

## The Evolution of Augustan Theme and Image

The career of Augustus, from his adoption by Caesar to his own death, extends over such a prolonged period of time and includes such a variety of differing challenges that scholars have taken to dividing the years into sections that serve to distinguish the position of Octavian and the disposition of his policies. The three commonly accepted periods are identified as the *triumviral* period, the first settlement and the second settlement. These periods are logically identified with specific political arrangements that define the basis of Augustus's *potestas*. This is a useful framework and I do not suggest dismantling it, but supplementing it to more clearly differentiate the produced public image of Octavian and the source of his power. Inspired by Galinsky's reading of Augustan culture as a pursuit of *auctoritas*, I propose expanding and refining these distinctions in order to more fully reflect discreet periods of the public career of Octavian. To this end, I propose that we supplement them with a pre-triumviral period, which I call the *Cesarean* phase. Following the model of nomenclature of the other periods, it reflects the source of his claim to *potestas*, primarily as the heir of Caesar. I also will argue to append to the later period of his reign a period which Severy calls the third settlement. This is the end of the period Galinsky's reading of *Res Gestae* 34 identifies as a shift in the Augustan program from its initial pursuit of *potestas* to its eventual focus on *auctoritas* circa 28BC.

I argue the *Cesarean* phase by showing how Octavian early on, struggling to assert his relevance and influence in a crowded field of politicians, projected an image not dissimilar from his opponents and used the same tools that these rivals were using. His primary distinction was his connection to Caesar. This shifts over time to reflect his own accomplishments and his current rivalries. This period is more accurately called *triumviral*. This continues until the period

after the battle of Actium. Both the Cesarean period and the triumviral period can be characterized by pursuit of *potestas*, and are focused on competing with rival claimants for the traditional offices and extraordinary powers. That model is no longer relevant after Actium.

Once Augustus, without rival and without significant opposition, holds unrestrained *potestas*, he shifts to a novel approach. He no longer seeks *potestas* but instead is aimed at grounding his influence more in *auctoritas*. As Galinsky has shown, Augustus' reign shifts towards surrendering power but seeking more approval and broader influence both in the senate and from the people of Rome. I argue that, as his approach evolves and his power matures through the first and second settlements, there is a final shift after the dedication of the Forum of Augustus, which heralds the third settlement. Severy makes this argument in support of an imperial model, but I contend that this is not about making an imperial heir. I believe it is involved in a vast attempt to reconfigure the relationship of the citizens and state into a family unit with Augustus as the *paterfamilias* of the state. This new period depends largely on altering the imagery of the *paterfamilias* and the *pater patriae* and conflating them to create a new ideology for Augustus.

I believe that this grouping of the periods provides structural insights to identifying significant shifts in political needs that drive adjustments of image and program. This division also supports inquiry into the ways that Augustus evolved in his role as Princeps and sought to drastically alter the Roman state, to leave a lasting and functional structure in place of the failed republic.

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