

SUETONIUS AND AUGUSTUS' 'PROGRAMMATIC EDICT'*

In his *Life* of the first *princeps*, in a chapter dealing with Augustus' 'retention of the state', Suetonius includes a verbatim quotation from an edict of Augustus which we know from no other source.¹

De reddenda re p. bis cogitavit: primum post oppressum statim Antonium, memor obiectum sibi ab eo saepius, quasi per ipsum staret ne redderetur; ac rursus taedio diuturnae valitudinis, cum etiam magistratibus ac senatu domum accitis rationarium imperii tradidit. sed reputans et se privatum non sine periculo fore et illam plurimum arbitrio temere committi, in retinenda perseveravit, dubium eventu meliore an voluntate. quam voluntatem, cum prae se identidem ferret, quodam etiam edicto his verbis testatus est: ita mihi salvam ac sospitem rem p. sistere in sua sede liceat atque eius rei fructum percipere, quem peto, ut optimi status auctor dicar et moriens ut feram mecum spem, mansura in vestigio suo fundamenta rei p. quae iecero. fecitque ipse se compotem voti nisis omni modo, ne quem novi status paeniteret.

Various aspects of the edict have been discussed, but the form of the edict, the precise language employed, the translation of these words and the overall significance of the pronouncement require further comment, not least because of the importance of any first-hand statement by Augustus on his political position or aspirations, but also to do justice to Suetonius, who later in *Augustus* comments on the care which Augustus took over the wording of his pronouncements.² I propose (i) to offer a commentary on the

*) The comments of J. E. Atkinson, M. T. Griffin and J. W. Rich have greatly improved this piece; the remaining infelicities are mine.

1) Suet. DA 28.1–2. H. Malcovati, *Caesaris Augusti Imperatoris operum fragmenta*, Turin 1969, edicta X.

2) DA 86.1: *praecipuamque curam duxit sensum animi quam apertissime exprimere*. The major dedicated discussion of this edict is by P. Ceausescu, *Das programmatische Edikt des Augustus – eine mißverständene Stelle*, RhM 124, 1981, 348–53, accepted by U. Lambrecht, *Herrscherbild und Principatsidee in Suetons*

individual words and phrases which comprise the decree, on the basis of this (ii) to propose a translation and finally (iii) to discuss the probable context and significance of the edict.

I. Commentary

Ita. *Ita* leading onto an *ut* clause for the purposes of asseveration – of the contents of the *ut* clause rather than strict result – is a feature of Roman prayers often with *ita me di ament, ut ...* (e. g. Plaut. Bacch. 892, Merc. 762).³

Mihi. The use of the first person is appropriate to an edict, that is a pronouncement based on magisterial authority on a question considered within his competence: the magistrate or emperor spoke in the first person.⁴ The addressees are unspecified, but can be understood as all those under Augustus' authority: in the context that may mean all citizens of the empire,⁵ or more likely a limited group, for example, the inhabitants of Rome. Although edicts in principle had no specific addressee, before the tetrarchic period there is little evidence of imperial edicts as a means of general communication to the empire rather than as responses to specific communities, individuals or requests.⁶

While *mibi* and the tense of *liceat* may indicate that Suetonius is providing us with a quotation in *oratio recta* consistent with an

Kaiserbiographien, Bonn 1984, 135 and O. Wittstock, Sueton. Kaiserbiographien, Berlin 1993, 498. Much basic groundwork was done by W. Weber, *Prinices: Studien zur Geschichte des Augustus*, Stuttgart/Berlin 1936, 27 nn. 134–7, but now all treatments must deal with K. M. Girardet, *Das Edikt des Imperator Caesar in Suetons Augustusvita* 28,2. Politisches Programm und Publikationszeit, ZPE 131, 2000, 231–43.

3) See the collection of examples by G. Appel, *De Romanorum precatationibus*, Gießen 1909, 177–8; Girardet (above, n. 2) 234: “einer emphatischen Bekräftigungsformel”.

4) M. Benner, *The Emperor Says: Studies in the Rhetorical Style in Edicts of the Early Empire*, Gothenburg 1975, 26. Cf. M. Kaser, *Zum Ediktsstil*, in: H. Niedermeyer and W. Flume (edd.), *Festschrift für Fritz Schulz*, Weimar 1951, vol. ii, 51–2.

5) Cf. A. von Premerstein, *Vom Werden und Wesen des Prinzipats*, München 1937, 124: “einem Edikt an die Bürgerschaft”.

6) See F. G. B. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World*, London 1977, 252–9. However, Jos. AJ 19.291 and P. Fayum 20 preserve provisions for empire wide display, and other Augustan edicts preserved via literary texts (Plin. Ep. 10.83, Macrob. Sat. 1.10.23) relate to subject matter that would have an empire wide relevance.

imperial edict, the two words are more precisely part of a vow (see on *Liceat*), of which Suetonius has omitted the condition(s) which Augustus imposed on himself and which would constitute its fulfilment.

Salvam ac sospitem. The combination of the cognate adjectives *salvus* and *sospes* is found from Plautus onwards: *filium /tuom modo in portu Philopoleum vivom, salvom et sospitem /vidi* (Capt. 872–4); *eamque eventuram exagogam Capuam salvam et sospitem* (Rud. 631); Lucilius, *sospitat, salut(e) inperit plurima et plenissima* (739 Marx), provides the only other example from Republican literature, but from the imperial period we have Ovid, *namque meis sospes multum cruciatibus aufers, /atque sit in nobis pars bona salva facis* (Pont. 3.2.3. Cf. the prayer which concludes the Epicedion Drusi, 472–4: *parsque tui partus sit tibi salva prior; /est coniunx, tutela hominum, quo sospite vestram, /Livia, funestam dedecet esse domum*) and two acclamations of Domitian by Martial (Ep. 2.91.1–2: *rerum certa salus, terrarum gloria, Caesar, /sospite quo magnos credimus esse deos*; 5.1.8: *o rerum felix tutela salusque, /sospite quo gratum credimus esse Iovem*). These parallels are sufficient to demonstrate that Augustus carefully chose the pair of adjectives for its archaic and religious associations and thus for the solemnity it imparts to his words. Benner notes the use of alliteration, which is marked, especially in this opening phrase, and attributes it to the elevated style Augustus has espoused for this particular, important edict which served as a manifesto of his political aims.⁷ This is fine, as far as it goes, but hardly brings out the religious nuance of the words, which is wholly appropriate to the specific context that Suetonius' *compotem voti* suggests.⁸ Although the only other use of the expression *compos voti* (Cal. 13) by Suetonius himself is clearly hyperbolic and should not be forced, the religious language has parallels in contemporary documents

7) Benner (above, n. 4) 81: "the reference to renown and the survival of his life-work after his own death is a feature of pathos". F. Hickson, *Roman Prayer Language: Livy and the Aeneid of Vergil*, Stuttgart 1993, 80 gives examples of the alliterative combination of *salvus* and *servare* in vows for the preservation of the state and/or emperor. On alliteration as a feature of Roman prayer language, see Appel (above, n. 3) 160–2 and on the cumulation of virtual synonyms, Appel (above, n. 3) 141–5.

8) R. Hanslik, *Die Augustusvita Suetons*, WS 67, 1954, 132: "Sueton unterstreicht diese Worte noch durch die abschließende Feststellung: *fecit . . . paeniteret*".

(IGRRP 4.251) and, even if formal public *vota* are not meant, individual examples are not excluded. At DA 58.2 Suetonius quotes Augustus' words *compos factus votorum meorum, p. c., quid habeo aliud deos immortales precari . . .* in his response to Valerius Messalla's proposal that he be given the title *Pater Patriae*. This is probably a comparable context to our edict. In all other instances when Suetonius uses *votum* it bears the technical sense of a vow undertaken, by individual or community, which would be repaid (DJ 85, DA 57.1, 58.1, 59, 97.1, Tib. 38, 54.1, Cal. 6.1, 14.2, 27.2, Cl. 45, N 46.2). Suetonius' *votum* should probably be understood as 'vow' and not 'wishes'.

Rem p(ublicam). There is "a notoriously elastic range of uses" for this term,⁹ and in an unembodied quotation such as this it is particularly difficult to pin down Augustus' usage. Edwin Judge includes this as an example of a kind of personification best translated as 'the country', while Edwin Ramage prefers "a general term for government or the Roman state".¹⁰ Augustus' use of *res publica* in other public documents, notably his *Res Gestae*, is also very difficult to pin down, indeed any ambiguity there may well be deliberate.¹¹ Other official documents, such as the Actium inscrip-

9) M. Schofield, Cicero's definition of Res Publica, in: J. G. F. Powell (ed.), Cicero the Philosopher, Oxford 1995, 66 (= M. Schofield, Saving the City: Philosopher-Kings and other Classical Paradigms, London 1999, 180). In general, see H. Drexler, Res publica, Maia 9, 1957, 245–81, R. Stark, Res publica, in: H. Oppermann (ed.), Römische Wertbegriffe, Darmstadt 1967, 42–110 and V. Ehrenberg, Some Roman concepts of state and empire, in: Man, State and Deity: Essays in Ancient History, London 1974, esp. 108–12. For the Augustan period, see E. A. Judge, Res Publica Restituta: A Modern Illusion, in: J. A. S. Evans (ed.), Polis and Imperium: Studies in Honour of Edward Togo Salmon, Toronto 1974, esp. 280–5. For the term as a myth subject to various interpretations, N. K. Mackie, Res publica restituta: a Roman Myth, in: C. Deroux (ed.), Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History, vol. iv, Brussels 1986, esp. 328–34. Ceausescu (above, n. 2) 351 stresses a concrete understanding of the word, the property connotations of *res populi*, following H. P. Kohns, Res Publica - Res Populi, Gymnasium 77, 1970, 392–404. For a general treatment of Suetonius' vocabulary for 'the state', see G. Alföldy, Römisches Staats- und Gesellschaftsdenken bei Sueton, Ancient Society 11/12, 1980/81, 361–4 and below p. 196.

10) Judge (above, n. 9) 302; E. S. Ramage, The Nature and Purpose of Augustus' "Res Gestae", Stuttgart 1987, 60.

11) Ramage (above, n. 10) 38–40 argues that the seven occurrences of *res publica* in *Res Gestae* each have a republican connotation, but his insistence (39 n. 69) that "Augustus is talking here about activities in 43 B. C. when the republic

tion, *pro* [r]e p[u]blic[a],¹² and the dedication by the Senate and people in 29 B. C., *re publica conservata*, on a triumphal arch can similarly bear more than one interpretation.¹³

Sistere. While examples of the expression *rem publicam* (*vel sim.*) *sistere* exist and may be relevant (cf. Cic. Verr. 2.3.223: *qui rem publicam sistere negat posse nisi ad equestrem ordinem iudicia referantur*; Livy 3.20.8: *non ita civitatem aegram esse, ut consuetis remediis sisti possit*; Virg. Aen. 6.857–8: *hic [Marcellus] rem Romanam, magno turbante tumultu / sistet eques*),¹⁴ the key combination is *salvus* and *sistere*. Livy records a prayer of Scipio Africanus before his departure for Africa: *salvos incolumesque ... mecum domos reduces sistatis* (29.27.3). Hickson questions whether Livy's use of *salvum sistere* for the traditional *salvum servare* may not "reflect a contemporary development in religious language" (perhaps to be seen in Augustus' words),¹⁵ but in essence we have a time-honoured formula, although not one which is indisputably a prayer formula. In his *Rudens* Plautus uses the combination twice on the lips of Daemones, *ego vos salvos sistam* (1049; cf. Trin. 743:

still existed, so that *res publica* can only refer to the republic" ignores amongst other considerations the range of meanings that *res publica* had during the Late Republic. In the words *rem publicam a dominatione factionis oppressam in libertatem vindicavi* (RG 1.1) it has been argued (cf. Cic. Phil. 3.1) that *res publica* stands not for the state but for the city of Rome and its concerns (H. Braunert, *Die Gesellschaft des römischen Reiches im Urteil des Augustus*, in: E. Lefèvre [ed.], *Monumentum Chilonense: Studien zur augusteischen Zeit*, Amsterdam 1975, esp. 41: "*res publica* ist vor allem noch nicht ‚eine abstrakte Idee‘ sondern ‚Objekt staatlicher Tätigkeit‘" and id., *Zum Eingangssatz der Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, *Chiron* 4, 1974, 343–58; rejected by Ramage and D. Kienast, *Augustus. Prinzeps und Monarch*, Darmstadt, 3¹⁹⁹⁹, 179 n. 37, 417 n. 236).

12) J. H. Oliver, *Octavian's Inscription at Nicopolis*, *AJP* 90, 1960, 180; W. M. Murray and P. M. Petsas, *Octavian's Campsite Memorial for the Actian War*, Philadelphia 1989, 76.

13) Ramage (above, n. 10) 58–9 argues that these refer to the Republic proper. On this inscription from the arch of Augustus, see J. W. Rich, *Augustus' Parthian Honours, the temple of Mars Ultor and the arch in the Forum Romanum*, *PBSR* 66, 1998, 100–14.

14) Quoted by Ceausescu (above, n. 2) 349.

15) Hickson (above, n. 7) 80. However, the extant examples from the *Acta Fratrum Arvalium*, which comprise the vast majority of examples of these formulae and postdate Livy, do not use *sistere* but *servare*. Insufficient extracts of the *Acta* from Augustus' and Tiberius' reigns exist to permit conjecture as to a new formula under Augustus or a revision to the traditional formula under Tiberius.

neque ita ut sit data / columem te sistere illi and Virg. Aen. 2.620: *tutum patrio te limine sistam*) and *omnia ut quidque infuere ita salva sistentur tibi* (1359). In the categories of *sisto* in Lewis & Short our example probably belongs in A5 ‘to cause to be in certain condition’ and in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* in (3) ‘to present (a person) or hand over (a thing) at the required time’ respectively. Which nuance we accept can only be decided by the wider context, in particular the following phrase, but there is no need to envisage a specifically legislative context.¹⁶

In sua sede. This expression has generally been understood in a metaphorical sense,¹⁷ although both detailed commentators on this passage envisage a more concrete sense. Ceausescu argues that *sedes rei publicae* must be understood in the sense that it is in several of Cicero’s works and in Livy, as the city of Rome, and thus comprises a boast by Augustus of having thwarted the intention of M. Antonius to transfer the capital of the empire to Alexandria.¹⁸ If, however, a metaphorical translation is adopted, e.g. ‘on its rightful base’, this could easily refer to constitutional and/or legislative action by Augustus, either with a general reference or even specifically to his claim *rem publicam ex mea potestate in senatus populi que Romani arbitrium transtuli* of the events of 13th January 27 B. C.,¹⁹

16) H. Grziwotz, *Das Verfassungsverständnis der römischen Republik*, Frankfurt 1985, 317–9 demonstrates that the expression *rem publicam constituere*, and thus the role of Octavian as *triumvir rei publicae constituendae*, did not mean creating a new constitution, but bringing to order the existing one.

17) P. Burmann, *C. Suetonii Tranquilli De Vita Caesarum*, Amsterdam 1736: “pro firmo ac stabili rerum statu”; D. Ruhnken, *Scholiam in Suetonii vitas Caesarum*, Leiden 1820: “firmus status rerum”; S. Pitiscus, *C. Suetonii Tranquilli Opera*, Frankfurt 1690: “sedes est βásiς, κήπις. Translatum a columnis vel colossis, qui magno nisu in suam basim restituuntur”. But Girardet (above, n. 2) 235: “nicht metaphorisch zu verstehen”.

18) Cf. Ehrenberg (above, n. 9) 115: “For Cicero Rome represented the state”. *Prov. Cons.* 34: *Numquam haec urbs summo imperio domicilium ac sedem praebuisset*; *Leg. Agr.* 1.18: *sedem urbis atque imperii*, 2.89: *sedem novae rei publicae*; *Sull.* 33: *urbem hanc ... sedem omnium nostri*; *Cat.* 3.26: *imperii domicilium sedesque*; *Rep.* 2.10: *hanc urbem sedem aliquando et domum summo esse imperio praebituram*; *Livy* 5.51.2, 27.34.14. On Octavian’s successful propaganda campaign to persuade the Roman people that Antonius intended to move the capital, see e.g. P. Ceausescu, *Altera Roma: l’histoire d’une folie politique*, *Historia* 25, 1976, esp. 86–8.

19) *RG* 34.1. On which see most recently W. Turpin, *Res Gestae* 34.1 and the *Settlement of 27 B. C.*, *CQ* 44, 1994, 427–37.

or to a successful ending of the *motus* which had thrown the state into chaos.²⁰

An attractive parallel appears in Cicero's *Pro Marcello* in which Cicero sets out what he considers remains for the dictator Julius Caesar to do *ut rem publicam constituas* (27) and which contains much of the vocabulary appearing also in this edict. Notably, *nisi haec urbs stabilita tuis consiliis et institutis erit, vagabitur modo tuum nomen longe atque late, sedem stabilem et domicilium certum non habebit* (29), which must be understood metaphorically.

Liceat. Well attested for prayers, indeed prominent in two other prayers by Augustus (his response to M. Valerius Messalla Corvinus' speech conferring on him the title *Pater Patriae* in 2 B. C. [Suet. DA 58.2]: *compos factus votorum meorum, p. c., quid habeo aliud deos immortales precari, quam ut hunc consensum vestrum ad ultimum finem vitae meae perferre liceat* and in a letter to Gaius Caesar in A. D. 1: *deos autem oro, ut mihi quantumcumque superest temporis, id salvis nobis traducere liceat* ... [Aul. Gell. 15.7.3]) and not suggestive of an oath.²¹ Cicero concludes two of his extant speeches with florid prayers, or invocations, to the Capitoline Triad which reveal that *licere* was used in solemn vows: *imploro et obtestor ... mihique post hac bonos potius defendere liceat quam improbos accusare necesse sit* (Verr. 2.5.189) and *meque atque meum caput ea condicione devovi ut ... mihi re publica aliquando restituta liceret frui* (Dom. 145).²² Hickson notes that "his prayer (Suet. DA 28.2) is particularly interesting because Augustus prays that he himself may be the agent of what was traditionally seen as a divine gift"; the conclusion to the section by Suetonius makes almost the same point: *fecitque ipse se compotem voti nisus omni modo*.²³

20) K. M. Girardet, Politische Verantwortung im Ernstfall: Cicero, die Diktatur und der Diktator Caesar, in: *Αἰνῶτα*: Festschrift für Carl Werner Müller, Stuttgart/Leipzig 1996, 226–8, demonstrates the contrast between *status* and *motus* which informs their use.

21) For suggestion concerning an oath, see M. Adams, C. Suetonius Tranquillus: Divi Augusti Vita, London 1939, 122 and W. K. Lacey, Augustus and the Principate, Leeds 1996, 86.

22) The parallels of vocabulary between the *De-Domo-sua*-passage, the audience of which was the pontifical *collegium*, and the Augustan vow are increased if one adds *in meas sedes restitutus* (145), but this, I would argue, demonstrates only the shared context of a vow, not borrowing from Cicero by Augustus.

23) Hickson (above, n. 7) 81.

Eius rei. The referent of this is taken as *sistere* in the translation of Lacey ‘of this’. While there are examples of *res* with a pronoun as an emphatic periphrasis for *id*, which is what these translations require (e.g. Plaut. Amph. 1068), it may be more appropriate to the elevated tone and self-congratulatory note of this edict to understand *res* as ‘action’ or ‘achievement’, as one of Augustus’ *Res Gestae* (cf. Rolfe’s ‘that act’).

Fructum percipere. A metaphor taken from agriculture (cf. Plin. NH 15.1), ubiquitous in Cicero (e.g. Verr. 1.1.33, 2.5.77, Sull. 1 and Fam. 10.32.5: *quarum rerum fructum satis magnum re publica salva tulisse me putabo*; cf. Caes. BG 7.27.2; Livy 45.25.9). The frequency of this metaphor may suggest either that it was ‘dead’ or that it spoke powerfully to the Romans. If the latter, then building metaphors do not stand alone in the edict and *sistere in sua sede*, which can be taken as an image from building, as Ceausescu argues, may be understood differently.

Quem peto. For the first person, see on *Mibi*. Augustus’ desire for an excellent reputation can be seen as an example of the typical upper class Roman desire for *gloria*.²⁴

Optimi. While the adjectives *bonus*, *optimus* and their cognate *Optimates* had a distinctive meaning in the ideological struggles of the Late Republic, those who fought for the pre-eminence of the Senate, it is not certain that Augustus is using it here in such a retrospective sense.²⁵ Rather a prospective sense is preferable: “no doubt this recognises that there was a *status (civitatis)* which was in some respects new: that was patent”.²⁶ For a comparable, non-constitutional use of *status* and an adjective in Suetonius, cf. Domitian’s foreboding concerning the reigns of Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian *beatiorum post se laetiorumque portendi rei publicae statum* (Dom. 23.2).

24) See e.g. D. C. Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome*, London 1967, 30.

25) E.g. J. Hellegouarc’h, *Le vocabulaire latin des relations et des partis politiques sous la république*, Paris 1963, 495–505; esp. 498: “ce sense «conservateur» d’*optimus* se maintient sous l’Empire. Auguste, qui prétend restaurer la légalité républicaine, appelle sa constitution *optimus status* ...”. The provisional title for Cicero’s *De Republica* was *de optimo statu civitatis et de optimo cive* (Cic. QF 3.5.1–2).

26) P. A. Brunt, *Augustus e la respublica*, in: *La rivoluzione romana*, Milan 1982, 239.

Status. Ceausescu argues for the technical character of *status* meaning constitution, 'Verfassung', comparing Augustus' letter to Gaius in A. D. 1 (quoted above under *Liceat*) and his vow in A. D. 9 after the defeat of P. Quinctilius Varus, *vovit et magnos ludos Iovi Optimo Maximo, si res p. in meliorem statum vertisset* (Suet. DA 23.2).²⁷ Rather, this Suetonian example highlights the key usage for this passage – in prayer or vow formulae without a constitutional sense. Livy has five examples of the formula *si res publica in eodem statu . . .* in the conditional clause of a vow (21.62.10, 22.9.10, 30.2.8, 30.27.11, 42.28.8) and the *acta* of the Arval Brethren preserve examples from A. D. 27 to the 2nd c. A. D. of the formula adapted to vows to Jupiter Optimus Maximus for the emperor's safety.²⁸ It is not clear whether the formula was originally specific to the censors' vow for the well-being of the state or whether it was used more generally.²⁹ *Denarii* minted in 16 B. C., *I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) S(enatus) P(opulus)Q(ue) R(omanus) V(ota) S(uscep-erunt?) Pr(o) S(alute) I(mp) Cae(saris) quod per eu(m) r(es) p(ubli-ca) in amp(liore) at(que) tran(quilliore) s(tatu) e(st)* (BMCRE vol. i. nos. 91–4) prove for the Augustan period the use of *status* in public vows. For consciousness of an etymological link between *status* and *sistere* cf. Cic. Rep. 1.49; such wordplays are a feature of Roman prayers. The use of *status* in the political sphere of the Late Republic is not too different in that it is predominantly general, of a condition or state of affairs, not a specific constitutional form, although in philosophical theoretical discussions it can approach the meaning of 'state'.³⁰ During the early principate the term enjoyed a greater prominence because its vagueness meant that it could incorporate the changes Augustus instituted.³¹ If any allusion to the language of public vows is rejected or thought to be tangential, Augustus' use of such a general term in a delicate political context remains intelligible (cf. Macr. Sat. 2.4.8: *quisquis praesen-*

27) Ceausescu (above, n. 2) 348. Cf. Hickson (above, n. 7) 99–100.

28) See J. Scheid, *Romulus et ses frères*, Paris 1990, 372–4.

29) Ehrenberg (above, n. 9) 107: "*status* is hardly ever used independently in a political sense; it means something like condition or state of affairs or constitutional structure"; cf. J. Christes, *Noch einmal Cicero, De Re Publica 1,33,50: eine Replik*, WJA 21, 1996/7, 221 n. 12.

30) Such a use is seen in Cicero's philosophical works (e.g. Rep. 1.33, Leg. 1.15).

31) See the detailed study by E. Köstermann, *Status als politischer Terminus in der Antike*, RhM 86, 1937, 225–40, who cites this edict (229) as evidence.

tem statum civitatis commutari non volet, et civis et vir bonus est).³² Later Seneca can call rule by a just king *optimus civitatis status* (Ben. 2.20.2), but that owes more to Stoic philosophy than to Augustus' language.

Auctor. Examples principally from Cicero show that *auctor* was commonly used in Republican political language of a leader who exercised powerful influence through intellectual qualities or military might, frequently in connection with *princeps*, of one who took the initiative to preserve the state.³³ As such it would be appropriate in whatever political context we place this edict, and be unobjectionable to 'Republicans'.³⁴ It is, however, tempting to see in Augustus' use an allusion not only to the *auctoritas* which was to be celebrated in *Res Gestae*,³⁵ but also to his own defining

32) A. J. Woodman, *Velleius Paterculus: the Tiberian Narrative* (2.94–131), Cambridge 1977, 280: "*status* came to be used by Augustus as a happily neutral term which aptly described the constitution which he inaugurated". Cf. Judge (above, n. 9) 305: "Augustus was prepared to go as far as to speak loosely of 'the order of the state' and even of the 'existing' order". K. M. Girardet, *Die Entmachtung des Konsulates im Übergang von der Republik zur Monarchie und die Rechtsgrundlagen des augusteischen Prinzipats*, in: W. Görler and S. Koster (edd.), *Pratum Saraviense: Festgabe für Peter Steinmetz*, Stuttgart 1990, 125 n. 165, suggests that *status* here has a precise constitutional sense, which he sees echoed in the coin of 16 B. C.

33) Hellegouarc'h (above, n. 25) 321–3. For the almost synonymous use of *auctor* and *princeps*, see H. Wagenvoort, *Studies in Roman Literature, Culture and Religion*, Leiden 1956, 56 ff.; for Ciceronian examples of the terms conjoined: Dom. 10, Prov. Cons. 25, Sull. 34, Orat. 3.63, Rep. 2.46.

34) Cf. the suggestion of J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *The Settlement of 27 B. C.*, in: Deroux (above, n. 9) 350, that the decree passed by the Senate on 13th January 27 stated that "the princeps would continue indefinitely as *auctor publici consilii*, or something of that kind". See now J.-L. Ferrary, *À propos des pouvoirs d'Auguste*, CCG 12, 2001, 113–5, arguing against a senatorial decree recognising any primacy or *cura*. Unofficially, though, and even before January 27 Vitruvius (1 praef. 1) could write of Octavian *de vita communi omnium curam publicaeque rei constitutione habere*.

35) The literature on *auctoritas* is vast, but the demonstration by R. Heinze, *Auctoritas*, *Hermes* 60, 1925, 354 ff., of a fundamental development in its use under Augustus, from meaning *auctorem esse* or the activity of the *auctor* to being a permanent quality attaching to the *auctor*, is relevant here, though it is not clear how far the development has progressed by the time of this decree. For a link with *auctoritas* cf. Ramage (above, n. 10) 60. A connection of *auctor/auctoritas* with the emperor's role as exemplar is emphasised by J. Hellegouarc'h, *Suetone et le principat d'après la vie d'Auguste*, in: *Filologia e forme letterarie. Studi offerti a Fr. Della Corte*, vol. iv, Urbino 1987, 86.

cognomen.³⁶ In the Senate in January 27 B. C. there was substantive debate over what to call Octavian on his assumption of a newly defined position within the Roman state and the title was an integral part of "the first constitutional settlement";³⁷ according to Dio and Suetonius, Octavian had wanted to be called Romulus as a recognition of his position as a second founder of Rome, but the regal associations of the term caused him to accept the proposal of Munatius Plancus that he be called Augustus.³⁸ *Augustus* is linked with *augur* and *auctor*, and thus with *augeo*, certainly in popular contemporary etymology of Augustus' time, if not by some

36) Cf. P. Grenade, *Essai sur les origines du principat*, Paris 1961, 68. K. Scott, *Tiberius' Refusal of the Title 'Augustus'*, CP 27, 1932, 49 plausibly suggests that the connection between *auctor* and *Augustus* explains the modest Tiberius' insistence that his role in an individual's approach to the Senate be described not as *auctor* to *suasor* (Suet. Tib. 27), although *auctor* had solid Republican precedents (e. g. Cic. Pis. 35).

37) See Liebeschuetz (above, n. 34) 352. C. J. Simpson, *Reddita omnis provincia. Ratification by the people in January, 27 B. C.*, in: C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, vol. vii, Brussels 1994, 297–309, argues convincingly that the award was made by Senate on 13th January and subsequently ratified by the people. Against his arguments for 15th January for the ratification may be the dedication of the new temple of Concordia Augusta by Tiberius in A. D. 10 on 16th January, a date which gains significance as the anniversary of Augustus' *cognomen* (see P. Gros, *Aurea templa. Recherches sur l'architecture religieuse de Rome à l'époque d'Auguste*, Rome 1976, 34) and the fact that the 15th was not a comitial day (see J. W. Rich and J. H. C. Williams, *Leges et iura p. R. restituit: a new Aureus of Octavian and the Settlement of 28–27 B. C.*, NC 1999, 204 n. 100).

38) Dio 53.16.7–8; Suet. DA 7. On Augustus' name, see e. g. M. Reinhold, *Augustus' Conception of himself*, Thought 55, 1980, 43: "pregnant with potent polyvalent implication"; Ramage (above, n. 10) 100–104; H. Erckell, *Augustus, felicitas, fortuna: lateinische Wortstudien*, Gothenburg 1952, 36–8, and of the older literature K. Scott, *The identification of Augustus with Romulus-Quirinus*, TAPA 56, 1925, 82–105. J. von Ungern-Sternberg, *Die Romulusnachfolge des Augustus*, in: W. Schuller (ed.), *Politische Theorie und Praxis im Altertum*, Darmstadt 1998, esp. 172–3, shows that Romulus-parallels are their starkest between 29 and 27. Perhaps also the success of M. Licinius Crassus in deserving *spolia opima* for his exploits in Macedonia (see J. W. Rich, *Augustus and the spolia opima*, Chiron 26, 1996, 85–127; H. I. Flower, *The Tradition of the Spolia Opima: M. Claudius Marcellus and Augustus*, CA 19, 2000, 49–53), which highlighted further Octavian's military failings, contributed to the rejection of the name Romulus.

For Plancus and a plausible reconstruction of his role in the creation of the name Augustus, see T. H. Watkins, *L. Munatius Plancus. Serving and Surviving in the Roman Revolution*, Atlanta 1997, esp. 124–7.

modern philologists.³⁹ For Magdelain,⁴⁰ *optimi status auctor* was a clumsy formula employed by Octavian to evoke from the Senate “une épithète brève et sonore qui résumât l’idéologie du héros fondateur”, namely Augustus, but to understand the longer phrase as an ‘explanation’ or justification of Augustus seems preferable to me.

Moriens. Given the fragility of Augustus’ health throughout his life, this is no certain guide to the possible date of the edict, although Suetonius records the extended and seemingly terminal illness of summer 23 (cf. DA 81.1, Dio 53.30.1–2) immediately before quoting this edict.⁴¹ Girardet ([above, n. 2] 237–8) conjectures a severe illness from Octavian’s absence from the consecration of the temple of Divus Julius on 18th August 29 which then becomes the terminus post quem for this edict. The word is probably no more than a deliberately vague future reference ‘whenever I die’.

Ut feram mecum spem. The second element of Augustus’ wish should be separated from the first as shown by the temporal *moriens*. As Augustus could not control what happened after his death, he could only ‘hope’.

39) Two ancient etymologies connect *auctor* and *augere* (Schol. Bern. Verg. Georg. 1.27, GL 4 Plac. A. 59); the standard etymological dictionaries concur (A. Walde and J. B. Hofmann, Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch, Heidelberg 3 1938, 80, 82–3; A. Ernout and A. Meillet, Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue latine, Paris 1932, 84–5) and a recent linguistic study argues that *auctor* is the agent noun to *augere* (M. T. Watmough, The Suffix *-tor*; Agent-noun Formation in Latin and other Italic Languages, Glotta 73, 1995–6, 109). For the link of *augustus* / *augur* with *augeo*, see e.g. Ovid, Fasti 1.609–12, Serv. Aen. 7.153. For collected bibliography on these related terms see H. Wagenvoort, Roman Dynamism, Oxford 1947, 12; Erckell (above, n. 38) esp. 27; for the most recent etymological research, G. Neumann, Zur Etymologie von lateinisch *augur*, WJA 2, 1976, 219–229. Cf. J. Linderski, The Augural Law, ANRW II 16.3, Berlin 1986, 2290 n. 577. Now too G. Zecchini, Il cognomen <Augustus>, ACUSD 32, 1996, 129–35, who emphasises the connection with augural terminology in the choice of *Augustus* and a role for Plancus and even for M. Valerius Messalla Rufus, author of a multi-volume *De Auspiciis*.

40) A. Magdelain, *Auctoritas principis*, Paris 1947, 59. I note but do not accept the suggestions of Grenade (above, n. 36) 147, who takes *auctor* in a narrow sense as legislator, and of Magdelain (57 n. 2), who canvasses the possibility of a precise juridical sense relating to the transfer of the state: a *mancipio dans* can be referred to as an *auctor*.

41) Accepted by e.g. von Premerstein (above, n. 5) 124.

Mansura in vestigio suo. Unlike almost every other phrase in the decree, this appears to lie outside the vocabulary of politics, religion or architecture. Where Livy combines *vestigium* with a possessive adjective, the context is military (21.35.12, 28.22.15; cf. Tac. Hist. 4.60), Pliny (Paneg. 73.2; cf. Ep. 6.7.2) has something like seat or place; only Servius (Aen. 10.771) glossing Virgil's description of Mezentius '*mole sua stat: hoc est in sua mole, ut dicitur, "in vestigio"*' has a usage which with some difficulty may be understood as 'architectural'.

Fundamenta rei p(ublicae). A common metaphor, employed by Cicero in oratorical, philosophical and epistolary works.⁴² For Ceausescu, however, given his interpretation of *sedes*, something more concrete would seem to be required, the actual foundations of the buildings built or restored under Augustus.⁴³ In contrast to this 'fundamentalist' approach Heinz Bellen prefers an allusion to the legislative programme Augustus was to pass.⁴⁴ However, neither of these views fits well with Cicero's use of the expression in a political context, namely his loudly proclaimed boast to have laid the foundations of the state on 20th December 44 B. C. in the delivery of his 3rd *Philippic* in which he proposed that Antonius' *imperium* be held invalid and that Octavian be thanked and honoured.⁴⁵ As we lack the evidence to say when and how the full expression *fundamenta rei publicae iacere* may have been used by politicians, Cicero's use cannot prescribe an interpretation of Augustus'.

42) Cat. 4.13, Phil. 4.1, 5.28,30, 6.2, Off. 2.78, Fam. 12.25.2. Cf. Benner (above, n. 4) 81.

43) Ceausescu (above, n. 2) 352–3: "auf diese Weise lassen sich vielleicht auch die der bautechnischen Fachsprache entnommenen Leittermini des Ediktes ... genauer erklären, die sich von Metaphern zu politischen Ausdrücken entwickelten, da sie sich ursprünglich auf die öffentlichen, die Republik begründenden Bauten bezogen und in diesem Falle auf die Bautätigkeit des Augustus hinweisen".

44) H. Bellen, *Novus status – novae leges*, in: L. F. Schumacher (ed.), *Politik – Recht – Gesellschaft: Studien zur Alten Geschichte*, Stuttgart 1997, esp. 184. Seneca makes Augustus claim *legibus urbem fundavi, operibus ornavi* (Apoc. 10.2) which the most recent commentator takes as derived from Virgil's description of Numa, *primam qui legibus urbem fundabit* (Aen. 6.810–1), although the wider context suggests that a reference to the claims of Augustus' *Res Gestae* is being made (P. T. Eden, *Seneca: Apocolocyntosis*, Cambridge 1984, 117. Cf. Ceausescu [above, n. 2] 351–2).

45) Phil. 4.1, 5.30, 6.2, Fam. 12.25.2.

Iecero. According to Lacey ([above, n.21] 86 n.41) this future perfect tense looks forward, not back from the moment of the decree's publication, but that Augustus at the moment of his vow is looking back at some evidence of his saving activity (which would, he hoped, increase) cannot be excluded and is preferable, whatever date we assign to the edict.

Before moving on to more speculative issues, it is worth summarising key conclusions from this detailed study of Augustus' edict: first and foremost, the form and the language indicate that the words Suetonius quotes were (part of?) a prayer, a *votum*, which the *princeps* wished to publicise; and secondly, that Ceausescu's 'fundamentalist' reading of the construction metaphor should be rejected.

II. Translation

On the basis of the phrase by phrase investigation of the language of the decree and its origin in the form of a solemn vow I propose the following translation:

May I so set the state safe and sound on its rightful base and reap the benefit of that achievement (which is my aim) that I may be called the author of the finest state of affairs and that I may carry with me, whenever I die, the hope that the foundations I have laid will remain in their place.⁴⁶

46) Cf. Scott (above, n.36) 46–7: "I pray that it may be my lot to establish the state safe and sound upon its foundations, and that I may reap of this act the fruit which I seek, namely that I may be called the author of the best state and that when I die I may bear with me the hope that its foundations will remain fast as I shall have laid them"; Judge (above, n.9) 302: "Augustus speaks of laying foundations for the nation, of settling it safe and sound in its place and of winning a reputation as the founder of the best possible order"; Lacey (above, n.21) 86: "he may set the *res publica* safe and sound in its place and see the fruits of this in such a manner that he may be called the author of the best state of affairs and carry with him when he died the hope that the foundations of the *res publica* which he had laid will remain in their place"; A. Thomson, revised by T. Forester, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, London 1926: "may it be permitted to me to have the happiness of establishing the commonwealth on a safe and sound basis, and thus enjoy the reward of which I am ambitious, that of being celebrated for moulding it into the form best adapted to present circumstances; so that, on my leaving the world, I may

III. Date and Context

At the outset it should be said that no definite answer to the date, and thus to the context, of Augustus' edict can be proposed. However, on the basis of the language that Augustus uses perhaps some of the answers proposed by other scholars can be excluded. Any discussion must take into account the immediate literary con-

carry with me the hope that the foundations which I have laid for its future government will stand firm and stable"; J. C. Rolfe, Suetonius, London, 1913: "may it be my privilege to establish the State in a firm and secure position and reap from that act the fruit that I desire; but only if I may be called the author of the best possible government and bear with me the hope when I die that the foundations which I have laid for the State will remain unshaken"; G. Williams, "Did Maecenas fall from Favor?" Augustan Literary Patronage, in: K. A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (edd.), Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate, Berkeley 1990, 274: "may I be permitted to establish the state safe and sound on its own foundation and therefrom reap the reward I want – to be named as the author of the best constitution and, dying, to take with me the expectation that the foundations of the state laid down by me will stay fixed firmly in their place"; S. Treggiari, *Leges sine moribus*, AHB 8, 1994, 91: "So may it be allowed to me to put the state safe and sound on its site and reap the harvest I seek, that I may be called the *auctor* of the best constitution and dying take with me the hope that the foundations of the state which I have laid will remain in place"; Ceausescu (above, n. 2) 353: "Möge es mir gelingen, die gerettete und unversehrte Republik in ihrem Sitz, nämlich in Rom (meine Ergänzung), zu befestigen und den von mir erwünschten Lohn dieses Verdienstes zu erreichen, nämlich zum Begründer der besten Verfassung erklärt zu werden und im Augenblick meines Todes die Hoffnung ins Grab mitzunehmen, daß die von mir gelegten Fundamente der Republik an der ihnen zukommenden Stelle fort dauern werden"; Wittstock (above, n. 2): "Möge es beschieden sein, den Staat an seinem Ort gesund und sicher zu begründen und die Früchte, die ich erstrebe, davon zu erhalten, nämlich als Urheber des trefflichsten Zustandes bezeichnet zu werden und bei meinem Tode die Hoffnung mitzunehmen, daß die Fundamente des Staates, die ich gelegt habe, unverrückt bleiben werden"; Girardet (above, n. 2) 235: "So möge mir denn erlaubt sein, das Gemeinwesen heil und unversehrt an seinem Platz fest hinzustellen und dafür den Lohn zu erhalten, den ich erstrebe: daß ich Urheber des besten (Verfassungs-)Zustandes genannt werde und daß ich im Sterben die Hoffnung mit mir nehmen kann, daß die von mir gelegten Fundamente des Gemeinwesens an ihrem Ort auf Dauer bleiben werden"; K. Bringmann, Von der *res publica amissa* zur *res publica restituta*. Zu zwei Schlagworten aus der Zeit zwischen Republik und Monarchie, in: J. Spielvogel (ed.), *Res publica reperta*. Zur Verfassung und Gesellschaft der römischen Republik und des frühen Prinzipats, Stuttgart 2002, 121: "so wahr es mir vergönnt sein möge, den Staat heil und unverletzt an seinem Platz zu verankern und daraus den Gewinn, den ich erstrebe, zu ziehen, Urheber des besten Zustandes genannt zu werden und sterbend die Hoffnung mit mir zu nehmen, daß die Fundamente des Staates, die ich gelegt habe, an ihrer Stelle bleiben werden".

text of the edict in Suetonius' *Augustus* and show an understanding of how the biographer has arranged his material.⁴⁷

After a key *divisio* setting out his intention to analyse Augustus' life by categories (*per species*) not chronologically Suetonius divides Augustus' public career into military and civilian spheres.⁴⁸ The culmination to this latter section deals with Augustus' tribunician power and the *regimen morum legumque*. Throughout the *Life* Suetonius is consistent in holding that Augustus held power until his death; indeed the words with which he ends the chronological introduction to Augustus' life make this plain and are key to understanding Suetonius' meaning in chapter 28: *primum cum M. Antonio M.que Lepido, deinde tantum cum Antonio per duodecim fere annos, novissime per quattuor et quadraginta solus rem p. tenuit*.⁴⁹ In the description of the tribunician power and the *regimen morum* Suetonius stresses that they were bestowed without temporal restriction *perpetuam ... aequae perpetuum – rem publicam tenuit*. Chapter 28 begins with words, *de reddenda re p.*, which for Suetonius, as the previous paragraph demonstrates, must mean only 'letting the state out of his power', i.e., first and foremost ceasing to hold any office or *imperium*. This is confirmed by, or is at least consistent with, the excuse that Suetonius attributes to Augustus *se privatam non sine periculo fore*. Although Suetonius is internally consistent when he writes *in retinenda [re publica] perseveravit*, his editorial tag, which is crucial for contextualising the edict, is at first sight perplexing, *dubium eventu meliore an voluntate. quam voluntatem ...* Suetonius' ostensible doubt is in fact a rhetorical device by which he emphasises the excellence of both the outcome of Augustus' decision and of his intention.⁵⁰ This *volun-*

47) For the text of Suet. DA 28.1–2, see p. 181.

48) The military section covers civil wars (9–18), conspiracies (19), foreign wars (20–23), and military reforms (24–25); the civilian career starts with his consulships (26), appointment as triumvir (27.1–4), tribunician power and his *regimen morum* (27.5).

49) Suet. DA 8.3.

50) See Girardet (above, n. 2) 233–4. J. Gascou, Suétone historien, Paris 1984, 719, rightly comments that the expression is "proche de l'obscurité dans son excessive densité". Cf. Suet. Cal. 1.1: *incertum pietate an constantia maiore, DJ 58.1: dubium cautior an audentior*.

tas must refer to Augustus' desire to retain control of the *res publica*.⁵¹

I have stressed the political context in which Suetonius places the edict, i.e. the introductory material of 28.1–2, and above all the fact that for Suetonius the edict is a public manifestation of Augustus' desire, *voluntas rem publicam retinendi*, to continue in a political role, but Ceausescu places greater emphasis on the continuation:

(28.3) *urbem neque pro maiestate imperii ornatam et inundationibus incendisque obnoxiam excoluit adeo, ut iure sit gloriosus marmoream se relinquere, quam latericiam accepisset. tutam vero, quantum provideri humana ratione potuit, etiam in posterum praestitit. (29.1) publica opera plurima extruxit, e quibus vel praecipua: . . .*

He argues that *urbem* . . . follows logically Augustus' edict: the *urbs* was the *sedes rei publicae*, and a list of Augustus' building activities demonstrates how he improved it, how he fulfilled his vow.⁵² To evaluate Ceausescu's idea it is necessary to discuss Suetonius' methods of introducing new headings within his material. Scholars have often spoken with some validity of 'rubrics', that is of deliberate signalling by the first word(s) of a chapter of a change of subject,⁵³ and Suetonius often does do this. In this context, however, does *urbem* . . . *excoluit* or *publica opera plurima* make best sense as a Suetonian 'rubric'? *Opera* are a definite Suetonian category of

51) Girardet (above, n. 2) 234 n. 18 understands *voluntas* as encompassing Octavian's /Augustus' whole political intention which he strove to realise throughout the course of his sole-rule, rejecting the views of scholars who understand *voluntas* of the intention either to retain control (e.g. Grenade [above, n. 36] 153) or to give it up (e.g. E. Cizek, Structures et idéologie dans «les vies des douze Césars» de Suétone, Paris 1977, 180; Gascou [above, n. 50] 719).

52) Ceausescu (above, n. 2) 350–1. Ceausescu berates Burmann (above, n. 17) for criticising the traditional paragraphing, but could have had greater fun with D. C. W. Baumgarten-Crusius, C. Suetoni Tranquilli opera, Leipzig 1816, who begins chapter 29 with *urbem neque*, "his verbis novum caput incipiendum esse" and rejects the emendation of *neque* into *namque* "exornatio urbis sola efficere non poterat, ne quem novi status paeniteret". Perhaps the connective *namque* encouraged the Renaissance paragraphing. Ceausescu's argument from Suet. Ve. 8.1 is far stronger, as there the first material picking up *rem publicam* . . . *ornare* of the *divisio* relates to Vespasian's rebuilding activities in Rome (Ve. 8.5).

53) E.g. A. F. Wallace-Hadrill, Suetonius: the Scholar and his Caesars, London 1983, 13.

assessment and the word itself appears as a clear ‘rubric’,⁵⁴ whereas the case for *urbs* is less clear cut at first sight.⁵⁵ However, the *divisio* which introduces Divus Augustus 46, *ad hunc modum urbe urbanisque rebus administratis*, and which sums up the preceding 17 chapters suggests strongly that *urbs* is the main unifying principle for the preceding material. If so, Burmann and his successors were justified in beginning a new paragraph with *urbem . . . excoluit*, the link required by Ceausescu is weakened and the whole section on Augustus’ offices ends with powerful *ipsissima verba* of the *princeps* – Augustus declared his intention *rem publicam retinere* – and Suetonius adds his unstinting approval.

In trying to pinpoint the date of Augustus’ edict, however, this is not much help and Suetonius’ words *quam voluntatem, cum prae se identidem ferret, quodam etiam edicto . . . testatus est*, if *identidem* and the imperfect *ferret* are stressed, could suggest an extended period. Moreover, *quodam* (as opposed to, for example, *illo*) does not suggest any famous edict which we should link to a prominent historical event. Nonetheless, many scholars have proposed definite contexts for the edict, many connected with pivotal moments in Augustus’ reign: in 29 shortly after Octavian’s return from the East,⁵⁶ in 28,⁵⁷ 13th January 27, when Octavian handed back his provinces to the Senate and people,⁵⁸ sometime in the summer of 23, after the major medical crisis suffered by Augustus,⁵⁹ in 18 or

54) E.g. Cal. 21, Cl. 20.1, Dom. 5.

55) Cf. DJ 44: *de ornanda instruendaque urbe . . . destinabat*, Cl. 18.1: *urbis annonaeque curam . . . egit*.

56) Girardet (above, n. 2) 231–2; 242: after 18th August but before autumn/winter 29.

57) F. Martino, *Storia della costituzione romana*, vol. 4, Naples 1974, 149. John Rich has suggested to me that he would consider also the edict of 28 by which Octavian proclaimed the annulment of his illegal acts.

58) Scott (above, n. 36) 46. For Magdelain (above, n. 40) 56–7, the dating of the edict is not problematic – as it mentions the intention to ‘rétablir la république’ it cannot be after 13th January 27 B. C., when the announcement was made, and as his intention was only made public on that day it cannot be before it. Therefore it must be January 13th: “nous sommes donc en présence de l’Édit par lequel Auguste publia sa décision de restaurer la constitution républicaine”. Cf. Grenade (above, n. 36) 147: “édit qui doit dater du 13 janvier 27” and V. Fadinger, *Die Begründung des Prinzipats*, Berlin 1969, 326.

59) Von Premerstein (above, n. 5) 124; G. E. F. Chilver, *Augustus and the Roman Constitution 1939–50*, *Historia* 1, 1950, 422; E. T. Salmon, *The Evolution of Augustus’ principate*, *Historia* 5, 1956, 458: “possibly in 23 B. C. although the year

17,⁶⁰ in 17 or 16,⁶¹ some time after 17,⁶² on 5th February 2 when Augustus was offered the title of *Pater Patriae*,⁶³ on the adoption of Tiberius 26 June A. D. 4⁶⁴ or even when Augustus was really dying in A. D. 14.⁶⁵

If we downplay the apparent indefiniteness of Suetonius' chronological indications and engage in the search for an appropriate context, a refinement of one of the above alternatives is worth consideration. Although there is no compelling reason to understand *in sua sede* concretely of Rome, Girardet's general contextualising of the edict in the early 20s⁶⁶ is plausible; the celebrations of the Secular Games in 17 B. C. clearly mark the new age and thus the conclusion of any process *rei publicae restituendae*, whereas the language of the edict looks forward to a future securing of the state. I would favour a later date than that suggested by Girardet, who rightly emphasises the parallel between the situation in 46, when Cicero gave advice to Caesar culminating in the words *reliqua pars est, hic restat actus, in hoc elaborandum est: ut rem publicam constituas* and that facing Octavian in 29.⁶⁷ However, his hypothesis of a 'pre-enactment' of the events of January 27, an offer to retire into private life followed by a senatorial request for him to remain with full consular powers and undertake the non-military salvation of the state, the subject of the edict, seems to me implausible. For, although the staging of *recusationes* was a powerful weapon in the Augustan armoury of negotiating his position within the Roman state, as the instances recorded by Dio show,

is uncertain"; Gascou (above, n. 50) 224–5; A. R. Birley, Q. Lucretius Vespillo (Cos. Ord. 19), *Chiron* 30, 2000, 737. Cf. Dio 53.30.1–3, 31.3; Zecchini (above, n. 39) 131.

60) Girardet (above, n. 20) 165–6: "Augustus selbst dürfte sein Gesetz von 18 v. Chr. als ein wesentliches Element der *fundamenta rei publicae* angesehen haben, die den von ihm erstrebten *optimus status* ermöglichen sollten".

61) J. M. Carter, Suetonius: Divus Augustus, Bristol 1982, 130. Cf. Lacey (above, n. 21) 86 n. 41.

62) Williams (above, n. 46) 274.

63) Judge (above, n. 9) 302: "no occasion is more appropriate". Judge also canvasses other dates: the renewal of Augustus' *imperium* in 18 and 13, the *ludi saeculares* of 17, vows for his health in 16, his return from Gaul and the voting of the altar of Augustan peace in 13.

64) One of many alternatives canvassed by Weber (above, n. 2) 27 n. 134.

65) Kienast (above, n. 11) 527.

66) Girardet (above, n. 2) esp. 236.

67) Girardet (above, n. 2) 240.

Girardet's hypothesis requires us to posit an otherwise unattested *recusatio* ignored by the source whose narrative account is the basis of discussions of the years 29–27.⁶⁸ My analysis of chapter 28 has emphasised the idea that Augustus is looking to a continuation of power, hence the edict should not be connected with Octavian's laying down of powers. I propose that this edict is best understood as one element of Augustus' public response to the senatorial decree and the subsequent popular vote of the *cognomen* Augustus, in the aftermath of his being voted a cumulation of provincial commands for ten years.⁶⁹ Possible support for this may be found in the carefully chosen language of the part of the edict which we possess if we can see an allusion to the new name of Augustus in the use of *auctor*. Certainly the edict proclaims Augustus' keenness to stress his role as (re-)founder of Rome and his vision of a continuing role for himself in Roman political life. He is, then, committing himself in a very solemn form to a mission of on-going salvation of the state. All of these factors are particularly relevant to what has often been called the 'first constitutional settlement', in fact a process beginning in 28 and concluded in January 27, in which the foundations of principate as an institution were laid.⁷⁰ This context is, I think, particularly attractive if Augustus was offered and also assumed general oversight of the *res publica*, but any such *cura* is not essential to the argument.⁷¹ Neither the situation

68) Cf. J. Béranger, 'Le refus de pouvoir', in: F. Paschoud and P. Ducrey (edd.), *Principatus: Études de notions d'histoire politiques dans l'Antiquité gréco-romaine*, Geneva 1975, 165–90. Girardet's subsidiary argument ([above, n. 2] 241) that reflections of the hypothetical *recusatio* of 29 can be detected in Livy's account (5.49–55) of the interactions between Camillus and the Senate after the Gallic invasion depends too much on the writing of the first pentad being contemporary with the former events, whereas there is a case to be made for seeing Livy as a writer of the triumviral period (e.g. P. J. Burton, *The Last Republican Historian: a New Date for Livy's First Pentad*, *Historia* 49, 2000, 429–46).

69) Cf. Magdelain, for whom the edict inspired the motion of Munatius Plancus. On the difficulties of Magdelain's order, see Chilver (above, n. 59) 422. A simple reversal overcomes these and a consequence would be to salvage the belief of Kenneth Scott, so often a most perceptive writer on the early principate, that the words of this edict "surely belong only to a solemn inaugural ceremony" ([above, n. 36] 46). On Augustus' provinces and powers in the settlement of January 27, see Ferrary (above, n. 34) 108–13.

70) For the importance of including all Augustus' key actions of 28 B. C. in the transition to the Principate, see Rich and Williams (above, n. 37) esp. 196–9.

71) See above Liebeschuetz quoted in n. 34; followed by Rich and Williams (above, n. 37) 211–2.

described in chapter 28 nor the edict give any support to those who see Augustus explicitly claiming to have 'restored the Republic', to their opponents or to those who think that he openly proclaimed a 'new order' (even though that was what in effect happened).⁷² Although Suetonius' authorial comment claims that what emerges was a *novus status*, the chapter is irrelevant to constitutional questions. Rather, Augustus looks forward to the ultimate fulfilment of his former triumviral role to have put the state on a firm footing.

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72) Cf. Salmon (above, n. 59) 458: "Surely if these words mean anything, they mean that Augustus, so far from claiming to have restored the old Republic, is insisting that he has devised a completely new (and he hopes) lasting type of government."