed at Vienne and Lyons. But rather than make the river more violent, the effect seems to have been to calm its flow, and all the evidence suggests that the effect of floods was reduced. These conditions explain the importance of riverine communications, and the epigraphical references to *nautae* providing transport along stretches of water such as the Ardèche and the Ouvèze that are not navigable today. Likewise, these conditions allowed sea-going vessels to come as far up the Rhône as Lyons, making this city an important port.

Other evidence suggests an early imperial rise in the sea level of the Mediterranean in Provence, and of the Channel and the Atlantic to the north and south of Brittany, as far as the Vendée. Some farms and salt-production centres were submerged during the first century A.D., and in the same period some islands that were previously joined to the mainland, at least at low tide, were cut off and the settlements on them were abandoned. It is still a matter of debate whether these changes in sea-level reflect general trends produced by climatic change, or whether they were caused by localized tectonic movements. Whatever the cause, the coastline shifted at several places.

The issue of deforestation is equally complex. Surface survey has revealed

³ See Andouze and Fiches (1993), Barruol, Gascou and Bessac (1982), Bel and Benoit (1986), *Le bois* . . . (1985), Chastagnol (1992), Chouquer and Favory (1991), Christol (1992a), (1992b), Deman and Raepsaet (1985), Ferdière and Zadora-Rio (1986), Fiches (1987), (1990), Favory and Fiches (1994), Frézouls (1984), (1985–7), Gascou and Janon (1985), Guilaine (1991), de Kisch (1992), Leveau and Provansal (1993), Maurin (1991), Moberg *et al.* (1984), Naveau (1991), Pflaum (1981), Provost (1984), Richard and Magny (1992), Troussel (1987).

archaeological remains in a number of areas that are presently wooded, especially in the Ile-de-France, in central France, in Normandy, in the Vosges and even in the south. There has been widespread speculation that the Gallo-Roman period may have seen forest clearances on a scale equal to those of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But a cautious response is more appropriate. Although it is no longer possible to hold the belief, dear to historians at the beginning of this century, that Gaul was a country covered for the most part by forests, we should not assume that all Gallo-Roman remains represent the remains of agriculture. In some cases, these may reflect the use of the forest to supply wood for craft production, building and firewood. Sedimentology seems to indicate that there was no large-scale erosion, except in some areas of the Massif Central and the south, a fact which suggests either that patches of woodland remained to catch and retain run-off water, or that they were managed in a planned fashion.

Our conception of rural settlement has recently undergone major revision. Campaigns of aerial photography, although they have not been exhaustive, have nevertheless made it possible to map hundreds of agricultural establishments (inaccurately referred to as *villae*) as well as enclosures, ditch systems and the remains of land-divisions. The last ten years have also seen the development of surface surveys designed to detect and study concentrations of potsherds and brick which attest human occupation in the Gallo-Roman period. Alongside the traditional typological dating of pottery, archaeomagnetism has recently been used to date brick and tile. In the south, field survey has also been used to find the remains of oil and wine presses. Rescue archaeologists have had to uncover and excavate huge complexes of features, including entire sites. The construction of motorways and high-speed rail links creates immense transects across the landscape that have allowed archaeologists to work on a scale never before possible. Thus, in Picardy the density of occupation has been shown to be six or seven times greater than that already revealed by aerial photography. Every two or three kilometres on average, a huge site is revealed, the buildings of which cover ten or fifteen hectares and are surrounded by, and dominate, more modest structures. The whole complex is generally located in the centre of fields delineated by ditch systems. Excavation reveals frequent shifts of site and spatial reorganizations. In eastern Brittany there is a similar density of sites, revealed by structures or enclosures. These results may be generalizable insofar as other micro-regional studies point in the same direction.

Recent research has also focused attention on the number and significance of the settlements that English historians call 'small towns', but which in French are termed *agglomérations secondaires*. These have been particularly thoroughly studied in Burgundy and in the Franche-Comté, in Lorraine, Aquitaine and in eastern Languedoc. For example, seventy-five small towns have been discovered in the territories of the *civitates* of the

Aedui, the Senones, and (although part of Upper Germany) the Lingones and the Sequani. Forty odd were at least twenty-five hectares in area, and twelve covered more than fifty hectares. A third of the sites have produced inscriptions, sometime in quantity: Mandeure, Alise-Ste-Reine, Mâlain and Dijon, for example. Many of them were equipped with sanctuaries and public baths, and eight had their own theatres. Nearly half of them seem to have served predominantly agricultural functions, communities of peasants, then, processing and distributing rural produce. Other communities were associated with quarries or mines. The sites often seem characterized by considerable craft activity, including the working of clay, iron and bronze, the manufacture of furniture and small items from wood and other materials, meat processing and, in five cases, workshops producing sculpture. Nine of the small towns had a secondary role in local government as the centres of *pagi* or else had the status of *vici*. Finally, a religious role seems to have been important for about half the sites.

This study raises a series of questions. First, how far can this pattern be assumed correct for the rest of Gaul? The case of Aquitaine suggests it cannot. There seems to have been considerable variety within that Roman province. Two-thirds of the small towns – including the biggest of them, Vandœuvre, Naintré, Talmont and Argenton – are in the territories of the five large *civitates* of the north, the Bituriges Cubi, the Pictones, the Santones, the Lemovices and the Arverni, while the peoples south of the Garonne, such as the Vellavii, the Gaballi and the Petrocori provide few examples. Second, what role did the road network play in these developments? It is certain that the major roads promoted the foundation and growth of some centres, but at the end of the first century and in the second century the relationship seems to have been reversed, and it was the existence of some secondary centres at some distance from the main roads that led to the further ramification of the road system. Third, what was the relationship between these secondary centres and the *civitas* capitals? Until recently the orthodox view was that monumental centres – typically comprising public spaces, a theatre, baths, a sanctuary and perhaps even some civic building like a basilica – were founded in the middle of the countryside with no surrounding settled population. These centres were supposed to have served as meeting-points, sites for occasional gatherings and, in short, as sorts of ‘civic centres’ designed to ‘romanize’ the peasant masses. These collections of monuments had even been given the name *concliabula*. Recent research has led to a reassessment of this theory. Only a few great sanctuaries, such as Drevant and Les Bouchards, were truly isolated from settlements, and many of these ‘civic centres’ – Talmont in Santon territory, for example – turn out to have been genuine towns.

It is still too early to suggest a real geography for these secondary towns. The best hypothesis currently available suggests that they were least important in the smallest *civitates*, in the south-west, in the north and the north-

west along the Channel and the North Sea and in mountainous regions. They would then be most developed in the south, the centre and the east. Whenever reasonable dating evidence is available, it indicates that the apogee of these centres was under the Flavians and in the second century. This is an important point, since it is also the period in which the *civitas* capitals reached their maximum extent. The two categories were not in competition, then, as was to be the case in some instances later on.

If this observation is combined with the density of rural settlement noted above, it is tempting to challenge existing estimates of the total population. It is worth remembering that at the beginning of this century historians reckoned the population of Gaul (in its widest sense, extending as far as the Rhine and so perhaps covering 600,000 square kilometres) at 30–50 million souls. The trend reversed and in place of these unrealistically high totals, estimates tended to be in the range of 3–5 million, assuming a maximum density of eight persons per square kilometre, based on an impression of rural settlement that now appears greatly underestimated. If both external factors – such as colonization, immigration of ‘foreigners’, albeit limited, and the end of the trade in Gallic slaves to Italy – and also internal factors – such as peace, security, political stability, agricultural expansion and economic growth in a number of centres – are taken into account, it becomes clear that the early empire must have witnessed a general increase in population. Without entering into detailed calculations, a population density of twelve persons per square kilometre seems to be an absolute minimum, and so I would suggest a total population of well over 8 million persons. How much over 8 million, however, difficult to say.

III. THE ROMANIZATION OF THE COUNTRYSIDE⁴

Gaul’s reputation in literary texts is that of a land rich in agriculture and in stock-raising. Recent research makes it possible to be more specific about some aspects of the way the land was used.

To begin with, romanization took various forms. In Narbonensis, colo-

⁴ The following reference works and survey articles include important bibliographies: Bémont and Jacob (1986), Ferdière (1988), Laubenheimer (1992), Leveau, Silières and Vallat (1993), Mangin (1988); note that C. Bémont contributes a regular update on developments in pottery studies to the *REA* and F. Laubenheimer does the same for amphorae and economic history in the *DHA*. Other works include: Agache (1975), ‘Agriculteurs et métallurgistes ...’ (1993), Amouretti and Brun (1992), Andreau (1989), (1990), *Anfore romane ...* (1989), *Archéologie de la vigne ...* (1990), Aubin (1984), Borréani and Brun (1990), Brun and Rogers (1989), Cauuet (1991), (1992), Columbeau (1991), Coudart and Pion (1986), Desbat (1991), Domergue (1991), (1993), Favory (1991), Feugère (1985), Fiches (1989), *Formes de l’habitat rural ...* (1993), *Géographie commerciale ...* (1977), Heinen (1976), de Izarra (1993), Langouet (1984), Langouet and Daire (1989), Laubenheimer (1990a), (1990b), Leday (1980), Legouilloux (1989), Le Ny (1988), Mangin *et al.* (1992), *Mines et fonderies ...* (1982), *Les mines ...* (1987), *Mines et métallurgies* (1987), *L’orgine des richesses ...* (1985), Picard (1981), Py (1992), Raepsaet (1987), Raepsaet-Charlier and Raepsaet (1988), Reddé (1979), Roche-Bernard (1993), Sablayrolles (1989), Schwinden (1989), *Terroirs, territoires ...* (1991), Wightman (1975), Wild (1970), (1985).

nization had an immediate impact, in particular by compelling dispossessed local populations to bring new areas under cultivation. By contrast, in the Tres Galliae excavation has revealed considerable continuity between agriculture at the end of the Celtic period, and the first 'Roman' production. Changes are more noticeable at first in land-divisions, ditch complexes and enclosures, which become more regular in shape, rather than in the buildings themselves, which only began to be built in stone and roofed in *tegulae* in the middle of the first century, a style which only became widespread in the course of the second century. The design of these 'farmhouses' (a term preferable to *villae*) is a good deal more varied than is sometimes imagined. The great ranges of the second century, equipped with courtyards and façades, are the culmination of long processes of development, not the result of the adoption of some imported model.

Research on this subject is less advanced in southern Gaul, where conditions are not so favourable for aerial and surface surveys. However, it has recently proved possible to show that alongside the undoubted influence of Italian models, local traditions continued to exert an influence. At the foot of the late prehistoric *oppida*, alongside the 'colonial-style' *villae*, were small farms or little rural centres constructed and laid out in ways that reflect the influence of Iron Age custom. Beside the grand establishments with their numerous olive presses and vast areas devoted to wine storage, small concerns have been excavated which have just one oil press and a few *dolia*. The difficulty is in knowing whether or not the latter were controlled by the former.

In fact, the key question concerns the distinction between land ownership and the actual units through which it was farmed, whether by free peasants, tenants, sharecroppers or some other means. Archaeological data seem to suggest that the basic units of production were farms of, on average, 150–200 hectares in size, less in southern Gaul. On the basis of recent excavations in Picardy, the estates that surrounded the very large establishments would have brought together a number of these units, and could have covered between eight and twenty kilometres, that is 800–2,000 hectares. But calculations of that sort are very insecure, and in any case vary according to the kind of land involved and the way it is farmed: vineyards, for instance, cannot really be compared with pastures. In any case, inscriptions that show that nobles might hold offices in more than one *civitas* indicate that an individual might possess widely scattered landholdings. Two conclusions are certain. First, the idea that enormous estates existed covering thousands of hectares must be abandoned. Second, the *average* size (but it is only an average) of an agricultural unit in the Gallic countryside was in the region of 150–200 hectares. Our data is not good enough, however, to reveal family plots that can only have covered 20 hectares or so, nor to estimate what proportion of the terrain was covered in woodland, pasture,

moorland and so on. Finding answers to these questions is an important priority for future research.

As for agricultural production itself, a good deal has been discovered about wine and oil production and also about stock-raising. Vines were grown in the area around Marseilles in late prehistory. Small production centres have been found archaeologically, dating from the beginning of the Christian era. Production increased over the first century, and huge wine stores were constructed on some estates after about A.D. 50. The emperor Domitian ordered half of all provincial vineyards to be torn up in A.D. 92, but it is from then on that Gallic wine production achieved its greatest extent, so the decree cannot have been applied. Wine was already being produced near Bordeaux, in Dauphiné, Burgundy and the Rhineland, but it was from this period that it really began to flourish, a good deal earlier, in other words, than was previously believed. Yet other vintages, produced on a rather smaller scale, probably owed their beginnings to the favourable climatic conditions described above. This wine production was accompanied by the manufacture of the *amphorae* termed 'Gaulish', which were made at over sixty sites and exported as far as the military camps on the Rhine, to Britain and also to Ostia, Rome and perhaps the East. All the recent data confirm that from now on viticulture was of great importance in Gaul. Enormous wine-producing facilities have been found in Languedoc and Provence, but developments in the Three Gauls, notably in Aquitaine, were also on a more massive scale than was previously believed.

Oil production was a rather different affair. It was hardly produced outside Provence, where several production centres have recently been excavated, and where surface survey has recovered the remains of the stone components of presses and troughs. Production reached a peak at the end of the first century and during the second, but we have no idea of what sort of containers were used to transport southern oil. The cities of southern Gaul continued to import oil from Baetica throughout the same period. Should we conclude from this that regional production was on so small a scale that it could not even satisfy local needs? The case of wine production encourages caution. If the 'Gaulish' *amphorae* that carried local wine had not been identified, we would know nothing of the importance, or even of the existence of some vintages. The absence of *amphorae* for Gaulish oil does not provide a sound basis for assessing the phenomenon, and it is thus safer to reserve judgement for the moment.

Our knowledge of stock management has been revolutionized by the development, only recently in France, of archaeozoological studies based on animal bones recovered from excavations. This research has revealed that romanization brought about major changes. During the Iron Age, animals – specifically cattle, sheep, pigs and horses – were rather small in build. Following the conquest, there is evidence of some much larger

animals, nearly as massive as modern breeds. So large Italian cattle (*bos brachycephalos*) appear alongside the small native cattle (*bos brachycaros*), and become increasingly important over the first and especially the second centuries. They do not, however, ever threaten to replace entirely the smaller cattle, the size of which increases. Sheep, and above all pigs, undergo similar developments. These changes in the size of animals and in stock-raising took place over a long period, and there were always exceptions, so that even in the second century, some estates had not changed over to the large cattle. A recent discovery is the large estates for rearing sheep in Crau, in the territory of the colony of Arles. Should a distinction be drawn between 'model farms' and traditional practices, or between large stock-raisers and small concerns? No figures are yet available to help us decide the matter, just as we are not yet able to produce a map showing, region by region, the main species raised. At present we can only note the importance of pigs, and the scarcity of faunal remains from wild species. The latter observation is equally true for the Iron Age: hunting made little contribution to diet, and is best regarded simply as a leisure activity.

Other kinds of studies, such as research on pollen and on seeds, are still in their infancy, and their first preliminary findings must be treated with great caution. They seem to indicate a difference between Narbonensis and the Tres Galliae. In the south, romanization had encouraged not only the intensification of olive- and vine-growing, but also the cultivation of some fruits (peaches, plums and figs), and had led to the introduction of some cucurbitaceous vegetables (melons and marrows). Elsewhere in Gaul, however, new crops appeared: vines, chick peas, rye, domesticated oats, distich barley and domesticated fruit trees, including apples, pears, quinces, cherries, pine kernels and perhaps chestnuts. In this instance, these new arrivals may have owed as much to favourable climatic conditions as to Italian involvement. But the appearance of these new species should not obscure the main points on which texts and archaeology agree. Gaul was above all a land of stock-raising, exporting meat, hides, woollen clothing and so on, and a land of cereal production. It was for cereal cultivation that Pliny credits the Gauls with inventing a great sickle, and perhaps the scythe (*HN* xxviii.261), and with developing, on the great plains of Belgica, a harvesting machine which he calls a *vallus* (*HN* xxx.296) which is also illustrated on some bas-reliefs. Experimental archaeology has shown the difficulty of working this machine, and its inefficiency except for spelt. Today, however, we tend to stress the contribution made by romanization, a systematic approach to farming, which in arable cultivation improved the soil through allowing it to lie fallow and through a biennial rotation, and for livestock meant selective breeding and proper stock control. The changes brought by Rome were thus considerable.

IV. MINING, CRAFT PRODUCTION AND TRADE⁵

If Rome was correct in its assessment of the agricultural riches of Gaul, it was quite wrong about the extent of its mineral resources. Late prehistoric Gaul had had a reputation for being rich in metals, especially in tin – which was in fact imported across, rather than from it – and in gold. At the end of the second century B.C., shortly after the conquest of the south in other words, mining began in the south-western Cevennes and in the Pyrenees Ariègeoises in search of lead, silver, copper and iron. In 56 B.C., the third year of the Gallic War, an expedition was despatched to Aquitaine under the command of Publius Crassus, the son of the famous businessman Marcus Licinius Crassus. It is difficult to believe that this venture was not prompted by economic aims, specifically by an interest in Aquitanian gold, yet recent research suggests that mining was scaled down towards the end of the last century B.C. Should we conclude that, after initially considering Gaul an El Dorado, Rome had come to realize that its metal resources had been overestimated by comparison with those of the Iberian Peninsula?

That conclusion seems a little premature since systemic research has only just begun on the mines of Gaul. The first lessons to be drawn from these studies relate to non-ferrous metals. The working conditions required to exploit the southern sites were very difficult, and deposits in the Vosges and the Alps were hardly touched during antiquity. Gold and tin sources were worked in the Limousin from the Flavian period, and in Brittany tin was produced in small quantities through surface-cut mining throughout the period. As for iron, traces of numerous production sites have been noted. Ironworkings were especially numerous in La Montagne Noire, in the Yonne, and in Lorraine, but also in the Berry, the Morvan, Périgord and elsewhere. These areas of iron production were only medium or small in scale, extending over only a few tens, or occasionally hundreds, of square kilometres in area, and the largest sites themselves never cover more than a thousand square kilometres. The overall pattern, then, was of scattered small-scale ironworkings and no great iron-producing regions existed. This probably accounts for the rarity of inscriptions referring to districts under the control of the emperor or civic authorities. Production was so dispersed that it could more or less escape being controlled directly by the imperial administration. Nevertheless, Trajan did establish an imperial secretariat for the iron mines of Gaul, responsible for leasing out those that belonged to the state, and among the officials of the Council of the Three Gauls at Condate was a *index arcae ferrar(iarum)* (*CIL* XIII 3162) which suggests that its budget was in part derived from a duty on iron produced in the mines. These observations do not alter the overall conclusion, however,

⁵ The bibliography for this topic is included in the list of items in n. 4, above.

that Roman Gaul had enough iron to supply its own needs but not enough to allow significant production for export.

Much the same is true of stone and marble quarries. Lyons provides a good example. To begin with, the stone needed to build the public monuments of the Augustan and Tiberian periods was brought up from the middle Rhône valley, in particular from the quarries of Glanum. Then quarries were opened up at Seyssel in Savoy, enabling stone to be brought down river instead of up, and finally quarries were developed even closer. Equally, there were marble quarries in Gaul, but none of them acquired any special importance with the exception of St B at in the Pyrenees, marble from which was widely distributed beyond its own region. Nevertheless, the marble used for the pavements and high quality facings of public and private monuments were for the most part imported from Italy, Greece or Africa.

The study of *terra sigillata* was for a long time the main means through which the economic life of Roman Gaul was studied. To be sure, this pottery is found in every excavation in the Roman West. The Rutenian productions of La Graufesenque and its subordinate centres and the Arvernian products of Lezoux were diffused over great distances, and the taste acquired for them explains the development of new centres of production in eastern France, in the Franche-Comt , in Lorraine and in Alsace which were most active in the second century. Yet however useful this ceramic is for dating archaeological contexts, for the study of eating habits and of decorative motifs, its economic importance is a matter of debate. No one today regards *terra sigillata* as the sign of an unparalleled economic success story. Some scholars have even raised doubts about the extent to which these great productions contributed to the prosperity of their immediate locales, particularly in view of the seasonal nature of their operation and of the manpower employed. On the other hand, a new possibility for research has been opened up by the suggestion that the location of these great centres of production might be related to the existence of trace routes primarily dealing in other products. Was La Graufesenque, in other words, linked to transport routes going via Narbonne, Montans to a route passing through Toulouse and Lezoux to those which connected with the Atlantic coast and with Britain? If so, major finds of *sigillata* at a given site might suggest it was also receiving imported grain or meat, textiles, wine, minerals and so forth, and the multiplication of centres of production in the second century, especially in the East, would attest to the growing importance of local exchange systems at the expense of larger-scale trade routes. At the moment, however, this suggestion is simply a hypothesis to be pursued further.

At a more modest level, the study of other pottery productions, such as cooking and 'coarse' wares, bricks and tiles, has led to the discovery of a

large number of small workshops, especially in cities and small towns. These discoveries run counter to the traditional view that these products were manufactured in rural *villae*. The same applies to other kinds of craft production, which are attributed more and more to small towns and less and less to great estates, for example textile production, which leaves very little in the way of archaeological remains aside from spindle whorls and loom weights.

The Gallic manufactures most commonly mentioned in texts and inscriptions are either the products of agriculture and stock-raising or else of textile working. For the latter, *Gallia Belgica* holds pride of place. Two other Gallic specialities are known from the iconographic studies. Wood-working made use of a sophisticated range of tools, from axes to long saws, to produce a wide range of products ranging from clogs to barrels. Secondly, the development of harnesses, following on the invention of shafts and perhaps of the collar, made possible a wide range of horse-drawn carriages from the second century which are depicted on relief sculptures from the Rhine valley.

Discussion of the overall level of commerce in Gaul can clearly not be separated from the debates over rival 'maximalist' and 'minimalist' interpretations of the economy of the Roman empire as a whole. Thus, although no one doubts that the presence of troops on the Rhine *limes* and then in Britain exercised a powerful attractive force, the extent of its influence is uncertain. If inscriptions mentioning the *nautae*, who controlled river transport, and *seviri Augustales*, whose wealth derived in general from business, are plotted on a map, they demonstrate the importance of riverine routes, the Rhône, the Saône, the Seine, the Moselle, the Loire and of course the old route across the Gallic Isthmus from Narbonne to Bordeaux. A *collegium* of *nautae* was governed by a *splendidissimus ordo*, like the senate of Nîmes or of Lyons or even of Rome. Seats were reserved for *nautae* in some amphitheatres, as happened at Nîmes. At Lyons, they or other *negotiatores* set up huge funerary markers. All these observations give the *impression* of lively commercial activity, based in particular on waterborne transport. That impression seems confirmed by depictions on funerary monuments of the second half of the second century and above all of the third century A.D., most of them from Mediomatrican or Treveran territory, which show boats and carts loaded up with barrels, sacks and bales of cloth.

But epigraphy and iconography alone do not allow us to go beyond general observations and 'impressions'. There is, as yet, little archaeological evidence for commercial installations. Few docks, trading posts or river ports have been found, although there are exceptions to this rule at Vienne, Talmont, Lyons, Bordeaux, Nantes and Rézé. A good deal has been learnt from the study of *amphorae*, their typology, their fabrics (from which their

origins can be discovered) and the painted inscriptions which appear on them. The importance of imports from the Iberian peninsula, for example, has been revealed (first wine, then fish sauces and oil), and the distribution of Gallic wine. But how can this activity be quantified? To begin with, several indicators suggest that the barrel may have played more of a role in the early empire than had been thought on the basis of the rarity of depictions of them before the mid-second and third centuries A.D. It is dangerous to put too much faith in iconographic fashions: images of banquets and of women making themselves up belong to the same style, yet it has never been believed that banquets were rare in the early empire, or that women did not arrange their hair then. But if the barrel was important in the first two centuries A.D., then the archaeological investigation of trade routes cannot produce usable results, since these containers disappear except in very rare circumstances (for example, when reused to line a well) and we do not know what they contained. The ambiguity of the evidence and the impossibility of obtaining quantifiable data suggest we should be very cautious about the role played by Gaul in the wider economy. It is worth noting, however, that the architectural developments that affected both towns and countryside, and rural buildings in particular, imply that a significant surplus was produced and that there was a market capable of handling it and of transforming it into cash. It is this market, its features and implications, which our sources emphasize. The images they present may well be distorted and deformed, but a critical approach to them should not lead us to deny the existence of the economic realities they portray.

V. THE LIFESTYLE AND HORIZONS OF THE ARISTOCRACY⁶

For a hundred years, histories of Gaul and studies of the area have concentrated on institutional and administrative developments, seeking to establish the exact boundaries of provinces and *civitates*, to work out precisely how they operated, and to piece together their prosopographies. With the

⁶ For towns and urban life the main works, often with useful bibliographies, are the following: Goudineau (1980), Gros and Torelli (1988), Mangin *et al.* (1986), *Les villes de la Gaule Belgique* . . . (1984), *Villes et agglomérations* . . . (1992). Valuable information about the cities of the early empire is included in the volumes of the series *Topographie Chrétienne dans les cités de la Gaule des origines au milieu du VIII^e siècle*, I–VII, 1986–9. On the small towns of Gallia Belgica and the Germanies, with some treatment of neighbouring regions, see *Agglomérations* (1994). Note also the bibliography in *CAH* x². See also: *Actes du colloque* . . . (1985), *Aoste* . . . (1990), *Archéologie à Nîmes* . . . (1990), *Augustoritum* . . . (1990), Barraud (1988), Bayard and Massy (1982), Béal and Dupraz (1989), Bellet (1991), *Carnets de fouilles* . . . (1990), Darde and Lassalle (1993), Desborde and Loustaud (1991), Deschamps and Vaginay (1990), Dumasy (1988), *Du nouveau sur l'Arles antique* (1987), Eck and Galsterer (1991), Février *et al.* (1988), Gauthier and Debord (1982), Goudineau (1989), Goudineau and Rebourg (1991), Guichard and Valette (1990), Hiernard (1987), Lerat and Walter (1990), *Lutèce* . . . (1984), Odiot *et al.* (1982), *Palladia Tolosa* . . . (1988), Pinette (1987), *Quand Vannes s'appelait* . . . (1992), Roussel (1988), Sintès (1992), *Trente ans* . . . (1990), *Ugernum* . . . (1987), Velay (1992), Villedieu (1990), Walker (1981).

exception of a few points of detail there is little to add to the traditional picture. The creation of the German provinces by Domitian (with the Lingones being reintegrated into Lugdunensis at an uncertain date) may be noted, and the grant of the Latin right to the Tres Galliae under the Flavians (rather than under Claudius, but certainty is impossible). Inscriptions seem to show that by the end of the early empire the governorship of Lugdunensis was regarded as more prestigious than those of Narbonensis, Aquitania or Belgica. Like other parts of the Roman world, Gaul received the attentions of a growing number of *procuratores*, some of them assigned to more than one province, and also of *curatores* assigned to ensure the financial probity of this or that *civitas*. Let us move on, to other matters.

Epigraphic research has recently cast some light on the Gallo-Roman élites, demonstrating that the number of Gauls embarking on equestrian and senatorial careers dropped sharply after A.D. 70. Although the number of equestrian posts continued to rise, the positions held by Gauls began to diminish under the Flavians, a downward trend that continued through the Antonine period. Apart from Mettius Rufus under Domitian and Attius Suburanus in Trajan's reign, no Gallic knight held an important post. Equally, only two Gauls are known to have held high senatorial rank, Iallius Bassus, a Helvian, and Sedatius Severianus, a Picton. Compared to the élites of Spain, the East and of Africa, those of Gaul, including Narbonensis, put up a poor performance. Ronald Syme's views about the supposed rise to power of Spaniards and Narbonensians under Trajan need to be revised, at least as far as the Gauls are concerned.

Why this decline? It certainly cannot be explained in terms of differences in the level of personal fortunes between the Gallo-Roman nobility and those of Italy, Spain and Africa. Although the number of inscriptions referring to acts of euergetism is not large, the sums cited for donations, feasts, buildings and the like are at least comparable with those known from the richest provinces. A. Annus Camars' gift to *Arelate* (*CIL* XII 670) of one thousand pounds of silver for two statues – that is over one million sesterces – is exceptional. Even so, examples of *summae honorariae* and payments *ad honorem* are known from several communities at rates of 100,000 sesterces or more, sums that are higher than those of Italy and Africa. One citizen of Nîmes bestowed two million sesterces and a huge estate on his native community (*CIL* XII 3313) and an equestrian from Vasio gave one and a half million to his (*CIL* XII 1357). Local notables contributed to adorning cities and to providing them with amenities in all four Gallic provinces. The most impressive act of euergetism was the testamentary gift to Bordeaux of two million sesterces as a contribution to the construction of an aqueduct (*CIL* XIII 596–600).

Epigraphy does pick out two peculiarities. First, the euergetism of the aristocracy was also directed towards the ‘small towns’, which they provided with basilicas, theatres, temples, baths and so forth. Second, funerary inscriptions show that a number of élite members chose to build their tombs not around the urban centres but in the countryside on their rural estates. Archaeology provides ample confirmation of this practice. Was it the case that, like Pliny the Younger, they divided their time between urban pursuits and rural retreats (*secessus* or *otium*) in their *villae*? The architectural development of the latter during the second century, and their rich decoration, particularly with mosaics, confirms this impression. The social world evoked by this material is that presented in the works of Ausonius, written two hundred years later.

Ausonius – who himself never visited Rome – exemplifies the lifestyle of those fourth- and fifth-century *clarissimi* who were permitted by Constantinian legislation to reside permanently in the provinces. It seems legitimate, then, to wonder whether the ‘decline’ in Gallic recruitment to equestrian and senatorial careers might not simply reflect an attitude similar to that of Ausonius, that is a preference for a voluntary withdrawal and a reluctance to settle far from one’s native land. If so, then Valerius Macedo of Vienne’s refusal to accept the grant of the *toga laticlava* under Hadrian may have been representative of a more general attitude. After playing a major part in the political, military and administrative life of the empire during the Augustan age, the Gallo-Roman nobility were less willing to be uprooted than were, for example, Romano-African élites.

A related issue is that of social mobility and the question of the extent to which it was possible for individuals or families whose fortune derived from ‘economic activity’ to gain access to the highest positions in Gallo-Roman society, the *ordo decurionum*, the municipal magistracies and the provincial priesthoods. The issue is not confined to Gaul, but it has a special importance in this case. Historians, impressed by phenomena like the spread of *terra sigillata*, have suggested that an old aristocracy, dating back to before the conquest and romanized in the Caesarian and Augustan periods – hence the common gentile name, Iulius – was replaced during the first century by a new commercial bourgeoisie. According to some the process began under Claudius, others see it as beginning under the Flavians, and the success of this new class is taken to be proclaimed by the late second- and third-century funerary monuments of the Moselle valley and the Rhineland. This picture seems to be supported by inscriptions that mention the generosity of rich freedmen and the success of *seviri Augustales* in the great commercial towns, especially at Lyons, Nîmes and Narbonne which together account for two-thirds of attested examples. Recent work is, however, cautious about the notion of the decline of the old aristocracy.

To begin with, the enthusiastic opinions held in the past about Gallic 'industry' and commerce are no longer so widely shared. Second, detailed research on inscriptions, when there are enough of them as at Nîmes, reveals complex patterns which suggest more continuity than change. Social renewal sometimes took the form of 'Pompeian' adoption, that is one of the newly enriched adopting a member of an ancient family, but more often by means of the freedmen of great families whose descendants gradually became integrated into the ruling classes. In one way or another, those who became rich through commercial or financial ventures found themselves, either from the very start or in due course, either clients or allies of the old families, and so did more to sustain them in their position than to replace them. Can this analysis, conducted on one Narbonensian *civitas*, be generalized to the Tres Galliae? The paucity of municipal inscriptions makes it hard to be certain, but it is difficult to see what sorts of arguments would lead us to think otherwise, at least in the case of the great *civitates* of Lugdunensis and Aquitania which had powerful pre-conquest aristocracies. These observations also tend to reinforce the picture suggested above of élites closely tied to their lands.

The idea that the nobility were more deeply attached to their *civitates* than to the empire at large, and that within them they spent much of their time on their rural estates, might explain why settlements and monuments are so densely scattered in the Gallic landscape. An aristocrat was not only interested in the capital of the *civitas*, but also in the small towns and in the countryside. It is also easier to understand why the *ordo decurionum* promoted so many little centres, granting them the status of *vicus* and with it the possibility of setting up the monuments that might accompany this lowest level of administrative independence. Although the chronology of monuments needs to be approached with some caution, the archaeological evidence does in fact allow us to discern, within the early imperial period, a distinction between the developments of the first and of the second centuries A.D. In the first century the means through which the land was to be exploited were set in place and, at the same time, the capital city of the *civitas* was constructed, its organization and monuments expressing adherence to Rome, loyalty to the emperor and its own administrative role. We might term this 'the City of Ideology'. This period ended in the reign of Domitian. He was the last emperor to intervene both at the level of provincial organization – not just by creating the Germanies, but also by setting up the provincial imperial cult of Narbonensis – and at the level of individual towns, bestowing the title of *Palladia* on Toulouse and being responsible, according to the most recent interpretations, for the amphitheatres of Arles and Nîmes and the reorganization of the forum of Amiens and so forth. In any case, after his reign the main building projects

in the *civitas* capitals concerned the organization of the city, for example the repair, rationalization and improvement of the road system; the provision of amenities, such as the building and extension of public baths, aqueducts, monumental fountains, porticoes and the like; or else private residences. Small towns, on the other hand, were provided in the course of the second century with civic monuments.

The case of places of entertainment, which served both ideology and recreational purposes, seems significant. All the theatres of classical design, some twenty-three in number, are to be found in *civitas* capitals and all but three of them were built in the first century A.D. Of the thirty-nine amphitheatres known, thirty-two are in capitals and no more than eight were built after the first century. The Flavian period and the second century, however, saw the appearance of a type of monument that has long been termed either a 'theatre–amphitheatre' or else an *édifice-mixte*. The *cavea* of these structures extends partly into the round, beyond a semicircle, and it has an elliptical or oval *orchestra*, with the *scaena* reduced to a simple podium, sometimes backed by a colonnaded wall. Nearly a hundred examples are known of this type of building, which has numerous variants and which could accommodate both theatrical performances and the games normally associated with amphitheatres. More than 80 per cent of these buildings are located in small towns. Among *civitas* capitals they are known only in Paris, Lisieux, Angers, Vieux and Senlis.

What is distinctive about the Gallic provinces, particularly about the Tres Galliae, is the great number of settlements and the explanation we give for this today. Far from being ideological and cultural instruments, as used to be said, imposed by the powerful to romanize the peasant masses, this density of settlement illustrates a collective psychology, a culture of 'proximity' comprising a close attachment to the land and a disdain for the great administrative cities. This attitude should doubtless be attributed to a Celtic origin, since it is also characteristic of northern Italy. Equally certainly it was responsible for a relative slowing-down of the official policy of urbanization which begins to become apparent from the mid-second century, when some *vici* seem to become more important than *civitas* capitals, especially in the west and the centre, and when some of these capitals seem to show signs of running out of steam. One striking indication of the extent to which these towns had been resented as artificial is given by the progressive replacement of their names with tribal names, a phenomenon that affects two-thirds of communities in the Tres Galliae, but does not appear in Narbonensis. So Lutecia loses its name in favour of the *civitas* Parisiorum, Durocortorum becomes Reims after the community of the Remi, Autricum takes the name Chartres after the Carnutes and Caesarodunum Tours after the Turones.

VI. 'GAUL WAS COVERED IN ROMAN MONUMENTS'⁷

This phrase, or something like it, appears in every history book. The truth of the observation cannot be denied, but recent work allows us both to qualify it and to specify its significance more precisely. Much research has been concerned with the chronology of monuments, and has led to some significant revisions. Some structures have been redated, for instance the town wall of Fréjus, which until recently was dated to the Augustan period, but which excavations now show to have been built between A.D. 50 and 80. Alternatively, the walls of Toulouse, believed to be second century in construction, have been shown to date to the reign of Tiberius. Most importantly, it has been realized that the great chronological frameworks based on technical and stylistic criteria are in need of revision. A case in point is the presence of layers or levels of brick in walls built in '*petit appareil*', constructed, that is, out of small blocks of roughly cut stone. Brick layers had been held to be a clear sign of post-Hadrianic date, but turn out to have been in use in the early first century A.D. Equally archaeologists have learnt to distinguish between public monuments, which were the first to adopt Roman techniques, and private houses in which more traditional methods of construction tended to be employed. We are also more aware today of the existence of regional schools and workshops, some of them displaying forms of archaism that will be discussed below in relation to art. Chronological revisions are in course, then, and seem likely to become more radical with the development of dating methods borrowed from the physical sciences, which are demonstrating the approximate nature of chronologies based on pottery, especially for the late first and second centuries. For example, archaeomagnetism used on fired clay (kilns, hearths, bricks and tiles) has recently dated the spread of building in stone with roofs of *tegulae* through the landscapes of western France to the period between A.D. 150 and 250, much later, in other words, than had been believed.

Studies now tend to stress processes not of resistance to Roman style, but of its necessary modification to suit the enormity of the task of monumentalizing a 'new' land. These modifications account for many of the peculiarities of Gallic design. The technique of facing a wall built of *opus caementicium* with small blocks of '*petit appareil*', was prompted not by aesthetic so much as pragmatic considerations. It was easier to cut stone for

⁷ See Andrieu (1990), Balmelle (1992), 'La basilique de Bavay . . .' (1989), Bellet *et al.* (1990), Blanchard-Lemée *et al.* (1986), Boucher (1983), Bouley (1983), Cochet and Hansen (1986), Delaval and Savay Guerraz (1992), Desbat (1984), Doreau and Golvin (1982), Dumasy (1975), *Les enceintes . . .* (1987), Fabre *et al.* (1992), Fiches (1986), Harmand (1988), (1990), Heijmans (1991), *La maison . . .* (1988), Laurenceau and Maurin (1988), Le Masne de Chermont (1987), Loustaud (1988), (1992), Sabrié (1989), *Vingt milles mètres cubes d'histoire . . .* (1992). See also n. 2, 6 and 9.

this method of construction, and the facings provided a casing into which the fill (the *nucleus*) might be poured, while the layers of bricks served both to regulate the construction of the wall and to bind it together more securely. Equally, the use of timber frames, combined with daub, adobe and sometimes brick in some regions, illustrates the adaptation of traditional materials and techniques to suit buildings of unprecedented size and novel design. Structures built in this style could not, in any case, be distinguished from those built of *caementicium*, since the walls of both were coated in plaster. It is in this period, rather than in late prehistory, that architectural styles based on timber frames and half-timbering originated. The styles reappear, although quite how is unclear, in the central Middle Ages, for example in Normandy, around Lyons, in Burgundy and in eastern France. As in the Middle Ages, it would be a mistake to reduce all these developments to a simple chronological evolution with stone gradually replacing wood. Sociological phenomena such as ostentation also played a part, leading the élite to construct in stone in some periods, but to prefer or go back to half-timbering in others. Regional studies are beginning to be conducted along these lines.

Another characteristically Gallic feature was the vast amount of urban space allocated to public monuments. This might be seen as the consequence of originally ambitious plans which, except in rare cases, were never fully realized, leaving space unoccupied in the centre. But the absence of any pre-Roman tradition of urbanism must also have played a part. While Italian towns were equipped with several public spaces, specialized to serve religious, administrative, economic and recreational purposes, in Gaul the practice developed of grouping all the public buildings together in a single complex which could be very large indeed. The forum of Trier covered nearly four hectares, that of Bavai nearly three and at Amiens the forum, which was originally 320 metres long and 125 metres wide, acquired an amphitheatre built on to one end which added 100 metres to its length. Although this phenomenon is less marked in the south of the country, where the architectural history of towns like Nîmes, Arles and Narbonne was much more complex, it remains true that in most cases programmes combining public space, basilica, temple, administrative buildings, porticoes and perhaps a *macellum* created a sort of closed off and 'autonomous universe' at the heart of towns. Possibly alternative settings for social life, rather than these quasi-official complexes, were created in the course of the second century by the great development of bath-houses. If so, this might provide one possible explanation for their tremendous success which the number and scale of buildings of this kind attest. Most towns had at least two or three bath complexes and some, as at Trier, rivalled those of Rome. Even so they still form just another kind of closed universe.

This aspect of Gallo-Roman towns was again emphasized by the

predominance of a very large *domus*, each covering most or all of a block. Recent rescue excavations have produced more and more examples of houses of, or modelled on, the Italian type. Some of them were even in their earliest stages built on a very grand scale, as was the case at Lyons, but most reached their maximum extent in the Flavian period or in the second century, covering areas well in excess of 2,000 square metres with multiple courtyards and gardens. Examples are known from Vaison and Vienne (on the right bank of the Saône), Orange, Limoges and Amiens, some of them effectively little palaces. The low density of the urban population is indicated not only by this extension of the aristocratic *domus* of the aristocracy, but also by the absence of any mass accommodation on the lines of the *insulae* of Ostia. Only in second-century Lyons is there any impression of space becoming cramped. Did shops and workshops, the latter scattered throughout the town rather than gathered together into specialized zones, manage to escape the inflexible lines of this organization of urban space? The authorities exercised strict control over public building, while private space was organized in accordance with the norms which impelled élites to demonstrate their romanization. The result was cities which were caricatures of Italian towns, but which lacked the latter's diversity and freedom of space. Perhaps this argument, too, contributes to an explanation of the limits of urbanization in the Gallic provinces.

The *pars urbana* of the *villae rurales*, although manifesting clear signs of Roman style, were much more diverse in design than the urban *domus*: even within a single region this diversity cannot really be encompassed in any of the typologies proposed to date. No one model spread at a single period but rather they were formed from the clash and combination of traditional forms, of the constraints imposed by their agricultural functions and of a desire for ostentation and comfort. As a result, features that were originally inconspicuous and practical in intent were monumentalized, as can be exemplified in the creation of the façaded gallery flanked by pavilions, or by the transformation of yards into peristyles or *viridaria*. Over three or four generations these modifications accumulated as baths were built and wall-paintings and mosaics became more common. The great period of rebuilding extended from the late first century through the first half of the second, exactly contemporaneous then to the apogee of the urban *domus*, emphasizing once again how élite members held both to urban values and those of rural *otium*.

Aqueducts, a visible link between the cities and the rural world, have always caught the imagination. Their imposing arches traversing the countryside make them a powerful symbol of the wealth and power of the town. Many Gallo-Roman cities had at least two: Vienne with eleven holds the record and the network that supplied Lyons with water covered a total of 200 kilometres. It is worth noting that some of these aqueducts were faced

in *opus reticulatum*, a technique that is rare outside Italy and perhaps suggests the participation of specialist builders and labour, maybe that of the army. An interdisciplinary study of the aqueduct of Nîmes, which includes the famous Pont du Gard, has just detailed the lack of uniformity in the way it was built, the needs that arose for modifications and repairs, the problems that were posed by calcareous deposits and in general the precarious nature of these constructions. The use of series of lead siphons, attested in the aqueducts of Lyons and Saintes, shows how great a sum some cities were prepared to pay. Incidentally, the traditional dating of most aqueducts to the late first and second centuries has recently been challenged. The aqueduct of Nîmes is probably older, dating perhaps to the second third of the first century A.D., and the largest component of the Lyons network, the aqueduct of Gier, could be Augustan.

Funerary monuments and practices are one sphere in which specifically Gallic traits have often been highlighted. Emphasis is generally placed on the continuance of some practices which were discussed in *CAHX*² in relation to the beginnings of the early empire. Inhumation continued to be popular in some cemeteries, for example around Paris. Supposedly 'aristocratic' or 'privileged' tombs have been found in Lemovician territory at La Bussière-Etable; in that of the Pictones, at Nalliers, Bouillé-Courtdault, St-Médard-des-Prés; and among the Turones at Cheillé, while in Belgica tombs with *tumuli* were built in the states of the Tungri, the Nervii and the Treviri, mostly during the second century, which some have seen as the revival of an ancient tradition. These remarkable finds are all located in rural settings, just as it is mainly in the countryside that traces have been found of sculptured funerary pillars and masonry stacks (*piles*). The first category of monuments occurs mostly in the Rhineland and to a lesser extent in Lugdunensis, the second is characteristic of Aquitania. Like the *tumuli*, these monuments must have made an impressive impact on the landscape.

Yet, although some of their features may represent the survival of ancient patterns, we should not exclude the possibility that other models may have exercised some influence. Imperial *mausolea* may have influenced the *tumuli*, while Syrian tower tombs, which had spread to northern Italy in the first century, may have inspired the pillars and stacks. It is certainly the case that virtually all funerary monuments can be related to Italian types whether altars, *cippi*, *stelai* or *mausolea*. Unfortunately, the latter were mostly dismantled and reused in late imperial ramparts and no one has been able, or has attempted, to reconstruct them. The organization of cemeteries is equally classical, with a regular plan bringing together enclosures of various kinds. Several graveyards have been the subject of recent excavations which have revealed the marked diversity of funerary cults and offerings and of the grave assemblages of tombs even within the same region. The only trend that has been securely identified is a progressive simplification

of the rite of cremation, with the use of a *ustrinum* being replaced more and more often by burning the body over the grave.

VII. RELIGIOUS PRACTICES⁸

The expression ‘the Gallo-Roman religion’ is to be avoided, since it gives a misleading impression of unity: it derives from a famous passage (*BGall* vi.16–18) in which Caesar sketched out a short, general account designed to show that the Gauls of the pre-conquest period had much the same idea of the gods as the Romans themselves and that they might therefore be assimilated. The only force for unity – and we do not know over how great an area – was the power of the druids. Their influence was exercised over sacrifices, over judicial affairs and administration (through their use of writing), and over the education of aristocratic youths. But they seem to have played little part in the individual and collective worship of particular gods.

The system put in place by Rome was in some respects similar to what had gone before. Official cults organized by ‘duly constituted bodies’ were focused on the worship of Rome and of the emperor, but private individuals and perhaps groups were free to offer cult to the divinities of their choice. It seems that to begin with druidism was not felt to pose any threat, since at first no measures were taken against it. But its influence must be assumed to have persisted, and to have been judged harmful since Augustus prohibited it for *cives* – probably that is for Gauls who had become Roman citizens – and Claudius generalized the ban (Suet. *Claud.* 25). There is no proof that it was responsible for the uprising, in A.D. 69, of a *fanatica multitudo* in Aeduan territory led by one Mariccus (Tac. *Hist.* ii.61), but Tacitus does report that druidical predictions preceded Civilis’ rebellion (*Hist.* iv.54) so the issue remains open.

Whatever the case, recent work has shown the enthusiasm with which the Gauls responded to the creation of the imperial cult. Alongside the abundant epigraphic evidence, we now have architectural studies which show the prominence of the imperial cult in the great programmes of

⁸ General works: Deyts (1992), *Les dieux* . . . (1989), Fauduet (1993a), (1993b), Ferdière and Villard (1993), Février (1988), *Incinérations et inhumations* . . . (1991), *Monde des morts* . . . (1993). See also: Allain *et al.* (1992), Amand (1986), (1987), Amand and Nouwen (1986), Andrikopoulou-Strack (1986), *Aspects de la religion* . . . (1990), Aupert (1992), Béal (1991), Belot (1990), Bémont (1986) Bémont *et al.* (1993), Béraud and Gébara (1986), Boucher (1988), Bourgeois (1992), Cabuy (1991), Deman (1991), Deyts (1983), (1987), *Les eaux thermales* . . . (1992), Ebel (1989), Fincker and Tassaux (1992), Galliou (1989), Gilles (1987), Guyonvarc’h and Le Roux (1986), Hallier *et al.* (1990), Hatt (1986), Horne and King (1980), Janon (1991), Joubleaux (1989), Landes (1992b), Lauffray (1990), Lavagne (1979), Lejeune (1985), Linduff (1979), Merten (1985), Metzler *et al.* (1991), Moitricieux (1992a), (1992b), *Nécropoles* . . . (1987), Pailler (1989), Picard (1992), Plumier (1986), Richard (1989), Romeuf (1986), *Sanctuaires arvernens* . . . (1985), Scheid (1992), Schwinden (1987), Ternes (1984), Trunk (1991), Turcan (1986), (1989), (1991), Walters (1975), Wightman (1986).

urban development which created the heart of the Gallo-Roman cities. The dynastic temple now replaced the *capitolium* as the centre of the civic monumental complex, and cult formed a link between that centre and the theatres and amphitheatres which were the settings for liturgies tied to the celebration of the emperor. Traces of broad architectural programmes of this sort have been found in monumental complexes at Arles, Orange, Nîmes, Augst and Amiens, and also in what have misleadingly been termed the 'blocs-forums' of the Three Gauls, at Feurs, Paris, Trier and Bavai, each of which are endowed with dynastic monuments. The case of Lyons illustrates the strength of the cult. The colony had the grand federal sanctuary of the Three Gauls on its doorstep at Condate, at the confluence of the Rhône and the Saône. Nevertheless, on the hill of Fourvière, it constructed a huge limestone temple, equipped with propylea and porticoes which was rebuilt, either under Claudius or the Flavians, in Carrara marble, perhaps by Italian craftsmen. In the same vein, a recent theory posits a connection between the imperial cult and the large complexes comprising a sanctuary, sometimes a basilica, and a theatre and/or amphitheatre, which are characteristic of *vici* or secondary centres. Certainly dedications often mention the *numina Augustorum* or the *domus divina* or else mention the activities of the *sacerdotes Romae et Augusti* of Condate. The development of these complexes in the Flavian and Antonine periods shows that once the imperial cult had ordered and adorned the cities, local benefactors spread its influence to even the small centres. It would be more precise to say that the cult acquired monuments in these centres at this period, since its presence there is attested from the first half of the first century, as may be illustrated, for example, by the discovery of graffiti on the painted walls of a small sanctuary at Châteauneuf in Savoy which include dedications to the local god *Limetus* but also to Rome and to Tiberius.

There is no need to discuss the federal sanctuary of Condate any further, except to note that it is clear from inscriptions that mention the priesthood of Rome and of Augustus that in virtually all cases it constituted the culmination of a municipal career. Of the sixty-odd priests known to us only eleven were to enter the equestrian order. Perhaps it was its success in the Tres Galliae, and also at Cologne and St Bertrand-de-Comminges, which accounts for the establishment of the imperial cult in the senatorial province of Narbonensis, attested by a fragment of the *Lex de flamonio provinciae Narbonensis* (*CIL* XII 6038). For a long time this development was dated to the reign of Vespasian, but a new reading of the career inscription, found at Athens, of Trebellius Rufus, a Toulousan who was the first provincial flamen, has convincingly redated the foundation of the cult to Domitian. In this case too, however, there is a contrast between Narbonensis and the Tres Galliae, as the imperial priesthood, here a flaminiate, was restricted to members of the equestrian order. The

architectural impact of the cult on Narbonne can only be glimpsed: the cult centre included a *templum divi Augusti*, an amphitheatre and probably the baths, porticoes and basilicas which an inscription records as having been destroyed, presumably by fire, and then rebuilt by Antoninus (*CIL* XII 4342). It is possible that the enlargement of the amphitheatre of Condate, near Lyons, should also be attributed to Domitian.

Quite apart from its civic function, the imperial cult also operated to bring together Gallic and Greco-Roman gods. The Roman emperor, as the guarantor of religious freedom, presided to some extent over this coexistence. The best proof of this is the famous Pillar set up by the Nautae Parisiaci which is dedicated to Tiberius Caesar Augustus and to Jupiter, and which is decorated with sculpture depicting not only Mars, Mercury, Venus, Vulcan and Castor and Pollux but also Smertrios, Cernunnos, Tarvos Trigaranos and local goddesses whose names we do not know. The Pillar is an early example of the monumental epigraphy and sculpture which associates gods of very different origins. A further stage is marked by the appearance of what is termed *interpretatio* or assimilation, the depiction of Roman deities given a Gallic aspect by some attribute or costume. Jupiter, for example, is shown with a wheel and Mercury is accompanied by a tortoise, a cockerel, a ram-headed snake and so forth, or else a Roman name is coupled with a Gallic epithet, often derived from a place-name, as in the case of Apollo Grannus at Grand or Mars Vintius at Vence. Divine 'mixed marriages' were also depicted, hence Apollo and Sirona, or Mercury and Rosmerta. All this shows how right Caesar was when he suggested that some Gallic gods corresponded to some Roman ones. Perhaps the most striking example of this closeness is provided by the white clay figurines which were mass-produced in small workshops, the most prolific of which were located in central Gaul near Vichy, and in Burgundy, but which also existed at Bordeaux, on the Loire, in Brittany and in the north. These statuettes were used as offerings or dedications and depicted animals, fruit and altars but also deities. The most popular was Venus, a long way ahead of Minerva and Mercury. Other deities appeared in the second century, in particular a mother goddess feeding one or two infants at her breast, an image which may be related to the fashion for images of the *Matres* which is also apparent in stone sculpture. What is particularly noticeable about these 'popular' images is how little they reflect typically Gallic deities. Only Epona and the God with the Mallet appear in the series and neither are common types.

Another illustration of the interaction of native and Roman elements is a type of monument characteristic of Gaul, and especially of eastern Gaul and the Rhineland, the so-called columns of 'Jupiter with the serpent-footed beast'. On top of each of these columns a sculpture portrays the god mounted on horseback and slaying a monster, the lower part of whose

body ends in a snake's coils. These monuments are anything between two-and-a-half and twelve metres in height and may include a quadrangular pedestal with reliefs portraying gods from the Roman pantheon and sometimes a historiated capital with busts of the Seasons. The predominantly rural distribution of the columns is so marked that they are thought to have been originally designed for the protection of the crops. The meaning changed over time, however, and the monument gradually developed official connotations, symbolizing the triumph of Rome over the barbarians, probably following the unrest which broke out in Germany under Marcus Aurelius, with the god and the serpent-footed beast coming to represent the victorious emperor as well as the king of heaven.

The geographical distribution of the cults of particular gods has long been an object of study, and little more need be said on the subject here, since these patterns effectively simply reflect pre-conquest conditions. What is more important is the distribution of inscriptions which include elements of specifically Gallic origin, whether it is the word *deus* preceding the name of a god, or a native epithet attached to the name of a Greco-Roman divinity. Names preceded by *deus* appear in less than 7 per cent of the religious inscriptions of Narbonensis, but if we consider the Tres Galliae the figure rises to nearly 40 per cent. Names with native epithets appear in 5.5 per cent of inscriptions in Narbonensis, and in 7–10 per cent of those from the Tres Galliae. Finally, gods with wholly native names comprise between 30 and 40 per cent everywhere except in the Alps where the proportion rises to 65 per cent and south of the Garonne where it is 55 per cent. The general picture is thus one of considerable romanization in Narbonensis, of considerable variation in the Tres Galliae and the persistence of local traditions in the Alps and the Pyrenees.

One peculiarity of Gaul, the Rhineland and southern Britain is the sudden development of an architectural form that archaeologists (misleadingly) term the *fanum*. These buildings are very different from 'classical' temples and usually consist of a central tower – which may be square, rectangular, polygonal or circular in plan – surrounded by a low concentric gallery, with both tower and gallery facing east. Aerial photography has more than doubled the number of these structures known in France in recent years, bringing the total number of examples close to 600, making it by far the most common category of public monument. The size of these buildings varies considerably from modest chapels of three to five metres a side, to grandiose monuments like the Tower of Vesona in Perigueux. Sometimes several are grouped together within the same sacred precinct to create what are effectively sacred quarters like the Altbachtal at Trier or the extra-mural sanctuary of the so-called Temple of Janus at Autun. One-third of these structures are found in rural settings, most of the remainder being located in smaller towns, often associated with bath complexes and

theatres. The type probably developed from late prehistoric roots, but most were constructed either in the Augustan period or in the decades either side of A.D. 100. Inscriptions mentioning the names of gods have been found in fifty-seven of these sanctuaries. Mercury is the most common, followed by Apollo and Mars, their names often accompanied by indigenous epithets, and the next most frequently occurring names are those of local female deities. The imperial cult is often present in the urban sanctuaries. These '*fana*' seem to exemplify religious cult in Gaul. Roman techniques allowed an older, native pattern to become generalized and the cults, equally native, far from dying out were, in fact, strengthened. It is worth noting, again, that buildings of this type are very rare in Narbonensis.

Some other local peculiarities deserve attention, in particular the popularity of 'nature cults' at trees, forests, rocks and water, and the superstitious acts or perhaps sorcery which took place there but which are principally known because the Church Fathers condemned them. Some of these sites, especially those connected with water such as Genainville, Villards d'Héria, or the source of the Seine, were endowed with monuments. Others, however, were left in something closer to their natural condition but received offerings and *ex votos* and it is not always easy to draw a clear line between cult, the desire to be healed and the curative or health-restoring properties attributed to a particular water source. Whatever the case, an impressive number of anatomical *ex votos* are known from Gaul, including a number of sculptures representing the healing of eyes. When these are set alongside the numerous finds of oculists' kits, surgeons' instrument cases and needles for treating cataracts, it may be argued that sanctuaries played a major role in medicine. Another religious characteristic of Gaul is finds of cult statues in cellars furnished with niches and tables. The associated cult is particular to central and eastern Gaul, taking place, for example, at Argentomagus, Paris and Alesia, and probably represents the survival of prehistoric rites rather than a modification of the Roman cult of the *lares*.

Finally, it is necessary to make some mention of the oriental religions. Most of the new information on this subject, however, really concerns the German provinces or the third century and there is little more to mention than that doubts have recently been raised about the sanctuary of Cybele, previously identified in Lyons, and perhaps also about that of Vienne. As for Christianity, it has recently been proposed that the traditional account of the martyrdoms at Lyons in 177, including those of the bishop Pothinus and of Blandina in the amphitheatre at Condate, in fact refers to events in Galatian Pontus in northern Asia Minor. The arguments do not, however, really convince. On the other hand, the theory according to which the pogrom was set off by a struggle between devotees of Atthis and the followers of Christ seems to have been abandoned. Instead the events are

now seen as a spontaneous act of the local population, and the Christians either as the victims of a 'racist' attack, or else as scapegoats for a general discontent arising from the economic difficulties of the end of the century. I have nothing to add to this debate.

VIII. ART AND CULTURE, ROMANITAS AND PROVINCIALISM⁹

Whole areas of first- and second-century Gallo-Roman art and culture are completely lost to us, beginning with all works of literature except for Justin's Epitome of the *Histories* of Pompeius Trogus, a native of Vasio, composed in the reign of Augustus. What we know of Gallo-Roman literature in the testimony of other authors or through rare fragments suggests that the loss is not a serious one. Apart from a few poems and epics, one on Germanicus, another on the German Wars, and the agronomical treatise *de Vitis* of Iulius Graecinus of Fréjus, which was used by Columella, we hear only of orators. Some of these made their career at Rome: Votienus Montanus from Narbonne flourished under Tiberius; Domitius Afer from Nîmes was consul in A.D. 39; Iulius Africanus spoke before Nero and was mentioned by Tacitus and Juvenal; Marcus Aper was portrayed by his former pupil Tacitus in the *Dialogus de oratoribus*, and Favorinus of Arles was a friend of Hadrian. A few others are known. But all of these were shaped by a Roman mould and were famous not for their originality but for the talent that enabled them to succeed in relation to their peers. No Gallo-Roman work was based on the Celtic past, then, and the myths and poetry recited or sung by the bards in the pre-conquest period disappeared completely. That genre had no heirs and mediaeval '*chansons de geste*' are neither a reminder nor a renaissance of those works. Equally, Gallo-Roman iconography provides no evidence of any musical instrument or dance peculiar to Gaul.

The special architectural features of many places of entertainment, especially the reduction in scale of the *scaena*, the building behind the stage, has sometimes led scholars to propose that performances of some new type were performed there, perhaps connected to ancestral cultural or religious traditions. Yet little support can be found for this hypothesis. All the

⁹ Specialist bibliographies on wall painting and mosaics appear regularly in APÉLLES, Bulletin de l'Association Internationale pour la Peinture Antique and in the Bulletin edited by AIEMA (Association International pour l'Etude de la Mosaïque Antique). There is also the *Recueil Général des Mosaïques de la Gaule*, published as supplement 10 of *Gallia*. To date eleven volumes have appeared. Other works: *Archéologie et médecine* . . . (1987), Baltzer (1983), Baratte (1984), (1989). Barbet (1987), Boucher (1976), Darmon (1981), Desbat (1980–2), Deyts (1976), (1984), Dumasy-Mathieu (1991), Feugère *et al.* (1985), Golvin and Landes, *Amphithéâtres*, Guiraud (1988), Janon (1986), Künzl (1984), Lancha (1977), Landes (1987), (1989), (1992a), Lavagne (1987), *Métrodore* . . . (1992), Nerzic (1989), *La peinture murale* . . . (1990), *Peintures romaines* . . . (1993), Pelletier (1985), Raepsaet (1982), Reddé (1978), Rémy (1984), Sabrié (1985), Sabrié and Solier (1987), Sauron (1983), Tardy (1986), (1989), Voinot (1981–2).

depictions of games and performances suggest they were perfectly conventional in type, and it seems preferable to retain the traditional explanation, that the new architectural form arose from practical considerations in order to allow both theatrical events and the games characteristic of the amphitheatre to be staged in the same structure. What is more, the new design allowed temporary wooden structures to be added to increase the size of either the *scena* or the *cavea*.

Wall painting has been the subject of important research over the past few years. Narbonensis has produced a few rare examples of Pompeian 'First Style' and several of the 'Second Style', for example at St Rémy-de-Provence, Ensérune, Narbonne and Brignon, which cannot be distinguished from their Italian models. In the course of the first half of the first century A.D. the 'Third Style' spread all over Gaul, and around A.D. 30 the first local variations appeared, from which an independent and original Gallo-Roman style emerged in the second half of the century. That style was characterized by plinths decorated in animal motifs and by a fondness for candelabra motifs, the branches of which supported birds and tiny figurines in reference to Bacchic and Apolline imagery. The Pompeian 'Fourth Style' had almost no influence on Gaul beyond Narbonne, and the fashion was for huge red panels divided by bands which still made use of the candelabra motif, but now with the branches hidden in vegetal designs or twisted as at the *villa* of Liégaud in Haute-Vienne. Above the panels were friezes with depictions of griffins, lions and gladiators. A taste for wall paintings that gave an impression of marble also remained strong, with examples known from Aix-en-Provence, Escolives and Genainville. Around the middle of the second century a new taste spread throughout Gaul. Architectural designs were set against a white background, the panels were bordered with delicate geometrical patterns and there was increasing use of criss-cross patterning. At the end of the century this was replaced by a revival of false perspective, and by grandiose scenes of deities, mythological figures and scenes from the theatre, for instance at Narbonne, Lisieux and Famars. If second-century Gaulish wall painting is compared with contemporary work at Ostia the resemblances seem slight, not to say virtually nonexistent.

Similar patterns emerge from the study of Gallo-Roman decorated floors. The oldest examples, whether in *opus signinum*, *opus sectile* or mosaics, are so similar to Italian examples that it has been suggested that they were constructed by itinerant teams of craftsmen who had moved into Narbonensis. But the great proliferation of the late first and especially of the second centuries A.D. saw the development of regional teams. The workshops of Lyons and Vienne exercised such a strong influence over these that they have been dubbed the 'Rhône valley school'. Until very recently it was believed that they began work in the Antonine period, but

there is good reason today to redate their formation to the Flavian period. Their peculiar style is marked by a 'compartmentalization' of the design: a grid of framing bands divided the mosaic into a number of boxes, each of which was decorated with a different motif from mythology or daily life so that imaginative designs and a rich use of different coloured stones was combined with the geometric rigour of black and white Italian mosaics. The influence of this Rhône valley school extended as far as Aquitaine, Normandy and Switzerland. Alongside it the workshop of Trier, influential in Belgium, seems much more 'classical'. Although they are fewer in number, their great figurative mosaics, often based on mythological themes, are among the most sumptuous examples of western mosaics. Among these signs of refined and cultured taste should be mentioned a late second-century mosaic from Autun known as 'the mosaic of the Greek poets', each panel of which depicts a different author accompanied by a passage of their work. A recent excavation has just recovered another of these panels with a portrait, named as Metrodorus, accompanied by a quotation until now attributed to Epicurus (sentence Vatican 14)! On the other hand, pictorial mosaics seem to have been less popular in north-west Gaul where *opus sectile* was preferred. That this was a matter of taste, not of cost, is shown by the rich collection of imported marbles used there.

Gallo-Roman sculpture ought to have been the object of great works of synthesis, or so one might think on the basis of the very great number of pieces of sculpted stone which are gathered for the most part in Esperandieu's *Recueil*. But this has not happened, perhaps because the very variety of both material and styles makes it difficult to classify sculpture into schools or to discern chronological patterns. Even the 'official' art is difficult to compare directly with that of Rome. A recent study of the column capitals and entablatures of Saintes shows how the important Santon workshop first acquired techniques and a range of designs based on those of Italy and Narbonensis in the Augustan period, but then went on to develop a very individual style of its own. The latter was characterized by a concern with ornament and even an excess of decoration, and a continued use, even in the Flavian and Antonine periods, of motifs that had long gone out of fashion in Rome and Italy. The 'Corinthianizing' and hybrid products of this workshop were very widely distributed throughout Gaul and as far as Germany (where they are generally badly dated since their origin is not recognized). Much the same applies to all the architecture in the Gallo-Roman style known as 'Tuscan'. What is required is an effort to identify production centres, as has been done for the sculptor who produced a large quantity of religious statuary in the Meuse valley around A.D. 50, and whose workmen moved from Langres to Mayence. Another example is the Burgundian workshop which between A.D. 80 and 120 executed the decoration of the great public baths of Sens, produced religious

works in the round and sculpted funerary pillars for private customers. Prolific and distinctive workshops developed in the second century around Bourges, Genainville in the Val d'Oise, Metz and Trier, and the distribution of their products sometimes intersected. It is not easy to draw general conclusions from this material. Nevertheless a few central points may be made. The first is to stress the Gaulish love of sculpture, that is to say of three-dimensional art, that is represented by the apogee of all these art forms. That taste included huge works, like the colossal bronze statue of Mercury that the Arverni commissioned from the Greek sculptor Zenodorus for 40 million sesterces (Pliny, *HN* xxxiv.18.45), and also tiny pieces like the white clay statuettes made in a large number of workshops. It also encompassed both refined works, like the classicizing religious art of Claudius' reign and the pieces of Hellenistic inspiration produced under Hadrian, and also the most popular production, funeral *stelae* that were barely hewn smooth and the most basic of *ex votos*. It is also worth stressing the popularity of sculpted funerary reliefs, more common in the Tres Galliae than are commemorative inscriptions. The originality of some of the monuments that carried sculpture, the pillars and the columns, is also striking, as is the vitality of some of the scenes inspired by everyday life and by various trades and the realism with which scenes drawn from religious and mythological sources were treated. Finally, it is worth noting how the entirety of the area that might be sculpted is used up: this reluctance to leave any space blank recalls Celtic coinage and the mosaics of the Rhône valley school. In short, sculpture was the art form that Gaul really made its own. The frequency of relief decoration on *terra sigillata*, and the medallions applied to the Rhône valley pottery known as 'sigillée claire B' points in the same direction.

IX. CONCLUSION

To conclude this study, perhaps I may be permitted to venture, as a *jeu d'esprit*, to speculate on the impressions a voyager from Italy might have formed of Gaul, as he travelled through it some time in the second century A.D. I present his own brief account of the experience.

Language wasn't a problem anywhere. Almost all Gauls have enough Latin for a traveller's needs. The province of Narbonensis is much the same as the north of Italia. Both the towns and the countryside were very similar, and so was the cooking and the local costume. They even had the same sort of monuments there, dating back to the time of the early emperors. I travelled up the Rhône, which impressed me even more than the Po in terms of the strength of the current and the amount of shipping on it. The shops of Vienne are as good as those of Ostia, and the dockside at Lugdunum was piled up with amphorae and barrels. Once you pass this city, however, it is amazing that none of the other towns have walls, but

just spread out all over the place. Most of them have big town centres with all the modern monuments, but the style is – what can I say? – a bit forced? The houses too are surprisingly big. But apart from a couple of lively main streets most districts of the towns seem almost dead. The little *vici*, of which there are quite a few, are a bit more lively. I was surprised at the number of spa towns and at the monuments of the towns and sanctuaries where springs are worshipped. As for the rivers and the traffic on them . . . one wonders why the Gauls felt they needed quite so many aqueducts! I was expecting to see thick forests everywhere, but the countryside turned out to be mostly cultivated with lots of neat little fields, little farms and roadside shrines and graveyards. The men, with their baggy trousers and hooded cloaks, look a bit more exotic than the women, but they both like to dress colourfully. After the olive-oil cookery of the south, it was pretty hard to adjust to food cooked in lard or to the huge platters of meat they dish up there, but it has to be admitted it isn't difficult to get hold of Italian-style food here and there's *garum* everywhere and even imported oysters! No problem about wine: there's plenty of it, although it is not always top quality, and you have to drink it young as it doesn't keep so well in barrels as it does in amphorae. But even the local wine tastes much better than the disgusting local beers made of fermented barley or wheat that the locals drink. Many of their temples look like our own, especially in the south of the country, but they also have some shrines of local design, where they worship gods with strange names and shapes alongside Jupiter, Apollo, Minerva and so on, whom they also portray in rather a strange fashion. The time when you really notice how different they are from Italians is at their festivals and their assemblies. In the crowd there seem fewer men of any standing but those that are there seem very rich, very grave and very well respected. When one sees them and hears them speak (and they love to speak, and make long orations that are sometimes even more erudite than those of our own senators) one is immediately struck by their respect for Rome and their love of our divine Caesar Augustus.

CHAPTER 15

ROMAN GERMANY

C. RÜGER

We describe as Roman Germany the two forward zones which Augustus established on the Rhine for action against the tribes between the Weser and the Elbe. There were two high commands here invested with *imperium*, one for the 'upper army' (*Exercitus Germanicus Superior*) in Mainz, the other for the 'lower army' (*Exercitus Germanicus Inferior*) in Cologne.¹

The end of the Batavian revolt (A.D. 68–70) also marks the end of the keen attention which Roman imperial historians had paid to Germania up to that point. Under Augustus the princes of the imperial family had *imperium maius* and waged war in Germania. Claudius still showed great interest in the new military enclaves in the context of his Gallic policy and the exploitation of natural resources. He had begun the process of municipalization with the raising of Cologne to colonial status and he, or Nero, had perhaps established a *municipium* with the name Cibernodurum out of the tribal centre of the lower Rhine Ciberni or Cuberni. The military activity on the Rhine between 13 B.C. and A.D. 70 is characterized by the presence of fourteen legions between the Alps and the Dutch coast.² At this epoch the history of Roman Germany is essentially imperial history.

With the end of the Batavian revolt Germania vanished from the purview of imperial politics. The legions on the Rhine were already reduced to six by A.D. 43 for the offensive against Britain. After the rebellion of the Rhenish tribes four legions (I, IV, XV and XVI) were broken up. In Rome everything was accompanied by rather less of a feeling of catastrophe than had been the case on the defeat of Varus in A.D. 9. It also seems that ultimately the Germans who had been involved in the war committed themselves during the first years of Vespasian's reign to a peaceful solution.

The concatenation of events in the year of the four emperors had shown that the size of the army in a province was a crucial factor and that one should rely on the legions. The Rhine armies, however, had shown themselves adherents of Vitellius. Their notable refusal in face of the Rhenish

¹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.3; *ad ripam Rheni*.

² H. von Petrikovits in Bogaers and Rüger (1974) 11–14; Schönberger (1985) 345–7.

rebels was justification for their dissolution. The most famous of all, the legio V Alaudae, still perhaps associated in popular tradition with Julius Caesar, was exiled to Moesia and destroyed in the theatres of war in that province. In 69 it had been the most rebellious legion on the Rhine.³

So it was time for Vespasian to order the military region anew. All the auxilia which had been recruited in the area of the two Rhine armies and were deployed there in garrison were removed to other provinces. There had been enough unhappy experiences over their fraternization in the Batavian revolt. To Mainz, garrison headquarters of Germania Superior, came again the *domitores Britanniae*,⁴ the ‘*Optima Legio*’ XIV Gemina, which lay in garrison there with the legio I Adiutrix. Soon afterwards there followed the abandonment of the double legionary fortress, thanks to a revolt by its garrison under the governor Antonius Saturninus in A.D. 89 and legio XXII remained alone at Mainz until late antiquity. On the south the Mainz garrison was flanked by the legio VIII Augusta. The latter was stationed at first, not in Argentorate (Strasbourg), but at Mirebeau (Burgundy) in the hinterland.⁵ Here it watched over the access route from the Rhine to the Mediterranean along the Saône–Rhône road and took part in the rebuilding of the Rhine forts. In the first years of Domitian it again occupied the former garrison post of Strasbourg.

The long-distance routes from the Rhône to the Danube and along the Rhine over the Alps were covered by the legionary fortress at Vindonissa.⁶ Here Vespasian put the Eleventh Legion. Together with Noviomagus (Nijmegen) on the north flank of the two Rhine armies Vindonissa suffered the effect of Trajan’s decision (during his Dacian Wars of A.D. 100–3) to give up both garrisons. While Vindonissa was not occupied militarily at all after 101, a legionary eagle – the eagle of the Ninth Hispana – was set up just once at Nijmegen, between 121 and 130.⁷

The legionary garrison of Novaesium (Neuss) was also given up around 105 and a mobile cavalry regiment moved into the barracks.⁸ Its job was to maintain communications between the two remaining legionary garrisons at Vetera (Xanten) and Bonna (Bonn). Legionaries remained at these two fortresses until the end of the Principate – the legio XXX Ulpia Victrix at Xanten secured the northern flank towards the North Sea coast and the legio I Minervia at Bonn maintained the connection with the Twenty-second Legion at Mainz as far as the command border on the Vinxtbach near Brohl. Established in about 120, these remained the positions of the legionary garrisons for the next 250 years or more.

From the reign of Claudius onwards the *Exercitus Superior* and the *Exercitus Inferior* consisted of four legions each, in other words a good third

³ Tac. *Hist.* 1.55. ⁴ *Ibid.* v.16. ⁵ Ritterling (1925) 1657; *Gallia* 28 (1970), 381–2.

⁶ Hartmann (1983). ⁷ Bogaers and Rüger (1974) 76–81.

⁸ Gechter (1979) 100. The date could be as early as A.D. 95.

of the Roman legions spread along only 250 kilometres of Gaul's eastern frontier. By the early second century, however, there was only a single legion at Xanten, Bonn, Mainz and Strasbourg. In the 70s of the first century troops were massed on the upper Rhine at Strasbourg for a campaign which Cn. Pinarius Clemens undertook through the Black Forest against Germania east of the Rhine, with the aim of shortening the route from Mainz to the upper Danube.⁹ There followed a massive campaign by the emperor Domitian against the Chatti in the central sector around Mainz.¹⁰ In fact, territory east of the Rhine, the fertile Wetterau opposite the seat of the legate of the Upper German army, had already been secured by forts. Here, as in Clemens' offensive, the first road-building programme was undertaken to link the forts and to secure communications with the legionary garrisons at Mainz and Mirebeau in the hinterland. Because of an outbreak of war in the province of Moesia in 85, Domitian's offensive was broken off without significant territorial gain on the right bank of the Rhine. But at least the whole plain between Taunus and Odenwald was secured by forts.¹¹ On the Neckar and Danube, too, forts to protect the lines of advance were set up by the legions in Vindonissa and Strasbourg. In the first years of Trajan's reign around A.D. 100 the right-bank part of the province of Germania Superior lay behind a fortified line, the *limes*.¹² The rising led by the Upper German governor Antonius Saturninus and the renewed massing of troops from Raetia, Lower Germany and Spain connected with it was used by Domitian in A.D. 89 to consolidate his hold on the Chatti, a right-bank tribe now located behind the *limes* in Upper Germany.¹³

About this time (after 85 and before 90 at any rate) the military zones of eastern Gaul were converted into regular provinces. The old theory, that it was for this purpose – the incorporation of the military zones into the public and private legal framework of the empire – that the jurist L. Iavolenus Priscus was sent to govern Germania Superior from 89–92, had recently had doubt cast upon it. But he had already been *uiridicus* in Britain and consequently had been able to develop considerable experience in the workings of private law in a *provincia armata*.¹⁴

At any rate it seems a brilliant move of imperial propaganda to have converted the previously military zones of the *Exercitus Germanicus Superior* and *Exercitus Germanicus Inferior* into regular provinces. The successes of the Chattan War may have helped to make it possible to see Germania, now two provinces, as to all intents and purposes conquered. At any rate, it was long Roman experience and not just anti-Domitianic opposition which Tacitus could summarize in the words *tam diu in Germania vincitur*.¹⁵ So

⁹ *CIL* XIII 9082 = *ILS* 5832; *CIL* XIII 6286; *CIL* XI 5271 = *ILS* 997. ¹⁰ Jones, *Domitian* 144–50.

¹¹ Schönberger (1985) 370–8. ¹² Schönberger (1985) 381–4.

¹³ Baatz and Herrmann (1982) 73–6. ¹⁴ Frere, *Britannia* 183; *CIL* III 9960 = *ILS* 1015.

¹⁵ Tac. *Germ.* 37.

around A.D. 90 the two Germanies were transformed from military districts into provinces and because in Rome their geography was unknown (the Rhine may have been confused at times with the Elbe!), by a propaganda trick the defeat of Varus was 'revised' by Domitian, as was the decision of Tiberius in A.D. 17 not to include as a province of the empire the region on the right bank of the Rhine where Augustus suffered defeat at the hands of the Germans. Certainly Tacitus attributed this final victory over the Germans to his emperor Trajan. It is quite possible that Rutilius Gallicus, who a decade previously had been in command of the Lower German army zone and therefore possessed excellent local knowledge, had a hand in the German provincial policy, even more perhaps than the lawyer Iavolenus Priscus. Gallicus was Domitian's right-hand man and fought successfully against the Bructeri on the right bank of the lower Rhine. The rise to provincial status of the two German military districts seems a logical continuation of the emperor's German war-propaganda. On Domitian's coins the goddess of peace burns a heap of weapons and the coin-legends celebrate the capture of Germany (*Germania Capta*).¹⁶

The new governors were from the senatorial nobility and of consular rank, just like the earlier *legati Augusti propraetore* of the two armies. They received their post therefore after the consulship and so were already experienced administrators: after a position in the two Germanies they only moved on to one of the most highly rated governorships, such as that of Syria, Britannia or Asia, or indeed to one of the highest offices in Rome such as the city prefecture.¹⁷

If we ignore the promotion of Mogontiacum (Mainz) to the titular rank of *colonia* as being after our period, then the founding of the second and last *colonia* on the land of the previous capital of the Cuberni or Ciberni, Cibernodurum, was a significant event in provincial history. It was the most northerly *colonia* on the European continent and was founded on the bank of the Rhine as *colonia Ulpia Traiana* a few kilometres north of the legionary fortress of Vetera, probably in the presence of the new emperor Trajan, between February and the late autumn of 98.¹⁸

As in the promotion of Aventicum to *colonia*, which can be explained in terms of the military reductions under Vespasian on the upper Rhine, so the *colonia* on the lower Rhine allowed the legio X Gemina to be transferred from Noviomagus to the Danube for use against the Dacians. At the same time other stabilizing measures were introduced through the rise of *civitas* capitals in Germania Superior and Germania Inferior. Municipal charters were received under the Flavians by Arae Flaviae (Rottweil) (Germania Superior), under Trajan by the capital of the Batavians, Ulpia Noviomagus (Nijmegen), and under Antoninus Pius by the earlier market centre Forum

¹⁶ *RIC* II 252, 278, 312, 341; all sestertii dating to A.D. 85–7. ¹⁷ Eck (1985), esp. 135–86.

¹⁸ *CIL* XIII 7697; 7715. Rüger (1968) 85. Mann (1962) 162–4.

Hadriani (Vorboorg) on the Dutch coast, renamed Municipium Aelium.¹⁹ Germania Superior came away empty-handed from the distribution of town charters in the second and third centuries. However, important *de facto* towns (*vici*) acting as administrative centres for their own tribal territoria (*civitates*) came to the fore on a larger scale there than in Lower Germany, above all Lopodunum (Heidelberg/Ladenburg) and Arae Flaviae, and also Sumelocenna (Rottenburg), Nida (Frankfurt/Hedderheim) and some others. The two military spa towns, Aquae Granni (Aachen) for Lower Germany and Aquae (Baden in Baden) for the legions of the northern sector and Aquae Helveticae (Baden in Aargau/Switzerland) were fully developed by the end of the first century and, like the other *vici* and similar small settlements of craftsmen and farmers, they took part in the ebb and flow of the expansion and recession during the second and third centuries up to the Alemannic invasions of Gaul.

While the Rhine in Germania Inferior remained throughout the whole of antiquity the eastern border of the empire, the *limes* of Upper Germany saw altogether three periods of extension in which ever-smaller improvements were introduced.²⁰ After Domitian the *limes* took the form of a patrol road with wooden towers, but under Hadrian (117–38) a wooden palisade was added in front of the road on the side facing the enemy. From the middle of the second century the wooden towers were replaced by stone ones and, at latest by the beginning of the third century, a rampart and ditch were laid out. The old palisade was still kept on the enemy side as the first line of defence. In the mountainous terrain south of the Main around A.D. 157 the line of the *limes* in present-day Württemberg was advanced some kilometres.²¹ As a strategic reserve, the two legions of Mainz and Strasbourg remained in their garrison positions in the hinterland while over 10,000 auxiliary soldiers were stationed at *limes* forts along the border.

In Germania Inferior where both legions and auxilia were stationed on the left bank of the Rhine, Vetera and Bonna (Bonn) together housed over 21,000 soldiers. Here the defensive line consisted of the River Rhine itself and the *limes* road from Mainz via Cologne to the North Sea at Valkenburg.²² Along this at intervals lay the auxiliary forts which were connected by a visible communication system of towers on the edge of the lower terrace of the Rhine and the road which lay behind it.

The greatest difference between the two provinces lay in the tactical disposition of the legions. Through their stationing in the hinterland at Mainz and Strasbourg the defence of Germania Superior enjoyed a greater

¹⁹ Bogaers (1972) 310–33. Schleiermacher (1960); Planck (1975) 220–4.

²⁰ D. Baatz in *Limeskongress* VII, 118 Abb. 31. Schönberger (1985) 392–4.

²¹ Schönberger (1985) 394–5. Alföldy (1983) 55.

²² H. von Petrikovits in Bogaers and Rieger (1974) 15–16.

measure of depth, but not as great as in Britain. By contrast it was obviously not regarded as necessary to introduce in Germania Inferior a similar defence in depth. We may conclude that the Germanic enemy in barbarian territory on the north-west German plain was generally weak, and that made it unnecessary to pull legions back as far as the Maas or even further westwards. In fact, intrusions through the *limes* begin in Upper Germany between 230 and 260 and work their way into Germania Inferior further north where the first is recorded as falling between 257 and 260.²³

It appears that the scouts of the Roman frontier defence force were very early on convinced that a would-be enemy would mass in front of the Upper German *limes* rather than between the Rhine and the Weser. If the enemy broke through on the lower Rhine there would be nothing to stop them before they reached Spain.

On the lower Rhine the pastureland of the legions (*prata legionis*) lay near Bonn and Xanten on the right bank,²⁴ or at least on the islands which were formed by the arms of the river east of the *limes*. Certainly a strip on the right bank of the Rhine was kept free of native settlers and dedicated to the use of the military after the creation of the Rhine as a watery eastern boundary under Claudius in the first century. In the second century there was a certain amount of settlement here, and the limits of the *territoria* and the legionary fortresses were firmly marked by means of boundary stones, as on the Danube.²⁵

The parts of Upper Germany on the right bank of the Rhine, the *Agri Decumates*, according to Roman accounts after the conquest only showed thin settlement. Into the area percolated a population from Gaul which was augmented by Germanic Suebi who migrated from the Elbe area after 72 B.C. and by Celtic (Helvetic) settlement groups. That much we know from archaeological sources about the Germans in the right-bank part of Upper Germany, which was otherwise Celtic. In the name repertoire, i.e. in the linguistic heritage above all of personal names, there is nothing Germanic to be found in Upper Germany. If we make an attempt to reconcile these two apparently contradictory findings, the conclusion can only be that in the sphere of material culture the group which archaeologists call the Weser–Elbe Germans can be identified; but the linguistic components of Germanic civilization still do not show clear enough characteristics to distinguish them from the Celtic.²⁶

The *Agri Decumates* had a mixed population which took to the Latin of the occupying forces as their *lingua franca*, but in the substrate population Celtic had precedence. At any rate, until the fall of the *limes* in 233, nothing

²³ Schönberger (1985) 414–22. ²⁴ H. von Petrikovits in Bogaers and Rieger (1974) 26.

²⁵ Rieger (1968) 52–4.

²⁶ Ptol. *Geog.* II.11.6; Caes. *B Gall.* I.28; Tac. *Germ.* 29. Von Usklar (1938), Horn (1987) 69.

Germanic can be observed. Even though the *civitas*, in other words the Suebi Nicretes (= 'Neckar-Suebi'), must be Germans in view of their belonging to the main Suebic tribe, there is in their corpus of names nothing recognizable as specifically German. Only at the time of the Alemannic invasions from 233 on is a change in this situation on the right bank of the Rhine probable, and names clearly recognizable as Germanic cannot be found there before the fourth century.

With few exceptions the veterans of every type of unit, whether legionary or auxiliary, received the Roman citizenship (*civitas*) at the end of their military service, which lasted at least twenty-five years. Their most important privilege was *conubium*, the right to enter into a full marriage in accordance with Roman civil law; for from Augustus to Severus the prohibition against all soldiers in active service entering into a legal marriage was in force here, too. As a result more and more Roman citizens settled around the garrisons. The overwhelming majority of soldiers remained in the vicinity of the garrison from which they had been discharged as veterans. Their settlements in the vicinity of the troops were raised to the status of *municipia* in Lower Germany or, more often, when they were *vici* of military style, they were raised to *civitas* capitals, as happened in Upper Germany.²⁷

At the beginning of the second half of the second century, therefore, a large percentage of the population of the two German provinces possessed Roman citizenship. At any rate there were so many families in that position that recruits into the four legions could be drawn just from the hinterland of Gaul and Germany and did not have to be raised any longer in the Mediterranean provinces of the empire. That meant, however, at the same time, that the local élites, even in the German provinces, possessed Roman citizenship, and so the organization of the *civitates* must have become quite similar to that of the *municipia* and *coloniae*.

The settlement landscape west of Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium (Cologne) appears to be an outstanding example of what the veterans achieved. Here, one encounters almost every 2,000 metres a Roman *villa rustica*, a farming establishment.²⁸ The farms are of almost identical style, both in their domestic buildings (the type is the so-called portico villa) and in their estate size. It seems that here we have the result of the *missiones agrariae* by which the legions of Bonn and Xanten were provided in the first half of the second century with land in the vicinity of Cologne. The comparatively uniform landscape gives the general impression that it represents land allotments to veterans of these garrisons. They must have been made available by the Roman citizens or the colony of Cologne.

Great villas which, in the style of their layout, fall outside the general

²⁷ Rüter (1968) 93–101; Bogaers (1972) 310–33.

²⁸ Horn (1987) 348–50; Gaitzsch (1983) 347, (1986) 397–427.

scheme of a farming establishment and are palace-like will have belonged to the provincial officer-class and the provincial nobility. In the case of the villas of Münster-Sarmsheim or Bad Kreuznach there are indications that the inhabitants belonged to the provincial officer-class of Upper Germany. While the senatorial nobility was scarcely at home in the two provinces, there were nevertheless some families of equestrian rank both in Upper and in Lower Germany. Imperial freedmen, too, who represent a quite specific body of the wealthy, existed in both provinces. Some of the splendid stately homes in the countryside may have belonged to them.

The theatres of war in the first half of the second century were far from the German provinces and so individual detachments could take part in the wars in Dacia (101–2 and 105–6) and on the borders against the Parthians in Armenia (161–5) without endangering security on the Rhine.

However, after 160 there were internal troubles in the Upper German province in the territory of the Helvetii and Sequani and also in the Rhine–Main area east of Mainz.²⁹ At this period the Cologne town walls could have been strengthened; certainly the town walls at Mainz were built now with strong fortifications.³⁰ In 169 the Chatti attacked the central sector of Upper Germany and in 172 the Chaucian pirates from the mouth of the Elbe threatened the frontier of the province of Belgica on the Channel coast. After 180 the rebuilding in stone of the Lower German *limes* fort was completed, and the Upper German *limes* was strengthened with newly founded forts.³¹ In 185 there was a revolt by deserters, the implications of which are slowly being elucidated by archaeological means. The written sources speak of great devastation in Germania (Superior) and in Gaul.³² The end of this period is marked by the year of the five emperors (192) from whom, in 197, Septimius Severus finally emerged. But until 206 the Rhenish legions still had to fight against the adherents of the emperor Clodius Albinus who was able to rely on British troops.³³

The first half of the third century is characterized on the German Rhine frontier by the appearance of two mighty tribal confederacies, the Alemanni (from 213) on the Upper German frontier, and the Franks (after 230) east of Lower Germany. The core of the Alemannic confederacy³⁴ was probably the Suebic Semnones, the Hermunduri and the Chatti, who had never belonged to the empire. They concentrated in front of the Upper German *limes* while the Bructeri who lived between the Weser and the Elbe, the Chamavi, the Chattuarii and the Amsivarii made themselves felt as

²⁹ Finke (1927) 66; Schönberger (1985) 402–3.

³⁰ Doppelfeld (1950); Süßenbach (1981); Baatz (1962) 61–7.

³¹ Dietz (1983) 525; Schönberger (1985) 406–7. ³² Alföldy (1971) 367–76.

³³ Frere, *Britannia* 154–5; Salway (1981) 217–21.

³⁴ Bakker (1993) 369–86 reports the find of a Roman victory monument at Augsburg, dated to A.D. 260.

Franks for the first time in 257–60 on the Roman side of the lower Rhine not far from Krefeld.³⁵

I. ECONOMIC HISTORY

The end of the first century and the beginning of the second are characterized by the army acting as a major economic factor. Archaeologically, civilian consumers with considerable capital behind them cannot yet be recognized. The high liquidity of the soldiers, thanks to their being paid three (then four) times a year, was vital for the prosperity of the north-east Gallic economic zone at this time. In general the fact that Gaul was a common economic zone was emphasized by its 2.5 per cent tax (the so-called *quadragesima Galliarum*) collected at the border posts on the roads to Spain, Italy, Britain and Noricum, in other words right around Gaul and the Rhine provinces.³⁶

The communications network by sea and river extended to the Bay of Biscay, the English Channel, the North Sea, and the rivers Rhine and Danube. So, in the exchange of goods, the Atlantic coast of Gaul and Britain, and also the northern Mediterranean coast via the route along the Rhône valley must be represented as nearest neighbours in trading terms. One can point to families with names which sound the same forming a kind of guild of great *nautae*, shippers, and *negotiatores*, long-distance merchants.³⁷ They had under their control the navigable waterways of central Europe and traded via their branch offices in Bordeaux, London, on the Dutch North Sea coast, in Cologne, in Trier and Lyons, and probably also at the mouth of the Rhône. The trade in stone from the Eifel–Ardennes massif into the areas in the north-west European lowlands which were lacking in stone sources – trade which was carried out from the middle Rhine area as far as northern England principally in material for millstones – seems, as in the first century, the basis for the wealth of a class of civil entrepreneur. While in the first century they simply cooperated with the army, now they could rely on a class of civilian merchants in northern Gaul, the German provinces and Britain, and also in the barbarian area on the North Sea coast. In addition, one should also mention exports of pottery made from the tertiary clay sources along the Rhine. These wares went by ship up the whole length of the Rhine and over the Channel to Britain.³⁸

The merchants were, to some extent, organized in societies like those of the merchants' guilds for trade with Britain (*negotiatores Britannicani*). Clubs for *negotiatores* who handled trade with the barbarians east of the Rhine are not so far known. The army itself may have had in its own hands a part of

³⁵ Périn and Feffer (1987) 29–34; James (1988) 35–8. ³⁶ de Laet, *Portorium* 144–68.

³⁷ Stuart and Bogaers (1971) 60–80; Bogaers (1983) 13–32. ³⁸ Hartley (1969) 238–9.

this trade with the Germans. The trade was perhaps of considerable extent, but the goods probably consisted above all of organic materials which are not well preserved archaeologically. Despite this, however, the export of pottery, glass and metal objects, above all bronze vessels and iron weapons, was fairly comprehensive. One may say that all the larger *limes* forts were at the same time markets for a long-distance trade run by the army with *Germania Libera*. They often had before their walls regular trading centres.

The natural resources of a new province were always one of the first targets of exploitation by the Roman occupiers. Under the emperor Claudius and also during the Flavian dynasty the army began to mine for silver, perhaps also coupled with lead, on the lower Lahn.³⁹ At this time, too, stone quarrying was properly organized in the Brohl valley and around Mayen. Trade in this heavy material reached as far as the south and east coasts of England and, also via the Rhine system, to Frisia and the lower Elbe. Although we can document the use of coal from the Aachen coal-mining area, nevertheless it was small-scale and confined to the installations of the army in *Germania Inferior*. The incidence of zinc from Nussloch at Wiesloch was of some importance. It was used for the production of bronze. Since the addition of zinc ores to bronze ended around A.D. 260, in other words at about the time of the abandonment of the *Agri Decumates* on the right bank of the Rhine, the exploitation of zinc ore resources before this period is probably to be sought on the right bank of the Rhine, namely in the areas just mentioned. How far the extraction of the available copper ores in the Eifel–Ardennes massif round Aachen was responsible for this important additive to bronze is still largely unexplored.⁴⁰ It could be that the re-melting of used metal and the addition of zinc ore in the recasting process played a greater role.

As in the first century the winning of stone from the stone quarries along the Rhine system remained important. Notable were those in the Nahe Valley and on the Moselle, and quarries near the Rhine itself like those in the area of Mayen. Coastal trade to Britain seems to have continued, too, in the second century. However, the millstone trade from the Mayen region lost much of its share of the British internal market where the local millstone grit displaced the products of *Germania Superior* because of its lower transport costs. While in the first century limestone from the quarries of the French Département of the Moselle was preferred for decorative architectural building elements, in the second century the light, fine-grained, sandstones of the Trier area were discovered to be useful for building and were transported by river.⁴¹ The same holds good for the Maas area.

Export of these heavy materials reached the south and the east coasts of

³⁹ Tac. *Ann.* XI.20. ⁴⁰ Willers (1906). ⁴¹ Heinen (1985) 153.

England, principally from the Maas, but also over the Rhine system to the Friesian North Sea coast and up as far as the lower Elbe.

The two armies with their financial power were the real consumer market for the products of agriculture, animal husbandry and forest economy. The constant flow of cash which they could guarantee was first and foremost the cause of the high prosperity of the civil inhabitants of the two military provinces, where everyone, in one way or another, had something to do with the army.

The fertile river valleys in Upper Germany, the loess lands of the Wetterau on the right bank of the Rhine and also of the lower Rhine area on the left bank as far as the Maas, and the fertile limestone basins of the Eifel–Ardennes area, were already largely deforested in the first century B.C. and were converted into open agricultural landscapes on which the growing of grain dominated. The fertile volcanic ash soils of the Vulkaneifel in Upper Germany were taken over by splendid villas whose masters could have been agriculturalists just as much as *negotiatores* and *nautae*.

The pottery centres near the navigable rivers have an important position in long-distance trade; for smooth transport by river is an important condition for a prosperous trade in ceramic products which are breakable. Pottery vessels, however, are fundamental to our knowledge of the development of society and communal life and so pottery, which is found everywhere, provides (before the discovery of cheap metals – sheet iron, aluminium – and artificial plastics) the basis of archaeologists' knowledge of social structure, from its invention right through to modern times. The pockets of tertiary clay on the bank of the Rhine were already being exploited in the first century by the military. After A.D. 70 civilian enterprises on the same spot followed military tilers and potters.⁴² The same is true of the clay industry on the middle Rhine north of Koblenz and also of the pottery centre round Nida (Frankfurt/Heddenheim) and, above all, of Rheinzabern.⁴³ At this period the manufacture at Rheinzabern became of supraregional importance. Alongside tile production by the Eighth Legion from Strasbourg there was a civilian population who for over a century had specialized in the production of high-value pottery. So a *terra sigillata* pottery industry came into being, the potters of which brought their know-how with them from Gaul. Their products can be found in both German provinces and in Britain, and also in Raetia and in the Gallic hinterland. The industrial zone covered an area of more than 14 hectares, so far as it is known today. Almost all *terra sigillata* vessels were stamped and from the period between A.D. 150 and 260 more than 300 potters' names are known.

⁴² Horn (1987) 171–2.

⁴³ Ludowici (1927); (1948), (1963).

In Germania Superior were stationed two legions, twenty-two auxiliary cohorts of infantry, three *alae* of cavalry and an as yet unknown number of small units (*numeri*). In Germania Inferior similarly there were two legions, more than twelve cohorts of infantry, six to seven *alae* of cavalry, and a still unknown number of *numeri*, as well as the Rhine fleet. That adds up, for Upper Germany, to more than 18,000 soldiers; for Lower Germany, more than 21,000. They needed, together, about 8,000 tonnes of grain a year. For a metric tonne of grain probably 1.3 hectares of agricultural land were necessary. Altogether, therefore, 10,700 hectares in the two provinces alone were required to supply the soldiers. That corresponds to the surplus production of about 300 farming units of medium size. During the occupation phase of the first century sometimes three times that number of soldiers would have had to be fed in the two military areas. So it is easily conceivable that during the second and third centuries the two provinces with their highly developed agriculture and without grain import could take care of the military supply (*annona militaris*) of the two armies. If they did not succeed completely, the needs could be covered by the very fertile province of Belgica to the west, stretching towards the Channel coast, which had no permanent army of occupation apart from the Channel coast fleet, the *Classis Britannica*.

To supplement a small native breed of cattle the Romans imported a large Mediterranean beast which was raised above all for meat and for its working capabilities. Meadows for the cattle and horses of the legions were to be found on the right bank of the Rhine in the *prata legionis* mentioned in inscriptions.⁴⁴ The next most common domestic animal was the pig. The pollen diagrams show that forest beech-mast was cultivated, the product of the wooded uplands of both provinces. On these high pastures with their particularly poor soils there was also sheep-ranching for a flourishing woollen industry. The suggestion has long been made that the highlands of the Eifel and the Ardennes served not only as the centre for timber production, but also for animal husbandry on the principle of a semi-nomadic summer meadow economy (transhumance) from winter bases in the valleys of the Maas and the Rhine. In favour of this theory is the extraordinary emptiness of the mountain landscape between 300 and 500 metres above sea level and the existence of cattle-pens which are attested at various points in the highlands.

The cultivation of the vine is already attested in the first century A.D. in the Moselle valley, earlier than in central Gaul.⁴⁵ It was widespread, too, on the Rhine and the Nahe in the second and third centuries, and in fact throughout Upper and Lower Germany wherever vine-growing was possible.

⁴⁴ See above, p. 501. ⁴⁵ Heinen (1985) 145–7 leaves the matter of date open.

The question of Roman cadastration (centuriation) is more difficult to answer. In the western part of lower Germany traces are thought to have been found on the great plains, and also in the area of Cologne. But there is no definite proof. After the middle of the second century a climatic decline began. It appears that cultivation of wheat, introduced by the Romans, is reduced and the planting of the more robust spelt wheats (including spelt, emmer and rye) increases again. The sixth decade of the second century could also be the period when new sorts of fruit were introduced. The soldiers of the Bonn legion took part in the Parthian campaign between the Black Sea and the Caspian from 161 to 165. This area is the home of cherries, peaches, apricots, sweet chestnuts and walnuts, and after that time they turn up also in the Roman north-west.

II. SOCIAL HISTORY

The ruling class of the German provinces, the officers of the High Command and the state officials, still came almost entirely from the Mediterranean parts of the empire. The first consul known to us who comes from Lower Germany, or perhaps indeed from Britain, was a suffect of A.D. 175, Marcus Macrinus Vindex, and at the beginning of the third century there appears an equestrian procurator from Cologne, Gaius Titius Similis. Many families, particularly the rich decurion families from the *coloniae*, could hardly have found it a financial hardship to aspire to the equestrian nobility; for the principal agent of social mobility in the Principate was, of course, wealth. It is also hard to credit that they contented themselves with displaying their wealth in their town and country houses, and in expensive grave goods. Rather, it could have been imperial policy deliberately to prevent the social ascent of the middle class from the north-west of the empire into the equestrian and senatorial nobility.

So the wealthy *negotiatores* of the towns and *vici* in the two provinces were the most influential group. From them were recruited the decurions of the town councils in the *coloniae* and *municipia*. They may also have had patron–client relationships in the countryside; for the basis of their wealth was not only trade but also investment in land.

From inscriptions one can conjecture that from these families came also a certain number of the centurions in the Rhine legions. The centurions, the officers corresponding to them in rank in the *auxilia*, and the N.C.O.s must equally be regarded as belonging to the upper class of the two provinces. Even more than the *negotiatores* they were the carriers of romanization. However, their isolation from the civilians of the provinces because of their life in the military garrisons was probably quite marked and they differed in that respect from the civilian *negotiatores*. To the ranks of the *negotiatores* belong not only the haulage contractors along the land routes but

also the barge owners who undertook transport by water on the rivers of the Rhine and Maas system as far as the coast and perhaps also into foreign parts on the other side of the Channel and into the Bay of Biscay. Dedications in the shrine of the North Sea goddess Nehalennia⁴⁶ make it likely that river and marine trade and transport in both directions lay at least partly in the hands of the same people. There is no proof that the sea-going ships were built differently from those for river transport on the Maas–Rhine system – if, that is, one disregards the lighters which were naturally only relevant to river transport. On the grounds of shipbuilding technique there was therefore no need for transshipment of goods from river ships to sea-going vessels, something we are used to in modern times.

The craftsmen were dependent on this class of merchant. The division between production and marketing was so thorough-going that, for example, we find in addition to brewers beer distributors, in addition to bakers those who sold bread and confectionery. This encourages us to suppose that there was a strongly developed network of periodic markets (*nundinae*) in the two provinces, which the mobile *negotiatores* supplied with products made on the spot by local craftsmen. This stratum of craftsmen was not particularly privileged, apart from the fact that they were Roman citizens, but they had nevertheless a certain pride. Their members are happy to declare their professions in dedications or funerary inscriptions. As was the case in the interior of Gaul many craftsmen, particularly potters, but also those in the textile trades, set up guild-like cooperatives which regulated with each other their spheres of production, qualities of product, and so on.

Naturally, the slave class rarely makes itself felt historically. But that is no proof that it did not exist. On the contrary, one must expect a considerable number of slaves. Moreover, the market reservoir for this commodity lay nearby in barbarian territory on the other side of the Rhine.

In general it is to be noted that along the left bank of the Rhine in Germania Inferior, along the line of the *limes* in Upper Germany and also round the legionary fortresses of Mainz and Strasbourg, civilization was completely determined by soldiers. So the life of the first century in all its outward expressions of civilization, art, religion, and so on, was moulded by Mediterranean exemplars. In the hinterland, on the other hand, a native civilization may well have been dominant, developed after 50 B.C. in the mingling of the survivors of the caesarian genocide with the new migrants arriving from the right bank of the Rhine. In contrast with the military civilization, this indigenous element either did not express itself overtly at all or only weakly in the persons of the local *nouveaux riches* who were cooperating with the Roman army.

⁴⁶ Stuart and Bogaers (1971).

The situation changed, however, in the second century when recruiting of legionary soldiers no longer reached out into the Mediterranean provinces and even the natives contribute to historical sources as a result of the literacy introduced by the army. It was in the middle of the second century that this indigenous element was in a position to break through the hard crust of military civilization with its Mediterranean character and articulate itself in various new ways.

This cultural phenomenon has been observed in the interior of Gaul and it has been described as a Celtic renaissance. That description of it is also valid for the eastern military fringes of Gaul, the two German provinces. Some of its manifestations seem to be conscious or unconscious throw-backs to antecedents in the Marnian La Tène, that is, the classical Celtic civilization. Others, above all the linguistic, can be recognized as Germanic. This feature, however, has still not been examined historically. We can, for example, mention only a few fields in which this indigenous civilization makes itself felt. Among them we can point to the appearance of non-Roman weights and measures like the Gallic mile, the *leuga*. It appears from Trajan's reign onwards in central Gaul and, under Septimius Severus in 202, it becomes the standard measure of distance along Roman roads even in the two Germanies. Nothing is maintained more stoutly than traditional weights and measures. At the same time we note the native names of older and new deities and recognize them as Celtic or Germanic. Dress seems to change, too, and also eating habits, burial rites, and modes of expression in art, above all in shapes of pottery and bronzes.

Whether all this represents survivals from the first century B.C. which, with the beginning of prosperity among the lower classes who were their carriers, now became archaeologically tangible is an open question. Rather, it seems probable that a frontier civilization was formed which also embraced the native upper class. The latter are represented both among the civil population and the military and seem to develop a sort of regional pride in presenting themselves in this way.

III. RELIGIOUS HISTORY

What was said in the last section is particularly relevant in the case of religious beliefs. During the first century all religious phenomena were conditioned by Roman/Mediterranean traditions. The religious calendar reflected the normal practices of Roman army religion. A typical example of this is the great Jupiter column of Mainz.⁴⁷ While the artists are Gallic peregrines and the concept of the Jupiter column obviously local, the occasion for setting it up was an event at the court of Nero which also affected

⁴⁷ Bauchhenss and Noelke (1981) 31–41.

the army and the administration on the Rhine frontier. The message was expressed, furthermore, in the form of representations of Mediterranean deities. While in Lower Germany a Jupiter of Mediterranean type seated on a throne crowns these cult pillars, in Upper Germany there stands on the corinthian capital which usually crowns the columns a representation of a fight between a mounted Jupiter and giants. The unanimous verdict of research is that this is taken from Celtic mythology. The dedicants were the *canabari*, the long-distance traders at the seat of the provincial governor and the legionary legate of Mainz. The great Mainz Jupiter column, prototype for all others, has no rider and giant group. The antecedents for these columns are seen in metropolitan Roman antecedents from the time of the Republic. While the Lower German type seems to follow old Roman forms in the manner of its crowning, in Upper Germany the Celtic idea of the tree cult, which is embodied in the column, and the concept (obviously coming from Celtic tradition) of the application of physical human forms to columns are supplemented by a further Celtic component in the crowning of the column by a giant and rider-figure in Celtic style. The examples which date to the Flavian/Trajanic period belong exclusively to the military sphere. Only after that do civilians set up such columns. In the second and third centuries no religious monument is erected in either province more often than these Jupiter columns. The figure of Jupiter Optimus Maximus honoured in them is at the same time the leading god of the state, so that in these columns, right from the beginning, a religious interest is expressed in the Roman state.

The situation is different in the case of the highest gods of the native Pantheon. While in the interior of Gaul a paramount deity identified with the Roman god Mars dominates the Pantheon presiding over social groupings like the tribes and sub-tribes, the highest tribal gods in both German provinces were identified with Mercury. Although Tacitus mentions specifically the particular popularity of Mercury among the Germans⁴⁸ it is not certain that this reflects Germanic beliefs. Certainly the later tradition current principally in the north Germanic region knows as a high god a disturbed wandering god who has a raven on his shoulder which relates to him the history of the world. He is appropriately represented as Mercury on grounds of general similarity of character – one should note the wings on Mercury's helmet – but ultimately one cannot decide whether the cisrhene beliefs are Germanic or Celtic, or indeed have earlier native roots.

In this review of the provinces there is no space to describe the Graeco-Roman pantheon. Rather, provincial peculiarities are to be emphasized. Among them belongs the concept of maternal fertility goddesses in Lower Germany, the so-called *Matronae*.⁴⁹ They appear to relate to a mother-

⁴⁸ Tac. *Germ.* 20 (*mercurium valde colunt*). ⁴⁹ Rüter (1983).

goddess type developed in the cisalpine Celtic area of northern Italy, but after the middle of the second century they appear in Lower Germany as a Triad. The occasion for their appearance in the official Lower German heavenly company is again to be sought among the military, namely as a corollary of the Parthian campaign of 161–5. Thereafter, the goddesses appear in civil contexts, too, everywhere in the hinterland. They are represented in the Lower German dress of native women, the so-called Ubian costume.

A Celtic god Grannus⁵⁰ who was particularly associated with healing springs and healing was equated with the god Apollo in his healing abilities. It seems that he is the only Celtic deity to have enjoyed an empire-wide distribution, not least through the honours which the emperor Antoninus III (Caracalla) paid to him during his stay on the military frontiers of Upper Germany in the year 213.

As in other provinces of the north-west, however, the oriental religions are winning adherents in these two provinces at the same time. The greatest and most detailed religious monuments of Upper Germany are neither dedicated to the Mediterranean pantheon nor to native gods, but to the Persian/East Roman Mithras who is worshipped as Sol Invictus. The high moral demands of neighbourly love and, above all, the requirement to fulfil obligations which are peculiar to this religion make it one of the preferred religions of state officials and soldiers. As a result, we commonly find the underground cave-like temples of the god and his small strongly hierarchical communities in the two provinces. Even in the fourth century the circle of adherents of this deity was obviously much greater than that of the incipient Christianity.

In summary one can say that the period after the Batavian revolt and up to the third century, that is between 70 and 230 A.D., is the period of Pax Romana, the great period of imperial peace, on the Rhine. The two Germanies remained largely unaffected by the political crises and dangers of the frontier. The civil population enjoyed unbroken economic prosperity which seems to have benefited the provincials as a whole. The strong Mediterranean influence of the military declines and a civilization of the German frontier is formed, quite different from that of other provinces. High intellectual values were of little interest to the state officials and soldiers active here, nor to the civilians whose ideals were those of down-to-earth merchants and craftsmen, and who were as much inclined towards their own native traditions as towards those which the armies of occupation brought with them a hundred years before from the Mediterranean region. The standard of civilization which the provincials reached was

⁵⁰ *Aquae Granni* (Aachen) was a principal cult-centre of this god, but he was honoured elsewhere in both German provinces: *CIL* XIII 5315; 6462; 7975; 8712.

probably not to be surpassed before the late Middle Ages or the early modern period. With the Latin language and Mediterranean technology in handicraft and agricultural economics, a cultural landscape was established between the Eifel and North Sea west of the Rhine; its present-day civilization would be unthinkable if the Roman epoch had not existed.

CHAPTER 16

AFRICA

C. R. WHITTAKER

I. THE EMPERORS AND AFRICA

After his victory in the civil wars, the emperor Vespasian put it about that he was a man of blunt words and business-like determination. His job was to restore the empire under the slogan, 'Get it stable first and then embellish it.'¹ And at the core of the programme was a regime of tight fiscal and economic discipline.

Africa needed stability. There was insecurity in the southern border lands caused by semi-nomadic incursions; vast new imperial estates had been created by Nero, which had then been increased through confiscations after the civil war; the tax system was confused by confiscations and immunities which had been granted by rival emperors; and the vital corn supply had been threatened by imperial pretenders. It is easy, of course, to exaggerate the novelty of the programme, as Vespasian's propaganda intended, and to overstate the achievement. But there is little doubt that Vespasian took some important steps towards the romanization and rationalization of Africa in the years after the civil war, which set the agenda for the second century. We must not forget that Vespasian's wife came from Sabratha in Tripolitania and that he himself, as governor around A.D. 63–66, was the first emperor ever to have set foot in Africa. That may explain why his rule appears more interventionist than that of most of his successors.

Although neither Trajan nor Hadrian spent much time in Rome, Trajan never visited Africa at all and Hadrian, despite a reign of almost constant travelling, only made one certain visit in A.D. 128, when he addressed the army at Lambaesis. Nevertheless, he happens to have been the first reigning emperor to see the African provinces and, according to his biographer, 'brought many benefits' to them.² In A.D. 138 Hadrian was succeeded by Antoninus Pius, a man who like his predecessor came from the provinces and under whom, his biographer says, 'the provinces prospered'. Unlike Hadrian, however, he prided himself on not travelling to the provinces in

¹ *stabilire primo deinde ornare*, Suet. *Vesp.* 8.

² Lambaesis: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 328; 'benefits': *HA Hadr.* 13.4. *HA M. Ant.* 7; cf. Ael. Arist. *ad Romam* 33.

person, since he maintained an efficient information service. Marcus Aurelius and his co-emperor, Verus, although they played an active and personal military role on the Danube and Parthian frontiers, showed no interest in Africa. Marcus' son, Commodus, we are told, did once pretend he wanted to visit Africa and his name became particularly associated with Carthage, but both facts had more to do with politics in Rome than any special preoccupation with Africa.³

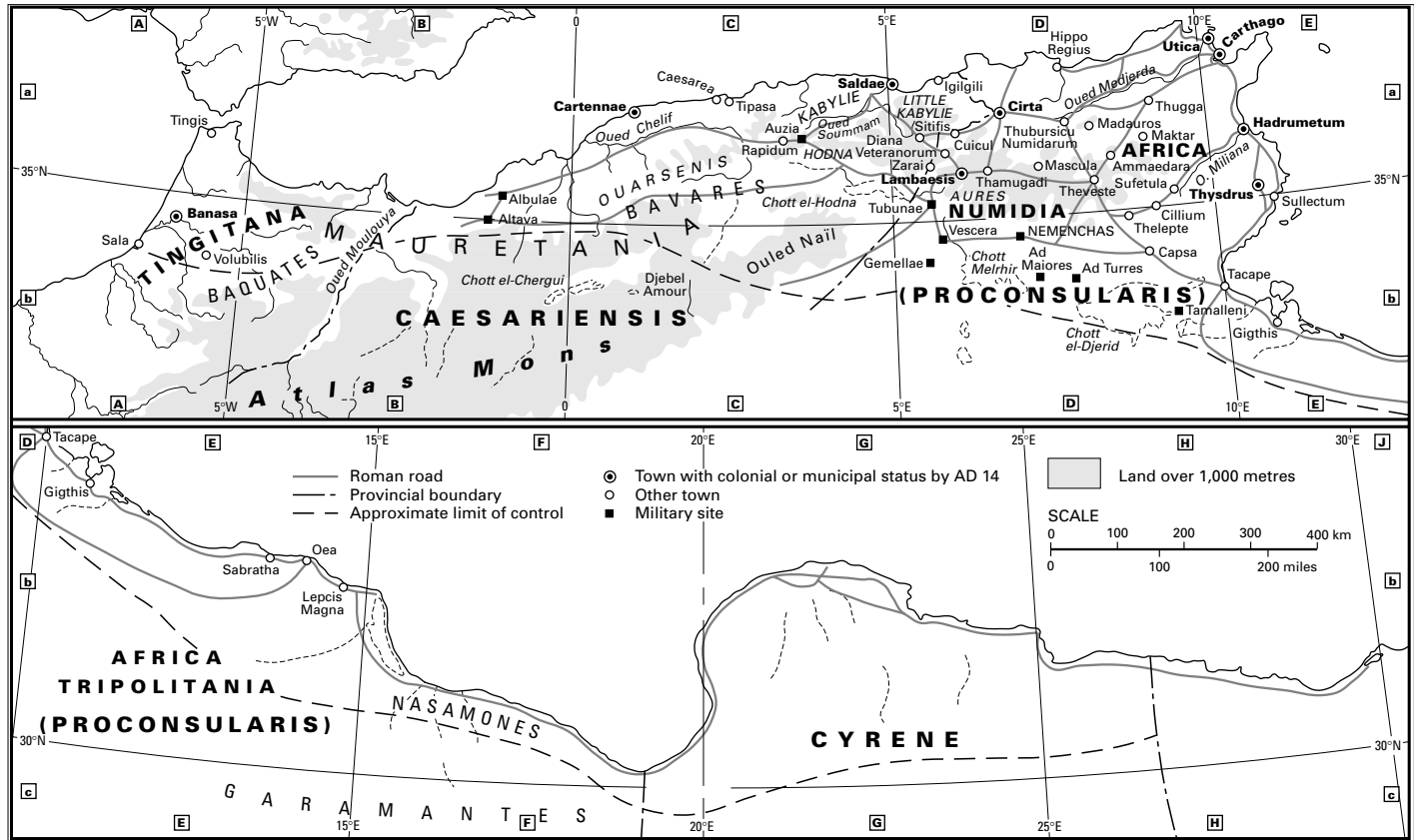
This generally *laissez-faire* attitude presents us with problems of how to interpret the evidence, which either consists of short passages like those just cited that are full of political prejudice from a later biographical source, or is contained in numerous but very specific inscriptions from which it can be dangerous to generalize. Yet there is no doubt that during this period the African provinces became increasingly organized militarily, the civic centres became larger and more numerous, the economic production of the country boomed and the number of African families that entered the corridors of power in Rome steadily increased.

Do we, then, put the developments down to routine provincial administration which simply carried on under its own impetus? Or should we be trying to detect the 'African policy' of various emperors? One difficulty lies in interpreting the language of inscriptions which proclaim that a governor acted 'on the authority' of an emperor or even 'according to the plan sent by him'. It may indicate their particular interest in the administration and special mandates given to governors.⁴ Or it may simply reflect the exaggerated rhetoric of the imperial chancellery for routine action. The two Mauretaniae, for example, were usually administered by two separate equestrian procurator-governors, but sometimes they were governed together by a single administrator, or occasionally the title of *pro legato* (i.e. acting as a military legate) was added, as happened around A.D. 113 and around 158. Does this sort of evidence signify a military crisis, a special honour to an imperial favourite or simply that one of the governors had died in office? We cannot be sure.

Vespasian is the one emperor who really does seem to have had radical intentions. Soon after his accession a series of governors and legates, some of them quite senior figures, were appointed to Africa Proconsularis and the Mauretaniae, who appear to have been given special orders, sometimes with extraordinary powers, to reorganize the territories and doubtless to increase the taxes. Good examples of such appointments are Sextus Sentius Caecilianus, legate of the Numidian army in A.D. 73, who was appointed 'on the authority of Vespasian' to act in coordination with the ex-consul C. Rutilius Gallicus to redefine the boundaries between Africa Vetus and Nova (the two provinces of Julius Caesar before they were

³ *HA Comm.* 9.1; 17.7–8.

⁴ E.g. *CIL* VIII 22787 (dated 104): *secundam formam ab eo missam*.



Map 4 Africa

united as Proconsularis by Augustus). Possibly the new XIII urban cohort was created to assist in the task. Caecilianus then went on to an extraordinary command in A.D. 75–6 with a mandate ‘to set in order both Mauretaniae’. Gallicus at the same time went to sort out the boundaries between Lepcis Magna and Oea in Tripolitania. Boundary regulations involving tribal groups were also the concern of other special agents: Tullius Pomponius Capito in western Proconsularis and later, ‘on the authority of Domitian’, C. Suellius Flaccus to deal with the Syrtic coast of Tripolitania.⁵

Another early special command was given to a junior senator, Domitius Tullus, who, although not yet praetor, ‘was sent by the emperor Vespasian Augustus as pro-praetorian legate to the army which is in Africa’. Tullus’ brother, Domitius Lucanus, was also a legate in Africa where he may indeed have served as quaestor when Vespasian was governor (and hence their friendship). Both brothers went on later to become proconsular governors. Lucanus married the daughter of a rich senator, T. Curtilius Mancina, who although not known to have served in Africa, almost certainly gave his name to the famous Lex Manciana cited as the basis for imperial estate administration in the next century. Lucanus’ daughter by the marriage, Domitia Lucilla, became the sole heir to all the property of the brothers, which included vast estates in Africa.⁶ These appointments would appear to indicate that something more than routine was happening in Africa, and all point in the direction of fiscal order and tax increases. The Roman senator and authority on land surveying, Iulius Fronto, who was a contemporary of the Flavians, says that Vespasian took special pains that ‘unallocated land’ (*subseciva*) over the empire should profit the imperial treasury.⁷

One factor in assessing the imperial policy is the growing number of senators and equestrian officers of the court who were African in origin and who could have advised on African affairs from first-hand experience. The number of senators of known African origin under the Flavians was five, including the first consul, Q. Aurelius Pactumeius Fronto of Circa. Under Trajan and Hadrian that figure increased to fourteen. By the end of the second century Africans outnumbered all other senators from the western provinces outside Italy. Some were powerful men who became confidants, or married into the families of the emperors – men like M. Cornelius Fronto of Circa, the Antistii of Thibilis, the Arrii Antonini of Circa – and one family, the Septimii of Lepcis Magna, produced an

⁵ Caecilianus: MW nos. 449, 276, 277; XIII urban cohort: *CIL* VIII 23910 records a centurion on a boundary stone near Thabora, but the date of the arrival of the cohort is unknown before Domitian’s reign; Capito: *AE* 1969/70 no. 696; Flaccus: MW no. 450.

⁶ Domitius brothers: MW nos. 299–300, Pliny *Ep.* VIII.18; Domitia Lucilla: brick stamps *CIL* VIII 22632.14–20; cf. *PIR*² D 182 and the discussion of the African estates in Setälä (1977) 34–7, 107.

⁷ E.g. Fronto, *De contr.* 8 (Thulin).

emperor in A.D. 193. There was a similar rise in numbers of equestrian procurators.⁸

Some of these who served in the administration also possessed extensive property in the African provinces, as did the emperors themselves. L. Minucius Natalis, legate of the Numidian army, who carried out a number of boundary settlements 'on the authority of the emperor' Trajan, had an estate in southern Tunisia near where he operated as legate. One of Trajan's generals, Lusius Quietus, who went on to become a consul and governor, was enigmatically described as 'ruler of the Mauri' – perhaps in origin chief of an ethnic Moorish auxiliary unit.⁹ Matidia, Hadrian's sister (or mother-in-law of the same name) possessed property in the Sétif plain, while imperial estates are recorded near Ammaedara, Theveste and at Bordj-Bou-Arreridj commanding the high ridge between Sitifis and the Soummam Valley to the west.¹⁰ These were all areas where both military and administrative activity took place, fixing territorial rights, establishing lines of communication and instituting order.

But whether this means that there was a particular interest in Africa is doubtful. The correspondence of Cornelius Fronto in the Antonine period does not, apart from the wish to advance his fellow townsmen by patronage, show the least interest in African affairs nor the desire to instruct the emperors on policy.¹¹

II. FRONTIERS

Under the Flavians it was fairly predictable that the army would have to move southwards and westwards to control the Aures Mountains and the high Tell of central Algeria since Augustan armies had already reached the Gulf of Gabes in eastern Tunisia, while security on the high plateaux of Tunisia and the plain of Constantine, on which the all-important African grain was produced, depended on regulating the movements of the transhumant shepherds coming from the pre-desert south. In about A.D. 75 the Augustan legionary camp of Ammaedara was abandoned for Theveste (Tebessa) and by A.D.81 a legionary detachment had taken up quarters further west at Lambaesis (near modern Batna) at the entrance to one of the main passes of the Aures. It was probably one of a chain of small forts along the edge of the Aures–Nemenchas massifs, although none can be positively dated. But records of actual fighting are scarce in the thirty years of Flavian rule. The only reference is to about A.D. 84/86, when a special equestrian officer, C. Velius Rufus, was appointed 'general officer com-

⁸ Pactumeius: *FE* 298; senators: Le Bohec (1989a) 516; equestrian procurators: Jarrett (1963) and (1972). ⁹ Natalis: *CIL* VIII 10962; Quietus: Dio LXVIII 32.

¹⁰ Matidia: *ILS* 8812; Ammaedara: *ILAlg* I 2939; Theveste: *ILAlg* I 2989–9; Bordj-Bou-Arreridj: *CIL* VIII 8800 (Antonine date). ¹¹ Champlin, *Fronto* ch. 1.

manding the African and Mauretanian armies for the purpose of suppressing the tribes which are in Mauretania'. This sounds like part of the western movement but has left no other record.¹²

Our idea of how much further south Roman armies penetrated in the first century changes as archaeology advances and we are much less inclined than before to attribute the taming of the south to Trajan and Hadrian. In Tripolitania Roman goods, and especially Roman *terra sigillata*, had been arriving in the Libyan Valleys and among the Garamantes as early as A.D. 50 and the same is probably true in the pre-desert native farms of southern Tunisia. No doubt trade preceded the flag, but by the time of Domitian it looks as if there had been a significant advance, since there was a road from Tacape (Gabes) to the oasis of Turrus Tamalleni (Telmene) and a *castellum* 30 kilometres south of Capsa (Gafsa). The same is true of the Aures range, where penetration seems to have taken place before Trajan, and the very location of the garrison at Lambaesis near a major pass at El Kantara, 'the St Gotthard of Africa', implies traffic passing through.¹³

In Tripolitania, after the attack of the Garamantes in A.D. 70 there was probably a concerted attempt to mark out and tax the territory of the Nasamones, the large tribal coalition that lived along the dry coast of the Gulf of Sirte but who as nomads had contacts with the Garamantes to the south. Under Domitian they rebelled and massacred the tax collectors, leading to reprisals and the break-up of the tribe, so that Domitian could declare that he had 'forbidden the Nasamones to exist'.¹⁴ Recent work by the UNESCO project shows how Flavian pottery was reaching the Libyan Valleys some 200 kilometres south of Lepcis Magna. Even further south the Garamantes appear to have grown richer from trade in exchange for Roman fine pottery, lamps and wine amphorae, and to have moved from their old hill-top site to more prosperous houses at Garama.¹⁵ This coincides with the Roman expeditions into the interior, the first in A.D. 70 across the Hammada el-Homra plateau to the Garamantes, the second around A.D. 86 to Garama and then on to the 'Ethiopians', and the third some time after by Iulius Maternus who travelled for three months with the king of the Garamantes to the land of the Ethiopians when they reached 'a country

¹² Forts: e.g. Masculula (Khenchela), Aquae Flaviana (west of Theveste), Vazaivi (Ain-Zoun); Lambafundi, Verecunda and Diana Veteranorum ended up as veteran settlements; even the later veteran colony of Thamagudi (Timgad) may have begun as a fort. Velius Rufus: *ILS* 9200 (but the date is disputed).

¹³ Southern Tunisia: Guéry (1986); road: *IL-Afr* 656 (although the reading is uncertain); *castellum*: *CIL* VIII 23165–6 (Thiges); Aures: Morizot (1979).

¹⁴ Nasamones and Garamantes: Hdt. iv.174–5, Joseph. *BJ* II.381; Domitian: Dio LXVII.4.6; cf. *IRT* 854.

¹⁵ Libyan Valleys: see the various reports in *Libyan Studies*, especially that in *LS* 13 (1982) 1–34; Garamantes: Daniels (1970).

called Agysymba where the rhinoceros gather' – possibly the Air Mountains.

It is the fluidity of the southern frontiers that is striking. Vespasian's contemporary, Pliny the Elder talked of tribes 'who obey Roman rule' and adds that Roman rule extended over 'the whole of Gaetulia as far as the River Nigris' – probably the Oued Djedi south of the Aures. Tacitus described the Garamantes in his day as in the power of the Roman people and Ptolemy fails to assign any southern limit to the lands of Numidia or Gaetulia.¹⁶

On the frontiers the work of the emperors in the second century continued that of the Flavians. The general trend of what was taking place is clear – a steady push westwards and southwards from the high Tunisian and Constantine plain to three areas: first, towards the pre-desert of eastern Algeria south of Lambaesis and the Aures mountains; secondly, the oases and salt-marsh 'chotts' of south-eastern Tunisia were linked up with eastern Algeria by a road which ran south of the Aures and Nemenchas; and thirdly, the western edge of the Aures massif was linked to the province of Mauretania Caesariensis.

The more, however, that archaeological prospection progresses, the less certain we become of the originality and extent of Trajan's and Hadrian's contribution. The legionary base at Lambaesis, for instance, had already been sited as an outpost some twenty years before Trajan and it now seems that the whole legion did not actually move there until *c.* 115/20, well after the foundation of the colony of Thamugadi (Timgad) in A.D. 100. Timgad was possibly not even founded as a veteran town, as once thought, to support the legion but began as one of a series of settlements founded by the Flavians along the northern edge of the Aures and Nemenchas mountains.¹⁷ These southern massifs, too, once thought to be centres of resistance, are revealing increasing information about early internal pacification and steady romanization, making the second-century development of a southern road look like simply the conclusion of a process which began with the Julio-Claudian campaigns against the Gaetulians.¹⁸

The advances are recorded on inscriptions. The southern pre-desert road was organized by Trajan's legate, L. Minucius Natalis, who has left his name at forts along the line between Vescera (Biskra) and the Tunisian chotts.¹⁹ The fort at Gemellae, south of Vescera, was the work of Hadrian some time before A.D. 125/6. Gemellae, an oasis on the Oued Djedi, was almost certainly linked to a fortification that was part of a wall, berm and ditch system with fortlets and watchtowers which by the later empire came to be called the African *fossatum*. Various other sections have been found in

¹⁶ Pliny, *HN* v.30, Tac. *Hist.* iv.50, Ptol. iv.2.7. ¹⁷ Le Bohec (1989a) 362, 365.

¹⁸ Leveau (1977), Morizot (1979), Février (1989) 1114.

¹⁹ *Ad Maiores: CIL* VIII 2478; *Turris Tamalleni: ILAfr* 655; *ad Medias: Smallwood, NTH* no. 425.

the southern pre-desert between the Hodna basin in Algeria and, most recently, in Tripolitania.²⁰

Despite certain similarities in construction technique with Hadrian's Wall in Britain, however, the *fossatum* is only tenuously linked to Hadrian through the dating of the fort at Gemellae. The walls were not continuous and only part of a complex frontier system which developed over a long period, and there is no reason to think that every section was built simultaneously or with the same intention. In some places the frontier seems to have been a closed barrier with fortlets and watchtowers, in others only a road. Often it appears to have been more an administrative line for directing trans-frontier traffic than a defensive barrier. But in some sectors, such as that south of Capsa, it followed up the work of a boundary commission set up by Trajan whose task was to divide the land of the Nybgenii, a semi-nomadic people, from that of the Tacapitani at Tacape (Gabes) to the north. More probably the officers of Trajan and Hadrian were only continuing the work of earlier emperors in settlement and control of the southern transhumant tribes, less to exclude them than to regulate their movement onto the northern plains, as still happens today.²¹

The Antonine emperors continued along the same lines. In A.D. 142 forts and outposts were built south-west of Gemellae to command the desert massif of the Ouled Naïl and in A.D. 174 an unusual inscription records a soldier in the Djebel Amour even further south along a possible nomadic route to the Moulouya Valley. North-east of Gemellae forts were established by 169 along the road between Biskra, the El Khantara pass and Tobna, and south of El Khantara a small station was built in 188 'for the protection of travellers', showing that peaceful traffic was passing through the frontier. The presence of detachments in the southern valleys of the Aures, including a cavalry unit *morantes in procinctu* ('waiting at the ready'), is now thought not to signify unrest but to be linked to recorded *coloni* settlements and incipient municipal life at this time. The peaceful penetration of the Nemenchas and the strengthening of the southern pre-desert road which ran towards Tripolitania, begun under earlier emperors, is evident in the time of Commodus.²²

The third region which occupied the Romans, particularly during the reign of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, was the southern plain of Constantine and Sétif and the link from there to the Soummam and Chelif

²⁰ The pioneering work on the *fossatum* in Algeria was done by Colonel Baradez with aerial photographs, Baradez (1949); the Tunisian sections: Troussel (1974); Gemellae: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 327; recent Tripolitanian discoveries: Mattingly and Jones (1986).

²¹ Troussel (1978). For the function of the frontier in general, see Whittaker, *Frontiers* 79–81.

²² Ouled Naïl: Salama (1991); Djebel Amour: *CIL* VIII 21567; El Khantara: *AE* 1980 no. 954, *CIL* VIII 2495; Aures detachments: *CIL* VIII 10230 (A.D. 145), 2466 (A.D. 173/9); *coloni*: *CIL* VIII 2469 (A.D. 166); urban officials: *CIL* VIII 2450–1; Tripolitanian forts: *CIL* VIII 11048 (Tisavar, post A.D. 185). *IL-Afr* 26, *ILLum* 58 (Bezereos).

Valleys of central Algeria through the Ouarsenis Massif. Almost inevitably this led to the establishment of a clearer link between the Chelif and the western border between Caesariensis and Tingitana. Under Hadrian a number of fortified camps was constructed – such as those at Rapidum, south of Algiers, and at Albulae (Aïn Temouchent) on the Moroccan border. Almost certainly this signifies that a frontier road had been developed under Trajan and Hadrian from the Soummam Valley to the Chelif and on westwards, of which Auzia (Sour el Ghozlane) was a key point. It is reasonable to suppose this western road through the mountains linked up at Auzia to a southern route via the Hodna basin and Zarai. But we lack evidence of this until the next generation, which perhaps warns us against attributing too much systematic planning to individual emperors.²³

In the year A.D. 117/18 Hadrian's biography says that trouble broke out in western Caesariensis (possibly provoked by Hadrian's execution of Lusius Quietus) to deal with which Q. Marcius Turbo, the later praetorian prefect, was specially appointed. This may be the same event as a second reference to an uprising among the Mauri, from which Hadrian earned a minor triumph. In A.D. 167/8 walls were built at Rapidum and by 185 the road between Auzia and Medea had been strengthened by new forts 'for the security of the provincials'. These troubles may also be related to a fort called *castellum Victoriae* founded by A.D. 128 at Igilgili (Jijel) north of Cuicul.²⁴ About this time, too, the town of Cartennae (Tenes), west of Caesarea, was attacked by the Baquates, a tribal group prominent in a series of treaties recorded over the next century at Volubilis, the first of which was set up soon after Hadrian's death. It would be rash, however, to build too much out of these scattered pieces of information, which signify nothing more than routine actions to stabilize the western frontier of Mauretania Caesariensis, where southern nomadic groups have habitually intruded from the Sersou plateau westwards via the valley of the Chelif.²⁵

The Antonine wars in the Mauretaniae in the mid- to late second century are a good example of the problem of assessing the importance of the evidence. There are a few goblets of literary information and a good deal of epigraphic evidence to suggest – but not prove – that more or less from the accession of Pius to the end of Commodus' reign there were wars in one or other or in both the provinces of Caesariensis and Tingitana, which spilt over into Spain. But the scale, the numbers and the dates of the wars are matters of interpretation which have split commentators between those

²³ Rapidum: *CIL* VIII 20833; Albulae: *CIL* VIII 22629. Frontier road: *ILS* 9372, a milestone of Hadrianic date found at Rapidum listing distances between Auzia and Thanaramusa – see Salama (1977).

²⁴ Salama (1977); *HA Hadr.* 5.8, 1.2.7; Igilgili: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 466; Rapidum: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 326; Auzia: *CIL* VIII 20816 cf. Smallwood, *NTH* no. 427.

²⁵ Cartennae: *CIL* VIII 9663 (undated); Baquates: Euzennat (1984).

who detect great campaigns, a continuous and almost national resistance and abnormal movements of population on the one hand, and those on the other hand who see in the evidence no more than sporadic, uncoordinated action sometimes on the level of small-scale banditry, typical of many regions of the empire where geography made control difficult by an administration that had only a limited concern to resolve the problems.²⁶

Apart from vague literary references, the inscriptions refer mainly to military units found in Mauretania or Numidia in Pius' reign, only one of which carries a precise date, a discharge list of five Pannonian units at Brigetio on the Danube in A.D. 150 after service in *expeditione Mauretaniae Caesariensis*. But it is impossible to judge how many units were present simultaneously, whether the whole unit came or where they operated, although most of the inscriptions come from western Caesariensis.²⁷ The military inscriptions are supplemented by others which record special appointments and commands, the most explicit being that of T. Varius Clemens who was 'prefect of the auxiliaries sent from Spain at the time of the expedition into Mauretania Tingitana', perhaps about A.D. 147, and who ended up as prefect of one of the military cavalry units known to have taken part in the Caesariensis expedition.²⁸ The Mauri attacks on Spain are reasonably well documented by inscriptions and special Spanish commands between the years A.D. 171 and 179 but there is no evidence that they caused any unrest in the African provinces, since raids on the Baetican coast from the Moroccan Rif were not unknown.²⁹

That is the end of what might be called the direct evidence of the Mauretanian Wars. The rest is circumstantial. In A.D. 144 a well-known inscription at Sala (Rabat) honoured a local military commander, M. Sulpicius Felix, for protecting the inhabitants against 'habitual injuries and theft of cattle'; but more interesting are the 'great walls' he put up 'in dangerous places', which may refer to the stone wall and fosse about ten kilometres long between the sea and the Bou Regreg just south of Sala. We know, too, that in this period a number of towns in the Mauretaniae, such as Volubilis, Thamusia, Rapidum and Auzia, acquired walls, but whether for security or prestige is a matter of lively debate.³⁰

Lastly there is the evidence of diplomatic exchanges between various

²⁶ Recent advocates of large-scale wars are Rachet (1970), Bénabou (1976), Benseddik (1982), Euzennat (1984). The minimalists are Frézouls (1981), Février (1981), Christol (1981), Speidel (1984) 337–9. Banditry: Shaw (1984).

²⁷ Literary references: Pius: *HAM. Ant.* 5.4; Paus. VIII.43.4; Ael. Arist. *ad Romam* 70; *HA Marc.* 21.1; *HA Comm.* 13.5. The inscriptions are well laid out in Frézouls (1980); Brigetio: *CIL* XIV 99.

²⁸ *expeditio in Mauretanium*. *CIL* III 5211–5215, 15205¹; full inscriptions and discussion in Pflaum, *Carrières* 368–73.

²⁹ Mauri attacks: Arce (1981), Euzennat (1984). The main evidence is *ILS* 1327, cf. now *CIL* 41 271 (career of L. Iulius Vehilius Gallus(?) Iulianus); Vallius Maximianus: *CIL* II 1120, 2015.

³⁰ Sala: *LAML* 307–3; conflicting views about walls in Rebuffat (1974), Hallier (1986).

tribes in or on the borders of Tingitana. A remarkable series of inscriptions, of which three fall in this period – in A.D. 140, 173/5 and 180 – record treaties from the mid-second to the late third centuries made with the Baquates and other tribal groups. The Baquates were located by Ptolemy on the south-eastern edge of the province, but their attack on Cartennae in western Caesariensis may mean that they were recent arrivals, perhaps from the eastern desert, who had been forced westwards to the Moulouya Valley by Roman frontier developments. But the important feature of the subsequent *colloquia* recorded on inscriptions at Volubilis is that they show the peaceful relationships between Rome and the *princeps gentium* in the development of a sort of protectorate beyond the formal frontiers. The repetition of the accords is evidence not so much of continuous resistance as of the unstable structure of tribal loyalty, which needed reaffirming in each generation.³¹

Roman diplomatic relations with the Baquates and other tribes of the eastern borders of Tingitana are complemented by the grant of citizenship in 168/9 to Iulianus with his family, a prominent member of the Zegrenses tribe of the south-western Rif, in recognition of his loyalty. A member of this family, Aurelius Iulianus, became the *princeps gentium* of the Zegrenses in 176/7, when citizenship was likewise extended to his family. The remarkable dossier of letters registering these grants by the imperial council at Rome was inscribed and set up in the Roman colony of Banasa (hence known as the Tabula Banasitana). It included an imperial rescript explaining that the grant was made without prejudice to the legal status of the tribe or its obligations to pay tribute.³² In other words, the Zegrenses, unlike the Baquates, were regarded as provincials and not federates beyond the borders.

The question remains of what was happening in the two Mauretaniae during this period. The problem is not so much whether there were troubles but how to measure their gravity and duration. The Sala inscription shows that raids from semi-nomadic tribesmen or robbers were endemic. But we should not be misled by the exaggerated language of inscriptions into believing that Africa was more unstable than other parts of the empire. The most plausible context is within the Roman effort to define the western frontier. The testimony of Pausanias and Aelius Aristides is important, since both authors speak of ‘a clash on the borders’ or driving the Mauri ‘out of the land to the furthest parts of Libya’. The activity of the Antonine administration in western Caesariensis and Tingitana aimed to continue what had been begun earlier in southern Tunisia and central Algeria, to limit the capacity of the transhumant tribes to move as they wished into the provinces.

³¹ *LAML* 348–50 etc, discussed by Frézouls (1980). Origin of tribes: Euzennat (1984) 372–91.

³² *LAML* 94.

III. THE ARMY

This now brings us back to the army of Africa. The unimportance of Africa as a military theatre in this period is shown by the fact that the standing army for the whole of the Maghreb never contained more than one legion, the Third Augustan Legion, which moved its base from the older part of Proconsularis to that part called Numidia.³³ The legion's new base at Lambaesis from the time of Trajan is conspicuous both by the remains of the *principia* headquarters buildings of the main camp and by the long inscription of the speech made by Hadrian on the occasion of his visit in A.D. 128, set up in the parade ground of the legion.³⁴ Like most speeches made by inspecting generals the remarks are stunningly banal and illustrate Hadrian's well-known love of detail and discipline rather than his attachment to Africa. The soldiers were probably more impressed by the unusual rain storm on the occasion of the visit than by a boring parade in the hot sun.³⁵

Of the auxiliaries in Africa-Numidia we know little, although Hadrian's speech refers to units separated 'in many widely scattered posts' and also names some of the auxiliary units he inspected. At some time in the Flavian period a new urban cohort XIII was stationed at Carthage, no doubt as compensation for the legion moving west. It is evident from the names of units that under the Flavians there was a good deal of strengthening of the army of Proconsularis by the recruiting of auxiliaries, some of whom were ethnic units drawn from the tribal groups which had caused trouble in earlier periods.³⁶ The same applies to the Mauretianas, where, apart from some discharge lists, it is difficult to get an idea of the standing army, even, as we have seen, in the troubles of A.D. 149. Based on such documents the minimum force of Tingitana has been estimated as about 5,000 and that of Caesariensis as about 10,000. But the figures take no account of fluctuation or irregulars. The fact that most auxiliaries were mounted gives some idea of the mobility of the opposition.³⁷

But there is some reason to think that there were what have been described as changes of 'fundamental importance' for the African army in the second century. There are two reasons in particular for the more radical assessment: the provincialization of military recruitment into the legion

³³ Recent bibliography on the African army collected by Le Bohec (1991).

³⁴ The inscription is broken into about 125 fragments, some of which are published in Smallwood, *NTH* no. 328; a new edition of previously unpublished fragments is promised by M. Le Glay (1977).

³⁵ The first rain in five years: *HA Hadr.* 12.14; two altars commemorating rain storms, set up by legionaries in the Aures, *CIL* VIII 2609, 2610.

³⁶ Known in the Flavian period are: cavalry I Flavia Gaetuliorum; mounted cohorts II Flavia Afrorum, I Flavia Numidarum; infantry cohort I Flavia Musulamiorum.

³⁷ Auxiliaries: Le Bohec (1989b), Benseddik (1982); XIII urban cohort: dating problems discussed by Bérard (1991), (1992).

and the permission granted to illegitimate children of legionaries in camp settlements (classed as *castris*) to join the legion like Roman citizens. In the first century the majority of soldiers of the legion were non-Africans. But after Hadrian the African element was as high as 93 per cent, in contrast to what happened in some of the northern frontier armies. We also know, from a letter he sent to the Egyptian prefect, that Hadrian was personally concerned for the illegitimate offspring of soldiers and for interpreting the rules applying to them 'more liberally'.³⁸

Even in the second century, however, the majority of the African soldiers of the legion came not from the Numidian frontier region but from Proconsularis. Recruits classed as *castris* are certainly prominent on African military inscriptions – 14 per cent under Hadrian and about 40 per cent by the third century – so much so that some suspicions have been expressed that other non-citizens from native *civitates* were recruited under this heading or that the term became a mark of prestige and lost its meaning. Special citizenship grants to incorporate native recruits into the Roman legions had had a long history in Africa and the names of Marius or Iulius by now carried a social cachet.³⁹ Nevertheless, this must not obscure the importance of the army as an agent of romanization in Africa, more so perhaps than in other provinces.

IV. TRIBAL TERRITORIES

The control and organization of the tribal territories was clearly a major concern, which began with the Flavians and continued under Trajan and Hadrian. The suppression of Tacfarinas and the Musulamii in Tiberius' reign, plus the defeat of the Garamantes and Nasamones by Flavian generals, required an administrative machinery to control and tax these semi-nomadic peoples of the southern and western borderlands – particularly those accustomed to migrate up to the Tunisian plateaux and to the fertile plains of Constantine and Sétif. Under Nero we know of a Roman officer appointed as 'prefect of the six Gaetolian tribes (*nationes*)' in Numidia and under Domitian a 'prefect of the tribes of Africa', perhaps the counterpart in the older parts of Proconsularis.⁴⁰

Some of the concern for the tribes was on account of new colonial settlements. Colonists, many of them veterans, required land. Local élites, who joined the colonies, expected to be rewarded for their cooperation and some of the leading families from the older colonies may have sent their sons west. At the new colony of Cuicul, for instance, the wealthy Cosinii

³⁸ Le Bohec (1989a), 507; Hadrian's interest in illegitimate offspring of soldiers: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 133.

³⁹ Le Bohec (1989a) 503; Campbell, *Emperor and Army* ch. 4, shows how all emperors were anxious to protect military wills and inheritance. Marii and Iulii: Gascou (1972) 92. ⁴⁰ *ILS* 2721, *CIL* VI 31032.

appear to be related to top decurions of both Carthage and Cirta (Constantine). After Trajan and Hadrian the foundation of genuine *coloniae* (that is, of new settlements) came to an end and the title henceforth became honorific. But under the Flavians and Trajan we see a spate of land settlements, partly associated with the new colonies and partly the result of the formation of new communities with their own *civitates*. Some of the new *civitates*, as in the case of the Nybgenii on the semi-desert borders of Proconsularis, were the direct consequence of the developments on the frontiers.

At Cirta a part of its huge territory must have remained unallocated. Some was probably earmarked some time before A.D. 103/5 when the Cirtan towns of Rusicade, Milev and Chullu were given separate colonial status. West of Cirta the colony of Sitifis (Sétif) was planned under Nerva and, perhaps at the same time, two others in the foothills of the Little Kabylie Mountains, the colony of Cuicul (Djemila) and another whose name is lost called Mopth[. . .]. Around the villages south of Cirta various Hadrianic boundary stones marked APC (*agri publici cirtensium*) and AAC (*agri accepti cirtensium*) were intended to make clear which was public land and which was allocated land within the territory of Cirta.⁴¹ Another Flavian veteran colony was planted at Madauros, which one of its citizens, the writer Apuleius, described as ‘on the very border of Numidia and Gaetulia’. Yet another Flavian colony was founded right in the heart of Musulamii country on the old legionary site of Ammaedara, soon to be followed by a foundation at Theveste when the legion moved again in Trajan’s reign.⁴²

All this is the background to understanding the significance of the many tribal boundary marker stones which have survived from this period and which have sometimes been misinterpreted. They fall into three main groups; those of the Nicives and Suburbures, previously known on the borders of Proconsularis but now reappearing in the Sétif plain south of Cuicul; those of the Numidae, whose *civitas* centre had been recognized by the Flavians at Thubursicu in the Bagradas Valley, but who are now recorded over 250 kilometres to the west near Bordj-Bou-Arredj; and – by far the largest group – those of the great tribal confederation of the Musulamii found in the regions around Ammaedara and Theveste.

While we cannot absolutely prove that all these people were transhumant pastoralists, the inscriptions have been found in regions where recent historical parallels make it a strong probability. The real controversy is not so much about the existence of semi-nomadism in North Africa before the arrival of the Romans, but whether the Romans transformed the seasonal

⁴¹ Cirtan colonies: *ILAlg* II 36 and Gasco (1982). Dates for Sitifis, Cuicul and Mopth[. . .] are uncertain but Cuicul was certainly in place by Trajan’s reign: *ILAlg* I 2070, 2064 bis. Hadrian: *CIL* VIII 19132–4, *AE* 1939 no. 161, etc.

⁴² Madauros: *Apul. Apol.* 24; Theveste: no clear date but see Gasco (1972) 91–2.

ebb and flow of populations, some of them from beyond the frontiers, by an active policy of 'containment' and forcible sedentarization or whether the rhythm of pastoral exchange continued under a Roman administration, which sought mainly to control and to supervise rather than exclude.⁴³ The evidence is inevitably ambiguous.

Some of the boundary markers were probably no more than land disputes between two parties, as when Hadrian sent out an imperial slave as land surveyor (*mentor*) to restore the stones originally set up by Vespasian's legate in the upper Bagradas Valley to separate the Suppenses and the Vofricenses. In other cases, where there were private estates, the imperial administration intervened to make sure there was no encroaching by nomads on crops and olive groves.⁴⁴ There is no reason to think that any of these arrangements were intended to sedentarize pastoralists, nor even to restrict them seriously.

South of Cirta and Cuicul a series of inscriptions have been found, some recording definite boundaries (*finēs*) allocated to the Suburbures in A.D. 116/17, while in the foothills north-east of El Eulma a number of later inscriptions refer to the Suburbures and to 'the *respublica* of the Suburbures tribe' or to 'Suburbures *coloni*'. The Nicives, who in Flavian times were associated with a fraction of the Suburbures near Cirta, in the later empire developed a *civitas* centre at Nicivibus (N'Gaous) in the Hodna basin to the south. The inscriptions can, however, be read as state attempts to regulate rather than prevent movement. Pastoral transhumants can destroy agriculture, if not restricted in the seasons, when they come on to arable or olive land; but they can also benefit farmers, if controlled, by providing flexible, seasonal labour and symbiotic exchange. The history of precisely this region between the Hodna and El Eulma in the nineteenth century shows how tribes operated from a sedentary base in the south from which they migrated northwards according to the needs of their animals.⁴⁵

If we think of the 'tribes' of Roman times as in reality federations made up of different sub-groups, this helps us understand what happened to the Numidae. Thubursicu Numidarum (Khamissa) on the upper Bagradas Valley of Proconsularis was recognized as a *civitas* centre in the Flavian period and granted municipal status by Trajan. Yet at the same time chiefs (*principes gentis*) of the Numidae are recorded as magistrates in the city and a Roman military officer as 'prefect of the tribe'. Another inscription inscribed on a boundary stone near Bordj-Bou-Arreidj some 250 kilometres to the west records 'territory assigned to the Numidae'. Other fractions

⁴³ The 'containment' view used to be much favoured by French historians of Africa; e.g. Rachet (1970); but see now Février (1989) 1 ch. 9, for the contrary view.

⁴⁴ Suppenses and Vofricenses: *AE* 1942/3 no. 35; private estate: *CIL* VIII 21663.

⁴⁵ Evidence and inscriptions collected in Desanges (1962). Flavian times: MW no. 448. Historical parallels for the Suburbures and Nicives can be found in Despois (1953) 287–90.

are known in the Chelif Valley far to the west and in the original *Vetus* province. We can only guess at the exact circumstances but it looks as if there were different fractions of the group and perhaps one fraction practised seasonal transhumance from the Hodna to the Sétif plain.⁴⁶

The Musulamii were one of the great tribal confederations that since Flavian times had furnished auxiliary units for the army, with many gaining citizenship for long service. One probable case was T. Flavius Macer, perhaps son of a Flavian veteran, since he became flamen in the military colony of Ammaedara, who rose to high equestrian office as an imperial procurator. At one stage he became prefect of the Musulamii, too. This history makes it difficult to believe that the attention paid to the territory of the Musulamii by Trajan between A.D. 102 and 116 was some sort of punishment which forced them into reservations. The evidence is a number of boundary stones, most of which refer to demarcations between Musulamii tribal land and colonial territory, imperial estates or land of other tribes (perhaps originally fractions of the Musulamii) within a region of about eighty kilometres.⁴⁷ In Antoninus Pius' reign an inscription was set up some eighty kilometres east of Theveste and north of Sufetula (Sbeitla), where a rich senatorial estate owner was given permission to hold a market 'in the Beguensis district on the territory of the Musulamii'.⁴⁸ Ptolemy, a contemporary of Antoninus Pius, located Musulamii far to the west in the eastern plain of Cirta and other later sources place them in the plain of Sétif. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose, therefore, that at least part of the group continued to range widely between the dry regions south of the Tebessa mountains and the high plains of Tunisia and Algeria.

The inscription from the *saltus Beguensis* is typical of many market inscriptions and shows how carefully the Roman administration regulated locations for 'neighbours and strangers to meet and come together without violence for common benefit'. Rural markets in Africa served the function of places of exchange between farmers and nomads, labour exchanges and centres of taxation and administrative control. Several of the market inscriptions in this period come, significantly, from just those points where tribal groups such as the Nicives, the Suburbures and the Musulamii came into contact with great estates. The market was not to exclude the transhumant strangers, since owners of large estates had need of them as harvesters, but only to ensure they obeyed the rules and did not encroach on the farmers.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Municipal status: *ILAlg* I 1240; *principes gentis*: Florus son of Chanar (*ILAlg* I 1341), A. Larcus Macrinus (*ILAlg* I 1297); *praefectus gentis*: Publius Memorialis (*CIL* VIII 7554); *finis adsignati*: *CIL* VIII 8813–4. Tribal references in Desanges (1962).

⁴⁷ References in Desanges (1964) 117–22 and most recently with a new inscription by Z. Benzine ben Abdullah, *AntAfr* 28 (1992) 139–45; Flavius Macer: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 260.

⁴⁸ *saltus Beguensis*: *CIL* VIII 270. ⁴⁹ Markets: Shaw (1981); transhumance: Whittaker, *Frontiers* ch. 1.

The Musulamii do not exhaust the list of tribal settlements made in this period, many of which are known only from a single inscription. The Cinithii, a tribe closely associated with the Musulamii, was one of the groups settled by the Flavians, with their *civitas* centre at the Punic port of Gigthis. Rather like what happened to the Numidae, although one of the Cinithii leaders became a Roman citizen of equestrian status and prominent among the élite of Gigthis under Hadrian, the *gens* continued to be administered by a prefect even after the city was granted municipal status by Antoninus Pius until at least the end of the century. Presumably it continued to migrate between the desert and the sown.⁵⁰

Although we do not know exactly what sort of institutional arrangement was devised to contain both the sedentary and the nomadizing sections of the tribe, one possibility is the 'attribution' of the tribe to a colony or a *municipium*. The practice of *attributio* is well known in Italy, and, although not documented in Africa, it might even have extended to *civitates* as a means of attaching a less romanized, less 'civilized' (in Roman eyes) community to a city. The city then became responsible for settling petty judicial affairs and collecting the taxes. The device suited Rome, since administration was devolved on to local cities. It suited the local city, since tribal leaders increased the numbers within the decurion class to carry the burdens (*munera*) of local government. And it suited tribal leaders, since they could gain citizenship, although that process was often accelerated by their military service as commanders of auxiliary, ethnic units. The importance of the military service is demonstrated by many inscriptions recording the Flavian name, which was taken both by units of Musulamii, Numidae and Gaetuli as well as by individuals in veteran colonies like Ammaedara, Theveste and in border towns of these confederations such as Cillium (Kasserine) and Sufetula (Sbeitla).⁵¹

We can only guess how widely attribution was used, sometimes perhaps in order to break up large tribal federations.⁵² In Tripolitania the break up of the Nasamones and the appearance of the Muducivii and Zamucii occurs within the same period as the grant of municipal status to Lepcis Magna, despite the fact that Lepcis kept its Punic titles for magistrates. But whether all these events were connected we do not know.⁵³ Vespasian, of course, had a personal interest in Tripolitania, since his wife came from Sabratha, which also received municipal status soon after his accession. But

⁵⁰ L. Messius Pacatus, an *eques* Chinithius, possibly *princeps gentis*: *CIL* VIII 22729; military *praefectus gentis*: *CIL* VIII 10500; cf. the description of the *natio* by both Pliny *HN* v.30; Tac. *Ann.* II.52; full references in J. Desanges, *Pline l'ancien*, Livre v 1–46 (Belles Lettres) Paris, 1980, 338–40.

⁵¹ Attribution: Christol (1987) but modified by Gasco (1992); Flavian name: Lassère (1977) index; border towns: dates uncertain but see Broughton (1968), 95, 101–2.

⁵² E.g. at Calama (Guelma) two tribal leaders were given civic honours (*ILAlg* I 233, 290); at Sitifis a certain T. Flavius Septimianus Peschianus, *princeps* of the Musuni *gens* was commemorated (*BCHT* 12–14b (1980), 123–9). ⁵³ Muducivii etc.: *IRT* 854; Lepcis Magna: *IRT* 342, 346, etc.

such grants were common in the border territories under both the Flavians and Trajan, and attribution may be the reason.

V. AGRARIAN LEGISLATION AND ESTATES

Many of the tribal territorial inscriptions make it clear that the number of estates owned by the emperor had increased vastly with the military expansion that took place between Vespasian and the end of the second century. It is not surprising, therefore, to find measures concerning imperial estates in this period. It is possible that Vespasian's decision to redefine the *fossa regia* in the early years of his reign also had something to do with the imperial estates of the middle Bagradas Valley, since all the *fossa regia* boundary stones have been found in the same region just east of the estates. The inscriptions of the estates mention the Lex Manciana, which was almost certainly the work of an early Flavian governor and concerned native rights of tenure. In the early third century another group of inscriptions were set up just east of the *fossa regia* recording the names of various *possessores* on an estate, including one who called himself a *manciane cultor*. Just what the link was we can only guess – veteran settlements, perhaps, which led to examination of land claims. But taxation and rents were almost inevitably the ultimate target.⁵⁴

No single subject has attracted more discussion than the three great agrarian inscriptions, dating respectively from the reign of Trajan, Hadrian and Commodus, the first found at Henchir Mettich, the second at Ain el-Djemala and the third at Souk el-Khemis in a region just north-east of Thugga which is still dedicated to olive and grain cultivation today.⁵⁵ The Henchir Mettich inscription was a ruling – although called a *lex* – by the procurators in charge of an imperial estate called Villa Magna (or Mappalia Siga) laying down the conditions of tenure on land which had not been formally allocated (*subseciva*) to owners. The reply cites the Lex Manciana as the basis for the new conditions. The Ain el-Djemala inscription is the text of a letter from the procurators' office containing a dossier of previous letters and petitions from probable tenants of one or more imperial estates. The tenants requested permission to cultivate unused marsh and forest land, as had already been permitted on a neighbouring imperial estate called the *saltus Neronianus*. In reply the procurators gave a ruling (*sermo*) about tenure, to be applied to a group of estates named in the letter, in which they

⁵⁴ *fossa regia*: FE 449, cf. AE 1979 no. 648–9; *possessores*: *ILLIum* 628–9; veteran settlements: Ferchiou (1980).

⁵⁵ The three inscriptions, Smallwood, *NTH* no. 463–4 and *CIL* VIII 10570, are conveniently laid out and translated in Tenney Frank, *ESAR* IV; many textual emendations and translations have since been made, of which by far the best (in German) is by D. Flach, *Chiron* 1978 and *ANRW* 1982, which is used with some (not always happy) emendations by Kehoe (1988).

cited an edict by the emperor Hadrian called the *lex de rudibus agris et iis qui per x annos continuos inculti sunt* ('the law concerning virgin land and land left uncultivated for ten years in succession').

The third inscription is a complaint from the tenants of a nearby imperial estate, the *saltus Burunitanus*, that the terms of the Lex Hadriana were not being respected, despite the fact that 'it has been inscribed in bronze and sent to everyone everywhere in the neighbourhood, presented in a form that still applies today'. To this the emperor replied restating the law. There are two other very fragmentary inscriptions within the region which repeat the complaints, but evidently not all the estates in the region applied the same conditions, since not far away at Ain Wassel to the west of Ain el-Djemala a copy of the Hadrianic inscription has been found which was not set up until the third century.⁵⁶

The question is, therefore, what the new regulations intended to achieve. The progression, laid out schematically, was as follows.

- (a) The Lex Manciana stipulated that sole enjoyment (*usus proprius*) and heritability went to the cultivator of unallocated land; the tenant in return had to pay metayage of roughly a third of all produce.
- (b) The Trajanic law stipulated that previous informal agreements for occupiers of unallocated land could be ended by offers of Mancian tenure; but tenancy depended on continuous cultivation; temporary rent remissions were granted on new fruit trees, grafted wild olives and vines (five years) and olive trees (ten years); to the rent was added a *corvée* service of labour, which seems to have varied between six and twelve days plus field guard duties.
- (c) The Lex Hadriana together with the procurators' *sermo* stipulated that any estate land, even if allocated, could be occupied if uncultivated for ten years; that 'right of possession' (*ius possidendi*) and inheritance went with the land, provided it was not idle for ten years; tenants must pay Mancian metayage plus Trajanic *corvée*; all olive trees had rent remissions of ten years, fruit trees of seven years.

If the Mancian law was Flavian, its aim was to give native *coloni* a deal – security of tenure in return for regular payment of a percentage of their crops. Although we cannot prove this resulted in higher taxes or tax-rents paid to the state through the central contractor (the *conductor*), it is reasonable to suppose that the law fits into the Flavian tightening up of the African tax régime. Nor do we know how widely the Flavian law applied, whether to private estates, as certainly happened later, or only to imperial property. The same applies to the Trajanic and Hadrianic laws. What is immediately obvious is that from the Mancian to the Hadrianic law there

⁵⁶ Ain Wassel: *CIL* VIII 26416; other complaints: *CIL* VIII 14451 (Ain Zaga), 14428 (Gast Mezuar).

was no dramatic change. Between *usus proprius* and *ius possidendi* there was little practical difference, since the latter did not mean ownership (as is often assumed) and was a lesser right than contractual, legally enforceable *locatio–conductio* tenancy.⁵⁷

The agrarian laws, therefore, did not create a new class of peasant-proprietors out of former tenants and it is not even clear whether they provided greater security than previous customary agreements. It is significant that when the tenants of the *saltus Burunitanus* and other estates complained to the emperor Commodus of collusion between the procurator and the *conductores*, they did not threaten any action in law for breach of contract. Heritability presumably added stability to the lives of the poor, and temporary rent immunities were an improvement on the terms of Mancian tenure. But corvée duties were exacted in exchange and we know too little about previous labour conditions to be sure how important heritability was.

This brings us, therefore, to the central question of intention and whether it is correct to assume, as so often in the past, that by this legislation emperors aimed to improve the conditions of poor tenants and to raise productivity – and that it was this which produced the African boom of the second to third centuries.⁵⁸ There is nothing inherently improbable about schemes to increase the attractiveness of cultivation, as we know from a speech by Dio Chrysostom to the city of Euboea and from an inscription found at Thisbe in Greece, quite apart from the many other examples we have in Egypt or Italy of rent concessions to tenant farmers in difficulties.⁵⁹ The themes that unite these examples are a moral dislike of idleness, a philanthropic concern for the poor and a desire for rents. The last two motives figure in the African decrees, which proclaim the ‘inexhaustible care’ and ‘providence’ of the emperor. And even the poor tenants of the *saltus Burunitanus* were aware that good conditions increased rents.

The difficulty lies in supposing that this was the main purpose of the measures. Why otherwise were the terms of the new tenancies granted piecemeal and apparently on petition rather than being imposed universally? As we see from the Aïn el-Djemala inscription, the tenants had to request permission to obtain the terms which were already in force on neighbouring estates. Even more surprising is that the terms did not reach the nearby Aïn Wassel estate until the reign of Septimius Severus. This was a curious way to initiate legislation, if it was aimed at raising agricultural production systematically. We are left with the uneasy feeling that here, as in other aspects of the Roman empire, such as urban policy, changes were

⁵⁷ *usus* technically went with the beneficiary, *possessio* with the land: Crook (1967) 153; but *possessio* was precarious ‘for as long as he who granted it allowed’ (Ulpian, *Dig.* XLIII.26.1. pref.).

⁵⁸ The strongest exponent of the theory is Carandini (1983).

⁵⁹ *Euboeicus*: Dio Chrys. *Or.* VII; Thisbe: *OGIS* 884.

haphazard and inefficient within the general context of an administration that took few initiatives but was always anxious to raise taxes.

Since the rents of the Mancian law were not necessarily lower than earlier customary agreements, it may well be that the state profited from the natural desire of peasants for more land and stable tenure by offering this against higher rents. Nor should we assume automatically that emperors wanted to help peasants. The most significant feature of African agriculture from the first to the third centuries is the growth of an immensely wealthy African landlord class on the backs of increasingly dependent, poor *coloni*. If it is true, as various later references to Mancian cultivators lead us to believe, that the legislation for imperial estates was extended to the private sector, it was the profits which this produced for the rich, not the poor, which accounted for the African boom.⁶⁰

VI. THE AFRICAN CORN SUPPLY

Although none of the great estate inscriptions speak of the economy of Africa, nor of emperors' interest in the corn supply, this does not mean that either were neglected. If taxation was a perennial concern of emperors, then more extensive cultivation was one way of increasing revenue. In Trajan's rule and under his successors there was more than one occasion when the corn supply to Rome needed emergency measures, as, for instance, once when Egypt's contribution failed. This was, as always, an imperial concern, as we see in the special appointment of T. Flavius Macer, former tribal prefect of the Musulamii, as curator by Trajan 'to obtain wheat for the city's food supply'.⁶¹

We also have the first evidence of a new taxation régime in Proconsularis in the second century, the logical continuation of Flavian initiatives. An official called 'the procurator of the four African public taxes' might mean that there were four tax districts, although the regions are difficult to determine because of later changes. Inscriptions, however, show that part of the procurator's task was dealing with the estates (variously called *praedia*, *saltus*, *tractus* or *fusa*), and he was perhaps responsible for collecting the *annona*.⁶² Macer went on from his special *annona* commission to become (or he was already) procurator in charge of the imperial *praedia* and *saltus* in the districts of Hippo Regius and Theveste.

Linked to the tax administration was the growth of the road network,

⁶⁰ The later history of *culturae mancianae* is traced by Courtois *et al.* (1952) s.v. index, cf. Whittaker (1993) I 361.

⁶¹ Shortages in Egypt: Pliny, *Pan.* 30–1. See the list in Garnsey, *Famine* 225–6, although not all the shortages are related to Africa. Macer: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 260.

⁶² The evidence and discussion on the *IV publica Africae* is in Pflaum, *Carrières* 379–85, Oersted (1991).

one of whose main purposes was to carry the grain of the imperial estates and that levied for the *annona* of Rome to ports such as Carthage, Tacape (Gabes) and Hippo (Annaba). For example, in Proconsularis the new *via Hadrumetina* appeared about now linking Ammaedara and the high tell of Tunisia to the port of Hadrumetum (Sousse). But in the new territories of the south or in the rolling hills between Sétif and Constantine we can see how the settlement and roads brought economic growth as well as military control. The development of ports on the Kabylië coast at Saldæ (Bejaïa) and Muslubium (Souk el Tenine), for example, must be connected to the exploitation around Sitifis and the Soummam Valley. At Ostia we have the record of shippers from some of the ports (e.g. the *navicularii Mullubitanii*); oil amphoræ from Tubusuctu (Tiklat) began to appear in numbers at Ostia in the early third century; and on the road between Sitifis and Saldæ there was a post called Horrea ('the Granaries').⁶³

The importance of the corn supply to emperors is illustrated by the trouble experienced by the emperor Commodus in A.D. 190, when manipulation of the *annona* caused a plot in Rome which almost toppled the emperor. The African dimension to the events is obscure but there had been disturbances in Proconsularis just before this, in which religious prophecies from the Caelestis cult played a part. Probably, too, some of the powerful African senatorial families who disliked Commodus, such as the Arrii Antonini and the Antistii Burri, were implicated.⁶⁴

Whether as the result of this experience Commodus tried to improve the transport of wheat from Africa to Rome is unclear. His biographer says he established 'an African fleet (*classis*), which would help if the wheat of Alexandria failed'. Ships, however, that carried the *annona* to Rome were never state-owned but mobilized by tax immunities to private shippers, a system which continued after the Antonines as it had before. An inscription from Cirta recording a *classis nova Libyca* a few years earlier certainly refers to a war fleet, since it was commanded by a military trierach and this may have caused the confusion. But if the story is true that the emperor used jokingly to call Carthage 'Alexandria Commodiana Togata', it might mean that Commodus gave further inducements to private shippers in Carthage to organize a fleet parallel with the 'Alexandrian fleet', bulk-transport ships which regularly brought corn to Rome – but privately owned and named after the route they plied, like the 'Indiamen' in the eighteenth century.⁶⁵

Where there was almost certainly state intervention, however, was in the

⁶³ *via Hadrumetina*: *IL Afr* 159, Salama (1964); ports of the Mauretanian coast: Salama (1977); economic function: Salama (1951) 41–50.

⁶⁴ Events and sources in Whittaker (1993) ch. 6; Caelestis: *HA Pert.* 4.

⁶⁵ *HA Comm.* 17.7–8, *IL Alg.* II 614 (Cirta), discussed by Pavis d'Esurac (1974); shippers: Garnsey, *Famine* 234–5.

construction of magnificent new port buildings at Carthage on the site of the old Carthaginian circular harbour, which were excavated during the UNESCO project for Carthage. They are dated somewhere between the middle and the end of the second century A.D., and it is tempting to believe that the large double-porticoed building was somehow connected with Commodus' African fleet. It could also have had a function as some sort of forum for the collection of the *annona*, as seems to have been its function in the later empire.⁶⁶

VII. THE AFRICAN ECONOMY

Our knowledge of the exports from Africa and their impact on the economy has been transformed in the last twenty-five years as a result of the study of amphorae and shipwrecks around the Mediterranean, together with various rural surveys in Africa. We also gain a clearer idea of the relationship between agricultural exports and the prosperity it brought from studies of African fine pottery, the so-called red polished ware, which began to appear in quantity on sites around the Mediterranean with the Flavian dynasty.⁶⁷

African wheat production obviously continued to occupy an important place in the economy and, although it is impossible to quantify, it never ceased in Roman eyes to be the most important of Africa's contributions to the empire. According to the biography of Septimius Severus, 30 million modii (200,000 tonnes) were required to feed the population of the city of Rome each year, a substantial proportion of which came from Africa. The total export to the empire would have been higher, although we can only guess how much higher after local consumption needs had been met. The total product of Tunisia (which corresponds to the more developed parts of Proconsularis) a generation after the French colonial occupation of the late nineteenth century was the equivalent of about 40 million modii, but the grain harvest in Africa was more capricious than in many other Mediterranean lands. If, however, it is correct that finds of African red polished ware are a partial index of corn exports, then a large amount was evidently carried to ports all over the Roman West and reached a peak in the second half of the second century A.D. There is a striking correlation between the export of African red polished ware and public buildings, showing where some of the wealth was being spent.⁶⁸

Production of olive oil was the most important growth area in the

⁶⁶ Hurst (1994) 109–11.

⁶⁷ Among those more recently published in English (where other titles can be found), see Carandini (1983), Parker (1992), Mattingly (1988a), Hitchner (1990).

⁶⁸ Rome: *HA Sev.* 23.2; Tunisian production: Picard (1959) 69–70 and Amin (1970) 37; red polished ware: Fentress and Perkins (1987).

Roman African economy, and recent studies have radically revised older minimalist views of this boom. Field surveys in Tripolitania and Tunisia reveal olive presses in some olive regions every one or two kilometres and olive groves covering thousands of hectares. In the Tripolitanian territories of Lepcis Magna, Oea and Sabratha, for example, the density is such that the production could have been 30 million litres in a good year, while in the Sahel of southern Tunisia production could have been a million litres for every 100 square kilometres. Even more dramatically, in a dry area of 1,500 square kilometres in south-central Tunisia between Cillium (Kasserine), Thelepte and Sufetula (Sbeitla), the remains of olive presses have allowed archaeologists to calculate a production level of between 5 and 10 million litres in a good year.⁶⁹

These extraordinary figures cannot, of course, be extrapolated for the whole of Proconsularis but even if applied to only a tenth of the land surface north of Capsa, the production could have been as high as 60 million litres of oil, which, added to Tripolitanian oil, would have supplied over 7 per cent of the population of the Roman empire with 20 litres each (regarded as a mean consumption rate). The wide distribution of amphorae carrying African oil, especially in the West as far as the northern frontier, suggests that the export might have been greater. By the end of the Antonine period the fragments of amphorae imported from Tripolitania and Africa exceeded those of Spain in a rubbish dump at Ostia, and African oil containers were being dumped on Monte Testaccio in Rome. Even if the oil boom was not to reach its climax until the third century, the conditions for its arrival and its influence on the social economy must have been evident in the second century.⁷⁰

Although there is plenty of evidence to show that olives were cultivated all over the three provinces, both north and south, their main importance seems to have been in the southern half of Proconsularis and in the Tripolitanian territories, broadly speaking below the 300 mm isohyet line, where dry farming of cereals was not possible. The first amphorae of the Flavian and early second century (Ostia Form LIX and XXIII) may have been manufactured in the north to export oil from the northern estates through Carthage, and the romanized aristocracy of cities such as Caesarea (Cherchel) were early to organize olive-growing around their rural villas.⁷¹ But the majority of the great series of mid- and late second-century African amphorae (Africana I and II) were manufactured in the Sahel region of central Tunisia. This we can tell from the stamps referring to ports such as Hadrumentum (Sousse), Leptiminus, Thaenae and Sullectum

⁶⁹ Illustrated summary in Hitchner and Mattingly (1991).

⁷⁰ Graphically presented in Panella (1983). A guide to African amphorae in Peacock and Williams (1986).

⁷¹ The importance of villas as 'organizers' of the countryside stressed by Leveau (1975) and (1984).

and from the kilns which have been found nearby (there is only one known near Carthage). The location of the kilns almost certainly indicates the region from where the oil came, both from the coast and from the interior (perhaps in skins), to be bottled and shipped out. And it is these regions where the main archaeological evidence of olive farms has been found.⁷²

The level of capital investment in the centralized farms and oileries was not within the means of poor tenants and peasants. Some luxury villas indicate that the rich owner was resident but in the majority of cases the central farm, though substantial, looks more like the residence of a bailiff or *conductor*, while the smaller habitations give the appearance of dependence on the central buildings. This reinforces the view that the agricultural developments and the growing wealth of the African provinces mainly benefited the rich. Confirmation comes from a remarkable series of Tripolitanian amphorae dating to the generation just after our period, when the leading families, many of them members of new provincial senatorial families, stamped their initials on the oil containers from their estates. Although the Tripolitanian families were exceptionally rich, the same concentration of oil production on the estates of the local, urban élite can be seen in the territory of Caesarea in Caesariensis. This does not rule out the possibility that some tenants profited from the terms of the Mancian and Hadrianic laws. But the evidence of the Albertini tablets, dating from the late fifth century, which mention *culturae mancianae* on a southern estate, suggest that the tenants were dependent and often debt-ridden.⁷³

Many of the regions of southern Tunisia and Algeria where the evidence of intense olive culture has been found are those discussed earlier as marked out for transhumant tribes. The territory of the Musulamii and the Musunii Regiani, for instance, lay between Theveste (Tebessa), Cillium (Kasserine) and Sufetula (Sbeitla), while the Cinithii migrated up the coastal Sahel towards Thysdrus (El Djem). The coastal cities of the Libyan coast were likewise exposed to an influx of tribesmen from the south. Archaeological evidence of small settlements in the Kasserine and Sbeitla surveys or on the Tripolitanian Djebel suggests that some of the tribesmen turned from pastoralism to sedentary farming. Olive farming, however, is seasonal and extremely labour-intensive at harvest-time, exactly the sort of conditions which required migrant workers. It is highly probable, therefore, that pastoral tribesmen were used by the estate landlords as seasonal labour, even though we hear of slave labour on some rich estates. We also see now why it was necessary for the state to lay down regulations about where and when such migrant labourers were allowed to install themselves.⁷⁴

⁷² Amphorae stamps: Zevi and Tchernia (1969); kilns: Peacock *et al.* (1989).

⁷³ Stamps: Mattingly (1988b) 21–41; Caesarea: Leveau (1984). Albertini tablets: Mattingly (1988c) 404–15.

⁷⁴ Apul. *Apol.* 93; discussed in Whittaker (1993) ch. 1.

VIII. CITIES

The growth of cities in the African provinces is perhaps the best example of the problem we face in deciding whether Roman emperors had specific policies for Africa. The period between the Flavians and the Severans has been described as the ‘greatest age of the municipalization of the Roman world’ all over the Empire and, although Africa differed in how early this age began, there was still something ‘almost mechanical’ and ‘passive’ about the role played by individual emperors. But equally it is possible in the municipal history of Africa to detect differences in different periods which might be the result of active policies.⁷⁵

The debate reflects the enormous variety of the towns in Africa – known mainly through epigraphy and archaeology – and the ambiguity of our few literary sources about the way Roman imperial administration was carried out. The most famous statement about provincial municipal policy is by Tacitus (a contemporary of Trajan and Hadrian), who says that the governor of Britain both gave official aid for urban buildings and privately encouraged them through ‘competition for honours’ (*aemulatio honoris*) among urban élites. Both forces were at work in Africa. The public role of imperial administration is illustrated by decisions such as the building of a city by the army for veterans at Timgad (*imperator . . . fecit per legionem*) or the assistance sent to the town of Saldae (Bejaia) by a military engineer to build an aqueduct. The desire of towns to improve their status, often in rivalry with their neighbours (*municipalis aemulatio*), is illustrated by the town of Gighthis, which petitioned the emperor Pius twice for *ius Latii maius*, while petitions for individual status by urban aristocrats to the emperor, such as that by Septimius Severus to Marcus Aurelius, were clearly enhanced by public donations to one’s town.⁷⁶

To some extent, therefore, there is no contradiction between official action and private donations known to be approved by officialdom. But there was a kind of relentless rhythm in the process by which a community was first recognized as a *civitas*, then gained Latin rights and finally rose to *colonia* status, and it is difficult to believe that great policy decisions were involved in each case. Hadrian found the petitions for such symbols of urban status, among which he cited that of Utica, ridiculous, particularly since, after Timgad in A.D. 100, no more true colonies of immigrants were founded. Thereafter the title of *colonia* became honorific and by the late third century all over the empire titles began to disappear as the distinctions between Italian immigrants and local communities became blurred. The

⁷⁵ For the different views, see Sherwin-White, *Citizenship* 252–4; Gascou (1972) and (1982).

⁷⁶ Tac. *Agr.* 21; Timgad: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 508; Saldae: *ILS* 5795; Gighthis: *CIL* VIII 22737; Severus: *HA Sev.* 1.5.

fact that Africa retained them longer than most says something about their importance to local communities.⁷⁷

It is, of course, impossible to trace the history of every town in the three provinces. By the standards of western provinces Africa – and in particular the province of Proconsularis – was a land of cities. Over five hundred recognized *civitates* are known by name, of which nearly half were in the older parts of Vetus and Nova. Almost certainly there were many more. A recent survey of a region 2,600 kilometres square between the lowlands of Bizerta and the Medjerda Mountains in north-east Tunisia, containing some of the large estates discussed earlier, has found thirty-two centres with monumental buildings, although only twenty can be identified by name. The variety of size and population was enormous, from Carthage which was reckoned as the third city of the empire to tiny agro-towns that can have had no more than a few thousand inhabitants. Many rural workers must have lived in the towns, especially in Proconsularis where they are sometimes located only a few kilometres apart. A study of the north-eastern quarter of Volubilis shows that agrarian activities like olive pressing were sometimes carried out in urban buildings.⁷⁸ There was no obvious correlation between the recognition of a *civitas* or subsequent grants of enhanced status and the physical size or development of a town. The main qualification for a *civitas*, to judge by the petition of Orcistus in fourth-century Asia, was its strategic importance, its buildings and sufficient numbers of resident rich to make it financially viable as a tax-raising unit.⁷⁹ Romanization was probably a factor that envoys cited in their petitions for recognition. But it was probably judged mainly by monumental building and urban institutions, such as the adoption of Roman-style magistrates or the imperial cult.

What mattered above all, however, was support by effectual patrons rather than deep cultural change. At Maktar a new portico, gateway and forum opened up a large new eastern sector in Trajan's reign that continued to be enlarged into the third century. But this had little relationship to its rapid change in status between A.D. 169, when it was still a *civitas*, and A.D. 192, when it became a *colonia*. The change was more probably due to several influential, rich families that entered the imperial procuratorial service in the Antonine period. At Thugga, despite a long history of fine monumental buildings in the first and second centuries, including new temples, a new forum and the spectacular Place of the Winds under Commodus, municipal status was not granted until the early third century and colonial status half a century later.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Hadrian: Aul. Gell. *NA* 16.13; status titles: Gascou (1982) 236–8.

⁷⁸ Survey: Peyras (1991), summary in *BCH* 17B (1981) 115–30; Volubilis: Étienne (1960).

⁷⁹ *FIRA*² 195.

⁸⁰ Maktar: Mastino (1983) but Picard (1987) thinks it possible the town had an exceptional status in Nerva's reign because of the large number of Roman citizens; Thugga: Poinssot (1958).

Leaving aside articulated policies of individual emperors, interventionist or otherwise, we can see differences in the reigns. After the stagnation of Nero's reign most urbanization and civic grants took place in Proconsularis under the Flavians, although no actual new foundations are known in the older part of Vetus. Under Nerva and Trajan there were many new colonial foundations and grants of municipal status, mainly in the developing regions of Nova and Numidia, but none in the Mauretania. Under Hadrian, likewise, Mauretania did not see much urban activity. But in Proconsularis, notably in the older parts such as the *perthica* of Carthage, there was a spate of civic grants, as Italian immigrant and native communities began to assimilate. In the period of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, after a period of almost total inactivity under Pius, there was a positive 'fever' of urban building and civic grants, although again the status awards went exclusively to towns in Proconsularis. This boom in urbanization continued into the Severan period in the next century.⁸¹

Some of the changes followed a natural rhythm of developments, some appear to have been more manipulated. Or, at least, it is possible to detect certain factors that may have determined the changes. The military consideration and security are the most obvious. For example, Flavian development of the borderlands of the southern Dorsal of Tunisia was marked by the foundation of veteran colonies at Ammaedara (ex-legionary camp) and Madauros and the establishment of southern towns like Sufetula, Cillium and Capsa, although whether they were simply military forts at this stage or already recognized as *civitates* and *municipia*, as they were by Trajan's time, we do not know. Under Trajan and Hadrian this development continued with veteran colonies at Thamugadi, Theveste (ex-military base) and perhaps at Thelepte. Progress from military fort to civic status was rapid because the military base was on the move. But in Caesariensis the pace was nothing like as rapid, presumably because it was less secure. Hadrian's foundation in A.D. 122 at Rapidum in the Titeri Mountains was strictly military and, although augmented by veterans and *paganii* (civilian villagers) who helped build the wall in A.D. 167, it did not gain any civic recognition until the early third century when the cohort had left. But a military fort was not always the first stage in a region where order was being established. The colonies founded under Nerva and Trajan at Sitifis and Cuicul on the edge of the Little Kabylie Mountains were clearly a sort of protection for the western push into the plain of Sétif.⁸²

This is the context of the tribal settlements, discussed earlier, such as Thubursicu Numidarum (Khamissa) or Turris Tamalleni alternatively called *civitas Nybgeniorum* (Telmine), which were the means by which Rome incorporated transhumant groups within the order of the province. The

⁸¹ Février (1982), Gascou (1982). Broughton (1968), though out of date, is still useful.

⁸² Details of all these foundations can be found in Gascou (1982); Rapidum: Laporte (1989).

precise institution by which it was effected is unclear. In some cases it may have been by attribution, a device well known in Italy for attaching mountainous people as tax-payers to local towns. In the early days of conquest control of the tribes was exercised through senior soldiers who were seconded to be prefects of the tribe and were responsible to the governor for the collection of tribal taxes. But in the second century, while the tribal leaders were incorporated within a civic centre through individual grants of citizenship, won sometimes by military service as captains of ethnic units, the *principes gentis* were probably drawn from the tribe itself.⁸³

The tribal land, however, was probably not simply incorporated into the territory of the city but kept its identity for tribal use, which would explain the various tribal marker stones discussed earlier. Nevertheless, in the cases of the Numidae, the Musulamii and the Cinithii, the links between the tribe, the *princeps gentis* and a town were close and it is tempting to believe that there was a formula to incorporate tribal élites into the civic organizations, while allowing the tribe itself to continue its traditional pastoral movements. In short, the urban system was a means of taming the tribe, ensuring the cooperation of the chiefs and raising taxes.

But whatever the official policy, the frenzy of building and status grants in the Antonine period was in some degree related to the economic boom. The Bagradas–Milia Valley, noted for its corn-growing, was dense with towns. Many new centres in the olive-rich regions of Numidia, together with the ports of Byzacena, rapidly rose to the status of *coloniae* or *municipia*. Our obsession with the Severan age in Africa has dated many buildings to that period which were in reality part of a steady growth during the second century. The colony of Timgad, for instance, which benefited from both corn and olives as well as a military market nearby, was too large for its original layout as soon as it was built in A.D. 100, and all the later entrance gates of the city were constructed in the second half of the second century. By the end of the Severan period Timgad's size had quadrupled but many of its spectacular buildings, including the library, which we know to have cost 4 million sesterces, may have been constructed earlier.⁸⁴

That story is repeated all over the three provinces. The coastal town of Thysdrus (El Djem) in the centre of the olive culture possessed three amphitheatres, including the largest one outside Italy, which was built either in the late second or early third century. By the late second century Cuicul (Djemila), founded in Trajan's reign on the western flank of Proconsularis, had spilt over beyond the gates and down the sides of the hill with sumptuous villas and huge new baths. Many of the grand new developments at

⁸³ Lists of *principes* in Leveau (1973), Bénabou (1976) 459. Attribution was first proposed by Dessau in *ILS* 9394 and followed by Christol (1987); but see Gasco (1992) which modifies part of Christol's conclusions. ⁸⁴ In general, Février (1982); Timgad: Courtois (1951) 19.

Volubilis, once thought to have been Severan, have been redated to the second century.⁸⁵

But above all, there was Carthage, which went through a transformation in the second half of the second century after a fire in the reign of Pius. The great Antonine Baths, fed by an aqueduct from Zaghuan over 130 kilometres long, has left massive ruins that stretch along the sea front for about 200 metres, not much less than the central hall of the Baths of Caracalla at Rome. Recent work in the UNESCO project has also revealed that the massive vault terracing visible on the central Byrsa hill was built to provide a gigantic new basilica, comparable in concept to the Basilica Ulpia or other imperial *fora* at Rome, which could serve both economic and administrative ends and was linked to the probable site of the Capitol where the present cathedral of St Louis stands. The monumental harbour construction, noted earlier, was linked to the Antonine Baths by a grand sea-front esplanade.⁸⁶

The prosperity of the African towns is reflected in the *summae honorariae* of magistrates and the voluntary donations made by their wealthy citizens, which may have trebled on average between the second and third centuries, although it is quite hard to get a sense of chronological development from the data recording building costs, charitable foundations and other prices. The contrast between the prolific numbers of such inscriptions from Proconsularis and the meagre evidence from the Mauretaniae shows their relative wealth and urbanization. Apuleius, who lived at the time of Antoninus Pius, gives us some idea of the individual wealth of the urban élites. His father, a decurion of the quite small Numidian town of Madauros, owned property worth 2 million sesterces (that is, five times the property qualification for an equestrian), while he himself married an heiress worth double that in the Tripolitanian port of Oea.⁸⁷

IX. ROMANIZATION AND RESISTANCE

Naturally the extent to which native Africans accepted Roman rule differed from place to place. In the early days of conquest resistance was through armed opposition, although the scale and duration of the wars is sometimes exaggerated. More problematic after that is the extent of cultural resistance and how to gauge it, since any historical evolution preserves relics of the past that may denote particularity rather than opposition. Each provincial society, even when it embraced the culture of Roman Italy, had its own characteristics. Internal social differences may be better explained

⁸⁵ Thysdrus: Slim (1983); Cuicul: Février (1968); Volubilis: Rebuffat (1965/6).

⁸⁶ All previous reports on Carthage are replaced by Lancel (1995).

⁸⁷ Costs and *summae honorariae*: Duncan-Jones, *Economy* ch. 3; Apuleius: *Apol.* 23–4, 77.

by poverty and wealth, town and country or plain and mountain than by collaboration or opposition. Resistance does not explain the relationship of culture to power nor the extent to which social divisions and sectional interests were expressed in common ritual values. Broadly speaking, the Roman state was more concerned to win the hearts and minds of the rich than the common people, since it was upon the backs of an urbanized élite that the urban structure of the empire was constructed.⁸⁸

Perceptions of romanization have changed and now *laissez-faire* is favoured over imperialism. Acculturation is thought to have been driven more from below by competing élites than by state imposition from above. It is, in effect, an extension of the debate about urbanization, that can be applied to religious institutions like emperor-worship as well. Urbanization was self-imposed by provincial élites and coupled with willing adoption of the Latin language, Roman names, Roman dress and so on. The functionalist, rationalist interpretation that ruler-worship was forced upon provincials as a weapon of control is thought less convincing than a structuralist interpretation of religion as a system of communication through which rulers and ruled found mutual satisfaction. There has also been a change in the time-scale. Romanization was once thought to have been a slow, gradual process, starting with a thin veneer of civilization which only sank in with time. Now the fashionable view is that élites were rapidly romanized after the initial conquest, largely because rulers and local élites served each other's needs, the one to have an agency of rule, the other to win backing in local power struggles. This does not exclude evolution and in most provinces one can talk about a secondary phase of romanization which went hand in hand with the kind of urban boom seen in Africa.⁸⁹

But in Africa state *dirigisme* and local élite enthusiasm were not mutually exclusive. Roman intervention privileged the urban rich by land allocations and tax immunities. At Thugga, for instance, where *pagi* communities of veterans and immigrants had been imposed upon the native town by the state, the tax immunity of the *pagus* was reaffirmed by Trajan, and privileges concerning inheritance law were granted by Marcus Aurelius. Without going into the complications of the relationship between *pagus* and *civitas* within the *pertica* of Carthage, we may assume that such grants were designed to give the Roman citizens of the *pagus* a dominating economic position over the Libyan labour force of the *civitas*, while structuring them into the civic and religious life of the native community.⁹⁰ We have seen already how tribal *principes* were given access to the urban system of privileges without losing their grip on the tribes but in this case the state was less concerned to urbanize the tribesmen than to organize them.

⁸⁸ Resistance: Bénabou (1976) and (1981); urban élites: Garnsey (1978).

⁸⁹ Among many studies Millett (1990); Woolf (1998); S. Price, *Rituals*.

⁹⁰ Trajan: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 510; Marcus: *CIL* VIII 26528.

Roman religious intervention was idealized in the concept of *evocatio*, a sort of spiritual imperialism which aimed to capture and tame foreign gods by domesticating them in Rome. Indirectly the influence of Roman Carthage and other colonies dominated local Libyan cults. One of the striking things about the Roman cults in the cities of the African provinces was their purity in contrast to Gallo-Roman practice (outside Narbonensis) of preserving native epithets for official gods.⁹¹ Evidently it was not imperial orders but local factors which determined the character of the official cults. Probably the many Italian immigrants among the local élites created a greater competitive need by Africans to demonstrate how Roman they were. And it may have been this factor which accounts for the more rapid assimilation of Africans into the imperial administration.

The institution of *curiae* in Africa supports this conclusion about the effects of imitative competition. The widespread existence of these urban cult organizations was long thought to be a relic of African and Punic brotherhoods, but the theory is contradicted by the fact that almost all *curiae* have been recorded in *municipia* and *coloniae*. More probably, therefore, they were introduced by the Romans as a means of incorporating different social groups, some of the wealthier members of the tribes, within the urban voting and religious life. From the point of view of romanization the *curiae* became the channel through which emperor-worship was conducted by the lower classes, the counterpart of the *Augustales* in Gaul.⁹²

If the *curia* was an imported institution, its growth was spontaneous among more romanized townsmen. At a provincial level the establishment of the imperial cult about A.D. 70 was a state decision by the Flavian emperors, which carried with it the important political position of provincial flamen in the provincial council.⁹³ But no official decision can fully explain local enthusiasm in Africa for the urban flamine, which had been established at Lepcis Magna as early as 8 B.C. and was often held by non-Romans before the town achieved municipal status. Once again, explanations that there was some sort of affinity between the flamine and pre-Roman cults does not seem to correlate with the fact that the flamine was popular in the most Roman parts of the provinces. It was often held by African families that were the first to be absorbed into the urban system – families such as the Memii of Gighthis or the Gabinii of Thugga – who would be anxious to prove their Roman credentials.⁹⁴

It was this lack of an imposed religious ideology that accounts for the huge diversity of provincial pantheons in the Roman empire. But while the

⁹¹ Février (1976). ⁹² *curiae*: Gascoü (1976); *Augustales*: Kotula (1981).

⁹³ Date: in Proconsularis year one of the cult is listed on *CIL VIII 14611*, *AE* 1964 no. 177; in the imperial provinces of the Mauretaniae emperor-cult might have been established by Claudius but more probably by Vespasian, also – see Fishwick (1987).

⁹⁴ Bassignano (1974) expresses the view attacked here.

new African urban élites were anxious to prove their Roman-ness, more popular cults of Saturn and Caelestis engaged the lower classes. They were not, however, cults of resistance, since, although the two gods were the romanized forms of Punic Ba'al and Tanit, geographically they were worshipped in the most sedentarized and agriculturally prosperous regions. But a change occurred in the mid-second century when, although the priests of the Saturn cult were still drawn from the lower class, strong links developed with the urban élites. From the rule of Pius vows for the safety of the emperor associated with Saturn became common on inscriptions; the first dedication to Saturn by a *flamen* appeared; and there was a revolution in the iconography of the stelae as figures began to be shown wearing the Roman toga. Rich benefactors donated luxurious Roman-style temples to the cult of the towns, of which the best known is the temple replacing an earlier Semitic building at Thugga in A.D. 195. It was paid for by a member of an African family that emerged in the second century, probably from the *civitas* which was becoming assimilated with the older *pagus* of settlers. A similar change took place in the countryside, where small 'chapels' appeared on the edge of the estates and dedications to Saturn were sometimes associated with local rural deities, but often made by the rich, romanized landlords.⁹⁵

All this looks like a secondary phase of romanization, associated perhaps with a new élite of African landowners who were assimilating with or even replacing the earlier colonial élites. At Thugga, for instance, there was an almost complete break between the families that held urban office in the first century and those of the second. At Cuicul the families which dominated in the late empire first appeared in the early third century. At Lepcis Magna the great *gentes* of the third century who put their marks on the oil amphorae exported to Rome were making their fortunes in the second century.⁹⁶ Although none of the great Antonine and Severan families that entered the senatorial and equestrian orders can be directly associated with the Saturn cult, since their loyalties were engaged in Rome itself, it appears as if the local bourgeoisie, newly enriched by the African boom, found in Saturn not a form of spiritual resistance but a resolution of the tensions between their African and their Roman commitments.

⁹⁵ Saturn: Le Glay (1966) 248, for a list of dedications, Bénabou (1976) 373; Thugga: *CIL* VIII 26498 and Pensabene (1989). ⁹⁶ Jacques, *Privilège*.

CHAPTER 17
CYRENAICA

JOYCE REYNOLDS

The account of geographical and social conditions in Cyrenaica, its Augustan organization and Julio-Claudian development given in *CAH* x² 619–40 is taken for granted here.¹ What happened during the ‘Year of the Four Emperors’ is not known. It would be surprising, however, if the Greek élite was unaffected by the fall of Nero, with whom some members seem to have had influence, or by the events in Egypt which made an emperor of Vespasian, once quaestor of Crete and Cyrene; while the Jewish communities, always in touch with Judaea, must have reacted to the course of the revolt there. When the proconsul Antonius Flamma (who may have been a Cyrenaean (*CAH* x² 637–8) was condemned in 70 for extortion aggravated by cruelty,² the sentence may have reflected the factional politics of the period as much as his guilt.

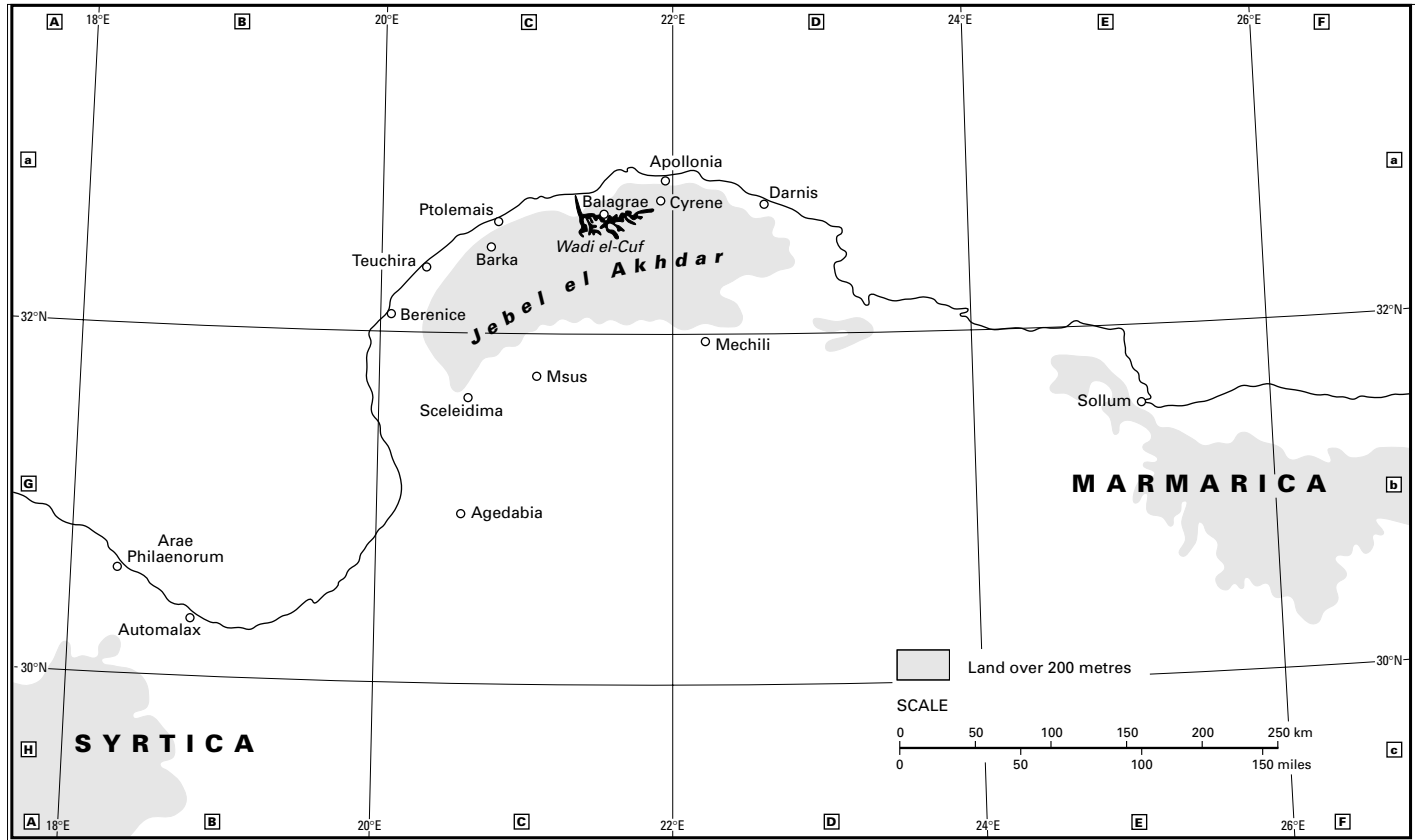
For the following century and a quarter we have only gobbets of information. They derive from literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources to approximately the middle second century, from epigraphic and archaeological, with one important papyrological supplement, thereafter. The dating and interpretation of these items is often open to argument; received doctrines are very liable to be controverted by new discoveries; like that in *CAH* x², this account is strictly provisional.

I. A.D. 70–117

From 70 to 115 the evidence, on the face of it, shows five modestly prosperous cities in which old traditions were being gently modified by borrowings from Rome, whether on local or on Roman initiative. The

¹ The list of sources in *CAH* x² 619 n. 1 covers much of the ground, but should be supplemented by consultation of the bibliographies to the Cyrenaican sections of *Libyan Studies* xx (1989) and of the three specialist journals *Libya Antiqua*, *Libyan Studies* and *Quaderni di Archeologia della Libia*. A notable documentary addition for this period is the stele carrying letters (and/or other dicta) of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius, *SEG* xxviii.1 566, *AE* 1979 no. 636 and Oliver (1989) nos. 120–4. An article touching on many central issues of Cyrenaican history in the second century A.D. is Spawforth and Walker (1986).

The importance attributed to the native Libyan component in the population is not materially reduced, in the opinion of the present writer, by the argument of Moretti (1987–8) 237–9 that ‘Libyssae’ in *SEG* ix 1 should be understood as ‘Cyrenaican Greeks’. ² *Tac. Hist.* iv.45.



Map 5 Cyrenaica

archaeological contributions to it come mainly from the excavated civic and cult centres of Cyrene, with some additions from similar areas in Apollonia, Ptolemais and Teuchira, from the extensive cemeteries of Cyrene, Ptolemais and Teuchira, and from the excavated residential area of Sidi Khrebeish at Berenice. They are, naturally, most informative about the rich; but also show a fair range of other social and economic strata (allowing for the inadequacy of criteria for discerning the poor). It should be noted, however, that inscriptions have yielded very few examples of craftsmen (one of the few being a local sculptor who was also a city councillor), and none of craft or trade associations. How we should interpret this silence is not clear.

Until there has been more detailed analysis of the small finds only very generalized assessment of the economy is possible. Since it was based on a combination of agriculture and pastoralism, it surely flourished in the stable conditions established towards the end of Augustus' reign. Some luxuries were also produced, but apparently only in a small way; thus there is no indication that the once very profitable silphium trade ever recovered its earlier volume (*CAH* x² 627–8), but something of it probably continued, since Cyrenaican silphium is still listed in Diocletian's Price Edict.³ It is unlikely, then, that great fortunes were being made in Cyrenaica, but quite satisfactory incomes may be conjectured for many; and it is these which must have paid for such things as the vigorous redevelopment of the residential area of Sidi Khrebeish (which had run down to near-desolation in the first century B.C. but began to revive around the middle of the first century A.D.), as well as for the imported goods of many varieties found on all sites, most conspicuously marble.

Among the really rich it seems that several from Italian immigrant families acquired local citizenship, married into local families and became difficult to distinguish from locals; the more so as Roman citizenship was now being steadily extended among the leading Greeks. The one certainly Cyrenaican Roman senator known to us appears in this period, P. Sestius Pollio, probably from a family in which local and immigrant Italian blood were mixed; his career perhaps began under Domitian, and he reached the praetorian legateship of Crete and Cyrene before 111/12 when he was priest of Apollo at Cyrene⁴ – not a very distinguished record, but his employment in his province of origin is interesting, as is his tenure of a local office. Other prominent Cyrenaeans were now publicly identifying Roman affairs as their own; thus a priestess of Artemis at Cyrene invited all the girls of the city and its territory to a meal in honour of Trajan, probably in 105/6, and so, presumably, to celebrate the fall of Sarmizegethusa,⁵ while the priest of Apollo in 106/7 was described in the priest-list as 'priest

³ Ch. 36, line 132 (Laufer). ⁴ *SEG* XVIII.744. ⁵ *SEG* XXVI.1826 with 1827.

in the year when Trajan captured Decebalus' and held the extra title *kallietes* – 'priest in a glorious year'.⁶

People of lesser status too were assimilating elements from Roman culture; thus Latin names were increasingly taken into their onomastic repertoire, and, more significantly, a change in funerary custom, which began in the later first century B.C., was gaining strength. By the beginning of the second century the busts of the nameless and faceless goddess which traditionally marked Cyrenaean tombs⁷ had been replaced for current burials by stelae and/or funerary portraits on the Roman model.

It also seems that Libyans and Libyan influences are increasingly visible, not only through the appearance of more Libyan names in inscriptions but in concepts expressed monumentally. As early as the second century B.C., so it is currently proposed, a series of sculptured reliefs found a little outside the walls of Cyrene presented Libyan religious ideas (gods and goddesses assembled in a cave, with pastoral scenes above) in a form strongly hellenized, but in many features patently non-Greek; and examples of the series were being produced also in the Roman period.⁸ By that time tombs in country districts all over Cyrenaica were beginning to be marked by stelae which carry a more or less schematic representation of a head,⁹ almost certainly a Libyan feature; while in and around Cyrene it was becoming the practice to cut niches into the façades of rock-cut tombs for small funerary portrait heads which often show Libyan facial characteristics,¹⁰ a more sophisticated variant on the heads of the stelae. A culture in which Greek and Libyan elements were combined, under some influences from Rome, is apparent here.

Roman administrative initiatives are to be seen in Vespasian's resumed reclamation of illegally occupied *ager publicus populi romani* (begun by Claudius but discontinued by Nero in 59 because of local pressures, *CAH* x² 640), in road-building and perhaps a military levy in Vespasian's reign and, more energetically, early in Trajan's (when it seems likely that a major improvement was made on the road which linked Cyrene with the sea, the work being allotted to soldiers, especially the recruits called up in a levy);¹¹ and in some official public building. It is possible that we should connect with the Trajanic activity an issue of coinage showing the head of Jupiter Ammon on the reverse, which is much more plausibly related to Cyrenaica than to any other province suggested for it.¹²

The treatment of *ager publicus* and the public works merit discussion. Boundary stones erected by Vespasian's legate, Q. Paconius Agrippinus, to mark public property have been found with dates from 71 to 74;¹³ the

⁶ *SEG* IX.101 with XVIII.744. ⁷ Beschi (1969–70). ⁸ Fabbriotti (1987).

⁹ Bacchielli and Reynolds (1987) 459–88. ¹⁰ Rosenbaum (1969) 13–28.

¹¹ R. G. Goodchild in Gadullah (1968) 169–70, Reynolds (1979) 459; *AE* 1951 no. 210 and, for the Trajanic levy, *AE* 1951 no. 88. ¹² Walker (1977) 112–13. ¹³ E.g. *SEG* IX.165, 166, 360.

programme, then, was briskly introduced at the outset of the reign in the context of the emperor's proclaimed public need for cash. It apparently began with reclamations actually in or immediately adjacent to Cyrene (but all the Cyrene markers were unfortunately found reused so that their original locations are uncertain) and near Berenice; the rest of the stones known were in the coastal plain, from a little east of Apollonia to a little east of Teuchira. The properties attested are likely to have been comparatively small (one is described as a garden); but, even supposing that there are no more markers to be found, none even from the large estates which seem to be implied by Hyginus,¹⁴ the work was more productive than that suggests, since assertion of ownership by the Roman people was apparently followed by survey and redivision of the land, clearly for letting to tenants on new terms; and this procedure was certainly also applied to some at least of the land reclaimed but left in possession of its occupiers by Nero. It is possible that field boundaries still visible near Cyrene and Apollonia were established at this time but secure evidence for their dating is difficult to find. There is no real foundation for a view that a programme of agricultural reform was intended; what was done may have been incidentally beneficial, but the emperor's aim was surely fiscal. It did perhaps include some attempt at rationalization of publicly owned property; Vespasian authorized a proconsul to sell an estate belonging to the Roman people to the city of Apollonia and her associates,¹⁵ and that could have combined relief from a marginally profitable burden for the official administrators with advantage to Apollonia, whose territory and civic finances are likely to have been limited. Except that the tenant of one parcel of the land sold to Apollonia had the name of a free-born Greek, we know nothing of those who now received leases. It is tempting to guess that they included hellenized Libyans, but there is no confirmation for this, any more than for a conjecture that some might have been Jews. We have no information either to show whether *publicani* continued to manage the Roman properties as they did earlier (*CAH* x² 631–2).

At the same time there are signs of imperial concern for civic finances. The sale of public land to Apollonia is one; and here a paternalistic effort to prevent the city from mismanaging its acquisition seems evident, for the proconsul himself was responsible not only for the land division, but for the terms of the lease (a perpetual one) and apparently for the choice of tenant. That Domitian recovered civic land for Ptolemais is another.¹⁶ It was presumably also part of the reason for gifts of public buildings such as the annexe to Cyrene's record office given by Domitian¹⁷ and her Roman bath given by Trajan;¹⁸ some encouragement to romanization can be seen

¹⁴ *Corp. Agrim.* 1 (Thulin) 85–6, with Jones, *Cities* 360. ¹⁵ *AE* 1967 no. 531.

¹⁶ *AE* 1954 no. 188. ¹⁷ *AE* 1927 no. 142. ¹⁸ Reynolds (1959) 95–6.

in these as well. More difficult to interpret, if the Flavian date currently proposed for it is right, is the conversion of an important part of Cyrene's ephebic gymnasium into a 'forum' (the *Caesareum*) with an adjacent (and newly built) basilica.¹⁹ This would seem to be an interference with civic tradition, apparently in order to provide better accommodation for the proconsul's court. It may be, of course, that this was felt to have advantages also for the Cyrenaeans, conferring prestige and encouraging more visitors to the city and so more business for the citizens; and/or the loss for the ephebes may have been fully compensated in ways of which we are ignorant.

A clearly sinister sequence of events, on the other hand, is recorded in the affair of Jonathan the Weaver, usually dated in 73 because he was a refugee from Masada.²⁰ According to Josephus he persuaded some 2,000 poor Cyrenaican Jews to assemble in the desert in the hope of miracles and signs, and went unnoticed until richer Jews informed the governor Catullus (sometimes identified as L. Valerius Catullus Messalinus, *cos. ord.* 73, but that would be surprising in view of his rank unless the affair occurred earlier than 73). Catullus' troops inflicted heavy casualties on the group and captured Jonathan, who was then suborned to inform against richer Cyrenaican Jews and others elsewhere, including Josephus himself. Many Cyrenaican Jews suffered death, with confiscation of property (Josephus says 3,000); and although Vespasian eventually rejected Jonathan's testimony and executed him, Catullus got off lightly; nor is it clear whether the injustices that he had inflicted in Cyrenaica were admitted. There is no reflection of all this in the archaeological evidence – the series of Jewish funerary inscriptions at Teuchira appears to go on without check; but it is likely that there was festering resentment and a weakening in the numbers and the restraining authority of the richer members of the communities. That would provide one element in the background to the major revolt of Cyrenaican Jews which probably took place in 115.²¹ This revolt is to be associated with approximately contemporary outbreaks in Egypt, Cyprus and Mesopotamia, suggesting that the main cause lay not in Cyrenaica, but in widespread bitterness stemming from the failure of the Jewish rebellion of 66 and from Titus' destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem, fanned no doubt by refugees from Judaea. The absence of Trajan on the Parthian campaign, for which he had diverted troops from elsewhere (just possibly including Cyrenaica since nothing is said of Roman troops resisting the revolt), and perhaps the earthquake of Antioch, provided a promising moment for a sudden explosion of remarkable force. The literary sources stress atrocities and casualties (220,000 according to Dio), noting that these

¹⁹ Luni (1990). ²⁰ Joseph. *Bj* vii.437–51, *Vit.* 424–5.

²¹ Dio lxxviii.32; Oros. vii.12; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iv.2.

were very heavy in the countryside. Excavation has revealed extensive physical damage focused, it seems, on temples and administrative buildings, both Greek and Roman, and on statues, of public figures as well as of gods. At Cyrene a number of inscriptions on public-buildings in the Sanctuary of Apollo, near the agora, and in the temple of Zeus refer to ‘overthrow and burning in the Jewish War’,²² which the remains confirm, most vividly the fallen peristyle of the temple of Zeus (never re-erected in antiquity). At the country site of Balagrae to the west an important sanctuary of Asclepius also suffered severely. Milestones show that the road from Cyrene to Apollonia was destroyed (cutting the direct link between the city and the sea),²³ while a representation of a seven-branched candelabrum, deeply incised in the rock surface of a stretch of road north-west of Balagrae, suggests interference with the route between Cyrene and her neighbours to the west. There was probably serious damage on the other city sites too but since their excavation has been less extensive it is much less precisely attested at present; too little is known of village sites to indicate whether Balagrae was the only one of them to suffer, but it is unlikely. On the other hand, at Sidi Khrebeish (Berenice) the residential area uncovered shows no sign of damage at this date, and although an adjacent public building may have been abandoned in the aftermath of the revolt, that is not certain. The course of events is not perfectly clear, but a number of the rebels joined their fellows in Egypt. All were eventually suppressed by the soldiers whom Trajan sent against them under Q. Marcius Turbo; those in Cyrenaica apparently before Trajan’s death, since it was he who ordered the despatch of colonists to resettle the area.²⁴

II. A.D. 117–193

Present evidence does not support the view, once widely held, that the Jewish revolt sent Cyrenaica into irreversible decline. Active measures were taken to deal with the damage. By the second half of the century the cities were again modestly prosperous, even vigorous, several of them known to have been participants in the common sacrifice of the Capitoline Games at Rome, and in Hadrian’s Panhellenion.

There were, of course, emergency needs in 117/18; in the first place, surely, for food, since harvests had been lost; Hadrian was later called ‘nourisher’ at Cyrene, much more probably because he sent relief supplies than from gratitude for an alimentary system of which no other trace has come to light.²⁵ Some public works were also immediate necessities; Hadrian set troops to remake the road from Cyrene to Apollonia; and by

²² A number collected by Applebaum (1950); add *SEG* xvii.800, 804. ²³ *AE* 1951 no. 208.

²⁴ *SEG* xvii.585. ²⁵ *SEG* xvii 809.

the end of 119 he had in hand rebuilding of the Caesareum and basilica at Cyrene, along with the Roman baths and the adjacent temple of Hecate.²⁶ This programme no doubt served the Roman administration as much as the locals; but the restoration of the baths, which had been Trajan's gift to Cyrene, underlined continuing imperial interest in the citizens, as well as providing a romanized setting for pursuits which included athletics along with cleanliness.

We might have expected administrative changes after so signal a failure of the governmental organization; but none are apparent unless a reduction in the size of the territory took place at this time. At some date between the writings of Pliny the Elder and those of Ptolemy the Geographer (whose evidence is confirmed by a papyrus of 191) the eastern frontier was moved westward from Great Catabathmos (Sollum) to Darnis (Derna).²⁷ This was a significant diminution of the area under the protection of the limited number of troops stationed in Cyrenaica and could very well have been stimulated by the experience of 115. If the garrison had been reduced at an earlier date, it was presumably brought up to strength again or even increased; but there is no clear evidence either for its subsequent size or its distribution before the reign of Severus.

The most serious requirement, however, which was for new colonists, was met at once. Already in 117 Trajan authorized despatch of 3,000 veteran legionaries under the camp prefect of legion XV Apollinaris and it has been suggested (without evidence) that Hadrian increased the numbers. Replacements were needed not only for those killed by the rebels but for the rebels themselves, since the substantial Jewish communities of the preceding periods disappear entirely from the inscriptions of the cities and their territories. Some may have survived in the Sirtica and the Marmarica but would be irrelevant to the problems of the cities. On the other hand, there is no reference in our sources to Libyan participation in the revolt on either side, and it is not likely that the Libyan tribesmen to the south of the cities had suffered heavy casualties; their existence may have reduced the need to bring men into the country from outside. Until monuments in the countryside can be dated more precisely (for which more excavation, especially on village sites, is essential), it is impossible to offer more than the guess that one likely result of the revolt would be an increased presence of sedentarized Libyans in city territories. Traces of the soldier colonists can be seen at Cyrene and probably also at Apollonia, Ptolemais and Teuchira (but the soldier of XV Apollinaris who still figures in accounts of this site is a fiction based on a misread text);²⁸ nothing relevant is known from Berenice. Presumably a substantial number went to the

²⁶ *SEG* IX 168, 252; XVII 800, 804; *AE* 1928 no. 1, 2; 1951 no. 123; 1960 no. 268.

²⁷ Romanelli (1940) 215–16 with Norsa and Vitelli (1931). ²⁸ Reynolds (1977–8).

new city of Hadrianopolis on the coast between Teuchira and Berenice; it has left few monuments and is often written off as a failure, but its mark is to be seen in the description of Cyrenaica as a Hexapolis which was certainly in use throughout the rest of the second century (relevant evidence fails in the third).²⁹ Hadrian was still expressing concern about the population of Cyrene in 135,³⁰ but by the second half of the century there seems to be no problem; thus two ephobic lists, one of 161 and the other of a year between 172 and 175, show about the same numbers in training as in the late Augustan lists,³¹ and it must be significant that there was a military levy in the territory, very possibly under Marcus Aurelius³² (an issue of coins with the head of Jupiter Ammon, similar to the Trajanic issue which seems to belong to the time of a levy, p. 550, should perhaps be associated with it).

Recovery of the population should have sufficed to revive economic prosperity – and clearly did, although after some delay. In the early days some of the formulae in inscriptions at Cyrene seem self-pitying; but there are also purely factual statements indicative of genuine difficulties. A good instance is the list of eponymous priests of Apollo which shows several years in which the city took on the priest's obligations, clearly because there was no qualified candidate.³³ Nevertheless even in 118 Cyrene could respond to Hadrian's help by erecting a statue of him on a marble base³⁴ and was clearly able to function as a city, if not very grandly.

The progress of public building is far from clear. After his initial work at Cyrene we hear of Hadrian constructing (it may well have been reconstructing) a basilica at Teuchira in 123; and at the same date he probably undertook public works in Apollonia and perhaps Berenice.³⁵ In 135 while urging Cyrene to bolder and more enterprising work herself he acceded to her appeal for help with the gift of a second gymnasium to be reserved for epebes.³⁶ He may also have rebuilt the basic elements of the sanctuary of Asclepius at Balagrae in her territory (his name figures largely on its structures, but not certainly in the nominative case). By 138 Cyrene described herself as 'adorned (by him) also with cult statues',³⁷ suggesting that he did much more for her than we know. Nevertheless, he certainly left much to be restored by her, including, it seems, buildings in the agora, the temple of Apollo, together with most of the many subsidiary temples and monuments in the sanctuary around it, and the great temple of Zeus. This responsibility was heavy and it is hardly surprising that it was not met

²⁹ E.g. *AE* 1963 no. 140; *SEG* xviii 740*b*.

³⁰ *SEG* xxviii 1566; *AE* 1979 no. 636; Oliver (1989) no. 121.

³¹ *SEG* xx 742; Reynolds and Fadel Ali (1996). ³² Reynolds (1977–8) n. 28.

³³ Smith and Porcher (1864) 112 no. 10. ³⁴ *SEG* xvii 808.

³⁵ Reynolds in Humphrey (1976) 314 no. 46; and Lloyd (1977–85) 240 no. 9.

³⁶ See n. 30 above with Oliver (1989) no. 122. ³⁷ *SEG* ix 136.

quickly – a lot of the work was not completed before the reign of Commodus (later dates sometimes proposed should be rejected in the light of fresh evidence). But under Marcus Aurelius and subsequently the completion of restorations was taking place alongside new construction on what appears to be an ambitious scale. The most important new buildings so far uncovered were in and on either side of the Valley Street which runs between the hill of the agora and acropolis and the hill of the temple of Zeus. A longish stretch of this route as it approached the sanctuary of Apollo was redeveloped as a colonnaded street entered through a triumphal arch; and, higher up, where the valley broadens, it was flanked with what are, for the most part, new temples and a number of buildings probably intended for public purposes (perhaps including a market, but none are sufficiently excavated for confident identification).³⁸ A new system of water supply was constructed at Cyrene in which the city paid at least for two large cisterns, while acknowledging imperial aid, together with stimulus from the proconsul in office, who actually put the first spade into the earth for their excavation.³⁹ Minor monuments, statues and other decorative features become common again, some of high quality. Although the evidence from the other sites is more limited, it too shows signs of a *floruit*; thus at Ptolemais a series of good pieces of sculpture were found;⁴⁰ and at Berenice, in the residential area of Sidi Khrebeish, new house-construction begins, sometimes in a grander manner than previously, and new decorative features are added to older houses, notably mosaic floors. It is true that on all sites the local limestone was the main building material, but when new or stuccoed it produced a much better effect than can be easily appreciated today; and a fair quantity of marble was also in use, some of which had to be imported, although some was reused.

It is possible that vigour returned to city life in the other cities a little earlier than in Cyrene. Already under Hadrian, and still more under Antoninus Pius, there are signs in them of the intercity rivalry that was notoriously prevalent in the Greek world of the time.⁴¹ One city, perhaps Ptolemais, sought privileges equal to those of Cyrene in the Panhellenion; Berenice petitioned for the status of assize town (which would have been to the disadvantage of Cyrene and probably of Ptolemais too) and Ptolemais sought to assert herself ahead of Cyrene at the Capitoline Games in Rome. They were snubbed by the emperors, but their ambitions must reflect a reasonable prosperity. By the time of Marcus Aurelius, Cyrene too seems restored to vigour. The building programme just mentioned demonstrates that well enough; the number of local benefactors recorded, which notably outstrips that at present known from the first

³⁸ Ward Perkins and Gibson (1976–7). ³⁹ *SEG* XVIII 704.

⁴⁰ D. M. Brinkerhoff in Kraeling (1962) 183–4.

⁴¹ See documents in n. 30 above, with Oliver (1989) nos. 120, 122–4.

century A.D., is equally significant. In the affairs of the city some of the families prominent in the first century recur, showing that the survival rate was higher than we might have guessed from the ancient casualty figures, and that this 'old guard' still led society despite the appearance in civic life of a number of new names. These latter should be the names of soldier colonists who, on the face of it, were integrated into the citizen populations when they were settled in old cities; they must, however, have introduced new features into social and cultural life, although it is difficult at present to assess them, since the men had been serving in the Greek-speaking East, may well have included some who were recruited there, and were certainly (doubtless by design) not wholly alien to their new environment. At the least they greatly increased the number of Roman citizens in the middle social range; they no doubt hastened the abandonment of the already declining Cyrenaean dialect and of archaic features such as the triakatiarch in Cyrene's ephobic organization (still there as an alternative name for the ephibarch in 161, but gone by 172–5);⁴² they may be suspected of having encouraged the tastes that led to construction of an amphitheatre at Ptolemais and conversion into another of the theatre beside the sanctuary of Apollo at Cyrene. But Hadrian stressed Cyrene's own traditions, especially her foundation in accordance with an oracle from Delphi, and her connection with Sparta, founder of Cyrene's mother city Thera.⁴³ These and other elements from the past figure in a number of Cyrenaean inscriptions⁴⁴ and some sculptural representations of the second century. He also fostered her Hellenism in other ways. Although probable, it is not certain that he ever went to Cyrenaica, so that J. H. Oliver's attractive theory that we have, in one Cyrenaean inscription, a fragment of a speech made to the people of Cyrene on the occasion of a visit must be treated with reserve for the moment.⁴⁵ But he probably undertook the function of lawgiver at Cyrene and revised her code, perhaps with some especial stress on the inculcation of Spartan moral qualities in the young. He and his successor supported Cyrene's status as metropolis of Cyrenaica, and the title, sometimes expanded as Metropolis of the Hexapolis, appears in inscriptions. Most constructively, after the foundation of the Panhellenion in 131, he fostered her membership of it (in 135) with two representatives on the Council.⁴⁶ A sustained connection with Greece can be seen in other Cyrenaican cities too; Apollonia dedicated a statue of Hadrian in the Olympieion at Athens and one of Marcus Aurelius at Eleusis.⁴⁷ Ptolemais/Barca commissioned a statue from an Athenian sculptor.⁴⁸ The Panhellenion in fact drew all Cyrenaica into closer touch with mainland Greece and the Greek East, and provided, at least for members of Cyrene's

⁴² See n. 31 above. ⁴³ See nn. 30, 41 above. ⁴⁴ E.g. *SEG* 1x 190. ⁴⁵ Oliver (1989) no. 122.

⁴⁶ Oliver (1989) no. 120. ⁴⁷ *IG* II² 3306, 3407. ⁴⁸ Kraeling (1962) 214 no. 38.

élite, new opportunities which were, perhaps, more easily accessible and may have been more attractive to them than those of the Roman public service. There are at any rate no more Cyrenaican senators known at present and no members of the Roman equestrian service (although a few knights appear in the third century); but a Ti. Claudius Iason Magnus, of a great Cyrenaean family, was president of the Panhellenion in a year between 157 and 161, his probable grandson won the men's foot race at Olympia in 189,⁴⁹ and D. Cascellius Aristoteles, another eminent Cyrenaean (rather than a Spartan with Cyrenaean connections, as has been thought), held office as *paidonomos* in Sparta in the middle of the century (clearly underlining Cyrene's kinship with Sparta).⁵⁰ Thus, the new Roman influences were balanced by a new strengthening of the Greek tradition. That is nicely illustrated in contemporary Cyrenaean architecture; new features were being accepted, like the colonnaded street, which takes up a fashion from the Greek East, Corinthian capitals, or the triumphal arch and *podia* for temples which are borrowings from Rome, but the old-fashioned Doric was deliberately chosen for some – mainly religious – purposes. It is also apparent in a different way in the pottery found at Sidi Khrebeish; during the second, as already in the first century A.D., considerable quantities were being imported from the West, but always some from the Greek East as well; and when, in the second century, local potters wanted new models it was to Greek plain wares that they turned.

There are also developments among the Libyans, some in continuation of trends noted earlier (p. 550), in which it is not always clear what degree of Libyan self-consciousness we should postulate, others, very remarkably, in their own country sanctuaries. The outstanding instance is at Slonta (probably ancient Lasamices) south of Cyrene, where a second-century date is now proposed for the sculpture in a cave and rock-cut shrine.⁵¹ It is apparent here that Libyans had learnt from Graeco-Roman contemporaries a desire to express their own religious concepts in permanent, visible form; and that they had adapted Graeco-Roman symbols and techniques, vigorously, if roughly, to represent the rituals in what seems to have been a Libyan chthonic cult.

Cyrenaica, in fact, by the end of the second century was showing a vitality which can fairly be reckoned as consonant with her natural resources, and a culture which is a striking combination of Greek, Roman and Libyan elements.

⁴⁹ Spawforth and Walker (1986) 98–100.

⁵⁰ Spawforth and Walker (1986) 97–8.

⁵¹ Luni (1987).

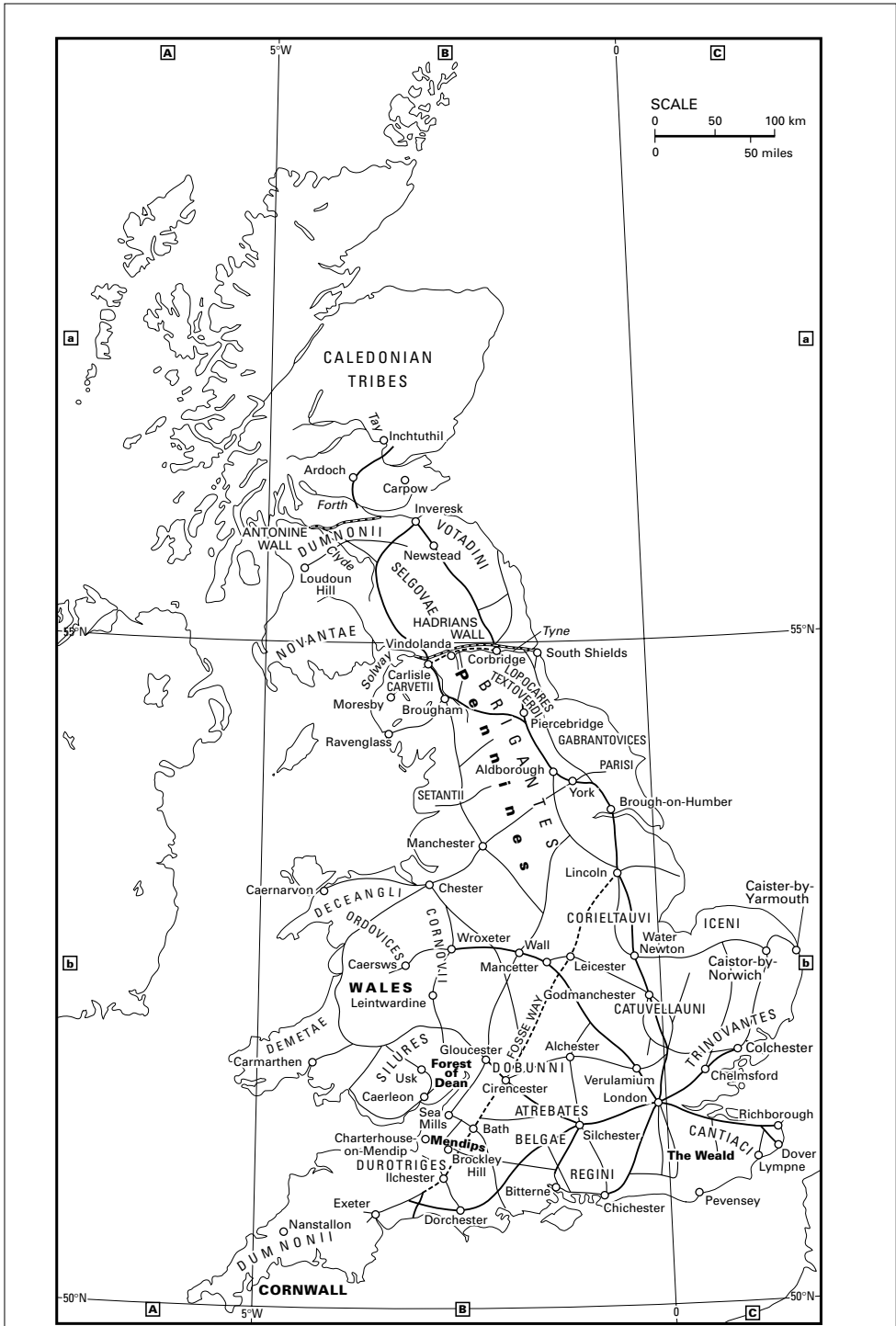
CHAPTER 18

BRITAIN

MICHAEL FULFORD

Almost the entire period between the accessions of Vespasian and Septimius Severus was dominated by military affairs in Britain. Even during those relatively short periods when little or no campaigning is recorded as having taken place it can be argued that developments elsewhere in the civil zone of the province were conditioned by events on the frontier. Recently, greater emphasis has been placed on the achievements of the native aristocracy where the development and pace of romanization is seen to reflect more the latter's attitudes and aspirations towards Rome rather than the results of policies imposed by the invader. However, it is difficult to isolate civil developments from a framework imposed by the progress of conquest and its associated administrative structure.

Our written sources are dominated by Tacitus and, in particular, by the biography of his father-in-law, the *Agricola*, which also includes a commentary on political developments in Britain before the latter became governor. The *Historiae* also offer some useful insights into the Civil War of 68–9 and relations with the Brigantian client kingdom during that period and at the start of the 70s. Second-century historical sources are much more limited, but nevertheless, and in conjunction with a rich epigraphic record, offer a framework for the principal developments on the northern frontier: the construction of Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall. Although the recently discovered series of documents from Vindolanda offer vivid insights into military organization and military life in the north at the very beginning of the second century, they do not add materially to the historical narrative. The latter has had graphic illumination from the archaeological record in the form of the physical remains of the frontier systems, forts and the legionary fortresses, but only the association with closely datable inscriptions, or strong coin evidence, allows good correlation with the historical narrative. While there has been a long tradition of trying to associate the military history of Roman Britain as derived from written sources with the archaeological record of forts, fortresses, and the like, much of the basis for this is inherently speculative, depending as it does on a series of tenuous links, more often than not linked to ceramic evidence, which, in its turn, is dependent on correlations with otherwise independently dated deposits. Whereas a coin will almost invariably provide a *terminus post quem*,



Map 6 Britain

the pottery that is dated by association is usually broken and distant by an unknown period from the date of its manufacture. Thus the date of a deposit of, for example, new *sigillata*, such as the crate containing South Gaulish *sigillata* buried by the destruction of Pompeii in A.D. 79, will probably be much closer to that of its manufacture than a deposit of broken sherds of identical material from a rubbish pit associated with coins which reveal varying degrees of wear. Thus, although there is a strong expectation of developing chronologies of material culture that will allow a close reading and interrelationship with the historical narrative, it is an unrealistic one. Except where particular circumstances prevail, such as with dendrochronologically dated sequences, it is usually difficult to work in archaeological periods of less than about twenty-five years. The Flavian governorships of Cerialis, Frontinus and Agricola provide good examples of the difficulties of correlating the archaeological and written records in that there can be no easy resolution of precisely who was responsible for conquering which territories or for the construction of which forts. Even in the case of Agricola, where we have more information from Tacitus about the extent of his conquest in Scotland, there is considerable uncertainty over what should be attributed to him, rather than his predecessors and successors.

In any case, while the written sources, including the epigraphic material, largely focus on frontier affairs, there is almost no evidence to relate to the civil province and the development of administrative structures, cities and the romanization of the island. Here we are almost entirely dependent on archaeological evidence. In this connection, and within the period with which we are concerned, much has been made of one brief reference to the civil policies of one governor, Agricola, with whom much has been linked in the archaeological record.¹ In effect such correlations cannot be sustained by the evidence. Indeed, the one inscription of A.D. 79 from a civil, public building which mentions Agricola (the forum-basilica at Verulamium) records the completion of a structure which can only have been started some years before his appointment; the initiative was not his.² Thus, although the non-militarized part of the province probably consumed as much, if not more, energy and resources as the frontier zone, we are dependent on a slow acquisition of material evidence to characterize the full extent of the achievement in the romanization of the province during the period between 69 and 193.

I. THE FRONTIER

At the outset of our period only three legions remained in Britain, legio XIV having been withdrawn in 66 or 67 from its base at Wroxeter for

¹ Tac. *Agr.* 21. ² Wright (1956) 146–7 no. 3; Frere (1983) 69–72.

service in the East. Changing legionary dispositions in Britain point to substantial retrenchment after the suppression of the Boudican revolt: the fortress at Usk, probably occupied by legio XX, had also been abandoned sometime after 65. Thus, revised arrangements for the supervision of south Wales were necessary and evidence from Gloucester points to the foundation of a new legionary fortress there from the late 60s. This is likely to have been occupied by legio II Augusta, although evidence from its base at Exeter suggests continuation there of military occupation into the 70s. Legio XX, another possible candidate for Gloucester, is likely to have occupied Wroxeter in place of legio XIV. Legio IX remained at Lincoln.³ This disposition is likely to have been in place during the governorship of Vettius Bolanus (69–71) whose military resources did not apparently allow him the means to intervene in the client kingdom of Brigantia where Cartimandua had been usurped by Venutius.⁴

This task was left to Petillius Cerialis, with whose appointment a fourth legion (II Adiutrix) was restored to Britain.⁵ His brief from Vespasian was clearly to tackle the problem of Brigantia and to advance the conquest which had effectively been suspended since the Boudican rebellion. That policy was followed by the two succeeding governors, Iulius Frontinus (74–8) and Gnaeus Iulius Agricola (78–84). Initially, under Cerialis, the thrust was to the north, into the territory of the Brigantes, and certainly as far north as the Solway–Tyne line.⁶ The legionary fortress at York (for legio IX) appears to have been founded in the early 70s, leaving legio II Adiutrix at Lincoln at the outset. Frontinus, on the other hand, resumed the conquest of Wales, concentrating first on the southern tribe of the Silures and establishing a new base for legio II Augusta from c. A.D. 75 at Caerleon, while Agricola completed the conquest of the tribes of north Wales in the first year of his appointment. This was accompanied by the provision of a new fortress for legio II Adiutrix at Chester which was under construction in 79.⁷ Agricola's tenure of office was longer than usual and extended through the Principate of Titus into that of Domitian, and it saw the conquest of northern Britain almost completed. The foundation in 84 of the legionary fortress at Inchtuthil on the River Tay for legio XX symbolized the military achievement of that governorship.⁸ This success was short-lived; even during his term of office some troops had had to be withdrawn to serve under Domitian against the Chatti. Following the major invasion of Roman territory by the Dacians in 85, further reinforcements from Britain were required to serve on the Danube. This necessitated the withdrawal of legio II Adiutrix by about 86 or 87, and certainly by 92, along with an uncertain

³ Webster (1988) *passim*; Manning (1981). ⁴ Tac. *Hist.* III.45.

⁵ Attested at Lincoln, *RIB* I 253, 258.

⁶ Dendrochronological dating gives certainty of a Roman fort at Carlisle from A.D. 72/3; Caruana (1992); McCarthy (1991). ⁷ *RIB* II 3, 2434.1–3. ⁸ Hanson (1987); Pitts and St Joseph (1985).

number of auxiliaries. This loss of troops called for the precipitate abandonment of the unfinished fortress at Inchtuthil and, over the next fifteen to twenty years, also of the network of auxiliary forts stretching back through Scotland down to the line of Stanegate (Carlisle to Corbridge) and the Rivers Tyne and Solway. Legio XX was redeployed to Chester in place of legio II Adiutrix. Whether it is appropriate to describe the line of forts which had stabilized along Stanegate and down the Cumbrian coast by about 105 as a frontier is unclear. Either a lack of resources – the commitment to Dacia – or a deliberate disregard for Britain determined a policy of consolidation on the part of Trajan. This is exemplified by the programme of rebuilding in stone of the existing legionary fortresses at Caerleon, Chester and York as well as many of the associated auxiliary forts.⁹

It is usually accepted that the campaigns of the Flavian governors were prompted by military necessity and there is, not surprisingly, a certain amount of evidence for this in Tacitus' accounts concerning relations with Brigantia. The divisions within the client kingdom of Cartimandua, who lost control to her husband Venutius, may in particular have invited military intervention, but was total conquest of Britain the appropriate solution? The decision by Trajan to abandon so much of what Agricola had won rather implies that concerns about renewed warfare on the part of the natives were not paramount; the loss of northern Britain, whether temporary or not, was not a major strategic issue. This also seems to be borne out by the evidence for the posting of legio IX Hispana outside Britain sometime between 108 and the early 120s.¹⁰ Until the arrival of legio VI, probably in 122, the island may have been left with only two legions for ten or fifteen years. Other possibilities might also be canvassed to explain the apparently enormous scale of resource devoted to Britain under the Flavians. Awareness of the power of the legions on the Rhine in influencing the rule of the empire would have been very fresh in Vespasian's mind; the diversion of the energies of his best generals in a series of major campaigns safely beyond the continental shores was surely a significant factor in deciding on policy towards Britain. Native considerations were, perhaps, a lesser influence.

The writing tablets found at the auxiliary fort of Vindolanda on Stanegate, which date to the closing years of the first and the opening years of the second century, offer us some important insights into frontier life and the deployment of a garrison. The documents contain relatively few references to fighting or campaigning; in one instance the natives are referred to derogatively as *Brittunculi*. Other documents refer to the out-stationing of substantial numbers of troops; one detachment at Corbridge,

⁹ Breeze (1982); Hanson and Maxwell (1983); Maxwell (1989) 112–32; *RIB* 1 330, 464 and 665.

¹⁰ Birley (1971).

another at the governor's headquarters in London. This hardly provides us with a picture of a garrison on full alert and at full strength ready to confront a dangerous and numerous enemy. Equally, the references to the long-distance procurement of a wide range of supplies implies that lines of communication through the northern military zone were relatively secure behind the frontier line. More pertinent still, perhaps, is the correspondence of the fort commander's wife which also gives no hint of insecurity.¹¹

In this context it is difficult to construe the motives behind Hadrian's decision to construct the great 130 kilometre linear barrier between Solway and Tyne, with further extension along the Cumbrian coast. However, Hadrian's biographer refers to difficulties at the beginning of his reign and coins struck in 119 commemorate a victory in Britain.¹² These may well have followed the withdrawal of legio IX, thus coinciding with a period when Britain was lightly garrisoned. Nevertheless, Hadrian's decision also reinforces indirectly that of his predecessor to withdraw from Scotland, in that no strategic sense was seen in prosecuting conquest further north. Given that comparatively little data have so far been assembled on the size of the native populations, and that what exist so far point to relatively low densities, a frontier defence of this magnitude seems out of all proportion to its likely defensive function. Nevertheless, we should recall that this would have been just about the time when a new generation of fighting age would have emerged in the north. In one area, namely manpower, the linear frontier may have been a more economical proposition than the conquest and occupation of Lowland Scotland. In other respects the costs of construction and maintenance of a system with an even distribution of forts, milecastles, turrets and a continuous curtain wall can only have been very substantial, particularly in the developed state of the monument, and may possibly have exceeded the costs of a looser disposition of forts which also embraced the Lowlands of Scotland. Indeed, in terms of possible manpower requirements, it has been estimated that only an additional 4,000 or so troops would have been necessary to hold all the north of Britain, including the Lowlands, and the successor frontier system to Hadrian's Wall, the Antonine Wall.¹³ As a further indication of the scale of the undertaking, the building of Hadrian's Wall involved all three British legions (one of which, legio VI Victrix) had been brought over by Nepos, presumably to replace legio IX Hispana) as well as the *Classis Britannica* and numerous auxiliary detachments. It was a prestigious undertaking; a strong symbol of the power of Rome to face an enemy of uncertain size and strength.

¹¹ Bowman and Thomas, *Vindolanda II* nos. 154, 164, 291–4, 343.

¹² *HA Hadr.* 11.2.

¹³ Frere, *Britannia* 143–6.

That Hadrian's Wall may have had little to do with confronting a particular military threat from the north is perhaps best brought out by the decision of his successor, Antoninus Pius, to build a shorter, linear frontier between the Clyde and Forth in Scotland. Although less than half the length of its predecessor and requiring a garrison about 60 per cent of the estimated establishment of Hadrian's Wall, additional forces were required to police the Lowlands and to man a series of outpost forts to the north of the new wall. Thus, whatever savings might have been made by the construction of a shorter barrier, these were, as we have seen above, more than offset by the new establishments in the Lowlands and to the north. The new wall was begun almost at the outset of Antoninus' reign and was probably completed by 143. In many respects, it represents an advance on its predecessor, not least in the economy of its construction where turf was used rather than stone, and in the variable size and closer spacing of its accompanying forts. The reasons for the move northward and the abandonment of as massive an undertaking as Hadrian's Wall remain obscure. There is evidence neither of unrest at the end of Hadrian's reign nor of inadequacy in the strength of military dispositions; nor were any economies made in setting up the new frontier and its associated forts to north and south. The closeness of the policy change with the accession of the new emperor prompts the conclusion that the decision was determined by the political situation in Rome and the need for Antoninus to earn prestige by military success rapidly consolidated by a distinctively new frontier arrangement.

The subsequent history of the Antonine Wall is somewhat problematic. There seemed extensive support for a short break in occupation in the mid-150s with Hadrian's Wall being temporarily put back into commission. However, close examination of the evidence from the Antonine Wall does not bear out this hypothesis and the case for its continued occupation seems stronger.¹⁴ Nevertheless, an inscription from the Tyne recording the arrival of reinforcements from the German armies during the governorship of Iulius Verus, and thus assignable to the mid-150s, combined with coin issues of 154–5 showing Britannia subdued, suggest that there were problems in the north at this time.¹⁵ That these were overcome is indicated by the evidence for the continued retention and occupation of the Antonine Wall into the early or mid-160s. The date of the final abandonment is unclear for, while the evidence of the imported *sigillata* from Gaul, the most abundant source of dating evidence, makes it clear that the two walls were never held together for any length of time, it does not provide close dating for the abandonment of the Antonine Wall.¹⁶ Taken with the coin evidence, it seems clear that the turf wall was certainly held up to the beginning, or earliest years, of Marcus Aurelius' Principate, but some

¹⁴ Hodgson (1995). ¹⁵ *RIB* I 1322+*add.* ¹⁶ Hartley (1972).

garrisons may have been kept in place until the 170s. As with the abandonment of Hadrian's Wall, it is not clear what role – if any – native opposition played in the decision and, once again, it is tempting to associate such a major change with the new policies of Marcus. The problems presented by the Marcomanni and Sarmatians on the Danube frontier posed a serious challenge and, as with the Dacians before, a certain strategic redeployment of resources away from Britain may have been necessary.

Nevertheless, the troubles of the 150s perhaps provide evidence for the beginning of a shift in the balance of power towards the native societies of the north. This is further strengthened by the events early in Commodus' reign when Dio reports that the greatest war of his principate was fought in Britain.¹⁷ Attributed to 181 with coins celebrating victory in 184–5, it is possible that these troubles contributed to the final abandonment of the Antonine Wall. Archaeological corroboration may be found in the burnt and destruction deposits from forts of Hadrian's Wall and its hinterland. However, given the problems of dating outlined above, while it is possible that some or all of this evidence may be attributed to the Commodan war, equally it may date to the period of the usurpation of the governor Clodius Albinus in 196–7, or to another otherwise unrecorded event. Although there is no independent evidence for trouble after the removal of troops from the island to fight Severus for the empire, the latter would have provided the natives with an opportunity. This undoubtedly provided part of the context for Septimius Severus' decision to regain the initiative in the north in 208, some fifteen years after coming to power. By then the northern tribes had grouped themselves into new confederacies, the Maeatae living close to the Wall, and the Caledonii beyond, but it is likely that the origin of these power groups dates back to the time of Commodus or Aurelius. A more united opposition in the north required a more forceful response.

II. URBAN DEVELOPMENT

At the beginning of the period of our survey the cities of Britain were recovering from the aftermath of the Boudican rebellion. The three certainly known to have been destroyed, Colchester, London and Verulamium, have each produced evidence of slow recovery with delays in their redevelopment of a decade or more.¹⁸ Equally, the extent of city life at the beginning of the Flavian period was limited to the south-east, the area which, before the Boudican rebellion, had effectively become demilitarized. This included the kingdom of Cogidubnus, whose boundaries are uncertain. It appears to have been centred at Chichester and probably extended north and west to embrace the territories which, on the king's

¹⁷ Dio LXXII.8.

¹⁸ Crummy (1984), (1992); Frere (1972), (1983); Perring and Roskams (1991).

death in the late 70s or 80s, became the *civitates* of the Atrebates and the Belgae. The *civitas* of the Cantiaci may also have formed part of his domain.¹⁹

The decision to press the conquest forward from 71 inevitably led to the redistribution of forces and the cessation of military control over extensive tracts of the island. The movement of the legions is perhaps the key to understanding the potential for reorganization in this period. Legio II Augusta had certainly moved to Caerleon by about 75, thus releasing the south-western peninsula from military control and allowing for the foundation of Isca as *civitas* capital of the Dumnonii at Exeter on the site of the abandoned fortress. Whether the foundation of Durnovaria (Dorchester) belongs to this period, or a little earlier, is not clear; recent excavations suggest the latter.²⁰

Civil government of the *civitas* Dobunorum was based on Cirencester (Corinium) whose street grid and major public buildings appear to be of Flavian origin. A similar date can be assigned to the establishment of the street grid at Leicester (Ratae), even if the provision of public buildings such as the forum-basilica and public baths belonged to the second century. A similar sequence of slow development has been observed at Venta Icenorum (Caistor-by-Norwich). This gradual process of city development is not confined to those which were either physically destroyed or politically implicated in the Boudican rebellion; Durovernum (Canterbury) has revealed little evidence of major public building projects before the closing years of the first century. This conservatism is also reflected across the Thames in the territory of the Trinovantes where, if the original intention had been to make Caesaromagus its *civitas* capital, that role effectively seems to have been ceded to the colonia at Colchester (Camulodunum). None of the buildings that might be expected of a tribal capital have so far come to light at Chelmsford.²¹

The physical evidence from the south as a whole does not wholly conform with the model for the development of the cities of Roman Britain in the Flavian period which takes as its lead the well-known Tacitean passage where Agricola is said to have encouraged the provincials to build 'templa, fora, domos'.²² Presumably, as confidence gradually attached to the success of the conquest of Wales and the north up until the military retrenchment after the mid-80s, a corresponding enthusiasm grew for investment in the civilian infrastructure. The withdrawal of legio II Adiutrix and the gradual pullback from Scotland may have shaken confidence. Thus, although there are some strong cases for the associations of

¹⁹ Barrett (1979); Bogaers (1979).

²⁰ Bidwell (1979), (1980); Henderson, in Webster (1988) 91–119; Woodward *et al.* (1993) 103.

²¹ McWhirr (1988); Wachter and McWhirr (1982); Hebditch and Mellor (1973); Kenyon (1948); Freire (1971); Bennett (1984). ²² Tac. *Agr.* 21.

buildings with the Flavian dynasty (as at Cirencester, Exeter and Verulamium), we should be cautious about the overall speed of urbanization in this period. Even where the case for Flavian development has been strong, as at Calleva (Silchester), further investigation shows a more complicated pattern. While the core of the street grid, the amphitheatre and the forum-basilica are certainly of Flavian date, the latter was a timber construction, only replaced in masonry in the early to mid-second century.²³

Changes of policy towards the northern frontier may explain the decision to found two new *coloniae* at Gloucester (Glevum) and Lincoln (Lindum) following evacuation by their respective garrisons. Providing the prospect of additional support for the civil zone, these were in place by the reign of Nerva. Just as earlier with Colchester, there was extensive utilization of the existing fabric, such as the *principia* and barrack blocks, of the legionary fortress, indicating economies of expenditure without parallel in the foundation of continental *coloniae*.²⁴

The extension of urbanization continued into the second century with the establishment of new *civitates* closer to the military zone. Although the military situation allowed for the foundation of Caerwent (Venta Silurum), Carmarthen (Moridunum), Wroxeter (Viroconium), Brough (Petuaria) and Aldborough (Isurium) by the end of the first century, there is little evidence for this happening so early.²⁵ Although, as previously with Agricola, there is a temptation to associate these initiatives with Hadrian's visit to Britain, largely on the basis of the forum inscription at Wroxeter which dates to his principate, the archaeological evidence does not normally allow us to make precise associations.²⁶ However, recent work at Caerwent supports a date in the second quarter of the second century for the construction of the forum basilica there.²⁷ The setting up of new *civitates* was patchy; it is by no means clear, for example, why the Demetae in the west of Wales were favoured in addition to the Silures and not, for example, the extreme south-west beyond Exeter which was neglected. The Brigantian territory is believed to have extended over much of the north, but was served at the outset by only one centre at Aldborough, situated like Caerwent close to a legionary base, in this case York. The north-west, whether Brigantian or not, was not the subject of separate provision unless or until Carlisle became the centre for the Carvetii somewhat later.²⁸ What determined the policy behind the establishment of the *civitates* is unclear; how much was attributable to local rather than central initiatives is not certain. In any case final decisions rested with the imperial authorities. The epigraphic evidence as a whole is not particularly helpful; there is little of it, and, as with the case of Wroxeter, there is general anonymity on the question of responsibility

²³ Fulford (1993), (1989a). ²⁴ Hurst (1988); Jones (1988).

²⁵ Webster (1988b), (1993); Brewer (1993); James (1993). ²⁶ *RIB* 1 288.

²⁷ *Britannia* 25 (1994) 252; Brewer, in Greep (1993) 65. ²⁸ Higham and Jones (1984).

for the building programme(s). This suggests that individual munificence was rare, but whether costs could have been covered by the resources of the *civitas* without remission of taxation has not been established. If the subsequent development of villas gives us some index of regional prosperity, it would seem that the peripheral *civitates* would have had much less available surplus than the south and east; here, at least, governmental assistance is indicated.

While much has been discovered about the overall history of the cities of the province and their public buildings, very little is known about the urban population and the governing élite. Although the more complete plans of, say, Verulamium, Silchester and Caerwent show the widespread existence of town houses, it is now clear that many of these structures only emerged from the late second or third century onwards. Only in the *coloniae* and at Verulamium do we have much evidence for the origins of this development. In the former, at Colchester up to Boudica, and Gloucester, we find the continued use of barrack accommodation adapted for civilian use, until by about the early to mid-second century evidence of the first purpose-built shops-cum-workshops and town houses emerges. At Verulamium small, rectangular, timber-framed town houses, occasionally appointed with mosaics and decorated wall plaster, emerged in the course of the first half of the second century. A disastrous fire in about 155 seems to have precipitated a gradual programme of rebuilding in masonry thereafter.²⁹ The first-century predecessors of the town house at Verulamium and elsewhere are ill-understood, thus reinforcing both our lack of knowledge of the origins of the urban aristocracy, and the impression that investment in the towns was directed first towards the civic fabric, rather than urban housing. In London, where a different pattern of development might in any case have been anticipated on the basis of the different role it played in the province, the earliest housing seems to have consisted of series and sequences of simple, rectangular, narrow-fronted, timber-framed buildings, some of which were decorated with mosaics and wall plaster. Evidence for Mediterranean-style atrium-type housing of the kind that eventually emerged in Gloucester is lacking in first- and second-century London.³⁰

There are few indications of what activities took place in towns, but the excavations at Verulamium in Insula XIV alongside Watling Street show a thriving commercial quarter where shops-cum-workshops fronting the street were redeveloped over successive generations until the disastrous mid-second-century fire.³¹ Other towns such as Silchester show comparable patterns of development influenced by the main through-roads/streets of the town. London, in particular, with the recent publication of

²⁹ Crummy (1992) and (1993) 34–41; Hurst (1972) 39–42 and (1988) 56–9; Frere (1972) and (1983).

³⁰ Perring and Roskams (1991). ³¹ Frere (1972).

excavations in the west of the city, exemplifies this pattern. Off the principal thoroughfares the evidence is patchy, but again London and Verulamium point to the existence of artisanal activity – properties with hearths and ovens – in these quarters, prior to the construction of the first town houses. The picture is one of some commercial activity and vigour gradually giving way from the mid- to late second century onwards in the central blocks of *insulae* of towns like Verulamium and Colchester to a pattern of more residential occupation with commercial activities focused on the main thoroughfares and around the centre of the town.³²

In London the evidence for the decline of the commercial/artisanal aspects of the city is more marked, and the transition to the residential pattern is less clear. Indeed it has been suggested that the second half of the second century represents the beginning of a marked decline in the fortunes of the city.³³ To some extent there may be a point of comparison with neighbouring cities like Verulamium, inviting the question as to how far the economic life of the cities was locally based, and how far it rested on the wider provincial or imperial economy. This theme will be considered further below.

So far little has been said of an urban dynamic; a state of affairs which correlates closely with the lack of detailed urban investigation. We have seen that, even with the provision of public buildings, progress was slow and by no means uniform. Yet there is one area where there is considerable uniformity, and that is defence. Only the *coloniae*, reusing or refurbishing their existing fortress defences in the case of Gloucester and Lincoln, or with a new, purpose-built wall at Colchester, were defended with stone walls before the second century. However, towards the end of the second century almost all other towns of *civitas* rank and above were protected with earthen ramparts and ditches. Although the archaeological evidence cannot allow precision as to exactly when these defences were added – and, given that the dating rests on a *terminus post quem* everywhere, it is possible that there could be variation of between two or three decades – the consistency in the manner of their construction is striking. Furthermore, the phenomenon is not just confined to the major towns; most of the lesser towns on the principal road networks were similarly provided. Altogether it looks as if this programme was the result of a common policy, possibly engendered by apprehensions over the northern wars of Commodus' reign, or by the departure of Clodius Albinus and the army in 196. Hurried though the defences appear to be, there does not seem to have been a need to enclose a reduced area; as far as was practical entire street grids were embraced and only ribbon developments along the principal roads in and out of the towns were excluded.³⁴

³² Frere (1972) and (1983); Crummy (1984), (1992). ³³ Perring (1991) 76–89; Milne (1995) 71–5.

³⁴ Burnham and Wacher (1990); Maloney and Hobley (1983); Frere (1984); Fulford and Startin (1984); Fulford (1984a).

The urban analysis has so far been almost exclusively confined to the chartered towns and *civitas* capitals, but other centres also emerged from the late Iron Age onwards. These are known collectively as the ‘small towns’, even if very little is known about their urban character. The more important of these were those which developed on the road network, which, with its focus on London, predominantly post-dates *c.* A.D. 55. Such towns, as we have seen, were defended at the end of the second century. A major consideration in the development of these sites will have been the provision and maintenance of *mansiones* and other establishments necessary for the *cursus publicus*. Excavation at Chelmsford and elsewhere suggests that this provision belongs to the later first century onwards. Some sites on the principal road network, such as Bath (Aquae Sulis), developed for other reasons as well (for the development of the spa, see below). Off the road network, development depended on special factors, such as we find at Charterhouse-on-Mendip (lead-mining centre). A characteristic of all these towns is the lack of town planning and public buildings. Development was focused on the principal thoroughfare and tended to be linear, but side lanes emerged towards the centre of the larger examples such as Water Newton (Durobrivae), Cambridgeshire.³⁵

III. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

That lack of clarity about native élites is further borne out by the countryside where the evidence for romanizing in the form of villa developments is unevenly distributed spatially and chronologically. Just as with the town houses, the emphasis in our understanding lies in the third and fourth centuries and a record largely derived from early investigations. Comparatively few extensive excavations have taken place where attention has been paid both to the potential of the stratigraphy and the possibility of discovering timber-framed buildings or other activities beneath masonry successors.

The patchy nature of the evidence for the first and second centuries is partly a reflection of where fieldwork has been carried out. One area where there has been a considerable investment of effort in recent decades is the countryside around Verulamium, where we can begin to identify a pattern of villa development from the late first or early second century, sometimes with evidence of late Iron Age predecessors. The latter is the case with Gorhambury on the outskirts of the city, whereas at Boxmoor and Gadebridge Park to the north the evidence shows the gradual development of a villa from the late first century onwards. In the case of the latter, the provision of a bath-house, probably accompanying a timber-framed house, was followed by the setting up of a masonry villa in the second century,

³⁵ Burnham and Wachter (1990); Black (1995).

subsequently aggrandized in the Antonine period with projecting wings. What evolved here is comparable to the sequence at, and the scale of, Gorhambury.³⁶

More elaborate villas are to be found elsewhere in the south-east, but they are exceptional. Among these may be included the ‘palace’ at Fishbourne, less than 2 kilometres west of the *civitas* capital of Chichester. About A.D. 75 a very large courtyard building closely related in style and grandeur to counterparts in Italy was built. It replaced a Neronian building, possibly a baths building, which was also elaborate. The architecture was sophisticated and the building was richly decorated with mosaics and painted wall plaster and the central courtyard was graced with an ornamental garden. Although this residence compares well with the larger country houses at the centre of the empire, a number of other, outstanding villas of similar date and also substantially ‘built as one’, have been identified at locations such as Rivenhall in Essex, Eccles in Kent and Angmering in Sussex.³⁷ While these can be seen as the product of major capital investment from the outset, the reverse is true of the Verulamium group and others like it which gradually developed over a period of time.

With one or two exceptions the area where we can identify early villa development is in the south-east. Elsewhere the aristocracy, whether native or immigrant and presumed to be associated with the urban developments of the Flavian period and the second century, is much less visible architecturally in the countryside. The native farmstead at Whitton, South Glamorgan, and probably situated in the territory of the Silures, had taken on a more romanized appearance by the late second century with rectangular buildings replacing round houses, but there was no sophisticated architecture or internal decoration. A similar situation prevails among the northern *civitates* where, at sites like Dalton Parlours or Rudston, there is little evidence of romanization before the third century. Although it is difficult to draw the boundaries between these peripheral *civitates* and the military, and thereby non-urbanized, zone, there is certainly no clear distinction in terms of rural romanization to be made between them. In these areas the priority was investment in the establishment of the urban (albeit modest) centres.³⁸

In parallel with the gradual emergence of villas in the countryside is a corresponding development of rural shrines. The characteristic ground-plan of these buildings comprises a double square: a central *cella* with enclosing ambulatory. Although there is some evidence for parallels for rectangular structures as cult buildings in the mid- to late Iron Age, as at

³⁶ Branigan (1985) 100–40; Neal *et al.* (1974); Neal (1976); Neal *et al.* (1990).

³⁷ Cunliffe (1971) and (1973) 76–8; Rodwell (1985) and (1978); Detsicas (1984).

³⁸ Jarrett and Wrathmell (1981); Stead (1980); Wrathmell and Nicholson (1990).

Heathrow and the hillfort at Danebury, their plans do not coincide so closely with those of the Roman temples which emerge from the later first century onwards; indeed, there is comparatively little evidence of them before the late first century. As with the villas, the earliest examples of temples are recorded from the south-eastern counties. In two cases, at Weycock Hill, Berkshire, and Wanborough, Surrey, the origin of temple buildings seems to post-date the deposition of 'temple' treasures, which consist of hoards of, for the most part, Iron Age coins. The association of some Roman coins suggests that these collections were not deposited until at least the mid-first century A.D. Where there is evidence of masonry succeeding timber structures, as at Harlow, Essex and Hayling Island, Hampshire, the latter appear to be of latest Iron Age date. Beyond the south-eastern core the evidence for a late Iron Age origin is not so clear or consistent, and, as at Uley, Gloucestershire, or Lowbury Hill, Oxfordshire, the date of temple buildings cannot be placed any earlier than the latest first century or first half of the second century A.D. With the lack of firm evidence for a history of development from native forms, we have to consider whether these rural shrines represent a strategy of legitimation of ownership on the part of new landowners amassing country estates in the securer parts of Britain.³⁹

This difficulty in identifying a romanizing native élite over large areas of the province before the late second or third century must raise doubts about the scope of its involvement, whether political or financial, in the early romanization of the province outside the south-east. Such opacity is nowhere more evident than at Bath (Aquae Sulis) where the Neronian–early Flavian period saw the construction of a fine classical-style temple adjacent to a large bathing complex built to exploit the hot mineral springs. The identity of all the early visitors to the spa is hard to seek, but dedications on altars and tombstones from the city provide a valuable source. Predominantly, these record soldiers and those associated with the cult; the wider family is scarcely in evidence.⁴⁰ In the scale of its investment the spa complex at Bath rivals that at Fishbourne, or, to a lesser extent, the other *de novo* foundations in the countryside, while in the towns, the comparison is with the provision of public buildings such as *thermae* and *fora basilicae*.

At the level of the individual the contrast between the evident affluence in material terms between those living in southern towns, such as Colchester, London and Verulamium, and those in the countryside is striking. Even in the south-east, villa development is relatively rare before the later second century, and there is a large measure of continuity in settle-

³⁹ Drury (1980); O'Connell and Bird (1994); Burnett (1991); France and Gobel (1985); Downey (1980); Woodward and Leach (1993); Fulford and Rippon (1994).

⁴⁰ Cunliffe (1969); Cunliffe and Davenport (1985), (1988); *RIB* 1 155, *passim*.

ment patterns and structures, as well as material culture, from the late pre-Roman Iron Age. A recent survey of the results of rescue excavation on the river gravels of southern England, and particularly on the Upper Thames, revealed settlement continuity from the middle Iron Age up to the late first/early second century A.D. The tendency thereafter was for only those settlements founded at the very end of the Iron Age to continue on and develop into small romanized farms or villas in the third and fourth centuries, as at Barton Court in Oxfordshire.⁴¹ It is not easy to explain settlement abandonment unless it relates to a reordering of the countryside as villa estates began to grow, or to a drift of settlement into the towns. The former may account for the development of rural nucleated settlements such as Chisenbury Warren in Wiltshire which developed rapidly from some point between the mid-first and mid- to late second century A.D., perhaps as a planned estate village, and in a landscape where otherwise there seems to have been a major break between those settlements which were occupied from the early to the mid- to late Iron Age and those which developed in the first or second century A.D. Catsgore in Somerset, where there is evidence of a romanized, nucleated settlement from the early second century A.D., offers another possible example of an 'estate' village. Stanwick on the River Nene in Northamptonshire may be similar, but here there is also evidence of a later Iron Age predecessor.⁴²

As can be seen from the foregoing account, much of our understanding of the countryside is derived from single-site excavations, often on villas before the advent of stratigraphic and area excavation; there has been very little effort to understand the landscape as a whole and the full range of the settlement hierarchy. This is an urgent necessity if we are to understand better the relationship between the emergence of the romanized landscape and the patterns of desertion, adaptation and reorientation of the non-romanized countryside.

IV. ECONOMY

Although mineral exploitation played an important role in the economic life of the province, with major development of the iron (the Weald and Forest of Dean) and lead (Mendips, north Wales, Pennines) extraction and processing industries, with a lesser emphasis on gold (south-west Wales), tin (Cornwall) and copper (Anglesey), agriculture remained the pivot of all economic activity.⁴³ The fecundity of the island may well have been an influence in the original decision to invade, but it is not clear how far production of a surplus could keep pace with the demands placed upon it by the army and the developing civilian infrastructure of the province.

⁴¹ Fulford (1992). ⁴² Entwistle, Fulford and Raymond (1994); Leech (1982); Neal (1989).

⁴³ Jones and Mattingly (1990).

Theoretically the potential was there, but there is no evidence that society was capable of delivering it from the start, or that the infrastructure was in place to manage distribution. On the contrary, there is evidence for the importation of basic requirements such as grain in the first and second centuries.⁴⁴

There can be little doubt that the principal areas of consumption of resources in Britain in the first and second centuries were the military with its fortresses, forts and linear frontier schemes, the programme of town- and road-building, and the support of the communities engaged in metal extraction and production. Whereas the campaigning of the Flavian period, with all its subsequent provision of fortresses and forts, was undoubtedly a costly affair, substantial investment in the frontier systems continued through the second century. While much of the work, as well as the procurement of certain raw materials such as lead, or iron from the Weald, were undertaken at the outset by the army and therefore represented no extra labour cost, the supply of other materials and the feeding of the troops involved expenditure outside the closed military circle. Although many of the basic requirements could probably have been met from within Britain, it is clear from the evidence of amphorae and other imported pottery, that a wide range of commodities flowed into the island from the Mediterranean, Gaul and Spain in the first and second centuries. The economic irrationality of these trade or supply systems, such as the numerical superiority in Britain of the more remotely produced central Gaulish *sigillata* as opposed to the eastern Gaulish types, or of Baetican as opposed to Gaulish olive oil, has been observed before, and similar patterns can also be found with goods of British origin within Britain itself.⁴⁵

This is most striking in the second century when the northern frontier can be shown to be at the end of supply routes, identifiable by ceramic tracers, whose origins lie in the south of England as well as the midlands (e.g. Dorset black-burnished category 1, Thames Estuary black-burnished category 2, Colchester, Mancetter and the Nene Valley). More local sources do not appear to have been much utilized. Although the distributions of the various types of pottery have this northwards distortion, civilian markets were served as well; but it is clear that the military was their most powerful magnet and was largely responsible for the coastwards location of the major industries. This seems to imply that in the balance between the development of the civilian infrastructure and the maintenance of the garrison, the emphasis was in favour of the military. Only in the second half of the second century do specialist industries develop, such as the Oxfordshire or Alice Holt pottery industries, whose market seems to be entirely confined to the civilian sphere; but in this case the distributions are

⁴⁴ Fulford (1984b). ⁴⁵ Fulford(1991).

quite narrowly circumscribed. One implication which can be drawn from the developments of the second century when, for ceramic supplies, the northern frontier appears to draw on sources from as far away as the south of the island, is that this represents a situation where the whole of the urbanized area of the island is exploited for the support of the army and frontiers, and that this represents a real change from previous arrangements.⁴⁶

In the first century we have greater reliance on imported goods – graphs for samian supply from London and elsewhere show the peaking of south Gaulish *sigillata* in the latter part of the century. The internal evidence shows the importance of London as the principal node in a centralized supply organization. Brockley Hill pottery (between London and Verulamium) can be shown to be widely distributed to the northern frontier from the Flavian periods onwards; it points to a road-based supply from London, where goods were collected for transit to the north and north-west.⁴⁷ In the second century, however, marine-based supply systems utilizing east- and west-coast routes, became more important. Given its involvement in the construction of Hadrian's Wall and the exploitation of Wealden iron, it is likely that the *Classis Britannica* played an important role in the supply of the northern frontier.⁴⁸

By the end of the second century the military and civilian structures of Roman Britain were firmly established. After the decision to abandon the Antonine Wall, the frontier arrangements in the north remained essentially unchanged. Equally, although there may have been minor adjustments to the organization of the *civitates*, there was no significant expansion to their number, and, correspondingly, no new towns were founded after the first half of the second century. Emphasis on the development of the public aspects of towns and on infrastructure such as the road network in the second half of the first and early second century was followed by evidence for expansion of conspicuous consumption at the level of the individual household. The town house and the countryside are the principal areas to show substantial development later, but even here the framework for that expansion was securely in place by the elevation of Septimius Severus.

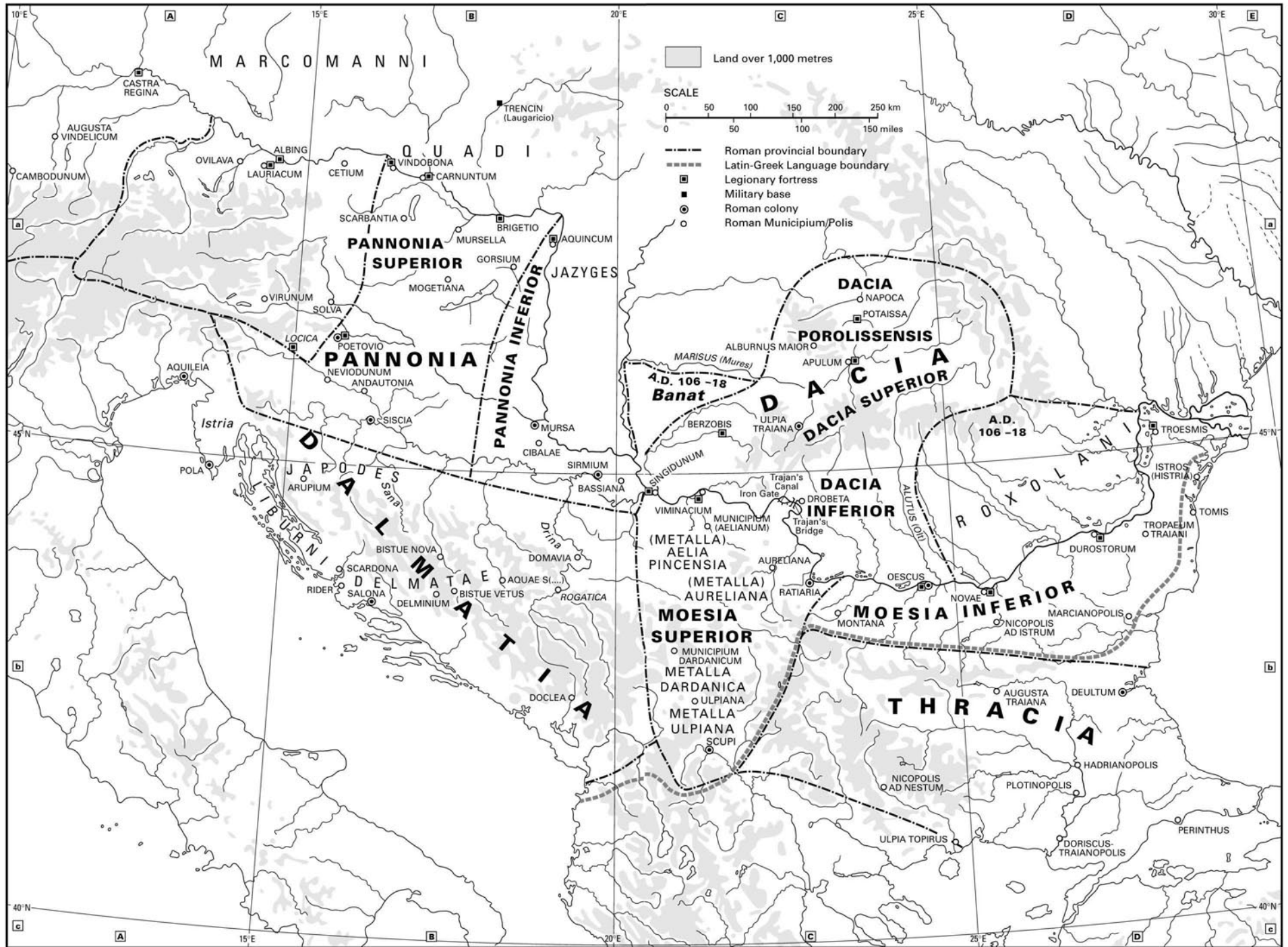
⁴⁶ Fulford (1989b). ⁴⁷ Castle (1972). ⁴⁸ Cleere (1977).

THE DANUBE PROVINCES¹

J. J. WILKES

The long interval between the two civil-war triumphs of the Danube legions, in 69 for the Flavians and in 193 for the Severi, witnessed a steady but unremarkable assimilation of the Celtic, Illyrian and Thracian peoples of the Danube lands to a Latin-speaking Roman provincial culture. On the south a limit was set to this process by the Hellenistic traditions of the ancient kingdoms of Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace. Their northern boundaries defined the linguistic frontier of the Roman world between the Latin West and the Greek East. The Danube provinces of the Roman empire were dominated by the presence of the army. By around the end of the period almost half of the legions (twelve out of thirty; *c.* 60,000 men) and more than a third of the *auxilia* (*c.* 80,000 men) were based along the

¹ Sources are overwhelmingly archaeological and epigraphic. No literary narrative records the history or conditions in the Danube lands during this era and the sum of historical record consists of brief passages in the surviving versions of Dio and in the Augustan History. Except for the writing tablets recovered from the Dacian gold mines (*CIL* III; *IDR* 1) the written record consists of inscriptions on stone. Those known before 1902 were edited in *CIL* III by Th. Mommsen, O. Hirschfeld and A. v. Domaszewski, which is now being gradually replaced by corpora based on current national boundaries, notably *RIU* (Hungary), *IDR* and *ISM* (Romania). A new collection is gradually appearing for Moesia Superior (*IMS*) and a valuable supplement is now to hand for the Latin texts from Greek Macedonia (*ILGR*). The corpus of Greek inscriptions from the Bulgarian areas of Moesia Inferior and Thracia is now complete (*IGBulg*) and in part from the Romanian section of the former in the Dobrudja (*ISM*). A useful survey of epigraphic publications relating the Danube lands from 1902 until 1980 contributed by authors from several countries was edited by J. Šašel in *Arheološki Vestnik* (Ljubljana) 31, 1980, 201–321. Those from Yugoslavia published between 1902 and 1970 are fully catalogued in the three volumes of *ILJug* edited by A. and J. Šašel. The archaeological record is now considerable for many areas and overall has increased significantly since the Second World War, though little has so far been fully digested in works of synthesis. Individual provinces have been the subject of monographs by Alföldy (1974): Noricum; Mócsy (1974): Pannonia and Upper Moesia; and Wilkes (1969): Dalmatia. Other useful surveys include those of Lengyel and Radan (1980) and Hájnočí (1995): Pannonia; Hoddinott (1975): Bulgaria; and those of Tudor (1968b), Vulpe and Barnea (1968) and MacKendrick (1975) on Romania. Most of the Danube lands are now covered by sheets of the *TIR* (K34 Sofia, L33 Trieste, L34 Budapest, L35 Bucharest and M33 Praha), although some are now out of date. Except for Austria and a beginning in Hungary, little of the many collections of sculpture in the region has been published in volumes of *CSIR: Austria* I 3–4 Carnuntum (Krüger 1970, 1972); I 5 Scarbantia (Krüger 1974); I 6 Aelium Cetium (Ubl 1979); II 1–4 Virunum (Piccottini 1968, 1972, 1977, 1984); III 1 Iuvavum (Heger 1975); III 2 Lauriacum (Eckhart 1976); III 3 Ovilava (Eckhart 1981); III 4 Aguntum/Brigantium (Heger 1987); *Hungary* VII Sopiana, Drava, Limes section Lussonium-Altinum (Burger 1991); and also for Savaria (Balla *et al.* 1971).



Map 7 The Danube provinces

Danube. The legions which had advanced the boundaries of the empire to the Danube in the first century A.D. came from Italy and the colonies. They demanded their rewards from the Caesar, cash payments or acceptable allotments of land in specially founded colonies. That state of affairs persisted until the reign of Hadrian (117–38), when the role of the army became essentially static, upholding the status quo while maintaining a peacetime efficiency through training and manoeuvres. The provincial armies now became rooted in the lands where they were stationed, tied through a cycle of recruitment and discharge to the communities which had grown up in the vicinity of the frontiers. Three generations after the reign of Hadrian saw the Illyricians of the Danube lands a dominant group in the power struggles of the empire. By setting a limit to the Roman empire in that quarter Hadrian had begun a frontier policy that resulted in the massively fortified perimeters of the later empire.

I. THE FRONTIER

By the middle of the first century A.D. bands of Iranian horsemen migrating westwards from the steppes north of the Black Sea posed a threat to Roman control of the Danube in the Wallachian and Hungarian plains. Throughout the period a close watch was kept on the Sarmatian Jazyges and Roxolani who roamed the plains across the river from Pannonia and Moesia. During the civil wars of A.D. 68–9 the latter people had made at least three destructive raids on Roman territory (*CAH* x² p. 558). The victory of the Danube legions in the Flavian cause had demonstrated not only the strategic value of the route across Illyricum but had also exposed the weakness of the Roman position in the face of sudden attack, especially when the river was bridged with ice. Matters became even more serious when the Sarmatians joined with a revived kingdom of Dacia in the mountains of Transylvania. The Roman response was to create a cordon of military bases along the right bank of the river which extended between southern Germany and the Black Sea. In Raetia, Noricum and Pannonia, legions and auxiliaries were moved up to bases on the river bank, with bridgehead forts placed across the river from the legionary fortresses. Later this deployment was extended to the lower Danube, although in Moesia some auxiliary stations were maintained at major road intersections in the interior. Though already conceived under Tiberius (*Florus Epit.* II.28) the watch on the Danube to counter Sarmatians and other threats gained permanence under the Flavians. This large military presence had a major impact on social and economic developments in the Danube lands throughout the Roman era.

Major Roman defeats followed by prolonged campaigns during the middle years of Domitian, against Dacians, Sarmatians and Suebic Germans, brought a significant increase in the strength of the Danube

armies, as the strategic centre of gravity for the Romans in Europe shifted eastwards from the Rhine. By 86 Moesia had been divided into two commands, each with a consular army. Under the Flavians also the Roman fleets on the Pannonian and Moesian Danube were reconstituted, while efforts were made to overcome the whirlpools and cataracts of the Danube gorges and the Iron Gate, notorious barriers to navigation. A towpath through the upper part of the Danube gorge, first constructed under Tiberius, needed frequent repair but complete navigation was not achieved until A.D. 100 when Trajan's legionary engineers had hacked out a road along the rock faces of the lower gorge (Kazan) and, in the following year, cut a 5 kilometre canal to by-pass the rapids of the Iron Gate below the exit from the gorges.²

The incorporation of Dacia as a province in 106 transformed the Roman situation in the Danube lands. The Roman army in Dacia was deployed to secure Transylvania within the Carpathians, initially a consular command with two legions, based at Berzobis in the Banat and Apulum in Transylvania. The Romans now encompassed the Hungarian and Wallachian plains occupied by the Sarmatian Jazyges and Roxolani. On the west the great command of Pannonia was now divided into a consular Pannonia Superior (three legions), facing the Germans north of the middle Danube, and Pannonia Inferior (one legion) confronting the Sarmatians to the east.³ Where Dacia was joined to the rest of the empire the River Danube, between Viminacium and Oescus opposite the Alutus (Olt), ceased to be a frontier but the lower course of the river was now fully garrisoned with *auxilia* and three legions (Novae, Durostorum and Troesmis) in the command of Moesia Inferior. Not unconnected with this will have been the full incorporation of Thrace, a kingdom until the reign of Claudius when the native dynasty was replaced by imperial procurators. Around a dozen native centres were organized as Roman cities (see below) and the province placed in the charge of a legate of praetorian rank.

Trajan's successor retained the core of Dacia but withdrew garrisons from exposed stations in the plains to the east and west (Wallachia and Banat), having witnessed at first-hand, and then neutralized, threats from the Sarmatians (*HA Hadr.* 6.6). By 120 Dacia had been divided into three military commands, the heartland with its legion (Superior) under a praetorian legate, and two smaller districts under imperial procurators, Dacia Inferior in the south-east facing the Wallachian plain and Dacia

² *ILLug* 55–63; 468; Šašel (1973), canal inscription; Petrović (1990), towpath reconstruction and (1991), harbour at Aquae, Moesia Superior; Mitova-Dzonova (1986), fleet stations on lower Danube.

³ Gudea (1977); Cătănicu (1981) 11–20. The division of Pannonia into Superior and Inferior was evidently made on 11 June 106 since that date was the occasion for later dedications at the shrine on the Pfaffenberg hill near Carnuntum, and on the Gellért hill at Aquincum: Piso (1991) 162–5; Alföldy (1995) 30 and n. 17.

Porolissensis in the north-west facing the northern part of the Hungarian plain. These dispositions remained until the German and Sarmatian Wars under Marcus Aurelius (167–80).⁴ Then newly raised legions were stationed in Raetia and Noricum, where the governing procurators were replaced by legates. One of the three legions stationed on the lower Danube was moved across to Dacia and the three provinces were united under a consular legate.

Roman commanders were perceptive in their choices of legionary bases along the river. Many sites chosen at this time are still occupied by the flourishing cities. In Raetia the base was *Castra Regina* (Regensburg), in Noricum, *Lauriacum* (Lorch), replacing an earlier situation at Albing that evidently proved too exposed to flooding by the River Enns.⁵ In Pannonia military bases from the era of conquest, *Siscia*, *Sirmium* and *Poetovio*, were now occupied by veteran colonies.⁶ Four legions stood on the river, at *Vindobona* (Vienna), *Carnuntum* (Deutsch Altenburg), *Brigetio* (Szóny) and *Aquincum* (Budapest).⁷ Above the Danube gorge the legions of *Moesia Superior* were deployed towards the west, at *Singidunum* (Belgrade) and *Viminacium* (Kostolac) facing the Hungarian plain and the Banat. Earlier bases at *Scupi* (Skopje) and *Ratiaria* (Archar) now also accommodated veteran colonies settled by Domitian and Trajan.⁸ In *Dacia* the single legion was stationed at the heart of the province on the River *Marisus* (Mureş) at *Apulum* (Alba Julia), while the second, introduced under Marcus Aurelius, was placed at *Potaissa* (Turda) a little more than a day's march to the north.⁹ On the lower Danube in *Moesia Inferior* the base at *Oescus* (Gigen) received a colony following the advance into Dacia, and the three permanent bases were *Novae* (Svishtov), *Durostorum* (Silistra) and *Troesmis* (Iglița), the last losing its legion to Dacia under Marcus Aurelius.¹⁰ Between the legions all the major crossing-places of the river were under surveillance from auxiliary units, using the numerous watch-

⁴ The first recorded legate of Thracia is T. Statilius Maximus Severus Hadrianus around A.D. 112: Roxan *Diplomas II* no. 14. Boundaries of Thracia: Gerov (1979). Organization of Dacia: Petolescu (1985), Hadrian; Piso (1985), Porolissensis; Petolescu (1987), Marcus Aurelius.

⁵ *Castra Regina*: Overbeck (1976); Fischer (1986). *Lauriacum*: Vetters (1977b); Kneifel (1984).

⁶ *Siscia*: Šašel (1974). *Sirmium*: Mirković (1971). *Poetovio*: Saria (1951); Mikl-Curk (1991), military impact in eastern Alps.

⁷ *Vindobona*: Neumann (1980); Harl (1986). *Carnuntum*: Stiglitz *et al.* (1977); Stiglitz (1986), auxiliary fort; Jobst (1983); Kandler (1991), legion I *Adiutrix*. *Brigetio*: Visy (1988) 53–7. *Aquincum*: Szilágyi (1968); Polenz and Polenz (1986); Póczy *et al.* (1986), excavations 1973–83; Visy (1988) 81–7; Kaba (1986), (1991), baths; Kérdő (1990), *retentura*; Szirmai (1986), street-plan and (1991), barracks in *retentura*; Kocsis (1990), tribune's house; Szirmai (1990), auxiliary fort; Németh and Kérdő (1986), 1st cent. garrison; Németh (1990), cavalry fort.

⁸ *Singidunum*: Mirković (1976). *Viminacium*: Mirković (1986). *Scupi*: Dragojević-Josifovska (1982). *Ratiaria*: Giorgetti (1983); Atanassova-Georgieva (1986), excavations 1976–82.

⁹ *Alba Julia*: C. Daicoviciu (1977), Gudea (1977), Cătăniciu (1981). *Potaissa*: Barbulescu (1900), *principia*, and (1991), general.

¹⁰ *Oescus*: Poulter (1983a). *Novae*: Press and Sarnowski (1990), general; Parnicki-Pudełko (1990), defences; Press (1986), hospital; Sarnowski (1991), headquarters, and (1987), early garrison; Dimitrova-Milcheva (1991). *Durostorum*: Donevski (1990) and (1991). *Troesmis*: Poulter (1986).

towers erected along the bank. The large garrison of Dacia was deployed on the main roads radiating from Apulum and in stations which blocked the passes through the Carpathians into Transylvania. Beyond these there was a belt of observation posts and signalling points.¹¹ Dalmatia, though losing its remaining legion during the Danube Wars under Domitian, continued to be administered by a consular legate supported by an auxiliary garrison of three units.¹²

Hadrian, who knew the Danube as the first governor of Pannonia Inferior, visited the Danube during the first year of his reign and at least once again during his provincial journeys. He decided that the primary role of the army should be to guarantee the continuation of the treaties and client arrangements, involving subsidies and other support, with rulers of peoples bordering the empire.¹³ This role is reflected in the arrangement of provincial commands which corresponded with the different groups along the river. Pannonia Superior and Noricum confronted the Suebic Germans (Marcomanni and Quadi) of Bohemia and Slovakia. Long contact with the Roman world had brought to them an internal political stability only occasionally threatened when dynastic crises erupted. At such times the Romans were prepared to intervene, as on the occasion when Antoninus Pius 'granted' a king to the Quadi, an episode judged of sufficient importance to be advertised on the imperial coinage.¹⁴ In spite of territorial concessions and occasional subsidies the Romans appear to have achieved less success with the Sarmatians. The Jazyges of the Hungarian plain were encircled on three sides by the armies of Pannonia Inferior, Moesia Superior and two of the Dacian provinces, Superior and Porolissensis. The movements of the Roxolani in the Wallachian plain were similarly monitored from Dacia Inferior and Moesia Inferior. One Sarmatian ruler, along with his household, is recorded in what may have been a comfortable exile on an island off Pola in Istria. He advertises a Roman citizenship conferred by Hadrian and may have been another pro-Roman king rejected by his own people.¹⁵

Until the war broke out under Marcus Aurelius the Romans were prob-

¹¹ Danube frontier: Fitz (1991). Pannonia: Grbić (1961), Yugoslav section; Mócsy and Gabler (1986); Visy (1988) and (1990), aerial photography; Gabler (1989), Ács-Vaspuszta fort; Visy (1991), Lussonium fort; Genser (1986), Austrian section; Kandler and Vetter (1986), Austrian section; Ubl (1985–6), auxiliary forts; Wilkes (1989), Noricum; Kolnik (1986), Slovakia. Dacia: Gudea (1977); Cătănciu (1986), south-east Dacia; Petolescu (1986); Benea (1986), Tibiscum and south-west Dacia; Ferenczi (1989), northern Dacia; Gudea (1990), Porolissum. Moesia Superior: Vasić and Kondić (1986), Iron Gate; Petrović (1986), Timacum Minus fort. Moesia Inferior: Poulter (1986); Dimitrova-Milcheva (1990); Zahariade (1991), Halmyris.

¹² Domitian may have appointed legates of praetorian rank following the removal of the sole legion from Dalmatia but the experiment was not continued: Wilkes (1969) 445.

¹³ Certainly he was there in 133 if not in 124 or 125: Syme (1988). Mócsy (1978), Hadrian's frontier policies.

¹⁴ REX QUADIS DATUS: *RIC* III 620 and Mócsy (1974) 102–3.

¹⁵ *ILS* 852–3, *Ital* x 1.153–4.

ably content with the state of their relations with peoples beyond the frontier. Holding to the River Danube as a military frontier for the empire posed many problems and would in the long run fail. Yet the decades of peace which followed the accession of Hadrian, a marked contrast with the reigns of Domitian and Trajan, brought a steadily rising material prosperity to communities on both sides of the river. Trade across the frontier, always strictly regulated and heavily taxed by the authorities, became a significant element in the economy of the frontier regions. Trouble came when migrations by more distant peoples began to push first the Germans and then the Sarmatians against the frontier, forcing them to demand either admission (*receptio*) or, as an alternative, incorporation of their present territories within a more advanced cordon of the Roman army. The option of moving forward to incorporate the entire Danube basin within the Carpathians may have been considered by Marcus Aurelius, from the report of an intention, late in his reign, to create new provinces Marcomannia and Sarmatia (*HA Marc.* 24.5, 27.10). Such an advance is not likely to have appealed to the Danube armies, whose social and economic interests were now closely linked to the territories in which they were stationed.

Diplomacy could postpone (*HA Marc.* 12.3) but not deflect the demand of the Suebic Germans for admission to the empire. Probably in A.D. 167, when the Romans had barely recovered from a costly war on the eastern frontier and were still suffering from a destructive plague brought back by the returning army, the Marcomanni and Quadi forced their entry and inflicted serious damage on communities in Noricum and Pannonia during their march to Italy.¹⁶ Though the invaders were soon expelled there followed more than a decade of costly war along the Danube, with operations directed by the emperor in person. Some of the Germans, and also some Sarmatians, were in the end accepted for settlement within the empire, though not in areas close to their own homelands. Those who remained in their native lands were corralled into specified areas and denied access to the river and to Roman territories except under strictest supervision. The gradual easing of these harsh conditions seems to have reduced most of the Germans and Sarmatians to something approaching their former compliance. It was during his last years that Marcus Aurelius may have contemplated a permanent annexation of territories beyond the Danube and was said to have been on the point of obtaining a total submission from the Germans when he died at Vindobona (Vienna) on 17 March 180. A Roman army had already passed the previous winter in a base at Trenčín on the River Váh (Waag) 130 kilometres beyond the Danube in southern Slovakia.¹⁷

¹⁶ Birley (1968); Miki-Curk (1987b), pottery evidence; Fitz (1985), Sarmatia; Oliva (1986), Sarmatia.

¹⁷ *ILS* 2747 and 9120; *AE* 1956 no. 124.

We cannot be certain that the decision of Commodus to return to the earlier system of client relationships represented an abrupt departure from his father's policy. The treaties agreed before the emperor's return to Rome in the following autumn may have sought to involve not only the long-standing clients, Marcomanni, Quadi and Jazyges, but also the new peoples whose entry into the Carpathian basin had provoked the earlier turmoil. Rome could now intervene across the river almost at will, and there was evidently no need to deploy troops there in permanent bases. Surveillance of the river bank was intensified with a new system of watchtowers and police posts. Germans and Sarmatians were permitted to approach the river and cross into Roman territory for markets on specified days, while the latter were also permitted to communicate with the kindred Roxolani via the routes across Roman Dacia.¹⁸ On the frontier of Pannonia the new policy is illustrated by building-inscriptions dated to 185 (the same text survives in at least seventeen copies) that are unusually explicit in their description of the work done: '[the emperor Commodus] fortified the entire river bank with forts built from the ground up and also with garrisons set at the places particularly well suited for the crossing [of the river] by thieves [*latrunculi*]'. The system was apparently never put into place (the slabs never left the mason's yard), a change in policy which may be linked with reports of trouble in Pannonia following the fall of Perennis in 185.¹⁹

II. PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

At the end of the Antonine period the government of the Danube provinces required the services of ten Roman senators, all but the proconsul in Macedonia serving in peacetime a term of around three years. The core of the Danube armies was in the charge of four consular legates, of Pannonia Superior, Moesia Superior, Moesia Inferior and the Three Dacias, with the single-legion provinces Raetia, Noricum and Pannonia Inferior, under praetorian legates. Though perennially afflicted by unrest, the praetorian legate in Thrace was expected to summon help from the Danube when required.²⁰ The size of Dalmatia (the province was to survive almost unscathed by Diocletian's reforms) and its closeness to Italy justified the presence of a consular legate, though normally selected from among the less senior in that rank.²¹ Most governors were wealthy landowners from Italy and the Mediterranean provinces who enjoyed the confidence of the emperor and his advisers. Under Hadrian and the Antonines few of the governors can be recognized as commanding figures in the empire, often no more than names surviving on a milestone, official document or some

¹⁸ Dio LXXII.2–3; Mócsy (1974). ¹⁹ *RIU* v 1127–37; Mócsy (1974) 196–7.

²⁰ Dobó (1968), Pannonia; Winkler (1977), Noricum; Thomasson, *Laterculi Praesidum*, Moesia, Dacia and Thracia. ²¹ Wilkes (1969).

foundation stone in a remote provincial town. Little stands on record relating to their active role in civil administration, except for intervention in local disputes. After the accession of Hadrian the military sphere also offered little scope for independent action. Only the crisis of invasion and warfare within the empire brought a change. Then there was a need for a new type of commander, promoted from the ranks of career officers with wide military experience. Figures such as Helvius Pertinax (emperor for a few weeks in 193) and Valerius Maximianus, who rose to the consulship during the wars of Marcus Aurelius, anticipate the Danubian emperors of the third century. Maximianus, who came from the colony Poetovio in Pannonia and reached the consulship *c.* 184, had a long military career under Marcus Aurelius, while his early exploits included winning a hand-to-hand combat with a tribal chief of the Naristae who dwelt across the Danube.²²

To the mass of the population, Roman governors were remote figures, happily rarely seen and seldom to be approached. Less remote, perhaps, and certainly more intrusive were the imperial officials who managed the collection of taxes and other burdens. The provincial procurators had a general oversight of the state revenues and also of the vital business of processing army pay. Other imperial procurators managed specific tax bureaux, including those of inheritance, sales and manumissions of slaves.²³ Most of the actual collection was undertaken by private contractors, more or less integrated with local city institutions, when these existed. In the Danube lands, with several major highways and many military camps, the most burdensome exactions, both for individuals and for communities, were possibly those of the imperial post and transport system (*vehiculatio*). These consisted of the requisitions of animals and other supplies. Collection of customs dues (*portoria*) was based on districts which comprised several provinces. The Portorium Publicum Illyrici included Raetia, Noricum, Dalmatia, the Pannonias and Upper Moesia, with the Three Dacias and Moesia Inferior forming a separate district. The control-posts (*stationes*) of this organization were located on the major roads by which large volumes of traffic passed in and out of the region. The bureau for the imperial post was based on a similar district, though excluding Raetia and Dalmatia. Internal security remained a permanent concern of the administration, in the form of police posts maintained by legionaries (*beneficarii consularis*), seconded from the frontier legions, on major routes throughout the interior.²⁴

Alongside structures for taxation, requisitions and other compulsory

²² Pertinax: *HA Pert.* 1.6–2.11. Valerius Maximianus: *AE* 1956 no. 124.

²³ Danubian procuratorships: Pflaum, *Carrières* 1058–69; Bounegru (1981–2), Ti. Iulius Saturninus, conductor Illyrici, etc.

²⁴ Dobó (1940); *bf. cos.*: Schallmayer *et al.* (1990); Mirković (1994), *bf. cos. statio* at Sirmium.

services such as bridge construction, where local communities were required to combine their resources for major projects (*CIL* III 3203=*ILS* 393), several other imperial agencies are represented. There are few records of imperial properties or large private estates but there is ample evidence for imperial management of mines in Noricum (iron), Dalmatia/Pannonia (silver and lead), Dalmatia (iron and gold), Dacia (gold) and Moesia (copper, silver and lead).²⁵ By the end of the period large settlements had grown up in these mining districts, some of which were destined to be organized as Roman cities, to exist alongside the imperial administration. Save where it was linked with a specific activity, such as mining, the Roman administration, or at any rate its upper echelons, remained based in a few major cities or military centres. The governors of Dalmatia, Thrace and Moesia Inferior maintained their principal residences on the periphery of their provinces, Salona on the Adriatic, Perinthus on the Hellespont and Tomis on the Black Sea. In Pannonia the governors resided close to the major military bases, Carnuntum in Superior and Aquincum in Inferior. In the latter the legate's palatial residence stood on the Danube bank facing into *barbaricum*, a symbol of Roman self-confidence during the middle decades of the second century.²⁶ In Raetia and Noricum similar provision may have been made following the introduction of the legions under Marcus but important branches of the provincial administration remained at the earlier inland centres Augusta Vindelicum (Augsburg) and Virunum (Zollfeld).

Below the provincial administration were the local institutions which regulated the day-to-day living of ordinary people, both town-dwellers and country folk. The Roman ideal, given expression during the imperial period, was to grant local communities the institutions of a Roman city (*municipium*). This allowed a maximum degree of local control over affairs, though with strict rules imposed by statute on the conduct of public business and with municipal offices confined to the wealthier citizens in order to rule out any unseemly outburst of democracy. For a variety of reasons the Danube provinces were among the more backward areas of the Roman world in the progress of officially inspired urbanization. An intractable landscape and a perennial fragmentation of society in villages inhibited the growth of urban centres, allied no doubt with an instinctive distrust on the part of the peasant and shepherd to the new structures of power and economic control. Moreover, until the accession of Hadrian the Danube lands exhibited the more overtly imperialistic type of urbanization in the form of the Roman colony. This was the new city created on Roman state land, originally seized for army use at the time of the conquest, partly for mili-

²⁵ Noricum, Pannonia, Dalmatia and Moesia Superior: Dušanić (1977); Dacia: Mrozek (1977).

²⁶ Szilágyi (1968).

tary reasons but mainly for the purpose of rewarding time-served Roman soldiers.

Roman colonies founded under Vespasian at Siscia and Sirmium, at the west and east end of the Sava valley, may have been intended specifically for veterans from the imperial fleets at Ravenna and Misenum.²⁷ These drew a large proportion of their manpower from the Danube lands and had been active in the recent civil wars.²⁸ Around the same time a colony was established at Deultum on the Black Sea coast of Thrace for the purpose of accommodating veterans from legion VIII Augusta stationed at Novae on the lower Danube.²⁹ A similar function was performed by a new colony at Scupi (Skopje) in the south of Moesia Superior for veterans discharged from legion VII Claudia stationed in the north of the province on the Danube at Viminacium. Tombstones survive of several of the original settlers (*deducticii*) who formed up the *colonia Flavia felix Domitiana* (any reference to Domitian as founder was erased after his death and *damnatio memoriae* in A.D. 96).³⁰ Under Trajan new arrangements in the Danube area following the conquest of Dacia included the use of vacated legionary bases as veteran colonies, Poetovio in Pannonia Superior, Ratiaria and Oescus in Moesia Superior and Inferior respectively and the *colonia Ulpia Traiana Dacica*, to which the name of the old Dacian capital Sarmizegetusa was soon attached, in the new province Dacia.³¹

At the start of the Flavian period the existing Roman cities organized among native communities were confined to the Celtic or Venetic areas in Noricum and Dalmatia (*CAH* x² p. 575–6). The *municipia* in the Liburnia region of Dalmatia and the Claudian foundations in Noricum reflected long-standing links with northern Italy and the Adriatic cultural province. Elsewhere the *civitates peregrinae* organized after the conquest were administered by senior Roman centurions or regimental commanders. After two generations of this regime the Flavian era saw power being returned to the local nobility. These now begin to appear on inscriptions with the Latin title of *princeps* or chief, either of a particular stronghold (*castellum*) or of the local community (*civitas*).³² Out of this class a few were entrusted with rule of their own people and advertised their official role in the new order with the title *praepositus*, an elevation evidently normally accompanied by the conferment of Roman citizenship.³³ The next stage was the organization of a new city based on all or part of an existing *civitas*, into which the native aristocracy were required to invest their hereditary power to serve as

²⁷ Siscia: Šašel (1974); Sirmium: Mirković (1971). ²⁸ Fleet recruitment: Starr (1941).

²⁹ Deultum: Gerov (1988) 48–59. ³⁰ Scupi: Dragojević-Josifovska (1982).

³¹ Poetovio: Saria (1951); Mikl-Curk and Tusek (1985). Ratiaria: Giorgetti (1983). Ulpia Traiana: Daicovicu and Alicu (1984).

³² *Princeps k(astelli) Salthnae*. *ILJug* 1852; *princeps civitatis Docl(eti)umr*. *ILJug* 1853.

³³ *Principes and praepositi* of Japodes: *CIL* III 14324–8, 15064–5.

members (*decuriones*) of a town council (*ordo*) and in turn as annual magistrates (*Ilviri iure dicundo*, *aediles* and *quaestores*).

Native urbanization gained momentum under the Flavians, first among Celtic and Illyrian communities around the west and south of the Danube basin. In the Celtic areas of western Pannonia new cities were created at Neviodunum, Andautonia, Scarbantia and, across the border in Noricum, at Solva in the Mur valley.³⁴ Among Illyrians in the province of Dalmatia cities were established among the Japodes at Arupium in the Lika plain and among the Delmatae at Scardona and Rider, while in the south the descendants of those who had once ruled the kingdom of the Illyrians became the municipal aristocracy of a new city at Doclea in modern Montenegro. Beyond the Dinaric watershed at least three cities were created in the valleys of the Bosnian rivers, Bistue Vetus (Vrbas Valley), Bistue Nova (Bosna) and at Rogatica (Drina).³⁵

Trajan's reign marked the full incorporation into the empire of the eastern Balkans and the lower Danube, following the annexation of Dacia. In the newly organized province of Thrace this period saw at least thirteen centres of the old kingdom created cities with institutions on the traditional lines of the Greek polis. Their origins are signified by imperial titles, Ulpia (seven examples), Trajanopolis, Augusta Trajana, Plotinopolis, Marcianopolis, and one of Trajan's successor, Hadrianopolis. The new cities were distributed throughout the province, mainly on rivers and major roads. In the south Trajanopolis-Doriscus and Ulpia Topirus lay on the Via Egnatia, while others lay in the Hebrus, Nestus and Strymon Valleys. Two major cities lay north of the Haemus, Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis, while in the south-east the ancient Thracian capital Bizye was similarly incorporated. Although some of these centres were already Greek in character the reorganization affected only native Thracian communities, the older Greek cities along the Aegean and Black Sea coasts being little involved except perhaps for some additions of territory.³⁶

Hadrian's visits to the Danube led to several important changes in local organization, in a fashion typical of that restless emperor. Several new cities were created, some in remote areas far from major routes and existing major settlements. Even more significant was the reorganization of settlements along the Danube frontier which had grown up in the vicinity of military bases. By the time of Hadrian's visit two types of civilian settlement had come into existence. Immediately adjacent to legionary fortresses, and to a much lesser extent auxiliary forts, were the 'hutments' (*canabae*). Being on military land they remained under military control and in a sense formed part of the army. Here the emperor insisted on strict observance

³⁴ Neviodunum: Hoffiller and Saria (1938) 108–15. Andautonia: Hoffiller and Saria (1938) 212–18; Scarbantia: Mócsy (1959); Solva: Hudeczek (1977).

³⁵ Wilkes (1969); Bojanovski (1988).

³⁶ Jones, *Cities*; Danov (1979), Philippopolis, Serdica, Odessus; Gerov (1988).

of regulations concerning the residence of military personnel within the camp, when many senior ranks were already beginning to enjoy a more comfortable existence outside the ramparts that seemed justified by the increasingly permanent character of the legion's situation. It was Hadrian also who insisted on a state of military readiness through training for an increasingly inactive army. Nowhere was this new regime of *Disciplina Augusti*³⁷ more applicable than along the Danube where a new generation of soldiers must have been bemused at the contrast between the military turbulence under Domitian and Trajan and the tranquillity contrived by Hadrian and continued by Antoninus Pius.

Another object of Hadrian's attentions was the larger civil settlements which grew up near the legionary fortresses but quite distinct from the *canabae*, being not apparently on military territory and located on the river about 4 kilometres away, usually upstream. These were prosperous communities consisting of immigrants and natives and began to play an increasing role in the frontier economy. These anomalous settlements, in that they were unregulated towns on the territory of the native *civitates* bordering the legions, were brought into the Roman order when Hadrian incorporated them as *municipia*. These new and cosmopolitan communities were now locked into the structure of provincial administration, including taxation and civic obligations.³⁸ Their continuing prosperity was based on a close connection with the serving army and with the native peoples of the province. Their prosperity would appear to have been at the expense of the smaller country towns of the interior, where few seem to have been either qualified or willing to undertake council membership or a magistracy. This resulted in an increasing role for the permanent officials, notably the town clerk (*scriba*), in municipal administration.³⁹ Hadrian's programme of municipalization also extended to Dacia, though none of these attained the prosperity of the Danube cities.

By the end of the Antonine period the Roman municipal system appears to have been extended throughout the Danube provinces. Such places as Carnuntum in Pannonia Superior, Aquincum in Pannonia Inferior, Singidunum and Viminacium in Moesia Superior rapidly acquired the amenities of Roman city life. Other Hadrianic *municipia* created in the vicinity of the frontier included Augusta Vindelicum in Raetia, Cetium and Ovilava in Noricum, Mogetiana, Mursella and Mogetiana in Pannonia Superior, Mursa, Cibalae, Bassiana, Mursella and Gorsium in Pannonia Inferior, Viminacium and Municipium Aelianum in Moesia Superior.⁴⁰ Cities founded at this time in Dacia included Drobeta and Napoca.⁴¹ In

³⁷ *HA Hadr.* 10; Dio LIX.9, *Disciplina Augusti* on coins of Hadrian: *RIC* II pp. 327 and 367.

³⁸ Hadrianic *municipia* along Danube: Mócsy (1974); Mirković (1977), Moesia Superior.

³⁹ *Scribae* in cities: Mócsy (1974).

⁴⁰ Hadrianic *municipia* away from frontiers: Wilkes (1969); Mócsy (1974).

⁴¹ Drobeta: Tudor (1968a). Napoca: Daicoviciu, H. (1977).

Moesia Inferior new cities appeared under the Antonines in the vicinity of the legionary bases at Novae, Durostorum and Troesmis, while another city in the same province took its name from Trajan's victory monument in the southern Dobrudja, Municipium Tropaeum Traiani. Even the remote valleys of the southern and western Balkans were now accounted in the territory of one city or another, and the major mining centres had also been formed into cities before the end of the second century.⁴²

With around sixty-six new cities created in the Danube lands after the accession of Hadrian no significant group will have now stood outside an organ of local government based on the obligations of municipal office-holding and the accompanying responsibility for local services, along with taxation and justice. The traditional rivalries between even the newest of provincial cities appear to be reflected in the assumption of imperial titles and the title of Roman colony. The latter appears to have been attained by most of the 'legionary' towns along the frontier before the middle of the third century.

III. SETTLEMENTS AND ECONOMY

No city in the Danube provinces has yet been fully excavated but enough has been done to build up a reliable picture of the physical character of veteran colonies, the frontier towns, modest country towns in remote valleys and the urbanized mining settlements. Almost nothing is known of the Flavian colonies at Siscia and Sirmium, the former being as yet unexplored while the latter's remains lie beneath the many massive structures dating from the fourth century A.D. when it served as an imperial capital.⁴³ Trajan's new colony, Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, was founded in A.D. 108 on the site of the base vacated by legion IV Flavia. A walled rectangle (32.5 hectares) enclosed a regular street-plan. Public buildings so far excavated include a forum and basilica but the dominant feature of the city was the great precinct (85 by 65 metres) for the ceremonies of the imperial cult, organized by freedmen *Augustales*. Most of the other known structures also date from the second century and include a possible governor's residence and an extramural arena with room for around 5,000 spectators.⁴⁴ The colony at Oescus in Moesia Inferior settled after the departure of legion V Macedonia does not appear to have occupied the site of the vacated fortress and the walled area of the city was an irregular pentangle. There was a regular street-grid and the remains of public buildings have been dated to the second century but no comprehensive plan is yet available.⁴⁵

Several of the cities organized out of native communities exhibit signs

⁴² Novae, Durostorum, Troesmis and Tropaeum Traiani: Mrozewicz (1982); Poulter (1983a); Ivanov (1983); Margineanu-Carstoiu (1984). ⁴³ Sirmium: Mirković (1971).

⁴⁴ Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa: Daicoviciu, C. (1977).

⁴⁵ Oescus: Ivanov (1983); (1986); (1985), houses; (1990), defences.

of Roman town-planning. In southern Dalmatia the walled city of Doclea occupied an irregular plateau in the angle of the Rivers Zeta and Morača. Several of the major buildings which line the principal paved street (15 metres) were built during the early years of the Flavian *municipium*. One was the temple of Dea Roma, a centre for the imperial cult now apparently transferred to the new city from the coastal colony at Epidaurum. Near to this precinct lay another shrine, enclosed by a peristyle court adjoining an elegant Roman town-house. Further east lay the precinct of Diana, containing a temple almost identical in character to that of Dea Roma, distyle in antis with single cella and rear apse. Near the middle of the town the civic baths and the forum-basilica civic centre faced one another across the street. The paved forum (60 by 55 metres) was enclosed by porticos and shops, except on the west side where stood the basilica and council chamber. The inscription on the architrave facing the forum records that the basilica was contributed by Flavius Fronto and Flavia Tertulla, first- or second-generation citizens among the local nobility, and dedicated by them to the memory of their fifteen-year-old son Flavius Balbinus who had himself held 'all the offices permitted to him by law'.⁴⁶ This early enthusiasm for Roman municipal life may have waned as the burdens of office increased and does not appear to have been matched by succeeding generations, although the city remained the administrative centre of the region into Byzantine times. By way of contrast Solva in Noricum, a *municipium* organized under Vespasian, appears to have enjoyed a steady prosperity over the years, from the evidence of its many inscriptions. The built-up area of c. 600 by 400 metres was never enclosed by a wall and was divided into regular blocks of different sizes defined by a grid of streets. Some well-appointed private houses have been found, but, except for the nearby arena, there is no trace of public buildings.⁴⁷

In Thrace, Trajan's new foundation of Nicopolis ad Istrum was a Greek city with a cosmopolitan population reflected in the great variety of religious dedications. The city was based on a grid of intersecting streets with a regular perimeter wall. The central block contained the paved forum (42 metres square) enclosed by porticos. On the west of this lay a complex of buildings which included a council chamber lined with stone benches and a small Roman theatre (*odeum*) with seating for around 400 raised on brick vaults. Between these the *decumanus maximus* of the city led to a monumental gate into the forum dedicated in 145 to Antoninus Pius, his empress Faustina and Marcus Aurelius Caesar. The streets were paved throughout the city and there was a comprehensive network of sewers drawing on water from an aqueduct. Further excavation at Nicopolis will reveal

⁴⁶ Doclea: Wilkes (1969); Cermanović-Kuzmanović (1975), cemeteries.

⁴⁷ Solva: Alföldy (1974), Hudeczek (1977).

valuable evidence for the residential areas and the extent to which these were also planned within the overall Trajanic scheme. The rich architectural ornament at Nicopolis belongs to the Hellenistic traditions of Asia Minor and many fragments of free-standing sculptures have been recovered from the site.⁴⁸ In north-east Thrace, Marcianopolis had a walled area of around 70 hectares. Excavations have uncovered an area of paved streets with sewers, in a regular grid with town-houses having similar internal arrangements of rooms.⁴⁹ Though not Roman colonies, the planning of Trajan's two foundations in Thrace north of the Haemus echoes that of early colonies in the western provinces. They may have been intended to serve as civil centres for the newly organized frontier along the lower Danube.

New veteran colonies, the steadily increasing number of cities among the native peoples and the strength of the Danube armies contributed to a growth of traffic in and out of the Danube lands. The early prominence of trading families from northern Italy (most were centred on Aquileia) was replaced from the Flavian period with a more broadly based pattern of trade, including a growing traffic along the Danube from the west. Italian-based interests may have retained a dominant role in the western areas most conveniently served from north Italy during the second century but longer overland connections with the cities and military bases of the lower Danube evidently held little attraction. Instead, the river, with navigation possible throughout its course from the time of Trajan, was a practical route for goods and commodities from Gaul and Germany. Many of the army units which came to the Danube in the late first and early second century appear to have kept their links with the West. The economic impact of the increased army, undoubtedly a burden on the local civil economies, is demonstrated by the rapid growth of encampments (*canabae*) alongside the legionary bases with evidence for the organization of trading and manufacturing associations (*collegia*). It was through these trading connections that the Roman camps and their associated Latin-speaking communities maintained their role in the frontier economy. The romanization of Moesia Superior was accelerated by the incorporation of Dacia. Both provinces have yielded evidence for immigrants from Italy and the West, doubtless linked in some way or another with the military economy of the region. At the same time there was from the outset a significant element from the East among the immigrants to Dacia.

By the end of the first century, north Italian *sigillata* pottery was a significant import in Roman camps and associated settlements throughout the Carpathian basin. In general, the level of imports to the Danube lands

⁴⁸ Nicopolis ad Istrum: Poulter (1983a); (1988), excavations.

⁴⁹ Marcianopolis: Poulter (1983a); Gerov (1988) 124.

appears to have reached a peak during the fifty years A.D. 80–130, after which new patterns of exchange and linked to more local centres of production begin to displace the Italian connections.⁵⁰ Some other patterns continued for specific products. Along the Danube frontier, olive oil from Istria was consumed, although there is some evidence that some groups within the military bases were supplied with the more highly regarded Spanish oil, perhaps a privileged military traffic that was exempt from normal customs dues.⁵¹ All the signs are that until trading patterns began to change during the reign of Hadrian, the Roman economy of the Danube lands was largely internal to the army and groups associated with it, including veteran colonies and a number of expatriate craftsmen providing services of every kind within a monetarized economy. Even the major new cities created among the native population joined this economy only slowly and partially. That, at any rate, is the picture presented by the limited number of coins and the small and socially unrepresentative number of inscriptions known from these places.⁵²

The volume and growth of trade across the Danube frontier is more difficult to assess but there seems no doubt that it was a significant element in the economies of communities along both sides of the river. The Roman army had an insatiable demand not only for foodstuffs but for basic commodities essential to military efficiency. Minerals, horses, mules, hides and timber must have been top of the list. Slavery remained a distinguishing feature of Roman society, although after the early second century it appears to have been in decline, at least in the frontier economies. It is reasonable to assume that after more than a century of cohabitation the Roman and native economies along the river had become inextricably linked, though along the middle Danube probably more so with the Suebic Germans than with the Sarmatians.

In addition to livestock, produce and a robust population, an outstanding natural resource of the Danube lands was mineral deposits. The Romans were well aware of these from the outset but no attempt at their systematic exploitation using the native population seems to have been attempted before the end of the first century A.D. Until then, methods of extraction seem to have advanced little beyond those of the prehistoric era. An exception was the high-quality iron from Noricum which was already being imported to Italy in the second century B.C. Late in the following century a centre for a wholesale trade in the iron products of Noricum grew up on a terrace of the Magdalensberg hill in Carinthia (*CAH* x² p. 583). It

⁵⁰ *Terra sigillata* imported: Gabler (1985a); (1985b), Aquincum; Póczy (1987), Pannonia; Mikl-Curk (1987a), Yugoslav Pannonia; Gudea (1984), Dacia; Kolnik (1984), Slovakia; Gabler (1986), Poetovio; Gabler and Vaday (1986), beyond Danube between Pannonia and Dacia; Baluta (1986), import of lamps in Dacia. ⁵¹ Gabler and Kelemen (1985), Baetican amphorae on Danube frontier.

⁵² Mócsy (1974).

was apparently in the reign of Trajan that a new organization for mineral extraction was created and a high level of activity was sustained throughout most of the second century. In Noricum the workings of iron ore (*ferriarum Noricae*), some of which could be smelted to a quality approaching that of steel, were leased to private contractors (*conductores*) who managed operations under the general supervision of imperial agents (*procuratores metallorum*).⁵³ There were two mining districts along the border between Dalmatia and Pannonia south of the Sava Valley, iron ore in the Sava Valley to the west and silver-bearing lead around the middle Drina Valley. Both districts were managed by imperial procurators of equestrian rank.⁵⁴

In Moesia Superior a new imperial organization of the mines had an impact on the native population comparable with the arrival of the Roman army in the previous century. The beginnings are recorded on small-denomination bronze coins issued under Trajan and Hadrian with names of the different mining districts on the reverse: *metalla Ulpiana*, *metalla Dardanica*, *Aelia Pincensia* and the later *Aureliana*, produced silver and lead in different areas of the province. The scale of operations saw the arrival of mining communities from adjacent provinces. In Dacia the productive gold mines of western Transylvania (Apuseni mountains) required the introduction of whole communities of skilled miners from Dalmatia and Thrace. At Alburnus Maior (Roşia Montana) Roman galleries have been found with working tools and equipment abandoned when the crisis of the Marcomannic Wars evidently caused the workings to be evacuated. Wooden writing tablets (A.D. 131–67) furnish in Latin private contracts for the hire of labour, sales and leases of property, including the associated bonds of surety. Many of the individuals named record their origins in the province of Dalmatia.⁵⁵ In Moesia Inferior the gold-workings around Montana (Mihailovgrad) in the north-west of the province remained throughout the period under direct military supervision.⁵⁶ The deposits of gold, silver and other minerals, further to the south in Macedonia and Thrace, had long been productive for the Greek world and continued to be worked but there is no evidence for any new Roman organization comparable with those of the frontier provinces.

Before the setback of the Marcomannic Wars the new frontier cities incorporated under Hadrian and the Antonines exhibit some of the most rapid growth to be found anywhere in the Danube lands. Excavations in the northern suburbs of Budapest have revealed much of the eastern half of the town of Aquincum. An area of around 650 by 440 metres contains mainly houses along streets laid out roughly at right angles, although there

⁵³ Mines in Noricum: Alföldy (1974).

⁵⁴ Mining in Noricum, Pannonia and Dalmatia: Dušanić (1977).

⁵⁵ Mining in Moesia Superior: Dušanić (1977); Werner (1986). Mining in Dacia: Mrozek (1977), gold; Benea and Petrowsky (1987), metalworking at Tibiscum. ⁵⁶ Montana: Rankov (1983).

is no indication of any overall street grid. On either side of a major north–south street commercial buildings include a produce market (*macellum*), a three-sided peristyle centred on a market kiosk. Nearby was a bath complex, some small shrines and the premises of the clothworkers' guild, in which the famous Aquincum organ was found. The rest of the built-up area contains rows of narrow houses separated by alleys and containing a variety of workshops. To the south of the market there were several larger private houses of the courtyard plan. First occupation of the site appears to have begun towards the end of the first century, when the legionary fortress was being constructed around 1.6 kilometres downstream. After the place became a city a defensive wall was built to enclose around 29–30 hectares, an area apparently larger than the existing settlement. The city's amenities included a stone arena and a water supply through diversion of a part of the aqueduct constructed to serve the legion.⁵⁷ Less is known of Carnuntum but if the three unconnected excavations represent parts of the town, then its area of around 60 hectares may have been twice that of Aquincum. In the south-east excavations, the houses match closely the narrow strip-houses and workshops at Aquincum. Though there appear to have been streets on a parallel alignment there is no evidence for any regular street-grid. The only public building known so far is the arena near the south-west corner of the settlement. The so-called 'Palace remains', a complex of large rooms with hypocausts, may have been used by some of the city's prosperous trade guilds.⁵⁸

At Augusta Vindelicum in Raetia the remains of the Hadrianic *municipium* are buried deep beneath the modern city of Augsburg. Enough is known of the 800 metres-square settlement to indicate that there was no street-grid or regular *insulae*. The wooden buildings of the first-century town were replaced in stone and the site was enclosed by a wall under Hadrian or the Antonines. The only public building so far known is the civic baths but many small shrines, private houses and stores buildings have been recorded.⁵⁹ The origin of Gorsium (near Székesfehérvár), in Pannonia south-west of Aquincum, was a civil settlement in the vicinity of an auxiliary camp. Following the division of Pannonia under Trajan, Gorsium became the centre for the provincial cult of Pannonia Inferior. Construction of a *forum* and *capitolium* at the intersection of the two principal streets was apparently already under way before the grant of municipal status under Hadrian. The colonnaded *forum* incorporated the *ara provinciae*, while alongside lay the assembly hall of the provincial council.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Aquincum: Szilágyi (1968).

⁵⁸ Carnuntum: Stiglitz *et al.* (1977); (1984) and (1985); Jobst (1976); (1983); (1986), Jupiter temple; Scherrer (1990), Jupiter cult. ⁵⁹ Augusta Vindelicum: Kellner (1976); Gottlieb (1985).

⁶⁰ Gorsium: Fitz (1976); (1986a), auxiliary fort; 1986b (forum); Fitz (1985), provincial council in Pannonia.

The prosperity and physical growth of these settlements was linked with the presence of the army and with the frontier economy. There was much less incentive for the inhabitants of more remote country towns to invest their surplus in urban amenities following a grant of municipal status and personal enfranchisement. One such place was Delminium, from which the Illyrian Delmatae took their name, attacked more than once by Roman consuls in the second century B.C. This was their principal settlement in the plain of Duvno, up among the Dinaric mountains of Dalmatia. The Roman settlement occupied a level and more convenient situation below the old hillfort near Županac, and has been identified by the remains of its modest forum (42 by 37.5 metres), a paved open space enclosed on three sides by a plain wall and with a basilica and council chamber (*curia*) along the fourth side. The large stove which was probably a later addition in the corner of the latter will have been an essential provision if public business was to be properly transacted when the north wind blew during the winter months.⁶¹

The municipal system of the second century A.D. could not be extended to the civil settlements which existed on military land adjacent to legionary and auxiliary camps. Some of the legionary *canabae* had by the end of the second century expanded into large settlements with a definitely urban character. Aerial photographs have revealed the plan and extent of the *canabae* at Carnuntum on either side of the road leading from the south gate of the fortress.⁶² There is also evidence from several places for settlements of this type having communal services administered by a council and magistrates, but there is no trace of public buildings dedicated to this purpose.⁶³ Most of the buildings were little more than wooden shacks containing taverns, shops and workshops, but there are also examples, notably at Aquincum, of substantial well-built private houses with mosaic floors, wall- and ceiling-paintings. None of these places could be permitted a protective wall because of their situation so close to the walls of army bases and for all their wealth must have retained an air of impermanence, being liable to expulsion or demolition in time of danger.

Cities dating from the Hadrianic, Antonine and later eras are almost without exception smaller in area and modest in their urban development, with few signs of an active office-holding class among local proprietors. Typical of such places was Bassiana in the south-east corner of Pannonia between Sirmium and Singidunum. Aerial photographs reveal a rudimentary street-grid but the walled area was a mere 19 hectares.⁶⁴ This would appear to be the case of a small settlement on a major road having imposed

⁶¹ Delminium: Wilkes (1969), Zaninović (1961–2).

⁶² Carnuntum *canabae*: Stiglitz *et al.* (1977); Kandler & Zabehtlicky (1986). Brigetio: Bónis (1986), workshops. Aquincum: Póczy (1983); (1986), *canabae*; Zsidi (1990), cemetery.

⁶³ *Canabae* organization: Mócsy (1974) 218. ⁶⁴ Bassiana: Grbić (1956), aerial photograph.

upon its responsibility for local administration and the provision of services. In Raetia, Cambodunum had been the principal settlement of the Celtic Estioni, but its Roman development may have owed more to its situation at a major junction of routes between Italy and the Danube. The settlement flourished in the first century A.D. when it acquired several public buildings, but by the time municipal status was granted that prosperity had been lost to the new frontier settlements. Promotion to city status was done for administrative reasons and will have imposed heavy burdens on a small town, including the upkeep of major roads in a difficult alpine terrain. In spite of this, the built-up area of Cambodunum increased to around 1,000 by 500 metres.⁶⁵ Two thousand four hundred kilometres to the east, the settlement which grew up at a crossroads between Tomis and Durostorum, with a mixed population of local families and Roman settlers, took its name from Trajan's great monument to his Dacian victory, Tropaeum Traiani. Until around 170 the area may have been administered by a detachment from legion XI Claudia at Durostorum but that function passed to the *municipium* established on the site. Most of the remains within the defended area of around 10 hectares belong to the period of the late empire but there is no indication that the city had ever exceeded these limits. The place served to maintain part of the network of routes by which the frontier system was sustained and ceased to exist following the arrival of the Slavs at the end of the sixth century.⁶⁶

The essentially functional and subordinate role of municipal institutions in the Roman provinces of the Antonine era is well illustrated by their introduction to the mining settlements, hitherto administered directly by imperial officials through the traditional system of leases and contracts. As time passed some of the tenants (*coloni*) who controlled the mines worked by slaves and local miners amassed large fortunes, which were evidently in the minds of the government when it was decided to include these settlements within the municipal system. The rich mining entrepreneurs were expected to contribute to the provision of those urban amenities unlikely to be paid for out of imperial funds. In the Dardanian silver mines some existing buildings, mainly storehouses, were adapted to serve as the centre for the new Antonine *municipium Dard(anum/anorum)* in the Ibar valley at Sočanica.⁶⁷ At the Dalmatian silver mines of Domavia in the Drina Valley, the buildings used by the imperial administration may have been adapted to serve as basilica and council chamber. The houses of the settlement were crowded together along the sides of the narrow valley, leaving no open spaces suitable for public use. The largest building in the settlement was the baths, with more than fifty rooms, which inscriptions indicate continued to be maintained by the imperial administration, though doubtless at the

⁶⁵ Cambodunum (Kempten): Schleiermacher (1972); Overbeck (1976).

⁶⁶ Tropaeum Traiani: Sampetru (1984). ⁶⁷ *Municipium D(ar)d(anorum)* (Sočanica): Mócsy (1974).

expense of the local community.⁶⁸ In addition to military towns along the frontier, remote country towns and mining settlements, the municipal system was eventually extended to a fashionable spa in central Bosnia at the source of the River Bosna. Aquae S(. . .) – the full name of the place is not on record as is also the case with several other later *municipia* in the region – lay at Ilidža a few miles from Sarajevo. Older excavations revealed part of the spa buildings (55 by 50 metres) consisting of large rooms with mosaic floors, painted walls and imported Corinthian capitals. More recent work has revealed what may be the ancient sanatorium. How the *res publica* of Aquae S. functioned as a central place for the inhabitants of the surrounding hills is not easy to imagine. The curative establishment continued to derive benefit from wealthy patients who came for the cure, who included at least one Roman senator.⁶⁹

In the countryside around the towns the remains of villas, buildings in the Roman fashion with mortared stone and brick walls with tiled roofs, which formed the centre of an agricultural complex, are found along the Adriatic coast, in Noricum, western and southern Pannonia. Most were first erected during the early Principate and seem to coincide with known areas of Italian and veteran settlement.⁷⁰ Until the reign of Marcus Aurelius there were few rural residences in the Roman style known to have been inhabited by upper-class natives, though they are prominent in eastern Pannonia with rich burials and decorated tombstones.⁷¹ The meagre traces of native settlements and villages of the first and second centuries serve only to confirm this impression, where modest round and square huts hardly match the evidence for a native upper-class lifestyle. Matters were different in Noricum, where after the middle of the first century any such distinctions between Italian settlers and native proprietors rapidly disappeared.

Regional differences along similar lines are suggested by the evidence for the local manufacture and the import of pottery. By the early second century Roman forms were widespread in areas of foreign and veteran settlement. In other areas the traditional forms of the late (La Tène) Iron Age prevailed. Some local production of *sigillata* pottery was for a time carried on at Siscia, Aquincum and perhaps on the lower Danube, although the volume was never great and the quality of the product generally unimpressive.⁷² The tastes of veterans and settlers at first determined the production and design of pottery but later the dominant market was the many

⁶⁸ Domavia (Gradina): Wilkes (1969). ⁶⁹ Aquae S(. . .) (Ilidža): *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ Villas, Dalmatia: Zaninović (1977); Čremošnik (1984), mosaics and wall-paintings. Pannonia: Thomas (1980b); Palagyi (1985); Kolník (1990), south Slovakia; Kuzmova (1990). Moesia Inferior: Poulter (1983a); Martem'janov (1986). Dacia: Tudor (1968b); Glodariu (1977). Raetia: Overbeck (1976); Hussen (1990). ⁷¹ Villas in eastern Pannonia: Mócsy (1974).

⁷² *Terra sigillata* and other pottery production: Thomas (1980b), Pannonia; Bjelajac (1987), Sirmium; Premk (1987), Sirmium; Mikl-Curk *et al.* (1984), Poetovio; Gabler (1986), Poetovio. Dacia: Gudea (1984). Moesia Inferior: Dimitrova-Milcheva (1987); Museteanu (1985), Durostorum.

military bases along the Danube, supplied by trade-routes which followed the river.

The steady spread of a taste for stone sculpture among the native peoples, though not unknown previously, was a distinctive feature of the early Roman era. Two forms of production can be observed, larger workshops reproducing Italian traditions and smaller ateliers serving the native communities which lay beyond the distribution area of the former's products. These differences seem to disappear in the period following the reign of Hadrian, as a higher standard of mass-produced tombstones and sculptures became more widely available. The traditions of classical ornament which came to the area from Italy remained dominant in the Latin-speaking Danube provinces. For those who sought and could afford work of a higher quality, Mediterranean-trained craftsmen and the marbles in which they worked were available in the larger centres.⁷³

IV. SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The changes described above were bound up with the changing pattern of recruitment to the Danube armies. A difference can be observed between the Illyrian provinces in the west (Pannonia, Noricum and Dalmatia) and Moesia and Dacia in the east. In the latter the origins of legionary recruits appear confined to Roman colonies in the area, Scupi, Ratiaria, Ulpia Traiana and Oescus.⁷⁴ At least, that was how their origins were officially recorded, possibly concealing a technically unqualified native origin. There was also a significant eastern element surviving in the *auxilia* based in Dacia and Moesia, presumably dictated by the available supply of suitable manpower. Until the Hadrianic period the origins of the army in Pannonia were more mixed. Legions were drawn from Italy, Gaul and Spain, while the auxiliaries comprised Dalmatians, Thracians, Alpine peoples, Britons and Germans. Soon most of the *auxilia* looked to their own provinces for new recruits, except for some units of Thracian and Syrian origin who maintained links with their homelands. By the middle of the first century, recruitment of native Dalmatians and Pannonians to the auxiliary units stationed in their own provinces was under way. In the following century the provincial garrison drew its manpower from peoples in the vicinity of the frontier.⁷⁵ The native cities organized from the Flavian period onwards do not figure in the recorded origins of recruits to the legions. The role of veteran colonies in legionary recruitment remained important and it has

⁷³ Sculpture and architectural ornament, Pannonia: Kiss (1987); Blagg (1992); Ertel (1990), Corinthian capitals; Kolnik (1984), south Slovakia. Noricum and Raetia: *CSIR* (n. 1 above); Jobst (1985). Dalmatia: Čremošnik (1984), painting and mosaic. Dacia: Mackendrick (1975). Moesia Inferior: Ivanov (1986), Oescus. Thracia: Hoddinott (1975); Georgiev (1983), Odessus baths.

⁷⁴ Legionary recruitment: Mann, *Recruitment*.

⁷⁵ Auxiliary recruitment: Kraft (1951); Alföldy, *Heeresgeschichte*.

been suggested that there was for a time an intention to match the number of legions in a province with the same total of veteran colonies.⁷⁶ During the long peace of the middle second century army recruitment appears to have been so circumscribed as to suggest that a hereditary pattern of military service was already developing in some frontier areas. Some social distinction remained, in that legions drew from the local colonies and auxiliaries came from the native communities. One consequence of the growing links between the frontier armies and local civil communities was that the imperial authorities no longer faced a 'veteran problem' such as had once proved so destructive to the Roman Republic. Whatever rewards and privileges army veterans may have received, they were evidently content to settle near their old camps or return to their home towns somewhere in the area.

In matters of belief and ritual associated with burial, Roman sculpture was soon employed to furnish permanent memorials of the deceased depicting native beliefs regarding the after-life, including the journey into the next world on a four-wheeled cart or by boat. Several graves have been found with pottery vessels in the form of boats and there are some examples from early in the Roman period of native interments containing full-size carts. The taste for the depiction and burial of carts appears to have been particularly strong among wealthy native families during the early second century.⁷⁷ The commonest form of burial was the mound of earth (tumulus) raised above the burial, either cremation or inhumation, a rite used in the Danube lands for centuries before Roman times and probably little altered in associated ritual since the Bronze Age ceremonies preserved in the poems of Homer. The adoption of figured tombstones by the native Danubians provides the first durable record of native fashions in dress, personal ornament and hairstyle among Celtic, Illyrian and Thracian communities.⁷⁸

The Roman colonies and the more prosperous native *municipia* advertised their Roman character and loyalty to the political order in the prevailing version of the classical style. Almost all the known religious monuments of the first and second centuries exhibit an entirely Roman character. Exceptions are shrines of several oriental gods, including Mithras (the Unconquered Sun), an Iranian deity representing the forces of light triumphant over the power of darkness. This and other exotic cults, with their distinctive rites of personal initiation that appealed to the more

⁷⁶ Legions and colonies: Mócsy (1974).

⁷⁷ Tombstones with cart reliefs (Szentendre): *RIU* nos. 3, 893, 911, 913, 925.

⁷⁸ Portraits on tombstones, Noricum and Pannonia: Schober (1923); Alföldy (1974); Mócsy (1974); Kranz (1986), Šempeter near Celeia. Dalmatia: Sergejevski (1965); Cermanović-Kuzmanović (1973), Komini near Plevlja; Gabričević (1983), Sinj. Dacia: Bianchi (1985); Alicu *et al.* (1979), Sarmizegetusa; Marinescu (1982), Dacia Superior and Dacia Porolissensis. Moesia Inferior and Thrace: Dimitrov (1937); Conchev (1959); Alexandrescu Vianu (1985).

educated and prosperous classes, may have been introduced to the Danube lands by soldiers returning to their home bases after temporary service in the East. The oriental cults flourished in the larger cosmopolitan cities but are also found in the smaller towns of the interior.⁷⁹ The indigenous cults of the Danube lands are rarely found in equation with gods of the classical pantheon, except among the predominantly Celtic communities in Noricum, the Venetic Istrians and Liburni and the Japodes of north-west Dalmatia.⁸⁰ Almost nothing has survived of native religious traditions or identities in Roman Dacia or among the Latin-speaking communities of the lower Danube. This is in marked contrast with the Greek-speaking communities of Thrace, where a rich and varied belief is revealed through many figured and inscribed dedications to such deities as the Thracian Rider-God.⁸¹

By the middle decades of the second century there had developed in the Danube provinces a Latin-speaking Roman provincial culture to which local native traditions appear to have contributed little. This was based on the growing settlements along the river and was bound up with the influence of locally recruited legions and *auxilia*. It was the pay and other rewards which sustained the large Danube armies and the many civil communities linked with them. Soon the need to protect their homelands and the income on which their existence depended would dominate the actions of the Danube armies. The older colonies and *municipia* along the routes to Italy and on the Adriatic coast gradually lost their dominant role in the region. At the same time, few of the new cities organized among the native peoples away from the frontiers ever amounted to very much.

The Latin language was dominant throughout the frontier provinces of the Danube.⁸² Greek remained confined to the southern Balkans and did not spread significantly beyond the limits of Hellenistic Macedonia and Thrace. As most recently defined from the evidence of inscriptions, the linguistic frontier in Roman Europe followed more or less the southern boundaries of Latin Dalmatia, Moesia Superior and Moesia Inferior; and this demarcation altered hardly at all during the Roman era. At first, Latin along the lower Danube was confined to the military bases and associated civil settlements. Trajan's new Greek foundations, at Nicopolis ad Istrum and Marcianopolis in Thrace north of the Haemus, retained their character; at the same time the use of Latin, on tombstones and religious dedications,

⁷⁹ Oriental cults: Zotović (1966), Moesia Superior; Selem (1980), Yugoslav Pannonia; Ertel (1991), Carnuntum *canabae*; Berciu and Petrolescu (1976), southern Dacia; Tacheva-Hitova (1983), Moesia Inferior and Thracia; Vermaseren (1960), Mithras; Popa and Berciu (1978), Jupiter Dolichenus in Dacia.

⁸⁰ Native cults in Danube lands: Najdenova (1991), lower Danube.

⁸¹ Danube horseman cult: Tudor (1969) and (1976). Thracian Rider-God: Gočeva and Oppermann (1979–84), Bulgaria; Hamparțumian (1979), Romanian Moesia Inferior; Cermanović-Kuzmanović (1982), Yugoslavia.

⁸² Latin language: Mihăescu (1978). Boundary of Latin and Greek: Gerov (1980).

spread gradually to the inland communities through the cycles of veteran settlement and native recruitment. On the Black Sea coast, the ancient Greek colonies south of the Danube delta retained their historic character and generally flourished in the Roman era. Silting-up of the surrounding lagoons caused by the huge outflow of the river was probably responsible for the decline of Istros (Histria) and the leading port in the area was now Tomis, principal residence of the governor of Moesia Inferior and the base of a Roman fleet.

Little sign of what might be termed 'native resistance' to Roman rule and the way of life in general can be seen in the Danube provinces. There were undoubtedly recurrent outbreaks of brigandage, some serious, in several areas.⁸³ Yet there is no suggestion that any of it was a reaction specifically to Roman rule, any more than it has been to the several comparable regimes that have sought to dominate the Balkans since then. The native peoples came to accept a version of the Roman way of life. From among the native Danubians who joined first the *auxilia* and then the legions we can recognize the ancestors of a military class who were to become dominant in the empire from the middle of the third century. The small number of Danubians known to have reached high equestrian or senatorial rank before the Marcomannic Wars came from the older settler colonies.⁸⁴ By comparison with other Latin-speaking areas of the empire such as Gaul, Spain or North Africa, the Danube provinces made little mark in the Roman world as a whole. No historians, poets or philosophers can be claimed. Most typical were the likes of Sextus Iulius Severus, consul in A.D. 127. Described as Hadrian's 'best general' when he was assigned the task of dealing with a major uprising among the Jews (A.D. 133–5), his ancestors can be discovered among the founding settlers of the Claudian veteran colony at Aequum in southern Dalmatia.⁸⁵

⁸³ Several epitaphs from Moesia Superior record death at the hands of brigands (*interfectus a latronibus*): Mócsy (1970) 194–5. Under Marcus, the procurator of Moesia Inferior led a task force against brigands on the borders of Thrace and Macedonia: *AE* 1956 no. 124. It is not certain if these are the same as the 'brigands of Dalmatia and Dardania' said to have been enlisted by the same emperor (*FLA Marc.* 21.7), probably in the newly formed cohorts of Dardanians stationed in the area. On brigands in general see MacMullen (1967) 192–9. ⁸⁴ Wilkes (1969) 318–36. ⁸⁵ Wilkes (1969) 321–2.

CHAPTER 20

GREECE AND ASIA MINOR¹

BARBARA LEVICK

I. VESPASIAN'S REORGANIZATION OF THE GREEK EAST: RECOVERY AND ADVANCE UNDER THE FLAVIANS

Greece, Asia Minor and the islands came off lightly in the civil wars of 68–70. Nero's war against the Parthians, which had in any case been fought in Armenia Major, was over five years before Nero fell, and the rebellion in Judaea was only of local significance. Morale and expectations must have been high in 69–70. It was from the eastern provinces that the final victor came; his troops had largely been recruited there, and he enjoyed the moral and financial backing of ruling circles. Nero might have been the preferred ruler for many Greeks, but Vespasian was superior to the men who had come from western provinces and with the support of western legions to overthrow Nero and fight for supremacy.

But Vespasian was concerned with the military security and solvency of the entire empire and rather with the restoration of Rome, Italy, and the provinces that had suffered than with the sensibilities of his subjects. Some of the changes he made in the East were unwelcome.² First, he revoked

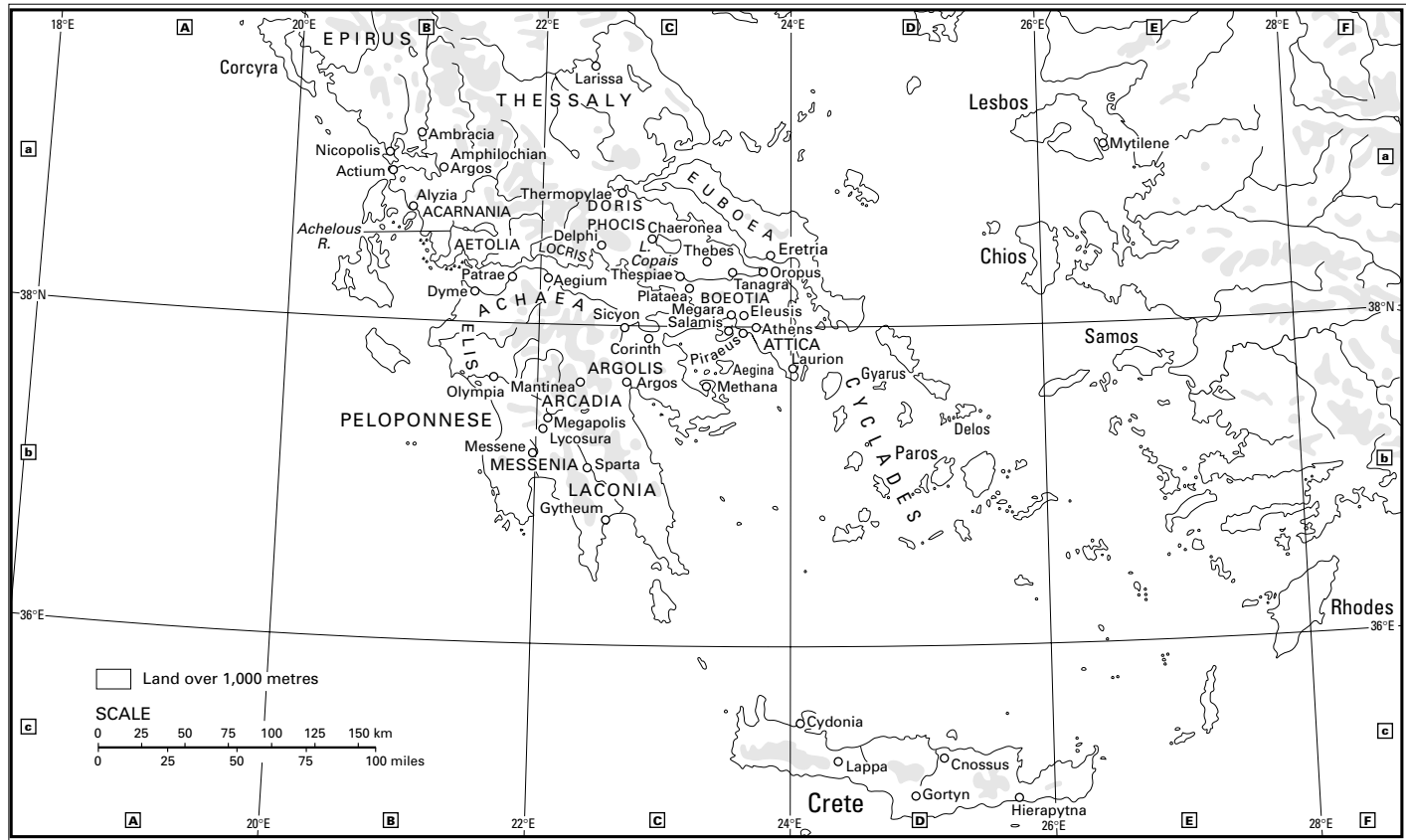
¹ The flourishing condition of literature in this period makes it one exceptionally rich in contemporary sources: Pliny the Younger's *Letters* from Bithynia (Book x), along with the *Orations* of his contemporary, Dio Chrysostom, are indispensable for social and political life and administration; they may be supplemented by Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. First-hand information is provided by the *Periplus of the Black Sea* of the Hadrianic governor of Cappadocia Flavius Arrian and by the *Moralia* of Plutarch, which offer invaluable information about political life in the Greece of the late first and early second century. For the next decades we have the *Orations* of Aelius Aristides, and, on the sophistic movement in general, Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*, while the *Metamorphoses (Golden Ass)* of Apuleius gives invaluable insight into life at a lower level. The essays of Lucian cover the same period and many of the same topics with a humour welcome in the literature of this century. Pausanias' *Guide to Greece*, Ptolemy's *Geography* and the elder Pliny (for the earlier period) are also useful. For Christians in society, see The Book of Revelation, Eusebius' *History of the Church*, and H. Musurillo's edition of *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford, 1972), and, for another non- if not anti-Roman perspective the *Oracula Sibyllina*. Rulings preserved in Justinian's *Digest* become an important source for the regulation of provincial life by the Roman government. For interpretations of the authors see the bibliography, and, for epigraphic and numismatic sources, the corresponding list of sources for *CAH* x².

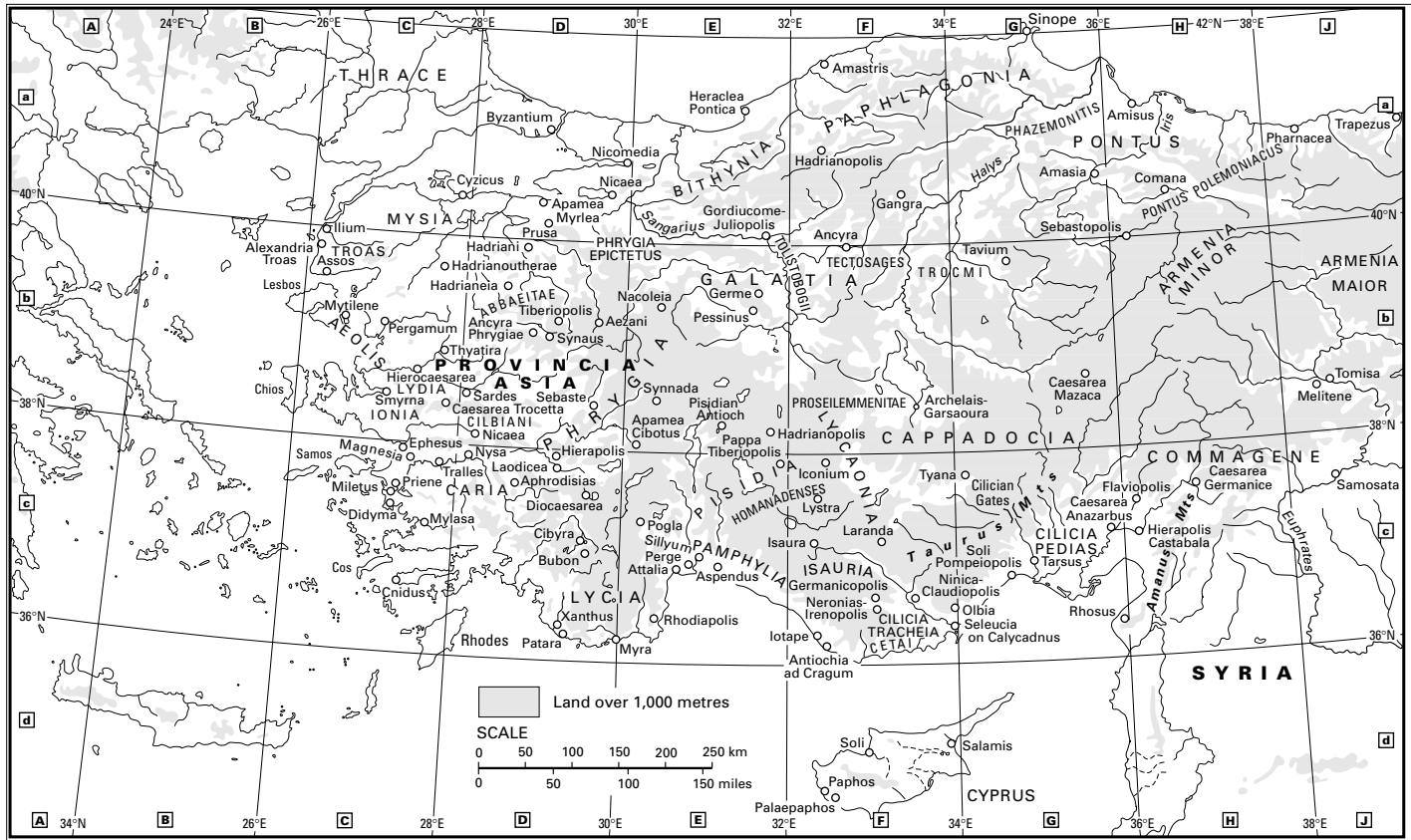
² The most recent treatment is that of Dąbrowa (1980) 9–17; cf. Bernhardt (1984). For the boundary of Achaëa and Macedonia, see Chérif (1987). Lycia's status: see Eck (1970) 65–70, with Sex. Marius Priscus legate under Nero and to 71 or 72: Lycia had 'bestimmte Vorrechte innerprovinzieller Art'; *koinon*: Oliver (1978) 187. Anicetus: Tac. *Hist.* III.47–8; Parthians, Caucasus and new arrangement: Sherk (1980) 991–8.

grants of freedom that Nero or other emperors had made to Achaëa, Rhodes, Byzantium, Samos and perhaps Lycia, and he may have dissolved the enlarged *koinon* that had existed in mainland Greece since Tiberius' time. Disturbances in the cities were the reasons alleged, perhaps in connection with the first of the imposter Neros who were to continue attracting support in the East while it was under the Flavian dynasty; it is likely that Nero's death and Rome's loss of attention had led to speculative upheavals in ruling circles or even demonstrations by the lower classes. But another result of reducing Achaëa to provincial status again was an increase of revenue; Vespasian will have borne protests with fortitude.

Given Nero's conciliatory solution to the Armenian problem – that of allowing the Parthians effectively to nominate the ruler – Rome had to cut a credible military figure on the Euphrates. In addition to Parthia there were troublesome tribes beyond the Danube and Caucasus to bear in mind, and in 69 pro-Vitellian insurgents under Anicetus, slave of Polemo, attacked Trapezus in Pontus and annihilated a cohort. Vespasian determined to bring up legions to the Euphrates north of Syria, reviving the consular command in Cappadocia-Galatia that Nero had created for Corbulo in 54. This was the essential part of the arrangement, but there were consequential changes; only in part is the chronology certain. Cappadocia received one of its two legions, stationed at Melitene, in 70–71, but the other, which was to come to Satala, was still operating in Syria in 75. Armenia Minor, which had been under Aristobulus since 54, and probably Polemo's possessions in Cilicia Tracheia, were taken over at the end of 71 and united with Cappadocia, although unruly Ceticus had to remain under a client ruler; Commagene (with its revenues!) was annexed, after some resistance, between July 72 and June 73, and attached to Syria, which lost Cilicia Pedias. This was united with Antiochus IV's other possessions in Tracheia for the first time as a separate province of Cilicia in 73–4; southern Lycaonia, which had been assigned to Antiochus by Gaius or Claudius, was reunited with Galatia and at the same time the province of Lycia-Pamphylia, which was to contain western Cilicia Tracheia and much of Pisidia, was created. The two new military areas were thus attached to different well-established provinces.

The combination of Galatia, Cappadocia, Armenia and the minor districts that governors rejoiced to list as part of their command, was unwieldy enough to demand the use of subordinate officers, *legati iuridici*, but it corresponded to the geographical and cultural division: Cappadocia-Galatia comprised the greater part of the Anatolian plateau, arid and relatively unurbanized, while another hellenized, that is to say urbanized, coastal region was added to the tally of Asia and Bithynia: Lycia-Pamphylia; the same epithets apply to the lowland part of the new province of Cilicia. Like all new provinces (and like Lycia-Pamphylia), Cilicia received governors nominated by the emperor. Neither province contained legions and they





Map 8 Greece and Asia Minor

were safe enough for men of praetorian rank; on the other hand, their tenure held promise of the consulship, so that their governors were men of talent or influence.

Vespasian must be given credit for these administrative changes and he and his sons for the development and maintenance of the military road system, centring on Ancyra, that the changes entailed. But excessive credit has been given him and his sons for the economic and cultural advance of Asia Minor during their Principates (as it has in other areas also): in particular for the careful selection of governors acquainted with the country and highly qualified for their positions.³ The new command in Cappadocia-Galatia was certainly one for men of tried ability and loyalty, but not because the welfare of subjects in these provinces was the first consideration. And 'public' provinces continued to receive governors appointed essentially through the workings of seniority and the lot. Under Domitian, it is true, governors are said to have shown a self-restraint not kept up in succeeding reigns; but Domitian's high reputation among scholars is due to the fear that his insistence on exercising control himself inspired in governors and potential accomplices in city aristocracies.

In fashioning his new provincial structure in Asia Minor Vespasian followed the Neronian model, and the annexation of dependent kingdoms was no novelty in Rome's advance to the Euphrates and beyond. It had begun under the Republic with Asia and Bithynia themselves, continued when Augustus took over Galatia, and had been accelerated under Tiberius. The most recent precedent was again Nero's: he had annexed Pontus Polemoniacus in 64.

No individual or dynasty can claim a decisive share of the credit for the success of Asia Minor. The real sources are diverse and much less simple. Basic was the fertility of western Asia Minor itself, and the position of the entire peninsula between two continents; the opening up of the regions in the east of the peninsula, Cappadocia-Galatia itself, and, to the West, the Roman advance to the Danube and beyond: that provided new markets for what Asia Minor could produce; finally came the stationing of legions on the Danube and on the Euphrates, topping up the east Anatolian markets with a stable, state-backed demand for provisions, equipment and amenities (Melitene acquired municipal status under Trajan); and the establishment of a hundred years' peace in 30 B.C. created the confidence to give wealth and enterprise their head. The wars of 68–70 were a momentary interruption of Anatolian progress that was resumed under the new dynasty and certainly promoted by its firm control of affairs.

The Flavians were ready to promote urbanization and restoration:

³ Roads: French (1980) 708–13; Domitian's credit: Suet. *Dom.* 8.2; Magie (1950) I 577–81; Kreiler (1975) 146–9; Dąbrowa (1980) 45–53; *contra*, Levick (1982) 63–6.

Corinth acquired the title Flavia after the earthquake of 77, although in Asia Minor Dąbrowa finds only one city founded under them: Flaviopolis in northern Padias. But the Ephesian *conventus* list shows peoples, including one called the [F]laviocaesares, winning or recovering the status of city under Flavians; and the sure sign of city status and awareness, the issuing of coins as a *polis*, was now displayed by no fewer than 300 of the 500 cities claimed by Josephus and Philostratus for the Province of Asia. To the east, however, notably in Cappadocia, Pontus east of Trapezus, and Armenia Minor, cities remained sparse.⁴

To some extent Greece itself also benefited from these factors, but although ancient authors, followed by some modern scholars, may have underestimated the revival, prosperity seems to have had a narrow base, reaching fewer cities, notably Corinth, where building activity was unceasing from the earthquake of 77 until the end of Hadrian's reign; Patras; Athens, the banking centre of Greece; Sparta, which achieved particular wealth during the Principate; and philo-Roman Thespieae. The entry of men into the legions and advancement in the procuratorial service and the Senate suggests that it was more thinly spread. At Athens the Dodecais lapsed between A.D. 14 and Domitian's reign, and there were six years without archons in the last two decades of the first century; olive exports were important but grain remained a problem. We shall see Athens receiving many gifts of buildings, but erecting few for herself; and Pausanias' statement that Athens 'flourished again when Hadrian was emperor' suggests that she needed some help. Elsewhere the appearance of emphyteutic leases in literature and (more convincingly) in epigraphy suggests that land was going out of cultivation; in 'desolate' Thessaly ranching had taken over and in the Amphictyony of 125 it lost members to Athens and Sparta. The decline of individual places such as Megalopolis, Thebes and Delos might mean mere shifts of population, but Plutarch claims that all Greece could no longer put into the field the three thousand hoplites (i.e. ex-ephebes) that Megara had fielded against the Persians.⁵

The Flavians supported education and culture. Vespasian founded chairs at Athens and Rome and in 75 he accorded teachers, 'who educate, civilize, and make good citizens of the young', doctors and physiotherapists

⁴ Dąbrowa (1980) 71; Corinth: Wiseman (1979) 506; *conventus*: Habicht (1975); city numbers: Joseph., *BJ* II.366; Philostr. *VS* 548, with Eck, *Senatoren* 84 n. 41; coins: Jones (1965), with 523 cities coining in the Roman world 27 B.C.–A.D. 276, 312 in Asia Minor, 90 in Greece and the islands; eastern Anatolia: Jones, *Cities* 172–3.

⁵ Corinth, Patras, Athens, Sparta: Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* I 28 n. 44; 29 n. 50; Geagan (1979) 385–6, with Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* I 163–4 on sources of wealth; grain: *IG* II/III² 2776, with Day (1942) 221–37; Wiseman (1979) 507, 521–3. Thespieae: Jones (1970) 244–9. Habicht (1985) 59–61 takes a cheerful view against Kahrstedt (1954) on Messene and generally. Thessaly: Dio Chrys. xxxiii.25; Philostr. *VS* 615; emphyteutic leases: Dio Chrys. vii.36–7; *SIG*³ 884; Megalopolis, Thebes and Delos: Paus. vii.33. 1–2; hoplites: Plut. *De def. or.* 8, 414A.

exemption from civic burdens in the cities in which they resided, on pain of a fine of 10,000 denarii for infringement; and they were to be able to hold conferences in whatever sacred place they chose – anyone guilty of violence against them was answerable to the Roman people for impiety towards the imperial house. Eighteen years later Domitian found the privileges being abused by practitioners who took on slave pupils for money; they were to lose their immunity. Both decisions evidently pleased the cities, since both were published on the same stone at Pergamum. For the long-established guild of Travelling Athletes Dedicated to Heracles, whose members' performances gave pleasure to hundreds of thousands, Vespasian confirmed existing privileges, as Claudius had before him.⁶

A prime source of wealth, and the attitude of the last Flavian emperor, are both illustrated by the incident of his vine edict. To prevent the uprooting of half the vines of 'Ionia' (perhaps the district, which had a league, perhaps the entire province, represented at the *koinon*), the sophist Scopelian of Smyrna travelled to plead with the emperor; so successful was he that according to Philostratus he actually persuaded Domitian to order the Ionians to plant vines rather than to destroy them. If that report is accurate, it must be because by the time Scopelian arrived Domitian was so embarrassed by his hasty and unenforceable edict that he was prepared to say anything to be rid of it: but the measure shows no concern for viticulture in the provinces in the face of the grain shortages that gripped Asia Minor and other parts of the Mediterranean basin, as under Domitian himself, when the magistrates of Pisidian Antioch appealed to the governor of Galatia for help.⁷

The advancing prosperity of Asia Minor, as well as the support given to Vespasian during his coup, is shown by the numbers of men who now began to enter the Senate, eventually to rise to high positions. Tacitus stresses merits – and wealth. Of the nine easterners Vespasian is known to have admitted, seven were from Asia Minor, and their origins did not differ markedly from those of the sprinkling admitted in earlier reigns: they came from the great cities of western Asia Minor and from Roman colonies and other areas of Italian settlement. Two great cities of Asia were represented by Ti. Iulius Celsus Polemaeanus of Sardes and C. Antius A. Iulius Quadratus and C. Iulius Bassus of Pergamum, and the Roman colonies of Antioch towards Pisidia and Apamea in Bithynia by C. Caristianus Fronto and a man with the cognomen Longus respectively; Perge, in another area heavily settled with Italians, contributed a new senator: C. Iulius Cornutus Tertullus. Two of these men can be detected in eastern armies when their

⁶ Teachers and doctors: MW 458, with Forbes (1955) 348–50; athletes: *PLond* III 1178.

⁷ For this view, see Levick (1982) 57–8, 66–73.

advancement began: Fronto commanding a troop of cavalry in Syria, Polemaeanus as tribune of legio III Cyrenaica in Egypt.

Western prejudice remained. Easterners knew the life (it would be said) and the language; they were useful in the eastern provinces, occasionally in their province of origin. Bias is suggested by the number who served in the unpromising province of Bithynia: Fronto and Quadratus as legates, Polemaeanus as proconsul in about 84–5, and Bassus both as quaestor under Vespasian and as proconsul in about 100–1. Sometimes they seem to have been too familiar with their people: it seems to have been because Bassus became involved with the politics of Bithynia that he was brought to trial for misgovernment there.

But Tacitus is right to insist on their success: not only were four of these men adlected into the Senate rather than having to stand for the lowest offices;⁸ most reached the consulship: Ti. Iulius Candidus Marius Celsus was suffect in 86 and *II ord.* in 105; the next known, Caristianus Fronto, suffect in 90, when Domitian after the revolt of Saturninus needed to reward or favour as many men as he could; Polemaeanus followed as suffect in 92 and Quadratus in 94; he was to share the *ordinarius* consulship of 105 with Celsus. Pliny's friend Cornutus Tertullus, who was not one of the *adlecti*, had to wait for his suffect consulship until 100, and Longus and Bassus failed to reach the office. Pergamum's primacy in wealth and standing showed: she far outstripped her rivals, notably Ephesus, in the number of consuls she produced.

From 79 to 98 the intake was less spectacular: apart from two senators of uncertain Anatolian origin, Ti. Claudius Sacerdos Iulianus (*suff.* 100) and L. Antonius Albus (*suff.* 102), Halfmann records two men from Pisidian Antioch, Iulius Paullus and Anicius Maximus (another governor of Bithynia, between 98 and 109), two from Pergamum, C. Iulius Fronto and C. Iulius Nabus, with one from Aphrodisias, Sallustius Rufus, and (more adventurously, since the man came from a province only recently acquired), M. Arruntius Claudianus of Xanthus in the accessible west of Lycia.

II. PHILHELLENE EMPERORS: THE INTERVENTIONS OF TRAJAN

Vespasian's unification of eastern Asia Minor into the northern section of a great command imposed strains. When Trajan himself began campaigning in the East he brought it to an end. Trajan divided the two again, this time for good, upon annexing Armenia Major. L. Catilius Severus is attested as governor of *Cappadociae et Armeniae maioris et minoris*, 114–17. Pontus, Galaticus and Polemoniachus, and southern Lycaonia ('Lycaonia Antiochiana') also went to Cappadocia and only Paphlagonia was left to

⁸ Tac. *Hist.* II.82; for the men see Halfmann, *Senatores* 78 and index; cf. Dąbrowa (1980) 55–6.

Galatia, which henceforward was to be under an ex-praetor and of diminishing importance. By the time of the Severi such divisions would have doubled the number of provinces established by Augustus; as local government became less effective, tighter central control was imposed. But Cappadocia-Galatia had been a 'monster'.⁹

With the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian the provinces, especially those of western Asia Minor, finally reached that plateau of prosperity and brilliance to which they had long been ascending. To take one yardstick of prosperity and temper: in the first half of the second century more temples of the imperial cult are known to have been built than in any other fifty-year period. In Crete earthquakes at the end of the century may only have stimulated fresh building under Nerva and Trajan, including a basilica at Cnossus and a palace at Gortyn, where in A.D. 100 the Odeion was restored with government help. The marble for Cretan buildings came from Anatolian quarries, while in sarcophagi Attica was dominant.¹⁰ Successful war against Dacia, concluded in 106, brought gold and fresh markets in the new province, and the peace that followed the breaking-off of hostilities against Parthia in 117 reduced the costs of government.

Trajan's reported remark to Dio of Prusa, 'I don't understand a word you say, but I love you as myself', presents the soldier-emperor as a benevolent philistine. The reputation of philhellene was normally conferred at Rome on emperors such as Nero, Domitian and the *graeculus* Hadrian, disliked for other reasons; as a minor failing of the *Optimus Princeps* it escaped attention. But Trajan's father may have been responsible for organizing Cappadocia-Galatia; certainly he became governor of Syria in 73 and provincialized Commagene. Valuable connections may have been forged. Trajan's Principate was predicted by the oracle at Didyma, and Dio Chrysostom alludes to it as a city with a great claim on the emperor.¹¹ The reign of Trajan saw more easterners entering the Senate than Domitian had allowed: they soon reach such numbers that it would be pointless to trace the development further, beyond noticing that in 175 it was possible for a pretender of eastern origin to arise, Avidius Cassius, and that in 193 the *praefectus urbi* T. Flavius Claudius Sulpicianus of Hierapytna, father-in-law of Pertinax, would be a claimant. It was not only a question of numbers but of the ever-widening area from which the new men were taken, even inside Asia Minor. Apart from the cities of western Asia and Bithynia – Nysa, with Sex. Iulius Maior, Nicomedia, with L. Flavius Arrianus – and the Roman colonies, there was C. Claudius Severus from Pompeiopolis on the coast of Cilicia

⁹ See Syme (1977) 38–48, dating the vicissitudes of the monster; another interpretation: Eck, *Senatoren* 10–12 and 174–5, and Sherk (1980) 1024–6. Rusticus' death: Franke (1979) 381–2. Minor areas: Jones, *Cities* 133.

¹⁰ Price, *Rituals* 59; Sanders (1982) 47, 133.
¹¹ Philostr. *VS* 488; *FLA Hadr.* 1.5. Dio Chrys. XLV.4, with Jones (1975) and Bowersock (1973), (1987).

Pedias and the Phrygian Ti. Iulius Frugi. After the reign of Domitian, Trajan was able to enlist useful men without much regard for senatorial sensibilities. The usefulness of most of his recruits need not be doubted: Arrian, a conscientious administrator and an efficient officer, consul probably in 129 and governor of Cappadocia for six years, as well as archon of Athens, philosopher and man of letters, is a paradigm of the Hadrianic age and of what it achieved in unifying the empire. But King Alexander, of Cappadocian, Armenian and Jewish descent, and his nephew by marriage, C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus, suffect consul in 109, had no known claim to preferment beyond royalty. Philopappus was, however, a friend of Plutarch and archon at Athens; bringing Nemrud Dağ within the city, his eclectic funerary monument (contemptuously alluded to by Pausanias), with its Italian, Commagenian and even Gallic ancestors, is still conspicuous. Even if it is true that Hadrian was to prefer the cultivated urban aristocracy to the descendants of eastern rulers, Philopappus represents two prevailing trends: first, the partnership of culture and administration and so the recognition of Greek men of letters as candidates for the highest positions of government (Arrian is another instance); second, the internationalism of leading circles in the East.¹²

Trajan's reign saw the first senators from mainland Greece: Ti. Claudius Atticus and perhaps L. Staius Aquila, from Athens, and one of Philopappus' Spartan cousins, C. Iulius Eurycles Herculanus. Atticus and Herculanus represented families long prominent in Greek politics: Atticus was descended from the Eucles who had been a leading figure in Augustan Athens and the son of a man who had been prosecuted first under Vespasian and then under Domitian. It was the father's fortune that was in question and it was only in the reign of Nerva that Atticus was safe in disclosing to the Emperor his 'discovery' of a treasure in a house in Athens that he had happened to buy.¹³ The Euryclids of Sparta, which now had close links with the leading family of Athens, had undergone many vicissitudes since their fortunes first rose with those of Octavian and of Sparta as a whole; Trajan can have felt few qualms now in admitting a representative of this turbulent family to the Senate, probably to secure the suffect consulship of 108. The operation of Roman preferences may also be detected in the entry of these men: although Atticus had connections with Corinth, only one Corinthian senator has been suggested, none from Patras; socially such men could not stand comparison with the ancient landed aristocracy of Athens.¹⁴

¹² Philopappus: see Kleiner (1983); Nemrud Dağ: H. A. Thompson in Macready and Thompson (1987) 14. Hadrian's preference: Syme (1982a) 23–4. Stadter (1980) 6 and 11 has Arrian's father a senator and thinks an earlier date possible for the consulship; but see (1982b), esp. 188.

¹³ Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* 1 10–22.

¹⁴ Atticus' estates: Ameling; *Herodes Atticus* 1 34. Prosperity of Sparta: Baladié (1980) 290–5.

But the free states embedded in Achaea, including Athens, which had appointed epimeletes since Julio-Claudian times, Delphi, Sparta, Nicopolis and perhaps Thessaly and Plataea, were a source of concern to Trajan, as they continued to be to Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. He took action, sometime before 107–8. It may have been Sex. Quintilius Valerius Maximus, the ex-praetor from Alexandria Troas, who was sent to check abuses, and he was not the only imperial emissary to be found in Achaea under Trajan.¹⁵

In itself concern need not indicate impoverishment: it was only a year or two before Trajan, on the authority of the Senate, was assigned Pontus-Bithynia and sent the younger Pliny there as his praetorian legate with consular power. Pliny was the formal equal of the annual proconsuls who had been responsible for the province since the beginning of the Principate, but as an ex-consul specially appointed by the emperor, presumably for a three-year period (though he died before completing his second year), to remedy all the abuses that were rampant there, he enjoyed higher prestige and authority.

The problems that Pliny encountered are amply documented in the letters he wrote and are illuminated by the writings of his contemporaries Plutarch and Dio Chrysostom, who had an inside view of his own province but was not treated as an unimpeachable authority by Pliny. The richness of the evidence makes Pliny's governorship and the problems that brought it about a key to understanding Greece and Asia Minor at this time, if the problems that Pliny encountered were typical of the Greek world, or of the empire at large, and if they were on the increase. And they might even lead to a grim view of the Greek city of the age as an unproductive parasite on the countryside.

Certainly Pliny found the city magistrates, his subjects, to be careless over administrative matters as basic as sewage disposal and the scrutiny of a man's qualifications to serve as a public official. In particular they were extravagant with public money, and self-indulgent to the point of corruption and beyond. Cities were spending large sums on *ex gratia* payments to officials and on the travelling expenses of envoys carrying out the 'diplomatic' activities that they had inherited from the Hellenistic age. Notoriously the greatest items of expenditure were for buildings, such as aqueducts and theatres, not all of them ever completed, which offered wide scope for bribery of officials by contractors. Amisus' reluctance to allow Pliny to examine its accounts may have been due to civic pride and the

¹⁵ Athens: Oliver (1973); Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.24, with Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny ad loc.* and, for a list of the free cities, Jones, *Greek City* 129 with n. 63; for doubts on Thessaly and Plataea see Millar (1981) 71 n. 45, discussing Larsen (1937) 447–8, who bases himself on a list of cities dealt with by Hadrian's corrector Pactumeius Clemens, *NTH* no. 228. For Avidius Nigrinus and L. Aemilius Iuncus, see Eck, *Senatoren* 258.

desire to preserve legal rights, but there could have been individuals with reason to fear examination.

Behind the high expenditure lay ambition, the desire for position that ancients could regard as one of the three springs of human action, strong as fear and greed: first, and essentially, the ambition of individuals within the *poleis*, some of whom had so identified themselves with their city that they could claim, like Iulius Piso of Amisus, to have ruined themselves in its service; then, the rivalry of one *polis* with others, especially its close neighbours, which involved individuals in two ways: primarily by way of their own pride in their cities, secondarily through rivalry with their peers, and the pressure on each that came from the masses behind them not to let their city slip – their own prestige within the city depended on it. Inter-city rivalry is much to the fore in the letters from Bithynia, and so are splits within the cities, rivalry between powerful individuals and class strife.

Eager as Trajan and Pliny were to find solutions to individual problems, they could not admit, as Plutarch and Dio Chrysostom could, that intervention, the very existence of the ruling power, contributed to them, since every appeal to the superior authority of the governor, even more to that of the emperor, weakened city autonomy. For Rome, tranquillity and prosperity in the cities were desirable in themselves, but also vital to the financial and political interests of the ruling power which wanted to deal with stable and familiar, and hence trustworthy, governments. In Bithynia, Pompey's regulation of the province, the *Lex Pompeia*, had already created a constitutional pattern that owed something to Rome: members of city councils were in for life, like Roman senators, and not responsible to the electorate. Democracy was discouraged, and Trajan told Pliny (what he and the leading men who had consulted him on the subject wanted to hear) that it was better for the under-age sons of the existing aristocracy to be admitted to city councils, if there were not enough men of an age to serve, than to allow in members of the *plebs*. Sometimes Trajan was more cautious than his man on the spot: in Nicomedia, after a fire, Pliny was not permitted to allow a fire-brigade such as he must have known from Italy, Narbonensis and the Danubian provinces, however moderate in numbers (150 men) and carefully controlled: it would inevitably turn into a subversive political club; the whole province, particularly Nicaea and Nicomedia, had been harassed by them.

These problems are important, firstly because they can be paralleled from other parts of the empire and at different times. The Greek city had a common origin and ideology, a geographical limit rarely passed, and a common experience of Hellenistic monarchs and Rome. Inefficiency over money and corruption can be documented from Cicero's letters to his brother Quintus, governor of Asia, and his own from Cilicia, dating from the middle of the first century B.C.; the *ex gratia* payments to officials had

been banned twenty years before he went to Bithynia, and embassies to Rome were one of the political activities that Plutarch of Chaeronea, writing to a friend in Sardes, cites as really demanding outlets for politicians. High expenditure on building and failure to complete can be inferred from other parts of the empire, and rulings on the subject have a substantial section of the *Digest* devoted to them. Costs of a festival honouring Antoninus Pius' birthday were a source of anxiety at Ephesus and the administration of funds entrusted to the cities has produced a whole dossier of appeals to governor and *princeps*. Social unrest and Roman repression of it can be inferred from the fears of the *grammateus* of Ephesus at the time of Paul's visit and the trouble it caused, and Smyrna is another instance of a city that was not allowed a fire-brigade. As to inter-city rivalry, the speeches of Dio Chrysostom provide a convincing list of participants, including some of the very Bithynian cities that Pliny visited; but perhaps the most striking instance is that of Athens and Megara, who, when the sophist Marcus of Byzantium arrived in Megara, were keeping up their feud just as if the famous Megarian decree had just been passed, so that the Athenians were being firmly excluded from the local games.¹⁶

Not only can we document the problems from West as well as East in the empire, but they were persistent. The narrow city patriotism and hostile attitude to neighbours, which had begun in mainland Greece as part of the struggle for enough land to support the growing population of cities caught in poor terrain between mountains and sea, became part of the heritage of the *polis* and continued as a genuine survival of the same problems, but also, in the richer terrain of Asia Minor and elsewhere, as an obligatory manifestation of city life. It often continued as a struggle over boundaries, sometimes as rivalry over status. The persistence of the feuds of Trajan's time is illustrated in Bithynia itself: in the civil war of 193 the Nicomedians took the side of Septimius Severus, so the Nicaeans (ever losers) chose to back Pescennius Niger. For them Roman civil war was a means of adjusting their own relationship – although the outcome would depend solely on a Roman victory to which their own contribution would be negligible. That had long been the case, perhaps decisively so since the war against Perseus. The cities were still at loggerheads in 451, when Nicomedia, the ecclesiastical metropolis of Bithynia, was in dispute with Nicaea, which had originally been only a suffragan bishopric of Nicomedia and had been raised to metropolitan status by Valentinian and Valens. Now Nicaea was claiming to be an effective metropolis, with suffragan bishoprics of her own.¹⁷

But there was another memorable theme in Greek history: the struggles

¹⁶ Cic. *Att.* vi.2.5; *QFr.* i.1.15; *Flac.* 9.20; *Fam.* iii.8.2. ff.; 10.6; *Flac.* 9.20; Isthmians: Philostr. *VS* 529; embassies: Plut. *Praec. Rei publ. ger.* 9, 805 A-B; promises: *Dig.* L. 12; Paul: Acts 19: 23–41; Ephesus: Robert (1977); guarantees: Oliver (1953) 963–80 and Herrmann (1980) 339–56; Smyrna: Jones, *Greek City* 215.

¹⁷ *Acta Conc. Oec.* ii.1.416–21, with Jones (1964) II 882–3.

of Greeks united against Persia and Macedon, the barbarians, could also be invoked, especially when dealing with Rome, plausibly only the last and greatest threat to Greek freedom. Plutarch begged his contemporaries to leave talk of Marathon and Plataea to the rhetorical schools; times had changed, and Roman boots could be seen above the platform on which the Greek politician was making his speech.¹⁸ The Romans could not, and did not seriously try to, detach the loyalty of the Greeks from their individual cities or their Hellenism and harness it to the empire. The imperial cult attracted loyalty, but it was focused on an individual and his family and only incidentally on Rome.

In Roman eyes these were 'Greek foibles' (so Dio Chrysostom says, and he is borne out by the tone of Trajan's letter about the Bithynians and their passion for buildings). They are pitiable, or a nuisance. Seen from a different perspective, that of Aelius Aristides, lauding Rome in the peaceful reign of Antoninus Pius, it was one of Rome's achievements that the cities had given up all other forms of rivalry in favour of self-adornment. Behind this complacent and superior attitude the Romans concealed an *arcanum imperii*: the running of the empire depended on the local units of which it was made up: taxation, road maintenance, the provision of animals and carriages for the public post, the supply of recruits of the army, public security and petty justice. Aelius Aristides was right to praise Rome for the encouragement that she gave cities old and new. It pleased everyone: certainly the cities; the emperors who were responsible for the improvements and so acquired the honour and immortality of founders; finally the emperors again and Romans in general for whom their work was being done by the cities – or, as Aristides bluntly put it, by the powerful men who held the cities for her.¹⁹ Despite chronic and widespread problems, the continued liveliness of the city was the prime consideration. This may help to explain why Trajan's solutions to some of the problems referred to him by Pliny were sometimes more attentive to local laws and customs than those that Pliny had proposed. A balance had to be struck between security for Rome and enough autonomy for the cities to make politics worthwhile. In Pliny's Bithynia there is no sure sign of a falling-off in interest. Men were keen to enter politics. Loss of interest would depend on the factors operating in different communities: wealth, the strength of the *polis* tradition, and its strength in neighbouring cities.²⁰

But the sending to Bithynia of Pliny and another conscientious administrator, Cornutus Tertullus of Perge (but without consular power), and

¹⁸ For the interpretation, see Oliver (1953) 958 n. 27.

¹⁹ Foibles: Dio Chrys. xxxviii.38; beautification: Ael. Arist. *Ad Roman* 97; encouragement: 94; strong men: 64.

²⁰ On Pliny, *Ep.* x.1 13, see Sherwin-White's *Letters of Pliny* and the *O.C.T.* edition of R. A. B. Mynors, emending the MS 'inviti' to 'invitati'; but there is dissent: Bowersock (1965) 148 n. 3; cf. Garnsey (1974) 232.

the appearance under Hadrian of a third legate, C. Iulius Severus of Ancyra, require explanation. Many solutions have been canvassed, some dramatic (he was sent to prepare the province for the Parthian War),²¹ but it is a reasonable view that he was appointed primarily because his predecessors had failed in their duty. They were not men who normally might expect to reach the consulship. Not only the proconsul Iulius Bassus but also Varenus had recently been condemned for extortion (Pliny appeared for the defence). Trajan might conclude that the province had not been governed by men of the right calibre. But there were special conditions that may have aggravated problems glimpsed elsewhere in the empire: the very enrichment of the province that was made possible as Balkans and eastern *limes* were developed. The increasingly important route through northern Asia Minor by way of Byzantium, Nicomedia, Nicaea, Juliopolis, Ancyra, Archelais Colonia and Tyana was to be the one used by troops of the second and third centuries.²² Their passage certainly did not enrich the areas on the route, but the presence of stationary troops was another matter and trade used the routes that Trajan kept in repair for state purposes. West of the peninsula, the activities of merchants from Asia Minor in the Balkans are well illustrated by epigraphic evidence. Social change would follow at a more rapid pace than elsewhere, rivalries would become fiercer as some men failed in the struggle. The increase of activity in Bithynia and its connection with the Balkans may be illustrated from Pliny's letters, which give evidence of growing traffic through the province: Byzantium, which also asked Pliny to sanction the sending of a delegation to the governor of Moesia, was overburdened by the demands of travellers, Nicomedia had a *stationarius* in Pliny's time, and he asked for one to be sent as well to little Juliopolis on the borders of Bithynia and Galatia.

The cities do not come well out of Pliny's *Letters* or Dio's speeches. A defence of their inherited and unreflectingly accepted ethos is in place. They were class-ridden and their self-seeking ruling circles patronized and despised the lower orders. But much of what the upper class provided in return for position was given to the city as a whole and was as beautiful as they knew how to make it and as they could afford it to be. The investment still pays off as tourists flock to the sites such as Ephesus that bear witness to the 'euergetism' that was coming to its height. At Ephesus Polemaeanus began a magnificent library, completed by his son Aquila. It was a single hall, eastward-facing for the benefit of early risers, 15 metres high, with niches for books and galleries on three stories. Polemaeanus' sarcophagus was placed underneath the apse, a rare example of a benefactor being

²¹ See Lepper (1948) 165–70; Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 648–9.

²² See the *Antonine Itinerary*; Mitchell (1983) 131–45; Stoian (1962) 40 ff.; for the wealth of Bithynia, see Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 527.

buried within the walls of his city.²³ Material remains aside, the cultural achievement of Asia Minor, and to a lesser extent, of mainland Greece, under the Principate of the late first and second centuries A.D. was not negligible. Plutarch, whose many Greek and Roman friends included members of the leading benefactor family of Thespieae, was one of the earliest writers of this renaissance. Oratory bloomed showily in the performance of the second-century sophists (the word is used neutrally) as a fashionable form of literature and an outlet for politicians. Pergamum was a magnificently appointed centre of medical practice, appropriately the birthplace in 129 of the great Galen. Prusa, Nicomedia, Magnesia ad Sipylum, even Samosata have illustrious writers to show in Dio Chrysostom, Arrian, Pausanias and Lucian; a man from Aspendus in Pamphylia took a prize for Tragedy at a competition in second-century Boeotia, Lycaonia could display Greek culture, boys from Thrace and Pontus were to throng the rhetorical schools of Athens, and Cappadocia had its sophist in Marcus Acilius Diodotus of Caesarea Mazaca.²⁴

If the Romans erred on the side of caution, as Trajan may have done over the fire-brigade, that was because of pressure on the central government: above all to ensure the regular payment of taxes in sufficient quantities to keep the vital army going. Here was a serious and recurrent problem. Trajan's interventions in Achaea and Bithynia must be seen in the context of the institution of *curatores civitatis* who appear sporadically in the provinces, notably in Asia, from the time of Domitian onwards.

When Trajan's troops passed through Asia Minor on their way to the Parthian War, they wintered at Ancyra (A.D. 113–14) and probably marched from there to Satala and the rendezvous with Trajan. They were entertained during their stay by the wealthy C. Iulius Severus. There was plenty of spare fat in the economy. And although Trajan's costly Parthian War achieved no lasting success it could be presented as a return to the more aggressive policies of Mark Antony and Nero (in 62–3), both noted philhellenes. Once again the Greeks were involved in a western crusade against, if not Persians, at least Parthians.

In Roman governmental circles outside the court, where Greek-speakers, as well as teaching future emperors, had long held responsible posts and enjoyed great influence, there was increasing appreciation even among the western intelligentsia of Rome's debt to Greece, as Pliny's letter to the *corrector* of Achaea attests; his own governorship and that of Tacitus in Asia, 112–13, the year Hadrian was archon at Athens, may have been exceptionally fortunate for their subjects, but these literary men are tokens of a

²³ Bean (1966) 175.

²⁴ Plutarch and Thespieae: Jones (1970) 248; oratory: Bowie (1982); Pergamum: Habicht (1969) 15–18; Aspendus: Jameson (1971) 27; Lycaonia: Robert (1940–65) XIII 52–4; Thrace, Pontus and Cappadocia: Philostr. *VS* 553.

diminution of imperial arrogance best illustrated from the early career of a future emperor: no governor of the first century B.C. or A.D. would have put up with being treated as the proconsul of Asia, later Antoninus Pius, is said to have been by the sophist Antonius Polemo.²⁵

III. PHILHELLENE EMPERORS: HADRIAN, ATHENS AND THE PANHELLENION

Hadrian on his travels did not neglect military matters but in Greece and even in Asia Minor, in spite of the very large number of milestones bearing his name, they were not his primary interest. The bearded intellectual, architect, philosopher and poet (to be clean-shaven in the Greek East at the end of the first century A.D. had been to show oneself an imitator of the Romans) was a product of and a leading contributor to an age of prosperity, in which archaism in literature and art was the vogue (at Sparta it predictably took the form of a return to the old system of education). Attention focused on the achievement of classical Greece, so that individuals are found claiming descent from Themistocles, Alcibiades (a Samian!), Miltiades and Pericles, while cities in the interior of Anatolia discovered impeccably Greek, even Spartan, founders. It is no surprise that Hadrian confirmed the privileges granted the Sacred Society of Worldwide Travelling, Victorious in Sacred Games, Gold-crowned Dionysiac Artists, their seating precedence, exemption from military service, immunity, taxation and billeting privileges, and exemption from the death penalty, nor that the Travelling Athletes took his name: the services of the guilds were in demand among Greek communities worldwide as festivals multiplied.²⁶

The literary sources for Hadrian's tours are inadequate and honours were showered on him whether he acted in person or at some distance: 'You may see monuments of his journeys set up in city after city of Asia and Europe.' But the dates of his visits to Athens as emperor are virtually certain, with the first becoming the beginning of a new era for the city: 124–5, 128–9 and 131–2.²⁷

The favours that Hadrian conferred were clearly manifold; everything that an emperor could do Hadrian was close enough to be asked to

²⁵ Severus: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 215. Influence: Bowersock (1965) 30–1; Millar, 83; Bowie (1982) 42, 44–5; Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* 1 71–2. Tacitus: Magie (1950) II 1442 n. 33; Syme, *Tacitus* II 664–5; Eck, *Senatoren* 176 and (1982) 353; Hadrian: Phlegon, *Mir.* 25=F. Jacoby, *FGrH* IIB. 1179; Polemo: Philostr. *VS* 542–4; Habicht (1985) 129.

²⁶ Milestones: French (1980) facing 720; beards: Dio Chrys. xxxvi.17; Habicht (1985) 127, citing V. Ehrenberg, *RE* IIIA (1929) 1450–3 for Sparta; Robert (1940–65) VIII 90–1; Dionysiac Artists' privileges: *BGU* IV 1074, *POxy* xxvii 2476, *POxyHels.* 25; cf. Strabo. 14 p. 643.

²⁷ For Hadrian's journeys see now Halfmann, *Itinera* 188–210 (monuments: Fronto, 206N); for Athens Follet (1976) 107–16, with bibliography 108; era: Follet (1976) 110–11, citing Smallwood, *NTH* 486; Geagan (1979) 389–99 (era 392).

perform, or it might occur to him to do, whether for communities or for individuals. There were material benefits. North-west Asia Minor had been devastated by an earthquake in 120, and Hadrian constructed a temple building at Cyzicus which was one of the wonders of the world. Pergamum benefited from its connection with him, and he counted on Ephesus responding to a request that it should admit a protégé, his ship's captain, to its council. It might be the restoration after disturbances, as of Salamis in Cyprus after the Jewish revolt, or the resolution of difficult internal disputes of long standing, such as he finally solved at Aezani in Phrygia, where plots of land belonging to the temple of Zeus Aezanensis were being held by possessors who were paying no rent, or the settlement of disputes between cities, or their further advancement in status.²⁸

The restoration of old cities and the foundation of new by the promotion of village or tribal communities, a mere visit or some other sign of favour were all occasions for conferment of a title that embodied the emperor's name. Hadrianothrae, 'Hadrian's Hunts' in eastern Mysia, where city life developed late, belongs to the second category, like the creation of Hadriani-by-Olympus from the Hellespontii in the Caicus valley east of Pergamum and Hadrianeia from the Abretteni; Hadrianopolis Thymbrium in Philomelium near Phrygia Paroreius would have been a re-foundation; what did he do for Hadrianopolis in Bithynia? Aezani, which probably did not see Hadrian in person, did not take his name but called one of its tribes after him, as did Athens.

In Greece proper, where he was 'founder' in a number of small cities, and 'Restitutor Achaeae', the Megarians were the only people, said Pausanias, that Hadrian was unable to make flourish. He did rebuild the temple of Apollo there, establishing a guild of Hadrianidae for its maintenance and laying down their code of conduct, and he broadened the highway that ran from Megara to Corinth. In return this city too named a tribe after him. Besides Athens and Megara he knew Sparta and Mantinea, to which he restored the city's original name and where he composed an epitaph for the grave of Epaminondas and rebuilt the shrine of Poseidon. At Argos he added a horse race to the winter Nemean festival and gave an aqueduct. In central Greece he contributed to efforts to stop the flooding of Lake Copais and was greeted by the Hellenes at Plataea – an organization foreshadowing the Panhellenion – but his interest focused on Delphi, where the Amphictyons passed a decree in his honour, the incumbent priest and secretary being Plutarch; he consulted the oracle (about Homer's parentage) and received a reply.²⁹

²⁸ Honours paid Hadrian by cities in Asia (cult or nomenclature) are listed by Le Glay (1976) 357–64. Reconstruction at Nicomedia: L. Robert, *BCH* 102 (1978) 396–8.

²⁹ Argos: see S. Walker in Macready and Thompson (1987) 64; central Greece: Fossey (1979) 583; *SEG* xxxii 460–3.

There was life, too, in the mysteries at Eleusis. Hadrian was initiated into both grades, and in return the initiate rebuilt the bridge over the Cephissus. The high prestige enjoyed by the shrine and the spiritual status it could confer is shown by the fact that Hadrian's Antonine successors (except Pius) were initiated.³⁰

The verses of the prophetess spoke of Hadrian as showering endless benefits on all cities, but especially upon those of 'famous Cecropia'. In doing so he was following imperial and private examples, most recently that of Philopappus and the T. Flavius Pantaenus who in 100–2 dedicated his Library to Athena Polias and Trajan.³¹ Athens deserves special attention, as it received Hadrian's, to such a degree that mere material benefaction merged into promotion at the highest level of the city's moral, political and intellectual welfare. Hadrian was to hold the archonship for a second time, as emperor, as Domitian had before him, the first Roman emperor in office to do so, and preside at the Dionysia of 125 in native dress. Even at Athens complete certainty as to the timing and distribution of his benefactions between the visits has not been attained, and they are best dealt with by category.

The significance of Hadrian's minor benefactions, of which the aqueduct bringing water from Mt Parnes, to be completed by his successor, the temple of Hera and the gymnasium are examples, should not be overlooked, but three achievements in particular will have meant most to the city – and the last of them to the Greek world at large: besides reforming procedure for appeal to the emperor, Hadrian provided Athens with a revised code of laws, completed and dedicated the temple of Olympian Zeus (along with an altar to himself), and established the Panhellenion, which was inaugurated in 131–2, perhaps after seven years' work.³²

It is not clear whether some measures belonged strictly speaking to the law code or not, but it had constitutional elements, such as the reduction of the Council from one of six to one of five hundred (actually 520), along with the concomitant creation of the new tribe, and an alteration in the relation of Council and Areopagus, which was being assimilated to the role of a western *ordo decurionum*. After the reform, the Areopagus or the Council is found in a significant solecism, the issuing of *psephismata*, formerly the prerogative of the People.³³ Hadrian's code also included a ban on tax-farming by members of the Council, and one section seems to have

³⁰ Geagan (1979) 394 (second visit, 128); successors: Graindor (1934) 5–6; Commodus: Mylonas (1961) 233. ³¹ Prophetess: Paus. I.3.2; Pantaenus: *IG IV/III* 2.2017.

³² Appeal: Oliver (1970b); code: Euseb.-Jerome, A.D. 121/2; see Follet (1976) 116 n. 2; cf. Geagan (1979) 392–4; Zeus: Dio LXIX.16.1–2; *HA Hadr.* 13.1, suggesting that a beginning was made during the first stay and the works completed during the second; Kokkos (1970) 154–7; *IG IV²* 384, shows the dedication taking place in 131–2; Panhellenion: Follet (1976) 108, 115, 125–35; Graindor (1934) 52–3.

³³ Constitutional changes: Follet (1976) 116–25, dating Hadrianis (121) to A.D. 121/2 or 124/5; see Geagan (1979) 392 dating to 126/7; *psephismata*: Follet (1976) 123–4.

laid it down that farmers must sell one-third of their olive oil on the home market at the current home-market rate. Hadrian was both safeguarding public supplies and laying claim to a place in the city's history comparable with that of Dracon and Solon, who had also enacted legislation about oil. (A letter on a related subject regulated the sale of fish at Eleusis, but its place in the code is not assured.) The same is true of the remaining financial reorganization, including the law on debtors who failed to meet their obligations. Hadrian further safeguarded revenue by making over the entire island of Cephallenia to Athens, and food-supplies by an annual grant of grain.³⁴

Hadrian's completion of the temple of Olympian Zeus (the workmanship of the chryselephantine cult statue was good, considering its size, reports Pausanias)³⁵ showed him surpassing Peisistratus, who had begun the project, and Antiochus IV Epiphanes, who had taken it up again three centuries before; a new quarter, named Hadrianopolis, was divided from the old city by the arch built in the emperor's honour that still stands by the site of the temple of Olympian Zeus; in the view of the dedicators, he was a new founder, a second Theseus. The prestige as well as the prosperity of the city were enhanced by three new sacred festivals that Hadrian founded to match the Panathenaic, now also sacred and eiselastic: one associated with the cult of Olympian Zeus, the other named after himself, the Hadrianeia, and the third connected with the Panhellenion. An influx of competitors and spectators could now be expected every year.

The views that Hadrian and the Greeks took of his activities could be complex, and the two sets of conceptions might not coincide. They may be examined in connection with Hadrian's most ambitious project in Athens, the Panhellenion. The nature and purpose of the organization remain enigmatic, but there can be no doubt of the assessment made of the Panhellenion as a product of the interplay of culture and politics that was to be characteristic of the second century.³⁶

As to the material side of the project, there was a temple of Panhellenian Zeus, a sanctuary of all the gods, a magnificent library modelled on the temple of Pax at Rome,³⁷ decorated with a gilded roof and alabaster, a basilica known as the Panhellenion, and a gymnasium. The constitution is also clear: the leading official, the archon, held office for four years, thus presiding over one celebration of the games (although there was a separate priest of Hadrian Panhellenius and an agonothete) and providing continuity; for membership of the Synedrion lasted for one year only, cities sending ex-magistrates to represent them, two for example from Cyrene,

³⁴ Oil: Smallwood, *NTH* no. 443, with AJ 90 and Oliver (1953) 960–3; Follet (1976) 117; fish: AJ 91, Follet (1976) 117 n. 6 (bibliography). ³⁵ Paus. 1.18.6; Geagan (1979) 398.

³⁶ The account that follows is particularly indebted to Spawforth and Walker (1985) 78–104.

³⁷ H. A. Thompson in Macready and Thompson (1987) 10.

perhaps more than two from Sparta. That meant the honour of attending could be spread among a wider group of leading men in each city (although the representatives coming from the Athenian Areopagus were required to possess 'good', that is to say free, birth for three generations, and Spawforth and Walker have found that while the high officials of the organization were Roman citizens, even kinsmen of senators and knights, fewer than half the Synedrion members were *cives*, nor was the organization dominated by intellectuals. Culture, *paideia*, was important, but so were qualities of character, *arete* and *epiikeia*, and M. Ulpius Appuleius Eurycles of Aezani thought it worth obtaining testimonials as to these three qualities from the Synedrion (to be approved by Pius himself).³⁸ It conferred high prestige to hold official posts in the organization: election could be challenged.

The reach of the Panhellenion was wide, but not coextensive with Hellenism, for its main strength lay in the Aegean: of the fifty-four inscriptions connected with it, seven have been found in Asia Minor, one in Italy and one in Cyrenaica: cities and *ethne*, that is *koima*, of Achaeans, Boeotians, Phocians, Macedonians, Thessalians, Thracians, Cretans, Cyrenaicans and Asia were represented, but some very prominent cities are not known to have been members: Pergamum, Ephesus and Smyrna. Those who wished to join were vetted by the existing members of the Synedrion. The criteria for admission included Greek ancestry (as with Cyrene) and good relations with the suzerain (Magnesia was a colony of Thessalian Magnesia and had fought alongside Ionians, Dorians and Aeolians): the three cities named above should have had no difficulty, and the Corinthian representation, in spite of their Roman names, which showed them to be citizens of a Roman colony, were at least the heirs of a great Greek city; but Sardes was blatantly Lydian in origin and there were some members, such as Aezani and Cibyra, which would have had to invent their Greek origins, as other cities of Asia Minor were to do:³⁹ Cibyra claimed to be a Spartan colony, yet related to Athens, Aezani to have been founded from Arcadia. Besides being responsible for the holding of the festival, building and maintaining its own premises, the organization had funds, presumably on a foundation provided by Hadrian, to make grants to the Athenian ephebes and to put up dedications, for the first fruits of Demeter at Eleusis, to the Emperor and others. Its moral weight must have been considerable: it was able to undertake arbitration between a private citizen of Athens and the administrator of the affairs of its great man, Herodes Atticus, a purely Athenian transaction; how the question of the position of Christians in the city of Sardes arose under Antoninus Pius is unclear.⁴⁰

³⁸ *OGIS* 504–7.

³⁹ Oliver (1951) on *IG* II/III² 1091; Robert (1938–84) 1972, 397 no. 139, cf. 1966 no. 144.

⁴⁰ Barnes (1968) 37–8; Spawforth and Walker (1985) 83–4.

The Panhellenion is the most significant benefaction of Hadrian to Athens and the most difficult to interpret. For that archaizing age, classical Athens, the oldest of Greek cities, especially perhaps in her role of champion against the Persians (only fourteen years elapsed between the end of Trajan's war against Parthia and the inauguration of the Panhellenion), represented the greatest achievements of Greece and was to be honoured above more successful rivals in wealthy Asia Minor.⁴¹ Those achievements could now be crowned by a beneficent emperor, and the cultural unity of Greece become a reality at Athens, crystallized in the new organization as it had never been before. That would be the ideal. For Athens there was prestige, the new buildings, and the expenditure of the representatives from abroad (it was at Athens that Thyatira and Synnada, which grotesquely claimed to be a joint foundation of Athens and Sparta, erected documents in Hadrian's honour);⁴² in complying with the ideal member states would feel that they were taking part in something that transcended local politics and the activities of *koina*. Greek opinion would make itself known at the highest level and have the ear of the emperor. The factors involved were practical, cultural and ideological; for the individuals involved, from top to bottom, personal ambition was strong. The Panhellenion has judiciously been presented as 'an attempt to divert Greek national feeling into cultural and ceremonial channels, yoking it to the imperial system more effectively than the sometimes disaffected and quarrelsome provincial *koina* had done'.⁴³

Desire for immortality was a powerful spur to an emperor in dealing with cities; in mainland Greece he would wish in particular to be a restorer of ancient glories. But there were cities that hardly needed help: what Hadrian did for them was rather a tribute to their present greatness, as at Ephesus. There he instituted a new quinquennial festival called the Hadrianeia Olympia and Mysteries along the lines of those at Eleusis. This aspect of imperial activity was as important as material benefactions. It showed itself in particular by the holding, even in absence, of local magistracies, such as the archonship at Athens, and, where religion was of prime significance, religious posts, as at Didyma, where both Trajan and Hadrian held the offices of *prophetes* and *stephanephorus*.⁴⁴

The rivalry that Plutarch, Dio of Prusa and Aelius Aristides noted between the cities was only lightly muffled by the Panhellenion, although its foundation encouraged diplomatic activity and developed genuine or fictitious kinships. In the test of the civil war that followed the death of Commodus, domestic interests took first place, and the last foreign official recorded belongs at latest to 217. But there were other influences for unity.

⁴¹ Cf. Oliver (1951) 31; Habicht (1985) 108; see S. Walker in Macready and Thompson (1987) 62.

⁴² Oliver (1941) 363–8; Spawforth and Walker (1986) 89. ⁴³ Sheppard (1984–6) 239.

⁴⁴ Spawforth and Walker (1985) 85; 76; (1986) 88–96; Herodian III.2.7–8.

First economic. Mutual dependence was recognized by issues of coins commemorating *Homonoia* (Concord). A place with commercial interests like Hierapolis, where the president of the 'most august guild of the wool-washers' might fill the highest city posts, could have ties with as many as eight other cities. They might even be willing to use common dies for their coins.⁴⁵

Then there were the sophists, although as teachers they relied heavily on themes from the hey-day of the *polis*. The inaugural speech at the Panhellenion was given by Antonius Polemo, descendant of Antony's client ruler in Pontus, who comes early in Philostratus' list of leading sophists. The sophists were members of the highest class in the cities, able to devote years to training,⁴⁶ and their family connections reached beyond one city or one province. So of course did those of most of the leading families of Greece and Asia Minor: the genealogy of the senator C. Iulius Severus of Ancyra specifically records his descent from kings and tetrarchs and his cousinship with four consulars and a number of senators. But the education of the sophists demanded that they should travel to Athens, Smyrna, Ephesus, Rome or wherever teachers and models were to be found. Their horizons would continue to be widened as they embarked on their careers, demonstrating their skills all over the Greek-speaking world and before emperors and their families. They could see things from the point of view of rulers and ruled, as Dio Chrysostom did, and know that there was reputation both in taking a strong line with flighty cities and in defending their interests at court, like Scopelian, and Aristides in 178 after the Smyrna earthquake.⁴⁷ For official position it was best to combine membership of the Senate with the practice of eloquence, as Herodes Atticus did, or an imperial post such as *ab epistulis graecis*, in which sophists are found under Marcus. There were risks also, as Dio and Herodes Atticus discovered, from opponents at home, and even Aristides, who may have aspired to membership of the Senate, found himself having to evade the imposition of liturgies.⁴⁸ But as a career, it offered one of the most satisfying outlets to would-be politicians.

The reign of Hadrian saw rich developments elsewhere, not necessarily prompted or paid for by him, but in his spirit. At Pergamum the shrine of Asclepius was reconstructed. The large square which had had the temple within it was rebuilt to be surrounded by halls with a theatre, propylon and temple copied from the Pantheon in Rome.⁴⁹ Only one or two individual patrons can be mentioned here: in Nacolea, Asia, a freedman of Hadrian's,

⁴⁵ Jones, *Cities* 73; Robert (1962) 188–91; C. Cichorius in Humann (1898) 41.

⁴⁶ Bowie (1982) 30. Dio used the term to belittle; it must be applied with caution; Jones (1974) 13.

⁴⁷ Dio LXXII.32.2; Ael. Arist. 19K=41D. ⁴⁸ Syme (1982a) 16; Bowie (1982) 31.

⁴⁹ Habicht (1985) 44; (1969) 10–11.

P. Aelius Onesimus, provided what was probably his native city with 200,000 HS for grain, at Plataea and Sparta a citizen of Synnada, Ti. Claudius Attalus Andragathus, came forward as benefactor. Two men far outstrip these, even though they in turn are left behind by Herodes Atticus; both are from Anatolia. One was Vibius Salutaris of Ephesus, the other Opramoas of Rhodiapolis, who died in the middle of the century; he was the benefactor of thirty cities in Lycia and elsewhere and had made donations of 2.5 million sesterces – matching the acts of senators and *equites*, the great inscription in his honour significantly points out; Opramoas was not even a Roman citizen: Lycia was enough for him; and even if Opramoas' gifts could not be equalled, there were others in Lycia whose substantial benefactions were done corresponding honour.⁵⁰

IV. THE ANTONINES: A MARRED PROSPERITY

The reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius saw a little more of the division of provinces already mentioned. Out of Achaea the province of Epirus was cut, also to comprise Acarnania, Amphilochia, Phocis and parts of Trachis, so that the borders of Achaea were at Thermopylae and the Achelous; Thessaly was assigned to Macedon. In Asia Minor the size of Cappadocia was reduced by the creation of the 'Triple Eparchy' consisting of southern ('Antiochian') Lycaonia, Isauria and Cilicia; Lycaonia was organized into a separate league with Laranda as its metropolis.⁵¹

Hadrian set his successors and private individuals high standards of generosity. Antoninus Pius, the former proconsul of Asia, was not an active philhellene, was sarcastic about the claims of philosophers to immunity from liturgies, and did not travel the empire; but he established a chair of rhetoric at Athens, perhaps one of grammar. In Marcus Aurelius the Greeks acquired a philosopher-king. Like Hadrian an initiate at Eleusis, he paid for the reconstruction of the sanctuary there and established four chairs of philosophy (A.D. 174) and a second in rhetoric (176).⁵²

It is not surprising to find the greatest private practitioner of euergetism in Hadrian's favourite city, his gifts concentrated on Athenian needs and the great cultural centres of old Greece, Olympia, Delphi and Corinth. The wealth of the family could now safely be used to the common benefit of donor and city. Herodes Atticus' father had already spent 4 million HS on an aqueduct for Troy and regularly bestowed money for sacrificial wine and meat on all Athenians. Herodes himself, in addition to benefactions elsewhere in Greece, Epirus and Italy, including a theatre at Corinth and an

⁵⁰ AJ 71; *I GR* III 739. ⁵¹ Ptol. III.12–14, with Cherf (1987); Jones, *Cities* 133, 135.

⁵² Philosophers: *Dig.* XXVII.1.6.7; Dio LXXII.31.3, under 176.

aqueduct issuing in a brash nymphaeum at Olympia, gave an Odeion on the south slope of the Acropolis and a stadium wonderfully decorated in white marble in the archaizing style of the age.⁵³

The ascendancy of Herodes Atticus and his like illustrates the direction that society was taking in Greece and Asia Minor (and all over the Roman world) in the second century: more sharply than before in the direction of timocracy and the end of popular participation. The qualifications for taking part in political life at Athens in the later second century have been compared with criteria in force in about 470 B.C. But timocracy had its drawbacks: restricting popular participation was one thing, but the results of status dissonance – wealth accruing to the freedmen of Roman citizens – had to be guarded against. By 165 their sons were rising, by way of the archonship, to the Areopagus, Lucian's *Assembly of the Gods*. With a view to re-establishing Athens' grandeur (*semnotes*), Marcus and Verus reimposed the 'trigonia' rule, requiring freeborn ancestry for three generations, which resulted in the expulsion of ineligible persons, and led to years of *anarchia*, as in 167–8 and 169–70; in the end Marcus had to content himself with insisting that a member of the Council of 500 must be free-born, the existing Areopagite's father be 'well-born', while future entrants must have both parents free-born; henceforward it was only ex-Areopagites who were candidates for the Panhellenion who must satisfy the 'three-generation rule'. The foundation of the Gerousia, probably in consequence of the visit of Marcus and Commodus in the autumn of 176, has been interpreted as a means of providing access to the wealth of the less well-born.⁵⁴

The predominance of Herodes was not unchallenged. He laid himself open to criticism from his fellow-citizens by depriving them of part of his father's legacy, and deducting from it any debts owing to the estate. So he gave a rival, Ti. Claudius Lysiades, the member of another family dominant in the oligarchy, the opportunity of taking over the high priesthood of the Augusti which had also belonged to Herodes' father; it was only after many benefactions, when the priesthood fell vacant again (by 165–6), that Herodes secured it for himself. Litigation between the factions culminated in an attack by Ti. Claudius Demonstratus and two allies on Herodes' ascendancy, in particular over the attempt of the Daduchus Aelius Dionysius to secure further advancement without surrendering his priesthood. The troubles were not solved by the activities of Marcus Aurelius' consular *correctores* the Quintilii; they were ended only by interventions on the part of Marcus himself, first at a trial conducted at Sirmium in about 174, then by

⁵³ Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* 1 68–70 and 84–95; Olympia: S. Walker in Macready and Thompson (1987) 61–2 ('post-modern').

⁵⁴ M. Aurelius' rulings: Oliver (1970c); Jones (1971) 161–83; Williams (1975) 37–56; Follet (1979); Geagan (1979) 403. Gerousia: Follet (1976) 140–1.

letter.⁵⁵ Herodes' opponents were well-born and talented, but in their aid they enlisted the people. Herodes' failure to satisfy his fellow-countrymen may not all have been due to his own faults or the alleged misbehaviour of his freedmen. As they came to be more and more excluded from what decision-making remained in a Greek city, the populace may in return have become more critical of powerful men.

Similar changes are documented elsewhere, inevitably when most decisions entailed personal expenditure, and they seem to be widespread. The decline of active service as a criterion for high position, in comparison with wealth, is shown alike by the admission of women to office, particularly the gymnasiarchy, in some cities of Asia Minor, especially in Caria, Pamphylia and Pisidia, and by the development of positions held for life, such as the posts in the gymnasium at Athens noticed by Follet as a sign of the growth of the curial class there. It is not merely a question of exclusion of 'plebeians' from city councils, of the introduction of *timetae* and life-membership of councils, such as we have noted in Bithynia, even of the complete transfer of political initiative to magistrates and council, shown by the formulation or addressing of documents, the assembly a mere rubber stamp, as at Ephesus in 129 when Hadrian requested the election of his ship's captain. There might be a fee for full actual citizenship, or a limitation on membership of the assembly, as seems to have been the case at Tarsus where in Dio Chrysostom's time the 'linen-workers' were excluded from active participation in the assembly for want of the 500-drachma admission fee; certainly the electoral assembly of the Lycian *koinon* was no mass meeting. The development of a politically active section of the *demos* from the mass may also be illustrated from Pliny, and documents from Poglá in Pisidia and Sillyum in Pamphylia, where a certain group, not included in the assembly, has specifically to be included in a benefaction, and from Herodes' invitation to his fellow-Athenians to dine by tribes and clans.⁵⁶

In 175 a second attempt to seize power from the East, that of Avidius Cassius (the coup that threatened under Nerva came to nothing), failed and its instigator was assassinated. In the aftermath Marcus and Commodus travelled to the East, and it was this journey that gave Marcus the opportunity to visit Athens, become an initiate at Eleusis, and consider the state of the city. The close association between Athens and the ruling power – at Athens, Follet remarks, Rome was more in evidence than might be expected in a free city – had its consequences. Ambassadors and other prominent personages stress connections with Roman senators and

⁵⁵ Oliver (1970c) 33–5, dating the trial at Sirmium to 174 and the intervention by letter to 174–5; Bowersock, *Sophists* 93–100; Jones (1974) 15; Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* I 63–76; 136–151; II 204.

⁵⁶ See esp. Ste Croix, 518–34; women: Casarico (1982); positions for life: Follet (1976) 367; Kearsley (1986) 191 n. 31.

knights and display Roman nomenclature.⁵⁷ Yet in spite of Roman influence the vigour of Athenian institutions at this date was unimpaired, and they are found at work until the middle of the third century.

As one author (probably Favorinus) wrote, the best of the Greeks elsewhere than at Athens might be seen inclining towards Roman ways. In the East 'romanization' is not *humanitas* but a medley of change: a smattering of Latin words in popular speech (especially amongst those who had had contact with the army), the bald modification along Roman lines of city constitutions, or, more importantly, the penetration of Roman law, beginning under the early Principate, advancing in the Flavian age and the reign of Hadrian as prestigious Roman *conventus* had their effect and citizenship spread even to the freedmen of Roman citizens, giving women, too, some limited rights. Nor was it only 'the best' who were affected: in spite of the continued popularity of athletic and musical competitions, gladiatorial shows and wild-beast hunts put on by leading men in celebration of the imperial cult encouraged a taste for them in the masses, not just in Roman colonies like Corinth or among the Gauls, where it might have been expected, but in Greek cities of high culture, such as Athens, where Hadrian's gifts included a wild-beast show of a thousand animals, and the stadium was fitted with a parapet to protect the spectators, Smyrna and Aphrodisias; Rhodes was an honourable exception.⁵⁸

More salubrious was the spread of the Roman taste for utilities, baths and aqueducts with nymphaea. In Asia Minor and elsewhere, aqueducts begin under the Julio-Claudians, with Nero contributing the aqueduct at Soli in Cyprus. Efforts to bring them in become more common in the second century. They were often technically complex, very costly – and not very conspicuous: Hadrian had begun an aqueduct at Athens, Herodes at Alexandria Troas; at Aspendus the benefactor laid out 2 million denarii, but the cost more often had to be borne by the community. The elaborate nymphaea that Asia had been able to afford in the first century spread to mainland Greece in the second.⁵⁹

The influence of Rome on architecture at Athens under Augustus has already been noticed, and that, too, spread during the Julio-Claudian period and beyond, as men from the East came to know Rome in their official capacity. It is evident in a preoccupation with townscapes, a fashion for

⁵⁷ Follet (1976) 367.

⁵⁸ Dio Chrys. xxxvii.25. See Triantaphyllopoulos (1972) 169–91. Athens: *HA Hadr.* 19.2–4; Graindor (1934) 179–80; Smyrna: Euseb., *Hist. Eccl.* iv.15. cf. Lucian, *Demon.* 57; Aphrodisias: Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* xv; Rhodes: Dio Chrys. xxxi.121–2.

⁵⁹ *AE* 1953 no. 166 (Soli); Mitford (1980) 1327; Pliny, *Ep.* x.37–8 (Nicomedia) and 90–1 (Sinope), with Dio Chrys. xlv.12 and Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny ad locc.*, for Hadrian at Nicaea; for Herodes Atticus at Alexandria Troas, see Philostr. *VS* 548–9, with Ameling, *Herodes Atticus* 1 54–6; Aspendus: Ward-Perkins (1955). For aqueducts, and the cost borne by communities, see J. Coulton in Macready and Thompson (1987), 72–84, esp. 81 n. 42.

colonnades, vistas and arches in such cities as Perge in Pamphylia, Soli in Cyprus and Patara in Lycia, as well as in the use of new techniques and materials, such as brick, concrete and mortared rubble, strikingly exemplified in the 'Kizil Aulu' (Red Hall) at Pergamum and in the theatre baths at Ephesus where the Library of Polemaeanus combined marble and brick and the bath-house at Lappa in Crete, and barrel-vaulting also in Crete. Clearly architecture went along with other tastes: amphitheatres abounded in Crete, where theatres had been a rarity in the pre-Roman period, and the theatre at Hierapytna was planned in Roman feet. On Cyprus the gifts of Salamis' most distinguished citizen, Ser. Sulpicius Veranianus, astutely included not only a theatre but an amphitheatre and a Roman bath-house. But Roman fashions by no means drove out traditional forms and techniques, and in the south-west of Asia Minor bath-houses display a variety of adapted forms.⁶⁰

Aelius Aristides claimed in 143 that there were no more wars, only tribal unrest on the borders of the empire. Certainly wars in the East, before the third-century revitalization of the Parthian empire under the Sassanians, were aggressive (that is to say, safe for the Roman Empire), but the army of Lucius Verus, returning in 165, brought plague with it along the roads. Asia Minor was in the front line: 'Woe, woe, a powerful disaster leaps on to the plain, a pestilence hard to escape from, in one hand wielding a sword of vengeance, and in the other lifting up the deeply mournful images of mortals newly stricken.' Such are the words of an oracle given to the Lydian city Caesarea Trocetta. Even a cautious scholar allows that it was great and destructive to rich and poor alike, Herodes losing his daughter Elpinice.⁶¹

The main external danger that the empire had to face from 167 onwards was of invasion across the Danube. Greece and Asia Minor were insulated to some extent, although the Costoboci, coming from the region of Poland in 170 or 171, did penetrate as far as central Greece and fired the sanctuary of Eleusis. They were repelled with the help of heroic local levies (gymnastic training told: the leader, who fell in battle, had won the double race in armour at the Olympics of 161). Volunteers from Thespieae, and probably elsewhere, had already shown themselves ready to play their part in the German wars, which were making marked demands on eastern resources of manpower in 169.⁶² It could be in the aftermath of these misfortunes

⁶⁰ Soli: Mitford (1980) 1328; Perge and Patara: Jameson (1971) 25 fig. 4; 23 fig. 3; materials: Dodge, (1984) and in Macready and Thompson (1987) 106–116; M. Waelkens, in Macready and Thompson (1987) 94–105. Crete: Sanders (1982) 57–88; Salamis: Mitford (1980) 1322. For survival of tradition, see M. Lyttelton in Macready and Thompson (1987) 48, and for adaptation in bathhouses A. Farrington in Macready and Thompson (1987) 58.

⁶¹ Trocetta: *JGR* IV 1498; see Gilliam (1961); Elpinice: Philostr. *VS* 558.

⁶² Paus. VIII.43.6; Costoboci: x.34.5; date: Habicht (1985) 9 n. 50; Volunteers: Jones (1971b) 45–8, with 46 n. 4 for the Costoboci and citing *HA Marv.* 21.6–9, *IGR* IV 580, and *TAM* III 1, 106 for the call-up of *diognitae*.

that the reluctance of the 'curial class' to play their part in local government began to be marked, in spite of their privileged position. When Marcus abandoned his attempt to restore the 'three-generation rule' at Athens he wrote that he was 'taking into account the circumstances brought about by fate, which I know have caused other cities to ask most justly for aid'.

Internal security, never to be taken for granted even at the height of empire, as Paul's travels bear witness, seems to have begun to deteriorate in the second century; luckier than Paul, Lucian obtained an escort of two soldiers on a trip through Cappadocia. This is the period when the cities began to appoint irenarchs, who, aided by their flying squads of *diogmitae*, were responsible for maintaining order within their city territory. We do not know much about the rebellion in Greece under Pius.⁶³ Opportunities for disorder became greater when armies were kept busy at the periphery of the empire, and the economic advance of Asia Minor was losing impetus as the expansion of the empire came to an end. Taxes did not decrease, and were to be ever more rigorously exacted as imperial needs became more acute; since towns depended ultimately on the produce of the countryside, country people paid the final bill. That was evident in time of famine, as a famous passage of Galen shows: winter saw the city people living well, the country producers of the food living on fodder that made them ill; even slaves had a better life in cities.⁶⁴

The second and third centuries are the period when there is most abundant evidence for imperial estates in Asia Minor; possessions acquired piecemeal had coalesced into extensive domains on which it was even possible for cities to develop; by the end of the second century a special procurator of Phrygia was necessary to supervise imperial properties in that area. Harder times would have made the lives of the *coloni* on these estates particularly difficult, and there were to be vociferous complaints in the third century.

The mountain regions of Asia Minor, the Taurus and Anti-Taurus, were traditional homes for the desperate and starving, for resistance movements, or, as both were officially called, brigandage (which title is correct in each instance depends on numbers, organization, origin, declared and real aims); one Tilliboras was already causing trouble around his fastness on Mt Ida in the Troad under Hadrian. The magistrates, council and people of Bubon, in the unarmed province of Lycia-Pamphylia, were commended by Commodus for their enterprise and courage in killing and apprehending brigands, and were rewarded by the Lycian *koinon* (with his approval) by being given one vote in addition to their former two in that body – to encourage the others. Not all brigandage came from within. The coastal

⁶³ Police: Jones, *Greek City* 211–13; rebellion: Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* 475.

⁶⁴ Galen VI.749f.κ, cited by Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* 13–14; Sen. *De Ira* III.29.1.

areas of Asia Minor were its most prosperous, and were vulnerable to pirates. Syedra was advised by the oracle of Didyma to take its own measures against them.⁶⁵

It was not only with pirates that cities contended, or against bandits that irenarchs and *diognitae* went into action. They pursued the bishop Polycarp from Smyrna into a farmstead where he took refuge. City unrest had long focused on Christianity, although outside Judaea it was not actively subversive and, as a sect of Judaism, was not considered so. Paul was treated with respect by the governor of Cyprus and welcomed at first in the cities of Asia Minor, where there were influential Jewish communities. Trouble arose between Christians and orthodox Jews and when a sect that kept its members aloof from others in society threatened livelihoods, such as that of the silversmiths of Ephesus, and perhaps the butchers of Pontus under Pliny's governorship; trouble may have arisen there twenty years before Pliny's governorship, to be dated not far from the time of the famine that afflicted Asia Minor in the early 90s. The sect attracted have-nots and confirmed them in their alienation by cutting them off from local and imperial religion, and Revelation shows a savage attitude on the part of some Christians. Pliny and Minicius Fundanus, proconsul of Asia in A.D. 122–3, were told not to search out Christians, but local authorities were confronted with them as scapegoats and voluntary martyrs. Certainly the wave of persecutions towards the end of Marcus' reign was due to pressure from people in the cities.⁶⁶

Individual members of the curial class must have been struck by the Christians' demeanour, the more so as their own lives became less secure and their values were threatened not simply because they effectively lacked power above parish-pump level but because the fact was increasingly apparent as one Roman intervention succeeded another and as the imperial power itself was shown not to be invulnerable. Perhaps it was this that drew the attention of the Panhellenion to Christianity under Pius and why in the same or the following reign the *koimon* of Asia asked the proconsul to take action against it.

The received view that decline began some time under the last two Antonine emperors is vulnerable to the evidence of amelioration in Achaëa, especially in Corinth, under Commodus, and under the Severi of an outburst of epigraphic documents and of city coinage; the acute crisis has been pushed by common consent into the second half of the third century. Even then the evidence from Asia Minor makes it clear that there

⁶⁵ Rostovzeff, *SEHRE*² 373–4, 738 n. 17; Bubon (invaluable general observations): Schindler (1972) 11 no. 2; Millar (1981) 71–5; (1984); Hopwood (1984). Syedra: Bean and Mitford (1965) 21 no. 26, dating to the Triumviral period.

⁶⁶ Euseb. *Hist. Ecl.* iv.15.3. Searching out: Pliny, *Ep.* x.97; Euseb. *Hist. Ecl.* iv.9 with Barnes (1968) 37; voluntary martyrdom: Ste Croix, (1963) 23–4=Finley (1974) 236–7; pressure: Frend (1965) 268–302.

were comparatively prosperous areas. It is dangerous to generalize, and the answer a scholar gives to questions about decline depend on previously adopted criteria. Yet Habicht has a precise theme when he writes that by 180 the tide of Hellenism was ebbing; a costly fashion that had come in under Augustus and reached full flood in Hadrian's time could no longer be afforded. In Asia Minor the creation of new forces to deal with unrest and the celebration of men who willingly take on city office is a sign of what was to come. Septimius Severus ended an upheaval and restored confidence, for a time.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Coins: MacMullen (1982) 245 n. 18; Larsen (1937) 489–90; Mrozek (1973). Prosperity, see Roueché (1981); the tide: Habicht (1985) 26.

CHAPTER 21
SYRIA AND ARABIA

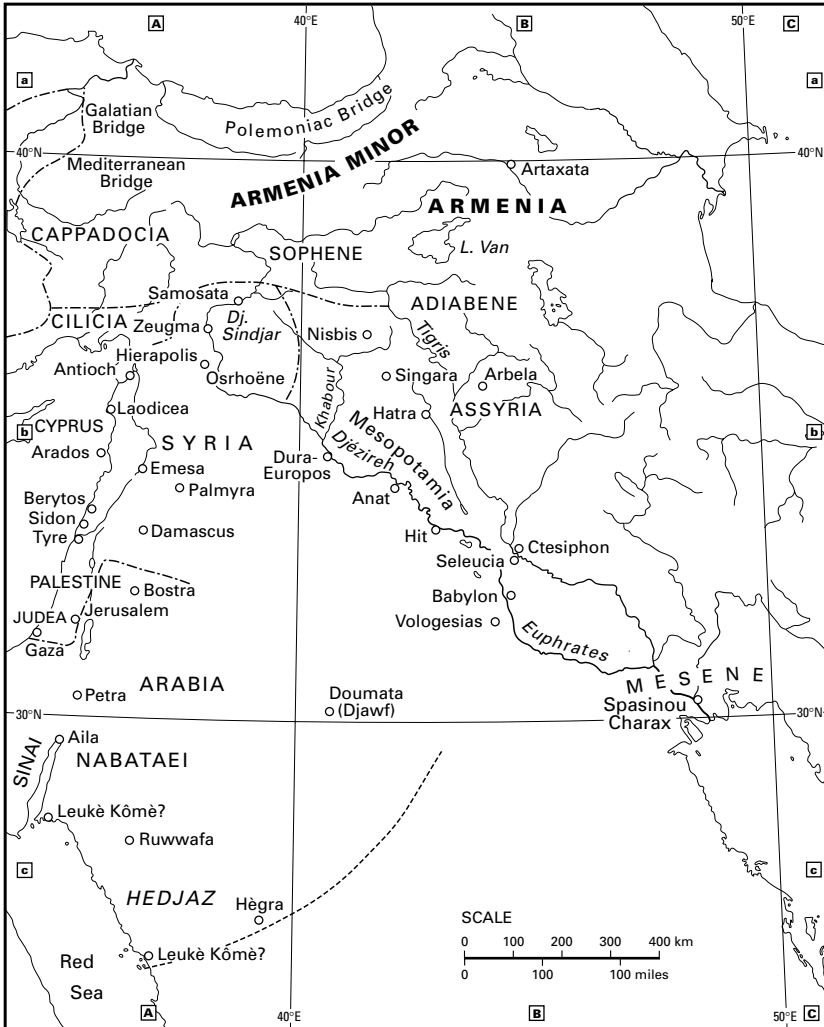
MAURICE SARTRE

At the accession of Vespasian, the Mediterranean regions of the Semitic Near East, from the Taurus in the north to the Hedjaz in the south, fell under Rome's control either directly or indirectly, but their status varied according to whether they were Roman provinces or client states. Before the end of Trajan's reign a standardization in the forms of administration took place, which means that the years 69–192 marked a period of closer integration into the empire for this whole region, despite some resistance and setbacks. The gaps in the documentary evidence notwithstanding, four main aspects of the history of these provinces should be the focus of our attention during this period:

- (1) The integration of the client states and the process of provincialization;
- (2) The development of the land and the organization of the native rural societies;
- (3) The evolution of civic life, and the adoption of the typical Graeco-Roman way of life by the urban societies;
- (4) The success of the artisan class and the apogee of Syrian trade.

I. THE INTEGRATION OF THE CLIENT STATES AND THE
PROCESS OF PROVINCIALIZATION

At the time of Vespasian's accession, the political situation of the Near East presents an interesting picture. Although Rome had control over all the territories to the west of the Euphrates, she had not yet taken over direct administration of the country as a whole. It was therefore divided between a *provincia*, Syria, and various client states. The province, placed under the charge of a *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of consular rank resident at Antioch, had experienced numerous enlargements since its creation by Pompey. To northern Syria and the Phoenician coast had been added the Decapolis of Transjordan, then Gaza, Hippos and Gadara (4 B.C.), and finally Judaea-Samaria (A.D. 6). The particular case of the Decapolis, which found itself without any direct geographical connection with the province, and that of Judaea-Samaria, where a religious separatism dominated,



Map 9 The Roman East in the second century

making the area difficult to govern, led the emperor to place prefects in charge of these two districts; these were placed under the authority of the governor of Syria, who controlled the general administration of the country and assured its security. The province thus had a very extended territory, reaching from the Cilician ports of the north, since it incorporated Cilicia Campestris, to Gaza in the south, at the very gates of Egypt.

The *provincia* was not, however, geographically continuous, because numerous districts escaped the direct control of the legate of Syria. Several

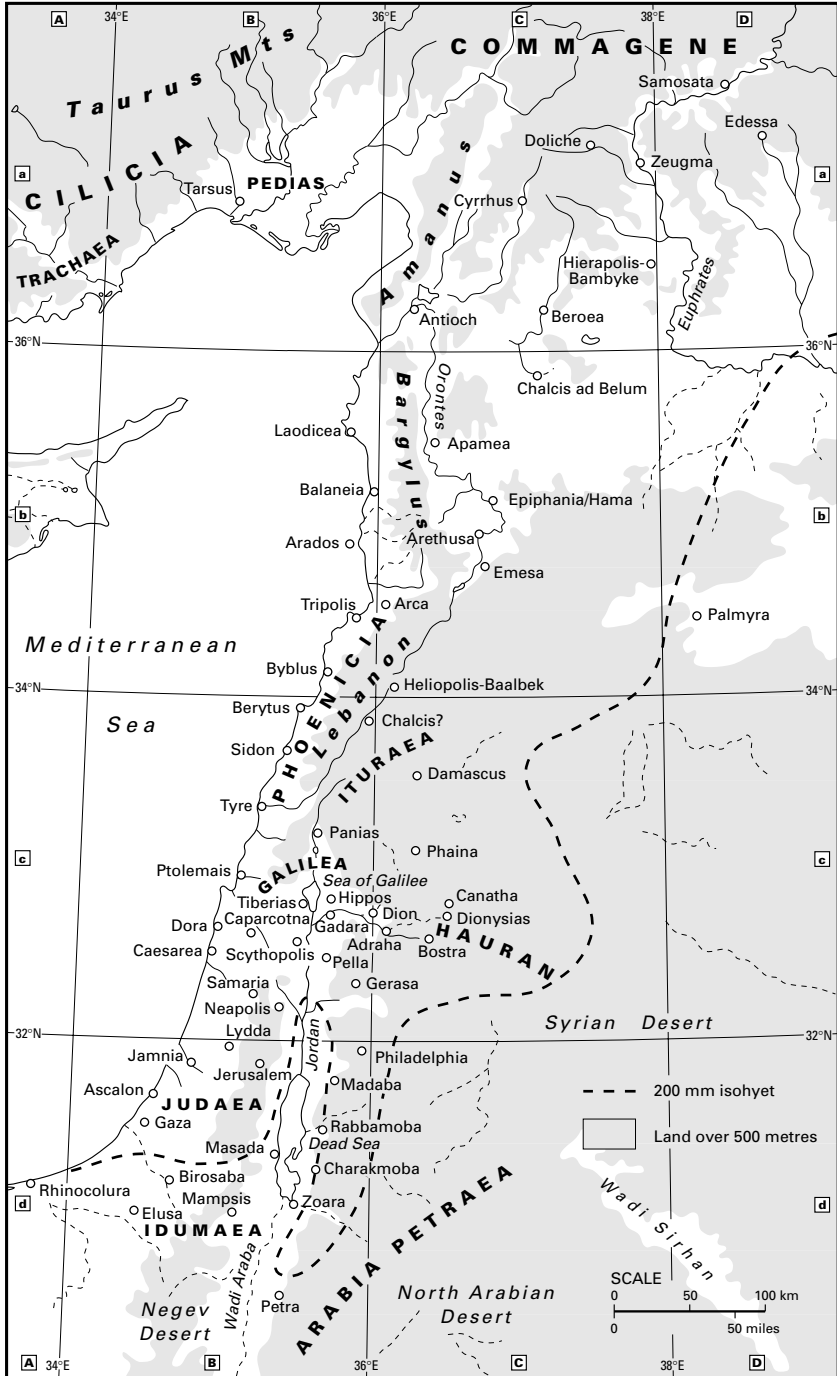
client states, entrusted to the 'friends and allies' of Rome, still survived in 69. The most important of these were situated on the fringes of the province. The kingdom of Commagene, in the high valley of the Euphrates and centred on Samosata, was still governed by the hellenized descendants of an Iranian dynasty which had first been dispossessed by Tiberius,¹ then restored,² next removed again under Caligula,³ and finally re-established by Claudius at the latest.⁴ In central Syria, the Arab dynasty of the Sampsigerami controlled Emesa and Arethusa in the middle valley of the Orontes, while Palmyra, situated more to the east, was part of the empire by 19 at the latest.⁵ In the south, the principality of Agrippa II, great-grandson of Herod the Great, stretched from the slopes of Mount Hermon to the Jebel Druze, taking in at the same time the rich plain of Hauran as well as the arid plateau of Trachonitis (Leja). Finally, the Nabataean kingdom, governed from Petra by Malikhho II, comprised various and diverse territories, from the fertile fields of southern Hauran as far as the oases of the Hedjaz and Negev, hence covering a substantial area from Bostra all the way to Hegra, from Dumat al-Jandal in central Arabia to Rhinocolura on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

These states, ruled by kings, formed only a part of Rome's whole *clientela* in Syria. Numerous tetrarchies, so minute that Pliny did not consider them worth naming,⁶ survived in the isolated and mountainous regions, from the Amanus and the outskirts of Antioch in the north as far as the Ituraean principalities of inner Lebanon to the south, around Arca and Chalcis in Lebanon.

Hence the Semitic Near East under Roman control in 69 resembled an administrative patchwork, although during the preceding period several kingdoms and tetrarchies had already been absorbed (cf. *CAHX*² ch. 14c). From the accession of Vespasian a swift reorganization took place, the main stages of which may be noted. First, as soon as the uprising in Judaea was crushed, this territory was raised to full provincial status, governed by a *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of praetorian rank resident at Caesarea in Palestine. This new province incorporated Judaea, Samaria and most of Galilee as well as northern Idumaea (the part which was not Nabataean), Gaza and the Palestinian coast to the south of Ptolemais, and several parts of Transjordan in Peraea. Not long afterwards, doubtless around 72, Cilicia Campestris (*Pedias*) was detached from Syria and made into an autonomous province, having been reunited with Lycaonia and Isauria. This detachment from the province of Syria was compensated for by the annexation of the kingdom of Commagene, which was finally and definitively taken over from Antiochus IV on the pretext that he had been plotting with the

¹ Tac. *Ann.* II.42B. ² Dio LIX.8.2. ³ Dio LX.8.1. ⁴ Dio LX.8.1.

⁵ Will (1985) 268–9. ⁶ Pliny, *HN* v.81–2.



Map 10 Syria and Arabia

Parthians.⁷ It may be seen at this juncture how the province of Syria, like others, consisted of several subdivisions which were supposed to play a role in the judicial organization as well as in the celebration of the imperial cult in the provinces. Indeed, before 72 the imperial cult had been celebrated separately by the three *koina* of Syria (Antioch), Phoenicia (Tyre), and Cilicia (Tarsus) who nevertheless jointly organized communal games. From 72, the former capital of the kingdom of Commagene, Samosata, oversaw the imperial cult of the regional *koinon* of the eparchy of Commagene, while the *koinon* of Cilicia continued to take part in the joint games with Syria right up to the 80s. It was then separated, but from the time of Hadrian a fourth eparchy of the imperial cult was added, that of Coele Syria, with Damascus as the capital. Several cities of Arabia (Gerasa, Philadelphia) and Syria-Palestine (Scythopolis, Gadara) continued to form part of that eparchy throughout the second century⁸ to the extent that no imperial cult was organized either in Arabia (where it did not appear until the middle of the third century) or in Syria-Palestine.

The integration of client states was actively pursued under the Flavians. Perhaps as early as 72, but certainly before 78, Sampsigeramus of Emesa was deposed and his principality incorporated into the province. The fate of the neighbouring tetrarchies is not known to us, but this policy of provincialization must have affected them at the same pace as the larger states in the vicinity. It is not, however, possible to establish a chronology of these annexations, because they unquestionably lacked geographical logic. Indeed, where documents are available, it is possible to see that Rome preferred not to use force, and was prepared to wait for the death of the client ruler before proceeding with annexation. Whatever their territorial importance, these states could therefore survive for some time, even up to the end of Domitian's reign, and occasionally beyond it: Aristobulus held Chalcis until 92⁹ (though it is uncertain whether this was Chalcis by Belus to the south-west of Aleppo, or Chalcis in Lebanon, somewhere in the Beqaa), and Agrippa II southern Syria until roughly 92–3. The last state the exact date of whose disappearance is known to us is the Nabataean kingdom in 106, though its fate was atypical. For while all the other tetrarchies had gone towards enlarging the province of Syria, the kingdom of Rabbel II (70–106) was sufficiently large to make up a new province in itself, Arabia, into which were incorporated several cities of the neighbouring Decapolis (Gerasa, Dion, Philadelphia), more easily governed from Bostra, the capital of the new province, than from Antioch.

With this annexation Roman Syria took on the appearance which it kept until the Severan reorganization. It thus comprised three subdivisions. The

⁷ Joseph. *Bj* vii.219–43; Suet. *Vesp.* 8.

⁸ A Gerasian 'priest of the four eparchies at Antioch': C. B. Welles in Kraeling (1938) 399 no. 53.

⁹ *SNG von Aulock*, no. 65–6.

most important was the large province of Syria, administered by a consular legate, where three legions were stationed, IV Scythica at Zeugma, III Gallica at Samosata, and XVI Flavia Firma near Antioch in 75,¹⁰ before it moved to join an unknown garrison; the strength of the auxiliaries is poorly attested, but it may be calculated approximately by combining the information given by two diplomas of 88 which give the figure of eight *alae* and nineteen cohorts.¹¹ The southern Mediterranean regions formed the province of Judaea (which officially became Syria-Palaestina during the revolt of Bar Kochba in 134), governed by a legate initially of praetorian rank, then consular once a second legion, VI Ferrata, installed at Caparcotna in Galilee, came in 123 to reinforce X Fretensis quartered at Jerusalem since 70. Lastly there was the huge province of Arabia, governed by a praetorian legate in charge of VI Ferrata, then from 123, III Cyrenaica which garrisoned Bostra; the province covered rich agricultural zones (Hauran, and the Transjordanian plateaux of Ammonitis and Moab) and huge desert expanses. These latter had the advantage of controlling the large caravan axes from south Arabia or the Persian Gulf towards the Mediterranean. Until the end of Commodus' reign the situation underwent little change. The new provinces created by Trajan beyond the Euphrates in 115–16 (Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria) were evacuated by Hadrian in 118, and no extension to Syria was left. On the other hand, the Parthian campaign of Lucius Verus in 164–5 resulted in the acquisition of a solid bridgehead on the middle Euphrates, Dura Europus, at the end of one of the roads of Palmyra towards Mesopotamia. The Euphrates thus continued to form the eastern frontier of the empire throughout this period, just as it had been established since Sulla and Pompey.

The policy of *clientela*, which had allowed the progressive integration of the territories west of the Euphrates, re-emerged east of the river. At the outset of his Parthian expedition, Trajan had received homage from numerous client rulers who had come from beyond the Euphrates,¹² in particular Abgar of Edessa and Sanatruq, prince of Hatra, not far from the Tigris. At the start of Marcus Aurelius' reign, the Parthian expedition of Lucius Verus used as a pretext the expulsion of Ma'nu VIII, king of Edessa *philorbômaios*, by a Parthian client, Wael bar Sahru, to intervene on the other side of the Euphrates.¹³ Rome thus enjoyed the support of clients who controlled part of the Jazirah, the 'island' situated between the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, the Tigris and the Euphrates. In the sector which separated the Romans and Parthians in Armenia, complex both diplomatically and militarily, Rome had doubtful allies in the mountainous parts of Gordyene and Adiabene. Some were situated much further towards the

¹⁰ van Berchem (1983). ¹¹ *CIL* XVI 35 and Roxan, *Military Diplomas I* 3.

¹² Eutropius VIII.3; Festus, 20.2. ¹³ Dio LXXI.1.1–2.

interior of the Parthian empire, such as the king of Mesena (Characene): these states occupied the extreme south of Lower Mesopotamia. Already Trajan had there received a warm reception on the part of Attambelus V.¹⁴ The principality maintained its existence, despite the abandonment of Trajan's conquests, and it was only in 151¹⁵ that a victorious campaign by the Parthians put an end to this client principality. The importance of this little-known network should not be underestimated, because it explains the ease of Roman conquests beyond the Euphrates in 164–5, then in 195 and 198–9, as well as preparing the ground for the creation of new provinces.

During the whole period, the provinces of Syria and Arabia enjoyed peace and security. Despite the constant fears of a Parthian invasion, this took place only once, in 161,¹⁶ and was quickly pushed back. Even the usurpation of Avidius Cassius in 175 did not involve a military operation, since the usurper was eliminated without a battle.¹⁷ The only causes of trouble were the mountain bandits and the raids of the nomads. During the Flavian and Antonine periods, however, these threats were fairly weak. The brigandry of the Ituraeans of Lebanon and the Trachonitis had in fact been almost completely wiped out by the action of the Herodians in the area, even before the Flavian period. There may have been inter-tribal rivalries, but they do not seem to have seriously affected the security of the sedentary peoples. Thus, a bilingual inscription of Ruwwafa in the Hedjaz recounts that the governor of Arabia, Q. Antistius Adventus, intervened to restore peace at the heart of the Thamudean confederacy, and had a sanctuary of the imperial cult erected on this occasion, which was completed under his successor, L. Claudius Severus (between 161 and 169). But we scarcely hear of any nomad incursions against the sedentary peoples, and it is impossible to consider the aim of the defensive system installed along the high plateaux of the Transjordan to have been to counteract the nomads. In any case, this defensive system remained very weak until the Severan era,¹⁸ which shows that an invasion was not feared from this quarter.

II. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND AND THE ORGANIZATION OF THE INDIGENOUS SOCIETIES

1. *The sources*

Ancient authors were much more interested in listing products within the empire remarkable for their quality or their originality than in describing the systematic development of the provinces. Syria and Arabia do not

¹⁴ Dio LXVIII.28.3–4.

¹⁵ Bowersock (1989) 159–68.

¹⁶ Dio LXXI.2.1–2.

¹⁷ Dio LXXI.2.2.3–2.3.3.

¹⁸ Parker (1986).

escape this rule; if literary texts alone survived, whether classical Graeco-Roman or Talmudic, it would be possible to establish a list of the characteristic products of these provinces, from the wines of Laodicea to the aromatics of Jericho, from the cedars of Lebanon to the oil of Gischala, but we would still not have a precise picture of the general economy of these provinces. In fact, such a catalogue is of little interest, since ancient authors only reported those products which were exported and had attained a certain renown, which represents only a part of total agricultural produce – a part, moreover, difficult to quantify. Thus, they only rarely speak of cereal crops, although they were distributed all over the empire and surely constituted for many regions the mainstay of agricultural production. Similarly, wines and oil are only mentioned when of a superior quality, worthy to provision the markets of Rome, which was never the case for the oil of Syria; the only exception was the wine of Laodicea.

Syria and Arabia, however, offer the historian who is not content with these partial inventories a chance to reconstruct with rather more precision the history of their development, thanks to two remarkable, but as yet only partially exploited, archaeological features, one in the north, the other in the south of the country. Several hundred villages situated in the limestone massif¹⁹ of northern Syria, a region of arid mountains and small sheltered plains, still survive in an exceptional state of preservation. In the south, on the boundary between the provinces of Syria and Arabia (the administrative unification of the region was not accomplished until under the Severans), the Hauran was no less rich, though less completely explored. More than three hundred villages in this basaltic region, comparatively well watered, have preserved numerous traces of the epoch of their splendour. The systematic analysis of finds is now providing information of primary importance, even if care must be taken about extrapolating to Syria as a whole. But before proceeding to this examination, we must take a look at the region as a whole.

2. *General conditions*

The geographic conditions of the Syrian provinces have been described in the preceding volume (*CAH* x² ch. 14c) and are not very different from those of the other Mediterranean provinces. Aridity, however, is more pronounced here, the further one is from the Mediterranean to the east and south. Thus, in northern Syria there is sufficient precipitation for a non-irrigated agriculture the whole length of the Anti-Taurus as far as Nisibis and beyond, whereas it rapidly ceases as soon as one crosses the Euphrates

¹⁹ This term (a translation of the term 'massif calcaire', which we owe to Tchalenko) is the generic name of some limestone jebels in the area delimited approximately by a triangle with its corners at Antioch, Aleppo and Apamea.

around Aleppo-Beroea. The further south one goes, the more the boundary of the desert approaches the west, extending to a little east of Hama and Homs, taking in the far side of the Anti-Lebanon range and Damascus, then following the eastern side of the high plateaux of Moab and Edom. Hauran alone enjoys sufficient rainfall despite its relatively eastern location. These climatic conditions are themselves altered by the landscape, since the slopes west of the massifs (the Amanus, Jebel Ansariye, Mount Libanus, Jebel Druze, Galilee) are well watered, while the eastern slopes are dry, almost parched.

As regards agricultural innovations, it is hardly possible to attribute any significant modifications to the Roman presence in Syria. It is true that several aqueducts are known, but they are always connected with the provisioning of neighbouring cities with water, and there is no evidence that they served any agricultural purpose. On the other hand, the native population was well aware of how to create systems to gather and conserve rainwater: every village had a cistern, often dug into the rock, sometimes constructed out of masonry in important population centres, as at Bostra; they might be open-air (in Hauran) or covered (in northern Syria). In the arid zones like eastern Transjordan, southern Nabataea or especially the Negev, the Nabataeans had invented systems of dykes, which allowed use of rainwater which had fallen over a wide area, either to replenish the underground cisterns (Umm al-Biyara at Petra)²⁰ or to irrigate small temporary fields at the base of the wadis (Negev).²¹ The Archimedean screw which enjoyed some success in Egypt, is not attested in Syria, perhaps through lack of a major river, and the noria (bucket waterwheel) appeared only later.

It is uncertain to what extent the Roman presence was able to introduce modifications either to the property-system, the methods of exploiting the land, or to agricultural techniques in Syria. The structure of landed property had doubtless already been considerably disrupted in the Hellenistic era with the arrival of large numbers of Greek colonists in northern Syria. For a long time it was thought that nothing parallel had taken place under the empire, and that the establishment of Romans (other than at the colonies of Berytus-Heliopolis and Ptolemais founded as *coloniae* under Augustus and Claudius, cf. *CAH* x² ch. 14c) did not have any major effect on landed property. This is no longer so certain today, since traces of centuriation and land-surveying have been uncovered around Emesa, and, more recently, around Damascus, Aleppo and Bostra.²² Now although this need not point to a redistribution of land to the detriment of the former proprietors, these measures may be connected with a restructuring of a fiscal nature, or with the installing of new landowners on lands which had

²⁰ Diodorus XIX.94.6–8.

²¹ Even-Ari *et al.* (1982).

²² Dodinet *et al.* (1990).

been abandoned or confiscated. This process appears quite well established in the plain of Bostra, which was hardly developed at all until the mid-first century, while it is densely occupied in the second and third centuries. Veterans, attested by numerous inscriptions in the area, would have been able to benefit from these new allocations of land, but they were not alone. These new arrangements are not precisely dated, however, and could be connected with the granting of the title of colony to some of these cities under the Severans or later; but this explanation cannot cover Aleppo, for it never became a colony.

For the rest of the area, our ignorance is almost total. As far as sacred lands are concerned, there is nothing to indicate their importance in Syria and Arabia. Only one estate of a sanctuary is known, that of Zeus of Baitokeke in the hinterland of Aradus,²³ but others may have existed since there are several mentions of *hierodouloi*,²⁴ a term which can designate peasants dependent on such sanctuaries. It is likely that in a few cases the estates of the gods became confused with those of their high-priests (Emesa) or those of the city (Hierapolis-Bambyke). These became civic lands at the same time as the sanctuaries were secularized.

It is more difficult to appraise the importance of the imperial estates. There is no evidence that successive emperors confiscated all the royal lands for their own profit, starting with those of the Seleucids (how much of them was left in 64 B.C. in any case?), then those of the client princes (but their importance is unknown). In the current state of our knowledge only one imperial estate can be located with complete certainty, the Lebanese forest in the Lebanon range between Berytus and Tripolis.²⁵ The reorganization of its workings by Hadrian shows that it was an original estate where the emperor did not claim ownership of the whole forested zone, but only of four kinds of trees which he reserved for his own use: the cedar and the juniper (*juniperus excelsa*) definitely, and the oak and Cilician pine most probably. We are much more poorly informed regarding other imperial estates.²⁶ Their existence is certain, since we know of a *procurator* of the *regio Syriatica* entrusted with their management under the Flavians.²⁷ But neither their location, nor their origin, nor their importance is known. A few may nonetheless be placed to the south of the Dead Sea near Zoara²⁸ under Hadrian (it must have taken the place of the 'palm-grove of the king Rabbel' attested in 99),²⁹ and nearby, towards the northwest around Engeddi in 110.³⁰ Another estate was undoubtedly situated at Beth Phouraia in 245, in the valley of the Euphrates upriver from Dura Europus.³¹ The rest is less certain. In north Syria, after the revolt of Avidius

²³ *IGLS* VII 4028. ²⁴ C. B. Welles no. 5/no. 53; others unpublished. ²⁵ *IGLS* VIII/3.

²⁶ Sartre (1991) 324–5. ²⁷ *AE* 1982 no. 877.

²⁸ Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 16. ²⁹ *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 2.

³⁰ *Documents of Bar Kokhba* 11. ³¹ Feissel and Gascou (1989) 547.

Cassius in 175 had been put down, his domains in the region of Cyrrhus would have been confiscated, comprising 16 per cent of the civic *chôra*.³² Much of the domains of Agrippa II could have become an imperial estate: an unpublished inscription shows that Batanea was a *saltus* by the mid-fourth century, and also confirms the existence of a *saltus Bataneos* in the sixth century. Finally, Byzantine toponymy preserves the memory of *saltus* on the Euphrates (*saltus Eragizzenon*) and in the Negev (*saltus hieraticus*), though their origin is unknown.

3. *The 'limestone massif' and Hauran: two regional examples*

If the state of landed property largely escapes us, we can nevertheless make a few observations regarding the exceptional development of the two regions mentioned above. Current studies have concentrated more on the continuity of these regions from the first to the seventh century, and it is extremely difficult to establish a chronology which sets forth the situation applicable to each period. An attempt will here be made to describe conditions at the end of the first century and during the second.

In the limestone massif, G. Tchalenko³³ observed that the region appeared almost deserted in the Augustan period. Only a few poor native villages were left on the fringes of the massif, those of former *laoi* of the Hellenistic era. In his view, a rapid agrarian revival took place right from the first century, accelerating in the second century; the development of the area was based on olive-tree plantations and cereal crops. In order to accomplish this, he reckoned that the administration had granted undeveloped lands to Roman colonists, former soldiers or officials, who had succeeded in mobilizing the village workforce to work their new estates. This analysis may be precise, but the real growth of the region must be pushed back to the second century. In fact, it is hard to find any archaeological remains or inscriptions from the first century, whereas numerous inscriptions from impressive rural tombs date from the second half of the second century. Furthermore, nothing proves the existence of large estates, not even the development of olive cultivation from this period onwards. The only feature of which we can be certain is the important increase in the population between the first and the mid-second century. This created the need for some organization of agriculture on the part of the Roman administration. Minute traces of cadastration (*scannatio strigatio*) have been noted over the whole region but these cannot be dated more precisely than with the period between Pompey and the Severi. But the clear signs of prosperity in the second century suggest the possibility that the region benefited from the application of a law like the Lex Manciana, or the Lex

³² Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Letters* 42. ³³ Tchalenko (1953), (1958).

Hadriana de rudibus agris itself; it is unlikely that certainty can be attained in this matter.

Whatever the exact origins of the agricultural development in this region, we must not imagine the formation of huge private estates, worked by dependent peasants; for the density of attractive village houses precludes such a solution for this period. Rather, there was coexistence between the rich landowners who lived in the villages for at least part of the year, and the peasants who do not appear to have been poorly off. The cultivation of the olive tree which predominated, though not to the complete exclusion of other crops, allowed an extremely adverse environment to be exploited; for although the area has adequate rainfall, the water is quickly lost in the limestone unless the necessary hydraulic buildings (i.e. cisterns) are constructed. Although Syrian oil was not famous (no ancient author mentions it), it went to supply the markets of the numerous cities of the region, at least for the daily needs of average folk. From all this, considering that the chronology and the details remain to be accurately established, what should above all be borne in mind is that a region, apparently deserted at the start of the first century, found itself developed and inhabited once more from the second century.

The case of Hauran recalls that of the limestone massif in many respects, although the natural conditions are rather different.³⁴ This volcanic region is composed of three districts with quite dissimilar geographic characteristics: a fertile mountain range, well watered and often covered in snow in winter (Auranitis); a parched, uncultivated basaltic plateau at a lower level, but difficult to reach on account of the layer of lava covering it, pierced in only a handful of places where a few cultivable openings are found (Trachonitis); and a well-watered plain with rich soil (Batanea and the plain of Bostra). Under threat from banditry and the razzias of nomads during the first century, the plain and the plateau were developed late. This suppression of brigandage was the vital task of the Herodian client princes in the north, and the Nabataeans in the south. The pacification was judged to be accomplished, or at any rate sufficiently advanced, towards the end of the first century, since in 93 and again in 106 Rome decided to take over direct administration of these regions. At all events, it appears now that the Herodians pursued a policy of founding villages near the less secure zones (the military colonies of Bathyra, Danaba, Sur al-Leja). Similarly, the transfer of the usual residence of Rabbel II from Petra to Bostra may reflect not only the decline in the caravan traffic passing through Petra, but also the desire to develop the plain of Bostra. Towards the end of the first century and in the course of the second century, Hauran as a whole regained its prosperity, and was densely inhabited to judge by the abundance of remains

³⁴ Dentzer (1985–6).

in all the villages, even though the mass of ruins, many of which are from a later period, cannot be precisely dated.

The geographical and historical constraints detailed above bear on the types of organization which may be observed in the various sectors, and the differences between them can be linked to the manner of their development. Thus, while an autonomous village organization installed itself in many rural centres in Trachonitis and Auranitis, in the plain of Bostra on the other hand, large undertakings, perhaps in the hands of foreign colonists as well as rich hellenized natives, made use of the local workforce. Studies in process in fact show differences in many fields (population, institutions, funerary customs, domestic architecture, spread of Graeco-Roman architectural and decorative models) for which an explanation should be sought in a study of the chronology and of the different modes of development. For the moment caution must be exercised, since the majority of applicable texts in this field belong to the third and fourth centuries, and cannot be used to describe the situation before this; but a few rare inscriptions of the second century allow one to suppose that in some respects, such as the village institutions, the situation which prevailed in many villages in the fourth century existed from the second century in at least a few.

The population of the region appears relatively homogeneous to the casual observer. In fact, Semitic names predominate in the impressive mass of Greek funerary inscriptions, which indicates that even the most hellenized individuals continued to be faithful to their traditional backgrounds. Nevertheless, fairly revealing micro-regional differences may be observed. Thus, on the one hand there is no significant difference in the distribution of Graeco-Roman and Semitic names between the towns and the villages next to the plain or the mountains; but on the other hand, the north – the former Herodian state – was clearly more permeated by Greek and Roman influence than the south, previously Nabataean. Furthermore, the Semitic base was far from homogeneous: alongside a sedentary Aramaic population, an Arab population installed itself in the east and south of the region, in contact with the steppic zones of the Syro-Mesopotamian desert. Several Greek inscriptions attest the presence of members of tribes which are also found in the desert to the east of the Jebel Druze (Jebel el Arab). It is these who are generally called ‘Safaites’, an inappropriate term, since they could have belonged to several groups without having had links with one another. We do know, however, that some of them spent the summer near the Jebel Druze, and during the winter and spring travelled the steppe and desert with their herds.

This brings us on to consider the agricultural development of Hauran. It is certain that cereal crops predominated, while there is no evidence for the presence of the olive tree (though numerous recent plantations have

shown that olive culture is certainly possible). On the other hand, the importance of the vine is well established in the Jebel Druze; vines were located near the settlements, and watched over during the season of the grape-harvest from towers placed in the middle of the vineyards, and occasionally linked to a press and fermentation vats. It is uncertain, however, whether these wines were exported or supplied only the local market. Finally, recent exploration has demonstrated the importance of cattle-farming in the villages: few houses lacked a stable at ground level, beneath the family quarters.³⁵ Hence, the sedentary practice of cattle-breeding was added to the breeding practised by the desert herdsmen, who specialized in camel-breeding but also bred horses, sheep and goats.

4. *Rural societies*

The traditional rural societies of Syria and Arabia are little known, because the available documents are generally late or poorly dated. Moreover, the documents come almost entirely from the two privileged regions discussed above, which cannot be taken to apply to the whole of Syria.

The lot of the peasants does not emerge save on the occasion of complaints against the excessive requisitions of the army and administration. Domitian wrote to the procurator Claudius Athenodorus to demand a lightening of the burdens oppressing the peasants,³⁶ but his concern perhaps extended only to the imperial estates administered by the procurator. A century later, towards 183–7, the governor of Syria, Iulius Saturninus, reminded the inhabitants of Phaina in Trachon, a *metrokomia*, in a letter, that they owed neither a collective contribution nor hospitality to soldiers and strangers in transit.³⁷ This shows that the autonomy enjoyed by the village did not protect it from the excesses of requisitions.

Nothing is known regarding the organization of the villages save for a few rare cases originating almost entirely from northern and eastern Hauran, and a handful from the Golan and Hermon. In this region, cities were few, and their territories did not extend over the whole area. Numerous villages therefore found themselves outside all civic *chora*. These villages nevertheless developed communal institutions which greatly resemble those of the neighbouring cities, although their magistrates bore different titles, which are not found in the cities of the region: *episkopos*, *pistos*, and also *dioiketes*, *strategos*, *epimeletes*. Inscriptions show that these villages had a treasury (which is on occasion that of the local deity), erected public buildings and received donations from benefactors. Thus, outside the cities a type of civic life developed even in the hamlets in the mountains, in the plateau of Trachonitis and to the north of the plain of Batanea.

³⁵ Villeneuve (1985). ³⁶ *IGLS* V 1998. ³⁷ *IGRR* III 1119.

Among these villages some acquired a greater prominence, and it is possible to see a village hierarchy gradually emerge, sanctioned by the Roman authorities, who gave to the most important the title of *metrokomia*: Phaina of Trachon, Zorava, Borechath Sabaon, Aqraba, Neeila all acquired the title. The granting of this status was confined to the very restricted zone of southern Syria, Batanea and Trachonitis, that is the former domains of Agrippa II which had doubtless become imperial estates. The creation of *metrokomiai* allowed the creation of a kind of urban network without cutting chunks out of the *patrimonium* for new civic territories. But this phenomenon seems to belong only to a small part of southern Syria, and there are no grounds for extrapolating from this to Syria as a whole. Elsewhere, the cities governed the villages, and it is unknown whether the latter possessed autonomous institutions of the same type.

III. THE SPREAD OF THE CIVIC MODEL AND THE URBANIZATION OF THE REGION

1. *Foundations and elevations to city status*

The foundation of some Greek cities in Syria took place during the Hellenistic period, but the Seleucid foundations were confined to northern Syria, while the Ptolemies preferred to convert Phoenician cities into *poleis*. Later, perhaps only at the time of Pompey's arrival in Syria, native towns like Damascus and other settlements of Transjordan (Gerasa, Pella, Rabbatamana-Philadelphia, Gadara) acquired the same status. Huge areas remained devoid of such civic 'foundations', however, as much in Palestine as in Arabia and central and southern Syria.

The Julio-Claudians had done little in this field in Syria, despite the foundation of colonies at Berytus and Ptolemais (Akko) (*CAH* x² ch. 14c). Their successors showed themselves to be just as cautious, and the intense programme of foundations carried out in Asia Minor under the Flavians and Antonines is not paralleled in Syria and Arabia. Nevertheless, although the degree of urbanization was not great, it was not without its own particular features.

On the one hand, until the Severans liberally granted the status of Roman colony to many Syrian cities, no new colony was founded in Syria, with the exception of the *colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Caesarensis* at Caesarea Maritima around 70, followed by the *colonia Aelia Capitolina* on the site of the ruins of Jerusalem around 132–5 (cf. *CAH* x² ch. 14d). The situation in this regard does not differ from that of the other eastern provinces of the empire.

On the other hand, the transformation of native towns into *poleis* was quite rare, and did not lead to the formation of a dense network of cities.

Only the foundation of *Flavia Neapolis* in Palestine in 71/2 can be ascribed with certainty to the Flavians.³⁸ *Capitolias*, in the north-west of Transjordan, was founded more than twenty years later, in 97 or 98.³⁹ The other ‘foundations’ actually consisted of the promotion of several old native towns of Arabia and Syria. This is confirmed first in the case of the two former Nabataean capitals, Petra⁴⁰ and Bostra,⁴¹ whose institutions can be seen to be functioning from the time of Trajan and Hadrian, but which were promoted on the occasion of the annexation of the kingdom. Other towns of Arabia must have acquired the same status in the course of the second century, without it being possible to pinpoint the date: Madaba, Hesbous, Rabbamoba, Charakmoba on the plateaux east of the Dead Sea, Aila on the Red Sea, perhaps Elusa, Mapsis and Birosaba in Idumaea. Thus the urbanization of the province of Arabia was completed by upgrading status rather than by new foundations and several cities of the Decapolis (Philadelphia, Gerasa and Dion) were acquired as well.

In the province of Syria, actual foundations were much less important, probably because urbanization there was more thickly spread and of longer standing. Even Palmyra, whose civic institutions appear to have been specifically placed under the scrutiny of a resident Roman (*CAH* x² ch. 14c), enjoyed city status immediately on its annexation to the empire in 19. Hence only two foundations dated to this period are attested: Emesa as soon as the client principality had been annexed, and, more than a century later, under Commodus, the elevation of the village of Soada in the Jebel Druze, to become the city of Dionysias.⁴²

2. *Municipal institutions and civic life*

It is difficult to evaluate the intensity of civic life, since the substantial epigraphic evidence which illustrates the functioning of the cities of Asia Minor or Greece at this time is not paralleled in Syria. Nevertheless, evidence does exist, albeit in small quantities, but precise enough that we can assert that the Syrian cities possessed all the characteristics of *poleis* of the imperial period: a *boule*, consisting of members for life (the title frequently appears in epitaphs at Bostra, for example), magistrates and those who performed civic duties (liturgies) – as long as the difference between the two was still of any significance – chosen for a year or six months (Apamea), benefactors occasionally ostentatious (Apamea),⁴³ often simply generous (Gerasa,⁴⁴ Balanea,⁴⁵ Canatha,⁴⁶ Palmyra⁴⁷). There is nothing original in

³⁸ Schürer, *Jewish People* I 520.

³⁹ Jones, *Cities* 259; Schürer, *Jewish People* I 521; Stein, (1990) 139–40. ⁴⁰ *SEG* xxxii 1550.

⁴¹ *IGLS* XIII 9063. ⁴² *ISyrie* 2309. ⁴³ Rey-Coquais (1973).

⁴⁴ C. B. Welles in Kraeling (1938) 375 no. 4. ⁴⁵ *IGLS* IV 1302. ⁴⁶ *IGRR* III 1235.

⁴⁷ *Inn. Palmyre* I no. 2.

any of this to suggest any development particular to Syria. Suffice it merely to note that it is much rarer to find decrees inscribed in stone than in Asia Minor, and that not one such has been found in any of the new cities of Arabia mentioned above; some, however, are known from Apamea,⁴⁸ Antioch,⁴⁹ Seleuceia,⁵⁰ Rhosus⁵¹ and even from Palmyra.⁵² This does not mean that the city did not issue decrees, but the lack of publicity may be the sign that the civic body was confined to an élite among the population, and that these élites did not find it worthwhile to publicize their decisions, at least not in this form. In the new foundations of Arabia this could be connected to the limited size of the citizen body; it is noticeable indeed that the magistrates of the cities were drawn from among the élite villagers of the entire neighbouring region, even from beyond the civic territory. It may have been difficult to find enough people sufficiently wealthy and hellenized to make the institutions of a *polis* work. Such a situation had no chance of arising in the rich and populous cities of the north Syrian coast, however, already long hellenized.

Similarly, no particular conclusions can be drawn from the fact that many Syrian cities only issued coinage relatively late, since the same phenomenon recurs in several provinces of the eastern Mediterranean.⁵³ Thus Beroea-Aleppo, Hierapolis-Bambyke, Chalcis by Belus, Cyrrhus and Zeugma only brought out a coinage under Trajan, Doliche and Antioch on the Euphrates under Marcus Aurelius. This does not indicate that they had not received civic status until then, but merely that they had not felt the need to issue coinage previously.

In common with the cities of Asia Minor, the cities of Syria sought distinction, driving them to bitter rivalry with their neighbours. The competition for titles was as alive there as elsewhere, and many cities received benefactions from emperors, such as the title of *metropolis* (Antioch even before the Augustan era, Tyre under Domitian, Petra under Trajan, Damascus and Samosata under Hadrian at the latest), autonomy (Laodicea, Rhosus, Tripolis, Tyre, Seleucia, Dora) and freedom (Ascalon, Antioch, Laodicea and Seleucia possessed it right from the start of the first century,⁵⁴ but Scythopolis, Abila, Capitolias and Gadara acquired it after 160), not including the titles of *hiera* and *asylos*. On the other hand, it is possible to see the desire for pre-eminence in titles and benefits driving the cities of Palestine and the Decapolis from the first half of the second century. Hence, for the first time under Hadrian, and above all in the reigns of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, historical references appeared, which the cities had kept quiet until then. Some recalled their foundation by

⁴⁸ Rey-Coquais (1973). ⁴⁹ *IGLS* III 993, 994. ⁵⁰ *IGLS* III 1183, 1185, 1186, 1187.

⁵¹ *IGLS* III 718. ⁵² *Inn. Palmyre* x no. 44. ⁵³ Sartre (1991) 94–7.

⁵⁴ Despite the views of some scholars, Palmyra never achieved the status of a free city (see below, p. 660).

Alexander the Great (Gerasa, Dion, Capitolias), others exulted in their foundation by Pompey or his legates (*Pompeia Gadara*, *Gabinia Canatha*, *Philippeia Pella*), while others again made more systematic use of their ancient dynastic names (Gerasa-Antioch of Chrysorrhoeas, Abila-Seleucia). It is possible that this sudden display of historical consciousness was aimed at providing more splendour for these cities in their rivalry with the recently elevated cities, which had already acquired such honorific titles as *Nea Traiane Bostra* and *Hadriane Petra Metropolis*. This taste for competition among cities clearly illustrates to what degree the élite city-dwellers of Syria and Arabia had been imbued with the fundamental values of the Greek city, notably the spirit of the *agon*. This could lead them to ruin, since on the occasion of the simultaneous usurpations of Pescennius Niger and Septimius Severus, the cities of Syria made their decision on the basis not of their preferences among the men but in reaction against the choice of their rival. Herodian in this case puts forward opposed pairs, Laodicea against Antioch, and Tyre against Berytus,⁵⁵ the origins of which undoubtedly predate this episode. Niger did not hesitate to hand over Laodicea and Tyre to be pillaged, before the victorious Septimius Severus deprived Antioch of all its privileges and even of its rank as a city.⁵⁶

3. *The spread of Graeco-Roman culture*

The functioning of the civic institutions is not the only trait which bears witness to the integration of the cities of Syria and Arabia into the way of life of the Greek East under Roman rule. The extent of this integration can be evaluated by adopting various criteria in turn: the advance of Roman citizenship, the creation of Greek games and the appropriate places to stage them, the transformation of the urban environment and participation in the general circulation of ideas and of the arts. Whatever criterion is applied, quite substantial differences between the north and the south are apparent, as between the coast and the interior and, above all, between Syria and Arabia.

Thus, in the sphere of Roman citizenship, a systematic analysis of the inscriptions of Syria and Arabia shows, if soldiers and obvious foreigners are excluded (mainly officials), that city-dwelling élites were fairly often citizens in the regions which were hellenized earlier on in the Hellenistic era – the north and the coast – while at Emesa, as in the more recent cities of Arabia (Bostra, Petra), it was rare for the magistrates to be citizens (or at any rate to make mention of it). They very often kept their native names, not even adopting that veneer of hellenization which involved merely hellenizing one's name. This did not prevent them from running the civic

⁵⁵ Herodian III.3.3.

⁵⁶ Herodian III.6.8.

institutions and from having private texts which concerned them engraved in Greek, such as dedications to the gods, or epitaphs. The dividing line seems to be clearly tied to the chronology of the spread of Hellenism: at no large distance from one another, Gerasa and Bostra provide a stunning contrast, when we apply this criterion. While the magistrates at Gerasa were often Roman citizens, and Semitic names are rare in the population as a whole, the reverse may be observed at Bostra, despite its rank as a provincial capital. A contrast of the same type can be provided between Emesa and Apamea. The logical consequence of this is that the north of Syria furnished Rome with some senators and knights, among whom was C. Avidius Cassius, a native of Cyrrhus, while not one senator from Arabia is yet attested.⁵⁷

The distinctions are certainly less striking in the matter of new urbanization, since the initiatives coming from the provincial administration conceal the choice of individuals. On a general level, the cities of Syria and Arabia, like those of Asia Minor, were eager for the adornment which characterized the Antonine era. The trend started in the Julio-Claudian period at Antioch, Damascus and the cities of Phoenicia (Tripolis, Berytus, Sidon and Tyre), often on the initiative of rich benefactors like the Herodian princes,⁵⁸ but it became more pronounced under the Flavians and Antonines, and spread to the whole of both provinces.

Antioch, the *metropolis* of the whole Syrian East, benefited more than all the other cities from the measures taken to embellish them. In addition to the practical hydraulic installations constructed nearby (the so-called 'canal of the fullers' in 73–4),⁵⁹ as well as upstream from the city (the 'canal of the country between the rivers' in 75),⁶⁰ new baths were built under Domitian.⁶¹ The major earthquake of 13 December 115⁶² necessitated extensive reconstruction. Already the survivors of the disaster dedicated a sanctuary to Zeus Soter at Daphne, near Antioch,⁶³ and an attempt at restoring the collapsed colonnades was planned.⁶⁴ But it is difficult to be sure whether the works of adornment are all subsequent to the earthquake, and some of them must precede the destruction of the city. The construction of the *Mese Pule* must be attributed to the reign of Trajan at any rate, a monumental arch supporting the sculptured group depicting the wolf suckling Romulus and Remus,⁶⁵ and likewise the completion of the theatre⁶⁶ and the construction of the temple of Artemis at Daphne.⁶⁷ Activity did not slow under Hadrian, who had the sanctuary of the divine Trajan built,⁶⁸ and improved the supply of water by large works at Daphne.⁶⁹ Antoninus had

⁵⁷ Bowersock (1982). ⁵⁸ Joseph. *BJ* 1.422–8; *AJ* XIX.315–17; XX.211–12.

⁵⁹ Feissel (1985). ⁶⁰ van Berchem (1983) 185–6. ⁶¹ Malalas 263.11–17.

⁶² Dio LXVIII.24–5; Malalas 275.3–10; *Juv.* VI.411. ⁶³ Malalas 275.9–10. ⁶⁴ Malalas 275.21–2.

⁶⁵ Malalas 275.13. ⁶⁶ Malalas 276.3–9. ⁶⁷ Malalas 277.11.

⁶⁸ Suda, s.v. *Ιοβίτατος*; John of Antioch, fr. 181. ⁶⁹ Malalas 277.20–278.19.

the porticoed roads paved in Theban granite at his own expense.⁷⁰ Finally, Marcus Aurelius had the *Centenarium* baths restored, which had remained in ruins since the earthquake of 115,⁷¹ and the *Mousson* constructed.⁷²

Antioch was not the only beneficiary of this policy of embellishment, however, and all the cities of Syria gained from it, even if in most cases the financing of the actual work in this urbanization was undertaken by the inhabitants themselves. Indeed, even at Antioch the emperor Trajan and Hadrian, then governor of Syria, had urged the rich inhabitants of the city to rebuild private houses and baths at their own expense. Hence from the Flavian period Palmyra and Bostra were endowed, at least in part, with a new city plan, while Gerasa acquired a new *naos* of Zeus and a theatre (the south theatre). But it is above all in the second century that the architectural development of the cities reached its peak. In 115 Apamea, struck by the great earthquake which affected all northern Syria, was rebuilt in lavish style: large baths were installed alongside the avenue and richly decorated with bronze statues;⁷³ later, around 166, a vast north–south avenue was decorated with colonnaded porticoes, the columns being fluted and cabled. Nor were Arabia and the cities of the desert left behind. Gerasa was decorated with broad colonnaded avenues (around 100), a monumental gate (Gate of Hadrian, 129–30), a new sanctuary of Artemis dominating the city (c. 150), a second theatre (the north theatre, c. 162–6), baths (the west baths, c. 160–70), and so on. Following its annexation in 106, Bostra, already partly transformed by Rabbel II, acquired new colonnaded avenues, huge baths, a theatre with 15,000 seats, and a *tetrapylon*. Palmyra and Petra were also adorned, though the former far outstripped the latter: beside its avenues with porticoes interspaced with arches and *tetrapyla*, it witnessed, under Hadrian, the completion of the monumental precinct of the sanctuary of Bel (dedicated in A.D. 32), the reconstruction of the sanctuaries of Nabu, Baalshamin and Allat, the building of an *agora* and baths, while the small theatre was left unfinished. At Petra, despite the start of a relative decline of the city, a broad avenue, which opened out in an arc at the esplanade of the main temple, was nevertheless constructed in the lower town, the Qasr al-Bint; but in the case of this city, the main urban features and the large buildings date back to the reigns of Arethas IV (9 B.C.–A.D. 41) and Milikho II (41–70).

This relative standardization of the urban environment was accompanied by the spread of the buildings most characteristic of Greek culture, the centres of entertainment: thus theatres were built in the native cities recently elevated to the rank of city, such as Petra (in the first century A.D.), Canatha, Bostra, Palmyra, Adraha,⁷⁴ Dionysias, and even in the villages (Sahr in the Trachon); baths and gymnasiums were also added. Several

⁷⁰ Malalas 280.20–281.6.

⁷¹ Malalas 282.8–10.

⁷² Malalas 282.10–11 and 302.7–9.

⁷³ Rey-Coquais (1973).

⁷⁴ Unpublished.

cities enjoyed an amphitheatre, such as Antioch, Berytus⁷⁵ and Bostra,⁷⁶ and perhaps Caesarea Maritima,⁷⁷ Jericho,⁷⁸ and Jerusalem,⁷⁹ although caution is needed with the evidence of Flavius Josephus. This definitely points to some sort of spread of Graeco-Roman customs in the fields of sport, sanitation and leisure activities, including a general craze for gladiatorial combats, with which Titus entertained Caesarea, Berytus and the cities of Syria after his victory over the Jews.⁸⁰ The extent of the participation of the native populations in this Graeco-Roman way of life is difficult to evaluate, since the buildings, located in the cities, could well have been frequented only by officials, soldiers and foreigners in transit. In fact a significant proportion of the city élites frequented them, especially in the cities hellenized from an early date.

It is symptomatic, however, that one of the most characteristic elements of Greek civic life, the games (*agones*), did not succeed in establishing themselves at Palmyra, nor at Petra, nor Emesa, and only at a late stage at Bostra (*Dousaria Actia* in the middle of the third century). On the other hand, they are well attested at Tyre (*Herakleia*) and at Sidon (*Asklepeia*) which possessed them from the Hellenistic period; games are also found in the high empire not only in the cities of northern Syria (Antioch, Laodicea, Leucas, Apamea, Beroea, Hierapolis, Zeugma) but also in those of Phoenicia (Berytus and Tripolis), Palestine (Caesarea, Gaza, Ascalon, Neapolis), the Decapolis (Gerasa, Scythopolis, Philadelphia) and more isolated cities such as Damascus, Chalcis and Caesarea-Paneas. Their absence in cities as important as Palmyra, Petra and Emesa shows once again the divide between the cities where hellenization started under Seleucid or Lagid rule and those which had stayed in the hands of native princes for a long time; the same applies in the case of the spread of Roman citizenship.

These regional variations can also be found in the participation of the provincial élites in cultural life. We know how the cities of Phoenicia were the homes of philosophers, grammarians, mathematicians and physicians from the Hellenistic era. This trend did not decline under the empire, for the major philosophical currents continued to be represented: Stoicism by Boethus of Sidon (second century), Cynicism by Oinomaus of Gadara (second century), Neoplatonism by Maximus of Tyre (c. 125–85) and Numenius of Apamea (second century), while Alexander of Damascus took up the Aristotelian chair of philosophy at Athens in 176. As regards the other intellectual and artistic disciplines, suffice it to mention the architect Apollodorus of Damascus under Trajan, the mathematicians Marinus of Tyre (first to second centuries) and Nicomachus of Gadara under Hadrian and Antoninus, the sophists Paul and Hadrian from Tyre, Fronton

⁷⁵ Joseph. *AJ* XIX.335–7.

⁷⁶ Monument to the south-west of the theatre; identification probable. ⁷⁷ Joseph. *BJ* I.415.

⁷⁸ Joseph. *BJ* I.606. ⁷⁹ Joseph. *AJ* XV.268. ⁸⁰ Joseph. *BJ* VII.37–40 and 96.

of Emesa, Pausanias the Syrian, the novelists Lucian of Samosata, Iamblichus (*Babyloniaca*) and Heliodorus of Emesa (*Ethiopica*), the jurists Paul and Ulpian of Tyre, not forgetting the first Christian authors, such as Justin Martyr (c. 100–165) from Neapolis in Palestine or Beryllus, bishop of Bostra, at the very opening of the third century. This flowering of writers and sages illustrates the participation of the cities of Syria in the Graeco-Roman culture of the times, and points to its progress even as far as the cities only recently promoted (Samosata, Emesa).

IV. THE SUCCESS OF THE ARTISAN CLASS AND THE APOGEE OF SYRIAN TRADE

Syria and Arabia held an advantageous position in commerce between the empire and the countries to the East, which classical authors occasionally call simply *Indica*, although this covers central Asia, China and the Arabian peninsula as much as the Indian subcontinent. Despite their intermediary role, the two provinces did not owe their fortune exclusively to this: their own products, crafted wares as well as agricultural produce, established a prosperity which peaked in the second century, without suffering a decline under the Severans.

1. *The artisan class*

Part of the agricultural produce supplied an artisan class which engaged in transforming agricultural and animal products. This practice is attested with regard to the preparation of drugs and cosmetics, which relied on local products (oak-apples) as much as imported (cassia, cinnamon, myrrh). The purple-dyeing industry provides another example, albeit rather more complex. It was the glory of Tyre and Sidon, and was based on the conjunction of several favourable factors. On the one hand, there existed shoals of murex, exploited by the local fishermen; from the shell a purple dye was extracted, which from high antiquity the Phoenician dyers had known how to render permanent. On the other hand, breeding provided the chief material (wool) for the cloth-mills installed in the cities themselves, and the villages of their territories, or in other cities further afield in Syria (Antioch, Laodicea, Berytus, Byblos) and Arabia (Gerasa). Finally, textiles of varying degrees of coarseness were imported, either from neighbouring provinces (linen from Egypt and Cilicia) or far-off countries (silk from China). These textiles acquired a considerable increase in value purely on account of their purple dye, and this was enough to enrich the Phoenician craftsmen. Coarse textiles, such as the Chinese silks, were also re woven *in situ*, in order to make them finer. Hence, in the chain of production which led the silk material from the first Chinese workshop for

spinning and weaving to the shop of the retailer in Rome, the most lucrative part of the work, and thus the main benefit, accrued to the Phoenician craftsmen and the intermediaries who transported it, as well as to the imperial treasury.

Phoenicia owed its reputation for crafts in part to glass-production. Sidon specialized in luxury glasses, glasses with reliefs, fluted or gilded, and Sidonian workshops opened local branches even in the West, in Gaul and on the Rhine, such as that of the famous glass-maker Ennion. Sidon was not the only centre of production, however, and others are attested in Galilee, at Emesa and at Antioch. The abundance of glass-finds in all the necropoleis of Syria and Arabia strongly implies that there must have been glass manufactured in most cities of even minor importance.

Much less is known about ceramic production. The exclusive provenance of Eastern *terra sigillata* – Asia Minor – has been questioned for a long time, and the multiplicity of production-centres from the Flavian period has been accepted. It is possible that some of these ceramics emanated from the region of Antioch, from the Negev or the eastern part of Cyprus. The matter awaits systematic study, however, and we must be satisfied with tentative hypotheses. The only ceramic series clearly identified is a beautiful painted ceramic, very finely made, originating from the Nabataean kingdom. It appeared in the first century B.C., but production continued up to the second century A.D. For a long time it was thought to be confined to the south of the kingdom, in the area of Petra and in Idumaea, through a lack of finds elsewhere. But recently excavations have uncovered specimens at Bostra, Khirbet Samra, as well as Philadelphia.

Although Syria did not possess any metal resources tapped under the high empire (the copper mines of the Wadi Arabah seem to have lain dormant until the end of the third century), metal-working held a high place among the local craftsmen. The export of weapons from Bostra to central and southern Arabia is only attested for a later period, however. We know that works of art were exported, including stone and metal sculptures, of which examples or copies have been found in the Yemen,⁸¹ but it is difficult to measure with any precision the activity and whereabouts of these workshops.

The only indicator of the local importance of these various crafts is furnished by the existence of corporations like those of the fullers at Gerasa and Antioch (the construction of a canal to supply their workshops in 73–4),⁸² that of the copper-beaters, and those of the jewellers and of the leather-bottle makers, which enjoyed the advantage of reserved seats at the theatre in Bostra. However, the documentation is not nearly so extensive on this matter as in Asia Minor.

⁸¹ E. Will in Fahd (1989). ⁸² Feissel (1985).

2. *The exchanges*

The Semitic Near East played a major part in the trading contacts of Rome with the Far East and the Indian Ocean, even though it shared this role with Egypt. This traffic gave rise to literary accounts of very uneven quality, where the exceptional was preferred to the ordinary. It is necessary, therefore, to make this point simultaneously with regard to the products traded and their origin, as well as on the routes followed and the role of the intermediaries.

Moreover, the prestige attached to this commerce has generally led to neglect of the fact that Syria was herself producing products for export. The development of agricultural production in the first and second centuries has been noted above. Of course the Syrian products were not unique when compared with those of the Mediterranean provinces as a whole, which *a priori* did not favour trade; but the leisured *clientela* of the great cities of the empire sought particular characteristics in products, not only in wine, but also in oil, which furthered the currents of exchange within the Mediterranean. There is no evidence that Syrian agricultural products took part in such exchanges outside the ports of Phoenicia or north Syria, since the study of Syrian ceramics is not sufficiently advanced that it can be recognized and classified in the large Mediterranean sites. The export of these same products to the east and south must also be considered: there is a lack of evidence for this precise period, but a little later the wines of Hauran are known at Mecca and Medina, and the inhabitants of the Hedjaz came to seek wheat in Syria.

The trade between Syria and the Mediterranean, and in the interior of Syria, benefited from the improvement in the conditions of circulation. Work on most of the ports remains to be carried out, but it is known that Seleucia was helped by the digging of a ditch for driftage (the 'canal of Vespasian') under the Flavians, intended to avoid the port silting up, and it is possible that Byblos also enjoyed a programme of repair work.⁸³ Navigation on the Orontes was facilitated by the construction of a canal upstream from Antioch, *Dipotamiae fluminis ductum*, dug by the army in 75.⁸⁴ The road network too, although its primary function was military, did not cease to improve and grow in extent. The work carried out by M. Ulpius Traianus between 71 and 76 is observable in Galilee,⁸⁵ as in Apamena.⁸⁶ Afterwards, the roads were regularly maintained and repaired, as the numerous milestones attest.⁸⁷ The annexation of Arabia entailed the creation of a *via nova* in 111–15 from Bostra to Petra and Aila across the Ammonitis and the plateaux of Moab and Edom.

⁸³ *CIL* III 6696. ⁸⁴ van Berchem (1983). ⁸⁵ Isaac and Roll (1976). ⁸⁶ *AE* 1974 no. 653.

⁸⁷ Thomsen (1917).

Every ancient observer stressed the luxurious or rare nature of the products imported from beyond the frontiers: silk material, aromatic substances, spices, gold and ivory. This means that even if this trade was important in its value, it still represented only a small volume. It is absurd to envisage a constant flow of merchants and caravans criss-crossing the deserts of Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia. These exchanges remained marginal, though they doubtless enriched their practitioners.

The provenance of many products is uncertain, but two principal geographic zones may be indicated, from which the merchants acquired them: the Indian peninsula and Ceylon on the one hand, and Arabia Felix (Yemen) on the other. This does not mean that all the products purchased there originated from these places, since a significant proportion of the products of Arabia Felix actually came from East Africa, but it was there that the markets were held. In addition, other routes came directly from central Asia to Mesopotamia, traversing the Iranian plateau, such as the silk road. Furthermore, Syria and Arabia were not the only points of arrival and departure, since a maritime route via the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean allowed the Egyptian shore to be reached directly. Towards Syria, two main routes were the most used: one linked the base of the Persian Gulf to central Syria by the Euphrates valley as far as Dura Europus; from there it passed through the desert to Palmyra, Emesa, and then, beyond Emesa, it reached the Phoenician ports through the pass which separates the Alaouite mountains from Mount Lebanon. Other routes from Palmyra allowed Antioch to be approached directly, via Aleppo-Beroea or towards Tyre via Damascus; this was the route of the products from India. The second route linked Arabia Felix to Petra; an entirely overland variant passed by Najran and Hegra, while another used the maritime route as far as Leuke Kome, near the entrance to the gulf of Aqaba. From Petra the Mediterranean could be reached in the Gaza (Rhinocolura) area, while the royal route of the plateaux of Edom and Moab, through Philadelphia, Bostra and Damascus, led to Syria (the *via nova* constructed between 111 and 115 *a finibus Syriae usque ad mare rubrum*). These two main axes were not the only channels of communication, since caravans went directly from Fostat at the base of the Persian Gulf to Petra, via the oasis of Jauf.⁸⁸

At the end of the first century and during the second, these two routes were by no means of equal importance, which is reflected in the fate of the two caravan cities which controlled them. While Palmyra enjoyed a definite peak during the second century, Petra on the other hand was in decline from the reign of Augustus. Strabo⁸⁹ states at the beginning of the century that Rome's conquest of Egypt had diverted part of the trade, which had previously passed through Petra, to Alexandria. It is known, too, that many

⁸⁸ Pliny, *HN* VI.144–5. ⁸⁹ Strab. XVI.4.23–4.

Nabataeans followed this displacement of trade, and led caravans between the Egyptian ports of the Red Sea and Coptus. At the same time, moreover, the trade from the Persian Gulf preferred to head for Palmyra rather than Petra, reinforcing the inevitable decline of the latter. Nor does the epigraphic and archaeological evidence from Petra point to great wealth in the second century: on the one hand, we know now that most of the finest buildings of Petra belong to the period of Arethas IV (9 B.C.–A.D. 41) and not to the second century. On the other hand, even if the city did still enjoy a certain amount of prestige and saw the arrival of some caravans from south Arabia (a soldier in the garrison around 107 was astonished at the variety of products to be found there),⁹⁰ the goods were only for the Syrian market. From the reign of Rabbel II (70–106), Bostra appears to have vied with Petra as the capital of the kingdom; Rome's choice of Bostra as the provincial capital was the final confirmation of this new state of affairs. The prosperity of Bostra, however, was not founded on the great caravan trade, despite the existence of a direct route towards the Persian Gulf via Azraq and the wadi Sirhan, but on the agricultural development of the Hauran.

The situation was very different at Palmyra. Wealthy already in the first century B.C. and the first century A.D. (note Mark Antony's pillaging raid of 41 B.C.⁹¹ and the dedication of the temple of Bel in A.D. 32), the city reached its apogee in the course of the second century. Situated at an oasis admirably located at the junction point of numerous mountain ranges, which left no choice other than to use the sole existing pass, the city entered the empire at the latest in 19, and most probably in that year. It must not be supposed, as a passage of Pliny⁹² has led some to believe, that the city held the balance of power between Romans and Parthians. Palmyra was mostly a peregrine city, like the others, from A.D. 19 and the name of *Hadriane Palmyra* which it carried after 129 is no indication at all that it received 'freedom' from Hadrian. As a city of the empire it contained a Roman customs-post in addition to the toll due to the city itself. Endowed with the usual institutions of a Greek city, Palmyra preserved a notable native character in its cults, simultaneously mixing local traditions (Iarhibol, Aglibol, Malakbel), an old Aramaic heritage (Baalshamin), influences or borrowings from Mesopotamia (Nabu), and increasingly more noticeable Arabic importations (Allat, Arsou).

Numerous inscriptions, often bilingual in Palmyrene and Greek, allow us to describe the organization of trade in Palmyra in the second century, and to understand the causes of its prosperity. In the first place, Palmyra offered merchants the means of transport without which travel across the desert was impossible. Indeed the Palmyrene aristocracy was composed of

⁹⁰ *PMich* VIII 465. ⁹¹ App. *BCiv.* v.9. ⁹² Pliny, *HN* v.88.

rich camel-owners who pastured them to the north-west of the city, and which they put at the disposal of those who needed them. In the second place, Palmyra organized caravans which led the merchants into Mesopotamia. Under the direction of a caravan chief (*synodiarches*), the city provided an escort,⁹³ and negotiated a free passage with the tribes of the Syro-Mesopotamian desert,⁹⁴ to avoid the risk of looting.⁹⁵ The frequency of these caravans is uncertain, but the complexity and cost of their organization rule out the idea that they could be sent out without adequate preparation. It was necessary to wait until enough merchants were ready to depart and the requisite means of protection were available. This certainly implies several convoys a year, but whether there was any fixed pattern is unknown. Finally, Palmyra put at the disposal of the merchants the stalls which it possessed in Mesopotamia, and as far as the Persian Gulf. Indeed there were Palmyrenes resident at Ctesiphon, Babylon, Vologesias,⁹⁶ Spasinou Charax,⁹⁷ Tylos (Bahrain)⁹⁸ and on Kharg island. The Palmyrenes themselves certainly engaged in trade, but it is likely that their knowledge of the local environment allowed them to become more effective intermediaries between merchants coming from other provinces of the Roman world and the natives. Thus Palmyra did not enrich itself primarily from the taxes or dues which it levied from merchants in transit; in fact, the famous 'Palmyrene Tariff' was merely a toll-rate for goods intended for the local market of Palmyra. The other goods escaped these taxes, being stored in caravanserais outside the city, like that of Gennae. The wealth of Palmyra lay rather in the practice of commerce by the Palmyrenes themselves, and above all in the quality and indispensable nature of the services provided to merchants: means of transport, security of persons and goods, and profitable contacts with eventual partners. It is all this which is proudly celebrated by the beautiful inscriptions honouring the caravan chiefs, whose statues adorned the main road of the city and the columns of the *agora*.

What has been noted above with regard to the Syrian craftsmen and the Nabataean and Palmyrene intermediaries necessitates a revision of the opinion often expressed at Rome, according to which the trade in luxuries with India and Arabia was ruining the empire. Of course the sale of these products at Rome and the large cities of the empire could always ruin those who purchased them; but it remains to be seen who benefited from the purchases. For on the one hand, the imperial tax of 25 per cent on all products entering or leaving the empire through the Red Sea or Syria should not be overlooked: so part of the price paid by the rich Roman matrons went directly into the state coffers. On the other hand, included in the sale price

⁹³ *Inv. Palmyre* x 81 (135). ⁹⁴ *Inv. Palmyre* III 28 (193). ⁹⁵ *Inv. Palmyre* x 44 and 96.

⁹⁶ *SEG* VII 135. ⁹⁷ *SEG* VII 135. ⁹⁸ *Inv. Palmyre* x 38 (April 131).

were the commissions of the merchants (Romans, Syrians or others, but almost always subjects of the empire) who bought the merchandise outside the empire to resell at Rome, as well as that of the caravan chiefs and the owners of the means of transport (camels as much as boats), also subjects of the empire, and finally of the Syrian craftsmen too; for they had increased the value of the imported product by reworking it, in rendering it finer, by endowing it with a luxurious quality that it did not always possess at the outset. All this doubtless comprised an important part of the retail sale price, which, in other words, means that most of the money paid by the Roman consumer stayed in the empire after all. Rome herself may have gone to ruin, but not the empire. In any case, contrary to Pliny's view, the purchase of these luxury goods outside the empire did not invariably result in a 'flight of gold'. It is true that in south India numerous Roman coins of Augustus and Tiberius have been found; but this phenomenon is not continued after these two reigns, and it is now certain that the trade was not one-way: Syria and Arabia, as well as Egypt, found there an outlet for their agricultural produce (wine) or their crafts (ceramics, works of art, textiles). In this field, the appetite for luxury so deplored by the moralists as much as the agents of the treasury, in fact had positive economic consequences for the provinces participating in the trade.

In spring 193, as in 69, it was in Syria that the crisis for power at Rome unfolded. In 69, the governor C. Licinius Mucianus had addressed the crowd at Antioch to justify the usurpation of Vespasian, and to secure its support for the new emperor; he had at the same time persuaded the legions by leading them to believe that Vitellius intended to replace the legions of Syria 'where military service took place in an atmosphere of opulence and tranquillity' with those of Germany 'where the climate is severe and the conditions hard'.⁹⁹ Thus we have the image of a province already prosperous, and whose resources gave cause for hope to him who coveted the empire. In 193 it was the legate of Syria, Pescennius Niger himself, as Mucianus may once have dreamt, who took up the purple to oppose the usurpation of Septimius Severus. The prosperity had not diminished, and the clients beyond the Euphrates were hardly any less willing to support the attempt than had been those of Emesa, Commagene and south Syria in the case of Vespasian. But what changes there had been in the intervening years! Syria, which had ended up by incorporating all the client states west of the Euphrates, was counted among the richest provinces of the eastern Mediterranean. Not only did she have one of the main cities of the empire as her capital, Antioch, but she already possessed a dense network of cities, supported by a prosperous, well-developed countryside. The hellenization which had especially affected the coast and north

⁹⁹ Tac. *Hist.* II.80.

Syria was extending steadily further east and south, right into the heart of the Hedjaz. The increasing number of Arabs installing themselves on the edges of the Syrian provinces should not be ignored, however. There they developed a culture of their own, which owed to Hellenism only a few secondary features. This juxtaposition of the two cultures marks the uniqueness of the Syrian provinces, even if for the moment that arising in the Mediterranean gave the appearance of dominating and masked the progress of the Arabs.

CHAPTER 22

JUDAEA¹

MARTIN GOODMAN

The prosperity and peace of the Roman empire as a whole was not shared by the Jews, whose fortunes sank to their lowest ebb during these years. Three disastrous wars and the loss of their homeland in Judaea had a profound effect on all aspects of Jewish national and religious life both at the time and in the following centuries.

I. THE GREAT REVOLT AND ITS AFTERMATH

The rise to power of the Flavian dynasty was intimately connected to the demise of the Jewish state, which had declared its independence in A.D. 66. The competing factions which struggled for power in Jerusalem in A.D. 69 had extra scope for their ambition when, in June of that year, the Roman legate Vespasian called off his impending assault on the city in order to concentrate on his bid for power in Rome. That power, once achieved, was justified in large measure by propaganda about the success of the new emperor in the suppression of the Jews. Titus, in the closing months of the war in A.D. 70, pressed on against the great walls of the capital with exceptional vigour, ignoring opportunities to starve out the defenders in his haste to speed the victory. In August the Temple was burnt down by the victorious troops and Jerusalem was razed as if it had never existed; only fragments of the massive fortifications remained. Coins, and the dedication of a temple to Pax in A.D. 76, proclaimed the restoration of the Pax Deorum by the new emperor: the gods delighted in the extinction of the sanctuary where Jewish atheism, directed to an invisible entity, was a reproach to genuine religion. The victory of Jupiter was proclaimed symbolically through the immediate institution of the *fiscus Iudaicus* (see below, p. 669), which also brought some much needed funds to the empire. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were killed or enslaved, and coins minted in the

¹ Joseph. *Bj* provides a narrative for events to A.D. 70 and for the aftermath of the revolt. No continuous history of Judaea after A.D. 70 survives and few inscriptions have been found in the area. Evidence has to be culled mainly from brief references in Dio and Eusebius, from archaeology, from the texts discovered in the Judaean desert caves, and from rabbinic texts, in particular the Mishnah (redacted probably c. A.D. 200) and the Tosefta (redacted probably in the mid-third century A.D.).

province gloried in *Judaea capta*.² The land of Judaea was confiscated by the emperor; what was not kept for the stationing of troops or (as at the village of Emmaus) for veterans, or for the imperial fiscus, like the balsam groves of Jericho and Engedi, was sold, often probably to the original owners.³ Jews still inhabited Galilee, Transjordan and parts of the Judaeian countryside in large numbers, but with the extinction of the metropolis the cultural, political and (in Judaea) the economic structure of their society was shattered.

Mopping-up operations were executed with great thoroughness within four years. Legio X Fretensis was stationed permanently in Jerusalem under a praetorian legate. The Herodian fortresses of Herodium and Machaerus were gradually subdued; survivors of the latter siege were among the slain in a bloody rout in the (unidentified) Forest of Jarden. According to Josephus, the bandits called *sicarii* who inhabited Masada committed suicide rather than succumb to imminent assault from the massive ramp built by the besieging Romans.⁴

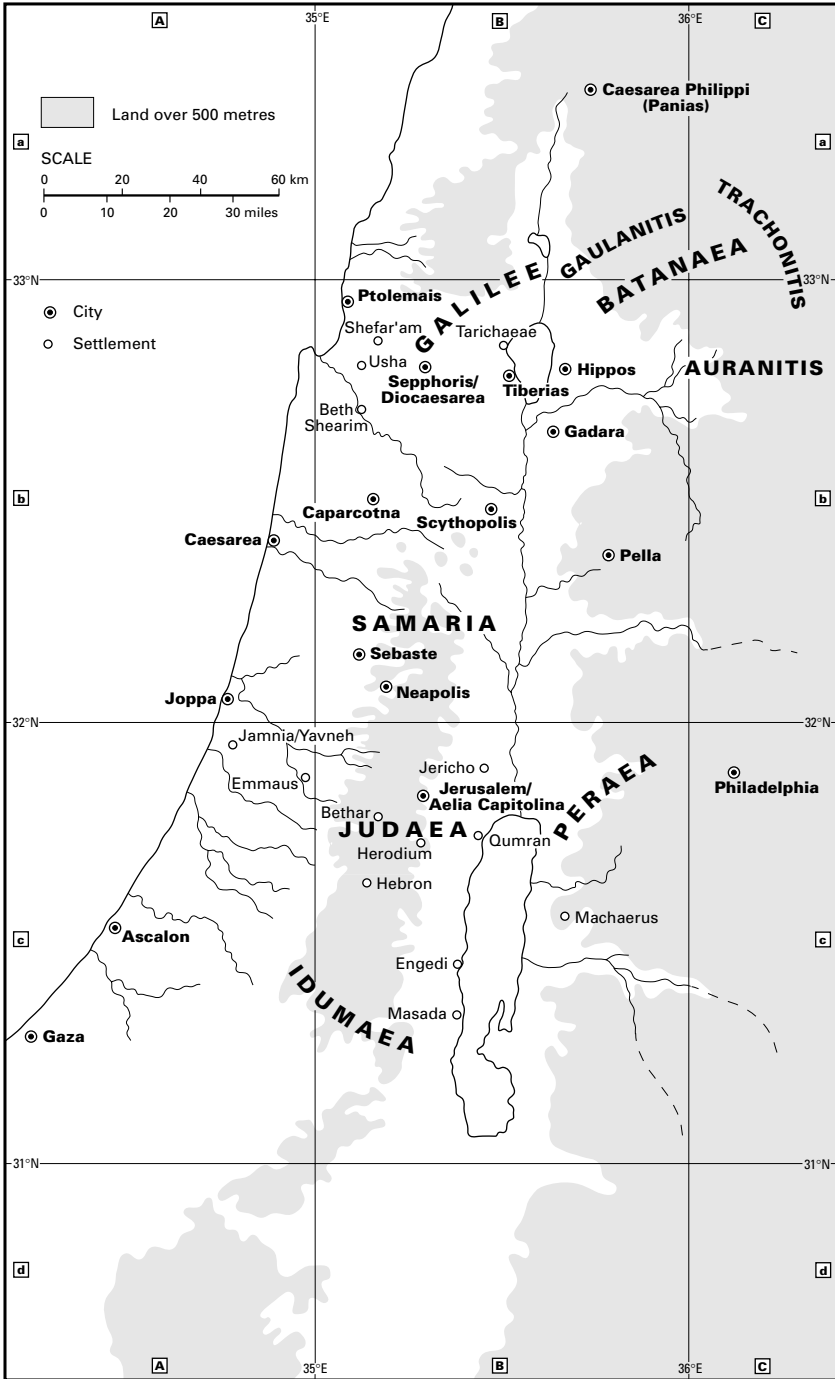
The shock of the defeat and the destruction of the Temple was carried into the diaspora communities where Jews seem to have been reluctant to lend aid to Judaea while the war was in progress. In Antioch, where tensions between Jews and gentiles may often have been high and had become particularly bitter in the spring of A.D. 67, the Jews were blamed for the outbreak of a fire which destroyed the civic record office in winter A.D. 70–1, but it was established that debtors were in fact responsible and Titus refused a request for the expulsion of Jews from the city. In Alexandria and, more seriously, in Cyrene, refugees from the war in A.D. 72 fomented disturbances which became quite serious despite the efforts of richer Jews to dampen excitement. In Cyrene the violence may have been exacerbated by the messianic aspirations of the Jews' leader, a certain Jonathan. Roman retaliation included the closure of the Jewish temple at Leontopolis in the Egyptian delta in A.D. 72 and its precincts in A.D. 73, even though the shrine had never been a centre of unrest since its foundation in the mid-second century B.C.

II. THE REBUILDING OF JUDAEA

Nearly all the main pillars of the structure of Judaeian society were destroyed in A.D. 70. Jerusalem, the Temple and the priesthood were in ruins. Nothing more is heard of the high-priestly families which had been pre-eminent before A.D. 66, apart from their deaths. The Sanhedrin ceased to exist and the old Jewish ruling class disappeared. The Herodian king

² On Flavian propaganda after the revolt, see Goodman (1987) ch. 10.

³ Joseph. *Bj* VII.216; cf. Isaac (1984). ⁴ On the excavations at Masada, see Yadin (1966).



Map 11 Judaea

Agrippa II, who had shown marked loyalty to Rome throughout the rebellion, remained in favour, but, although he was rewarded by the addition to his kingdom of territory in Arca in Lebanon and by the award of *ornamenta praetoria* in A.D. 75, he was given no authority over Jews; his position may have been somewhat weakened after A.D. 79. when his sister Berenice was peremptorily dismissed from Rome by her erstwhile lover Titus.

The social and religious structure of the society which emerged gradually in Palestine during the following century and a half was markedly different from what had preceded. The broad outlines of this society in its final form can be discerned quite clearly but the details of its development are much more hazy because of the lack of any narrative history of Jewish society in this period and the systematic distortion inherent in the descriptions which do survive. Pagan writers wrote little about Judaea except when the province appeared a military threat to the empire; when at peace the region was neither strategically nor economically significant. Christian authors from the mid-second century tended to view the Church as *verus Israel*, the true inheritors of the Jews of the Old Testament, tacitly accepting the implication that Jewish history had in effect ceased with the mission of Christ. The Jewish tradition preserved by the rabbinical schools distorts history rather differently in its assumption that rabbinic influence and ideals had been paramount since the time of Moses. The essentially ahistorical rabbinic notion that the law had been passed down unchanged from generation to generation causes major difficulty in sifting reliable information from the rest.⁵ In general it can be assumed that stories and laws ascribed to particular rabbis of this period are more likely to be accurately recorded if they are preserved in the tannaitic compilations (the Mishnah, Tosefta and tannaitic midrashim), which are usually believed to have reached their present form in the early third century A.D., than if they are preserved in later works, such as the two Talmuds, although it should be noted that the whole notion that such works were ever definitively edited has itself been called into question.⁶

What, then, was the nature of Jewish society in Palestine in the fifty years between A.D. 70 and the outbreak of the Bar Kochba War? It is likely that all Jews hoped, in vain, for the rapid rebuilding of the sanctuary in Jerusalem. Josephus in the 90s A.D. still assumed that the Temple and its priesthood were central elements of Jewish worship, as did the Christian author of I Clement, and priests retained their prestige and still received tithes, although their influence gradually declined as their religious functions faded into memory. But such yearning for a revival of national institutions was without effect. In practice authority in Jewish society became much more localized. The village scribes, whose prominence as skilled

⁵ On the transmission of Torah, see *m. Aboth* 1.

⁶ On these texts see Stemberger (1992); on their use as a historical source, see Goodman (1983) ch. 1; Neusner (1988); Schäfer (1986); Milikowsky (1988); Schäfer (1989).

interpreters of the Torah had, in any case, become marked while the Temple still stood, filled the vacuum left by the destruction of national life. Of these scribes much the most important were to be the rabbis.

According to later rabbinic tradition the timely escape and surrender by Yohanan b. Zakkai during the siege of Jerusalem persuaded the Romans to spare the lives of the sages in the academy in Yavneh (Jamnia), one of the detention centres set up by Titus during the war for upper-class deserters.⁷ Other rabbis, including Simon b. Gamaliel, the scion of the family of Hillel, had participated more fully in the revolt and disappear from history. In the generation after Yohanan the family of Hillel was restored to prominence when Rabban Gamaliel II became head of the academy in Yavneh. His leadership was not without challenge, perhaps particularly from priests such as R. Tarfon and from the pupils of Yohanan, and at one stage he was apparently temporarily deposed from his position in favour of R. Eleazar b. Azariah. The rabbis were much given to disputes on the interpretation of Torah. Such disputes could become quite bitter, although of only one rabbi, Eleazar b. Hyrcanus, is excommunication recorded.⁸

It is hard to be sure of the significance of such political manoeuvres among the rabbis in this period for the political or religious leadership of the nation as a whole. The rabbinical schools may have been connected in some way to the sect of the Pharisees whose views had carried much weight before A.D. 70, for at least some rabbis from the family of Hillel had been described as Pharisees in the earlier period; if so, it can be assumed that rabbis inherited much of the prestige as well as the ideas of their Pharisee forbears. On the other hand, many Jews were not Pharisees before A.D. 70 and there was no reason for a sudden conversion to such a philosophy at precisely this time; on the contrary, religious reactions to the destruction of the Temple were diverse (see below, p. 677). There is no specific evidence that the Roman state handed over any secular authority to rabbinic leaders. According to *m. Eduyot* 7:7 R. Gamaliel went once to the governor of Syria to receive *reshut*, but this Hebrew term can mean either 'authority' or 'permission' and is thus ambiguous here. There are many stories about a visit by four rabbis to Rome in c. A.D. 100 but for what purpose they travelled is quite unclear.⁹

It seems likely that the acceptance of rabbinic authority by Jews in Palestine was gradual and perhaps not even far advanced by A.D. 132 when the outbreak of revolt seems to have had no connection with the rabbinic leadership (see below, p. 671).¹⁰ Numerous factors contributed to the rabbis' eventual prominence. Not least important was the need by all Jews

⁷ See Neusner (1970).

⁸ For the political history of the rabbinic schools in this period, see Alon (1980–4).

⁹ E.g. *m. M.Sb.* 5.9.

¹⁰ For a different account of rabbinic authority in this period, see Goodblatt (1994).

for a trustworthy authority in the fixing of the calendar, and other religious factors will be examined below (p. 677). On a more general level there is no evidence that there were other organized Jewish groups in Judaea to compete with them. Such local administration as the Roman state required from native populations – the keeping of order and extraction of taxation – was entrusted by Vespasian to gentile cities founded or strengthened in the vicinity of Judaea: Flavia Neapolis in Samaria was to become a great city, Joppa became Flavia Joppa with a gentile majority in its population, and Caesarea, which remained the administrative headquarters of the province, was bolstered by the grant of the status of *colonia*.

III. THE DIASPORA REVOLT UNDER TRAJAN¹¹

Hostility to Rome among the Jews of the eastern Mediterranean diaspora did not end with the suppression of the disturbances which immediately followed the revolt. One cause of lingering resentment was the demeaning *fiscus Iudaicus*, which compelled all Jews, including those of the diaspora, to pay an annual poll tax to the Roman state, originally for the benefit of the temple of Capitoline Jupiter in Rome. The tax was quite heavy for poorer Jews with large households, and its rigorous exaction by Domitian must have caused much resentment since one of the boasts advertised by Nerva after his accession was *calumnia fisci Iudaici sublata*.¹² In Alexandria peculiar local conditions aggravated the insecurity of the Jews as in earlier times: the local Greeks blamed the Jews for their lack of control over their own affairs, accusing them of wielding undue influence on a gullible and philosemitic emperor. Such tensions exploded in A.D. 115 to 117 in Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus and Mesopotamia. Brief and somewhat divergent narratives of the revolt may be found in the epitome of Dio, in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (which is here derived from a pagan source) and, less usefully, in Orosius and in Eusebius' *Chronicon*. The contemporary but scanty evidence of Appian and others, and the papyri from Egypt and inscriptions and archaeological material found especially in Cyrene, have to be fitted into the narrative framework provided by these authors, as do the fragmentary remarks in rabbinic texts. The exceptional ferocity of the rebellion and its suppression may be explained in part on the Jewish side by the great size and long establishment of the Jewish population in the areas involved, and on the Roman side by Trajan's need to secure his rear during his campaign against Parthia.

The chronology of the rebellion differs in the two main sources. According to Dio, Trajan's failure to hold Mesopotamia encouraged the

¹¹ On the diaspora revolt, see Pucci (1981).

¹² On the impact of the *fiscus*, see Goodman (1989).

Jews of Cyrene to rise up. They were then imitated by Egyptian Jews. According to Eusebius, the Jews in Egypt and Cyrene began the uprising in the rear of Trajan's lines; Cypriot and then Mesopotamian Jews rebelled later. It is probable that Eusebius' account should be accepted since one Egyptian papyrus suggests that the revolt began there in A.D. 115 before Trajan's forces in Mesopotamia began to weaken in mid-summer A.D. 116.¹³

The fortunes of the rebels varied in the different areas involved. In Egypt the Jews overran much of the countryside in A.D. 115–16, but were more rapidly suppressed in Alexandria. The withdrawal from the Parthian campaign of Q. Marcius Turbo and a number of legions to deal with the threat shows how serious it was felt to be. Papyri reveal the participation of local pagan militia alongside the legions.¹⁴ In Cyrene many thousands of gentiles were killed, pagan temples were destroyed, and Dio even alleges that cannibalism was rife. In Cyprus, too, there was massive loss of life among the local gentiles and Salamis was razed. Little more is known about the events in Mesopotamia than the suppression of Jewish opposition by the consular Lusius Quietus. It is likely that the Jews simply participated in a general anti-Roman movement in the region and that many local inhabitants preferred lax Parthian rule to Trajan's hegemony.

The precise causes of the widespread violence may have been mixed. According to Dio, Rome treated the uprisings as purely nationalist and anti-Roman in intention, but local gentiles were much involved both actively and passively. Nor should religious motives be discounted, especially in Cyrene where temples were destroyed¹⁵ and either one or two leaders of obscure origin inspired the rebels, perhaps with messianic aspirations since, according to Eusebius, the leader called Lukuas called himself a king; a similar figure arose as leader of the Jews in Cyprus also, and the migration of many of the rebels in the direction of Palestine, leaving their homes and devastation behind them, may suggest a state of eschatological fervour. Finally, it is not impossible that the revolt was encouraged by the Parthians as a way to threaten Roman supply lines and divert troops from the campaign in Mesopotamia. But no evidence can be found for any grand plan among the diaspora Jews themselves, and the failure of the Jews of northern Syria to join the revolt despite their strategically nodal position suggests that there was little if any central organization.

Except in Mesopotamia, where the Jews saw Roman troops withdraw, the effect of the revolt on the Jews of the areas involved was cataclysmic. Jews were banished from the island of Cyprus, a ban still in force in the early third century. Evidence for Jewish settlement in the countryside of Egypt and Cyrene comes to an abrupt halt, although a few Jews were

¹³ *CPJ* II no. 435; this chronology is challenged by Barnes (1989), but see Horbury (1996).

¹⁴ *CPJ* II nos. 435–50. ¹⁵ Applebaum (1979); Goodman (1992).

attested again in Egypt from the late third century. The great community of Alexandria seems to have largely disappeared and the great synagogue was destroyed, although according to the *Acta Pauli et Antonini* the Greek struggle against the Jews for political rights still continued under Hadrian, which suggests that Jews still lived in or near the city for a time.¹⁶ In the rest of the diaspora, however, no reaction can be discerned in the exiguous evidence. In Asia Minor, for instance, pagan city councillors are found among the contributors to a Jewish institution recorded in the synagogue at Aphrodisias, probably also in the second or early third centuries.¹⁷ Such serene coexistence is in marked contrast to the violence of the revolt under Trajan.

IV. THE BAR KOCHBA WAR¹⁸

The Jews of Palestine do not seem to have participated very much, if at all, in the momentous events of A.D. 115–17, despite clear evidence that the Romans anticipated possible trouble in the region. According to Eusebius, potential leaders of the line of David were being hunted down in Palestine already in the time of Vespasian and Domitian and again in the time of Trajan.¹⁹ In c. A.D. 117, according to the *Historia Augusta*, the Jews of Palestine *rebeldes animos efferebant*.²⁰ In A.D. 117 Lusius Quietus was appointed as consular governor of the province after the suppression of Jewish rebels in Mesopotamia, and by A.D. 120 at the latest an extra permanent legion had been drafted into the area and stationed at Caparcotna, so that a sizeable proportion of the total military force of the empire was committed to the prevention of unrest by the Palestinian Jews.²¹ But no Greek or Latin source refers to fighting in the Jewish homeland in these years and rabbinic references are scanty and ambiguous: the Mishnah mentions a ‘war of Quietus’ and in *Megillat Taanit* there is a reference to ‘Trajan’s day’ as a day of rejoicing, but these need not concern events in Palestine since the rabbis will have been well aware of the horrific struggle of their compatriots in the diaspora; rabbinic texts preserve various traditions about two martyrs, Iulianus and Pappus, who are said to have died under Trajan, but their deaths could have occurred anywhere.²²

Rebellion, thus averted in A.D. 115–17, broke out on a huge scale in A.D. 132. Jewish and non-Jewish sources alike attribute the leadership of the revolt to a certain Bar Kochba. The struggle over which he presided was one of the most costly campaigns suffered by Rome in the second century. The immediate causes, the course and the geographical extent of the Bar

¹⁶ See Musurillo (1954) no. ix. ¹⁷ Reynolds and Tannenbaum (1987).

¹⁸ On the Bar Kochba War, see esp. Schäfer (1981).

¹⁹ Euseb. *Hist. Ecl.* III.12, 19–20, 32 (citing Hegesippus). ²⁰ *HA Hadr.* 5.2.

²¹ See Isaac and Roll (1979). ²² *m.Sot.* 9:14; *Megillat Taanit* 29.

Kochba War are in doubt. No narrative of the revolt survives from antiquity – the epitome of Dio provides only a general description, and Eusebius' account is mostly derived from Dio.²³ Comments by contemporaries reveal little more than that a war occurred. The rabbinic sources, which contain many observations on the revolt, often in the name of sages who flourished in the generation after the war, are mostly concerned either with Bar Kochba as a leader, or with the attitudes of the rabbis towards the revolt, or with the aftermath of the revolt; many of the stories on these matters in the later compilations are highly fanciful and may have no historical kernel at all.²⁴ Archaeology has revealed little of the Roman operations, although siege works have been found at Bethar (see below, p. 674), but the organization and ideology of the rebels have been much illuminated by finds of underground hiding-places, in or near settlements, which were probably used by the insurgents, and by analysis of the coinage they produced.²⁵ Much the most useful discovery was that of the documents and sometimes the bones of the last victims of the Roman pacification who took refuge in isolated caves in the Judaeian desert.²⁶

As cause of the revolt a general hatred of Rome as destroyer of the Temple cannot be doubted. In rabbinic texts Rome was equated with the wicked Edom of biblical times, and it is hard to find a favourable comment about Rome in any Jewish text after A.D. 100 (although the favourable picture of Hadrian given by the probably Jewish author of the Fifth Sibylline Oracle should be noted).²⁷ Economic distress may have aggravated resentment since the destruction of Jerusalem as a great market for goods will hardly have been offset for Judaeian farmers by the presence of a Roman garrison. It is possible that the ill effects of land confiscations carried out after A.D. 70 still lingered and are reflected in the *sikarikon* laws (see below, p. 675), although the involvement in the rebellion of a wealthy woman called Babata, whose documents were found in the Judaeian desert, suggests that some rich Jews shared in the opposition to Rome.²⁸ It may also be relevant that Hadrian interfered directly in the province with an unprecedented flurry of new road-building.²⁹

According to the *Historia Augusta*, Hadrian provoked the revolt by instituting a ban on circumcision.³⁰ The ban was intended to apply over the whole empire and was linked to the emperor's concern to prevent other forms of mutilation such as castration, but circumcision was widely considered in the Roman world as a Jewish custom above all and it seems

²³ Dio LXIX.12–14; Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* IV.5–6. ²⁴ See Schäfer (1990).

²⁵ On the hiding-places see Kloner and Tepper (1987); on the coins see Mildenberg (1984).

²⁶ Yadin (1971).

²⁷ See in general Hadas-Lebel (1990); on the Fifth Sibylline Oracle, see Collins (1974).

²⁸ For these documents, see Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba*.

²⁹ See Isaac and Roll (1982). ³⁰ *HA Hadr.* 14.2.

unlikely that Hadrian can have taken such action without anticipating some Jewish responses. More plausible is Dio's statement that the cause of the war was the emperor's decision to turn Jerusalem into a new pagan city with the name Aelia Capitolina.³¹ Eusebius states that Aelia was founded only after the revolt as a punishment for the Jews, but coins of the city have been found in hoards with coins of Bar Kochba and seem to have been produced before A.D. 135; it is possible that the conferment of *colonia* status on the city occurred after the outbreak of revolt and was intended to penalize the rebels.³² The founding of Aelia was consistent with Hadrian's behaviour elsewhere in the empire and was presumably a result of his visit to the province two years before. This insult to the holy city explains the programme proclaimed on the rebels' coins: they fought for the freedom of Jerusalem. If Dio gave the correct cause of the war it may be that the circumcision ban was itself a punishment after its suppression or that both causes were combined, but no ancient evidence is available for either of these possibilities.

Nothing is known about the first stages of the rebellion, although early Jewish successes against the Romans are likely, which suggests that some time had been spent in preparations. As to the geographical scope of the war, most of the evidence refers to the part of Judaea closest to Jerusalem and the Dead Sea. It has been argued that parts of northern Palestine were also involved because talmudic texts refer to Jews having suffered in Galilee in this period, but these may concern persecution after the war. Some subterranean hideouts like those found in Judaea have now been discovered in Galilee, in some cases with coins of Bar Kochba, but this is consonant with use by bandits after the war, when the rebels' coins may have retained some exchange value among Jews regardless of the attitude of the imperial government.³³ In Judaea itself Appian and Eusebius state that Jerusalem was captured and rabbinic sources record a plan to rebuild the Temple, but it is strange that the epitome of Dio does not mention this, that no archaeological evidence, not even a modicum of coins, has been found to give it support, and that the letters found in the Judaeian desert refer to Herodium not Jerusalem as the rebels' headquarters, while the last stronghold was not Jerusalem but Bethar. On the other hand, the archaeological record of Jerusalem between A.D. 70 and A.D. 312 is in any case scanty, and the coins minted with the mysterious legend 'Eleazar ha Cohen' may suggest hopes for the imminent reconstruction of the Temple.³⁴ The summons to C. Julius Severus from Britain to take over the command in Judaea in A.D. 134, and his subsequent reward of *ornamenta triumphalia*, demonstrate the seriousness of the rebellion in Roman eyes. The paucity of references to the

³¹ Dio LXIX.12.1–2. ³² See Geiger (1976).

³³ For arguments in favour of the involvement of Galilee, see Oppenheimer (1991).

³⁴ For these coins, see Mildenberg (1984).

war in contemporary Roman texts probably reflects the reluctance of the imperial government to make a great public issue over an inglorious campaign of little propaganda value: the rebellion did not fit well with Hadrian's self-image as the benevolent patron of the provincials. The size of the Roman forces was large but cannot be more accurately determined: inscriptions reveal that units were sent to the war from legions based in Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Moesia and Pannonia, but how many men served in each detachment cannot be ascertained. The participation of the praetorian cohorts was occasioned by the presence of the emperor on the campaign. Legio XXII Deiotariana, which fought in the war, is not heard of again, but it cannot be assumed that it was destroyed: legions were disbanded for various reasons at other periods and places in the early empire.³⁵ On the Jewish side it is probable that guerilla warfare was favoured since no fortress capable of withstanding a long siege, as Jerusalem had done in A.D. 70, was available. The defence of Bethar, which lay on a Roman military road, was presumably a last resort.

All sources agree on the charismatic leadership of the rebels by Simon bar Kosiba. Letters written by him found in the Judaeian desert reveal his fierce insistence on discipline and the imposition of an organized state structure which encompassed the leasing of state lands for the benefit of the Jewish authorities.³⁶ The letters also show a marked enthusiasm for religious observances on sabbaths and festivals, and it may be that the term 'brothers', which was used as a standard form of address among the rebels, reflected a spirit of religious comradeship. Later rabbinic sources attributed to Bar Kosiba both messianic aims and the support of R. Akiba, but there is no contemporary evidence for either of these factors.

V. JEWISH SETTLEMENT, 135-193

Roman reprisals after the war were thorough, as the legendary fate of Bethar and the bones found in the Judaeian desert caves bear witness. Many survivors were enslaved.³⁷ According to Dio, 50 towns and 785 villages were destroyed. Rabbinic tradition also records the martyrdom of a number of sages, including the great teacher R. Akiba, in a period of persecution in which many forms of Jewish religious behaviour, including study of the Torah, observance of the sabbath and circumcision, were forbidden. Some of these stories may be literary inventions harking back to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes (see *CAH* VIII² pp. 346-7) but the prohibition of circumcision was real enough: only after Hadrian's death did Jews receive permission to circumcise their own sons (but not proselytes). But the most drastic feature of Roman retaliation was more long-lasting. Jews were for-

³⁵ Keppie (1990); on Roman reactions in general, see Bowersock (1980).

³⁶ Benoit, Milik and De Vaux (1960) no. 24. ³⁷ Dio LXIX.14.3.

bidden to reside in Aelia Capitolina and its territory.³⁸ In a move very unusual in Roman provincial administration Hadrian thus excluded Jews from their homeland and holiest site. Coins celebrated the Roman city, populated by local Syrians and a few veterans, erected over Jerusalem, and a temple dedicated to Hadrian was built on the Temple mount. The image of Judaea on Hadrian's coins issued in A.D. 135 is a Greek figure.³⁹ The new name of the province, Syria-Palestina, was normally if not consistently used after this date; it, too, celebrated the purging of the Jewish heritage from the land. Archaeological surveys confirm a considerable depopulation of Judaea in this period.

Rome took no more chances with the Jews of the region. Governors appointed for the rest of the century were senior generals. A rising under Antoninus Pius, recorded by the *Historia Augusta*, was probably of local significance since it has left no other trace.⁴⁰ Jews were caught up like other eastern provincials in the bid for power by Avidius Cassius in A.D. 175. But in general peace prevailed.

The focus of Jewish settlement after the exclusion from Jerusalem and its environs was Galilee. An unknown proportion of the refugees must have fled into the diaspora. Some Jewish villages could still be found in the fourth century and after in southern Judaea and Idumaea, the area referred to in rabbinic texts as the *darom* or south and in Eusebius' *Onomasticon* as the *daromas*, and it is possible that some of these settlements had retained a continuous Jewish presence throughout the Roman period.⁴¹ Substantial Jewish minorities were to be found in the cities of the coastal plain; they are particularly well attested in Joppa and in Caesarea, where there was a flourishing rabbinic school by the third century.⁴² But the biggest influx of refugees was to Galilee, where new settlements mushroomed as a result.⁴³ In Galilee alone, the *sikarikon* law, by which the rabbis tried to discourage Jews from buying lands from gentiles in case they infringed the rights of previous owners who had been expropriated by Rome, was kept in force. Elsewhere the law was waived in order to encourage Jews to buy property in the holy land at whatever cost.⁴⁴

Among the immigrants to Galilee were the sages of Yavneh, about whose rabbinic academy nothing more is known after the war. Later tradition depicted the scholars as settling soon after the revolt and the cessation of persecution in Usha, a village on the western fringes of Galilee. In the following decades they moved gradually further east to Beth Shearim, Shefar'am, Sepphoris and Tiberias. Such a large resident rabbinic presence in Galilee was probably novel, although rabbis had doubtless maintained some contact with the area before A.D. 135, but over the following century

³⁸ Justin Martyr, 1 *Apol.* 47.6. ³⁹ Kadman (1956). ⁴⁰ *H.A.M. Ant.* 5.4.

⁴¹ Schwartz (1986). ⁴² Levine (1975). ⁴³ Goodman (1983) ch. 3; Oppenheimer (1991).

⁴⁴ See *m. Gitt.* 5:6; *t. Gitt.* 3:10.

rabbinic authority in secular as well as religious matters was to become highly regarded and possibly paramount for the indigenous inhabitants of the area as much as for the immigrants and their descendants.

Prime prestige and authority rested with the rabbinic *nasi*, who is described in Greek and Latin texts as ethnarch or patriarch of the Jews.⁴⁵ By the early third century A.D. the burial place of the patriarch's relatives at Beth Shearim had become a major necropolis for Jews from all over Palestine and parts of the Diaspora.⁴⁶ According to Origen, writing in the 240s, this Jewish leader was able to put felons to death, and 'although the Romans do not give permission for this, they do not forbid it either'.⁴⁷ From the mid-second century this position was a privilege of the descendants of Hillel, restoring the family to the prominence achieved by R. Gamaliel II in Yavneh (see above, p. 668). But the ability of the patriarch to act as autocrat among the rabbis was challenged more than once in the Galilean academies until the powerful R. Judah ha Nasi established his pre-eminence in the later years of the second century and consolidated his authority by effecting acceptance of his compilation of Jewish law, the Mishnah, as a semi-sacred text on the explication of which much future rabbinic debate about the Torah would be based. It seems to have been during the career of R. Judah that the descent of Hillel, and therefore the patriarchs, from David was first mooted.

The relationship between rabbinic and secular leaders in Galilee is little known and may have varied. The city of Sepphoris, renamed Diocaesarea by Antoninus Pius, was perhaps controlled by pagans, but Tiberias may well have retained Jewish magistrates throughout the second century despite the minting of conventional pagan coin types. The rabbinic texts themselves assume the existence of non-rabbinic administrators in the villages, but since much of the relevant civil law recorded in the Mishnah accords well with Jewish law in practice as found in legal documents from the Judean desert, the choice of court for arbitration on such matters may have depended on convenience only. By the late fourth century A.D. the secular power at least of the patriarch, if not of other rabbis, was undoubted. By that date the patriarch was an international figure who acted as a focal point for diaspora as well as Palestinian Jews. Accorded the status of praetorian prefect by the Roman emperor, he enjoyed the right to tax all Jews and conversed with Roman officials on equal terms. Whether R. Judah ha Nasi enjoyed so high a degree of Roman recognition is dubious, but legends about his conversations with an emperor named, rather unspecifically, Antoninus may reflect considerable *de facto* influence with the imperial authorities.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Discussions with differing views in Goodman (1983) 111–18; Goodblatt (1994); Levine (1996).

⁴⁶ See Mazar, Schwabe and Lifshitz (1973–4). ⁴⁷ Origen, *Ep. ad Africanum* 14.

⁴⁸ See Krauss (1910).

The gradual emergence of this new national institution was the result of a new attitude by Rome towards the Jews of Palestine. Left alone in peace in the Galilean hills, an independent, idiosyncratic Jewish culture was to flourish even as the Roman state faced the political turmoil of the third century.

VI. RELIGIOUS CHANGES

This period witnessed some quite significant changes in the religious attitudes of Jews as they tried to make sense of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The author of the apocalyptic vision in IV Ezra, which was written under Domitian, preached an imminent end to the world. II Baruch, possibly written at about the same time, saw the catastrophe as divine punishment for sin and counselled a return to the Torah. It is probable that other strands of Judaism, not reflected in the exiguous literature of this period preserved through the Christian and later Jewish traditions, preached yet other reactions. But of most long-lasting significance from these years was the formation of rabbinic Judaism, the type of Judaism which has remained normative among Jews to modern times. In place of the great heterogeneity of the era before A.D. 70, rabbinic Jews began a process of religious self-definition parallel to the contemporary development within Christianity. In the process many forms of Judaism came to be defined by what became the rabbinic mainstream as heresy (*minut*), although less effort seems to have been spent on the negative requirement to combat rival philosophies than on the development of rabbinic thought itself, and wide scope was still left for disagreement between teachers who functioned within the rabbinic system: one of the characteristics of the Mishnah is the common recording of divergent views, often without explicit indication of the authoritative ruling, and the disputes between the houses of Hillel and Shammai continued after A.D. 70 (see *CAH*^{x2} p. 765).⁴⁹ Among the beliefs found incompatible with Jewish piety was belief in the divinity of Jesus, and the definitive split between Christianity and Judaism is probably to be dated to the fifty years or so after A.D. 70. Evidence about the Essenes and Sadducees disappears from soon after A.D. 70, and no more is known about the sectarians at Qumran; lack of evidence does not in itself prove the demise of these groups during the first or second century, but it is certain that they no longer existed by the fourth.⁵⁰

To what extent the success of rabbinic teachings constituted a victory for Pharisaism depends on the much disputed nature of that philosophy (see *CAH*^{x2} pp. 764–5). In the concept of an oral law given to Moses on Mt Sinai in conjunction with the written Torah,⁵¹ the rabbis had an

⁴⁹ See Cohen (1984); Goodman (1996). ⁵⁰ Goodman (1994). ⁵¹ See, e.g., Schiffman (1991).

excellent tool for adaptation to changing circumstances, of which the most pressing was the destruction of the Temple, which left Jews bereft of their main link to the divine. By the fourth century rabbis taught that private piety in the careful observance of the Torah could, with prayer, study and charity, take the place of the Temple sacrifices. In the Mishnah the laws discussed are wide-ranging, covering the rules governing festivals and the sabbath, rules about the tithing and purity of food, and the conduct of the Temple cult, in addition to more secular concerns (i.e. criminal and civil law). It is hard to know how representative such a law code may be of the main religious concerns of the rabbis, but it is striking that, if the Temple law is excluded as theoretical since there was no real prospect of a rebuilt shrine when the Mishnah was compiled in *c.* A.D. 200, individual sanctity through which a man could atone for misdeeds and request divine aid is seen to lie in study and prayer and in the observance of dietary laws and preservation of the greatest possible purity in family life.⁵²

In time the sanctity of the Temple would be partly replicated in the sanctity of synagogues, but it is not likely that this occurred rapidly, or indeed within the period covered by this volume.⁵³ Synagogues functioned as places for the reading of the Law. For such a purpose any large space would suffice, and there is no evidence that fine edifices were erected for this purpose in Palestinian villages in the second century A.D. any more than before A.D. 70. By contrast prominent synagogue buildings became widespread in Galilee from the late third century A.D. In this respect Palestine lagged behind the Diaspora, where distance from the Temple had often encouraged ascription of sanctity to synagogues before A.D. 70 and the mid-third-century building at Dura Europus reveals a well-established tradition of synagogue art and architecture.⁵⁴

⁵² See the useful selection from early rabbinic texts in Maccoby (1988). ⁵³ Levine (1987).

⁵⁴ Kraeling (1956).

CHAPTER 23

THE LAND

PETER GARNSEY

I. INTRODUCTION

In the Graeco-Roman world land was the source of subsistence and of wealth. Land was looked to primarily for food. Other goods derived from the land directly, such as metals and timber, or indirectly, such as clothing and containers, will not be discussed in this chapter. Though important, they were lower priorities than food.

Food made up the major part of surplus production. For the very few whose estates produced more than enough of it, food was the main medium of profit and of power. For the rest of the population, most of whom were employed on the land but had only a limited stake in it, life revolved around the frequently desperate search for food. Production of food was hindered by a combination of natural and man-made constraints. Staple foods were in relatively short supply and were distributed in accordance with wealth and status rather than need.

Food, therefore, was a much more vital concern then than it is now, at any rate in the developed West. A comparison between ancient societies and contemporary developing countries might have more point (was Graeco-Roman antiquity a 'third world?'), or between antiquity and the pre-modern era in the West, before it slipped the net of famine, food shortage and malnutrition. One does not have to go far back in European history to encounter societies in the grip of chronic malnutrition, the consequence of poor diets and excessive claims on diet due to exposure to disease. It was only after the mid-eighteenth century that 'normal' endemic malnutrition, itself the main cause of very high mortality levels, began to lose its hold on European countries, including Britain. As for the Mediterranean (the heartland of the Roman empire, and still in the period of the high empire the main focus of interest for the historian of classical antiquity), it was a thesis of Fernand Braudel that the fragility of food resources was a permanent condition of the region from antiquity to the early modern period.¹

¹ Braudel (1972–3), e.g. I 244: 'Yields were small, and in view of the limited space devoted to cereal growing, the Mediterranean was always on the verge of famine.'

This chapter begins with an assessment of the food-producing capacities of the territories making up the Roman empire (in particular its Mediterranean base) and the manner in which they were tapped, against the background of the opportunities offered and constraints imposed by the physical environment. Consideration is given then to developments in the agrarian economy in our period; expansion of the area under cultivation and the issue of technological progress; patterns of land-holding and methods of managing and working the land; and, finally, agricultural productivity.

II. CLIMATE AND CROP

Climate (especially rainfall and temperature) and terrain (topographical conditions and soil textures) establish the range of foods that are potentially available and can be most successfully grown. They provide the context in which choices are made, within the limits set by the state of technology and agronomic knowledge and by the cultural traditions and requirements of a society. These cultural constraints receive attention from Georges Duby in his introduction to the agrarian economy of early medieval France:

It is unnecessary to believe that a society is sustained by whatever is most successfully produced by the land where it is located. Rather, a society is the prisoner of customs that are handed down from generation to generation and are changed only with difficulty. In other words, it harnesses its resources to break down the resistance of soil and climate in order to procure for itself to the best of its ability the foodstuffs that social custom and religious rite compel it to consume.²

Duby allows that local customs can be subverted, even if only ‘with difficulty’. Under Greek and then Roman influence, agricultural regimes and cultural practices, including alien patterns of food consumption, were transplanted from their natural habitat in the Mediterranean to areas of temperate Europe where climatic conditions (humid summers, cold winters) were different and to some extent less favourable. The vine was received in France (where it flourished) and Britain, the olive in the Midi.³

The thesis that climate and terrain provide a necessary backdrop, but no more, against which an analysis of land-use, crop choice and dietary practices can proceed, can only be accepted with qualifications. It fits the rich better than ordinary people, especially the poor. While the former could afford experiment and diversity, the latter were much less able to escape the constraints of the physical environment, and were therefore a force of resistance to change. It should be no surprise to find that people who lived

² Duby (1973) 26. On food, diet and culture see Garnsey (1999).

³ On these developments see Dion (1959), and more briefly, de Planhol (1988); Brun (1986).

in the backblocks of Asia Minor, according to Galen the doctor from Pergamum in the second century A.D., produced and consumed the cereals that grew well in their part of the world, however distasteful they might have been to the cultivated palates of Galen and his Pergamene friends:

But I have seen in Thrace and Macedonia many fields with a crop having a very similar appearance to our *tiphe* in Asia . . . From this grain [sc., *brizā*] a black bread is made with an unpleasant smell of the sinewy character described by Mnesitheus . . . In the most wintry parts of Bithynia there is a grain called *ζεοपुरον* . . . The names of the cities in which this grain is grown are Nicaea and Prusa, Crassopolis and Claudiopolis, Heliopolis and Doryle, which is a city right at the limits of Asian Phrygia. Phrygia itself has a grain of this kind growing in the fields, just as the other cities nearby have. It should be noted that the bread which is made from this grain is as much better than the bread made from Thracian and Macedonian *brizā* as it is worse than wheat bread.

(VI.511–15)

Since the Neolithic revolution, cultivated cereals have been the main source of food energy for the settled populations of the Mediterranean. By a recent estimate, some 70 to 75 per cent of the calorific needs of most people may have been supplied from cereals.⁴ The vast majority of the population must have depended heavily on cereals and dry legumes (which tend to be overlooked in discussions of food-consumption in antiquity) also for protein, for meat was relatively scarce. In short, large quantities of cereals and other seed-crops were consumed by the lower classes in particular. The rich could afford a diet more varied and somewhat less dominated by cereals.

‘Cereals’ is shorthand for the wide variety of wheats and barleys, and diverse less important crops (millets, oats, rye, etc.). However, wheat increasingly won the ‘competition’ with barley as food for humans. This was the case especially in the towns: for peasants tended to grow lesser cereals for their own consumption and wheat for the city-dwellers. As Galen reports: ‘I myself have seen countryfolk in Cyprus eating barley meal though they grow a lot of wheat’ (VI.507). Meanwhile, naked wheats, and in particular bread wheat (*triticum aestivum*), outstripped the husked wheats in popularity, as bread gradually displaced porridge, *polenta*, *puls*, as the preferred way of consuming cereals, especially among urban dwellers and military personnel.⁵ In north Gaul, south-east Britain and other parts of temperate Europe, a noteworthy increase in the cultivation of bread-wheat followed the expansion of agriculture onto the heavier, wetter soils of valley bottoms.⁶

Vines and olives make up, along with cereals, ‘the Mediterranean triad’,

⁴ Foxhall and Forbes (1982) 74. ⁵ Sallares (1991) 313–60.

⁶ Jones (1989); Groenman-van Waateringe (1989).

the basis of the traditional agricultural regime. None of these cultigens was grown everywhere or with equal success. The zone of the olive tree in particular is restricted. But where olives grow in profusion, they can be assumed to have reduced the contribution of cereals to the diet. In Crete immediately after the Second World War, olive oil provided about 29 per cent of total calories, only 10 per cent behind cereals (which, however, provided 47 per cent of total protein).⁷ In antiquity, olive oil was the major source of fats and oils as well as of lighting and soap.

There is a case for expanding the triad to accommodate dry legumes, which have traditionally played a subsidiary but crucial role in the diet. The most significant of these for human consumption were broad beans, peas, chickpeas and lentils. They supplied vital nutrients in which cereals are deficient (such as calcium, vitamin B₂ and the amino acid lysine), and in their traditional role as ‘the poor man’s meat’ made a significant contribution to the protein intake of ordinary people. Broad beans are more prevalent than any other plant food in recent finds at Pompeii. Across the Bay of Naples at Puteoli, recently unearthed wooden tablets reveal the import in bulk into Italy, presumably ultimately for the Roman market, of several species of dry legumes from Egypt. Official records of food distributions in late Hellenistic Taormina in Sicily, a province better known for its wheat, show that the responsible magistrates, called *sitophylakes*, handed out broad beans (*kuamoi*).⁸

Most countrymen are assumed to have eaten some meat, pig being the animal most easily raised, and having nothing else (apart from lard) to offer the consumer. As Varro wrote of Italians (but of all classes?): ‘Who of our people cultivates a farm without keeping swine?’⁹ In general, in the context of the Mediterranean agricultural economy, meat and other foods of animal origin were in short supply and of minor importance in the diets of the mass of the population. In temperate Europe, meat was always of greater significance. Archaeologists have identified an upsurge in our period in animal husbandry in Britain, Gaul and the Danubian provinces. More and larger animals were raised for food and non-food uses, in the first instance to meet the demands of the Roman garrisons.¹⁰

Finally, the hunting and gathering of ‘wild’ foods from the *incolto* (woodland, maquis, marsh), not to mention rivers and the sea, was then, as now, carried out where practicable. The quantities consumed varied both with the availability of such resources and with the success of agriculture in

⁷ Allbaugh (1953) 131. Olive oil and olives were of course consumed together with bread, and wheat was often intercultivated in olive-groves.

⁸ Legumes are treated in detail as a field crop in writers on botany, agriculture and medicine (cf. Galen, VI.525–46). See Meyer (1980), Pompeii; *AE* 1972 nos. 86–7, Puteoli; *IG* XIV 423–9, Taormina; cf. Hebblethwaite (1983); Garnsey (1998b). ⁹ Varro, *Rust.* II.4.3.

¹⁰ Grant (1989); Bokonyi (1988); Smrcka *et al.* (1988).

providing adequate supplies of basic foods. Even so, 'wild' foods, fish included, were most satisfactorily used to complement rather than replace staples.¹¹

In the ancient Mediterranean, rainfed agriculture was the norm. Irrigation (outside Egypt and Mesopotamia) has traditionally been marginal. However, it is clear that rivers were a source of water, especially for wet pasture-lands but also for cereal cultivation, for example in the Po valley (where centuriation and field divisions are visible over wide areas). Proximity to a river carried risks, since floods could destroy property and reduce the amount of arable that could be profitably farmed, and careful drainage was always essential. In addition, gardens and orchards benefited from the water of nearby springs and wells. Otherwise, irrigation is best attested in the context of the 'run-off' agriculture of the interior of the North African provinces where an elaborate infrastructure of cisterns, dams, barrages, canals and terrace walls made crop and tree growth possible in the high steppe and pre-desert zones.¹²

As a rule, then, the growth-cycle of seed crops has to coincide with rainfall which is highly seasonal and occurs mainly in the winter months. Most cereals and pulses were therefore winter-sown. There is a Turkish saying: 'He who sows spring wheat is hungry every year; he who sows winter wheat is hungry only every ten years.'¹³

A climate qualifies as 'pure' Mediterranean (roughly speaking) if more than three times as much rain falls in the winter as in the summer months, and if a dry summer season is experienced in which the driest month receives virtually no precipitation.¹⁴ Such conditions occur only in restricted areas of the Mediterranean basin. This is not surprising, since much of the region lies to the north of 40 degrees latitude, that is above the subtropical latitudes. Thus a true Mediterranean climate is to be found in the borderlands of the sea and the islands in the east and south, in the extremities of the peninsulas, and in isolated pockets elsewhere (as on the Kerch peninsula in the Black Sea). Parts of Spain, northern Italy and the Tyrrhenian or west coast, southern France and the northern Balkans have patterns of rainfall which reflect continental as well as subtropical Mediterranean conditions: they experience an autumn rather than winter maximum and a secondary maximum in spring. Here, dependence on winter-sown crops is reduced. Late-season sowing of catch-crops is possible; fast-growing cereals or legumes can be planted in April for summer harvesting. More complex agricultural regimes incorporating simple rotation systems are feasible as an

¹¹ Frayn (1979) ch. 4; Evans (1980); Gallant (1985).

¹² Hitchner (1988) 39–40; (1989) 398–400; cf. Shaw (1991b). For drainage and marshes, see Traina (1988); Leveau (1993), (1994). ¹³ Tumerteken (1955) 78.

¹⁴ Trewartha (1981) 281. General studies of the physical environment of the Mediterranean include Semple (1932); Walker (1962); Birot and Dresch (1964); Smith (1979).

alternative to the basic sequence of cereal and fallow (biennial or longer) common in the drier south.

In such areas of transitional climate, as in mountainous areas everywhere, crops are more at risk from low temperatures and frost than from low rainfall (though the Black Sea region, for example, is also drought-prone); the winter growing season is shortened, and the cultivation of more cold-resistant cereals is required. Galen, as we saw earlier, is informative and uncomplimentary about cold-region cereals.

Rye was grown successfully in sub-continental northern Italy, and increasingly in our period in temperate Europe across the Alps and in Britain, along with oats and (mainly for the benefit of the Roman army) bread-wheat.

The olive most clearly marks the limits of the 'Mediterranean climate'. It needs a dry season in which to develop its oil content, and a cool winter in which to rest. It does not tolerate frost, and is normally therefore not grown successfully above about 800 metres.¹⁵ Seed crops, though not the preferred cereals wheat and barley, reach their limit around 1,500–1,800 metres. In the northern Mediterranean, the 'olive-line' follows the sea coast, penetrating little inland except in Italy and Spain. In the Balkan peninsula the olive is not found further north than the Macedonian plain, Chalcidice and southern Thrace. In Italy it grows on the foothills of the central Apennines but no higher or further north, except in Venetia at the head of the Adriatic. In Spain, it reaches the southern edge of the central Cordillera, and penetrates the Ebro valley. The transitional climates, too cold in winter and wet in summer for the olive, are less hostile to the vine. Indeed the vine was widely distributed throughout the Roman empire, including the north-western provinces. It is, however, a labour-intensive crop, does not flourish everywhere, and can be grown at the height of 500–1,000 metres only on insulated sheltered slopes.

In the semi-arid regions in the south and east of the Mediterranean the wet season is short and abruptly terminating, and total precipitation is dangerously close to the threshold for the most drought-resistant crops, notably barley (requiring around 250 millimetres). Wheat (requiring around 350 millimetres) is vulnerable, dry legumes (for the most part requiring 400–450 millimetres) an even greater risk. The olive can survive in zones with rainfall as low as 200 millimetres (while preferring 400–600 millimetres). Its root system is broad but shallow. Best results are achieved (as with the vine) if the tree is encouraged by trenching to root deeply and tap the resources of moisture that lie below the surface soil. The cereals are shallow-rooted, and the size of the harvest will depend upon the climate of any particular year and the quality of the surface soil, except in so far as water has been stored up from one year to the next by fallow.

¹⁵ Pansiot and Rebour (1961) 40–4.

The crop threshold figures cited above are approximations. Ideally, they should be adjusted to take account of, for example, rates of evapotranspiration, which will vary from place to place. In any case, the figures need to be broken down and set against the growth cycle of particular plants. Low rainfall in the autumn weakens the plant, cuts short growth during tillering, reduces the number of heads per plant and lowers yield. Crop-size will similarly be deleteriously affected if sowing is delayed following poor autumn rains. In contrast, heavy autumn and winter rain hampers growth by leaching nitrogen and compacting the soil. However, the most crucial months for cereal production are February, March and April, covering the period from the beginning of earing to the formation of soft dough. As Arnon writes, specifically in connection with wheat: 'Adequate rainfall during these months, coming after . . . winter, promotes rapid growth of the crop under favourable conditions, and provides sufficient moisture to carry the crop along to maturity. By early May, the crop either has enough water to enable it to mature or it has suffered so badly that above-average rainfall in May can no longer affect the situation.'¹⁶ However, the maturing process can be severely impeded by a rapid rise in temperature as often in May in North Africa when a sirocco blows from the south and south-east.

If rainfall in the Mediterranean tends to decrease as one passes from north to south, so western regions are wetter than eastern. This follows from their greater exposure to the dominant, west-originating frontal systems. The lee depressions moving south-east from the Gulf of Genoa are the most important source of rainfall (74 per cent) for the region stretching from the east Spanish littoral to the Aegean Sea.¹⁷ The central and eastern Basins, situated off the coast of Messenia, and over Cyprus, respectively, form other, minor regions of cyclogenesis.¹⁸ Where mountain ranges obtrude, as in Italy and Greece, rather different climatic conditions are produced on the western and eastern sides of the peninsulas. The Tyrrhenian coast is wetter than the Adriatic coast in winter at the same latitude; it is also warmer, since it is sheltered by the Apennines from the influx of cold air from the north-east. Further east, on Ionian islands such as Kerkyra and Lefkas (winter season means = 1,152 millimetres, 1,111 millimetres) farmers have to cope with a surfeit rather than a deficit of effective moisture, in contrast with Athens or Thera (winter season means = 364 millimetres). In Kerkyra and Lefkas there is virtually no chance that a wheat or barley crop will face moisture stress, but at Athens and Thera wheat will fail about four years in ten and barley about one year in ten.¹⁹

Actual climatic distribution is much more complex than a simple

¹⁶ Arnon (1972) II 5. ¹⁷ Barry and Chorley (1976) 271.

¹⁸ Wigley and Farmer (1982) 23, fig. 1.7.

¹⁹ All figures and statistical calculations therefrom are based on modern data. They furnish a rough guide to conditions in classical antiquity, if, as is commonly accepted, climatic conditions were broadly similar to those prevailing in modern times.

north–south, east–west division would imply, once local topography (and the presence of advective wind systems) is taken into account. The main factors are the hilly or mountainous profile of peninsulas and islands (90 per cent of Greece is characterized as mountainous or semi-mountainous), and the presence and broken aspect of the sea. Microclimates in circumscribed locations proliferate. One recent classification identifies sixty-four climatic sub-types in the Mediterranean basin as a whole. Another study has subdivided the Near East (specifically, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Iran) into twelve main agroclimatic regions, themselves capable of further reduction into numerous sub-regions.²⁰ In Cyprus, an island of 9,251 square kilometres, the average annual rainfall is close to 500 millimetres for the island as a whole, but ranges from over 800 millimetres on the Troodos Massif in the south to 200–300 millimetres in the west of the central lowlands.²¹ But the pattern of rainfall distribution on Cyprus or Crete is too complicated to be captured by a regular rainfall map. Sudden and frequent changes in vegetation, from humid to arid, are a striking feature of such islands, reflecting a complex precipitation pattern, as well as the physical properties of the soil, altitude and other microenvironmental factors.

The mosaic of crop distribution is correspondingly complex. One can say this without suggesting that there was ever a perfect fit between what was ecologically desirable and what farmers chose to grow or consume.

Thus far rainfall, the prime climatic variable, has been discussed in terms of seasonality, growing-season requirements for crops, and patterns of diversity from region to region and on a smaller topographical scale. Another main feature of the climate (or climates) of the Mediterranean is interannual variability. The region experiences significant short-term fluctuations in rainfall and temperature, traceable especially to the extreme mobility of the subtropical westerly jet stream, whose seasonal shift southwards into Mediterranean latitudes produces the rains of the winter months. Generally speaking, there is an inverse ratio between rainfall and rainfall variability: the less rain that falls, the less regular it is.

Variability increases the vulnerability of farming in a semi-arid environment. Variable climate produces variable harvests. There is an extra dimension to the variability of the olive, in that, for biological rather than climatic reasons, it normally produces a main crop in every second year.²²

Can the level of variability be quantified? Agroclimatologists have set the limits of dry-farming in the Near East at 240 millimetres mean annual rainfall and 37 per cent variability.²³ Such figures can only serve as a guide, and in any case there is more point in working from figures for the wet

²⁰ Le Houérou (1977); Brichambaut and Wallen (1963). ²¹ Christodoulou (1959).

²² Sallares (1991) 304–5 and n. 27, citing Loussert and Brousse (1978) 237.

²³ Brichambaut and Wallen (1963) 10.

season, roughly the months of September to May inclusive, than from annual figures, and such figures have not been provided for the Near East. In the northern Mediterranean region modern data identify, for example, south-east Greece and parts of the Iberian peninsula as being high risk areas: thus, Megara has an average winter season precipitation of 397 millimetres and an interannual winter season variability of 34 per cent; at Murcia in the south-east corner of Spain the comparable figures are 293 millimetres and 29 per cent.

Other areas of Spain where low rainfall and high winter-season variability are combined lie in the interior continental zone; thus, Valladolid and Palencia on the Meseta, Zaragoza in Aragon in the north-east, and Zamora on the Douro in the region of Leon all have winter-season rainfall of less than 340 millimetres and variability above 30 per cent.

Just as the winter-season rainfall averages need to be broken down and set against the crop-growth cycle, bearing in mind the critical importance of the autumn and spring rains, so do the variability figures. At Athens, for example, the winter-season variability is only 26 per cent, but variability in September, October, March, April and May ranges from about 80 per cent (March, April) to 90 per cent or more (October, May), reaching a high point of 146 per cent in September. These figures, when set against average winter season precipitation of 364.6 millimetres, produces a high likelihood of crop failure (over 80 per cent for legumes requiring 450 millimetres, 44 per cent for wheat and almost 12 per cent for barley).

The responses of Mediterranean farmers to a fickle climate are touched on in the following section. We must next ask how animals fit into the landscape.

The physical environment of the Mediterranean does not favour the development of large-scale pastoralism. The season of vegetational growth is short. Spring growth can represent as much as 85 per cent of annual growth, as has been demonstrated in stations as far apart as the Murge in south Italy and the Los Pedroches plateau north of the Sierra Morena in Spain.²⁴ Supplies of grass and fodder soon dwindle, as natural pastures are dried out by the summer drought. The *prata* (meadows, irrigated or, more commonly, dry), the preparation of which is described in detail by the agronomist Columella and the encyclopaedist the elder Pliny, probably for the benefit of well-off landowners in Latium and Campania, were available for grazing only during autumn and winter; in the spring they were shut off to ensure a good crop of hay.²⁵ But hay supplies were short-lived. Columella, referring to the feeding of oxen, indicates that farmers had recourse to foliage from mid-June (or from 1 June in a bad year) until the beginning of November:

²⁴ Baticle (1974) 26. ²⁵ Varro, *Rust.* 1.37; Columella, *Rust.* 11.16–17; Pliny, *HN* xviii.258–63.

From then [*sc.*, 15 June, or 1 July 'in cooler regions'], they should be given their fill of leaves . . . The most highly esteemed is the foliage of the elm, next comes that of the ash, and, thirdly, that of the poplar; the least satisfactory is that of the holm-oak, the oak and the bay-tree, but these may have to be used after the summer if all other kinds fail.²⁶

Arable was in any case in relatively short supply; only the very wealthy could contemplate reducing the area of their land that was under cultivation for the purpose of raising livestock on meadowland. Moreover, livestock-raising is an uneconomical use of land; plants produce far more food per unit area than animals do.²⁷ A farmer would be far better off eating his own crops than eating animals to which he had previously fed the crops. Where population was relatively dense and land relatively scarce (as in Italy when Columella and the elder Pliny were writing), one would not expect animal husbandry to operate on a large scale.

This was not a landscape altogether without large animals, but the few that there were, like the oxen whose feeding so taxed Columella, were usually kept for farm-work, not primarily for meat or dairy products. Otherwise they were bred for sacrifice, which did lead to their consumption, though not necessarily by all sections of the population.²⁸ Beef was relatively rare, and therefore a prestige food, available in ordinary circumstances only to the rich and to privileged groups such as the military. In Britain, where livestock can be raised in numbers without difficulty, Roman soldiers on the northern frontier ate beef, mutton, goat and pork, not to mention the deer and wild boar which they hunted.²⁹ Classical writers regard the eating of meat and dairy products as characteristic of nomads, mountain-dwellers and other marginal people, like the Germans, whose diet and way of life in general they stigmatized as being uncivilized and inferior. These were ideological statements, usually made in ignorance.³⁰

Cattle put a severe strain on the food and water resources of the semi-arid Mediterranean lowlands. These are best exploited not by cattle, but by sheep and goats. To the food resources already referred to, namely, hay and other fodder (in short supply and presumably fed mainly to work animals), and foliage, a supplementary feed also for sheep,³¹ we can add stubble, fallow and uncultivated land. This last, whether it went under the name of *pasuum* (permanent, rough pasture), *dumeta* (low trees and shrubs or macchia/garrigue), or *saltus* (uncultivated land in general), was a standard feature of the landscape. This was marginal land, lying perhaps on the slopes between the good arable and the mountains, itself subjected to the plough and abandoned again as the number of consumers rose, and fell.

²⁶ Columella, *Rust.* vi.3.6–7; cf. xi.2.48.

²⁷ Dahl and Hjort (1976) 220; Halstead (1981) 314.

²⁸ Cf. Jameson (1988); Corbier (1989).

²⁹ Davies (1971); Bowman *et al.* (1990).

³⁰ Shaw (1982–3). ³¹ Cato, *Agr.* 30.

Columella encouraged farmers to include uncultivated land in the farm, presumably as outfields;³² otherwise local public land might be exploited.

All the agricultural writers take it for granted that sheep will be kept on the farm. This made good sense, given the shortage of manure. Sheep manure is both qualitatively superior and ample – a modern sheep is capable of producing 500 kilograms of manure annually³³ – and in some contexts is regarded as the sheep's main asset. The first century A.D. jurist Alfenus writes of sheep kept specifically for their manure, Varro in the previous century of people who keep sheep for their manure even if they lack meadows.³⁴ Manure is certainly the product of sheep in which the agricultural writers show most interest though this is perhaps a predictable consequence of their concentration on arable agriculture.

Sheep (and goats) can be accepted as more or less ubiquitous, at least on the standard farm with which our sources are concerned. What, then, are we to make of the standard assertion that animals, with the exception of those needed for farmwork and transport, and of pigs, which were scavengers and could feed on the refuse of the farmhouse and garden, were forced after the winter months to abandon the parched fields of the lowlands for fresh pastures in the mountains, that is, to transhume? The consequences for the productivity of the farm, denied manure for a part of the year, are evident.³⁵

Transhumance involves the seasonal movement of livestock between different pasture areas with seasonally complementary grazing resources. Farmers with an interest in stock-raising who operate in the lowlands can extend the grazing year if they have access to uplands, where the summer drought is shorter and growth extends later in the year. Correspondingly, transhumance might involve shepherds whose home base is the mountains driving their sheep down to the plain in the winter months (descending or inverse transhumance). Strabo refers to Ligurians who brought down their flocks (and sundry products) from the mountains to the region of Genoa.³⁶ Such seasonal migration might be small-scale, involving a journey of only a few hours or a day (short-distance, vertical transhumance). The pattern of transhumance in the Mediterranean region which has attracted most attention, however, is long-distance, and it involves large numbers of animals. The 'Mesta' of Castile and the 'Dogana della Mena delle Pecore di Puglia', which both ran for centuries (from 1273 and from 1447, respectively), are well-known examples.³⁷ In the latter case, flocks were pastured

³² Columella, *Rust.* 1.2.4. ³³ Baticle (1974) 34.

³⁴ *Dig.* xxxii.5.60; Varro, *Rust.* 1.19.3. See also Cato, *Agr.* 5.8; 37; Pliny, *HN* xix.192–4; Columella, *Rust.* vi pref. 2.

³⁵ The separation of agriculture and pastoralism, and its consequences, are stressed in Skydsgaard (1974); Pasquinucci (1979); Isager and Skydsgaard (1992) 83–107.

³⁶ Strab. iv.6.2; cf. Lamboglia (1921). ³⁷ Klein (1920); Musto (1964); Marino (1988).

in the mountains of Abruzzo from June to late September and were then driven over a two-week period to a large grazing area north of Puglia, from which they passed onto the Tavoliere plain in December, remaining there until May. Long-range or 'horizontal' transhumance has been considered conspicuous and important also in Graeco-Roman times, including the period of the Principate.³⁸

Two suppositions have underpinned this long-held view. The first embodies a form of geographical determinism. Climatic and ecological conditions, essentially the summer drought, prescribe that livestock will be forced away from the parched plains up into the mountains and along upland tracks between seasonal pastures at some distance from one another. Since an iron law of geography is held to underlie this operation, it would seem to follow that the history of transhumance in the Mediterranean has been unchanging – with obvious consequences for the nature of pastoralism in Graeco-Roman times.

There are several flaws in this thesis. First, it assumes the homogeneity of climatic and vegetational conditions in the Mediterranean, whereas there are significant regional variations in the length and severity of the summer drought. Secondly, it ignores the evidence of the agricultural writers that farmers expected to be able to feed stock throughout the year in some numbers (Columella says that up to a hundred goats or a thousand sheep could be housed in the same fold within the estate).³⁹ Thirdly, it takes for granted that mountain pastures were as plentiful in antiquity as they have been in the modern period, following large-scale high woodland clearance. It appears that half the woods that covered the slopes of the Gran Sasso and other high mountains in Abruzzo were destroyed in the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ The high Middle Ages was another active period of deforestation in Spain and south Italy.⁴¹ It is possible that deforestation was carried out on an equally large scale in the Roman period (and that wild-wood increased again as pastoralism fell back), but this has yet to be established.⁴² Fourthly, it ignores the role played by people, by social, demographic, economic and political factors, in shaping the historical development of pastoralism.

A second, related, assumption is that animal husbandry is necessarily independent of and antagonistic to agriculture. This clashes with the ample and clear testimony of the agricultural writers that pastoralism and agriculture, though acknowledged to be different kinds of activity, were integrated in the medium-sized farms of Italy. Other versions of the thesis are just as improbable, according to which sedentary farmers were permanently at odds with, on the one hand, nomads, and on the other, mountain dwellers.

³⁸ Critiques in Lewthwaite (1981); Garnsey (1988)=(1998a) 166–79; Thompson (1988); (1989).

³⁹ Columella, *Rust.* vii.6.5. ⁴⁰ Franciosa (1951) 71. ⁴¹ Houston (1964) 114.

⁴² The issue of high mountain pastures is not discussed in the otherwise useful Giardina (1981).

A picture of this sort can emerge only from a thoroughly slanted and partial view of the sources, one which for example remains focused on the ideological constructions of ‘otherness’ produced by the literary sources from Herodotus to Ammianus Marcellinus, or on the involvement of shepherds in banditry and their disputes with farmers. But, for example, the interplay between the nomadic and sedentary farming economies in North Africa cannot be ignored: nomads both brought into the empire commodities for which there was demand in the north and further afield, and filled out the ranks of the seasonal farm workers in the agricultural heartland of Africa Proconsularis and Numidia. Their annual appearance *en route* to employment in the corn fields ‘around Cirta, the capital of the Numidians, or in the plains dominated by the mountain of Jupiter’ was the signal to the peasant of Maktar to set about harvesting his own crop.⁴³ Mountain-dwellers practised sedentary farming as well as livestock-raising (whether we have in mind the inhabitants of Samnium or the people of the Aures); in so far as they were pastoralists, they needed winter pastures for their flock in the lowlands for more than half the year. A symbiotic relationship with the farmers of the plain was essential to their survival and prosperity.

Extensive transhumant pastoralism is likely to have existed in south Italy in Roman times more or less continuously from the second century B.C., if not earlier. Varro, writing in the latter part of the first century B.C., himself practised it: ‘I used to have flocks which wintered in Apulia and summered in the mountains of Reate, since these two distant pasture areas were connected by public drove-roads, as a yoke connects buckets.’⁴⁴

‘Horizontal’ transhumance along the drove-roads of Abruzzo re-emerges in the time of Marcus Aurelius through the medium of an inscription from Saepinum, which happens to be on a major *tratturo* (sheep-track) between Abruzzo and Puglia.⁴⁵

Agricultural writers apart from Varro are silent, and even Varro had a lot more to say about animals on the home farm. Their silence is no doubt in part a reflection of the limitations of the genre of agricultural treatises, and specifically their bias towards arable. But it does suggest that there was no point of contact between the farms they wrote about and specialized pastoralism. This must create problems for the thesis that the latter was pursued on a massive scale, such as to make a comparison with the Dogana or the Mesta appropriate. For the present, the level at which specialized pastoralism was practised must remain conjectural. What is needed is a careful and comprehensive analysis on the basis of a study of the total historical context, that is, the social, demographic, economic and political conditions of the time.⁴⁶

⁴³ *CIL* VIII 11824; Leschi (1957); Shaw (1980); Leveau (1988). ⁴⁴ Varro, *Rust.* II.2.9–10.

⁴⁵ *CIL* IX 2438; Corbier (1983).

⁴⁶ This approach has been set in motion in Thompson (1989), but is missing from Frayn (1984).

III. EXPANSION AND INNOVATION IN AGRICULTURE

The period of the Principate witnessed the expansion of agriculture, especially in the provinces of the West.⁴⁷ This was a direct result of public policies: the extension of the physical boundaries of the empire; the pacification of newly won areas; the establishment of resident armies on the frontiers; the institution of regular land- and poll-taxes. Government, army and a rising number of city-based consumers made demands on, and afforded opportunities to, the indigenous populations, their numbers swelled by immigrants from Italy and elsewhere. The response of provincial producers included an extension of the area under cultivation, a transformation of traditional patterns of land-use, and an increase in agricultural output.

No global view of developments in agriculture over the whole of the empire is feasible. One can only float some hypotheses and hope to provide some confirmation and illustration, bearing in mind that variation between and within regions and over time makes generalization of limited utility. In what follows it is suggested that expansion and innovation in agriculture were most marked in the West, and in the less developed areas thereof (not, therefore, in Italy and Sicily). One can say this while admitting that there were significant changes in the East as well, for example, in consequence of the break-up of royal properties in former Attalid, Seleucid and Ptolemaic lands. In Egypt, the growth of private property, more particularly where it fell into the hands of large landowners, gave a boost to viticulture, and in general stimulated the development of a 'market' economy in agricultural products. A second hypothesis, that change in land-use was a more significant and general development than the extension of cultivation onto virgin land, is put forward even more tentatively, in the knowledge that there is no chance of putting it to the test in any convincing way.

One important factor in stimulating change was the military presence, which was especially marked in the north and north-west of the empire. The East (Egypt, Syria, Cappadocia and the eastern Danube) had fewer soldiers, though a lower legionary count was to some extent made up by the considerable number of auxiliaries stationed there. Urban development also had an impact on the rural economy. The city of Rome, containing perhaps around one million inhabitants at its apogee, was less accessible to the East than to the West, and, Egypt apart, drew mainly on the West for its supplies. The East probably witnessed a growth in the urban population, for example, in Egypt; on the other hand, it was already relatively urbanized and received only a handful of new foundations under the Principate. The

⁴⁷ For general discussion of themes introduced in this and subsequent sections see Garnsey and Saller, *Empire* ch. 4; Pleket (1990).

establishment and continuation of the *pax Romana* was in general favourable to agriculture in the eastern provinces, but provided no special stimulus to innovation. The slump that affected much of Greece and the Aegean islands (Crete and Cyprus apart) in the Late Hellenistic period, as signalled by a sharp drop in the numbers of rural sites, was not reversed under the Principate.⁴⁸

The provinces supplied the military, normally from close at hand. The main burden of army supply, therefore, fell upon the northern and north-western provinces where most of the army, approximately two-thirds, was stationed in the middle of our period. Britain, the Rhineland and the Danube–Balkan region supported something approaching a quarter of a million men, their requirements in wheat alone amounting to more than 85,000 tonnes p.a. This was mainly a case of turning existing arable to different use. Some new land was opened up, in Britain, for example, in the brackish regions around the North Sea Basin, the tidal wetlands of the Severn estuary and marginal areas in the north such as the middle and upper Dales. But the more important changes in agriculture, an expansion of arable onto heavy clay soils and an increase in grassland, had already been set in motion in the late Iron Age. Britain in the pre-conquest period was already achieving surplus production of grain and cattle. The Romans profited from these developments and turned them to their own ends. The Principate was, in Britain, a period of steady growth rather than innovation.⁴⁹ In the northern and central provinces of Gaul, as in the Danubian provinces, mixed farming patterns were somewhat undermined by extensive cereal cultivation, and by an extension of livestock-raising, on existing arable. Technical innovation, in particular the introduction of a reaping machine or *vallus* (the efficacy of which is questionable) and the displacement of the sickle by the scythe, is associated with north Gaul.⁵⁰ In the south and centre of Gaul there was some expansion into marginal areas. At Arausio (Orange) veteran colonists occupied the best land, pushing the Tricastini onto uncultivated land on the margins – a pattern doubtless repeated at other colonies. Again, Gallo-Roman remains continue to turn up in unexpected places such as hilltops (in the Vosges) or forests (such as Compiègne). But the more striking developments are the development of olive-oil production in the Midi and of viticulture in many regions, on land for the most part already cultivated, from Languedoc to the Rhineland.⁵¹

⁴⁸ See Alcock, *Graecia Capta* and (1994). ⁴⁹ Jones (1981), (1982), (1989), (1991); Fulford (1990).

⁵⁰ Pliny, *HN* xviii.261, 296; Palladius vii.2.2–4; White (1984) 60–2.

⁵¹ Goudineau and Ferdière (1986); Bayard and Collart (1991); Piganiol (1962); Brun (1986); Laubenheimer (1989); Leveau *et al.* (1993). For the limits set to Roman occupation and agricultural development by, especially, mountains and forests, see Shaw (1987a), esp. 78–82 (with ref. to Mauretania, Isauria-Cilicia).

The Spains, southern Gaul, Sicily and Sardinia and North Africa, in comparison with the Rhineland, Danubian area and Britain, had an insignificant military presence. However, there was incentive to increase agricultural output in order to meet the demands of the city of Rome and of their own cities, which were growing in number and in size, especially in the Iberian peninsula and Africa. African and Sicilian grain, African oil, Spanish wine and more particularly oil were consumed in bulk in Rome under the Principate, not for the first time, but in increased quantity in some cases. In the mid-second century Spanish oil alone came into Rome at the rate of about 4 million kilograms p.a. in around 55,000 containers, making the largest contribution to the formation of an 'eighth hill of Rome' (Monte Testaccio).⁵² African grain had reached Rome as early as the middle Republic, but the contribution of Africa steadily increased under the empire, as the Romans made the core areas of grain production (the old province of Africa and the former Numidian kingdom) secure from tribal incursion, and pushed further south towards the desert. At the beginning of our period, Africa was providing two-thirds of the city of Rome's requirements in grain, if we can accept Josephus.⁵³ The most dramatic development concerns African oil production. There was a massive increase in the extent and scale of oil cultivation in the interior of Rome's African province, for example in the high steppes of Tunisia, linked to a burgeoning demand for oil in the region (where the cities of Cillium and Thelepte were founded, in the first century) and beyond. In Tripolitania, agriculture and arboriculture spread beyond the coastal and Gebel zones into the pre-desert areas, well beyond the 150 millimetre isohyet, from the late first century A.D. The foundations were being laid for the remarkable success of African oil exports throughout the Mediterranean from the late second century onwards.⁵⁴

What of Italy? The extraordinary expansion of the Roman empire, the colonization of the interior of the peninsula, the growth of the city of Rome into a massive metropolis, and warfare and insecurity in the countryside had transformed Italian agriculture in the last two centuries B.C. Nothing comparable in scale occurred in the first two centuries A.D. Rather, the amount of land under cultivation underwent small adjustments: in one area (upper Albegna Valley, *ager Capenas*, both in Tuscany) arable made inroads into the *incolto*, in another it receded (upper Volturno Valley in Samnium, lower Albegna Valley), in yet another district it remained more or less static (*ager Veientanus*). 'It leaves one with the uneasy feeling that generalizations of any sort may well be premature, and that in the end the story of even one part of a valley could well be very different from that of

⁵² Rodriguez-Almeida (1984). ⁵³ Joseph. *Bj* II.383, 386; Garnsey (1983) 118–21.

⁵⁴ Hitchner (1988), (1989), (1990); Mattingly (1988a), (1988b), (1988c), (1993), (1994); Forbes (1992).

another.⁵⁵ Rising imports of agricultural products (oil, wine, wheat) from the provinces made a considerable impact on local production, for example on viticulture where, however, the consequence appears to have been a changing geographical pattern of wine-production, not an overall decline. Cheap wine continued to be produced and sent in bulk to the Roman market.⁵⁶ In general, the major cash crops, amongst which wheat must be included,⁵⁷ continued to be grown in Italy for sale in Rome, a more or less insatiable market, while the so-called *pastio villatica* serving the luxurious tastes of the rich still flourished in the vicinity of Rome. Demand for wheat, wine and oil was steady or growing in other Italian cities, which were less accessible than the capital to foreign imports and saw considerable growth in our period. Prosperity was of course not universal nor evenly spread.⁵⁸ The agglomeration of estates and displacement of small producers, a process that continued its steady but relentless course in Italy under the Principate, may well have favoured a modest increase in the total production of cash crops.

IV. SOCIAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY

Property was unequally distributed. Land might barely keep a peasant family alive, or support a conspicuously consuming Roman senator. There survive land registers from our period (dated to the early second century A.D.) from two very ordinary Italian towns, Veleia Romana in the north, and Ligures Baebiani in the south. Together they give the value (but not the size) of more than a hundred estates. At Ligures Baebiani 3.5 per cent of the wealthiest landowners own 21.3 per cent of the land (and one individual owns 11.2 per cent), while 14 per cent of the poorest own 3.6 per cent. At Veleia the richest individual owns 12.4 per cent of the land, while the poorest 23.9 per cent have 5.2 per cent.⁵⁹

As it happens, both registers give a full picture of property-ownership only between the two extremes of subsistence peasant and Roman senator. The estate with the lowest stated value is worth 14,000 sesterces (at Ligures Baebiani), while at the other extreme one is rated at 1,508,150 (at Veleia). The smaller owner-occupiers must have been excluded at both places (at

⁵⁵ Potter (1987) 113. Other literature drawing on land-surveys: Patterson (1987), 134–44; Potter (1979), S. Etruria; Attolini *et al.* (1991), N. Etruria; Barker (1988–9); Barker *et al.* (1978); Lloyd and Barker (1981), Molise; Patterson (1985), upper Volturno; Hayes and Martini (1994), Liri Valley.

⁵⁶ On the wine industry see Purcell (1985); Tchernia (1986); Panella and Tchernia (1994): decline on Tyrrhenian coast, ‘essor’ in Tiber basin, Adriatic coast, Picenum.

⁵⁷ Spurr, *Arable Cultivation* 133–46, against Yeo (1951–2); Scheidel (1994b) against Carandini (1983).

⁵⁸ For the debate over the Italian ‘crisis’, see Carandini (1980a), (1981); Carandini and Ricci *Settefinestre* 115–21, 107–85; Rathbone (1983a); Spurr (1985); Patterson (1987); Wickham (1988); and *L’Italie* (1994), *passim*. On *pastio villatica*, see e.g. Carandini (1985); Kolendo (1994).

⁵⁹ Duncan-Jones (1976 and *Economy* ch. 7; Woolf (1990); Criniti (1991) for full bibliography.

Veleia the lowest assessment stands at 50,000 sesterces). Three estates (all at Veleia) would in theory have qualified an owner for the Roman Senate, as they are valued at a little over a million sesterces-worth of property, though 8 million sesterces was considered a practical minimum for a senator.⁶⁰

Within the senatorial class there was a wide spectrum of wealth. The younger Pliny was a senator of middling wealth, if he possessed estates of around 17 million sesterces in value. We know of senators who were more than twenty times richer than he.⁶¹ In a tantalizingly laconic reference, the value of which is hard to assess, the elder Pliny talks of six Roman senators who ‘owned half of Africa’ but had their land confiscated by the emperor Nero. Perhaps their estates lay in the Medjerda valley in north-east Tunisia, where substantial imperial properties are attested in inscriptions from the second century.⁶² In a rather more convincing passage, one of the writers on land-surveying (*agrimensores*) writes of estates (*saltus*) of private individuals in North Africa, that ‘can be as big as whole city-territories and many are in fact much bigger. The owners have substantial population on their estates, and there are villages (*vici*) surrounding the villas as though they were cities (*municipia*).’⁶³ The source is making the point that these estates (the names and statuses of whose owners are not mentioned) are an embarrassment to the cities in the vicinity, because they refuse to submit to their jurisdiction, with the consequence that those attached to them possess de facto immunity from civic burdens. A letter of Pliny shows the north Italian town of Vicetia at loggerheads with a large landowner, the Roman senator L. Bellicius Sollers, over the latter’s petition to the Senate for permission to establish a market (*nundinae*) on his estate, evidently because of a perceived threat to the town’s finances and the well-being of its inhabitants.⁶⁴

The largest senatorial fortunes under the Principate were grounded in provincial as well as in Italian land, in the Spains, south Gaul, North Africa, in Asia Minor and Greece, as well as Italy and Sicily. Rich Romans had been building up properties abroad since the late Republican period. The proprietors of African land who fell victim to Nero were presumably Italians – they were not Africans, for Africa had not yet produced a Roman senator, whether of native or immigrant origin. The entry of leading provincials into the senate under the Principate, first a trickle, then a steady flow, substantially increased the amount of senatorial landholding abroad. The

⁶⁰ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 18.

⁶¹ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 17 (with App. 7); 20, but see de Neeve (1990) 369–70.

⁶² Pliny, *HN* xviii.35; *CIL* viii 25902 1 25 ff., cf. ii 8; 20210; Kehoe (1988b). For imperial estates in general, see Crawford (1976), and in Egypt, see also Parássoglou (1978).

⁶³ *Corp. Agrim.* (Thulin, 1913) 145.

⁶⁴ Pliny, *Ep.* v.4.13, with de Ligt, *Fairs*, cf. Shaw (1979) 108; in general, de Ligt and de Neeve (1988); de Ligt (1993).

emperor Trajan, perhaps concerned to increase the level of commitment to Italy among provincial senators, ruled that every senator should invest at least one-third of his wealth in Italian rural property; the failure of this move is revealed by its repetition two generations later by Marcus Aurelius, with the significant amendment that only one-quarter need be so invested.⁶⁵

The removal to Rome of leading provincials with senatorial or high equestrian status, and the steady expansion of properties belonging to the emperor abroad, might have been a drain on the provincial economy. But senators were few, top equestrians even fewer, their wealth was not necessarily lost to the provinces in its entirety and in permanence, and the bulk of the land must have remained in the hands of local families of curial, equestrian or even senatorial means (there were probably many more men of senatorial wealth in Italy and the provinces than actual Roman senators). Moreover, Italian cities suffered more than provincial cities from an outflow of capital and resources. For the whole of our period, most Roman aristocrats (though a steadily decreasing number) were Italians.

Large landowners consolidated their position at the expense of the small under the Principate. Their financial situation was less vulnerable. They had greater reserves and were less likely to fall into debt. Their main enemy was profligate spending, not bad harvests. The rich, and only the rich, were in a position to undertake capital investments. The more enterprising of them drained marshes, cleared land, experimented with new technology or techniques and, above all, introduced new crops. The rich were responsible for the expansion of the vine and the olive in the western provinces. The financial benefits of producing cash-crops for which the demand was significant and increasing, locally and further afield, were a paramount consideration. There were also cultural implications, in so far as the landowners concerned were members of an indigenous élite that was self-consciously moving closer to its former conquerors in respect of diet and way of life.

Large estates did not consist entirely of large concentrations of land. The accidents of marriage and inheritance and the operation of economic forces (the piecemeal way in which properties were accumulated), perhaps also economic attitudes (a lack of interest in economies of scale), ensured that a part of the holdings of the rich would consist of middle-sized or smaller, geographically scattered, units. This had the advantage that crops were unlikely to fail together, in so far as local weather conditions were to blame – as when hail damaged some of Pliny's grapes.⁶⁶ But opportunities for making economies of scale were reduced, supposing these had been thought desirable and practicable.

It is easier to show that properties were scattered than in what size units

⁶⁵ Pliny, *Ep.* vi.19; *HA Marc.* 11.8. ⁶⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* iv.6.1.

they were farmed. The archaeological evidence is intractable, since the distribution of buildings is an uncertain guide to the dimensions of working farms. Pliny the Younger owned substantial estates in two areas, Como and Tifernum Tiberinum (Umbria), the latter inherited from his uncle, Pliny the Elder. His major holding at Tifernum brought in 400,000 sesterces in rent, which points to a property value of something over 1 million sesterces or about 7 million sesterces, depending on whether the rent was for a five-year *lustrum* or one year;⁶⁷ he also considered purchasing a property in the region for 3 million (reduced from 5 million). There are indications that his property at Tifernum was somewhat dispersed,⁶⁸ and this is as likely to have been true of the ancestral properties near Como, derived as they were from a number of different sources. Pliny is shown in his letters both receiving and parting with property. He was given legacies in the region of Como which included one holding worth 1,100,000 sesterces from a Saturninus, and another valued at 700,000 but with a market value of 900,000, and five-twelfths of the whole estate of the nameless donor, but immediately sold to Corellia as a favour.⁶⁹ And he made over to his nurse a property worth 100,000 sesterces. This *agellum* was clearly of modest size,⁷⁰ and presumably brings us into the range of the farm-units used by the agronomists as the basis of their calculations of labour requirements in men and animals: 100 iugera or 25 hectares for vines, 200 iugera or 50 hectares for arable and 240 iugera or 60 hectares for olives. The dimensions of 'model farms', or 'typical working farms', or the agronomists' own farms can hardly be arrived at on the basis of such figures. Columella had holdings in three places, at Alba, Carsioli and Caere (and earlier at Ardea), in the same geographical area, but their sizes and values are unknown.⁷¹

The best evidence for property-fragmentation comes from Veleia and Ligures Baebiani. The three richest landowners at Veleia had thirty-five, twenty-six and thirteen properties respectively. Most of the properties were of small or modest size. Only one of the thirty-five properties of Mommeius Persicus lies outside the range of 80,000–85,000 sesterces. Overall, only a handful of properties were valued at over 100,000 sesterces.

The scattering of property among the rich at Veleia was not unlimited, and not random. Mommeius Persicus owned more than 60 per cent of the property declared in the *pagus* (district) of Ambitrebis, and his land was largely in that district. Much of his land must have been held in a bloc or contiguous blocs. One notes in addition the multiple names of many farms, implying some conscious reduction in the number of farm-units, and the parallel declaration of *fundi* rather than a *fundus* as single units. Some

⁶⁷ Pliny, *Ep.* x.8, with de Neeve (1990) 382 ff., cf. Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 19–20.

⁶⁸ de Neeve (1990) 373, arguing from Pliny, *Ep.* III.19 and IX.39. ⁶⁹ Pliny, *Ep.* v.7; VII.11, 14.

⁷⁰ Pliny, *Ep.* VI.3. See, on Columella, *Rust.* III. 3.8 and land values, Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 51–2; de Neeve (1985). ⁷¹ Refs. in Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 325–6.

amalgamation of farms is visible also on the table of Ligures Baebiani. On the other hand, Persicus declared nine properties which are identified as fractions of farms. If economic considerations and marriage alliances favoured the integration of farms, partible inheritance produced the opposite result.

The estates of moderately well-off Veleians, those others with 200,000 sesterces or above, that is, possessions of the level that could comfortably support a family of curial status, show a similar pattern. There is usually a larger property of around half or more of the total value of the estate, and a number of smaller properties. It is also common to find a number of close-knit estates built around one consolidated farm in a single parish. The main differences between the holdings of the 'millionaires' and the moderately rich at Veleia is that only the former control *saltus*, large tracts of land that are presumably pasture and forest. They (like Pliny) have substantial 'secondary' properties away from their main estates. Also, their property-owning slips over the borders into the territory of neighbouring cities, Placentia and Parma. (The Roman senator Bellicius Sollers who wanted to set up a periodic market on his property in the territory of Vicetia was a citizen of Verona.) It is interesting that non-Veleians, presumably also very wealthy, show up on the table as owners of Veleian land, typically *saltus*.

The configurations of landholding in Veleia Romana and Ligures Baebiani at the turn of the first century A.D. are not precisely reproducible elsewhere (and are far from identical in the two towns in question). The point need not be laboured. However, the same forces for property accumulation and division were active everywhere, and the richest landlords were not immune. The largest estates in Italy and Sicily had a pastoral sector and produced cereals extensively – these are the true *latifundia* about which Columella and Pliny the Elder (among others) have harsh words to say.⁷² But the *latifondisti* would also have possessed smaller, fragmented properties. To this degree their estates and those of the lesser rich, like Pliny the Younger, who can be seen inheriting parts of estates and handing on parcels of land to others, or like the leading property-owners of Veleia Romana and Ligures Baebiani, conformed broadly to the same pattern.

Finally, we come to the peasants, those operating at or not far above subsistence level. They are barely visible in the historical sources, whether as owner-occupiers, tenant farmers or wage labourers, three overlapping categories.⁷³ Peasants do not leave monuments, epigraphic or otherwise. The closest we can get to them in the archaeological record is in traces on the ground of small-unit farms, as for example in Tuscany and the Molise, but the status and condition of the occupiers of such farms is unknowable.⁷⁴

⁷² Pliny, *HN* xviii.35 cf. Columella, *Rust.* 1.3.12.

⁷³ Garnsey (1980)=(1998a) 134–50; Foxhall (1990b).

⁷⁴ Potter (1979); Barker, Lloyd and Webley (1978).

Peasants were too impecunious, their enterprises too small, for them to feature on the Tables of Veleia and Ligure Baebiani: they were not considered worthy recipients of a state loan. Similarly, they do not appear in the letters of Pliny or, except marginally, in the treatises of the agricultural writers, essentially because the indebtedness or collapse of a small farmer made little difference to the financial position of a wealthy landowner. That they continued to fall into debt and lose ownership of their land can be taken as certain. The main points of interest are, how fast did the small peasantry disappear, and what braking mechanisms operated to slow down the pace of decline.

First, state policy, moved by political and strategic considerations, counteracted to some extent the downward pull of economic forces.⁷⁵ The creation of 'new' peasants was a policy forged in the initial period of conquest, in the course of which Rome won control of the Italian peninsula. It was then applied to a greater or lesser extent in the overseas provinces as they fell under Roman sway. Land captured from enemies and rebels was given to groups of colonists and to individuals, who were expected to maintain a Roman presence and act as a strategic defence in a sensitive area. The ordinary allotments were small (up to around 10 iugera or around 2.5 hectares), enough to provide a subsistence base for a peasant, but no more – so much and no more was thought appropriate for the rank-and-file ex-soldiers who were increasingly chosen for such projects. Peasants became soldiers and, if they survived, were discharged into the ranks of – the peasantry. Under the Principate, the 'recycling' of peasants became standard procedure in the context of a now professional army, but the geographical focus shifted away from Italy to the provinces, and to those areas where the army was active. The fruits of this policy are visible today in the regularly spaced remains of villas in Gallia Belgica (e.g. near Trier) and in Pannonia, or in the chessboard grids that cover large tracts of the Tunisian landscape – signalling in different ways the apportionment of land in regular allotments.⁷⁶ The survival chances of these settlers varied according to terrain and circumstance. The best placed were veterans who maintained links with the army, the worst placed were tribesmen (in Africa, the Musulamii, Nicives or Numidae), forced to learn the skills of sedentary farming on underdeveloped and marginal land.

The replenishment of the stock of peasants which this policy represented largely bypassed Italy and the 'unarmed' provinces. This should mean that the numerical decline of the small farmer was more pronounced in these areas. The equation is a complicated one. On the positive side,

⁷⁵ See Garnsey (1976)=(1998a) 221–35.

⁷⁶ Wightman (1970) 151, 155; Thomas (1964); Trouset (1974). See Garnsey (1978) 230–6 on small-holders in N. Africa.

Italian peasants were not subjected to a land tax, and Trajan's alimentary schemes might have taken the edge of their impoverishment. The extensive landed investment of so many rich men in Italy, and the economic and demographic pull of the city of Rome, were constant, negative factors.

To take the matter further, we have to consider the nature of the peasant economy and the self-preservationist strategies devised by peasants.⁷⁷

Peasant farming is a minimum-risk enterprise. Instead of concentrating on the production of one or two cash crops for sale in the market, the peasant diversifies his crops in order to spread his risks. Crop diversification and its close ally, property fragmentation (a product of local inheritance and dowry rules and customs), make particularly good sense in the broken hilly landscapes of the northern Mediterranean lands, with their great variety of topographies and microclimates. The farmer is unlikely to experience a low return in any particular year in respect of all his various crops in all his scattered pockets of land.

Careful storage of the surplus, family limitation in its various modes, and 'social storage', or the cultivation and maintenance of horizontal relationships (with relatives, neighbours, friends) and vertical links (with patrons and others of higher social and economic status), also contributed to the survival of peasants. The last of these factors is particularly worth considering in this section, because it brings into focus the ambiguous role of large landowners. Thus far they have been treated as the enemy, inexorably expanding their holdings at the expense of small farmers. Transference of ownership from the small to the great, which did occur, did not necessarily entail the displacement of the small. Large landowners characteristically, and by choice, drew on the reservoir of small farmers of the neighbourhood to provide essential supplementary labour on their estates. Rather than extrude peasants, so risking a reduction in the supply of free labour and increasing its mobility, many (not all) landlords will have found it in their interests to cultivate and preserve a symbiotic relationship with the peasantry.⁷⁸

To sum up: peasants are resilient: they have strategies for survival which have been tried and have proven successful in a whole variety of settings and contexts. Given half a chance by governments, landlords and creditors, they can hold on. There is no answer to the question 'How did peasants prosper under the Principate?', because there is no typical peasant in this or any other period. Peasants were 'recycled', were converted into tenants, survived as proprietors, were displaced. Overall, small-scale production continued to be important in the Roman Empire.

⁷⁷ Forbes (1976), (1982); Garnsey, *Famine* 43–68; Halstead and O'Shea (1989b); Halstead (1989), (1990a); Gallant (1991). ⁷⁸ Foxhall (1990b).

V. MANAGEMENT AND LABOUR

The difficulties limiting our comprehension of this subject are well known and need not be fully treated here: briefly, archaeology is more or less silent; epigraphy provides piecemeal information, most valuably concerning the tenancies operating on imperial estates in North Africa (but the alimentary tables are quite opaque); the *Digest* offers confirmatory and supplementary evidence for the existence of some institutions and practices, but not in a systematic way; and too much depends on agricultural writers, who were writing prescriptively and often rhetorically for a restricted upper-class audience, had an avowed interest only in the centre-west of Italy, and had very little of value to impart on matters of agricultural economics, let alone long-term trends. Our best literary source for practical estate management is the younger Pliny, our best documentary resource a large estate in Egypt, from a little outside our period, painstakingly reconstructed from hundreds of papyri.⁷⁹ In both cases we come up against the problem of generalizing from individual cases.

In matters of management and labour, the propertied classes had in principle several options. One was the 'slave estate', wherein slaves made up the permanent labour force and also supplied management in the form of a *vilicus* (bailiff). Non-slave *vilici* are occasionally recorded. Temporary labour, free or slave, was brought in at times of peak activity, in particular for the harvest.⁸⁰ Slave-owning landowners tried to keep their wage-bills as low as possible, but none could achieve absolute self-sufficiency in terms of labour.

An alternative arrangement involved a combination of tenancy and slavery: slave labour but not slave management. Slaves serving tenants, supplied by either tenant or landowner, are attested in the legal sources, once in the Veleian Table, and in the Letters of the younger Pliny. Pliny was considering the purchase of an estate at Tifernum Tiberinum adjacent to a property he already owned. The existing proprietor, faced with arrears in the rent, had sold the *pignora* (security) of the tenant (or tenants), which apparently included slaves. Pliny planned to provide *mancipia* (slaves), 'and at a higher price at that, as these must be good'.⁸¹

Pliny's practice, at least on one occasion, and perhaps regularly, was to employ a standard tenancy contract (according to *locatio-conductio*), and to negotiate a fixed rent over a five-year period (*lustrum*). Once, when faced with defaulting tenants, he experimented with share-cropping, *métayage*.⁸²

⁷⁹ Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism*.

⁸⁰ Garnsey (1980)=(1998a) 134–50; Scheidel (1989), (1990a), (1992), (1994b) 153–202; Spurr (1985).

⁸¹ Pliny, *Ep.* III.19. For tenants employing slaves, see de Neeve (1990) n. 119. On tenancy in general see de Neeve (1984); Capogrossi (1986); Scheidel (1992), (1994b).

⁸² Pliny, *Ep.* IX.37 with Rosafio (1993b); Flach (1990) ch. 3 (N. Africa).

Métayage was used on the imperial estates in North Africa. Whether it was a common procedure in Italy is unknown, and a single instance in Pliny cannot give us the answer: the institution appears in the *Digest* only in a passage that points to the provinces.⁸³

A variant on the hiring of a free tenant who employed slaves was the use of a slave-tenant, *servus quasi colonus*.⁸⁴ This practice is better attested in the legal texts than métayage, perhaps because it is more likely to have had a written contract, but its incidence is nevertheless problematic. The temptation to assign it a significant role in the history of the evolution of the late imperial colonate is best resisted.⁸⁵

Outside Italy and Sicily, agricultural slavery occurred only in pockets, as in old Greece and the south of France ('more Italian than Italy', according to Pliny the Elder). The wife of Apuleius, Pudentilla, used slave workers on her property in the territory of Oea in Tripolitania. More usually landlords, in North Africa and elsewhere, employed free workers.⁸⁶ The third-century Appianus estate in the Fayum district of Egypt is interesting for both the absence of slaves in the workforce, and the variety of categories of free workers employed, whether as full-time labourers (there are three main kinds) or as extra workers hired for short periods. (If such diversity is surprising, this I suspect only goes to show how scanty and superficial our knowledge of farm management is over the empire as a whole.)⁸⁷

The nature of agreements between owners and managers/tenants also varied widely. A formal lease (*locatio–conductio*) was standard practice in areas where the writ of Roman law ran, but less formal dispositions were also in use, ranging from arrangements between friends to *precarium*, clientage or some other dependency relationship.⁸⁸ Managers, agents or tenants might be, correspondingly, men of standing and influence, or on the other hand of low status. At one end of the spectrum there is Alypius the manager of the estate of Appianus, a former equestrian official, or the powerful *conductores* of the imperial estates in North Africa, in both cases presumably property-owners in their own right on a considerable scale; at the other end are placed subsistence or near-subsistence farmers, working someone else's land and possessing no other resources.⁸⁹

The literary sources tell us as little about poor tenants as about small owner–occupiers: when they refer to tenancy it is usually tenants of some

⁸³ *Dig.* XIX.2.25.6, *Gaius, ad edictum prov.*; other refs. in de Neeve (1984) 15–18.

⁸⁴ *Dig.* XV.3.16; XL.7.14 (Alfenus); cf. XXXIII.7.12.3; XXXIII.7.20.1 etc. See de Neeve (1984), 143; Veyne (1980), (1981); Scheidel (1990b), (1993b), (1994b) 131–9.

⁸⁵ Wickham (1988) 187; recent discussions of the origin of the colonate include Finley (1976); Marcone (1988); Rosafio (1991).

⁸⁶ *Apul. Apol.* 93; Whittaker (1978), (1980); Garnsey (1978) 236–7. For Asia Minor, see Pleket (1982) 3.

⁸⁷ Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism* chs. 3–4.

⁸⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* VI.3, with de Neeve (1990) 374, friend?; Foxhall (1990b), dependents; Rosafio (1993a), *precarium*.

⁸⁹ Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism* 19; *FIRA* 1 no. 103 (A.D. 180–3).

means who are in question, controlling an enterprise of considerable scale.⁹⁰ The *novus colonus* from whom Pliny intended to demand 80,000 sesterces a year (or just possibly five times as much money) would have had to produce cash crops of high aggregate value for the market, and would presumably use slaves as a permanent labour force to do so.⁹¹ Other tenants who employed slaves were probably in a similar position; some of Pliny's tenants were certainly involved in viticulture, his main cash crop. Such tenants might fall into hard times, like those on the estate Pliny was thinking of buying. It does not follow that these were poor men, and had never been anything else. They were in all probability independent landowners of middling wealth taking a gamble on 'plantation agriculture', without sharing the risk with the owner, and requiring favourable climatic and economic conditions if they were to prosper. When Pliny complained in another letter of the lack of 'suitable tenants' (*idonei conductores*), echoing a complaint made by Columella more than a generation earlier, he had in mind men who had sufficient financial reserves to bide themselves over bad harvests and low market prices, and who would not have to be bailed out by the owner.⁹²

Pliny no doubt had employed tenants of more humble station as well, genuine peasants. We do not know, because he says nothing about them. This is not surprising. If Pliny did have such tenants, he would not have been much exercised about their performance, because their plots were small and their rents low. In general, one can certainly imagine farms of small dimensions occupying an economically marginal position within the total properties of a wealthy landowner. But the suggestion that large properties were characteristically divided into a great many small peasant plots has no support in the sources, and no plausibility.⁹³

Why did landowners choose one method of managing or working a farm rather than another? This question has received some unsatisfactory answers.⁹⁴ For example, it has been suggested that there was a switch to tenancy under the Principate because slavery was in terminal decline. This ignores the compatibility of tenancy and slavery, where the tenant supplies management and slaves labour. In any case, the decline of slavery was a much longer and slower process than has often been imagined. The supply of slaves did not drop off dramatically after the Augustan wars came to an end. If all the data are marshalled, including the evidence from the *Digest*, then it can be seen that slavery retained its place in agriculture in those areas where it had established a significant presence. The archaeological evidence for a crisis of the 'slave estate' is unconvincing, and the consequential

⁹⁰ See de Neeve (1990) 383–92; Scheidel (1994b) 29–117. ⁹¹ Pliny, *Ep.* x.8. ⁹² Pliny, *Ep.* vii.30.

⁹³ Cf. Sherwin-White, *Letters of Pliny* 255, 257. ⁹⁴ See de Neeve (1984) 75–90; (1990) 394–7.

promotion on a large scale of slaves into tenants, farming fragments of parcellized *latifundia*, is pure speculation.⁹⁵

The original question may be rephrased: how did landlords choose between slave and free management, always supposing they had the choice? Each of the two main systems we are considering had points for and against. The 'slave estate' in its pure form, with a slave workforce managed by a slave *vilicus*, promised a high return, but only if the operation was closely supervised. The profits lay entirely with the owner, but the owner also carried all the risk. A tenant operating under a formal lease and managing a slave workforce was in principle an independent farmer. He carried the risks, and pocketed the proceeds minus the rent. The involvement of the landlord was on a correspondingly diminished scale.

It is not the case (as is sometimes suggested) that a tenant needed no supervision, for one who turned out not to be 'suitable' in either a financial or a moral sense could cause his landlord a great deal of trouble. But other things being equal, tenancies required less supervision than 'slave estates'.

Nor is it the case that slaves were suited to the management and working of olive groves and vineyards but not cereal- and legume-producing arable, where they were major crops, grown for the market. Columella recommended tenancies for the latter when they were distant because of the harm that undersupervised slaves could do to cereals. He also knew there was a class of tenant (the notorious *colonus urbanus*) who was apt to turn his back and give his slaves free rein.⁹⁶

The attitude and circumstances of the landlord, not the kind of crop, were crucial. Tenancy suited Pliny because he was a politician and a man of letters, who lived his life at a distance from his estates and only rarely visited them. He was a regular visitor only to his 'non-productive' villa at Laurentum, not far from Rome. He was, in other words, a *rentier*. It is hardly surprising therefore, that in pondering the purchase of the property at Tifernum Tiberinum adjacent to an estate already in his possession, he was influenced by non-economic factors, including aesthetic considerations, although aware that one manager and villa would be cheaper than two. One can imagine landlords with properties near Rome seeking high profits through the direct supervision and intensive exploitation of slaves, though it may be more appropriate to look for such men among equestrians and freedmen than senators. Where property amalgamation involved putting land to more profitable use, proto-economic thinking may be said to be present. We do not know whether this was happening on the integrated farms at Veleia and Ligures Baebiani. In any case, nothing in the texts or

⁹⁵ Garnsey and Saller, *Empire* 60–2; 72–3; and see bibl. in n. 58, above.

⁹⁶ Columella, *Rust.* 1.7.6–7, with Scheidel (1993a); Spurr, *Arable Cultivation* ch. 8.

documents prepares us for the economic rationality on display in the management of the Appianus estate, in respect of crop-choice, labour-control, accounting, productivity- and profit-consciousness and marketing. It is no longer possible to say the ancient farmers *in toto* 'failed' to make rational calculations of the productivity, efficiency and profitability of their enterprises.

VI. PRODUCTIVITY

Having witnessed in our time an agricultural revolution (still in progress), the essential achievement of which has been a dramatic improvement in yields of sown crops, we should be less susceptible than earlier generations of scholars to exaggerating the potential of Mediterranean and European agriculture in a pre-industrial society. The problem is to decide whether Graeco-Roman agriculture was advanced or primitive, whether yields were high or low, within the limits set by the state of scientific knowledge and technological development.

We are not ignorant, thanks to the agricultural writers, of the way in which well-off landowners, at any rate in central Italy, were expected to run their estates. This is not quite the same as saying that we know how they actually farmed, although the texts contain a number of references to current practice. Of farming practices over the empire at large our knowledge is extremely sketchy. It may be that more information would actually make things more difficult: at least, it would complicate the task of generalization, since a 'pattern' of diversity and variability, already discernible in the ancient and comparative evidence, would become more apparent. This gives us all the more reason for suspecting the single generalized remark on yield provided by the sources, that of Columella on the subject of cereals (*frumenta*) but made in the midst of an extended defence of the profitability of viticulture: 'For we can hardly recall a time when grain crops, throughout at least the greater part of Italy, returned a yield of four for one.'⁹⁷

Crop performance, and therefore productivity levels, were governed by a number of variables. For convenience I divide them into two groups of four: on the one hand, weather, seed quality, soil and technology: on the other, the supply of land, labour and seed-corn, and proprietorial attitudes.

Weather, seed, soil and the state of agricultural technology kept productivity relatively low. In respect of all four factors, enterprising or fortunate farmers pressed against, and even to some extent pushed back, the productivity threshold.

Despite the limitations of rain-fed agriculture in a semi-arid zone,

⁹⁷ Columella, *Rust.* III.3.4, with Garnsey and Saller, *Empire* 79–82, and Sallares (1991) 374–5 (defending Columella).

spelled out earlier in this chapter, very high seed:yield ratios are attested in the literary sources for Byzacium and Cyrene in North Africa (and should not be dismissed out of hand) in areas of low and variable rainfall.⁹⁸ Moreover, also in North Africa, the successful use of run-off irrigation enabled farmers to penetrate into even more marginal ecological zones.⁹⁹

Seeds were small and therefore of relatively low yield-capacity.¹⁰⁰ They were also higher in protein than modern seeds; in other words, higher yields were earned at the cost of a decrease in nutritional value.¹⁰¹ Some farmers nonetheless obtained better results than others by careful seed selection (as opposed to scientific selective breeding, nonexistent in antiquity) and by utilizing newer strains of cereal that were more productive and better suited to the particular environment.

Soil conditions are of course diverse. The famous high-yielding wheat of Sybaris grew on volcanic soil. Otherwise, the more adventurous farmers laboured, in the absence of artificial fertilizers, to rejuvenate often overworked soils by manuring (the application of animal and human dung and other organic substances), and the use of legumes as a field crop as an alternative to or in rotation with cereals.¹⁰²

The spread of technological innovation, defined broadly as the application of improved agricultural techniques and knowledge, is impossible to monitor closely.¹⁰³ We can talk in general terms of the diffusion of crops, techniques and equipment already developed in the heartlands of the Mediterranean into regions at a lower technical level, mainly in the northern and north-western provinces – one of the more recent inventions, the water-mill, because of the need for permanent, reliable water-courses, could only be of marginal use in the Mediterranean region, as distinct from Britain, Gaul and Germany, where it was widely employed from about the second century. Adventurous landowners in those same areas developed novelties like wheeled ploughs, long iron coulter, scythes, and the Gallic reaping machine or *vallus*. Mediterranean-based farmers showed enterprise by introducing screw presses for grape- and olive-pressing, or preserving the fertility of the soil by crop-rotation and manuring. Agricultural practices in the Mediterranean did not undergo substantial change until the modern period, with the advent of large-scale irrigation schemes, deep-ploughing tractors, artificial fertilizers – and seeds that could respond to them.¹⁰⁴

A second group of variables relevant to the productivity of agriculture

⁹⁸ Pliny, *HN* xvii.41; xviii.94–5 (also Sicily, Baetica, Egypt); Varro, *Rust.* i.44.2 (also Sybaris in Sicily and Gadara in Syria). Other figures in Cic. 2 *Verr.* ii.3.109–13, Sicily; Varro, *Rust.* i.44.1, Etruria.

⁹⁹ Sallares (1991) 378 against Shaw (1984b) 160–5. ¹⁰⁰ Sallares (1991) 317–18, 333–46.

¹⁰¹ Bhatia and Robson (1976) and R. Sallares (pers. comm.).

¹⁰² Alcock *et al.* (1994); Spurr, *Arable Cultivation* 126–31, manuring. On rotation, see Pliny, *HN* xviii.191 (Campania). ¹⁰³ Greene (1992).

¹⁰⁴ Wikander (1984); White (1984); Greene, *Archaeology*; Pleket (1988).

includes the three major resources engaged in the farming operation, land, labour and seed-corn,¹⁰⁵ plus the attitude of landowners, the conceptual framework within which they operated.

The yield figures in Cicero, Varro, Columella and Pliny the Elder are presented as seed:crop ratios. But return on seed is only one factor of production: and a high yield:seed ratio may be correlated with low return per unit area.¹⁰⁶ The secret of the high seed:yield ratios of North Africa, it has been persuasively argued, lay in an abundance of land, adequate resources of labour, and a low sowing rate – allowing ample tillering. The result was a heavy crop-load per plant, but a total product of modest proportions. In the apparent fixation of the ancients on return on seed rather than on land, we might seem to have one more illustration of the ‘failure’ of ancient farmers to make rational calculations of the productivity, efficiency and profitability of their enterprises.

However, while the ancient world may well have lacked the economic concept of productivity (the ratio of output over input) in its fullness, it does not follow that farmers or proprietors did not think of relating the product of the farming operation to the various resources employed in its production.

Production totals mattered.¹⁰⁷ Every year farmers measured their harvests. Every year they decided how much of the harvest to set aside as seed – and so were in a position to calculate the yield of the seed. But just as regularly they decided how much land to put under cultivation, how much to assign to each crop, and how much seed to sow for a given area. In other words, they had all the information they needed to work out the yield of the land. In the case of farmers required to pay a proportion of the harvest as tax or rent, such a calculation could not be avoided.

Production totals and the yield of the land mattered to landowners at various social and economic levels, though for different reasons. Small farmers were growing food primarily for their own consumption; their very survival and that of their families depended upon the performance of the crops they sowed. Being short of land, the combination of high tillering, high return per plant and low return per unit area was a luxury they could not afford. Their return would have varied with the amount of seed-corn they had and the level of labour-input they were willing and able to apply.¹⁰⁸

The rich also had expenses imposed on them by the state and their own lifestyle. But they could also afford not to aim at higher profit-levels. They

¹⁰⁵ See Halstead (1990b). ¹⁰⁶ Sallares (1991) 374 ff.

¹⁰⁷ Note that Columella thought in terms of yield per unit area in respect of vines, *Rust.* v.1.8–3.9, cf. Sallares (1991) 375, and that wheat yields on the Appianus estate were recorded according to area, in arourai, cf. Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism* 242–4.

¹⁰⁸ For variability of labour-input, see Gallant (1991) chs. 2, 4. The place of residence of a small farmer in relation to his workplace was another, significant factor. See Garnsey (1979)=(1998a) 107–33.

exercised this freedom of choice by, among other things, adjusting the relationship between the various factors of production.

There were doubtless gentleman-farmers with land to spare in all periods who manifested symptoms of the 'prize-marrow syndrome'. If it could be shown that the Roman agronomists wrote largely for them, that would be interesting. But the agronomists also paid attention to the profitable sale of surplus produce.¹⁰⁹ The numbers of landowners who were completely preoccupied or obsessed with the yield of the plant, and totally unconcerned with the marketing of their produce, were surely few.

¹⁰⁹ See e.g. Cato, *Agr.* 1.3, III.2; Varro, *Rust.* 1.16, III.2; Columella, *Rust.* 1.2–3.

CHAPTER 24

TRADE

W. V. HARRIS

I. INTRODUCTION¹

All forms of market exchange fall within the scope of this chapter, including everything from local trade in which very little transport of goods might be involved to trade over long distances, both inside and outside the Roman empire. We shall also need to take into consideration some transfers of goods which took place outside the market. The main commodity so distributed was the grain which, having come into the government's hands partly as provincial tribute, was shipped to Rome and divided gratis among the recipients of the corn dole. The Roman empire knew many other types of governmental and private largess; indeed, taken together they play an essential role in the social system.² We shall also notice other ways in which the imperial government and city governments were involved in commercial activities. Trade is defined here as exchange of goods in which a desire for profit is the motive of one party or both; we shall be especially concerned with trade taking place over considerable distances, at least from one city's territory to the next.³

¹ Several years have elapsed since this text was last revised (1990). Works of general relevance to the subject which it does not take into account include von Freyberg (1988), Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism*, the Einaudi *Storia di Roma*, which contains wide-ranging essays on the imperial economy (Schiaivone (1989) and Lo Cascio (1991)), Harris (1993). On particular topics see also the following. For the evidence from wrecked ships: Parker (1992). Prices: Drexhage (1991a), Duncan-Jones, *Money* ch. 2. The organization of the grain supply: De Salvo (1992). On trade across the eastern frontiers: Begley and de Puma (1991); across the northern frontiers: Wolters (1990, 1991). About olive oil: Jacques (1991); olive oil and wine: *Amphores romaines* (1989). Metals: Domergue (1994a), (1994b). On *terra sigillata*: Pucci (1993). Glass: Sternini (1993). Marble: Fant (1993). Perfume: Mattingly (1990). On markets in the literal and figurative senses see respectively De Ligt, *Fairs*, and Andreau (1991). On the term *emporos* see Drexhage (1991b). Representations of the merchant: Giardina (1993). Social élites and trade: Wallace-Hadrill (1991b), Gutsfeld (1992). On the organization of commercial enterprises see Aubert (1994); on *societates* and the transportation of metal ores (under Tiberius) see Liou and Domergue (1990). For the Customs Law of Ephesus see *SEG* xxxix 1180, and the map in Nicolet (1993) 931. On financial systems: Howgego (1994). Concerning the early imperial government's efforts to provide infrastructure see Schneider (1986).

² Concerning imperial largess see Veyne, *Pain et cirque*. Private largess: Hands, *Charities*. But it is scarcely plausible to maintain, with Whittaker (1985) 59, that 'gift exchange' was a phenomenon comparable in scale to market exchange.

³ The most important general works are Rougé (1966) and the collective volumes edited by D'Arms and Kopff, *Seaborne Commerce*, and by Garnsey, Hopkins and Whittaker, *Trade*.

One question we have to face is simply whether trade was very important. The question has commonly been presented as a crude dichotomy: either trade was mainly a matter of ‘luxuries’ and special cases, a relatively minor by-product of an agrarian economy which had few of the modalities of more vigorous pre-industrial economies, or the Romans developed an intense commercial system which had effects on large segments of the population and rivalled in scale the most commercial economies which ever existed before the twentieth century. The latter point of view certainly cannot be defended in its pure form.⁴ The ‘minimizing’ view, on the other hand, still has champions,⁵ though it may be doubted whether it has ever been much favoured by anyone who combined a wide knowledge of Mediterranean archaeology and of the ancient texts. Those who have played down the importance of Roman trade have often ignored the full range and implications of the evidence. A sub-group of ‘minimizers’ consists of scholars who have been somewhat carried away by the anthropological discovery of gift exchange, which dates back to the famous study of M. Mauss published in 1925, or who have rather recklessly applied to the Roman empire Karl Polanyi’s emphasis on institutionalized reciprocity and redistribution as against market exchange.⁶

The dichotomy itself is misleading, and should be avoided.⁷ It is becoming steadily more obvious that the complex patterns of Roman trading included not only a limited trade in goods of specific geographical origin – papyrus or glass, for instance, or first-rate wines – but also a truly massive trade in certain commodities to certain areas. Furthermore, the very great range of goods transported over some trade-routes means that large sums of money were involved and very many lives were affected. On the other hand, Roman trade differed in some important ways from the mercantile economies of the immediately pre-industrial era. If we are going to seek for comparisons, they should mostly fall in the period between 1400 and 1750.

Walking through the ruins of Ostia or Ephesus gives one the strong impression that the Roman empire encouraged or allowed the growth of a vigorous commercial system.⁸ Many another body of archaeological material suggests the same conclusion. The concentration of people in the

⁴ The classic statement is that of Rostovtzeff, *SEHRE* esp. ch. 5, but although he maintained that ‘the main source of large fortunes . . . was commerce’ and applied the terms ‘capitalism’ and ‘industry’ to the Romans, he cannot easily be convicted of confusing the Roman empire with the nineteenth century. Pleket (1990) 42 holds that no one would now espouse such a view as Rostovtzeff’s.

⁵ Finley (1985) (esp. 34, 126, 131) includes a guarded statement of this view. According to Jones (1954) 169=(1974) 30, ‘trade . . . played a very minor part in the economy of the Roman empire’. See also Pekáry (1980), Hopkins (1983a) xi; and also Peacock and Williams (1986) 60–3, who misleadingly refuse to count selling commodities to the government as trade.

⁶ Polanyi (1957) is the work which has had so much belated influence; for an anthropological critique see Adams (1974). ⁷ Cf. Carandini (1980b) 12; (1988) 264.

⁸ Or consider the size of the dock at Aquileia, 380 metres in length (Brusin (1934) 24).

major cities – Rome itself, also Alexandria and Carthage – would in any case lead us to suspect that essential and less essential goods were imported in great quantities from considerable distances. Rome probably had not far short of a million inhabitants in the first century A.D., Alexandria had very roughly 600,000 – and, according to Strabo, was the biggest trading centre in the world. Eventually Carthage approached the size of Alexandria.⁹ While we must pay attention to probable levels of aggregate urban demand, these very large cities (add Antioch perhaps) are a distinguishing feature of the Roman empire. The fact that their inhabitants somehow or other fed, clothed and housed themselves has extensive implications. Written sources, furthermore, show that long trading voyages all over the Mediterranean were commonplace, and that trade extended far into more distant waters. ‘Every sea has been opened’, writes Pliny during the reign of Vespasian, ‘. . . and an immense multitude undertakes voyages.’¹⁰

But hardly do we begin to ask a historian’s questions about Roman trade when the evidence, vast in extent though it is, begins to fail us. We can scarcely do more than guess at the volume of trade in any commodity, with the exception of the wheat imported to Rome itself, at any period, and wheat we know to have been atypical because of government intervention. Our knowledge of prices is for most parts of the empire very poor,¹¹ though for Egypt it has been possible to construct interesting if rudimentary prices series for various commodities. Another vital topic which remains obscure to us is the economics of transport. In short, the lack of useful quantitative evidence is a very severe handicap.¹²

The archaeological record is also problematical in many respects. A quite basic problem is that artefacts moved from place to place not only as objects of trade but for a variety of other reasons; we have already mentioned non-market exchange, and we must also keep in mind the effects of migration, of plundering, and of landowners’ moving the products of their far-away estates to places where dependants might use or consume them.¹³ We commonly do not even know for certain whether surviving artefacts were locally made.¹⁴ Another kind of difficulty stems from the fact that the

⁹ The population of Rome has been endlessly disputed: cf. pp. 811–13 below. Alexandria: Delia (1988); Strab. xvii 798. Carthage: cf. Herodian vii 6.1 (referring to 238). For other big cities see Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 260 n. 4.

¹⁰ ‘For the sake of profits not knowledge’, he says, Pliny, *HN* ii.118; cf. Juv. xiv.275–84 (hostile). Not that such texts lead to any clear conclusion.

¹¹ This emerges from Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 63–256.

¹² Cf. among others Morel (1982) 205, Tchernia (1986) 34–5.

¹³ For the latter practice see Whittaker (1985) 58–9. The wreck ‘Culip IV’, at the northern end of Spain’s Mediterranean coast, offers a cautionary tale: according to conventional ideas, part of the cargo (Gaulish *terra sigillata*) must have been travelling south-westwards, while the thin-walled pottery and amphorae must have been travelling north-eastwards (Nieto (1986), (1989)).

¹⁴ For some recent progress in the chemical analysis of Roman amphorae and pottery see Martin-Kilcher, Schupbach *et al.* (1985) Mirti, Zelano *et al.* (1990).

recent proliferation of archaeological information is disproportionately western, so that the author of any survey is bound to be frustrated by unanswerable questions about the eastern half of the empire.

The study of Roman trade is in flux. Some impressive recent studies of particular commodities have reached new levels of sophistication,¹⁵ and archaeological material and studies are accumulating so fast that any survey is bound to be seriously out-dated before long. All we can do here is to consider what is now known about patterns of trade in various commodities, about the social and institutional mechanisms by which trade was conducted, and about the role of governments. Near the end of the chapter we shall return to the problem of scale.

II. THE GEOGRAPHICAL SETTING

The frontiers of the empire had economic as well as military importance: there were tariffs, and outside the frontiers the rights and even the safety of a Roman were less secure than at home. But the power of Rome cast a long shadow, and the area in which Romans (that is to say, subjects of Rome) traded was vast. Indirectly Roman trade extended into still more remote regions, even to China. One of our most important sources of information about Roman trade is the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (*Voyage around the Red Sea*), a brief merchant's guide, probably composed some time in the period A.D. 40–70,¹⁶ to the markets of the Red Sea, East Africa and the west coast of India. The northern frontier of the empire was as permeable as the eastern one, though the north had fewer desirable commodities to offer; Roman goods are commonplace in the archaeology of south Russia and non-Roman Germany and even Poland and Sweden.¹⁷

The ready navigability of the Mediterranean by ships of the kind that the ancients were capable of building is one of those fundamental facts about the classical world which is sometimes in danger of being neglected. Also crucial is the navigability of many of the empire's principal rivers such as the Guadalquivir, Ebro, Rhône, Rhine, Tiber and Nile – to name only those whose commercial exploitation is amply attested. However, the limitations on the navigability of the Mediterranean have to be stated, in particular the seasonal limitations. Sailing in winter was unpopular,¹⁸ and in the absence of compasses and charts,¹⁹ not to mention weather forecasts, even summer sailing was risky. The dangers of the Indian Ocean, the Atlantic

¹⁵ Tchernia, *Vin*, and Mattingly (1988a) and (1988b) may be singled out.

¹⁶ The date: Casson (1989) 6–7, diverging somewhat from Casson (1984a) 39. In favour of A.D. 79–84: Miller (1969) 16–18. ¹⁷ Cf. Eggers (1951), Godtowski (1985).

¹⁸ See Cary (1949) 25–9, Rougé (1966) 31–9, on sailing conditions in the different seasons. Pliny, *HN* II.125 says that now greed drives people to sail in the winter.

¹⁹ Lack of charts: Casson (1971) 245–6.

and the seas of the north-western empire were of course greater still. Yet by comparison with the difficulties which the great oceans put in the way of the navigators of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries,²⁰ the problems of Mediterranean shipping in Roman times were only moderate.

The fertility of some of the territories bordering on this useful stretch of water was also of very great importance: such territories could, if there was a market, export their agricultural surpluses.²¹ Another crucial fact about resources, one which had had a profound effect on Mediterranean history since the eighth century B.C., was the dispersed location of mineral deposits. The best deposits of metal ores were not where they were most needed. The imperial power exercised widespread control over these resources, but they were also the basis of a large though little-known commercial market.

Another question concerns not geography itself but geographical knowledge. Every Roman of some education must have had at least an outline knowledge of Mediterranean geography. What is less clear is whether an interested person could acquire reasonably precise knowledge about potential trade-routes.²² This leads us to the vexed question of transport.

III. COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT

Before the transport revolutions which took place in the nineteenth century, the entire logic of long-distance trade was certainly different, particularly when it involved inland movement. We would of course like to know what kinds of trade were encouraged or discouraged by maritime, riverine and land transport of the kinds which the Romans had at their disposal. Water-borne transport was seen as very advantageous: an estate should preferably be near the sea or a navigable river, says Columella.²³ What makes it easy to get building materials to Rome, in Strabo's account, is river transport: not only along the Tiber but along the Rivers Anio, Nera, Topino and Chiani.²⁴ His descriptions of transport in Gaul and across the eastern Alps make it clear that in his time river transport was preferred to roads whenever possible (but the roads improved later).²⁵ The emperor Diocletian's Edict on Prices, though it does not give us real market prices even for its own period, shows that moving bulk commodities by land was enormously more expensive than moving them by sea, and given that land

²⁰ Cf. Crosby (1986) 104–31.

²¹ This statement must of course be understood within the context of Mediterranean ecology: Tripolitania is not fertile for most purposes, but with proper care and investment it could produce a large volume of olive oil (cf. Mattingly (1988a) 23–7).

²² On itineraries see Kubitschek (1916). Bekker-Nielsen (1988) may suggest a negative answer to this question.

²³ Columella, *Rust.* 1.2.3 ('by which its crops can be carried away and goods brought in'); cf. Harris (1989) 123. ²⁴ V.235. ²⁵ IV.177, IV.207.

transport depended mainly on oxen and pack animals this makes perfect sense. According to one estimate, the ratio of land, river and maritime transport costs was 55:6:1.²⁶

Roman merchant ships of the largest class were comparable in size to most of their European counterparts in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries.²⁷ Not that size is everything: the fact that small ships could operate successfully in Mediterranean coastal waters, often relying on cabotage, kept down the cost of getting into the shipping business. By the late second century the rule was that a shipper of grain could only enjoy certain privileges if his ship had a capacity of 50,000 *modii* or more, which with wheat of average weight amounted to about 340 tonnes, or if he simultaneously operated five ships of 10,000 *modii*.²⁸ Commercial vessels of 340 tonnes burden therefore existed, and a few wrecks of this size are now known.²⁹ Most ships which carried non-grain cargoes were much smaller, and many trading ships were in the 20 to 40-tonne range.³⁰ This was for economic not technical reasons, and since it was still true in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, should not cause us the least surprise.³¹ With respect to navigation too – although much remains unclear, especially the manoeuvrability of the average commercial vessel – work on the wreck at La Madrague de Giens confirms that some ships could tack into the wind at an impressively tight angle.³²

The market superiority of water transport should not lead us to think that commercial transport by land was unusual or that it was always an unbearable handicap. Transport by sea had its negative side: there was always the danger of losing the cargo to jettison or to complete shipwreck even if you stayed within the narrow season of supposedly safe sailing. Some scholars have now grown restless with the orthodoxy according to which ‘no low-value bulky cargoes could have been traded profitably overland for any significant distances’.³³ Anyone who had the choice no doubt

²⁶ Hopkins (1982) 86. Kunow (1980) 23 gives 62.5:5.9:1. It may be suspected that these ratios overstate the disadvantages of road transport (cf. Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 368, for a ratio of 22.6:4.7:1 in eighteenth-century England).

²⁷ For the tonnage of sixteenth-century merchants ships cf. Braudel (1972) 1 295–312, Unger (1980) 265. Genoese ships: Heers (1961) 273–5, Unger (1980) 221.

²⁸ *Dig. L. 5. 3* (Scaevola). An edict of Claudius had referred to grain ships of 10,000 *modii* capacity. On the sizes of merchant ships see Casson (1971) 171–3, who, however, mistakenly takes 10,000 *modii* to be the minimum capacity for a vessel which was to engage in overseas trade.

²⁹ According to Pomey (1982) 146, the late-republican wreck at La Madrague de Giens had a capacity of about 375 tonnes; the Isola delle Correnti wreck carried about 350 tonnes (Pomey and Tchernia (1978) 234). For the very largest ships (not in regular commerce) see Duncan-Jones (1977).

³⁰ Houston (1988) 553–60, with arguments of varying relevance.

³¹ Cf. Hopkins (1983b) 99–100.

³² See esp. Pomey (1982) (for a comparison with what was possible in the seventeenth century see 153 n. 37). Genoese navigation in the fifteenth century: Heers (1961) 176–7.

³³ Greene, *Archaeology* 40. Restlessness: Hopkins (1978) 43–9, Meiggs (1982) 339–46, Spurr, *Arable Cultivation* 144–6, Sippel (1987).

usually took the route over water, but what determined the feasibility of land transport was whether the market would tolerate its costs and still leave room for a profit – as it probably often did. We should not be over-impressed by the theoretical calculation, based on Diocletian's Edict, that a wagon-load of grain doubled in price when it had travelled less than 320 kilometres.³⁴ In fact, goods which were transported by water quite often had to be carried for considerable distances overland: this applied, for instance, to much of the grain and the olive oil exported from Africa Proconsularis. It has been argued that La Graufesenque, a major Gallic centre of the production of *terra sigillata* pottery which was exported to Britain and the Rhineland, shipped its wares in the first place not down the River Tarn (which is not in fact navigable so high up) but overland to Narbo, by a route which must have involved at least 80 kilometres of road travel.³⁵ Yet somehow it could be sold at a profit in distant locations. The distribution of east Gaulish pottery depended heavily on land transport.³⁶ The system of trunk roads covered virtually the entire empire, was supported by numerous local roads of reasonable quality and went on being improved at least down to Trajan's reign. 'Their roads can carry boat-loads', so Strabo had written in his description of Italy.³⁷

If demand was strong enough, the costs of land transport could be accepted. They should be seen as a limiting factor, a very important one, but not as a proof that land transport was of little commercial use over substantial distances.

IV. COMMODITIES

Many merchants avoided specialization, and for this reason among others it is artificial to discuss Roman trade commodity by commodity. On the other hand, much confusion has resulted from failing to attend to the wide range of commodities traded, so a survey, necessarily incomplete, is essential.

1. *Cereals*

The normal system, for most of the empire, was local production for local consumption: hardly any community attempted to live far away from an adequate source of cereals. The great cities were exceptions in that they had to import some of their cereals from beyond their own territories, and Rome, of course, was an exception on a grand scale; some cities of the second rank, such as Ephesus, may also have imported wheat regularly. In addition the big military encampments had to draw grain from sizeable regions.

³⁴ Jones (1955) 164=(1974) 37, as improved by Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 368 (note the latter's doubts about the usefulness of the Edict on transport prices). ³⁵ Middleton (1980), Nieto (1986) 112.

³⁶ Wightman, *Gallia Belgica* 153–4. ³⁷ v.235.

The population of Rome is likely to have required more than 250,000 tonnes of wheat annually,³⁸ as well as large quantities of barley and animal fodder. In the main this did not come from districts nearby, which must largely have been given over to producing the higher-priced and perishable foodstuffs which the city consumed. We should accept as exaggerated but roughly correct the claim, recorded by Josephus, that the wheat of Rome was imported from North Africa and Egypt for eight and four months of the year respectively; this was a rhetorical simplification, but not far from the truth.³⁹

The wheat which was distributed by the government involved private entrepreneurs who shipped it to Rome.⁴⁰ However, most of the grain which was imported by Rome was not the government's at all but the object of private commerce,⁴¹ and the majority of the inhabitants did not receive free grain. Not that the market operated in isolation from government actions, even at the beginning of our period – and as time passed intervention increased.⁴² Augustus had introduced the office of *praefectus annonae*, and Claudius had offered incentives to the shippers of grain. The latter also built a huge new harbour for the city at Portus, which Trajan remodelled. And at Rome itself the state had by this time built up a vast array of quays and warehouses.⁴³ Such facilities obviously tended to ease the lot of the grain merchants. In other cities, too, merchants brought the grain to market, with more or less frequent intervention by public officials and by benefactors.⁴⁴

2. Olive oil

To ancient Mediterranean people olive oil was an essential. It was part of their diet, they used it for much of their indoor illumination, it was an ingredient in soaps, medicines, perfumes and cosmetics.⁴⁵ Demand is difficult to estimate: a guess of nearly 20 litres per person per year (implying

³⁸ Rickman (1980) 10. Foxhall and Forbes (1982) 72 estimate 212,000; Garnsey (1983) 118–19 estimates 200,000; Casson (1984b) 97 estimates 400,000.

³⁹ Joseph. *B*/II.383–5; see Rickman (1980) 67–71. However, grain was imported to Rome from many other places (from 'everywhere' according to *IGSK* XII 211, lines 10–11).

⁴⁰ It seems that occasionally the fiscus actually bought grain for use in the capital. The evidence for this (listed by Casson (1984b) 103) is all Trajanic.

⁴¹ Rickman (1980) 87–93, 187–97, Casson (1984b) 96–116, with arguments of very unequal weight, against Pavis d'Escurac, *Prefecture*. But see also Whittaker (1985) 53–4. ⁴² Rickman (1980) 90–2.

⁴³ Castagnoli (1980).

⁴⁴ Occasionally emperors were involved in the provinces' problems in obtaining grain. This is probably the significance of the procurator for the annona of Narbonensis and Liguria in *CIL* XII 672= *ILS* 1432. A Greek city commonly had officials called *sitonai* who took responsibility for the grain supply (see Pavis d'Escurac (1987); it was an occasional office: 118), but this did not mean that the trade was in public hands, only that the *sitonai* were to see to it that grain came into the city and was sold at a bearable price. The equivalent in the western cities were the *curatores annonae*. The money might come from the city's treasury or from the magistrate's private resources (Pavis d'Escurac 120–1).

⁴⁵ Amouretti (1986) 177–96, Mattingly (1988b) 33.

nearly 200,000 hectolitres a year for the city of Rome) seems rather high,⁴⁶ but suggests the scale of the supply problem. Before the advent of railways, olives were grown further north than normally they are in modern times,⁴⁷ yet even with the widest possible pre-modern diffusion of the olive tree a considerable portion of the empire had to meet its need for olive oil through imports; in spite of its rugged appearance the olive tree is sensitive to cold and rain. Large cities and the army, but also the provinces which lay north of the olive tree's natural limits,⁴⁸ created demand for oil from afar.

One of our principal sources of information, as with wine and with the popular condiment *garum*, consists of the hundreds of thousands of surviving amphorae and amphora fragments, which have brought to light (sometimes it is very fitful light) entire patterns of Roman trade. This evidence continues to accumulate. In the western empire, the main routes of the trade in oil are reasonably clear. The characteristic form of Baetican amphora, Dressel 20, achieved very wide distribution during the first and second centuries.⁴⁹ Other major oil-exporting areas in the western empire were Tripolitania and, later, Africa Proconsularis. The centres of production in Baetica are crowded on and close to the River Guadalquivir and its tributary the Genil,⁵⁰ which vividly illustrates the importance of riverine and maritime transport: this oil arrived at affordable prices in central Italy, notwithstanding a journey of at least 2,000 kilometres (Hispania to Ostia). It was also shipped in considerable quantities to, among other places, the Rhineland and Britain, where the army formed part of the clientele. It seems likely that both Baetican and Tripolitanian producers could market their oil effectively in part because of their highly organized production methods.⁵¹ In the Flavian period oil from Africa Proconsularis won a substantial share of the Italian market, assisted by easier access (Carthage to Ostia was a three-day journey in good conditions). For the eastern empire, the exporting regions are harder to identify. Most of the surviving amphorae of Alexandria are unpublished, and no specialist study whatsoever has been devoted to the currents of the long-distance trade in olive oil in the eastern Mediterranean; Tripolitania was one of the sources.⁵²

Eventually the government took some steps to ensure that Rome, and

⁴⁶ Amouretti (1986) 183 (for Greece); cf. Mattingly (1988b) 33–4.

⁴⁷ See Callot (1984) 7–8, for the conditions which the tree will tolerate. The line indicating the northern limits of the olive tree in Braudel (1973–5), I 232 (fig. 19), is at some points too far south.

⁴⁸ See, for instance, Le Gall (1983) on the spread of olive oil to northern Gaul. Dressel 20 amphorae which contained olive oil are found on civilian as well as military sites in Britain: Williams and Peacock (1983) 270.

⁴⁹ Peacock and Williams (1986) 136; unfortunately no good distribution map is available.

⁵⁰ See the map in Ponsich (1980) 52 (fig. 1); further bibliography in Mattingly (1988b) 38.

⁵¹ Tripolitanian oil seems to have come from large estates: Mattingly (1988b) 37.

⁵² Grace (1955) tells us little, but suggests the Aegean as the main source for Alexandria. Tripolitanian olive-oil amphorae in the eastern Mediterranean: Peacock and Williams (1986) 166–7. The most useful contribution to date is Riley (1979).

perhaps other places, received adequate supplies of oil. In the first century its concern had probably been limited to providing for military supplies, and to the efficient exploitation of imperial estates.⁵³ But from an inscription set up at Rome we know that in or shortly after the 140s the olive-oil merchants from Baetica had a former *praefectus annonae* as their official patron; no doubt they received, or at least hoped for, favours.⁵⁴ In the reign of Marcus we hear of a high-level assistant of the *praefectus annonae* whose job involved him deeply in bringing oil to the Roman market, apparently at a subsidized price,⁵⁵ and there was now an imperial procurator in charge of receiving oil at Ostia.⁵⁶ By the 160s those who shipped olive oil to Rome, like the shippers of grain, were entitled to immunity from civil office-holding;⁵⁷ this, however, was the limit of official involvement before the Severan emperors.

3. Wine

Practically every province of the Roman empire could produce its own wine, and most of them could do so in abundance. Yet it is clear that a great deal of wine was transported from one territory to another by way of commerce. The amphora evidence is once again important, although it is somewhat perilous to use,⁵⁸ above all because wine could also be carried in *dolia* (much larger vessels) or in wooden casks; some remains of these containers survive, but not in sufficient quantities to prove much.

In our period the wines most prized by the Roman élite were mainly Campanian,⁵⁹ but this trade was not of primary economic significance. The key question is what the mass of the population drank. In most parts of the empire the wine will always have been a local product, or one which came from a neighbouring territory. But huge quantities of wine were shipped considerable distances,⁶⁰ the principal reason being once again that

⁵³ Remesal Rodriguez (1986) 75–6, was quite unjustified in saying that the Baetican oil trade was ‘controlled’ by the state from the Flavian period. It is interesting, however, that there was already a facility at Rome known as the *portus olearius*: see the inscription published by Panciera (1980) 238–41 = *AE* 1980 no. 84.

⁵⁴ *CIL* VI 1625b = *ILS* 1340 (with the text improved by Tchernia (1980) 155–6, and Panciera (1980) 243–4); *CIL* VI 1620 = *ILS* 1342 is a parallel dedication to a *praefectus annonae* by the *mercatores frumentari et oleari Afrari* (but he was not their patron). Cf. *FLA M. Ant.* 8.11.

⁵⁵ *CIL* II 1180 = *ILS* 1403, concerning Sex. Iulius Possessor, whose office was ‘adiutor praef. annon. ad oleum Afrum et Hispanum recensendum item solamina transferenda item vecturas naviculariis exsolvendas’. The last phrase implies a subsidy.

⁵⁶ *CIL* XIV 20 = *ILS* 372 (A.D. 175): he is rather obscurely entitled ‘proc. ad oleum in Galbae / Ostiae portus utriusque’. For evidence of a distribution of oil in A.D. 177–80 see *CIL* VI 34001 = *ILS* 9022.

⁵⁷ Callistratus in *Dig.* L.6.6.6. For oil distributions at Rome under the Severi see Rougé (1966), 468.

⁵⁸ See esp. Tchernia, *Vin* 76–7.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 201–3, 277–8. Italian wine as a luxury in the Greek world: Lucian, *Ship* 23, Alciphron IV 13.9.

⁶⁰ This the amphorae do demonstrate, for instance those from Tarraconensis at the Terme del Nuotatore site at Ostia (Tchernia, *Vin* 244).

the large cities concentrated more demand than could be met in their own immediate regions. On a fairly conservative estimate the demand for wine at Rome itself is likely to have been on the order of 1.5 million hectolitres a year in the first century,⁶¹ and only a small proportion of this demand could be met by vineyards near the city. Other large cities all over the empire, and military encampments as well, will also have depended on long-distance imports.

In the Flavian period and the second century, Rome's most important sources were probably on the west coast of Italy and in Gallia Narbonensis, with Hispania Tarraconensis making a major contribution, and also Crete.⁶² In other words, the spending power concentrated in the capital stimulated production over a wide area, the area which, while possessing suitable climate and soil, was most accessible by sea. Alexandria is likely to have had a somewhat similar effect: Strabo says that Syrian Laodicea supplies Alexandria with most of its wine, and there is no reason to suppose that this changed in the first or second century; from other sources we know that second-century Alexandria imported wine from the Aegean.⁶³

The imperial government did not intervene in any fashion in the trade in wine.⁶⁴

4. *Other foodstuffs*

Describing the crucial trading venture of his career, Trimalchio says that he loaded his ships with bacon and beans as well as with wine, perfume and slaves.⁶⁵ We can unfortunately gain very little idea of the extent or patterns of Roman trade in meat, fish, dairy products, vegetables or fruit over moderate or long distances. Some foodstuffs were too perishable to travel very far, but demand was considerable in the great centres of population, and meat and fish could be preserved by salting. Strabo says that salted meat was supplied to Rome and Italy from Belgica, and also mentions that Italy was supplied with Cisalpine pork.⁶⁶ Not only Trimalchio but also real-life merchants might concern themselves with legumes: some of the documents from Murecine (Pompeii), in which the main commodity is grain, also mention chickpeas and lentils.⁶⁷ Vegetables were a major element in the diet of the poor.⁶⁸ Dates were inexpensive in Italy, even though they

⁶¹ Tchernia, *Vin* 21–7.

⁶² Tchernia, *Vin* 238. On Crete see Chaniotis (1988) 73 who argues cogently that it exported wine in many directions 'on a massive scale' (cf. Tchernia (1986) 34–6). A lot of this wine probably went to Alexandria as well as to Rome.

⁶³ Strab. xvi.752; Clem. Al. *Paed.* II.2.30. Cf. also Johnson (1933–40) II 352, and, concerning some of the problems that arise in analysing wine imports into Roman Egypt, Rathbone (1983b).

⁶⁴ Tchernia, *Vin* 27–8. ⁶⁵ Petron. *Sat.* 76.

⁶⁶ Strab. iv.197 and v.218 (with Harris (1989) 124). ⁶⁷ *TabPomp* 13, etc.; see Bove (1984).

⁶⁸ For Juvenal's evidence about Rome itself see Courtney (1980) 112. On Roman vegetables: André (1961) 13–51.

were undoubtedly imports.⁶⁹ These fragments of information help to suggest that in fact trade in foodstuffs other than wheat was a vast and complex affair. But neither the trade in ordinary foodstuffs nor the luxury trade which transported all manner of exotic edibles across the empire can be even approximately quantified.

The popularity of *garum* and other fish sauces is indicated by the numbers of the surviving amphorae which carried them; at Ostia under the Flavians these amphorae outnumbered those containing oil.⁷⁰ It is clearly established that a large part of the western Mediterranean production of these commodities came from Baetica and Mauretania Tingitana.⁷¹ But the overall patterns remain to be elucidated.

5. *Slaves*

In the description of Roman trade given so far, the main thing which differentiates it from the trade of, say, sixteenth-century Europe is that the Roman empire included three cities which were each twice the size (or nearly so) of the largest cities which existed in Christian Europe around 1600. But there were other important differences too, one of which was the relative lack of a commercial bourgeoisie in the Roman empire, a fact which was closely linked to the very large role in Roman commerce of slaves and freedmen. Another difference is that the Romans carried on an extensive slave trade in order to maintain this element in their economic and social structure.

The common notion that the slave population of the empire now consisted mostly of the children of slaves cannot be sustained.⁷² In any case such slaves might be bought and sold, like those who became slaves by other means such as through capture in war, through the enslavement of foundlings or through importation across the frontiers.

Augustus had probably expected that his 2 per cent tax on slave sales would produce annual revenue on the order of 5 million sesterces, which implies that as many as a quarter of a million sales were believed to take place each year.⁷³ Subsequently the number of prisoners of war who came onto the market in an average year declined (though it could sometimes be very high: the total numbers enslaved in Trajan's Dacian Wars and at the end of Bar Kochba's revolt were in six figures). In all probability, however, neither demand nor supply declined significantly at least until late in our period.

⁶⁹ See Petron. *Sat.* 40, Mart. VIII.33.11, etc. They are the only common foodstuff at Pompeii which was definitely imported: Meyer (1988) 200, 215.

⁷⁰ Tchernia, *Vin* 293. At Pompeii, too, the *garum* amphorae far outnumber the olive-oil ones: Manacorda (1977) 121, 131.

⁷¹ See Ponsich and Tarradell (1965), Curtis (1978), Ponsich (1988).

⁷² For this and the other views expressed in this section see Harris (1980a).

⁷³ The tax: Dio LV.31.

While Rome and Italy undoubtedly comprised the largest regional market, slaves were in demand all over the empire. The main areas of 'surplus' within the empire were Thrace, Asia Minor, with the exception of the *provincia Asia*, and Syria. Slaves were imported from time to time across practically all the frontiers, and regularly through Palmyra into Syria, as we know from the local fiscal law of 137.⁷⁴ The route through Zarai into Numidia, which we happen to know of from the Zarai Tariff of 202,⁷⁵ was merely one of the other channels of importation. Slaves were bought and sold in every Roman city, as fairly extensive testimony shows. However, the most active centre of the trade, apart from Rome itself, was Ephesus,⁷⁶ which drew most of its slaves from the interior of Asia Minor and probably still exported them in large numbers to Italy.

Imperial intervention was slight, as far as we can tell, even though the imperial household must itself have been a large source of demand. The sales tax had risen to 4 per cent by A.D. 43,⁷⁷ and probably stayed at that level. By the time of the Zarai Tariff, however, the rate of duty charged on the importation of slaves was lower, at least in Numidia, than for any other major commodity, which can only have come about because the government wished to improve supply.

6. *Metal ores and artefacts*

Extraordinary little attention has been given to forging any synthesis out of the many fragments of evidence we possess about trade in metals and manufactured metal goods under the Roman empire. The aggregate of production was clearly very large. Pompeian archaeology illustrates this well: household vessels and utensils of every kind, farm implements, craftsmen's tools, fittings for vehicles and harnesses, jewellery and ornaments, statues, locks, nails, water pipes, the paraphernalia of gladiatorial combat – even this is not an exhaustive list of the classes of Pompeian metal artefacts. Other reasonably well-to-do cities all over the empire will have had a comparable need for metals, and the needs of the army were also very great.⁷⁸

The principal metals in question were gold, silver, copper, tin, bronze (the alloy of the preceding two), lead and iron. Most of the ultimate sources of supply were the property of the emperor.⁷⁹ However, extraction seems to have been mainly in the hands of private contractors, as was the shipping of ore and of metal ingots.⁸⁰ Metals then made their way into the

⁷⁴ *OGIS* 629 = *CIS* II 3.1.3913 (on Palmyrene trade in general, see Gawlikowski (1988)). On the import of slaves from Colchis see Braund and Tsatskheladze (1989). ⁷⁵ *CIL* VIII 4508.

⁷⁶ Harris (1980a) 127; see also Achilles Tatius v.17.

⁷⁷ *CIL* VI 915 = *ILS* 203; cf. Tac. *Ann.* XIII.31.

⁷⁸ For the range of uses see Healy (1978) 237–53, Gaitzsch (1985) 188–9.

⁷⁹ De Martino (1979) 316.

⁸⁰ Extraction: Greene, *Archaeology* 147. Shipping, at least to Ostia: Meiggs, *Ostia* 271–2.

hands of town craftsmen, who for the most part seem to have worked on a modest scale in the places where the products would be sold. Even a small community such as Tebtunis had its own goldsmith, bronze-worker, strigil-maker, lead-worker, tinsmith and maker of arms and breastplates.⁸¹ There was also, of course, a certain amount of long-distance trade in manufactured goods, including some export across the frontiers.⁸²

The richest resources were concentrated in a few provinces, except for iron.⁸³ For gold the primary sources seem to have been Iberia, Dalmatia and, after Trajan's conquest, Dacia. Silver came particularly from Iberia and Asia Minor. Iberia, once again, was a prime source for each of the principal base metals. Gaul and Cyprus were the other main sources of copper. Since bronze was produced in many places in Italy and the provinces,⁸⁴ it can be presumed that many sources of copper and tin were exploited. Lead came from Sardinia, Britain and Attica as well as Iberia.⁸⁵ While iron was to be found in almost every part of the empire,⁸⁶ the large-scale production occurred in Iberia, Gaul, Italy, Noricum, Dacia and Asia Minor.

Minerals were an important part of the emperor's wealth and were administered on his behalf by a network of procurators. But the main responsibilities of these officials concerned mining,⁸⁷ and whether the state involved itself with manufacturing in any way, or with the satisfaction of civilian needs for metal products, is obscure. Two procurators concerned with metals are attested at Ostia, another at Rome,⁸⁸ and it may well be that one of their functions was to ensure that Rome's supplies were sufficient. Not that we have any clear sign of government interest in this matter. And it appears that in the first part of our period the government was still content to rely on private workshops for all or most of the army's supply of weapons and other artefacts.⁸⁹

⁸¹ Johnson (1933–40) II 343. On the metal-working workshops of Pompeii see Grafis (1988).

⁸² Within the empire: note Gabler (1983) 108–9, Kunow (1985). For export of metal products to Germany see Dąbrowski and Kolendo (1972), Kunow (1983); to the area covered by the *Periplus*, Casson (1989) 27–9.

⁸³ For sources of ore see still Blümner (1887) IV 7–100. For mines in Europe see Davies (1935); Dušanić (1977) 63–79 on the upper Danube provinces; Domergue (1987) on the Spanish provinces. For gold sources see Healey (1989) 12. ⁸⁴ Cf. Pliny, *HN* xxxiv.96. ⁸⁵ Boulakia (1972).

⁸⁶ Pliny, *HN* xxxiv.142. Nonetheless iron bars have been found in a number of Roman wrecks: Gibbins and Parker (1986) 293.

⁸⁷ *CIL* II 1179 = *ILS* 1591 is suggestive: *confectores aeris* making a dedication to an imperial freedman who is 'proc. montis Mariani'.

⁸⁸ Ostia: *CIL* XIV 52 = *ILS* 1592 and XIV 4459 = *ILS* 1442 (iron). Rome: *CIL* VI 31863 = *ILS* 9011 (iron).

⁸⁹ See MacMullen (1960) and Oldenstein (1985) 83–6, who argues that such legionary workshops as existed in this period mainly did repairs, and Kunow (1986) 741. On the other hand, Bishop (1985a) believes that in the western empire equipment was all made in legionary *fabricae* throughout this period; cf. Scott (1985) 176. *Tac. Hist.* II.82 and *Dio LXIX.12.2* seem to imply that in Syria and Judaea there were private workshops which were at least capable of producing large quantities of arms and armour. *CbLA* x 409 reveals a military *fabrica* with a large labour force in second- or third-century Egypt. There was probably a change during the second century: cf. *Dig.* I.6.7 (Tarruntenus Priscus).

7. *Textiles*

Wool and linen, and also silk, require discussion. Poor people in the country might dress in skins, but the demand for wool, to be used for clothing, bedding and other purposes, was felt throughout the empire. Practically every province of the empire possessed ample flocks of sheep of one variety or another, and hence, as in the case of the trade in wine, the volume of long-distance trade – whether of raw wool, yarn, cloth, or finished goods – needs to be looked at carefully. In this case the material remains, those at any rate which have been published and analysed, are too slight to help much.⁹⁰

Certain fine material and certain highly regarded products were naturally traded as luxuries,⁹¹ and according to one account, there was no kind of ‘mass market’ for clothing, except for the military market.⁹² It would be a reasonable guess that many households aimed for self-sufficiency, making clothes – if not always spinning and weaving – for themselves. There is, however, a good deal of evidence that clothing was very commonly purchased.⁹³ The rather wide diffusion of *centonarii* in the western empire is significant in this respect, if it is correct to see them as sellers of cheap clothing judged suitable for slaves. At all events it was once again the big cities which were the main cause of long-distance trade. Rome itself regularly imported woollen goods from distant places.⁹⁴ And, as we would expect, the army had to seek supplies from far away – the Cappadocian and Judaeian legions in Egypt, for instance.⁹⁵

When Pliny evaluates the best varieties of wool, saying that Apulian wool is the most highly praised, and so on,⁹⁶ he does not convey very much about the main currents of commerce in this commodity. There is no guarantee at all that ‘Apulian’ wool was produced only in Apulia, and Pliny’s interest is in any case in the premium end of the trade. Strabo seems more informative, suggesting that Belgica, Turdetania (in the province of Baetica), Liguria, and the Insubrian area of northern Italy together with Patavium, were important sources of exported wool or woollen

⁹⁰ Even when the remains from a particular region have been carefully analysed, as by Wild (1970), the results have not so far been significant for the study of trade.

⁹¹ Frayn (1984) 163 sees most of the long-distance wool trade as ‘luxury’ trade, but observes (170–1) that the mass of detail about the textile trade in Diocletian’s Edict implies that the scale was fairly large. The best analysis of textile production in the empire as a whole is Pleket (1988).

⁹² Frayn (1984) 154, 163. ⁹³ Jones (1960) 184=(1974) 352.

⁹⁴ From Patavium: Strab. v.213 (‘every kind of clothing’), 218.

⁹⁵ Unfortunately we do not know how the prices paid related to market prices. For a chiton and four cloaks woven and made up at Philadelphia for the army in Cappadocia see *BGU* VII 1564 (A.D. 138). Five white cloaks from Socnopaiou Nesos for the army in Judaea: *PRyl* II 189 (A.D. 128). Apparently the army in Moesia obtained some of its clothing in Gaul: see Fink, *Military Records* no. 63, II 18 (Trajanic). ⁹⁶ *HN* VIII.190–1.

goods.⁹⁷ In the East one exporting area seems to have centred on the twin Phrygian cities of Hierapolis and Laodiceia, and Egypt may have been another.⁹⁸

Linen was widely used, at least in the eastern empire, for the clothing of all classes. Probable sources of large quantities of linen exports include Egypt, Gallia Comata and Spain.⁹⁹

There was also a certain amount of long-distance trade in silk. Cos was the Mediterranean source, but it seems to have been supplanted or supplemented, at least for a time, by imports brought by various routes from China.¹⁰⁰

8. Timber

The Roman world was heavily dependent on wood, for construction, for ship- and boat-building, for furniture, for writing-tablets, and for charcoal and firewood (wood was the fuel for all Roman baths). To what extent long-distance trade was involved remains unclear, in spite of some important studies devoted to timber resources.¹⁰¹ Certain texts give evidence of an elaborately organized system of production,¹⁰² and indeed demand cannot have been met without such a system. Importing of timber over medium and long distances may have taken place on a large scale. Yet most regions of the empire had extensive forests, and most people will no doubt have been willing to take Vitruvius' advice and replace fir or spruce, if they were not locally available, with cypress, poplar, elm or pine.¹⁰³

It is regrettable that there has not been more scientific analysis to determine the woods used in the Vesuvian cities, at Ostia and at other places where material survives. The literary sources give the impression that Rome itself, the principal market, drew all its timber, except for a few special

⁹⁷ Belgica: Strab. iv.197; Drinkwater (1977–8); Wightman, *Gallia Belgica* 149–50. Turdetania: Strab. iii.144. Liguria: iv.202, v.218; Insubres: v.218. Strabo's account may, of course, have been outdated by now.

⁹⁸ Concerning Laodiceia and Hierapolis see Pleket (1984) 31. Van Minnen (1986) argues from *Ποσειδωνος* 40 that in the span of five days, during one year in the second or third century, Oxyrhynchus exported 1,956 garments, and from this that it exported some 100,000 a year; it is not specified that the material was wool. However, the numerous customs documents from the second-century Fayum give no hint that it was a big textile-exporting area (cf. Drexhage (1982) 74).

⁹⁹ Egypt: Pliny, *HN* xix.7–8, 13, *CIL* iv 3340 c. Gaul: Pliny, *HN* xix.7–8. Spain: Pliny, *HN* xix.10. For Tarsus as a linen-producing centre see Cracco Ruggini (1980) 60–4, Pleket (1984) 31–2.

¹⁰⁰ Cos as a source in this period: Pliny, *HN* xi.76–8; however, Juv. viii.101 is the last reference (Sherwin-White (1978) 303). For the view that silk importation benefited from peaceful conditions along the roads from China in the period from about 90 to 130 see Thorley (1971). Chinese silk is often mentioned by Roman writers from Augustus' time onwards.

¹⁰¹ Giardina (1981) concentrating on southern Italy, Meiggs (1982).

¹⁰² Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* xx.15.2 (for the Sila forest), Pliny, *HN* xvi.23, 42, etc.

¹⁰³ Vitr. *De Arch.* 1.2.8.

woods for the luxury market, from Italy.¹⁰⁴ Of woods from outside Italy the most important in terms of value was probably citrus for furniture-making, which in our period came from Mauretania.¹⁰⁵ Elsewhere in the empire timber was exported,¹⁰⁶ but the scale is difficult to guess. The very big cities needed timber from far away, and other cities perhaps not much from a great distance – but here there is once again a great deal of still unanalysed archaeological evidence.

9. Pottery and glass

Pottery has occupied a large place in the modern study of Roman trade, primarily because of its survival capacity. Archaeologists often give the impression of thinking that trade in pottery was an important economic phenomenon, and some have explicitly defended this point of view.¹⁰⁷ This is not a point of view to be rejected out of hand: we should recall that in some parts of the empire, *negotiatores artis cretariae*, pottery merchants, make up a substantial proportion of all epigraphically attested traders.¹⁰⁸

A trade in high-quality pottery is no more difficult to understand than a trade in high-quality wine. Fine pottery was regularly imported over long distances. Whether pottery of middling or cheap quality travelled long distances for purposes of trade is more doubtful. There is a certain unjustified tendency to assume that similar wares must have come from a single centre of production.¹⁰⁹ However, it is widely agreed that the famous red-glazed *terra sigillata* ('samian') was sometimes exported long distances from the places where it was made.¹¹⁰ While *terra sigillata* was not destined for the poor, it was not the extreme of luxury either.¹¹¹

What made trade in pottery of this quality possible was not that merchants somehow managed to eliminate transport costs by shipping pottery with other goods,¹¹² but the ability of some of the producers to satisfy a more-or-less middle-class clientele which was not content with local prod-

¹⁰⁴ Meiggs (1982) 243–58.

¹⁰⁵ Meiggs (1982) 286–91; cf. Pliny, *HN* XIII.91–102 (the highest price he records for a citrus-wood table was 1.3 million sesterces, XIII.92). Seneca the philosopher was alleged to have owned 500 citrus-wood tables (Dio LXI.10.3).

¹⁰⁶ See, for instance, Pliny, *Ep.* x.41, Dio Chrys. XL.30 (both referring to Bithynia). For imports by sea to Ephesus, apparently on a large scale, see the inscription published by Keil (1959) = *IGSK* XI 1.23.

¹⁰⁷ See Pucci (1983) 110–11; but even he writes that 'pottery was never a pivotal sector of the economy in antiquity', 109. ¹⁰⁸ Cf. Raepsaet (1985) 74 on Belgica and the German provinces.

¹⁰⁹ So, for instance, with so-called 'Pompeian red' ware: Peacock (1977) 147–8.

¹¹⁰ For a survey of the production and distribution of *terra sigillata* see Peacock (1982) 114–28. The wreck 'Culip IV' (Nieto (1986)) now seems to show that *terra sigillata* could be a ship's principal cargo.

¹¹¹ But for some imported *terra sigillata* on a quite modest site see for instance Griffiths (1987) 286 (Northamptonshire).

¹¹² Mattingly (1988b) 53, among others, claims that the eventual 'dominance' of African red-slip ware in the western Mediterranean can only be explained if it rode 'pick-a-back' on other cargo; cf. Whittaker (1985) 54. No doubt this method did help the pottery trade to some extent; cf. Nieto (1988).

ucts. The centre of production moved from Italy to southern Gaul (above all, La Graufesenque) and later, towards the end of the first century, to central Gaul (chiefly Lezoux) and the German provinces, probably in part because of transport costs.¹¹³ Almost from the beginning of our period a considerable volume of North African red-slip ware ('sigillata chiara A') was exported to many areas of the western Mediterranean.¹¹⁴ Besides transport costs, other factors which are hard to specify influenced the development of these new trading patterns,¹¹⁵ but in any case throughout our period *terra sigillata* was shipped considerable distances in the western empire.

In the case of 'firm-lamps' (*Firmalampen*), simple and highly uniform terracotta lamps, it is possible to see how a geographical distribution of finds which at first sight seems to demonstrate long-distance trade is more probably to be explained by other means: branch workshops, and also unauthorized local imitations.¹¹⁶ These lamps were probably very cheap and except in unusual circumstances could not be transported in bulk over long distances as a profitable enterprise.

A striking feature of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* is the frequency with which it mentions exports of glass from Roman Egypt eastwards.¹¹⁷ But notwithstanding the survival of a fair quantity of Roman glass, a history of trade in this commodity can scarcely be written. By Pliny's time, the places of manufacture, which had originally been concentrated in Egypt and Syria, had spread to include sites in Italy, Gaul and Spain,¹¹⁸ and most provinces probably produced some; on the other hand the special conditions which were required might suggest that most glass was produced in relatively few centres.

10. Construction materials other than timber

Bricks, tiles and stone were all objects of trade, but for the most part only marble seems to have travelled truly long distances. The market for marble was clearly willing to pay high prices, and it was commonplace for marble to be brought many kilometres over land (for instance from the important quarries at Docimium in Phrygia), and most of the length of the Mediterranean by sea.¹¹⁹ This was not just a question of satisfying the tastes

¹¹³ Quality declines in the later production at La Graufesenque, in the Flavian period (Greene, *Archaeology* 161). Perhaps La Graufesenque prices were being undercut (but other explanations are possible). For the location of the production centres see Peacock (1982) fig. 60 (p. 117).

¹¹⁴ Carandini (1969) 107–8. ¹¹⁵ Cf. Pucci (1983) 110. ¹¹⁶ Harris (1980a) with Harris (1993b).

¹¹⁷ Sections 6–10, 17, 39, 49, 56.

¹¹⁸ Pliny, *HN* xxxvi.194; cf. Harden (1970) esp. 48–51 (bibliography: 67–71; add, for instance, Gabler (1983) 109–11, on Italian glass sent to Pannonia).

¹¹⁹ Ward-Perkins (1980), esp. fig. 1 (p. 27), shows the distribution of sarcophagi made from Docimium marble, and see Fant (1989). For transport of marble by sea see Pliny, *HN* xxxvi.2–4, and the report on the Saint-Tropez wreck by Benoit (1950).

of the emperor; so much of certain marbles was reaching Pompeii and Herculaneum by 79 from Numidia and from Teos that an expert scholar concluded that there must have been 'regular channels of supply' for the private market.¹²⁰ Under the Principate the marble trade seems highly organized,¹²¹ and since all or most of the quarries were imperial property, it was probably the emperor's *familia* which imposed this degree of organization and profited from it.

The market for other building materials is likely to have been no more than regional at most. This emerges, for instance, from a study of stamped bricks in the northern Adriatic region.¹²² Yet stamped bricks made in the vicinity of Rome were used as far away as Tripolitania in the second century, and apparently arrived there as objects of trade.¹²³

11. *Papyrus*

Although wooden tablets and potsherds were the everyday writing materials of the Roman empire, papyrus was also in heavy demand among officials and the well-to-do.¹²⁴ The scale is unknowable, but we should think of tens of thousands of rolls a year being exported from Egypt, which was always the virtually exclusive source. The extent of government involvement in production or distribution is surprisingly little attested. Under Tiberius the Senate had intervened to regulate the supply at Rome,¹²⁵ and it is likely that both then and later trade in papyrus was normally in private hands.

12. *Exotic plant-products*

It would be a complex matter even to list and to investigate the uses of the large number of commodities – mainly spices, ingredients for medicines and perfumes, dyes, incense – which fall under this heading.¹²⁶ Dioscurides wrote, probably during Nero's reign, five books on *materia medica*; they assume as a matter of course that it will be drawn from an enormous area stretching from Britain to India. Plant-products came to the Romans from as far away as Tanzania and north-eastern India. Large sums of money

¹²⁰ Ward-Perkins (1980) 39. ¹²¹ Cf. Ward-Perkins (1980) esp. 25.

¹²² Buora (1985). See also Matijašić (1983) 990–1. The gradual disappearance of these Pansiana stamps after A.D. 68 suggests that they were replaced by local products.

¹²³ See Helen (1975) 18, referring in particular to *AE* 1967 no. 538 (six different stamp types on the same site). Cf. Tomber (1987). For a sceptical view see Steinby (1981) 244–5.

¹²⁴ On other writing materials see Harris, *Ancient Literacy* 193–5. For the importance of papyrus: Pliny, *HN* XIII.68. See also Lewis (1974) 21–32 on its use for purposes other than paper-making; 121–2 on the organization of production. ¹²⁵ Pliny, *HN* XIII.89.

¹²⁶ For a list of those mentioned in the *Periplus* see Casson (1989) 42–3. The other important contemporary sources, besides Pliny, are Dioscurides and Galen. See Miller (1969), Müller (1978), Raschke (1978), 651–3, Groom (1981).

were sometimes involved. The known prices of some products make this plain, and in addition we happen to learn from a mid-second-century papyrus of a single import shipment, in which the most costly known components were nard and ivory, valued at 1,154 talents (probably equal to at least 6 million sesterces of imperial currency).¹²⁷ This was more than the retail value of the grain carried by twenty large merchant ships.

13. *Ivory, pearls and precious stones*

In the main these articles were imported into the empire from India or east and central Africa. The *Periplus* mentions particularly often places where tortoise-shell and ivory could be acquired. As usual, almost everything to do with volume escapes us. The elder Pliny describes having seen Lollia Paulina, former wife of Caligula, at a banquet 'covered with emeralds and pearls . . . their total value amounting to 40 million sesterces',¹²⁸ and the order of magnitude can easily be believed. While Lollia Paulina was exceptional, the demand for precious materials in this category clearly spread right across the upper class and accounted for a financially important branch of Roman commerce.¹²⁹

A much-discussed pair of texts in the elder Pliny suggests that in his time Rome had a serious trade imbalance with Arabia, India and China, at least 100 million sesterces a year.¹³⁰ This should be accepted as reliable information, but on the other hand Pliny was probably not attempting to describe a net imbalance at all. From the point of view of people who approved of economic self-sufficiency and deplored luxuries, such an outflow of funds was in itself worthy of note.¹³¹

V. THE GEOGRAPHICAL PATTERNS OF TRADE

Patterns are discernible in the vast and variegated history of trade under the Roman empire. A very large amount of trade took place over long and over medium distances such as from one province to the next. What matters is of course mainly value, not tonnage,¹³² though sometimes

¹²⁷ Harrauer and Sijpesteijn (1985) verso col. ii, lines 27–9; cf. Casson (1986a), (1989) 35. The papyrus being damaged, most of the cargo cannot be identified.

¹²⁸ Pliny, *HN* ix.117. On precious stones and minerals imported from India see Warmington (1974) 235–60. ¹²⁹ On ivory imports see Raschke (1978) 905.

¹³⁰ Trade with India, mainly the import of luxuries, caused the outflow of 55 (or 50) million sesterces a year (*HN* vi.101), and 100 million a year if Arabia and China were inclined (xii.84). These, he says, were minimum figures.

¹³¹ See Veyne (1979a). Raschke (1978) 634–7, among others, has argued that the figures are fictitious, but they can without difficulty derive from information about the revenue from the 25 per cent import tariff levied on the eastern frontier. At least in the second passage there is a moralistic concern (*pace* Crawford (1980) 207): Pliny is against the outflow of money because of what it was being spent on.

¹³² Cf. Braudel (1973–5) I 442–3.

cargoes of great bulk were involved. Commodities travelled long distances if they could be sold at a profit, a possibility which depended on many different factors. Price elasticity was the key. This could make not only a desirable luxury, a precious stone, say, or an exceptionally qualified slave, saleable far from its source; it affected any commodity which could not be produced or substituted for locally in adequate quantity. Willingness to pay depended on the tastes as well as the needs of the customers: pottery and textiles of good but hardly spectacular quality sometimes travelled noteworthy distances to market and were evidently sold at a profit.

Large cities could satisfy few if any of their principal needs locally. Profit-oriented farmers near to such cities no doubt concentrated on perishables.¹³³ The metropolitan cities could only exist because essential commodities were brought to them from enormous catchment areas. Thus, the main geographical patterns of long-distance trade were determined by the location of these markets and of the centres of production or supply. When a commodity could be produced in many different regions, wine for instance, the economics of transport had a powerful effect. The big concentrations of population, wishing to satisfy their needs as economically as possible, generally did so from the producing areas which could ship to Rome, or wherever the market might be, at relatively low cost. But this was not the only factor: the efficiency of producers also enters into the matter, and we may presume that well-capitalized and well-run estates and other enterprises had an advantage.¹³⁴

Army units in the provinces were another stimulus to trade. Since legionaries and their officers were paid regularly and paid reasonably well, they formed a not insignificant market. The total of military manpower was on the order of 300,000 men. It was a strange sort of market, since the government had a special interest in making sure that its needs were met, at least as far as food, clothing and equipment were concerned. By the Severan period the army's civilian suppliers enjoyed a tax exemption.¹³⁵ It is far from clear, unfortunately, how this market functioned, but in any case a market does not cease to be a market simply because suppliers receive special privileges from the government.

The army could afford goods brought from afar because it lived on tax revenues. It is tempting to say the same about the big cities, certainly about Rome itself. But matters were not so simple, since at least in the early empire central Italy was a noteworthy manufacturing area as well as a 'tax-receiving' area.¹³⁶ Alexandria and Carthage did not live in the main from tax

¹³³ Cf. Carandini (1988) 339–57, Mattingly (1988b) 50.

¹³⁴ Concerning the case of olive-oil production cf. Mattingly (1988b).

¹³⁵ Paulus in *Dig.* xxxix.4.9–7.

¹³⁶ On Puteoli as a port which exported manufactured goods under the empire see Pucci (1985) 277, appositely citing Strab. xvii.793. On Rome itself as a great *ergasterion* (workshop) see Aelius Aristides, *To Rome* 11.

revenues. Their enormous size is to be explained by a combination of factors: they benefited from Rome's grain purchases in their respective provinces and they were both the places of residence of well-to-do *rentiers*; they were also centres of production and trade.

We must continue to distinguish carefully between the Roman economy and what came after the Industrial Revolution: in the Roman world, as Hopkins has pointed out, we shall not find 'regular routes of large-scale exchange between regions specializing in the production of an agricultural surplus and regions specializing in the production of manufactures'.¹³⁷ A pattern of trade which we might expect to find is the export of manufactured goods to economically and technically backward regions both inside and outside the empire in exchange for raw materials.¹³⁸ The first half of the equation is easier to document than the second. Manufactured goods moved outwards, pottery to Pannonia and Britain, for example, weapons to independent Germany, manufactured metal goods and glass from Egypt to the East, but for most of its raw materials the Roman economy did not depend on the most backward regions.

An important set of trade mechanisms which co-existed with the day-by-day transactions on quaysides and in the market-places and shops of the cities consisted of fairs and periodic markets. They are attested in many parts of the empire (for instance in Campania, Phocis, the province Asia, Africa Proconsularis) and probably multiplied in the era from the Flavians to Hadrian.¹³⁹

Our attention has been concentrated on long- and medium-distance trade, but of course every Roman city was also a local trading centre, receiving the products of the surrounding countryside and sending out local artefacts as well as long-distance imports. Similar functions could be fulfilled by secondary 'central places', and it is to be noted that small settlements were often provided with *fora*, evidently for commercial purposes.¹⁴⁰

VI. PERSONNEL

In the foreground stands the merchant (Latin *negotiator*, *mercator*; Greek *emporos*),¹⁴¹ but the picture contains many other characters, some of them

¹³⁷ Hopkins (1978) 49. ¹³⁸ Cf. Coarelli (1965) 1012, Miller (1969) 203.

¹³⁹ MacMullen (1970), Gabba (1975), Andreau (1976), Shaw (1981), Pavis d'Escurac (1981), Nollé (1982), de Ligt and de Neeve (1988).

¹⁴⁰ For cases in Roman Germany see von Petrikovits (1985) 308.

¹⁴¹ Most scholars think that under the Principate a *negotiator* was a merchant who operated on a larger scale than a *mercator* (in older Latin *negotiator* had had a different meaning), though the latter was normally involved in wholesale trade. For attempts to distinguish the two terms see Rougé (1966) 290–1, Kneissl (1983) esp. 76–81. Händel (1985) 500 claims that both terms usually but not always refer to wholesale merchants. The terms probably overlapped a good deal, but *negotiator* may have been felt to be more respectful, which might explain its especial predominance in inscriptions (pointed out by von Petrikovits (1985) 299).

with roles which are hard to describe. The *negotiator/emporos* himself might operate in all sorts of different ways. He might, for instance, travel with his own goods on a ship owned by another, or he might send a subordinate, normally a slave or freedman, in charge of a consignment. Alternatively he might own and captain a ship himself.¹⁴²

A merchant was likely to deal in mixed cargoes, as Trimalchio was supposed to have done on his famous voyage, and as the author of the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* anticipates. Surviving wrecks normally turn out to have carried several commodities, quite apart from those which would have disintegrated with the passage of time: thus *Port-Vendres II* contained tin, lead, copper, oil, wine, fish sauce, almonds and pottery.¹⁴³ Admittedly these goods belonged to a number of people, and there is no guarantee that any particular wreck was shipping the goods of a single merchant. However, shipping a mixed cargo was an obvious strategy to follow since information about market conditions at the point of sale could never be up to date, and this was the normal practice in pre-modern trade. Nonetheless, some individual merchants specialized, either in a particular commodity such as wine, slaves or pottery,¹⁴⁴ or (perhaps less commonly) in a product or products from a single region.¹⁴⁵

In terms of status, many merchants and many successful ones were freedmen or slaves, though plenty of others were free-born. An impressionistic judgement might be that the first of these groups was the largest. In any case Roman law, and presumably other legal systems in use in the Roman empire, made it practical for a slave to be a merchant, even though in legal theory he was not a person.¹⁴⁶ Even those merchants who were free-born seldom seem to have been of curial, let alone equestrian, status. From inscriptions we know of extremely few merchants who were city-councillors; in Gaul such a thing may have been fairly common,¹⁴⁷ but in general the two callings were not often conjoined.¹⁴⁸ Thus the Roman world did not possess a powerful commercial bourgeoisie of the kind which was to be found in early modern, pre-industrial cities in Italy and the Low Countries.¹⁴⁹ But this by no means implies, as has sometimes been suggested, that trade itself was unimportant.¹⁵⁰ Among the Romans it was largely freedmen and slaves, the former with their own rather

¹⁴² Petron. *Sat.* 101. ¹⁴³ Colls, Etienne, *et al.* (1977).

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Wisseman (1984). This was perhaps commonest in the larger trading centres such as Lugdunum. ¹⁴⁵ Such people deserve further investigation; cf. Rougé (1966) 281.

¹⁴⁶ Slave *emporoi* as a common phenomenon: Ps-Plut. *De lib. educ.* 7=*Mor.* 4b with Pleket (1984) 21 n. 90. For the slave's legal position see Rougé (1966) 421–2.

¹⁴⁷ On the Fadii of Narbo in the second century see Cels (1978). Two *nautae Ararici*, captains or rather boat-owners on the River Saône, were respectively a Roman *equus* and a city decurion: *CIL* VI 29722, XIII 11179 (and see further Pleket (1984) 24 n. 104). For merchants holding local office in cities of the eastern Mediterranean see Pleket (1983) 139–40. ¹⁴⁸ Cf. *Dig.* L.2.12 (Callistratus).

¹⁴⁹ Pleket (1984) esp. 10–12. ¹⁵⁰ Cf. Veyne (1979b) 277.

hollow structure of civic distinctions, who managed the commercial enterprises.

It should come as no great surprise to anyone who has studied the status of women in the Roman world that while the vast majority of merchants were men, it was also quite possible for a woman to be a merchant in her own right.¹⁵¹

Some scholars have maintained that behind the façade of freedmen and other merchants of low social status there lurk senators, knights and office-holders from the cities of the empire with extensive commercial interests.¹⁵² The legal and institutional mechanisms were available, and sometimes we can get a glimpse of them in action. The very size of certain investments – those, for example, which were necessary for the construction of the largest merchant ships – suggests that members of the upper élite were involved. The problem is one of scale, or rather to know what was normal. The members of the upper orders were normally landowners, and they took an interest in the commercial aspects of running their estates, such as the selling of the vintage to *negotiatores*.¹⁵³ The emperor himself, through his *familia*, undoubtedly had the largest commercial income of all.¹⁵⁴ In a sense, commerce was a sideline for almost all members of the various social élites – they did not work at it day by day; but it was, as has been said, a sideline ‘with structural significance’ – and not something that they would willingly have done without.¹⁵⁵ When Pliny remarks casually that only a small proportion of his money is lent out,¹⁵⁶ we cannot tell what sort of loan or loans were in question; but in any case the commercial interests of various senatorial families can be conjectured.¹⁵⁷ Upper-class Greeks were perhaps a little less squeamish than Italian senators: Dio Chrysostom notes that the rich support themselves by means of usury, tenements, leasing slaves and by ships.¹⁵⁸ And within each level of the élite, diverse attitudes and varying levels of interest in commercial ways of making money were to be encountered. One could make money from trade while being best known as a professor (‘sophist’) and even while enjoying the reputation of not being acquisitive.¹⁵⁹ It seems probable that in most regions of the empire the city élites, like knights and senators, invested only a limited proportion of their money and a still more

¹⁵¹ The Claudian government took female grain-shippers into account: Suet. *Claud.* 19. Female merchants: see, for example, Panciera (1980) 244–5, and for two who operated in the Red Sea, probably on a largish scale, *JEG* VIII 703.

¹⁵² This is the hypothesis explored by D’Arms, *Commerce*, Schleich (1984) 53–70.

¹⁵³ Pliny, *Ep.* VIII.2.1.

¹⁵⁴ Specific evidence that imperial freedmen were involved in the grain trade: *TabPomp* 5, with Casson (1984a) 104–7. ¹⁵⁵ Pleket (1983) 136; cf. (1984) 13. ¹⁵⁶ Pliny, *Ep.* III.19.

¹⁵⁷ See esp. D’Arms, *Commerce* 156–62, Schleich (1984) 44–6. On the Laecanii see the thorough but necessarily inconclusive paper of Tassaix (1982).

¹⁵⁸ Dio Chrys. VII.104, XXVII.8 and see Ps.-Plut. *De lib.educ.* 7=Mor. 4b. Cf. Pleket (1984) 14–15.

¹⁵⁹ See the examples drawn from Philostratus by D’Arms, *Commerce* 4 and 164–5.

limited amount of their time in trade, mainly doing so through intermediaries. Yet they were the source of a large proportion of the empire's investment capital.

Against the hidden involvement of the élite it can be argued that a vast range of evidence demonstrates the repugnance of the upper Roman élite for direct concern with commerce, and furthermore that the almost ubiquitous freedmen *negotiatores* can just as well have been operating on their own accounts as on behalf of well-born patrons.¹⁶⁰ The dispute is one of nuance and degree and is hardly likely to be settled in a definitive way.

It was, in any case, common practice for well-to-do Romans to finance their freedmen and slaves in commercial enterprises. Furthermore, Roman law had already developed mechanisms for the vertical organization of commercial enterprises by defining the position of the *exercitor*, generally a ship-owner, in relation to the activities of his subordinates; the position of the *institor* or manager in relation to his superior; and the position of *servi communes* (jointly owned slaves) with respect to their masters.¹⁶¹

An expectable weakness of the Roman economy is that most enterprises are likely to be relatively short-lived, lasting a few decades at most. The principal players are all involved in an elaborate game of social mobility which will lead a successful merchant or his son to give up his original calling and perhaps turn to lending money at interest.¹⁶² Certainly we have very little evidence for the continuity of commercial enterprises, but this may be largely attributable to the nature of our sources. And some fairly impressive cases are known: the Decimi Caecili, for instance, were active in the olive-oil business before the destruction of Pompeii and at least as late as 154.¹⁶³ Even more impressive, if genuine continuity of ownership was involved, were some of the enterprises which made terracotta lamps, some of which lasted from the mid-first or early second century well into the third.¹⁶⁴ But it should be noted that the short life-expectation of business enterprises also characterized early modern pre-industrial economies.

In addition to those who carried on long-distance trade, there were, of course, men and women, probably far more numerous, who bought and sold commodities between one community and another on a relatively small scale, such as the men who are recorded in the papyri as dealing in small quantities of textile goods.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ On this point see Garnsey (1981) and (1983) 129.

¹⁶¹ See above all *Dig.* XIV.1 and XIV.3. On the law concerning the commercial activities of freedmen see Schiller (1935). For the employment of *servi communes* in trade see Di Porto (1984).

¹⁶² Cf. Petron. *Sat.* 76.9, with D'Arms, *Commerce* 100–8.

¹⁶³ Broughton (1974) 20; for this family see also Tchernia (1964) 437–9, (1980) 156, Remesal Rodríguez (1983) 103–4. ¹⁶⁴ Harris (1980a) 143–4. ¹⁶⁵ Cf. Wipszycka (1965) esp. 74–8.

VII. COMPANIES AND GUILDS

The ordinary merchant often seems to have been an individual with subordinates but no partners, and this is held to differentiate Roman commerce from European commerce of, say, the sixteenth century. It certainly seems to be characteristic of a merchant that he travels on his own behalf,¹⁶⁶ which suggests small businesses without partners. But partnerships, apparently limited in most cases to two or three men, were quite common, and *societas* received very detailed attention from the jurists.¹⁶⁷ They might be of brief or unlimited duration. The use of *servi communes* gave an added element of flexibility. Whether this system was a constraint on commerce by comparison with what happened in the sixteenth century remains doubtful: it was only in the seventeenth century that the joint stock company developed.¹⁶⁸ The natural way for a large enterprise to be structured in the Roman world would be through the employment of freedmen and slaves in responsible positions, and through *institores*. Admittedly we have little evidence for specific large enterprises of this kind. In the second-century wreck 'Saint-Gervais 3' several different Antonii lost amphorae, and they were probably fellow freedmen.¹⁶⁹ If so, they may or may not have been working in the interests of their *patronus*.¹⁷⁰ There were other forms of cooperation: a common one was that several independent merchants shipped goods on the same vessel.¹⁷¹ We should not in any case be hasty to assume that the Romans lacked the commercial structures which they needed.

It might be expected that merchants, like many tradesmen and craftsmen, would have formed guilds (*collegia*) in great numbers, but such was not the case. A few are attested, such as the *collegium* of the *vinarii importantes et negotiantes* at Ostia, and shippers (*navicularii, nautae*) organized themselves into *collegia* in a number of places.¹⁷² But the *negotiatores/emporoi* so often had diverse economic interests, and in so many cases travelled long distances, that they did not naturally coalesce. Many of the more successful ones became *Augustales* in the various cities, and presumably by this means satisfied their instinct for collegiality.

A type of organization which was quite common, and has interesting

¹⁶⁶ Philostr. *VA* v.20, Rougé (1966) 287–91.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Rougé (1966) 423–35, (1980) 296–8. The most fruitful source is *Dig.* xvii.2 (though many of the partnerships concerned had nothing to do with trade). The evidence from the eastern provinces has never been collected.

¹⁶⁸ On the growing size and complexity of Italian companies in the fifteenth century see Ball (1977) 24–5, and on the development of the joint stock company in northern Europe after 1550 see, for instance, Ball (1977) 40–4. ¹⁶⁹ Liou (1980) 174. ¹⁷⁰ Cf. D'Arms, *Commerce* 143.

¹⁷¹ See, for instance, Paulus in *Dig.* xiv.2.2.2.

¹⁷² On the *corpora naviculariorum* and the grain trade see Rickman (1980) 87–92, 226–30.

parallels in the history of early modern commerce, is the ‘colony’ in a distant city. At Ostia there were offices representing Narbo, Carales, Turris (both in Sardinia), Alexandria and each of a number of towns in Africa Proconsularis.¹⁷³ At Puteoli the Tyrians, and probably others, were organized.¹⁷⁴ In many other cities of both East and West similar groups were to be found. Often the strangers were from far away, for example Alexandrians at Tomi and at Perinthus (on the Sea of Marmara). No one has systematically investigated the character and functions of such ‘colonies’.¹⁷⁵ Perhaps the most remarkable merchants’ organization was, however, a formally constituted guild, the *corpus negotiatorum cisalpinorum et transalpinorum*, the Cisalpine and Transalpine Merchants’ Organization, which is attested in several cities in Italy and to the north.¹⁷⁶

VIII. COMMERCIAL FINANCE

No one could doubt that the Roman financial system was drastically different from anything modern,¹⁷⁷ but many key questions about it are hard to answer. How did you obtain credit to carry on a commercial enterprise? How easy was it to do so in practice? Were the financial institutions of the Roman empire flexible enough for the purposes of long-distance trade? We shall not debate whether the money supply was so limited that it inhibited the development of trade,¹⁷⁸ for we have only the most hypothetical idea how much money, in the sense of cash and callable deposits, existed at any date.¹⁷⁹ There is, in any case, no evidence of frequent liquidity crises or of astronomic interest rates.¹⁸⁰

It is assumed in the upper class that if one becomes active in commerce, one will borrow.¹⁸¹ Large sums can be borrowed either from private indi-

¹⁷³ *CIL* XIV 4549. ¹⁷⁴ Tyrians: *OGIS* 595.

¹⁷⁵ For such groups at Rome itself see Loane (1938) 55–9, Moretti (1958). See also, e.g., *CIL* III 10548 for Cologne merchants at Aquincum. Tomi: *IGRR* I 604 (A.D. 160). Perinthus: *CIG* 2024. Concerning other places in the Greek world see Stöckle (1924) 160–1. The continental *negotatores Britannici* studied by Hassall (1978) seem to be a different phenomenon, merchants who traded with Britain.

¹⁷⁶ *CIL* V 5911 (Mediolanum), XIII 2029 (Lugdunum), 11480 with *AE* 1952 no. 205 and 1972 no. 352 (Aventicum), XIII 5305 and 11547 with Kolb and Ott (1988) (Augusta Rauricorum). Cf. Schlippschuh (1974) 112–13.

¹⁷⁷ For the western empire see Andreau, *Vie Financière* (but he deals only with specialized professionals); on banks in the Greek world see Bogaert (1968).

¹⁷⁸ This seems to be the notion of Pekáry (1980). He does not make the appropriate comparisons, which are with early modern states (as J.-M. Carrié notes, in Pekáry (1980) 116).

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Veyne, *Pain et cirque* 534 n. 467. Goldsmith’s attempt to estimate the amount of coin in circulation ((1987) 40–2) is too speculative to be useful. Late mediaeval banks are said to have aimed at keeping cash reserves of about 30 per cent of deposits, and it has been suggested that ancient practice was similar (Bogaert (1968) 364 drawing on De Roover (1948) 306, 318, for late mediaeval practice).

¹⁸⁰ Naturally the availability and cost of loans varied from place to place: cf. *Dig.* XIII.4.3 (Gaius). See further below, pp. 769–86.

¹⁸¹ *Sen. Ep.* 119.1 (in the first place, interestingly, from *proxenetae*, brokers).

viduals or from banks.¹⁸² The bankers we know about are generally to be found in ports, which suggests the profession's commercial orientation.¹⁸³ Yet bankers seem not, at least as a general rule, to have made maritime loans, presumably because of the high risks.¹⁸⁴ Special rules applied to *traiecticia pecunia*, the maritime loan: it functioned in such a way as to include marine insurance, and alone of Roman loans it had its interest rate settled solely by the market, without any legal ceiling.¹⁸⁵ This gave needed flexibility. In fact, the overall impression which the sources, including the papyri and the Murecine tablets, give us is that credit was rather readily available, and that in normal circumstances trade is unlikely to have been hampered by credit shortages.

What the financial system seems to have lacked is the power to accommodate entrepreneurs over long distances. Not that it was helpless in this respect: you might, for instance, be able to repay in Rome a commercial debt which had been incurred at Berytus, or collect at Puteoli a sum lent in Egypt.¹⁸⁶ A detailed study has concluded that in the western empire banks were purely local in scope,¹⁸⁷ and there is no real sign of empire-wide financial networks – with the not unimportant exception of the imperial household. It might, however, be possible to detect some relatively sophisticated financial arrangements concerning trade between the cities of the eastern Mediterranean.

Another fundamental question concerns the extent to which the economy was monetized (see also below, pp. 274–8). The existence of a certain amount of barter should certainly not lead us to categorize the Roman system as a primitive one.¹⁸⁸ Even when Strabo was writing, regions which lacked money were strange and marginal in the eyes of a well-travelled Greek.¹⁸⁹ And, in fact, a fair quantity of evidence points to the monetization of the country-town market as well as of the larger cities.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸² For the relationships of financiers and merchants see D'Arms, *Commerce* 102–8. Lending by bankers for commercial purposes: Andreau, *Vie financière* 585–7, 656–7.

¹⁸³ Cf. Andreau, *Vie financière* 607.

¹⁸⁴ Andreau, *Vie financière* 603–4, Bogaert (1968) 355. However, a banker might be involved at least as an intermediary, as was the case with the particular maritime loan we know most about (the banker was a Roman citizen based in Theadelphia): see the revised text of *PVindobGrG* 19792 in Biscardi (1974) 211–14 and in Casson (1986b) = *SB XIV* 11850 (A.D. 149).

¹⁸⁵ This is the implication of Paulus *Sent.* II.14.3, which is admittedly later than our period; cf. Billeter (1898) 242–4, Ste Croix (1974) 55. The notion of Rougé (1980) 291–5, that maritime loans were only used by small traders, is unfounded.

¹⁸⁶ Payment at Rome (but not at Brundisium): *Dig.* XLV.I.1.22.1; Rathbone (1983b) 89.

¹⁸⁷ Andreau, *Vie financière* 663, 668–70 (referring to the West).

¹⁸⁸ Nor does it matter much whether every corner of the empire was part of the monetary economy: compare the comment of Carrié, in Pekáry (1980) 115, on the economy of the Abruzzi about 1930.

¹⁸⁹ Strab. III.155 (the deep interior of Lusitania), VII.315 (Dalmatia and the barbarians). Cf. Duncan-Jones, *Structure* 34. Dalmatia at least will have been different later.

¹⁹⁰ Veyne (1979b) 266 n. 22, and (concerning Belgica) Wightman, *Gallia Belgica* 156.

IX. GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION AND ITS LIMITS

The imperial government drew revenue from tariffs on trade, and so did a certain number of cities in the East, especially in Asia Minor and Syria.¹⁹¹ Apart from these *portoria*, the only tax levied on commerce was, as already noted, the 4 per cent tax on the sale of slaves. The *portoria* were exacted at many customs points within the empire, most of them situated in ports (often river ports) or other places which were on or near to external or inter-provincial frontiers.¹⁹² Rather curiously, the sea-ports of Italy seem to have been exempt while the land frontiers were not.¹⁹³ The tariff was a *quadragesima*, 2.5 per cent, in the Gallic district (which eventually seems to have included the German provinces) and in the provinces of Asia and Bithynia, also in Spain.¹⁹⁴ The absence of evidence for a *quadragesima* tax in other places, combined with the varying rates given in the Zarai Tariff (A.D. 202), suggests that, contrary to what is often said, many areas of the empire had no flat rate. A tariff of 25 per cent seems to have been exacted at the eastern frontiers of the empire,¹⁹⁵ but what happened on other external frontiers is unknown. It is difficult to say with confidence whether the distribution of this tax burden corresponded to any policy objectives.¹⁹⁶

Whether one thinks the government's intervention in long-distance trade was heavy or light depends in part on one's own historical perspective. The prevailing system was certainly not pure *laissez-faire*. Quite apart from the problem of supplying the army, the imperial power concerned itself with the wheat supply and later also with olive oil, and some city governments did so too.¹⁹⁷ Emperors and cities were also involved in their capacity as property-owners, especially through imperial ownership of mines and quarries. Not, of course, that it was quite proper for an emperor to be too interested in commercial revenues, and Vespasian's reputation suffered on this score.¹⁹⁸

At Rome and in the cities officials, chiefly aediles and *agoranomoi*, super-

¹⁹¹ On the whole subject see esp. de Laet, *Portorium* (351–61 on the *portoria* which cities were allowed to exact).

¹⁹² For new evidence from Ephesus see Engelmann and Knibbe (1989).

¹⁹³ No source says that the Italian *portorium* had been abolished, but the total silence of the epigraphical sources is sufficient evidence. Aquileia and some other places in north-eastern Italy are usually thought to have been included for *portorium* purposes in Illyricum (cf. de Laet, *Portorium* 178–80, Panciera (1957) 61–73), but the evidence is not conclusive.

¹⁹⁴ Gaul: de Laet, *Portorium* 125–73. Asia: de Laet, *Portorium* 274–5 (mistaken, however, in supposing that we have any evidence that this rate was extended to Asia Minor in general). Bithynia: *ILS* 9490 (Severan). Spain: *CIL* II 5064=*ILS* 1462 (*CIL* XIV 4708 is probably Severan: Etienne (1951)).

¹⁹⁵ At or near Palmyra: *AE* 1947 nos. 179 and 180. In Egypt: see the allusions in the papyrus published by Harrauer and Sijpesteijn (1985) (cf. Casson (1986a)). The relevance of *Periplus* 19 is very dubious: Bowersock, *Arabia* 70–1.

¹⁹⁶ On the low rate for slaves at Zarai see above, p. 722.

¹⁹⁷ On official *sitonai* and *elaionai* (grain- and oil-buyers) in the cities see respectively Pavis d'Escurac (1987), Robert (1969). ¹⁹⁸ Suet. *Vesp.* 16.1.

vised the markets – with what effects, we can scarcely judge. This was a matter of regulating trade in the interests of the community. Trade was also encouraged: governments and philanthropists frequently provided items of infrastructure such as harbours, porticoes, warehouses, *macella* (food-markets) and other places for doing business.¹⁹⁹ And this interest was matched by quasi-official rhetoric: emperors wanted long-distance trade to flourish.²⁰⁰

This concern also affected the legal system. As has already been hinted, the Roman legal system took extensive cognizance of the problems and disputes which arose in commercial life, and the solutions which it provided were balanced and increasingly sophisticated ones.²⁰¹

X. THE CHARACTER AND SCALE OF ROMAN TRADE

It no longer seems reasonable to assimilate Roman trade either, on the one hand, to the trade of an early industrial or a modern economy or, on the other hand, to the exchange system of a ‘primitive’ culture. The exposition offered in this chapter leads to the conclusion that Roman trade concerned far more than ‘luxuries’ or one or two government-dominated ‘staples’. Because the Roman empire contained a few cities which were very large by the standards of before 1800, and many other secondary cities, it had large markets for foodstuffs, textiles, metals and many other commodities. The social and institutional mechanisms which were needed to sustain such trade existed. So, to a sufficient degree, did an entrepreneurial or at least trade-oriented mentality. All of these phenomena – cities, markets, institutions, mentalities – had their specifically Roman forms, just as we should expect.

Nothing said in this chapter, however, should be construed as a return to a Rostovtzeff-like view of an entire Roman economy dominated by commerce. It remains true that reasons of technology and of social structure prevented the Romans from replacing their agrarian economy, in which the mass of the population lived not much above subsistence level, with a more dynamic system. Transport technology and production technology were relatively slight. Slave labour always made up a large proportion of the work force in any sizeable economic enterprise, whether it was an estate or a workshop (this, however, had the advantage of assisting the formation of capital). The weakness of the commercial bourgeoisie must also have had

¹⁹⁹ Governmental interest in infrastructure: Rougé (1966) 465–6, and for Egypt, Arabia and Judaea, Sidebotham (1986) 48–77. On port installations see, for instance, Meiggs, *Ostia* esp. 64–78, D’Arms (1974) Greene, *Archaeology* 29–30. On *macella* see esp. de Ruyt (1983): they were built by philanthropists (352–3), supervised and renovated by cities (354–5, 358–60).

²⁰⁰ Pliny, *Pan.* 29, Aelius Aristides, *To Rome* 11–13.

²⁰¹ Well argued with respect to the wine trade by Frier (1983a).

important effects, although they are hard to define: one consequence is that we never hear, as we often do in early modern states, of merchants or others advocating public policies on the basis of commercial utility.

XI. CHANGES OVER 120 YEARS

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, so it is now believed, long-distance trade in western Europe went through several periods of expansion and contraction.²⁰² We have no means whatsoever of knowing whether such cycles also occurred between 68 and 192 A.D.; a priori it seems likely.

One indubitable long-term change is that government intervention increased. The trend is clearly visible under Antoninus Pius with respect to olive oil, and there are indications under Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, preceding a markedly higher degree of state control under the Severans. What started all this is unclear – it is not enough to say that the government became more concerned about the supply of certain commodities. Part of the explanation is the steady and inevitable concentration of assets, including landed estates, in the hands of the emperor.

Late in our period the trade of the Roman empire probably began to contract. It is possible that the modest decline in the number of identified Mediterranean shipwrecks from the first century to the second resulted from a real decline in trade.²⁰³ If there was substantial contraction of trade, it may well have begun with the plague of 165–89,²⁰⁴ the resulting population decline, and also with the warfare of Marcus Aurelius' reign. The Roman economy was still to go through many further fluctuations, but the high point of long-distance trade was now past.

²⁰² Lopez (1987) 379–80. ²⁰³ For the fact see Parker (1984) 110 (fig. 4).

²⁰⁴ However, there may already have been serious difficulties in the economy of the capital under Antoninus Pius, causing a decline in construction (for which see Steinby (1978) col. 1515).

INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY

KEVIN GREENE

I. INDUSTRY

Any study of Roman industry is confronted by a basic problem, highlighted by Hopkins and Duncan-Jones: 'In the ancient economy, agriculture was clearly pre-eminent; most adults in the Roman world worked in the fields; most wealth was based on landownership';¹ 'Almost everywhere a large part of the population was engaged in agriculture at a relatively low level, while industry depended on a backward technology and was rarely organised in large units.'² In contrast, the products of Roman industry abound in museums and on archaeological sites. Vast quantities of fine stone were employed in imperial, civic and religious architecture and statuary; the army required iron, copper and lead for the manufacture of its comprehensive range of weapons and equipment; and most ordinary households used pottery which was produced on a very large scale, and traded over long distances. The overall level of production must have been determined by demand, and opinions are divided about the extent to which it was articulated by market-centred transactions involving coinage, or dominated by bulk-purchasing by the state and army.³ The answer is probably a combination of the two, stimulated by an aggregate demand from millions of peasants and town-dwellers incorporated into a single empire with comparatively good communications.⁴

Literary sources for the study of Roman industry are extensive, but almost entirely superficial. Strabo and Pliny the Elder both provided comprehensive catalogues of the resources and products of many regions of the empire. These texts, combined with historical interpretations and supplemented by epigraphic sources, formed the basis of extensive sections of Tenney Frank's *Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*,⁵ Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*⁶ and Charlesworth's *Trade Routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire*,⁷ all three were written before archaeology began to make a substantial contribution to our knowledge. The manner in

¹ Hopkins (1978) 75.² Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 1.³ Greene, *Archaeology* 50, 61–5.⁴ Hopkins (1978) 54.⁵ Frank (1933–40).⁶ Rostovtzeff (1926), (1957).⁷ Charlesworth (1926).

which Pliny catalogued the results of his insatiable curiosity was governed by a spirit of compilation rather than analysis that has been regretted by modern historians of science.⁸ However, his information about resources of stone, minerals and other raw materials must have proved extraordinarily useful to governors, procurators and generals sent out to new commands around the empire.

Archaeology has had a growing influence upon the study of Roman industry and technology in recent decades. An array of techniques now exists for the discovery, investigation and scientific analysis of ancient sites and artefacts. Archaeological evidence has its own special problems of survival and interpretation, but its role in the study of Roman economics is now extensive and immensely productive.⁹ New evidence is emerging from areas of the empire where literary sources are deficient, and interesting conflicts have arisen between written and archaeological sources; the case of water-mills discussed below provides a particularly good example; such conflicts are of course valuable in stimulating new thinking on familiar texts. Detailed archaeological knowledge can also provide a context for the interpretation of written evidence that would otherwise remain of very marginal interest, for example papyri containing terms for the lease of pottery production facilities in Egypt.¹⁰

Specialist studies of industrial products have helped to form an overall picture of industry in the early empire. Three (pottery, metal and textiles) will be considered below in order to provide a basis for generalizations about the nature, scale and organization of Roman industry. Our knowledge of pottery is almost entirely drawn from archaeological evidence. The sources and exploitation of metals are documented to some extent by Strabo and Pliny, but most details of extraction and production come from archaeological fieldwork or scientific analysis. In contrast to pottery, an assessment of the textile industry relies upon literary and epigraphic evidence and the study of production facilities rather than the products themselves, which survive only in exceptional circumstances.¹¹

The significance of Roman industry cannot be assessed without reference to the relative positions of agriculture, domestic crafts and industry in the economy, but such divisions are at best ill defined and at worst a modern imposition. It is not only impossible to estimate the percentage of workers employed in industry rather than in agriculture,¹² but it is also very misleading, especially in the countryside. Many rural industries were

⁸ French and Greenaway (1986).

⁹ Greene (1995) provides an account of archaeological methods, whilst Greene, *Archaeology*, considers their application to the Roman economy, and is also a general source for the whole of this section.

¹⁰ Cockle (1981). ¹¹ E.g. Wild 1977.

¹² White (1984) 190–1 estimates that over 60 per cent worked in agriculture, and 10 per cent in industry.

undoubtedly owned and run from villa estates, and most industrial workers were probably involved (if only seasonally) in conventional agriculture. This conclusion has been reached independently in many cases, ranging from the preparation of garum in Lusitania, to iron-working in Noricum, or salt production in Britain,¹³ and will come as no surprise to students of recent industrial history. Pennine lead-miners in nineteenth-century England still spent much of their very limited spare time working on small-holdings attached to their cottages. As late as A.D. 1900, highly industrialized economies still depended on horses, and required a complex agricultural infrastructure for breeding, rearing, and the supply of oats and hay.¹⁴

The processing of Roman agricultural products into wine, oil, textiles, or leather bore many similarities to, and was just as complex as, the 'industrial' production of pottery, glass, stone or metal. Fishing, garum and salt production cannot be placed in purely industrial or agricultural categories. Furthermore, since most 'industrial' items had raw materials which were products of the earth, they were not entirely unrelated to agriculture. The supposed contrast between the social acceptability of agriculture and the shame of commerce is thus blurred.¹⁵ Names on brick-stamps show that aristocrats made no secret of owning sources of commercial profit, such as the clay sources used by tileries around Rome.¹⁶ The Sestii, whose villa has been excavated at Sette Finestre near Cosa, were involved in an economic network extending from agriculture to shipping, wine, bricks and *terra sigillata*.¹⁷ All of this evidence reinforces the pre-eminence of agriculture within the Roman economy, without denying a significant role for industrial products.¹⁸

The structure and organization of some industries can be elucidated with the help of makers' stamps on products. The best-known are *terra sigillata* and tiles, but workers' or workshop names occur on many other products from glass vessels to ingots of metal, and even perishable goods such as leatherwork or textiles.¹⁹ Stamps are generally small and abbreviated, and performed a function during manufacture and distribution rather than at the point of sale. Indeed, stamps on metal ingots or tanners' marks on leather would normally have disappeared during the production of finished goods. It seems that even those industrial goods which were produced in large quantities, such as *terra sigillata* or textiles, normally emanated from a multiplicity of small workshops, although subdivision was not so extensive

¹³ Edmondson (1987) 128–30; Ørsted (1985) 239, 248; Gurney (1986). ¹⁴ Thompson (1976).

¹⁵ Finley, *Ancient Economy* 40–2, 51–2 etc.; D'Arms, *Commerce*, Schleich (1983–4).

¹⁶ Helen (1975); Champlin (1985) 258.

¹⁷ Carandini (1985); Will (1984); McCann *et al.* (1987). See also Haley (1988) for a possible Spanish case of 'élite involvement' in pottery production and commerce. ¹⁸ Hopkins (1978), (1988).

¹⁹ Gansser-Burckhardt (1942) 99 Abb. 72, 105–8; Wild (1987) 470.

that it excluded craft-specialization within workshops.²⁰ Likewise, state-owned mines and quarries were usually operated by a number of leaseholders, and even the imperial mints were distributed around the empire and internally subdivided. There are striking similarities between the ways in which the Roman state ensured supplies of marble for building projects, and corn for the masses; quarries and estates might be owned by the state, but extraction and transport were generally arranged through private leases and contracts.²¹

Name stamps, grave memorials and other evidence demonstrate the existence of free, freed and servile labour in industry in Italy and the provinces. Grave memorials from many parts of the empire (including Italy) show that despite the views of Rome's aristocratic élite, manual labour was considered to be an honourable pursuit. Free citizens and freedmen appear on carved tombstones in working clothes with the tools of their trade, alongside wives dressed in the traditional garb of a Roman matron.²² The extent of the use of servile labour is difficult to measure, but it may well have been underestimated in the provinces.²³

I. Pottery

Roman pottery provided a comprehensive range of vessels for table and kitchen functions, and for use in storage and transportation.²⁴ At the top of the quality scale were fine wares, including *terra sigillata*, the universal glossy red tableware made in Italy and several provinces. Distribution patterns of individual wares varied enormously, from kinds of *terra sigillata* which could be found throughout the empire, to local kitchen wares produced for a single locality. Some industries made wide ranges of forms, others concentrated on particular categories. Roman pottery was traded rather than made for the consumption of individual households or estates. Diversification was common; in central Gaul, a major production centre for *terra sigillata* at Lezoux was surrounded by other sites making various combinations of coarse, colour-coated or glazed wares, *terra sigillata* and moulded figurines.²⁵ Archaeological-site finds show that one of the most visible effects of romanization in the western provinces was to increase the general availability of all kinds of wares.

The mode and scale of pottery production undoubtedly ranged from a part-time activity which supplemented farming to full-time employment for specialized craft workers, or even military manufacture.²⁶ Most Roman vessels were made on a potter's wheel, and fired in carefully constructed

²⁰ Petrikovits (1981); Loane (1938). ²¹ Ward-Perkins (1971); Rickman (1980).

²² Reddé (1978); Zimmer (1983). ²³ Samson (1988). ²⁴ Peacock (1982).

²⁵ Vertet (1975) 46 fig. 1.

²⁶ Peacock (1982) 8–11; for military manufacture, see Greene (1977) and Stephens (1984).

kilns,²⁷ although some surprisingly widely distributed kitchen wares were still hand-made and fired in bonfires.²⁸ There were simply no technical (as opposed to organizational) innovations in Roman imperial pottery production, but 'technology transfer' took place rapidly and widely, so that provincial potters from Britain to Africa were able to produce *terra sigillata* and other fine wares of Mediterranean origin which, in the absence of any form of patents, drove successive Italian and Gaulish products from the market. The army was undoubtedly very important in spreading Roman tastes in pottery to frontier provinces, and in introducing technical expertise which could be taken up by local potters.²⁹

2. '*Terra sigillata*'

Terra sigillata derives from a Greek ceramic tradition which included a mixture of plain and decorated forms. The technical change from these Hellenistic 'black-glazed' wares to red *terra sigillata* occurred in the first century B.C. *Terra sigillata* made in Italy, Gaul and Germany comprised a standardized (but evolving) service of decorated and plain wares, including vessels for serving, eating and drinking.³⁰ Its study not only reveals the technology involved, but also gives indications of the organization of the work.³¹

Clay had to be dug from selected deposits, weathered and refined to an optimum consistency for wheel-throwing, forming or moulding, depending on which type of vessel was being made. Most plain wares were open vessels such as bowls or plates, mass-produced on a rotating wheel using a blank, probably lathe-turned from wood; the exterior profile was formed by a template. Decorated vessels were made in fired clay moulds with motifs impressed into their interior surface with small individual hand-held dies. Clay was pressed into the mould, and drawn up on the wheel to create a projecting rim; a footring was added by hand after drying and removal from the mould. Finally, all vessels required a very fine coating of a slip to produce a glossy surface when fired in an oxygen-rich atmosphere, which caused the iron oxides in the clay to become red. Kilns were very large, and partly built from prefabricated elements, such as clay pipes which conveyed heat through the load without spoiling its even red finish by direct contact with smoke from the fire.³²

The distribution of Augustan 'arretine' *terra sigillata* embraced sites in the north-west provinces, around the Mediterranean, and even reached beyond the empire to India and Britain.³³ Some of the workshops had branches elsewhere in Italy and in Gaul, notably at Lyons. The complicated

²⁷ Swan (1984). ²⁸ Peacock (1982) 79–89. ²⁹ Greene (1979).

³⁰ Vernhet (1979); Bémont and Jacob (1986).

³¹ Jacob and Leredde (1986).

³² Picon (1973).

³³ Pucci (1981) 104–5 tav. xvii.

arrangements of the firm of Ateius, and its branches at Pisa, Puteoli and Lyons, have only been elucidated by scientific analysis of clay sources.³⁴ The distribution of distinct groups of slaves' names indicates that different centres served separate geographical areas, north and south of the Alps.³⁵ The production of 'arretine' *terra sigillata* in Italy and Gaul ceased early in the first century A.D., although inferior derivatives in Italy continued to reach the Alps and the west Mediterranean coasts.³⁶

The western provinces were then supplied from centres in southern Gaul, notably La Graufesenque (Aveyron), which flourished until the end of the first century. Between A.D. 100 and 150, new sites in central and eastern Gaul rose into prominence, whilst Mediterranean areas were increasingly supplied with red slip ware from North Africa.³⁷ Central Gaulish ware came largely from Lezoux, and was important only in Gaul and Britain. East Gaulish ware was made in many locations from the Mosel to the Danube, and was largely directed at local consumers; production continued well into the third century A.D.³⁸ Red slip ware from Asia Minor and then Africa enjoyed long-term success and expansion around the Mediterranean from Hellenistic to Byzantine times, in contrast to *terra sigillata* production centres in the north-western provinces. Decline set in during the third century, and production devolved to ever-smaller local centres which, by the fourth century, made simpler vessels without moulded decoration or regular use of name-stamps.³⁹

The quality of wares from each production area was by no means uniform, and great changes took place in individual centres in the course of a few decades. The superb Augustan moulded vessels from Arezzo lasted less than forty years before devolving into coarse imitations of south Gaulish ware. The robust and glossy south Gaulish ware declined rapidly after the 70s A.D., and by A.D. 100, bowls were hastily removed from simplified moulds, with their decoration blurred. These signs of haste presumably reflect economic difficulties which could only be met by faster production.⁴⁰

Since *terra sigillata* manufacture involved many processes already familiar in pre-Roman times, it was evidently possible for anyone with access to suitable clay deposits to set up a workshop, whether by buying experienced slaves or employing free craftsmen. A prominent central Gaulish workshop bore the name of Libertus, indicating the likelihood of a patron financing a freedman. Even careers and movements of individual potters can sometimes be deduced from the study of name-stamps.⁴¹

³⁴ Schnurbein (1982) 4–21; similar diversity in the production of lamps has been investigated from a legal point of view by Harris (1980a). ³⁵ Lasfargues and Vertet (1976).

³⁶ Pucci (1981) 116–19 tav. xx–xxi. ³⁷ Hayes (1972).

³⁸ Peacock (1982) 117 fig. 60, King (1981) 64 fig. 6.4; for recent excavations at Rheinzabern, see Reutti (1983). ³⁹ E.g. Young (1977). ⁴⁰ Greene (1982). ⁴¹ Hartley (1977).

Name-stamps on pots, and incised inscriptions found at a few kiln sites, help to elucidate the organization of production, and demonstrate that the *terra sigillata* industry was subdivided into many small units, each employing a number of workers. Many of the predominantly Augustan stamps found at Arezzo in Italy bear two names, one featuring the *tria nomina* of a Roman citizen presumed to have owned the workshop, and another (commonly Greek) probably that of a skilled slave who actually did or supervised the work. A hundred and ten firms are known, and the number of slaves associated with a single owner's name is typically between ten and twenty, but ranges from only one up to sixty-five.⁴² The Gaulish workshops of the first and second centuries A.D. were smaller and more numerous, and *tria nomina* are much rarer amongst the owners' names, which include many of native Gaulish origin.⁴³

The study of stamps and signatures is very complex, since their significance varies according to their position.⁴⁴ Moulded bowls occasionally incorporated prominent 'advertisement' stamps displaying the name of the workshop-owner into their decoration, but mould-makers normally inscribed their names freehand in the bottom of a mould before it was fired, in a position where it would be obliterated when a footring was added to a bowl after moulding. Thus, a single bowl might preserve the mould-maker's name (freehand and retrograde), a workshop name (amongst the decoration) and a bowl-finisher's name (on the rim or inside the bowl), underlining the division of labour involved.

Some skilled activities were conducted by specialists on behalf of many workshops. The best evidence for this comes from 'tallies' scratched onto plates in cursive script recording kiln-loads, known from several production sites in southern Gaul. The pots are tabulated by size, form, number, and the names of makers who are also familiar from name-stamps. The numbers of pots add up to tens of thousands, reflecting the responsibility resting upon the kiln operator.⁴⁵ Firing lists also help to explain the universal practice of stamping individual pots with workshop or workers' names, for they would ensure the accurate return of vessels after firing, and assist in calculating the amount to be paid to the firer. Similarly, they would have facilitated assembly of products from several workshops into a contracted order placed by a middle-man (*negotiator cretarius*). In a large workshop, stamps could also have helped to monitor the production rate of workers.

3. *Metals and mining*

The ores of non-ferrous metals are mainly restricted to volcanic rocks in highland areas, either in a primary position or redeposited nearby through

⁴² Prachner (1980) 243. ⁴³ Oswald (1931). ⁴⁴ Johns (1963). ⁴⁵ Marichal (1988).

erosion. Metal resources, and the timber which provided essential fuel for their processing, were heavily concentrated in the western provinces of the empire and the best archaeological evidence for their extraction comes from Spain and Britain.⁴⁶ Iron ores are found very widely, but some regions were exceptionally rich, including parts of Italy, Noricum and Britain. Pliny and Strabo provide extensive accounts of metal resources, together with circumstantial descriptions of techniques and working conditions.⁴⁷ Pliny is a particularly valuable authority on mining in Spain, for he actually saw it in action in A.D. 72–4 while he held an official post.⁴⁸ However, written sources give an inadequate picture of Roman mines in Gaul.⁴⁹

Eroded ores redeposited in river gravels were exploited by using water to wash away lighter sediments. Water released from dams fed by aqueducts could be used to clear away surface soil and loose rock on opencast sites. Fire-setting was effective in opencast mines or tunnels; the rock was heated by fire and then flooded so that thermal shock would shatter it, making the ore easier to remove. Pliny saw and described *ruina montium*, in which water eroded tunnels in the workface of an opencast mine until it collapsed.⁵⁰ Underground mining was a last resort, reserved for precious metals, for many ores could still be exploited by means of opencast workings. More elaborate techniques depended on geology, and whether an ore was in a primary position or had been redeposited. Patches or veins of ore lying near the surface were exploited by simple pits or trenches. Deep tunnels and shafts demanded a considerable investment of labour, particularly if ventilation and drainage were necessary.

Archaeological studies in Spain, Greece, Wales and elsewhere have identified all of the stages of ore extraction from simple surface working to deep mining, together with evidence for additional uses of water such as sieving and ore-washing.⁵¹ In southern Spain, modern exploitation has revealed (and destroyed) traces of mining conducted on a spectacular scale: ‘almost all of the presently operating and most of the old abandoned copper mines of Huelva had previously been operated in Imperial Roman times and had produced silver as well as copper’.⁵² An impression of the general extent of Roman mining can be gained from 231 sites identified with the help of fieldwork in the north-west of Spain alone.⁵³ Many examples of miners’ tools and other artefacts have been found,⁵⁴ and drainage equipment has survived in wet conditions, including large wooden water-wheels, bucket-chains, Archimedean screw-pumps and bronze piston-pumps.⁵⁵

⁴⁶ Recent general accounts include Woods (1987) and Healy (1988).

⁴⁷ Davies (1935); Healy (1978), (1986). ⁴⁸ Domergue (1974); Bird (1984).

⁴⁹ Ramin (1974) 437. ⁵⁰ Domergue and Herail (1978) fig. 35 c-d.

⁵¹ Spain: Bird (1972), Rothenberg and Blanco-Freijero (1982), Domergue and Hérial (1978); Wales: Lewis and Jones (1969); Annels and Burnham (1986); Greece: Conophagos (1980), Lauffer (1979), Kalcyk (1982). ⁵² Rothenberg and Blanco-Freijero (1982) 173. ⁵³ Bird (1984).

⁵⁴ Healy (1978) pls. 21–37. ⁵⁵ Luzon (1968); Palmer (1926–7) pl. 16.

The organization of mining

Metal resources eventually came to be imperial property,⁵⁶ and although the army was involved in prospecting and initial exploitation in newly conquered provinces, mines were not normally worked directly by the state. Rich areas were placed under the control of procurators, who regulated mining activities, and supervised the leasing of workings to individuals and *societates* on a 'share-cropping' system similar to agricultural tenancies. Epigraphic evidence from Dacia includes records of several holders of the office of *procurator aurariarum*, as well as many subordinate officials.⁵⁷ Not only precious metals were administered in this way; a similar system operated in areas with notable iron resources, such as Noricum.⁵⁸

Two sets of mining regulations were found at Vipasca (Portugal) in 1876 and 1906.⁵⁹ The latter were probably general, and composed in Rome, while the former are very local and specific.⁶⁰ The regulations stipulate a payment of 4,000 sesterces to obtain permission to exploit metal on a 50 per cent sharing basis. Although this sum was well within the reach of an army veteran, at seven times the annual wages of a free contracted labourer it ensured that only operators of proven means undertook exploitation.⁶¹ Safety regulations and measures against fraud are included, as well as details of the operation of baths, shoemakers and tax concessions for teachers. Obviously, a well-regulated community with essential facilities was necessary to attract suitable leaseholders and labourers to remote districts.

The names of many operators were cast or stamped on ingots of metal.⁶² In Spain, at least, stamps on lead ingots indicate a change from large companies to individuals by the time of Augustus, and then an increase in state control during the Empire.⁶³ Indeed, the massive scale of exploitation in new areas of Spain may reflect direct exploitation by the state rather than the activities of leaseholders.⁶⁴ The output of traditional mining areas was affected by new conquests; ingots found in the port of Narbonne in south-western Gaul show that initially it handled Spanish metal on its way north, but that later, metal from Britain travelled through it to the Mediterranean.⁶⁵

Mining remains a dangerous and unpleasant activity; in Roman times, criminal or servile labour probably undertook repetitive or unskilled tasks such as driving water-lifting machinery. However, holders of leases required skilled and experienced labour; a series of documents inscribed on wax writing-tablets found at Alburnus Maior (Rosia Montana) in Dacia

⁵⁶ Finley (1970). ⁵⁷ Mrozek (1977) 97; Noeske (1977) 296–311, 347–86.

⁵⁸ Cleere (1983); Dušanić (1977) 79–85. ⁵⁹ Domergue (1983). ⁶⁰ Orsted (1985) 203.

⁶¹ Richardson (1976); Orsted (1985). ⁶² Colls (1975). ⁶³ Domergue (1966) 65–8.

⁶⁴ Rothenberg and Blanco-Freijero (1982) 173; Tranoy (1981) 233.

⁶⁵ Laubenheimer-Leenhardt (1973) 199, 201.

includes pay agreements for free contract workers; there is remarkably little evidence for slave labour.⁶⁶ Studies of personal names found in north-west Spain show that free workers were attracted from other parts of the peninsula,⁶⁷ whilst the conquest of Dacia absorbed individuals from Dalmatia in the West, and many parts of Asia Minor in the East.⁶⁸ The introduction of mining into remote areas created a local demand for labour in ancillary trades and agriculture, estimated to be potentially as much as 60 per cent of the total workforce in parts of Spain.⁶⁹

Metallurgy and technology

Most metals (including gold, silver, copper, lead and tin) were obtained through the smelting of mined ores – rather indirectly in the case of silver, which was normally recovered as an impurity of lead.⁷⁰ The resulting ingots of pure metal could be cast or hand-worked into finished objects either straight away, or after being combined into alloys such as bronze, brass or pewter. Iron was rather different, for Roman furnaces produced solid blooms which could only be hammered and shaped into objects by smithy-ing.⁷¹

Gold and silver were used in making coins, jewellery and ornaments, and high-class tableware.⁷² Copper alloys were much commoner, and provided the bulk of the coinage, cheaper jewellery and all manner of fittings for vehicles, military armour, furniture, and so on. Bronze was the principal alloy used in casting statues and making a range of cast and sheet-metal vessels, but zinc brass was also used, notably by the army, and may even have been the subject of state control.⁷³ Lead and tin provided metal for alloying with copper to make bronze, or with each other for pewter or solder.⁷⁴ Lead on its own was invaluable for sealing roofs or water tanks, and for making the pipes which were important in the construction of water-supply systems and baths.⁷⁵ Iron was universal for strong, sharp and durable tools.⁷⁶

Roman metalworkers possessed a clear understanding of practical metallurgy. Scientific analyses of silver and bronze artefacts have revealed that whilst general working techniques were uniform in Gaul, there were strong regional traditions of alloy ‘recipes’. Metalworkers apparently came from local native populations, and maintained proven ways of producing alloys from local ores and metals, but adopted new techniques under Roman rule – a clear case of ‘technology transfer’.⁷⁷ In common with other

⁶⁶ Mrozek (1977) 102–9; Noeske (1977) 386–415. ⁶⁷ Tranoy (1981) 233.

⁶⁸ Noeske (1977) 315–19. ⁶⁹ Edmondson (1987) 60. ⁷⁰ Conophagos (1980) 151.

⁷¹ Cleere (1976). ⁷² Painter (1977). ⁷³ Bayley (1990).

⁷⁴ Hughes (1977); Blagg and Read (1977). ⁷⁵ Boulakia (1972).

⁷⁶ Manning (1986); Matthaus (1984); Gaitzsch (1985).

⁷⁷ Baratte *et al.* (1985) 51–8; Beck *et al.* (1985) 115.

Roman crafts, metalworkers operated in small workshops, often in urban settings, or occasionally in the army.⁷⁸

Coins demonstrate the consistency with which either pure metal or alloys could be produced, albeit by rule of thumb rather than scientific control. Early denarii of pure silver were declined with the progressive addition of bronze until only 2–3 per cent of silver remained by the third century. The very gradual and consistent way in which these changes took place emphasizes the degree of control which existed. The ‘bronze’ sesterces and dupondii of the early empire in fact consisted respectively of brass (copper and zinc) and impure copper, which gave a visual distinction to denominations of similar size.

Different alloys have different properties, both in manufacture and use, and once again metallurgical analysis has demonstrated a sound knowledge present amongst Roman metalworkers. It is possible to compare Pliny’s ‘recipes’ for alloys with scientific analyses of objects.⁷⁹ Analyses show that levels of tin and lead were carefully controlled so that finished products were not adversely affected by their potentially negative properties. Thus, for thin metal vessels, lead was kept down to around 1 per cent lest it should soften the alloy, whilst it ranged up to 35 per cent in cast objects and statues. Tin is found in both categories, but never over 14 per cent, at which point it leads to brittleness. Pliny made this distinction in his lists of ingredients for thin vessels and castings.⁸⁰ Scientific analysis and microscopic examination have been instigated by Pliny’s comments on soldering silverware.⁸¹

The wide variety of metals and alloys used in Roman metalwork demonstrates a clear control over metallurgy, and, by implication, a similar level of expertise throughout the processes of mining, preparation and smelting of ores. Scientific analyses underline general competence in metallurgy, rather than innovation. It must be stressed that the wide range of casting methods employed in the Roman period had already been in use for several thousand years. However, the quantity, range and specialization of metal products was markedly greater than in the pre-Roman period.⁸² Although the mining of iron and its subsequent processing into steel made the province of Noricum famous in Roman times, the medieval innovation of casting iron into finished objects was not perfected until the late eighteenth century, when it contributed to many significant advances in manufacturing, construction and transport.

In mining too, the Roman period brought intensification rather than innovation. Despite the scale of operations, techniques differed little from those known at the Athenian silver mines at Laurion, which continued in production from Greek to Byzantine times without technical change.⁸³ In

⁷⁸ Grafsls (1988); Bishop (1985b). ⁷⁹ Brown (1976) 39–41. ⁸⁰ Brown (1976) 39.

⁸¹ Lang and Hughes (1984). ⁸² Manning (1986); Gaitzsch (1980) 259–61.

⁸³ Hopper (1968); Conophagos (1980); Lauffer (1979).

Spain and elsewhere, existing mines expanded in the early empire, and new mines were dug, using extensive shafts and underground galleries. The resulting requirement for drainage equipment was met by adapting effective water-lifting and pumping devices already used in Egyptian irrigation agriculture.⁸⁴ The earliest application of steam engines in the seventeenth century was to improve mine drainage; in the Roman empire, muscle-power remained the dominant motive force.

4. *Textiles*

It is instructive to contrast the amount of detailed archaeological research lavished upon the study of Roman pottery, metalwork and stone with the comparative neglect of textiles. At most, pottery can only have played a very minor role in Roman commerce, whereas textiles were of enormous importance. To provide a perspective, documentary evidence from England shows that both wool and leather were still much more important than metals in the eighteenth century.⁸⁵ The products of the Roman textile industry only survive in rare and exceptional circumstances of desiccation or waterlogging, and their manufacture leaves fewer diagnostic physical traces, compared to the slags, furnaces and kilns associated with metal, pottery or glass.

The study of textile production underlines the problems of interpretation encountered in assessing the significance of Roman industries. In 1926, Rostovtzeff pointed out the contrast between the 'homespun' image of domestic weaving presented in Roman literary sources, and the complex archaeological remains of textile workshops revealed at Pompeii.⁸⁶ A. H. M. Jones disposed of this 'archaic fantasy' of domestic production in 1960, through a study of different kinds of documentary evidence, such as Egyptian papyri and Diocletian's Edict; his conclusion was that: 'Weaving was then in the main a professional occupation, and clothing an object of trade.'⁸⁷ Study of the textile industry should not overlook the importance of the production and trade in raw wool.⁸⁸

Rostovtzeff's remarks were followed up in a detailed analysis of the wool trade of Pompeii by Moeller,⁸⁹ who emphasized the enormous range of crafts involved in textiles from sheep-shearing to finished cloth; this, and the number of known Latin terms used to describe the workers involved, implies considerable specialization.⁹⁰ Even greater specialization could be found in associated activities involved in the supply of essential materials for textile processing, such as the preparation of dyes or the collection of urine for wool cleansing. A series of separate establishments carried out

⁸⁴ Oleson (1984). ⁸⁵ Clarkson (1960–1) 245. ⁸⁶ Rostovtzeff, *SEHRE* 577–9 n. 20.

⁸⁷ Jones (1960) 184; see also Wipszycka 1965. ⁸⁸ Frayn (1984). ⁸⁹ Moeller (1976) 1–2.

⁹⁰ Moeller (1976) 10–27.

different stages of textile production at Pompeii – washing raw wool, dyeing fleeces, spinning and weaving, fulling and felt-making.⁹¹ Moeller claimed that inscriptions and graffiti from Pompeii revealed that ‘persons of all classes’, including the ruling local aristocracy, were involved in the work and ownership of the textile industry. He went on to detect ‘distinct signs that some master hand directed the industry’,⁹² and to claim that Pompeii was a major production centre with extensive exports.

This conclusion involved the rejection of Wild’s opinion (derived from the study of textile remains, rather than production facilities) that northern Gaul and Syria were the major exporters of cloth in the Roman empire, and that Italy made no significant contribution.⁹³ Furthermore, most of Moeller’s other conclusions have now been disputed by Jongman;⁹⁴ for example, he has demoted fullers from the role of entrepreneurs, and suggested that some of the fulling facilities may have been used for laundering dirty clothes, rather than preparing new cloth. Most textile workshops were indeed small, and the claim that the biggest may have employed as many as nineteen workers may have been over-optimistic.⁹⁵ Even on Moeller’s most generous estimates, less than 4 per cent of Pompeii’s population was employed in the textile industry,⁹⁶ and Jongman concluded that: ‘Pompeian industry shows few, if any, characteristics appropriate to the “producer” city. No one (export) industry dominates. Instead we see a welter of small-scale crafts catering for the consumer demand of a local élite.’⁹⁷

Technology in cloth production

Technology does not impinge upon the Roman textile industry to any appreciable extent; painted scenes of workers treading cloth in fulling workshops emphasize the labour-intensive nature of virtually all of its stages of production.⁹⁸ Not until after A.D. 1100 were mechanisms powered by water-wheels adapted to the kinds of repeated stamping actions used in fulling.⁹⁹

Since no physical remains of actual looms (as opposed to weights or tools) are known from the first millennium A.D., the types in use must be deduced from artistic representations and technical features of distinctive woven products.¹⁰⁰ Most weavers in the early empire used the traditional vertical loom with weighted threads,¹⁰¹ although small hand-held weaving-tablets and heddles might be employed to make borders and braids.¹⁰² Despite claims to the contrary, the introduction of the horizontal loom seems not to have occurred before the third century A.D.¹⁰³ It increased the

⁹¹ Moeller (1976) 29–56. ⁹² Moeller (1976) 104–5; Jongman, *Pompeii* 184.

⁹³ Wild (1970) 3, (1976) 167, 177. ⁹⁴ Jongman, *Pompeii* 155–85.

⁹⁵ Jongman, *Pompeii* 169–70. ⁹⁶ Moeller (1976) 81. ⁹⁷ Jongman, *Pompeii* 158.

⁹⁸ Moeller (1976) 21 fig. 1. ⁹⁹ Reynolds (1985). ¹⁰⁰ Carroll (1985).

¹⁰¹ Wild (1976) 166 fig. 274. ¹⁰² Wild (1976) 173. ¹⁰³ Wild (1987).

repertoire of weavers producing elaborate, expensive materials such as silk, rather than affecting the speed and scale of ordinary textile production. The greater complexity of designs executed on horizontal looms had to be fully conceived in advance, unlike products of 'tapestry weaving' on the vertical loom.¹⁰⁴

II. TECHNOLOGY¹⁰⁵

The consistent feature of Roman weaving, mining, quarrying and pottery-making is the extent of operations and the quantity of output. The technology applied to the extraction and processing of raw materials was evidently adequate to meet a relatively high level of demand, at prices which could be afforded. Italy did not possess technical pre-eminence in any industry, and the provinces were fully involved in skilled production. The movement of workshops or workers was usually related to the relocation of production centres for specific markets, rather than the spread of new technology. However, 'appropriate' technology was certainly introduced very widely where necessary, from specialized tools to mine-drainage systems.

There was never really any such thing as Roman technology, but rather technology of Roman date. Like other aspects of Roman civilization, it incorporated non-Roman elements, some with a Greek background, and others derived from the indigenous 'barbarian' peoples brought under Roman rule. It is also difficult, but not very helpful in the present context, to attempt to differentiate between science, engineering and technology.¹⁰⁶ 'Roman' solutions to technical problems were not applied evenly over the empire as part of the process of romanization. But although the term 'Roman' is not very helpful on an explanatory level, what other label could possibly describe a drainage device found in Britain that was invented by Greeks in Alexandria?

Many classical scholars approach Roman technology in the light of their knowledge of its Greek background, without necessarily adjusting the context from city-state to empire. A persistent stereotype contrasts Greek theory and invention with Roman practical application.¹⁰⁷ This view tends

¹⁰⁴ Trilling (1982) 96.

¹⁰⁵ Oleson (1986) for a major bibliography on Graeco-Roman technology. Since writing this section in early 1991, I have published several papers on technology (Greene (1992), (1994), (2000)), that develop the views presented here and in Greene (1990).

¹⁰⁶ See e.g. Landels (1978) and (1988), and Hill (1984).

¹⁰⁷ 'The Romans, although a far more practical people, invented little of their own but did much to adapt the principles, used by the Greeks only for their temple "toys", to large-scale practical applications such as could be used "for the common good"' (McNeil (1990) 18); 'Unlike the Greeks, the Romans were not innovators but very practical engineers, who applied the ideas of their predecessors' (*ibid.* 970).

to overlook the fact that much of the engineering associated with ‘Greek science’ was Roman in date, developed in Alexandria, and was extensively applied, for example in irrigation agriculture.¹⁰⁸ The application of technology in the Roman empire will now be assessed in two different contexts – transport and milling – where new evidence has brought a change in perception, and (briefly) in some other important aspects of Roman life: water-lifting, agriculture and architecture.¹⁰⁹

1. *Water transport*

In the last three decades, hundreds of Roman shipwreck sites have been recorded in the Mediterranean,¹¹⁰ and many river-boats have been discovered in the silts of important trade routes such as the Rhine.¹¹¹ Excavated remains of ships now provide a firm basis for comparison with the considerable number of craft illustrated in wall-paintings, carvings and mosaics, or described in ancient literary sources.¹¹²

The essential contrast between Graeco-Roman Mediterranean ships and those of the medieval and modern periods lies in a basic approach to hull construction. Classical vessels relied on a rigid shell into which strengthening timbers were fitted afterwards, rather than the ‘skeleton’ of a keel and ribs over which a skin of planks was fitted.¹¹³ Many Roman wrecks have confirmed that a keel was laid, and then the shell was built from planks joined edge-to-edge without any overlap, held together by mortices and tenons secured with wooden pegs and copper nails. Frames and other strengthening timbers were then shaped and fitted internally, and the lower part of the hull was sheathed in lead as a defence against sea worms.¹¹⁴

Local traders around the Atlantic coasts used ships with overlapping planks held together by iron nails similar to the Venetic craft encountered by Julius Caesar.¹¹⁵ Caesar and Strabo’s descriptions have received welcome confirmation from the remains of a merchant ship of the second century A.D. excavated in St Peter Port harbour, Guernsey. These Celtic ships were waterproofed by caulking, rather than through the precise carpentry of the close-fitting planks of Mediterranean builders. In the Mediterranean too, sea-going ships might still be constructed in other ways, such as the pre-Roman technique of sewn planking.¹¹⁶

A heavy but shallow timber keel gave Roman ships strength, but little stability under sail; ballast was essential. A mast amidships carried a wide rectangular mainsail, and on large vessels, small sails might be found on one or two additional masts near the bow and stern. The mainsail could be

¹⁰⁸ Oleson (1984). ¹⁰⁹ White (1984) is an essential source for these subjects.

¹¹⁰ Parker and Painter (1979); Parker (1990). ¹¹¹ Weerd (1978).

¹¹² Casson (1971), (1978), (1985); see Basch (1980) on the use of literary sources.

¹¹³ Paffett (1987). ¹¹⁴ Casson (1978). ¹¹⁵ *BGall.* III.13–14. ¹¹⁶ Basch (1976).

raised and lowered, and its size, shape and angle altered quite easily. This kind of rigging allowed a ship to run well before the wind, but tacking was laborious in comparison with the use of a triangular lateen sail. Ships were steered by long oars hung singly or in pairs alongside the stern.

Pre-Roman boat-building traditions survived on the many rivers of the empire. Rafts of wood or bundled reeds were common in Roman Egypt, and timber rafts fulfilled a variety of roles on inland waterways elsewhere in the empire.¹¹⁷ Skin boats were probably important in Britain, and their use might easily have spread to other areas where cattle-raising ensured a good supply of hides.¹¹⁸ Planking secured by sewing rather than carpentry survived around the Adriatic,¹¹⁹ and log boats are very widely attested in Italy and the rest of the Roman world in archaeology and literature.¹²⁰

Six vessels from the Rhine near the fort of Zwammerdam in the Netherlands illustrate a range of utilitarian craft of different sizes and complexity built in a provincial tradition of pre-Roman origin.¹²¹ They demonstrate that boats could be constructed for a wide range of purposes by developing the simple concept of a hollowed log, and expanding it in length and breadth to produce anything from a small fishing boat to a large cargo vessel. Three of the Zwammerdam craft were simple dug-outs, one of which had been heightened by the addition of a wide plank. The larger vessels employed curved planks derived from split hollowed logs to form a watertight junction between their bottoms and sides which required no joinery. Flat planks were inserted to construct flat bottoms of the desired width, and the sides were heightened with a broad plank.

The size of Roman merchant ships was not exceeded until the fifteenth century, and the grain ships were not surpassed until the nineteenth; size was limited by demand rather than technical factors.¹²² The concept of skeleton-first hull-building grew in the late Roman and Byzantine periods to become standard in Europe by the fourteenth century A.D., but the shell-first approach is widely used in small craft, whilst large shell-first ships are still built in many parts of the world today.¹²³ Skeleton construction did nothing to reduce the persistent problems of 'hogging' and 'breaking' that beset all wooden ships at sea until diagonal bracing was introduced in the eighteenth century A.D.¹²⁴

Unless the size or function of local ships or river boats required radical modification, there was no reason for traditional designs to change. Caesar's admiration and imitation of the planked ships and skin boats which he encountered in Britain and Gaul demonstrate that Rome's technology was not necessarily superior to that of its neighbours.

Although lateen sails first appeared in the Roman period, they did not

¹¹⁷ E.g. Lagadec (1983). ¹¹⁸ Caes. *BCiv.* 1.54. ¹¹⁹ Pomey (1981). ¹²⁰ Casson (1971) 8.

¹²¹ Weerd (1988). ¹²² Speziale (1929); Pomey and Tcherna (1978).

¹²³ Greenhill (1976) 60–88. ¹²⁴ Coates (1985).

become standard in the Mediterranean until the early medieval period. They improved the angle of tacking against a headwind, but spare sails of different sizes had to be carried to cope with varying wind-strengths effectively. The rectangular sail was quite adequate for most purposes, as Viking ships were to demonstrate for many centuries. Rudders fixed to a vertical stern post did not regularly replace steering oars until the late medieval period. The change was not of great significance, for experimental work with side-mounted steering oars has demonstrated that they are in no way inferior to rudders.¹²⁵

Canals could only be afforded by the state in Roman times, and they were usually constructed for strategic reasons.¹²⁶ There is no clear evidence to show whether Roman canals involved locks; on the whole, they simply extended or modified existing river routes, and pound-locks with sets of gates are not known for certain in European canal systems before the thirteenth century A.D. All of the technology necessary to construct lock-gates and sluices certainly existed in dry docks, irrigation dams and harbour works, but literary sources do not specifically mention them in the context of canals. However, the major Roman canals proposed in Gaul and Asia Minor could not have been conceived without the use of locks.¹²⁷ Selkirk has drawn attention to many sites in northern Britain where simple dams with by-pass canals and lock gates could have existed in order to facilitate the supply of Roman military campaigns and forts as an alternative to roads in areas with steep hills, but fieldwork and excavation have given little support to this hypothesis.¹²⁸

2. *Land transport*

Major Roman roads built by the army and maintained by the state consisted of layers of different materials on solid foundations. They were cambered, drained, and paved or metalled with cobbles or gravel, and could be maintained effectively as long as the basic foundations remained intact and dry. Details of construction varied throughout the empire, according to local climatic and geological conditions, the importance of the road, and the intensity of its traffic. Compared with the accuracy required for the alignments and levels of aqueducts, the planning of roads presented no particular problems to Roman engineers familiar with the surveying instruments of the *agrimensores*.¹²⁹ Modern experiments have confirmed the accuracy of these instruments.¹³⁰

As with aqueducts, road-building also involved tunnels, cuttings, terraces and bridges; the technology involved in mining and architecture was perfectly adequate to solve these problems. Most bridges were wholly or partly

¹²⁵ Lehmann (1978); Thurneyssen (1980). ¹²⁶ Smith (1977–8). ¹²⁷ Moore (1950).

¹²⁸ Selkirk (1983); Anderson (1992). ¹²⁹ Dilke, *Surveyors* 66–81. ¹³⁰ Adam (1982).

constructed in timber,¹³¹ but many stone bridges have survived in use into recent centuries. It seems likely that much Roman road construction derived from Etruscan practices in central Italy, where roads and drainage schemes had already involved cuttings, tunnels and bridges.¹³²

Our knowledge of vehicles remains poor; most information is still derived from pictorial representations rather than archaeological finds. Careful study of sculptures can occasionally reveal details of suspension, steering and braking systems, but most depictions are uninformative side-views carved by stone-masons with little interest in technical details.¹³³ In contrast to the study of ship construction, archaeology has contributed very little because of the lack of suitable wet or desiccated conditions for the preservation of vehicles. Exceptions are finds such as a spoked wooden wheel from a Roman fort at Newstead in Scotland,¹³⁴ or metal parts surviving from complete carriages interred in graves in Thracia.¹³⁵

The study of these rare finds and some sculptures has disposed of the view that Roman vehicle design was wholly unsophisticated.¹³⁶ Suspension and steering may not have existed on simple ox-carts, but the passenger carts buried in Thracia had metal fittings which demonstrate the use of suspension and pivoted front axles. This is hardly surprising, for pre-Roman carts in Scandinavia already featured turning front undercarriages,¹³⁷ and the Iron Age Celts were skilled constructors of carts and chariots; indeed, many Roman vehicles bore names of Celtic derivation.¹³⁸

Roman harnessing methods for traction by horses have been criticized by historians of transport ever since Lefebvre de Noëttes published his observations and experiments. They claim that horses pulled against a neck-collar, poorly adapted from ox-harnesses, which constricted their blood supply and breathing, thereby reducing their potential pulling power.¹³⁹ In contrast, the padded collar, which became common by A.D. 1200, allowed a horse to take the weight of the cart upon its chest. However, perfectly good traction has been obtained from Roman methods in recent experiments; Lefebvre de Noëttes had merged two distinct types of Roman harness into one which (understandably) performed very badly.¹⁴⁰

The development of better horse-harnessing for heavy loads was unnecessary since oxen, rather than horses, were the principal traction animals. The shift from ox to horse traction in medieval times probably reflected a preference for speed over burden because of economic development, rather than advances in vehicle or harness technology.¹⁴¹ The medieval

¹³¹ E.g. Cüppers (1969); Bidwell and Holbrook (1989). ¹³² Potter (1979) 79–87.

¹³³ Molin (1983), (1984); Vigneron (1968) pls. 57–69. ¹³⁴ Curle (1911) 292 pl. 23.

¹³⁵ Venedikov (1960). ¹³⁶ Landels (1978) 180. ¹³⁷ Sleswyk (1987) 421.

¹³⁸ Chevallier (1976) 178–81; Chapman (1982).

¹³⁹ Lefebvre de Noëttes (1931); Landels (1978) 151 fig. 57. ¹⁴⁰ Spruytte (1983) 14–15.

¹⁴¹ Langdon (1984) 61–5; (1986).

horse-collar was not an unmixed blessing for horses, for part of their energy was diverted into carrying the heavily weighted harness. Shafts or traces attached to the sides of animals (a development normally assigned to the medieval period) appear in Roman carvings, and improvements in horse yoking and harnessing techniques have been claimed from northern Gaul, an area with plentiful carvings;¹⁴² other developments may have existed in areas lacking good pictorial evidence.

3. *Hydraulics*

Aqueducts and siphons

According to N. A. F. Smith, the inverted siphon is an example of the victory of attitudes over evidence; he has demonstrated the falsehood of the notion that Roman engineers failed to apply this Greek invention.¹⁴³ The decision to construct a piped siphon to cross a valley at ground-level, rather than a high arched aqueduct, was determined by height; the former was preferred if more than 50 metres was involved. The dramatic visual impression given by surviving aqueducts (such as the famous Pont du Gard in Gaul) should be modified by considering the mining and transportation involved in the construction of siphons, requiring an estimated 10–15,000 tonnes of lead piping, to supply water to Lugdunum. Our perception of the extent of the use of siphons has grown with the recognition of distinctive stone (rather than lead) pipes in Asia Minor.¹⁴⁴ Coulton reinforced Smith's conclusions by estimating that a siphon at Aspendos (Pamphylia) saved 65,000 tonnes of stone compared with the construction of a 'normal' arched aqueduct.¹⁴⁵ Cities in dry areas of the empire required large cisterns for water storage,¹⁴⁶ whilst agriculture on the desert fringes involved elaborate hydraulic systems for the collection, direction and distribution of infrequent rainfall.¹⁴⁷

Water-lifting devices

Chapter x of Vitruvius' *De Architectura* covers items which, in its author's opinion, deserved to be better known 'so as to provide countless benefits by their rotation'. Vitruvius begins with devices for lifting water graded by height of lift, from the *tympanum* to the bucket chain, followed by water-wheels turned by a river current, which are specifically noted as being labour-saving. Next comes the vertical water-wheel equipped with geared transmission to turn its power through 90 degrees to rotate a millstone, then the water-screw, and finally the Ctesibian force pump. All share a common background of Alexandrian applied 'science'.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴² Raepsaet (1982), (1987). ¹⁴³ Smith (1976). ¹⁴⁴ Coulton (1987) 79 fig. 22.

¹⁴⁵ Coulton (1987) 79–80. ¹⁴⁶ E.g. Hallier (1987).

¹⁴⁷ Gilbertson and Kennedy (1984); Oleson (1990); Shaw (1984b). ¹⁴⁸ Oleson (1984).

Literary, papyrological and archaeological evidence combine to demonstrate that these devices actually were in general use in the early empire, from Wales to Egypt, in irrigation agriculture, mine and ship drainage and water supply. Furthermore, archaeological finds have added devices which employed the same principles adapted to different materials. Thus, not all double-action force pumps were made from expensive bronze castings;¹⁴⁹ effective equivalents were constructed widely in the north-western provinces by drilling piston-chambers and inlet/outlet pipes into a solid block of oak.¹⁵⁰ In Gaul, the technology of native carpenters (already familiar from ships and vehicles) produced a remarkable multi-cylindered pump found at St Malo, constructed from local oak and radiocarbon-dated to the early empire.¹⁵¹ Underwater archaeology has revealed that the standard device for draining ships' bilges was a chain-pump of a type which remained in use into the eighteenth century A.D.¹⁵² It consisted of a continuous loop of rope, with disks of wood fitted at intervals which drew water up to a pipe. This form of pump was previously thought to be a medieval invention, since it was not described in contemporary technical sources.¹⁵³ On one of the ships found in Lake Nemi, Italy, a pump of this kind was operated by a large cog-wheel turned by another supposedly medieval invention, the cranked handle.¹⁵⁴

Water-mills

The water-mill merits detailed discussion, for the supposed failure of the Romans to apply water-power on any appreciable scale to cereal milling (let alone industrial processes) has become an issue amongst historians of technology.¹⁵⁵ The place of the water-mill in Vitruvius' series of devices implies that it developed from vaned water-lifting wheels driven by rivers in the same manner as under-shot mill-wheels;¹⁵⁶ indeed, Roman mill-wheels found at Hagendorn in Switzerland did have projecting vanes.¹⁵⁷ Two other elements were essential for its conception – the rotary mill, and the geared transmission of power through 90 degrees by engaged cog-wheels.¹⁵⁸

Rotary animal-powered or hand-driven mills only replaced the side-to-side motion of the Greek 'hopper-rubber' mill in the second century B.C.¹⁵⁹ Power transmission was adopted from the saqiya gear, an Alexandrian invention familiar in Egypt, which normally employed animals for lifting water with a bucket-chain. A similar device excavated at Cosa implies that

¹⁴⁹ Schioler and Garcia-Diego (1990). ¹⁵⁰ Oleson (1984) figs. 87, 139–40, etc.

¹⁵¹ Sanquer (1973); Oleson (1984) figs. 131–6. ¹⁵² Foerster (1984).

¹⁵³ Carré and Jézégou (1984). ¹⁵⁴ Drachmann (1973) 37–8.

¹⁵⁵ 'The astonishing thing is that, having it at their disposal, they were so slow at bringing it into general use. For – let us make no mistake – although the invention of the water-mill took place in ancient times, its real expansion did not come about until the Middle Ages.' Bloch (1935) 545, trans. in Bloch (1969) 143; Finley (1965) 35–6; Wikander (1990). ¹⁵⁶ *De Arch.* x.5. ¹⁵⁷ Gähwiler (1984).

¹⁵⁸ Halleux (1977). ¹⁵⁹ Moritz (1958) 52.

this form of gearing had reached Italy by the second century B.C.¹⁶⁰ By the time Vitruvius described the water-mill in the late first century B.C., it had already developed into the form which still survives in widespread use even in the twentieth century.¹⁶¹

Vitruvius made no comment about the origin or extent of use of the geared water-mill; like the other devices described in chapter x, it is presumably uncommon, but not unfamiliar. Pliny refers to water-mills in an ambiguous passage; either he was not very familiar with them, or he did not consider them in any way remarkable.¹⁶² In Diocletian's Edict of A.D. 301, a water-mill (presumably the stones, wheel and power transmission) cost 2,000 denarii, and compared favourably with a horse-mill at 1,500, an ass-mill at 1,250, or a mere hand-mill at 250, although installation could be more expensive if aqueducts were required. Water-mills had evidently become sufficiently familiar by this date to require a fixed market price.¹⁶³

Archaeological evidence for Roman water-mills is growing rapidly¹⁶⁴ despite problems which inhibit their recognition. In Britain, Germany, France and Switzerland, most mills were situated at some distance from the forts, villas or towns which they served,¹⁶⁵ and many suitable locations will have been masked by later reuse. A second-century mill excavated at Ickham in Kent was constructed entirely of wood, and was only found because two later Roman mills had already been excavated on the same river.¹⁶⁶ In Mediterranean valleys subject to severe erosion and silting, such slight remains would probably disappear completely.

Many mill-sites are known from the accidental discovery of millstones and/or artificial water-channels rather than actual mill buildings, for example at Kenchester in Britain.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, the identification of characteristic forms of stones now suggests that forts, villas and towns in Britain were normally equipped with powered mills.¹⁶⁸ A reassessment of the Barbegal mill complex near Arles reinforces the view that mills were numerous and widespread, for its output could perhaps have served 12,500 people in one town, rather than providing a large surplus for export.¹⁶⁹

It is not yet clear to what extent the 'horizontal' or 'Norse' mill was used in the Roman empire; it differs in that water is directed onto turbine-like blades which drive stones mounted on a vertical shaft directly above it. Examples are known from the sixth century A.D. in Ireland, and they are still common around the Mediterranean today;¹⁷⁰ late Roman examples have been identified in Africa and Palestine.¹⁷¹

The introduction of water-mills is generally seen as a reaction to man-

¹⁶⁰ Oleson (1984) 377. ¹⁶¹ Di Caprio (1985). ¹⁶² *HN* xviii.23.97.

¹⁶³ *Edictum de pretiis* 15.54. ¹⁶⁴ Wikander (1981), (1984), (1985).

¹⁶⁵ Simpson (1976); Neyses (1983); Benoit (1940); Gähwiler (1984). ¹⁶⁶ Spain (1984).

¹⁶⁷ Wilmott and Rahtz (1985). ¹⁶⁸ Welfare (1981) 225. ¹⁶⁹ Sellin (1983).

¹⁷⁰ Rahtz (1981). ¹⁷¹ Wikander (1990) 76, 78 fig. 8.

power shortages in the later empire, and many of the classic sites (the Athenian Agora, Barbegal near Arles, and the Ianiculum in Rome) are indeed of late date. Documentary sources show a steady acceleration of occurrences from late antiquity, leading to their 'triumph' in the Middle Ages.¹⁷² However, archaeological evidence shows that water-mills were in common use by the third century A.D., especially in the north-western provinces; the lack of early written evidence merely reflects the absence of the kinds of sources available in the early medieval period.¹⁷³

The long survival of animal-powered mills in Rome's bakeries after the invention of the water-mill is not surprising, since relocation for supply by aqueducts would have required major expenditure.¹⁷⁴ Perhaps mills were first established on the Ianiculum in the third century A.D. because urban decline had reduced the demand from aqueducts, releasing reliable supplies of water. A significant factor which favoured the introduction of water-mills (and windmills) in the medieval period was the power of landowners, motivated by the large profits which could be gained by enforcing monopolies. The use of domestic hand-mills was suppressed by law or, if necessary, force.¹⁷⁵ Neither individuals nor the state in the early Roman empire conceived of using 'feudal' powers to assist the introduction of technology.

Water power and industry

The growing evidence for water-mills in the early empire suggests that firm evidence may yet be found for industrial applications. Ausonius' much-disputed reference to a stone-sawing mill on a tributary of the Mosel is not an impossibility,¹⁷⁶ for many examples of sawn local stone have been found in Trier.¹⁷⁷ The identification of a mill at the Chemtou marble quarries in Tunisia suggests that it may not have been unique.¹⁷⁸ A strong candidate for industrial use of water-power (requiring only rotary action) is the production of lathe-turned stone pots in the Alps,¹⁷⁹ but complex bronze pumps seem to have been made by lost-wax casting, the only method that did *not* require rotating machine-tools.¹⁸⁰ Iron-working would also have benefited greatly from water-powered hammers and bellows.¹⁸¹ The usual objection to the existence of water-powered activities such as sawing or hammering in Roman times is that they require reciprocating mechanisms, or at least a trip action, characteristic of the medieval period; however, Hero featured a device of this kind (powered by a windmill) to drive the bellows of an organ.¹⁸²

¹⁷² Maroti (1975); Bloch (1935). ¹⁷³ Wikander (1984) 20. ¹⁷⁴ Curwen (1944) 132.

¹⁷⁵ Bloch (1935) 559. ¹⁷⁶ Wikander (1989). ¹⁷⁷ *Mos.* 362; Neyses (1983) 220 Abb. 2–10.

¹⁷⁸ Rosumek (1982) 136. ¹⁷⁹ *La pietra* (1987). ¹⁸⁰ Schioler and García-Diego (1990) 65.

¹⁸¹ Cleere and Crossley (1986). ¹⁸² *Pneumatika* 1.43.

3. *Agriculture*

Agricultural potential is linked to the state of technology in tools and transport, as well as farming practices. Thus, Lefebvre de Noëttes considered that water-mills did not develop until the medieval period because poor Roman harnessing made it impossible to transport corn to them or to deliver their flour in large enough quantities.¹⁸³ In fact, it seems likely that a choice could be made between ‘Pompeian’ mills, animal-powered mills with ‘Vitruvian’ gearing, or, where reliable streams existed (generally away from the Mediterranean zone), water-mills. The water-mill is an excellent example of the combination of separate technical developments to produce a useful new invention.

In a similar manner, the screw-thread and solid nut were added to the olive press to produce another effective piece of agricultural equipment which continued in use with little change into the twentieth century A.D.¹⁸⁴ Like the water-mill, the screw-press received little enthusiastic comment in Roman literature, and neither device displaced traditional equipment in domestic contexts where they were inappropriate. Oil and wine presses and an animal-powered ‘Pompeian’ mill found in a villa at Sette Finestre, Italy, show the level of technical equipment that was required in a typical wealthy Italian agricultural establishment of the late Republic or early empire.¹⁸⁵ The problem of water-mills highlights the general scarcity of appropriate forms of literary and artistic evidence from much of the empire; it affects our knowledge of many other agricultural activities with equal severity. For example, the effective mechanization of harvesting by means of the *vallus* may well have been common wherever the cultivation of large flat fields made it appropriate. Its usefulness has been confirmed by experimental trials of replicas,¹⁸⁶ and by the success of conscious imitations in nineteenth-century Australia, where it solved problems caused by a shortage of skilled labour.¹⁸⁷

Just as hand-mills coexisted with water-mills, the majority of small-scale farmers probably continued to use simple ards of a form that has survived from prehistory to the late twentieth century. However, more sophisticated ploughs capable of turning over a sod were certainly in use, and heavy soils presented no insuperable problems. Heavy ploughs with wheels may have seemed odd to writers used to Mediterranean ‘dry’ farming practices,¹⁸⁸ but even in Italy farmers probably possessed a range of ploughing equipment and harrows suitable for different soils.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸³ Lefebvre de Noëttes (1931) 185.

¹⁸⁴ Drachmann (1932); Amouretti *et al.* (1984); see Mattingly (1988c) for an informative review of olive-press typologies. ¹⁸⁵ Carandini and Ricci, *Settefinestre* II 241–52. ¹⁸⁶ Müller (1985).

¹⁸⁷ Jones (1979), (1980). ¹⁸⁸ Pliny, *HN* xviii.172. ¹⁸⁹ Spurr (1986) 27, 39.

Kolendo has made dramatic (but disputed) claims for the impact of the harrow on Italian agriculture.¹⁹⁰

Iron artefacts survive well on archaeological sites, compared with large wooden items such as ploughs, and they repay detailed study. Many Roman tools used in agriculture and crafts are remarkably similar to their modern counterparts, and their range and specialization was noticeably greater than in the pre-Roman Iron Age.¹⁹¹ In Austria, there was an initial influx of new tools from Italy (such as pruning knives, hoes and pick-axes), frequently found in military contexts.¹⁹² From the second century A.D., these types spread into general civilian use, where they mingled with native Celtic tools to produce a distinctively 'provincial' assemblage. New variants developed, of which some were specifically adapted to the cultivation of wet and heavy soils, such as heavy forks and plough shares which could turn a sod. The sequence of developments in iron tools which took place in Austria could well be typical of technical progress in Roman agriculture as a whole; sadly, much of the evidence was never documented, and is unlikely to be easily recovered by archaeology.

4. *Architecture*

Much of Roman architectural style and technology was inherited from the Greek and Etruscan areas of Italy, or imported directly from Greece during the late Republic.¹⁹³ The major difference between imperial architecture and that of preceding centuries is the sheer scale of public and private building, and the stimulus that it gave to experimentation.¹⁹⁴ The demand for structures such as new palaces and bath-houses stimulated a demand for the industrialization of building materials, notably stone and brick. Their design demanded audacious vaulting to span large internal spaces, using concrete with carefully chosen aggregates and brick reinforcement.¹⁹⁵ Provincial buildings might adopt local solutions, such as solid brick walls in Greece and Asia Minor or tubular earthenware vaulting in North Africa.

Between 200 and 100 B.C., cement with small pieces of stone set into its outer surfaces became familiar in Roman architecture, allowing the use of conveniently standardized quarried blocks.¹⁹⁶ A significant change took place in the early empire; the use of brick-faced concrete for major public buildings began under Tiberius, and became standard from the time of Nero. In the eastern provinces, brick became a building material in its own right rather than a simple facing, and regional developments in brick vaulting took place in Greece and Asia Minor.¹⁹⁷ Inscriptions in Gaul indicate

¹⁹⁰ Kolendo (1980); Pleket (1973); Spurr (1986) 54–6. ¹⁹¹ Gaitzsch (1980) 259–61.

¹⁹² Pohanka (1986) 301–4. ¹⁹³ Coulton (1988); Packer (1988). ¹⁹⁴ E.g. Delaine (1990).

¹⁹⁵ E.g. Rakob (1988). ¹⁹⁶ Coarelli (1977) 16–18. ¹⁹⁷ Dodge (1987).

that provincial architects shared a common technical vocabulary with their Italian counterparts.¹⁹⁸

Large buildings were constructed by increasing the size of timber scaffolding and formwork for concrete, rather than by the development of new techniques. Multiple-sheaved pulleys were well known,¹⁹⁹ and could be combined with a variety of lifting equipment, such as the huge tread-wheel crane illustrated on the tomb of the Haterii.²⁰⁰ Roman engineers made great use of concrete which would set under water for use in harbours and aqueducts, although analyses have made it clear that pozzolana was already used on a small scale by Greek architects.²⁰¹

5. *Quarrying and stoneworking*

Ruins of stone buildings are one of the most insistent reminders of the former power of the Roman empire. In many provinces, stone was used extensively for construction for the first time, although neither the continuing importance of timber nor the growing use of concrete and tile must be underestimated. Marble and other decorative stones were also employed in panelling, mosaics and furniture inlays.²⁰² Precious and semi-precious stones were used in jewellery,²⁰³ whilst beads, large ornaments, trays and table-legs were carved from jet or shale.²⁰⁴ Suitable sandstones and lava were quarried to make querns and millstones, and even lathe-turned stone pots.²⁰⁵

The principal method of extracting stone was to separate large blocks from a workface either by digging narrow trenches around them, or by inducing them to split in desired directions with wedges; both techniques leave clear indications.²⁰⁶ Blocks of specific sizes were extracted with a particular use in mind to avoid wastage, especially in the case of architectural items or sarcophagi; large single-piece building elements such as columns were shaped and removed individually.²⁰⁷ Studies of unfinished items show that much preparation and carving was carried out at the quarry rather than at the building site, presumably to reduce weight for transport. For example, the carvings of Dacian prisoners featured in Trajan's Forum in Rome were virtually completed at quarries in Turkey.²⁰⁸

The massive building programmes of the early empire created such a demand for stone that state ownership of quarries was introduced, stock-piles were created, and a certain amount of standardization took place in the sizes of common items such as columns.²⁰⁹ Blocks of stone were

¹⁹⁸ Blanc (1989). ¹⁹⁹ E.g. Shaw (1967). ²⁰⁰ White (1984) 15 fig. 3.

²⁰¹ Malinowski (1982). ²⁰² Dodge (1988). ²⁰³ Higgins (1961). ²⁰⁴ Lawson (1975).

²⁰⁵ Peacock (1980); *La pietra* (1987). ²⁰⁶ Healy (1988); Adam (1994) 27 fig. 30, 33 fig. 41.

²⁰⁷ Adam (1994) 27 figs. 25–6; Ward-Perkins (1971) pl. 6; Peña (1989). ²⁰⁸ Waelkens (1985).

²⁰⁹ Ward-Perkins (1971).

frequently inscribed with dates of extraction, serial numbers and other quarrying details. Masons from quarries sometimes travelled with stone (from Nicomedia in Asia Minor to Lepcis Magna in Africa, for example) to complete detailed carving on a building site.²¹⁰ At a local or regional level, the products of smaller-scale private quarries and sculptors' workshops can be identified through geological analysis and stylistic comparisons. Scientific analysis of elements and isotopes in marbles now helps to identify the sources of stones such as white marbles, which are difficult to distinguish by eye.²¹¹ Geological identification has emphasized the remarkable state of Roman knowledge of different sources and working properties of building stone, for example at the Fishbourne palace in Britain.²¹²

Quarrying remained static from early times up to the nineteenth century, with a laborious technology which improved only slightly with the appearance of metal tools.²¹³ No major changes took place before the advent of drills, explosives or large mechanical cutting wires and saws.²¹⁴ Many iron tools, from axes and adzes to fine chisels and files, were available for quarrying and stoneworking, and their usage can be studied from actual finds, representations of masons at work, or from the traces they left on architectural or sculptural elements. Stone could be finished to the precise degree of sophistication that was required for any particular purpose.²¹⁵ Although it is easy to see the beneficial effects of mechanization and explosives, the state of Roman technology did not create any major obstacles in the extraction, working or transport of stone required for public or private building schemes in the early empire.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Is the success of Roman technology to be measured simply by showing that inventions known from documentary sources actually existed, or should we demand that they were widely and productively employed? Should we demand evidence not only for a series of inventions, but their development? In twentieth-century terms, should technology be 'high' or 'appropriate' in order to be judged successful? Is successful technology revealed by dramatic innovations, or general modest benefits? And whose needs should we consider – the state, the army, the social élite or the multitude?²¹⁶

Questions of this nature are rarely asked, let alone answered, by most

²¹⁰ Ward-Perkins (1971) (1980). ²¹¹ Walker (1984). ²¹² Cunliffe (1971).

²¹³ Fant (1988); Bessac (1988). ²¹⁴ Ward-Perkins (1971) pls. 8, 15b.

²¹⁵ Adam (1994) 32 fig. 45; Blagg (1976); Varène (1974).

²¹⁶ Lloyd (1988) 274 concluded that: 'The fact that technological progress leads to improvements in the material conditions of human life was often viewed not so much with satisfaction and hope for the future as with anxiety, and the alarming suspicion that such developments were a prime source of degeneracy and corruption.'

modern writers on Roman technology.²¹⁷ Little help is available from ancient written sources; as Lynn White Jr observed: ‘So far as I am aware, no Greek or Roman ever told us, either in words or in iconography, what he or his society wanted from technology, or why they wanted it.’²¹⁸ Finley attempted to sidestep the problem by criticizing ‘an artificial insistence on isolating technology as an autonomous subject’.²¹⁹ Nevertheless, he and other modern commentators concluded that the technology of the classical world was indeed a failure, on the grounds that it made no progress, and that the few inventions made were not applied.

1. Technology and society

Finley and Pleket independently concluded that considerable development in the use of traditional techniques was not matched by the practical employment of new inventions, and they shared the view that the explanation was primarily social.²²⁰ The majority of commentators has accepted a social explanation for the apparent lack of progress in the Roman empire.²²¹ Reece contrasted the Greeks’ favourable attitudes with their lack of resources; in his opinion, the Romans had population and wealth, but an unsuitable climate of opinion.²²² Drachmann, a classical scholar with unusual practical and experimental skills, preferred ‘not to seek for the cause of the failure of an invention in the social conditions till I was quite sure that it was not to be found in the technical possibilities of the time’.²²³

Others have favoured Drachmann’s view. Lee pointed out that the Roman distaste for labour was shared in the eighteenth century A.D., and blamed failure upon ‘lack of motive power, prohibitively bad land transport, inadequate metallurgy’.²²⁴ Loane reached an intermediate position from her empirical observation of the great number of small industries making the same products in Rome: ‘the emergence of production on a large scale depends on many additional factors: labor-saving machinery, cheap fuel, the nearness of essential raw materials, and the interest of the capitalist class in industrial enterprise. Rome had none of these.’²²⁵ Oleson has made the harshest judgement of all: ‘A society that neglected water-power, wind-power, and the crank, and that unthinkingly fitted the ox harness to horses certainly was in no intellectual position to consider importing Mesopotamian petroleum or British coal to fuel steam engines.’²²⁶ However, it can be argued that his opinion is not only incorrect in some details, but that it represents an inappropriate concept of Roman technology.²²⁷

²¹⁷ Papers edited by Leeuw and Torrence (1989) shed indirect light on these questions.

²¹⁸ White (1980) 237. ²¹⁹ Finley (1959) 125. ²²⁰ Finley (1965); Pleket (1967).

²²¹ E.g. Magalhães-Vilhena (1971–2); Halleux (1977). ²²² Reece (1969) 47.

²²³ Drachmann (1963) 206. ²²⁴ Lee (1973a) 76. ²²⁵ Loane (1938) 63.

²²⁶ Oleson (1984) 403. ²²⁷ Greene (1990).

2. *An industrial revolution?*

The Roman state constructed marble buildings on an unprecedented scale, and minted millions of gold, silver and bronze coins. Thousands of ordinary Roman farmers had more iron tools, architectural stonework and fine tableware than ever before, to an extent that would not be matched again until the post-medieval period. A combination of effective transport and appropriate coin denominations helped to sustain trade in these materials, far beyond the requirements of the state and the army alone. None of this caused, or resulted from, an industrial revolution; the only form of growth that took place was proliferation and intensification in the favourable circumstances of an expanding empire.²²⁸ A nineteenth-century 'Darwinian' attitude to industry and technology assumes that technical progress was a natural path of development which led to increased productivity and industrialization, and culminated in the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries A.D.²²⁹ It provides a conveniently circular argument, by means of which the *absence* of an industrial revolution in the ancient world merely confirms the view that insufficient technological progress had taken place. However, economic historians have played down the role of the application of new technology in the Industrial Revolution, and have minimized the extent of large-scale industrialization even in the nineteenth century.²³⁰ Furthermore, since the Industrial Revolution only really happened once, initially in Britain and then in parts of Europe, it is no longer widely considered to be a 'normal' or universal path of economic development. It followed a period of worldwide territorial expansion and importation of cheap raw materials and foodstuffs. 'What had happened was that the Europeans had discovered an unprecedented ecological windfall. Europe was sufficiently decentralized and flexible to develop in response, and not merely content to consume the raw gains. This conjunction of windfall and entrepreneurship happened only once in history.'²³¹

Thus, industrialization and new technology may be considered to have been a complement to the Industrial Revolution, rather than one of its preconditions. If this is accepted, then evidence for extensive industries and widespread application of technology in the Roman world can be taken at face value, without creating a necessity to explain why they did not cause dramatic progress or Rostowian 'take-off'. There was a general application of effective technology to industry, transport and farming. The inventions that were either made or applied included items for use in essential activities such as mining, and, above all, in the single most important industry of the Roman empire – agriculture.

²²⁸ Manning (1987).

²²⁹ Basalla (1988).

²³⁰ E.g. Musson (1976).

²³¹ Jones (1981) 84.

COMMERCE AND FINANCE

J. ANDREAU

Neither the fall of Nero nor the reign of Commodus marked an important turning-point in the history of private finance. During the one hundred and twenty-four years between their deaths developments in financial and banking life certainly took place, only some of which we can perceive. But some of them had begun before Nero, while others continued after Commodus. In order to understand the logic of these developments, it is necessary to bear in mind the enduring characteristics of Roman financial life, which (in many respects) continued up to the third century and even beyond.

It is this continuity which will be stressed in my first two sections. The first will be devoted to the financial activity of the senators, knights and other nobles, and to that of the intermediaries, money-changers and professional bankers. The second will briefly pose three important and extremely difficult questions. To what extent was the Roman empire monetized? What was the relationship between financial matters and the economy, that is the production and distribution of material goods and services? And how can we characterize the methods used by the various groups of financiers – did they change much from the last centuries of the Republic to the end of the high empire? The third section, like the first two, will deal with private finance, but with the intention of defining its evolution under the Flavians and Antonines. Can we speak of a decline of banking professions? What are we to make of the business affairs of the nobility? And are we fated to know nothing about the volume of transactions? Finally, the fourth and last section will deal with the manner in which the state and the cities did or did not intervene in these private financial matters.

The borrowing of money was an old tradition among senators, equestrians and members of municipal aristocracies, but so also was the lending of money as well as participation in various other financial operations. In addition to land, livestock, slaves, precious objects, cash, rich residences and real estate, large personal fortunes also included money out on loan. From the start of our period to its close, all the evidence agrees on this matter. In the

Satyricon four words describe Trimalchio's fortune: *fundi, nummorum nummi, argentum, familia* – land, lending at interest, silverware and slaves.¹ Seneca writes that the rich man has slaves and a beautiful house, that he cultivates a lot of land and lends large quantities of money; at several points in his works richness is characterized by landed property and lending at interest.² These two same sources of revenue are found also in Plutarch,³ Tacitus,⁴ Juvenal⁵ and Apuleius.⁶ A passage of Tertullian is particularly relevant.⁷ Criticizing the appetite of women for jewels, he professes outrage at the value of necklaces, earrings and rings: how many agricultural estates, how many pieces of real estate, how much money out on loan, and clinking, weighty coins hang suspended from a frail neck or delicate ears in the form of jewels? In castigating luxury, the Christian author underlines what were the normal constituents of a noble's inheritance.

There is certainly a prejudice against lending at interest; it is not illegal, but cannot be given moral approval. Plutarch's *De vitando aere alieno* is based on this condemnation of usury, even if it is concerned with borrowing rather than lending. The highest-placed people of the empire, however, and the emperor himself, scarcely took the trouble to conceal their lending operations. Even Pliny the Younger, who asserts in a well-known passage that he owns a fortune chiefly in land, adds that he lends some money at interest.⁸ For hoarding is contrasted quite readily with lending: the first is barren, while the second, however deserving of criticism, brings in revenues and enables the money to bear fruit. Not only is lending advantageous, but in ensuring the growth of the capital put out on loan, it may be said to participate in the rhythm of life.⁹ The etymological link between *τόκος* and *τέκνον* is sometimes felt to be surprising and paradoxical;¹⁰ but it perhaps helped to redeem lending at interest in the eyes of people who were in any case accustomed to seeing it practised.

Who does the lending? Definitely small-scale moneylenders, some peasants, some merchants, but also leading representatives of the higher orders. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* there is mention of one of the leading citizens (*primores*) of the city of Hypata, Milo, who practises lending on security. As surety he requires from his debtors gold or silver items which he keeps in a strong room (*borreum*) in his house.¹¹ Among the numerous senators who

¹ Petron. *Sat.* 37.8–9. ² Sen. *Ep. ad Lucil.*, IV.41.7; see also II.6 and *Tranq.* VIII.5.

³ Plut. *An seni* 24 (= *Mor.* 795 E and F) and *De virtute et vitio* 4 (= *Mor.* 101 C).

⁴ Tac. *Hist.* I.20.3; on this case, see Mrozek (1985) 312 and n. 10 (but in this text, *faenus* means a loan at interest, and not capital, as Mrozek calls it). ⁵ Juv. *Sat.* XI.39–41. ⁶ Apul. *Apol.* 20.3.

⁷ Tert. *Cult. fem.* 1.9.3.

⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* III.19.8 (*sum quidem prope totus in terris, aliquid tamen fenero nec molestum erit mutuari*).

⁹ Stat. *Silv.* II.2.150–2; Plut. *Reg. et imper. apophth.* *Dionysius the Elder* 13 (= *Mor.* 176 C); Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* IV.27.1.

¹⁰ See Plut. *De vitando aere alieno* 4 (= *Mor.* 829 B), where he contrasts the reproduction of animals with the manner in which interest accrues. ¹¹ Apul. *Met.* I.21.6; I.22.2; III.28.3; VII.1.6.

lent money, we may cite Seneca himself¹² and C. Rutilius Gallicus, who despite this had the gall to rebuke Musonius for his loans.¹³

The management of loans was no easy task, however, as Seneca's *De beneficiis* in particular suggests (although the author is supposedly showing that benefactions are the opposite of usury, he at times slides into talking about loans rather than gifts! – a good example of double standards). It is necessary to inquire into the life and wealth of potential debtors, to fix the term and the conditions in such a way that the borrower may not evade repayment of his debt. And when a borrower defaults, one must know how to face the situation.¹⁴ The rich noble, especially the senator or knight who holds high positions, delegates these concerns to certain of his slaves, the *actores* and *dispensatores*, or indeed entrusts his money to intermediaries, some of whom will have been among his dependants in any case. Different types of lender exist: some just lend their money, others handle these loans, charging a commission or a part of the profits (or paying the interest to those in the former category). On the one hand, there are the investors, who play a passive role; these tend to be members of the élite in particular. On the other hand, there is a whole array of intermediaries, who are only poorly known to us.¹⁵

Since they lent and borrowed money in turn, or even simultaneously, the élite-members on occasion contracted loans to meet other loans; this was the *versura*, which Plutarch calls in Greek the *μεταγραφή*.¹⁶ And instead of paying in cash, they would offer credits (which would then undergo a technical renewal so as to carry the name of the new creditor). This is what Plutarch, in the same passage, terms the *μετάπτωσης*. Senators, because their wealth was situated increasingly in the provinces during the period under consideration, had therefore to make transfers of capital towards Italy, where they spent a part of their revenues. The relative importance of these transfers of private capital has been noted.¹⁷ It is surprising, however, that they have not left more trace in the available documents; they were heard of in the age of Cicero, but are altogether absent from the texts of the Antonine era.

Money-changers and professional bankers had existed for a long time alongside élite financiers. The first money-changers and testers of coin are

¹² Tac. *Ann.* XIII.42; Dio LXII.2.1.

¹³ Plut. *De Vitando aere alieno* 7 (=Mor. 830 B); on this treatise, see Russell (1973).

¹⁴ Sen. *Ben.* I.1.2; III.10.1; III.15.1–3; IV.12.3; IV.39.1–2; V.21.3.

¹⁵ In one of the tablets from Transylvania, there is reference to a *societas danistariae*, not a bank, but a society for lending at interest (*CIL* III 950–1, no. 13). One of the associates brings more money – the investor; the other supplies his services – the intermediary. As for the *formula baetica* bronze inscription found at the mouth of the Guadalquivir and which dates from the first or second century, it is a model contract; of the two parties to the contract, the first, Dama, slave of Lucius Titius, is the investor, while the second, L. Baianius, will make the money invested by Titius bear interest (*CIL* II 5042; see Andreau, *Vie financière* 705–6).

¹⁶ Plut. *De vitando aere alieno* 7 (=Mor. 831 A).

¹⁷ See e.g. Hopkins (1980) and von Freyberg (1989) 134–8.

attested in Greece towards the end of the sixth century B.C. A century later, they had become money-changers/bankers, whom the Greeks called *trap-ezítai*. At Rome the first of them appeared between 320 and 310 B.C.; they were called *argentarii*. At the start of the empire, in the western Mediterranean, there also existed *nummularii* who tested the coinage and provided the facilities for exchange. During the first half of the second century A.D., these *nummularii* became bankers in their turn. These professions possessed different features in Egypt, the rest of the eastern empire, and in the western half. Their main functions were nevertheless the same in the whole empire: exchange, the testing of coinage, the acceptance of deposits, and the granting of loans, particularly using deposited money. Throughout the empire, they worked in shops and were subject to regulation of their profession, which the élite financiers escaped completely. Each profession was defined by a certain number of functions, and if its practitioner carried out others, he was straying outside its bounds.¹⁸

These professionals were still outside aristocratic circles; none of them was even part of the municipal aristocracy of their cities. They belonged to the plebeian world of the city trades; their enterprises were individual, or alternatively they formed small companies of two or three associates. Under the Julio-Claudians and the Flavians, many were freedmen, but that did not stop some of them from acquiring considerable riches, and certain sons of bankers or debt-collectors were able to attain the equestrian order.¹⁹

In Italy and the western areas of the empire, the major distinguishing feature of the money-changers/bankers, the *argentarii* and *coactores argentarii*, was their participation at auctions, so as to provide credit for the purchasers of the objects on sale.²⁰ During the days which followed the sale, they paid to the vendors the sums owed to them and granted the buyers a time-limit for their payment (of a few months or, at most, of one year, if we are to believe the examples we possess, in particular at Pompeii, in the tablets of the *argentarius* or *coactor argentarius* Lucius Caecilius Iucundus, which almost all date from the 50s A.D.).²¹ This participation in auctions was a normal and frequent activity of professional bankers, and they had to keep their own registers at the auctions, the *tabulae auctionariae* or *auctionales*,

¹⁸ A papyrus of the fourth century specifies that a banker of Heracleopolis lends six artabae of wheat *διὰ χειρὸς ἐξ οἴκου*. This formula indicates that he is making the loan as a private landowner, and not in his capacity as banker (*PVindSijp* 13; see Bogaert (1988), 223 and n. 56). Such a distinction is clearly valid for all periods since the appearance of banking professions.

¹⁹ This is the case with Tiberius Claudius Secundinus, son of the *coactor* Tiberius Claudius Secundus, who died at the age of nine (in the reign of Titus, or at the start of Domitian's), when he was already an equestrian. See *CIL* VI 1605, 1858, 1859, 1860; and Demougin (1980).

²⁰ On banking professions in the western part of the empire, see Andreau (1974), (1984), (1985a), (1986), (1999) and *Vie financière*; and Bürge (1987).

²¹ On the tablets of L. Caecilius Iucundus, Andreau (1974) and Jongman, *Pompeii*. On auction sales in the Roman world, Talamanca (1954); Thomas (1957); Andreau, *Vie financière*.

in which they recorded the names of the buyers and sellers, the nature of the objects sold, and the total proceeds of the sale. Besides the interest on the loans, they also received a commission in proportion to the total proceeds, the *merces*. They were assisted by *coactores*, debt-collectors who were independent for the most part, and who handled the repaying of the sums due, remitting them to the *argentarii*. Some bankers were also debt-collectors, and were then called *coactores argentarii*. This participation by bankers at auctions lasted four centuries, from the second half of the second century B.C. until the second half of the third century A.D. It is never attested either in the eastern part of the empire or at any other period of history. The *argentarii* and *coactores argentarii* are the only bankers who thus took part in sales by auction, on a regular basis and within the scope of their profession, in order to grant credit in this setting.

Even if Egypt is treated separately, the eastern half of the empire is definitely more diverse than its western counterpart in matters of finance. In Jewish Palestine, for instance, so long as the Temple existed (i.e. up to A.D. 70), the Jews each year had to pay their contribution of a half-shekel in staters or semi-staters; the money-changers approved by the Temple therefore engaged in exchanging the items of currency brought by their compatriots.²² Throughout the Greek world a most important profession, that of the *trapezites*, scarcely changed from the end of the fifth century B.C. to imperial times.²³ The *trapezitai* were no more part of the local aristocracy than the *argentarii* and *nummularii*. In Sparta, however, in the second century A.D. a private banker, holding a monopoly in money-changing, managed a capital fund belonging to the city. At Prusa, during the same century, the *trapezites* Asclepiades was honoured by his city for having helped it on the occasion of a serious financial crisis.²⁴ The extremely wealthy Herodes Atticus employed banks (several of them, we should note) to settle his accounts with the Athenians, so that he managed not to pay them all the money which his father had requested.²⁵ Does all this mean then that the professional bankers of Greece and Asia Minor operated on a more secure financial base and were held in higher social esteem than the western counterparts? Probably it does. Should we see in this a sign of the growing prosperity of the Aegean world? This is far from certain, for in the western part of the empire, at the end of the Republic and in the Augustan era, prosperity had brought with it the lowering of the social and financial position of professional bankers; they became still further removed from the aristocracy, and increasingly tied to medium-scale transactions.

²² Lambert (1906) and Bogaert (1973).

²³ Bogaert (1966), (1968), (1975), (1976a), (1976b), (1985). Egypt aside, R. Bogaert's researches chiefly concern classical Greece; but those cited above deal also with the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

²⁴ *JG* v 1, 18 (Sparta); see Bogaert (1968) 99–100. *BCH* 24 (1900), 366 no. 1 and 33 (1909) 248, no. 412 (Prusa); see Dörner (1957) and Bogaert (1968) 230. ²⁵ Philostr. *VS* II 1.549.

Since the Latin texts often mention auctions, and because the tablets of L. Caecilius Iucundus and Agro Murecine were discovered at Pompeii, the bankers of the Latin areas are better known to us than others in the imperial era. The comparison is thus rendered more complex.

The situation in Egypt is a special case because public banks, *δημόσιαι τράπεζαι*,²⁶ were to be found there. They were the successors of the royal Ptolemaic banks – state institutions ‘directed by officials and entrusted with the payment or collection of sums due to or owed by the state’; they could also deal with private accounts.²⁷ There were also in Egypt banks which were completely private concerns. The sums found on their payment orders were often modest, so their clients were far from belonging to the richest stratum of the population.²⁸ This is in line with what I have noted in the western part of the empire, especially in Italy: the élite, in particular the most wealthy among them, made loans to financiers from their own circles, whereas the clients of professional bankers were often of more limited means.

The money-changers and professional bankers devoted themselves primarily to local and regional transactions. They also undertook the custody of important sums of money. Their existence, moreover, facilitated monetary transactions, making them more rapid and more numerous; hence they contributed to the monetization of economic and social life. In Italy and the western provinces, their participation at sales by auction also comprised an additional guarantee for all those lending on securities, since the objects secured were sold at auction in the event of the debt not being repaid. The presence of the bankers, who supplied credit to the buyers, thus facilitated the sale of the objects secured and allowed them to be sold at a higher price.

On the other hand, the elements of aristocratic fortunes – houses, slaves, precious objects or even agricultural estates – were sold at the auctions, especially in the case of an inheritance, in order that the wealth of the deceased might more easily be divided among the heirs. The existence of auctions in the Italy of the late Republic and the early empire was thus linked to an undeniable fluidity in aristocratic fortunes.

This relative fluidity is one of several indicators of the state of monetization which the empire had attained. Can more be known about this subject? Our impression of economic development during the second century A.D. is dependent on the answer given to this question.

Working from a sample of 90,000 silver coins, Hopkins notes that between the Flavians and the Severans the coins of successive years are

²⁶ On the banks and bankers of Egypt under the high empire, see Bogaert (1965), (1980), (1983a), (1983b), (1984), (1987), (1988), (1991) and (1994). ²⁷ Bogaert (1987) 55. ²⁸ Bogaert (1985) 82–3.

equally well represented in the various regions of the empire; he therefore infers a strongly integrated monetary economy.²⁹ Duncan-Jones works from the different coin types, which last about one month. Since the frequency of types varies considerably from one province to another, he concludes that this situation cannot be reconciled with the hypothesis of a 'heavy degree of inter-regional trade based on monetary exchange'.³⁰

Monetization was certainly less in the country than in the city. It also differed according to the region, and the price of goods, just as levels of interest varied from one place to another.³¹ But such variations did not put a stop either to transactions or to the circulation of information. Moreover, long-distance commercial transactions did not necessarily entail the movement of actual coin. The evidence of coins must therefore be handled with caution: it probably tells us more about state expenditure than private financial life. Monetization is, after all, inevitably relative. Just as a precise comparison between ancient cases and certain medieval or modern cases cannot be made, so it is difficult to pronounce judgement on this matter. As Harris remarked, in dealing with trade, radical positions must not be espoused hastily. The available documentation in any case does imply relatively vigorous monetary exchange, particularly on the Mediterranean coast.³²

Did the loans provided by the élite financiers and professional bankers go to production and commerce? Can one say that they were 'productive', that they contributed to the development of production, or to economic life in general? In the case of classical Greece, Bogaert and Millett have recently stressed that the vast majority of loans attested were linked to consumption.³³

The sense of the word 'productive' varies among scholars. Consumption, too, is part of the economy in any case, and in aristocratic life it was often closely linked to production (a villa was simultaneously a luxury residence and the centre of an agricultural estate). Furthermore, as von Freyberg asserts, a pre-industrial economy like that of Rome could not improve its performance without a strong increase in consumption.³⁴ But let us take note of what Millett and Bogaert have written about classical Greece; what was the case under the high empire?

Is it a question of knowing whether the bankers and financiers concentrated most of their efforts on the financing of economic life, with a view to creating an efficient instrument of investment, being fully aware of the causal relationship? Should the ancient bank be compared to that of the nineteenth century, or even to that of the eighteenth? If the question is put

²⁹ Hopkins (1978) 39 and (1980) 112–16. ³⁰ Duncan-Jones (1989). ³¹ *Dig. XIII.4.3* (Gaius).

³² See ch. 24 above, 'Trade', pp. 736–7.

³³ Millett (1983) 43; Bogaert (1968) 356–8 and (1985) 85–6. *Contra* Thompson (1979) 230–3, but without any convincing arguments; and Stanley (1990). ³⁴ von Freyberg (1989) 26–7.

this way, then the reply is clearly negative. It is certain that neither the *argentarii* nor the élite financiers clearly distinguished between a loan for production and a loan for consumption, and that they did not aim to finance enterprises in any methodical and continuous manner. It is, however, an enormous step from this to assert that they did not intervene in economic life generally or in trade in particular;³⁵ and it is a leap which should not be made in relation to the high empire.

With regard to the *trapezitai* of the Greek regions of the empire, it is difficult to give a precise answer, partly because of the scarcity of available documentation, and partly because it has not yet been sufficiently exploited.³⁶ We may, at any rate, note that the famous text of the 'Revenue Laws', which dates from the first century of the Ptolemaic era (259 B.C.), mentions the *ἀγοραῖοι* and *ἔμποροι* as clients of bankers (as well as *γεωργοί*, perhaps).³⁷

As far as the *coactores* and *coactores argentarii* are concerned, the conclusion is clear. They certainly do not appear to have supplied medium- or long-term credit to enterprises, and they definitely granted loans for consumption; but one of their functions, in particular at auctions, was to grant short-term commercial loans. In the period with which we are concerned, at Rome and Ostia there were *argentarii* installed in the places of commerce (gross or retail), where the auctions took place: the *macellum magnum*, a retail market opened in A.D. 59;³⁸ the *portus vinarius superior*, a wholesale market situated on the Tiber upstream from the centre of Rome, where the wines which had come down the river were sold;³⁹ and the *forum boarium*.⁴⁰ Outside Rome and its ports, they also took part in periodic markets, *nundinae*.⁴¹ The short-term credit supplied by the bankers allowed the merchants who were selling to restock more quickly, without waiting for their buyers to pay them the price of the merchandise; and it allowed the merchants who were buying to purchase more, without actually having all the necessary sums. Not all goods went through the auctions, however, and not all merchants frequented them. Those merchants who did visit them most often were probably not the most important; the auctions are likely to have been places for medium-scale transactions, involving independent traders.

Maritime and longer-term loans granted to artisans or merchants do not appear usually to have been the responsibility of professional bankers. They existed all the same, however. Those who offered these types of credit, élite financiers or intermediaries, also granted loans for consumption. For

³⁵ As Jongman asserts in *Pompeii*.

³⁶ However, for professional bankers in Egypt, see Bogaert (1994).

³⁷ See Bogaert (1987) 57.

³⁸ *CIL* VI 9183.

³⁹ *CIL* XI 3156.

⁴⁰ *CIL* VI 1035. On these various inscriptions, see Andreau, *Vie Financière* (on the role of debts granted by professional bankers, see esp. 585–7).

⁴¹ Andreau (1976); see ch. 24 above, 'Trade', p. 731.

though the ancients realized what money could gain them, they did not clearly distinguish between credit for production or commerce and credit for consumption. But they were not unaware that a particular loan aimed at improving the condition of an estate or at setting up a commercial enterprise.

In his condemnation of debt, Plutarch makes an exception in favour of those who borrow to stay alive, having no longer anything to eat or drink; but he accords the same treatment to those who borrow to buy lands or productive slaves as to those who do this on account of their appetite for luxury or in a spirit of munificence.⁴² Plutarch also, in another passage, talks of borrowing to purchase fields of wheat, vineyards and olive-groves.⁴³ Seneca, employing a metaphor, refers to a man who, wishing to go into business, maritime trade or public contracts, has need to borrow and turns to an intermediary (*intervessor* or *proxenata*) to obtain credit.⁴⁴ Fragments of the *Digest* deal with the case where the loan is contracted in order to buy a plot of land, repair a boat or feed sailors, and for buying goods.⁴⁵ Maritime loans continued to be taken out, and on conditions largely similar to those which characterized the practice at Athens in the fourth century B.C.⁴⁶ It is, however, now thought that no maritime loan appears in the Murecine tablets,⁴⁷ which concern matters dealt with at Puteoli under the Julio-Claudians and provide evidence of other loans granted to merchants.⁴⁸ As regards the links which bound slaves and emancipated artisans or merchants to their master or patron, some of the conclusions of Di Porto are definitely very questionable; but these ties, too, should be placed under the heading of loans for an economic function.⁴⁹

In the Roman world of the first and second centuries, no category of financiers limited themselves to loans for consumption. But this does not mean that the majority of loans were productive, nor that the banks were the privileged helpers of production and commerce. The techniques of payment and lending were carried over from previous practices.⁵⁰ The transfer of loans and maritime credit, we have seen, continued to be practised as before. Neither the rates of interest, including the manner in which they were evaluated and levied, nor the specific records kept by the *argentarii* underwent any significant change.⁵¹ There was no institutionalized

⁴² Plut. *De vit. aere alieno* 7 (= *Mor.* 830 E). ⁴³ Plut. *De cupid. divit.* 2 (= *Mor.* 523 F).

⁴⁴ Sen. *Ep. ad Lucil.*, 119, 1 and 5.

⁴⁵ *Dig.* XII.1.4 *pr.* (Ulpian, *ad Sab.* xxxiv); XIV.1.1, 8 to 11 (Ulpian, *lib. xxviii ad Ed.*); XIV.1.7 (Afr., *lib. viii quaest.*).

⁴⁶ See Bogaert (1965) and (1987) 70–3 (as well as the bibliography mentioned there, esp. Biscardi (1974)). ⁴⁷ Wolf (1979), Purpura (1984), Santoro (1985) and Camodeca (1999).

⁴⁸ On these tablets, see Bove (1984) (where a bibliography up to that date can be found); and Camodeca (1983–4), (1985–6), (1988–9), (1992) and (1999). ⁴⁹ Di Porto (1984).

⁵⁰ Garnsey and Saller, *Empire* 55.

⁵¹ On this book-keeping, Bogaert (1968) 376–84 and Andreau, *Vie financière* 548–60 and 615–26.

compensation in existence between banks. But, thanks to several papyri, it is known that from this time onwards transfers did take place from one bank to another, and the techniques employed are beginning to become better known: for instance, one banker is known to have had an account with one or several of his colleagues.⁵²

From the fifth century B.C. the clients of banks issued orders of payment, which they sent to their banker or handed to him in person.⁵³ But Bagnall and Bogaert have put forward evidence that, at the end of the Ptolemaic era, there were cheques in existence, given directly to the beneficiary by the account-holder, who also, by way of verification, sent a note of authentication to the banker.⁵⁴ No cheque dating from the high empire is known as yet, but one papyrus implies the existence of the cheque.⁵⁵ Therefore, in this matter as well, there is continuity from the end of the Hellenistic era to the beginning of the Principate and the period of the Flavians and Antonines. These cheques could neither be endorsed nor made payable to the bearer, however. Throughout the Roman period, loans and orders of payment never circulated freely.⁵⁶

Does this mean that financial and banking life under the Flavians and Antonines continued to function as before? Clearly not. Some important developments are hardly open to doubt.

The most obvious one relates to the professional bankers of the western part of the empire, and particularly Italy.⁵⁷ During the first half of the second century the *nummularii* became deposit bankers. The texts before this time present them as testers of coinage and money-changers;⁵⁸ but from this point they opened bank accounts and received deposits.⁵⁹ This transformation caused problems for the Roman juriconsults: did the specific regulations already in force for the *argentarii*, particularly in the matter of compensation or the production of registers (*editio rationum*), have to be applied to the *nummularii* as well?⁶⁰

The emergence of this third profession of bankers (after those of the

⁵² Bogaert (1983c) 34 n. 43.

⁵³ Bogaert (1968) 333–45 and Andreau, *Vie financière* 544–8 and 560–8.

⁵⁴ Bagnall (1975); Bagnall and Bogaert (1975); Bogaert (1977) and (1983c).

⁵⁵ This is *PMeyer* 6, which concerns a problem relating to a cheque without funds (Bogaert (1987) 73–7 and esp. 75). There were also cheques in Jewish Palestine: the Talmud mentions the cheque as a means of paying those workers who, according to the Mosaic law, had to receive their salary daily; see Bogaert (1968) 340 n. 206.

⁵⁶ Mrozek (1985) has insisted on the existence of methods of payments other than hard currency (metal coinage) under the high empire. If he means by this that credits were sold, and that cheques existed in some areas, he is right; but there was never any circulation of instruments of credit.

⁵⁷ Andreau (1986).

⁵⁸ Petron. *Sat.* 56; Mart. XII.57.7; Suet. *Aug.* 4.4; and Suet. frg. 103, p. 133, 3 Reiff.

⁵⁹ *Dig.* II.13.9.2 (Paul); II.14.47.1 (Scaevola); XIV.3.20 (Scaevola); XVI.3.7.2 (Ulpian).

⁶⁰ *Dig.* II.13.9.2 (Paul) and II.13.10.1 (Gaius); see Andreau, *Vie financière* 186–92.

argentarii and the *coactores argentarii*) does not indicate a growth in the operation of loans, because it was accompanied by a marked reduction in the provision of credit at the auction-sales, especially in Italy. During the second half of the third century, the *argentarii* and *coactores argentarii* disappeared completely, bringing to an end the participation of bankers at auctions. From the beginning of the second century, the evidence for *argentarii* diminishes everywhere; in Italy, after 100, no more inscriptions recording an *argentarius*, *coactor* or *coactor argentarius* are known, save at Rome, Ostia and Portus. The *coactores*, independent cashiers who contributed to the effectiveness of payments, disappear, although bankers continued to work in certain commercial areas of Rome, such as at the *forum boarium*, and its two ports.

We know of only one individual case of failure among the bankers of Rome, that of the future pope Callistus. While he was a slave, during the reign of Commodus, he had received a sum of money (as a *peculium*?) from his master, the imperial freedman Carpophorus,⁶¹ by means of which he ran a bank in the twelfth region of Rome. He found himself unable to return the sums deposited, and the depositors turned to his master. Callistus claimed to have lent the money to clients who refused to return it to him. He attempted to escape, but in the end caused a scandal at the synagogue, and was despatched to the mines of Sardinia by the city prefect. Had he squandered the money as his enemy Hippolytus of Rome, thanks to whom we know the story, claims?⁶² Did he render himself guilty of mismanagement by lending to people who did not offer sufficient guarantees, or by failing to keep enough funds in hand? Can his failure be connected with the general rise in prices which took place in Commodus' reign, despite the efforts of the emperor to stabilize them? This hypothesis, formulated by Heichelheim, subsequently attracted the support of Mazzarino; but there is no proof that they are right.⁶³ Or was the failure due to the indebtedness of his clients, itself a result of the grain speculation of Cleander, as Garzetti thought?⁶⁴ Whatever the case, and even if Callistus fell because of his own poor management or lack of scruples, it is certain that professional bankers did not have an easy time during the second and third centuries A.D., especially in Italy. I shall put forward other indications of these difficulties below.

It is impossible to quantify the volume of either loans or sales by auction. By inductive or deductive methods we may arrive at some figures relative to the commercialization of certain products, for example wine, and to the receipts and expenditure of the state. But this is not the case for private

⁶¹ That is Marcus Aurelius Carpophorus, mentioned in *CIL* VI 13040.

⁶² Hippol. *Haer.* ix.12.1–12; see Andreau, *Vie financière* 614–15, 631–2 and 639; Bogaert (1973) 252–5.

⁶³ Mazzarino (1966) 150–2; see Andreau, *Vie financière* 632 and n. 108.

⁶⁴ *Tiberius to Antonines* 541–3.

financial activity. The book of von Freyberg is revealing: although keen to arrive at precise figures, the author abandons the attempt in the domain of private capital transfers.⁶⁵ In such a situation the history of the banking professions can be looked at only for indications of trends in the volume of loans. The decline of banking in the second and third centuries reveals an undeniable contraction in loan operations, particularly in Italy. Bearing in mind what we have already said concerning the roles of loans, we shall enumerate three aspects of this decline.

First, the existence of auctions was linked to a certain type of management of aristocratic fortunes. The disappearance of loans at auctions demonstrates how the chief constituents of these fortunes – slaves, houses and lands – were less fluid than previously, and were thus less frequently on sale. Second, the sales by auction had a commercial function, linked to the provisioning of Rome. Their decline is connected to that of redistributive trade and that of a circle of medium-scale businessmen, who came to the auctions by river or sea, in order to sell goods transported to Italy or originating in the peninsula itself. Third, and finally, the decline, followed by the disappearance of auction-sales, cannot fail to have had an effect on the operation of loans in general, since the securities of the loans, in the case of failure to repay, were often sold at the auctions.

As for the western provinces, it is possible to say only that the business of the professional bankers declined in the course of the second century; but it had never been as active as in central and southern Italy (where it had been stimulated simultaneously by the expansion of the city of Rome and the presence of large senatorial and equestrian fortunes). On the other hand, it is during the second century that merchants and bankers from the eastern Mediterranean start to be attested in the western part of the empire: thus two *trapezitai*, one originating from Antioch in Syria, the other from Synnada in Phrygia, are found installed in stands at the forum.⁶⁶

References to the financial affairs of the upper classes are brief and fragmentary for all periods. During the last century of the Republic, and up to the Julio-Claudians, however, they are frequent, and allude to intricate operations, occasionally scandalous: reassignment of loans, transfers of funds, political loans, instances of corruption. This is no longer the case from the time of the Flavians. Apart from the classic loan at interest employed by every self-respecting member of the élite, we no longer hear of anything significant. New documents, it is true, show that the maritime loan continued to be used, and not only for the merchants of more limited

⁶⁵ Freyberg (1989) 134–5; for another attempt at quantification, extremely bold in my view, see Goldsmith (1984) and (1987).

⁶⁶ *ArchClass* 30, 1978, 252–4 and Andreau, *Vie financière* 198–9. These ‘easterners’ must not be confused with the freedmen of previous centuries, who could have been natives of the east, but had been slaves of Italians or western provincials before being emancipated (see Christol (1971)).

means.⁶⁷ The money came from rich intermediaries linked to the world of commerce, and, through their mediation, probably from members of the élite whose identity we do not know. But we have no information whatever on transfers of funds, for instance of provincial senators and equestrians, whose fortunes were situated for the most part outside Italy. And even if Roman political life was not as it had been at the end of the Republic, the social life of the aristocracy offered numerous opportunities for incurring large expenses and taking out sizeable loans. The reflections of this which we have in the literary sources of the second century are very slight. Is this due to the nature of our sources, or does it show a decline in financial activity?

In the second century the provinces sold much more to Italy than they bought from there.⁶⁸ Since many private transfers of money took place from the provinces to Italy, we must suppose that some commercial loans were a means for the lenders of transferring money without physically transporting the sums. In the absence of relevant documents, such operations leave hardly any trace, not even of a numismatic nature. The intermediaries close to the aristocracy or aristocrats themselves, relatively well attested in Cicero's time (such as Cluvius, or Vestorius, or certain *negotiatores* conducting business in the provinces), are still present in the works of Seneca,⁶⁹ but they elude us almost completely in the second century, probably because they were fewer in number or because their businesses were less striking. They were partly replaced by slaves or freedmen of great aristocrats, or even of the emperor and his entourage. Some of these slaves and freedmen were direct collaborators with their master or patron, but in one way or another they managed their own affairs at the same time as their master's or patron's and thereby acquired prosperity or riches. A *dispensator* of Nero was able to pay 13 million sesterces at the moment of his emancipation; a few years later, a slave of Galba agreed to pay 1 million sesterces to obtain a comparable appointment.⁷⁰ The *actores* or *πραγματευταί*, the *dispensatores* or *οικονομοί*, and the *procuratores* are nothing new in the Graeco-Roman world; but in the period under consideration, we find them spoken of with particular emphasis.

Other slaves or freedmen managed a banking or lending business, or were *institores* – shopkeepers – at a shop belonging to their master, even while owing money to their master or patron. This was the case with

⁶⁷ See ch. 24 'Trade and transport', above, p. 737 and nn. 184–6. Besides the bibliography cited in these notes, see Rougé (1980); Harrauer and Sijpesteijn (1985); Casson (1986b) and (1990); Thür (1988).

⁶⁸ Freyberg (1989) 39–56 and Andreau (1991) 368–78.

⁶⁹ He calls them *interessores* and *proxenetae* (Sen. *Ep. ad Lucil.* 119.1). We should consider Cornelius Senecio (*Ep. ad Lucil.* 101.1–4).

⁷⁰ Pliny, *HN* VII.39.129 and Suet. *Otho.*, 5.2; see Millar, *Emperor* 136. See also Sen. *Ep. ad Lucil.* 14.18 and Plut. *De lib. educ.*, 4.8; *De cupid. divit.* 4 (= *Mor.*, 525 A) and 7 (= *Mor.*, 526 A).

Callistus, the slave of Carpophorus.⁷¹ Certain fragments of the *Digest* deal with such slaves or freedmen – for instance the slave in Arles, employed as an agent in the oil trade, who simultaneously lent money to other merchants.⁷² Among the professional bankers, freedmen and slaves of high-ranking persons, or even of the emperor himself, were proportionately more numerous than in the Augustan period. Besides Callistus, slave of an imperial freedman, we should cite, for the second half of the first century, Ti. Claudius Secundus Philippianus, L. Domitius Agathemerus, emancipated by L. Domitius Paris, and doubtless L. Calpurnius Daphnus;⁷³ for the following period, M. Ulpius Martialis and, at Poetovio, Didymus, the freedman of Septimius Severus and his sons.⁷⁴ The study of Bürge places much emphasis on the links which united the financiers with their master or patron. His case is even stronger for the second century than for the preceding centuries.⁷⁵

As Frayn remarks,⁷⁶ it is a characteristic feature of the Roman economic mentality to distinguish between productive businesses based on an estate and services subordinate to that production. These services were supplied by professionals. The lending of money practised by the upper classes was, by contrast, a business based on landownership. Between the two existed important businessmen, who aimed to amass a fortune through finance or commerce. On the one hand, these businessmen only sought to accumulate capital on a temporary basis, in order then to convert it into landed property. On the other hand, behind the structures of the previous periods, which tended to maintain themselves in the second century, there was a slump in activity. And when there was less vigorous activity, the logic of the institutions and economic attitudes led to the supplanting of these men by the members of the élite, on whom meanwhile the professional bankers themselves became increasingly dependent. The élite did not cease to play a major economic role, although during all periods certain bankers or financiers remained completely independent of them. In my view, however, the role of these independent men was restricted when activity slackened, and this is what took place in the second century.

What form did the interventions of the emperor in financial or banking matters take? Did the emperor intervene to a greater extent than previously in the Flavian and Antonine periods? In this area too, we must note at once strong continuity and signs of development.

⁷¹ Hippol. *Haer.* ix.12.1–12. On slave and emancipated financiers, and in particular the differences between slaves of the *domus* and *institores*, see Garnsey (1981) and (1982).

⁷² *Dig.* xiv.3.19, *pr.* (Papinian, *lib.* iii *Resp.*); see Andreau, *Vie financière* 703–4.

⁷³ *CIL* vi 1605, 1859 and 1860; vi 9183; xiv 2886. Lucius Calpurnius Daphnus was probably the freedman of the *consul ordinarius* A.D. 57, Lucius Calpurnius Piso, or that of one of his close circle or dependants (see Andreau, *Vie financière* 411). ⁷⁴ *CIL* vi 8728 and iii 4035. ⁷⁵ Bürge (1987).

⁷⁶ Frayn (1984) 158.

Under the Republic and high empire, the public authorities only intervened in private financial activity in so far as the interests of the city or the state were concerned (that is, with regard to the management of the *publica*). They did not aim to direct banks and private affairs, nor even to organize them. The state held such economic activities in too low esteem not to leave them alone. Its liberalism did not stem from any conscious policy, from an acceptance of economic laws or similar assumptions; it was the consequence of its indifference to the economy as such, without consideration of its social and political implications. The sums which the emperor and his associates were in the habit of lending must undoubtedly have exerted increasing pressure on financial transactions. All the available evidence, however, leads one to think that in the financial field, the property of the emperor was dealt with for the benefit of their owner or manager, and not in the interests of some sort of state financial policy; but the same conclusion would not probably be valid with regard to agriculture.

The public authorities nevertheless took care to regulate financial activity, and endeavoured to find a solution to the crises of payments and the problems posed by indebtedness. As a result, in our period, interest seems to have been limited to 12 per cent per year, that is 1 per cent per month, except in the case of maritime loans.⁷⁷ Several texts of juriconsults specify, moreover, that it is necessary to bear in mind regional practice, which may in certain cases impose much lower interest rates.⁷⁸ We should note that some of these texts express themselves in terms of custom, and say nothing of the current economic situation; this would suggest that, in the short term, levels of interest in a given place hardly varied, and in any case to a much lesser extent than the price of the necessities of daily life.

Turning from the regulation of financial activity, we come to the problem of the issue of coinage. In the event of a crisis, when debts have accumulated and payments are no longer being made, the emperor puts more money into circulation, for example in the form of loans that are interest-free or at very low interest rates. This was the case in A.D. 33 in Tiberius' reign.⁷⁹ Were his motives economic, financial or merely social? Was he merely aiming to assist the poor on the one hand, and ensure the permanence of aristocratic fortunes on the other? This is the view of Crawford. Under ordinary circumstances, according to him, coin issues correspond only to the budgetary requirements of the state. In time of crisis, social objectives supplement these budgetary requirements, but we

⁷⁷ On interest rates, the fundamental work remains Billeter (1898); see 267–75.

⁷⁸ *Dig.*, xxvi.7.7.10 (Ulpian, *lib.* xxxv *ad Ed.*: *ex ceteris causis secundum morem provinciae praestabit usuras aut quinquages aut trientes aut si quae aliae leviores in provincia frequentantur*); *Dig.*, xxvii.4.3.1 (Ulpian, *lib.* xxxxvi *ad Ed.*: *cum usuris, sed vel trientibus, vel his quae in regione observantur*); xxxiii.1.21 *pr.* (Scaevola, *lib.* xxii *dig.*: *pretii usurae quae ex consuetudine in provincia praestarentur*). See Billeter (1898) 179 ff.

⁷⁹ On the crisis of A.D. 33, which has given rise to a very considerable bibliography, see Rodewald (1976), Lo Cascio (1978d), and, more recently, Demougin (1988) 117–23.

must discount any economic considerations.⁸⁰ These arguments have been propounded by Crawford for more than twenty years, yet are far from attracting unanimous support. Recently Howgego has applied himself to demonstrating that, even under ordinary conditions, the requirements of public expenditure are not enough to explain all issues of coinage.⁸¹ Lo Cascio, in the numerous and excellent articles which he has devoted to this question, rules out neither the desire for a smooth monetary circulation, nor even economic considerations.⁸² Nicolet, Hopkins and von Freyberg tend in the same direction.⁸³

For my part I would propose that the state did not aim to influence the economy as a whole, as a system of production and distribution, by the issue of coinage, but that it did on the other hand have the desire to support, and on occasion to revive, stable monetary circulation.⁸⁴ Such a concern explains the growth, in certain cases, of less constricting expenditure (for example that involved in benefactions), or in other cases, the distribution of interest-free loans or loans at very low rates of interest; such loans in any case come to qualify as *liberalitates*, like benefactional gestures.⁸⁵ Under the Flavians and Antonines, there were no crises of payments as spectacular as that of A.D. 33; nevertheless, first Hadrian, then Marcus Aurelius, were forced to grant remissions of taxes in arrears,⁸⁶ and Pertinax in his turn remitted the arrears of interest of the *alimenta*.⁸⁷ Such gestures can also be explained in part as a desire for the smooth circulation of coinage.

On the other hand, if a global economic way of thinking, correlating the quantity of coin in circulation with production and exchanges as a whole, is completely ruled out, we must not overlook certain more limited concerns, linked to the needs of some social milieu or other or to the resolution of a particular problem – concerns simultaneously economic, social and political. We may cite the provisioning of Rome and Italian agriculture as examples of such concerns. The *alimenta* of Trajan, which have been much debated, are at once a benefaction and loans at reduced levels of interest. In this connection should we evoke what Dio Chrysostom writes in the *Enboean Discourse*, and see them as simultaneously an aid to poor children and a measure in the interests of Italian agriculture and landowners.⁸⁸ Whatever the case, Lo Cascio is right to point out, with regard to the monetary policy of Trajan, that the public authorities cannot have been unaware of the effects of the increase in the amount of money in circulation. It is

⁸⁰ See Crawford (1970) 46; (1974) II 633; (1982) 120–2; etc. ⁸¹ Howgego (1990).

⁸² Lo Cascio (1978a); (1978b); (1978c); (1978d) 201–2; (1980); (1981 – see pp. 85–6 in this last article for a brief sketch of Crawford's arguments on the issue of coinage, followed by an equally concise sketch of Lo Cascio's. ⁸³ Nicolet (1971); Hopkins (1980) 106–12; Freyberg (1989) 89–97.

⁸⁴ Andreau (1983a).

⁸⁵ The word *liberalitas* is, for instance, used by Suetonius (*Aug.* 41.1–2).

⁸⁶ *HA Hadr.* 7; and Dio LXXII.32. ⁸⁷ Lo Cascio (1980).

⁸⁸ Dio, *Enboicus*, 33–7; on this rapprochement, see Gabba (1962) 56–8.

equally certain, however, that they did not attempt a general amelioration of the economic situation by the measures they took.⁸⁹ There is a great gap between the perception of one or several precise economic problems and the notion of an economic system, on the entirety of which it is possible to act by means of such levers as the issue of coinage; and it is one which the Romans never bridged.

In contrast with the lending of money practised by a rich possessor of capital, banks created additional purchasing power. Did the Romans realize this? Probably not, as Lo Cascio remarks.⁹⁰ But they at any rate recognized the novelty of the deposit bank, and the professions concerned with it; several fragments of the jurists to be found in the *Digest* demonstrate this well. And when the banking professions started to fall away and threatened to disappear altogether, as was the case in the second and third centuries, both the emperor and certain cities undertook specific measures to check their decline.

Banks which were leased, contrary to what was previously believed, were not a permanent institution of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt, but they did reappear there in the second century; one is known at Oxyrhynchus in A.D. 153, and another at Hermopolis Magna in 151.⁹¹ Other leased banks are attested for the same period in the Greek world, at Sparta, Pergamum and Mylasa.⁹² More or less parallel establishments were probably founded in the Danubian provinces: Didymus, the freedman of Septimius Severus and his sons, and Ianuarius, another imperial freedman, could have run such establishments, the former in Pannonia Superior, the latter in Dacia.⁹³ How can we explain the appearance of these leased banks? It seems to me difficult not to interpret them as a symptom of financial malaise, as an attempt to help the coin-testers, the money-changers and the professional bankers with their difficulties.⁹⁴ Working from the number of payment orders attested by the papyri, Bogaert concludes that in Egypt there is a decline in the third century, and not in the second. But nearly all the payment orders available date from before A.D. 140; if their number is a reliable indicator, it reveals that the decline set in well before the end of the second century.⁹⁵

In Italy, Marcus Aurelius took some measures, whose content is unknown to us, concerning bankers and auction-sales.⁹⁶ Later, under Septimius Severus, the *porta argentariorum* bears witness to other measures

⁸⁹ Lo Cascio (1978b) 94–5. ⁹⁰ Lo Cascio (1981) 76 n. 3. ⁹¹ Bogaert (1983a) and (1987) 58–61.

⁹² *JG* v 1.18 (see Bogaert (1968) 99–100; *OGIS* 484 and 595 (Bogaert (1976b) 24 and 28).

⁹³ *CIL* III 4035 and 7903; see Andreau, *Vie financière* 202–3 and 205–7.

⁹⁴ R. Bogaert sees in this 'the sign of a new economic policy, which would be intensified in the following centuries, that of the domination of the public authorities in certain branches of economic activity in order to gain the benefits from it' (Bogaert (1983a) 56).

⁹⁵ Bagnall and Bogaert (1975) 97–101 and Bogaert (1987) 74. It is at the start of the second century that the payment orders of Egypt are most numerous (though less than thirty survive).

⁹⁶ *HA, Marc. Aurel.* 9.9.

undertaken in favour of the *argentarii* and *negotiantes* of the *forum boarium*, in order to facilitate the transport of livestock to Rome.⁹⁷ In the third century *stipulatores argentarii* are attested in two large cities of Italy, Ostia and Milan; their appearance could also have resulted from a public initiative of the emperor or the cities themselves.⁹⁸ All these signs are very tenuous, because the accounts concerning professional bankers are always allusive and fragmentary. But their convergence is revealing. In the third century the depreciation of the silver coinage in addition to political and military instability would deal decisive blows to financial activity. In the second century signs of sluggishness and exhaustion may be seen, following the dazzling prosperity of the Augustan era and the relative stability of the Flavian and early Antonine period; the degree of this decline escapes us, but the evidence for the tendency is clear.

⁹⁷ *CIL* VI 1035; see Andreau, *Vie financière* 122–6.

⁹⁸ *CIL* XIV 405 and V 5892. On all these measures, see Andreau (1986) 607–11 and 815–17.

CHAPTER 27
DEMOGRAPHY

BRUCE W. FRIER

The underlying demographic structure of the early Roman empire is only dimly perceptible.¹ By and large we lack not only reliable statistical evidence for general demographic functions, but also the detailed local records that prove invaluable for early modern Europe. What we do have, in abundance, are impressionistic and often moralizing observations by literary sources; but such remarks, as vague and inconsistent as similar statements by modern lay persons, must always be considered suspect unless they can be verified. Anecdotes are of similarly marginal demographic interest. For these reasons we often have no choice but to fall back upon reasonable conjecture: likelihoods, not truths.

Further, the Roman empire spanned a vast geographic range, and it endured for centuries. To judge from early modern data, little uniformity can be anticipated of it – considerably less, indeed, than the discussion in this chapter may suggest.

Despite these handicaps, a picture is emerging. The Roman empire's demographic structure, to the extent we know it, broadly resembles most populations before the modern demographic transition; in particular, it is close to the norm for pre-modern Mediterranean societies, while displaying no divergences that clearly anticipate the demographic transition. It goes without saying that Rome's demographic structure fundamentally conditioned the economic, social and political institutions of the Roman empire.

Roman demography can be approached in two ways. First, the population of the empire and of its regions can be examined for level, increase or decrease, age and sex structure, and so on. Second, population can be broken down into its three major demographic components: mortality, the rate at which members passed out of the population through death; fertility, the rate at which new persons were born into the population; and migration, the rate at which persons entered or left the population through physical relocation. These components jointly determined the general structure and age distribution of the Roman population, as well as its change over time.

¹ On demography, see Newell (1988).

This chapter first examines the three components of Roman population, and then the empire's gross population.

I. MORTALITY

Almost all historians now assume that Roman life expectancy at birth was approximately twenty-five years.² This consensus rests less on ancient evidence, which is sparse and poor in quality, than on the reasonable conviction that, granted the general social and economic conditions prevailing in the Roman empire, its life expectancy is likely to have lain near the lowest levels attested for pre-modern populations. Of particular importance here are data from India and rural China, which still in the early twentieth century had life expectancies at birth in the lower twenties.³

1. *Probable life tables*

No accurately measured population has ever had so low a life expectancy, at any rate in normal times. Therefore, in order to understand what such mortality implies, we must first turn to model life tables. These computer-generated models, developed to facilitate study of demographic history and development, are based on historical data and describe 'typical' populations at various levels of mortality. Of the standard models, Model West is the most generalized and widely applicable, and it is chiefly used below.⁴

Table 1 gives mortality functions associated with Model West, level 3, in which life expectancy at birth is 25 years for females and 22.9 years for males.⁵ In this life table, three columns of statistics are provided for females and males aged exactly 0, 1, 5, and thereafter at five-year intervals until age 95. The first column states the probability that a person of given age will die before the next indicated birthday; thus, about sixty-two of one thousand 15-year-old females will die before their twentieth birthday, and about fifty-five of one thousand males. The second column shows the toll such mortality would exact on representative 'cohorts' of one hundred thousand newly born females and males; here the impact of high infant mortality rates is especially clear. The third column gives average life expectancy at successive ages; thus women aged 15 have on average about 34.2 years of life remaining, while their males counterparts have only 32.6 years.

² See, e.g., Parkin (1992) 84–6.

³ India: Coale and Demeny (1983) 32–3 (data for 1911). China: Barclay *et al.* (1976) 617–21 (data for 1930–1).

⁴ On life tables and models: Newell (1988) 62–81, 130–66. On the reasons for preferring Model West for high mortality populations, see Coale and Demeny (1983) 25, 33.

⁵ Coale and Demeny (1983) 41. All data cited below on model life tables also derive from this volume and are used by permission of Academic Press, Inc., and Prof. Coale.

Table 1: *Model West, level 3: a life table for the Roman empire?*

Age	Females			Males		
	Mortality	Cohort	Life exp.	Mortality	Cohort	Life exp.
0	0.3056	100,000	25.0	0.3517	100,000	22.8
1	0.2158	69,444	34.9	0.2147	64,826	34.1
5	0.0606	54,456	40.1	0.0563	50,906	39.0
10	0.0474	51,156	37.5	0.0404	48,041	36.2
15	0.0615	48,732	34.2	0.0547	46,099	32.6
20	0.0766	45,734	31.3	0.0775	43,579	29.4
25	0.0857	42,231	28.7	0.0868	40,201	26.6
30	0.0965	38,614	26.1	0.1002	36,713	23.9
35	0.1054	34,886	23.7	0.1168	33,035	21.3
40	0.1123	31,208	21.1	0.1397	29,177	18.7
45	0.1197	27,705	18.5	0.1597	25,101	16.4
50	0.1529	24,389	15.6	0.1981	21,092	14.0
55	0.1912	20,661	13.0	0.2354	16,915	11.8
60	0.2715	16,712	10.4	0.3091	12,932	9.6
65	0.3484	12,175	8.4	0.3921	8,936	7.7
70	0.4713	7,934	6.5	0.5040	5,432	6.1
75	0.6081	4,194	4.9	0.6495	2,694	4.6
80	0.7349	1,644	3.6	0.7623	944	3.4
85	0.8650	436	2.5	0.8814	225	2.4
90	0.9513	59	1.8	0.9578	27	1.7
95	1.0000	3	1.2	1.0000	1	1.2

Source: Coale and Demeny (1983) 43. ‘Mortality’ is $q(x)$, the likelihood that a person aged exactly x will die before the next indicated birthday; ‘Cohort’ is $l(x)$, the survivors to exact age x ; ‘Life Expectancy’ is $e(x)$.

A caveat is required at this point. This model life table can give only an approximate notion of normal Roman mortality experience. Because such models are based on little empirical data for levels of mortality as high as Rome’s, they are not entirely dependable, especially in two important respects: the structural relationship between juvenile and adult mortality levels, and the relative mortality levels of females and males.⁶ In any case, mortality within the Roman empire must have fluctuated considerably from period to period, region to region, and probably also from class to class. A range of ten years in life expectancy would not be unusual; thus, normal Roman life expectancy at birth is perhaps more satisfactorily set in a broad range from twenty to thirty years.

⁶ On infant mortality, see Bagnall and Frier (1994) 33–4 n. 10, with further references. On sex differentials, see below.

The best surviving ancient evidence, though it is often difficult to interpret, generally supports modern assumptions about Roman mortality. A good example of the problems with Roman sources is a schedule for calculating the tax value of annuities, a document commonly called Ulpian's life table but in fact apparently created by imperial bureaucrats; it is preserved in a juristic text dating from the early third century A.D. Ulpian's life table appears to give figures for adult life expectancy, and these figures are broadly consistent with Model West, level 2, in which female life expectancy at birth is 22.5 years, and male about 20.4.⁷ Ulpian's life table thus implies mortality rates even higher than those usually presumed for the Roman empire; but the statistical peculiarities of Ulpian's schedule are so obvious that a degree of continuing scholarly caution may well be justified.⁸

On the other hand, much the same result emerges from what is generally conceded to be by far the best surviving demographic source for ordinary subjects of the Roman empire: the three hundred census returns, containing entries for more than eleven hundred persons, filed in Roman Egypt during the first to third centuries A.D. Despite uncertainties, the age distribution in the census returns strongly suggests that overall Egyptian life expectancy at birth was in the lower twenties, probably between 22 and 25 years.⁹ There is no reason to suppose that this result is entirely coincidental.

Skeletal evidence from Roman cemeteries has rarely been subjected to accurate demographic analysis, and in any case the obstacles to determining the age and sex of skeletons remain formidable. Two well-studied fourth-century cemeteries from Pannonia do both yield mortality data that closely support Ulpian's schedule.¹⁰ However, although close study of Roman cemeteries may eventually greatly augment our knowledge of demography, the results thus far are of limited value except as to health and the causes of death. Of exceptional importance, in this regard, are the 150 skeletons buried at Herculaneum when Mount Vesuvius erupted in A.D. 79; although at best they represent only a cross-section of a well-off Italian population, they are already proving useful to demographic anthropologists.¹¹

One final source is far more controversial. Especially in the Latin-speaking West, Romans often include on epitaphs the decedent's age at death; this practice was almost universal in North Africa, but markedly less common in Europe. Although the corpus of surviving inscriptions is

⁷ Aemilius Macer (2 *ad Leg. Vic. Hered.*), *Dig.* xxxv.2.68 pref. (quoting Ulpian), with Frier (1982).

⁸ Saller (1994) 15–15, summarizing recent scholarship.

⁹ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 109–10, summarizing discussion at pp. 75–109; a low intrinsic growth rate is assumed.

¹⁰ Acsádi and Nemeskeri (1970) 215–34; Frier (1983b). Compare Parkin (1992) 41–58, on palaeodemography; with Jackson (1988) 170–86, on palaeopathology. ¹¹ Bisel (1988).

numerically impressive (some 25,000 from Europe, an additional 18,000 from North Africa west of Egypt), gravestones are today widely and rightly treated with suspicion.¹² In the case of the European inscriptions, no life table based on all or part of them is even remotely plausible. The inscriptions invariably underrecord juvenile mortality, but that could be corrected. More seriously, they grossly exaggerate mortality among young adults, evidently because the decedent's tender years often influenced the decision to include age at death; further, the mortality rates for older adults are patently skewed by age exaggeration. Thus every portion of these epigraphic life tables is incurably biased.¹³

Roman North Africa is altogether different. Unlike in Europe, African epitaphs almost invariably give decedent's age at death, so problems of selectivity in including age at death are less severe. Although the African epitaphs underrepresent juveniles, they produce credible mortality rates for males aged 10 to 44, and for females aged 10 to 54; and, as table 2 shows, these mortality levels are reasonably comparable to Model South, level 2, in which both sexes have a life expectancy at birth of about 22.5 years.¹⁴ Male mortality virtually duplicates the model; female mortality is generally similar to the model, but significantly higher during the peak years of child-bearing, ages 20 to 34 – perhaps a sign of high fertility. In later ages, however, mortality rates are artificially lowered owing to age exaggeration, a phenomenon that apparently begins somewhat later for women than for men. Since tombstones were moderately expensive, these epitaphs indicate that high levels of mortality obtained also among the urban well-to-do.

Empirical evidence thus generally supports the modern consensus that average life expectancy of Romans at birth was normally about 25 years, or perhaps even slightly lower.

2. *Causes of mortality*

The concepts of 'stable' and 'stationary' population are powerful theoretical tools in demography. If a population's birth and death rates remain unchanged over many generations, and if migration is negligible, that population becomes 'stable', with a constant age-structure and rate of growth. If birth and death rates are also identical, then this stable population is also 'stationary'; its numbers remain unchanging. Though in fact no historical society has ever been exactly stable (much less stationary), pre-modern

¹² See just Hopkins (1987) and Parkin (1992) 5–19. Szilagyi compiled this epigraphic evidence in *AArabHung* for 1961 to 1963 and 1965 to 1967.

¹³ Suder (1990) unsuccessfully attempts to evade these problems.

¹⁴ Table 3 does not use the inscriptions from Carthage and Mauretania, which diverge from the pattern found elsewhere in Africa. Model South presupposes relatively low mortality from ages 40 to 60; see Coale and Demeny (1983) 12.

Table 2 *Reported mortality rates in Roman North Africa*

Age	Females		Males	
	Inscriptions	Model South, level 2	Inscriptions	Model South, level 2
5	0.0355	0.0817	0.0338	0.0729
10	0.0437	0.0438	0.0383	0.0350
15	0.0601	0.0599	0.0561	0.0525
20	0.0795	0.0746	0.0786	0.0787
25	0.0921	0.0800	0.0763	0.0788
30	0.1085	0.0833	0.0808	0.0779
35	0.1005	0.0876	0.0821	0.0853
40	0.0982	0.0890	0.0863	0.1005
45	0.0863	0.0939	0.0820	0.1166
50	0.1077	0.1213	0.1132	0.1457
55	0.1112	0.1634	0.1148	0.1891
60	0.1577	0.2592	0.1529	0.2695
65	0.1576	0.3768	0.1578	0.3744
70	0.2357	0.5434	0.2280	0.5729
75	0.2566	0.7248	0.2551	0.6964

Source: African mortality rates – $q(x)$ – calculated from statistics in Szilagyi (1965–7), with five-year moving averages used for inscriptions giving age at death. Life table: Coale and Demeny (1983) 384.

populations can often be approximately described through these concepts.¹⁵

Under the conditions of Model West, level 3, a stable population, if it is stationary or slowly growing, will have annual death rates of about forty per thousand for women, forty-four per thousand for men; more than half of all deaths will be of children under ten. These death rates are very high; in early modern Europe the death rates were rarely higher than thirty-five per thousand.¹⁶

Death in the Roman world followed a seasonal pattern also found in the early modern Mediterranean: highest in late summer and early autumn, when infectious diseases took their heaviest toll; lowest in the cooler winter months.¹⁷ The major natural causes of death probably did not differ much from those prevailing in early modern Europe. Although many diseases have a history of their own – now virulent, now abating – the great

¹⁵ For details, see Bagnall and Frier (1994) 78–81. ¹⁶ Wrigley and Schofield (1989) 180–1.

¹⁷ Norberg (1963) 58–9, cf. Lassère (1977) 53–6; in modern populations deaths are usually highest in mid-winter. The seasonal pattern of Roman births almost exactly reverses that for deaths: Norberg (1963) 69–72.

scourges are certain to have been, first, the numerous ‘fevers’, including typhus, typhoid fever, Malta fever and malaria; second, pulmonary illnesses, especially the forms of pneumonia and tuberculosis. In normal circumstances, these causes were probably immediately responsible for around 60 per cent of all deaths. Also undoubtedly significant were dysentery and diarrhoea (especially for infants); cholera; gangrene; scurvy (especially in times of want); and, less frequently, rabies, tetanus and anthrax. Ancient medical writings describe most of these illnesses, though for advanced cases doctors could offer little more than comfort. The evidence for bubonic plague, measles, smallpox (before A.D. 165), influenza and syphilis is less certain.¹⁸

Casual violence or accident, including tainted food and drink, also carried off a substantial number of Romans. A man of 22 from Ephesus died of a haemorrhage after drinking a massive dose of wine; an African widow records that her 35-year-old husband had been ‘deceived by a bull’.¹⁹ Military deaths, by contrast, were of little statistical significance in peacetime; the Roman army constituted less than 1 per cent of the empire’s population.

Why did Roman death rates remain so high? The ineffectiveness of medical science explains little; medicine had no measurable impact on death rates until at least the early eighteenth century. Four interconnected reasons may perhaps be given for high Roman mortality.²⁰ First, poor nutrition, conditioned primarily by the low level of real wages, rendered most Romans susceptible to illness; and although the Herculaneum skeletons show that at least the affluent were well nourished, they also provide some alarming evidence of lead poisoning. Second, sanitary standards were poor especially as to the disposal of human waste and garbage; large cities in particular remained fetid despite the spectacular feats of Roman engineers in providing fresh drinking water. (Rome alone probably produced about 1 million cubic metres of human waste each year, a fact worth remembering when we read of Romans bathing in the Tiber. Indeed, the medical writer Galen specifically warns against eating fish from the Tiber.) Third, Roman urbanism implied large and compact settlements linked by swift communications, and thus provided a ready network for infectious diseases to take hold and spread. Fourth, unlike early modern nation-states, the under-bureaucratized Roman Empire could not or would not take the draconian measures required to quarantine and eradicate pestilence.

The Roman empire’s vast expanse helped insulate its total population

¹⁸ See generally Grmek (1983).

¹⁹ Ephesus: Meillier (1980). Africa: *CIL* VIII.2268 (‘a tauru deceptus’). On banditry, see Shaw (1984a).

²⁰ These reasons are ‘extrinsic’ to the demographic structure. In section II below, it is suggested that high fertility (an ‘intrinsic’ reason) was ultimately responsible for high Roman mortality.

against 'great crises of mortality' caused by plague or famine; what for an early modern state would have been a national catastrophe, for the Romans was essentially a regional event, though no less severe in its consequences for local populations. The balance of food production was always precarious, and the even distribution of bulky staples like cereals was hampered by the high cost of overland transport; even in Egypt, usually a large net producer of cereals, food shortages occurred sporadically, and in most other areas of the empire they were fairly frequent.²¹ At Rome, pestilence erupted so frequently that literary sources pay it slight heed. Even natural catastrophes usually provoked new outbreaks; for instance, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 was soon followed by pestilence (perhaps cholera) in Rome.²²

However, apart from vague references to widespread epidemics under Domitian and Hadrian,²³ the early empire as a whole was spared a 'pandemic' until A.D. 165, when the army of Avidius Cassius, returning from Parthia, brought with it what was probably smallpox, now for the first time establishing a permanent foothold in the Mediterranean basin. This plague, the first of many that enervated the later empire, raged for a quarter century; in 189, at the height of its second outbreak in Rome, an eyewitness says it caused two thousand deaths per day.²⁴ The Malthusian checks had begun.

3. *The age structure and differential mortality*

Even in more normal times, high mortality rates produced a youngish population. In the stationary population of Model West, level 3, the average age is 27.3 for females and 26.2 for males; in the Egyptian census returns the average age is 26.1 for females and 26.5 for males, a fairly close match. Indeed, as table 3 shows, the general age distribution of the Egyptian population was quite close to the model: about 33 per cent of the population was less than 15, some 61 per cent was 15 to 59, and only slightly over 6 per cent was 60 or older. The same age distribution seems to be emerging among the Herculaneum skeletons.

There is little firm evidence for major class-related differences in Roman mortality rates; studies of 'differential mortality' on the basis of epitaphs are highly problematic.²⁵ If experience in the Americas is any guide, Roman slaves probably had lower than normal life expectancy, and the Herculaneum skeletons may confirm this; but slaves represented considerable capital investment, and hence were treated with some care even in the

²¹ Garnsey, *Famine*. ²² Suet. *Tit.* 6.3; cf. Dio, LXVI. 23.5. ²³ Dio LXVII. 11; *HA Hadr.* 21.5.

²⁴ Dio LXXII. 12.3–4. Smallpox: Littman (1973).

²⁵ E.g. Suder (1990) 35–49; cf. Salmon (1974) 89–112. See also section IV below on the high mortality in larger Roman cities.

Table 3 *Age distribution of Egyptian population*

Age	Females (per cent)		Males (per cent)	
	Census returns	Model West, level 2	Census returns	Model West, level 2
0–9	20.5	24.3	26.9	24.9
10–19	20.5	19.9	16.5	20.6
20–29	19.4	17.1	16.3	17.8
30–39	16.7	13.9	14.3	14.4
40–49	9.2	10.8	12.0	10.7
50–59	7.2	7.8	6.7	7.0
60–69	3.8	4.5	4.0	3.6
70–79	2.6	1.5	3.1	1.1
80–89	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.1
Number:	346		357	

Source: Census returns: Bagnall and Frier (1994) 97 (figures updated). Life table: Coale and Demeny (1983) 56, 106.

Republic. Slaves may well have been better off in this respect than subsistence peasants of free status.²⁶

At the opposite end of the social scale, it has been observed that the Roman Senate, which in the empire normally had about six hundred members, was maintained through annual entry of twenty quaestors each aged about 25.²⁷ This implies a life expectancy of about thirty years for senators aged 25, which is consistent with a male life expectancy at birth of about thirty years (Model West, level 6). Senators may thus have been somewhat more advantaged than the general population. Ironically, high status among the Romans usually meant urban residence during most of the year, and hence increased exposure to urban diseases that did not respect position. The incidence of tuberculosis among Pliny the Younger's friends is eloquent in this regard, as is Tacitus' report that numerous senators and equestrians died in the pestilence at Rome following the Great Fire of 64.²⁸

It is also hard to make out a sex-based differential in mortality. However, comparative evidence indicates that, in the least developed pre-modern populations, males may frequently have enjoyed somewhat longer life expectancy than females, a situation that the demographic transition has since reversed. The situation in Roman Egypt, the best-documented

²⁶ Evans (1980).

²⁷ Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* 146–7; cf. Duncan-Jones, *Structure* 93–6 (on the album of Canusium).

²⁸ Pliny, *Ep.* v.19.7, vii.19.3; Tac. *Ann.* xvi.13.1–2. On tuberculosis, cf. *CIG* 3272 (Smyrna), *IG* iv² 122 (Epidauros).

ancient population, is unclear on present evidence, but the census returns at least suggest that males had a similar or slightly higher life expectancy than females, so that the sexual imbalance normally prevailing at birth (about 105 male newborns for every 100 females) continued into adult life.²⁹ If this inference is correct, then Model West, level 4, should be used for males, rather than level 3.

4. *The perception of aging*

Under the conditions of Model West, level 3, only one newborn in eight survives to age 60. A Roman who reached this age was already 'old', *senex*; but the word *senex* was also applied to much younger people. Cicero, for instance, once describes a man of 49 as *senex*.³⁰

The Egyptian census returns show that at least some ordinary Roman subjects were able to determine their ages accurately throughout their lives.³¹ The epitaphs imply, however, a more complex situation, further complicated by the fact that the ages come not from decedents but from their survivors. African epitaphs may indicate that accurate age remained part of a person's 'identity' until about age 50. However, both in Africa and elsewhere, after age 20 the reports of age at death are increasingly given in multiples of five.³² In Africa this pattern of age-rounding obtains for nearly two-thirds of all epitaphs; in Rome and the European provinces the phenomenon is only slightly less pronounced. Preference for certain digits followed regional patterns throughout the empire; thus, in Africa there was also a proclivity toward ages ending in one, while two was preferred in Rome, and the Egyptians (on mummy labels) liked six. Such digit preference argues that those who erected the epitaphs either were not concerned to give exact ages, or were unsure of the decedent's exact age, perhaps because the decedent had also been unsure. The second explanation is by no means impossible. In one especially notorious case, a well-off Egyptian landowner is repeatedly given inconsistent ages in a series of dated documents.³³

For the African epitaphs, comparison with the model life tables suggests that after age 60 the Africans, both male and female, lived about nineteen 'psychological years' for every ten calendar years. Doubtless exaggeration was assisted by age-rounding, which allowed age to skip ahead by pentads. In Africa nearly 20 per cent of all adults are reported to have died at age 75 and over, and nearly 3 per cent are centenarians; but for a stationary population the comparable model life table gives 8 and 0 per cent, respectively.

²⁹ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 92–109.

³⁰ Censorinus, *D. N.* 14; Cic. *De Or.* 2.15 (of his teacher L. Licinius Crassus). Cf. Suder (1978).

³¹ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 44–7. ³² Duncan-Jones, *Structure* 79–92.

³³ Boak and Youtie (1960) 394 (Aurelius Isidorus, fourth century A.D.).

Roman Africa took pride in the number of its elderly,³⁴ and age exaggeration was doubtless more pronounced for this reason. But similar, though less extreme, exaggeration occurred elsewhere in the empire; in A.D. 74 a census of Italy's eighth region produced a bevy of centenarians, none of whose ages are credible.³⁵ The old lived on, venerated sincerely, if somewhat artificially, in a society where the old were rare.

II. FERTILITY

Harsh mortality rates placed a considerable burden on Roman society, and above all on the reproductive capabilities of Roman women. Literary sources, reflecting the perceptions of the status élite, often give the impression that Roman families commonly had few or no children.³⁶ But this cannot have been generally true, since even a modest fall-off in the required birth rate would soon have caused a precipitous decline in population.

1. *The gross reproduction rate*

If a population is to endure over a long period, the minimum requirement is that each generation of women replace itself. In demographic terms, the net reproduction rate (NRR) must be 1.0, meaning that on average each woman reaching menarche bears one daughter who also reaches menarche. More useful, however, is the gross reproduction rate (GRR), a more abstract concept. It is calculated by aggregating the number of female births per living woman at various ages throughout the period of female fertility (by convention, ages 15 to 50); it thus gives the number of daughters a woman will bear if she survives to age 50 and bears daughters at an average rate for women her age. When the effects of mortality on adult women are then weighed in, the GRR is converted to the NRR.³⁷

Under the mortality conditions of Model West, level 3, a GRR of about 2.5 is needed for a stationary population, and a GRR of about 2.9 for a stable population growing at an annual rate of 0.5 per cent.³⁸ This means that, if the Roman population was stationary or moderately growing, the average woman who reached menopause probably bore at least five to six children altogether. These rates are inexorable. For example, if the GRR had been not 2.5 daughters but only 2.1, then the Roman population, when

³⁴ Sall. *Cat.* 17.6, with Lassère (1977) 562–3.

³⁵ Pliny, *HN* VII.162–4; Phlegon of Tralles, *FGrH* 257 F 37; cf. Pliny, *Ep.* v.6.6. on Tifernum Tiberinum. Cf. Parkin (1992) 107–11.

³⁶ See, e.g., Eyben (1980–1), esp. 7, with sources.

³⁷ On measuring fertility, see Newell (1988) 106–12. Fertility rates count only live births, not miscarriages or stillbirths.

³⁸ Coale and Demeny (1983) 57, assuming a mean age at maternity of 27.0. This age is about right for Roman Egypt: Bagnall and Frier (1994) 136–7.

it stabilized, would have halved every century. But no modern historian contemplates a decline of such magnitude, and most suppose that the empire's population was stationary or slowly growing. It must follow that the actual long-term GRR for the empire as a whole (though, of course, not necessarily for every class and region within it) remained close to, or exceeded, the GRR required for a stationary population. If literary sources appear to paint a different picture, they are not to be trusted.

The projected GRR for the Roman empire may seem high, but it is in no respect extraordinary for a pre-modern population. For example, mid-eighteenth-century France, under mortality conditions closely similar to those posited for Rome, still had a GRR above 2.5 despite a late age for women at marriage; and the least-developed contemporary countries frequently have even higher fertility rates.³⁹

The burden of this fertility was not, however, distributed equally among adult Roman women. Although non-marital fertility (including births to slaves) was not insignificant, free married women undoubtedly had considerably higher fertility rates than unmarried women, evidently because of the strong and enduring cultural link between marriage and procreation; as the doctor Soranus candidly observes, 'women usually are married for the sake of children and succession, and not for mere enjoyment'.⁴⁰ In Roman Egypt, for example, some 85 per cent of all births were within wedlock, but only around 55 per cent of all Egyptian women aged 15 to 50 were married at any one time; this implies marital fertility rates about four times higher than non-marital rates.⁴¹

The pattern of Roman fertility was chiefly determined by two factors: marriage customs, especially the age of free women at marriage and the probability that they remained married until menopause; and the methods by which fertility was controlled within the ancient world.

2. *Marriage*

Roman women married early, and thus were able to bear legitimate children during all or almost all of their peak reproductive period. Close studies of epitaphs from the western empire indicate that women generally married in their late teens, although the best evidence (the shift in commemorators from parents to husbands) is necessarily somewhat indirect.⁴² Much the same pattern is also found in the Egyptian census returns, where it can be more exactly studied. Women begin to marry at age 12 or 13, shortly following menarche; 60 per cent or more have married by age 20, and by 30

³⁹ For sources, see Bagnall and Frier (1994) 138–9.

⁴⁰ Soranus, *Gyn.* 1.34. See, e.g., Treggiari (1991a) 205–28; Dixon (1992) 61–71.

⁴¹ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 115–16, 144–5. Non-marital fertility is concentrated mainly among slave women. ⁴² Shaw (1987b); Saller (1994) 25–41.

nearly all women are married or previously married.⁴³ Maternity began soon after marriage; in Egypt, almost a quarter of all legitimate children were borne to mothers under age 20.

This custom of early female marriage closely resembles that prevailing in pre-modern Mediterranean populations, and it is concordant with a marital regime in which at least the first marriage of women is usually controlled by their families. Among the Roman élite, marriageable daughters were often treated as dynastic pawns, and their first marriages were even more accelerated.⁴⁴

Both inscriptions and the census returns show that men normally married somewhat later than women, usually in their mid-twenties, so that husbands were not infrequently some seven to ten years older than their wives.⁴⁵ However, at least in Egypt, the male marriage pattern is more complex than the female: men marry over a longer period, and though many begin to marry in their late teens, others may remain unmarried until as late as their forties.

Lifelong celibacy was rare for freeborn women; Rome had no spinster class. A survey of African epitaphs for women of marriageable age showed that, in those cases where it was possible to determine marital status, nearly 95 per cent were or had been married; and of those who were evidently unmarried, half were still under age 23.⁴⁶

For female slaves and freedwomen, the problem of marriage was more complex; but many entered into informal unions (concubinage or *contubernium*), either with those of similar status or, less often, with their masters or patrons. Soldiers and sailors, forbidden to marry during their protracted term of service, also often resorted to concubinage.⁴⁷ The frequency of concubinage meant that illegitimate children were common: in Egypt, perhaps around 3 to 5 per cent of free births, although higher locally and especially in villages. For both mother and child little social stigma attached to illegitimate birth.⁴⁸

The Romans themselves were relentlessly monogamous, rarely even combining concubinage with marriage, and they also enforced reasonably strict rules against incest and incestuous marriage. Thus, in Egypt brother–sister marriage remained common (in the census returns, about one-sixth of all marriages) until the Egyptians were made Roman citizens in A.D. 212/13.⁴⁹

High mortality rates meant that many marriages were broken by the

⁴³ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 111–15. On menarche and menopause in the ancient world, see Amundsen and Diers (1969), (1970). ⁴⁴ Syme (1987); Treggiari (1991a) 401–3.

⁴⁵ Saller (1987a); Bagnall and Frier (1994) 116–18. ⁴⁶ Lassère (1977) 481–2.

⁴⁷ Treggiari (1981a); Campbell (1978). ⁴⁸ Egypt: Youtie (1975). In general: Rawson (1989).

⁴⁹ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 127–34; see generally Treggiari (1991a) 107–19. In the West, close-kin marriages (e.g. with first cousins) were rare even though permitted: Saller and Shaw (1984a).

death of one spouse; thus if a man aged 25 married a woman aged 15, the figures in table 1 imply better than one chance in four that one or both spouses would die within ten years. Divorce, in principle unrestricted by law and available on demand to either spouse, was evidently frequent among the upper classes, but its incidence among ordinary Romans is debated. However, in the Egyptian census returns divorces are not unusual, suggesting little social restraint on divorce among the lower classes as well.⁵⁰

When marriages were broken by death or divorce, the former spouses not infrequently remarried. Among the upper classes the Augustan marriage legislation exerted pressure to remarry, and literary sources indicate that remarriage was normal, particularly for women still of childbearing age. Among ordinary Egyptians remarriage is also quite common, particularly after divorce; but women apparently seldom remarry after age 35, while men remarry, to increasingly younger wives, throughout their lives, and by age 50 all surviving males appear to be either married or previously married.⁵¹

3. *The fertility pattern*

Before the modern demographic transition, all accurately measured populations have a characteristic pattern of marital fertility rates across the years from menarche to menopause. This pattern is called ‘natural fertility’ because its age distribution – its shape – is determined almost entirely by the ordinary level of adult female fecundity (potential fertility): marital fertility rates of women decline gradually in their 20s and 30s, and then sharply in the 40s, as a direct function of declining fecundity as women age. Therefore the shape of marital fertility is evidently not influenced by the attempts of couples to limit family size after reaching what they consider to be a sufficient number of children. By contrast, today, in the aftermath of the fertility transition, family limitation is obviously a pervasive aspect of marriage; childbearing is usually concentrated in the early years of marriage, and marital fertility rates decline much more rapidly than does fecundity as women age.⁵² Although this may seem a mundane matter, recovering the age distribution of marital fertility is crucial to a deeper understanding of Roman demography.

The only surviving evidence as to the Roman pattern of marital fertility comes from the Egyptian census returns, which apparently reflect a fairly stable population with a small annual growth rate. Table 4 gives both overall

⁵⁰ Treggiari (1991a) 473–82; Bagnall and Frier (1994) 123–4.

⁵¹ Upper classes: Humbert (1972) 76–112. Egypt: Bagnall and Frier (1994) 126–7.

⁵² See Frier (1994), with bibliography, esp. Coale (1986), on both of which the discussion below draws heavily.

Table 4 *Reconstructed fertility rates, Roman Egypt*

Age	Reconstructed fertility rates		Standardized fertility rates (20–24 = 100)	
	All women	Married women	Egypt (married)	Natural fertility
12–14	23	23		
15–19	140	249		
20–24	261	333	100.0	100.0
25–29	275	325	97.6	93.7
30–34	238	299	89.8	86.1
35–39	178	262	78.7	69.8
40–44	85	166	49.9	36.3
45–49	12	37	11.1	5.2

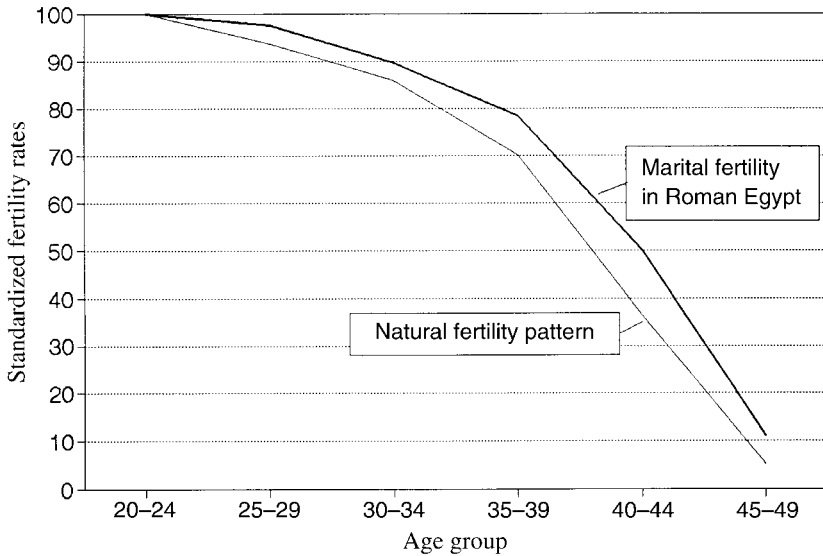
Source: Fertility rates for all Egyptian women: Bagnall and Frier (1994) 143; rates for all married Egyptian women and natural fertility rates: Frier (1994) 325. Fertility rates are expressed as annual births per one thousand women of the indicated age.

and marital fertility rates derived from the reports in the census about the difference in age between a mother and her children.⁵³ For each successive pentad of a woman's life, the corresponding fertility rates express the annual number of births per one thousand women. The mean age of maternity in the census returns is about 27 years, typical of populations with natural fertility; the mean age of paternity is much higher, probably about 37 years, reproducing the wide age gap between husbands and wives.

Graph 1 represents the values from table 4 after standardization: the fertility rate for married women aged 20 to 24 is assigned a value of 100, and fertility in subsequent pentads is measured as a percentage of that for ages 20 to 24. As this figure shows, marital fertility corresponds closely to the normal pattern for natural fertility. Therefore ordinary Egyptian couples, in so far as we can know of their behaviour, did not anticipate the modern fertility transition; they did not attempt to limit family size, and so women continue bearing children at a relatively high but declining rate well into their forties. Although this pattern is confirmed only for Roman Egypt, there is no appreciable likelihood that it, or a pattern closely similar to it, did not prevail generally in the Roman empire.

The marital fertility rates in table 4 may seem surprisingly low. Even in their peak period of fertility (ages 20 to 29), married women bear children in only one year out of every three, comparable to most Mediterranean populations before the fertility transition, but far below the highest rates that are known to be socially sustainable. The Egyptians could accept such

⁵³ Overall fertility: Bagnall and Frier (1994) 135–44. Marital fertility: Frier (1994) 323–7.



Graph 1 Egyptian fertility rates and natural fertility pattern

low rates because, like almost all pre-modern populations, they distributed the heavy burden of childbirth as widely as possible among fertile women: not only did women marry early, but all, or virtually all, women married. But such low fertility rates force us to confront what is perhaps the central enigma of Roman demography: how did the Romans prevent a population explosion?

4. *Fertility control*

Although the shape of the natural fertility pattern is nearly constant in pre-modern populations, the actual level of fertility varies extremely widely; some populations (such as the United States in the early nineteenth century) have elevated fertility levels, while others (such as rural China in the early twentieth century) have very low levels. The cause of this variation is, in the main, the relative effectiveness of controls on fertility; but, particularly within marriage, these controls do not have a modern form.⁵⁴

If a population with the Roman empire's general structure of mortality and nuptiality succeeds in maintaining a stationary or slowly growing population, the reason will lie about as much in voluntary or social restraints on maximum fertility, as in the harshness of its death rates.⁵⁵ Ancient sources leave no doubt that Romans, or at least some Romans, were genuinely interested in controlling fertility through contraception and

⁵⁴ See, e.g., Wood (1990), with a survey of modern scholarship. ⁵⁵ Weiss (1973) 52-7.

abortion. Medical writings in particular contain numerous discussions of both practices (which were often freely confounded); and neither was visited with substantial moral disfavour or legal sanction during the early empire.⁵⁶ To be sure, the efficacy of the suggested methods is often open to question, although one recent study has argued strongly in their favour.⁵⁷ In general, suggested abortifacients were probably more effective than contraceptives, though many such methods risked the mother's life if not dosed exactly.

But even if Romans had access to dependable methods of contraception and abortion, the more significant demographic question is how, and by whom, these methods were used.⁵⁸ Here comparative evidence is decisive: within marriage, contraception and abortion, as 'direct' methods of fertility control, are emphatically associated with conscious family limitation and hence with the modern fertility transition. No general population is known to have practised family limitation before the fertility transition, and, as we have seen, Rome was apparently no exception. If Romans made use of contraception and abortion, they are likely to have done so primarily in the context of non-marital fertility, where the strong cultural link between marriage and procreation did not obtain.⁵⁹ Non-marital fertility includes all illegitimate births to free and slave women, irrespective of whether such births result from non-marital relationships (such as concubinage or *contubernium*) that could have long duration.

If not by contraception and abortion, then how? In pre-modern populations, marital fertility was apparently controlled, for the most part, by 'indirect' methods, such as breastfeeding, that act to delay post-partum pregnancy across the entire span of female fertility. These indirect methods do not limit family size, but instead 'dampen' fecundity in a fairly even way. Prolonged breastfeeding was clearly widespread in the Roman world; the doctor Soranus, for instance, recommends weaning after eighteen to twenty-four months. Only wealthy families made use of wet-nurses.⁶⁰ In Egypt, wet-nursing contracts, which doubtless reflect normal breastfeeding practices, usually last for two years. Further, many of these contracts also enjoin the nurse from sexual intercourse, indicating that abstinence during lactation was considered desirable or even mandatory – a folk taboo that Roman doctors also commend and that is common in many traditional societies.⁶¹

In addition to direct and indirect forms of fertility control, the Romans also resorted to infanticide or exposure.⁶² Exposure differs from infanticide

⁵⁶ The modern scholarship is extensive; see Parkin (1992) 126–9, summarizing the debate.

⁵⁷ Riddle (1992). ⁵⁸ Frier (1994) 327–33 (criticizing Riddle).

⁵⁹ This is, at least, the likeliest explanation; see Alter (1992).

⁶⁰ Soranus, *Gyn.* 2.47; compare Parkin (1992) 129–32. On wet-nursing: Bradley (1991) 13–36.

⁶¹ See Bagnall and Frier (1994) 149–51, with further references. Post-partum abstinence is recommended by, e.g., Soranus (*Gyn.* 2.19) and Galen (*De San. Tuenda* I. 9.4–6, = *CMG* v 4.2, p. 49).

⁶² See esp. Harris (1994), with a survey of the massive bibliography.

in that the exposed child is given at least a theoretical chance of being taken in by a stranger – normally to be raised then as a slave. Infanticide and exposure were not commonly considered immoral, nor were they made illegal until the later empire; even the upper classes often put newborn children to death if they were deformed or unlikely to survive, and the lower classes allegedly did so also for economic motives or on the basis of sexual preference. The frequency of the practice cannot be determined, but it was plainly not negligible. Literary sources suggest that female newborns were more likely to be exposed than males; but surviving data on the sex ratio are inadequate to demonstrate any large effect of the practice.⁶³

In any case, the Egyptian census data indicate that exposure was not used to limit families; it was perhaps more commonly associated with non-marital fertility, including adulterous births, in cases where contraception or abortion were unavailing. Even within marriage, such direct and conscious forms of fertility control had their purposes, though not to limit family size but rather to ensure a safe interval between successive births; the dominant aim was to protect the health of the mother and of her earlier children, which were placed at risk by too close a spacing. The Romans were clearly aware of the risk.⁶⁴

Large families were certainly not rare in the Roman world. The Italian woman honoured at consecutive secular games for bearing ten children was perhaps singular less for this fact than that all of them were still living; thus, an African widower records quite in passing that his wife bore him twelve children.⁶⁵ But the absence of family limitation becomes apparent in the Egyptian census returns, where we can examine its consequence more concretely. The most striking feature, largely produced by the randomizing factor of heavy infant mortality, is the enormous variance in the number of surviving children. Couples with as many as eight children are attested,⁶⁶ but large numbers of surviving children are infrequent. In complete or nearly complete returns, nine-tenths of married couples declare three or fewer surviving children, and the average number of children declared is less than two. Ancient sources that express preference for only two children presumably discount already for infant mortality.

5. *The level of fertility*

In the end, although much can be surmised about Roman fertility, data are lacking to determine its precise level. Fertility rates in the general popula-

⁶³ Parkin (1992) 98–102. On Egypt, Bagnall and Frier (1994) 92–9, 106–9.

⁶⁴ See Gourevitch (1984) 133.

⁶⁵ Mart. x.63; *CIL* VIII 17463 (Hippo Regius). Other large families: Treggiari (1991) 403–5.

⁶⁶ BGU I 115 i = *WChr* 203, where Eirene gave birth at ages 25, 28, 31, 37, 45 and 47 (the age of two other children is unknown); and doubtless there were other children, now deceased or departed.

tion were undoubtedly very high by modern standards; for example, in a well-studied group of female skeletons from a British cemetery, adult women had borne an average of about 4.6 children before their deaths, well above what is required to maintain a stationary population under conditions of high mortality (about 4.25).⁶⁷ But such samples are usually too small to permit generalization.

But mortality levels were also so high, the Roman population was fairly delicately poised between the risks of under- and overpopulation; in this respect, of course, it resembles all pre-modern societies. What is astonishing about these societies is that, irrespective of their relative mortality levels, most had long-term intrinsic growth rates that lay between 0.0 and 0.5 per cent per year; that is, their birth and death rates were usually closely balanced, and population therefore grew slowly.⁶⁸ The age distributions in the Egyptian census returns are most consistent with an annual growth rate around 0.2 per cent, sufficient to double the population every three and one-half centuries.⁶⁹ Such a growth rate would not have been difficult to attain even under Roman mortality conditions, and there is no reason to believe that the early Roman empire fell short of it.

However, the issue here is more complex than it may seem. In general, moderate population increase was probably conducive to growth in traditional economies, and hence, of itself, desirable. At some point, however, social conventions that mandated early and universal marriage could initiate a cruel cycle, first of population growth that outstripped resources, and then of an offsetting increase in mortality rates, until an equilibrium was eventually restored. France of the *ancien régime* may have approximated a society of this type: its population already probably far above optimum, its birth and death rates in any case much higher than in its northern European neighbours.⁷⁰ Such a population had apparently fallen into the grip of Malthusian constraints, although exactly how this could have come to pass remains among the deep mysteries of historical demography. What should be stressed, in any event, is that this may well have been the normal fate of pre-modern populations, a fate from which only few escaped.

Taken at its strongest, our evidence implies that the Roman empire was not among these lucky few. Roman mortality and fertility rates, to the extent that we can reconstruct them, are comparable to those of most traditional societies, at the high rather than the low end of the usual pre-modern range. Further, the Roman modes of fertility control, if viewed as

⁶⁷ Wells (1982) 192–4 (Cirencester, fourth century A.D.; thirteen women). In the model, average number of births per woman who reaches age 15 is calculated from table 1 by this formula: 2.07 times 100,000, divided by female cohort survivors to age 15. ⁶⁸ Livi-Bacci (1991) 1–22.

⁶⁹ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 81–90.

⁷⁰ Wrigley and Schofield (1989) xxiv–xxv, 246–8, 452; and see generally 454–84 on the demographic transition. (France had a late age of marriage, but very high fertility rates after marriage.) Rural China in the 1930s may parallel Rome even more closely: Barclay *et al.* (1976).

Malthusian preventive checks on population growth, were probably less responsive to short- and perhaps even long-term demographic changes than those used in early modern Europe. They may well have been effective in maintaining population equilibrium only after mortality had reached relatively elevated levels.

For Rome, therefore, the fundamental demographic risk was probably not depopulation, but overpopulation, at any rate so long as its economy was unable to generate new resources to sustain a growing population. But literary sources of the early empire give exactly the opposite impression, that population decline was the imminent danger; and such sources seem directly reinforced by the Augustan marriage laws, which employed a variety of sanctions and rewards to encourage marriage and childbirth.⁷¹

The contradiction is probably just a function of social perspective, since literary sources are chiefly concerned with reproduction among the upper classes, who were also the main target of Augustus' legislation. In this tiny élite, the failure to reproduce may indeed have been a pervasive difficulty; it has been observed, for instance, that three-quarters of senatorial families disappear entirely after just one generation.⁷² Granted relatively more favourable mortality rates in the élite, their failure to reproduce themselves is indeed problematic. The likeliest explanation is that, among the privileged, more individualistic conceptions of marriage had developed, leading to the widespread use of direct methods of fertility control (contraception and abortion) in an effort to limit family size. There are clear historical parallels for this: long before the onset of the general fertility transition in Europe, some small but affluent social groups were already consciously limiting their families.⁷³

Upper-class attempts to 'limit the number of their children' (*finire numerum liberorum*) occasioned intense resentment. The social situation is perhaps best captured by the satirist Juvenal, who bitterly observes that poor women must inevitably give birth, while wealthy women resort to drugs inducing sterility or abortion.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, the individualistic anti-natalism of the privileged probably did not extend very far down the social scale; the municipal aristocracies of Italy, for instance, display remarkable continuity during the early empire.⁷⁵

In the late first century A.D., under imperial patronage, alimentary schemes were set up providing financial subvention to parents who raised their children. These schemes were soon copied by wealthy private citizens. But the scale of such programmes was too small to have effected much, and they were mainly confined to Italy.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Treggiari (1991) 60–80 (Augustan laws), 407–9 (failure to reproduce).

⁷² Garnsey and Saller, *Empire* (1987) 123, 144–5; compare Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* 138–46.

⁷³ Livi-Bacci (1986). ⁷⁴ Tac. *Germ.* 19.5; *Juv. Sat.* VI.592–8.

⁷⁵ MacMullen, *Social Relations* 101, 189 n. 35. ⁷⁶ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 285–319, 382–3.

6. *Mortality, fertility and household structure*

Mortality and fertility rates operate as generalized probabilities, not as predictions for individual cases, which inevitably can vary quite widely from any norm. The large range in numbers of surviving children, discussed above, is a salutary example of this point: the toll of infant mortality fell with grievous force on some families, while leaving others unscathed. But the point has wider implications.

The Egyptian census returns provide the only secure evidence as to the ordinary household size and structure in the early empire.⁷⁷ In complete or nearly complete returns, the average household was smaller than might have been anticipated: about 4.3 family members. But again there is extraordinary variation. Some 64 per cent of attested households are of a 'simple' form: persons living alone, co-resident siblings, or conjugal (nuclear) families. The remaining households are of 'complex' form: either extended through the presence of near relatives, or with multiple co-resident families. Such complex households could become extraordinarily large; the largest have upwards of twenty family members, and sometimes slaves or lodgers as well. It is likely that, in Egypt as a whole, at least three-fifths of principal family members lived in complex households. This, too, was characteristic of Mediterranean populations in the early modern period.

Particularly in villages, the strong preference for complex households clearly reflected cultural preferences as much as economic necessity. In the census of 173/4, one village household, by no means unusual, registered four brothers, their wives and children, a total of nineteen persons; but a separate return shows that in the same village the four brothers owned considerable other property, including a house, left standing vacant.⁷⁸

The fortuitous impact of demographic probabilities meant that households swelled and contracted erratically from generation to generation. Conjugal families, for instance, almost always are not young couples with their children; rather, they result from attrition, through the death of parents and other near kin, and so the couple are usually at least middle-aged. In a few cases where we have successive census returns from the same household, it is clear that a family could experience difficulty reproducing itself into the next generation.⁷⁹ On the other hand, because parents, too, might fall victim to high mortality, orphans were not rare; and it is actually common for households to contain children, even adult offspring, from former marriages. In one remarkable household, a family of renters from

⁷⁷ The data in this section derive from Bagnall and Frier (1994) 57–74; see also Saller (1994) 66–9, on generalizing from Egypt. Sample size is 167 households. ⁷⁸ *PBRUC* I 10, 16.

⁷⁹ In a stationary population about 20 per cent of all families will have no natural heir, and a further 20 per cent will have a daughter or daughters only, irrespective of the prevailing mortality level.

Arsinoe, the couple has living with them not only their own daughter, but an adult son and daughter from the husband's two prior marriages (these half-siblings have married), plus the wife's son and daughter from her prior marriage.⁸⁰

In short, the most salient characteristics of Roman households are likely to have been, ironically, their irregularity and unpredictability over time; familial dislocation was a more or less inevitable aspect of life, and many Roman social and legal institutions reflect the attempt to plan for such vagaries.⁸¹ From this perspective, it is misleading to think in terms of a typical 'life cycle' of the Roman family.

7. *Reproduction among slaves*

For Roman demography, the institution of slavery presents a special problem. By law, the offspring of a slave woman were slaves themselves, the property of her owner; and birth is accordingly recognized as one means whereby people became slaves. But the relative importance of birth as a source of slaves is not easy to assess. Slaves could not marry, and Roman law also did not recognize the legitimacy of informal slave unions (*contubernia*); but such unions did receive at least a degree of social recognition and respect, and they are often mentioned in inscriptions. Still, it remains deeply problematic whether, in general, the slave population reproduced itself naturally.⁸²

In Roman Egypt, slave families are rarely detectable in our sources; yet the census returns, where slave mothers are usually listed with their children, show that masters expected their adult female slaves to bear children, and that female slaves often did so. For this reason, female slaves were not commonly manumitted while still of childbearing age. Rough statistics indicate that slave fertility was probably about the same as that of all free women, though well below that of free married women.⁸³

III. MIGRATION

The third principal demographic component is migration. The early empire erected few formal barriers to the movement of population within its borders, and it is clear from literary works (such as the *Satyricon*) and from inscriptions that mobile segments of the population took advantage of this fact. Further, to some extent the empire itself remained receptive to outsiders, although their immigration was often involuntary. During the first

⁸⁰ *PTebt* II 322 (= *Sel Pap* II 313), census of A.D. 187/8.

⁸¹ Bradley (1991) 125–55; Saller (1994); Krause (1994).

⁸² See Harris (1980b) 120–1; Bradley (1987). On *contubernium*: Treggiari (1981b).

⁸³ Bagnall and Frier (1994) 156–9.

two centuries A.D., migration probably worked to the general advantage of the western Mediterranean. To be sure, the numbers involved were undoubtedly small in the short run; the huge mass of the population remained attached by tradition, though not yet by law, to the soil of its birth. Yet the balance between mortality and fertility was so delicate that in the long run the transfer of even small numbers could have significant effects.

1. *Within the empire*

If we leave to one side the geographic movement of the political élite to and from Rome, there were three main avenues of internal migration during the early empire. The first was military colonization.⁸⁴ After Actium, Augustus had undertaken extensive resettlement of his veterans in strategically situated colonies throughout the empire. His successors continued these efforts, though at a reduced pace and with the more specific aim of settling empty or undercultivated areas; accordingly, the great majority of new post-Augustan colonies were in the West, and in some areas, such as Africa, they played a major role in urbanization.⁸⁵ However, veterans generally disliked such enforced colonization, and under Hadrian the programme lapsed; veterans now settled mainly in the region of their service or retirement. Nonetheless, periodic movements of troops still effected some migration; a good and unusually well-documented example is the Syrian cohort that in 180 took up residence in Pannonia on the Danube.⁸⁶

The second major avenue of migration involved the empire's commercial and intellectual classes. Inscriptions make clear their drift towards the western Mediterranean. For example, onomastic studies of African inscriptions reveal large numbers of Syrians, Jews and other easterners who were not yet assimilated;⁸⁷ and similar evidence has emerged in Italy, Gaul and Spain. Most of these immigrants were presumably drawn westward in hope of gain, and they are accordingly concentrated especially in port cities; but the wealth of the imperial capital was a powerful magnet also to educated Greeks, as Lucian's essay 'On Salaried Posts in Great Houses' candidly acknowledges. This network of easterners settled in the West was crucial in spreading eastern religions, including Christianity.

The third major avenue of migration was the flow of slaves. Slaves are a highly mobile form of capital, and it is not surprising to find evidence for their widespread dispersion in all directions across the Mediterranean; however, since slaves often received new names from their masters, onomastic studies of the slave trade are not easy. Literary sources indicate,

⁸⁴ Mann *Recruitment*. ⁸⁵ Lassère (1977) 235–81. ⁸⁶ Fitz (1972).

⁸⁷ Lassère (1977) 395–426.

usually in moralistic terms, that the great majority of household slaves in Rome were of 'eastern' origin (usually Anatolians or Syrians); and in fact the numerous epitaphs from Rome record about twice as many freedmen (most vaguely 'eastern') as freeborn citizens.⁸⁸ The Orontes was flowing into the Tiber, so Juvenal put it. A similar but less pronounced pattern is found throughout Italy and the western provinces, especially in port cities. To be sure, epigraphic evidence may significantly overrepresent the proportion of freedmen in the general population; but heavy migration of slaves from East to West is in any case evident, and it undoubtedly overwhelmed migration in the opposite direction.⁸⁹

2. *Across the empire's borders*

The imperial army, stationed chiefly along the Rhine–Danube frontier to the north-east and on the Armenian and Parthian frontier to the east, engaged in more or less continuous skirmishes; since enslavement was the usual fate of prisoners, it is not unlikely that 10–15,000 slaves per year entered the empire by this route.⁹⁰ Major wars dramatically increased the number of military slaves. An eyewitness states that Trajan's Dacian campaigns yielded more than half a million slaves; this is doubtless exaggerated, but we have good evidence that the suppression of the Jewish revolt in 70 produced 97,000 slaves, and in 135 the defeat of Simon Bar Kochba's revolt caused a glut in local slave markets.⁹¹ Further, Roman slave traders continued to operate across the frontiers; their efforts perhaps equalled the normal influx of slaves from military sources. A majority of these slaves doubtless ended up in the West.

Augustus made fairly extensive efforts to populate the area inside the north-eastern frontier by resettling large groups of tribesmen from beyond it.⁹² Later Julio-Claudians continued the policy fitfully; in 50 Claudius allowed a Suebian king and his dependants to settle in Pannonia, and in 57 a governor of Moesia resettled within his province at least 100,000 Germans from across the Danube.⁹³ Thereafter the practice apparently lapsed for a century, until in about 175 Marcus Aurelius revived it by resettling the Marcomanni.⁹⁴ The emperor may have been motivated by depopulation following the plague of 165; in the later empire resettlement was a frequent imperial response to underpopulation.

Finally, some thinly settled areas at the empire's periphery were annexed after A.D. 14: Britain, Nabataea and Dacia. None of these is likely to have

⁸⁸ Taylor (1961). ⁸⁹ Harris (1980b) 125–8. ⁹⁰ Harris (1980b) 122.

⁹¹ Lydus, *Mag.* 2.28; Joseph. *BJ* VI.420; *Chron. Pasc.* 1.474 Dindorf.

⁹² Strab. IV.3.4 (p. 194), VII.3.10 (p. 303); Suet. *Aug.* 21.1; Tac. *Ann.* XII.27.1.

⁹³ Tac. *Ann.* XIII.30.2; *ILS* 986. See also Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* 509–18.

⁹⁴ Dio LXXI.11.4, 21; *HA Marc.* 22.2, 24.3.

had more than a few hundred thousand inhabitants at the time of annexation. Rome's shifting border with Armenia and Parthia can be ignored for present purposes.

IV. POPULATION

The Roman demographic structure, though undeniably harsh by modern standards, posed no obstacle to modest population growth. Most of human history has been lived under conditions of mortality not unlike Rome's. Where peace, prosperity and freedom from general epidemic have obtained, populations of the past have normally experienced a modest measure of sustained growth; there is no reason to believe that the Roman empire's population did not grow similarly. The following section hypothetically reconstructs the pattern of such growth in the early empire.

I. Regions and cities

The starting-point must be Julius Beloch's famous attempt to estimate the population of the empire and its regions in A.D. 14, the year of Augustus' death.⁹⁵ Beloch believed that the empire then contained about 54 million persons who were fairly evenly balanced between the Greek East, with 28 million inhabitants, and the Latin West, with 25 million. The East, however, was far more densely settled than the West.

By and large, Beloch's prudent estimates have stood up extremely well to subsequent criticism.⁹⁶ The main difficulty is his estimate for Anatolia and greater Syria, to which Beloch assigned a combined population of 19 million; this figure is incredible, since it requires a population density not achieved again until the twentieth century. A figure of about 12 million is considerably more plausible.⁹⁷ Otherwise, the likeliest modifications of Beloch's estimates have produced only a small cumulative downward effect on his total. Table 5, based on one recent set of regional estimates for the empire,⁹⁸ suggests that in A.D. 14 the total population was slightly more than 45 million persons, of whom about 20 million resided in the East and 25 million in the West. These estimates imply that the entire Roman empire had an average population density of 13.6 inhabitants per square kilometre, obviously very low by modern standards; but the population density in the

⁹⁵ Beloch (1886) 507. Beloch's later upward revision of these figures (1899) is considerably less credible.

⁹⁶ Summarized in Salmon (1974) 23–39. For a recent critique, see Lo Cascio (1994), with further bibliography. Aggrandizing estimates of ancient population often tacitly accept the hoary fallacy that more is better; contrast the justified caution of Rathbone (1990), on Egypt.

⁹⁷ Russell (1958) 81–3. Beloch's estimates for Spain and Africa were also on the high side; cf. Charles-Picard (1959) 45–59, and Balil (1973).

⁹⁸ McEvedy and Jones (1978); these estimates also closely resemble those of Russell (1958).

Table 5: *An estimate of the empire's population in A.D. 14*

	Area (1000 km ²)	Population (millions)	Density (per km ²)
Greek East:			
Greek peninsula	267	2.8	10.5
Anatolia	547	8.2	15.0
Greater Syria	109	4.3	39.4
Cyprus	9.5	0.2	21.2
Egypt	28	4.5	160.7
Libya	15	0.4	26.7
Total:	975.5	20.4	20.9
Latin West:			
Italy	250	7.0	28.0
Sicily	26	0.6	23.1
Sardinia/Corsica	33	0.5	15.2
Maghreb	400	3.5	8.8
Iberia	590	5.0	8.5
Gaul/Germany	635	5.8	9.1
Danube Region	430	2.7	6.3
Total:	2,364	25.1	10.6
Roman empire:	3,339.5	45.5	13.6

Sources: Land area: Beloch (1886) 507. Population estimates: McEvedy and Jones (1978), except that somewhat higher values are used for Anatolia, Greater Syria, Egypt and Italy. Land areas include client kingdoms annexed soon after A.D. 14. The Greek peninsula comprises the modern territories of Greece, Albania and Turkey in Europe. Greater Syria includes Lebanon and Palestine.

East was almost twice that in the West. Only Italy and Sicily had achieved a population density comparable to that generally obtaining in the East.

Since at this date annual gross national product per capita is likely to have been about 380 sesterces, the Roman Empire's national product in A.D. 14 was about 17 billion sesterces, equivalent in commodities to 1,400 tonnes of gold. Comparative data from other pre-industrial economies suggest that, of this national product, probably less than half was monetized and about 60 per cent derived from agriculture, in which at least three-quarters of the workforce are likely to have been employed. Slaves may have constituted up to 15 per cent of the empire's population, thus as many as 7 million persons; but the proportion of slaves was considerably higher in Italy, lower in Egypt and North Africa.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Statistics in this paragraph derive from Goldsmith (1984) 270–6, except that a lower estimate of total population is employed.

The Roman empire was a network of cities; as many as a sixth of its inhabitants resided in several thousand cities, a degree of urbanization that is unusually high by pre-modern standards. By A.D. 14 Rome, the imperial capital, had at least 750,000 inhabitants, more than a tenth of Italy's population, and in the following century it may have reached 1 million; Rome was larger than any Western city would be until the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁰ The empire could support only one such city; other large cities numbered only a few hundred thousand (Alexandria, Antioch, later Carthage), or less. Most cities were much smaller, usually only 10–15,000 persons of whom many resided outside the city itself;¹⁰¹ still, the cumulative population of these cities must have been at least 5–7 million. Further, small size gave such cities a social stability that larger ones lacked; all the great cities of antiquity, with their fetid conditions and high mortality rates, were heavy net consumers of population.¹⁰²

2. *Growth and decline*

What happened to the Roman empire's population after A.D. 14? Clearly there was room for growth, above all in the thinly settled West; and although the population of Italy apparently remained stagnant, elsewhere archaeology has provided conclusive evidence for growth, especially in Africa, Spain and Gaul.¹⁰³ Exact figures cannot be known, but table 6 is an attempt to suggest what the Roman population might have looked like in A.D. 164. This table derives from a computer simulation using two reasonable assumptions. The first is that the population in both halves of the Mediterranean grew at a fairly constant annual rate of 0.15 per cent during the century and half from A.D. 14 to 164; this rate, though very low, would double the population every 4.6 centuries.¹⁰⁴ The second assumption is that, on average, a net of 20,000 persons migrated each year from East to West, and that 20,000 slaves also entered the empire each year, of whom three-quarters ended up in the West. These rough calculations were periodically revised to reflect territorial annexations (though not the shifting imperial border east of Syria), resettlement of barbarians within the empire, and all major known disasters including natural catastrophes, famines and plagues; the numbers obviously involve much guesswork, but on the whole they have little impact on overall population figures.

In this simulation, the Roman empire's population reached a peak of about 60 million persons in A.D. 164; the Mediterranean basin would not regain that level until the sixteenth century. The figure is obviously hypothetical, but on any even remotely plausible assumptions the empire's

¹⁰⁰ Brunt (1987) 382–3. ¹⁰¹ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 259–87. ¹⁰² See just Scobie (1986).

¹⁰³ Africa: Lassère (1977) 570–89; the three Gauls: Drinkwater (1983) 168–70; also Frere, *Britannia* 348–50, on Britain. ¹⁰⁴ A rate of this order is supported by the Egyptian census returns.

Table 6: *An estimate of the empire's population in A.D. 164*

	Population (millions)	Density (per km ²)	Increase from A.D. 14 (per cent)	Roman Pop. reattained in:
Greek East:				
Greek peninsula	3.0	11.2	7.1	} 1875
Anatolia	9.2	16.8	12.2	
Greater Syria	4.8	44.0	11.6	
Cyprus	0.2	21.1	—	1900
Egypt	5.0	178.6	11.1	1850
Libya	0.6	40.0	50.0	1850
Total:	22.9	23.5	12.3	
Annexations	0.2			
Total:	23.1			
Latin West:				
Italy	7.6	30.4	8.6	} 1250
Sicily	0.6	23.1	—	
Sardinia/Corsica	0.5	15.2	—	
Maghreb	6.5	16.3	85.7	1825
Iberia	7.5	12.7	50.0	1200
Gaul/Germany	9.0	14.2	55.2	1200
Danube Region	4.0	9.3	48.1	1100
Total:	35.7	15.1	42.2	
Annexations	2.5			
Total:	38.2			
Roman empire:	61.4	15.9	34.9	

Source: Modern population: McEvedy and Jones (1978).

population reached 50 million persons, and 55–65 million is a much likelier estimate. Table 6 represents, on a highly provisional basis, how this growth in population may have been distributed.

Significant growth was probably confined to the major peripheral provinces of the western empire, which gradually assumed a density comparable to that of Italy and the Greek East. This steady shift westward in the balance of the empire's population was in this theory accomplished entirely by migration; therefore, if it were assumed that the intrinsic growth rate in the heavily populated East was lower than in the West, the shift in population would be still more pronounced. Even on the assumption of equal intrinsic growth rates, the East's population remained virtually stagnant, growing only 12 per cent in a century and a half; the West increased at a rate more than three times as high, with positive implications for economic

growth as well.¹⁰⁵ This shift westward in population, made possible by Rome's political unification of the Mediterranean, was doubtless the most important and enduring demographic achievement of the Roman empire.

The empire's rising population might eventually have provoked a rise in the cost of basic foodstuffs, at any rate after land in the West came under more intensive cultivation. In Egypt the rise is clear: the median price of wheat rose by about half from the first to the second century A.D.¹⁰⁶ Elsewhere in the empire the phenomenon is far less securely attested, but seems to have been similar. Rising food prices, if (as is likely) they were not offset by an equivalent rise in real wages, ought to have pauperized an increasing portion of the populace, but there is little reliable evidence for this, and in particular no clear evidence that pauperization was acute enough to cause decreased nuptiality and fertility, the preventive Malthusian checks on population growth. This happy situation endured for one hundred and fifty years.

By A.D. 164 the Roman empire probably embraced about a fifth of all persons then living. In land area and population, the Roman empire all but duplicated the Eastern Han empire in China, where a census of A.D. 156 registered nearly 60 million persons.¹⁰⁷ Ten years later a Roman 'legation', probably comprised of merchants, arrived in the Han capital, symbolizing the quickening tempo of Rome's contacts with South Asia. Such contacts may well have caused a spill-over between hitherto isolated 'disease pools', a spill-over that in 165 unleashed upon the Roman empire a dreadful plague.¹⁰⁸

Fifteen years later, as he lay dying, Marcus Aurelius directed his friends to mourn not him, but rather the general pestilence and death. The demographic consequences of the plague should not be exaggerated, but were clearly severe.¹⁰⁹ Literary sources, among them eyewitnesses such as Galen and Dio, attest the plague in Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Gaul and Germany; they also stress its heavy toll on human life both in cities and on the land, its persistence and recurrence, and the widespread famines and that broke out in its wake. The disease, probably smallpox, 'behaved as infections are wont to do when they break in upon virgin populations that entirely lack inherited or acquired resistances. Mortality, in other words, was heavy.'¹¹⁰ As much as 10 per cent of the empire's total population may have

¹⁰⁵ Duncan-Jones (1980). Table 6 is very tentative; recent archaeological evidence suggests, for instance, that the population of the Hellenistic East may have grown more than this model allows.

¹⁰⁶ Duncan-Jones, *Structure* 143–55. Real rentals and wages probably did not keep up: Muth (1994). In pre-modern societies, 60 per cent or more of average household income is usually spent on food, so the price of grain is of crucial importance.

¹⁰⁷ On world and Chinese population: Durand (1974) 15, 61. ¹⁰⁸ McNeill (1970) 109–15.

¹⁰⁹ Gilliam (1961); Salmon (1974) 133–9. Economic effects: Duncan-Jones, *Structure* 67–76.

¹¹⁰ McNeill (1970) 116; see also Hopkins (1983) 22–3.

perished in the plague; in cities and military camps the percentage was perhaps twice as high.¹¹¹ The plague would thus have undone about half a century of slow growth. The Roman empire was not dealt a mortal blow; but this sudden population drop ushered in, or immensely complicated, a host of social and economic problems, to cope with which a new dynasty was ultimately required.

¹¹¹ These estimates are from Littman (1973) 252–5. On Egypt, see Rathbone (1990) 114–19.

CHAPTER 28

STATUS AND PATRONAGE

RICHARD SALLER

I. 'ORDINES': THE ROMANS' CONCEPTION OF THEIR SOCIAL ORDER¹

The literate élite of the Roman empire in the second century conceptualized the social order as a stable and equitable hierarchy worthy of high praise. Aelius Aristides (*ad Romam* 39) distinguished in a simple fashion between the great and the humble, the rich and the poor, the notable and the commoner. Rome's achievement, in his view, was to extend a system of government that treated all subjects fairly and offered citizenship to all who deserved it (59). Aristides' vision of society, then, was based on a broad binary division and justified by his sense of fairness.²

Other imperial authors present a more precise categorization in the form of a hierarchy of *ordines*. The good emperor was one who protected the social order by granting rank in accordance with the traditional aristocratic criteria of birth, wealth and excellence. In a speech put into the mouth of Maecenas, Dio recommended choosing as senators 'tous te gennaïotatous kai tous aristous tous te plousiotatous', and the equestrian *ordo* was to be filled with 'such men as hold second place in their regions as regards birth, excellence and wealth' (LII.19.1–4). The same criteria, but on a more modest scale, were judged appropriate for the *ordo decurionum*. Wealth was guaranteed by a census requirement for each *ordo*: 1 million sesterces for senators, 400,000 for *equites*, and something less for decurions (Pliny,

¹ The sources for Roman social history are uneven and leave the historian with many blind spots. Much of the picture drawn in this chapter comes from literary works written by élite male authors living in Rome. Because historians of the empire like Tacitus and Dio were not interested in all levels of their society, social historians today are forced to fill out the picture with other genres of literary works from satirical poetry and novels to moral philosophy. Their imaginary and tendentious qualities make their value as historical evidence a subject of lively debate. The classical jurists wrote many treatises during this period on issues related to property and status, now extant largely as excerpts from the Justinianic *Digest*; again, this body of material is concerned mainly with the propertied class. The picture of Roman society can be broadened somewhat through the many thousands of inscriptions and papyri, but those written by non-élite Romans tend to be very brief and yield only a very few details about their lives. The social historian has virtually no quantitative data from the Roman world to document patterns of social and economic behaviour like social mobility or dominant modes of production.

² Nutton (1978).

Ep. I.19, gives 100,000 for Comum). The rules concerning birth took the form of exclusion of those tainted by servile origins: two generations of free birth were required of *equites*, and the curial *ordo* was generally closed to freedmen. Excellence was more difficult to define and regulate. Men from degrading occupations, such as undertakers and auctioneers, were barred,³ but it was sometimes necessary to recruit men of doubtful honour. The Severan jurist, Callistratus, asserted that although men of honour ('*viri honesti*') were to be preferred for the decurionate, in case of shortage even '*viles personæ*', in particular, *negotiatores* who had been subject to the *ædiles'* whip in the market-place, could be chosen to serve in high municipal office (*Dig.* L.2.12).⁴

In addition to the ruling *ordines*, Rome recognized certain other groups for their specific functions in the state. *Scribae*, *viatores*, *lictiores* and *praecones*, all subordinate functionaries attached to aristocratic magistrates, received this sort of recognition, as did the Augustales serving the imperial cult in the municipalities (see below).⁵ Among the non-élite there were fundamental distinctions between free and slave, and between citizen and non-citizen. Although not called *ordines* by the Romans, these classifications qualify as 'orders' in a modern Weberian sense, in so far as they were legally defined divisions within the Roman empire.

The vision of the social hierarchy offered by élite authors is an essentially static and conservative one. Its conservatism lies in the premise that fairness dictated a proportional distribution of rank and privilege in accordance with worth as defined by traditional aristocratic values. In contrast to modern egalitarianism, Roman writers subscribed to the view that nothing would have been more unfair than strict equality, or, in the younger Pliny's words, 'if these distinctions [of *ordines* and *dignitas*] are confused, nothing is more unequal than equality itself' (*Ep.* IX.5). This basic tenet in the aristocratic ideology of social order served its proponents in several ways. It was available as a justification for the benefits of privilege and enormous inequalities. On the other hand, it could be used to condemn unwanted changes. For instance, the emperor was advised against granting undue power and honour to his freedmen on the grounds that it was unseemly for those who failed to meet the criterion of respectable birth to enjoy superiority over honourable men (Pliny, *Pan.* 88.1–2).

The static quality of this aristocratic vision is apparent from Maecenas' speech in Dio's history (LII. 14–40). The main outline of Maecenas' recommended social order was just as appropriate for Dio's time (late second and early third century) as it had been for the Augustan age. The same hierarchy of élite *ordines*, defined by the same census requirements, continued for

³ *Tabula Heraclensis*, *FIRA* I, no. 13, 94 and 108–23.

⁴ On the élite *ordines*, see Alföldy, *Konsulat* and (1981); Stein (1927); Garnsey (1974a). On the social hierarchy generally, Gagé (1964), Alföldy (1985). ⁵ Purcell (1983); Duthoy (1974), (1978).

more than two centuries. The elaborations and changes from the Flavians to the Antonines were essentially minor. In the second century a new system of titles making distinctions within the old *ordines* emerged. Senators and their families were distinguished by the title 'clarissimus'. The equestrian *ordo* had become a relatively large, amorphous body numbering in the tens of thousands and including municipal notables as well as the great prefects of Rome. Under Marcus Aurelius the superiority of imperial officials among the mass of *equites* received recognition with the epithets 'egregius' for the emperor's procurators and 'eminentissimus' for the praetorian prefects.⁶ The special title for praetorian prefects underlined their great power and prestige, second only to the emperor, and set the stage for their promotion in protocol ahead of senators in the Severan age. These epithets illustrate the Roman impulse to give formal acknowledgement to fine differences of dignity, which had earlier been expressed informally in phrases like Tacitus' 'equestris nobilitas' (*Agr.* 4.3).

To the modern historian the élite Romans' perception of their social order seems incomplete, unsatisfactory and self-serving. The hierarchy and legitimacy of the *ordines*, and the privileges accorded them, were accepted as self-evident, with no thought given to how the Roman conception of the social order was projected and legitimated outside its centre. Moreover, by conceptualizing society as a hierarchy of rank and worth, the élite writers had no need to consider relations between men of different ranks, in particular, the relations of production that generated the wealth essential to high rank. In addition to exploitation, the harmonious picture of the social order neglects to give explicit attention to one of the hallmarks of Roman society, an intense competition between individuals for status that went beyond imperial grants of rank. It must be asked by what daily social practices superiority was asserted by one Roman over another. Though the hierarchies of rank and status were stable, individual Romans and their families rose or fell. What were the principal means of mobility? Finally, should the general stability of society under the Pax Romana be taken at face value, or is it possible to discover contradictions or other social trends?

II. LEGITIMATION OF THE 'ORDINES'

For members of the élite of the Roman empire, men like Aelius Aristides and Dio, the empire's social order was largely unproblematic. But Rome had long ceased to be a small, face-to-face community in which common social values could be expected to be held by all. For the peripheral groups in the empire, it is worth asking how the Roman hierarchy of rank was made known and legitimated, and how individuals asserted their position in it.

⁶ Pflaum (1970); see *Tab Vindol* 22 and 37 for the use of 'clarissimus' at the beginning of the second century.

The *Lex de flamonio provinciæ Narbonensis* from Vespasian's reign provides insights into what symbols the Romans considered significant in expressing their social order and placing someone in it. The law institutionalized the imperial cult on a province-wide basis in Gallia Narbonensis and established the office of flamen to serve it. Much of the extant text is devoted to specification of the symbols placing this new official in the ranks of the élite of the city of Narbo: he was to be accompanied by lictors, to have the right of sitting in the front row of seats at the public games between senators and decurions; he and his wife were to be distinguished by special clothing; and ex-flamines were entitled to continue to enjoy some of these privileges. This document draws attention to the central symbolic expressions of the social hierarchy, notably seating at the public spectacles and distinctive clothing.⁷

The shows at the amphitheatres regularly brought together larger crowds than any other event in the empire. Consequently, they provided the broadest possible mass encounters in which the community could express and reaffirm the hierarchy of rank. In Rome, seats were distributed so that senators were honoured in the front row, *equites* had the next fourteen rows reserved for them, followed by the urban plebs and then other groups. The articulation of the seating made visible the order of rank and the basic principle that rank had its privilege. Furthermore, taking a seat in the privileged rows was a public assertion of high rank. The *ordo* of equestrians, for example, could be designated as those with the right of sitting in the fourteen rows. Seating schemes in amphitheatres outside the capital were not uniform from city to city, but still were used to organize social divisions. In general, Roman senators were given pride of place, followed by decurions, with other less-exalted corporate groups variously arranged. The seating thus reflects the reality of a hierarchy of Roman élite ranks imposed on diverse local social structures.⁸

That seating at the public spectacles gave symbolic expression to the social order offers an explanation of why Romans attached some importance to a seemingly trivial matter. Laws and sections of municipal charters were given over to its regulation. The *Tabula Heracleensis* and the *Lex coloniæ Genetivæ Iuliæ* from the time of Caesar had specified drastic fines for anyone flouting the proper seating order. In the newly discovered charter for the Spanish town of Irni, the *municipium* was permitted to retain its previous seating order.⁹

Knowledge of the seating at the spectacles was knowledge of the Roman system of rank. In characterizing the Frisian kings in Rome, Verritus and Malorix, Tacitus chose, interestingly, to narrate their visit to

⁷ Williamson (1987). ⁸ Hopkins (1983b), Rawson (1987), Kolendo (1981), Polacco (1982).

⁹ González (1986) ch. 81.

the theatre of Pompey. 'There in their leisure – for in their ignorance they did not appreciate the amusements – they asked about the crowd on the benches, the divisions of the *ordines*, who was an *eques*, where the senate sat . . .' (*Ann.* XIII.54). In this vignette the un-romanized Germans displayed their lack of understanding of the imperial order by their naivety about distinctions of seats at a public spectacle. The story (whether true in all details or not) shows the theatre as a teaching device, educating peripheral peoples about the Roman hierarchy of privilege.

Participation in other municipal activities also required acknowledgement of one's position in the system of privilege. Inscriptions from Italian cities, for instance, repeatedly show discrimination in public distributions according to rank: decurions and *seviri Augustales*, being worthier and wealthier, were commonly designated to receive several times more money than their humble fellow citizens. In a typical distribution of the late second century an imperial freedman of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, after being honoured as municipal patron by Anagnia, reciprocated by giving 20 sesterces to each of the town's decurions, 8 to each *sevir* and 4 to each member of the *populus* (ILS 1909; cf. 406 for a similar distribution).¹⁰ Those participating in public rituals far from Rome might also hear the social order invoked. In Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, set in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaëa, the only mention of senators and equestrians comes in a prayer of a priest of Isis for good fortune for 'principi magno senatuique et equiti totoque Romano populo . . .' (*Met.* XI.17.9).

In order for rank to attract its proper deference in daily affairs, Romans had to be able to make their social position readily known. In small face-to-face communities this presumably posed few problems, but in larger cities, and especially in Rome, visible marks of rank were required. Magistrates were distinguished by accompanying lictors symbolic of their authority – a perquisite granted to the new flamen of Gallia Narbonensis. More broadly, Romans laid claim to rank by the clothing they wore. As the *Lex de flamonio* attests, the colour of prestige was purple.¹¹ A broad purple stripe on the toga (*latus clavus*) was the mark of a senator; second in rank, *equites* were allowed less purple in the form of a narrow stripe (*angustus clavus*). *Equites* also wore the distinctive gold ring on the finger. Rank was in part conceived by the Romans as the right to wear these symbols: admission to the senatorial *ordo* was formulated as the grant of the *latus clavus*, and special permission to wealthy freedmen to claim fictitious free birth in order to qualify for the equestrian *ordo* was expressed as 'the right of the gold ring' (*ius anulī aurei*).¹² Lower on the social ladder, citizens were distinguished from *peregrini* by their white togas, which a patron might insist his

¹⁰ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 184–8, provides an extensive list.

¹¹ Reinhold (1970).

¹² Duff (1928) 214–20.

salutatores wear as a sign of their standing and which were prohibited to those condemned with an interdiction of fire and water (Mart. *Epig.* 3.36; Pliny, *Ep.* IV.11.3). Finally, just as honour could be signified by physical appearance so also could disgrace: slaves were marked as runaways on their foreheads.¹³

The public events and distinctive clothes that visibly gave meaning to the privilege of rank invited usurpation.¹⁴ While emperors endeavoured to suppress it, Roman writers satirized the illicit assumption of symbols of rank. More than once in Petronius' *Satyricon* characters manipulated those symbols of social identification. Martial repeatedly poked fun at men who attempted to misrepresent themselves as *equites* by wearing purple and sitting in rows reserved for the second *ordo* at the games. Misrepresentation was a sensitive issue in his day, as Domitian, like some of his predecessors, attempted to enforce distinctions of rank at the amphitheatre (Suet. *Dom.* 8; Mart. *Epig.* 5.8). Guards were employed by the emperor at public spectacles, but in general the administrative machinery was inadequate to keep the empire's tens of millions of inhabitants in their proper place despite threats of serious penalties. The second century rules of the Idiologos, for example, specified confiscation of a quarter of an Egyptian's estate for falsely claiming Roman citizenship for his father (43); the same fine was fixed for an Egyptian who usurped the citizen's privilege of legionary service by passing himself off as a Roman (56). Even the death penalty for slaves entering military service as free citizens was not always an adequate deterrent, to judge by Pliny's letter from Bithynia asking Trajan for instructions in such cases (*Ep.* x.29–30; Dio, *Epit.* LXVII.13.1, reports another, more flagrant misrepresentation). Severe punishment of runaway slaves is easy to understand, but the concern for regulation and the heavy penalties for other kinds of usurpation are perhaps not so easy, unless it is accepted that the Romans interpreted this behaviour as generally subversive to the hierarchy of rank and privilege.

III. WEALTH, EXPLOITATION AND CLASSES

Elite imperial authors believed wealth to be a vital constituent of a Roman's standing, but usually did not comment on how it was accumulated. The connection between wealth and rank appears less innocuous than they present it, if attention is drawn to the massive inequalities of resources and to the exploitation used to extract profits.

A few, scattered pieces of evidence can illustrate the scale of the disparity. Those exploited under the worst conditions – for example, slaves in the mines or mills – had barely enough to survive on. Somewhat better off were

¹³ Jones (1987). ¹⁴ Reinhold (1971).

the free, unskilled labourers working in the Dacian mines for food plus two sesterces per day.¹⁵ The low pay and uncertainties of wage labour make it easy to understand why legionary service was regarded as a privilege: the legionary was paid 1,200 sesterces per year after Domitian's 33 per cent pay rise. The annual salary was supplemented by a substantial retirement bonus, adequate to establish veterans as prosperous members of local communities. The members of the leisured orders, by comparison, enjoyed incomes many times larger. To judge by the census requirements and traditional rates of profitability of land, modest decurions had annual incomes of at least 5–10,000 sesterces, and equestrians were several times again better off. The complaints about financial difficulties from the equestrian poets Martial and Juvenal should be put in perspective: an *equus* with the minimum census would have had an income some twenty times larger than a legionary. Nevertheless, that income would have seemed painfully inadequate in the social circles of the truly rich at Rome. The younger Pliny had a fortune of perhaps 20 million sesterces, or twenty times the senatorial census requirement, and still regarded himself as only modestly rich. The wealthiest of the imperial élite were indeed ten times richer than Pliny. With estates worth hundreds of millions, they disposed of incomes equivalent to those of some 25,000 subsistence farmers.¹⁶ Whether the huge gap between rich and poor widened during the first and second centuries is difficult to know on the available evidence: it is often assumed a priori that through the centuries of the Roman empire there was a continuous process of concentration of property, and this may be correct, but factors producing fragmentation of fortunes (e.g., dispersion of estates through wills) should not be overlooked.

The enormous inequalities might appear to invite a Marxist-style analysis of Roman society in terms of class. In such an analysis classes would be differentiated on the basis of their relations to the means of production, with exploitative owners distinguished from exploited workers. Or finer distinctions could be attempted, say, among (1) *rentiers* who owned resources but did not work them, (2) smallholders and artisans who owned and worked modest capital, (3) tenants who did not own the capital they worked and (4) slaves who possessed neither resources nor their own labour. Unfortunately, serious difficulties arise with these classification schemes, as is apparent from Marx's own problems with settling on a definition of class. If the drawing of clear class boundaries has been problematic in industrial societies, for which the concept of class was developed, it is all the more so for the Roman world with its more complex system of rank and great variety of labour arrangements. Boundaries are blurred by those who straddled classes or were in some sense between

¹⁵ Brunt (1980).

¹⁶ Duncan-Jones, *Economy*.

classes. For example, small landowners who worked their own land and also provided casual labour for rich neighbours fit into both the second and third of the above classes;¹⁷ and Junian Latins, who may have been numerous in Italy, were members of the free classes until their deaths when their property reverted to their former masters like a slave's *peculium*.¹⁸ Furthermore, the distinction between free and unfree may have been unclear in provinces where traditional forms of dependency survived.¹⁹

A more fundamental problem with class analysis is that exploitation in the Roman world was not a simple matter of a dyadic relationship between the owner of the means of production and his labourers. In a letter about a large estate (*Ep.* III.19), Pliny wrote of the cost of providing his tenants with slaves as part of the *instrumenta* to work the plots. In this situation Pliny could obviously be classified as an exploiting owner and the slaves as exploited, but where do the tenants fit into the scheme? Though not owners, they presumably benefited from slave labour. The famous *saltus Burunitanus* inscription (*CIL* VIII 10570 + 14464) illuminates an arrangement in which the emperor's lands were rented out to *conductores*, who in turn sublet plots to hereditary tenants with the obligation of providing six days of labour per year on the central estate. Clearly, the emperor was part of the owner–exploiter class and the subtenants were exploited, but the *conductor*? He did not own the capital, but still was able brutally to exploit the tenants through his *political* connections with imperial officials. One might be inclined to place Pliny's tenants in the class of the exploited and the imperial *conductor* in the class of the exploiters, but on what principle? That the former actually worked? On that principle, independent smallholders would fit into the class of the exploited, but how were they exploited? One might argue that the exploitation took the form of taxation. If so, then Italian smallholders would have to be distinguished from provincials since the former enjoyed the traditional privilege of the conquerors, exemption from *tributum*. And if class boundaries are to be drawn on the basis of who paid taxes and who benefited from them, should the poor citizens of Rome who lived in part off distributions of grain from the provinces be counted in the class of exploiters? Slaves might appear to present the fewest problems of classification, but even in their case the question of exploitation is not straightforward. Some slaves in large households, especially the imperial *domus*, had de facto control of great wealth, supervised free and unfree workers, and were served by other slaves: their managerial powers and sumptuous lifestyle make it difficult to place them among the exploited, and yet they owned nothing in the full legal sense and were vulnerable to the arbitrary abuse of their masters. These examples illustrate why the Roman world cannot be cleanly divided according to the criterion of exploitation

¹⁷ Garnsey (1980).

¹⁸ Weaver (1991).

¹⁹ Wightman (1977), Whittaker (1980).

or relations to the means of production. Exploitation is not so easily defined, and relations to production were complicated by legal and political arrangements in society at large and within the household.²⁰

The deficiencies of Marxist classes as a comprehensive system of analysis should not obscure the merits of the insights to be gained from an examination of relations of production. The hierarchy of rank and wealth was not a benign product of men's worth, as elite authors liked to assume, but required exploitation, often direct, personal and sometimes violent, perpetuated over the generations by the law of property.

The ownership of property, particularly land, was fundamental to social inequalities in the Roman world. Land and labour were the primary resources for the generation of wealth. Rank had wealth as a prerequisite, and by itself did not, as in some other societies, yield wealth. The propertied elite of the empire had traditionally claimed that one of the state's primary functions was to protect private property. By and large, the imperial government from the Flavians to the Antonines obliged. Roman jurists had already developed a body of property law which gave strong, nearly absolute rights to individual owners. While Roman law penetrated to only a limited degree in the eastern provinces, in the West with the spread of citizenship it made inroads against local custom in a way that may well have strengthened the rights of individual owners to dispose of their wealth as they saw fit, thus consolidating and perhaps exaggerating local inequalities.²¹ Further, Roman law gave property owners broad powers of testation, enabling them to bequeath their wealth to their families, and so to perpetuate economic and social disparities from generation to generation. The imperial state did little to interfere with this transmission or to redistribute property. The level of the inheritance tax (*vicesima hereditarium*) on Roman citizens was set at a modest 5 per cent, and closely related heirs were exempt even from this. Trajan expanded the circle of relatives to whom the exemption applied, a popular reform in the judgement of Pliny and his peers (*Pan.* 37–40). (The additional exemption of the humble estates of poor smallholders from this tax adds to the difficulty of interpreting taxation simply as a means of class exploitation.)

The land could be made to yield a profit only through the application of labour. As already suggested, the nature of the relationship between owner and labourer was varied and complex. It is also so poorly documented that for most areas of the empire it is impossible to prove what the dominant relationship was. But it is possible to illustrate the variety of the social relationships and to characterize them.

Broadly speaking, the leisured landowner's capacity to exploit labour

²⁰ Shaw (1983) reviewing Ste Croix, *Class Struggle*; Harris (1988).

²¹ Wightman (1977); Garnsey (1978), 235; Galsterer (1986).

derived from his legal and economic powers. The importance of the legal powers was most apparent in the master–slave relationship. Roman law treated slaves as chattels in many respects and gave masters almost unlimited control over them. Foremost in the arsenal of control were the powers of coercion. The existence of the ordinary agricultural slave, with no prospect of manumission, was grim: slaves were assumed to be naturally recalcitrant, and as a result, the symbol of the master’s dominance was the whip, used to enforce the discipline of exploitation – ‘to coerce and break’ the slave in Cicero’s words (*Rep.* III.25). The second-century emperors’ legislation aimed to curb only the worst abuses against slaves, leaving masters free to beat their slaves or to hire out the tiresome task to *tortores*. The fearful brutality of many slaves’ existence is perhaps best indicated by the figure of the *tortor* who earned part of his living by applying the whip and more painful punishments for a stated fee.²² Juvenal caricatured the vicious *domina* by reference to her keeping a *tortor* on annual retainer (*Sat.* VI.480). Masters also had at their disposal the threat to break up slave families and other forms of psychological coercion to enforce exploitation. Whereas slave households were pervasive across the empire, slave-worked estates were concentrated in Italy and Sicily, but also found in pockets in the provinces, as in Pudentilla’s large holdings in Tripolitania worked by some four hundred slaves.²³

The slave was not the only one whose exploitation was enforced by Roman law. Despite the abolition of *nexum* in the late fourth century B.C., the law continued to allow personal execution against those who defaulted on their debts. The numbers of those forced to work on the lands of their creditors are not known, but Columella characterized the vast estates of absentee Italian landlords in the mid-first century of the empire as occupied by slave gangs and citizens bound *nexu* (I.3.12).²⁴ Outside Italy where Roman law did not so clearly and comprehensively delineate a distinction between citizen and slave, local relationships of dependency may have continued to bind labourers to landowners. Caesar’s reference (*BGall.* I.4.2) to the numerous dependants and debt bondsmen of Gallic nobles (*clientes obaratosque*) was echoed in Tacitus’ account of the Gallic revolt of A.D. 21 (*Ann.* III.42). In the first century B.C. Varro claimed that ‘many *obararii* worked the lands of Asia, Egypt and Illyricum’ (*Rust.* I.17.2) and Strabo later referred to large holdings of ‘temple-slaves’ (*hierodouloi*), thought to be bound labour, in Asia Minor (XII.3.34). Unfortunately, little evidence exists to document what happened in the following centuries to such bound labour. Consequently, the debate about the survival of these traditional forms into the second century is unlikely to be resolved.

²² *AE* 1971 nos. 88 and 89; see also Cic. *Clu.* 177 and *Dig.* XLVII.10.15.42 for masters having their slaves tortured. On control of slaves, see Bradley (1984). ²³ MacMullen (1987).

²⁴ Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* 165–70.

Where the law or custom did not enforce bonds of dependency, wealthy landowners used a labour force predominantly made up of free tenants, but political and economic conditions could detract from their nominal freedom. The very limited state apparatus left room for the wealthy to employ illicit violence against the humble, and occasionally corrupt officials turned the state's force against tenants.²⁵ The most famous case of the latter is attested in the inscription from the *saltus Burunitanus*: the subtenants there complained to the emperor Commodus that his procurator had sent in imperial troops to silence protests and force submission to the excessive demands of the *conductor* for labour. Nor did the centuries-old exemption of Roman citizens from floggings offer any protection in this case from the rods and cudgels.

Even without physical violence, some landowners were able to take advantage of the economic weakness of their tenants to pressure them to continue to work their lands. Pliny described the desperate situation of the tenants on an Italian estate under consideration for purchase: 'The previous owner quite often sold off the tenants' pledges for their debts; and while he reduced the debt of the tenants (*coloni*) for a time, he depleted their resources for the future, on account of the loss of which they began to run up their debts again' (*Ep.* III.19.6). There is no hint here of the legal procedure used in the personal execution against defaulting debtors, but in reality the tenants may have been little better off than bondsmen: repeatedly stripped of their possessions, they were kept by their landlord in destitution so that without funds or capital it was very difficult to make use of their legal freedom to move their families and negotiate a better contract elsewhere. In such circumstances, the real freedom and bargaining power of the tenants must have depended in part on the surplus or shortage of labour in their region and their consequent ability to escape an oppressive landowner.²⁶

In sum, the complex and varied nature of the social relations of production across the Roman empire, together with the patchiness of the evidence, defies attempts to find an adequate single label such as 'slave society'. Nevertheless, owing to the low level of Roman technology, the vast wealth of the élite few – the wealth that made them worthy in the eyes of their peers – must have derived from the labour of impoverished masses, whatever their legal standing.

IV. STATUS AND COMPETITION

Rank and wealth were vital constituents of status in the Roman world, but were not in and of themselves sufficient to determine a Roman's social

²⁵ MacMullen, *Social Relations* 5 ff. ²⁶ Kehoe (1988a).

standing.²⁷ It would be wrong to reify the Roman system of *ordines* and to think that the emperor through a grant of rank could fix a man's status – that is, his prestige or honour as perceived by those around him. Claudius' grant of magisterial *ornamenta* to his freedmen had been stubbornly refused genuine recognition by the senatorial aristocracy and ultimately failed to establish their high status. Moreover, the *ordines* were too broad to satisfy the Romans' desire for minute social grading. Consequently, competition for status continued within the *ordines*, and also between men of different *ordines* since birth, wealth and excellence were not always distributed in proportion to rank. Finally, the system of *ordines* did not include much of the empire's population. Women, for instance, could make no independent claims to imperial rank, and yet were not entirely excluded from the pursuit of high status in private life.

That wealth alone was not enough is illustrated by a story from Apuleius: the fictitious miser of Hypata Milo was rich, but speaking of him as one of the leading men (*proceres*) drew a derisive laugh from an old townswoman – after all, he lived in a humble house (*domus*) and kept only one servant (*Met.* 1.21). To achieve status, wealth had to be displayed and used to attract deference. How was wealth converted into social status in the Roman world? By what symbols did Romans strive for status? Through what customs and rituals did one Roman display deference to another, and thereby establish their relative social positions?

A partial answer to these questions was implied by Apuleius' old woman in her comment about what the miser lacked: a grand *domus* and numerous slaves. In his lament about the excesses of conspicuous consumption, the emperor Tiberius had pointed to the size of villas, the numbers of slaves, the display of precious metals, jewels, clothing and art (*Tac. Ann.* III.53). By the end of the Julio-Claudian period the size of slave households had reached extraordinary dimensions: some four hundred slaves were living in the townhouse of the urban prefect Pedanius Secundus when he was murdered in A.D. 61 (*Tac. Ann.* XIV.42–45). Such numbers were demanded not for utilitarian reasons but for conspicuous consumption. Epigraphic studies have shown that household duties were minutely differentiated and highly specialized in order to employ huge troops of slaves – as Epictetus put it, one slave to cook, another to buy delicacies, another to put on the master's shoes, yet another to dress him, others to massage him, and still others to follow him in case of need of another massage (*Diss.* III.26.21–3). The conspicuous display was pursued further by attention to the looks of the slave retinue: the man with a large group of handsome slaves was especially to be noticed and envied. Perhaps the most blatantly wasteful aspect of this consumption was the preference for young male slaves in household service jobs that female slaves could have done.²⁸

²⁷ Hopkins (1965b). ²⁸ Treggiari (1976) esp. 91–4.

The *domus* had long been a symbol of prestige for élite Roman *familia*, serving as the setting for the *salutatio* (see below) and for the display of the ancestral *imagines* and trophies of war. Many of these old *domus* burned down in the Great Fire of A.D. 64 (Suet. *Nero* 38.2), and for the aristocrats who built new *domus* the symbols of prestige were rather different. Like the emperor Vespasian, they came for the most part from families new to the Senate and could not boast long ancestral lineages. Consequently, as the elder Pliny observed (*HN* xxxv. 5), the prestige value of the ornamentation no longer derived from its representation of the master of the house and his ancestors, but solely as a display of wealth (*pecunia*), the lowest denominator in a society of newcomers from diverse backgrounds.²⁹

Philosophers and satirists railed against these and other status symbols, on the grounds that they did not reveal a man's true worth as measured by virtue. Tacitus asserted that under the influence of Vespasian's restrained habits extravagance declined among the new aristocratic families from Italy and the provinces who were accustomed to more frugal ways (*Ann.* III. 55). Tacitus may have been right, but the status symbols of a fine house and many slaves were hardly novel to the local élites supplying recruits to the Senate: with the philosopher Crates' position among the élite of Thebes, Apuleius associated a large slave establishment and a grand house (*frequens famulitium, domus amplo ornata vestibulo, Flor.* 22). Certainly lavish consumption continued in Rome as a target of later moralists like Epictetus (*Diss.* III.26) and Juvenal (*Sat.* XIV).

Whereas rank was a matter of discrete categories, status was entirely relative – one Roman's standing compared to others'. That relative standing was regularly made apparent at two private social events: the *salutatio* and the *cena* or banquet. The *salutatio*, the morning ritual in which the great aristocrats were greeted by their friends and clients, was a characteristically Roman practice dating back to the Republic. After its obvious *raison d'être* in electoral politics disappeared with the collapse of the Republic, the ritual persisted throughout the Principate. Why did it survive? The *salutatio* was a remarkable custom for its regular, precise visible display of status, and therein lay its continuing attraction for the Romans. Each morning friends and clients hurried across Rome and were admitted in order of status to greet the great men in their *atria*, the number of morning callers serving as a sign of the power and status of the men in receipt of such deference. The clients were rewarded with favours, dinner invitations, small sums of money or food. The practice was imitated in regions outside Rome, where other public areas of the *domus* could be used for the reception in the absence of an *atrium*.³⁰ In Pergamum Galen set himself apart from his ambitious contemporaries with the boast that as a studious youth he did not waste his time paying regular visits to the *salutationes* of the rich and

²⁹ Saller (1984).

³⁰ E.g. see Thébert (1987).

famous.³¹ He was one of many patrons and clients who alike decried *salutationes* as a waste of time (Tac. *Dial.* 11, Quint. *Inst.* XII.11.18, Mart. *Epig.* x.74); Martial also voiced the resentment of clients at the humiliation implicit in the exaggerated shows of deference (*Epig.* 11.68, x.82).

The exchange of material support for *dignitas*, and the client's resentment of it, is also apparent in the Roman customs of the banquet. The rather abstract feeling among Romans that hosts ought to treat their guests as friends on equal terms ran up against the hierarchical premise that everyone had his proper place.³² In order to highlight their own exalted status, wealthy Romans invited to their great *triclinia* not only their peers but also some of their clients, whose inferior status was reiterated by their inferior seating, food and wine (Pliny, *Ep.* 11.6.2, with disapproval; Mart. *Epig.* 1v.68, vi.11). Juvenal's *Fifth Satire* is devoted to the client's question: 'Is the dinner worth the insult (*iniuria*)?' Throughout the ages dining has served as a context for the advertisement of status, but in recent times this has more often been accomplished by the exclusion of unworthies; in Rome humble men were invited, even paid, to attend so that they might pay deference or (from the viewpoint of the jaundiced observer) suffer as the victims of displays of *superbia* by their hosts. Domitian believed the patron–client relationship to be in need of reform and prohibited the distribution of *sportula* (a small handout, conventionally 100 quadrantes) for the client's services in the hope of reviving the traditional reward of a dinner (Mart. *Epig.* 111.7, 111.14, 111.30, 111.60; cf. Suet. *Dom.* 7.1). The measure was presumably motivated by a belief that the once-sacred patron–client relationship had been debased to a crass matter of money (an echo of the elder Pliny's sentiment about domestic ornamentation). Like other attempts to return to the better days of the idealized past, this reform did not bring about lasting change – Martial expressed the client's discontent with it, and before the end of Domitian's reign he was again writing verses about the income from *sportula* (*Epig.* VIII.42, 50; IX.100). The grand house and the large slave retinue, then, were not only symbols, but also were the context for the rituals of deference, the *salutatio* and the *cena*, through which the hierarchy of social status was worked out and advertised in Rome.³³

Because social standing was made so explicit through these rituals, the intensely status-conscious Romans were painfully aware of incongruities in rank and status. Indeed, much of the evidence for social tensions and conflicts during the Principate is better understood in terms of status than class. The praetorian prefect who achieved power beyond that of senators despite his membership of the second *ordo* was a ready target of resentment for senators. The hatred and anger felt by senators toward Sejanus in the

³¹ *De Optimo Medico Cognoscendo*, Corpus Medicorum Graecorum Supplementum Orientale vol. 1v. ed. and trans. Albert Z. Iskandar. Berlin, 1988. ³² D'Arms (1984), (1990).

³³ Wallace-Hadrill (1988), (1991a).

early Principate had their parallels in the hostilities directed toward Perennis and Plautianus nearly two centuries later (Herodian 1.8; III.10.6–11.3). That the source of the discontent was not just abuse of power is apparent from Herodian's disparaging comment about Plautianus' low birth (III.10.6). Tacitus and Dio indicate that the contradiction between status and rank was made clear in the cases of Sejanus and Plautianus as senators paid deference to these equestrians at *salutationes* (*Tac. Ann.* IV.41 and 74; Dio LXXVI.5.3–4). One of the main political messages of the senator Dio's narrative was that the emperor should keep equestrians in their place as the second *ordo*.³⁴

Freedmen had the greatest potential for making dissonance between rank and status obvious. As long as they remained dependent and deferential in accordance with their servile origins, the social order went unchallenged. But Roman society and the economy permitted a fortunate few the opportunity to acquire great power and wealth: four of the ten richest men known from the Principate were imperial freedmen. That wealth was translated into status, as is evident from the frequent marriages of imperial freedmen to freeborn women.³⁵ Up to a point, the successful minority could be accommodated within the system, in particular through the *ordo* of the *Augustales*, the local priests of the imperial cult in Italy and the western provinces. The *ordo* offered a compromise which enabled two essential principles of the social hierarchy to be maintained: that wealth deserved honourable recognition – in this case through the special seats, *lictors*, *fascēs* and *toga praetextata* granted to *Augustales* during their term of office – but that despite their success freedmen must remain below the curial *ordo* on account of the unerasable stain of servile birth.³⁶

Some freedmen, however, refused to acquiesce in a subordinate position and made that clear by reversing the roles of superior and inferior in exhibitions of status. Petronius caricatured the freedman's claim to superior status in his *Cena Trimalchionis*. Tacitus reported a senatorial debate about the arrogance of freedmen who threatened their former masters with the blows traditionally reserved for men of servile station (*Ann.* XIII.26). Claudius' freedman Pallas had been honoured with senatorial *ornamenta*, and another, Callistus, had been so brazen as to hold a *salutatio* at which he turned away his former senatorial master (*Sen. Mor. Ep.* 47.9). Such actions upset proper distinctions of status, effectively making senators 'slaves of slaves', in Epictetus' pointed phrase (*Diss.* IV.1.148). The senators' bitter and humiliating experiences with these powerful freedmen left an indelible mark on the aristocracy's collective memory: two generations later the usually mild younger Pliny still felt outrage at the honours bestowed on Pallas (*Ep.* VII.29). He and his fellow senators made it a cardinal virtue of

³⁴ Millar (1964) 107–8. ³⁵ Weaver (1967). ³⁶ Duthoy (1974).

the emperor that he keep his freedmen and slaves subservient (*Pan.* 88.1–2). Imperial freedmen of the late first and early second centuries continued to wield influence in the imperial household, but apparently not in a fashion to challenge the superior status of the aristocracy. The replacement of *liberti Augusti* by *equites* in the important secretariats of Rome in this period decreased the potential contradiction between a freedman's low rank and great administrative power. Nevertheless, Commodus later allowed his *cubicularii* Saoterus and Cleander to get out of hand and to sell senatorial offices and honours (Dio LXXII.12). The troublesome anomaly of Cleander's lowly origins and power over men of higher rank prompted Herodian to mark how 'a small and unexpected turn of fortune can raise a man from the meanest depth to the greatest height and then throw him down again' (I.13.6).

Like freedmen, women presented anomalies making neat divisions according to rank and status problematic. Elite male ideology continued to hold that spheres of activity were naturally split along gender lines between the male public and the female domestic roles (e.g. Musonius Rufus, frag. 4, O. Hense). Reality was not so clear-cut: women were largely but not completely excluded from the public offices that gave men their élite rank. A tiny minority were given the right to use the honorary epithets and symbols of rank by virtue of their relationship, by blood or marriage, with high-ranking men: wives, daughters and granddaughters of senators were called *clarissimæ*, and the wife of the *flamen* in Narbo was entitled to wear white or purple on special occasions (*CIL* XII 6038, l.6). To the extent that status came from public life and public power, then, women were usually limited to a derivative status. The younger Agrippina, for instance, enjoyed the high standing associated with a door crowded with morning callers (*cætu salutantium*), but only as long as she was perceived to have influence in the emperor's house (Tac. *Ann.* XIII.18f). Some cities of Italy and, later, of North Africa honoured women as their municipal *patronæ* and granted them the *ornamenta decurionatus*, but these were invariably women related to men of the élite imperial *ordines*.³⁷ In such cases the achievement of status was vulnerable, because, as Tacitus observed in connection with Agrippina's fall, 'nothing in human affairs is so unstable and changeable as the reputation [*fama*] for power not based on one's own strength [*sua vi*]'. In the eastern cities of the empire, especially in Asia Minor, women had more public positions open to them, to judge from inscriptions honouring them as municipal office-holders, as well as benefactors. Yet, even in the East they constituted a very small minority of the officials, they did not fill positions involving public activities such as travelling, deliberating and voting, and their achievements were praised in terms of the traditional domestic virtues.³⁸

³⁷ Nicols (1989).

³⁸ Van Bremen (1983); MacMullen (1980).

In private affairs Roman law and social practice did permit women considerable independent *vires*. Their property rights, remarkable in comparison with those of women in many other traditional agrarian societies, were nearly the same as men's, and the Roman practice of partible inheritance left many elite women with large fortunes and the discretion to dispose of them as they pleased. This could be translated into social power, attracting deference – in a word, status. Rich, childless women were just as likely as men to have their wishes respected by legacy-hunters. Calvia Crispinilla, *magistra libidinum Neronis*, survived the upheavals of A.D. 68–9 and lived on into the Flavian era, 'powerful by reason of her money and childlessness' (*potens pecunia et orbitate*, Tac. *Hist.* 1.73). Marcus Aurelius' great aunt Matidia was strenuously cultivated by many men (who later grumbled at being left out of her final will, Fronto, *Ad M. Caes.* 2.16; *Ad amic.* 1.14). Similarly, rich old Ummidia Quadratilla enjoyed the attention of adulators in hopes of rewards greater than the tiny legacies they received (Pliny, *Ep.* VII.24). Other women deployed their wealth to buy honour through communal munificence in the same way as men. The *collegium fabrum* of Ariminum paid homage with an honorary inscription to Aurelia Calligenia 'on account of her munificence towards themselves' (*ob munificentiam in se*) (*CIL* XI 405). Corellia Galla Papiana ensured the perpetuation of the memory of her name through two legacies of 100,000 sesterces to Minturnae and Casinum to have her birthday celebrated with an annual distribution of pastries and honey-wine (*CIL* XIV 2827=*ILS* 6294).³⁹ Even women near to the bottom of the rank hierarchy left the occasional hint that they too sought status in imitation of upper-class mores in spite of the disdain they might arouse among the elite: a freedwoman in Rome, Manlia Gnome, boasted on her tombstone that she lived an upright life and had many clients, *multos clientes* (*CIL* VI 21975).

Despite the opportunities allowed to women to enjoy deference and respect, if they appeared too ambitious and refused to accept a secondary status, then they, like freedmen, encountered the hostility of men. Agrippina's efforts to wield power, evident in the number and status of her *salutatores*, were deeply resented as an invasion into the male domain of court politics. More generally, Juvenal's misogynistic *Sixth Satire* was directed not only against the sexual misconduct of women, but also against women who sought to compete with men in the various constituents of status – virtue, learning or wealth. To be avoided in matrimony was the woman who brought with her dowry *grande supercilium* (I. 169).

Women and freedmen, then, are two major groups that demonstrate the inadequacies of an analysis of Roman society solely in terms of class or rank. From the standpoint of class, wealthy women and freedmen were indistinguishable from elite men; from the standpoint of rank, freedmen

³⁹ Forbis (1990); MacMullen (1986a); Purcell (1986).

were fixed near the bottom and women were in many respects ignored. The ambiguous positions of these groups introduced tensions, as the sources repeatedly demonstrate. Moreover, some of the changes that came with the Principate and the influx of new families into the imperial élite – the greater stress on wealth rather than *nomen*, the ultimate value of influence at court regardless of rank – also opened the way for women and freedmen to compete more effectively for status, since these were *vires* that they too could possess. The backlash of freeborn male citizens who regarded privileged status as their birthright led to resentment evident in imperial authors from Petronius and Columella through Tacitus and Juvenal to Dio and Herodian.

V. SOCIAL MOBILITY

The hierarchies of rank and status in Roman society were steep, but membership was not immutably fixed by birth. Indeed, the Principate was characterized by the progressive unification of the empire through complementary processes of social mobility and cultural diffusion – that is, the provincialization of the imperial aristocracy in Rome and the romanization of the local élites in the provinces. The patterns of mobility, both upward and downward, were structured by the organization of the Roman economy and the nature of social relationships, and consequently were different from those of modern industrial societies.

Most of the empire's population lived and worked in the countryside, where the nature of economic production offered few opportunities for significant social advancement. The condition of free rural labouring families should not be imagined to have been entirely static: hard work, good or bad luck with harvests and herds, and the division or accumulation of land through inheritance must have produced improvements and declines in family fortunes over the generations. Yet it is difficult to see how the meagre and uneven surpluses of peasant farming could have generated dramatic promotion into the leisured élite for very many. A singular example, the 'Mactar harvester', did manage this achievement and advertised it in his funerary inscription (*ILS* 7457) telling of his rise from a family possessing 'neither property nor a domus'. After years of work as a harvester, he led a gang of harvesters in Numidia for eleven years, accumulating the wealth to acquire 'domus et villa' and to take a place in the curia. Though notable as an exception, the formulation of this success story – from propertyless to 'dominus' – illustrates the centrality of the well-appointed *domus* as a Roman symbol of status which was available for purchase by the new rich.

The opportunities for slaves in the countryside must have been similarly restricted. Agricultural slaves were not manumitted with the same regular-

ity as their counterparts in the towns. For field hands Columella recommended that the *dominus* watch over their food, clothing and punishment, and reward diligent work with encouraging words and a *premium* (1.15 ff.). The hope of manumission in Columella's advice was held out only to the slave woman bearing four children.

The economic and social structures in the towns were more conducive to upward mobility. Martial warns off the migrant to Rome hoping to make a fortune with his verses, and he jests about the easy money to be made by only a few lucky men in the right occupations: the auctioneer, the harpist, the architect (*Epig.* III.4, v. 56). These epigrams should not be taken too seriously as evidence of social advancement, but they do point to the city as a place of hope and to the fact that money could be made in the urban economy through skills, without the high level of capital investment needed in agriculture. While only a handful of auctioneers and entertainers could have struck it rich, many more artisans and traders had a market in the city through which they could attain a modest prosperity. The disproportionately high representation of freedmen among the funerary inscriptions from Italian cities reflects the fact that ex-slaves were better placed to make a success of themselves in the urban economy than the freeborn poor: upon manumission many of the ex-slaves started with skills and a business. In addition, freedmen of the great houses could hope for continuing support from wealthy *patroni*. The younger Pliny's provision of an estate worth 100,000 HS for the *nutrix* was unusually generous, and Trimalchio's inheritance of a senatorial fortune from his ex-master is from the realm of fiction; but the *Digest* gives evidence of more modest bequests for the continuing support of ex-slaves. For the unskilled freeborn the prospects were bleak, mitigated by the amenities offered to them as urban residents.

While in Rome freedmen were permitted a degree of upward mobility that is remarkable by the standards of other slave-owning societies, there was also the reverse, downward mobility, as freeborn infants were enslaved following exposure, and older men sold themselves or their children into slavery. Though illegal, enslavement took place within the boundaries of the empire, as the *Digest* title 'De liberali causa' (XL.12) clearly shows. Papinian went so far as to claim that because of the daily trade in slaves 'we frequently buy freemen [*liberos*] in ignorance' of their true status (*Dig.* XLI.3.44 pref.). It has been plausibly argued (though it is beyond proof) that this downward mobility through self-sale and infant exposure was a major source of new slaves during the Principate.⁴⁰

The Roman economy did not produce large business organizations in which promotion could lead to riches and power. The two large organizations in the empire were the state administration and the army, each

⁴⁰ Harris (1980b).

presenting avenues for mobility. Promotion within the administrative organization was limited by the division between aristocratic and servile career paths: imperial slaves and freedmen, whose experience made them the real backbone of the administration, could acquire considerable wealth and power through promotion in the *familia Caesaris*, but their servile origins generally barred them from advancement to the highest levels of equestrian procuratorships and prefectures. A man like Nicomedes, who as *libertus* and *educator* of the emperor Lucius Verus rose to the ducenariate post of *procurator summarum rationum* (*ILS* 1740), was quite exceptional. In the ideologies of other pre-industrial states prospects of social mobility have been closely associated with promotion for merit in the bureaucracy, and in turn have given rise to pressure for impersonal evaluations of merit (e.g., through examinations) to achieve fairness. The absence of this sort of ideology in Rome may be explained by the acceptance of the virtually unbridgeable social gap between the ‘career bureaucrats’ in the *familia Caesaris* and the aristocratic officials who monopolized the top governmental offices.⁴¹

If the administration provided opportunities for limited advancement to slaves, the army was the avenue for the freeborn. Because the military recruits were *ingenui* and often citizens, there was no formal barrier to a rise nearly to the highest administrative posts. For most soldiers the rise in status was far more modest. Provincials who enrolled in auxiliary units received citizenship at the end of their term of service, and legionaries received it upon signing up if they lacked it. Upon retirement legionaries received a retirement bonus that allowed them to establish themselves as substantial property-owners in small communities and from the Hadrianic period were treated as part of the legally privileged circle of *honestiores*. Whereas the ordinary veteran’s retirement bonus alone left him well short of the census required of decurions in larger towns, the minority of legionaries who were promoted to the centurionate did acquire a curial income and the opportunity for further promotion. The rank of *primuspilus* carried with it equestrian status and income, and was a springboard to the very highest offices in the equestrian administration. But this path was extremely narrow: only a few tens of thousands out of the empire’s many millions were recruited into the legions each year, and only one or two out of the thousands of veterans retiring each year rose to the ranks of procurator.⁴²

Most of the emperor’s equestrian procurators and new senators were drawn not from the ranks of the army, but from the local aristocracies in Italy and the provinces. The rapid pace of élite mobility in Rome was set by the failure of the senatorial order to replenish its numbers with sons and

⁴¹ Brunt (1975). ⁴² Dobson (1974).

grandsons. Most of the thirty-nine patrician families known from the Flavian and Trajanic periods disappeared from the extant record by the middle of the second century. More broadly, only a quarter to a third of consuls in this period had sons who reached the same level of eminence. As a result, places in the Senate opened up to new families at a rate of several hundred per generation – enough openings to accommodate all the sons of equestrian procurators and many more. In turn, each generation of equestrian officials was recruited almost entirely from new families drawn from the municipal aristocracies more and more distant from Rome. The result can be seen in the change in the Senate's composition by region, from very largely Italian at the beginning of the Flavian dynasty to only half Italian by the end of the second century.⁴³

The constant flow of propertied men from municipal élites into the equestrian and senatorial orders was probably not matched by such regular mobility up into the municipal aristocracies, because the latter presumed a major acquisition of wealth which the former often did not involve. On the basis of the meagre evidence, it is reasonable to suppose that the success of the Mactar harvester was the exception; more normal was the stability of wealth and class attested by the property lists of the *alimenta* tablets for the small Italian town of Ligure Baebiani.⁴⁴ Even in the stable local élites some replacement of old families by new was inevitable: the very uneven epigraphic evidence, mainly from Italy, suggests that the descendants of wealthy freedmen were among those ready to fill the vacancies in the curial order.⁴⁵

How did certain Romans secure social promotion? What were the criteria for success? Obviously, since imperial ranks were defined in terms of census requirements, wealth was indispensable, whether acquired through economic activity or patronal beneficence. Another important ingredient was education, particularly in rhetoric, law or medicine, but education offered only restricted opportunities for mobility because it generally had to be paid for and therefore was available to the minority who were already well off. The value of an education lay not in a system of credentials or degrees that qualified a man for certain well-paying jobs, as in the modern world. Rather, it could prepare a Roman for one of a few loosely defined professions: a career in teaching rhetoric could lead, for a fortunate few, to wealth, municipal privileges, even consular *ornamenta* in the case of the renowned Quintilian; a handful of brilliant jurists reached the upper echelons of imperial service and rank; as a successful physician, Galen came to the attention of the most powerful men in his province and then in Rome. For others, however, education did not lead to a profession, but was an

⁴³ Hammond (1957); Hopkins, *Death and Renewal*. ⁴⁴ Champlin (1981).

⁴⁵ Garnsey (1975), (1981); Gordon (1931).

ingredient in the cultural and moral refinement needed for acceptance by other members of the élite.⁴⁶ Eloquence and literary taste are mentioned in letters of recommendation on behalf of young aristocrats seeking military and administrative posts, for which those qualities would seem to have been irrelevant except in so far as they guaranteed good companionship. The value of education, then, must be understood not so much in terms of professional training in a differentiated economy, but in the context of a patronal network in élite society. Even in the field of medicine Galen complained that most doctors sought to make their careers not by the study of Hippocratic texts and clinical practice but by ‘hanging about the doorsteps of the rich’.⁴⁷

VI. PATRONAGE⁴⁸

The steep hierarchy of Roman society naturally encouraged personal relationships of acknowledged dependence. The early Republican bonds of *clientela* were thought by later Romans to be a mark of good social order and sufficiently important to have been regulated in a law of the XII Tables condemning a *patronus* who defrauded his *cliens*.⁴⁹ Whatever the authenticity of that law, in the classical law of the Principate as excerpted in the *Digest* the patron–client relationship was not defined or given formal standing, and in only a few, scattered passages were *clientes* mentioned and then only casually. Yet patronage, defined as a voluntary, continuing exchange relationship between men of unequal power or status, remained fundamental in Roman society: in the view of the Romans themselves exchange relationships were the glue that held human society together.⁵⁰

For all their importance, patronal relationships are not always obvious to the historian, because the clearest markers – the words *patronus* and *cliens* – were used in a restricted way. Prose writers of the Principate generally reserved the word *patronus* for legal advocates, municipal patrons and ex-masters of freedmen; conspicuously rare is *patronus* in its broadest sense of ‘influential protector’. *Cliens* was used to mean ‘dependant’, but only occasionally (five times in the *Digest*) and then with reference to humble men. When applied to hangers-on of élite status, *cliens* could be strongly pejorative. Beyond the literary texts the uses of *patronus* and *cliens* were more general, more in line with the general meaning of patronage as defined above. In inscriptions grateful recipients of favours, some of great substance and élite rank, honoured their benefactors as *patroni* and labelled themselves *clientes*. This difference of usage was a matter of Roman eti-

⁴⁶ Brown (1987) 240. ⁴⁷ *De optimo medico cognoscendo* 9.18.

⁴⁸ Saller, *Patronage*; Wallace-Hadrill, *Patronage*.

⁴⁹ Quoted by Servius on *Aeneid* vi.109; Rouland (1979); authenticity doubted by Drummond (1989) 90. ⁵⁰ Sen. *Ben.* i. 4.2.

quette: the prose authors were often leading men who out of delicacy were not inclined to demean their protégés by applying the language of *patrocinium*, but those protégés were obliged to display deference to their benefactors and this could be accomplished with the self-deprecating terms of *patronus* and *cliens*.⁵¹

To avoid the delicate problems of pejorative language, the words of friendship, *amicus* and *amicitia*, were available. The preference for these words over the language of *patrocinium* was not a manifestation of some egalitarian sentiment that friendship should not be influenced by status, since the Romans carefully categorized their friends, distinguishing equals from inferiors and superiors. These ‘amicitiae tam superiores quam minores’ (‘greater as well as lesser friendships’, in the words of the younger Pliny, *Ep.* VII.3.2) had their different codes of behaviour (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 94.14). The relationships between superior and inferior *amici* often involved dependency, the ‘rule’ of the former over the latter (Musonius Rufus, frag. 7, O. Hense), and are not analytically distinct from *patrocinium*. Nor did the Romans make a clear distinction, as demonstrated by a letter addressed to Cicero in which he is referred to as both *amicus* and *patronus* (*Ad fam.* 7.29 from M^r. Curius), and by a third-century inscription in which a Gallic aristocrat referred to himself as ‘amicus et cliens’ of the former governor, Tiberius Claudius Paulinus (*CIL* XIII 3162).

Because patronage by definition involved the exchange of goods and services, the vocabulary describing those goods and services – *beneficium*, *officium*, *meritum* – are perhaps the best pointers to patronal relationships. When used in a context related to patronage, these words had a similar meaning, ‘favour’, and all carried with them the notion of reciprocity. The Roman ethic of exchange was precise and powerful: a man who accepted a *beneficium* was considered to be indebted to his benefactor and obliged to display gratitude. Any Roman failing to respect these *mores* was branded as an ‘ingratus homo’, one of the most reprehensible characters in Roman society.⁵² The strength of the reciprocity ethic provides a partial explanation for the willingness of many élite Romans to make their services (e.g. legal defence) available on the basis of reciprocity rather than exacting set fees.

Broadly speaking, the importance of patronage in structuring Roman social relationships stemmed from the underdevelopment or lack of formal, impersonal institutions. The early Roman empire possessed only a small administrative apparatus lacking the machinery to deal individually with its subjects and to recruit administrative personnel; there were no corporations to provide insurance, banking services or standard accommodations. For most of the protection and services supplied today by

⁵¹ Saller (1989). ⁵² A theme of Sen. *Ben.* esp. I.10.4.

government and private institutions, the Romans depended on friends, patrons and clients.⁵³

1. *Imperial patronage*

The patronal network stretched out unevenly through the empire from Rome and the emperor. The imperial ideology conceived of the *princeps* as a patron who protected and benefited his friends, clients and subjects.⁵⁴ Augustus in his *Res Gestae* had justified his usurpation of power in the state with an account of his extraordinary benefactions. The ideology was perpetuated in anecdotes about the good emperor – for instance, about Titus who lamented that he had lost a day when he failed to send away at least one subject happy with a favour (Suet. *Tit.* 8). Nerva claimed to have become *princeps* ‘so that I might confer new *beneficia* and preserve those already granted before my rule’ (Pliny, *Ep.* x.58.7–9). In his *Panegyricus* for Trajan, Pliny laid stress on the benefits bestowed by the emperor on provincials, citizens and senators alike. The proper and generous dispensation of benefactions was an essential aspect of the role of the good emperor who could protect himself by the good will of his grateful people more effectively than by bodyguards.⁵⁵ This ideology contrasts sharply with modern ideologies of government which value efficient administration and universal access to government services: ‘favour’ and ‘favouritism’ in government have taken on negative connotations which they did not have in ancient Rome.

Emperors had a great reservoir of *beneficia*, some to be granted to privileged groups and others to individuals. The two groups with a special claim on the emperor’s favours were the urban *plebs* and the army, both with the potential to make trouble if not kept contented. Both groups occasionally were given donatives. The emperor also gave special attention to the amenities of life for the urban *plebs*, including public shows and supplies of food and water. The privileges and bonuses granted to soldiers upon retirement were also considered to be *beneficia* from the emperor.

To select individuals the emperors granted *beneficia*, ranging from high office to money. Pliny’s and Fronto’s letters include requests to the emperor on behalf of themselves and others for senatorial offices and honours, an equestrian procuratorship and staff offices, a procuratorship for an imperial freedman, individual citizenship grants, the privilege for citizens with three children, use of the *cursus publicus*, and special consideration for a tax contractor under audit. From other sources it is clear that the *latus clavus*, the *equus publicus*, the *ius ingenuitatis*, the privilege of tapping the aqueducts in Rome, and money were also granted as imperial favours. In short, virtu-

⁵³ Hands, *Charities*; Wallace-Hadrill, *Patronage*.

⁵⁴ Kloft, *Liberalitas*; Béranger (1953) 259.

⁵⁵ Sen. *Clem.* 1.13.5.

ally everything within the emperor's power and purse was judged proper material for distribution as *beneficia*. The clear exceptions were contested judicial cases: the emperor was supposed to hand down verdicts without favouritism, but it is revealing that his patronal role did not easily give way to that of impartial judge, as the case of Herodes Atticus before Marcus Aurelius demonstrated (Philostr. *VS* 559 ff.).

Who received imperial benefactions was largely a matter of who had access to the emperor. In this respect, the emperor's kin, the *familia Caesaris*, and the *amici Caesaris* enjoyed a special advantage.⁵⁶ Fronto's correspondence illustrates the value of connections with the emperor's household. During the reign of Pius, Fronto chose on at least two occasions to seek special consideration from the emperor through his student, the emperor's adopted son, Marcus Aurelius, rather than addressing the emperor directly (*Ad M. Caes.* 5.34, 37). After Marcus and Lucius assumed power, direct access was not so easy for Fronto, and he wrote to a freedman in the imperial household in an effort to discover when the emperors could be conveniently approached (*Ad Verum Imp.* 1.3–4). Under the Julio–Claudian emperors these contacts with the imperial family and freedmen were thought to have been abused. Vespasian's freed concubine Caenis was notorious for selling 'governorships, procuratorships, army commands and priesthoods' (Dio *LXVI.* 14.3), but in general later emperors did not come in for heavy criticism on this count, even though Fronto's letters and other evidence show that members of the imperial *domus* continued to be valuable as lines of approach to the emperor. When criticism was voiced, it was aimed not at favouritism in principle, but at venal favouritism and favouritism by the wrong people, especially women and freedmen.

The right people, in the view of our élite authors, were the emperor's senatorial and equestrian *amici*. The letters of Pliny and Fronto reveal the emperor bestowing favours on these two prominent senators, and also, much more often, on the protégés and clients of these two men at their request. The emperors, then, after acquiring power and the ultimate patronal resources, did not attempt to monopolize these resources as sole patrons at the expense of the senatorial élite. On the contrary, perhaps the greatest favour that the emperor bestowed on his *amici* was the power to act as great mediators in securing the emperor's *beneficia*. In a letter to Trajan on behalf of a junior senator, Rosianus Geminus, Pliny expressed just this point: 'I ask, Sir, that you delight me by increasing the *dignitas* of my former quaestor – that is, my *dignitas* through him – as soon as is convenient' (*Ep.* x.26.3).⁵⁷ Although Tacitus represented the development of this patronal network in pejorative terms as the servile dependence of senators on the

⁵⁶ Millar, *Emperor* ch. 3.

⁵⁷ A clear illustration of the same phenomenon of mediation at a lower official level can be found in *TabVindol* 22.

emperors, it may be said in more positive terms that successful emperors like Trajan maintained the loyalty of senators like Pliny by enhancing their prestige as important men who had access to imperial *beneficia*.

The reciprocity ethic demanded that the beneficiaries of imperial favours make some return to the emperor. But, as Seneca pointed out, emperors 'are placed by Fortune in a position in which they are able to bestow many favours but will receive very few and inadequate gifts in return' (*Ben.* v.4.2). Subjects expressed their gratitude in several standard ways, above all, through loyalty. It was said that when Vespasian heard of Mettius Pompusianus' imperial horoscope, the wise emperor granted him a consulship to ensure that Pompusianus would be loyal, 'mindful of the *beneficium*' (Suet. *Vesp.* 14). Subjects could give overt and material expression to this loyalty. As an extraordinary patron beyond ordinary mortals, the emperor received religious expressions of thanks. Pliny wrote to Trajan that he felt so inadequate to the emperor's favours that 'I have recourse to *vota* and pray to the gods that I be judged not unworthy of the things you constantly bestow on me' (*Ep.* x.51). The empire was littered with inscriptions thanking the emperor for his generosity. The final expressions of gratitude came in wills leaving bequests to the emperors. Cumulatively these inheritances and legacies amounted to huge sums. Good emperors restricted the circle of friends and beneficiaries from whom they would accept a bequest, while the bad, grasping emperors sought to expand the number by interpreting as broadly as possible the group of those indebted to their kindness.⁵⁸ The distinction between those obliged by the emperor's beneficence and those not is an indication that the emperor was not conceived of as a universal patron of all subjects, but a patron of a fortunate minority.

2. Aristocratic patronage

On a smaller scale, the provincial governors and other imperial officials were also valued as benefactors and honoured in inscriptions as *patroni*. As Apuleius wrote, most provincials esteemed their governors for the *fructus*, the individual *beneficia*, they derived from his *bonitas* (*Flor.* 9). Governors favoured relatives, friends and protégés with positions on their staff (see below). During his tenure of office, the governor of a peaceful province spent much of his time hearing legal cases, and was subject to pressure to show favouritism in his decisions. Some advocates cultivated the good will of the governor and advertised their special relationship in dedications to the governor as their *patronus*.⁵⁹ These inscriptions show that strictly impartial justice was not a binding standard; on the other hand, some governors

⁵⁸ Gaudemet (1953). ⁵⁹ E.g. *CIL* VIII 2393, 2734, 2743; *AE* 1911 no. 99; 1917–18 no. 73.

exceeded the bounds of propriety in their favouritism, as when Marius Priscus as governor of Africa accepted hundreds of thousands of sesterces to condemn and eventually to put to death some leading men (Pliny, *Ep.* 11.11). The case of Priscus illustrates how governors were drawn into local disputes. Municipal aristocrats caught up in quarrels among themselves over the distribution of local honours, the management of local finances and building projects were constantly tempted to call on the governor's *bonitas* in favour of one side or the other, despite warnings that disputes should be settled without gubernatorial favouritism so as to preserve local autonomy. Yet at the same time as Plutarch proffered this advice, he also urged a young local leader 'always to have some friends in the circles of the most powerful as a firm support for the city. For the Romans themselves are best disposed to the civic exertions of friends. And it is good that those who enjoy benefits from friendship with the powerful use it for the prosperity of the people' (*Mor.* 814 c).

In return for their *beneficia*, governors received gratitude and (often illegal) gifts. In addition, they had reason to maintain friendships with some grateful provincials in the event that a charge of maladministration was brought after their term of office. Dio Chrysostom advised his fellow Bithynians against factionalism and too close an involvement with the governor, because he could then wrong the province with impunity in the knowledge that he would have witnesses to testify on his side in any trial for misconduct (*Or.* xxxviii.36–7; xxxix.4).

Outside office, the aristocrats of the Roman empire remained important both as distributors of imperial *beneficia* and as patrons in their own right. Their power was a function of their own patronal resources and how well they were placed in the exchange network. A Roman patron's friends and clients were graded, and the relationships should be analysed with attention to differences of status. In addition, the nature of the exchange varied between urban and rural settings.

Rural patronage is likely to have been widespread in defining social relationships in the countryside, to judge by the evidence from the later empire and by modern Mediterranean studies. In addition to kin and neighbours, peasants no doubt sought the support of more powerful men in times of need, for protection or for resources that they themselves lacked.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, as with other aspects of rural society and economy, until the later empire, when rural patronage became problematic for the state administration, only the smallest fragments of information have been preserved from this urban-based civilization. For instance, a monument from imperial Etruria, dedicated by *clientes* to their *patronus*, shows a bull being sacrificed to the *lar* of the *fundus*. The mausoleum of the Secundini and a

⁶⁰ Garnsey and Woolf (1989).

bas relief from the region around Trier and a mosaic from Carthage depict scenes of peasants bearing agricultural products to the lord of the domain and have been plausibly interpreted as a ceremonial presentation of rustic gifts, alluded to in Martial's verses (*Epig.* III.58.33–44) and analogous to a customary practice in patron–client relations in Mediterranean lands down to the present day.⁶¹ If the bonds of dependency between landowners and rural labourers were in fact similar to recent experience in the Mediterranean countryside, then the patronal ideology served to present an essentially exploitative relationship as one of kindly protection – an ideology which the clients attempted to manipulate in their own favour. When such manipulation failed to restrain the exploitation, tenants might look elsewhere for a patron other than their landlord to protect them. The most famous example were the *coloni* of the imperial estates of the *saltus Burunitanus*, who found a protector, Lurius Lucullus, to represent their complaints against their *conductor* to the emperor Commodus (CIL VIII 10570+14464). Here is an illustration of patronal ties, which often contributed to social cohesion, also being valued on occasions of conflict.

The customs and practices of urban patronage are much better attested for the first and second centuries. Seneca (*Brev. Vit.* 14.3) and Tacitus (*Hist.* 1.4) represent the views of great senators about humble clients, who were considered a nuisance but at least constituted the better part of the urban *plebs* in so far as their daily rituals of deference showed them to be properly respectful of the social order. The clients displayed deference at the morning *salutatio* and by accompanying their patron in his daily round of duties. To be attended by a throng of dependants was evidence of power and status; their public support and applause could be useful, for instance during a forensic speech by their benefactor.

The traditional duty of the patron was to protect his humble clients, especially in the law courts. Although there is not much imperial evidence for this duty, it would seem likely that it remained important in a society where the state offered only minimal protection. In return for their humble services, clients could hope for dinner invitations, small sums of money or handouts of food. Some enjoyed a more intimate relationship with their patron, living together with him in his *domus*. It was this situation that raised the legal questions addressed in four of the five passages in the *Digest* using the word 'clients': the master of a house could not bring an action for theft against members of his household, including *clientes*, *liberti* and *mercennarii* (XLVII.2.90); *clientes* and other dependants were considered such a natural accompaniment to a Roman of means that a legacy of *usus* of a house or its stores included use for the benefit of the legatee's slaves, freedmen, *clientes* and guests (VII.8.3, XXXIII.9.3.6); but the householder was held

⁶¹ Veyne (1981b).

responsible for anything his clients or other guests poured out of the windows onto passers-by (IX. 3. 5. 1). In the *Digest*, then, there is no acknowledgement of any special, ancient legal obligations between *patronus* and *cliens*, only an awareness that *clientes* were one of several types of dependant with whom a Roman could be expected to live.

In this respect, the *patronus–cliens* bond stood in clear contrast to the *patronus–libertus* relationship, which was regulated in law. The *libertus*, regarded as in debt to his ex-master for the *beneficium* of manumission, owed *obsequium* ('respect') and more concrete obligations. Bound by duty, a freedman could not freely bring legal actions against his *patronus*, and he had to submit to reprimands and even mild physical punishments (which would have been considered *iniuriæ* in other circumstances). In order to gain their freedom, freedmen sometimes placed themselves under obligation to provide continuing services or *operæ* to their ex-masters. If the freedman predeceased his patron and did not have children, the patron had a right to half his estate; the entire estate of freedmen of Junian Latin status went to their patrons. Perhaps the most severe obligations were placed on freedwomen: if they were manumitted for the purpose of marrying their ex-masters, they were not free, like other women, to divorce and remarry unless they had their patron's consent. The obligations were not entirely one-sided. The *Digest* passages about clients presume that *liberti* also commonly found shelter and sustenance in the house of their patron, who was legally bound to provide *alimenta* to his destitute freedmen. The sense of mutual obligation did not come to an end at death: freedmen often looked after the burial and commemoration of their ex-masters, and were legally obliged to accept the responsibility of *tutela* over the children. Reciprocally, a patron often provided for the burial of his freedmen and their descendants who were valued as perpetuators of the patron's name.

The positions of *cliens* and *libertus* were not as distinct in practice as in law. Both were part of the entourage (*necessarii*) of patrons who ideally considered it a matter of duty and honour to protect 'their own' (*sui*). In return, patrons expected displays of deference from both. The fact that the *libertus* legally owed *obsequium*, and the *cliens* did not, did not prevent the patron from demanding open acknowledgement of subordination and even self-debasement from his clients. The tablets from Vindolanda (22.5; 37.6) show the obsequious language used by free-born clients to address their patrons. Martial's *Epigrams* and Juvenal's *Satires* offer the most extensive evidence about the client's resentment towards this degradation, but literary critics warn against too literal an interpretation of their verses by social historians. Both poets were of equestrian status and not necessarily in touch with the experiences of the truly humble *cliens*. The exaggeration of the client's plight in Martial's *Epigrams* for the sake of humour should be recognized as such, yet the relief expressed in the Preface of Book XII as being

in Spain away from the morning rounds of the capital suggests that the drudgery of the *salutationes* was not merely a literary topos. Juvenal chose to satirize the patron–client relationship as one facet of the degeneration of Roman customs. His miserly patrons either dined alone or invited greedy clients willing to suffer humiliation in order to fill their stomachs (*Sat.* v); the only client truly valued by the patron was the one who could threaten revelation of his patron’s criminal past (*Sat.* III.49 ff.). Juvenal’s portrayal of a grasping world, it may be argued, moves beyond exaggeration to literary invention in the pursuit of a moral theme (for instance, in his rearrangement of the customs associated with the *sportula*) and deserves a sceptical reading from the social historian on that account. However the realism of the poetry is assessed, the repetition of the patron–client motif points to an area of continuing concern in Roman thinking about the breakdown of the proper social order.⁶²

3. *Patrons and protégés*

The indignities associated with being a client explain why the use of the terms *patronus* and *cliens* was such a sensitive matter and was usually avoided in relationships between Romans not too dissimilar in status. For this reason, it has been suggested that exchange relationships between senior and junior senators, or senators and equestrians, did not qualify as *patrocinium* in the minds of the Romans and should not be considered under the heading of patronage by the historian today. But the Romans, whatever the words they applied, thought in terms of *clientela* where the two parties were unequal in *auctoritas*, *dignitas* or *vires* (*Dig.* XLIX.15.7.1) – criteria that were met in a protective friendship between a consular and a new man just starting in the senatorial *cursus*. The emperors called their senatorial associates ‘*amici*’, but the friendship was so unequal that it would not be inappropriate to consider the emperor’s *beneficia* to these men as imperial patronage. Similarly, young aristocrats, especially the majority from new families, depended on the support of senior aristocrats for advancement in their careers. To avoid the demeaning connotations of ‘*cliens*’, perhaps it is best to refer to these as patron–protégé relationships.⁶³ They deserve full discussion because they are central to an understanding of the recruitment of the imperial aristocracy. In the absence of entrance examinations or other universalistic criteria for identifying potential senatorial and equestrian administrators, personal contacts with well-placed men were the means of securing honours and offices and moving up into the imperial élite.

The *beneficia* of offices and honours were but one element in the aristocratic exchange network. In Seneca’s hierarchy of *beneficia*, after life and

⁶² Cloud (1989); Saller (1983); Mohler (1931). ⁶³ Saller (1989).

liberty came the favours of *pecunia* and *honores* (*Ben.* 1.11.2). Wealthy and powerful patrons provided *pecunia* and a variety of other financial services from loans to the exercise of influence in the collection of debts and legacies. The younger Pliny, for instance, bestowed the sum of 300,000 HS on Romatius Firmus, an old hometown friend, in order to raise him from a curial to an equestrian census (*Ep.* 1.19). He gave smaller but still substantial gifts to others to constitute a dowry or to support a career as a centurion (*Ep.* 11.4; VI.32; VI.25). That such beneficence was expected of a patron is suggested by a letter of Fronto in which he said that he would have supplied funds to help his protégé Gavius Clarus carry out his ‘senatoris munia’ if he had had the money. Since he did not, he used his influence with Lucius Verus to help Clarus secure a legacy in Syria (*Ad Verum* 2.7). In an empire without a standard legal system and where litigation was avoided by the élite when possible, social influence was often brought to bear in order to collect legacies and debts. Pliny used the *amicitia* network to bring pressure for the repayment of an old loan to his protégé Atilius Crescens (*Ep.* VI.8). For another protégé, the scholar Suetonius, he exerted his influence to help acquire a suitable estate at the best price (*Ep.* 1.24). Pliny’s generosity illustrates how the aristocratic values of the Roman world encouraged the élite to deploy their wealth and influence as patrons of individuals and municipalities in order to achieve honour and social domination in personal relationships.

As noted above, a traditional patronal duty was protection of the client before the law, and one of the primary meanings of *patronus* in classical literature through the second century is ‘legal advocate’. With specialization in oratory and law, however, it was no longer just a matter of a powerful aristocrat defending his weak client. In the empire a man known for oratorical talent could attract an élite clientele of both friends and protégés, from whom the orator could profit. But such specialization did not reach a level characteristic of the modern world, and patronage remained important. In Quintilian’s view (*Inst.* XII.7.12), it was not honourable for the gentleman advocate to charge fees, as was increasingly the fashion; he should rely for compensation on the traditional sense of reciprocal duty incumbent on the recipient. Furthermore, victory in court depended not only on legal knowledge and effective oratory but also on the influence of the litigants and their patrons.⁶⁴ Fronto wrote to his consular colleague Claudius Severus on behalf of a friend whose case was about to come up before Severus. In an apologetic tone Fronto explained that he did not intend to divert the course of justice but he did ask the judge to look favourably on his friend (*Ad amic.* 1.1). When the emperor Tiberius had tried to restrain such influence through his presence in the courts, it was resented as an

⁶⁴ Ste Croix (1954).

infringement of *libertas* by the *potentes* (Tac. *Ann.* 1.75). Finally, in the absence of any system of credentials, aspiring young advocates continued to rely on a senior figure to introduce them into the courts through a sort of apprenticeship.

The nature of politics changed markedly from the Republic to the Principate, but not in a way to diminish the importance of patronage, as has often been supposed. In fact, quite the reverse: Republican candidates for high office needed ‘suffragium’ in the sense of the popular vote in order to succeed; candidates of the late first and early second centuries of our era depended on ‘suffragatores’ in the sense of influential backers.⁶⁵ The *commendationes*, or letters of recommendation, among Pliny’s and Fronto’s correspondence reveal how senior senators at every stage boosted the careers of protégés, whom they often came to know through sharing a common home town or region.⁶⁶ Aspiring senators and equestrians began their careers in staff positions under senior military or civilian officials in the provinces and Rome. Occasionally they served on the staffs of their fathers, but that was usually not possible. The alternatives were explained by Fronto in a *commendatio* to Claudius Iulianus on behalf of Faustinianus:

if I had had any children of the male sex and these were of an age for the discharge of military duties at this particular time, when you are administering a province with an army, my children should serve under you. This that each of us would desire will almost be fulfilled. For I love Faustinianus, the son of my friend Statianus, no less, and I desire him to be loved no less, than if he were my own son.
(*Ad amic.* 1.5)

If a father could not provide a staff position for his son, a senior friend with a position was sought out, and, failing that, a powerful supporter was found who could write a letter to a friend who could make an appointment. There was no other formal procedure for allotting these posts, and they were conceived as reservoirs of *beneficia* to be granted by senior officials to their own protégés and those of their friends. As Pliny expressed it in a request to his friend Priscus for a post for his junior friend Voconius Romanus:

you would be most eager to embrace opportunities of obliging me and I place myself in no one’s debt more freely. Therefore I have decided for two reasons to ask you in particular for what I most especially want. You command a very great army, from which you have had considerable resources of *beneficia* and also a long time in which you have been able to honour your friends. Turn your attention to my few.

(*Ep.* 11.13)

⁶⁵ Ste Croix (1954); Brunt (1988) 382–442.

⁶⁶ For other *commendationes*, Cotton (1981) and *TabVindol* 22; Syme, *Tacitus* 591, 595, 606, notes the importance of shared *origo*.

The *commendatio* of an influential patron was indispensable for a new man at the beginning of his career and remained useful as the senatorial or equestrian careers progressed and the emperor took a more direct hand in the distribution of offices. Some senatorial magistracies remained open to election in the Senate. For these it was important to have a *suffragator* to canvass his friends for votes in advance and to speak on behalf of his protégé's character in the Senate prior to the vote. The success of the young man depended on, and was a reflection of, the *auctoritas* of his supporter. Pliny described his efforts to attract votes for his young friend Iulius Naso: 'I hang in suspense; I am worried by hope and excited by fear; I do not feel like an ex-consul. For I once more seem to be a candidate for all the offices for which I ran . . . In short, if Naso wins the position he seeks, the honour is his; if he is denied, the rejection is mine' (*Ep.* vi.6). Even when the emperor made the appointment, a supporter with access to the imperial court could influence the decision. Pliny and Fronto sent *commendationes* to the emperor as well as to their friends, and Pliny told of how his *suffragator* Corellius Rufus sang his praises before the emperor Nerva in a discussion of the 'boni iuvenes' of his day (*Ep.* iv.17).

The fact that Pliny in his late thirties was still discussed as one of the 'boni iuvenes' by Nerva and Corellius Rufus shows that Pliny and Corellius were by no means on an equal footing in their *amicitia*. The latter fulfilled a protective role and in return received gratitude and respect from the former. The words typically used to describe the behaviour of a protégé towards his senior friend were *colere et observare*, 'to cultivate and attend to' – words so strongly associated with patronage that one Roman etymology derived *cliens* from *colere*.⁶⁷ But the higher status of the protégé affected the relationship, as Fronto explained in a *commendatio* for Gavius Clarus:

From an early age Gavius Clarus has attended me in a friendly fashion not only with those *officia* by which a senator lesser in age and station properly cultivates [*colit*] a senator senior in rank and years, earning his good will; but gradually our *amicitia* developed to the point that he is not distressed or ashamed to pay me the sort of deference which *clientes* and faithful, hardworking freedmen yield – and not through arrogance on my part or flattery on his. But our mutual regard and true love has taken away from both of us all concern in restraining our *officia*.

(*Ad Verum* 2.7)

The protégé provided private services for his protector and his family, and in public magnified his influence and reputation. Pliny claimed to have played the part of protégé well by almost invariably following the advice of Corellius Rufus. In this way Corellius and his peers extended their political influence beyond their terms of office: their power in Rome came not so

⁶⁷ Servius' commentary on *Aeneid* vi.609.

much from a capacity to issue orders from a high position in an administrative hierarchy, but from this *auctoritas*. Although the Senate was of diminished political importance in the Principate, it remained an arena for conflict and trials in which leading senators needed to marshal their friends and protégés in support.

The networks of patronal relationships among the élite are essential to an understanding of the perpetuation of the traditional senatorial ethos at Rome. As remarkable as the high turnover among senatorial and equestrian families was the strong continuity of élite culture at Rome.⁶⁸ Obviously the continuity cannot be attributed to fathers teaching their sons the ways of senatorial life, and not only because of the high proportion of new men. Sons of senators intent on a senatorial career usually did not have a father alive when they started the *cursus* in their twenties. Iulius Naso had had a father of praetorian rank, but after his death turned for *suffragium* to Pliny, who explained:

A man of such fame and seriousness [as his father] ought to benefit his son through his reputation. But there are many in the Senate to whom he is not known, and many others who knew him but revere none but the living. Therefore, with the loss of his father's glory, which is a great ornament but of little influence, he must rely on himself and his own effort.

(*Ep.* vi.6)

Self-reliance meant seeking out an effective senior supporter like Pliny. Given the high mortality rate among the Romans, Naso was almost certainly one of a large majority in need of a patron to replace his father. Consequently, an explanation of the durability of élite values and customs should focus on the patron–protégé relationship – the advice and support given by senior aristocrats to their junior friends, and the respectful attention offered in return.

The nature of these networks has broad implications for any analysis of social conflict in the Principate. Vertical bonds between Romans of different orders tended to obviate the development of a consciousness of horizontal interests within the orders, casting doubt on historical interpretations based on a premise of hostility between the senatorial and equestrian orders or senators and freedmen. In reality, individual freedmen and equestrians were tied to senators by patronage and friendship. Far from discouraging these bonds, emperors in fact contributed to their strength by responding to senators' requests for imperial favours on behalf of their equestrian protégés and freed clients. From the time of Julius Caesar and Augustus, the experience of emperors shows that this strategy of strengthening the patronal network by distributing *beneficia* through senators was a

⁶⁸ Hopkins, *Death and Renewal*.

more effective strategy for survival than degrading senatorial dignity and provoking tension between the orders.

VII. SOCIAL CHANGE

The above sections have concentrated on how the Roman social hierarchy was organized and legitimated, and on the daily processes and personal bonds by which Romans asserted their places in it. The resulting picture is largely static, and for good reason: the basic hierarchy of *ordines*, the symbols and rituals of status, the avenues of mobility and the personal bonds of dependency remained unchanged from the Flavian through to the Antonine era. And yet whatever the justification for characterizing this century as the period when 'the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous',⁶⁹ it is incumbent upon the historian to attempt to identify less obvious or less benign developments beneath the apparent stability.

Various hypotheses have been advanced about contradictions in social relations or economic production during the Antonine era, suggesting a decline in slave numbers or increasing oppression of the free working classes.⁷⁰ Such arguments come up against the obstacle of evidence so scarce as to make the clear demonstration of underlying social or economic trends impossible. It is by no means certain that slave numbers must have declined through the second century. Roman jurists of the early third century continued to take it for granted that slaves constituted part of the tools of production (*instrumenta*) of farms, and a survey of references to slaves in the early and later empire has been interpreted as showing little change.⁷¹ A decline in the numbers or profitability of slaves has been linked to the worsening condition of the free working peoples of the empire, as the wealthy landowners intensified their exploitation of the latter to compensate for declining profits from slave production. But exploitation is difficult to define and measure even with good evidence; so little is known of rates of taxation and rent that it is impossible to gauge the level of exploitation for any given time and place in the empire, much less to identify secular trends. To be sure, cries about the desperate plight of the peasants are heard from later centuries, but similar complaints can be traced back at least as far as the rhetoric attributed to Tiberius Gracchus.⁷²

One overt indication of the worsening position of the free working class has been found in the emergence in the second century of the formal legal dichotomy between *honestiores* and *humiliores*. The *honestiores* comprised the

⁶⁹ Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Modern Library edn, 1 70.

⁷⁰ See, e.g., Anderson (1974), Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* esp. at 453–503.

⁷¹ Harris (1980b); Bradley (1987); MacMullen (1987).

⁷² See the critique of Ste Croix's thesis by Brunt (1982).

senatorial, equestrian and curial *ordines*, army veterans, and their families. The rescripts of Hadrian, Antoninus Pius and later emperors concerning various crimes specified lighter penalties for men 'born of honourable station' (*honestiore loco nati*) than for the masses of 'humble station' (*humilis loci*). The former were generally punished by deportation, relegation or fines, and were protected from corporal punishment and the death penalty except for the most heinous crimes. At the same time, the humble were more routinely subjected by magistrates to severe and demeaning punishments including flogging and aggravated forms of execution. By the Severan age the 'dual penalty system' was well established, and in addition the testimony of *honestiores* was formally recognized as more credible.⁷³

The significance of these rescripts for the question of exploitation is debatable. On the one hand, the sentiment in favour of those of exalted *dignitas* goes back further than Hadrian, as shown by Pliny's comment on the need for governors to preserve 'distinctions of order and dignity' in dispensing justice (*Ep.* ix.5.3). Legal procedures from the Republic on had favoured men of high status. No law or edict establishing a system of dual penalties is known, arguably because none was needed to establish an age-old principle; rather, elaboration and specification appeared piecemeal in individual rescripts, which do not represent themselves as major innovations.

On the other hand, the clear specification of harsher penalties left little room for whatever was left of the Republican rights accorded to humble citizens. Their struggle for *libertas* during the Republic had, as one focus, exemption from the magistrates' arbitrary use of the *fusces* on Roman citizens.⁷⁴ St Paul's experiences illustrated how citizenship continued to provide some protection from excruciating and humiliating floggings in the early Principate. In the late Antonine age, citizenship still afforded some Christians relief against aggravated forms of execution (Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* v.1.47), and the farmers of the *saltus Burunitanus* thought it worthwhile to protest against the beatings of those of their group who were citizens. By a process that is not at all clear, however, the value of citizenship became negligible; in more and more rescripts humble citizens were classified as *humiliores*, subject to corporal punishment and forms of execution regarded as servile. In this sense the *libertas* won in the Republic was lost. The line between the privileged and the underprivileged was adjusted through the *honestiores/humiliores* distinction so that it corresponded more closely to the division between rich and poor.⁷⁵ Both in the Republic and in the late second century after Christ, soldiers as the source of armed power were

⁷³ Garnsey (1970), (1974b); MacMullen (1986b).

⁷⁴ Brunt (1988) 330–2.

⁷⁵ Ste Croix, *Class Struggle* 455–62.

included among the privileged – as citizens in the Republic, as *veterani* in the later Principate.

The devaluation of citizenship by the late second century should not be understated, but it was essentially a legal change. Most of the lower classes across the empire did not enjoy citizenship until it had already lost its value: for them the partial shift in the criteria of privilege from the citizen/non-citizen dichotomy to the *honestiores/humiliores* had no effect. For the citizen population of Rome and Italy the loss was more serious, but largely irrelevant to the way landlords exploited tenants. There is no reason to think that the *leges Porciae* of the second century B.C. had improved the economic condition of humble citizens, nor conversely that the loss of legal protection from magistrates allowed an intensification of exploitation. The landlord of Pliny's letter (III.19) applied economic violence to his tenants whose citizenship gave no relief. Physical violence against tenants by private landlords was no more legal in A.D. 192 than in A.D. 70 – and yet was still used. The submergence of humble citizens into the broader mass of *humiliores* represented a decline in status but not a change in relations of production.

The *honestiores/humiliores* distinction is one aspect of a wider phenomenon of a gradual change in the geographical distribution of rank and privilege during the Principate, a development which laid the basis for a fundamental conflict of interests in the later empire. In the Republic senators and ordinary citizens enjoyed (albeit in differing proportions) benefits and privileges as members of the conquering power: the latter received special legal rights and distributions of provincial grain in Rome; the former were enriched with booty and slaves to work their Italian estates; and all Italy was exempted from the land tax. Under the Augustan regime there was no inevitable conflict of material interests between the emperor and an imperial élite from Italy who could comfortably cooperate in exploiting the provinces to pay for the administration and defence of the empire as well as amenities at home. By the end of the second century, however, men from the provinces came to dominate in the senatorial and equestrian *ordines* (section v above). Even after the requirements established by Trajan and Marcus Aurelius that senators invest a third or a quarter of their fortunes in Italian land, most of the landed wealth of the new ruling élite lay in the provinces and was therefore subject to the exactions of the state. Furthermore, it was worked mainly by a non-slave labour force, which, unlike slaves, was a potential source of manpower for the army. In all likelihood, then, the use of slaves on senatorial estates did decline, not necessarily because the numbers of slaves declined in Italy, but because the composition of the senatorial *ordo* changed. Ultimately, it was in the individual self-interest of these provincial aristocrats not to cooperate with the imperial administration in exploiting the provinces, but to

withdraw their manpower and financial resources from the reach of the government. The ensuing conflict of interests was a deep and recurring problem that plagued the late imperial administration in its struggle to survive.

CHAPTER 29

FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD

RICHARD SALLER

Family organization and practices are fundamental to an understanding of Roman society. Daily life was organized in the household, at the core of which was the family. To most Romans property and rank, or the lack of them, came through inheritance within the family. Consequently, major social developments were intimately related to family practices. The changing composition of the imperial élite, for example, must be understood in terms of reproduction, and dispersion or concentration of wealth – all basic matters of family behaviour and strategy. Furthermore, the rising new religion of Christianity partially defined itself in contrast to prevailing pagan sexual and other family mores; an understanding of Christianity therefore requires a knowledge of what went before. Moreover, since much of Roman law was concerned with family matters, the Roman family left a legacy through the law for later Europe, a legacy that continues to be felt today.

I. LANGUAGE AND IDEALS

A semantic discussion of the vocabulary related to family life offers a convenient starting-point for an examination of Roman conceptions and ideals of the family.¹ *Familia* and *domus*, the two Latin words for ‘family’, had different semantic ranges and emphases from the word ‘family’ today. Ulpian (*Dig. L.16.195*) offers a series of definitions of *familia*. First, there is the *res* or property belonging to the head of the family (*paterfamilias*) – an archaic meaning rarely found in classical texts apart from the law. As for persons, *familia* in its narrowest sense encompassed the *paterfamilias* and those in his *potestas*, usually sons, daughters, and sons’ children, including formally adopted children. Again, this was a technical usage, found mainly in the legal sources, according to which a young boy could constitute a *familia* of one, if he had been emancipated or if his father and paternal grandfather had died. More broadly, those agnates who had once lived together under a *paterfamilias* could be described as a *familia*, as could all

¹ Saller (1984). For a general discussion of the Roman family, see Dixon (1992).

those claiming descent through males from a single ancestor. In the latter sense, *familia* was used interchangeably with *gens* or those bearing the same *nomen*. Finally, *familia* was most commonly used in classical literature to refer to the slave staff of a household or owner. No definition in Ulpian's list corresponds to the primary meaning of 'family' today – that is, 'father, mother and children'. In classical marriages the woman who did not come under the authority (*in manu*) of her husband (and most did not, see below) was not in the *familia* of her husband and children. Nor would we today describe the young orphan boy as a 'family'. Historical interpretations of these semantic peculiarities must take account of the fact that the first two definitions were legal archaisms in the early imperial era: they were not used in the social discourse of the time about the 'family' and hence are not a guide to classical conceptions of the family as a social unit.

Domus was the word commonly used in classical discussions of family and household, but it, too, does not correspond with the contemporary primary meaning of 'family'. In addition to the basic physical structure of the house, *domus* was often used to refer to those living in the household – not only father, mother and children, but also coresident relatives, slaves and other dependants. Like *familia*, *domus* had a broader meaning, including all relatives, both agnatic and cognatic, living and dead. Because *domus* was not limited to agnatic kin as was *familia*, it became a more suitable focus for the evaluation of a man's family background and status during the Principate. Cicero in his orations and letters placed the emphasis on *familia* and *nomen* (that is, agnatic lineage) when discussing the high birth of aristocrats. The younger Pliny, by contrast, never mentioned *familia* in this connection a century and a half later; rather, he stressed the wider *domus*, the quality of a man's relations by blood and by marriage, through women as well as men. This shift of emphasis away from agnatic lineage went hand in hand with the replacement of the old noble families by new Italian and provincial families whose ancestry meant little in Rome and who made their way into high society in part through strategic marriages.

Since *familia* and *domus* did not designate the core family, Roman men referred to their family with the phrase *uxor liberique*. For more distant kin Latin possessed an elaborate classificatory terminology, which distinguished agnatically related uncles, aunts and cousins from the rest. Indeed, the jurist Paulus presented a list of 448 types of relatives extending from the *tritavus* or great-great-great-great-grandfather to the *trinepos* or great-great-great-great-grandson with collateral relatives out to the sixth degree. This highly differentiated terminology has given rise to etymological discussions by historical linguists, anthropologists and historical sociologists interested in the family – much of it highly speculative or misguided. The classification system, at least in the classical period, was an artefact of law rather than a principle of organization of social relations. As Paulus

himself noted, the juriconsult needed to know the system in order to resolve questions of inheritance, *tutela*, and exemption from testifying in court against close relatives. In discourse about social relations and obligations, the classificatory terms were generally not used; when they were (as in Sen. *Ben.* v.18–19), they could be used indiscriminately so as to suggest that neither social roles nor spouse selection were closely associated with them. The far more common vocabulary of daily family life included words such as *propinquus* (relative), *necessarius* (relative, connection, friend) and *mei, tui, sui* (mine, yours, his/hers). These words were vague, not discriminating between agnatic and cognatic – in fact, the latter four did not even distinguish between relatives on the one hand and freedmen, clients and other dependants on the other.

At the centre of Roman thinking about ideal family relations was the virtue of *pietas*. Often translated as ‘filial piety’, *pietas* is commonly misrepresented as the virtue of sons’ obedience and duty towards their fathers. While *pietas* certainly entailed respectful obedience from sons, it encompassed far more. It was a virtue to be displayed by a son not only towards his father, but also towards his mother and siblings, and it was owed by fathers to their wives and children. In fact, *paterna pietas* towards children occurs in the *Digest* just as often as filial *pietas* toward fathers. Therefore, within the family (and not just the *familia*) *pietas* was not the counterpart of *patria potestas*, not primarily the obedience owed to paternal authority. Rather, it was the reciprocal duty of all family members, and it entailed affection and compassion in addition to duty. For the elder Pliny (*HN* VII.121) the paradigm of *pietas* was a daughter who kept her wretched mother alive in prison by nursing her at her own breast. Far from exemplifying obedience, the daughter showed her virtue by contravening the authority of the *patria*. Similarly, early imperial rhetors spoke of ‘pious’ sons who acted compassionately towards other members of their family against the orders of the *paterfamilias*. *Pietas*, understood as a reciprocal bond of affectionate duty concentrated within the nuclear family, makes the Roman family appear less hierarchical, less oppressive or exotic to the modern eye than is sometimes suggested.²

II. THE FAMILY IN LAW AND IN PRACTICE

The most pervasive images of the Roman family derive from legal rules and satirical verses: the severe *paterfamilias* wielding almost unlimited coercive and financial powers over his *familia*, or the promiscuous rich wife with a husband for each consular year, or the son teetering between pious submission and violent rebellion against his father. The legal and literary evi-

² Saller (1988).

dence is indispensable to family history, but its limitations must be recognized and methodological care taken. Satirical caricature and other moralizing literature obviously are not reliable guides to what was true or typical of the Roman family, and it would be naive to draw from Juvenal the conclusion, for example, that marriage had widely degenerated to the point that serial divorce and remarriage amounted to legalized adultery. On the other hand, this evidence is not to be simply dismissed as exaggeration and therefore false; it is valuable for understanding the processes of establishing moral values and arousing concern about certain moral issues. While at special critical junctures, such as death and inheritance, the law no doubt regulated behaviour, at most times the law probably no more determined family practices than it does today. Even at those critical junctures the enormous flexibility of Roman legal instruments enabled Romans to reach diverse goals in diverse ways.

The lifetime legal powers of the *pater* over his *familia*, including sons and their children, have been understood in the past to imply that Romans lived in extended family households. The legal partnership called *ercto non cito*, or undivided ownership of the family property inherited by a Roman's *sui heredes*, has given rise to the view that brothers often lived together with their families in joint fraternal households after their father's death. Both kinds of multiple family household existed, but to see them as typical is to make the mistake of interpreting a legal institution as a sociological commonplace.³ The evidence, demographic, literary and legal, suggests that multiple family households were common neither as an ideal nor in practice. Nothing in Latin literature holds up the three-generation family as an ideal in the way that it is found, for instance, in Chinese culture. Despite the Chinese ideal of a harmonious extended family household, tensions regularly arose between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law or between sisters-in-law, and were a source of literary topoi and maxims. Interestingly, such stories are absent from Latin authors, nor did Roman law give much attention to all of the legal problems that one would expect from joint fraternal ownership. Commemorative practice, a major visible symbolic expression of family bonds, offers equally little evidence of extended family units. The relationship between paternal grandfather and grandchild, characteristic of a patriarchal three-generation household, was very rarely celebrated on funerary monuments. Nor is the bond between adult brothers, the basis of *frèreche*, conspicuous in extant funerary dedications: outside North Africa, commemoration from one brother to another was infrequent and no more common than from sister to brother. Finally, on demographic grounds alone the three-generation household cannot have been usual. Short life expectancy and late marriage for men meant that only about one Roman in

³ Crook (1967a).

ten was born during the lifetime of his paternal grandfather and only one in fifty had a *paternus avus* alive during his teenage years.⁴ In principle and in practice, the simple family formed the core of the Roman household, and it will be the main focus of the chapter.

1. *Marriage in law and in practice*⁵

The Roman state did little to certify the formation of a *matrimonium iustum*: such a marriage was made by a man and a woman living together with the intention of being married (*affectio maritalis*).⁶ Because the offspring of a *matrimonium iustum* were Roman citizens, the state did define who was eligible: generally speaking, male citizens over fourteen years of age and female citizens over twelve. There were some additional, specific limitations: for example, incestuous marriages between close kin were prohibited; senatorial men could not form *nuptiae iustae* with freedwomen, nor provincial officials with women under their governance, nor *tutores* with their wards from the latter part of Marcus Aurelius' reign. Through certain archaic rituals some women entered the authority (*manus*) of their husbands upon marriage, but far more common during the Principate was the marriage without *manus*, the wife remaining in her father's *familia* and under his *potestas*.

The husband's normal lack of authority had important consequences for the property regime of the household. *Matrimonium iustum* was conventionally accompanied by a dowry from the wife or her father to the husband in order to underwrite the expenses of the household. The dowry came under the ownership of the husband (or his *paterfamilias*) for the duration of the marriage, but had to be returned if the marriage was dissolved by divorce or death of the husband.⁷ Any non-dotal property which the woman inherited or otherwise received – and it could be considerable among the élite – remained under the ownership of the wife. She had a completely independent right to dispose of it, and the jurists went to considerable lengths to protect it from her husband: no major gifts could be legally transferred between husband and wife, and a wife could not stand surety for her husband's debts after the *senatus consultum Velleianum*.⁸

The independence of the Roman wife was further enhanced by the ease of divorce in law. Either spouse could unilaterally end the marriage by an action as simple as 'sending a messenger' (*nuntium mittere*). The divorced woman might have to forfeit a fraction of her dowry to support children left behind in the husband's household or as a penalty for moral infractions (e.g. adultery), but she retained her non-dotal property and much of her

⁴ Saller and Shaw (1984a); Saller (1987a). ⁵ Treggiari (1991a).

⁶ Corbett (1930); Volterra (1940). ⁷ Saller (1994) ch. 9. ⁸ Crook (1986a), (1986b).

dowry. The law, then, presents the Roman conjugal family as a rather odd unit (at least by comparison with other Mediterranean societies) in so far as the wife was not part of the *familia* and was independent with regard to property.⁹

The law influenced social practice, but must not be read as a direct representation of behaviour. Some Roman women unquestionably used their wealth and their freedom to leave the *domus* as a means to exert independence and to wield influence within the household and outside it. The actual frequency of divorce during the Principate is the subject of debate and cannot be known with precision.¹⁰ Even if the rate of divorce was lower than suggested by some historians, however, it was considered to be a real possibility, to be taken into account when making marriage arrangements. Moreover, a wife could use her property to good effect without threatening to leave her husband. In an unusually revealing aside, the jurist Papinian noted that a husband was not to be construed as exerting undue, illegal influence over the formulation of his wife's will when he tried to soothe her anger 'by husband's talk, as is usual' (*ut fieri solet . . . maritali sermone . . .*) in order to avoid being cut out of her will (*Dig. xxix.6.3*). In other words, it was a commonplace that a husband would go some way to keep his wife happy in order to benefit from her testamentary discretion. The satirical poets' dread of marrying a rich woman who would dominate and emasculate her husband was not without some basis.

Yet many other features of Roman marriage ideals and customs, and the wider culture, tended to make Roman wives something less than equal, independent companions.¹¹ First, there was usually a large age-gap between husbands and wives. A survey of funerary dedications in the romanized western empire reveals a major shift during the life course of men from commemoration by parents to commemoration by wives; the change of commemorators comes in the men's late twenties. A comparable shift to commemoration by husbands is detectable for deceased women in their late teens. The changes in commemorative patterns are best explained by the hypothesis that Roman men conventionally first married in substantial numbers in their late twenties and women in their late teens. Literary and legal sources, which are concerned with the élite, suggest earlier marriage ages for both senatorial men and women – early twenties for men and early to mid teens for women.¹² The substantial age-gap, often even wider than a decade because of remarriage by older men, must have encouraged the sort of paternalistic relationship of husband to wife that can be detected in Pliny's letters about his young wife Calpurnia.

Pliny's letters also illustrate the fundamental subordination of women to

⁹ Humbert (1972); Crook (1967b); Gardner (1986).

¹⁰ Bradley (1991) ch. 7; Treggiari (1991b); Corbier (1991). ¹¹ Shaw (1991a).

¹² Hopkins (1965a); Syme (1987); Saller (1987a), (1994) ch. 2; Shaw (1987a).

men in Roman culture. Men alone were eligible to exercise authority in public life. Calpurnia took an interest in Pliny's public career, but only as an observer from home. The traditional ideal, according to Columella (*Rust.* xii pref.8–10), held husband and wife to be equal partners with different spheres of interest, the woman watching over affairs within the *domus* while her husband handled affairs outside. But this ideal of equality was unrealistic in view of the high value placed on public honours and public authority. The cultural premise that public authority was the monopoly of males must have sometimes affected relationships within the household, despite the lack of formal legal power of husband over wife. The evidence is meagre, but a line from Seneca is suggestive. Why, he asks, does a man lament the loss of *libertas* in the state, when he himself reacts in anger to back talk from his slaves, freedmen, clients and wife (*De ira* 3.35). Here the wife is treated as another in a series of dependants in the household, not as an equal.

Nor was the wife's independence with regard to property always observed in practice as clearly as it was expressed in law.¹³ Husbands often assumed management of the wives' estates for the duration of the marriage, making it necessary to list the property so that it could be separated again in the event of divorce or death (*Dig.* xxiii.3.9.3). During the marriage gifts and loans were, in fact, exchanged despite their legal invalidity; generally there was no one to issue a legal challenge until a final accounting on death or divorce. Upon death it was apparently common to clean up any such problems through a provision in the will of a legacy to the spouse of all that had been given *volgari modo* (and illegally) during the course of the marriage (*Dig.* xxx.109 pref.). Women of wealthy families often brought to their marriage slaves as well as other property, so that in many households there was not one *familia* under a single *dominus*, but two slave staffs, one belonging to the husband and the other to the wife. It was not, however, practical to maintain a strict division as the slaves intermingled – which was the justification for executing the slaves of both in a household where one master was murdered (*Dig.* xxix.5.1.5). In sum, Roman private law afforded remarkable opportunities for women to wield independent economic power in their families, but in the practical course of family life some women forfeited much of their independence.

One other point must be stressed in connection with marriage in law and in practice: in the second century many of those living in Rome and Italy, and most of those beyond, were simply not eligible for *matrimonium iustum* because one or the other spouse lacked citizenship. Consequently, many conjugal unions took the form of *contubernium*, *concubinatus*, or cohabitation.¹⁴ These alternative unions used to be interpreted, from an

¹³ Crook (1990). ¹⁴ Rawson (1966), (1974); Treggiari (1981a); Weaver (1991).

anachronistic, modern viewpoint, as a facet of moral decline. But this is to overlook the narrowly legal nature of *matrimonium iustum* and *familia*. Concubinage was in fact considered to be an honourable, monogamous arrangement between a former master and his freedwoman, not an immoral relationship. Even slaves, ineligible to form their own *familia* in law, were nevertheless recognized as ‘family’ units bound together by the natural ties of *pietas*.

Finally, since the historian’s task is to trace change, it must be asked whether developments in the ideology or practice of marriage can be detected during the Principate. The traditional view marked the conversion to Christianity as a turning-point towards the standards of marriage, sexuality and family so familiar in later Europe. Revisionists more recently have stressed the antecedents to Christian moral precepts found in philosophical writings of the Principate.¹⁵ Authors such as Musonius Rufus and Plutarch highly valued a proper marriage in living the good life, criticizing the double standard of chastity applied to men and women, the practice of infant exposure, and other common family practices. Pliny and Calpurnia are sometimes held up by historians today as the paradigm of the new marriage ideals.

Although pagan philosophers did anticipate some Christian teachings, the value attached to affection and companionship in marriage by imperial aristocrats should not be exaggerated. The conjugal ideal of affectionate devotion between husband and wife was a traditional one, not an invention of the imperial aristocracy. Musonius Rufus did not push his argument about the conjugal relationship so far as to claim that wives ought to be treated as equal companions: he advocated the education of women in philosophy, but on the grounds that an educated woman would ‘be energetic, strong to endure pain, prepared to nourish her children at her own breast, and to serve her husband with her own hands, and willing to do things considered fit for slaves’ (frag. 3). Nor is it obvious that aristocratic moralists of the Principate were more concerned with the regulation of marriage than of other facets of life, for instance, the consumption of food. Musonius Rufus and others were challenging conventional norms when they insisted that male sexual activity be limited to marriage, but they do not appear to have noticeably influenced behaviour.¹⁶ Even as ostentatiously an upstanding philosopher as Marcus Aurelius took a concubine after his wife’s death, perhaps because he, like other aristocrats, regarded a second marriage as a threat to already established succession arrangements among children by the previous marriage. In such circumstances, cohabitation with a concubine of a lower social order may have been regarded as

¹⁵ Veyne (1978); Rousselle (1988); Dixon (1991) dates the change back to the Republic.

¹⁶ Benabou (1987); Cohen and Saller (1994).

morally preferable to the introduction of a stereotypically evil stepmother, a *noverca*, into the household.

Further, the impact of Christianity on the mores of marriage should not be understated. Whereas the marital and sexual prescriptions of Musonius Rufus were read and heard by a very few, and observed by even fewer, the Christian Church came to have a far broader effect by persistently preaching a ‘democracy of sexual shame’ to all of its converts.¹⁷ For the second century apologist Justin and other Christians, reformed marital and sexual practices were central to the differentiation of Christians from pagans – a demonstration of the moral superiority of the former.

2. *Fathers, mothers and children*

The strong influence of the law on Roman family studies is especially apparent in discussions of parent–child relations, where the emphasis is often on the father and *patria potestas*. Scant attention is given to mothers, who did not belong to the same *familia*, exercised no legal power over their children, were not eligible to act as *tutores* for their children, and were not even recognized as related to their children in the civil law of intestacy until the Hadrianic *senatus consultum Tertullianum* and the *senatus consultum Orphitianum* of A.D. 178.

By contrast, the *paterfamilias* for the duration of his life held powers over his children that are shocking to moderns (though not unparalleled in traditional societies).¹⁸ He was entitled to exercise physical coercion including the power of life and death. Perhaps more important, the *paterfamilias* enjoyed a monopoly of ownership of the property of the *familia*. Children *in potestate*, no matter what their age, could not exercise *dominium* over any property, even if they had acquired it. But fathers could grant children a fund, a *peculium*, which was theirs to add to and draw from with certain restrictions. The law also gave the *paterfamilias* a strong measure of control over the marriage of his children: throughout the Principate the consensus of both father and son or daughter was required for a valid marriage, and only in the latter part of the Principate was the father’s power to terminate his child’s marriage restricted.¹⁹ These and the other paternal powers, together with the absence of an age of majority, made the Roman father a striking figure of authority within the *familia* and prompted Gaius’ often quoted statement that ‘there are virtually no other men who have such a power over their children as we have’ (*Inst.* 1.55).

The Roman father has served as a paradigm for absolute authority in western thought over the centuries, but in practice the severity of *patria*

¹⁷ Brown (1987) 243. ¹⁸ Voci (1980); Saller (1994) ch. 5.

¹⁹ Matringe (1971); Treggiari (1982), (1984); Saller (1994) ch. 6.

potestas was mitigated in numerous ways.²⁰ First, demographic analysis of the Roman family indicates that the lack of an age of majority for Roman children had only a limited effect. Owing to the late age of men at first marriage and the large number of births per family required to compensate for high infant mortality, the age-gap between generations must have been large – an average of thirty-five to forty years (somewhat less among the senatorial élite who married younger). This large generation gap, surprising to the modern eye, is derived from a sophisticated computer simulation incorporating recent estimates of life expectancy and ages at first marriage, and is corroborated by the Egyptian census date.²¹ As a result of late marriage by men and high mortality, most Roman children lost their fathers before they reached adulthood and married. By the time most women married around the age of twenty, about half were *sui iuris* owing to their fathers' death; by the age of twenty-five – the age at which a *curator* was considered to be no longer necessary for guidance in financial affairs – only a third of Romans still had a father alive, a proportion that declined to a fifth by the time most men married around the age of thirty. The ex-consul who had reached the highest magistracy but was still legally unable to own property no doubt existed, but must have been the exception: perhaps one of twenty consuls was still *in potestate*. The great majority of senators without living fathers would have needed to look outside their immediate families for senior supporters to promote their careers.²²

The father's legal powers of physical coercion, enhanced by Republican legends of magisterial fathers executing their sons for lack of discipline on the field of battle, have done much to create the image of a severe authoritarian figure.²³ But the use of the latter right against adult children is not attested after the reign of Augustus, and the Augustan case of the equestrian Tricho, who was nearly lynched in Rome for beating his son to death, illustrates the severe social pressure against inflicting such extreme punishment (Sen. *Clem.* 1.15.1). Fathers did, however, make use of their right to expose their newborns, leaving them to die or, more often, to be enslaved.²⁴ The *paterfamilias* wielded less extreme coercive power over children and slaves, whose positions in law were similar in many respects. It would be wrong, however, to conclude from the legal rules that Roman children lived in an atmosphere as oppressive as servitude. Beyond the law the Romans clearly distinguished between paternal authority and that of the master. The master–slave relationship was recognized as inherently exploitative,

²⁰ Crook (1967a); Saller (1986); Eyben (1991); Rawson (1991) ch. 1.

²¹ See above, ch. 27. The slightly lower average age difference between father and child in the Egyptian data can be explained by the fact that men in brother–sister marriages tended to marry younger than others, a pattern that would not have affected the average in other areas of the empire.

²² Saller (1987a). ²³ Wiedemann (1989) 28–9; Bettini (1991) ch. 1.

²⁴ Harris (1986); see Garnsey (1991) on infant exposure and the debate about parental indifference.

and slaves were believed to be naturally recalcitrant; consequently, as Cicero noted, the exercise of authority over slaves required 'breaking' them. Cicero explicitly contrasted this coercive authority with paternal authority, which was considered beneficent and therefore readily obeyed (*Rep.* III.25). Moreover, although Roman law did warrant filial obedience and respect, that should not be interpreted simply as a confirmation of patriarchy since mothers as well as fathers were said to deserve *obsequium*.

The distinction between son and slave becomes apparent through a study of the basic symbol of coercion in the Roman world, the whip. Subjection to the whip was associated with servility, whether it be subjection to a Roman magistrate in the public sphere or subjection to a master in the household. Precisely because whipping was thought to instil a servile character, Quintilian's *Institutes* and the *De liberis educandis* ascribed to Plutarch strongly recommended against it in rearing and educating free-born children:

Children ought to be led to honourable practices by means of encouragement and reasoning, and most certainly not by blows nor by ill treatment; for it is surely agreed that these are fitting rather for slaves than for free-born; for so they grow numb and shudder at their tasks, partly from the pain of blows, partly also on account of the hybris.

(*De lib. educ.* 12)

It is impossible to know how far these prescriptions were followed, but there is very little early imperial evidence for the use of the whip on sons or daughters beyond childhood, nor do Roman authors offer the kind of advice, so often found in St Augustine (*De Civ. Dei* 19.16) and later Christian tracts on child-bearing, to the effect that children need to be beaten in order to force them to accept the divinely sanctioned hierarchy of authority.²⁵

The father's control over the family estate before and after his death could in principle have given him tremendous power over his children, yet social pressures and economic realities in many cases restrained that power. The many poor fathers probably gained very little leverage from their monopoly of *dominium* and their testamentary power. During their lifetime the family income came from labour; in law fathers may have owned their children's wages as well as their own, but a rescript of Antoninus Pius implies that in practice adult sons were regarded as supporting themselves by their wages (*Dig.* xxv.3.5.7). It is difficult to believe that the Roman administrative machinery was adequate to enforce the obligation to support ageing parents on reluctant children among the humble masses.²⁶ And the threat of disinheritance cannot have carried much weight in such families.

²⁵ Shaw (1987b); Saller (1994) ch. 6. ²⁶ Bradley (1991) ch. 5.

The position of a wealthy father was very different. He could deny his children the funds to live well; he could refuse his son money to establish an independent household or to pursue a public career; and finally he could disinherit his children if he had grounds, or at least limit the inheritance of *sui heredes* to a mere quarter of the *patrimonium*. Imperial literature contains more than a few examples of sons and daughters whose existence was made uncomfortable through disinheritance or the threat of it.

Nevertheless, many propertied fathers did not make full use of their legal powers. It was customary, even a matter of honour (to judge from Cicero's letters), for fathers to provide their sons with a substantial *peculium* or allowance, which allowed sons a day-to-day financial independence. Austere fathers who tried to exercise tight financial control risked driving their sons into the hands of creditors and even to patricide in order to hasten the inheritance. The *senatus consultum Macedonianum* of the late Julio-Claudian period sought to suppress such behaviour by taking away legal remedies from lenders who made loans to those *in potestate*.²⁷ At the other end of the spectrum, Martial satirized the son who was spending his indulgent father's money so fast that he would be left with no inheritance (*Epig.* III.10). Although fathers who died wealthy enjoyed the influence that came from wide testamentary discretion, in practice there were various pressures to leave the bulk of the patrimony to *sui heredes*, not least of which was the desire to have the *familia* continue with its status intact.²⁸ It was Plutarch's impression that children were usually so certain of their paternal inheritance that they could behave badly in the confidence that they would not be disinherited (*Mor.* 497 A).

It is important to realize that the potential difficulties and constraints on the Roman son were not the peculiar result of *patria potestas* in Roman law, but can be found in many traditional, agrarian societies where the wealthy have depended on inherited property rather than labour. Comparative evidence suggests that conflict between father and son is not uncommon in situations where they have to live off a single patrimony. Roman sons had one advantage that adult sons in many other societies have not had – that is, mothers with independent property to lend support. The Roman son was not reliant solely on his father, because he could hope for support and an inheritance from his mother who also had a moral responsibility for her children's welfare. The jurist Scaevola considered the case of a son in *potestate* who nevertheless 'was accustomed to deal with his mother's property and used his mother's money with her consent to buy slaves and other property [and] drew up bills of sale in his own name' (*Dig.* XXIV.1.58.2).

²⁷ Daube (1947).

²⁸ The duty was recognized in law in the *querela inofficiosi testamenti*, on which see Renier (1942). See also Champlin (1991) and Corbier (1985).

The extreme case is illustrated by Pliny's report (*Ep.* iv.2) on the relationship between M. Aquillius Regulus and his son. The boy's mother bequeathed him a substantial estate, but only on condition that his father emancipate him – which he did in order to avoid losing the estate. Here a mother used her wealth not only to influence the exercise of paternal power, but to break it altogether. Indeed, according to Pliny, in a reversal of roles Regulus then lavished treats on his son so that he would inherit his son's estate – a goal he achieved upon his son's premature death.

The story of Regulus' family shows why it is misleading to characterize the dynamics of power in the Roman family simply as patriarchal. The mother's independence from her husband's authority and wealth complicated and interfered with the legal relationship of authority and obedience between father and child. But the almost complete absence of mothers' voices in Roman literature makes it difficult to write a wholly satisfying account of their relationship with their children.²⁹ Nevertheless, several features bearing on the mother's position in the household are worth noting.

The pervasive presence of slaves in the households of propertied Romans must have affected all family relationships, and especially the nurturing role of the mother.³⁰ Despite the advice of Musonius Rufus and others, the tasks of child-rearing from nursing on were regularly assigned to slaves. Quintilian (*Inst.* i.1.4–5) assumed that the first task of a new father was to choose slaves to feed and look after the newborn.³¹ Slaves were so much the dominant presence in the lives of young children in wealthy families that the orator worried about the speech habits that children would pick up from slaves. Tacitus (*Dial.* 28–9) believed that the moral decline of Romans could be attributed in part to the shift of responsibility for child-rearing from stern *matronae* to slaves chosen because they were useless for any other tasks in the household. One might assume that the substitution of a slave for the mother in the nurturing role inhibited the development of the mother–child bond, but the Roman evidence is inadequate to demonstrate the hypothesis. If true, however, it might help to explain the willingness of some Roman mothers to divorce and leave their children in the household of their former husbands. In the context of frequent break-up and re-formation of marriages, the slave *nutrix* and *paedagogus* may often have been the ones who supplied stability in children's lives – hence, the attachment of Romans like the younger Pliny to his *nutrix*.

On the other hand, a different feature of the Roman family, the age-gap between husband and wife, may have tended to increase the reliance of children on mothers.³² The mother was usually much younger than the

²⁹ Dixon (1988) uses the male sources to good effect.

³⁰ Bradley (1991) ch. 3; Saller (1987b).

³¹ Bradley (1991) ch. 2. ³² Dixon (1988).

father – in fact, often intermediate in age between father and children – and consequently more likely to see her children through to adulthood. Whereas only a third of Roman twenty-five-year-olds had a father alive, nearly half still had a mother. That demographic pattern, together with the respect traditionally accorded *matronae* in Roman culture, placed some mothers in a special position of care and influence over their children as they grew older. It was Agricola's mother who guided his education away from philosophy. With regard to financial matters, mothers not only had their own resources to devote to their children as they saw fit, but they also recur in legal discussions of problems arising from *tutela* of children after the death of their father, even though women were barred from acting as *tutores*. Fathers and magistrates must often have recognized that no one would have the children's interests more at heart than the mothers. Consequently, mothers were expected to take the initiative in requesting a *tutor*, sometimes advised in the selection of one and continued to advise the *tutor* on the management of their children's property; finally, they acted as watchdog to ensure the integrity of the *tutor*, and could bring legal action for mismanagement even though women were generally not permitted to initiate legal actions (*Dig.* xxvi.6.1; xxvi.6.2.2; xxvi.7.5.8; xxvi.10.1.7). In addition, Roman law offered a means to allow fathers to entrust their wives with effective management of the patrimony by bequeathing the estate to their children but lifetime usufruct to their wives (*Dig.* vii.2.8; xxxvi.2.26.2).³³ In sum, mothers were more closely engaged with their children and more influential than is apparent from a reading of Gaius with his emphasis on *potestas*.

III. KIN BEYOND THE HOUSEHOLD

The highly developed classificatory vocabulary of kinship in Latin has given rise to theories about the different roles of types of kin, with a special distinction between paternal and maternal kin.³⁴ This vocabulary, however, was not common in everyday usage. Furthermore, the explanation offered for the distinction – that young Romans enjoyed warmer and friendlier relationships with their maternal relatives because they did not compete for property in the same *familia* – is based on an assumption no longer valid in the classical era when the old agnatic rules of heirship in the *ius civile* had in many respects given way to broad recognition of cognates on mother's and father's sides of the family. For every kind of support offered by kin beyond the household, examples can be found of both agnatic and non-agnatic relatives providing it.

The literary and legal sources give a wealth of illustrations of the *officia*

³³ Saller (1994) ch. 7. ³⁴ Bettini (1991).

bestowed by kin on one another. These *officia* took on a special importance in a state which provided virtually no systems of support for those in need. The nature of the *officia* required of course changed through a Roman's lifetime. A Roman child was dependent for nourishment and education in the first instance on his parents, but perhaps only a third of the children were fortunate enough to have both parents alive to support them through their teens, and a fifth lost both parents before the age of twenty. When the nuclear family prematurely broke up through death or divorce, it was natural to look to relatives for all types of support. The law recognized the obligation of kin and dependants to take orphans into their home and to raise them. There was some doubt about who could be compelled to meet this duty, but according to Ulpian the better view was that the praetor could so compel 'a freedman, a parent or some other relative by blood or marriage' (*libertum, parentem vel quem alium de adfinibus cognatisve* (*Dig. XXVII.2.1.2*)). In the case of children whose father had died but whose mother continued to raise them, there was still a need for a tutor to administer the estate left to them. Originally this had been a duty for agnates, who had an interest as the next heirs in line in seeing to the preservation of the estate. By the classical period, that special agnatic claim on the estate had weakened, and *tutela* came to be regarded as a burdensome and possibly costly duty to be performed by kin of any sort or freedmen, the choice often made by the deceased in the will.

Even if relatives did not take on the primary responsibilities of child-rearing, there were various other forms of support needed by Roman children as they grew. A grandmother or a maternal uncle, for example, might provide food and shelter for a young *nepos*, and whether they could reclaim the costs depended on whether they had been moved by feelings of *pietas* or had made the provision on the understanding that they would be reimbursed from the child's patrimony (*Dig. III.5.26.1; III.5.33*). As girls grew out of childhood, they normally required a dowry to make an honourable marriage. Where the woman's father (living or dead) could not supply sufficient funds, relatives might be asked for help. The woman lauded in the Augustan inscription (*FIRA* III no. 69, lines 42 ff.) exhibited her virtue by bestowing dowries on behalf of her impoverished relatives, and the younger Pliny made a generous contribution to the dowry of a kinswoman, Calvina, regarding it as an *officium adfinitatis* (*Ep. II.4*).

As adults, Romans continued to exchange duties (*officia*) with kin. The successful pursuit of a career in the imperial service required a patron to bring a young man to the attention of the emperor or other great men, and one's circle of kin was a natural place to seek such support. The younger Pliny was doing nothing unusual or objectionable when he secured a position on his staff in Bithynia for a relative by marriage (*Ep. x.51*). The weakness of financial institutions in the Roman world left Romans to look to

kin and friends for help in the oversight of their scattered properties, as Pliny did for his wife's grandfather (*Ep.* VIII.20). As Romans aged and felt less adequate to the management of their own estates, they could pass on the responsibility to a younger relative, as in the *Digest's* illustration of a paternal uncle who handed over his affairs to a nephew and regarded it as natural for his nephew to run his estate without being required to show authorization from his uncle (XVII.1.60.4). Presumably, in such cases the kinsman looked forward to a share of the estate from the will. Romans used their wills to bestow a final *officium* on relatives of all types. Indeed, it was possible to leave a bequest to all one's relatives in such a vague way as to raise questions about just when one had to have been related in order to collect (*Dig.* XXXIV.5.19). This sort of legacy illustrates the remarkable flexibility of Roman wills and shows how far the Romans had come from the agnatic focus of the *ius civile*. By the classical period, the old classificatory language had little bearing on social relations in most contexts.

Kin related no more closely than the fourth degree (first cousins) were also permitted by law to intermarry, and it has been suggested that they regularly did so in order to strengthen bonds of cooperation and to keep women's dowry and property in the *familia*.³⁵ The later Christian prohibition on close-kin marriage is then interpreted as a major social innovation. But the change in law in this case did not correspond to a significant change in practice, because the Romans were already exogamous at least by the classical period. Among the élite the examples of marriage between first cousins are few, nor was kinship mentioned as a criterion for selecting a spouse in the letters written by Cicero and Pliny regarding marriage arrangements. Furthermore, the Roman élite was characterized by its openness to outsiders who were coopted from the early days of the Republic through intermarriage. The pattern may have been different among the lower classes, but funerary commemorations indicate that more modest husbands and wives generally did not share the same *nomen* and therefore did not come from the same *familia*.³⁶ In sum, neither in marriage arrangements nor in the performance of *officia* can patterns be found to show that Romans carefully discriminated in accordance with their elaborate kinship vocabulary.

IV. LINEAGE AND INHERITANCE

The Republican aristocracy was notable for the continuity of the great *familiae* over the centuries. In order to overcome the ravages of high mortality, these families must have had many children born in each generation (at least five or six on average) or have made up for biological gaps by adop-

³⁵ Goody (1983). ³⁶ Saller and Shaw (1984b).

tion. The rate at which the nobility as a whole produced sons to take their places in the top senatorial magistracies declined from the second century B.C., and by the Principate only one of three or four consular senators had a son who reached a similar position in his career.³⁷ Thus, the senatorial aristocracy went from a high rate of social succession to a remarkably low rate. It has been said that in its failure to reproduce, the Roman senatorial aristocracy was following the general pattern of aristocracies in other periods of European history.³⁸ There is an element of truth in this but not a full explanation, because the rate of failure among Roman aristocrats was far greater than among even the least successful later European aristocracies. How should the Roman phenomenon be accounted for? No single reason provides an adequate explanation, but part of the answer must be related to Roman attitudes toward lineage and inheritance.

The Romans, whether nobles or peasants, faced problems common to agrarian societies with limited, privately owned land and poor medical technology to control births and deaths: how to have a family large enough to ensure an heir in the next generation to carry on the family line and at the same time to avoid a surplus of heirs requiring fragmentation of the patrimony and subsequent impoverishment. Later European societies developed various family strategies to cope with this dilemma. In some areas a primogeniture system of inheritance allowed families to be large, thus increasing the probability of having an adult male heir, but without minute division of the estate, most of which was destined for the eldest son. Another strategy was to encourage only one son and one daughter to marry, so that any property used to support other siblings would eventually return to the core family estate after their deaths.

These strategies did not find broad acceptance in Rome, where law and custom preserved a partible inheritance system for males and females.³⁹ The father's powers of testation could have been used to favour the eldest son over other sons, but no such custom seems to have developed. In the Latin sources disinheritance of a child is treated as frivolous on the part of the testator or as punishment for misbehaviour of a child, not as a strategy to preserve the patrimony intact. Nor did Romans take advantage of the flexibility of their law to develop anything comparable to perpetual entail in order to keep patrimonies in the male line over generations.⁴⁰ Furthermore, social norms did not encourage celibacy, as in later Christian cultures: all children were supposed to marry and to produce children. Augustus instituted laws to enforce the norms through a set of rewards for those married and bearing children, and penalties for the single and childless.

³⁷ Hopkins, *Death and Renewal*. ³⁸ Hammond (1957). ³⁹ Champlin (1991).

⁴⁰ Johnston (1988); Saller (1994) ch. 7.

Many imperial aristocrats of the Principate seem to have taken a different approach by limiting the number of their legitimate children. The bearing and raising of children came to be perceived to be expensive, annoying and generally unpopular. A willingness to have children was among the virtues of Asinius Rufus singled out in the younger Pliny's recommendation as unusual 'in this age when for most people the advantages of childlessness make even one child seem a burden' (*Ep.* iv.15.3). That noble women resented child-bearing as deleterious to their looks and their social life is apparent from Seneca's contrast with his own mother's virtues:

you, who were soundly trained in an old-fashioned and strict household, have not been perverted by the imitation of worse women that leads even the virtuous into pitfalls; you have never blushed for the number of your children, as if it taunted you with your years; never have you, in the manner of other women whose only recommendation lies in their beauty, tried to conceal your pregnancy as if an unseemly burden; nor have you ever crushed the hope of children that were being nurtured in your body.

(*Cons. ad Helviam* 16.3)

Abortion, infant exposure and concubinage were the means used to limit the size of the legitimate family.

Limited families and high mortality rates left élite Roman families highly vulnerable to failure in the male line. It has been estimated by demographers that under conditions such as those of the empire perhaps only 40 per cent of families giving birth to three children would have a son who lived long enough to inherit from his father.⁴¹ The imperial aristocracy had several options to compensate for these poor odds. The probabilities of success could be doubled, if daughters, like sons, were allowed to perpetuate the family name. In the earlier discussion of 'familia' and 'domus' it was suggested that Roman notions of family and lineage underwent change precisely at the beginning of the imperial era, when the emphasis shifted from 'familia' and 'nomen', transmitted exclusively through males, to the 'domus' including cognates and affines. This substantially increased the value of daughters as continuators of the family line.

A daughter's offspring came to be considered part of a noble's 'posteris', narrowly defined, as they had not been in the Republic. After the death of his first five children, Fronto finally had a daughter who survived childhood. She and her husband were treasured by Fronto as his link to the future, his hope for 'posteritas' (*Ad amicos* 2.11). A letter from the younger Pliny to his wife's paternal grandfather, Calpurnius Fabatus, is similarly revealing about the larger role of female descendants in continuing the family line. Calpurnia in her first pregnancy suffered a miscarriage, and Pliny expected old Fabatus to be disappointed: 'Although you must feel it

⁴¹ Goody (1976) 133–4.

hard for your old age to be robbed of a descendant already on the way, you should thank the gods for sparing your granddaughter's life . . . Your desire for great-grandchildren cannot be keener than mine for children. Their descent from both of us should make their road to high office easy' (*Ep.* VIII.10). Hope for 'great-grandchildren' and 'children' here must refer to a son, since a daughter could not travel the road to high office. Though the preference is for a son, Pliny nevertheless assumes that Fabatus will feel a great interest in Calpurnia's offspring as a continuation, in the absence of any other, of his own line and fame, despite the fact that they would be related only through a granddaughter and would not be in his 'familia'. A willingness to use females in this way is manifested in the development of extended names in the early empire, when the children of the family increasingly preserved the memory of both father's and mother's 'domus' by taking both of their names. In such a system of nomenclature, with names of other relatives being added on as well, the string of names grew from generation to generation to grotesque lengths by the mid-second century (one ran to thirty-eight names).

For those who wished to avoid the troubles of child-rearing altogether or were not fortunate enough to have a surviving child, Roman law offered another traditional means of continuing the family line, adoption.⁴² A childless Roman could also choose an adult male as heir in his will and obligate him to assume his name as a condition of collecting the inheritance. Not only did these practices allow Romans to perpetuate their names without the costs and uncertainties of child-rearing, it was also believed to bestow on them advantages in the peculiarly Roman exchange of gifts and legacies. Although Augustus' marriage legislation, which encouraged propertied citizens to marry and bear three children by penalizing those who did not, was designed in part to offset the advantage of the childless in the exchange of legacies by restricting their capacity to inherit from unrelated testators, the rules were circumvented and the scale of redistribution of wealth through this custom remained enormous.⁴³ The literary sources from the period assume that the childless continued to attract followers and favours (including representation in the law courts) from men hoping to be rewarded with a bequest.

The Augustan marriage laws obviously failed to produce the desired result of a largely hereditary aristocracy. They were a continuing source of irritation until Constantine abolished them in the fourth century, a fact suggesting that many were not meeting the requirement, and yet the goal of three children set by the laws was a modest one: the figures cited above suggest that well over half of the families who did no more than meet the requirement would not have had a male heir outlive his father, and one-

⁴² Corbier (1991). ⁴³ Wallace-Hadrill (1981); Csillag (1976).

third would have had no child of either sex to inherit the family name and estate. Moreover, the very fact of continuing state intervention to force the aristocracy to have children is noteworthy. The nobilities of many later European societies went to great lengths to secure male successors in their bloodlines: in contrast, Roman nobles had to be cajoled to have three children, a number that would have left the aristocracy as a whole well short of full replacement. Furthermore, the easy alternative of adoption was not used as often as might be expected.⁴⁴ Some Roman senators no doubt resembled Pliny and Fronto in subscribing to the traditional values associated with having children for purposes of posterity, but many others took a more individualistic view of life, one that did not call for them to subordinate their personal well-being to that of their lineages.

V. CONCLUSION

In language and law the Roman family appears very different from the contemporary family: no word for the nuclear family unit, the nearly complete lifelong dependence of children on their *pater*, and the nearly complete independence of wife from husband. From such evidence it has been argued that the Romans did not have the ‘family’ as we know it, but this is to overstate the disparity. Clearly, the Roman, propertied family differed from the family of the industrial age because of the drastically lower life expectancy, the importance of inherited property and the pervasive presence of slaves in the household. A better point of comparison might be other pre-industrial European societies. This comparison shows that Roman families shared many problems with their later counterparts – control of family size to match its resources, tension between generations and so on – but also had some differences arising from the independence of the wife and the ready availability of divorce. Though significant, however, even the latter differences should not be exaggerated, since in practice the daily challenges of family life in an agrarian society were often met in similar ways regardless of the law.

⁴⁴ See Hopkins, *Death and Renewal* 49, on the Republic; obviously if adoption had been used routinely during the Principate the rate of disappearance of senatorial families would have been much lower.

CHAPTER 30

LITERACY

GREG WOOLF

I. THE EXTENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERACY¹

Literacy poses in an acute form a central problem of Roman cultural history. How are we to reconcile the striking contrasts between the Roman world and our own, with the equally striking similarities? Very few of the inhabitants of the Roman empire were able to read even the simplest documents, fewer still could write as much as their own name. In that respect, Roman antiquity conforms to our expectations about the world in general before mass education, the printing press, the industrial revolution and all the other paraphernalia of modern, western civilization. Yet, superficially at least, Romans seem to have used writing in ways that are immediately familiar to us: to write poems and contracts, love-letters and sales invoices, public notices and graffiti, to register births, to tax the living and to commemorate the dead. Literacy offers one way of exploring this culture as a whole. But the strength of literacy as a vehicle for this exploration, the apparent pervasiveness of the written word, also creates problems. Roman literacy cannot be closely circumscribed as an area of study, and there is no single issue to be resolved. Instead, the study of Roman writing practices sheds new light on many aspects of early imperial society, economy, religion and government, and suggests new connections between them. Writing was not so much a single phenomenon as an aspect of Roman cultural style, and the apparent contradiction between the banal everyday uses of the written word and its evident symbolic significance suggests new ways of looking at modern, as well as ancient, literacies.

The centrality of writing in Roman imperial civilization would have been apparent to any visitor to a Roman town.² Milestones marked the approaches to the town and then, just before entering the city limits, the

¹ Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, is the only full length study. Humphrey (1991) brings together a series of essays written in response to Harris' work. For Greek literacy Thomas (1989), and especially Detienne (1988) and Thomas (1992), both with critical bibliographies, provide good introductions to a much larger body of scholarship. McKitterick (1989) and (1990) discuss the issue in an early mediaeval context. Bowman and Woolf (1994) collects essays relating to the connection between literacy and power in a number of ancient societies.

² Harris (1983) and Franklin (1991) on Pompeii, Corbier (1987) on Rome.

roads would begin to be lined by cemeteries. Some tombs were huge monuments with long inscriptions, but even the more modest tombstones were carved with simple epitaphs. On entering the town, the visitor was exposed to further displays of writing. The walls of the houses that lined the streets of Pompeii were covered in notices, elegant painted proclamations in support of electoral candidates for the chief magistracies of the town or the programmes for forthcoming games, detailing the animals that would appear, the number of gladiators and, most prominently, the names of those whom the public had to thank. Around the forum and in particular in the vicinity of temples were inscriptions on the bases of statues of local grandees, bronze laws, building dedications and sometimes imperial edicts. Temples also attracted perishable notices, recording vows made and fulfilled or accompanying offerings and religious calendars, painted or inscribed, listing market days, the dates of festivals and games, and also the days on which business transactions were taboo. Less reverent were the graffiti, obscene, literary, personal, humorous, that were scratched on walls throughout the town. Monumental inscriptions comprised only a fraction of the writing visible in the urban setting. Wax writing tablets recording business transactions have been found in the Vesuvian cities and elsewhere recording sales and loans, affidavits, labour contracts and the formation and dissolution of partnerships. Bookshops existed too, selling literary works on papyrus, at least in Rome and the major cities of the East, while one bookseller is known from the Egyptian village of Karanis.³ Pliny notes with surprise that his works can be bought in Lyons,⁴ but lines of Virgil are known from graffiti in Britain and thousands of literary papyri have been recovered from the sands of Roman Egypt.⁵ A villa outside Pompeii contained a papyrus library, a private collection showing an interest in Hellenistic philosophy, and public libraries also existed in some towns, many of them the result of aristocratic munificence, like the one built at Comum by Pliny the Younger. More significant for the contact that most town-dwellers had with writing were the stone-cutters, who carved epitaphs on tombstones, and the professional scribes, who drew up contracts and wrote letters, even for those who could sign them themselves. Most mundane and familiar of all the uses of writing were, perhaps, the painted labels on amphorae describing their contents, the stamps impressed in the bases of ceramic tableware and the legends on coins.

Beyond the town and its surrounding cemeteries, writing was far less evident. Roman Britain illustrates the possible limits of literacy in the provinces. Most of the graffiti scratched on pottery derives either from military sites or from towns, just as most of the names written on tiles and bricks

³ Kleberg (1975), Kenney (1982). For Karanis *PPetaus* 30. ⁴ *Ep.* IX.11. ⁵ Pack (1965).

before they were fired are Roman names, most of them probably soldiers. Inscriptions on stone are almost entirely limited to the frontiers and other areas where soldiers were common.⁶ Writing played a number of important roles in the life and working of the Roman army in Britain, yet it seems hardly to have penetrated the countryside, except in the form of milestones and at rural sanctuaries like Uley. The extent of this contrast must have varied from province to province, as did the scale of urbanization. Probably less than 5 per cent of the population of the north-west provinces lived in towns, while recent estimates of the urban population of Egypt and Campania have been as high as 30 per cent. Where writing was used in the countryside, whether on votive offerings at the temple of Clitumnus described by Pliny, or as tally lists for the pottery kilns of La Graufesenque in southern France, or simply as milestones along the Roman roads, it was the product of the power of the classical city and of the Roman empire over the rural hinterland. No separate rural writing practices can be attested for the early Roman empire and writing always remained a component of either the urban or the military versions of Roman civilization. Most inhabitants of the empire only had personal experience of writing when they visited the town.

It is easy to miss the dynamic nature of that culture. Towns appear to us as panoramas, frozen, like Pompeii, in a single moment of time. But writing must have been perceived more as an activity than as an artefact by the inhabitants of ancient cities. Bright new election notices superseded last year's faded proclamations, new edicts were displayed on *alba*, wooden boards painted white, new statues took their places among older weathered images, accompanied by new inscriptions, and new legends appeared at intervals on coins. Writing impinged on the spectator even more forcefully on occasion. When the wealthy processed through the city streets on their way to sacrifice, placards were carried detailing the name of the celebrant, the god who was to receive the offering and the reasons for it.⁷ Similar signs were carried in triumphs in Rome, proclaiming the origins of captives and the names of far-away countries subjected to Roman arms. When *damnatio memoriae* was pronounced on an emperor, city magistrates throughout the empire hurried to chip his name off monuments, just as they cut his face off statues. Some emperors burned records of tax arrears publicly, but others burned literature that was thought subversive, whether histories or books of sorcery, or, like Caligula, deliberately posted up new taxes where they could not be seen. The written word was only one component of a range of symbols and images manipulated in this way. But every member of Roman society must have been conscious of the power of writing to signal and generate change even if, like us, they were quickly inured to the

⁶ Evans (1987), Tomlin (1979), Biró (1975). ⁷ Veyne (1983).

inscriptions on old buildings. But even the meaning of ancient inscriptions remained latent, ready to be evoked in a new context, as when Caesar's opponents daubed graffiti on the statue of the first Brutus, inciting the Brutus of the day to overthrow the new monarchy.

But it is not enough to inject movement into our picture of the ancient city: it is also necessary to add a soundtrack. The visual panorama was supplemented with a whole range of utterances that are now lost to us, as the Roman world survives for us only as a series of silent texts supplemented by a few visual images. The fora must have been noisy with stallholders calling out their wares, sacrifices were accompanied by music and triumphs by songs, while official announcements were proclaimed by heralds as well as posted up. Public speeches were made at funerals, elections, on the arrival of governors or emperors, at the dedication of buildings, in honour of local notables and at entertainments. Attention to the written word must not blind us to the ubiquity and importance of the spoken word. Yet speech was accessible in a way that writing was not, and writing offered many kinds of security for the future, for those who could use it.

Surrounded as they were by the written word, how many of the empire's inhabitants could read it? Two problems confront any attempt to assess the extent of ancient literacy. The first is methodological. It is far from easy to decide what skills constitute the minimum requirement for an individual to be classified as literate. Does the ability to sign one's name, or to be able to read an inscription suffice? Presumably there were some who could read but not write, or who could only read a little, and others who could write a few words, perhaps only their own name like those labelled 'slow writers' in some papyri.⁸ Quantitative statements about literacy are not in themselves very informative: what would it tell us, for example, if we could be sure that 30 per cent rather than 10 per cent of the population of Roman Egypt were literate? Besides, any attempt to assess the distribution of reading and writing skills within the diverse societies of the early empire is obstructed by a second problem, the extreme paucity of evidence. What evidence there is is rarely clear cut, and the current consensus, that only a small portion of the empire's population could read or write simple Greek or Latin texts, depends largely on a priori arguments.

Perhaps the strongest of these considerations is the observation that very many of the empire's subjects do not seem to have been able to understand even spoken Latin or Greek.⁹ Most of the languages spoken within the empire were never written down, and literacy in those that were, did not always imply an ability to read and write the official languages of the empire. Alien literacies might even be the vehicle for alternative values to

⁸ Youtie (1971b).

⁹ MacMullen (1966), Millar (1968), (1971), Brunt (1976) app. 1, Millar (1987) and Neumann and Untermann (1980), Harris, *Ancient Literacy* 175–90.

those enshrined in Greco-Roman culture, as in the case of Hebrew, or perhaps written Gaulish or Egyptian Demotic. But the relationships between different languages were often more complex. Hebrew and Greek were the main languages read in Palestine, but although many could read only one or the other, some like St Paul could read both, while the most common spoken language was Aramaic. Roman Africa presents a similar pattern: some cities set up bilingual honorific inscriptions in Neo-Punic and Latin, but in addition a variety of dialects of Libyan were spoken and written in the interior.

A second set of *a priori* arguments consists of noting the conditions that made mass literacy possible in the modern world and then pointing to their absence from antiquity. Among the factors thought important in promoting modern mass literacy have been the invention of the printing press, the availability of inexpensive writing materials, a high level of urbanization, the stress on individual achievement encouraged by Protestantism and large-scale elementary education. Disagreement exists, of course, about the relative importance of each factor in recent history. It is also unclear how far each of these preconditions was absent from the ancient world. Papyrus was expensive although scraps were often available for reuse, but wooden tablets and *ostraka* were probably cheap. There were no printing presses, but the production runs of ancient texts and their cost are matters of debate.¹⁰ Levels of urbanization in the Roman empire were high by pre-modern standards but certainly a great deal lower than in more recent societies. Protestantism clearly did not exist, but other ideologies might have played similar roles, or at least have provided cultural contexts within which the written word was privileged over the spoken. The positive value set on *paideia* in much of the Hellenistic world did result in a number of educational foundations, but within that cultural system eloquent speech was valued greatly above fine writing.¹¹ The rapid social mobility suggested by the appearance of provincials in the equestrian and senatorial orders, by freedmen cults like those celebrated in most western cities by the *seviri Augustales* and by the extension of the Roman citizenship may have generated a similar concern with individual achievement. Finally, it is very difficult to assess how many children actually received elementary education.¹² Classical texts reveal ideals, rather than practice, and, as ever, are primarily concerned with a very limited sector of society. Few school buildings or inscriptions recording teachers are known, but neither are strictly necessary. Many children may have learnt to read and write from their relatives, and it is likely that some adults and children were taught within slave *familiae*. The number of different hands

¹⁰ Lewis (1974) and Turner (1978) on papyrus, Kleberg (1975) and Kenney (1982) on book production and consumption. ¹¹ Thomas (1992) 159–62 and Desbordes (1990) *passim*.

¹² Horsfall (1991), Bowman (1991).

attested on the documents from the fort of Vindolanda in northern Britain suggests that some level of literacy may often have been acquired in the army, too.

There is, in any case, a more fundamental problem in attempting to establish ancient levels of literacy in this way. Many scholars have seen 'full literacy' as part and parcel of modernity, one of the features of our world that distinguishes it from pre-modern, pre-industrial, traditional or primitive societies.¹³ Such an approach has advantages, but it can lead us to treat the writing practices of historical societies as if they were all alike, minor variants, for example, on restricted literacy.¹⁴ The differences between our civilization and Roman culture are emphasized but at the expense of the similarities, and also of the contrasts between Roman uses of writing and the literacies of, for example, classical Athens or early mediaeval Europe. Literacy levels are just one facet of this. In fact, there is not a clear-cut divide between literacy levels before and after the industrial and French revolutions, and we need to demonstrate, rather than assume, that the Roman empire had not taken an alternative route to high levels of literacy, just as the routes it took to high levels of urbanization or to economic growth differed markedly from those followed later in early modern Europe.

Documentary evidence provides the surest guide to literacy levels in any society. Egyptian papyri in particular preserve a level of documentation that has disappeared elsewhere in the empire.¹⁵ Many of these documents included autograph signatures, which Romans used as we do, in combination with witnesses, to validate legal agreements. As a result we know of hundreds of individuals who were unable to sign their names in Greek, and a few who claimed that they could write a little, but only slowly. Figures are hard to come by. Two-thirds of the cavalrymen in one unit could not write an acknowledgement for a hay allowance, and similar proportions of illiterates are recorded among the applicants for a grain dole in third-century Oxyrhynchus, among the cultivators of public land in second-century Lagis and in the contracts drawn up in the *grapheion* of Tebtunis. These documents emphasize two points. First, writing was as ubiquitous in the life of Egyptian villagers as it was in that of the townsmen of Pompeii: at Tebtunis about 700 documents were recorded in the village writing office each year, there were between 100 and 200 villagers capable of signing their

¹³ Goody (1977), Ong (1982) for this view. For critiques, Graff (1979) and Street (1984) who point out that 'full literacy' in the sense that all adults can both read and write to a reasonably high level, has not only never existed but is a characteristically modern 'myth'.

¹⁴ Goody (1968) illustrates the variety possible within this category, usually taken to describe societies in which all or most are affected by writing but in which only a few, often members of a scribal class or a clerisy, can actually read and write.

¹⁵ Majer-Leonard (1913), Calderini (1950), Youtie (1971a), (1971b), (1975a), (1975b) and Hanson (1991), Hopkins (1991) on the Egyptian evidence.

names in Greek, there was a schoolmaster and a temple library. Second, many of the participants in this literate world were clearly unable to perform even the simplest tasks with writing. Both the Egyptian and the Pompeian evidence strongly suggest that ability to write correlated with social status, and that in any status-group women were much less likely than men to be able to read and write. Nevertheless, the fact that there were clearly a number of individuals, besides the male members of the urban aristocracies of the empire, who could read and write fairly fluently, suggests that levels of literacy were high compared to those in many other ancient societies, such as Pharaonic Egypt or Achaemenid Persia. Certainly the uses of writing were much more varied and widespread than in most societies before the modern period.

How did illiterates manage in a world pervaded by the written word? By and large, with the help of literates. A frieze from the forum of Pompeii may show a literate reading out notices to a crowd of less literate bystanders. Whether or not this is the case, many notices and inscriptions must have been interpreted for those who could not read them, by those who could. The Egyptian evidence mentioned above reveals the activity of *hypographbeis*, individuals signing documents on behalf of a relative, often men writing for their wives or sisters, but also on occasion for their fathers, brothers, business associates or fellow townsmen. Public scribes also act in this way, but relatives were preferred.¹⁶ Some public information, laws for example in Rome, was published by proclamation, but many official decisions were only available in written form, like the answers to letters to the emperor posted up wherever he happened to be, or the prohibitions on divination which a Severan governor ordered to be posted up in a group of Egyptian *metropoleis*.¹⁷ To be unable to read or write put the illiterate in a position of dependency on others. In theory, it also debarred him from some public offices, although we know of some officials in Egypt who could not write.¹⁸ Alongside the illiterate's need to place his trust in others in order to do business or to deal effectively with the authorities, was there also a sense of alienation from full participation in the life of the community? That alienation is a central feature of the experience of illiterates in modern society. Because reading and writing in the Roman world was not narrowly restricted to an élite, a clerisy or to professional scribes, literacy was attainable in theory even if in practice it was rarely attained. The silence of the unlettered means that we cannot know whether that possibility made illiteracy harder to bear, or whether the fact that the lack of reading and writing skills was so generalized submerged any such alienation in the general alienation of the poor and the country-dwellers from the urban populations and élites of the empire.

¹⁶ Youtie (1975a).

¹⁷ Rea (1977) on *PYale* inv. 299.

¹⁸ Hanson (1991).

II. THE USES OF WRITING

Writing had been known in the ancient Near East since the fourth millennium B.C. Over the last millennium B.C., modifications of the Phoenician alphabet came into use throughout the Mediterranean basin and beyond. But the uses made of this new technology differed enormously between areas, varying both between and within broad ethnic groups like Etruscans and Greeks. Writing continued to be used in many different ways within the diverse societies of the Roman empire, as is exemplified by the case of Egyptian Hieratic script which seems to have been largely confined to the temples. But distinctively Roman writing practices characterized this period, serving a wide variety of functions, public and private, civil and military, political, commercial and social, sacred and profane.

Most of what was ever written has long perished. Many categories of Roman documents were never intended to last long, while others were stored as part of archives, whether private like Caecilius Iucundus' records of business transactions in Pompeii, or public like the applications for the corn dole at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt, but were written on perishable materials. Notes, writing exercises and graffiti were written on *ostraka* (fragments of pottery), or on erasable wax tablets. These tablets were made of wood, covered in a layer of wax, and were written on with a stylus. Small numbers of wax tablets were sometimes bound together to make notebooks, but there was a limit to the number that might be conveniently combined.¹⁹ Wooden tablets also existed, on which messages or records might be written in ink. Lead was a more expensive and heavier medium, which had been used by Greeks and Etruscans for business letters and contracts, but although it too was reusable, its expense and weight probably prevented it ever becoming popular, except for curse tablets. Parchment and papyrus were widely used for important documents. Papyrus was the most popular high quality medium in most areas, even though Egypt was the only source of supply, but parchment had been used further east since long before the Roman conquest and papyrus only replaced it at Dura Europus, on the Euphrates, when the town was captured from the Parthians by Lucius Verus. Most surviving records on papyrus come from Egypt, and it is probable that it was cheap enough there to be used for purposes which wooden tablets would have served in other provinces. A papyrus roll cost the equivalent of between two and six days' wages for a labourer, but would have been well within the budget of many Egyptians.²⁰ But even in Egypt papyrus was zealously reused and some archives of *ostraka* were kept. Only for literary works was papyrus standard throughout the empire.

As a result, only a few collections preserved in exceptional circum-

¹⁹ Roberts and Skeat (1983). ²⁰ Lewis (1974) 129–34.

stances represent the bulk of what was ever written. We had almost no wooden writing tablets until the finds of waterlogged material from the fort at Vindolanda, parchment was known largely from Dura and these two sites between them have produced a large proportion of the military documentation known from the entire empire.²¹ Records of business deals, outside Egypt, derive mainly from three archives from the Vesuvian cities; twenty-five tablets from Transylvania and some graffiti from a Roman trading post on the Magdalensberg in modern Austria.²² The firing records from the pottery kilns at La Graufesenque are without parallel anywhere in the Roman world.²³ True, graffiti are widespread in the Roman world, and Egypt has produced a wide range of documents, but it remains the case that most Roman uses of the written word are exemplified only by tiny and scattered bodies of material, or by casual mentions in literary texts. It might seem that it would be impossible to generalize on this basis but, in fact, examination of them suggests a remarkable degree of unity in the ways in which writing and texts were used in different parts of the empire.

A degree of uniformity in the way in which the Roman military used writing, whether on papyrus or wooden writing tablets, is perhaps the least surprising aspect of this unity. I will return to it below, in discussing the extent to which the empire itself was sustained by and generated texts. But among the documents from Vindolanda are also private letters of a personal nature, some conveying news or greetings and others which are *commendationes*, requests for patronage for a third party. Egypt has also produced examples of personal letters of this sort and, in a more literary form, the letters of Pliny and Fronto have long been known. Many were actually written by a slave or a scribe, but autograph signatures were usually added. The formulae that initiate and close these letters, and some stylized forms like the *commendationes*, follow common patterns, whether written by senators or soldiers.

Commercial documents show a similar convergence. A series of Roman agricultural writers from the second century B.C. on, recommend that written records be used in the management of large estates. Cato the Elder wrote that owners should leave written instructions for their farm managers, and Varro advocated that farm bailiffs and stock managers should be literate.²⁴ Other writers dissented, but the Egyptian evidence leaves no

²¹ Bowman and Thomas, *Vindolanda I*, Bowman (1991) on Vindolanda, Perkins (1959) on Dura. Fink, *Military Records*, collects military papyri.

²² Andreau (1974) on the archive of Lucundus, Russu (1975) 165–256 on the Transylvanian tablets, first published in *CIL* III pp. 921–60; Egger (1961) and Obermayer (1971) on the Magdalensberg graffiti. On the archive of the Sulpicii, found in the villa of Murecine outside Pompeii, see now Camodeca (1999); cf. the preliminary reports in *Rendiconti Napoli* 1966–, *AE* and Crook (1978). The Herculaneum tablets (the archive of Poppaea) were published in successive issues of *Parola del Passato* and are described in Pugliese-Caratelli (1950).

²³ Marichal (1988).

²⁴ Cato, *Agr.* 2.6, Varro, *Rust.* I.17.4; I.36.1; II.1.23; II.10.10.

doubt that written records were extensively used in the running of large estates. A large number of records survives from a third-century estate owned by an Alexandrine councillor named Appianus.²⁵ It comprised a number of separate farms and properties scattered throughout the Arsinoite nome. A central office in the nome capital oversaw more than thirty local village offices. Each local manager prepared elaborate accounts, detailing leases, payments, expenses and receipts on behalf of the estate, and submitted copies to the central office. Communications between Appianus, the central office and the village managers were managed largely by letter, and records were kept both in the villages and at Arsinoe, as well as presumably by Appianus himself.

Any business activity that involved substantial sums of money seems to have made extensive use of writing. The archives found in the Vesuvian cities have already been mentioned. Sixteen of Caecilius Iucundus' tablets record a series of contracts between himself and the city of Pompeii, but the remaining 137 refer to auctions of property undertaken by Iucundus on behalf of third parties. The tablets record the names of the vendors, some of whom also seem to have had money on deposit with Iucundus, and the names of witnesses to the arrangements. Only three tablets concerned sales worth less than 1,000 HS, the top three were for sums in excess of 30,000 HS, while the median value was 4,500 HS. Another series of Pompeian documents, from the Villa Murecine, relates to the diversified financial activities of the Sulpicii in Puteoli, recording imports, exports, loans secured against property, the auction and redemption of deposited goods and also legal guarantees. Similar tablets have been found in Herculaneum. Those from Rosia Montana in Transylvania include bills of sale for slaves, work contracts, records of loans and various documents concerning the setting up and dissolution of partnerships. The individuals involved were miners from Dalmatia, exploiting the opportunities opened up by Trajan's conquest of Dacia. Related commercial uses of writing are suggested by the 300-odd graffiti from the Magdalensberg which record the export of iron goods manufactured in Noricum to various cities in northern Italy, and beyond. The quantities of goods concerned are again substantial: plates, jugs and cauldrons were bought and sold in their hundreds, smaller items in batches of five hundred or so. One inscription records an Aquileian merchant buying 110 cauldrons, each weighing 15 pounds, and other graffiti record loans, credit and cash transactions. The firing records from La Graufesenque in southern France record fairly large batches of pottery, and most of the 213 records refer to that period in the first century A.D. when those workshops supplied *terra sigillata* to much of the Roman north-west. Most are simply itemized lists, but at least one contract exists,

²⁵ Turner (1978), Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism*.

similar to those from Transylvania, and from Egypt we know of a third century A.D. lease on a pottery kiln which required the lessee to produce more than 15,000 jars in the course of the two years.²⁶ Potters' stamps on finewares, and the stamps and painted labels on container amphorae, are equally a feature of large-scale productions. Many other types of transaction are known from Egypt, where copies of private contracts were stored in village archives. That level of recording has yet to be attested for any other province, and may be an Egyptian peculiarity, but in the case of larger transactions the Egyptian evidence may reasonably be taken to be representative. Roman legal texts at least imply that written contracts were common in all areas of economic activity and that they were necessary for any citizens who wished to take full advantage of the law to safeguard their business interests. Clearly, there was a broadly similar commercial literacy among the institutions that united the empire at an economic level. Both the estates and the business deals mentioned in the extant documents were substantial. But the Transylvanian miners, who seem not all to have been citizens, and the south Gaulish potters, who used Gallic words alongside Latin ones in their tallies, show that written contracts and accounts were not the prerogative of the imperial and municipal aristocracies. Writing was used when substantial amounts of money, rather than prominent individuals, were involved.

Compared to the huge extant body of classical epigraphy and literature, these uses of the written word, now so rarely preserved, might seem at first sight mundane. But the familiarity of these documents is deceptive. In fact, they encapsulate a combination of the utilitarian and the symbolic that characterized all Roman writing. Iucundus had his documents signed by witnesses, but they signed in order of social status. The Egyptian *hypographeis* were not simply writing on behalf of another, but also adding their support to the document and the transaction it recorded, and a scribe who did not know the individual for whom he wrote took care to signal that fact. Letters were signed by hand not just to authenticate the contents, which were often trivial, but also as a gesture of intimacy. Roman writing retained this blend of the pragmatic and the symbolic, irrespective of whether the medium used was permanent, like stone, or perishable, like wood.

Religious practice illustrates some of the similarities and differences in the ways different media were used.²⁷ One widespread custom was to make an offering in a temple to mark the taking or fulfilling of a vow. Celebrants might bring wooden placards on which the reasons for vows were advertised and having carried the placards in procession would leave them in the temple. But even the smallest votive might be accompanied by a little notice and the walls of some temples and the branches of some sacred trees were

²⁶ Cockle (1981). ²⁷ Veyne (1983), Beard (1991).

covered with them. Lead tablets were inscribed with curses and consigned to various gods at shrines throughout the Roman world from Delos to Bath.²⁸ Not all votives were written: images of parts of the human body often commemorated cures, although Asclepius required some of those he cured at Epidaurus in Greece to have their cure inscribed in stone in the sanctuary. The Arval Brethren at Rome also made the recording of their ceremonies on stone an integral part of their cultic activity.²⁹ The most prestigious sacrifices were recorded not on wooden placards but by the dedication of stone altars, often inscribed with a suitable epigraph. A military commander dedicated an altar every year as part of his unit's celebration of the imperial cult. Two temples on either side of the southernmost mouth of the Rhine accumulated a collection of altars offered to the local goddess Nehallenia by merchants working the Channel crossing. Some at least of their vows were fulfilled in return for safe journeys home.

How did Romans differentiate between the various writing media available? Most prestigious of all were inscriptions in bronze, the medium for treaties and laws, a medium which perhaps always conveyed some element of the sacred.³⁰ When Horace wrote that he had established with his poetry a monument that would last longer than bronze, he made the familiar equation of permanence and importance which was fundamental to the Roman concept of *monumentum*. Yet impermanent materials were used for very much the same purposes, and it would be equally possible to differentiate between these texts in terms of function, curses and acts of worship, commemoration of cures or a celebration of the religious *acta* of various associations, from a military contingent to a burial club or a college of priests. Central to many ritual uses of writing was a desire to mark an act of communication between human and divine, whether a vow, a request or a simple act of recognition, as in the case of soldiers in northern Britain who set up altars *Genio Loci*, to the spirit of the locality. Writing was one way of signalling the reciprocal relationship that existed between gods and men. But there were also other ways of expressing and maintaining this relationship, especially the dedication of non-written images, votive offerings or the performing of sacrifices. The importance of writing was that it was one way of memorializing and personalizing the religious act.

However permanent epigraphy may have seemed, only a tiny proportion of Roman inscriptions has survived. Bronzes have been melted down or lost and stone has crumbled or been recut, buried or melted in mediaeval lime-kilns. As a result, extant inscriptions represent at most 5 per cent of those ever set up.³¹ Only in exceptional cases can we estimate the number of inscriptions originally on display in a Roman town. Ostia, the port of Rome covered by silt and then extensively excavated, has produced more

²⁸ Tomlin and Walker (1988). ²⁹ Beard (1985). ³⁰ Williamson (1987).

³¹ Duncan-Jones, *Economy* app. 13.

than 3,000 inscriptions. Pompeii, buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79, has produced more than 11,000 examples of writing, most of them epigraphic.

Public records in stone and bronze were displayed in the centre of towns, on the walls of monuments and particularly on those surrounding the forum. Temples often acted as repositories for the most important public documents. At Rome, thousands of bronze tablets were displayed on the Capitol, recording treaties, decrees of the Senate, laws voted by the assemblies and grants of citizenship.³² Other cities imitated the practice, often on their own initiative, but occasionally at the request of Roman authorities. The *Res Gestae* of Augustus were circulated to every city in the empire as was the record of the honours passed by the Senate on the death of Germanicus. The practice of having Roman statutes monumentalized throughout the empire was relatively short-lived, beginning in the late Republic with the *popularis* politics of the Gracchi and their successors and ending in the Julio-Claudian period,³³ but Italian and provincial communities continued to display *senatus consulta*, *leges*, *edicta* and imperial letters that affected them in particular. All Latin *municipia* must have displayed municipal laws, like that found recently at Irni in southern Spain.³⁴ These laws comprised model constitutions designed to regulate the public life of communities in accordance with Roman law and custom. One clause required the town's chief magistrates to have the law inscribed in bronze at once, and to display it in the most prominent place possible in the *municipium* so that it might be clearly read from ground level. The formula is known from other documents. We do not know what place the *duumvir* chose for its display, but the copy we have would have been about nine metres in width and more than half a metre high, and the tablets are pierced for attachment to a wall. Other important documents on display in municipal temples or *scriptoria* would include land registers, like those known from Orange in southern France, and any text that emanated from the emperor, especially letters bestowing or confirming privileges. Large dossiers of correspondence with various emperors are known from cities like Aphrodisias and Ephesus.³⁵ Their display was a visible symbol of a city's importance within the empire, of the emperor's virtue and of the role played by particular local grandees as ambassadors, magistrates and power brokers. The Italian towns that benefited from Trajan's alimentary schemes displayed huge bronze inscriptions recording the emperor's *indulgentia* and the names of the local landowners who had mortgaged their lands to him so that the interest on the loans might provide gifts of cash for the maintenance of local children. Emperors, like gods, were honoured for favours bestowed and favours anticipated, and the monumentalizing of their 'sacred letters'

³² Suet. *Vesp.* 8. ³³ Crawford (1988). ³⁴ González (1986).

³⁵ Reynolds, *Aphrodisias* on Aphrodisias. For Ephesus *IEph* I–VIII with discussion by Rogers (1991) ch. 1.

reciprocated those favours as well as publicizing and guaranteeing them.

Perhaps the most prominent feature of the epigraphy of the cities of the empire is the prominence of names in every category of inscription: votive, honorific and above all funerary. At Canusium, an *album* lists the names of the community's patrons, in order of status, whether senatorial or equestrian, and then all the *ex-quinquennales*, *ex-duoviri* and all those who had held lesser magistracies and finally ordinary town councillors of various grades.³⁶ A patron was in addition presented with a bronze *tabula patronatus* recording the decree of their cooptation, the magistrates concerned and the individuals chosen to present it to him for display in his *atrium* in Rome.³⁷ The fora of most towns contained free-standing statues of prominent men. Integral to these monuments were inscriptions announcing the identity of each dignitary, listing the priesthoods and local magistracies he had held, and maybe other services he had performed, buildings restored, embassies undertaken, charitable foundations set up and extraordinary acts of generosity. Names were also prominent in the largest category of inscriptions, funerary monuments. Roman tombstones are so familiar, that it is easy to forget that naming the departed is not a necessary part of mortuary ritual and that Romans were more concerned than most peoples to name the commemorator as well.³⁸ The memorializing of names and relationships seems as important in death as in life. The words were only one part of a monument, of course, whether honorific or funerary. All the same, it is clear that Romans hoped to have their names as well as their images prominent both in the *necropolis* and the forum.

This concern, typical of the early empire, to assert individual achievement and status, and the relationships between individuals, may reflect conditions of increased social mobility within the empire. The inscriptions reflect not only the increased possibilities to achieve, but also the sense of insecurity that accompanied it. Inscriptions mark both the success of the upwardly mobile, like the fictional Trimalchio,³⁹ and the anxieties of those who felt themselves threatened by it. Monumentalization in many societies is seen to be a response to conditions of social change, driven by a desire to assert the stability of the social order and the strength of traditional values in the face of threats to both. Some support for this hypothesis is offered when variations in the density of inscriptions in different parts of the empire are mapped out and when variations over time are taken into account.⁴⁰ The density of surviving Latin inscriptions is uneven, stronger in Italy than in the provinces, in the Mediterranean world than in the western provinces (except where there were concentrations of soldiers)

³⁶ *CIL* IX 338. ³⁷ E.g. *CIL* VI 1492. ³⁸ Meyer (1990). ³⁹ Horsfall (1989).

⁴⁰ MacMullen (1982) on variations in time, with Mrozek (1973), (1988). Geographical variation between Italian *regiones* in Duncan-Jones, *Economy* 339, and between western provinces in Harris, *Ancient Literacy* 268. Meyer (1990) suggests one explanation stressing citizenship and testation.

and, within Italy, strongest in western central Italy around Rome. At least in geographical terms, epigraphic density correlates roughly with urbanization, the military and romanization, all thought to have promoted social mobility. A clear rise and fall in the epigraphic habit over time can also be detected, rising to a peak at the end of the second century A.D. and declining rapidly in the third. No consensus exists as to the reasons for this pattern, but it corresponds roughly with the rate of enfranchisement, in so far as we can trace it, up until the point at which Caracalla in 212 gave the citizenship to almost every free-born inhabitant of the empire and, by doing so, stopped it being a status indicator. Other kinds of monuments may also reflect changing hierarchies of status within the empire, for example between cities, and the competition and anxiety generated by these changes. But epigraphy is remarkable in that it so clearly attempts to establish a definitive statement of the status of individuals and their positions in a nexus of social relationships.

Ephemeral accounts and letters and contracts were the commonest kind of documents produced in the Roman empire, while the most prominent were ubiquitous monuments set up in stone and bronze. Romans made no hard and fast distinction between perishable and permanent, but rather conceived of a spectrum ranging from *ostraka* to bronze. That that continuum reflected cultural value, rather than durability, is shown by the fact that most bronze inscriptions have long been melted down while *ostraka*, non-reusable and virtually indestructible, have survived in huge numbers. But all of these documents together constituted a public culture, in the sense that access to reading, writing and texts *per se* was not restricted, and there was no sense of literacy being the exclusive prerogative of a few, whether low-status scribes or high-status clerics.

Cultures of exclusion existed, but based not on writing but on the capacity to produce and appreciate particular uses of language that were more often spoken than written. A number of different 'high cultures' coexisted, to some extent in competition. One example is provided by Latin poetry, which drew on Greek and Italian sources to produce complex pieces which, in their vocabulary, metre and allusions to a wide range of philosophical, mythological and historical themes, as well as to other poems, operated to exclude all but the most discerning audience.⁴¹ The amount of commentary necessary even to make one of Horace's *Odes* or Virgil's *Eclogues* comprehensible to a modern reader illustrates the exclusiveness of the form. For the ancients, of course, 'audience' is more appropriate than 'reader', since Latin poetry was designed to be read aloud, sometimes by the poet but more often by a reader the poet considered to be more perfect

⁴¹ One of the most persistent jokes in Petronius' *Cena Trimalchionis* turns on the rich freedman's failure to participate in this culture however much money he invests in attempting to do so; cf. Horsfall (1989).

in pronunciation, rather as a composer might prefer to have his piece performed by a musician rather than by himself.⁴² Grammarians devoted considerable attention to proper pronunciation and it was clear that the written text was conceived of as secondary to the spoken, in the same way we consider a musical score as secondary to a performance.⁴³ Even when reading to oneself, it was normal to read aloud in order to fully appreciate a poetic work. Rhetoric, both Latin and Greek, might be equally exclusive.⁴⁴ Public speaking had many uses in the courts, in politics before an assembly, a council, a governor or even the emperor, and also as a form of virtuoso performance art. Naturally, the occasion influenced the form of rhetoric used, and orators often specialized in one or other branch. But, at the level of high culture, rhetoric could be as allusive as poetry and just as concerned with pronunciation and performance, while it offered additional scope for feats of memory and improvisation and for competition to present familiar themes, such as a speech advising Hannibal to march on Rome, in new and original ways.

Few could compete with the trained sophists and orators, but it was possible to learn to appreciate oratory. The educational establishments of which we know the most taught precisely this, that cultural discrimination that the Romans called *studia* and the Greeks *paideia*. Educated Romans, of course, were expected to appreciate Greek fine speaking as well as Latin. How many in the West ever achieved this is very unclear. Latin 'literary culture' itself is best known from the city of Rome, although many writers came from the more romanized provinces where there were many colonies of Roman citizens. The Senecas and Martial originated in Spain; Apuleius, Fronto and Tertullian in Africa; and Tacitus may have come from southern France. Although most gravitated to Rome, their capacity to do so indicates some level of education in the major cities of the Latin West about which we are almost completely ignorant in this period apart from a few references to the schools of Autun where the Gallic élites had their sons educated.⁴⁵ Many more centres existed in the East for sophists to perform and teach in, pre-eminently Athens but also other major cities like Corinth, Ephesus, Smyrna and Antioch. Greek culture excluded doubly, asserting not only the superiority of particular classes in Greek civic society, but also the superiority of Greek culture over Latin. From the viewpoint of literacy, however, the important point is that the distinction between high culture and low does not coincide with that between written and oral but to some extent cuts across it, and on occasion seems to have privileged spoken over written. Books played a part in this culture, as imperfect *monumenta* of speech, and were exchanged, given, copied and collected by some aristocrats, like the enthusiast who compiled the philosoph-

⁴² Knox (1968).

⁴³ Desbordes (1990) ch. 6.

⁴⁴ Kennedy (1972).

⁴⁵ Haarhof (1920).

ical library in the Villa of the Papyri at Pompeii. A small number of private collections of this sort are attested in Italy, and libraries were among the benefits bestowed by the emperor on Rome and by aristocrats on their home towns, as Pliny the Younger did for Comum.⁴⁶ But even Pliny used slaves both to write down his compositions and also to read them out, and his Panegyric of Trajan shows that he was an adept of rhetorical culture in its spoken, as well as its written, form.

III. AN EMPIRE OF WORDS?

Many writers have postulated connections between the written word and political power.⁴⁷ No states have existed without at least some records, with which resources may be controlled, and without some medium for communication at a distance. Many have also used writing to create images of power and legitimacy, through propaganda and censorship. These two aspects of writing are in practice never completely separable: for example, written laws serve many pragmatic functions, but it is also important to the subjects that the laws are written down, rather than arbitrary, and important to the rulers that they may portray themselves as issuers and guarantors of the laws.

The profoundly literate nature of the Roman empire makes it unsurprising that writing was used in both these ways by Roman authorities. But what is particularly striking is that Romans do not seem to have developed specifically political uses of writing, but rather used writing in the running of the empire in much the same ways as they used it in the private sphere. The Roman state did use writing to control the empire, but largely through harnessing the writing practices of a literate society to imperial ends rather than by the creation of a new bureaucracy.

The point emerges very strongly from a consideration of the issue of bureaucracy. This term is usually taken, after Max Weber, to refer to a style of government characterized by large numbers of state employees, organized in a hierarchical structure, within which there is a very clear division of responsibilities and functions. Bureaucrats tend to assimilate individual cases to generic categories and to deal with them accordingly. Roman government is widely held to be the antithesis of that sort of bureaucracy. The emperor's relationship with his subjects was highly personalized. Armies were led, and provinces governed and taxed, by aristocrats with no specialized training and little experience. Their careers followed no rigid patterns, they were selected on the basis of moral character and personal favour and they discharged their functions not through a civil service, but with the help of their own families and connections and a few soldiers and

⁴⁶ Wallace-Hadrill (1985) 81–2, Rawson (1985) 39–45. ⁴⁷ Larsen (1988) for a survey.

imperial slaves. The burden of administration was devolved to local élites and private individuals who took public contracts. Roman officials were expected to exercise a general watching brief and to deal with crises as they thought best. Their conduct was governed by their *officium* rather than the rule book.

Yet writing proliferated here, as in every other sphere of Roman life. Although most ephemeral writings have perished, the military records found from Dura, the tablets from Vindolanda and the thousands of *ostraka* found at the imperial mines at Mons Claudianus in Egypt together indicate the huge amount of documentation that was once produced. The papyri from Dura included records for the cohort XX Palmyrenorum, including daily reports, correspondence, guard rotas, records of legal decisions and receipts. At Vindolanda, the texts include requests for leave, unit records showing the current location of various soldiers, letters, military intelligence and *commendationes*, references written to recommend an individual to another's attention. Similar records are known from Dura Europus. Military papyri recording the pay of individual soldiers, with deductions, are also known. Writing was clearly important in the army in managing the supply and movements of large numbers of men and goods, in coordinating the activities of different units and in maintaining an intelligence advantage over potential enemies. Frontier systems comprised complex communication networks and writing played an important role, along with roads and signal towers, in transmitting information along them. The importance of writing in the mundane operations of the army is attested by the large numbers of soldiers known to be able to pen a simple message. Many of the procedures of the army, such as posting the guard, demanded a fair number of literate soldiers.⁴⁸ Auxiliary cavalrymen in Egypt were asked to sign receipts for hay allowances, and almost a third of those recorded on one papyrus could oblige. Both in this document and in the material from Vindolanda, a wide variety of individual hands is known.

Non-military uses of writing are known primarily from Roman Egypt. The extent to which it is possible to generalize from Egyptian material to the empire at large is a matter of some dispute; on the other hand it is possible that Roman government resulted in a marked increase in the extent to which writing was used in running the province.⁴⁹ The texts include receipts for a wide variety of taxes and customs payments. Within villages, censuses were carried out and substantial amounts of written material flowed up and down the administrative hierarchy. We know a reasonable amount about the role of local scribes through a few well-preserved archives, and the range of issues they dealt with, primarily fiscal but also juridical. Outside Egypt, we are most aware of traffic in the upper reaches

⁴⁸ Best (1966–7). ⁴⁹ Hopkins (1991).

of the hierarchy, for example the written appeals sent to the emperor, at the bottom of which the emperor wrote a brief reply, a *subscriptum*, before having the letters posted up to be read. Occasionally a rescript might find its way into a more permanent medium, an inscription or a jurist's collection of imperial rulings on a given issue. But most have perished like the private ephemera.

Nevertheless, the volume of letters exchanged between Pliny and Trajan during the former's governorship of Bithynia indicates the total amount of writing that might be involved in running at least some parts of the empire.⁵⁰ So, too, does the post at court of *ab epistulis*, later differentiated into two equestrian secretaries, one dealing with Latin correspondence and the other with Greek. One component of the good emperor, as idealized in the second century A.D., was that he worked hard at answering this correspondence and heard his subjects' petitions for justice. It is a major gap in our knowledge of the emperor's activities that the nature of the evidence means we know little about the volume of communications between the court and the military, but it seems unlikely that more attention was paid to Greek cities than to the troops, or to Bithynia than to the Germans. Roman writers seem to assume that emperors are well aware of what was happening at the front, even if they did not always choose to publicize it. Republican aristocrats of the Ciceronian period were very well informed about current campaigns, as were Republican governors of events at Rome. Emperors had much greater resources at their disposal, so that it occasioned no surprise when Tiberius was able to keep track of two mutinies, and later a serious revolt, from Rome, or when Claudius was able to arrive in Britain at just the right moment to associate himself with the conquest but to avoid any danger. Hadrian's long period of touring the empire with the court would have been impossible without a well-developed system of communications, which is even more impressive in view of the well-known obstacles to efficient communications in the ancient world.⁵¹ So, too, centralized accounts must have been produced and continually updated in order to manage cash-flow, in an economy with very underdeveloped credit facilities, and in particular to coordinate income and expenditure on an empire-wide scale. The detail with which individual soldiers' pay was accounted for implies that the records kept centrally were at least as sophisticated. The occasional failure to recover old records from the central archives does not indicate that it was not thought desirable to do so or even that the problem was a normal one.

Roman government depended heavily on the written word, and yet it was not bureaucratic, as Weber defined bureaucracy as a particular style of government, an ethic within which rules and regulations are more impor-

⁵⁰ Pliny, *Ep.* x *passim*. ⁵¹ Millar (1982), Duncan-Jones, *Structure* 7–29.

tant than informal relationships. Bureaucracy treats personal ties like patronage as subversive and illicit, whereas for Pliny it was a solemn duty to support his *amici*. Like the officers at Vindolanda, he used writing to carry out this *officium* by producing *commendationes*, and the honouring of patrons and assisting of clients was so far from illicit that it forms a major concern of his letters, and so part of his idealized autobiography. Another instance of the way that the patrimonial government of the empire made use of writing is offered by one of the documents included with Augustus' will and read out to the Senate on his death.⁵² This was a brief account of the empire, of the location of the armies and fleets and of the regular revenues and expenditure. The document concluded with the names of the imperial freedmen who could provide further details on each topic. What the document illustrates is the way that Augustus ran the empire through his own *familia*. Just as his sons and *amici* managed the campaigns of conquest in Europe, so his ex-slaves ran the financial and logistical concerns of the empire. At an early stage, he had even entrusted tax-collection to his ex-slaves. Over the first century minor aristocrats came to replace freedmen, first in the collection of taxes and then in positions at the head of the imperial departments of state. But the empire continued to be run in a way similar to the large financial concerns owned by private individuals, to large estates, potteries, export companies and the like. Patrimonial government consisting in running the empire without new specialized uses of writing, but rather by adopting and adapting the already sophisticated devices used to manage the complex private affairs of Roman aristocrats.

The close relationship between private and public records may be illustrated in a number of other spheres. The Vindolanda documents, many of which emanate from the *praetorium*, the commanding officer's house and office, are a mixture of private correspondence and military business, all written in a similar way on the same materials. Dura has produced a quantity of non-military documentation. Among the texts from the registry are marriage contracts, leases and contracts, some of them involving soldiers engaging in transactions with locals. Soldiers also appear in the documents from the private archive of Babatha.⁵³ The lodging of private documents in the official *grapheia* of Egyptian villages indicates a similar trend, while the officials themselves were not trained civil servants but men of middle rank whose main experience was in managing their own property in a similar village. Much state administration, throughout the empire, was managed by private contractors, as were many of the public concerns of the cities. Contractors usually had to own substantial property which provided surety for their fulfilling their contracts. These might be for the collection of indirect taxes, the maintenance of amenities or services or

⁵² Suet. *Aug.* 101, Tac. *Ann.* 1.11.

⁵³ Lewis, Yadin and Greenfield, *Documents of Bar Kokhba*.

simply for farming city or imperial land. We must presume that they used writing to manage these concerns, just as they used it to manage their own.

Emperors also made less mundane uses of the written word, although again the line between pragmatic and symbolic usage is not easy to draw. The *census* is a good example of a device that served both pragmatic fiscal demands, yet also might be understood as a statement about the power of the empire to dominate its subjects, by making them objects to be counted and used. Similar arguments have been advanced about cartography, centuriation and the punctuation of the new road systems with milestones, inscribed in Latin. At one level the concern with compiling lists and records and accounts of the empire may be seen as good management, by the *familia Caesaris*, of its varied concerns, but at another the records produced may be set alongside Augustus' *Res Gestae* as rhetorical gestures.⁵⁴ The emperors also manipulated texts in more straightforwardly symbolic ways: libraries were built in Rome, like those constructed by Trajan, constructed as part of his monumental complex along with the column, the forum and the market. The practice, like the patronage of poets, echoed aristocratic fashion, as well as the activities of the Hellenistic kings who had inspired it. Books might also be burned if they were regarded as subversive of the regime.⁵⁵ A more popular gesture was to publicly burn records of tax arrears: the importance of the act at a symbolic level is emphasized by depictions of these bonfires.⁵⁶

But it is important not to overestimate the significance of written words among a wide range of potential symbols. Many other media were used for this sort of display and just as the erasure of the name was only one component of *damnatio memoriae*, which also included the destruction of images, so the burning of books was just one feature of restrictions on free speech thought characteristic of bad emperors in general. Besides, spoken words were as dangerous as written ones, and might attract as violent reactions.⁵⁷

One difficulty in assessing the symbolic power of the written word is that it rarely appeared alone, rather than as a component of some other monument, whether a coin, a statue or a building. It is easy to misunderstand the significance of inscriptions in particular by decontextualizing them, removing them from their setting, ignoring their format and focusing on the text rather than the artefact. Many inscriptions can only have been dedicated because they were more important as things, than as texts. So municipal laws were set up in public not for ease of reference, as a roll might have been easier to refer to, but to symbolize the status of the town and the importance that Rome attached to it. Imperial letters only rarely contained similar clauses commanding that they be converted into monuments, and

⁵⁴ Nicolet (1988). ⁵⁵ E.g. Suet. *Tib.* 61.3, *Gaius* 16.1, Tac. *Agr.* 2, *Ann.* IV.35.

⁵⁶ *HA Hadr.* 7 depicted on the *Anaghypha Traiani*. ⁵⁷ Eg. Tac. *Dial.* 2, *Ann.* 1.12.

other explanations must be sought for their display. The display of the 'sacred letters' of the emperor served several purposes, signalling the distinction paid to the city, the skill of the ambassadors who had won a favourable reply with their rhetoric, and asserted the loyalty of the city to Rome, and the services rendered to its people by its élite.

But this is simply the overt content of the inscriptions. Treating them as monuments rather than as texts suggests other interpretations. Monumentality, I have suggested, more often indicates fear of change and social tension, than complacency and stability. The proliferation of inscriptions celebrating the good relations between city and empire at first sight presents an impression of a peaceful and harmonious relationship between rulers and ruled, and an expression of the symbolic unit of the empire. But, like the panegyrics of the second sophistic and the imperial cult, the inscriptions might be seen as devices to exercise power over the emperors, by asserting an ideal rapport and imposing on them the role of benefactors. Failed (or even unanswered?) embassies, after all, were not commemorated. Overt statements might have operated as an ideological device to deny tensions between the emperors and their subjects, and between rich and poor in the cities, while expressions of both rivalry and harmony with other cities might conceal an anxiety that many individuals might no longer care whether they were Ephesians or Smyrnaeans. In a similar way, coins issued during civil wars often bore legends like 'Concord' or 'Peace of the Whole World', attempts both to allay fears and to assert a new reality.

Other forms of writing might express tensions between rulers and ruled. Greek hostility to Latin written culture has already been mentioned. Another strategy was to write in another language, Punic in Africa, Celtic in Gaul, Demotic in Egypt. Some non-classical literacies, for example Syriac and Hebrew, may have been simply the continuation of ancient literary traditions independent of the empire, but others seem deliberately to have been created as alternatives to classical writing. Demotic Egyptian seems to have been rigorously purged of Greek loanwords while some Gauls produced Celtic versions of quintessentially Latin documents such as curse tablets and religious calendars. These writers clearly knew the canons of Greek and Latin writing but deliberately rejected them. But it is unclear how far writing was conceived of as a particularly Roman practice. Most areas of the empire, in the West as well as in the East, had been aware of writing before the conquest. Romans themselves sometimes conceived of writing as one component of *humanitas*, civilization as invented by the Greeks and propagated in the West by the Romans, but on the whole they followed the Greeks in acknowledging that writing was widespread and distinguishing groups more by their customs, their appearance and their language. The deliberate rejection of Latin for Celtic, and of

Greek for Egyptian, may have been more significant than the written medium.

What can be said in conclusion about the importance of writing for the Roman empire? Certainly writing was necessary for the way the empire was organized, but it would be a mistake (the graphocentrism to which studies of literacy, in general, are notoriously prone) to overemphasize writing at the expense of other factors. As an organizational technology, writing was vital, but so were ships, iron-working and coinage. As a symbolic medium writing played a part, but perhaps not as great a part as statuary or gifts. How could we tell? Perhaps the most revealing conclusions are those that allow us to distinguish our society from theirs in respect of the relationship between power and the written word. There were no specialized writing practices in the empire, no bureaucracy and no sharp divide between the way that private affairs were run and how the empire was managed. At the level of symbolism, in government as in society at large, the written word was not so valued above the spoken one, nor was writing a privileged medium for the propagation of images. Despite the huge volume of writing produced in running the Roman empire, and the text-based view we have of it, power was more closely associated with speaking than writing. Whether the object was to sway the emperor or the illiterate masses, speech, not writing, was the essential skill to master in order to make friends and influence people in the Roman empire.

CHAPTER 31

LITERATURE AND SOPHISTIC

EWEN BOWIE

Until the wars of A.D. 68 to 70 the empire had enjoyed a century of peace. Its cities, the chief vehicles of Roman imperial culture, had grown in number, size and prosperity. In the West whole provinces, like Lusitania and the Three Gauls, saw a network of cities of the Graeco-Roman type superimposed on their previous town and village structures. Even in others that had long had cities, like Baetica and Narbonensis, the number and size of cities grew. The same happened in the eastern empire. There many more provinces already boasted Greek cities where the élites lived their cultured lives, though there were some, like Celtic Galatia, where city life was only developing, and others with large tracts of land where villages were the rule. The foundation of cities continued through into the third century, but in the years from 70 to 192 a number of factors combined to accelerate the efflorescence of the Greek cities of the eastern empire. The philhellenism of Nero and his gift of 'freedom' to Greece was a false dawn. But Vespasian's revoking of the latter was less important than his admission of many easterners to the Senate, often some places up the *cursus*, partly a consequence of his eastern power-base in the civil wars. Admission of easterners continued under Domitian and increased under Trajan. By Hadrian's accession there was a significant caucus of Greek-speaking senators who might draw imperial attention and favour towards Greek cities, especially their own. The shifting of Rome's chief engagement with northern barbarians from the Rhine to the Danube frontier made some contribution to bringing the cities of Macedonia and even Achaëa nearer to centre-stage, while military movement along the Bosphorus and Dardanelles routes that linked the northern and eastern frontiers had discernible economic effects on the eastern Balkans and parts of Asia Minor, notably Bithynia.

Throughout these cities of the empire was spread an élite which defined itself as much in terms of culture as of wealth. For almost all western cities the language of culture was Latin and the texts which formed the canon of literature were those of republican, especially late republican, and early imperial Rome. To most members of the Greek élites of the eastern empire these texts were either wholly unfamiliar or known only in snippets and at

second hand. Whereas the best-educated westerner would read Greek as well as Latin, could with pleasure and profit attend performances of Greek works, and might argue about the respective merits of Greek and Latin writings, only the easterners who became part of the Roman system of government, whether as senators or members of the equestrian service, or as soldiers in the army, are certain to have had a working knowledge of Latin, and only Greek historians who decided to write about Rome show signs of having read substantial portions of Latin texts.

This is in no way surprising, given the long pedigree and immense prestige of Greek literary culture. Before Latin literature had staggered its first imitative steps, Greek education and culture had been diffused by Alexander's conquests not simply across the eastern Mediterranean but as far as Afghanistan and India. Settlers maintained and natives acquired a Greek identity by an education centred upon a canon of texts headed by Homer, Euripides, Plato, Demosthenes and Menander. We have little evidence that this system changed, and much that it did not, in the four centuries that separate Nero's death from Alexander's. By acquiring a text-oriented knowledge of classical Greek alongside the *koïnê* employed in daily political, social and commercial life, a citizen of Borysthènes or Cyrene, of Nicomedeia or of Tyre, could enrol himself into the worldwide imagined community of Hellenes, and could rely on his education to establish common bonds of Hellenism with educated people he encountered from other parts of the Greek universe. In the Roman empire many Greeks did travel, as merchants, as envoys to other cities, to *koïna* or to the emperor, as tourists in pursuit of general knowledge or as pupils seeking instruction from a sophist or philosopher. For these, Hellenic education will have been an almost indispensable passport. But the majority, even of the educated classes, will never have left their province: for them, the common traditions of the Greek world were even more important, since they guaranteed them membership of a community whose geographical extension could with licence be seen as the inhabited world and whose origins could be traced back to the age of heroes.¹

At the highest social level the basic education that gave an entrée to this intellectual community could be taken for granted. Matters are much less clear as we move down the social scale, though it is certain that education could promote upward mobility. It is also hard, if not impossible, to quantify the proportion of the highest social class, the city aristocracies, who continued their education to a 'tertiary' level by studying rhetoric or philosophy. But again one thing is clear: the teachers of philosophy and, even more, of rhetoric were accorded high esteem, they were often themselves from families of the highest social and economic status, and their exercise

¹ For the continuing role of Hellenism cf. Bowersock (1990).

of their intellectual skills was not limited to the instruction of the young but extended to public declamations and lectures.

I. SOPHISTIC RHETORIC

The lectures (*dialexeis*) and declamations (*meletai*) delivered by the more eminent practitioners and teachers of rhetoric (or ‘sophists’) can be seen as the most important single distinguishing mark of the Greek culture of this period.² That was certainly the view of Philostratus, himself a *rhetor*, whose *Lives of the Sophists*, completed about A.D. 238, stresses not only the cultural but also the social and political importance of sophists from Nicetes of Smyrna (under Nero) to his own time. It may indeed have been the view of many Greeks of that period, although Philostratus may tailor his pattern to match his information,³ and much of our evidence comes from biased sources – the self-confident claims of men like Dio Chrysostom and Aristides who were themselves sophists, or the satirical and distorting mirror of Lucian, who once had been, and who developed his own brand of literary entertainment on a sophistic base. But the range of literary activities becomes much wider when glimpsed through the pages of Plutarch, Gellius, Galen or Athenaeus, and although these may not shift rhetorical declamation from its place in the centre of the picture, they leave it with a much smaller section of the canvas.

The forty-four biographies of Philostratus present considerable variations, but some features must have been common to many sophistic careers.⁴ A young man who seemed to his local *rhetor* to be gifted would move to one of the major centres of sophistic, Ephesus, Smyrna or Athens, and there attend the courses given by an established maestro. If precocious, he might be picked out as a favourite pupil and soon begin teaching and declaiming himself in one of these centres: men of lesser talent might have to settle for teaching rhetoric in a smaller city. In either case, he might travel in the expectation that his declamations would acquire him honours and fees from cities and individuals. For many, declamation and teaching were complementary aspects of the career: indeed, a major part of the teaching was made up of paradigmatic declamation, and it will have been the nature of the audience rather than the content of a *melete* or the manner of its delivery that distinguished public performances from school lessons. A *rhetor* who taught privately but did not undertake public teaching or declamation might be said ‘not to be engaged in sophistic’,⁵ and it seems that it was the status of public teacher of rhetoric that merited the appellation ‘sophist’.

² See especially Bowersock *Sophists*, Anderson (1989), (1993).

³ So Anderson (1986), (1989) 82–9 and (1990), but see Swain (1991).

⁴ The classic account is Russell (1983), cf. Anderson (1993).

⁵ Galen XIV. 627 cf. Anderson (1989) 88, Swain (1991) 161.

The title 'sophist', however, was not always claimed by those eligible: Dionysius of Miletus, termed 'sophist' and *rhetor* on an honorific inscription, is simply called *rhetor* on his sarcophagus, found beside the *agora* in Ephesus in a position of extraordinary honour, as recorded by Philostratus.⁶ Some declaimed but took no pupils, like Aristides: but as Aristides found, this might disqualify a *rhetor* from the immunity from taxation and right to decline certain offices which a limited number of teachers enjoyed.⁷

The fees charged by the most eminent were sometimes high enough to make a significant contribution to the income even of men already very rich. Polemo charged Herodes Atticus 250,000 drachmae (over 40 talents) and a Bosporan king 10 talents, each for a single performance. Scopelianus of Clazomenae was paid 15 talents by Herodes Atticus' father for declaiming before his son. More modest fees such as the 100 drachmae charged for a course by Proculus of Naucratis, even when levied on as many as a hundred pupils (the number Philostratus claims for Marcus of Byzantium) cannot significantly have changed the lifestyle of a sophist who was, like many, from the propertied city élite, though we get a measure of their contribution from the story that the aristocratic Heraclides of Lycia bought a suburban property worth 10 talents out of his fee-income and called it *Rhetoric*.⁸ On the other hand, fees might be vital to the budget of a man trying to rise from the lower echelons of the educated classes, as Lucian presents himself in his *Dream*.

Economic gain was not limited to fees. The most successful might be appointed to one of the chairs of rhetoric in Athens at a salary of 10,000 drachmae, whether the city chair or, after A.D. 176, a chair founded by the emperor Marcus.⁹ Other cities must have had chairs too – almost certainly Ephesus – but we have no explicit attestation. Other honours might be accorded by cities. To men already wealthy some, like statues and privileged seating at festivals (*prohedria*), will have been more attractive than money as extra points in the constant competition for honour (*time*). A very few sophists extracted rewards of money or status from emperors. To Dionysius Hadrian gave equestrian appointments and membership of the Alexandrian Museum. To Polemo he gave membership of the Museum along with a gift of 250,000 drachmae, an extension to his descendants of the right to free use of the *cursus publicus* given him by Trajan, and generous benefactions in money and kind to his city, Smyrna.¹⁰ Many more individuals no doubt benefited financially from rich pupils or patrons.

⁶ *IEph* 3047 and 426, cf. Philostr. *VS* 1.22 (526).

⁷ *Dig.* xxvii.1.6.8: see Bowersock, *Sophists*, with the corrections of Griffin (1971) 279–80.

⁸ Philostr. *VS* 1.21 (521) (Scopelianus), 1.25 (535) (the Bosporan) and (538) (Polemo), II.27 (615) (Heraclides). ⁹ On chairs see Avotins (1975).

¹⁰ Philostr. *VS* 1.25.531–3: for the benefactions to Smyrna cf. *IGRR* IV 1431 = *ISmyrna* 697, and for the overall context of imperial favours Millar, *Emperor*.

Money and honour will surely have attracted some to the profession, as in Lucian's *Twice Accused* (27–31) Rhetoric says that they drew Lucian. But the other gains she lists are important, too. A declaimer clearly revelled in the power to manipulate his audience's emotions, the acclaim that punctuated and concluded his performances and the recognition they won him in society at large. There were occasions which only an outstanding speaker could be called upon to grace – the dedication of a great temple, exemplified by Antonius Polemo's commission from Hadrian to speak at the dedication at Athens of the temple of Olympian Zeus (completed after almost 700 years), or a funeral oration, such as that delivered by Aristides for his former tutor in language and literature (*grammaticus*), Alexander of Cotiaeum. Or a sophist might volunteer a speech to commemorate or lament a disaster, like Aristides' *Monodia* for Smyrna.¹¹

A sophist's involvement in the real world could spill over the bounds of epideictic rhetoric. The magisterial role arrogated by poets in archaic Greece and by dramatists in classical Athens was now played more by sophists than by any other literary figure. Many are found intervening in troubles within or between Greek cities, and to some extent they do so as experts in arguments and words. But we must remember that our documentation of such sophists' interventions comes from Philostratus, who seems to select those sophists who already enjoy family status and wealth and those incidents which epitomize their social eminence. Like many other marks of eminence – local office, benefactions to their cities, embassies to governors and emperors, senatorial marriages and imperial friendships – the mantle of peacemaker may have fallen on sophists' shoulders more in their capacity as local aristocrats than as sophists, however good a training for calming an angry mob a career of Demosthenic impersonations may have given.¹² We must remember, too, that sophists undertook real forensic cases (sometimes for a huge fee, like the two talents charged by Polemo to a Lydian) as well as arguing on either or both sides of fictitious ones.

Another attraction will have been the way that the repertoire of sophistic declamations cast declaimers as privileged interpreters of a classical world with which they and their audience were deeply and emotionally engaged. The subjects of *meletai* were drawn from Greek history between the Persian Wars and Alexander, with a few Homeric outliers. For the duration of his performance the sophist was Themistocles or Demosthenes advising the Athenians, his audience in Nicomedeia or Pergamum, Seleuceia or Sidon, were fifth- or fourth-century Athenians. Part of the reason for the maintenance of this repertoire will have been precisely that it was the staple and universal educational diet: as has been said above,

¹¹ Philostr. *VS* 1.25 (533), Aristides 18 (*Monodia*) and 32 (on Alexander). ¹² See Bowie (1982).

education in the basic history and literature of the classical period provided Hellenes everywhere with a common cultural language. But in explaining this archaism some weight should be allowed to the contrast between the glorious independence of Greek cities that a Themistocles or Demosthenes were struggling to preserve and the limitations on a city's actions or city politician's power that followed from the Greek world's incorporation in the Roman empire. The archaism, after all, is not limited to the content of school syllabuses and of sophists' declamations, or even to literature, most branches of which are equally focused on the classical past and are written in an Attic dialect artificially achieved by assiduous consultation of primary authorities and of lexica.¹³ The daily world of the educated élites was one in which many buildings and institutions of the classical past – at least in mainland Greece – continued to function and might even have been restored, in which Roman styles of dress and nomenclature could be ignored, and in which the sculptures adorning private and public buildings were often copies of classical Greek originals, only occasionally Hellenistic and even less often discernibly Roman. During the first decades of the second century the wearing of beards again becomes fashionable, and a city aristocrat whose statues evoke a bearded orator or philosopher of the classical period, clad in the *himation*, will easily have seen himself in that role, whether declaiming in a *bouleuterion* or theatre or arguing real political issues in these same buildings before the *boule* or *demos*.

II. PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHICAL RHETORIC

The philosophic type that becomes increasingly popular for statues of city eminences reminds us that sophists were not the only intellectuals who claimed to interpret the classical heritage.¹⁴ The Greek philosophy of the empire is discussed fully below (chapter 32). Here it is important to note that many sophists and philosophers saw each other as rivals in the provision of tertiary education. In Athens the big schools – the Peripatos, the Stoa, and the Garden, and probably also the Academy – continued a formal organization with lectures, pupils and a scholarch in whose appointment there was sometimes imperial interest. In other cities a philosopher with an established reputation attracted pupils – the Stoics Epictetus at Nicopolis or Timocrates of Heracleia at Smyrna, the Academic Plutarch at Chaeronea. Some of these seem to have relied wholly on oral teaching. So Epictetus, whose staccato harangues, rarely approaching a formal lecture, are known to us only in the form given them by his admiring pupil Arrian; so, too, the Cynic Demonax, lauded in Lucian's biography. There is no evidence there that Demonax either wrote or gave formal lectures: we see him

¹³ For fuller documentation of this interpretation see Bowie (1970).

¹⁴ See Zanker (1995).

confuting others at their lectures, balling-out Favorinus in mutual one-upmanship, and deploying a scathing wit to castigate effeminacy, moral flabbiness and social pretension. Lucian represents him as playing the same game of repartee and enjoying the same public authority as Philostratus arrogates for his sophists.

Other philosophers may indeed have confined themselves chiefly or wholly to the production of written texts: Arrian's edition of Epictetus' harangues and a work on comets acquired him the label 'the philosopher', and Galen's philosophical thought was more diffused by books than lectures. More commonly, a serious philosopher would write books, whether treatises entitled 'About x' or dialogues, would engage in philosophical argument with small numbers of rivals, pupils, friends or patrons, and would also deliver formal lectures. Examples can be found in C. Musonius Rufus, whose Etrurian origins did not prevent him writing his philosophy in Greek; in Plutarch, who despite some apparently declamatory pieces expresses contempt for 'sophists'; or in Gellius' friend the Platonist L. Calvenus Taurus of Berytus (or, if we believe Philostratus against a Delphic inscription, Tyre). Taurus worked with sophists rather than as their rival, and is mentioned with respect by Philostratus as the philosophy teacher of Herodes Atticus.

Still closer to sophists were philosophers who gave public lectures in the sophistic manner. A clear case is that of Favorinus, the *soi-disant* eunuch from Arles, whom Philostratus puts in his small category of men who acquired the label sophist 'because they seemed to be sophists although really philosophers'.¹⁵ Some of his writings argued about central philosophical issues from an Academic position. But other works were declamations, like those known from Philostratus – *On the Boy who Died Young*, *In Support of Gladiators*, *In Support of Baths* – and Philostratus' remarks on his mien, on his rhythms and on his tone of delivery class his public performances firmly with those of sophists. So, too, as Philostratus notes, does his quarrel with the sophist Polemo, the latter supported by Smyrna while Ephesus backed Favorinus. Of his extant works a discourse on *Fortune* (= [Dio] 64) is sophistic, and a speech criticizing Corinth for considering pulling down a statue previously voted him (= [Dio] 37) is a genuine document from real life which might be delivered by either a sophist or a philosopher in a career of aggressive self-promotion. A third work, *On Exile*, of which much has been recovered on papyrus, has sometimes been thought to relate to a real exile following the same quarrel with Hadrian to which Philostratus attributes the Athenians' decision to pull down their statue of Favorinus: but it is rich in philosophical *loci communes*, and since

¹⁵ οἱ φιλοσοφήσαντες ἐν δόξῃ τοῦ σοφιστεῦσαι, Philostr. *VS* 1.8 (492) cf. pref. (484). Favorinus, 1.8 (489–92).

Philostratus denies that Favorinus suffered as a result of the quarrel, it is more probably as fictitious in its assumptions as declamations regularly were.¹⁶

A better-documented but more complex example is that of Dio Chrysostom, claimed by Favorinus as his teacher. On the conventional view, dating back to Synesius and in essence to Dio's own self-representation, Dio started life as a sophist, composing a work *Against Philosophers* at the time of Flavian persecution of philosophers in Rome and Italy and, about the same time, two elegant speeches commemorating a boxer Melancomas, who had caught the eye of Titus before an early death. Under Domitian, Dio was himself exiled after the disgrace and execution of a relative of the emperor (there are various candidates) and during his exile converted to a brand of philosophy more Cynic than Stoic. On the usual dating of some works, philosophical features can be found early – e.g. in the *Rhodian*, perhaps a speech of the early 70s – and one view dismisses the conversion as posturing. Another view would redate works and insist that Dio did change tack under Domitian.¹⁷ What is clear, on either interpretation, is that a number of speeches mix genuine (or at least look-alike) philosophical argument with the rhetorical skills and literary charms more often associated with sophists.

It is not surprising that a man so influenced by Plato (the two books Dio took into exile were the *Phaedo* and Demosthenes' *On the False Embassy*) should see the point of exploiting literary virtuosity to propagate philosophy. Thus the four discourses *On Kingship*, whether any of them was actually delivered to Trajan as two purport to have been, entertained their audience by variation between first-person exposition (1 and 3) and framed dialogue (Philip and Alexander in 2, Alexander and Diogenes in 4); by anecdote, with which all four begin; or by snippets of purported autobiography. In 1 Dio, lost in the Alpheus valley, meets a rustic crone who prophesies his restoration from exile and then acts as the mouthpiece for the Platonic myth used by Dio to close the work, an elaboration of Prodicus' 'Choice of Heracles'. In 7 the anecdote has expanded to become the 'myth': shipwrecked on Euboea, Dio is given hospitality by country folk whose virtues are contrasted with the vice and corruption of city life. In 36 Dio recalls a visit to Borysthenes, where he was struck by the persistent attachment to Hellenic traditions of Greeks constantly embattled with barbarians: keen on Homer and Plato, they listened to a difficult discourse on the divine government of the universe, in which views of 'the philosophers' are followed and contrasted with a myth that Dio attributes to the Magi. It was a good gimmick for ensuring the attention of Dio's audience in Prusa, elsewhere both praised and criticized by Dio for the quality of its Hellenism.

¹⁶ See Swain (1989), Gleason (1994), Bowie (1997).

¹⁷ Against conversion Moles (1978), but see Sidebottom (1990).

These and other speeches which handle philosophical ideas – like 12 on Pheidias' statue of Zeus at Olympia – are in their manner, and were doubtless in their delivery, as sophistic as the frivolous *tour de force* in which Dio sets out to demonstrate that Troy never fell to the Greeks (11). We find the same mixture of philosophical thought and sophistic entertainment later in the century, under Commodus, in the elegant, allusive but shallow Maximus of Tyre, whose omission from Philostratus warns us that there may have been many others like him.

But Dio had another vein which was far from shallow or frivolous. As well as several speeches delivered in Prusa after his return from exile in A.D. 97, proposing and defending his policies for the city's enhancement, there are a few addressed to Prusa and to other Bithynian cities urging moderation in their financially disastrous rivalry for status and privileges.¹⁸ Furthermore, a long speech delivered in Rhodes and another in Alexandria (31 and 32) aim respectively to encourage good 'Hellenic' behaviour and to curb outbreaks of disorder associated particularly with theatrical entertainments. Of a pair of speeches delivered in Tarsus one seems (more enigmatically) to seek to raise standards of civic behaviour, the other to urge extension of full citizenship. Whether or not some of these belong before Dio's exile, and whether or not Dio is in any sense an emissary of the emperor, he deploys rhetorical skills laced with a modicum of philosophical thought in an apparently real world, but in a way we know also from the careers of straightforward sophists like Polemo and Aristides.¹⁹

Between the late 150s and early 180s the sophistic declamation was developed in a different direction by Lucian. Although he, too, claims conversion to philosophy, the fictitious autobiography of *Twice Prosecuted* suggests rather that he saw the literary rewards of deploying elements of Platonic dialogue and Cynic, and more specifically Menippean, satire. He trained as a sophist and for some time probably pursued a conventional career. But many of the predominantly humorous works to survive seem to have been delivered in the sophistic manner and social contexts in which sophists delivered discourses (*dialexeis*) or overtures (*prolalai*) and declamations (*meletai*). The former sometimes draw attention to the following declamatory performance's novelty.²⁰ Some works reveal their first place of performance – the *Scythian* a city in Macedonia, *Runaway Slaves* (satirizing, as so often in Lucian, philosophers of various schools) Philippopolis in Thrace. Many assume Athens' centrality, and certainly presuppose familiarity with big names on the Athenian cultural stage – Favorinus, Herodes Atticus, Hadrian of Tyre, Pollux of Naucratis – but they are unlikely all to have had an Athenian audience.

¹⁸ Documented also by Pliny, *Ep.* x; cf. Robert (1977).

¹⁹ Marcus reconciles Megara and Athens, Philostr. *VS*1.24 (529), Polemo heals stasis in Smyrna, *VS* 1.25 (531); cf. Aristides' speeches *On Concord*, 23 to the cities of Asia and 24 to Rhodes. For full discussions of Dio see Jones, *Dio Chrysostom*, Desideri (1978), Brancacci (1985). ²⁰ Cf. Nesselrath (1990).

But the fact that we have texts of Dio, Aristides, Maximus and Lucian should remind us that their works, aimed in the first instance at live audiences in the great sophistic centres, may have been read within their lifetime by other Greeks who may never have visited these hothouses of literary culture. There is always, of course, doubt about the relation between a live performance and the text approved for copying and circulation. We shall never know the *ipsissima verba* of a sophistic declamation. But the texts that we have were also all that most Greeks in smaller and more remote cities could rely on to discover how such stars compared with their local *rhetor*. Indeed, it has been held that many of Aristides' speeches should be reckoned, on the ground of their denseness and difficulty, to be texts for reading and not performance.²¹ We know that texts of sophists' declamations were not only conned by professionals like Philostratus and by later writers or rhetorical manuals but even percolated to the chalcenteric dwellers of Oxyrhynchus. Admittedly our two Aristides papyri are of the sixth or seventh centuries A.D., whereas papyri of Plutarch and Achilles Tatius are attested within a century of the author's lifetime, but other declamations are to be found among the second-century books from Oxyrhynchus.²²

Alongside works intended primarily for performance but then circulating as texts to be read stand others whose primary destination was a reader, even if a recitation to launch the book cannot be excluded. Address to an individual shows many of Lucian's works to be pamphlets for reading: *How One Ought to Write History*, addressed to Philo, the spoof biography of the Cynic Peregrinus to one Saturninus, and that of Alexander of Abonouteichos to Celsus. Many others read as though they, too, were pamphlets, e.g. the two-book *True Histories*. Most ingredients are found, if in different proportions, in both categories of work: the dialogue form, social satire and literary parody, fantasy of a sort justly claimed by Lucian as Aristophanic, all bound together by the sophist's skill in marshalling arguments and illustrating them with anecdote. Occasionally he unsettles his reader by relocating his satirical persona, as in his laudatory works on the philosophers Nigrinus and Demonax, although there the philosophers themselves are presented as criticizing contemporary society.

III. THE WRITTEN AND THE READ

Lucian's works take us into genres intended primarily for reading. Another of these that seems to be new and to develop in the first two centuries A.D. is the novel (or 'romance'). The extant five Greek ideal novels were probably composed (though both *termini* are controversial) between c.A.D. 50 and

²¹ W. Morel *RE* xv. 1 col. 497.

²² For later reading of Aristides, Russell (1983) 5; for his papyri see Aristides ed. Lenz-Behr 1 1 (Leiden 1976) x–xi.

A.D. 250, and quotations and papyri of over a dozen others corroborate that span. Although its roots can be traced through many Greek genres – the *Odyssey*, Euripidean melodrama, New Comedy, Hellenistic erotic poetry, historiography, declamation – and into Near Eastern story-telling, the phenomenon that we find in our fragments of the *Ninus* and in our full text of Chariton is in essence new. The basic plot can be variously handled: boy meets girl (both aristocratic), they are separated by chance, storms or pirates, dragged round much of the eastern Mediterranean, and reunited after surviving several attempts on their life and chastity.

Mannered style and Atticist language suggest that Achilles, Longus and Heliodorus of Emesa may have been practising sophists (an idea precariously endorsed for the first two by ancient sources). Chariton, less mannered and hardly Atticizing, is at least a sophistic hanger-on if, as he claims, he was secretary to the *rhetor* Athenagoras of Aphrodisias. Some features of content also show especial affinities with sophistic: delight in ecphrasis, declamatory monologues, contrived trial scenes. Others, however, recur in contemporary but not specifically sophistic works – scientific excursus (chiefly in Achilles and Heliodorus, with traces in Longus),²³ paradoxography, and constant allusion to classical Greek literature. The novel should therefore be seen as a sibling and not a child of the sophistic movement. It catered to some of the same needs or tastes. A reader could enjoy identification with a handsome hero or heroine whom Fortune saw right in the end, just as a member of a declaimer's audience could, with the speaker himself, become Demosthenes or Alexander for an hour. Both suspended the humdrum present – but in different ways. Whereas the sophist added a dimension of fantasy to the individual's public and political life, the novelist brought it to his personal and sexual experience.

There may have been weaknesses in the social structures of the age that explain at once the attraction of the novelistic hero, rift from his community, and the pursuit of personal salvation in contemporary philosophy and religion.²⁴ But other explanations offer. The formula, once hit upon, was a winner – who is to say it would not have been developed so enthusiastically if discovered three centuries earlier? For the archaic period the *Odyssey* had offered similar excitement: but although still well known, it was chiefly as a school text with which familiarity might be assumed and paraded (as by so many writers of this period) and its world must have seemed more distant than would that conjured up in novelistic prose, often close, in starting-point at least, to that of readers in Greek cities.

It is debated who these readers were. Some seek them lower down the educational scale than those of high literature – even, for the supposedly pre-sophistic *Ninus*, Chariton and Xenophon, among women and children. One argument, the scarcity of references to novels or novelists in

²³ Rommel (1923). ²⁴ Reardon (1969).

‘respectable’ literature, has been exaggerated and does not compel this conclusion; and the constant allusion to classical texts, even in Chariton, suggests that novelists at least expected a well-educated audience.²⁵

But a new literary form naturally evaded the classifications of Hellenistic literary theory and the prescriptions of rhetorical handbooks, and we know of no attempt to give it a theoretical framework. That had advantages. Variants could diverge strikingly from what seems to have been the norm. The miniature effects of Longus’ four books in which his rustic adolescents rarely leave their flocks, and never leave Lesbos, play on readers’ expectation of a pan-Mediterranean stage and eight or ten books of narrative. It seems that it was Lucian who, characteristically, and perhaps independently of the Latin comic novel of Petronius, wrote a burlesque with a first-person narrator turning into an ass and experiencing adventures and sexual encounters where the scabrous and deviant replaced the romantic and titillating.

So much for the major genres wholly or in some degree new. Others could be added of less significance, like the prose hymns of Aristides²⁶ or the recreation of classical Attic town and country in the fictitious letters of Aelian and Alciphron. But the major genres of the archaic and classical period were not dead. Alongside prolific philosophical writing, noticed only tangentially above and more fully in chapter 32, and oratory that in its sophistic colours has so high a profile, histories continued to be written. It is a symptom of imperial Greeks’ preoccupation with their classical past that much historiography was a reworking, often in elegant Atticist idiom, of earlier writers’ accounts. But not all was of this sort, and many works tackle recent history, others by their shape or approach reflected the contemporary reality of a Roman empire in which the governing class was still preponderantly drawn from Latin-speaking Rome and Italy.

The work of Arrian of Nicomedeia exemplifies all three types. His *Anabasis of Alexander*, claimed in its second preface as his masterpiece (and, some would infer, written after his distinguished Roman senatorial career and retirement to Athens) works solely from written sources. However judicious his choice of Ptolemy and Aristobulus as chief witnesses or his occasional supplement from other traditions, his activity was more compilation than research, and at times he may have written what his own autopsy could have refuted.²⁷ Seven-book format and title evoked his role-model Xenophon, whose *Anabasis* was a suitable paradigm for would-be-sober military history. Equally derivative were its one-book supplement, the *Indike*, whose more ethnographic content induced Arrian to attempt to write it in Ionic, and his ten-book history of Alexander’s successors.

²⁵ Perry (1967) suggested women and children, Hägg (1983) still allows the latter. *Contra* Wesseling (1988), Bowie (1994), (1996). ²⁶ Russell (1990b) 199–219.

²⁷ On career and works most concisely Bosworth (1980) 1–38, more fully Stadter (1980).

The contemporary world, however, came closer in his *Parthian History*, apparently skewed towards narration of Trajan's campaigns. War had been the privileged topic of history since Herodotus and Thucydides, and it was now only of Rome's wars that an imperial Greek might write contemporary history of that traditional sort. Many frontier wars probably generated Greek histories, but only occasionally do we hear of them. Statilius Crito, doctor to Trajan, wrote a *Getica* on his Dacian Wars. A whole clutch of historians was hatched by the Parthian campaigns of Verus to be mocked – and in some cases perhaps invented – by Lucian in his essay *How to Write History*. The Danube campaigns of Commodus figure in Herodian's history of the period from the death of Marcus in A.D. 180 to the accession of Gordian III in A.D. 238.

But Herodian's work offers another type of history that could now be written in Greek, mixing fourth- with fifth-century models, a Roman political history in which the imperial throne stood at the centre. To be kinetic and involve war and politics a period of civil strife must be chosen. We know from Josephus²⁸ of Greek histories of A.D. 68–70, while the wars that threw up and followed the Severi offered Herodian an attractive theme which he could represent as Thucydidean. He is often criticized for reinforcing his autopsy by too little research and too much sophistic décor, and many moderns prefer the section of Dio's work on the wars that brought Septimius Severus to power.

That work, a history of Rome to the year of Dio's own second consulate, A.D. 229, illustrates yet another path that could be taken. Whereas Diodorus of Agrigium and Nicolaus of Damascus, writing under the triumvirs and Augustus, might have seemed to set limits to the freshly established world empire of Rome by placing it in the context of a world history, the second and third centuries see universal giving way to Roman history, history written by Greeks often holding high Roman office.

Appian, a practising lawyer from Alexandria, also exemplified this type, with prologue (perhaps written *c.* A.D. 160) and many books extant. The first three covered the regal period, expansion into Italy and the Samnite wars. The remaining first twelve books then treated chronologically the annexation of successive provinces, a pattern broken for monographs on the Hannibalic and Mithridatic wars. Books 13–17 narrated the civil wars culminating in Augustus, 18–21 were devoted to Egypt. Book 22 seems to have swept from Augustus to Trajan, with 23 on Dacia and 24 on Arabia. Appian's emphases are predictable. The provincial books focus on conquest and resistance, the turbulent century from 133 B.C. receives especial emphasis, and his own province, Egypt, is privileged by four books, which may have admitted more social and administrative history than most of the

²⁸ *BJ* IV.496.

work. Trajan's campaigns get special attention: then, with Hadrian's accession and the Antonine peace, history stops.

We do not know how the problem of the imperial peace was solved by Marcus' freedman Chryseros in his history of Rome, apparently down to his own time, or by the Greek and Italian History of A. Claudius Charax of Pergamum (*cos.* A.D. 147). They may have been saved by Marcus' wars.²⁹ It is perhaps significant in the case of Dio from Bithynian Nicaea that it was only after his monograph on the rise of the Severi that he turned to the arduous task (ten years of research and twelve of writing) of an eighty-book history. Dio gave space to administration as well as war, and it is regrettable that though we have Books 36–54, Books 55–60 and 79–80 survive only in fragments (albeit substantial for Books 79–80) and most of his imperial books (61–78) are known only in epitome.

This imperial section tends to the biographic, and reminds us that imperial biography was another available genre. We know of many, and there must have been scores more, ranging from the serious to the tendentious (whether in praise or blame). Domitian's reputation had him paired with Dionysius of Syracuse by Amyntianus, writing under Marcus. Hadrian's popularity in the Greek world secured him several, some doubtless in his lifetime. Even the reign of Pius had its historians,³⁰ though it is hard to know what they chronicled. The sophist Antipater was also, presumably, complimentary in his *historia* of the emperor Severus who made him *ab epistulis*.³¹

Amyntianus' other known works take us back towards Arrian's *Anabasis*. Like Arrian (and several imperial Greeks before them – Potamon of Mytilene, Dio Chrysostom and Plutarch) he wrote a work on Alexander, but also another pair of *Lives* linking Philip and Augustus, and a work on Olympias.³² His fourth-century interest matches declaimers' focus on the pre-Hellenistic period. The same bias affected the world history of the Hadrianic Cephalion, ending with Alexander, just as the Greek history of Jason of Argos, probably of this period, ended with Athens' fall in 322 B.C. Moreover, works on the Hellenistic period must have had a Greek rather than Roman focus – Telephus of Pergamum's five books *On the Pergamene Kings*, Criton of Pieria's work *On the Empire of the Macedonians*.

A similar recreation of a world in which Greece has pride of place could be achieved by writing local history, often antiquarian and periegetic. The same Telephus wrote a *Periegesis of Pergamum* – though his work *On the Temple of Augustus at Pergamum* suggests admission of recent monuments – Criton a *Periegesis of Syracuse*. There may have been more history in his *Palleniaka* or *Sikelika*, as there seems to have been in the work of Arrian that falls in this

²⁹ See Bowie (1974) = Bowie (1970) 12–13; on Charax, Andrei (1984).

³⁰ Paus. VIII.43. ³¹ Philostr. *VS* II.24 (607).

³² Phot. *Bibl.* 131, 97a 9 ff. For these and other works on Alexander see *FGrH* 147–151.

category, his Bithynian history, ending with his country's annexation by Rome, a terminus that recognized the real world in which Arrian had his career. There were numerous works similarly entitled by local *pepaideumenoí*, often *rhetors*, and others called *Foundations/ktiseis* and specifically directed towards the early, often mythical period: thus again Criton with his *Foundation of Syracuse*. As Criton's two-centre productions show, a writer might seek or reciprocate honour from another region as well as his *patria*. P. Anteius Antiochus, the mid-second century sophist from Aegeae, not only wrote *peri tes patridos* but established mythical links with Argos (through Perseus) which were officially recognized.³³ All these works are lost, but the manner in which such writing recreated the past can be followed step by step in Pausanias' *Periegesis* – great names and events, legendary and historical, are celebrated in connection with monuments still visited by the second-century tourist; and again, as in declamation and much historiography, material later than the Roman conquest of Greece is neglected.³⁴

One branch alone of this type of writing invited contemporary material, works like Aspasius of Tyre's *On Tyre and its Citizens*, Timogenes' similar work on Heracleia Pontica in three books, or the more comprehensive thirty books of Herennius Philo's *On Cities and their Famous Men*. Focus on distinguished men, as on monuments, might stress continuity and the vigour of contemporary Greek culture. So, too, purely biographic works – Lucian's pamphlet-sized *Demonax* and *Nigrinus*, and doubtless the lost biography of Arrian by Dio. In the hands of Philostratus a sequence of sophistic biographies becomes philhellenic cultural history, as do his novelistic eight books on the guru Apollonius of Tyana.

We have already crossed the boundary that we, but not contemporaries, might draw between history and its neighbours, biography, mythography and philological scholarship, and the addition of the sciences forms a nexus between whose members Greek writers moved more readily than moderns. Some were superficial, aiming to entertain by piquant selection and juxtaposition like the sophist Aelian of Praeneste in his *History of Animals* and *Diverse History*, or impress by sheer accumulation of material, like that on the history of eating and drinking in Athenaeus of Naucratis' *Sophists at Table*. But sometimes range may reflect breadth of serious learning, as probably in another writer of local history, Hermogenes of Smyrna. He wrote a two-volume study of Smyrna, several *ktiseis* (four on cities in Europe, two on Asia, one on the islands), a book on Homer's birthplace and another on his wisdom (*sophia*). But his main effort must have gone into his seventy-seven medical works.³⁵ This range outclasses even Favorinus,

³³ *FGH* 747. ³⁴ See Habicht (1985), Bingen (1996), Arafat (1996).

³⁵ *FGH* 579, *JGRR* IV 3311 = *ISmyrna* 536.

who alongside the philosophical and sophistic works already noted wrote a twenty-four-volume *Pantodape Historia* in which all manner of learning was on view but (unlike his arch-enemy Polemo, who wrote a *Physiognomica*) had no medical string to his bow. But both are dwarfed by the achievement of Plutarch and Galen.

Plutarch has already been mentioned for his philosophy. There his works range from highly technical essays in metaphysics and logic like *On the Principle of Cold* (addressed to Favorinus) and *On Stoic Inconsistencies* to protreptic moral treatises on such subjects as friendship, anger or flattery. But what we call the *Moralia* also include some rhetorical pieces (e.g. *On the Luck of the Romans*, *On the Luck of Alexander*, or the lost *Speech Delivered to Dio in Olympia*, presumably in reply to Dio 12), and religious and antiquarian studies (there was, inevitably, a work on *Ktiseis*). To these interests the lost works known from the Lamprias catalogue added philological scholarship, evident also in such extant pieces as *Greek, Roman and Sympotic Questions*. The humanity and range that the *Moralia* exemplify are also manifest in the parallel *Lives*. Although dedicated, like *Sympotic Questions*, to the philhellene Roman Sosius Senecio, the *Lives* surely expected a readership more Greek than western, and their programme was intended as much to recall to Greeks the achievements of great men of the past many, but not all, of whom were national 'heroes', as inform them about comparable figures in the history of the ruling power. The principle of pairing Greek and Roman lives, though not new, was increasingly appropriate in an age when more and more Greeks (among them Plutarch and others in his circle) were involved at high levels in Roman administration, and when in some spheres and locations (Rome, Athens, Pergamum, Ephesus) a common Greek and Latin intellectual and literary culture was developing.

Even greater was Galen, whose career as a practising and teaching doctor found room for writing works over an astonishing range, listed in a work he composed himself late in life when he discovered doubt about his authorship of books on sale in Rome. Over 120 survive, chiefly medical and philosophical, but those lost also embraced literary criticism and scholarship.

One other Antonine figure was also a major thinker, though we tend to class his writing, like Galen's medical works, as non-literary in a way that Platonic and protreptic traditions deter us from categorizing philosophy. That is Claudius Ptolemaeus, most famous as a mathematician, astronomer and geographer, though he wrote too on astrology, harmonics and optics. By contrast, we dismiss the content of Artemidorus' *Interpretation of Dreams*, though welcoming it as evidence for the perspectives and preoccupations of the age, the same criterion that admits to bookshelves Aelius Aristides' curious hypochondriac diary *Sacred Tales*.

IV. POETRY

Many of these subjects were also popularized in didactic poetry, usually, following the Hesiodic tradition, in dactylic hexameters.³⁶ Dorotheus of Sidon's long astronomical poem, surviving only in Arabic, was written about A.D. 80, the year of birth of the author claiming the name Manetho of whose *apotelesmatika* six books (c.2,000 lines) are extant. Galen quotes a 174-line elegiac poem on antidotes to snake-bites dedicated to Nero by his doctor Andromachus. Marcellus of Side, later chosen by Herodes to compose poems respectively heroizing Regilla and protecting her estate on the Via Appia, had his forty-book medical work *Chironides* lodged in Rome's libraries by Hadrian and Pius. In Lycian Rhodiapolis Heraclitus, priest of Asclepius and Hygieia, both dedicated them a temple and was honoured as the Homer of medical poetry and 'the first in all history to be a doctor, a historian and a poet of medical and philosophical verse'. He gave copies of his works to Alexandria, Rhodes and Athens (where he was honoured by the Garden and Areopagus). Enhancement rather than preservation of human life engendered three books on *Bird-catching* from a Dionysius (extant in prose paraphrase), five books on fishing, dedicated by a Cilician ('Oppian') to Marcus and Commodus and four on hunting dedicated to Caracalla. In geography, a *Periegesis of the Whole World* in 1,186 hexameters uses acrostics to identify its author as Dionysius of Alexandria and its date as Hadrianic: it became a basic school text, translated twice into Latin in late antiquity and used down to the early modern period.

Hexameters' other main genre, narrative epic, could also bring renown and reward, not least if the emperor was its theme.³⁷ Pancrates from Egypt won membership of the Alexandrian Museum for his poem on a hunt in which Hadrian slew a lion attacking Antinous: some uninspired lines survive. Nestor of Laranda's *Alexandrias* doubtless praised Alexander Severus. But less such poetry is attested than might be expected, and traditional myth remains the favoured subject. It may be for such works as his *Metamorphoses* (commended by Menander *rhetor*) and *Ilias Lipogrammatos* (each book eschewed successive letters of the alphabet) that Nestor was honoured by statues in Cyzicus, Ephesus, Ostia and Paphos. Certainly the mythological epic diminishes neither in frequency nor size. The Domitianic sophist Scopelianus of Clazomenae wrote a *Gigantias*; scraps of another (once at least seventeen books) seem to belong, like a *Bassarica* in at least fourteen books, to a Dionysius, perhaps even the Periegete, certainly of his period. Quintus of Smyrna's fourteen-book *Posthomerica*, from the mid-third century, the only epic between Apollonius and Nonnus to survive intact, was modest in scale alongside the sixty-book *Unions of Gods and*

³⁶ On these poets see Bowie (1990) 66–79. ³⁷ On these poets see further Bowie (1990) 79–83.

Heroes by Nestor's son Peisander. Such works doubtless satisfied the appetite for legends attached to the many Greek cities through which their readership spread, as is shown by the much later work to which they can be seen to lead up, the *Dionysiaca* of Nonnus of Panopolis in forty-eight books. Less favoured, it seems, were short epics in the Callimachean mode that influenced didactic writers, but one survives from the latter half of the third century, Triphiodorus' *Capture of Troy*.

The boundary between such book-texts and the world of performance and public display is straddled by epigram. Mostly in elegiacs, these could be sepulchral, dedicatory or commemorative, inscribed upon statue bases, buildings and grave monuments – or, in the unusual case of the many verses recording tourists' visits to the singing statue of Memnon near Egyptian Thebes, upon the legs of the colossus. A group of these emanates from one of the few women writers of this or any period, Iulia Balbilla, who opted to compose her elegiacs in Sapphic dialect. Expanded, such poems could become the hymnic and curse texts by Marcellus from the estate of Regilla or the eighteen elegiac lines from Pergamum in which, towards 180, Aristides acknowledges Asclepius' aid.³⁸ Often the composers were amateurs or hacks. But often too we have professional work of high quality, like Marcellus' poems, or a group of substantial poems from Eleusis in which T. Flavius Glaucus, poet, *rhetor* and philosopher, commemorates several of his family who officiated in the cult.

The other branch of epigram, the literary, was more under professional sway, though here, too, any man of letters, even an emperor, might try his hand. Composition of epitaphs for people long dead or fictitious, of piquant dedications, and of descriptions of works of art was an epigrammatic tradition dating at least to the Hellenistic period. This was continued, and the erotic epigram enjoyed a revival, chiefly in the hands of Rufinus late in the first century and of the pederastic Strato of Sardis under Hadrian. Equally popular was the satirical epigram, where the big names (confusingly for ascriptions) are Lucillius under Nero and Lucian the prose satirist. A literary epigram might receive its first hearing in a salon or symposium, but its chief avenue of dissemination was in a written text, whether alone or in a small collection, like Strato's single volume *Musa Puerilis* or Philo of Byblos' four books. Thence it might move into an anthology, like Philip's *c.* A.D. 40 or 60 or Diogenianus' under Hadrian or Pius.

For other genres live performance was indeed the primary objective. New hymns were composed for shrines and festivals. Aristides composed a number in lyric metres in the decade following his collapse in Rome in A.D. 144, chiefly to Apollo and Asclepius, for singing by a choir of boys, probably in the small theatre in the Pergamene Asclepicon. Glaucus

³⁸ See Bowie (1990) 53–66 and (1989a) 218–20.

composed one for Olympia.³⁹ The pagan hymns we know from quotation by Christian writers (who of course had their own) and papyri (particularly magical papyri) are directed to a wide range of deities and mostly composed in hexameters, though some are in iambic trimeters or anapaests.

Particular types of hymn were the subjects of competition in *mousikoi agones*. Athens still had dithyrambic competitions: that of A.D. 97 was won by Plutarch's friend and Glaucus' ancestor Serapion, a victory that is the setting of Plutarch's *Symptotic Questions* 1 10. The Mouseia at Thespieae had a category *prosodion*, once won by an Athenian Antiphon who was also an epigrammatist and both poet and actor of New Comedy.⁴⁰ At its second-century peak it had many other slots for poetry: poem to the emperor, poem to the Muses, rhapsode, poet of New Comedy, poet of New Tragedy, singer of new songs (?), writer of satyr plays.

There were still dramatic competitions at Athens too, and schedules of prizes for contests at Aphrodisias add further categories and throw light on their relative esteem. In competitions both musical and athletic a poet (type unspecified, but since he follows an encomiographer he too may be encomiastic) wins 200 denarii; a boy citharode wins 150, an adult 500, the same prize as for tragic poets, while a comic poet gets 400 (adult athletes get 1,000 or 1,500).⁴¹ Another raises the stakes for citharodes with 3,250 denarii for the winner and 1,000 for the runner-up, and has an entry for Latin poets. A third has first, second and third prizes for tragic and comic poets (ranging from 2,700 to 600 denarii, and from 1,600 to 300 respectively). In a fourth, prizes of 1,500 for a citharode and 400 for runner-up are the only literary ones to survive. Another solely musical competition, the Lysimacheia,⁴² offers 750 denarii each to encomiographer, poet and boy citharode. As well as prizes for tragic chorus and comic and tragic poets there were prizes (for producers?) of New Comedy and New Tragedy. The same relative esteem is attested by the more modest prizes established in Oenoanda by C. Iulius Demosthenes and sanctioned by Hadrian on 29 August 125 – 75 denarii for encomiographers and poets, 200 for comic and 250 for tragic poets, 300 for the citharode (half for runners-up).

The monuments of Athens, Thespieae, Aphrodisias and Oenoanda thus yield a different and perhaps more representative view of contemporary poetic activity than the perusal of surviving texts. Few scraps of tragedy survive – though we know Nicetas and Scopelianus to have excelled as tragedians – and no comedy (unless we count Lucian's parodic tragedy *Gout*).⁴³ Yet dramatic composition manifestly continued and was esteemed. Much must have been composed, as all was performed, by professionals who were members of the World Synod of Dionysiac artists. Such a pro-

³⁹ See Bowie (1989a) 214–20, 240–1. ⁴⁰ *JG* vii 1773 cf. Bowie (1990) 58–9.

⁴¹ *CIG* 2758a; cf. Roueché (1993) Appendix 1.

⁴² *CIG* 2759 = Le Bas–Waddington 1620d = Pickard–Cambridge (1968) 321 no. 16b.

⁴³ See Bowie (1989a) 254.

fessional was C. Iulius Longianus of Aphrodisias, honoured in A.D. 127 at Halicarnassus, at least partly for excellence in tragedy, with citizenship and twenty statues, one to be set up next to that of 'old Herodotus'. He was commended for 'diverse displays [*epideixeis*] of every sort of poetry' which entertained the old and improved the young – hence it was also decided that his books should be lodged in the libraries so that the young might learn from them as from the classics.⁴⁴ Like sophists and philosophers, live poets were clearly esteemed as educators, especially in morals, in the same way as classical poets. It is also likely, as is certain for the Hellenistic period, that the theme of poet as of prose encomiographer would be the city or festival itself, perhaps with special attention to *ketisis* and early history: at Thespieae the tension between tradition and contemporary reality is resolved by establishing compositions both on the Muses and on the emperor.⁴⁵ One further feature of poetic *epideixis* assimilates it to that of sophists, and that is admiration for extempore performance, specifically lauded in an Athenian decree honouring Q. Pompeius Capito of Pergamum with a statue and citizenship.⁴⁶

The competitions also reveal the most esteemed professional poetry as citharodia, songs accompanied by the cithara. A few survive by one of the leading citharodes, Mesomedes, some even with musical notation. Hadrian awarded his freedman Mesomedes a salary (later halved by Pius), and his songs were still admired by Caracalla. His song on Antinous is lost, but a stone from Courion has given us a citharodic lament for Antinous in the metres Mesomedes favoured.⁴⁷ Music will have been more important than words in this genre, but for many Greeks citharodia – like the other purely musical performances attested at competitive festivals and the sub-literary genres of mime and pantomimes – must have offered less demanding and more pleasurable entertainment than the more morally beneficial performances of sophists and texts of high literature.

V. THE LATIN WORLD

The Latin literary world presents a fundamentally different picture from the Greek, and at least part of the explanation may be found in the different place in it of sophistic rhetoric.

First, a brief overview of what was being written. Between the end of Nero's reign and the beginning of that of Pius, volume, variety and indeed quality are impressive. Flavian epic poetry – the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus, the *Bellum Punicum* of Silius Italicus, the *Thebais* and uncompleted *Achilleis* of Statius – is now being re-evaluated by modern critical scholarship, as are Statius' occasional and commemorative pieces, gathered in his

⁴⁴ *MAMA* VIII 418 (a) and (b): see further Bowie (1989b) 202. ⁴⁵ See Hardie (1983) 17 ff.

⁴⁶ *IG* III 769 (first century A.D.) ⁴⁷ See Bowie (1990).

Silvae. The *Epigrams* of Martial, chiefly satirical, marry accomplished technique to a sharp eye. Their tone, techniques and period of production (late Domitianic and early Trajanic) overlap with those of Rome's greatest verse satirist, Juvenal, perhaps still writing in the 120s. Other poetic activity there certainly was: Juvenal attests epic (the *Theseis* of Cordus), Tacitus' *Dialogue on Orators* and Pliny's *Letters* (A.D. 98–110) are witnesses to tragedies and lyric poems, some admittedly in Greek, others in Latin but probably (like Statius' *Silvae*) owing more to Greek than Latin traditions. Surviving fragments of Hadrian's poetry show us that the fashion for short poems in a variety of metres persisted.

Pliny's *Letters* themselves – 'real' yet artistically elaborated and tendentiously selected and selective – are an interesting development of those of Cicero. Two other great Latin prose genres still flourished. Tacitus and Pliny were without doubt fine orators, even if the former explores the idea of oratory's decline in his *Dialogue on Orators* and our only example of oratory to survive intact, the latter's *Panegyric* on Trajan (A.D. 98) strikes moderns as turgid and assentatory. But Tacitus' *Histories* and *Annals*, published in the first decades of the second century, are acknowledged masterpieces. Few would concede that Annius Florus' *History of Rome* raised his or historiography's reputation, but in a neighbouring genre Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* is a worthwhile contribution to biography.

From about A.D. 140 our record becomes much thinner. Historians and imperial biographers (the genres converge) must have written in Latin as they did in Greek, especially when incited by great foreign wars – Verus' in the East or Marcus' on the Danube – but they have left little trace. Suetonius had at least one successor early in the third century, Marius Maximus, who wrote twelve more imperial *Lives*, but he too is lost. We have scant remains of occasional poetry, including some bucolic from Annius Florus and Septimius Serenus.

Instead our three great witnesses to Latin writing under Pius and Marcus have left us respectively epistolography, *belles lettres* and an impressive range extending from Platonic philosophy to a picaresque novel. The letters are those of M. Claudius Fronto, tutor to Marcus and a distinguished orator, from whom we also have fragments of speeches, and of a theoretical work on historiography. The *belles lettres* are the *Attic Nights* of his admirer Aulus Gellius, a record of conversations, some in Rome but most in Athens, on topics philosophical, literary and above all linguistic. The third figure, Apuleius of Madaurus in Africa Proconsularis, is the only figure of all those so far mentioned to resemble Philostratus' Greek sophists. His philosophical writings (e.g. *On the Daemon of Socrates*, *On Plato*) establish him as a Platonic philosopher, somewhat more serious than Maximus of Tyre but not so professional as Plutarch. His status as a philosopher is robustly vindicated in his defence against a charge of magic purporting to be delivered

before the provincial governor Claudius Maximus (probably in A.D. 158/9). Besides revealing that he dabbled in poetry as well as magic this *Speech of Defence* also shows that his public role as a philosopher was that of itinerant lecturer rather than established teacher. That his public displays extended to sophistic themes is demonstrated by a collection of declamatory pieces, apparently short selections from a longer collection of speeches, entitled *Florida*. Finally, and most influentially, his eleven-book novel, probably entitled *Metamorphoses* but known to Augustine as *The Golden Ass*, elaborated a Greek original of the same title, very probably written by Lucian in a frivolous mode blending Menippean satire and Milesian tales, and concluded it with an Isiac revelation to the hero Lucius in an unexpected eleventh book that may or may not give it a serious religious twist.

The *Metamorphoses* may have been written as late as the 170s. Thereafter, even if Christian Latin writing flourishes, as it had already begun to with Tertullian, the traditional pagan genres almost disappear until the fourth century – and this during a period for several decades of which many Greek genres continued to show vigour.

A comprehensive explanation of this profile, so different from that in the Greek world over this period, cannot be attempted in this chapter. What is here addressed is the relation of this Latin literature to the Greek Second Sophistic. The most obvious and perhaps important single difference between this Latin and the Greek literary world is the almost complete invisibility of sophistic rhetoric. Apuleius of Madaurus apart, neither our surviving literary texts nor our epigraphic record, whether from Rome or from other cities of the Latin West, attest public declamations by rhetors before large audiences. It is especially striking that nothing in our considerable evidence on Fronto suggests that he ever declaimed, although he was a practising orator, a teacher of rhetoric and a man whose interests and personal relations brought him into close contact with many Greek representatives of the Second Sophistic.⁴⁸ Declamation was certainly practised, as the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* of the elder Seneca already make clear under Augustus and Tiberius, and as the minor *Declamations* ascribed to Quintilian exemplify, but its primary purpose remained educational – a teacher declaiming as a model, pupils declaiming for a teacher to criticize.

Indeed, as far as education goes, the Latin world enjoyed a structure almost indistinguishable from the Greek, with teachers of rhetoric accorded privileges in *coloniae* and *municipia* and an imperially salaried chair of rhetoric in Rome itself, founded by Vespasian and first held by no less a figure than Quintilian. It is clear too that young men who had been trained in Latin rhetoric and had also very commonly a Greek education might

⁴⁸ Champlin, *Fronto*.

then study Greek rhetoric either in Rome itself or by travelling to a Greek sophistic centre – both patterns were established even by Cicero's time. We also know that Cicero, Hirtius and Pansa declaimed when the latter were already consuls, chiefly (it seems) for each other's benefit, and doubtless so that the two consuls might learn from the maestro's virtuosity.⁴⁹ By the Augustan age it is clear that some Latin teachers of rhetoric are declaiming for entertainment and to substantial audiences,⁵⁰ and that eminent Romans, including Augustus himself, declaim before smaller groups of friends.

Our evidence becomes patchy after the period covered by the elder Seneca. It suggests, however, that at the most this pattern persists – e.g. the teacher of rhetoric Antonius Iulianus has declaimed in some public context recalled by Aulus Gellius (xv. 9) – but that Latin declamation did not become so prominent a cultural phenomenon as did Greek sophistic rhetoric, and may even have declined. The combination of teaching and declamation does not attract members of the highest social classes, as it does in the Greek world; declamation for entertainment never climbs to the top of the cultural ladder.

Accordingly, despite the interest and connoisseurship in Greek rhetoric manifested in the enthusiasm shown for Greek sophists visiting Rome (we may recall Pliny's remarks on Isaeus)⁵¹ and presumably nourished by resident Greek sophists, including the incumbent of the imperial Greek chair in the capital, Apuleius is our only clear example from this period of declamation in Latin for the entertainment of large audiences rather than for education or for the entertainment of a circle of friends. Admittedly, there are hints in the declamations of the *Florida* that Apuleius is in competition with others of his kind.⁵² It may be that we are dealing with an unusual case of the problem of invisibility, and that at least in Africa there developed a fashion for Latin declamation similar to that so widely diffused in the Greek world. It is less easy to believe that this was also true of Rome, given the silence of Pliny, Fronto and Gellius; and as for other western provinces, it may be telling that Favorinus of Arelate chose to make his sophistic, like his philosophical, career in the medium of Greek. Africa, then, may have been marked out by a local fashion – whether encouraged by the proximity of the Greek cities of Cyrenaica (Carthage itself was clearly hospitable to Greek culture) or for some other irrecoverable reason. More radically, we might note that Apuleius' allusions to competitors seem to relate specifically to the praise of proconsuls;⁵³ or might speculate that they are merely generic posturing, taken over with the other trappings of the Greek vogue. Apuleius would then become a creative borrower from Greek in his rhetorical practice as in his writing of prose fiction. A man who was

⁴⁹ Sen. *Controv.* 1 *pref.* 11; see the discussions of Winterbottom (1975) vii–xv; Sussman (1978) 1–17.

⁵⁰ Sen. *Controv.* 7 *pref.* 8. ⁵¹ *Ep.* 11.3. ⁵² *Flor.* 9; cf. Sandy (1997), Harrison (2000).

⁵³ *Flor.* 9.1, 17.1.

educated in Athens and who, like Dio and Favorinus, gave public lectures on philosophical subjects (but unlike these, in Latin) would find it easy to bridge the short gap between these and the school-oriented declamations and to attempt to transplant the developed sophistic performance.

The mere survival of a text of his *Florida* is perhaps inadequate evidence that he succeeded. It remains intriguing that no Latin equivalent of Philostratus' sophists developed – this despite close personal contacts enjoyed by Latin writers with Greek sophists (as well as with the philosophers, grammarians and medical writers with whom these sophists interacted); despite the archaizing prominent in second-century Latin, and especially in Fronto and Gellius, that must reflect some degree of influence exercised by the admittedly very different Greek preoccupation with their past; and despite the delight in linguistic niceties and in scholarly investigation in general that Fronto and Gellius share with contemporary Greek sophists. Perhaps the Greek sophistic performance became so widely admired in East and West alike that it stunted the comparable growth of the Latin. But the different relation between culture and politics might also offer an explanation. The élite of Rome and of western cities had no doubts about their role as a governing class. Fronto delivered speeches in the Senate and in the courts of Rome and attained the consulate; his pupils included the emperor Marcus; like others from western provinces who rose to high office in Rome he identified himself fully as a Roman and as an heir to the Roman past. In the Greek world, however, one reason for the prevalence of sophistic declamation, often by members of a city's élite, was its role as a substitute for 'real' uses of oratory that acquired or displayed political power.⁵⁴ The absence of sophistic declamation by members of the élites of the Latin West (like the apparent dearth of sophists from the anomalous city of Alexandria *ad Aegyptum*) becomes much less puzzling if that function is conceded to Greek sophistic.

⁵⁴ See Bowie (1970) – not, of course, a thesis that has gone unchallenged. For important recent reassessments, see Swain (1996), Schmitz (1997).

CHAPTER 32
PHILOSOPHY*

J. M. DILLON

I. INTRODUCTION

Trends in philosophy are not readily circumscribable by historical periods, and, especially since no attention was paid to philosophy in volume x, it will not be out of place to begin our story somewhat earlier, at least in a summary fashion.

In fact, a more significant starting-point may be seen in the earlier half of the first century B.C., or, to be specific, in 88 B.C., the year in which Mithridates captured Athens, which in turn resulted in Sulla's recapture of the city in 86, with its attendant destruction of both the Platonic School in the Academy and the Peripatetic School in the Lyceum, and the consequent scattering of philosophers in the directions of Rome and Alexandria. This event need not by itself have provoked changes of direction in philosophy (and indeed, in the case of the Platonic School, a change had been brewing

* The chief ancient sources for our period are as follows (those available in a Loeb Classical Library edition indicated by (L)):

Sextus Empiricus, *Works* (L); Cicero, *Philosophical Works* (L); Philo Judaeus, *Works* (L); Plutarch, *Moralia* (L); Seneca, *Moral Essays and Letters* (L); Epictetus, *Discourses* (L); Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* (L); Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica* (for fragments of Atticus, Numenius and Aristocles – fr. of Atticus collected in a Budé edition by E. des Places, Paris, 1977; fr. of Numenius likewise by E. des Places, Paris, 1973); Apuleius, *De Platone et eius dogmate* and *De Genio Socratis*, ed. J. Beaujeu, Budé: Paris, 1973; Diogenes of Oenoanda, *Fragments*, ed. C. W. Chilton, Oxford, 1971; Posidonius, *Volume I: The Fragments*, ed. L. Edelstein and I. G. Kidd, Cambridge, 1972 (2nd edn 1988), *Volumes II and III: The Commentary*, ed. I. G. Kidd, Cambridge, 1988; *Doxographi Graeci*, ed. H. Diels, Berlin, 1879 (repr. 1965).

The *Anonymous Theaetetus Commentary* is edited by Diels and Schubart, in *Berliner Klassikertexte* 2, Berlin, 1905. For Galen we are still largely dependent on the complete edition of C. G. Kühn, *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia*, Leipzig, 1821–33, but there is a good edition of the *De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis* by Ph. De Lacy, 3 vols., Berlin, 1978–84, and a number of the smaller works, including the *Institutio Logica*, have appeared in Teubner editions (translation of and commentary on *Institutio Logica* also by J. S. Keiffer, Baltimore, 1964). For the works of Alexander of Aphrodisias, we must still largely rely on the *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca (CAG)* edition of the Berlin Academy, but his *De Fato* has received an English edition by R. W. Sharples, London, 1983, and a French (Budé) edition by P. Thillet, Paris, 1984, while translations have now appeared in the new *Ancient Commentators on Aristotle* series (ed. R. Sorabji) of his *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, Book I (W. Dooley), Books II and III (W. Dooley and A. Madigan), *Ethical Problems* (R. W. Sharples); and part of his *Prior Analytics* commentary (J. Barnes et al.); knowledge of what survives of him in Arabic has been greatly increased in recent years, by the work of Richard Walzer, Shlomo Pines, H. Gätje and H.-J. Ruland (see Sharples (1987) bibliography 1226–43).

for some time), but this period, perhaps as a consequence of its high degree of political unrest and upheaval, does seem to have given rise to a series of new developments, both in philosophy proper and in people's attitude to the world in general.

It is dangerous, perhaps, to employ such concepts as 'desire for authority' or 'longing for certainty' as a decisive element in intellectual history – the use of the concept of an 'age of anxiety', after all, to characterize the second and third centuries A.D. has come under fire in recent years. However, it is arguable, I think, that even as a certain weariness with anarchy led ultimately, in the political sphere, to the acceptance of the Principate of Augustus, so on the intellectual level the lack of positive guidance emanating from the sceptical New Academy, and on the other hand the rather tedious quibblings of post-Chrysippian Stoics, led both to a move to return to a more dogmatic interpretation of Platonism and to a lessening of interest in the technicalities of inter-school controversy, which, on the Platonist side, led (via the compromise position on epistemology taken up by Philo of Larisa)¹ to the Stoicizing dogmatism of Antiochus of Ascalon, and, among the Stoics, to the Platonizing 'eclecticism' of Posidonius.

Meanwhile, two further factors of rather contradictory tendency entered the scene. One was the 'rediscovery', in circumstances (if we could only believe them)² rivalling in romance the rediscovery of much of Cicero in the early fifteenth century, of the 'esoteric' works of Aristotle, and their editing by Andronicus of Rhodes. The other was the revival of Pythagoreanism, bringing with it a host of pseudepigrapha, the most significant of which, perhaps, were Ocellus Lucanus, *On the Nature of the Universe*, and Archytas, *On the Categories*.³ Both these developments, however, involve an increased attention to, and reliance on, authority – in the Peripatetic case, issuing in a series of commentaries on Aristotle's works (arranged now for the first time in the order in which we have them, beginning with the logical works, the so-called *Organon*, or 'instrument' of philosophy), which continued to the end of antiquity, but whose finest flowering, perhaps, occurs at the end of our period, in the works of Alexander of Aphrodisias.⁴

All was not dogmatic, however. Presumably as a reaction against the dogmatism of Antiochus, we find arising in the mid-first century B.C. the figure of Aenesidemus, originally an Academic (presumably of the 'Fourth Academy' of Philo of Larisa), who turns his energies to reviving

¹ On this question see the good discussion in Tarrant (1985).

² The best discussion of this fascinating episode is to be found in Moraux (1973) 3–44.

³ There were a great many others, covering most aspects of ethics, politics, physics and metaphysics, and generally designed to upstage Platonists, Peripatetic and even Stoic doctrine by claiming it for Pythagoras. These are collected by Thesleff (1965). ⁴ On Alexander, see now Sharples (1987).

the scepticism of Pyrrho of Elis.⁵ Aenesidemus' chief contribution was actually in the systematizing into a series of ten *tropoi* or 'modes of argument' (mostly adopted from his predecessors among the early Pyrrhonists) all the strategies designed to bring about 'suspension of judgement' (*epokhe*) by casting doubt on our ability to know anything.⁶ He founded a separate school, distinct from Platonism, which appears to have survived to the time of Sextus Empiricus, the learned doctor who is a partisan of the 'empiric' school of medicine, and who celebrates the sceptical tradition in Greek philosophy in an encyclopaedic series of works towards the end of the second century A.D. At some time between Aenesidemus and Sextus, a certain Agrippa reformulated the ten modes as five, but we have no indication as to when or where he operated.⁷

This revived scepticism had a considerable influence on Greek medical theory, but not much on subsequent Platonism. However, such a figure as Plutarch does exhibit at least a sentimental interest in Academic scepticism, employing its arguments and techniques as a weapon to discomfit the Stoics, and he is actually credited with a work (now lost) *On Pyrrho's Ten Modes*, though we do not know what line he took.⁸ The Platonizing sophist Favorinus of Arles also assumed the mantle of Academic scepticism, but he cannot be taken entirely seriously as a philosopher.⁹

II. THE PHILOSOPHICAL SCHOOLS

In general, however, the accent in our period is on authority and tradition. All the four Hellenistic traditions, Platonist, Aristotelian, Stoic and Epicurean, continued vigorous throughout the period – though, interestingly (in the case, at least, of the Platonists and the Aristotelians), without any formal school structure to support them. In the case of the Epicureans, we know from letters in A.D. 121 to Hadrian from Plotina, the widow of Trajan, on behalf of the head of the School, one Popillius Theotimus (and to Theotimus himself), that the School survived intact down to the early second century A.D. at least;¹⁰ and for the Stoics we have on inscriptions the names of persons (otherwise quite unknown) who seem to be scholarchs during the first and second centuries.¹¹ But for the two oldest schools there

⁵ The fact that Aenesidemus is reported (by Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 212, 170a 14) as complaining that the Academy of his day was contaminated by Stoicism seems to place him satisfactorily, as does the fact that he dedicated his work to one L. Tubero, who is probably Cicero's contemporary, L. Aelius Tubero.

⁶ On Aenesidemus and his contribution, see Stough (1969) ch. 4, and the articles by Myles Burnyeat, Gisela Striker and Jonathan Barnes in Schofield *et al.* (1980).

⁷ Sext. Emp. *Pyr.* 1 164–78, and Barnes (1990).

⁸ *Cat. Lampr.* no. 178. Straight descriptive titles of this sort, however, are generally not polemical.

⁹ Fragments collected by Barigazzi (1966).

¹⁰ *IG* 11² 1099 (also *SG*³ 834); reprinted in Smallwood, *NTH* no. 442.

¹¹ On both Stoics and Epicureans, see Graindor (1934) 203–7, and Lynch (1972) 190.

is no such evidence: indeed, it seems virtually certain that the traditional Academy and Peripatos did not survive the recapture of Athens by Sulla. What succeeded them were small, personal schools, set up by individuals, and continued, perhaps for a generation or two, by their chosen successors, but no central, validating authority which could pronounce on questions of orthodoxy or heresy.¹²

In the Platonist tradition, we find, first of all, after 86 B.C., Antiochus of Ascalon¹³ setting up a school in Athens, not in the Academy, but based in a gymnasium (the Ptolemaion) in the centre of town, consisting, as far as we can see, just of himself and his brother Aristus. This may have continued for a generation (we know of one successor to Aristus), but there is no trace of it after the 40s B.C.

Meanwhile, in Alexandria some tradition of Platonism, in a rather different mode, is attested in the person of Eudorus (fl. c. 25 B.C.) – and by whoever it may have been who taught the Jewish philosopher Philo (c. 20 B.C.–A.D. 50) his Platonism. No clear connection can be established, however, between any such school and Tiberius' court philosopher, Thrasyllus, who produced what was to be the definitive edition of Plato's works, though he too came from Alexandria. The Alexandrian tradition can be characterized, in distinction to the School of Antiochus, by a return to a belief in a transcendental, immaterial reality, and a greater interest in Pythagoreanism, such as was to characterize later Platonism in general.¹⁴

About a century later, in the 60s A.D., we again find a small school of Platonism in Athens, to which Plutarch (c. 45–125) attached himself, presided over by an Egyptian, Ammonius, which continued to Ammonius' death in about A.D. 80, but we do not know whether he left a successor.¹⁵ Plutarch himself, the only Platonist we know of from the end of the first century A.D., chose to establish his school in his native town of Chaeronea. There probably were one or more Platonists teaching in Athens at the time, but it is misleading to suggest that for this reason Plutarch is to be set over against a tradition of 'Schulplatonismus' flourishing in Athens.¹⁶ Any Platonist teaching in Athens would have a certain prestige, but such a person cannot be seen as a generally recognized repository of 'orthodoxy'.

In the generation after Plutarch, in the 140s, we find as the dominant

¹² See on this question, Lynch (1972) 154–62 and Glucker (1978), esp. chs. 3–4. Various aspects of the topic are studied in Dillon and Long (1988).

¹³ On Antiochus, see Dillon (1977) ch. 2, and now Barnes (1989) 51–96.

¹⁴ On Eudorus, see Dillon (1977) ch. 3: 114–35. ¹⁵ On Ammonius, see Jones (1966).

¹⁶ As does Dörrie (1971) 36–56. It is possible, in fact, that one or more of the four Platonic philosophers mentioned in an honorary decree of (Delphi *SG*³ 11 no. 868), dating from the early second century A.D., was teaching at Athens, but we cannot be certain. The figures of Gaius, teacher of Albinus, and of Nicostratus have to be fitted in somewhere in this period.

Platonist in Athens L. Calvenus Taurus of Beirut,¹⁷ but he is never referred to as ‘head of the Academy’ or anything such. More or less contemporary with Taurus we find, in Smyrna, a school presided over by Albinus, the pupil of one Gaius (who himself may or may not have taught in Athens). Albinus is the author of one surviving short work, *An Introduction to Plato’s Dialogues* (we can no longer confidently identify him with the ‘Alcinous’ who is the author of the *Didaskalikos*, or ‘Handbook of Platonism’, as will be explained presently), and he has the distinction of being one of the teachers of Galen.¹⁸

Somewhat later in the century, we find an important Pythagorizing school operating in Apamea in Syria, presided over by Numenius (fl. c. 150), assisted by his companion Cronius.¹⁹ Numenius actually declared himself to be a Pythagorean (though his place is firmly within the Platonist tradition), and he took a considerable interest in oriental religions and philosophies as well, such as Judaism, Zoroastrianism and Brahmanism. He had a considerable influence (whether through direct contact or otherwise) with Plotinus’ teacher in Alexandria, Ammonius Saccas, and thus with Plotinus himself.

In the same period, around A.D. 176, the standard-bearer of Platonism in Athens seems to have been Atticus.²⁰ At this point, however, the emperor Marcus Aurelius intervenes significantly, by establishing a series of official posts for representatives of the major philosophical traditions, Platonist, Aristotelian, Stoic and Epicurean,²¹ thus establishing a series of *diadokhai*, or ‘successions’ of philosophers²² which, in the case of the Platonists, came to be regarded in later centuries as ‘the Academy’, thus causing confusion in the minds both of later Neoplatonists and modern historians of philosophy. The fate of the other ‘successions’ is less clear, but the Peripatetic chair began well, being graced before the end of the century by the great commentator Alexander of Aphrodisias, whose inaugural oration to the emperors Severus and Caracalla in A.D. 198 is preserved to us as his treatise *On Fate*.

The history of the Peripatetic tradition in our period is not easy to follow, but seems to have been structurally similar to that of the Platonists. The

¹⁷ The teacher of Aulus Gellius, who records various affectionate anecdotes about him in the *NA*. See Dörrie (1973).

¹⁸ On Albinus, see Dillon (1977) 266–8 (on the problem of ‘Alcinous’, author of the *Didaskalikos*, see J. Whittaker’s intro. to his Budé edn of that work, 1990). Galen tells us that he studied with Albinus in Smyrna (*Libr. Propr.* II, p. 97, 6–10 Müller), at a period which must fall between 144 and 157.

¹⁹ On Numenius, see Dillon (1977) 361–80, and Frede (1987b) 1034–75.

²⁰ We do not actually know where Atticus taught, any more than we can fix the place of his follower Harpocration of Argos. I presume Athens, but Alexandria is a possibility. See Dillon (1977) 247–62.

²¹ Dio LXXII. 31. Cf. Philostr. *VS* 566; Lucian, *Eunuchus*, 3.8.

²² The actual terms *diadokchos* and *diadokhe* go back at least to early Alexandrian times (cf. the work of Sotion of Alexandria, *Diadokhai ton philosophon*), but the title takes on a new significance in this connection.

Peripatos itself probably did not survive as an institution very much longer than the Academy. Andronicus (fl. c. 40 B.C.) certainly gave a considerable impetus to Peripateticism, but we cannot be sure that he was head of the Peripatos in its original form. He does seem to have presided over a school, but his position need not be very different from that of Antiochus *vis-à-vis* the Academy.²³ The Peripatetics of the next generation, such men as Boethus of Sidon (a pupil of Andronicus), Ariston of Alexandria, and Xenarchus of Seleuceia, are a mixed bag. Boethus and Ariston carried forward the tradition begun by Andronicus by writing commentaries on Aristotle's logical writings, and Ariston, at least, made some contribution to Peripatetic logic. Xenarchus, on the other hand, though a Peripatetic, attacked Aristotle's theory of the æther as a fifth element, and is credited with a strongly materialist definition of the soul, both features betokening a sympathy with Stoicism, perhaps of the Posidonian variety.²⁴

Apart from these relatively scholastic figures, we find in the last half of the first century B.C., and the first half of the next century, the more colourful personalities of Arius Didymus, court philosopher of Augustus, and Nicolaus of Damascus, who performed the same role for Herod the Great.²⁵ Arius, who was actually a Stoic by persuasion, composed a comprehensive account of contemporary philosophy, Platonist, Aristotelian and Stoic, of which the Aristotelian section shows no clear influence of Andronicus' revival of the 'esoteric' works, which makes it a valuable record of Hellenistic Peripateticism; while Nicolaus' achievements included a Universal History, in 144 books (lost), a work *On the Philosophy of Aristotle*, of which a fragmentary version survives in Syriac, and a work *On Plants*, based on that of Theophrastus, which also survives, in a Latin version of an Arabic translation.

But all these figures, strictly speaking, predate our period. From the second century A.D. we have a number of names of men who made useful contributions, but we do not know whether they belonged to a single, coherent school (although the fact that two of them come from the same city, Aphrodisias, might indicate a centre of Aristotelianism there). First,

²³ On this see Lynch (1972) chs. 5 and 6, but also Gottschalk, (1987). The claim that Andronicus was head of the Peripatos is based upon Neoplatonic reports that he was 'eleventh in succession from Aristotle' (e.g. Ammonius, *In de Int.* 5.24). However, this may be simply a conclusion arrived at by adding him on after Diodorus of Tyre, the last known scholar of the Peripatos before 88 B.C. The position is confused, unfortunately, both by the fact that Diodorus' predecessor Critolaus is also described as the eleventh successor by the *Vita Aristotelis Menagiana*, 13, and that Andronicus' follower, Boethus of Sidon is given the same description, again by Ammonius, *In An. Pr.* 31.11. It seems more probable that Andronicus began a school of his own, rather in the manner of Antiochus, and that this was continued by Boethus. Whether he did this in Athens or in Rome is also unclear. On this vexed question see Lynch (1972) 193–4, and *contra*, Moraux (1973) 45–58 and Gottschalk (1987) 1093.

²⁴ On Boethus, see Moraux (1973) 143–79; on Ariston, Moraux (1973) 181–93; on Xenarchus, Moraux (1973) 197–214.

²⁵ On Arius, see Moraux (1973) 259–443; on Nicolaus, Moraux (1973) 445–514.

there is Adrastus of Aphrodisias,²⁶ in the earlier part of the century, who, besides writing on the order of Aristotle's writings, and commenting on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, wrote a commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*, of which we find extensive use being made by the Platonist Theon of Smyrna in his *Mathematical Introduction to Plato*, and later by Calcidius in his *Commentary on the Timaeus*. This interest in the *Timaeus* (even if only, as seems to be the case, in the 'scientific' aspects of it) is significant in view of the position taken up later by his fellow-citizen, Alexander.

Other than Adrastus, we have a commentary on the *Ethics* from the hand of one Aspasius,²⁷ which in certain significant details concords with contemporary Platonism, and in particular with Plutarch's doctrine in his essay *On Moral Virtue*.²⁸ Then we have Aristocles of Messene, who wrote a *History of Philosophy*, considerable fragments of which are preserved in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*, which make it clear that he presented Plato in a most friendly way, but on the other hand reduced him firmly to a mere forerunner of Aristotle. I have suggested elsewhere²⁹ that it was this work, or at least the attitude behind it, which so incensed the Platonist Atticus, provoking him to his polemical tract (also preserved in large fragments by Eusebius) *Against Those who Seek to Interpret Plato through Aristotle*.

In the latter part of the century, we have the figures of Herminus, Sosigenes and Aristoteles of Mytilene, all of whom are credited by our sources with being teachers of Alexander of Aphrodisias,³⁰ and Galen's contemporary Alexander of Damascus, who held the chair of Peripatetic philosophy at Athens, perhaps as its first incumbent. Galen presents him (with approval) as a man of sceptical tendencies, 'well acquainted with Plato, but better with Aristotle' – a remarkable accolade for a professor of Aristotelian philosophy!³¹ Our period ends with the dominant figure of Alexander of Aphrodisias himself, about certain aspects of whose thought we will have more to say below. His essay *On Fate*, being in the nature of an inaugural address, takes on the Stoics with the same asperity as Atticus had earlier taken on the Peripatetics. Alexander is found to continue in many respects his predecessors' hospitality to Platonism, a tendency which made him an acceptable source for Plotinus in the next century.³²

In Stoicism, the most significant figure, at the beginning of our chosen period, is actually something of a maverick, Posidonius of Apamea (135–50 B.C.), who ran a school in Rhodes, and had many pupils, including (in the political arena) Pompey, Cicero and Brutus.³³ Posidonius managed to

²⁶ On Adrastus, see Moraux (1984) 294–332. ²⁷ On Aspasius, see Moraux (1984) 226–293.

²⁸ Notably the Pythagorean-influenced reinforcement of the theory of the mean with the concept of virtue as a musical harmony, and the comparison of reason and the passions to form and matter, cf. Donini (1982) 218. ²⁹ (1977) 249–50.

³⁰ On all these, see Moraux (1984) 335–60 (Sosigenes); 361–98 (Herminus); 399–425 (Aristoteles).

³¹ II 218, 627 Kühn. ³² Cf. P. Merlan (1963) 30–40.

³³ Fragments collected and commented upon by Ian Kidd, in Edelstein and Kidd (1972, 1988).

remain a Stoic while disputing a number of central Stoic doctrines, in particular that of the nature of the soul, displaying in this a distinct tendency towards Platonism, which becomes, though to a lesser degree, a feature of the thought of all the later Stoics we shall be considering. First of all, he accepted the Platonic tripartite soul in preference to the unitary model of orthodox Stoicism, recognizing an irrational part of it which is the natural seat of the passions, which cannot therefore be eradicated, but only moderated (all this we learn from Galen, in the course of his large work *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates and Plato*).³⁴ He also seems to have believed in the survival and independent existence of the soul (Fr. 149 E–K), as, later, both Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius appear to do. Seneca was also influenced by Posidonius, quoting him in various contexts.³⁵ How influential he was for later Platonists is a disputed question, but his influence now tends to be minimized. His doctrine of cosmic *sympatheia* was certainly influential, and comments of his on Plato's *Timaeus* were studied by Plutarch, at least.³⁶ We know of the names of a number of his pupils (Jason, his grandson, who succeeded him, Asclepiodotus, Geminus, Phanius, Diodorus), but his school probably did not long survive his death.

In the following centuries the Stoic School seems to have survived as such, even if dimly, as has been noted. Obscure Stoic *diadokhoi* are mentioned even in the third century by the Middle Platonist Longinus,³⁷ but in general nothing notable was added to Stoic doctrine by school philosophers during our period. The four distinguished figures in Stoicism whom we do have are all to a certain extent peripheral: the Roman statesman and knight, L. Annaeus Seneca (c. 4 B.C.–A.D. 65); the Roman knight from Volsinii, C. Musonius Rufus, part of the 'Stoic opposition' in the time of Nero and the Flavians; his pupil, the Phrygian freed slave Epictetus (c. A.D. 55–135) and the emperor Marcus Aurelius. We must not forget also L. Annaeus Cornutus, a freedman of Seneca, who was the teacher and literary executor of the poet Persius, and author of a book *On the Gods*, which exemplifies Stoic techniques of allegory; and the shadowy figure of Hierocles (early second century A.D.), of whom we have an *Elements of Ethics* partially preserved on papyrus.³⁸

Both Musonius and Epictetus did admittedly run schools (Musonius in Rome, Epictetus first in Rome, then, after being expelled from Rome by

³⁴ It may be significant, in this connection, that Posidonius is one of the few philosophers in the whole period under review whom we know to have been married (140 Edelstein and Kidd), another being that comfortable family man, Plutarch.

³⁵ Sixteen citations from *Ep.* in the index to Edelstein and Kidd.

³⁶ See Edelstein (1936) 286–325. ³⁷ *Ap. Porph., Plot.* ch. 20.

³⁸ On Seneca, see Griffin (1976); on Musonius, Lutz (1947); on Epictetus, Bonhoeffer (1890), (1894); on Hierocles, see now Isnardi Parente (1989). He is earlier than Calvenus Taurus, who liked to quote him against the Epicureans, according to Gell. *NA* ix. 5.8. The papyrus is edited by H. von Arnim (Berliner Klassikertexte 4), Berlin, 1906.

Domitian, at Nicopolis in Epirus), but the Stoicism they purvey is of the popular rather than of the technical variety, and they have no overt ambition to develop or contradict the doctrines of the founders of the movement, Zeno and Chrysippus. This is even more the case with Seneca and Marcus Aurelius. What one does notice in all these writers is a high degree of eclecticism, in the strict sense of that much-abused term – a willingness to borrow thoughts and formulations from Plato and Aristotle (and in Seneca's case, even Epicurus) when they seem conducive to moral uplift.

The survival of a more technical Stoicism might seem indicated by the fact that Plutarch finds it worthwhile to attack it in a number of polemical tracts (e.g. *On Stoic Self-Contradictions*, *Against the Stoics on Common Conceptions*), but it is noteworthy that in these works his main butt is Chrysippus, not any contemporary authority (though he numbered Stoics among his friends and acquaintances).³⁹ If the Stoic school tradition was not quite dead, it seems certainly to have atrophied by this time. Yet the basic tenets of Stoic doctrine continued to be discussed. Apart from the interminable argument as to the relative 'priority', or fundamental nature, of the Aristotelian and Stoic logics,⁴⁰ the main issues were *apatheia*, or 'freedom from passion', as an ideal for the wise man, as opposed to the Aristotelian aim of moderation of the passions (*metriopatheia*), and the question of free will and determinism. Such men as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius are full of defences of the ideal of the self-sufficiency of virtue for happiness, and of the wise man's freedom from the domination of passion, as well as of the necessity of submission to the course of nature and the decrees of fate,⁴¹ while these positions are correspondingly attacked and ridiculed by Platonists and Aristotelians, such as Plutarch, Taurus or Alexander of Aphrodisias.

As for the Epicureans, we know that their school survived, both from the letters of Plotina mentioned above, and from the testimony of Diogenes Laertius, writing at the end of the second century A.D., who says: 'This school, in contrast to all the others, which have died out, continues for ever, running through a numberless succession of scholarchs.'⁴² However, school Epicureanism leaves no more trace than school Stoicism. Plutarch, for instance, has Epicurean acquaintances, as he has Stoic, but when he attacks the School (as he does in three surviving treatises)⁴³ it is always historical Epicurean figures and positions that he adduces.

³⁹ We do, admittedly, have record of a treatise on fate by one Philopator (in Nemesius, *De Nat. Hom.* 35), and Cornutus is mentioned by Simplicius as joining in the attack on Aristotle's *Categories* (e.g. *In Cat.* 62.27; 129.1–2), but that is not much to show as the product of a couple of hundred years of Stoic speculation after Posidonius.

⁴⁰ A question addressed, for instance, by Galen at the beginning of his *Introduction to Logic* (ed. C. Kalbfleisch, Leipzig: Teubner, 1896). Later Platonist writers, at least, were generally content to use both systems.

⁴¹ See, on all these thinkers, Arnold (1911), Bodson (1967); and on Marcus Aurelius in particular, Brunt (1974) 1–20. ⁴² *Vit. Phil.* x 9. ⁴³ *Non posse*, *Adv. Colotem* and *Lat. Viv.*

Virtually our sole evidence as to the state of Epicurean doctrine in the second century comes from a remote corner of the empire, the city of Oenoanda in Lycia, where, towards the end of the century, a distinguished citizen of the place named Diogenes erected a stoa with a long inscription along the wall, which is a compendium of Epicurean doctrine for the benefit of all passers-by. Rediscovered progressively from 1884 on, and industriously pieced together by a succession of scholars, it is a remarkable and most valuable document, but it testifies, if anything, to the extreme conservatism of the Epicurean tradition.⁴⁴

III. PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES AND TENDENCIES

Apart from the Epicureans, then, there is no clear evidence of a continuous, centralized structure for any of the major schools throughout our period. On the other hand, this lack of a central authority did not prevent the development of a considerable degree of systematization of doctrine. In this the Platonists and the Peripatetics were doubtless influenced by the scholastic tendencies of the Stoic school.⁴⁵ Characteristic activities were the writing of commentaries on source texts, examples being the commentaries on the *Timaeus* of Eudorus of Alexandria, Taurus and Atticus (all lost), the anonymous *Theaetetus* commentary (the author of which refers to his own commentaries on the *Phaedo*, *Symposium* and *Timaeus*), and the commentaries on Aristotle's works by Peripatetics from Andronicus on down to Alexander;⁴⁶ the composition of introductions (*eisagogai*) to the philosophies of the various schools, exemplified by the *Didaskalikos* of Alcinous⁴⁷ and the *De Platone et eius dogmate* of the Roman rhetorician Apuleius, both being introductions to the philosophy of Plato, or Hierocles' *Elements of Ethics*, an introduction to Stoic ethics, while Diogenes of Oenoanda's inscription constitutes a similar introduction to Epicureanism; or formal treatises on central topics of philosophy, such as the gods (e.g. the Stoic Cornutus' *On the Gods*), fate and free will (e.g. Alexander of Aphrodisias' and Pseudo-Plutarch's treatises *On Fate*), the soul (e.g. Alexander's *On the Soul*, or Plutarch's *On the Creation of the Soul in the Timaeus*), the first principle (e.g. Numenius' *On the Good*), or ethical topics, many examples of which survive in the works of Plutarch, such as the essay *On Moral Virtue*, and of Seneca (e.g. *On Anger*, *On Clemency*).

There is evidence for interest in every department of philosophy in this

⁴⁴ Teubner edition (*Diogenes Oenoandensis, Fragmenta*, Leipzig, 1967). Further fragments incorporated, with translation and commentary, in Smith (1993); cf. Smith (1996). There is still more to be discovered.

⁴⁵ A good discussion of this in Donini (1982) ch. 3.

⁴⁶ The later Stoics do not seem to have indulged in this sort of activity, except for Posidonius, at the beginning of our period, and even he wrote comments, not on Zeno or Chrysippus, to whom in any case he was not particularly loyal, but rather on Plato's *Timaeus* (Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7. 93).

⁴⁷ Cf. n. 18 above. See now Dillon (1993).

period, but a salient feature uniting all schools is certainly a concern with personal salvation and with man's relation to divinity (whether personal or impersonal). 'Likeness to God' (*homoiosis theoi*), a phrase taken from Plato's *Theaetetus*, 176B, becomes the stated aim of Platonist philosophers in this period (as opposed to the Stoic aim of 'reconciliation to nature' accepted earlier by Antiochus), and surviving Stoic writers in fact subscribe to this ideal, with the proviso that God is to be equated with Nature, while Alexander of Aphrodisias' identification of the Aristotelian Active Intellect of *De Anima* 3.5 with God (as the Unmoved Mover of *Metaphysics* 12) is a significant development in the same direction.

At the beginning of our period, Antiochus of Ascalon⁴⁸ sets the tone by declaring:

The two greatest things in philosophy are the means of judging truth [*kriterion*] and the end of goods [*telos*], and no man can be a sage who is ignorant of the beginning of the process of knowledge or of a final aim of appetite, and who consequently does not know from what point he is starting or at what he ought to arrive.

For Antiochus, as a Stoic fellow-traveller, the end of the journey is assimilation to Nature rather than to a transcendent God, but, if 'God' is read for 'Nature', this is a programme with which any later Platonist would agree. The image of philosophy as a journey through life is notable,⁴⁹ and frequent in later writers of all philosophical persuasions. In Plutarch's essay *On the Obsolescence of Oracles* (410B), at the end of the first century, we find the grammarian Demetrius of Tarsus engaged in literal journeys throughout the known world, 'getting together a history to serve as the basis for a philosophy that had as its aim and end "theology", as he himself named it' – very much like Posidonius in the previous century. The amiable figure of Demetrius may serve as a representative of the philosopher's quest in our period.

Because of this preoccupation, it has been fashionable to speak, rather dismissively, of the philosophy of this period as 'religious philosophy', but this term, thus used, can be just as misleading as the term 'eclecticism' to characterize the period.⁵⁰ Certainly, the nature of the divinity and our relation to it does greatly concern the philosophers of this period, but not much more, I think, than it does Plato, Aristotle or the founders of Stoicism. It does not connote the subordination of philosophy to some religious purpose, which is what such a term would normally imply, nor does it betoken a lessening of interest in other philosophical issues, as I hope to show.

⁴⁸ As reported by Cicero, *Acad. Pr.* 29.

⁴⁹ Taking its inspiration, at least in part, from the famous question of Socrates that begins Plato's *Phaedrus*, 'Whither and whence, dear Phaedrus?'; but also, no doubt, from allegorical exegesis of the *Odyssey*. ⁵⁰ On this latter term, see Dillon and Long (1988), esp. Donini, (1988) 17–33.

In the Platonist tradition, we find, first, a reassertion of the transcendence and immateriality of God, after the rather ambiguous, but Stoicizing, position taken up by Antiochus, and then, in consequence, the progressive working-out of God's relationship with the world, chiefly by the postulation of intermediate entities. First, Eudorus of Alexandria propounds, as a first principle, a One above a pair of opposites, another One and an Indefinite Dyad – a scheme which he fathers on the Pythagoreans.⁵¹ We know all too little about the rest of his metaphysics, but some idea of the possible ways in which this tendency to transcendence could develop may be gleaned from a study of the thought of the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria, most of whose voluminous works have come down to us.

Philo is not, strictly speaking, a Platonic philosopher (he would regard himself, rather, as a *Mosaic* philosopher, claiming as he does that all Greek philosophy derives ultimately from the teachings of Moses),⁵² but he constitutes good evidence for trends in contemporary Greek philosophy, and particularly Middle Platonism. He describes God as 'one' (though never 'the One' in the neuter) and 'monad', and adopts as God's instrument of contact with the world the Stoic *logos*. Philo is also our earliest clear witness to the concept of the forms as thoughts of God, forming, indeed, a whole 'intelligible world' (*kosmos noetos*),⁵³ which serves as a paradigm for the physical world. In a way, this intelligible world *is* the *logos*, but the *logos* may also be seen as presiding over it (it is described as the 'place' of the forms at *De Opificio Mundi* 20).⁵⁴ At any rate, the *logos*, in its various aspects, is Philo's answer to the problem of how a totally transcendent God relates to the world. We do not know what was the scheme favoured by Eudorus.

Philo's solution was not adopted, so far as we can see, by any subsequent Platonist before Plotinus.⁵⁵ The intermediaries adopted are rather the *demiourgos* or 'creator-god', and/or the World Soul of the *Timaeus*, or simply the forms (often, significantly, in the singular – *idea* – not the plural). This latter term is found in the basic doxographic formulations of Platonic doctrine in this period as the middle one of a triad of principles God–Form–Matter,⁵⁶ and, especially when referred to in the singular, seems to fulfil at least one aspect of the role of the *logos*, as being the paradigmatic cause of the physical world, and the contents of the mind of God. This basic triad,

⁵¹ *ap. Simpl. In Phys.* 181 Diels. Whatever his justification for attributing this doctrine to 'the Pythagoreans', it seems to me clear that Eudorus is adopting it himself.

⁵² See Dillon (1977) 139–44.

⁵³ *De opif.* 16; cf. *Quod det.* 75–6. On the possible origins of the concept, see Rich (1954) 123–33.

⁵⁴ A formulation borrowed, no doubt, from Aristotle's report of Platonist terminology at *De An.* III.4, 429a27, though there the reference is to the soul.

⁵⁵ Though Plutarch certainly makes use of the concept of *logos* in his *De Is. et Os.*, cf. Dillon (1977) 200–1, and below, p. 935.

⁵⁶ Aetius, *Plac.* 287. 17 ff. Diels; Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 8.2, 720b; Alcinous, *Did.* ch. 9; Apul. *De dog. Plat.* I.5. Alcinous and Apuleius are careful to refer to 'the forms' in the plural; the first two sources simply speak of 'Form'.

however, proved unsatisfactory to many thinkers, as it failed to provide for Plato's 'Craftsman' (*demiourgos*) and World Soul.

To a large extent, the activity of later Platonists can be seen as an unending effort to tie up apparent loose ends in Plato's philosophy, including the role of the Craftsman in the universe, and the relationship with his intelligible model (*paradeigma*) on the one hand and the World Soul on the other. This is not solely a matter of the exegesis of the *Timaeus*; the myth of the *Statesman* must be considered as well, and the soul or souls discussed in Book x of the *Laws* – and then the relation of all these entities to the Good of *Republic* vi. What we find is a variety of accommodations. Once it is decided that the Craftsman of the *Timaeus* is not a supreme deity, but is subordinate to the Good (and also, in later Platonism, to the One of the *Parmenides*), then, whether or not one takes the *Timaeus* scenario literally, he must be seen as a mediating, creative entity, as opposed to the supreme God, who transcends all action or direct relationship with what is below him.⁵⁷ The forms, or the Model, are then to be taken as the contents of the mind of this secondary god, who thus becomes an active, creative *intellect*. However, this intellect now seems to encroach on the proper activity of the World Soul as depicted in the *Timaeus*, so that the World Soul tends to be deprived of its rational, ordering aspect, and becomes a rather passive, essentially irrational entity, requiring the bestowal of order and reasoning upon it from the Creator God, like the Soul of the *Statesman* myth.

However, these developments, which were to be so important for Neoplatonism, take on this clear form only in the system of Numenius. Elsewhere the situation is more fluid. In Alcinoüs' *Didaskalikos*, for instance, we have, in chapter 10, a system which seems to involve two levels of divinity, a supreme deity, exhibiting features of both the Good of Plato's *Republic* vi and the Unmoved Mover of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* xii, and a secondary god, the 'Intellect of the World Soul', who can be seen as a demythologized version of the Craftsman of the *Timaeus*, and then a World Soul, but the precise nature of the system described is disputable.⁵⁸

Alcinoüs, however, like Numenius, contrives to accommodate the various Platonic entities in a reasonably coherent structure, with, in his case, a little help from Aristotle. In the next generation, a complementary rapprochement takes place on the Aristotelian side, in the thinking of Alexander of Aphrodisias.⁵⁹ In his treatise *On the Soul*, which is of course firmly based on that of Aristotle, but contains original developments, he tackles the problem of the identity of the Active Intellect of Aristotle's *De Anima* iii.5, by identifying it not only with the Unmoved Mover, but also, implicitly, with the Good of the *Republic*, and thus with the supreme

⁵⁷ This is Numenius' formulation, Fr. 12 des Places.

⁵⁸ Cf. Loenen (1956) 296–319, and (1957) 35–56; and *contra* Mansfeld (1972) 61–80.

⁵⁹ See the useful article of Sharples (1987).

God.⁶⁰ This entity he presents, as does Alcinoüs, as an intellect ‘in activity’ (*kat’ energeian*), whose contents are forms (*eide*), though not necessarily forms in the Platonic sense. Indeed, Alexander is able to stay within the legitimate terminology of Aristotelianism (even his use of the Sun Simile is warranted by Aristotle’s use of sunlight imagery in *De Anima* III 5 – where Aristotle himself may well have had *Republic* VI in mind), while in fact taking an important step in the direction of Platonism.⁶¹

A problem that arises in connection with the nature of deity is that of dualism. Platonism is not in its origins dualist (in the sense of postulating two opposing principles in the universe),⁶² despite the ambiguities of *Laws* x; nor, *a fortiori*, is Aristotelianism. But we do find in this period, both in the Neopythagorean school of Numenius and in a (relatively) mainline thinker like Plutarch, a dualistic tendency which, in some of Plutarch’s utterances, at least, comes close to Gnosticism. Plutarch believes in a Platonist supreme principle, of course, which he terms ‘real being’, ‘One’ and ‘the Good’,⁶³ but he also postulates an archetypal opposing principle, presented as the Pythagorean ‘Indefinite Dyad’ (*Def. Or.* 428F). Of course, the adoption of such an entity is justified by its reported acceptance by Plato in his ‘unwritten teachings’, but Plutarch lends it a positive force for evil that is not attested for Plato. In his essay *On Isis and Osiris* (especially 373AB), he presents a complex system of entities, comprising, first, God himself (the Good, or the One), with Osiris as his *logos* in its transcendent aspect (i.e. as the contents of the divine mind), then ‘the body of Osiris’ as the immanent aspect of *logos*, or form in matter, which is constantly attacked and rent asunder by the indefinite Dyad, represented by Typhon, and continually gathered up and reassembled by the World Soul, represented by Isis. As a conspectus of Plutarch’s system, the exegesis of the Isis–Osiris myth presented here serves very well. Plutarch, unlike most other Middle Platonists of whom we have any information, opts for a demiurgic Logos-figure, and an irrational (but positively inclined) World Soul, ready and willing to receive ordering from above.

Plutarch also chooses to take the creation-myth of the *Timaeus* literally, which leaves him with a period when the natural disorder of the World Soul prevails, before it is brought to order by the demiurgic Intellect. He expounds his views on this in his essay *On the Creation of the Soul in the Timaeus*, where he shows a defiant consciousness of being out of line with the mainstream of later Platonist opinion.

A further topic which must also be touched on in this connection is the doctrine of daemons as intermediate beings between god and man, a

⁶⁰ *De Anima* 88.23–91.4 (Bruns); cf. Sharples (1987) 1204–14.

⁶¹ If it is indeed his step. He may have inherited it from his predecessors. Cf. Sharples (1990) 85–95.

⁶² In the other sense of the term, ‘postulating two levels of reality’, it of course is.

⁶³ E.g. *De E.*, 392–3; *Def. Or.* 423D.

subject discussed in such works as Plutarch's dialogue *On the Daemon of Socrates*, and Apuleius' essay on the same subject. Plutarch's doctrine especially is rich in complexity and contradictions, which cannot be gone into in the present context.⁶⁴ In the Stoic camp Posidonius had already, back in the first century B.C., written a work in more than one book *On Heroes and Daemons* (Fr. 24 E–K), about the contents of which we know very little, or of how nearly it conformed to Stoic orthodoxy. He held, at any rate, that they were composed of aetherial fire, and had knowledge of the future (cf. also Fr. 108 E–K).

Despite the claim at the outset of this section that theology was not the overwhelming preoccupation of philosophers in this period, I have dwelt at some length on Platonist and Aristotelian conceptions of the deity, since that is the area in which the most interesting developments can be documented.⁶⁵ However, it must be emphasized that we have evidence of continued interest and development in all branches of philosophy, logic, ethics and physics, characteristically with a degree of cross-fertilization between the schools.

In the area of logic, the argument as to the relative validity of the Peripatetic and Stoic systems continued, with the Platonists, at least, feeling free to use either, though preferring the Peripatetic, and indeed discerning examples of all the figures in Plato's work, as we can see Alcinous, for instance, doing in *Didaskalikos* chapter 6. Galen takes an interesting line in his *Introduction to Logic*,⁶⁶ accepting Stoic hypothetical syllogisms as a development of Theophrastean hypotheticals, and dismissing as unimportant the question of the relative priority of the two systems. No ancient authority seems fully conscious of the contrast between a logic of propositions and logic of terms. By the beginning of our period, in fact, Aristotle's system had already undergone certain subtle changes which transpose it into the 'classical' form in which it became known, through Boethius, to the mediaeval world,⁶⁷ and the rather superfluous Fourth Figure had been added, for 'completeness', to the syllogistic system. We know from Alexander's commentary on the *Prior Analytics* that his own teacher Herminus still found innovations to propose in the system, of some of which he himself disapproved.⁶⁸ Of developments in Stoic logic in our

⁶⁴ See on this Dillon (1977) 216–24 and Brenk (1986).

⁶⁵ Even this survey is only partial. Other developments deserving of note are the interesting use being made by the Neopythagorean Moderatus of Gades (end of first cent. A.D.) of both the latter part of Plato's *Parmenides* and the Second Platonic Letter (312E) to construct an apparent system of three hypostases (cf. Dodds (1928) 129–42); and the very Platonist theologizing of the pseudo-Aristotelian *De Mundo* (possibly emanating from first cent. B.C. Alexandria).

⁶⁶ Useful translation and commentary by Kieffer (1964).

⁶⁷ A process well described in ch. 1 of Patzig (1968).

⁶⁸ E.g. *In An. Pr.* 72.26 ff., Herminus' attempt to find a 'natural' major term for the Second Figure. Cf. Moraux (1984) 385–6.

period we know nothing, though Cicero's *De Fato*, if we can trust it, gives evidence of scholastic developments at an earlier period.

In epistemology, chapter 4 of Alcinous' *Didaskalikos* gives evidence of continuing refinements in Platonist doctrine as to the relationship between sense-perception and knowledge, with a higher value being placed on sense-perception than would be strictly Platonic, probably under the influence of Stoicism, mediated by Antiochus of Ascalon,⁶⁹ but possibly going back even to Speusippus (cf. Fr. 75 Tarán). Of contemporary Peripatetic epistemology we find a good account in Alexander, *De Anima* 83.2–87.23 Bruns. He begins with the rise of the soul from corporeal mixture (his doctrine here has been seen as rather more materialistic than Aristotle's own, owing something, perhaps, to the views of Strato of Lampsacus). He then describes the various types of soul that proceed from increasingly complex combinations of elements, until this process reaches the intellective soul in man. Man shares in common with animals a progression from sensation to imagination to memory. His specific difference is that he may proceed further to the abstraction, conservation and knowledge of enmattered form. Alexander then presents the development of intellection in three phases: the potential or material intellect; intellect in the state of possession; and the intellect in actuality, demonstrating the reason for each evolutionary advance. The whole passage is a most important statement of later Peripatetic psychology and epistemology.⁷⁰

In ethics, Platonism continues to oscillate between the poles of Aristotelian 'moderation of the passions' (*metriopatheia*) and the importance of the three grades of good, spiritual, corporeal and external, for the attainment of happiness, on the one hand, and the Stoic ideal of 'extirpation of the passions' (*apatheia*), and the sufficiency of virtue alone for happiness, on the other. Alcinous, Apuleius and Plutarch take the Aristotelian line, Atticus and (probably) Numenius the Stoic line. Among the Stoics themselves not much development of a technical nature is observable, though Hierocles' statement of the basic principles of Stoic ethical theory (*oikeiosis*) is a technical exposition unequalled in our other sources,⁷¹ but Epictetus developed, or at least exhibits, a distinctive use of the term *prohairesis*, which in Aristotle means simply 'choice', to denote something far wider, 'moral character' or 'personality', and as such it becomes a concept of considerable importance to him.⁷² What is interesting about this is that it may be as near as the Greeks got to the concept of the will as a distinct element in the make-up of the personality, especially if Epictetus is being influenced here, as seems probable, by Seneca's concept of *voluntas*.⁷³ For Epictetus,

⁶⁹ Cf. Cicero's account of Antiochian doctrine in *Acad. Pr.* 19–21 and 30.

⁷⁰ I am indebted for this summary of Alexander's doctrine to Schroeder and Todd (1990) 13 ff. See also discussion of Galen's epistemology in Frede (1981) 279–98. ⁷¹ See now Isnardi Parente (1989).

⁷² On this see Rist (1969) 228–31. ⁷³ Cf. Kahn, (1988) 251–5.

probairesis largely supersedes the traditional, 'intellectualist' Stoic term *hegemonikon*, or 'ruling element' of the soul.

Marcus Aurelius is distinctive in his strong separation of mind from soul as well as soul from body.⁷⁴ This clear distinction of *nous* from *psyche* may be ultimately derivable from an interpretation of Aristotle (particularly *De An.* III.5), but it finds a more immediate parallel in Plutarch's equally remarkable tripartition of the individual, particularly clearly exemplified in his essays *On the Face in the Moon* (943A ff.) and *On the Daemon of Socrates* (591D ff.), but also observable in his essay *On Moral Virtue* (441D ff.). Where this doctrine comes from is not clear, but it is certainly not Old Stoic (though it may go back to Posidonius), and this, together with talk of God's providence, and even of the separation of the soul from the toils of bodily existence,⁷⁵ are instances of significant cross-fertilization in the thought of these later Stoics. All the 'Roman' Stoics, Seneca (e.g. *Letters* 41.3), Epictetus (e.g. *Disc.* II 8.11–14), and Marcus (e.g. *Medit.* II.17) are remarkable in treating the *nous* within us as a *daemon*, or even as a manifestation of God, whom we must obey. This, too can be seen as a Platonic influence, and can be paralleled in Plutarch (*De Gen. Socr.* 591D–592E).

In an area which straddles the boundary between ethics and physics, that of fate and free will and God's providence, much work was done on the Platonist and Peripatetic side to try to counter the challenge of Stoic determinism, and to vindicate the autonomy of the human soul. A curious monument to this concern is the essay *On Fate* falsely attributed to Plutarch, but certainly the work of a first- or second-century Platonist.⁷⁶ A distinctive feature of this work (which is picked up in two later authors, Calcidius and Nemesius of Emesa, who seem to be dependent on the same source as is our author) is a triadic division of levels of providence, undertaken in an attempt to subsume both fate and free will under it. It cannot be said to be successful in its object, but it is an interesting record of philosophical activity in this area.⁷⁷ Alexander's treatise *On Fate* (and a treatise *On Providence* preserved only in Arabic) is evidence of a similar concern to deal with Stoic determinism on the part of the Peripatetics, who had, in addition, to counter the accusation levelled at them by certain Platonists that they denied providence in the sublunary sphere. Alexander asserts that providence is to be found in the effect of the regular heavenly motions on the sublunary world, in preserving the continuity of species; it does not, however, extend to the level of the fortunes of individuals.⁷⁸ The problem of fate and free will continued, to be tackled by Plotinus in an important

⁷⁴ E.g. *Medit.* III.16; XII.3. ⁷⁵ E.g. Epictetus, *Disc.* 1.9, 10 ff.; Marcus Aurelius, *Medit.* x.1.

⁷⁶ Edition by E. Valgiglio, *Pseudo-Plutarcho, De Fato*, Rome, 1964. Also to be found in vol. VII of the Loeb Plutarch *Moralia*, ed. De Lacy and Einarson.

⁷⁷ See Dillon (1977) 320–6 for a more detailed discussion.

and penetrating treatise (which does not, however, solve the problem), *Ennead* III.2–3.

The Epicureans have not yet figured in our survey, for the sufficient reason that they have left no record of original engagement with any of the main problems of philosophy in this period. However, Diogenes of Oenoanda does give evidence of scholastic activity (flourishing schools in Athens and Rhodes, at least), and he exhibits a few features not attested previously (though not necessarily therefore innovations of our period),⁷⁹ as well as indulging in vigorous polemic against all the other schools. It is to be hoped that more of his great inscription may yet be recovered.

An interesting feature of our period is the interaction of philosophy, chiefly Platonism, with the steadily spreading movements of both ‘main-line’ Christianity and the various Gnostic sects. Philosophical influence is already discernible in the prologue of John’s Gospel, and at various points in the Pauline Epistles, but it is not really until the second century that one finds attempts, by such figures as Justin Martyr (c. 100–165) and Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–215), to give Christianity a comprehensive philosophical underpinning. Both Justin and Clement fell foul of later orthodoxy, mainly because of their (quite understandable) tendency to see Christ as the Platonist secondary god, Demiurge or Logos, but they both performed considerable services for Christianity as an intellectual movement.⁸⁰

Less orthodox, and much wilder in their speculations, are the great Gnostic teachers of the second century, such as Valentinus and Basilides (both fl. c. 150, in Rome and Alexandria respectively, although Valentinus was educated in Alexandria). Basilides’ conception of a supreme, ineffable God, who is ‘nonexistent’, as being superior to existence, seems to anticipate Neoplatonism, but may derive from Neopythagorean speculations based on a metaphysical interpretation of the second part of Plato’s *Parmenides*; while the Demiurge of Valentinian and other Gnostic systems plainly owes something to an ingenious perversion of the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*. Other areas of the intellectual ‘underworld’ of the second century too, such as the Hermetic writings and the Chaldaean Oracles, owe a good deal to contemporary Platonism and Stoicism, while – paradoxically, perhaps – Christian polemic against traditional Hellenic mythology and religion owes much to Epicurean and Sceptic arguments against the existence of the traditional gods.⁸¹

⁷⁸ See on this the discussion of Sharples (1987) 1216–20.

⁷⁹ A distinction of three types of cause, Fr. 27 Chilton, and an interesting theory about influences from the gods through their statues, New Fr. 115 Smith. On this latter question, cf. Frischer (1982) on the importance of images of Epicurus himself (esp. 118–20).

⁸⁰ On Justin, see Andresen (1955); on Clement, Lilla (1971).

⁸¹ On Gnosticism, see Rudolph (1983).

IV. THE PHILOSOPHER IN SOCIETY

It seems suitable, in a contribution to a general history, to close with some remarks as to the role or roles assumed by philosophers in society, as these were varied and important. We may distinguish the philosopher as teacher from the philosopher as statesman, or at least public figure.⁸²

As teachers, the philosophers of our period were available to instruct, not only those who had a 'professional' interest in philosophy, but also young men of good family who wished to complete their education, but whose primary interest might be law or the public service. Cicero furnishes a good example at the beginning of our period, in attaching himself first at Rome to Philo of Larissa, and then going on to Athens to study with Antiochus of Ascalon, and to Rhodes, to sit at the feet of Posidonius. Later, he sent his son Marcus to Athens to study with the Peripatetic Cratippus.

A century later, Plutarch's teacher Ammonius, a Greek from Egypt, is found occupying an important position in Athenian public life, being at least three times elected *strategos*, and being entrusted with the yearly examination of the ephebes.⁸³ He plainly had in his school many who were not serious philosophers. Such is also the case with Taurus in the middle of the second century, as we can see from the pages of the *Attic Nights* of Aulus Gellius, one of his appreciative non-philosophical pupils (Gellius became a lawyer). Apuleius went to Athens at about this time also to complete his education, though we do not know who his teachers were. In the same period also, Galen, whose interests were primarily medical, studied with, among others, the Platonist Albinus at Smyrna.⁸⁴ Peripatetic and Stoic philosophers no doubt performed the same role, though documentation is lacking, with the notable exception of the relationship between Epictetus and Arrian (and to some extent the various figures in the 'Stoic opposition' under Nero).

Besides running a school to which all might come (and here we may note that we know remarkably little about how one enrolled, or what the financial or administrative arrangements were in the philosophical schools),⁸⁵ a philosopher might also, as in later ages, attach himself to a monarch or other noble patron, and become a court or house philosopher. Conspicuous examples are Arius Didymus at the court of Augustus, Philodemus the Epicurean at the house of L. Calpurnius Piso, Nicolaus of Damascus with Herod the Great, the Pythagoreanizing Platonist Thrasyllus with Tiberius, and Seneca (rather unhappily) with Nero. Marcus

⁸² The philosopher is not yet a 'holy man', as he becomes in the Neoplatonic period, perhaps in reaction to the growth of the Christian and Manichean cult of saints. In our period only a few fringe figures, such as Apollonius of Tyana, Alexander of Abonuteichus, or Julian the Theurgist fill that role.

⁸³ See Jones (1966) 205–13. ⁸⁴ Cf. n. 18 above. ⁸⁵ See Dillon (1979) 63–77.

Aurelius himself recalls his teachers at the beginning of his *Meditations*, and they include both Stoics and Platonists, the former including Plutarch's nephew Sextus!

Marcus' great contribution to philosophical education at Athens in A.D. 176 has already been mentioned. He entrusted Herodes Atticus, himself a great patron of philosophers (notably of Taurus) with selecting the first incumbents of the various chairs, whose successors were thereafter to be selected by the Areopagus.⁸⁶ How far schools of philosophy elsewhere were endowed by the central government is not clear, but Hadrian seems to have done a certain amount in this regard, and many were certainly endowed by municipal authorities.⁸⁷

As public figures, philosophers were in demand as ambassadors (though not to the same extent as were the great sophists of the time), and from time to time even as administrators. Notable examples of the former activity are Philo, leading a delegation of the Jews of Alexandria to Caligula – though he was there primarily as a member of the most prominent family of Jewish Alexandria – and Plutarch going to Rome on some unspecified public business at least twice in the period A.D. 75–95. Examples of administrators are furnished by Plutarch's teacher Ammonius, as mentioned above, and by Plutarch himself, if Eusebius' report is correct that he was in his old age appointed by Hadrian Procurator of Achaëa.⁸⁸ Again, the unnamed Platonist who was Galen's teacher at Pergamum was so much in demand in public affairs that Galen complains that he saw very little of him (*De an. morb.* 8).

That philosophers were prominent citizens, however, is plain enough. Taurus, as we learn from an anecdote of Aulus Gellius' (*NA* x. 2), was on good terms with the governor of Crete, who called on him when he was in Athens (he had probably been a pupil). Taurus was also, like the four philosophers mentioned earlier, honoured by the Delphians,⁸⁹ with the ancient equivalent of an honorary degree. An entertaining portrait of a (presumably real) philosopher of the mid-second century is furnished by Lucian's account of Demonax, who was, if Lucian is to be believed, a true eclectic, of Cynic tendency, but a widely respected public figure.

Philosophy, particularly in the forms of a generalized Platonism or simplified Stoicism, pervaded the culture of the later Roman empire. For statesmen, sophists, doctors or lawyers, to have taken courses in philosophy from one or more of the philosophical traditions constituted the sort of necessary background that exposure to Classics used to provide in

⁸⁶ For an amusingly satirical account of this process in respect of the chair of Peripatetic philosophy, see Lucian's *Eunuchus* (where the bothersome phrase *ton Peripatetikon ton heteron* can, I think, be taken to mean 'the second of the Peripatetics').

⁸⁷ Antoninus Pius had established municipal chairs in cities besides Athens, *HAM. Ant.* II. 3.

⁸⁸ *Euseb. Chron.* A.D. 119. ⁸⁹ Cf. above, n. 16.

modern society up to a generation ago. In the absence of an agreed religious orthodoxy, a general knowledge of the main issues of philosophy and of some of the generally favoured solutions to them was part of the intellectual baggage of every educated man.

CHAPTER 33

MEDICINE

VIVIAN NUTTON

When the orator Lucius Apuleius of Madauros stood trial in A.D. 158 before the proconsul of Africa, he defended himself in part against accusations of sorcery by recounting the views of Plato, Aristotle and Theophrastus on the true causes of epilepsy. His intention was not only to emphasize that this disease had a natural explanation and that his own examination of a sick woman had been entirely proper, but also to suggest to the judge that, since such medical knowledge was now widespread, anyone who, like his accuser, mistook an epileptic seizure for the consequence of sorcery was an ignorant bumpkin, unworthy of all credence. At about the same time, in Athens, Aulus Gellius could consider it a great social blunder when a man of taste and learning, but ill acquainted with medical terminology, mixed up his veins and his arteries.¹ These two incidents exemplify the high public profile of learned medicine in the Roman empire. The elder Pliny's diatribe against the evils of Greek medicine, a powerful blend of ugly truth and exaggerated insinuation, seems to have been forgotten, for healers of Greek descent, whether genuine or assumed, found favour around the empire. The elevated language of a Greek doctor at Chester is matched by the high moral sentiments of Serapion of Athens, and the citizens of Beneventum gratefully acknowledged the medical services and public charity of an immigrant family of doctors.² Medicine became fashionable. No literary symposium was complete without its physician, no collection of scientific problems without its medical theme. Doctors took their seat alongside poets and littérateurs at their free meals at the Museum of Alexandria and at its lesser imitations that sprang up in the Greek world.³ Doctors ventured into the writing of history, like Statilius Crito of Heraclea, with his memories of his Danubian campaigns with Trajan, or Lucian's butt, Callimorphus, doctor to the *ala contariorum* (an auxiliary unit of pikemen), who chronicled the Parthian War of 162 in flat and bastard Ionic.⁴ Others gained a reputation as philosophers, like Sextus

¹ Apul. *Apol.* 48–52; Gell. xviii.10.1.

² Nutton (1969); Oliver and Maas (1939); *ILS* 6496, with *AE* 1914 no. 164.

³ Nutton (1971); Bowersock, *Sophists* 58–75.

⁴ *FGNH* II.b.200; Lucian, *Hist. Conser.* 16, with the emendation proposed by C. Cichorius at *RE* I, 1894, 1239–40.

Empiricus, or Heraclitus of Rhodiapolis, the ‘first doctor of his age’, a writer on medicine and philosophy and ‘the Homer of medical poetry’, who was honoured, not only by his city but also by the Alexandrians, the Rhodians, and the Areopagus, the Thymelic Synod and the Epicureans of Athens.⁵ He displayed his gratitude by giving Rhodiapolis money for statues and games in honour of Asclepius and Hygeia, and by depositing copies of his treatises and poems with his other admirers. The public face of medicine could further be seen in lectures at the town gymnasium, in discussions and debates in the market-place, and even at the bedside. Galen’s reports of his own cases frequently mention a retinue of admirers that included senators and even imperial relatives. Some of them took a more than passing interest in medicine, for their questions were by no means amateurish and their medical experience is at times specifically emphasized. This is not surprising, for in Antiquity the boundary between the practitioner and the interested amateur, the *philiatros*, was a narrow one, and a local doctor did not think it at all odd to ask the advice of the erudite Apuleius in treating a dubious case.

Failure to recognize this has led to the creation of a historiography of ancient medicine which has concentrated almost exclusively on a few great medical authors who can be linked with certain discoveries. They are presented entirely without a context or any detailed investigation into the close links between medicine and other intellectual specialities. Even Galen, whose voluminous writings are our major source of information on Roman medicine and whose career will be examined in detail at the end of this chapter, is rarely placed within his proper social, philosophical and literary context. This chapter is an attempt to redress this traditional imbalance by looking first at the general background and broader medical developments before describing the achievements of four major medical men, Soranus, Aretaeus, Rufus and Galen. Their books were not always the products of a tranquil study, for they often reflect the vigorous arguments taking place in the Roman empire over the merits and weaknesses of various forms of healing. Its providers covered a wide spectrum of intellectual abilities and social statuses, from a Galen to the local barmaid, and the therapies that were on offer ranged from surgery and drugs to faith-healing. Far from displaying a monolithic and dull academicism, medicine in the first two centuries of the Roman empire was the focus of a lively debate and discussion, and the concern of a great variety of healers, not just of the devotees of Hippocrates.

Whether the apparently greater prominence of medical men and medical ideas in the first and second centuries reflects a new reality or is merely the result of the survival of a larger number of literary and

⁵ *IGGR* III 723–3.

epigraphic texts from this period is an open question, but neither interpretation would deny medicine its public importance. This impression is also heightened by the generally favourable bias of these sources. There is no denunciation of medical incompetence to rival that of Pliny or Cato, save perhaps by Galen himself, for the doubts of Tertullian and, still more, the wholesale equation by Tatian of all human drug therapies, however successful their outcome, with the wiles of the devil and his demons were marginal even within Christianity.⁶ Poignant laments for those whom the doctors failed to cure or, still worse, themselves killed can still be found, but these individual disasters do not appear to have turned into a widespread questioning of the claims of human healers. Even so devoted a follower of Asclepius as Aelius Aristides remained on friendly terms with physicians, although he rejected their aid except on the god's instructions. The prosperity of the towns, particularly in the East, also enabled some healers to give up their wanderings in search of paying clients and settle within a wealthy community. Dynasties of doctors, like the Statilii at Heraclea in Caria or the family of Moschianus at Thyatira, thus came to play their full part within the life of the town, although only rarely did a physician join the ranks of the provincial, to say nothing of the imperial, aristocracy.⁷ The wealth of a Galen, although not inconsiderable, was still much less than that of a Herodes Atticus or even a Flavius Boethus.

While one may speak confidently about the acceptance of medicine within general culture, it is harder to be precise about the benefits medicine gained from this alliance. One may point to a more refined philological interest in the Hippocratic Corpus, as exemplified in the so-called editions of Hippocrates by Dioscorides and Artemidorus Capito, fl. A.D. 110, and in the less well-known exegesis by the Antonine Jew, Rufus of Samaria, but Galen's quotations from his many predecessors do not say much for their philology.⁸ It is more tempting to suggest a growing public interest in medicine as one of the reasons behind the formal contests between doctors that are known from Ephesus and perhaps also from Smyrna.⁹ At Ephesus, these medical Olympics were divided into four sections, two concerned with surgery and instruments, and at least one with pharmacology, and the names of the winners were inscribed for all to see. These contests, which lasted for two days, made medicine a spectacle, just as much as the flowery language of the medical orator or the gilded instruments of the anatomical lecturer. Indeed, it may be from this public desire for medical entertainment that the art of medicine gained its greatest benefit in the Antonine period, by encouraging the revival of anatomy.

Writing in the early years of Trajan, the doctor Rufus of Ephesus

⁶ Tatian, *Ad Gr.* 16–8; Nutton (1988) ch. 8; Amundsen (1982); Temkin (1991) 119–23.

⁷ Robert (1954) 178–9; *JGGR* IV 1278. ⁸ Smith (1979) 164, 235–40.

⁹ *IEph* 1160–9; for Smyrna, Lebas-Waddington III 1523.

lamented the general ignorance of anatomy among physicians. Only at Alexandria was human anatomy still taught, and even here it seems to have been confined to a recital of the bones of a skeleton. Rufus' guide to anatomical nomenclature and the surviving fragments of the similar treatise by his contemporary Soranus reveal a variety of names for the parts of the body, but little interest in dissection *per se*.¹⁰ Yet two generations later Galen described many public anatomical dissections of sheep, goats and pigs – and even an elephant's heart – as well as of monkeys. He himself had attended in the late 140s the anatomical dissections given by Satyrus at Pergamum, and he traced the revival of anatomy back to Satyrus' older contemporary at Alexandria, Marinus. In addition, Galen carried out many anatomies himself in public and later in private, having been forced to withdraw from his public displays, so he claims, by the ill-will of his medical colleagues. His investigations were made on animals, not humans – although he recommended everyone to seize whatever opportunity came their way to view a skeleton or the interior of a corpse – and they involved experiments on the living as well as dissection of the dead.¹¹ Many of his own demonstrations were made for the purposes of research or, like those of Satyrus, in order to educate others, but his instructions on the choice of appropriate animals make it clear that he was well aware of the need above all to make a forceful impression on his audience. His anatomies, he asserts, were a great success, with medical men, with the Aristotelian philosophers of Rome and with the wealthy and well-connected senators who attended them. They also contributed to medical knowledge. By combining investigations into live animals with an understanding of the morphology of the dead, Galen could repeat many of the experiments first carried out by the celebrated anatomists of early Alexandria and take their conclusions further. He investigated the anatomy of the spine, tying or cutting the cord at various points to see its effect on function; he examined the brain to confirm the accuracy of Erasistratus' earlier observations; and he inserted a cannula into an artery to test his own theory of the nature of pulsation. That in the event he concluded, wrongly, that the power of pulsation resided in the coats of the artery and did not derive directly from the heart should not detract from his ingenuity and skill in performing the experiment.¹²

The results of this revival of anatomy and, in particular, of Galen's own dissections are generally clear. After Galen, there is not only an increased

¹⁰ Edelstein (1967) 250–1; Lloyd (1983) 149–67; for Soranus, *RE*. 2e Reihe, 3, 1927, 1117–18.

¹¹ May (1968) 31–43; Hankinson (1994). Advice on dissection technique is contained in an unpublished Arabic translation from the Greek, *On Dissection of Corpses*, see Ormos, 'Über die Sektion toter Lebewesen'. If this text is genuinely Galen's, it implies the existence of another tract *On Vivisection*, which may be identical with a surviving Arabic version with that title. In both texts, it is an animal, not man, that is being anatomized.

¹² Harris (1973) 378–88; Furley and Wilkie (1984) 47–57; Debru (1994).

understanding of the morphology of the internal organs of the body (not always exact, since Galen and his contemporaries were often forced to proceed by analogy with what they had found in animals), but also a greatly standardized nomenclature. Galen was no lover of innovation, and he rejected a proliferation of neologisms in favour of what he believed to be comprehensible terms of long standing, with the result that, as his authority grew after his death, the technical terminology of his opponents tended to disappear. Galen's anatomical studies also confirmed for him the purposeful activity of the Creator. His tract *On the Use of Parts* is a philosophical meditation on the discoveries he also recounted in his major anatomical treatise, *On Anatomical Procedures*, and it linked together form, function and purpose to the great satisfaction of the followers of Aristotle. Anatomy here comes close to religion, and its last book was specifically called by Galen an *Epode*, a hymn to the wondrous foresight of the Creator.¹³

Anatomy was also urged by Galen as an essential training for surgery, since, without constant practice in dissecting, the would-be surgeon would never gain the necessary skill to operate successfully. However gifted, without regular exercise of both his reasoning faculty and his manual dexterity the surgeon would fall short of his goal, like the athlete pitchforked into a race for which he had no training. Given the remarkable technical difficulty of some of the operations described or recommended by the surgeons of the second century, Galen's advice is by no means ill-judged. Although he himself never completed his projected textbook of surgery, his own record of successful surgical cures ranged from the reduction of complicated dislocations following accidents in the gymnasium to the excision of a suppurating breastbone, and from the dressing of wounds and ulcers to the removal of tumours.¹⁴ That Galen's high claims for surgery were by no means unwarranted can be seen from other near-contemporary writers. Antyllus, who lived perhaps under Trajan, operated for fistulae (a speciality approved by the lawyer Ulpian for tax immunity), for hydrocephalus and for aneurysms of the artery, as well as advocating tracheotomy and laryngotomy.¹⁵ The anonymous author of the *Introduction to Medicine* describes surgery for haemorrhoids, varicose veins, scrotal tumours, and several eye conditions, as well as for cerebral fractures, and explains how to open the chest to drain fluid in a case of empyema.¹⁶ One should not imagine that the consequence of such surgical intervention, which was carried out with, at best, weak anaesthetics, was always some permanent disability or impairment. Galen's experience with the gladiators of

¹³ Gal. iv.365 κ.

¹⁴ Harris (1973) 389–91; Toledo-Pereyra (1973) 357–65. Mani, 'Galen and surgery', in Kudlien and Durling (1991). The recently published text of Galen, *De medico examinando* 14.1–3, lists a range of operations thought by Galen to be within the range of a competent practitioner. ¹⁵ Grant (1960).

¹⁶ Toledo-Pereyra (1973) 366–75, wrongly assuming the author to be Galen.

Pergamum had enabled him to devise a method for treating cut and damaged tendons that would, in modern eyes, have had a high chance of success, while his preference for transverse and subcostal incisions over midline incisions of the abdomen, because they involved fewer complications and allowed stronger stitching, is entirely justified in the eyes of a modern surgeon.

But surgery, whatever the merits of the operator, was always attended with risk, and was the treatment of last resort. A doctor who claimed to remove growths on the eyelid by means of drugs rather than by cutting and burning would naturally, and in Galen's eyes deservedly, gain patients and rewards. Even pharmacology was open to suspicion, not without justification, given the sharp practices of the druggists reported by Galen and the immense difficulty that even he found in gaining access to medicaments of the best quality and in good condition. Medicines, too, were subject to fashion just as much as hairstyles, and the warehouses of the imperial palace contained in their basements ingredients for remedies that had long since fallen out of favour. Theriac, a cure-all and a tonic of dubious efficacy, was all the rage under Marcus Aurelius, who took a daily dose of it, but it was rejected by Commodus and it was not regularly prescribed again for the emperors until the accession of Severus.¹⁷ Where the emperors led, senators, egged on by their wives, followed gladly. Galen is scathing about the luxurious tastes of the aristocracy, with their preference for delicate and useless remedies over those more potent and more painful, but even he acknowledged that this was not without benefit for the practitioner. Since no man of wealth would willingly accept a cheap drug – for price was an obvious indication of quality – the doctor should learn what harmless and expensive preparations to include in his prescriptions and thereby charge a higher fee.¹⁸

How far the prejudices and expectations of such patients also influenced the medical theories by which their physicians explained or identified their disorders is harder to determine. In his *On Choosing the Best Doctor* Galen depicted the patient as a paragon of all learning, medical as well as philosophical, who could by his questioning decide which of the competing healers to trust.¹⁹ Not surprisingly, the successful candidate bears a close resemblance to Galen himself, and calmer reflection suggests that, if the patient spent as much time on making his choice as Galen advises, he would either not have been very ill or have died before he could make up his mind. But the range and type of questions suggested in this treatise also confirm the interaction of medicine and philosophy at the level of medical theory. The so-called medical sects were distinguished from one another by their

¹⁷ The idea that Marcus Aurelius was thereby a drug-addict, dependent on his daily dose of opium, rests on a mistranslation of Galen's Greek, see, for a refutation, Hadot (1984).

¹⁸ Nutton (1988) ch. 9. ¹⁹ Gal. *De medico examinando* (1988); see also Nutton (1990).

theories, often grounded on different philosophical preconceptions, far more than by their therapies.²⁰ The Empiricists rejected on sceptical grounds a reasoned investigation into the causes of disease, and founded their treatment on records of past cases and on the principle of trying out in one case what had worked before in a similar case.²¹ Of their opponents, the Methodists believed that the human body was made up of atoms and pores, whose natural, healthy relationship they characterized as constricted, fluid or mixed, an idea that may have been derived from earlier Greek philosophers such as Democritus and Epicurus. In their opinion, all disease was the result of a change in one of these three common states (the *koinotetes*). To discover and analyse the change was simple, and the choice of appropriate therapy followed easily on this straightforward aetiology. The third group, called 'Rationalists' or 'Dogmatics' by the ancient sources, appear united on only one doctrine, that a knowledge of the causation of a disease was necessary before attempting treatment, and that such knowledge was both difficult and accessible only to reasoning. The variety of philosophical and medical views on causation held by those who are named as Rationalists, including Galen, Asclepiades and a variety of Hippocratics, suggests that this sect was more defined by what its adherents were not than by any positive commitment to specific theories. Galen himself is avowedly an eclectic, beholden to no school, not even to his hero Hippocrates, and the doctor Leonides of Alexandria will not have been the only 'episyntetic' (or 'conciliator').²² Indeed, it may well be doubted whether any of the sects managed to secure a substantial uniformity of doctrine among their adherents over the centuries and over a wide geographical area. Soranus held a different view on the *koinotetes* from some of his fellow Methodist physicians, and Galen praised him for taking an interest in physiology, in contrast to the others, even though that interest was more for the purposes of self-advertisement than for science.²³

Galen's denunciations of the Methodists, however, cannot be taken as an accurate indication either of their successes or of their ideas. The physician Attalus, whose treatment of Theagenes is held up as a prime example of murderous incompetence, was in all probability an imperial physician, and there were other Methodists who attended the imperial household.²⁴ Their claims that their therapy was simple and their avowed preference for gentler remedies would also have attracted as patients those afraid of strong measures or unable to afford a long investigation, perhaps lasting

²⁰ Von Staden (1982); Frede (1985).

²¹ Deichgräber (1965) presents the fragments of the Empiricists; Stok (1993) is the most recent discussion.

²² Frede (1981) 75–86; for Leonides, Gal. xiv.684 κ. For Galen's Hippocratism, see Lloyd (1993).

²³ Soranus, *Gyn.* 19.18 Ilberg; Gal. 1.26 κ (although Soranus is not specifically named there); Soranus, *Gyn.* 4.6 Ilberg. See also Gourevitch (1988) vii–xlv; and Mudry and Pigeaud (1991).

²⁴ Gal. x.909–16; xiv.663 κ, with Benedum (1971).

several days, into their essential nature before any treatment was prescribed. The very accessibility of the Methodist Method, which they offered to teach in a mere six months, was a point in its favour, even though their opponents might characterize it as, at best, a crude correlation of symptoms and remedies.²⁵

The standard modern rebuttal of these accusations emphasizes the flexibility of Methodist therapeutic strategies, their severe practicality, and their general effectiveness. But it is less often admitted that this highly favourable judgement rests upon the evidence of two authors, Soranus of Ephesus and Caelius Aurelianus, and possibly only one, for it is agreed that the Latin author Caelius, fl. c. A.D. 400, took much, if not all, of his material directly from Soranus, fl. A.D. 110.²⁶ Nor is it easy to say how far Soranus was a typical Methodist, for, leaving aside Galen's claims to differentiate the good Soranus from his incompetent and boorish predecessors such as Thessalus (fl. A.D. 65), one can find within Soranus' own writings evidence for differences with his fellow sectaries over both theory and therapy. Comparison is made harder by the fact that what survives in Greek from his works, the *Gynaecology*, his biography of Hippocrates and a few pages on fractures, together with some later quotations, is largely unusual in the context of Greek medicine and perhaps even within his own oeuvre.²⁷ Yet it offers enough to justify the high regard of Galen and of Tertullian, who drew heavily upon Soranus in his treatise *On the soul*.

Soranus' *Gynaecology*, which is the largest surviving ancient work on the diseases of women, reveals a cautious, critical and high-minded practitioner, who knows when to modify his ideal treatment in the interests of effectiveness. Even though an amulet might have no direct effect on haemorrhage in the womb, its use ought not to be forbidden, for it might make the patient more cheerful and hence feel better. Psychological considerations may, in the end, take precedence over what will be of no help and even over the dictates of pharmacology. Similarly, although Soranus can be dismissive of anatomy and dissection, he does not reject them entirely, for sometimes anatomical facts determine appropriate therapy. At the same time, although Soranus strongly rejects the four humours (blood, bile, black bile and phlegm) of the Hippocratics, as well as their belief in purpose as determining the natural state of an organ, he is not an outright sceptic about the causation of disease, for sometimes a decision about aetiology

²⁵ Edelstein (1967) 173–91; Frede (1982); Rubinstein (1985).

²⁶ Drabkin (1951) 503–18; Hanson and Green (1994). Pigeaud (1982) 105–17, arguing for a greater independence for Caelius.

²⁷ Texts of Soranus: *Sorani Gynaeciorum libri IV*, ed. J. Ilberg (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 4; Leipzig-Berlin 1927) omits the quotations in later writers. There is a good English version of the *Gynaecology* by Temkin (1956); the Budé edition, *Soranus d'Éphèse, Maladies des Femmes*, ed. P. Burguière, D. Gourevitch, Y. Malinas (Paris, 1988 to 1994 so far), is far from satisfactory as text and translation. P. Voigt, *Sorani Ephesii Liber de etymologiis corporis humani* (Greifswald, 1882).

may be essential to determining treatment. His range of drugs is likewise full of commonsense and accessible remedies, and he pours scorn on some of the more far-fetched treatments for hysteria with bitumen or bedbugs. In short, the four books of the *Gynaecology* reveal a sane and sensible practitioner, an opponent of superstition, and a shrewd observer of what the treatment of his female patients demanded. His ideal midwife must be not only literate, quick-witted and of a high moral character, but also accustomed to hard work and unafraid to speak her mind or to call for assistance when needed. Failure even in little things might prove fatal for the parturient mother, and it was her well-being that was Soranus' first concern.²⁸ A similar combination of virtues marks many of the descriptions and therapies of acute and chronic diseases drawn upon by Caelius Aurelianus. The madman is not to be a social outcast, but to be brought, by sympathy and understanding, gradually back into everyday life. Sufferers from chronic conditions similarly have their psychological as well as their physical wants attended to.²⁹

The topic of acute and chronic diseases was also treated at length by an author of a different theoretical standpoint, Aretaeus of Cappadocia. Where and when he lived has been the source of considerable controversy, and recent scholars have hesitated between placing him in the time of Galen in the second half of the second century or a hundred years or so earlier.³⁰ Neither date is entirely free from objections, but the arguments for the later one are more convincing. That he lived during the Roman empire is clear from his use of some Latin words, which contrast sharply with the usually elegant Ionic Greek of his treatise. To write in this archaic dialect is a medical affectation which proclaims one's links with Hippocrates and is by no means unusual among our records of Greek doctors of the Roman period.³¹ Aretaeus' forte was the careful description of symptoms, and modern medical historians have been loud in praise of his faithful pictures of disease. He is credited with a classic account of asthma, pneumonia, diabetes, tetanus, elephantiasis, cerebral and spinal paralysis and diphtheria, although, given the absence of so much of earlier medical writing, it would be rash to claim that these diseases were first described by Aretaeus. His reputation as an observer of diseases grew as that of Galen declined, and the doctors of the eighteenth and nineteenth century regarded him highly. In part, this was because his underlying theory of disease, which may be loosely termed 'pneumatism', could easily be assimilated to the tradition of

²⁸ Lloyd (1983) 168–200; Gourevitch (1988) xxiii–xlvi.

²⁹ Caelius Aurelianus, *Morb. ac.* 1.58–66; *Morb. chron.* 1.144–80.

³⁰ Kudlien (1964) argues vigorously for the earlier date; *contra*, Smith (1979) 243–5. Oberhelman (1994) tentatively accepts the earlier date, but without noting the passage adduced by Nutton (1991) 11. Text: Aretaeus, ed. C. Hude (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 2; Berlin 1958).

³¹ Deichgräber (1971); Robert, *Bulletin épigraphique* 1962 no. 374, quote epigraphic parallels.

Hippocratic humoralism which survived into the nineteenth century. Aretaeus gave particular importance to the role of *pneuma*, spirit, as the arbiter of health and disease. Good health was a balance, not between atoms and pores, as it was for Soranus, but between *pneuma* and the four elements of matter and, in particular, between the humours of the body: it was changes in the tone or administration of the *pneuma* that led to disease and death, for an excessive loss of *pneuma* was inevitably fatal. In Aretaeus' physiology there is a close relationship between *pneuma* and blood; blood carries *pneuma* along with it in the vascular system, and, conversely, the liver, the organ that produces blood, is particularly sensitive to any form of pneumatic imbalance. Hence, Aretaeus prescribed bleeding, in various forms, as the most reasonable way of altering the body's imbalance of *pneuma* within a short period, although diet and drugs would also assist in the longer term. To his theories was married a good deal of practical experience, 'the best teacher of all; hence one should experiment, for caution is ignorance'. At the same time Aretaeus emphasized the need for the doctor to sympathize with his patient, particularly when the disease brought with it horrible disfigurement, as in *elephantiasis* (a skin condition), and even, as in tetanus, a dreadful agony of death. In such circumstances, the doctor's ministrations could be devoted at best to the relief of pain and suffering, and sometimes they might fail even in that.

Aretaeus provides a bridge from the Methodists to their opponents, the Hippocratics. His emphasis on the careful description of the acute and chronic diseases themselves as the main element of diagnosis is shared with Soranus and contrasts with the claims of the Hippocratics like Rufus of Ephesus and Galen that it was the individual's own make-up that was the most significant factor in determining his illness.³² At the same time, Aretaeus' studied Ionic language, with its Hippocratic allusions and quotations, shows his respect for his Coan predecessor. His theory of *pneuma* and his acceptance of a theory involving elements and humours can be seen also as a development from the Hippocratic Corpus, and the views of other Pneumatists, such as Athenaeus of Attaleia and Archigenes, were easily assimilated by Galen, although perhaps not in the way they themselves would have wanted. But Aretaeus and Archigenes were far from the conservatism of those 'modern' Hippocratics who believed that nothing could or should be added to the writings of the Master, and what survives from their treatises shows no concern with the minutiae of Hippocratic scholarship.

Archigenes' contemporary, Rufus of Ephesus, who was active under

³² Expressed programatically by Rufus, *Quaest. med.* 16. A marked contrast is provided by the anonymous author of a much-neglected text on acute and chronic diseases ascribed by its first editor, Fuchs (1903), to the first-century Methodist Themison, but on no good grounds; see now *De morbis acutis et chronicis, Anonymi medici*, ed. I. Garofalo (Leiden 1997).

Trajan, displays both the strengths and weaknesses of this revived Hippocraticism.³³ He wrote commentaries on several texts from the Hippocratic Corpus, and based his whole medical practice upon Hippocratic theory and precedent. This was for him but a starting-point. While he adhered to the doctrine of four elements and four humours as set out in *On the Nature of Man*, he carried his investigations beyond the often sketchy data of the Hippocratic Corpus. His tracts on *Melancholy* and on *Jaundice*, which have been recently identified in Arabic, show how he could develop earlier ideas on bile and black bile into a more consistent form and at the same time relate them more closely to the needs of everyday therapy.³⁴ Similarly, his impressive short *Medical Interrogation* can best be described as an extension of the precepts given in the Hippocratic *Prognostic* and *Airs, Waters and Places*. In it Rufus repeats his respect for Hippocrates, ‘a physician who was the greatest in the most important matters’, and a man of sound wisdom who made many excellent discoveries, but who did not say the last word on everything. He admits that *Airs, Waters and Places* offers valuable guidance to a doctor arriving in a strange town, but the evidence of one’s eyes is not enough by itself. The same information can be gained more swiftly and be considerably extended by questioning the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, for this may not only reveal much about local diseases but also indicate appropriate local remedies. Similarly, although it might be possible to form a judgement on a patient’s illness simply from its external manifestations, this should be only a preliminary opinion, for true therapy depends on fitting the remedy exactly to the patient, and this takes time. Individuality is the touchstone of Rufus’ medicine, and the discovery of the patient’s particular condition is crucial to treatment. But to identify this is by no means easy, and requires careful questioning not only about symptoms and their periodicity, but also about the patient’s whole way of life, including his or her habits and dreams. Only when a detailed clinical picture of the patient in sickness and in health has been obtained by these means, can one proceed to prescribe an appropriate treatment. Even more than in modern medicine, the specificity and exactness of the diagnosis is all, for ‘we are not all naturally the same; we differ very greatly from one another in all sorts of ways’. Until this individuality is known, proper therapy is

³³ Smith (1979) 240–3; Thomssen (1989); Abou-Aly (1992); Sideras (1994); Thomssen and Probst (1994). Texts: *Œuvres de Rufus d’Éphèse*, ed. C. Dareuberg and E. Ruelle (Paris 1879); *Rufi Ephesii Quaestiones medicinales*, ed. H. Gärtner (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum, Supplementum IV*; Berlin (1962) – the same editor’s revised text in the Teubner series (Berlin 1970) lacks the important commentary; *Rufi Ephesii De renum et vesicae morbis*, ed. A. Sideras (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 3.1; Berlin 1977); *Rufus von Ephesos, Krankenjournal*, ed. M. Ullmann (Wiestaden 1978); *Die Schrift des Rufus von Ephesos über die Gelbsucht in arabischer und lateinischer Übersetzung*, ed. W. Ullmann (*Abb. Akad. Wiss. Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl.*, u.F. 3, 138; Göttingen 1982).

³⁴ Ullmann (1978a), 37–8, 72–6; (1983); his ascription of a series of case-histories entirely to Rufus is more questionable, Ullman (1978b).

impossible, for no therapeutic substance ‘is so constant in its action that the physician can place it in single category’. Hence it is essential for the true doctor to find out all he can about his patient by questioning him and his friends.³⁵

The great detail into which Rufus believed the doctor should go in his interrogation might suggest that his own clientele was confined to the wealthier citizens of Asia Minor, those who could afford to pay for this attention. But what remains of his writings shows that this was far from being the case. His sympathies were wide: whether he is describing the ailments of slaves put up for sale in the market-place by deceitful merchants or the sexual difficulties of homosexuals, he writes with sensitivity and concern.³⁶ Even the failings of others are viewed with sadness rather than scorn. Nor was his advice only for his patients or his fellow practitioners. The largest treatise that he wrote is entitled *The Layman*, and seems to have covered the whole of medicine in language that the man in the street could follow in order to cure himself and his family when medical aid was otherwise not forthcoming. Unlike Galen, whose prolixity was notorious, Rufus sticks close to the point, never wasting words, and subordinating his undoubted learning to the point at issue. His treatise on anatomical nomenclature is based on a wide reading in both medical and non-medical texts, but is not the occasion for a display of philological fireworks.³⁷ Instead, Rufus offers a sober, clear exposition, at least as much as an encouragement to others as an advertisement of his own erudition. Rufus is ever the gentleman, courteous in debate, sympathetic to suffering and, if he followed his advice in his interviews with patients, possessed of an impeccable bedside manner. Add to this the respect in which Rufus was held by Galen and the Arabs, and one must agree that here was no ordinary physician.

To judge from his writings, his whole life was spent in the Greek East. He probably lived for some time in Alexandria as a medical student, for he observed the ravages of the Guinea worm in causing endemic disease, but the details of his other cases relate only to Asia Minor and the neighbouring islands. He displays no acquaintance with things Latin, no yearning for the bright lights of Rome.³⁸ In this he was not alone, for there were many other distinguished Greek physicians for whom the great cities of the East provided inducement (and income) enough. Marcus Modius Asiaticus, ‘leader of the Methodist sect’, practised at Smyrna, while at Tarsus in Cilicia a distinguished line of pharmacologists lived and taught for over a

³⁵ Rufus, *Quaest. med.* 16. Gärtner’s commentary (1962) on this text is invaluable. See also Rufus, *De renum et vesicae morbis*, ed. Sideras (1977).

³⁶ Rosenthal (1975) 204; Rufus, quoted by Qusṭā ibn Lūqā (ninth cent.), *Kitāb al-Ittilāf an-nās*, ed. P. Sbath, *Bulletin de l’Institut d’Égypte* 23 (1941), 134 (a reference I owe to Miss Amal Abou-Aly).

³⁷ Lloyd (1983) 149–67.

³⁸ By contrast, Soranus seems to have worked in Rome for a time, for he denounces some of the natives’ lack of devotion to their children, *Gyn.* 113 Ilberg.

century.³⁹ Yet, however much Galen might suggest that it was their own murderous incompetence that drove Greek physicians to seek the anonymity of the imperial capital, and imply that a successful practice at Pergamum or Smyrna was the proper summit of a doctor's ambitions, the bigger opportunities of Rome proved a potent attraction. Here one could specialize in only a few conditions; here one could make a name and become friends with the emperor and the court. Immigrant doctors from all over the East and from Massilia, that little Hellas beyond the Alps, flocked to Rome. Few returned. For all his protestations that he had been forced to leave Pergamum as a result of *stasis*, Galen's return to his native city lasted scarcely two years (summer 166 – winter 168–9) and may have been prompted as much by a desire to escape trouble (and the plague) in Rome as by any homesickness. Certainly there is no clear evidence for a further return visit until his old age or, as yet, for any great concern for the welfare of those he left behind. There is no record of any benefaction, any largess or any public monument such as might have been expected from a rich imperial physician.⁴⁰

This is but one of the many paradoxes in the life of Galen, the best known and, save for Hippocrates, the most influential of all ancient medical writers.⁴¹ Born at Pergamum in A.D. 129, the son of a wealthy architect, Galen was brought up in comfortable surroundings. His father, Nicon, wrote playful verse and was addicted to culture, even accompanying his young son to hear the lectures of a bewildering variety of philosophers. His plans for the boy did not at first include medicine, despite the

³⁹ *CIG* 3283; for Tarsus, cf. Scarborough and Nutton (1982) 192–4.

⁴⁰ Compare the benefactions of Galen's contemporary as an imperial physician, Stalilius Attalus, Benedum (1971).

⁴¹ Fundamental is Temkin (1973). Good short accounts are given by Eichholz (1951); Lloyd (1973) 136–53. Much modern scholarship is summarized in the papers of the International Galen Conferences: Nutton (1981); Manuli and Vegetti (1988); Kudlien and Durling (1991); Kollesch and Nickel (1993). Texts: *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia*, ed. C. G. Kühn. 20 vols in 22. Leipzig, 1821–33. References are usually cited by the volume and page in this edition (κ.). More modern editions have appeared in the *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* series, in progress in Berlin since 1914. Recent volumes, with text and English translation, include: *Galenus De praecognitione*, ed. V. Nutton (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 5.8.1). Berlin, 1979. *Galenus De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*, ed. P. De Lacy (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 5.4.1–2). 3 vols. Berlin, 1978–84. *Galenus De optimo medico cognoscendo*, ed. A. Z. Iskandar (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum, Supplementum Orientale* 4). Berlin, 1988. This tract is also given the Latin title of *De medico examinando*. Other recent editions and translations include: Brain (1986); Frede, (1985); Furley and Wilkie (1984); R. J. Hankinson, Galen, *On the Therapeutic Method, Books I and II*. Oxford, 1991; Larrain (1992); *On My Own Opinions*, ed. V. Nutton (*Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* 5.3.2; Berlin 1999).

Recent modern work on Galen is exemplified in the proceedings of the International Galen conferences held in Cambridge (1979), Kiel (1982), Pavia (1986), Madrid (1988), and Berlin (1989): Nutton (1981); Kudlien and Durling (1991); Manuli and Vegetti (1988); J. A. López-Férez, *Galenus: Obra, pensamiento e influencia*. Madrid, 1991; Kollesch and Nickel (1993).

A valuable guide to the bibliography of the *Corpus Galenicum* is: G. Fichtner, *Corpus Galenicum. Verzeichnis der galenischen und pseudogalenischen Schriften*. 2nd edn Tübingen, 1990. A major bibliography of Galenic texts and editions is given by J. Kollesch, and D. Nickel 'Bibliographia Galeniana', *ANRW* 37, 2 (1994), 1351–420.

importance in the town of the healing god Asclepius, whose magnificent suburban shrine was being lavishly reconstructed during Galen's early years. At the Asclepieion Galen saw the famous orator Aelius Aristides, whose struggle with constant illness impressed him with the capacity of the mind to conquer bodily weakness. Galen's relationship with Asclepius was no less close. He later prescribed for himself and for others as a result of dream-visions sent by the god, and more than once the god's intervention altered his whole life. On the first occasion, in 146–7, Asclepius appeared to Nicon in a dream, and henceforth the youthful Galen was turned towards medicine.

He studied first at Pergamum, but soon left for Smyrna, where, under Pelops, he was introduced to the cut and thrust of medical debate, and wrote his first tract on medicine. From Smyrna, he set off for Corinth to sit at the feet of Numisianus, but, finding him already gone to Alexandria, he followed him to Egypt. At Alexandria, 'the foundation of health for all men' as one ancient writer put it, he could share in the great traditions of Alexandrian medicine, in particular its anatomical teaching and its emphasis on the Hippocratic texts as the basis for proper practice.⁴² The dark sayings of Hippocrates were interpreted with the tools of medicine and of philology, an added inducement to Galen, whose intellectual interests were immensely broad and ranged from Aristotelian logic to the language of Aristophanic comedy. The teaching that he received there, although he does not always speak highly of it, helped to confirm him in his view of the essential importance of book-learning, and of philological erudition as a necessary adjunct to practical skills. At Alexandria, also, he could converse with shippers from all over the Mediterranean world, and beyond, and learn from them about astrological navigation as well as about the rare drugs and minerals they were carrying.

At the age of twenty-eight, after the longest medical education on record, Galen returned to Pergamum and began his practice. Such a long period of instruction, at a time when most healers were either self-taught or learned their medicine within the family or as an apprentice, was only possible because of Galen's wealth. This he attempted feebly to deny, but his father's death in *c.* A.D. 150 had left him with estates and a substantial income that he could use to build up a huge private library. He was also freed from the sordid necessity of making a living from medicine. As a proof that he was a true gentleman, he could boast that he had never charged a fee – although that did not stop him from receiving substantial presents in return for his treatments. His first official post, as doctor to the gladiators owned by the high priest of Asia, already shows the extent to which his wealth and standing could gain him access to the top social strata

⁴² On Galen's Hippocratism, see Smith (1979) 60–176; and Lloyd (1993). For Egypt, Nutton (1993).

of the city. Not that his practical skills would not also have marked him out, for he reports that he developed his own method of treating thigh-wounds and managed to reduce the number of fatalities from sixty to a mere two in four years. At the same time he was continuing to write, to argue and to treat the inhabitants of Pergamum – and to make enemies. His combative nature, perhaps inherited from his shrewish mother, a woman who shouted, screamed and even bit the servants, and his pretensions to superiority, which were clear even in the school classroom, were not likely to endear him to his fellow healers. He may also have backed the wrong side in a mysterious *stasis* in Pergamum, for in A.D. 162 he left his home town to seek his fortune in Rome.⁴³

He was no poor, friendless immigrant, as his autobiographical writings suggest. He quickly made contact with fellow citizens of Pergamum, including his old philosophy tutor, Eudemus, and within a very few months he was demonstrating his dissecting skills in public before an audience of senators and even an imperial relative. His success, he claims, aroused so much envy that he was forced to abandon his dissections in public, and hold them in private. But he still continued to argue in public, to visit the sick and to write. How great was his initial triumph in Rome is hard to say, since he himself is our only source, and the weight of an argument from the silence of such writers as Fronto or the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius is not easy to measure. Yet his attendance on the families of senators, unless totally invented, bespeaks a certain degree of success, and it is not difficult to sympathize with his competitors, whose envy forced him once more, in A.D. 166, to pack his bags. His decision to leave may have been accelerated by fears for his own safety, but whether from his hostile competitors or from the approaching plague cannot be known for certain. Of his travels and activities in the next two years we are almost totally ignorant, but he was not entirely forgotten in Rome, for in late 168 he was invited to join the emperors on their campaign against the German invaders of northern Italy. Despite his own insinuations, he was not the chief imperial physician, or even one of the most important, for after Lucius Verus' sudden death in early A.D. 169, he was left behind in Aquileia while Marcus Aurelius returned with the body of his brother to Rome.⁴⁴ Only later that summer did Galen return to the capital. His stay there should have been brief, for he was invited by Marcus to accompany him once more on campaign, but the god Asclepius intervened, and the 'philanthropic' emperor allowed him to remain behind as doctor to the stubborn young Commodus. Galen

⁴³ Nutton (1988) 158–71 gives the most detailed account of Galen's career before his second return to Rome. Galen includes frequent details of his early life, career and cases, most notably in *On Prognosis*, and *On My Own Books*. Useful surveys of Galenic problems are given at *ANRW* 35, 2 (1994), 1351–756. Galen and his subsequent influence are clearly set out in Conrad *et al.*, (1995).

⁴⁴ A report of Lucius' death, independent of Galen, can be found in Aelian frag. 206 Hercher.

toured Italy with the young prince, travelling from palace to palace, but the extent of his professional involvement with his charge was slight, and he used his abundant free time to write and write. The reappearance of the emperor in Rome seems to have made little difference to Galen's lifestyle, and his instinct for self-preservation enabled him to survive not only the atrocities of Commodus' later years but the chaos of the civil wars. He may have made a visit to Pergamum in the 190s, but he was still in imperial service in Rome in A.D. 193, and later attended Septimius Severus. The Suda places his death in A.D. 199–200 at the age of seventy, but Arabic writers, depending ultimately on a quotation from his contemporary Alexander of Aphrodisias, date it at least ten years later, and perhaps even as late as A.D. 216–17.⁴⁵

Galen has always been a controversial figure. He delighted in debates and challenges himself, and his assertions of his own superiority have continually provoked responses from doctors and scholars that have not always been favourable. His carefully fostered image of impeccability and massive learning both impresses and repels, and his tacit annexation of the ideas and therapies of others has tended to distort the whole historiography of ancient medicine. His catalogues of his own books, his case-histories, even his reports of his anatomies are designed for the greater glory of Galen, and his own powers of rhetoric and argument have proved very persuasive, even today. But the decline of Galenism as a medical philosophy and as a practical guide to therapy from the late sixteenth century onwards brought with it also a general denigration of Galen; he became, in Wilamowitz's words, 'that great windbag'. In the last twenty years, however, his reputation has begun to revive, in particular because of his independence as a philosopher.

Philosophy is one key to understanding Galen.⁴⁶ In his view, the best physician was *ipso facto* a philosopher, for in his practice and, still more, in his understanding of the workings of nature as made visible in the body he was forced to make decisions for himself on many of the central disputes of ancient philosophy. Many of these arguments Galen thought trivial or incapable of resolution without circular argument, but others he considered susceptible of 'demonstrative proof', provided that the appropriate methods of argument were used. 'Scientific demonstration' is thus a key Galenic slogan, and is an essential part of practical therapy as well as of medical theory. Furthermore, the doctor's investigations of the body pro-

⁴⁵ The evidence for the various dates of death is set out by Nutton (1988) 315–24. Further information from Arabic sources is given by Gero (1990).

⁴⁶ Rightly emphasized by Temkin (1973). More recent studies have increasingly emphasized Galen's stature as a philosopher, see Frede (1981); Moraux (1984); Barnes (1991); Hankinson (1992); Donini (1992). New philosophical works (or fragments) of Galen are still being discovered; see Rescher (1965); Strohmaier (1970); Nutton (1987); Larrain (1992).

vided him with a unique insight into the created universe, and the knowledge thus acquired should allow him to judge between competing theories. To take but one example, Galen's anatomical dissections confirmed, to his own satisfaction, the crucial importance of the heart, the brain and the liver, and hence the general correctness of Plato's views on the tripartite soul. At the same time, his Aristotelian conviction of the importance of purpose not only influenced, but was in turn influenced by, what he saw in the sheep, pigs, goats and monkeys upon which he experimented. Finally, his logical skills not only enabled him to develop his skills of differential diagnosis and prescription, but also helped to form the bridge between the animals he dissected and the humans he treated.

The second obvious feature of his work is the massive erudition that apparently underlies it. He himself possessed a substantial personal library, from which he no doubt derived much material for his studies of grammar and lexicography.⁴⁷ He did not shrink from displaying this learning in abundant digressions, on nomenclature, on variant manuscript readings and on the failings of his medical colleagues. He also displayed a considerable knowledge of earlier medicine (although, as has been recently shown, the sources he used for his books on pharmacology are far fewer than a first glance might suggest), and he often interpreted the works of his predecessors in ways they themselves would not have accepted.⁴⁸ Everything could thus be said to lead up to Hippocrates and his most faithful interpreter, Galen, and the divergencies of others were condemned as ignorance, folly or worse. Yet it would be wrong to imagine that book learning, although of prime importance, was all that Galen demanded of his ideal doctor. In the last resort it was practical therapeutic skills that counted, and Galen derided those who trusted solely to books. No helmsman would navigate, nor any physician diagnose and prescribe, simply from a book.

It is this practical experience of Galen that is hardest for the modern historian to understand, for there are many pitfalls in the way of identifying ancient with modern diseases. Yet even if this is an impossible task, it is important to remember that Galen always insisted on the necessity of practical experience, whether it was in prescribing drugs, diagnosing a patient or in dissecting a monkey. At times his claims for empiricism seem to override his other, more theoretical assertions. This was essential not only in pharmacology, where the working of drugs by their total substance was frequently known from experience alone rather than from any preconceived notions derived from a calculation of the properties of individual constituents, but also in surgery and diagnosis. Had Galen not already understood

⁴⁷ The newly discovered *Commentary on Airs, Waters and Places* reveals Galen's remarkable knowledge of Hellenistic astronomy and mathematics, see Strohmaier (1993).

⁴⁸ For some examples, see Smith (1982); Manuli (1984); Lloyd (1993). Galen's pharmacological sources are examined by Fabricius (1972).

from his experience with animal dissection the results of various lesions to the spine, he would not have been able to cure the Syrian sophist Pausanias of the loss of function in two fingers as a result of falling backwards from his chariot.⁴⁹ Similarly, his own great experience of dissecting enabled him to avoid cutting into the wrong organ or vessel, and thereby harming or even killing the patient. He was also a shrewd observer, whose deductions from what he could see in his patients and his surroundings would rival those of Sherlock Holmes.⁵⁰ Observation was one of his fortes and he was ever alert to incidents that might, at some stage, be put to good use in building up a theory. A weasel fighting a snake in Egypt, the behaviour of small children, the channels that irrigated a garden, all suggested to him useful analogies by which to explain medical or psychological phenomena.⁵¹ He also drew on his own investigations of the human body, the most elegant and purposeful work of nature or the Creator, to support his ideas about the order and purpose of the macrocosm.

It would, however, be wrong to set up experience and reason in opposition to one another in Galen's thought. His constant plea is for their essential unity within the doctor's everyday activity; to emphasize the one more than the other is to commit a possibly fatal error. Similarly, to single out surgery or pharmacology alone as the way to treat disease is to derogate from the unity of medicine as well as to put the patient's life at risk. The ideal doctor should be able to master all aspects of his art, both theoretical and practical, using both head and hand. This programme was one which Galen endeavoured to put into practice in his career and in his own writings.⁵² It is visible not only in the records of his cases in *On Prognosis* but also in the very structure and arrangement of his writings. To take but one example, his sixteen books on the pulse, which are, at first sight, among the driest and dullest of his productions, neatly display the relationship between his theoretical and therapeutical concerns. The sequence begins with four books on the differentiation of pulsation, in which the various theories about the pulse are reviewed and a grammar and a vocabulary for understanding the pulse laid down – Galen was ever one for establishing his meaning clearly at the outset of an investigation, albeit at considerable length. Then come four books on how to distinguish the various types of pulses – his own touch was 'most sensitive', how to take a pulse and what mistakes to avoid. Next Galen devotes four books to explaining the causes of this pulsation, which for him resides in a power communicated to the

⁴⁹ Gal. VIII.213–4 κ. ⁵⁰ Many telling instances are given in *De praecognitione*, XIV.599–673 κ.

⁵¹ The first two examples come from *De moribus*, which is preserved only in an Arabic epitome and in a few Arabic fragments; the relevant passages are given by Stern (1983) 94–5 (with a parallel from Rufus, 95–6); and Mattock (1972) 240.

⁵² It is emphasized at length in the newly published text *On Examining the Best Doctor* (1988), summarized in Nutton (1990).

coats of the arteries by the heart, which is not viewed as a pump or motive organ. Once one has learnt about the anatomical and physiological basis of pulsation, one can begin to understand why the pulse is such a significant indicator of changes within the body, and pass to the last quartet of books. These deal with prognosis by means of the pulse, either diagnostically, to show what disease is indicated by what type of pulse, or in confirmation, to show what pulse is indicated by the collection of symptoms already identified. Theoretical learning thus accompanies practical skill to the very bedside. Finally, since these sixteen books were both complex and expensive to have copied, Galen produced a smaller version, in a single book, for the benefit of beginners in medicine.⁵³ This pulse-lore, which Galen put into effect in his healing activity, was also further developed and refined in a series of special studies dealing with particular points or with objections raised by his opponents.

These studies of the pulse formed but one part of Galen's investigations of man and disease and they extended what Galen took to be the infallible reasoning of Hippocrates. Hippocratism, as we have seen with Rufus, was in fashion, but Galen carried the process still further. His massive erudition enabled him to resolve many detailed questions of interpretation of obscure passages, and his own successful clinical practice not only indicated to him the correct resolution of ambiguities, but also confirmed the essential truth of Hippocratic theories. By taking *On the Nature of Man* as the Hippocratic text *par excellence*, along with *Epidemics I* and *III*, and by employing his philological and medical skills, Galen was able to isolate various degrees of genuineness among the Hippocratic Corpus and effectively to reject much of the Hippocratic legacy as spurious. The resulting picture of Hippocrates, the father of medicine, proved long-lasting, and, even today, much of the argument about the Hippocratic question involves presuppositions formulated by Galen.⁵⁴ Galen's estimate of the achievements of his great predecessor led him to a limited view of medical progress. Since Hippocrates had laid down the route of proper medicine, just as Trajan was to do with the roads of Roman Italy, it was the task of later physicians to follow Hippocrates' advice, occasionally filling in a few holes left behind and adding copingstones, but aiming for a perfection in medicine already prefigured or outlined by Hippocrates.⁵⁵ Progress was possible, but it would also inevitably cease; the areas in which Galen or his successors were able to go beyond Hippocrates would become fewer and fewer, until, at some future date, the art of medicine would reach perfection.

⁵³ Galen's pulse-lore is discussed at length by Harris (1973) 397–431. Relevant material can also be found in Furley and Wilkie (1984) and in Brain (1986).

⁵⁴ Hence the structure of Smith (1979), but even he underestimates the extent to which the terms of the debate were fixed, from at least the sixth century onwards, by Galen's ideas.

⁵⁵ Gal. x.633–4 κ.

As has already been stated, anatomy was one area in which Galen went considerably further than his master; physiology was another. By using the evidence also given him by Plato in the *Timaeus*, Galen was enabled to extend the notions of the Hippocratic Corpus about the workings of the body. By concentrating upon purpose and function, Galen was led to the formulation of the idea of ‘faculties’, originally a shorthand term for the invisible combination of elements or qualities in an organ that enabled it to function properly, and whose disturbance brought about some illness or disease. He could also be more precise about the origin and role of the so-called spirits, produced in the brain and the heart, although it was later Galenic interpreters who discussed the importance of the ‘natural’ spirit produced in the liver and transmitted through the veins.⁵⁶ In his own practice, also, Galen analysed his patients less upon the Hippocratic schema of the four related qualities, hot, cold, wet and dry. But in general Galen regarded himself as merely following the guidelines laid down by Hippocrates, and he lamented when, as with plague, his master had left no definite statement behind. One had, of course, the great historian Thucydides, but he was no doctor, and, for all his many virtues as a contemporary observer, he could not have been expected to write down everything that would have occurred to Hippocrates.⁵⁷

Pharmacology had also developed beyond the Hippocratic Corpus, for its pharmacopoeia had been supplemented, at least in the big cities, by new drugs brought in from the East, largely through Alexandria.⁵⁸ Rome, the centre of the empire, was naturally privileged, and the royal physicians who worked there had access to untold stocks of rare and expensive materials. In his own writings on pharmacology Galen can be seen in the best and worst light. His inquisitiveness took him down the mines of Cyprus, to the shores of the Dead Sea, and, so he alleged, to the backwoods of Paphlagonia to learn the secrets of a herbalist-cum-poisoner. He obtained drugs from a camel caravan in Palestine, as well as from a search in the basements of the royal stores at Rome. He reports his own experiments with drugs, rather like his father’s earlier tests on plants and wines, and he refused to write up a section on the mineral drug *terra Lemnia* until he had had personal experience of its production – and that took thirty years. In addition he had a wide acquaintance with the literature on pharmacology, and he could appreciate the virtues of the pharmacologists of a hundred years earlier, Dioscorides, Andromachus and Crito. He was also interested in how drugs worked, with the aim of thereby gaining greater specificity in prescribing. He did not keep his conclusions to himself. He wrote two large treatises on drugs, arranged respectively according to type and to the site

⁵⁶ Temkin (1977) 154–61. ⁵⁷ Kudlien (1971).

⁵⁸ Schmidt (1924), is not entirely replaced by Raschke (1978) 650–76.

of the ailment, another large tract on the properties of simples, and lesser books on antidotes, simples and substitute drugs. He thus made his learning and experience available to all who could obtain his writings. In addition, he was prepared to attend to the needs of the backwoods doctor, whose armamentarium was considerably less than that of the metropolitan or imperial physician. Galen's weaknesses are equally apparent. His reorganization of traditional drug lore – for in truth he added very little himself to what he found in his sources – was both prolix and complex. He himself was no botanist, and he fell far short of the accuracy and detail of Dioscorides. His theoretical division of drugs according to the various grades of their action was an ingenious attempt to relate the power of a drug to the seriousness of an illness, but it was both difficult to put into effect in the absence of any accurate system of measuring temperature and other bodily changes, and left incomplete by Galen himself. Only 161 out of 475 botanical samples were classified according to their grades of action, and even here Galen did not always use the same system of classification.⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, later Greek authors preferred the older listings of Dioscorides.

Galen's pharmacology exemplifies his achievement. Massive book learning, perpetual curiosity, fecundity of ideas, shrewdness and ingenuity are balanced by gross wordiness and irritating inconsistencies. Despite his claims to have always maintained the same Hippocratic views over his long life – with the single exception that he came to prefer the liver to the heart as the first organ to be formed in the foetus⁶⁰ – his individual arguments and analogies are occasionally at variance with his general theses. In debate and confrontation the demolition of his opponent counted for at least as much as the recovery of the truth, and Galen was prepared to use any ammunition in his battles. The doctrines of the Empiricist sect were used against the Methodists, and, conversely, in his discussions of the causes of epidemic diseases he took over Methodist ontological theories to answer his opponents' case.⁶¹ He may have wished to put forward a systematic description of human physiology, in sickness and in health, and to analyse the relationship between disease and cure, but this aim was never totally achieved. In this Galen was no Galenist; many loose ends were left for others to tie. This is no cause for surprise, for Galen's hectic activity as healer and as publicist lasted for over fifty years, and gave him little time to refer constantly to his earlier writings. Indeed, we may choose rather to marvel at the general level of consistency that he maintained over that long period.

⁵⁹ See Harig (1974) for Galen's theories; and Fabricius (1972) for his sources.

⁶⁰ Gal. iv.663–4 κ. He returned to the subject at greater length in his last book, *On My Own Opinions*, ch. 11.

⁶¹ See Nutton (1988) ch. 11, pp. 3–16.

Galen's urge to express himself constantly on almost any topic brings with it advantages. No ancient doctor and very few ancient historical figures are better known than he, or offer so many insights into the daily life of Rome and the Greek East. He remarks on the unhappy fate of the Roman pauper dying alone in his garret from the murderous ministrations of a quack; and he sympathizes with the Asian peasant riddled with disease through being forced to eat roots and leaves in time of famine to replace the corn that had been taken away from him by big men from the city.⁶² Yet Galen's powerful rhetoric, his eye for a telling example, his evident concern for his patients' welfare, and the modernity of some of his ideas and emphases should not mislead us into concluding that all ancient physicians were like Galen, Rufus, Aretaeus and Soranus, or into judging the availability and efficiency of healing simply on the basis of a relatively few medical authors. The ability to cure was not confined to those who called themselves *medici* and *iatroi*, and even among those who did, the level of competence ranged widely. It is true that the availability of tax concessions for 'doctors' gave the granting authority some check, at least in theory, on the ability of those receiving this privilege, and the decision of Antoninus Pius to restrict this concession to a small number of physicians in each community and to leave the choice to the local council may have strengthened patients' control over their physicians.⁶³ But it would be wrong to be too optimistic, for showy rhetoric and flashy instruments might be more immediately impressive than sound therapy. In A.D. 124 a Roman governor of Egypt was prepared to allow tax immunity to a physician on appeal, even though his patients testified to his incompetence.⁶⁴ For every healer who followed the precepts of Hippocrates and who employed therapies that modern historians can class as 'rational', there were others, like Aelius Promotus or the writers of the magical papyri, whose treatments emphasized the occult powers of herbs and stones.⁶⁵ Galen and Pliny might denounce as mumbo-jumbo the magico-medical lore of Xenocrates and Pamphilus, but these authors were not thereby abandoned, and, indeed, their recipes continued to be recommended for centuries.⁶⁶ Local healers, whatever their intellectual accomplishments, might prove at times as effective as a learned Methodist or Hippocratic, and self-medication was the norm for most conditions.

Neither should one forget the ready availability of religious healing as an alternative or as complementary to that offered by a secular healer. It was

⁶² Strohmaier (1968) 69–70; Gal. VI.749 κ.

⁶³ Nutton (1988) chs. 4, 5 and 6, pp. 17–21. A new inscription from Ephesus, published by Knibbe (1981–2) 136–40, reveals that the tax privileges had been available at least since the time of Julius Caesar.

⁶⁴ *POxy* 1 40, with the revisions of Youtie (1964).

⁶⁵ Wellmann (1908) provides the best edition.
⁶⁶ Gal. XI.791–7 κ. Further discussions can be found at *RE* XVIII 3 (1949) 344–6 (Pamphilos) and *2e Reibe*, IX (1967), 1529–31 (Xenocrates). The latter is at times hard to distinguish from his homonym, Xenocrates of Ephesus, the author of a book on stones, see Ullmann (1972) 49–64; (1973) 59–76.

not just in time of great calamity, like the Antonine plague (which was probably a smallpox epidemic) or the more local epidemics of ‘anthrax’ reported for Asia by Galen, that resort might be had to religious shrines, although our information may then become more extensive.⁶⁷ Aelius Aristides’ visits to Asclepius, and the success of Alexander of Abonuteichos in establishing his own Asclepius cult, both predate the onset of the Antonine plague, and Galen himself notes without disapproval the growth in religious shrines during his lifetime.⁶⁸ There were also others, like the Christians, who claimed to offer healing to the sick as part of their message of salvation, and whose appeal to the halt, the blind and the lame undoubtedly carried some force.⁶⁹

To think of medicine in the Roman empire solely in terms of the surviving medical texts, the productions of only a few authors, is to underestimate the possibilities of healing available, and to attribute an exaggerated importance to the mere chance of survival. The fact that subsequent generations of physicians, in Byzantium, in the Middle Ages, and in the Renaissance – and even today in many parts of the Muslim world – accepted the therapeutic validity of Hippocratic medicine as found in Rufus and Galen may say something about the quality of their theories and treatments, but it should not at the same time obscure the medical pluralism of the Roman empire. Even Galen was not above acknowledging the advice of healers as diverse as the god Asclepius, Axius, doctor in the British fleet, Philoxenus the schoolmaster and Simmias the mountebank.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ See Gilliam (1961) 225–51; Wiseman (1973) 143–83; the identification with smallpox was proposed by Ebbell (1967) 53–9, with citation of evidence for the more local plagues, and, independently, by Littman (1973) 243–55.

⁶⁸ Behr (1969); Lucian, *Alexander*, with the splendid commentary by Robert (1980) 393–421; Gal. *De examinando medico*, 1.1–4. Lane Fox, *Pagans* is also relevant.

⁶⁹ Harnack (1892); MacMullen (1984); Nutton (1988) ch. 8, pp. 47–9.

⁷⁰ Gal. xi.3.14–15; xii.786; xiii.1036; xiv.182 κ., with Kudlien (1983).

CHAPTER 34

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

MALCOLM A. R. COLLEDGE

I. INTRODUCTION

Augustus and his Julio-Claudian successors had moulded the variegated architecture and art of the empire in ways that blended old with new, metropolitan with provincial. Patterns of practice had been created which would serve as a basis upon which future generations could build. Chief arbiters were naturally the ruler, his family and senior ministers, as controllers of policy and finance. Theirs were the fundamental choices about artistic direction. But a host of other factors, constantly varying, were ever present to influence what they might do, such as public opinion, resources, metropolitan and regional tradition, transport, technological skills, medium, receptivity, competence, pride, enthusiasm, or the particular needs of visual propaganda. Metropolitan traditions had arisen at Rome, certainly, but everywhere else there flourished multitudinous local traditions which interacted constantly with these. There was the Italian of north and central Italy, derived from and recalling Roman and Italian sources, whose influence spread far into Dalmatian and Danubian regions. There was the Celtic, in a great band from nearer Spain across France and Germany northwards to Britain, with its rectangular and circular temples often surrounded by a porticoed verandah, and its abstract, curvilinear art. There was the Punic of North Africa, the culture of the Semitic Phoenician settlers, derived from a hotchpotch of eastern and Greek elements, with its liking for cut-stone architecture in local forms of house, temple and tomb, and its unrealistic, 'conceptual' art. There was the unique culture of Egypt, flourishing still after more than three millennia. There were the further oriental cultures of the Near East, with their mixtures of Mesopotamian, Persian, Syrian, Greek and (in Palestine) Jewish elements, and their linear and 'conceptual' arts. There were the complex local traditions of Anatolia, built up over the centuries since Hittite, Assyrian, Persian and Hellenistic days. And most powerful of all was the tradition of the Greeks, widely influential not only in the Greek-speaking regions and Greek colonial areas of Anatolia, the Black Sea, coastal Syria, Egypt, Cyrenaica, Sicily, south and central Italy and southern Gaul, but also beyond, in Syria, Palestine, Punic

North Africa and Spain; this was a tradition which, moreover, would continue to evolve for centuries to come. It was characterized by an architecture with: a liking for cut stone (especially marble); rectangular or, less often, circular and frequently columned structures, normally built in simple post-and-lintel engineering techniques, although with some use of arch and vault; systems of proportion and ornament in the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders; and some elements of planning. It was also characterized by an art of idealized realism expressed through such media as sculpture, painting and mosaic. Greek artefacts, craftsmen and artists had, moreover, penetrated Rome since regal days; from the second century B.C. this trickle had become a continuing and influential flood, contributing together with Italic and Etruscan architecture and art, and the developing central Italian and Roman concrete architecture, to the rich tapestry of the art of the capital. Augustus and his dynasty had set their imprint on this amalgam: an art of idealized realism somewhat in the Greek manner, and a varied architecture. At times, especially under Augustus, this architecture was fairly Greek in accent, but at other times the possibilities of concrete, now normally brick-faced, were vigorously pursued, as under Tiberius and still more under Nero, with his hugely imaginative palatial residence the Golden House, which after the fire of A.D. 64 spread across the heart of Rome, evoking both admiration and resentment.

II. THE FLAVIANS

Vespasian (69–79), founder of the Flavian dynasty, soon showed an astute pragmatism in his handling of architecture and art. Clever early moves distanced him from the hated Nero and civil-war losers and linked him instead with Republican sentiment and the more respectable Julio-Claudian Claudius. He created an image of himself as a mature, practical senator, startlingly realistic in the manner of portraits of the late Republic and of Claudius, and contrasting strikingly with the demure looks and high-piled locks of Flavian dynastic ladies, and completed in Rome the temple of the deified Claudius, the Claudianum, largely destroyed by Nero. Soon attended to also were further architectural projects in Rome, designed to win popular favour. The temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol, Rome's most solemn state sanctuary, which had been reduced to smoking rubble during the civil war, was rebuilt on appropriately traditional lines and rededicated in A.D. 75 (only to burn again in 80). To celebrate the return of peace and, at the same time, provide welcome additional space in Rome's crowded Forum area, Vespasian erected a Temple of Peace (later incorrectly known as his 'Forum'), a harmonious, rectangular, colonnaded and tree-filled enclosure facing, and aligned with, the neighbouring Forum of Augustus, with a discreet temple flanked by a library and other halls (one

of which later housed a marble plan of Rome erected by Septimius Severus). His most dramatic gesture, however, was to begin the task of sweeping away Nero's Golden House by filling a drained ornamental lake with his Flavian Amphitheatre (completed by Titus and Domitian, and later nicknamed the 'Colosseum') to hold some 50,000 spectators of blood sports: conservative in its elliptical plan, in its use of much stone, including a travertine arched façade decorated with the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders, and in the brick-faced concrete barrel-vaulting of the staircases and corridors that supported the marble and wooden seating around the central arena, it was nevertheless a masterpiece in its size, ingenuity and dignity.

Outside Rome, Vespasian inspired much further building. New military installations arose. In the civilian sphere, Brixia (Brescia) in north Italy gained a remodelled Forum and terraced Capitolium; probably Flavian-period amphitheatres arose at Pozzuoli and Verona in Italy, and at Avenches (in wood) and Arles and Nîmes in France. Administrative buildings received attention: at Conimbriga in Portugal a palace with three courts arose, at Trier in Germany the headquarters of the provincial procurator were enlivened with black and white mosaics, and in Britain a southern coastal palace at Fishbourne entered an enlarged second phase with decoration that included more black and white mosaic and an impressionistic wall-painting of a landscape. In Britain, too, new urban complexes with forum and basilica were erected in London (with a temple) and Verulamium (St Albans, completed under Titus), and Cirencester was created a tribal capital (A.D. 78–9). At Tarragona in Spain the rich refurbishing of a temple of Jupiter, and at Mainz in Germany a Victory monument with relief plaques of defeated Germans, may belong to this period; in north Italy, public and private statuary proliferated, with standardized bases. Further afield, Thessalonica in Greece gained a gate with Dioscuri in relief, and Corinth a building dedicated in A.D. 78. In Asia Minor the tally includes imperial cult shrines at Nicomedia (A.D. 70–1) and Troy, gates at Nicaea (c. A.D. 71) and Xanthos, porticos (stoas) at Cyzicus and in Lydia, a fountain and niche at Side (c. A.D. 71) and baths at Patara. And an important remodelling of Jerash in Jordan (c. A.D. 50–75) was now taking place, involving the street plan, walls, gates and the creation of its unique Ionic colonnaded oval 'Forum'.

The private sphere also saw lively activity. Simple, brick rectangular tombs began to rise outside Rome, while rock-cut tomb façades continued to characterize Rome's neighbours the Nabataean Arabs. Funerary reliefs were widely produced, from Gaul to Syria. Red, glossy 'samian' ware, manufactured in southern Gaul, was exported to Gaul and Spain. Much house-building went on in old and new towns. Houses at Ostia and in Campania,

in particular, were still of the old court (atrium) kind. The Campanian houses, however, were being modernized at Pompeii, Herculaneum and elsewhere after an earthquake of A.D. 62 with increased use of brick and upper storeys. These towns, buried by an eruption of Vesuvius on 24 August A.D. 79, have since been excavated, and have revealed that one aspect in particular of interior decoration, wall-painting, was flourishing, in the final stages of the 'Fourth Pompeian Style'. Whereas floors normally had modest black and white geometric and figured mosaics, walls bore rich polychrome designs (with much use of white, yellow and gold) of imitation architectural features framing views 'through' the wall into architectural and landscape vistas and figured scenes often representing Greek myth and legend, and perhaps reflecting lost earlier masterpieces.

Titus, despite his mere two years as ruler (79–81), still had some impact. His image, seen on the coins he issued in one main style at Rome and in portraiture, is square-headed like that of his father, but younger and friendlier; again, the ladies of the court (on coins) sport towering frontal piles of curls. At Rome he built a triple arch (now gone; the 'Arch of Titus' was most likely raised by Domitian), continued the Colosseum which he dedicated in A.D. 80, began the conventional Temple of the Deified Vespasian, and built the innovatory Baths of Titus. In Britain his governor Agricola finished the forum of Verulamium and created tribal capitals at Exeter and probably Leicester; in Asia Minor a portico (stoa) was dedicated to him at Pessinus and a stadium completed at Laodicea-ad-Lycum, while in Beirut a colonnade was erected by his mistress Berenice. Thus his commissions, like Vespasian's, courted popularity.

Domitian (81–96), Titus' younger brother, revealed a similar approach in much of his work. Despite the claims of Juvenal and Suetonius that he was bald,¹ he appears on coins, issued from Rome, and the few surviving portraits with plastically indicated hair (a wig, or artistic convention?), broad Flavian features, and prominent nose and chin; certain (later?) hair arrangements may evoke precedents among such 'divinized' rulers as Alexander the Great. Flavian females continued to sport their towering wigs. At Rome he finished the Baths of Titus, temple of the Deified Vespasian and Colosseum; after a great fire in A.D. 80 ravaged the Capitol and Campus Martius areas he restored many buildings here, including the (Augustan) Pantheon and temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. New projects included two examples of dynastic promotion (both now gone), a circular family mausoleum on the Esquiline, and a porticoed enclosure, the Porticus Divorum, recalling Vespasian's Temple of Peace and containing temples of the deified Vespasian and Titus. Popularity was sought with a new racetrack

¹ *Juv. Sat.* iv.38; *Suet. Dom.* 18.

(*stadium*) in the Campus Martius (now Piazza Navona), technologically conservative and reminiscent of the Colosseum, and his new Forum Transitorium (dedicated by Nerva), with a temple of his patroness Minerva, which conveniently unified the forum area by linking the Temple of Peace with Augustus' Forum: from its decoration survive a classicizing frieze with goddesses and a colossal cult statue of Mars. More revealing, however, was his most ambitious achievement: an enormous and highly imaginative palace, the Domus August(i)ana, a triumph in brick-faced concrete, built as the poet Martial informs us by Rabirius,² and inaugurated in 92. This replaced sections of Nero's Golden House by covering the whole Palatium hill on the Palatine with a monumental new structure. Approached up ramps from the Forum, it was divided into two parts: the public, with its audience hall, basilica for judgement, shrine (*lararium*), great banqueting hall (*triclinium*) and (later) vast vestibule, and the private, two storeys around a rectangular courtyard with an elaborate fountain, and spacious, stadium-like porticoed garden. Everywhere were ingeniously shaped rooms and surprising vistas. Ornament was lavish, with marble veneer and friezes of Victories and trophies, and stucco. The whole provided a setting worthy of the 'master and god' who now headed the empire, one which was long to remain the imperial residence, and which gave the word 'palace' to western languages.

Historical reliefs were also commissioned at Rome. The relief of an emperor sacrificing before the altars of the Deified Vespasian and Titus (now in the Louvre), and the marble 'Trophies of Marius' (commemorating his German campaigns?) are probably his. So, too, is a pair of damaged but handsome large marble reliefs, found near the Papal Chancellery (Cancellaria) and stylistically reminiscent of Augustus' Altar of Peace (*Ara Pacis*). One (B), referring to A.D. 70, pictures the young Domitian welcoming his father Vespasian at his arrival (*adventus*) in Rome (symbolized by Roma, the Vestal Virgins, and the Spirits of the Senate and People), while the other (A) depicts Domitian (whose head has been recut as Nerva) with soldiers, Mars and Victory probably setting out (*profectio*) on a military campaign (against the Chatti?). Domitian also erected the Arch of (the Deified) Titus, still standing (restored) at the east end of the Forum, possibly late in his reign, as the ornament prefigures that of Trajan's Arch at Beneventum (A.D. 114). Either side of the single passage is a great relief depicting Titus' triumphal procession in Rome after his taking of Jerusalem in A.D. 70: in one, the Jewish spoils, including the seven-branched candlestick (*menorah*), are paraded, while the other shows Titus in his chariot escorted by soldiers and personifications of Honour, Courage and Victory. Most surprising is the style, deeply cut and illusionistic. Above, in the vault, the deification

² Mart. *Epigrams*, VII.56.

(*apotheosis*) of Titus is symbolized in relief: his bust is carried heavenwards by the eagle of Jupiter.

Domitian's mark is also visible outside Rome. He built himself a villa in Italy at Castelgandolfo. In Upper Egypt he appears in reliefs of Egyptian style as an idealized pharaoh. He ordered much military building. But particularly characteristic of his reign seems to have been urban improvement and renewal. The centres of Ostia and Conimbriga (Portugal) were modernized; London gained a second basilica and governor's palace, Wroxeter became a tribal capital, North African Cuicul (Djemila) was founded in 96 or 97, Palmyra (Syria) gained a colonnaded street, Jerash in Jordan was being improved, and in Corinth, after an earthquake in 77, the centre was rebuilt on a grander scale. In Asia Minor, apart from a portico (Limyra), aqueduct (Cilicia), courtyard shrine (Priene) and architectural decoration (Smyrna), the greatest activity was at Ephesus, where a large area was rebuilt with porticoes and possibly baths, and a great Flavian dynastic temple arose, from which survives an ambiguous colossal head, possibly of Domitian.

There was much private activity, also. Rome must now have been benefiting from Nero's sensible building regulations; a mass of commercial and domestic structures arose, identifiable by bricks which, in the efficient Roman manner, often bear stamps indicating date. Marble 'ash chests' with reliefs often housed the remains of the cremated dead. Provincial towns equipped themselves with theatres, baths, temples, streets and the like; Parma in north Italy set up divine figures in basalt. In Germany, military gravestones continue, while in Britain a locally carved stone female head has 'Flavian' curls and wall-painters frequently opt for schemes of red with black intervals. In Spain, black and white mosaics are preferred, while at Zliten (Tripolitania) in North Africa a villa has rich polychrome floors with figured subjects, including one where panels of cut marble alternate with busts of the Seasons personified. At Ephesus Pollio constructed a fountain in 93, enlivened with dead and dying marble warriors, half life-size and imitated from Hellenistic Pergamene originals.

The megalomania that induced Domitian to erect the Flavian temple at Ephesus and palace in Rome led to his assassination in 96 and the condemnation of his memory. His aged, stop-gap successor Nerva (96–8) issued coins bearing a stark image in one style from Rome, and ordered the re-cutting of Domitian's head on 'Cancellaria' frieze slab A as himself, but his other possible portraits are hard to assess; he authorized the first portraits of Trajan. He continued the laying out of Cuicul in North Africa and was honoured on buildings on the Greek island of Tenos and Kremna in Asia Minor. His most important work, however, was the completion of Domitian's Forum and its dedication in his own name. Thus his work was little more than a postscript to that of his predecessor.

III. TRAJAN

Dynamism returned to imperial commissions with the Romano-Spanish Trajan (98–117). The revenues of peace, the spoils of successful warfare, the creation of Dacia (106) and the peaceful annexation of the Nabataean Arab kingdom as the province of Arabia (106) all provided resources and reasons for celebration. Trajan's image as a new Augustus, a strong, mature, pleasant-featured and practical leader, with its almost Republican attention to detail but un-Republican softness of flesh, was periodically adjusted from its beginnings under Nerva throughout his own reign, as coins and sculptures reveal. Although he says in a letter to the younger Pliny that he is reluctant to allow statues of himself to be erected,³ portraits nevertheless survive; some have been associated with a coin issue of 108 celebrating ten years of rule (*decennalia*), others (from the Piraeus and on Samos in Greece) are colossal, and a large bronze medallion from Ankara in Asia Minor may depict him, unusually, in old age. Portraits of his empress Plotina formed a demure counterpart; ladies of fashion, however, could still wear the high, frontal wig.

A burst of building in and around Rome, skilfully targeted to please the public, dimmed memories of Domitian's architectural self-indulgence. An early priority was an imperial warehouse for wine (102). The venerable House of the Vestal Virgins was rebuilt (98–108); Caesar's Forum was restored, and his Temple of Venus Genetrix rebuilt with a fine frieze of nude, cavorting Cupids (113). Beside the Tiber stretched new wharves, berths, ramps and warehouses, in concrete faced not only with the now customary brick but curiously with a revival of the Republican network ('reticulate') pattern of small squared stones; Ostia received a new harbour, wharves for nearly one hundred ships, warehouses, baths and a lighthouse, and an impetus to build high-rise blocks. Profiting from a fire in Nero's Golden House (104), Trajan erected over the ruins on the Esquiline an enormous and splendid new baths (*Thermae*, opened 22 June 109) which, in size and layout, marked a major step forward. The architect, as the historian Dio reveals,⁴ was Apollodorus of Damascus, who thus demonstrated that despite an origin in the Greek-speaking world of cut-stone architecture, he had a complete mastery of Roman methods. Earlier, he had constructed a notable bridge over the Danube. He, too, Dio affirms, was the architect of Trajan's most magnificent architectural achievement, his new forum. Built out of the spoils of the Dacian Wars and dedicated in 113, this was to be the last and greatest extension of the public area at the heart of Rome. The adjacent Quirinal hill was cut back to a height of 38 metres; up its slopes now rose Trajan's Market, a functional but handsome and inge-

³ Pliny, *Ep.* x.9. ⁴ Dio LXIX.4.1.

niously planned commercial complex in brick-faced concrete with streets (including the central 'Via Biberatica'), over 150 offices and shops, and a two-storey vaulted market hall, in all a triumph of the most progressive contemporary architecture. Below lay the Forum, more traditionally conceived but unsurpassed in dignity and splendour. Opening towards Augustus' Forum (of which Trajan's was an enlarged version) was a slightly curving entrance wall, within which opened a spacious, rectangular columned court (200 by 120 metres), flanked on either side by a great semicircular recess or 'hemicycle' (*exedra*) and at the centre of which originally stood a fine equestrian statue of Trajan. Across the rear of the court stretched a magnificent apsed Basilica, called Ulpia after Trajan's family name, whose timber roof was supported by a forest of columns. Beyond this opened a second court, which embraced a pair of opposed, concrete, vaulted libraries and culminated in a grand temple of Trajan and Plotina (now under a church). The whole ensemble was polychrome, with numerous columns of grey Egyptian granite, and veneers and architectural and portrait sculpture of white and coloured marbles and probably porphyry. Its most singular feature, however, still stands today: Trajan's Column of white Carrara marble, 38 metres high, with 185 internal steps, set between the libraries and intended originally to provide a platform from which to view the whole, but converted before 113 into a memorial of the Dacian Wars, scenes from which were skilfully carved in low relief as an unbroken narrative spiral from bottom to top, in the common ancient 'vertical perspective' which raises background figures above those in the foreground. On top stood a gilded bronze statue of Trajan, and in the base rested the deified emperor's ashes. It was an extraordinary concept, thrice imitated by later emperors, and a worthy concomitant of Rome's grandest ensemble.

Somewhere in Rome there was erected a further sculptural commemoration of the Dacian Wars, the marble 'Great Trajanic Frieze', a section from which was sawn into four and used to decorate the Arch of Constantine; Trajan appears in an arrival and cavalry-battle scene in higher-relief and reduced 'vertical perspective' but the same continuous narration as the Column. Trajan's achievements were also commemorated elsewhere in various forms. In Dacia itself, at the site of Adamklissi, arose a huge circular monument, with its drum ornamented externally with a series of relief panels in local stone, in which scenes of Roman soldiers in various activities including combat are rendered with surprising naivety, doubtless because the carvers were provincials. Elsewhere, Trajan commissioned or inspired an extraordinary number of arches and archway-gates, a handsome classicizing example at north Italian Ancona (115), one in Dalmatia at Asseria (112), but mostly in Spain, at Alcantara (where a bridge was built in 106), Bará (an old-fashioned one erected by Trajan's general Licinius Sura), Cabanes, Càparra (a four-way, or *quadrifrons*), Martorell (by a bridge),

Medinaceli (three), and Merida, and North Africa, at Thamugadi (Timgad) in Algeria (if not later), Maktar in Tunisia, and Lepcis Magna in Tripolitania (109–10). But the most spectacular arch was that in central Italy at Beneventum, with a single passageway, built to commemorate the opening of a new short route (Via Traiana) to Brundisium and covered with reliefs in the passageway, exterior and attic (where an inscription gives a date equivalent to the second half of 114); Trajan's conquests, achievements and generosity are extolled in crowded panels which are difficult to interpret, but elegantly carved.

In the provinces the architectural and art forms characteristic of the Flavian era continued to flourish. At Antioch-on-the-Orontes in Syria production began of a series of fine, figured mosaics which was to last for centuries. Here and there activity by Trajan and the imperial élite may be observed. New cities were founded, laid out on the Roman grid-plan of streets, at Thamugadi (Timgad) in Algeria to settle veteran soldiers (100), at Bostra in Syria to be the capital of Arabia (106), and at Nicopolis-ad-Istrum and Marcianopolis in Bulgaria to hold Dacia (after 106). In Egypt, desert forts and a temple by the porphyry quarry, the Mons Porphyrites, were built; here, too, reliefs in Egyptian style show Trajan at Dendera, Esneh and on the Nile island at Aswan called Philae, where the strange, rectangular, Egyptian fourteen-column 'Kiosk of Trajan' formed the gateway to the temple of Hathor. In Germany the amphitheatre of Trier was rebuilt in stone. In Asia Minor, Miletus was replanned from *c.* 100 and gained baths, an aqueduct and nymphaeum; Smyrna received a little shrine (114), at Aphrodisias the market-place was rebuilt, and at Ephesus the prominent local citizen Tiberius Iulius Celsus began a magnificent library (*c.* 117–20), a high, rectangular, apsed and galleried hall with a rich front façade of pedimented columnar niches. Pergamum was crowned with an imposing Corinthian temple of Zeus Philios and Trajan, the Trajanicum. And at Athens, Pantainos built a columned, rectangular library whose regulations survive (*c.* 100), while on a hill a striking mausoleum arose, the Monument of Philopappos (114–16), Roman consul but also grandson of the late Hellenistic king Antiochus I of Commagene and descendant of Alexander's successor Seleucus I; the concave front largely survives, with niches in the upper register containing statues of Antiochus, Philopappos and also Seleucus (now gone), and a relief below of Philopappos' procession as consul remarkably reminiscent of the procession panel of the Arch of Titus, and thus a further example of the interplay of traditions so characteristic of the empire.

IV. HADRIAN

The age of Hadrian (117–38) proved to be extraordinary, largely because of the extent to which he was able to impress upon it his own many-sided

personality: ruler, philhellene, architect, dilettante, poet, traveller and romantic. Apart from rebellions, duly crushed, in the fringe provinces of Britain and Judaea, the era was one of peace and plenty, with architecture and art in a rich and fruitful stage. And now the Roman world had an emperor of strongly artistic temperament, determined to galvanize into architectural and artistic activity every region of the empire across which he so restlessly wandered.

His transformation of the arts began with his own image, which was revolutionary. For centuries the Roman élite had been clean-shaven. Now Hadrian wore a beard, whether to cover blemishes as his biographer, probably wrongly, alleges,⁵ or to look like a Greek hero or philosopher, or the chief god Zeus or Jupiter; the fashion was to last two centuries. His hair was lengthy. At some point a further innovation was introduced: the eye in stone (especially marble) sculpture, previously left blank for the details to be filled in with paint, now had the iris and pupil plastically indicated with groove and drill-hole. Hadrian's portraits, with two to three hundred known, far outnumber those of any other emperor, and have appeared in every corner of the empire, with large quantities in Athens, in the Olympieion and theatre of Dionysus; the Greek-speaking provinces have yielded numbers of cuirassed statues in marble (one from Perge dated 121) and, in Egypt, in porphyry. At least six main portrait types have been recognized, with other variants including an odd bronze statue in Greek dress from Kadirli (Cilicia) and a still stranger bronze head from the Thames in London, perhaps made in Gaul. The empress Sabina appears in severely classical guise, although with subtle changes. Classicizing, too, although with contemporary flesh polish, are the marble portrait statues and reliefs of Hadrian's deceased favourite the Bithynian youth Antinous, often in Greek heroic nudity (130–8): monuments of sexual loss, they embody a haunting, Hellenic beauty.

Hadrian's Hellenism, seemingly derived particularly from the Neoclassicism of contemporary Athens and the Greek cities of western Asia Minor, but always varying, pervaded architectural ornament and art. It may be seen in buildings of his time in and around Rome. It occurs in imperial reliefs he erected in the capital. Relief is deep and figures monumental. A pair, the 'Anaglypha Traiani', which both have buildings in the Forum as an architectural background, show in one case Hadrian addressing the people before a statue group of Trajan, and in the other the burning of records of debt. Eight roundels, later incorporated in the Arch of Constantine with most heads recut, depict Hadrian out hunting (a passion of his) and sacrificing, with companions who include, as an untouched head reveals, Antinous. Two reliefs from a demolished arch, the Arco di Portogallo, portray Hadrian on a dais making an address, and the emperor

⁵ *HA Hadr.* 26.1.

watching Sabina's deification (*apotheosis*) in 137. Classicism enters the designs and style of his coins, both those from Rome (especially the silver denarii) and some splendid large 'cistophoric' tetradrachms produced in Asia Minor.

But, paradoxically, in architecture Hadrian, who took a practical interest, was a modernist, so much so that he apparently fell out over this with Trajan's ageing favourite, Apollodorus of Damascus, whom he eventually banished and executed.⁶ After completing the Temple of the Deified Trajan in the Roman Forum, Hadrian showed his revolutionary approach by rebuilding Augustus' Pantheon, behind a conventional portico, as an enormous, plain, brick-faced concrete domed drum 43 metres in diameter and height concealing a richly ornamented interior with columnar niches, coffers and a central opening for light (c. 118–28). His Temple of Venus and Rome on the Velia, dedicated in 135, was also unorthodox, but this time in being a temple of essentially Greek design with ornament by carvers from Asia Minor in Rome, with two main halls (*cellas*) set back to back; it was later radically rebuilt by Maxentius (306–12). He constructed an imperial Mausoleum (now Castel S. Angelo) in 134 across from his Pons Aelius bridge; it had the traditional Italian circular form, but rich and especially Anatolian ornament. His most imaginative constructional feats, however, were reserved for a gigantic retreat he was building near Rome for most of his reign, his villa at Tivoli. This, his architectural self-portrait, sets within a rolling, wooded landscape a series of deftly sited buildings that vie with one another in daring, ingenuity and ornamentation. Early on the scene was a circular, moated island villa of almost wholly curvilinear design (118–25); later came the colonnaded ('peristyle') court (125–33) and the 'pumpkin' domes of the Vestibule (Piazza d'Oro) and Serapeum as well as baths, and, after 130, the colonnaded Canopus with statuary reflected in the lake. The rich decoration, although classicizing in taste, mixed orthodoxy with experimentation: mosaic was widely used even for walls and domes, and floor mosaics show a revival of polychrome figured panels with landscape scenes, while sculptures include both copies of famous old masterpieces, such as the Athens Erechtheum Caryatids, and adventurous pieces, like the polished brown marble old and young centaurs, executed in meticulous detail and signed by Aristreas and Papias from the dynamic Asia Minor school of Aphrodisias.

Everywhere he went in the empire, Hadrian commissioned or inspired work of every kind. In Ostia, high-rise blocks increased. An amphitheatre was remodelled in central Italy at Capua, and theatres at Italica and Merida in Spain, Lyons in France, where an Odeum arose, August in Germany, Stobi in Macedonia and Laodicea in Phrygia, 136–7. Far-flung Britain gained a

⁶ Dio LXIX.4.1; *HA Hadr.* 19.9–13.

fort, forum and huge basilica at London, a forum and basilica at Leicester, and across northern England from the Tyne to the Solway a continuous wall (c. 122–8), a permanent frontier, of which the western half was of turf and the rest of mortared rubble faced with stone. In North Africa, at Cyrene the temple of Apollo was reconstructed in traditional Doric, while at Lepcis Magna (Tripolitania) much use began of Greek and Anatolian marbles, visible in a fine baths of which much survives including a handsome marble latrine. In Egypt, Hadrian continued Trajan's temple at the Mons Porphyrites; a classicizing temple of Serapis arose at Luxor, while at Alexandria Hadrian dedicated an (extant) traditional Apis Bull. Jerusalem arose from the ashes of rebellion as the Colony of Aelia Capitolina (137); at Jerash in Jordan a triumphal arch arose, while in Palmyra (Syria) Hadrian's host Malè Agrippa erected a new cut-stone temple of Baalshamin of eastern Roman design (130–1). Much building in Asia Minor included gates (Attaleia, Claudiopolis, Termessos and Nicaea), sanctuaries (Claros, and Thyateira in Lydia), a triumphal arch (Isaura), a forum and basilica for the Roman colony of Cremna, a temple of Zeus (Aezani), temple and richly ornamented bath buildings at Aphrodisias, a temple at Pergamum of Zeus Soter which was circular in imitation of the Pantheon, a monumental gate and court at Perge built by Plancia Magna (117–121/2) with imperial portraits and statues of local deities, a private streetside temple of Hadrian at Ephesus with arched lintel, and the gigantic Corinthian temple of Hadrian at Cyzicus with a bust of the emperor in the pediment (completed in 139), one of the largest temples of the Roman world. Greece saw the Fountain of Peirene rebuilt at Corinth, and an architectural transformation of Athens, which Hadrian in A.D. 131/2 made the capital of a new League of Greek cities, the Panhellenion, with an aqueduct from Mount Parnes, a gymnasium, a partly extant Library reminiscent of Vespasian's Temple of Peace in Rome (132), a basilica (for League meetings?), the completion of the gigantic Temple of Olympian Zeus after 700 years (131/2, with statues of Hadrian and 'colonies'), and a whole new eastern quarter with houses, baths and gymnasia entered through a delightful, surviving gate (131/2) – in all the greatest imperial provincial benefaction ever, and one which subtly blended Athenian, Hellenistic Greek and Roman elements.

Classicism spread generally through the arts. Wall-painting at Rome comprised a delicate continuation of the 'Fourth Pompeian Style'. Mosaic remained important, both in black and white (as in the Neptune Baths at Ostia) and in polychrome geometric and figured kinds. But most important was the rise to popularity among the élite of an art form with a chequered earlier career, the carved stone (usually now marble) sarcophagus. This had flourished in the Classical Greek world as a rectangular coffin with figured reliefs of hunts and other subjects around all four sides, with a lid in the form of a gabled roof. In Italy, Etruria had developed its own version, with

figured scenes (usually drawn from Greek mythology) on one long (front) side only, or at most on one long and two short sides, as in the tomb it stood against a wall, and so had a blank back; on the lid was carved one or more reclining figures. At Rome, cremation had been the norm since Republican days. But now, whether through changes in personal belief or simply as a further display of wealth, the rich of Rome and the provinces began to commission sarcophagi in increasing numbers. Workshops in Rome prolonged the Etruscan tradition, and others in Athens and western Anatolia the Greek. Garlands, daily life and Greek mythology formed the staple subject-matter; but whatever the apparent subject, it probably carried for the Romans a deeper, allegorical meaning, referring to the struggles of this life on earth and to bliss in paradise. So this formed a further creative use of the classical tradition.

V. THE ANTONINES

Peace and prosperity characterized the era of the benevolent Antoninus Pius (138–61). His own engaging portrait, based on Hadrian's but with longer hair and beard, and known in roughly a hundred examples, hardly alters, although he passed from 51 to 74; similarly alike are the few (some posthumous) of his wife Faustina the Elder, who died in 141. Not so those of his adoptive family: Lucius Verus perhaps, and Marcus Aurelius more surely, had passed through two types by 161, and Marcus' wife Faustina the Younger no fewer than six (out of her eventual nine), so there was clearly concern to get the dynastic images right. This is surely reflected also in an important early monument from Ephesus, the 'Great Antonine Altar' (c. A.D. 138–40?), of which the magnificent marble frieze survives (now in Vienna), depicting an emperor standing, combat between Romans and eastern barbarians, an emperor's departure, goddesses and sacrificers, the deification of an empress, Roma, and an imperial family group with Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus as they were about A.D. 138.⁷ To the early part of his reign, too, belong his commissions at Rome: the completion of Hadrian's temple of Venus and Rome, the construction of a huge Temple of the Deified Hadrian (dedicated c. 145–51) from which some columns and classicizing relief panels of personified provinces remain, and the building of the traditionally conceived and still largely surviving Temple of Antoninus and Faustina overlooking the Forum from 141 in honour of the deceased empress, with a frieze of griffins and candelabra. A fragmentary frieze in Rome depicting a procession may have celebrated twenty years of Pius' rule in 158 (*vicennalia*).

⁷ Altar date as c. A.D. 138–40: Toynbee (1965) 65–6, 251; Vermeule (1968) 95–123; Strong (1986) ch. 8. As c. A.D. 161–9: F. Eichler, *JÖAI* 49, Beiheft II (1971) 102–36; Andreae (1978) 249–50.

An important early commission outside Rome was in the province of Britain, where trouble led Pius, in about 140, to move the frontier forward to the Forth–Clyde line in southern Scotland: a new turf wall was erected, from which survive some unique limestone distance slabs carved with edifying scenes of Romans defeating barbarians. But behind this and other frontier lines peace in general reigned, and Rome and the provinces enjoyed a continuation of the Hadrianic impulse to build and decorate, with a particularly classical inspiration. In Germany, Augst (*c.* 150) gained a provincial version of Trajan's Forum, and Trier a governor's palace with a green room containing a wall-painting of Jason and Medea; and in Danube lands, Aquincum a governor's palace with mosaics, Nicopolis-ad-Istrum a forum entrance (146–61) and Odessus a new aqueduct (157) and probably baths. In southern Spain, the *capitolium* at Baelo was rebuilt. In North Africa, Tipasa received new city walls, Sufetula (Sbeitla) an arch (140) and forum and *capitolium* with three juxtaposed temples (as at Baelo), Tingad the north gate (149) and southern baths, Cuicul a market and theatre (161), Thugga a temple of Minerva, and Carthage a great baths with interlocking hexagonal hot rooms. In Egypt, at Alexandria a relief of a captive barbarian was perhaps carved now, and at Medamud near Luxor Pius added a court in Egyptian style to a temple. In the East, temples were constructed, improved or rebuilt at Jerash (Artemis and Zeus), Dmeir (149), 'Atil (in the Composite order, 151), Hebran (Ionic, 155), and Palmyra (Bel and Baalshamin), while at Baalbek the Jupiter precinct continued to expand and a great, largely surviving colonnaded and richly ornamented temple of Bacchus arose; at Si' an arch was raised. In Asia Minor, Pius completed the Hadrianeum at Cyzicus; Nysa received a theatre-like council house ('Gerontikon'), Side and Sagalassos temples, Patara a theatre, Miletus a market gate (*c.* 160), Smyrna a handsome market-place with two-storey porticoes, and Ephesus baths built by Pius' friend Publius Vadius Antoninus. In Greece, Thessalonica gained a building, Crete an amphitheatre, Eleusis two arches like Hadrian's Athenian gate dedicated to Demeter and Pius as well as a medallion bust, possibly of Pius (but more likely Marcus Aurelius) in a gateway, and Athens a market office ('Agoranomion') and an arched reservoir on Mount Lycabettus; but activity in Greece was dominated by the millionaire patron Herodes Atticus, who restored the Stadium in Athens for the games of 143–4, contributed a fountain to the market-place (Agora) in Athens, rebuilt the Peirene fountain at Corinth, and in 149–53 constructed in the sanctuary of Olympia a splendid monumental fountain (Nymphaeum), with two tiers of niches each with a Zeus at the centre and eleven portrait statues, of Herodes' family above and the imperial below, in close association.

The arts continued generally to flourish. Sculpture, including portraiture and the handsome marble sarcophagi, maintained a high artistic level; it is

interesting to observe the arrival of the Hadrianic beard and the sarcophagus as a genre at Syrian Palmyra about 150, a generation after their start. Also, wall-painting maintained a high level, represented at Rome by landscapes, at Verulamium in Britain by marbling and candelabra, and in Egypt by a wall-painting of the god Heron on horseback in a temple at Theadelphia, and the continuing series of attractive mummy portraits. Fine, representational mosaics spread to the western provinces (including a striking scallop shell at Verulamium) and North Africa. This may also have been the period of the construction of a temple of Roman type at Bath in Britain for the local deity of the hot springs, Sul(is) Minerva, the pediment of which bore a singular relief in Romano-Celtic style of Victories holding a central medallion with an extraordinary, bearded Medusa-like frontal head.

Marcus Aurelius' joint reign with Lucius Verus (161–9), his sole rule (169–80) and British (160s), eastern (163–5) and northern (from 167) campaigns provided much to reorganize and commemorate. As coins and sculptures demonstrate, the rulers' hair and beard grow still longer; their faces are smooth and confident. Marcus' image is fairly consistent, in perhaps two main variants; Lucius' has a final (fourth?) phase as emperor. From c. 175 appears the first, beardless, type of Marcus' son Commodus. Marcus' empress Faustina the Younger and his daughter Lucilla both apparently pass through three types. Unusual surviving portraits are small gold busts of Marcus from Avenches (France) and Lucius from Marengo (near Mantua, Italy), and a great bronze equestrian statue of Marcus (176/7?) still standing in Rome, exuding dominance. Apart from portraits, an important early commission in Rome (c. 161) was a red granite column to honour Pius, the base of which survives, a rectangular marble pedestal with a large relief in classicizing style of the deification (*apotheosis*) of Antoninus and Faustina, flanked on either side by two almost identical military parade scenes (one in honour of Marcus, one of Lucius?) executed in extreme 'vertical perspective' with background figures raised above foreground ones.

A legacy of the British campaigns (160s) was the permanent re-establishment of Hadrian's Wall as the frontier and its completion in stone. Lucius' eastern war gained some territory from the Parthians, including the Euphrates river city of Dura Europus, which after 165 began to receive Roman garrison buildings, baths and a Mithras temple. Within the empire generally, however, warfare seemingly left little mark, and the activity and art forms of Pius' age carried on unabated. Trier in Germany gained the St Barbara baths, and in Danube lands, Costanza gained a building with fine marble work (161–2), Stara Zagora thermal baths (161–9), and Serdica walls (170–180). In North Africa, Timgad received a Capitulum and two arches (166–9, 171), Lambaesis a temple of Aesculapius (162), Thuburbo

Maius a Capitolium (168), Ain Zana and Markouna arches (161–9), and Tripoli an important four-way arch (162) with an octagonal stone cupola and reliefs of Apollo and Minerva; at Sabratha a marble temple of Marcus was raised (166–9) and work began *c.* 175 on a great theatre. In the East, Jerash got its north theatre (*c.* 161–6) and west baths among other items, nearby Mismiyeh a ‘Praetorium’ (161–9), and Palmyra its Bel temple gateway. In Asia Minor, Smyrna was rebuilt after an earthquake of 178; Miletus received the baths of Faustina (with some use of concrete), Sinope walls (176), Isaura another arch, Aspendos a handsome theatre almost entirely surviving (by the architect Zeno), Pergamum a temple of Diva Faustina Mater, and both Pergamum and Ephesus a ‘Serapeum’. In Greece, Philippi acquired a new forum with twin temples (161–79), Argos a fountain building (Nymphaeum), and Eleusis probably a Doric gateway with a medallion bust of Marcus as a pediment relief; Herodes Atticus remained active as a patron, contributing one Odeum to Corinth (*c.* 170), and another to Athens, a handsome theatre-like example for 5,000 persons, still standing below the Acropolis. It was at this time, too, that a surviving guide book to the antiquities of Greece was written by the scholar Pausanias.⁸

Around Rome, tombs become ever more varied and decorated in period: these include the fine, extant brick tomb of Annia Regilla, wife of Herodes Atticus. Sarcophagi multiply and now often have a battle as the main theme, a sign of the times; one outstanding example, perhaps that of an Antonine general, has the figures crowded together in a ‘vertical perspective’ design, creating a tapestry-like effect.

In his latter years, Marcus Aurelius began the commemoration at Rome of his northern campaigns. His equestrian statue may have been erected in 176/7. He built a triumphal arch in 176, now gone, but to which may be assigned three surviving reliefs in the Conservatori Palace in Rome, tall, rectangular ‘framed’ marble panels of classicizing style showing his triumphant entry into Rome, and a sacrifice. From a second arch, whether his or his son Commodus’, come eight reasonably similar panels later used to decorate the Arch of Constantine, with scenes of campaigning, sacrifice, address and distribution (the heads were recently recut as Trajan). And he commissioned a tall, marble column, a revised version of Trajan’s seemingly completed by Commodus, which still stands (though reworked in modern times) and tells the story as two campaigns up to 175, when rebellion brought Marcus back and Commodus (who does not appear) out as commander. As with Trajan’s, the narrative, told continuously, spirals upwards, with figures in crowded ‘vertical perspective’ and a personified Victory marking the half-way point; but the fewer spirals (twenty instead of twenty-three), deeper relief, gloomier atmosphere and frequent frontality

⁸ *Guide to Greece.*

of the emperor indicate significant rethinking, and produce a story that is visually even more striking.

Marcus' natural son Commodus duly succeeded (180–92). His portrait, which had undergone perhaps three transformations under Marcus, went through possibly two more, with ever-lengthening hair and beard. Architecture and art continued to flower against a background of continuing prosperity. At Rome, Commodus seemingly finished Marcus' Column, and completed (or built) a second triumphal arch. Around the capital, cremation burials continue to diminish; brick tombs proliferate, decorated with painting, stucco and mosaic, and housing the great sarcophagi. In North Africa, Cuicul received baths of Roman type (183), Cyrene a temple, perhaps of Commodus, Tripoli (Oea) a temple of the Spirit of the Colony with pediment relief, and Sabratha a new quarter with grid-plan layout and a temple of Hercules, the Roman equivalent of the local Punic Melqarth (186); at Timgad, the 'Arch of Trajan' may in fact be of this period. In the East, Jerash acquired a sumptuously decorated fountain (191) and nearby Es-Sanamén a temple (191); Shakka may now have got its basilica. In Britain, marble sculptures of Mithras and Serapis could now have been imported for the temple of Mithras in London. And interesting wall-paintings survive: competent figured scenes at Ostia, a red corridor ceiling at Verulamium in Britain with a barley-stalk design, three water-nymphs against a white ground in a deep room at the Lullingstone Villa, Kent, in England, personified Victories holding up portrait medallions and scenes of Achilles and Ganymede in the 'Tomb of the Three Brothers' at Palmyra in Syria (c. 160–91), and the scene of the sacrifice of the priest Konon at Dura Europus (c. 180) in an oriental, linear 'Parthian' style.

Some insight into Commodus' end may be provided by a curious discovery in an underground room at Rome from late in his reign (c. 191–2?): a marble sculptural group of two Tritons flanking a magnificent bust of the emperor in his final (fifth?) image, whose haughty features are framed by the lion-skin of Hercules – eloquent testimony to the megalomania which inspired his assassination.

As the Antonine age drew to a close, the Roman world was visually a splendid place. Monuments of Egyptian and Greek civilizations still stood. The Roman empire had come into being and was interacting fruitfully with its own republican past and its regional cultures, including those of the Classical and Hellenistic Greek worlds which were still a potent source of inspiration, particularly in architectural decoration and art, and notably for Hadrian. But powerful new ideas were constantly being generated, in the remouldings of earlier traditions, in the portrayal of the emperors and their achievements, and in the breathtakingly imaginative uses made by the Flavians, Trajan and Hadrian of the Roman concrete tradition. Both emperors and citizens, high and low, took pride in making beautiful what

was around them; even the poorest could feel involved in those monuments dedicated in the name of the people, and were free to wander through the great public buildings of the empire. So the rich artistic harvest of the Flavian to the Antonine ages was not just an imperial, but a corporate achievement, one which offered a worthy inheritance to following generations.

CHAPTER 35

RELIGION

J. H. W. G. LIEBESCHUETZ

I. INTRODUCTION

The victory of Vespasian marked an epoch in political, not in religious history. The subsequent period saw the continuation rather than the beginning of religious developments. The most important cause of change was probably the existence of the Roman empire itself. The establishment of Roman administration was accompanied by tremendous social upheavals, particularly in the West. The Roman army and civil urbanization introduced the worship of Roman gods. Native cults were romanized. It amounted to an explosive expansion of Roman religion. But this was not all. Men from all over the empire came to Rome for a wide variety of reasons bringing their religion, forming religious communities. From Rome and Italy these imported religions spread to the provinces with the result that cults from the Greek East became established in many places in the West. In the eastern provinces the dynamic factors were not quite the same. Further hellenization took the role performed by romanization in the West, and there was a great ferment of ideas.

An observer of the religious life of the empire would have been struck by its variety. This was partly a result of the population being composed of many different status-groups. As in many other societies, group solidarity found religious expression.¹ Groups large and small had their worship, from the gods of the Roman state to the protecting spirit of locality or home. Religion helped to integrate slaves and freedmen into society. They worshipped the *lares* of the family. In a large household they might form associations, under their master's patronage, for this purpose and to make sure that members received proper burial.² Craftsmen and humbler members of urban society, often slaves or persons of slave origin, were grouped in innumerable small associations sometimes based on a common craft, sometimes on common worship, but always with the triple aim of occasional conviviality, worship which invariably accompanied conviviality, and making sure that members received burial.³

¹ E.g. Mol (1976) 31–43.

² Boemer (1957–63) I 33–58; Waltzing (1895–1900) IV 160–76; Cuq (1896).

³ Waltzing (1895–1900) IV 185–269; Schiess (1988); cf. Bruhl (1953) 268–308.

The Roman empire produced a lot of movement of people, and it was this that gave scope to the spread of so-called mystery religions, almost all cults derived from the ancient cultures of the Near East (see below, pp. 992–7). Despite their foreign origin, these cults, in the form in which they spread through the Roman world, were a product of the empire, and their advance paralleled the process of romanization. In so far as the mystery cults represented a dynamic factor in religious development, this was in our period a western phenomenon. In the East the factors making for change lay elsewhere.

Any attempt to base the history of religion in the Roman empire on anything even remotely approaching a statistical basis must use inscriptions. Unfortunately, the fashion of inscriptional commemoration did not remain constant. There was a steady rise in the number of inscriptions put up year by year from the reign of Augustus to that of Septimius Severus. Soon after there began a rapid decline. By the middle of the third century fewer inscriptions were being produced than under Tiberius. The rate of erection of monuments was closely related to the rise and decline of urbanization, and the condition of the political institutions of cities. It is an important consequence for the historian of religion that if he relies on inscriptions of the dating of a religious or indeed any other historical phenomenon, he is likely to set its onset too late and its decline too early.

Inscriptions offer concise public statements; they convey little about beliefs, feelings or meaning. Information about these is provided by literature, especially poetry and philosophy. This raises a problem. Authors like Seneca, Plutarch or Dio Chrysostom were upper-class intellectuals writing for men like themselves, a tiny proportion of the population. How can they be taken as spokesmen for the religious and philosophical concerns of their society as a whole?⁴ The answer seems to be that it is possible to define a complex of concerns which pervades a wide variety of developments in religion, magic and astrology, no less than in intellectual fashion. Basic interests of writers are not different in kind from those of the general public. Writers are special merely in that they are conscious and articulate about developments which affect everybody, whether consciously or not. For the historian to deny himself the use of this kind of evidence comes close to renouncing the writing of the history of religion at all.

II. EMPERORS AND RELIGION

The heart of Roman religion continued to be the traditional ceremonies of the ancestral religion as practised at Rome. If few new temples were now being built at Rome, this was probably a consequence of a superabundance

⁴ MacMullen (1981) 74–7, 87; cf., on Plutarch, Russell (1973) 63–83, Brenk (1977).

of existing temples.⁵ A selection of Roman public religion, as practised by an auxiliary unit stationed at Dura on the Euphrates is given by the *Feriale Duranum* of c. A.D. 223–7.⁶ It includes ancient Roman festivals, festivals of the imperial cult, as well as two new festivals not tied to the cult of any traditional deity which achieved empire-wide celebration under the early empire, the New Year on 1 January and ‘the Rosalia of the Standards’ on 9–11 and 31 May, a popular spring festival which had been taken up by the army.⁷ It is a specialized selection to boost army values.⁸

The history of public religion is undramatic. The emperors were conservative, anxious to retain divine support and eager for a reputation of piety. Individual emperors might have personal religious preferences, but this did not mean that they felt obliged to adopt a religious policy for the empire as a whole. Emperors often displayed generosity to provincial sanctuaries, especially in Greece and Asia Minor.⁹ As far as this was not personal piety, it was public relations, part of the beneficial activity by which they kept the support of the élite in the Greek world.

The interplay of politics and religion is well illustrated by the events of Vespasian’s rise to power. Vespasian was encouraged by oracles to make his bid for the empire. In Alexandria he healed a blind man and a cripple, displaying a divine gift of healing which was claimed neither by earlier nor by later emperors, and was evidently expected to increase the authority of the first emperor of equestrian and municipal descent.¹⁰ Vespasian’s temple-building combined thanksgiving and publicity. He rebuilt the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus and restored the temple of Victoria, publicized his policy of civil peace by building temples dedicated respectively to the Pax Augusta and to Jupiter Conservator. Vespasian expressed respect for the previous dynasty, and distanced himself from Nero, by completing the temple of Divus Claudius. Restoration of the temple of Honos and Virtus proclaimed that he stood for promotion on merit. The provincial cult of the emperor was extended: provincial priests of the imperial cult are first attested under Vespasian for Gallia Narbonensis, Baetica and Proconsular Africa.¹¹ This was another attempt to strengthen the new dynasty, by reinforcing the links between it and leading provincials. Since it was of the essence of cults of loyalty that they should be offered out of gratitude, the initiative presumably came from provincials who knew what Vespasian wanted. Formally, Vespasian or the Senate will merely have given permission, and perhaps offered a set of regulations for the cult, which would be seen as a further indication of imperial favour.¹²

⁵ Fishwick (1987–92) II.i 475–590; Scheid (1990); Latte (1960) 418 Lietzman (1932) I 173–4.

⁶ Nock (1952); Fink, Hoey and Snyder (1940).

⁷ Meslin (1974); Nilsson (1920); von Domaszewski (1985); Birley (1978).

⁸ Fishwick (1987–92) II.i 593–608. ⁹ Nutton (1978); Price, *Rituals* 68–9.

¹⁰ Henrichs (1968). ¹¹ Veyne (1966); Fishwick (1987–92) I 219–68.

¹² Talbert, *Senate* 421–2; Price, *Rituals* 67–8.

The new dynasty exploited fully the ritual of posthumous deification. Vespasian and Titus were both deified and a temple was dedicated to them jointly. Titus deified a prematurely deceased sister. Titus and Domitian established a cult of the Flavian *gens* to match the family cult of the Julian dynasty.¹³ Domitian, who succeeded his brother without the prestige of military achievement, heightened court ceremonial, and came closer to introducing divine honours for himself than any of his predecessors, except Gaius who had come to the throne with the same disadvantage.¹⁴ Numerous gold and silver statues of the emperor appeared on the Capitol. Oaths were sworn by his genius, and the palace received epithets like 'sacred' or 'venerable'. In the last years of his reign Domitian is reported to have required the address of 'lord and god' (*dominus et deus*), which is not found on inscriptions or on coins, but is regularly echoed in poems of Martial written after 89.¹⁵

Domitian demonstrated traditional patriotic piety by rebuilding the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus which had been burnt down during the fighting of 68. He proclaimed the start of a new and better age in an equally Roman way by celebrating Secular Games in 88, following the precedent and returning to the cycle of Augustus. He combined Roman piety and Greek culture by setting up the Capitoline Games, a Greek competitive festival in honour of the Capitoline Triad.¹⁶ Here he followed the example of the disreputable Nero, but there clearly were good reasons for having a Greek festival in what was after all the capital of the Greek world, and Domitian's Games were a lasting success. It was as an expression of more personal religion that Domitian built one or possibly two temples at Rome to Minerva.¹⁷ Like his father and brother he demonstrated his gratitude to Isis and the Egyptian gods.¹⁸

As all of Domitian's immediate successors from Trajan to Marcus Aurelius succeeded by adoption, there was no need for new dynastic cults. But each of these emperors thought it necessary to consolidate the legitimacy of his rule by getting the Senate to deify his predecessor and adoptive father. They also followed Flavian precedent by deifying non-ruling relatives.

Trajan consecrated his real father and his deceased sister Marciana. Hadrian deified Trajan's wife Plotina and niece Matidia, and his own mother-in-law and his wife Sabina. Antoninus Pius deified his wife, the elder Faustina, and Marcus Aurelius deified Faustina the younger.¹⁹ The festivals of several of these ladies were still being celebrated in A.D. 223–7.²⁰ Motives for this extensive deification must remain partly conjectural. By deifying relatives, emperors demonstrated their own *pietas*. The ceremonies

¹³ Jones, *Titus*. ¹⁴ Scott (1936) 88–132. ¹⁵ Fears (1977) 224; Scott (1936) 105–7.

¹⁶ Friedländer (1921–3) IV 216–80; Robert (1970). ¹⁷ Girard (1981).

¹⁸ Henrichs (1968); Malaise (1972) 296–305. ¹⁹ Mattingly (1940). ²⁰ Herz (1978).

in honour of the new *divi* and *divae* publicized the emperor through his nearest relatives and raised him high above all others. But the apotheosis of a widening range of members of the imperial house must also be seen against the background of a world in which the providing of shrines in honour of dead relatives was becoming quite common in some areas.²¹

After Domitian's murder, Trajan demonstratively returned to the protocol of the Principate, presenting himself as first citizen rather than monarch and retreating from his predecessor's near self-deification. Nevertheless he continued to receive the address of *dominus*,²² and he, too, used religion to establish his position. He drew attention to his personal piety towards Jupiter Optimus Maximus, the traditional patron of the Roman state.²³ He encouraged the publicizing of a political doctrine which saw the emperor as Jupiter's representative on earth, and allowed the Senate to vote him Jupiter's own epithet, *optimus*.²⁴ Both Pliny and Dio also compare Trajan to Hercules, and Hercules appears on the reverse of some Trajanic coins.²⁵ As the god of Gades, and victor over monsters, Hercules was an appropriate patron for a Spanish soldier-emperor. Moreover, Hercules was an extremely popular god, honoured by many private cult societies in Italy, who also appealed to intellectuals, and his Labours were allegorized as the victories of order over chaos won for the benefit of mankind.²⁶

Trajan's best-known intervention in the field of religion is his reply to Pliny concerning the judicial treatment of Christians. It was peculiar to the procedure approved by Trajan, and subsequently followed in cases against Christians, that the penalty was almost always death, and that it was inflicted for the name alone. Neither the status of the accused in the Christian community, nor any specified act committed by the Christian, was relevant. It seems that for Trajan, as also for Pliny, it was the refusal to take any part in the worship of the gods, more specifically the absolute rejection of sacrifice, that was the heart of the Christian's offence. If Trajan had really believed that the Christians were in any sense a threat to public order he would surely have recommended a more direct form of suppression. What turned the relationship of Christianity and the Roman state into chronic confrontation was the fact that the Christians made total rejection of pagan worship into the supreme symbol of loyalty to their own fellowship and their own god.

Where Trajan had been concerned to stress the traditional Roman character of his policies, Hadrian showed himself conspicuously a cosmopoli-

²¹ See Price, *Rituals* 50, 166–7; Wrede (1981).

²² Friedländer (1921–3); cf. Alföldi (1934) on the steadily increasing ceremony surrounding the emperor in the Principate. ²³ Beaujeu (1955); Fears (1981) 80–5. ²⁴ Pliny, *Pan.* 88.10.

²⁵ Beaujeu (1955) 86–7.

²⁶ MacMullen (1981) 6; Jaczynowska (1981); Liebeschuetz (1979) 171; Simon (1955).

tan. Hadrian's motives were surely mixed. He had been initiated at Eleusis, and admired all aspects of Greek culture. At the same time he was certainly concerned to build up good relations with the Greeks. He travelled widely, and donated large sums of money for the building of sanctuaries: the temple of Zeus and the Panhellenion at Athens, the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, the temple of Zeus at Cyzicus, the sanctuary of Asclepius at Pergamum displayed Hadrian's care for his Greek subjects, and also a policy of reviving historic links between Greek cities in the interest of imperial unity.²⁷ In return, the Greeks set up great statues and altars to Hadrian in or around their principal sanctuaries.²⁸ At Rome, Hadrian established games to celebrate the city's birthday on the day of the ancient Parilia, and began work on a great new temple of Venus and Roma, whose construction continued through most of the reign. Cults of the goddess Roma had expressed loyalty to Roman rule in Greek cities since Republican times.²⁹ Now the cult was brought to Rome itself with the consequence that the picturesque traditional anniversary was turned into an imperial commemoration. It was no coincidence that the new temple, the largest in Rome, was built to a Greek plan.³⁰ Rome now had a patron goddess of the same kind as Athena of Athens, or the Fortuna of Antioch: the new cult is an example of the powerful wave of Greek influence in the West at this time.

Marcus Aurelius is the only emperor, other than Julian the apostate, who has informed posterity about his philosophical and spiritual life. He was strongly religious in the sense that philosophy gave him the strength to perform the duties of his office which he saw as a divinely assigned role. But Marcus' conception of the divine was remote and impersonal to the highest degree. With many contemporaries he shared a deep sense of the vast inferiority of the material world to the world of the spirit,³¹ but he rejected the considerations which for others made the rejection of the world bearable or even attractive. He would not personalize god. He had no confidence at all that his personality would survive death in any meaningful sense. He lived for duty, but expected no reward and seems to have allowed himself to feel very little satisfaction for whatever he managed to achieve.³² Marcus Aurelius was a Stoic, by now a traditional philosophy to uphold, even for an emperor. But his religious measures were a significant mixture of old and new. He and his son were initiated at Eleusis in 176, soon after he had lost his wife, and in the middle of war. Since it was thought that only the pure were acceptable to the goddesses at Eleusis he may have been concerned to show that the empire and he himself were not suffering punishment for his own guilt.³³ Among traditional religious

²⁷ Spawforth and Walker (1985), (1986). ²⁸ Price, *Rituals* 147–8.

²⁹ Fayer (1976); Mellor (1975), (1981). ³⁰ Boatwright, *Hadrian* 119–33. ³¹ Dodds (1965).

³² Rutherford (1989). ³³ Philostr. *VS* 1.12; *HA Marc.* 27.1; cf. Aristides, *Panath.* III.308–9.

measures adopted was a ritual purification of Rome, a *lectisternium* of seven days, and formal vows to gods.³⁴ But *lectisternia* seem to have been held at Alexandria and elsewhere as well as at Rome, and for public supplication he brought to Rome priests from all over the empire. To summon priests to perform their rites elsewhere than at their proper sanctuary was not traditional behaviour. Some years earlier Hadrian had been given credit for bringing miraculous rain to drought-stricken North Africa by the mere fact of his arrival.³⁵ It was new for an emperor to attribute victory to miraculous intervention by a divinity. Marcus did so twice. When during the campaign of 171 lightning struck and destroyed enemy siege machinery, this was publicized as divine intervention sent in response to the emperor's prayers.³⁶ In the following year, a sudden downpour of rain saved a Roman army which had been brought near to surrender by thirst. Credit for this miracle was officially given to the rites of an Egyptian priest of Hermes.³⁷

Marcus' son and successor Commodus went much further than any of his predecessors in displaying personal commitment to eastern cults. He was a worshipper of Isis to the extent of having his head shaved, and an initiate of Mithras.³⁸ The place of the eastern gods in public ceremony was enhanced, but still without becoming conspicuous: Cybele, Serapis and Isis figured on coins. Late in his reign Commodus regularly appeared dressed as Hercules in the amphitheatre, and was represented on coins as Hercules Romanus Augustus. There were many precedents of emperors or empresses being represented in art with attributes of gods.³⁹ This went somewhat further, but dressing up was a feature of performances in the amphitheatre, and Commodus' appearances as Hercules belonged as much to theatre and public relations as to religion.⁴⁰

III. IMPERIAL CULT AND RELIGION IN THE WESTERN PROVINCES

The various manifestations of the imperial cult remained basically as they had been since Augustus. Under the Flavians, the process by which each province acquired a provincial assembly and festivals of the imperial cult was completed in the western provinces. In the Balkans, provincial cults seem to have begun under Trajan.⁴¹ In Spain, the numerous dedications to emperors come almost exclusively from Baetica under the Flavians, but they are somewhat more widespread under the Antonines.⁴² Here, as elsewhere, the success of the imperial cults of loyalty was linked to

³⁴ *HA Marc.* 13.1–2. ³⁵ *HA Hadr.* 20.14; *CIL* VIII 2609–10. ³⁶ *HA Marc.* 24.

³⁷ Although subsequently responsibility for these miracles was claimed by several competing religious groups: Birley, *Marcus Aurelius* 237–40; Fowden (1987). ³⁸ *HA Comm.* 9.4–6, *Niger* 68.

³⁹ Turcan (1978a) 1022, 1046. ⁴⁰ *Contra* Gag  (1981). ⁴¹ Fishwick (1987–92) I 300–7.

⁴² Etienne (1958) plans 20–1.

romanization and, above all, urbanization. In the course of the second century, dedications to individual *divi* give way to dedications offered to the deified emperors in general. At the same time, the great majority of dedications came to be made not by individuals but by collectives such as the *ordo* of decurions, a *municipium* or *colonia*, or a professional group.⁴³ Roman religion everywhere followed the army and the Roman administration. In the civilian settlements that grew up around camps and in veteran colonies, temples of the Roman gods were established and a cycle of festivals modelled on the Roman cycle introduced. At the same time, native cults became romanized, some more, some less, and in the countryside later than in towns. From the late first and throughout the second century the so-called eastern or mystery religions spread (see below). The evidence for religious developments in the provinces is vast. Here only specimens can be given.

In Gaul and Britain one effect of Roman influence was the monumentalization of native religion.⁴⁴ Strictly classical temples, such as the temple of Claudius at Colchester or that of Sul Minerva at Bath, remained rare, but there arose a new kind of stone-built Celtic temple.⁴⁵ There was a great development of religious sculpture. Images of Roman gods appeared, as well as of gods such as Brigantia Minerva, Mars Rigionemitis and Mars Lenus, whose appearance was Roman but whose attributes or epithets reveal them to be Celtic gods, romanized in accordance with 'interpretatio Romana'.⁴⁶ Sometimes the Celtic origin is revealed by grouping. In Gaul, the recurring combination of Mercury, Hercules, Juno and Minerva seems to represent a Celtic association of divinities.⁴⁷ A group of three seated mother goddesses found in many sites of Gaul and Britain must represent a Celtic triad. In Gallia Belgica, monuments relating to gods with Roman names are most frequent. Gallo-Roman gods come next and native gods third. Eastern gods (or mystery cults) have produced far fewer monuments than the other three groups. Monuments of the imperial cult are more frequent than those of eastern gods, but less than native gods.⁴⁸ Such statistics are, of course, influenced by the fact that monuments and inscriptions are more likely to be produced in towns than in the country, and by the wealthy rather than the poor.⁴⁹ Reliefs from Gaul give tantalizing glimpses of a lost mythology.⁵⁰ The monuments suggest a Celtic revival from the later second century which may represent the spreading of 'monumentalization' to the less romanized countryside.⁵¹

In the Balkan provinces of Pannonia and Upper Moesia, as also in Greek-speaking northern Macedonia, the religious evidence for the early

⁴³ Etienne (1958) 473–90.

⁴⁴ Lambrechts (1965); Duval (1970); Hatt (1978); Henig (1983b); Green (1976); Jones and Mattingly (1990) 269–95 (maps). ⁴⁵ Wachter (1978) 226–32; Lewis (1966); Horne and King (1980).

⁴⁶ Girard (1980). ⁴⁷ Hatt (1965). ⁴⁸ Wightman, *Gallia Belgica* 177–87.

⁴⁹ Wightman, *Gallia Belgica* 162–8. ⁵⁰ Duval (1970) 94–8. ⁵¹ Cf. Blagg (1981) esp. 178.

second century is of Roman religion, and remains of temples belong to Roman, not native, communities. The advance of this religion kept in step with urbanization, the settlement of veterans and the replacement of native names by Latin. Native religion becomes archaeologically visible, because monumentalized, only towards the end of the second century.⁵² Now, for the first time, there appeared a specifically Pannonian religion. Its most prominent god was Silvanus, often with the epithet *domesticus*. In spite of his Latin name he may represent consolidation of a number of local gods.⁵³ The history of the Danubian rider cult is an example of a native cult evolving under the influence of classical civilization into a mystery cult influenced by Mithraism, and the neighbouring Thracian rider god appears to have undergone a similar development.⁵⁴

In North Africa, native cults had consolidated into the worship of Ba'al Hammon, a Carthaginian supreme deity. It is possible to trace in detail the gradual depunicization and romanization of the language and architecture of the cult, as well as of the image of the god himself, who was identified with the Roman god Saturn.⁵⁵ Under the empire animal sacrifice almost entirely replaced the sacrifice of young children, but the ceremony that accompanied it, the 'molchomor', remained entirely Punic. Dedications to African Saturn were mainly made by individuals. Perhaps that is why cults like that of Isis and Mithras did not win many followers in North Africa, although Christianity did. The climax of monumental activity on behalf of Saturn in Africa Proconsularis and Numidia, from the reign of Marcus Aurelius to that of Septimus Severus, coincides with a massive advance of Christianity, but Saturn continued to have a strong following in many areas until the end of the fourth century.

IV. THE DIASPORA CULTS

The importance of the so-called oriental or mystery cults is greater than the numerical strength of their followers, perhaps never more than a small fraction of the population.⁵⁶ This is because these cults, despite the comparatively small numbers and relatively modest social level of their membership, did express, if in different ways and to different degrees, 'the new mood' (see below) which was to dominate the religion of the empire through to the triumph of Christianity. The cults are known as mystery cults after the initiation ceremonies or 'mysterics' which most of them offered. Their religion was more concerned with the individual worshipper than with the well-being of a community, and for adherents the religious community was at least as important as the political one. They had

⁵² Mocsy (1974); Balla (1967). ⁵³ Mocsy (1974) 250–2; Tóth (1967), (1980); Düll (1977).

⁵⁴ Tudor (1976); Opperman (1981). ⁵⁵ Le Glay (1966). ⁵⁶ MacMullen (1981) 6.

professional or semi-professional priests, who were employed by the religious association itself and not by the city. These cults were less tied to worship in established sanctuaries and particular sacred locations than traditional civic cults, and therefore well adapted to serve the needs of immigrants and expatriates. They have been aptly described as 'diaspora religions'.⁵⁷

The cults differed greatly in the date of the entry into the empire and in the extent of their official acceptance. Cybele, for example, was incorporated into the Roman state religion, but Isis probably never achieved full admission into the state cult, although she was accepted into the official cult of several municipalities in Italy and the provinces. The communities of these cults typically emerged out of the world of associations of people of lower status, and they were maintained either by contributions of members or by patronage.⁵⁸ The social level of the membership varied from cult to cult, and region to region, with the social status tending to rise as the cult became established. In the second century, Isis was quite strong in the curial class of some cities, especially in Campania, while the membership of Mithraic communities was very much humbler, including slaves and freedmen, probably mostly below the level of the *augustales*. As these cult societies were outside official religions, and their ceremonial was emotional, they came closer to what the official point of view would see as superstition.⁵⁹ Not surprisingly, several of them met with suspicion and opposition. But by our period this had died down. There is no evidence that mystery groups attracted the politically or socially discontented. On the contrary, they were integrated into the social order. Unlike Jews and Christians, they did not look forward to a Messianic age in which the world would be transformed.

Of the eastern cults, that of Cybele has the most complicated history. Although the worship of Cybele had become part of the state cult at Rome in 205/204 B.C., the cult also developed outside state control, following the evolution of the myth of Attis which seems to have changed considerably over the centuries.⁶⁰ This tragic story came to be commemorated in a dramatically moving series of festivals between 15 and 27 March.⁶¹ These festivals were then included in the state cult, perhaps as early as the reign of Claudius but more probably under Antoninus Pius.⁶² As a general rule Cybele was strongest in cities and in civilian provinces, well away from the frontiers.⁶³ The patrons of the cult of Cybele at Ostia, where an impressive sanctuary was built under Hadrian or Antoninus Pius, were men of

⁵⁷ Smith (1971). ⁵⁸ Flambard (1987); Andraeu (1977); Schiess (1988) 81–4.

⁵⁹ Gordon 1990a. ⁶⁰ Vermaseren (1977) 82–99.

⁶¹ Lambrechts (1952); Thomas (1984) 1525–53.

⁶² J. Lydus, *De mensibus* 4.59; Fishwick (1966); Turcan (1983).

⁶³ Toutain (1907–20); Vermaseren (1977), (1981).

standing, senators even, or local magistrates. Ordinary members were men of lower standing, often freedmen or their descendants, but still of considerable wealth.⁶⁴ Cybele, like Isis, acquired an initiation ceremony.⁶⁵ An originally independent ceremony, the *taurobolium*, also came to be attached to the cult of Cybele, as is first attested in A.D. 160. The *taurobolium* involved the sacrifice of a bull so that the goddess would ensure the safety of the emperor; it was only much later, under the influence of Christianity, that it came to be seen as a baptism of blood giving rebirth to the initiate.⁶⁶

The religion of Isis and associated Egyptian gods is more fully known than any other eastern cult. Its Egyptian origins and Hellenistic development are well documented, not least in the so-called aretalogy.⁶⁷ From the early and late second century A.D. respectively we have Plutarch's philosophical interpretation of the Egyptian myth of Isis and Osiris and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* ('The Golden Ass'), a novel which culminates with the hero's conversion to the worship of Isis.⁶⁸ This may well have been written as propaganda to counter the advance of Christianity by publicizing the wonderful deeds of the pagan goddess; indeed it has been argued that publicizing the miracle-working powers of gods was a function of the ancient novel from the beginning.⁶⁹ The aretalogy in its several versions outlines the scope of the goddess. She takes an interest in the relations of men and women, parents and children, indeed civilization. She is the source of law, a champion of justice, an upholder of the sanctity of the oath. She protects shipping and she heals the sick. All the great goddesses are Isis under another name.⁷⁰ Nursing her son Horus, Isis showed herself a loving mother.⁷¹ For a pagan deity Isis was comparatively jealous. On votive inscriptions the names of other goddesses are hardly ever joined to that of Isis in the way that Serapis was often addressed as Zeus Helios Serapis, and Isis rarely admitted other gods into her temple.⁷²

The worship of Isis included animal sacrifice, but this occupied a much less prominent place in her ceremonies than in traditional Greek and Roman cults.⁷³ The faithful visited the temple not only for festivals, but regularly, spending time seated, contemplating the image. The temple was solemnly opened in the morning, and closed in the evening amid much ceremony and singing.⁷⁴ There were spectacular processions. Professional priests not only directed ceremonies but acted as spiritual counsellors to the worshippers.⁷⁵ Fewer temples of Isis have been found than might be

⁶⁴ Meiggs, *Ostia* 209–11, 217, 260–2, 361–2; Fishwick (1966).

⁶⁵ Firm. Mat. *Err. prof. rel.* 18; Julian. *Or.* v.169.

⁶⁶ Duthoy (1969); modified by Turcan (1972) 85 n. 1. ⁶⁷ Bergman (1968). ⁶⁸ Griffiths (1975).

⁶⁹ Walsh (1970) 186–9; Merkelbach (1962); Weinreich (1930–1); critically Beck (1984).

⁷⁰ Walsh (1970) 252–3; Smith (1971) 241–2; Grandjean (1975); Leclant (1984).

⁷¹ Stauffer (1984) 1466–86. ⁷² Malaise (1972) 189–91.

⁷³ Dunand (1972–3) II 197–219; cf. Apul. *Met.* xi.16–17. ⁷⁴ Witt (1971) 91–2.

⁷⁵ Malaise (1972) 145.

expected,⁷⁶ and perhaps all but the largest communities met in private houses. Isis was also worshipped among the gods worshipped by a family in its household shrine. This was especially common in Campania.⁷⁷ In the imperial period Isis acquired a concern for the dead and ceremonies of initiation for worshippers selected by the goddess, and able to pay.⁷⁸ Initiates experienced a series of visions which had to remain secret.⁷⁹ Although worship of Isis offered a continuous relationship with the divinity which was not ended by death, initiation served to consolidate the benefits of Isis worship, and to qualify the initiate for the priesthood, rather than to ensure a unique benefit such as immortality in the Christian sense.⁸⁰

The worship of Isis spread from Alexandria along sea-routes.⁸¹ Isis was probably brought to Italy by traders between Delos and Campanian ports.⁸² At Pompeii Isis seems to have been worshipped by all classes, including the local aristocracy.⁸³ In Rome and other Italian towns a high proportion of the followers of Isis were freedmen or slaves, but their social advance raised the status of this religious community so that it could afford more elaborate ritual and architecture.⁸⁴ The building of artificial harbours at Ostia by Claudius and Trajan produced a second wave of Isis-worshipping immigrants, more conspicuously Egyptian both in ritual and architecture. From Rome the cult of Isis spread to towns along the main roads to the north.⁸⁵ Tiberius was the last emperor to persecute Isis worshippers. The Flavians honoured Isis, but relatively discreetly. Commodus was seen with the shaved head of an Isis worshipper. But Isis worship remained rare among the senatorial and equestrian orders until the third and fourth centuries.

Egyptian cults expanded to the western provinces but nowhere achieved the extent of penetration reached in Italy.⁸⁶ The cult was often introduced by immigrants but spread to the local free-born population, especially in ports and cities on river lines of communication, for instance along the Guadiana in Spain and the Rhône, Saône and Rhine in Gaul. In the Danubian provinces worship of Isis was introduced as part of romanization by veterans and other settlers; the strength of the Egyptian cults in these provinces reflects their strength in northern Italy, the origin of many of the settlers. Judging by inscriptions, expansion ceased and decline began during the second century in the western provinces, around 200 in the Balkans, and a bit later in Italy and Africa.⁸⁷ Nowhere, except among the Roman aristocracy, do the Egyptian cults appear to have

⁷⁶ Wild (1984). ⁷⁷ Tran Tam Tinh (1964), (1971) 11–13. ⁷⁸ Dunand (1972–3) II 243–86.

⁷⁹ Although in Apul. *Met.* XI.1 = 23, Lucius relates at least part of his experience.

⁸⁰ Nock (1933) 104; Malaise (1972) 230–8, (1981); cf. Apul. *Met.* XI.6.

⁸¹ Fraser (1960) 20–49; Dunand (1972–3) III, map 3. ⁸² Malaise (1972) 261–314, (1984) 1632–2.

⁸³ Tran Tam Tinh (1964) 39–61. ⁸⁴ Malaise (1972) 144–6; Vidman (1970) 87–94.

⁸⁵ Malaise (1972) 81–5. ⁸⁶ Malaise (1984) 1650–1, 1658–9.

⁸⁷ Mora (1990) I 448–50, 484–5, 505, 520.

retained their strength into the fourth century. The expansion of Egyptian cults in the early empire was a western phenomenon.⁸⁸ In the East decline had probably set in the first century A.D.

Mithraism is the only one of the eastern cults which not only expanded, but in all likelihood originated in our period. The earliest evidence is from the late first century.⁸⁹ Mithras is the name of a Persian god, and Mithraism certainly included features of Persian or Persian-influenced religion.⁹⁰ But most scholars now agree that the relationship between Roman and Persian Mithraism is a remote one.⁹¹ The ritual and mythology of Mithraism, obscure as much of it remains, seems to be all of one piece. It looks as if somebody had invented it. The founder, undoubtedly a man of great ability and imagination, may well have been brought up in an area influenced by both Graeco-Roman and Persian civilization, but he is most likely to have spent the teaching part of his life at Rome itself.

Conspicuous evidence for Mithraism is provided by numerous Mithraea. These are small church-like underground structures, with benches along the sides, dominated by an image, usually carved, sometimes painted, of Mithras killing a bull. This is where congregations assembled for services, and where communal meals and initiations took place. The Mithraea are generally small. The majority might have held between twenty or thirty worshippers. Many would not have had room for so many. There was certainly no room to sacrifice a bull. It is generally agreed that the bull-slaying represents an incident in the sacred myth, a sacrifice performed by Mithras on behalf of the world.⁹² Initiation was an essential part of Mithraism: it must be assumed that most adherents were initiated into at least the lowest of the seven successive grades.⁹³ The grades of initiation represented a raising of the soul through the planetary spheres as in the ritual of the Chaldaean oracles.⁹⁴ As in the case of Chaldaean and Isiac initiation it seems difficult to determine to what extent the objective was personal immortality, to what extent a freer, purer, more successful, and perhaps longer earthly life.⁹⁵ Initiation apart, it is significant that the formulae of Mithraic dedications do not differ at all from those of traditional Roman religion. They do not suggest that anything other than the normal health, wealth or victory was asked of the god. Mithraists did not have separate cemeteries, and normally did not have their adherence to the cult recorded on funerary monuments. Judging by inscriptions, Mithras was less concerned with death than either Isis or Cybele.

It is a mistake to assume that Mithraism was monolithic. In fact, there is evidence for regional variation in ritual and in technical vocabulary.⁹⁶ The

⁸⁸ Vidman (1970) 111. ⁸⁹ Schwertheim (1974) 269–74. ⁹⁰ Campbell (1968); Hinnells (1994).

⁹¹ Beck (1984). ⁹² Turcan (1981a), cf. (1981b).

⁹³ Illustrated on mosaics at Ostia: Becatti (1954) figs. 16, 20, 22; Merkelbach (1984) 292–5.

⁹⁴ Lewy (1978) 184–200; Merkelbach (1984) 236–44; Beck (1984). ⁹⁵ Cf. Turcan (1981a).

⁹⁶ Gordon (1994) esp. 114–15.

Romans saw Mithras above all as a god who watched over oaths and contracts confirmed by the shaking of hands, that is as a god who sustained *fides*.⁹⁷ This is surely one reason why the cult appealed so strongly to soldiers and 'civil servants' in the provinces, men whose lives were dominated by the concept of loyalty to comrades, emperor and empire. But although Mithraism has a reputation as a soldier's religion, it was never part of the official religion of the army, and the majority of its adherents were always civilian, as at Rome and Ostia.⁹⁸ From Rome and Ostia it spread, particularly in the Severan period, to frontier areas, principally in Britain, Germany and the Balkans, where it won many followers among the troops, but considerably more among the service population who lived in the neighbourhood of the camps.⁹⁹ Away from the frontier it was mostly found in administrative centres with a military presence or in colonies.¹⁰⁰ Greece and Spain have produced comparatively few Mithraic finds. It looks as if the cult was spread by soldiers and officials, including the collectors of customs dues.¹⁰¹ Civilian Mithraism was socially rather humble. It was only in a few cities, mainly in Pannonia and Dacia, that Mithraism seems to have found followers in the curial class. There is some evidence that at least some Mithraic groups were organized on a home basis by the master for members of his household, in the same way as some of the household associations dedicated to the worship of traditional gods.¹⁰² Mithraism was a private cult. Its links with any public or civic religion were so remote as to be negligible. Initiation was not a privilege but open to all, except women, whose exclusion meant that Mithraism had no concern with the whole area of reproduction and domesticity. It was a religious society rather than a religion.

V. THE EAST

The religious situation in the East differed from that in the West. Its heartlands had long been urbanized. While urbanization continued, the principal dynamic factor, which the Romans encouraged, was hellenization, the spreading of Greek language and culture including religion. Even the native deities of non-urbanized Anatolia, notably Men, came to be identified with Greek gods and received Greek dedications.¹⁰³ The gods of the great Syrian cities underwent at least superficial hellenization.¹⁰⁴ At the same time, the traditions of ancient non-Greek religion remained live and influential. The impressive rituals of Egypt were still celebrated in its monumental sanctuaries.¹⁰⁵ Across the Mesopotamian border, the religion of Zoroaster was the state religion of the Parthian empire. Above all, Judaism

⁹⁷ Merkelbach (1984); Le Glay (1978). ⁹⁸ Coarelli (1979). ⁹⁹ Schwertheim (1974) 266–70.

¹⁰⁰ Beck (1984). ¹⁰¹ Gordon (1972); Daniels (1975); Beskow (1980).

¹⁰² Cf. Clauss (1990) 48; Liebeschuetz (1994). ¹⁰³ Price, *Rituals* 93–8; Lane (1990).

¹⁰⁴ Balty (1981b); Drijvers (1976), (1980). ¹⁰⁵ Nock (1944); Fowden (1986).

had numerous followers in many cities of the East. Judaism was also in a sense the most 'modern' religion, in being not only monotheistic and centred on moral conduct, but also based on a sacred literature. Outsiders could not fail to be impressed by the intensity and passion with which Jews clung to their exclusive religion. Even if Jews did not engage in active proselytizing, Judaism surely continued to win large numbers of converts.¹⁰⁶ It certainly exercised demonstrable influence on religious developments such as Hermeticism,¹⁰⁷ and also the worship of Sababazios.¹⁰⁸ There is considerable Jewish material in the magical papyri, and Josephus could claim that many Jewish prohibitions in the matter of food had been widely taken up.¹⁰⁹ But it seems that all 'Judaizing', or the pointing-out of common ground with Judaism, occurred on the pagan side of the religious divide, and there is little evidence for syncretism on the Jewish side.¹¹⁰

Inscriptions provide a vast amount of material for the historian of religion in the eastern provinces. They come from village as well as city sites.¹¹¹ The best-documented sanctuary is that of Zeus Panamarios near Stratonicea.¹¹² Among the topics illustrated are oracles, divine healing, votive offerings, ritual, hymns, sacred laws and the social life and administration of the sanctuaries.¹¹³ Since the climax of monumental paganism was followed so closely by the triumph of Christianity, extremely interesting questions are raised, and synthesis had hardly begun.

As in the West, the fact of the Roman empire made a great impact. Where the Romans found independent temple administrations they tended to attach them and their estates to cities, with the priests becoming liturgical magistrates. With imperial support, civic cults prospered in the first and second centuries A.D. as never before. Domitian helped to finance the sanctuary of Asclepius at Pergamum; the revival of the oracle at Didyma owed much to the generosity of Trajan and Hadrian, and that of the oracle at Clarus to Hadrian.¹¹⁴ When Baalbek in Syria became a Roman colony, the principal god and his two companions were romanized as Jupiter, Venus and Mercury, and their sanctuary made into a showpiece by successive emperors.¹¹⁵ There was much private munificence. Even small cities acquired an impressive range of temples and secular monumental buildings, thereby incurring a heavy burden of expense on maintenance. When, after the Severan dynasty, the resources of the empire had to be spent on

¹⁰⁶ Goodman (1994); Rajak (1992); Simon (1948), (1981); Smallwood, *Jews* 204–6, 222–3, 377–80, 469. ¹⁰⁷ Nock (1936) 444–51, esp. 445–7; Dodd (1935); cf. Nilsson (1950) 637.

¹⁰⁸ Nilsson (1950) 630–40; Fellman (1981); cf. Tcherikover, Fuchs and Stern (1957–64) III 43–87.

¹⁰⁹ *Ap. II*. 123.

¹¹⁰ Johnson (1984); Kraabel (1978); Reynolds and Tannenbaum (1987); Mitchell, *Anatolia* II 31–7; Goodman (1994) 51–2. ¹¹¹ Laumonier (1958).

¹¹² MacMullen (1981) 46–8; Roussel (1931), (1927). ¹¹³ MacMullen (1981).

¹¹⁴ Habicht (1969); Parke (1985) 72–3, 146; cf. also Debord (1982).

¹¹⁵ Eissfeldt (1941); cf. Hajjar (1977) on Jupiter Heliopolitanus.

military rather than civilian objectives, the cities of Asia often found themselves unable to maintain their splendid sanctuaries.¹¹⁶

The image of Roman rule, represented by the emperor and his family, was brought home to provincials through the buildings and ceremonies of the imperial cult, which in most cities were very prominent and closely linked with many aspects of civic life.¹¹⁷ Cities continued to offer to establish new cults. Some sensational buildings were put up, for instance the temple of Domitian at Ephesus, and the temple dedicated to Zeus Philios and Trajan at Pergamum. Hadrian received conspicuous honours in the many sanctuaries which his generosity had allowed to be completed. However, most emperors after Augustus and Tiberius received individual temples in only three or four cities. Most had to share honours with deified predecessors in a sanctuary dedicated simply to the *autokratores*. The building of imperial sanctuaries reached its climax between A.D. 100 and 150. After that it began to decline, significantly earlier than the general decline in civic buildings and inscriptions.¹¹⁸ This did not mean that the imperial cult itself went into decline. The ceremonies and festivals had become an accepted part of the established routine of civic life.

The cult of the traditional Greek gods was booming in the same way as that of Roman gods was in the West.¹¹⁹ The local aristocracies were wealthy, and spent a great deal on religion. Prominent buildings were built and festivals endowed in cities great and small. Inscriptions tell us how the activities served to honour the gods, to maintain good relations with the Romans, to enhance and to display culture, to provide entertainment and opportunities for trade, and all the time to demonstrate and consolidate the social order.¹²⁰ The temples of Asia were in full use for their primary purpose of enabling worshippers to put to the gods requests for health, success, justice, and sometimes revenge or some other less reputable object. The temple areas abounded in plaques and stelae recording that prayers had been answered.¹²¹ Temples received numerous offerings, from life-size marble statues to small pottery models of limbs or other bodily organs, all expressing gratitude for the god's help.¹²² To the inhabitants of Asia Minor in the second century the gods were real and near. In the Greek novel gods become visible at any moment. In the real world many dedications state that they have been made on the instructions of the god himself, whether communicated in a dream or by means of some other manifestation.¹²³

While demand for oracles was strong, the popularity of particular

¹¹⁶ Debord (1982); Habicht (1969). ¹¹⁷ Price, *Rituals*; Mitchell, *Anatolia* 1 100–7.

¹¹⁸ Price, *Rituals* 59; Etienne (1958) 478–95. ¹¹⁹ Price, *Rituals*.

¹²⁰ Wörle, *Stadt und Fest*; Rogers (1991); Gordon (1990b); Mitchell, *Anatolia* 1 217–25.

¹²¹ Versnel (1981b) 1–64. ¹²² Van Straten (1981).

¹²³ Veyne (1986) 259–83; Lane Fox, *Pagans* 103–67.

oracles was subject to fashion.¹²⁴ Delphi was now only of local importance, advising clients from the neighbourhood on such problems as whether to marry, to go on a voyage, or to lend money.¹²⁵ The success of the pseudo-oracle of Alexander of Abonuteichus, and the grateful inscriptions of the international oracles of Apollo at Didyma and Clarus stand in contrast.¹²⁶ There were numerous minor oracles too.¹²⁷ But an extension of the role of Clarus and Didyma is significant. Apollo was consulted not only about questions of ritual, or pressing problems such as what should be done about plague or brigands;¹²⁸ he also received theological inquiries.¹²⁹ These were not just academic. The citizens of Oinoanda had carved on an altar and set high up in the city wall an oracle in which Apollo of Claros had proclaimed the majesty of the self-generated one god. No doubt they believed that it, or rather the god, would keep off enemies.¹³⁰

A growing demand for a divinely confirmed theology is also witnessed by a large body of writings combining the traditions of the ancient Orient with Greek philosophical ideas, and dealing with a wide range of topics: magic, astrology, alchemy, medicine, philosophy, as well as religion in a strict sense. The writings can be grouped roughly according to whether their origin, or in some cases only their exotic colouring, was Egyptian or Mesopotamian–Persian.¹³¹ They have in common that they claim more than human authority, that the religion expounded in them is individualistic, moral, concerned with salvation (in whatever sense) of the soul, and its exercise not tied to any particular sanctuary. The Chaldaean Oracles, for example, provided a theurgy, a set of ritual techniques for the magical evocation of gods.¹³² The Hermetic writings are the survivors of a much larger literature inspired by Hermes Trismegistus, the Egyptian god Thoth. They seem to be part of a systematic course, or rather courses, which would enable a student, under the guidance of an inspired teacher, to achieve a state of enlightenment or rebirth through knowledge of god.¹³³ It is very difficult to assess the influence of these developments in the area of book-based religion. But it is significant that throughout the second century, leaders of what was to become orthodox Christianity were anxious to define canonical doctrines, and to defend them from distortion by speculation of Gnostic groups, which in turn were deeply influenced by the religious atmosphere which had given rise to the philosophy of Numenius, the Chaldaean Oracles and Hermeticism.

¹²⁴ Parke (1967); Lane Fox, *Pagans* 200–41.

¹²⁵ Plut. *De def. or.* 7; Lucian, *Deor.* 12; cf. Levin (1989).

¹²⁶ Lucian, *Alex.*; Robert (1981); Parke (1985); Fontenrose (1986). ¹²⁷ Nock (1934).

¹²⁸ Parke (1985) 150–9; Robert (1966) 91–100.

¹²⁹ Nock (1928); O'Meara (1959); Lane Fox, *Pagans* 183–200, 256–9. ¹³⁰ Robert (1971).

¹³¹ Smith (1978); Festugière (1949–54); Fowden (1986); Bidez and Cumont (1938).

¹³² Des Places (1984); Lewy (1978) 177–226; Dodds (1947).

¹³³ Fowden (1986) 156–60; Festugière (1949–54) II 28–50, cf. I 83–4.

At a less intellectual level, the increased importance of personal religion and concern for the individual soul seem to be reflected in a great increase in opportunities for initiation, including facilities at traditional sanctuaries that had not offered them earlier.¹³⁴ Another indication is the flourishing of small private religious associations for the worship of a particular god, most commonly Dionysus, sometimes with religious and moral aims predominating, sometimes for mainly social aims.¹³⁵ These were respectable and orderly groups, controlled by their own rules of good conduct, and also by the civic authorities.¹³⁶ Sometimes they centred on families and their dependants, most strikingly the groups recorded on the inscription from Torre Nova in Italy which seems to have consisted of around five hundred people, mainly freedmen and slaves of two senatorial families of Greek origin.¹³⁷ The fact that members were known as *mystae* suggests that most societies offered some kind of Dionysiac initiation.¹³⁸ Such initiation offered reassurance at the prospect of death, and gave some at least hope of an eternal wine-happy afterlife, others perhaps only of avoiding punishment for sins.¹³⁹

Christianity combined many of the developments observable in paganism: a dependence on revealed texts, stress on the importance of theology, insistence on moral purity, and above all, and with exceptional confidence, the saving of the soul after death. Christianity certainly made progress in these years. Nevertheless, well into the third century civic and non-civic pagan cults and Christianity seem to have flourished together. But the crisis of the third century gave civic religion a blow from which it never recovered.¹⁴⁰ Christianity emerged greatly strengthened, and, as it seemed to Eusebius, triumphant.¹⁴¹

VI. THE CHANGING MOOD

A common mood can be seen to underlie the complex and diverse religious phenomena of the age. One trend was in the direction of monotheism in the sense of belief in an ultimate controller or source of the world. This was not altogether new. The development of the early empire, and above all of the second century, was that a philosophical view of god seems to have become familiar to a very much wider range of the population. Philosophical writers like Epictetus, Plutarch or Dio Chrysostom, or later in the second century the Middle Platonists, expounded versions of this

¹³⁴ Nilsson (1957) 329–54; Hopfner (1935); Burkert (1987).

¹³⁵ Barton and Horsley (1981); Todd (1932); Ziebarth (1896) 33–69; Poland (1926) 277–87, 326–44, 568; Ohlemutz (1968) 109–16; Nilsson (1950) 630–40; Robert (1983).

¹³⁶ Festugière (1935), (1954); Merkelbach (1988) 15–30; Moretti (1986).

¹³⁷ Vogliano (1933) 215–31; Scheid (1986). ¹³⁸ Cf. Nilsson (1957) 66–98.

¹³⁹ Plut. *Cons. ad uxorem*. 10 (610d); *De sera* 565F–566A, *Non posse suav.* 1105B; Origen, *c. Celsum* IV.10.

¹⁴⁰ Geffken (1978) 25–30. ¹⁴¹ *Hist. Eccl.* VIII.1; Barnes (1981) 147.

view.¹⁴² Their readership may not have been very wide even among the educated,¹⁴³ but their way of looking at the world reached the public in a variety of ways more penetrating than philosophical writing. Cynic preachers were heard by people who did not read the books of philosophers. Theological oracles of Apollo spread a platonizing theology to a wider public. The government of the empire provided conspicuous support to philosophical arguments that the universe, too, was under a single ruler.¹⁴⁴ Syncretism, the process by which the cults of two or more gods were reconciled or even combined, had a long history in the Graeco-Roman world. It was a necessary consequence of the amalgamation of cities and tribes into larger units culminating in the Roman empire. In the second century a phenomenon of growing frequency was the invocation of a god by a series of divine names in a prayer or dedication. This was particularly common in addresses to eastern gods. Serapis was frequently addressed as Zeus Helios Serapis, Mithras more often than not as Sol Invictus Mithras. Isis was the most polyonymous deity of all (see above, p. 994). None of these gods claimed exclusive worship, but worshippers evidently often felt that they ought to address their particular god as if he or she was the supreme god. This tendency was not restricted to the educated, or even to city-dwellers. It was found also in villages of inland Anatolia.¹⁴⁵ It was henotheism rather than monotheism, but in the long run it tended to undermine polytheism. It is surely not a coincidence that the second century did see great progress of Christianity in Asia Minor, North Africa and Rome itself. Nevertheless, for the great majority of individuals, and for all political communities, the distinctions between the deities of the pantheon, each with its own sanctuary and quite distinctive ritual, remained essential.

Another development of profound significance was in the relationship of religion to morality. The gods of Graeco-Roman religion had never been indifferent to the way in which their worshippers behaved, but the interest was indirect. Moral rules were established by family and city, but not, except in a few special areas, by divine commandment. The gods were interested in the observance of moral laws, and might sometimes punish offences against them, mainly because they were interested in the welfare of their city which depended on moral laws being kept.¹⁴⁶ But the only area of behaviour which the gods kept under continuous observation was ritual, that is festivals and sacrifices. By the second century, however, it was widely agreed that the one essential form of worship was moral behaviour, even though the actual rules of conduct were still not seen as divine commandments.

¹⁴² Festugière (1949–54) II passim; Dillon (1977). ¹⁴³ MacMullen (1981) 67–8, 86–7.

¹⁴⁴ Nilsson (1950) 546–52; also Veyne (1986), and n. 129 above.

¹⁴⁵ Dunand and Levêque (1975); Solmsen (1979) 8–25; MacMullen (1981) 87–94; Mitchell, *Anatolia* II 45–51. ¹⁴⁶ Liebeschuetz (1979) 39–54, 90–100.

Moral decision-taking and moral self-education were topics of central concern to philosophical writers of the early empire. Seneca, Musonius Rufus and Epictetus assume that readers have a lifelong concern to become more perfect morally. By reading his *Meditations* we can observe the emperor Marcus Aurelius actually trying to do this. Men still served the state, but by deliberate choice, and the ultimate judgement whether they had succeeded or not was their own. Stoic philosophy taught that the only calamity is to have acted shamefully by choice, and when a Stoic or stoically influenced Roman came to grief he found consolation in the thought that no real harm can come to a good man. What gave men brought up in the Graeco-Roman tradition the incentive to self-improvement was the belief that they possessed a faculty of reason which was a spark of the divine substance ruling the universe.¹⁴⁷ The idea was not new. But the emphasis was. A religious concern for moral perfection was also found, at a lower social level, among the students of Hermetic writings, among the followers of Isis, Jupiter Dolichenus and Mithras, and most intensely among villagers of Phrygia and Lydia where the gods were seen as the custodians of just dealings in village and family.¹⁴⁸ It is certainly not a coincidence that in the course of the second century Christianity won many followers in this area. But the teaching of Paul implies that concern for moral purity and fear of divine punishment for sin were predominant preoccupations of the inhabitants of coastal cities, too.

A world view focusing on the divine origin of the soul and on the gods' rationality and good tended to strain the acceptability of the central ceremony of all traditional cults, the sacrificial offering. This was not new,¹⁴⁹ but criticism now gathered weight. If gods were pure spirit and reason, what they really required was purity of mind, 'spiritual sacrifice'.¹⁵⁰ The cynic philosopher Demonax at Athens refused to sacrifice on principle, and the same is said to have been true of Apollonius of Tyana.¹⁵¹ Rational criticism could not by itself destroy an institution which was so intimately linked with so many aspects of social life. But the third century saw a decline in the importance of sacrifice relative to the accompanying sacrificial feast,¹⁵² which helps to explain why in the fourth century the suppression of sacrifice by Christian emperors met with surprisingly little opposition.

If the soul is of divine origin, it should be able to communicate directly with the source of its existence; there should be a 'language of the gods'.¹⁵³ In the classical civic religion communication between gods and men was mediated through a public institution, a college of priests, or a

¹⁴⁷ Foucault (1984) 101–17; Epictetus II.8.11; I.17.27. ¹⁴⁸ Mitchell, *Anatolia* 1 187–94.

¹⁴⁹ Attridge (1978); Brown (1979, 1980); Ferguson (1980).

¹⁵⁰ Ferguson (1980) 1151–89; Hanson (1980) 913–18; Turcan (1984) 215–19; cf. Sen. *Ben.* I.6.3; Pers. I.69–75; Gal. *De usu partium* III.10. ¹⁵¹ Lucian, *Demon.*; Philostr. I.1, IV.11; Euseb. *Praef. Evang.* IV.13.

¹⁵² Price, *Rituals* 229. ¹⁵³ Lane Fox, *Pagans* 168–261.

temple-based oracle.¹⁵⁴ But in this period there was a growing tendency to bypass such channels of communication. Healing provides an exceptionally well-documented example. Traditionally, healing took place in temples. The patient slept in a sanctuary, such as that of Asclepius at Epidaurus or Pergamum, and the god, appearing in a dream, suggested a remedy.¹⁵⁵ But Aristides the valetudinarian orator saw dream visions of Serapis, and above all Asclepius, wherever he happened to be, and wrote up his experiences as 'Sacred Discourses'. One might say that Aristides exploited his illness to establish a lasting relationship of friendship with the god.¹⁵⁶ The emperor Marcus Aurelius seems to have had comparable experiences, even if he did not describe them in detail.¹⁵⁷ Isis worship, the Chaldaean Oracles and the Hermetic writings all assume that individuals can establish a specially close relationship with god, and that such holy men can lead pupils along the same way (see above, p. 1000). Apollonius of Tyana established a reputation as a holy man in regular communication with the gods probably already in his lifetime, the second half of the first century, even though his biography by Philostratus belongs to the late second century.¹⁵⁸

Oracles continued to be consulted, but individualism had made great headway in divination. Both astrology and magic, including the sophisticated and high-minded variant of theurgy, were serviced not by traditional sanctuaries but by experts qualified to provide information on the basis of professional knowledge. Belief in astrology and the practical application of that 'science' were more widespread than ever.¹⁵⁹ First the solar calendar, then the seven-day week, had made it easier to understand and to use, and had therefore widened the appeal and availability of this kind of divination.¹⁶⁰ Clients came from a wide social spectrum.¹⁶¹ Astrology was useful, but also frightening, for it seemed to provide irrefutable evidence that human life was predetermined and completely out of the individual's control. Concern at this was one of the factors which induced people to undergo initiation.¹⁶²

Magic was, if anything, even more widespread than astrology.¹⁶³ Magic was condemned by law. It was also refuted by reasoning. But the concept of what precisely constituted magic was hazy, and certainly not the modern one. The elder Pliny vigorously denied the efficacy of magical techniques but at the same time accepted a wide range of procedures, especially in healing, which we would describe as magical.¹⁶⁴ Magic was employed for many purposes, among them healing, arousing love, harming enemies, or

¹⁵⁴ North (1990). ¹⁵⁵ Herzog (1931); Weinreich (1909).

¹⁵⁶ Dodds (1965) 39–45; Behr (1968). ¹⁵⁷ E.g. *Med.* 1.17; cf. Price (1986) 19–20.

¹⁵⁸ Bowie (1978). ¹⁵⁹ Toutain (1907–20) II 179–208; Cramer (1954); Gundel (1950a), (1950b).

¹⁶⁰ Nilsson (1950) 465–85; Colson (1920) 47; Bara (1989) 126–9.

¹⁶¹ Cramer (1954); Neugebauer and van Hoesen (1959). ¹⁶² Müller (1961) 79–85.

¹⁶³ Toutain (1907–20) II 210–26; Audollent (1904); Tupet (1986) 2602 n. 43.

¹⁶⁴ *HN* xxx.1–6; contrast II.95, xxxvII.15; cf. Koves-Zulauf (1972), (1978) 192–9.

ensuring the victory of a particular charioteer. But one of its principal uses was to obtain information about the future, and it was used not only to manipulate the supernatural but also to provide religious experience.¹⁶⁵

A related phenomenon was a new respect for freely circulating writings claiming divine inspiration, principally the Chaldaean Oracles and the Hermetic writings. It was a weakness of traditional paganism that it was founded on 'ancestral custom', unsupported by an institutionalized priesthood or authoritative sources.¹⁶⁶ People's visualization and characterization of gods was based on mythology as interpreted by artists and poets.¹⁶⁷ The Hermetic writings and Chaldaean Oracles appealed in particular to intellectuals, and seemed to offer an authoritative foundation for a more philosophical religion. Men prepared to take the inspiration of writings like these on trust would have less difficulty than their ancestors in accepting the Christian bible as a revealed book of prophecy.

It is a paradox that a period which saw greater importance given to the existence of a supreme god, or first principle, also gave increased attention to the existence of a great number of 'demons', or lesser deities and spirits, intermediate between gods and men.¹⁶⁸ There appear to have been various reasons for this, both theoretical and practical. A transcendent concept of god required intermediaries between the supreme principle and the world of matter and man. The effectiveness of rites such as animal sacrifice or magic, which seemed unworthy of spiritualized and moralized gods, could be explained as working on demons.¹⁶⁹ Belief in demons was strengthened by the already ancient Graeco-Roman tradition of creating abstract deities to sacralize virtues, and other qualities, which were thought to have a great influence on the well-being of society. Indeed the creation of new abstract deities was an extremely active area of religion, especially in the Latin-speaking parts of the empire. Many new deities known simply as *tutela* or *fortuna* or *genius*, in each case qualified only by a sphere of duty, first received honours in the second and early third centuries.¹⁷⁰ The possibility of turning divine attributes like providence, wisdom, power or reason into independent abstract deities opened wide opportunities for the construction of speculative theological systems, some closer to philosophy, others to mythology, of which the most complicated were the constructions of the so-called Gnostics.¹⁷¹

In these speculations no problem loomed larger than that of the existence of wickedness and evil in the world. In traditional Graeco-Roman thought demons were not necessarily evil. In the course of the first and

¹⁶⁵ Hopfner 1921, cf. 1928; Betz 1986: xi–xxi. ¹⁶⁶ Beard (1990); Fowden (1986) 214.

¹⁶⁷ Veyne (1988).

¹⁶⁸ E.g. Maximus of Tyre *xii*, *xi*, *xvii*, *xli*; Plut. *De def. or.* 10–13; Apul. *De deo Soc.* 13; cf. Colpe (1975) 69–79; MacMullen (1981) 79; Brenk (1986).

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Lewy (1978) 259–359 on theurgy.

¹⁷⁰ Latte (1960) 331–41; Speidel (1978) 1542–55. ¹⁷¹ Grant (1967); Quispel (1981).

second centuries evil demons proliferated. The trend parallels the progressive moralization of the gods, and was the obverse of that tendency: if the gods are responsible only for good, how can so much evil come into the world unless through spirits which are positively wicked? It is presumably not a coincidence that Judaism, with its quite exceptional focusing on God's moral commands, seems to have been a principal source of ideas about the role of bad angels in the world, and that it was followed in this by Christianity.¹⁷² It is likely too that healing by exorcism, the casting out of evil spirits, originated in Judaism.¹⁷³

That some part of the departed should survive death is a very old belief indeed. But it is safe to say that up to the first century A.D. the classical world had no generally accepted belief about the fate of the soul after death, and that the outlook was on the whole pessimistic.¹⁷⁴ The greater emphasis subsequently put on the heavenly origin of the soul strengthened the hope for its survival after death, and led to the development of ritual which would restore the soul to its original state of purity. So many of the newer, and some of the older cults, acquired initiation ceremonies. But while initiation may have been thought in some vague way to improve the prospects of the soul after death, the prospect offered was an extremely ambiguous one, certainly far from being a promise that the personality would survive unchanged.

Roman religion, like every other religion, was concerned to reconcile its worshippers to the fact of death. It provided ceremonies for the funeral, it provided days for the commemoration and honour of the dead, and others for their appeasement and the purification of the house.¹⁷⁵ Family and friends honoured and commemorated their individual dead with annual offerings at the tomb and a banquet for the family around it. These ceremonies were by their nature very conservative. But in one respect there was a dramatic change. From around the second quarter of the first century, and gathering pace in the second century, disposal of the dead changed from cremation to inhumation.¹⁷⁶ Those who could afford to do so began to be buried in elaborately carved sarcophagi, which increasingly took the place of stelae, urns or grave-altars in Roman cemeteries. The change in burial custom may or may not reflect higher valuation of the human personality, and hence greater respect for its mortal remains.¹⁷⁷ It certainly produced a vast amount of artistic evidence which must express feelings about death.¹⁷⁸ The difficulty lies in decoding it.¹⁷⁹ In view of the range of themes and moods represented, it is certainly a mistake to look for a single message, or to assume that the image must refer to the future of the soul. Some themes evoke the possibility, or perhaps the wistful hope, of some

¹⁷² Grant (1967); Daniélou (1964) 101–92; Russell (1964) 234–62; Hamilton (1995); Michl (1962) esp. 80–2. ¹⁷³ Twelftree (1993) 21–52. ¹⁷⁴ Cumont (1923) 17–20, (1949) 55–108.

¹⁷⁵ Cumont (1949) 29–53. ¹⁷⁶ Toynbee and Ward-Perkins (1956) 112.

¹⁷⁷ Toynbee (1971) 40–1; Turcan (1958); *contra* Nock (1932).

¹⁷⁸ Cumont (1942); less dogmatic Koch and Sichtermann (1982). ¹⁷⁹ E.g. Turcan (1978b).

continued existence after death, above all representations of mythological mortals who were restored to life like Alcestis, or received immortality like Hercules, Endymion and Ariadne. Of these themes the one that recurs most often, and most strongly evokes a future after death, is that of Dionysus face to face with the sleeping Ariadne, immediately prior to waking her. The fact that Dionysiac initiation was believed by some to ensure some kind of survival makes the evocation of apotheosis very strong, particularly if the carving also includes implements associated with Dionysiac initiation. But Dionysiac tomb inscriptions show that worshippers even of this god had no firm expectation of a life after death.¹⁸⁰ It may well be that in general people were becoming more optimistic. The writer of a handbook could suggest immortality of the soul as a *topos* for a funeral speech, and epitaphs expressing hope of survival were more frequently carved on tombstones.¹⁸¹

A significant aspect of sarcophagus burial is that it was normally an altogether private form of commemoration. The deceased is magnified, but not for his performance as a public figure, or for services to the empire or city. Few of the sarcophagi are inscribed. If, as often, they were placed inside a mausoleum, sometimes linked to a villa, they would not have been seen by the mass of citizens. Whatever hopes or aspirations were expressed by the carvings on sarcophagi, the new form of burial itself represented a kind of deification in that it made use of mythological themes that had long been used to decorate temples. The effect was enhanced if the sarcophagus was placed in an architecturally elaborate temple-like setting: the tomb itself was assimilated to the dwelling of a god. The tendency was taken to extremes in funeral monuments, of which more than three hundred are known, on which a statue of a god, most often the popular Mercury or Hercules, was given the facial features of the deceased.¹⁸² This practice was surely not intended to imply that the deceased had turned into the god, but it does express an extremely high valuation of the private individual. What had traditionally been considered an exceptional civic reward for exceptional virtue, as shown for instance by the founder of a city,¹⁸³ and then a public honour reserved for the emperor and his close relatives, became a thinkable private possibility for more ordinary men and women.¹⁸⁴ The shift in values signalled by changing funeral practices had serious implications for the future of so civic a religion as classical paganism.

VII. CONCLUSION

This chapter has been written with hindsight to focus on developments which were to be prominent in the Christian future. But the age was

¹⁸⁰ Cole (1993). ¹⁸¹ Menander II.9 (414); Lattimore (1962) 97–103. ¹⁸² Wrede (1978).

¹⁸³ Cumont (1923) 111–67. ¹⁸⁴ Price, *Rituals* 35–6, 47–51; Dull (1975).

conservative and backward-looking, strongly concerned to retain and renew continuity with a classical past. This included a tradition of scepticism and this tradition too remained creative.¹⁸⁵ Juvenal the satirist wrote that only very young children believed in the underworld, and, by implication, in any survival of the dead.¹⁸⁶ Lucian's writings are full of fun at the expense of the traditional gods and their worship.¹⁸⁷ Sextus Empiricus argued vigorously that it is impossible to show that god exists or to assert anything about him.¹⁸⁸ The elder Pliny was quite sure that traditional religion was true only if reinterpreted completely in a naturalistic sense.¹⁸⁹ Marcus Aurelius clung to philosophy against an overwhelming sense of the pointlessness of life.¹⁹⁰ The state religion was defended by distinguishing it from superstition. But the dividing line was extremely narrow as can be seen from Tacitus' consistently critical comments on prodigies.¹⁹¹ Eventually, Augustine was able to use Seneca's *De superstitione* to discredit the traditional religion of Rome.

At the same time there is no overlooking the sheer quantity of traditional religious activity revealed by modern research. Moreover, it is no longer possible to designate it as cold and impersonal.¹⁹² Religion marked out the year, and brought a variety of entertainment as well as support and hope into the lives of all, not only ritual duties to priests. Paganism involved feasting, processions, games and theatricals. There was no entertainment that was not religious.¹⁹³ The ambiguity inherent in paganism as to whether an image is a representation of a god or actually the god himself meant that the presence of the divine might be experienced by the pious at any of the many temples, shrines or altars in town or countryside, quite apart from supernatural presences that might be sensed in groves or springs.¹⁹⁴ To all appearances ancestral paganism, scepticism and the new mood managed to coexist in stable equilibrium to the end of the second century and beyond.

¹⁸⁵ Drachman (1922); Attridge (1978). ¹⁸⁶ III.149–52.

¹⁸⁷ E.g. *Iup. conf., Iup. Trag., De sacrificiis passim.*

¹⁸⁸ *Pyrrh.* III.3, *Adv. phys.* 1.49–194; cf. Barnes (1990). ¹⁸⁹ *HN* II. 14–27.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Cumont (1949) 116–19. ¹⁹¹ E.g. *Hist.* II.78. ¹⁹² Lane Fox, *Pagans* 102–67.

¹⁹³ Lane Fox, *Pagans* 66–7. ¹⁹⁴ Lane Fox, *Pagans* 114, 124 n. 3, 135–7.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

A.D.	Rome and Italy	Foreign Affairs	Literature, Philosophy and Art
	69 Accession of Vespasian (acclamation <i>July 1</i> , <i>lex de imperio</i> late <i>Dec.</i>)		
70	70 Vespasian at Alexandria; reaches Rome (<i>Sept.–Oct.</i>)	70 Titus captures Jerusalem (<i>Sept. 8</i>); defeat of the Batavian revolt	70 Laying of foundation stone of the Capitoline Temple (<i>June 21</i>)
	71 Titus returns from the East (<i>Spring</i>), receives proconsular imperium and shares tribunician power with Vespasian. Jewish Triumph (<i>June</i>)		
	71–5 Banishment from Rome of <i>astrologi</i> and <i>philosophi</i>		
		72/3 Annexation of Commagene. Armenia Minor added to Cappadocia	
		c. 72–7 Annexation of Emesa	
	73–4 Censorship of Vespasian and Titus; adlec- tions to the Senate	73 or 74 Fall of Masada (<i>May</i>)	
	75 Visit of M. Julius Agrippa II and Berenice to Rome; banishment of Helvidius Priscus	74 Grant of Latin right to Spain	c. 75–79 Josephus, <i>Bell. Jud.</i> , Pliny. <i>Nat. Hist.</i>
		c. 77–84 Agricola governor of Britain	
	78 or 79 Conspiracy of A. Caecina Alienus and Epirus Marcellus		
	79 Death of Vespasian (<i>June 24</i>). Accession of Titus. Eruption of Vesuvius (<i>Aug. 24</i>). Fire at Rome		

A.D.	Rome and Italy	Foreign Affairs	Literature, Philosophy and Art
80			80 Dedication of Colosseum; destruction of Capitoline Temple by fire 80 Dedication of arch of Titus
	81 Death of Titus (<i>Sept.</i> 13). Accession of Domitian		82 Dedication of restored Capitoline Temple (<i>Dec.</i> 7)
	83 Domitian's triumph over the Chatti		
	83/4 Increase of legionary pay		
85	85 Domitian <i>ensor perpetuus</i>	85 or 86 Revolt of Nasamones in Africa 85–88 Dacian war	
	86 Inauguration of the Capitoline Games		
	88 Ludi Saeculares held		
	89 Edict against <i>astrologi</i> and <i>philosophi</i>	89 Rebellion of L. Antonius Saturninus	
90		91 <i>Lex Imitana</i>	90s Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>
	93 Pliny praetor. Trials of Baebius Massa, Herennius Senecio, Helvidius Priscus, Arulenus Rusticus	c. 93–120 Vindolanda tablets written	92 Palaces on the Palatine completed c. 93–4 Josephus, <i>Ant. Jud.</i>
95	95 Philosophers expelled from Italy. Flavius Clemens and Acilius Glabrio put to death		
	96 Assassination of Domitian (<i>Sept.</i> 18). Accession of Nerva; adoption of Trajan		96 Dedication of Forum Nervae
	98 Death of Nerva (<i>Jan.</i> 27). Accession of Trajan		98 Tacitus, <i>Agricola</i> and <i>Germania</i>
	99 Trajan enters Rome (<i>autumn</i>)		
100	100 <i>Alimenta</i> schemes instituted	100 Foundation of Thamugadi 101–2 First Dacian War	100 Pliny the Younger, <i>Panegyricus</i>
		c. 104 Withdrawal from Scotland	103 Reconstruction of Circus Maximus
105		105–6 Second Dacian War, creation of province of Dacia	

	106–11	Creation of province of Arabia		107/8	Dedication to Mars Ultor of monument at Adamklissi	
				c. 108	Tacitus, <i>Historiae</i>	
110	c. 109–12	Pliny the Younger governor of Bithynia-Pontus		112	Dedication of the Forum Traiani (<i>Jan.</i>)	
	113	Trajan leaves Rome for war against Parthia (<i>Oct.</i> 27)		113	Trajan's column	
	114	Annexation of Armenia, Mesopotamia and Assyria		c. 113	New harbour at Ostia completed	
115	115	Capture of Ctesiphon				
	115–17	Jewish diaspora revolt				
	116	Revolt against Rome in the East				
117		Death of Trajan (by <i>Aug.</i> 9); accession of Hadrian (<i>Aug.</i> 11)				
118		Execution of four consuls. Hadrian reaches Rome (<i>July</i> 9)	118		118–128	Reconstruction of Pantheon
120		Antoninus consul		c. 120	Tacitus, <i>Annales</i>	
			121–5			Hadrian's first provincial tour
			122			Hadrian visits Britain, construction of wall began. Second Moorish revolt
			124			Hadrian's first visit to Athens and Eleusis
125				c. 126		Death of Plutarch
	c. 127	Appointment of four consular legates for Italy				
			128–32			Hadrian's second provincial tour
130			130			Aelia Capitolina founded on site of Jerusalem. Antinoupolis founded by Hadrian (<i>Oct.</i> 30)
			131/2			Inauguration of the Panhellenion
135			131–5			Bar Kochba revolt
				131/2		Completion of temple of Olympian Zeus at Athens

A.D.	Rome and Italy	Foreign Affairs	Literature, Philosophy and Art
		131–7 Arrian governor of Cappadocia	
136	Adoption of L. Commodus; execution of Julius Servianus		135 Temple of Venus and Rome dedicated
138	Antoninus adopted As co-regent (<i>Feb.</i> 25). Death of Hadrian (<i>July</i> 10)		
140	140 First consulship of Marcus Aurelius	139–142 Construction of Antonine wall in Britain	139 Dedication of Mausoleum of Hadrian
145			143 Herodes Atticus and Fronto consuls
150		152 Peace re-established in Mauretania Caesariensis and Tingitana	<i>c.</i> 143–4 Aelius Aristides, <i>Eis Rhomen</i>
155		157–8 Operations against Dacian tribes	145 Temple dedicated to Divus Hadrianus
160	160 Marcus Aurelius and L. Verus appointed consuls designate	159 Dacia divided into three parts	
161	161 Death of Antoninus Pius (<i>March</i> 7). Accession of Marcus Aurelius; L. Verus given the title Augustus	160 Risings in Africa suppressed	
165		162–166 Parthian war of L. Verus	<i>c.</i> 162–200 Galen at Rome
<i>c.</i> 166	Appointment of senatorial <i>juridici</i> for Italy	166–170s Plague spreads from Seleuceia to Asia Minor, Egypt, Italy and the Rhine	
		166 Marcus Aurelius and L. Verus celebrate a joint triumph (<i>Oct.</i> 12)	
		167–175 Marcommanic wars	
169	169 Death of L. Verus (<i>Jan.</i>)	172 Revolt of Boukoloï in Egypt	174 Marcus Aurelius begins his <i>Meditations</i> ; trial of Herodes Atticus
170			
175		175 Revolt of Avidius Cassius, governor of Syria (<i>April</i>). Cassius killed (<i>July</i>)	176 Arches of Marcus Aurelius
			176 (<i>after</i>) Column of Marcus Aurelius

- 177 Consulship of Commodus, who is named Augustus
- 177 *Tabula Banasitana*. Martyrdoms at Lyons
- 178–180 Germanic wars on Danube
- 180 Accession of Commodus
- 180 Death of Marcus Aurelius (*Mar.* 17)
- 182 Conspiracy of Lucilla
- 185 Fall of Perennis
- 186 Pertinax suppresses mutiny of the armies in Britain
- 188 Roman victory against revolt in Germany
- 190 Fall of Cleander
- 190 Pertinax crushes disorder in Africa
- 192 Murder of Commodus (*Dec.* 31)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ABBREVIATIONS

This list does not include the standard abbreviations used for literary works, legal sources, inscriptions, papyri etc.

<i>AAAS</i>	<i>Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes</i>
<i>AAntHung</i>	<i>Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>AArchHung</i>	<i>Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae</i>
<i>AC</i>	<i>L'Antiquité classique</i>
<i>AClass</i>	<i>Acta Classica. Proceedings of the Classical Association of South Africa</i>
<i>Acta RCRF</i>	<i>Acta Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum</i>
<i>ADAJ</i>	<i>Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan</i>
<i>AE</i>	<i>L'année épigraphique</i>
<i>AEA</i>	<i>Archivo Español de Arqueología</i>
<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>AIIN</i>	<i>Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica</i>
<i>AION</i>	<i>Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli: Archaeologia e Storia Antica</i>
<i>AJ</i>	<i>F. F. Abbott and A. C. Johnson, Municipal Administration in the Roman Empire. Princeton, 1926</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJAH</i>	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
<i>AJPb</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>AMN</i>	<i>Acta Musei Napocensis</i>
<i>AncSoc</i>	<i>Ancient Society</i>
<i>AncW</i>	<i>Ancient World</i>
<i>Annales (ESC)</i>	<i>Annales (Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations)</i>
<i>AnnNYAcSc</i>	<i>Annual of the New York Academy of Sciences</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>H. Temporini, W. Haase (eds.), Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt. Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung. Berlin and New York, 1972–</i>
<i>ANSMN</i>	<i>American Numismatic Society: Museum Notes</i>
<i>AntAfr</i>	<i>Antiquités africaines</i>
<i>AntClass</i>	<i>Antiquité classique</i>
<i>Antiq</i>	<i>Antiquity</i>
<i>AntJ</i>	<i>Antiquaries Journal</i>
<i>AR</i>	<i>Africa romana</i>

<i>ArchAnz</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<i>ArchCant</i>	<i>Archaeologia Cantiana</i>
<i>ArchClass</i>	<i>Archaeologia Classica</i>
<i>ArchDelt</i>	Ἀρχαιολογικὸν Δελτίον
<i>ArchEpb</i>	Ἀρχαιολογικὴ Ἐφημερίς
<i>ArchErt</i>	<i>Archaeologiai Ertesitö</i>
<i>ArchJ</i>	<i>Archaeologiai Journal</i>
<i>Arb Vestnik</i>	<i>Arbeološki Vestnik</i>
<i>ARID</i>	<i>Analecta Romana Instituti Danici</i>
<i>ASAA</i>	<i>Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente</i>
<i>AW</i>	<i>Antike Welt</i>
BAR	British Archaeological Reports, British Series
BAR s	British Archaeological Reports, International Series
<i>BASOR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>BASP</i>	<i>Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists</i>
<i>BCAR</i>	<i>Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale in Roma</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</i>
<i>BCTH</i>	<i>Bulletin archéologique du comité des travaux historiques</i>
<i>BdArch</i>	<i>Bolletino di Archeologia</i>
<i>BEFAR</i>	<i>Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome</i>
<i>BLAL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London</i>
<i>BIBR</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'institut historique belge de Rome</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, University of London</i>
<i>BJ</i>	<i>Bonner Jahrbücher</i>
<i>BMB</i>	<i>Bulletin du Musée de Beyrouth</i>
<i>BMCRE I</i>	H. Mattingly, <i>Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, I: Augustus to Vitellius</i> . London, 1923
<i>BMCRE II</i>	H. Mattingly, <i>Coins of the Roman Empire in the British Museum, II: Vespasian to Domitian</i> . London, 1930
<i>BRGK</i>	<i>Bericht der Römisch-Germanischen Kommission des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>BSA</i>	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
<i>BSAO</i>	<i>Bulletin de la société des antiquaires de l'Ouest</i>
<i>BSNAF</i>	<i>Bulletin de la société nationale des antiquaires de France</i>
<i>BullHistMed</i>	<i>Bulletin of the History of Medicine</i>
<i>ByzSt</i>	<i>Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i>
<i>CBA ResRep</i>	<i>Council for British Archaeology, Research Reports</i>
<i>CE</i>	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>Classical Journal</i>
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>C&M</i>	<i>Classica et Mediaevalia</i>
<i>CPb</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>CRAI</i>	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>

<i>CT</i>	<i>Les Cahiers de Tunisie</i>
<i>CV</i>	<i>Classical Views</i> [= <i>EMC</i>]
<i>DaM</i>	<i>Damaszener Mitteilungen</i>
<i>DarSag</i>	C. Daremberg and E. Saglio, <i>Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines d'après les textes et les monuments</i> . Paris, 1875–1917
<i>DE</i>	E. de Ruggiero, <i>Dizionario epigraphico di antichità romana</i> . Rome, 1895–1988
<i>DHA</i>	<i>Dialogues d'histoire ancienne</i>
<i>DUJ</i>	<i>Durham University Journal</i>
<i>EA</i>	<i>Epigraphica Anatolica</i>
<i>EconHistRev</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>EE</i>	<i>Epbemeris Epigraphica. Corporis inscriptionum Latinarum supplementum, edita iussu Instituti Archaeologici Romani</i> . Berlin, 1872–9; 1903–13
<i>EJ²</i>	V. Ehrenberg, A. H. M. Jones, <i>Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius</i> . 2nd edn. Oxford, 1975
<i>EMC</i>	<i>Echos du monde classique</i> [= <i>CV</i>]
<i>EPRO</i>	<i>Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain</i>
<i>EpStud</i>	<i>Epigraphische Studien</i>
<i>ESAR</i>	T. Frank <i>et al.</i> , <i>An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome</i> . 5 vols. Baltimore, 1933–40
<i>EtudClass</i>	<i>Etudes classiques</i>
<i>FIRA</i>	S. Riccobono <i>et al.</i> , <i>Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani</i>
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HABES</i>	<i>Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien</i>
<i>HistTechnol</i>	<i>History of Technology</i>
<i>HSCP</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IA</i>	<i>Iranica Antiqua</i>
<i>IG</i>	A. Kirchoff <i>et al.</i> , <i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i> . Berlin, 1873–
<i>IGLS</i>	L. Jalabert, R. Mouterde <i>et al.</i> , <i>Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie</i> . Beirut, Paris, 1929–82
<i>IJ</i>	<i>Irish Jurist</i>
<i>IJNA</i>	<i>International Journal of Nautical Archaeology</i>
<i>IndustrArchRev</i>	<i>Industrial Archaeology Review</i>
<i>IstMitt</i>	<i>Istanbuler Mitteilungen, Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Istanbul</i>
<i>JARCE</i>	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
<i>JbAC</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JDAI</i>	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>JHM</i>	<i>Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences</i>
<i>JJP</i>	<i>Journal of Juristic Papyrology</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JLPeasStud</i>	<i>Journal of Peasant Studies</i>
<i>JNG</i>	<i>Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte</i>

JÖAI	<i>Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien</i> . Vienna 1898–
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRGZM	<i>Jahrbuch des Römisch-germanischen Zentralmuseums, Mainz</i>
JRoy.Soc.Arts	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Arts</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JS	<i>Journal des savants</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LA	<i>Libya Antiqua</i>
LS	<i>Libyan Studies</i>
LTUR	E. M. Steinby (ed.), <i>Lexicon Topographicum urbis Romae</i> . Rome, 1993–
MAAR	<i>Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome</i>
MAL	<i>Memorie dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, classe di scienze morali e storiche</i>
MBAH	<i>Münsterische Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte</i>
MDAI(D)	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Station Damaskus)</i>
MDAI(R)	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Römische Abteilung)</i>
MedhistJourn	<i>Medizinhistorisches Journal</i>
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École française de Rome, Antiquité</i>
MH	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
MSAF	<i>Mémoires de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France</i>
MUSJ	<i>Mélanges de l'Université St Joseph</i>
MW	M. McCrum and A. G. Woodhead, <i>Select Documents of the Principates of the Flavian Emperors</i> . Cambridge, 1961
NC	<i>Numismatic Chronicle</i>
NSc	<i>Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità</i>
OJA	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
OpInstRomFin	<i>Opuscula Instituti Romani Finlandiae</i>
ORom	<i>Opuscula Romana: Acta Instituti Regni Sueciae</i>
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i>
PBSR	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
PCPhS	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
PIR	E. Klebs <i>et al.</i> , <i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani</i> . Berlin 1897–8; E. Groag <i>et al.</i> , 2nd edn, 1933–
PP	<i>La parola del passato</i>
P&P	<i>Past and Present</i>
QAL	<i>Quaderni di Archeologia della Libya</i>
QTic	<i>Quaderni Ticinesi</i>
RA	<i>Revue archéologique</i>
RAAN	<i>Rendiconti dell'Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti di Napoli</i>
RAC	<i>Revue archéologique du centre de la France consacrée aux antiquités nationales de Auvergne etc.</i>
RAE	<i>Revue archéologique de l'Est et du Centre-Est</i>
RAN	<i>Revue archéologique de Narbonnaise</i>
RAO	<i>Revue archéologique de l'Ouest</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>

<i>RE</i>	A. F. von Pauly <i>et al.</i> , <i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , 83 vols. Stuttgart, 1894–1980
<i>REA</i>	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
<i>RecSocBodin</i>	<i>Recueil de la Société Bodin</i>
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des études grecques</i>
<i>REL</i>	<i>Revue des études latines</i>
<i>RendLinc</i>	<i>Rendiconti dell'Accademia nazionale dei Lincei</i>
<i>RFIC</i>	<i>Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica</i>
<i>RH</i>	<i>Revue historique</i>
<i>RHD</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire du droit</i> (= <i>Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis</i>)
<i>RHDFE</i>	<i>Revue historique de droit français et étranger</i>
<i>RbM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</i>
<i>RHPbR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RHR</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire des religions</i>
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<i>RIDA</i>	<i>Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité</i>
<i>RivStudi Lig</i>	<i>Rivista di Studi Liguri</i>
<i>ROMM</i>	<i>Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée</i>
<i>RPAA</i>	<i>Rendiconti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia</i>
<i>RPh</i>	<i>Revue de Philologie</i>
<i>RSA</i>	<i>Rivista storica dell'antichità</i>
<i>RSC</i>	<i>Rivista di studi classici</i>
<i>RSI</i>	<i>Rivista storica italiana</i>
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
<i>SCO</i>	<i>Studi Classici e Orientali</i>
<i>SDHI</i>	<i>Studia et documenta historiae et iuris</i>
<i>SIFC</i>	<i>Studi Italiani di Filologia Classica</i>
Smallwood, <i>GCN</i>	E. M. Smallwood, <i>Documents Illustrating the Principates of Gaius, Claudius and Nero</i> . Cambridge, 1967
Smallwood, <i>NTH</i>	E. M. Smallwood, <i>Documents Illustrating the Principates of Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian</i> . Cambridge, 1966
<i>SNR</i>	<i>Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau</i>
<i>TAPA</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>TAPhS</i>	<i>Transactions of the American Philosophical Society</i>
<i>TG</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Trierer Zeitschrift</i>
<i>World Arch</i>	<i>World Archaeology</i>
<i>YCS</i>	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Archäologie</i>

ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>
ZRG	<i>Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte</i>

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PART IV: ROME, ITALY AND THE PROVINCES (CHS. 12–22)

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