

DRUSUS AND THE *SPOLIA OPIMA*

According to Suetonius, Nero Claudius Drusus, the younger of Augustus' two stepsons, was said to have aspired to win *spolia opima*, that is, spoils taken from an enemy commander killed in battle. The aim of this paper is to consider what substance there may be in this claim and what light it may throw on Augustus' relationship with the princes of the imperial family.

I

Suetonius devotes the first chapter of his life of Claudius to Drusus, the emperor's father. After recounting Drusus' campaigns in the Alps and Germany, his death (in 9 B.C.) and posthumous honours, Suetonius makes the following statement (*Claudius* 1.4):

fuisse autem creditur non minus gloriosi quam ciuilis animi; nam ex hoste super uictorias opima quoque spolia captasse summoque saepius discrimine duces Germanorum tota acie insectatus; nec dissimulasse umquam pristinum se rei publicae statum, quandoque posset, restitutum.

[He is, however, believed to have been no less eager for glory than he was republican in his views. For it is held that he sought to win not only his victories but *spolia opima* from the enemy, often pursuing the leaders of the Germans all over the field at great personal risk, and that he never concealed his intention of restoring the old form of government, whenever he might have the opportunity.]

Suetonius has passed from stating the facts of Drusus' life to reporting qualities with which he was commonly credited, and characteristically yokes together two discrete topics: Drusus' desire for glory and his republican sympathies. There is no reason to suppose that he has drawn both items from the same source.

Suetonius goes on to report that some claimed that Augustus recalled Drusus because of his suspect opinions, and, when he delayed, had him poisoned, but he expresses his own disbelief in the story. Elsewhere he asserts, without qualification, that Drusus proposed in a letter to Tiberius that they should oblige Augustus to restore *libertas* and that Tiberius showed the letter to Augustus (*Tiberius* 50.1). Tacitus too reports that Drusus was believed to be intending to restore *libertas* if he came to power and that some held that this led to his death (*Ann.* 1.33.2, 2.82.2).

The story that Tiberius betrayed Drusus and Augustus had him poisoned deserves no credence: it is a typical example of the scandalous tales spawned by the gossip of the imperial court, and may well not have been invented until after the death in suspicious circumstances of Drusus' son Germanicus. There may be some substance in the allegation that Drusus had republican sympathies, as some recent writers have supposed.¹ However, Augustus himself professed his devotion to liberty and feigned reluctance when accepting renewals of his power. If the claim originated in any expressions of views on Drusus' part, they may have been innocuous. Drusus' personal qualities won him wide popularity, and that in itself may have been enough to start the rumour.²

¹ For example, B. M. Levick, *Tiberius the Politician* (London, 1976), 32–5, accepting the story of the letter but exculpating Tiberius; more cautiously, J. A. Crook, in *CAH*² 10.98–9.

² For his popularity with the citizen body, see Tac. *Ann.* 1.33.2, 2.41.3, 6.51.1.

How Suetonius came by the information that Drusus desired to win *spolia opima* can only be conjectured. The ultimate source might be a panegyric of Drusus, perhaps even one of the funeral orations pronounced by Tiberius and Augustus or of the accounts which Augustus later composed in verse and prose (Suet. *Claud.* 1.5; Dio 55.2.2). If so, the claim could be merely a rhetorical flourish embroidering the theme of Drusus' personal bravery.³ The tale may, however, be well founded: it may be that Drusus sought to excel not only in other ways but also through personal involvement in combat, and that he aspired to win the rare distinction of killing an enemy commander in battle. This would not have been an unrealistic ambition: if Drusus had managed to kill a German chieftain, he could readily be represented as the enemy's commander. Moreover, such conduct would have been in keeping with Roman tradition: Roman commanders often stationed themselves in or close to the front line in battle, and a high value was set on a commander's displaying personal bravery.⁴ Princes of the imperial family were under particular pressure to win distinction, and one way in which they might do so was by making a conspicuous show of personal valour.⁵ Germanicus is said to have often slain enemy warriors in hand-to-hand combat, and in this, as in other respects, he may have been emulating his father.⁶ It is true that the praises of Drusus' martial qualities in other literary sources do not highlight personal bravery, but in view of the paucity of the surviving material this can carry no weight.⁷

Further considerations will be adduced below which indicate that there may be substance in the tale. First, however, we must enquire what attitude Augustus would have been likely to take to such an ambition on the part of his stepson.

The winner of *spolia opima* fixed the armour of the commander whom he had killed to an oak stump in the form of a trophy, carried it in procession to the Capitol, and there dedicated it in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius. Tradition had it that only three Romans had dedicated *spolia opima*: Romulus, the reputed founder of the temple, A. Cornelius Cossus in the later fifth century, and M. Claudius Marcellus as consul in 222. It was disputed whether *spolia opima* could be won by any soldier or

³ Cf. Pliny's claim that Trajan would have won *spolia opima* if any of the enemy kings had dared to face him (*Paneg.* 17.3).

⁴ N. S. Rosenstein, *Imperatores Victi: Military Defeat and Aristocratic Competition in the Middle and Late Republic* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford, 1990), 116ff.; A. K. Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War 100 B.C.–A.D. 200* (Oxford, 1996), 154ff.

⁵ Cf. J. B. Campbell, *The Emperor and the Roman Army 31 B.C.–A.D. 235* (Oxford, 1984), 65, contrasting the circumspect conduct of emperors in battle with displays of bravery by princes of the imperial house. It is striking that no acts of personal valour are recorded of Tiberius, even in Velleius' eulogistic account of his campaigns: this may reflect Tiberius' characteristic preference for utility over show (Vell. 2.113.2: *utilia speciosis praeferens*).

⁶ Suet. *Cal.* 3.2: *hostem comminus saepe percussit*; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.20.3, 21.2.

⁷ See especially Vell. 2.97.2–3; *Consolatio ad Liuiam* 14–20, 259–62 (both sources stressing Drusus' excellence in both the civil and the military fields). There is little detailed characterization of Drusus in the *Consolatio*, which was not (as it purports to be) contemporary with Drusus' death, but a later composition: so recently J. Richmond, 'Doubtful works ascribed to Ovid', *ANRW* 2.31.2768–83; H. Schoonhoven, *The Pseudo-Ovidian Ad Liuiam de morte Drusi* (Groningen, 1992), 1–39; I. Cogitore, 'Praecursoria consolatoria: hypothèses de travail sur la *Consolatio ad Liuiam de Morte Drusi*', *MEFRA* 106 (1994), 1095–1117. A. Fraschetti, 'Sulla datazione della *Consolatio ad Liuiam*', *RFIC* 123 (1995), 409–27, and id., 'Indice analitico della *Consolatio ad Liuiam*', *MEFRA* 108 (1996), 191–239, defends the contemporary dating of the poem, but fails to account for the reference to the temple of Castor (not dedicated until A.D. 6) in lines 283–8. The sources on Drusus' career are conveniently collected at *PIR*² C 857; A. Stein, 'Claudius (139)', *RE* 3.2703–19.

only by a Roman commander fighting under his own auspices, and Augustus himself had entered this controversy, claiming to have discovered in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, which he had rebuilt, a linen corslet with an inscription showing that Cossus was consul when he won the spoils (Livy 4.20.5–11).

This ancient custom had acquired contemporary relevance in 29 B.C. when the proconsul of Macedonia, M. Licinius Crassus, had personally killed the king of the Bastarnae in battle, but had not gone on to dedicate *spolia opima* (Dio 51.24.4). It is usually supposed that Crassus formally applied to dedicate *spolia opima*, that Augustus had his claim disallowed and that Augustus' intervention in the dispute over Cossus' rank served to justify his rebuff to Crassus. I have, however, argued elsewhere that it is more likely that Crassus' right to dedicate *spolia opima* was never brought into question, that he himself chose not to exercise it, either of his own free will or as the result of informal pressure, and that Augustus' interest in Cossus' rank was purely antiquarian.⁹ However that may be, it is clear that the reason why Crassus did not dedicate *spolia opima* is that it would have been unwelcome to Augustus for a mere proconsul to win so exceptional an honour, all the more so because of its connection with Romulus, with whom he had long sought to associate himself.

The tradition of the *spolia opima* was subsequently exploited by the senate to honour Augustus himself. When in 20 B.C. the news arrived that the Parthians had returned the standards and captives which they had captured from Rome, the commemorative decrees passed by the senate included one prescribing that a temple of Mars Ultor should be erected on the Capitol to receive the standards 'in imitation of that of Jupiter Feretrius' (Dio 54.8.2). The decree placed Augustus on a par with Romulus. Romulus had founded a new temple on the Capitol to receive his spoils and had ordained that those who won spoils of the same kind in the future should dedicate them in that temple. By the senate's decree, Augustus was to found a new temple close to Romulus' to receive the spoils of a new kind which he had won, and no doubt the decree went on to prescribe that in the future, when Roman standards were recovered from enemies, they should be dedicated in the new temple. As I have argued elsewhere, Augustus probably declined the new temple on the Capitol, but accepted the senate's decree in a modified form: the temple of Mars Ultor was to be built instead in his new Forum, and the decree helped to determine the function and the imagery of the sanctuary, eventually dedicated in 2 B.C.⁹ It was in the great temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augustum that the standards recovered from the Parthians were eventually housed, and the temple was to be the repository of standards subsequently recovered from enemies.¹⁰ Prominent among the statuary in the new Forum was Romulus carrying his *spolia opima*. While the temple of Mars Ultor was being built, a temporary resting-place would have been required for the standards surrendered by the Parthians, and it is a tempting conjecture that the temple of Jupiter Feretrius was chosen for this purpose.

Levick accepted that Drusus was aiming to win *spolia opima* and linked it with his alleged republicanism. In her view, Drusus was issuing a challenge to Augustus: since Drusus happened to be consul in 9 B.C., Augustus would not be able to deny his right to claim the *spolia opima* as he had done to Crassus.¹¹ To my mind, this is mistaken. As already indicated, it is questionable what, if anything, Drusus' republicanism

⁸ J. W. Rich, 'Augustus and the *spolia opima*', *Chiron* 26 (1996), 85–127.

⁹ J. W. Rich, 'Augustus' Parthian honours, the temple of Mars Ultor and the arch in the Forum Romanum', *PBSR* 66 (1998), 71–128.

¹⁰ *RG* 29.2; Dio 55.10.4.

¹¹ Levick (n. 1), 34. So also J. Mottershead, *Suetonius, Claudius* (Bristol, 1986), 31, who,

amounted to, and whether Augustus had openly thwarted Crassus. In any case, although Augustus would not have wished a senator like Crassus to dedicate *spolia opima*, it would have been a different matter if a member of his family had won the right to do so. It is likely that one of the objects of Augustus' wars was to provide the princes of the imperial house with the opportunity to win military glory.¹² For Drusus to dedicate *spolia opima* would have been in accord with this goal. If Drusus did aspire to do so, rather than a challenge to Augustus, it was surely an aim which Augustus would have approved and encouraged, perhaps even prompted. Confirmation of this interpretation may be supplied by further consideration of some features of Augustan warfare, and in particular of the honours which accrued to Tiberius and Drusus for their campaigns in central Europe.

II

The division of the provinces in 27 B.C. had meant that Augustus acquired a near monopoly of military glory, and triumphs, common in the immediately preceding period, now became a rarity. Only those few proconsuls still in command of armies were eligible to triumph. Two proconsuls of Africa triumphed—L. Sempronius Atratinus in 21 and L. Cornelius Balbus in 19—but these were the last persons outside the imperial house to be accorded the honour.¹³ Augustus himself was regularly voted triumphs, but made a show of moderation by declining them all.¹⁴ Agrippa, who held independent *imperium*, was also voted triumphs, but it would have been tactless for him to accept what Augustus had declined, and so he too refused.¹⁵ This parade of restraint was in keeping with the new guise Augustus had assumed as *princeps*, first citizen, and also served to emphasize the uniqueness of his triple triumph of 29. Augustus succeeded nonetheless in promoting his own image as a pre-eminent military victor by a variety of means. One way in which he did so was through continued participation in ceremonies traditionally associated with a triumph. Thus in the same passage of the *Res Gestae* in which he recorded his refusal of further triumphs, he reports his twenty-one salutations as *imperator* and the fifty-five *supplicationes*, totalling 890 days, voted for victories won by him or under his auspices, and tells of his practice of depositing the laurels from his *fasces* on the Capitol on return to Rome, as commanders did at the end of a triumph.¹⁶

In the first years of his reign Augustus took direct command in various trouble-spots, campaigning in northern Spain in 26 and 25, and visiting Syria in 20 to recover the standards and prisoners from the Parthians. Thereafter he adopted a different

however, holds that 'Augustus may have secretly told Drusus that if he had a legitimate claim to the *spolia opima* it would be honoured.'

¹² Cf. P. A. Brunt, *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford, 1990), 448: 'so far as possible, the military glory accruing from aggrandizement of the empire was reserved to the reigning house, in furtherance of Augustus' dynastic plans'.

¹³ On the cessation of non-imperial triumphs, see W. Eck, 'Senatorial self-representation: developments in the Augustan period,' in F. G. B. Millar and E. Segal (edd.), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (Oxford, 1984), 129–67, esp. 138–9.

¹⁴ *RG* 4.1; Dio 53.26.5, 55.6.6; Florus 2.33.53.

¹⁵ Dio 54.11.6, 24.7 (19, 14 B.C.). Agrippa had already declined a triumph in 38 (Dio 48.49.3–4). C. J. Simpson, 'Agrippa's rejection of a triumph in 19 B.C.', *LCM* 16 (1991), 137–8, offers a different explanation for his refusals.

¹⁶ *RG* 4.1–2. For the deposition of the laurels see also Dio 54.25.4, 55.5.1 (discussed below). See further F. V. Hickson, 'Augustus *triumphator*: manipulation of the triumphal theme in the political program of Augustus', *Latomus* 50 (1991), 124–38.

pattern, by which he stationed himself at an appropriate location behind the frontier zone, but delegated military command to members of his family. Thus from 16 to 13 B.C. Augustus was based in Gaul, from where he directed the subjugation of the Alps and in particular the decisive campaign under the command of Tiberius and Drusus in 15. When the advance into central Europe was initiated in 12, the original intention may have been that Agrippa should command in Illyricum and Tiberius and Drusus in Germany, but on Agrippa's death Illyricum fell to Tiberius and Drusus retained the German command (Dio 54.28.1–2, 31.2–3). While the great advances were being made in Germany and the Balkans in the years 12–8, Augustus stationed himself either in northern Italy or in Gaul.¹⁷

Augustus was surprisingly young to withdraw from active service (he was only forty-seven at the time of the Alpine campaign of 15 B.C.). The new pattern may partly have been due to his poor health. However, the principal reason was surely that he had no need to win further military glory in person, and wished the young princes to do so. Although the succession was destined ultimately for his adopted sons Gaius and Lucius, his stepsons were nonetheless important members of his family, and, after the death of Agrippa, would have had to take over if anything befell Augustus himself. The interests of the dynasty required that they should win the glamour which only military success could bestow.

The military achievements of Tiberius and Drusus were duly rewarded with honours, but these were conferred in carefully graduated stages.¹⁸ Here, as elsewhere, Augustus sought to disarm resentment by making a parade of moderation. The constraints imposed served also both to emphasize the uniqueness of his own position as supreme commander and to give the honours conferred on his stepsons greater cumulative weight.

Tiberius and Drusus fought the Alpine campaign of 15 merely as Augustus' *legati*. They were thus entitled to no honours in their own right, but Augustus took a salutation as *imperator*, his tenth and the first which he had not won in person.¹⁹ In 12–11 they still ranked as his *legati*, and so Augustus did not permit them to accept salutations or triumphs. He himself took salutations in 12 (his eleventh) for Tiberius' successes in Illyricum and in 11 (his twelfth) for Drusus' victories in Germany (Dio 54.33.5).²⁰ However, the brothers also received a consolation prize: the *ornamenta triumphalia*, conferred on Tiberius in 12 and Drusus in 11.²¹ This gave them the same entitlement to triumphal dress as men who had triumphed, chiefly the right to wear

¹⁷ For Augustus' movements, see H. Halfmann, *Itinera Principum* (Stuttgart, 1986), 159, 162.

¹⁸ On the complicated problems posed by these honours and the associated imperial salutations for Augustus, see especially Th. Mommsen, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*² (Berlin, 1883), 13–15; T. D. Barnes, 'The victories of Augustus', *JRS* 64 (1974), 21–26, at 22; R. Syme, 'Some imperial salutations', *Phoenix* 33 (1979), 308–29 = *Roman Papers* 3.1198–1219, at 1200–4; J. W. Rich, *Cassius Dio: The Augustan Settlement* (*Roman History* 53–55.9) (Warminster, 1990), 210–24; D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle*² (Darmstadt, 1996), 66, 69, 76, 78; F. Hurler, *Les collègues du prince sous Auguste et Tibère* (Rome, 1997), 86–102.

¹⁹ The salutation is attested on milestones of the Via Iulia Augusta, the new coast road linking northern Italy with southern France, constructed in 13/12 B.C. (*CIL* v.8088, 8094 [= *ILS* 5816], 8100–1, 8105) and on undated coins of the Lugdunum mint (*RIC* i², Augustus 162–73).

²⁰ Augustus' eleventh salutation is not epigraphically attested, but the twelfth appears on inscriptions of his thirteenth and fourteenth tribunician years (respectively, 11/10 and 10/9 B.C.): *CIL* iii.3117, vi.701–2 (= *ILS* 91), x.8035. Both salutations appear on undated Lugdunum issues, the eleventh merely on two small issues (*RIC* i², Augustus 174–5), the twelfth on a large number of issues (*RIC* i², Augustus 176–84, 186–97).

²¹ Dio 54.31.4, 33.5; Suet. *Tib.* 9.2, *Claud.* 1.3.

the laurel wreath at the games. Shortly afterwards, the same privilege was granted to L. Piso for his campaign in Thrace, and thereafter it became the standard reward for successful generals outside the imperial family.²²

Dio also tells us of further honours conferred on both brothers in 11: the *imperium proconsulare* and the right to hold an ovation, or minor triumph (Dio 54.33.5, 34.3).²³ Some scholars have supposed that they actually celebrated ovations in 11.²⁴ However, the sources' silence makes it unlikely that Drusus ever held an ovation, and Velleius' references make it clear that the only ovation celebrated by Tiberius was the one which, as we shall see, he held in 9.²⁵ As Syme saw, the right to an ovation was not an award for successes already won, but prospective and linked to the grant of *imperium proconsulare*. Tiberius and Drusus would henceforth be eligible for imperatorial salutations, to be shared with Augustus, since they were still fighting under his auspices. In addition, they would be entitled to celebrate an ovation for future successes.²⁶

In 10 Tiberius and Drusus again campaigned successfully, and Dio reports that on their return to Rome at the end of the year they 'carried out what had been voted and whatever else was appropriate to be done in celebration of their victories'.²⁷ At first sight this seems to indicate that they then exercised their right to an ovation, but, as we shall see, Tiberius did not hold his ovation until the following year, and Drusus died before he could hold his. This suggests that they also did not take imperatorial salutations in 10, since, if they had done so, ovations would surely have followed. The explanation for this puzzling abstinence is perhaps to be found in the movements of Augustus, Tiberius, and Drusus. Each of them had probably not returned to Rome after the campaigning season of 11.²⁸ As a result Augustus in 10 still held his twelfth salutation, and new salutations could not be taken until he had returned and deposited those laurels.

In 9 Tiberius won further victories in Illyricum, and Drusus crowned his Germany campaigns by advancing to the Elbe. During the summer these successes probably received a multiple commemoration with Augustus taking his thirteenth imperatorial salutation and Tiberius and Drusus their first.²⁹

²² Piso: Dio 54.34.7. On *ornamenta triumphalia* see Rich (n. 18), 210–11, with further references.

²³ Drusus already held *imperium* as praetor in 11, and so his *imperium proconsulare* did not take effect until 1 January 10 B.C. Drusus' *ius ovandi* is also attested at Suet. *Claud.* 1.3. As usual, Dio refers to an ovation by the phrase 'to enter the city on horseback'. Ovations had been performed on horseback rather than on foot since that of Caesar in 44: J. W. Humphrey and M. Reinhold, 'Res Gestae 4.1 and the ovations of Augustus', *ZPE* 57 (1984), 60–2.

²⁴ So G. Rohde, *RE* xviii.1902; R. Seager, *Tiberius* (London, 1972), 26–7; Kienast (n. 18); G. Alföldy on *CIL* vi.40359.

²⁵ Vell. 2.96.3, 97.4, 99.1, 122.1.

²⁶ So rightly Syme, *Roman Papers* 3.1200–1; Hurlet (n. 18), 86–8, 97.

²⁷ Dio 54.36.4: ὅσα ἐπὶ ταῖς νίκαις ἐψήφιστο ἢ καὶ ἄλλως καθήκοντα τῇ γενέσθαι ἐπετέλεσαν.

²⁸ Rich (n. 18), 214. Augustus spent the winter in Gaul: Dio 54.36.2–4; *ILS* 92 (= *CIL* vi.30974); *P. Oxy.* 3020, 1.3ff; Halfmann (n. 17), 159.

²⁹ Augustus' thirteenth salutation is attested for his fifteenth tribunician year (9/8 B.C.) at *CIL* v.7231 (= *ILS* 94), vi.457 (= *ILS* 93), x.931; *CIL* vi.457 is dated to the consular year 9, and, since Drusus is named as consul, before his death. Tiberius' and Drusus' salutations are noticed at Tac. *Ann.* 1.3.2: *priuignos imperatoris nominibus auxit*. Tiberius' first salutation is not epigraphically attested, but must have been conferred before the dying Drusus sent his troops to greet him as *imperator* (Val. Max. 5.5.3; *contra* Barnes [n. 18], 22). Drusus is credited with a single salutation on his *elogium* from the Forum Augustum (*CIL* vi.40330) and on an inscription from Vicenza (*CIL* v.3109). Inscriptions from the city gates at Saepinum record him as *imp. II*: A. U. Stylow, 'Noch einmal zu der Tiberius-Inschrift von Saepinum', *Chiron* 7 (1977), 487–91. Hurlet (n. 18),

Later in the same year Drusus died, while still on campaign. Tiberius, who had dashed to Germany on the news of Drusus' illness, escorted the body back to Rome, accompanied from Ticinum by Augustus.³⁰ After reporting the funeral, Dio tells us that Tiberius held his ovation, and that Drusus would have done the same if he had lived.³¹ The natural interpretation of Dio's evidence is that Tiberius' ovation took place late in 9, after Drusus' funeral. Several scholars have, however, dated it to 16 January 9 B.C., which they take to be the date of his return from the previous year's campaign. This hypothesis is founded on an entry for 16 January in the *Fasti Praenestini* reading 'Ti. Caesar ex Pan[nonia]—]auit' (the lacuna is about nineteen letters long).³² However, this explanation of the calendar entry disregards the fact that it is an insertion by a later hand. The original version of the *Fasti Praenestini* was erected no earlier than A.D. 4, since the reference to Tiberius' adoption in that year was inscribed by the first hand.³³ This being so, it is altogether unlikely that a reference to the ovation which Tiberius had held many years before should have been omitted in the original version but added later. The entry may refer to Tiberius' ceremonial return to the city at the end of the campaigning season of A.D. 9, described by Suetonius (*Tiberius* 17.2).³⁴ However, Suetonius implies that that took place before the consuls of A.D. 9 left office. The notice in the calendar follows immediately after the dedication of the temple of Concordia Augusta on 16 January A.D. 10 (the first entry certainly made by the second hand), and may simply continue it, stating that the dedication was made by the returned Tiberius without implying that his return occurred on the same day.³⁵

Thus we may accept that, as Dio implies, Tiberius held his ovation late in 9 B.C., after his brother's funeral. He must have left the city after the funeral to re-enter in ovation, as his son Drusus Caesar was to do in A.D. 20, after Germanicus' remains had been interred (Tac. *Ann.* 3.19.3).

91–2, concludes that Drusus received salutations in both 10 and 9 B.C., but that is surely excluded by his failure to hold an ovation in 10 and by the failure of Augustus to take a salutation in both years (on all other occasions Augustus added one to his total when a member of his family received a salutation). The Saepinum inscriptions may be in error (like the inscription from the town's Forum in which Drusus is styled *imp. III*: *AE* 1959, 278). Alternatively, they may have counted the salutation which Drusus had received in 11, while he was praetor, which had been officially disallowed (Dio 54.33.5).

³⁰ Sources on Drusus' death and funeral journey include Livy, *Per.* 142; Suet. *Tib.* 7.3, *Claud.* 1.3; Val. Max. 5.5.3; *Cons. Liv.* 167–270; Sen. *ad Marc.* 3.1–2, *ad Polyb.* 15.5; Tac. *Ann.* 3.5.1; Dio 55.2.1–3. On the date of Drusus' death, see Hurlet (n. 18), 93–4, arguing for late October or early November. According to Tacitus, Augustus had gone to meet the body at Ticinum *asperrimo hiemis*.

³¹ Dio 55.2.4–5 (still in his account of the consular year 9 B.C.). Other sources for Tiberius' ovation: Vell. 2.96.3; Suet. *Tib.* 9.2; Jerome, *Chron.* 167 Helm.

³² L. R. Taylor, 'Tiberius' *ovatio* and the *Ara Numinis Augusti*', *AJP* 58 (1937), 185–93; Syme, *Roman Papers* 3.1202–4, 1215–9; Hurlet (n. 18), 97–100. G. Bersanetti, 'Tiberiana', *Athenaeum* 25 (1947), 3–16, dates the ovation to 16 January 8 B.C. This accepts the natural interpretation of Dio that the ovation followed the funeral, but disregards Dio's dating of it to the consular year 9 B.C.

³³ See A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae* 3.2 (Rome, 1963), 141–2 (arguing that the entry on the dedication of the temple of Castor in A.D. 6 was in the original version).

³⁴ So G. Wissowa, 'Neue Bruchstücke des römischen Festkalenders', *Hermes* 58 (1923), 369–92, at 375–7; E. Hohl, *Die Siegesfeier des Tiberius und das Datum der Schlacht in Teutoburger Wald* (SBBerl 1952, i). The alternative dating to 16 January A.D. 9, on the basis of Dio 56.1.1, overlooks the fact that the return ceremony mentioned there is said to have taken place *μετὰ τὸν χερμῶνα*.

³⁵ Cf. Degrassi, *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.398–400, proposing the supplement *ex Pan[nonia] reuersus dedica]uit*.

In 8 Tiberius transferred to Germany and brought the war there to a successful conclusion by obtaining *deditiones* from all the tribes who remained west of the Elbe.³⁶ In celebration Augustus took his fourteenth and Tiberius his second salutation, and on 1 January 7 B.C., Tiberius began his second consulship by holding a curule triumph.³⁷ It had doubtless been Augustus' intention throughout that both Tiberius and Drusus should advance to a full triumph when their respective wars were declared completed.

On Agrippa's death it fell to Tiberius as the elder of Augustus' two stepsons to take his place as husband of Augustus' daughter Julia. Dio (54.31.1) supposes that Tiberius also took Agrippa's place as Augustus' partner. This view has been adopted by many modern scholars, but is mistaken. Rather, Tiberius and Drusus were envisaged as a pair.³⁸ Although his seniority in age meant that Tiberius held his magistracies a few years before Drusus, from 11 on, as we have seen, they were advanced together in military honours. Like the Roman people, Augustus may have warmed to Drusus' more open personality, and in at least one respect Drusus had the advantage over his brother: he had been allowed to retain the German command, which was probably perceived as a more glamorous assignment than Illyricum.³⁹

A special distinction planned for Drusus is revealed by a curious detail included in Dio's notice of the preparations for Drusus' ovation, cut short by his death. Dio informs us that 'the *Feriae Latinae* were going to be repeated for his sake so that he could celebrate his triumph during the festival' (Dio 55.2.5).⁴⁰ The ancient *Feriae Latinae* were held every year at the sanctuary of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban Mount, some 27 km south of Rome. Thus, before entering Rome in ovation, Drusus was to make a triumphal procession to this sanctuary during the Latin festival.

This planned Alban triumph was a revival of a practice of the Middle Republic: on four occasions between 231 and 172 B.C. triumphs were held there by commanders who had been refused a triumph at Rome by the senate.⁴¹ In three of these four instances there was no accompanying celebration at Rome, but in 211 M. Claudius Marcellus combined an Alban triumph with an ovation: he had been allowed only an ovation rather than a curule triumph after the capture of Syracuse on the specious ground that Sicily had not been fully pacified, and celebrated an Alban triumph on the day before his ovation.⁴² There was also a more recent precedent. On 26 January

³⁶ Rich (n. 18), 223, with references.

³⁷ Joint salutation in 8 B.C.: Dio 55.6.4–5. Tiberius as *imp. II*: *ILS* 95 (7 B.C.), 147. The salutations were conferred in the early summer of 8 B.C. if *IRT* 319 is correct to style Augustus *imp. XIII* in his fifteenth tribunician year (9/8 B.C.). However, Spanish milestones dated to his sixteenth tribunician year have both *imp. XIII* and *imp. XIII* (*CIL* ii.4920, 4922, 4931, 4936). Tiberius' triumph: Dio 55.6.5, 8.2; Vell. 2.97.4; Suet. *Tib.* 9.2.

³⁸ So rightly Levick (n. 1), 31–2; Hurlet (n. 18), 81–5.

³⁹ That the emperor preferred Drusus to his brother was conjectured by R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), 425, and id., *History and Ovid* (Oxford, 1978), 153.

⁴⁰ αἱ ἀνοχαὶ δεύτερον τὴν χάριν αὐτοῦ, πρὸς τὸ τὰ νικητήρια ἐν ἐκείναις αὐτὸν εὐρτάσαι, γενήσεσθαι ἐμελλον. Dio regularly uses the term ἀνοχαί ('intermission') of the *Feriae Latinae*, probably because all the magistrates left the city to attend it, rather than in reference to the sacred truce enjoined on the participating communities (so A. Alföldi, *Early Rome and the Latins* [Ann Arbor, 1965], 30). He frequently includes details about the festival: see U. Boissevain, *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiarum quae supersunt* v. 64–5, s.v. ἀνοχαί.

⁴¹ See now T. C. Brennan, 'Triumphus in Monte Albano', in R. W. Wallace and E. M. Harris (edd.), *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History 360–146 B.C., in honor of E. Badian* (Norman and London, 1996), 315–37. Brennan questions Niebuhr's widely followed view that the practice was a revival of an archaic Latin rite (pp. 321–2).

⁴² Livy 26.21.1–6; Plut. *Marc.* 22.1; *vir. ill.* 45.6; Val. Max. 2.8.5.

44 B.C. Caesar, both consul and dictator, returned to the city in ovation from the Alban Mount after celebrating the *Feriae Latinae*.⁴³ This was the first occasion when an ovation had been co-ordinated with the Latin festival (the mid-republican Alban triumphs did not coincide with the festival).⁴⁴ However, Caesar's ovation, unprecedentedly, did not follow a military success, and so cannot have been preceded by an Alban triumph.

Thus it was planned that Drusus' return in 9 B.C. should be marked by a novel commemoration based on Marcellus' and Caesar's precedents, in which a triumph on the Alban Mount at the time of the *Feriae Latinae* would be followed by an ovation at Rome. Although, with the war unfinished, Drusus would not yet be eligible for a triumph, Marcellus' example provided a model of how in such circumstances military achievements might be celebrated as exceptional.⁴⁵

III

The examination of the military honours accorded to Tiberius and Drusus in the previous section reinforces the conclusion reached in section I about Drusus' alleged hankering after *spolia opima*. Augustus was eager for both princes to win military glory, and Drusus had been singled out for at least one special honour. He would thus have been delighted if Drusus had been able to add *spolia opima* to his other distinctions. If it is true that Drusus sought it, Augustus will have welcomed and had perhaps even prompted this ambition. On a strict interpretation of the doctrine that only a commander fighting under his own auspices could dedicate *spolia opima* Drusus would have been ineligible, since the German wars were still being conducted under Augustus' auspices, but Augustus would doubtless have been prepared to stretch this rule when it suited him. The grant of *imperium proconsulare* conferred in 11 could have been taken to make Drusus eligible for this honour as well as for salutations and an ovation, and the fact that he happened to be consul in 9 B.C. would provide further justification for a claim in that year.

The use of Marcellus as a model in the planned celebration of Drusus' return may be an indication that the claim that Drusus aspired to *spolia opima* is well-founded, for Marcellus was the last man to win such spoils.⁴⁶ It is true that Marcellus had dedicated his *spolia opima* at his first triumph in 222, but, as we have seen, the celebration planned for Drusus had eclectic features and could well have drawn on both of Marcellus' ceremonies.

Two further pieces of evidence provide a strong indication that immediately after his death Drusus was lauded for his personal valour and as a prospective winner (if he had survived) of *spolia opima*. The first is the arch which, as Suetonius (*Claudius* 1.3) and Dio (55.2.3) inform us, was erected in his honour at Rome on the Appian Way.⁴⁷

⁴³ *Inscr. Ital.* 13.1, pp. 86–7, 567; Dio 44.4.3, 10.1; cf. Suet. *Jul.* 79.1. See further S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), 320–31.

⁴⁴ Brennan, (n. 41), 333, n. 46.

⁴⁵ There may also have been a punning element in the design: Drusus would celebrate at Alba the extension of Roman power to the remote Albis (Elbe).

⁴⁶ It may be noted that there is also a link between Caesar's ovation and the *spolia opima*. When in 45/4 the senate granted Caesar the right to return from the *Feriae Latinae* in ovation, the numerous other honours conferred on him included the privilege of dedicating *spolia opima* 'as if he had killed an enemy commander by his own hand', and Dio reports these two honours together (44.4.3). Caesar's right to dedicate *spolia opima* is rejected without good reason by R. Syme, *Roman Papers* 1.166, 366, 419, n. 1. See further Weinstock (n. 43), 233.

⁴⁷ On Drusus' arch, see especially F. S. Kleiner, *The Arch of Nero in Rome* (Rome, 1985), 33–5;

The arch is depicted on coins honouring Drusus' memory issued by his son Claudius, namely *aurei* and *denarii* issued c. A.D. 41–5 and *sestertii* issued c. A.D. 41–50.⁴⁸ On all these issues it appears as a single arch surmounted by an equestrian figure, evidently representing Drusus, flanked by the trophies mentioned by Suetonius. On most of the issues Drusus is depicted in action. On some of the *aurei* and *denarii* he is charging, holding a spear levelled for attack and with his horse at the gallop (*RIC* i², Claudius 69–70). On the *sestertii* he is in combat, striking downwards with his spear and with his horse rearing. Artistic licence has produced some variation, but, as is generally recognized, the coins may be taken as evidence for the overall appearance of the arch, and we may accept that Drusus was shown not just on horseback, but in battle. Confirmation is supplied by a sarcophagus, now in Stockholm, which shows what is clearly the same arch: the equestrian figure is shown there as on *RIC* i², Claudius 69–70, with his spear at the level and his horse galloping.⁴⁹

It was natural that Drusus should be represented on his arch by an equestrian figure: since at the time of his death he had not yet earned a curule triumph, it would have been inappropriate to show him in a chariot. However, no other instance is known of an equestrian statue surmounting an arch showing the honorand in combat. As Lebek has argued, the decree by which the senate voted the arch probably specified that he should be depicted in this fashion.⁵⁰ This mode of portrayal was evidently intended as a tribute to the personal valour which Drusus had displayed in the battles of his German campaigns, and may also allude to his hopes of *spolia opima*. The same allusion may have been conveyed in the flanking trophies, although these also evoked the trophies which Drusus had actually erected, most notably at the Elbe (Dio 55.1.3; Florus 4.12.23).

The manner on which Drusus was represented on his arch thus shows that in the tributes paid to him after his death a strong emphasis was placed on his personal valour in combat. A clearer indication that his ambition to win *spolia opima* was included in these tributes is supplied by a little-noticed passage in Dio. As we have seen, it was Augustus' practice when returning to Rome after accepting an imperial salutation to dedicate the laurels from his *fascēs* on the Capitol, just as triumphing commanders did.⁵¹ Normally, the laurels were dedicated in the great temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. However, after Drusus' death Augustus departed from his usual practice. He avoided entering the city before the funeral and did not in fact do so until the consuls of 8 B.C. had taken office (Dio 55.2.2, 4.4–5.1). On entering the city, he dedicated his laurels not in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, but in the neigh-

S. De Maria, *Gli archi onorari di Roma e dell'Italia romana* (Rome, 1988), 272–4; W. D. Lebek, 'Ehrenbogen und Prinzentod: 9 v. Chr.–23 n. Chr.', *ZPE* 86 (1991), 47–78, at 71–8; L. Richardson, Jr, *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore, 1992), 25; G. Pisani Sartorio, in E. M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, vol. 1 (Rome, 1993), 93. Drusus' honours also included a tumulus at Mainz, on which see W. D. Lebek, 'Die Mainzer Ehrungen für Germanicus, den älteren Drusus und Domitian', *ZPE* 78 (1989), 45–82, esp. 46–62, with earlier bibliography. We have no information on how Drusus was portrayed at the Mainz monument.

⁴⁸ *RIC* i², Claudius 69–72 = *BMCRE* Claudius 95–103; *RIC* i², Claudius 98 = *BMCRE* Claudius 121–3.

⁴⁹ For illustrations, see Kleiner (n. 47), pl. vii; De Maria (n. 47), pl. 51. Some of the *aurei* and *denarii* (*RIC* i², Claudius 71–2) show Drusus in a quite different pose, raising his right hand in the act of address and with his horse at a walk. This pose seems to be modelled on that of Claudius on his British arch, which in some other respects apparently evoked the arch of Drusus (see *RIC* i², Claudius 30, 33–4, 44–5).

⁵⁰ Lebek (n. 47), 71–8, offering a sample text.

⁵¹ See above at n. 16.

bouring temple of Jupiter Feretrius (Dio 55.5.1). Dio notes that this was 'contrary to custom' (*παρὰ τὸ νομιζόμενον*), but offers no explanation.

A double explanation has been proposed by Bonnefond: the storm damage to the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus which Dio (55.1.1) reports as taking place the previous year, and a possible wish on Augustus' part to end that temple's monopoly of the ritual and to favour Jupiter Feretrius, linked since the senate's decree of 20 with the new temple of Mars Ultor which was still under construction.⁵² Neither of these suggestions is convincing. In Dio's account the storms took place early in the year, before Drusus' departure for Germany, so it is unlikely that the damage had not been repaired by the start of the following year. In any case the temple had probably been available for use at Tiberius' ovation later in 9 B.C.: Tiberius had presumably dedicated laurels from his *fascēs* there, and Dio's reference to a dinner on the Capitol (55.2.4) probably means that he followed the usual practice of giving the senators a dinner in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus.⁵³ It is true that the wide range of functions assigned to the temple of Mars Ultor at its dedication included some political activities which had formerly happened in the Capitoline temple, but Augustus was naturally scrupulous not to deprive the Capitoline deity of any benefits that he had formerly received. As Bonnefond recognizes, Jupiter continued to receive the laurels from triumphing commanders' *fascēs*, while they were now required to deposit their triumphal insignia (the sceptre and the crown) in the new temple.⁵⁴ Thus Augustus' action in 8 B.C. cannot have been intended to call Jupiter's monopoly of the laurels into question. We should rather seek for some special circumstance which made it appropriate on that occasion for the laurels to be dedicated not in the god's chief Capitoline temple, but in its smaller and reputedly older neighbour.

The answer to this puzzle is surely to be found in Drusus' ambition to win *spolia opima*. Tiberius will have given thanks for the year's successes in the traditional way by dedicating his laurels to Jupiter Optimus Capitolinus. When Augustus dedicated his to Jupiter Feretrius, he did so in tribute to Drusus' memory and as an affirmation that, if he had lived, he would have dedicated *spolia opima* there.

Thus Drusus' bravery in combat and his aspiration to the *spolia opima* bulked large in the commemorations which followed his death. He was depicted in battle action on his arch and Augustus varied his usual homecoming ritual to affirm that only his death had prevented him from becoming the fourth Roman to win *spolia opima*. Much was doubtless made of these themes in the memorial tributes which Augustus and others composed, and, as was suggested at the outset, one of these works may be the ultimate source of Suetonius' information on the matter. Strictly speaking, all this tells us only of how Drusus' memory was celebrated after his death, not of his conduct and ambitions during his lifetime. But it seems unlikely that the claims would have been given such prominence without some foundation.

Thus we may conclude that there is truth in the tale which Suetonius reports: as commander in the German wars, Drusus displayed conspicuous bravery in battle, engaging leading Germans in combat and seeking to win *spolia opima*. For Drusus to

⁵² M. Bonnefond, 'Transferts de fonctions et mutation idéologique: le Capitole et le Forum d'Auguste', in *L'Urbs: Espace urbain et histoire (Ier siècle av. J.-C. - IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.)* (Rome, 1987), 251–78, at 274–5.

⁵³ For such dinners, see *RE* viiA.510. Although commanders celebrating ovations wore myrtle rather than laurel wreaths, Tiberius' and Drusus' *fascēs* had presumably been wreathed with laurel since their salutations.

⁵⁴ *Suet. Aug.* 29.2; *Dio* 55.10.3; Bonnefond (n. 52), 258–9.

comport himself in this way may have been rash, but was not out of keeping with Roman tradition. In doing so, however, he was responding to the enormous pressure to excel to which he, like the other younger members of Augustus' family, was subject. It was hard to live up to such demands. Drusus' early death left his reputation unblemished. Others were less fortunate.⁵⁵

University of Nottingham

J. W. RICH
john.rich@nott.ac.uk

⁵⁵ I am very grateful to Barbara Levick and Thomas Wiedemann for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper.