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I.—The Political Atmosphere of the Reign of Tiberius

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F. B. Marsh set up an ingenious hypothesis concerning political parties in the time of Tiberius, showing how some men allied themselves to Germanicus while others followed Drusus. His theory needs modification, principally because he wrongly based it on the political habits of the Ciceronian Period. Actually the scattered opposition, arising from individuals and cliques rather than parties, had a special character, not Stoic in philosophy but marked by admiration for Cato and by cynical freedom in speech. The partisans of Germanicus and Drusus, courtiers rather than members of parties, engaged in intrigues which were serious because they became public.

This paper was evoked by an article by Professor F. B. Marsh in the *American Historical Review* on "Roman Parties in the Reign of Tiberius."¹ The substance of the article was reproduced in his book, *The Reign of Tiberius*,² essentially without change. The hypothesis he suggested is brilliant, but there are certain errors in

¹ *AHR* 31 (1926) 233–250.

² (Oxford, 1931) 62–68, 85–89, 116–118, 165, 168–170, 172–180, 188–191, 220. In the history of the problem there are to be found various works of no immediate value to us, as Hermann Schiller, *Geschichte des römischen Kaiserreichs unter der Regierung des Nero* (Berlin, 1872) book 4, chap. 4: "Die Opposition unter Nero"; Dav. Nemanic, "De stoicorum Romanorum primi Caesarum saeculi factione repugnante contra eam qua saeculum tenebatur rationem deque Taciti quod de eius factionis consiliis atque studiis de iisque qui ea sectabantur fecerit iudicio disputatio brevis," *Programm des k. k. Staats-Obergymnasiums zu Mitterburg* (Görz, 1880); F. Abraham, "Velleius und die Parteien in Rom unter Tiberius," *Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum Programm des Falk-Realgymnasiums Ostern 1885* (Berlin, 1885); V. Casagrandi, "Il partito dell'Opposizione Repubblicana sotto Tiberio, e la morte di Germanico Cesare," *Storia e archeologia romana, studi critici e polemici* (Genova, 1886) 179–212. I have not seen Wimmerer, *Die politische Bedeutung der Stoiker Roms im 1. christl. Jahrdt* (Hermannstadt, 1864), or R. Ch. Riedl, *Ueber den Parteistandpunkt des Tacitus* (Wien, 1875).

his approach, and more recent scholarship on Roman politics ³ urges us to revise his conclusions. It is advisable first to review his article in some detail.

The crucial passage on the point is in Tacitus *Annals* 2.43 (A.D. 17): Divisa namque et discors aula erat tacitis in Drusum aut Germanicum studiis. Tiberius ut proprium et sui sanguinis Drusum fovebat: Germanico alienatio patrum amorem apud ceteros auxerat, et quia claritudine materni generis anteibat, avum M. Antonium, avunculum Augustum ferens. Contra Druso proavus eques Romanus Pomponius Atticus dedecere Claudiorum imagines videbatur: et coniunx Germanici Agrippina fecunditate ac fama Liviam uxorem Drusi praecellebat. Sed fratres egregie concordēs et proximorum certaminibus inconcussi. Another important passage is found in *Annals* 4.17: ⁴ Instabat quippe Seianus incusabatque diductam civitatem ut civili bello: esse qui se partium Agrippinae vocent, ac ni resistatur, fore pluris; neque aliud gliscentis discordiae remedium quam si unus alterve maxime prompti subverterentur. Other passages ⁵ show that Sejanus tried to form a faction of his own on the basis of imperial patronage.

Marsh believed that there were three parties, one of Germanicus and Agrippina, one of Drusus, and one of Sejanus. He thought that the party of Germanicus was unfriendly to Tiberius, and that the party of Drusus was friendly to him. The party of Sejanus I feel we can disregard since under no circumstances can it be regarded as a party in the true sense of the word—it was merely a private effort, which contained few prominent people and collapsed as soon as its leader was gone.⁶

Marsh proceeded to draw up tables of the consuls from A.D. 4 to 37, classifying them as to whether they came from consular families or from old praetorian families, or whether they were lesser nobles and new men.⁷ His distinction between praetorian and consular families would probably not be valid for the Republic, and even less so for the early Empire. The interests of the praetorian and consular families normally would be almost identical, and he

³ In particular the admirable book by Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939), which will be cited as "Syme."

⁴ Cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.39f.

⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 4.2 and 68.

⁶ D. C. 58.8–9; 58.14–15 and 19.

⁷ He was perfectly ready to admit that our knowledge of the family relationships and of the *fasti* of the period is not entirely satisfactory.

overestimated the exclusiveness of the consular families. In addition, he did not draw the all-important distinction between old and new families; a really old praetorian family would doubtless be superior to a consular one which had attained its dignity in the reign of Augustus. Surely the old praetorian families would not form a single class with the lesser nobles. His statistics must therefore be suspect, but it would take a doctoral dissertation to analyze adequately the relative social status of the various men.

From the way in which new men seem to have obtained the consulship in greater proportions in certain periods, he concluded that Tiberius favored the higher aristocracy and that Germanicus favored the lesser nobility and new men. Since Marsh believed that Sejanus took over the remnants of the party of Germanicus, he tried to prove that he too favored the newer nobility. There may well be significance in his statement that most of the men mentioned as partisans of Germanicus were not of the higher nobility. He did not consider the question, however, of just how many men of old families were alive, competent, and eligible for the consulship at any given period.

It can be seen that the suggestions of Marsh are exceedingly valuable and deserve the most serious consideration. It is true that the heirs to the throne gathered partisans about themselves. How could that be helped? There had in the previous reign been an intimation, probably false, of a party around Marcellus,⁸ and Tiberius himself had had a party before the death of Augustus.⁹ Agrippa's personal power,¹⁰ too, had risen to such a point that Augustus must have sighed with relief at his death. It may well be that personal preferences of the princes account for certain men's rising to high public office, but the absolute determination of that fact requires a long prosopographical study which no one has yet made. Until it is compiled, there is no need for us to be swept along by Marsh's hypothesis. He may merely have made too much of the personal following which every Roman noble traditionally had. Dio says that Germanicus acquired friends through his services as an advocate, which was the normal Republican method.¹¹

⁸ Syme, 341; D. C. 54.3.2.

⁹ Syme, 434-437.

¹⁰ Vell. 2.93; Syme, 343f.

¹¹ D. C. 56.24.7, 26.1.

Marsh did at this point, however, say some things which leave one in doubt as to the soundness of his whole approach. He regarded the parties in the reign of Tiberius "as, in a sense, the direct descendants of those of the republic,"¹² and he described the Populares and Optimates as if they were real parties. Not only is this situation untrue for the Ciceronian Period, but it is extremely dubious that they should have survived from the time of Cicero to that of Tiberius. Marsh took the attitude that the Optimates favored Tiberius and the Populares favored first Germanicus, then Agrippina, and then Sejanus.

Marsh's thesis was questioned by two of his reviewers. J. P. V. D. Balsdon¹³ objected strongly to his views on political parties, and insisted that the passage in the second book of the *Annals* refers only to "domestic feuds at court," indicating no real division between old families and new. H. Stuart Jones also suspected Marsh's ideas on the parties and suggested that they would not work if our information were less fragmentary.¹⁴ No one seems to have criticized the theory at any length, and these two reviewers were perhaps too severe. Fault should be found not so much with the theory itself, which is useful, as with the fact that Marsh tried to prove too much with the scanty available evidence. The best corrective is to try to sketch the general political atmosphere of the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius.

A number of random objections can be made before we come to a more detailed treatment. Marsh's arguments are sound if he meant them to apply only to the court circle, which would of course include all persons of senatorial rank. His basic error was in transferring Ciceronian politics to the time of Tiberius, an obvious impossibility when one remembers all that had occurred in the intervening years.¹⁵ Actually I think there were no parties at all in the time of Tiberius, and Tacitus says as much in the opening chapters of the *Annals*. The best Tacitus can discover are court intrigues, and sporadic opposition which could not even be classed as factious. If Tacitus had known of a real party opposed to Tiberius, he would

¹² "Roman Parties" etc. (see note 1), 247f.

¹³ J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *JRS* 22 (1932) 241-243; cf. J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *The Emperor Gaius* (Oxford, 1934) p. 10, note 2.

¹⁴ *EHR* 48 (1933) 147.

¹⁵ One should likewise be careful not to transfer the Neronian opposition to the time of Tiberius.

not have bothered with his little drama¹⁶ of the senators who opposed Tiberius at the beginning of his reign and later suffered for it. Augustus had done so well his task of reconciling all parties¹⁷ that it took the tense reign of Caligula to begin to bring factions into existence again, both among the philosophers and in the senate, and the uneasy reign of Nero to finish the task of giving body and substance to them. There is not the slightest evidence that the new families worked in concert in the reign of Tiberius.

According to the way the parties ran in the Republic,¹⁸ once men rose to consular rank they usually ceased to show an interest in popular politics, and so the party of Germanicus would be constantly evaporating. It is also possible that standards had changed in this period. There was in prospect an equestrian nobility, quite content to remain in that status;¹⁹ no longer did everyone strive to become consul. There was also no program or platform involved in these so-called factions, for they could have been guided by nothing but self-interest. If they existed, they must have consisted of a very few men with selfish motives. In that case they would better be called court cabals than parties, since they would not penetrate too deeply into the senate, much less into the people, who no longer had the vote.

Marsh exaggerated the exclusiveness of the nobility in this period, forgetting that the old standards were largely a thing of the past, and that there were very few old families left active. Claudius went so far as to remark: *non lecturum se senatorem nisi civis Romani abnepotem*.²⁰ When men of the stamp he was objecting to were in the senate, the old days were definitely over. There is also no reason to believe that *every* new man would be on one side and *every* aristocrat on the other. Finally, Marsh based these parties on personalities rather than on ideals, because they were composed of so few people. The only opposition that I have been able to find in the period was based on ideals.

Marsh was not sufficiently acute in his use of the Tacitean passages. The first one, from the second book of the *Annals*, speaks of

¹⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 1.12f.; cf. C. W. Mendell, "Dramatic Construction of Tacitus' *Annals*," *YCLS* 5 (1935) 12-15. D. C. 57.2.5-7, however, also has the story that Asinius Gallus' death was caused by his conduct at Tiberius' accession.

¹⁷ Syme, 257; F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 10.602-604.

¹⁸ A. H. J. Greenidge, *Roman Public Life* (London, 1901) 264.

¹⁹ Tac. *Agr.* 4; Syme, 355-359; G. H. Stevenson, *CAH* 10.187f.

²⁰ Suet. *Claud.* 24.

tacita studia. In *Annals* 4.12 we are informed that senate and people were secretly pleased by the death of Drusus (*occulti laetabantur*) because they thought it augured well for the house of Germanicus.²¹ This group seems to have been excessively quiet, and could hardly have disturbed Tiberius or found record in any serious history, except court memoirs, to which Tacitus would have had access. The first passage was inserted by Tacitus to explain Piso's appointment to the governorship of Syria, with the purpose of checking Germanicus. Germanicus' military and administrative ineptitude would be enough to justify sending someone to observe him, and no one but a high-ranking noble could dare to restrain a member of the imperial house. Tacitus also used it to explain the bad feeling between Agrippina, on the one hand, and Plancina and Livia, on the other. Yet later we are told that Tiberius was forced to wait until after Livia's death to attack Agrippina and Nero.²² We cannot permit Tacitus to have it both ways.

Even if we leave these difficulties out of consideration, Tacitus explicitly says that the dispute was confined to the *aula* and the *proximi*, and that the adoptive brothers were themselves on the best of terms. In that case, would they be likely to favor different men in the state? A little later ²³ Tacitus tells us that both men favored Haterius Agrippa for the praetorship and procured his election in the face of opposition. I should be inclined to consider the passage in the second book as of slight importance; it looks like more of Tacitus' guesswork, inserted to fulfill his dramatic purposes.

Marsh did not use two passages which reduce the value of Tacitus' interpretation of conditions. In one place Velleius,²⁴ the partisan of Tiberius, displayed an obvious preference for Drusus over Germanicus, an attitude which should occasion no surprise and was possibly common in Velleius' lifetime, but which therefore may indicate to us that Tacitus wrote *Annals* 2.43 on the basis of the political tenor of the period rather than on the basis of historical information. In the other passage Suetonius ²⁵ tells us that Tiberius used Sejanus to destroy the children of Germanicus in the hope that he might be succeeded by the son of Drusus. We may safely con-

²¹ Cf. the confused passage on this point in D. C. 57.22.4a-b.

²² Tac. *Ann.* 5.3; on the chronology of this passage see M. P. Charlesworth, "The Banishment of the Elder Agrippina," *CPh* 17 (1922) 260f.

²³ Tac. *Ann.* 2.51.

²⁴ Vell. 2.125.4.

²⁵ *Tib.* 55.

clude that Tacitus, in *Annals* 2.43, was merely reporting the floating rumors about Tiberius' attitude toward his potential successors.

Agrippina, it is true, did make a fool of herself, probably because she believed she was more truly entitled than Tiberius to imperial power.²⁶ Connection with the line of Augustus was coming to grant a quasi-divine right to rule, and obviously her claim was better than Tiberius'.²⁷ Tiberius' realization of this fact is clear in his asking her if she felt deeply wronged not to be empress.²⁸ She undoubtedly did have a small faction of her own, which was in opposition to the court. She suffered from a persecution complex, aggravated by her excessive family pride;²⁹ and Sejanus knew how to play upon her emotions.³⁰ That Tiberius did not have too good a claim to the throne is shown by Julia's scorning him as unequal to her position in the state,³¹ although according to the old standards his family would be better than hers. There is no evidence for Marsh's statement that Sejanus was trying to win Agrippina's party away from her by intimidation.³²

Agrippina and Livia were clearly jockeying for power. The best sign of this is Agrippina's request for a husband,³³ which would strengthen her faction, an idea probably suggested by Sejanus' proposal to marry Livia. The size and type of Agrippina's faction, however, is shown by the elaborate preparations to ensnare one knight who was attached to her, Titius Sabinus.³⁴ Such a faction would constitute an annoyance to Tiberius, but no danger. When, after the death of his mother Livia, Tiberius did reprove Agrippina and Nero, he objected to their morals and manners, not to their politics.³⁵ There was, of course, popular favor for the house of Germanicus which annoyed Tiberius,³⁶ but that is the favor which

²⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 4.52; D. C. 57.6.3.

²⁷ Jean Gagé, "Divus Augustus. L'Idée dynastique chez les empereurs Julio-Claudiens," *RA* 5. Sér. 34 (1931) 11-41, esp. 15-29.

²⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 4.52; Suet. *Tib.* 53.

²⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 4.52.

³⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 4.54; cf. 4.60.

³¹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.53.

³² "Roman Parties" etc. (see note 1) 249f.

³³ Tac. *Ann.* 4.53; cf. 4.39f.

³⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 4.68-70. I am not convinced that Agrippina's party was a generally serious threat to Tiberius' government, in spite of the excellent article by R. S. Rogers, "The Conspiracy of Agrippina," *TAPhA* 62 (1931) 141-168. The person of the emperor, however, may have been in jeopardy.

³⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 5.3; Vell. 2.130.4.

³⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 5.4-5.

normally follows princes rather than emperors. Finally, the death of Agrippina was followed by the accusation and suicide of Plancina,³⁷ although Plancina should then have been more secure.

There is a very good reason, moreover, why Tacitus makes so much of what may appear to us to have been a mere trifle in the reign. One of the great secrets of empire was to have the reigning house and its chief supporters present a united front to the world.³⁸ Such a dispute in the court, and it is to be repeated that Tacitus specifically says *aula*, constituted a danger since it might cause unrest in the state as a whole. Germanicus and Drusus obviated this serious possibility by their open affection; Agrippina's lack of tact was a nuisance, and so Germanicus, on his deathbed, was anxious to warn her against imprudent conduct.³⁹

Another error in Marsh's thinking is that he assumed the political situation in the time of Tiberius to be somewhat comparable to that in the time of Cicero. Naturally, a moment's thought is enough to indicate that such could not possibly be the case. It is valuable to stop and reconsider some of the more obvious facts about the nature of Ciceronian parties and their fate.

We usually speak of two parties in the Roman state, although there is no particular reason to settle on that number. The new Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll-Mittelhaus article promises to demonstrate for us that there was no party of the *Populares* at all,⁴⁰ as is probably true. The *Populares* were a group of leaders who were constantly looking for the support of the people, in opposition to the senatorial group as a whole, but they did not always have that support. They were themselves senators, normally, and were using this way to rise to power in the senate. There is a notable lack of program or platform.

The *Optimates*, on the other hand, were likewise leaders of a party, not the party itself. They were usually a group of perhaps twenty of the most distinguished senators. With their personal and family connections they had a constant following which can honestly be termed a faction, and they all quite regularly acted in concert.⁴¹ Sometimes they might have a party behind them, with the pliable

³⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 6.26; D. C. 58.22.4-5.

³⁸ Syme, 479 and chap. 23: "Crisis in Party and State."

³⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 2.72.

⁴⁰ Syme, p. 16, note 2; *RE s.v.* "Optimates" (H. Strasburger).

⁴¹ Syme, chap. 2: "The Roman Oligarchy."

name of the *boni*, which means "the men of property," but which could be expanded to mean all the substantial people of Italy. Occasionally, for temporary reasons, other factions might be formed, but they would be short-lived. Naturally such a political set-up, relying as it did upon specific conditions, could not be expected to last from Cicero to Tiberius, although some scholars take the attitude that Roman parties are Roman parties, no matter what the actual political conditions. This paper, then, may resolve itself temporarily into a study of the parties of the late Republic.

The governing class of the late Republic is one of the most remarkable phenomena produced by antiquity. Without any real constitution, on the basis of their training and tradition, they had run the affairs of a great empire and done it rather well. The tumults that extended through the first century B.C. meant the destruction of most of the men who could assist in the administration of the government, and also meant that, in the instances where their descendants were not killed or impoverished, the younger men were not brought up in the tradition. The younger men, therefore, while longing for the glorious deeds performed by their ancestors, seem to have been perfectly aware that the broken tradition rendered them incapable of duplicating those exploits. It would be fortunate if we could rid ourselves of the idea that the Roman senate at any time was entirely filled with proud old aristocrats. The number of true aristocrats was always very small. A few general considerations of the fate of the senate in the first century B.C. will readily explain what became of them.

In 91 B.C. the senate had been reduced by the seditions to 300 members,⁴² and Sulla in 81(?) added 300 new senators,⁴³ some of them *gregarii milites*, if we can believe Sallust.⁴⁴ The Sullan proscriptions removed from the senate some forty of its members and destroyed 1600 knights, probably all prominent men.⁴⁵ The upper group, although it was expected to supply the provincial governors, remained exclusive, and by 66 the senate was having difficulty in finding enough men to fill the posts.⁴⁶ The unimportance of the majority of the men in the senate is shown by the fact that, in 55

⁴² App. *BC* 1.35.

⁴³ App. *BC* 1.59 and 100; cf. E. G. Hardy, "The Number of the Sullan Senate," *JRS* 6 (1916) 59-62; H. Hill, "Sulla's New Senators in 81 B.C.," *CQ* 26 (1932) 170-177.

⁴⁴ *Cat.* 37.6.

⁴⁵ T. Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore, 1933) 1.254, 272.

⁴⁶ T. Rice Holmes, *The Roman Republic* (Oxford, 1923) 1.201f.

B.C., we do not even know the names of one-third of the senators!⁴⁷ In addition, it is well to note in this century the dying off of the old families, a process which was incredibly accelerated in the period from 50 B.C. to A.D. 100.⁴⁸

According to Suetonius,⁴⁹ Caesar admitted to the senate even some provincials, in order to fill up that body. Caesar, of course, had never wanted to destroy the governing class at Rome, he had only desired that it should acknowledge him as its superior. Hence his bitterness at his victory at Pharsalus, because it meant that many men preferred death to coöperation with him.⁵⁰ It was for this reason that he was so anxious to preserve Cicero, the spokesman of the Optimates. Caesar must have been puzzled as to how he was to govern without the active support of the governing class.⁵¹ Caesar increased the number of magistrates, for administrative purposes,⁵² and he tried thereby to produce in the senate a majority favorable to himself,⁵³ which is one of the reasons why the aristocrats conspired to kill him. They feared not monarchy, but the possibility of being deprived of the monopoly and prerogatives of office.⁵⁴

There were more than sixty men in the plot to kill Caesar,⁵⁵ which would include many of the aristocracy, in addition to other disappointed elements,⁵⁶ for a tyrant had as much to fear from his own supporters as from any opposition. Most of these men perished in the Civil War that followed.⁵⁷ The lesson of Caesar's murder made a great impression on the early emperors. It was clear that, until the old traditions should have time to die out, it would be necessary to use the senatorial aristocracy as a partner in the government, at least enough to preserve its dignity.⁵⁸ The Julio-Claudians therefore exerted themselves to prevent a second formation of such

⁴⁷ Syme, 10f.

⁴⁸ T. Frank, *An Economic History of Rome*² (Baltimore, 1927) 206.

⁴⁹ *Iul.* 80; cf. Syme, chap. 6: "Caesar's New Senators."

⁵⁰ Syme, 50f.

⁵¹ F. B. Marsh, *The Founding of the Roman Empire*² (Oxford, 1927) 152f.

⁵² F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 9.733.

⁵³ F. B. Marsh, *The Founding of the Roman Empire* 154f.

⁵⁴ F. B. Marsh, "The Roman Aristocracy and the Death of Caesar," *CJ* 20 (1925) 451-464; cf. *idem*, *The Founding of the Roman Empire*, Appendix III, pp. 290-293; see also Ronald Syme, "Caesar, the Senate and Italy," *PBSR* 14 (N. S. vol. 1, 1938) 1-31.

⁵⁵ F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 9.735.

⁵⁶ Syme, 56f., 59f.

⁵⁷ Suet. *Iul.* 89.

⁵⁸ F. B. Marsh, *The Founding of the Roman Empire* 222f., 239-242, 254f.

a coalition of elements, and they were always willing to play off one class against another.

Already in December 44 the great names of the Republic had vanished or were poorly represented.⁵⁹ The formation of the Second Triumvirate and the proscriptions meant the death of most of the remaining leaders in the government. Appian,⁶⁰ doubtless exaggerating, says that 300 senators and 2000 knights were proscribed, which would lead us to conclude that among the knights who perished was destroyed the class which furnished the reservoir from which the lower ranks of the senate were traditionally replenished. The result was that by 42 there were almost no *nobiles* left alive in Rome, and the few still living elsewhere were with the Liberators or Sextus Pompey.⁶¹ At the beginning of Octavian's career there was a conspicuous absence, on his side, of men of senatorial rank.⁶² One reason, however, why he had so little trouble with the opposition later may have been that the proscriptions of 43 showed the extremes of which he was capable.⁶³

The battlefield of Philippi broke the class of the *nobiles*,⁶⁴ in the sense in which we understand it in the Ciceronian Period, and after that Octavian built up a new coalition which embraced the elements of all factions.⁶⁵ The senate was full enough at the time of the Second Triumvirate. Its number rose above 1000 and even escaped slaves got in!⁶⁶ Naturally most of these thousand senators owed allegiance to the Triumvirate.⁶⁷ It is noteworthy that for some ten years after 44 the consuls were *novissimi homines*,⁶⁸ and their descendants carefully tried to regard themselves as on a par with the true nobility. There were probably no men of old family capable of holding office.

Even after Philippi men of senatorial rank continued to disappear at an astounding rate of speed. Some were killed at Perusia,⁶⁹

⁵⁹ Syme, 163-5.

⁶⁰ *BC* 4.5 and 7; cf. Syme, p. 191, note 3; M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.21.

⁶¹ Syme, 197-201.

⁶² Syme, 133, 367f.

⁶³ Suet. *Aug.* 27.

⁶⁴ Syme, 7f., 205f.

⁶⁵ Syme, 7f.

⁶⁶ Syme, 196.

⁶⁷ Syme, 243.

⁶⁸ Syme, 199, 243-5.

⁶⁹ Syme, 212.

and some died in service with Sextus Pompey,⁷⁰ who, it will be remembered, had been active in trying to save men at the time of the proscriptions.⁷¹ When the dispute flared up between Octavian and Antony, the attrition of the old senatorial families continued, since in Antony's following there were more nobles than in Octavian's. It is interesting, moreover, that many of them had not yet sat in the senate.⁷² This meant that when the young men were soon to go the way of their elders, the families would end.

Octavian put into the senate every sort of new man. His party was composed of all classes, although he himself had a predilection for the glitter of the aristocracy.⁷³ He needed the assistance of the people who had some tradition, but it was necessary that they should be pledged to him personally rather than to any party. He was careful to diminish the personal influence of the nobles so that possible conspirators would have no party.⁷⁴ The only possible politics after this time would be within his own party, which would soon degenerate into palace politics. His policy was amply justified, because toward the end of his reign he came to find his firmest support in the *nobiles*, for their interest was identical with his,⁷⁵ the maintenance of the *status quo*.

Augustus also revised the senate-list several times, so that it must have contained just about the people he wanted.⁷⁶ Then, by the freezing of the *ordo senatorius*, a friendly group should have been preserved indefinitely. In short, he created a new governing class, into which the remnants of the older aristocracy were absorbed.⁷⁷ This group was of course fond of regarding itself as the heir to the great traditions, but I doubt if, even to them, the Republican attitude was more than sentimentality.⁷⁸ The few families of truly great fame, who might become a rallying point for disaffection, largely either died out or were deliberately absorbed into the imperial party or court.⁷⁹ The emperor carefully kept in his own hands control of the military and administrative powers, so that any dis-

⁷⁰ Syme, 233.

⁷¹ Vell. 2.77.

⁷² Syme, 268-270.

⁷³ Syme, chap. 24: "The Party of Augustus."

⁷⁴ Syme, 328-330, 404f., 502-5.

⁷⁵ Syme, 419f.; H. S. Jones, *CAH* 10.178f.

⁷⁶ H. S. Jones, *CAH* 10.148f.

⁷⁷ H. S. Jones, *CAH* 10.179.

⁷⁸ Syme, 514-9, shows how satisfactory they felt the principate to be.

⁷⁹ Syme, chap. 32: "The Doom of the *Nobiles*."

affected minority in the senate would have no serious means of opposing him.⁸⁰ In addition, the senate was deprived of a good reason for discontent by the respect the emperor accorded it, and by the share of power which he gave it.⁸¹ Augustus would never have admitted that his government was a dyarchy; he would have said that the senate was superior to him in every respect.⁸²

Under these conditions, how can anyone expect to interpret the politics of the early Empire in the light of the late Republic? Most of the senators, moreover, without the benefit of our historical perspective, would be inclined to regard the *princeps* as the bulwark of their dignity.⁸³

There was an economic factor also at work. Caesar,⁸⁴ for example, took over the estates of some of his fallen foes, and Octavian later laid heavy taxes on the wealthy. When he set out to fight Antony, he instituted a tax of one-fourth of the annual income of all citizens and a capital levy of one-eighth on rich freedmen.⁸⁵ The wealthy classes were therefore faced with poverty if such a situation continued and would consequently welcome the principate. We find, in the next century, that some of the old families were impoverished and depended on the bounty of the emperor.⁸⁶ Livia helped the senators, raised their children, and paid their daughters' dowries.⁸⁷ Most of the senators would therefore be bound to the imperial system, although they might oppose the individual emperors.

We cannot speak of a republican opposition, either, in the sense of a group which desired to restore the Republic.⁸⁸ The traditions of the Republic had been entirely forgotten, and many prominent men came from families which could not claim to be heir to those traditions. The only two glimmerings of republican uprisings were the thought of restoring the Republic upon the death of Caligula,⁸⁹

⁸⁰ Syme, 478f.

⁸¹ M. P. Nilsson, *Imperial Rome* (New York, no date) 16.

⁸² D. McFayden, "The Rise of the Princeps' Jurisdiction within the City of Rome," *Washington Univ. Stud., Humanistic Series*, 10 (1923) 181-264, esp. 182f.

⁸³ F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 10.603; M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.613f.

⁸⁴ T. Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* 1.337.

⁸⁵ W. W. Tarn and M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.96f.; cf. T. Frank, *op. cit.* (see note 84) 1.341f.

⁸⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 1.75; 2.37f.; 2.48; Vell. 2.129.3; D. C. 57.10.3.

⁸⁷ D. C. 58.2.3.

⁸⁸ G. Boissier, *L'Opposition sous les Césars*⁶ (Paris, 1909) 105, 342f.

⁸⁹ M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.667; Suet. *Calig.* 60; *Claud.* 10; J. *AJ* 19.158-189.

and the revolt of Vindex.⁹⁰ The passive resistance, which was more general, even extended to mass race suicide among the upper classes. Augustus' efforts to encourage a higher birth-rate among them were no great success.⁹¹ Consequently the later emperors found it necessary to create a new governmental aristocracy in preference to trying to continue to rehabilitate the old. Caligula, after restoring the elections to the people, found that the number of candidates for office was insufficient and the candidates themselves unwilling,⁹² no novel condition for the same situation had prevailed in the principates of Augustus⁹³ and Tiberius.⁹⁴

The conspiracies against Augustus, though numerous, were not serious, and they were usually discovered in an early stage.⁹⁵ Some of the leaders of conspiracies were Augustus' own creatures, like Salvidienus Rufus,⁹⁶ or people otherwise unknown, like Egnatius Rufus.⁹⁷ Even when the conspirators were prominent, like L. Aemilius Paullus, or Varro Murena and Fannius Caepio,⁹⁸ it is noteworthy that the plots seem to have involved individuals more than parties, and that there seems to have been no definite platform behind their actions,⁹⁹ for they aimed primarily at assassination.

There has been in my preceding remarks so much said about nobility that it is perhaps wise to digress and to attempt some definition of the term noble. The special group in the senate was formed by those whose ancestors had held curule offices,¹⁰⁰ and in Cicero's time was composed of those whose ancestors had held the consulship,¹⁰¹ and it is true that men who had been consuls held a special position even under the Empire.¹⁰² New men were generally those

⁹⁰ Th. Mommsen, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin, 1906) 4.333-347 "Der letzte Kampf der römischen Republik," and 4.347-352 "Adsertor libertatis."

⁹¹ Hugh Last, *CAH* 10.448f., 452, 455f.

⁹² D. C. 59.20.4-5.

⁹³ Syme, 370; D. C. 53.28.4; 54.30.2; 56.27.1; Suet. *Aug.* 40.

⁹⁴ D. C. 58.23.5-6. By A.D. 33 governors had to be continued in their provinces from three to six years because of the shortage of administrators.

⁹⁵ Syme, 479; Suet. *Aug.* 19.

⁹⁶ Syme, 220; Vell. 2.76.4.

⁹⁷ Syme, 371.

⁹⁸ Syme, 432, 333f.; Vell. 2.91.

⁹⁹ Boissier, *L'Opposition*, etc. (see note 88) 340f.

¹⁰⁰ M. Gelzer, *Die Nobilität der römischen Republik* (Leipzig, 1912) 21f.

¹⁰¹ Gelzer, *op. cit.* (see note 100) 25. The consulship did give a family a certain cachet, but it was hardly easy for an outsider to tell the difference in social grades among the descendants of patrician, consular, and praetorian families: *RE s.v.* "Nobiles" (H. Strasburger) 788f.

¹⁰² Gelzer, *op. cit.* (see note 100) 38f.

equites who were the first of their family to enter the senate.¹⁰³ When in A.D. 14 the elections were transferred from the people to the senate, the significance of the change was that the senate would be filled practically by coöptation except for the emperor's candidates.¹⁰⁴

It has been suggested, and I think with reason, that the old idea of nobility went out when the elections were transferred to the senate.¹⁰⁵ One's family had, so to speak, been ennobled by choice of the people. Such a view is extreme, but illuminating. There may also be validity in the statement that the creation of the new patrician families is indicative of an effort to recreate a nobility of birth to overshadow the nobility of office.¹⁰⁶ It is important to observe that in general, under the Empire, senators were *ex prima admissione* at the *salutatio* of the emperor, knights were of the second.¹⁰⁷ Hence I suppose we should have to say that they were among the technical *amici* of the emperor; at any rate they had been absorbed into the court. We are not clear as to the exact requirements which gave one claim to nobility in the Empire.¹⁰⁸ It is probable, for example, that one could claim nobility even if it was inherited from Republican nobles on only the mother's side of the family, an unthinkable claim during the Republic.

There was, as one would expect, opposition to the imperial system. We can trace at least two focal points for it, Stoicism and admiration for Cato. The admiration for Cato is one of the most curious aspects of the political situation of the first century B.C., for it sprang up almost immediately and spontaneously at his death and has continued ever since, in varying degrees. The most amusing factor is that the admiration should have been for Cato, who so frequently offended the code and the etiquette of his contemporaries. His true character, with all its narrowness and limitations, was ignored and he was idealized into a sort of patron saint. One reason

¹⁰³ Gelzer, *op. cit.* (see note 100) 27. In the Republic only fifteen new men had attained the consulship in 300 years: Gelzer, *op. cit.* (see note 100) 40f.

¹⁰⁴ A. H. J. Greenidge, *op. cit.* (see note 18) 373, 399-402.

¹⁰⁵ *RE s.v.* "Nobiles" (H. Strasburger) 790.

¹⁰⁶ Th. Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, transl. by W. P. Dickson, (New York, 1875) 4.567.

¹⁰⁷ Gelzer, *op. cit.* (see note 100) p. 87, note 1.

¹⁰⁸ The whole problem is argued by M. Gelzer, "Die Nobilität der Kaiserzeit," *H* 50 (1915) 395-415; W. Otto, "Die Nobilität der Kaiserzeit," *H* 51 (1916) 73-88; E. Stein, "Zur Kontroverse über die römische Nobilität der Kaiserzeit," *H* 52 (1917) 564-571; cf. *RE s.v.* "Senatus" (O'Brien-Moore) Suppl. 6.765.

for his cult, which has been generally overlooked, is that he was the last leader of the Optimate party. He had succeeded to that position in 61 B.C. upon the death of Lutatius Catulus, and he became the leader of the opposition after the conference at Luca;¹⁰⁹ his successor, Cicero, had only a brief career from December 44 to June or July 43, and in addition he was not the type to become the object of political worship. Stoicism probably entered but little into this admiration for Cato, as it likewise probably did not have much to do with his character, for he imitated Roman *virtus* rather than Stoic precepts.¹¹⁰

Cato died for a concept of the Republic which was a wedding or compromise between the old Stoa and Roman practice. Caesar had killed that ideal, as everyone realized. The people who idealized Cato probably had little notion of trying to bring back the type of state for which he had died; they merely adored him as the Stoic "Wise Man" and as the prototype of the virtuous oppositionist.¹¹¹ Cato may not have died for the vested interests, but in his own day it would certainly look like it. His ideal, like that of Tacitus, was the Roman nobility rather than Stoic virtue.¹¹²

Caesar must have felt thwarted when he heard of the death of Cato, for this was the only act which successfully defied him. So long as people would remain quiet or be willing to come to some compromise, Caesar was certain to win his ends; Cato not only defeated him by his refusal even to consider playing according to Caesar's rules, but Caesar also realized what a dangerous symbol his martyrdom was likely to become. Mommsen has an eloquent passage on the subject, in which he points out that Cato's death showed Caesar's careful constitutionalism to be a farce.¹¹³ He was the only enemy whom Caesar pursued beyond the grave.¹¹⁴ Brutus and Cassius became minor deities in the same cult, a formal one

¹⁰⁹ F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 9.614; cf. Plut. *Cato mi.* 22-43 and *passim*.

¹¹⁰ Syme, 57-9.

¹¹¹ This point is admirably handled by A. Sizoo, "Paetus Thrasea et le stoïcisme," *REL* 5 (1927) 41-52, esp. 51.

¹¹² Hermann Peter, *Die geschichtliche Litteratur über die römische Kaiserzeit bis Theodosius I und ihre Quellen* (Leipzig, 1897) 2.50-56; J. S. Reid, "Tacitus as a Historian," *JRS* 11 (1921) 191-199, esp. 191f.; G. Boissier, *Tacitus and Other Roman Studies*, transl. by W. G. Hutchison, (New York, 1906) 15f.

¹¹³ Th. Mommsen, *The History of Rome* (see note 106) 4.536f.

¹¹⁴ F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 9.689, 695; Eduard Meyer, *Caesars Monarchie und das Principat des Pompejus*² (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1919) 434-444.

with actual statues erected to them and to Cato.¹¹⁵ Both Caesar and Augustus were forced to reply to the praises of Cato, and Plutarch's lives of Brutus and Cato undoubtedly reflect the views of the early Empire.¹¹⁶

Cicero wrote a *Cato*; Hirtius and Caesar each replied with an *Anticato*. Cato was praised directly or indirectly by Brutus, Fadius Gallus, Horace, Vergil, Livy, Velleius, Valerius Maximus, Manilius and others.¹¹⁷ The heroics of Cato's death were especially esteemed. Praises of Brutus were written by L. Calpurnius Bibulus, P. Volumnius, and the Greek rhetorician Empylus. In the reign of Tiberius there was the incidental praise of Brutus and Cassius by Cremutius Cordus, and in the reign of Nero a life of Cato by P. Clodius Thræsea Paetus. In Domitian's reign there was a life of Thræsea Paetus by Junius Arulenus Rusticus; and we also hear of a monograph by C. Fannius on the fate of those "*occisorum aut relegatorum a Nerone*."¹¹⁸ The type of literature perhaps best designated as *Exitus illustrium virorum* became very strong in the latter part of the first century A.D. There was, then, a distinct literary opposition, a fad which could easily become dangerous in the event that its proponents should take it seriously.¹¹⁹

In spite of all the talk of Republican heroes, the Romans were at this time firm believers in monarchy.¹²⁰ The members of the opposition did not hope to change the system of government, they only wanted to change emperors when they happened to have a bad one.¹²¹ When the emperor was good, they appeared more than a little foolish, when he was bad, they appeared noble heroes. A great deal of their admiration of the Republic was mere fashion, a fashion which penetrated even the court. The very absurdity of the cult must have been maddening to the emperors, who knew that the

¹¹⁵ V. Gardthausen, *Augustus und seine Zeit* (Leipzig, 1904) 13.1238, 1245f. See note 119 below.

¹¹⁶ Plut. *Cato mi.* 25; 37.

¹¹⁷ B. Busch, *De M. Porcio Catone Uticensi quid antiqui scriptores aequales et posteriores censuerint* (Münster diss., 1911) esp. 11–38, 42–47.

¹¹⁸ M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.869.

¹¹⁹ This subject of the praise of Cato and the literary opposition is most ably treated in Hermann Peter, *op. cit.* (see note 112) 1.65–67, 165f., 171–176, 184–188. Cf. F. A. Marx, "Tacitus und die Literatur der exitus illustrium virorum," *Ph* 92 (1937) 83–103.

¹²⁰ Peter, *op. cit.* (see note 112) 2.8; Boissier, *Tacitus*, etc. (see note 112) 143f.

¹²¹ Boissier, *L'Opposition*, etc. (see note 88) 103–5; A. Sizoo, "Paetus Thræsea et le stoïcisme," *REL* 4 (1926) 229–237, esp. 232–235; C. Martha, *Les moralistes sous l'empire romain*³ (Paris, 1872) 141f.; Hugh Last, *CAH* 11.436.

soundest way to handle it was to ignore it.¹²² There was also the danger that some few men might take their own rhetoric seriously and try to put it into practice. The only man of this type whom Tiberius encountered was Cremutius Cordus,¹²³ whose praise of Brutus and Cassius very possibly was treasonable.¹²⁴

Their use of the word liberty is curious. By it they often meant a good emperor, who had regard for the old traditions and respect for the senate.¹²⁵ It sometimes meant that the leading men of the state retained their ancient privilege of speaking their minds freely and even of abusing the ruler.¹²⁶ A famous phrase is spoken of those who would sooner lose their heads than forego a witticism (*caput potius quam dictum perdere*).¹²⁷ Under any type of monarchical system, too much freedom of speech can be dangerous to the government,¹²⁸ and sometimes the emperors had to restrain their subjects, but the Romans were always difficult to silence, especially throughout this period when so many people suffered from boredom.¹²⁹

It required considerable talent on the part of Augustus and his contemporaries to play out the little comedy they had set for themselves, and it called for a delicate sense of balance which later ages forgot. Augustus went out of his way to give his era a Republican appearance, recalling the spirit of Cato and Cicero although definitely not the substance for which they had labored.¹³⁰ He even managed to some degree to absorb the cult of Cato.¹³¹ For instance, Augustus and the later emperors delicately preserved on the southwestern side of the Palatine simple Republican buildings which

¹²² B. W. Henderson, *The Life and Principate of the Emperor Nero* (London, 1903) 258f.; R. M. Wenley, *Stoicism and its Influence* (Boston, 1924) 53f.; Boissier, *Tacitus*, etc. (see note 112) 123-127.

¹²³ Tac. *Ann.* 4.34f.; D. C. 57.24.1-4; E. V. Arnold, *Roman Stoicism* (Cambridge, 1911) 392.

¹²⁴ M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.630.

¹²⁵ Boissier, *Tacitus*, etc. (see note 112) 126f. For a general consideration of what "liberty" could mean in various periods, the most valuable study is by H. Kloesel, *Libertas* (Breslau diss., 1935).

¹²⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 1.74; 1.77; 4.35; Vell. 2.71.2f.; cf. Syme, 152, 481-489; E. V. Arnold, *op. cit.* (see note 123) 397.

¹²⁷ Sen. *Contr.* 2.4.13.

¹²⁸ Syme, 481, 486-489.

¹²⁹ G. Boissier, *L'Opposition*, etc. (see note 88) 54-6.

¹³⁰ Syme, 317-321.

¹³¹ Syme, 506f.

formed a contrast with their own palaces.¹³² Tiberius tried to follow the same method of absorbing the opposition, but he was foiled when the senate refused to coöperate.

There was good cause for the great respect for the Republic in the early Empire.¹³³ After all, it formed part of the heritage of every Roman. Augustus was most anxious to recall his people to the virtues and ideals which had made Rome great,¹³⁴ and he naturally would agree heartily with all who praised those qualities. He thus robbed the Catonians of their platform.

This type of opposition is to be termed Catonian rather than Stoic. Stoicism, under the first Caesars, did not advocate opposition to the government. It might rather be said that many men opposed to the Caesars were Stoics.¹³⁵ Opposition on purely Stoic grounds did not begin until after the time of Tiberius. The first imperial opposition to philosophers came in the reign of Caligula,¹³⁶ and the first actual Stoic conspiracy came in the reign of Claudius,¹³⁷ while it was in the reign of Nero that the Stoics became the leaders of the opposition to the emperor.¹³⁸ Stoic opposition of a sort began with men like Thræsea Paetus, but even he managed to get along with the emperors for quite a while.¹³⁹ In other words, the emperors realized and discounted the personal beliefs of these men. They were needed in the government, and it was perfectly safe to use them until they became capable of extreme action. Even then they had no party to support them; the most they could accomplish was hopeless martyrdom.

¹³² T. Frank, *Roman Buildings of the Republic* (vol. III of *Papers and Monographs of the Am. Acad. in Rome*, 1924) 98-107.

¹³³ F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 10.586f.

¹³⁴ F. E. Adcock, *CAH* 10.586f. Augustus foiled the people of "Republican" sentiments by agreeing with them: Boissier, *L'Opposition*, etc. (see note 88) 92, p. 343, note 1. As Macrobius says (*Sat.* 3.14.2): *Vetustas quidem nobis semper, si sapimus, adoranda est. Illa quippe saecula sunt, quae hoc imperium vel sanguine vel sudore pepererunt*, etc.

¹³⁵ F. Villeneuve, *Essai sur Perse* (Paris, 1918) 25-33; cf. Elizabeth Bunting (Mrs. J. V. Fine), *The Stoic Opposition to the Principate as Seen in Tacitus* (unpubl. Yale diss., 1932). Mrs. Fine has been so good as to permit me to examine her dissertation and to make use of some of her conclusions, which have served to reinforce my own, the most notable being that the opposition in the reign of Tiberius was not truly Stoic. In most respects, however, the approach and purpose of our studies are different.

¹³⁶ M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.664f.; E. V. Arnold, *op. cit.* (see note 123) 393.

¹³⁷ E. V. Arnold, *op. cit.* (see note 123) 393f.

¹³⁸ E. V. Arnold, *op. cit.* (see note 123) 398f.; A. Momigliano, *CAH* 10.719f., 729-731.

¹³⁹ Villeneuve, *op. cit.* (see note 135) 33-43; E. V. Arnold, *op. cit.* (see note 123) 398f.

There was, of course, a true Stoic opposition, characterized by a wave of suicides in the latter part of the first century A.D.¹⁴⁰ It is to be considered, however, that an inclination to suicide was a part of the Roman character, perhaps guided by the concept of *dignitas*,¹⁴¹ and that it existed in other periods and in this one was merely aggravated. The leaders of the "Stoic-Republican" opposition were not nobles.¹⁴² The nobles of the Republic had fought, not for ideals, but for the power to rule the world and for the maintenance of the *status quo*,¹⁴³ and Tiberius' father was one of this group.¹⁴⁴ Cato killed himself as a sign that the senate, ruling by quasi-divine right, could not afford to compromise.¹⁴⁵ The Stoic oppositionists could not look back on proud Republican ancestry. The most dangerous Stoics seem not to have been any of the people we know or think of, but a mass of unnamed professional philosophers, orators, and rhetoricians.¹⁴⁶ This was the reason for the persecution of the philosophers, in the reigns of Nero and the Flavians, for then they seem to have made almost a cult of insulting the emperor, but they could hardly have been a political danger except in so far as their utterances were treasonable.

One of the most subtle devices originated by the subtle mind of Augustus was the principate. He was careful to leave the concept so fluid that we do not fully understand its theory today. The word *princeps* had been used in the Republic to indicate the *principes civitatis* and the *princeps senatus*, so that no odium could attach itself to the term. A similar theory in regard to leadership in the state had been expressed by Cicero. Pelham, Meyer, Richard Reitzenstein, Richard Heinze, Kaerst, Oltramare, Hammond, von

¹⁴⁰ W. E. H. Lecky, *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne*³ (New York, 1877) 1.212–223. It has been ably proved that it is incorrect to believe that suicide before conviction of high treason obviated confiscation of property: R. S. Rogers, "Ignorance of the Law in Tacitus and Dio: Two Instances from the History of Tiberius," *TAPhA* 64 (1933) 18–27.

¹⁴¹ Rudolf Hirzel, "Der Selbstmord," *ARW* 11 (1908) 433–468.

¹⁴² M. Gelzer, "Die Nobilität der Kaiserzeit," *H* 50 (1915) 395–415, esp. 411f.

¹⁴³ Gelzer, *op. cit.* (see note 142) 412.

¹⁴⁴ J. C. Tarver, *Tiberius the Tyrant* (Westminster, 1902) 87f.

¹⁴⁵ Tarver, *op. cit.* (see note 144) 52f., 55.

¹⁴⁶ Naturally the emperors had something, but not too much, to fear from unimportant people: Boissier, *L'Opposition*, etc. (see note 88) 65f.; M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1926) 109–113; Claude-Odon Reure, *De Scriptorum ac Litteratorum Hominum cum Romanis Imperatoribus Inimicitiiis* (Paris, 1891) 17–24, 114; M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 11.8–10, 30f.

Premenstein, and Syme,¹⁴⁷ among others, have all debated the question of whether Augustus was following Cicero's theories. It really is only an academic question. What Augustus was undoubtedly doing, it is agreed, was to follow, among the various theories of government, the *genus mixtum*, which advocated a combination of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, with the monarchical element predominant. This was close enough to the sentiments expressed in Cicero's *Republic*, in which he was combining Greek theory and Roman practice, to rob the opposition of their platform. They could not gather a party on Stoic philosophy which had only hair-splitting differences from the philosophy of the principate.¹⁴⁸ Hence they idolized the death of Cato as a rallying point, the only point they had which the emperors could not duplicate.

Tiberius' reign was difficult because it was a period of transition. With him it became apparent that one-man rule would last in Rome, and it was necessary that, then or later, it should be put on a more permanent basis. It is perfectly sound to say that Augustus had restored Republican government, the aristocratic senatorial government,¹⁴⁹ but he also intended that a firm hand should guide it. There was a delicate balance between authority and *libertas*, and the secret of maintaining this balance was forgotten in the course of Tiberius' reign and rediscovered in the time of Nerva.¹⁵⁰ Certainly no one outside Rome, and only a limited number of people in Rome, would be aware of the difference. There was, of course, real opposition to Tiberius—no ruler can please everyone, and Tiberius was far from being so tactful as Augustus. Tiberius was, moreover, the last of men to desire to be emperor, especially at the mature age

¹⁴⁷ H. F. Pelham, *Essays on Roman History* (Oxford, 1911) 56-60; Ed. Meyer, *op. cit.* (see note 114) 174-191; R. Reitzenstein, "Die Idee des Principats bei Cicero und Augustus," *NGG*, phil.-hist. Kl. (1917) 399-436, 481-498, esp. 497; Richard Heinze, "Ciceros 'Staat' als politische Tendenzschrift," *H* 59 (1924) 73-94; J. Kaerst, "Scipio Ämilianus, die Stoa und der Prinzipat," *NJW* 5 (1929) 653-675, esp. 673-5 (Kaerst remarks upon Augustus' close friendship with professional Stoic philosophers); A. Oltramare, "La réaction cicéronienne et les débuts du principat," *REL* 10 (1932) 58-90; M. Hammond, *The Augustan Principate* (Cambridge, Mass., 1933) 111f., 196; A. von Premenstein, *Vom Werden und Wesen des Prinzipats*, *ABAW*, phil.-hist. Abt., N. F. Heft 15 (1937) pp. 3-12 "Zur philosophischen Grundlage des Prinzipats"; Syme, 311f., 318-324.

¹⁴⁸ Boissier, *Tacitus*, etc. (see note 112) 126.

¹⁴⁹ Hammond, *op. cit.* (see note 147) 117, 195f.

¹⁵⁰ Peter, *op. cit.* (see note 112) 2.18; Tac. *Agr.* 3.

he reached the office, in his mid-fifties.¹⁵¹ He was an "old Roman" in a position of power he did not like or approve.¹⁵²

Tacitus very accurately portrays for us the annoyance felt at the conduct of Tiberius upon the death of Augustus. Although Tiberius kept the forms of constitutional government, he in fact and obviously performed executive functions instead of letting everything wait upon the senate, which irritated the opposition.¹⁵³ At the meeting at which he was given imperial power, the senators refused to let him play out the little comedy in comfort.¹⁵⁴ Q. Haterius went so far as to offend Tiberius' *dignitas* by asking him how long he would be content that there should be no head of the state.¹⁵⁵ None of these men meant to do more than annoy Tiberius.¹⁵⁶

Throughout his reign he was plagued by idle and uninformed cavilling at his actions. Augustus would have managed to make his conduct more palatable. For instance, people objected because he did not personally oppose the rebellious legions.¹⁵⁷ Some actions were directly aimed at his discomfiture.¹⁵⁸ The aediles revived sumptuary restrictions which Tiberius knew were impossible of enforcement and which he would have to try to enforce;¹⁵⁹ when he complained that he feared for his life, Asinius Gallus asked for details;¹⁶⁰ Fufius was accustomed to insult Tiberius with his witticisms;¹⁶¹ and always there was talk against him when he was alive, which was followed by vilification when he was dead.¹⁶² Most of the opposition was of this type, not serious actually, although always potentially so. The danger lay in the possibility that, while they could not hurt his power, they could harm his person, a circumstance which I believe was a large factor in his

¹⁵¹ D. C. 57.2.4; 58.28.5; Suet. *Tib.* 5.

¹⁵² *RE s.v.* "Iulius" no. 154 (Gelzer) col. 534; R. S. Rogers, "Tiberius' Reversal of an Augustan Policy," *TAPhA* 71 (1940) 532-536.

¹⁵³ Tac. *Ann.* 1.6-7; Suet. *Tib.* 24.

¹⁵⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.12-13; Suet. *Tib.* 24; Syme, 439.

¹⁵⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.13.

¹⁵⁶ As Tacitus says (*Hist.* 1.1): *malignitati falsa species libertatis inest*. G. P. Baker, *Tiberius Caesar* (New York, 1928) 215f., properly speaks of "wrecking tactics."

¹⁵⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 1.46.

¹⁵⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 2.36: Gallus' proposal that elections should be held for five years to come, etc.

¹⁵⁹ Tac. *Ann.* 3.52-54.

¹⁶⁰ Tac. *Ann.* 4.70f.

¹⁶¹ Tac. *Ann.* 5.2.

¹⁶² Tac. *Ann.* 4.11.

decision to retire to Capri.¹⁶³ His retirement insulted the aristocrats because it accurately revealed the nature of the government.¹⁶⁴

Much is made of the fact that Tiberius permitted prosecutions for slander,¹⁶⁵ by which he grew to be very irritated, under the *lex maiestatis*, which in the Republic had applied only to deeds.¹⁶⁶ Whatever the true situation may have been, it must be remembered that, as late as A.D. 12, even Augustus had been concerned with pamphlets written against certain people and that he had punished some of their authors.¹⁶⁷

There were actual conspiracies in the reign, naturally. Libo Drusus can be regarded as a good example of the insane and irresponsible opposition to the emperor.¹⁶⁸ Tiberius tried to get along with him, as he did with other men of his type, but finally he was compelled to act when Libo broke into desperate conspiracy, for there seems to have been something sinister behind his magical investigations. It would appear that Tiberius knew of Libo's attitude all the time, but that he would not take drastic action until his hand was forced.¹⁶⁹ Arruntius¹⁷⁰ was another man dangerous to Tiberius, although he can hardly be said to have been of lofty Republican ancestry. Tiberius even went so far as to save him from the attack of Sejanus, keeping him as a counterweight to the power of Sejanus. Arruntius could have escaped conviction for complicity with Albucilla because the death of Tiberius would doubtless have preceded the date of his trial, but he committed suicide because he foresaw what the next reign would bring.¹⁷¹ Cocceius Nerva also committed suicide without reason, much to Tiberius' distress, for he felt it was a criticism of him, as it was.¹⁷² L. Piso, disgusted with conditions, threatened to leave the city and live in distant parts.¹⁷³ The problem for the emperor was to understand the temperament of these men and so to handle them that they would

¹⁶³ Tac. *Ann.* 4.57; 4.67.

¹⁶⁴ CAH 10. pref. vii; Tac. *Ann.* 4.74.

¹⁶⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.72; 4.42; 6.39; Suet. *Tib.* 59; D. C. 57.22.5; 57.23; 58.1.1b-3.

¹⁶⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 1.72.

¹⁶⁷ D. C. 56.27.1-2.

¹⁶⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 2.27-32; Vell. 2.129.2; 2.130.3.

¹⁶⁹ F. B. Marsh, "Tacitus and Aristocratic Tradition," *CPh* 21 (1926) 289-310, esp. 291-304.

¹⁷⁰ R. S. Rogers, "Lucius Arruntius," *CPh* 26 (1931) 31-45, esp. 41-44.

¹⁷¹ Tac. *Ann.* 6.47f.; D. C. 58.27.4.

¹⁷² Tac. *Ann.* 6.26; D. C. 58.21.4-6.

¹⁷³ Tac. *Ann.* 2.34; cf. 4.21.

be useful in the administration,¹⁷⁴ where they were badly needed. Tiberius, from his type of character,¹⁷⁵ was not always successful in his management of personnel. He was frequently confronted with a Catonian bluntness of conduct or a determined passive resistance. Many of the senators were unable to maintain the exact degree of independence which the little farce required of them, so they either withdrew from public life or let their conduct degenerate into servility.¹⁷⁶ This offended Tiberius and caused him to exclaim, upon leaving the senate, "O homines ad servitutem paratos!"¹⁷⁷ On the other hand, he found cause to complain that the men who should have taken part in public life and assumed provincial governorships shirked these public duties.¹⁷⁸ He needed their assistance badly and many of them refused to help. The decay of the old families in this period was largely due to extravagance and luxury.¹⁷⁹

It is to be remembered that there is some importance in the number of known treason trials in the reign of Tiberius, some sixty-three, which was too high for a period of about twenty-two years.¹⁸⁰ Even though we grant that individuals were involved and not groups, none the less there was an unusual amount of treason in a reign which should have been settled. One can understand the troubles in the reign of Augustus, for a number of his opponents or of malcontents would still be alive. There was also a great deal of writing against Tiberius after his death, more than one would expect. It cannot be that his character alone was enough to inspire such dislike. Even late in his life he was greatly disturbed by the vices maliciously attributed to him and by the writings against him. No one seems yet to have discovered an adequate cause of this hatred. It is just as much a puzzle as the people who are said to have been executed or to have committed suicide because of *maiestas*, although their crime is not specifically stated.¹⁸¹ In the

¹⁷⁴ Tarver, *op. cit.* (see note 144) 262f.

¹⁷⁵ K. Scott, "The *Diritas* of Tiberius," *AJPh* 53 (1932) 139-151; Nilsson, *op. cit.* (see note 81) 21.

¹⁷⁶ Tac. *Ann.* 6.7.

¹⁷⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 3.65. Cf. the famous remark of Galba to Piso in Tac. *Hist.* 1.16: imperaturus es hominibus qui nec totam servitutem pati possunt nec totam libertatem.

¹⁷⁸ Tac. *Ann.* 6.27.

¹⁷⁹ H. Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*² (Oxford, 1896) 1.101; Tac. *Ann.* 3.55.

¹⁸⁰ M. P. Charlesworth, *CAH* 10.641; cf. R. S. Rogers, *Criminal Trials and Criminal Legislation under Tiberius* (Philological Monographs VI, Middletown, Conn., 1935) 190-196, who finds over one hundred indictments for *maiestas*.

¹⁸¹ D. C. 58.4.5-8.

number of those who were executed in the latter years of Tiberius' reign, apparently for some offense against the state, was at least one sizable group of persons of unimportant rank.¹⁸² This would be a sign of discontent rather than of any Republican or Stoic opposition.

The opening chapters of the *Annals* are a good point on which to conclude. Tacitus' direct statements at that point should be enough to keep any student from going astray on the politics of the period. He says that after the death of Antony there was no leader left for the Optimate faction, and only Augustus for the Julian. All the dangerous people had died in the wars or the proscriptions, and the rest of the nobles, bought up in one way or another by Augustus, preferred quiet and security.¹⁸³ By the time of the accession of Tiberius: *Domi res tranquillae, eadem magistratuum vocabula; iuniores post Actiacam victoriam, etiam senes plerique inter bella civium nati: quotus quisque reliquus qui rem publicam vidisset?*¹⁸⁴ What opposition Tiberius encountered was of the type to be expected in an empire, not of the type to be looked for in a republic.

¹⁸² Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 61. It is also interesting that a study of the cases of *maiestas* reveals no party line.

¹⁸³ Tac. *Ann.* 1.2.

¹⁸⁴ Tac. *Ann.* 1.3; cf. D. C. 56.44.3-4.