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Vox et Potestas: personal communication through the built environment of Rome in the time of Augustus

Mark McCahill

Through the efforts and contributions of Marcus Agrippa, Tiberius Nero, and the extended noble coterie of Augustus, individualized, controlled contributions to the cityscape of Rome are presented as a legacy of the one and the many. While the monuments, architecture and infrastructure of Augustan Rome express the voice and power of the Roman aristocracy afforded the opportunity to participate, they also express the ideology of the city's greatest patron, Augustus. Each contribution to the civic environment can be understood as an expressive and individual voice from the period, but with the power and glory of Rome residing, ultimately, in the imperial person of Augustus. It is, therefore, Augustus' *vox et potestas*[1] we are meant to appreciate.

INTRODUCTION

> But I observed that you cared not only about the common life of all men, and the constitution of the state, but also about the provision of suitable public buildings; so that the state was not only made greater through you by its new provinces, but the majesty of the empire also was expressed through the eminent dignity of its public buildings. […] Furthermore, with respect to the future, you have such regard to public and private buildings, that they will correspond to the grandeur of our history, and will be a memorial to future ages.

Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, I.2 & 3[2]

When Vitruvius stated 'the majesty of the empire also was expressed through the eminent dignity of its public buildings', we can accept that this was not mere platitude; rather, the glory and power of Rome was understood to radiate out from its built environment. On this basis, the extent of building work and regeneration undertaken in the time of Augustus is key to appreciating three crucial aspects of the voice and power dynamic: control through legacy, in terms of duration and in the extent of the plan executed by those empowered, or exhorted, to participate; the imprint of personal 'voice' upon the Roman cityscape, and the freedom of expression (however notional) derived from status and proximity to Augustus as *princeps*[3]. Additionally, the significance of ideas and ideology, as much as visual markers, underpinning

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[1] 'voice and power'; NB: this translation is the author's, as are all subsequent translations
[2] Vitruvius, *De Architectura (On Architecture), I.2 & 3*, trans. F. Granger (London, 1931), 3 & 5.
[3] 'ruler', or 'first man'

the Augustan approach to renewal of Rome's built environment demonstrates for us how universal the approach to urban regeneration was for the period, and how expressive and communicative its legacy is perceived to be.

The overlap of the later Republican and earlier Augustan period attests to the complexity of Rome's urban voice, with competing personalities and structures that confused any message; Augustus' efforts redefined what the (or, rather, his) civic message was, asserted through uniformity and ideology. That this approach extended across personal, architectural and infrastructural monumentality is pivotal to understanding the all-encompassing nature of Augustan renewal. Equally, due to the increasing control of Augustus over the term of his rule, the diminishing opportunity available for individuals to participate in monumental expression, *ex familia*[4], was demonstrated through the personalities who took the opportunity to engage. Individual expressions through named monuments became less and less common, replaced by a more anonymous, infrastructural contribution.

MARCUS AGRIPPA

> Every task assigned by the Emperor demands an earnest sense of responsibility, and whether by a watchful concern which is mine by nature or by loyalty which is sincere and attentive, I am roused not merely to the competent performance of an entrusted task, but even to feel devotion towards it.

Sextus Iulius Frontinus, *De Aquaeductu Urbis Romae*, I[5]

What relevance does the statement of an imperial bureaucrat, more than one hundred years after the death of Agrippa, have to Agrippa? It is neither disingenuous to say that the answer lies in the sentiment of the statement, rather than its date or author, nor incongruous to include such sentiment, when we evaluate both the level of civic involvement and the reasonable possibility that Agrippa may have uttered (or, at least, considered) the same words and expression of devotion to duty. If we examine the impact of power relationships with others, to aspects of control thereof – specific to the built environment of Rome – and to later incidents of restriction or repression of monumental voice, emphasis can be shifted from mere devotion to duty, to focus upon well-established, commonly-acknowledged friendship and kinship: that of Augustus'[6] most trusted confidante, Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa[7].

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[4] 'outside the family'

[5] Sextus Iulius Frontinus, *De Aquaeductu Urbis Romae (On the Water Management of the City of Rome*), I, trans. R. H. Rodgers (Vermont, 2003), taken from <http://www.uvm.edu/~rrodgers/Frontinus.html> [Accessed 22.9.12]

[6] For the sake of ease, the name 'Augustus' will be used throughout, despite the granting of same not having been made by the Roman Senate until 27 B.C; this helps avoid crossover in names, from

That there was an inter-changeability of control, influence and voice between Augustus and Agrippa is often overlooked, yet, seems evident through a particular example: Agrippa's long-term responsibility for essential public works, for example, *aquaeductus*; *cloacae*; *thermae*, and *horreae*[8], but with credit for completion, delivery, availability of service, and of the overall benefits of the differing projects assumed by Augustus. While historiographical credit tends to be attributed to Agrippa[9], a question remains: why would a military man of such distinction – a man credited with key, strategic involvement and success at Actium that helped decide the war between Augustus and Antony[10] – and the most senior, trusted figure in Augustus' retinue, consider (let alone accept) 'demotion' from *consul* to *aedile*[11], when the normal next-step was *pro-consul*? [12] Was it merely to facilitate the undertaking and completion of certain essential public works perceived as lowly – aqueduct repairs; sewer cleaning – on Augustus' behalf, or did a higher, more considered, selfless purpose exist?

Agrippa's reduced office, whether it was officially sanctioned or self-sought, may have been borne of necessity. It is arguable that the senior office of consul could not be demeaned through involvement in, for example, the necessities of public utilities overhaul (this, despite the fact that Augustus himself had been Commissioner of Roads[13]); the office of *aedile* would have represented a closer correlation to the previously responsible office within the Republic of *censor* or *praetor urbanus* [14]. This is also reflected in the actions of Agrippa's contemporary, Messalla, who accepted the responsibilities of *curator aquarum* [15] after Agrippa's death[16], having also previously been *consul*[17]. Augustus' adroit use and placement of senior, trusted people – starting with Agrippa – meant that positions perceived to be of

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Octavian, to Caesar, to Augustus and any ensuing confusion over the time period 44 B.C to A.D 14.
[7] I.M. Barton, 'Religious Buildings', in (ed.) I.M. Barton, *Roman Public Buildings* (Exeter, 2008), 47.
[8] 'aqueducts; drains; baths, and warehouses'
[9] The emphasis of this 'historical' credit concerns innumerable references to Agrippa and his civic projects by various ancient authors: Frontinus (*De Aquaeductu Urbis Romae*), Dio Cassius (*Historia Romana*), and Suetonius (*De Vita Caesarum*), with more recent historiography from archaeological notables, such as Lanciani (*The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*), Shipley (*Agrippa's building activities in Rome*), Zanker (*The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*), and Favro (*The Urban Image of Rome*).
[10] Tacitus, *Annales (The Annals of Imperial Rome)*, trans. Michael Grant, (London, 1996), 32.
[11] P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. A. Shapiro, (Ann Arbor, 1990), 71.
[12] The offices mentioned translate thus: *consul* = chief magistrate; *aedile* = city buildings superintendent; *pro consul* = provincial governor
[13] Dio Cassius, *Urbs Romae (The City of Rome)*, 54.8.4, trans. Dudley, from *Rome: The Augustan Age, A Source Book*, Chisholm and Ferguson (Eds.), (Oxford, 1981), 143.
[14] Frontinus, *De Aquaeductu Urbis Romae, VII*, trans. R. H. Rodgers (Vermont, 2003), taken from <http://www.uvm.edu/~rrodgers/Frontinus.html 22/09/2012> [Accessed 22.9.12]. NB: the offices mentioned translate thus:
censor = morality and infrastructure magistrate; *praetor urbanus* = a judge in matters concerning citizens of the city of Rome
[15] 'water commissioner'
[16] Frontinus, *De Aquaeductu Urbis Romae, XCIX*, trans. R. H. Rodgers, taken from <http://www.uvm.edu/~rrodgers/Frontinus.html>
[17] R. Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy*, (Oxford, 1986), 200.

lower status could be carried out by the Roman *nobilitas*[18], without any corresponding lowering of their status, any offence to aristocratic sensibilities, or diminution of public, participatory 'voice'. From this we derive the importance of status, of controlling elements thereof, and of the opportunity then afforded to communicate and participate in a public capacity. That the occasion then existed for individualised messages to be advertised may also be discerned. Agrippa's endeavours and ministrations in aid of public works could be construed negatively; a duty of such magnitude and scope might reasonably be expected to distract the person responsible from other concerns – exploitation of personal popularity, or consideration of political and military strength – and with control by Augustus still prevalent. Conversely, the prestige and recognition inherent in planning and executing such a grand plan of essential public rejuvenation, with or without the insistence of the *imperator*[19], is self-evident.

At this point, we should recognize the scope of what the duumvirate of Augustus and Agrippa was trying to accomplish: Roman renewal, root and branch, from the subterranean level upward; a project instigated and supported by Caesar[20], as *princeps*; and a project executed and communicated by a key, trusted ally as *de-facto* deputy. Personal statements and agendas evident from earlier Republican years of recent memory were not immediately apparent, evidenced in Eck's observations regarding Agrippa's refusal of triumphs[21], and corroborated by Shipley's work on the extent to which the *viri triumphales* had previously imprinted themselves on the civic built environment[22]. Reticence on the part of Agrippa, however, over control and exploitation of public space appears to be absent; a troubling observation worth investigation, if we interpret his use of the built environment as celebration of 'triumph' by another name. What real difference exists between the *Theatrum Pompeii Magni* and Agrippa's many named uses of space, such as *Campus Agrippae*; *Thermae Agrippae*; *Pons Agrippae*[23] (to name but three projects), other than the former is solitary, triumphal, polyvalent (this is disputable[24]) and monumental, not numerous, personal, singular and (mostly) spatial?

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[18] 'the nobility'
[19] 'emperor'
[20] 'Caesar' is used here in the titular sense, not as a deviation from the naming convention previously noted.
[21] W. Eck, 'Emperor and senatorial aristocracy in competition', *Yale Classical Studies, Vol. XXXV*, *The Emperor and Rome*, (eds.) B.C. Ewald & C.F. Norena, (Cambridge, 2011), 92.
[22] F.W. Shipley, 'Chronology of the Building Operations in Rome from the Death of Caesar to the Death of Augustus', *Memoirs of the Academy in Rome*, Vol. 9 (1931), 9-10; NB: the designation mentioned translates 'triumphant men', and is specifically military
[23] The spaces mentioned translate thus: theatre of Pompey the Great; field (or park) of Agrippa; baths of Agrippa; bridge of Agrippa
[24] It is arguable that Pompey contrived the polyvalence of the structure by use of the portico attached to his theatre, dedicated to *Venus Vitrix* ('Venus the Conqueror'), in order for its construction and permanence to be approved. See A.J. Ruthers, 'Buildings For Entertainment' in (ed.) I.M. Barton,

The significance of Agrippa to Rome's spaces is reflected in his role as the first, although not officially titled, *curator aquarum*; Messalla being the first to receive the formal title[25]. The importance of administrative public office, and of its place in the history of Agrippa's relationship with Augustus, is illustrated by two things: the extent to which Agrippa was allowed to reflect personal and considerable environmental control, as he stamped his identity on the civic renewal of Rome, and involvement in the many public offices created in the time of Augustus[26]. The scope of Agrippa's involvement in improving Rome was not just restricted to beautifying or enhancing spaces within it, nor to actions within his lifetime; Dio Cassius states that Agrippa, in his will as administered by Augustus, also provided for the needs of the *populi Romani*[27]. While this observation is itself unconnected to the built environment of Rome, what it does highlight is the pervasiveness of Agrippa's connection to, and with, Rome, from which is derived the importance of his, thereby, Augustus', investment in Rome at all levels: economically; environmentally; infrastructurally, and therefore personally. It is also redolent of the kind of tribunician power exercised by others (with varying degrees of success) in previous years of the Republic: Mark Antony, of recent memory, and the Gracchi, are prime examples. Telling, when we consider the number of occasions Agrippa was appointed tribune with Augustus[28]. This raises a compelling conundrum: exactly what kind of personal benefits were derived from expending your own funds alongside state funds, to improve different aspects of Rome's built environment, when the honour for its delivery was credited to Augustus? In this we should recognize signs of associative honour, and of a greater good over personal gain, rather than an overt, propagandist agenda. This theme is significant and of equal relevance when the projects of Augustus' family and friends are considered, as they span the late Republic and early Principate.

What is pertinent to the relationship between Augustus and Agrippa, and which has not been mentioned thus far, is that the bestowal of 'imperial'[29] patronage represented, however tacit, an aspect of control that also provided an opportunity to 'speak' commandingly. With

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Roman Public Buildings, (Exeter, 2008), 101.

[25] Frontinus, *De Aquaeductu Urbis Romae*, taken from <http://www.uvm.edu/~rrodgers/Frontinus.html>

[26] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum (The Twelve Caesars): Augustus, XXXVII*, trans. Robert Graves, revised with an introduction by Michael Grant, (London, 2003), 67.

[27] Dio Cassius, *Historia Romana (Roman History), LIV.29.3-5*, taken from M. Reinhold, *The Golden Age of Augustus* (Campbellville, 1978), 115; NB: the designation mentioned is translated 'Roman people'

[28] 'Fasti, 18-13 B.C.', in *Rome: The Augustan Age, A Source Book*, Chisholm and Ferguson (Eds.), 13 14

[29] The designation 'imperial' is used advisedly, in that it is rather disingenuous; the evidence for awareness of any 'imperial' agenda or ambitions is inconclusive, whereas efforts to restore the values (and the continuation) of the Republic were, essentially, being undertaken by Augustus and Agrippa. See Syme (51), as mentioned later in this paper, and Farrell (54) concerning a proto-imperial analysis.

Agrippa's *homo novus* status[30], despite his great military achievements and rigorous personal application to duty – cleaning out drains and repairing leaking pipes, while magnanimous, part of a grand plan, and for the greater good of all Roman citizens, is not exactly captivating – the importance of Augustus served other vital purposes for him: personal security; advancement, and, perhaps most significantly, *auctoritas*[31]. The programme of environmental renewal undertaken by Agrippa could be nothing other than the exercise of the personal authority of Augustus; from this, *auctoritas* also translates as the statement of intent already mentioned. In this sense, another critical message could be conveyed: *mores*[32].

The importance of moral rectitude to the entire programme of renewal underpins the intricacies of Agrippa's relationship with Augustus. The synchronous nature of *auctoritas* and *mores* permeates the overall sense of social, architectural and infrastructural regeneration undertaken throughout the time period mentioned, and is understood through moral legislation, temple rebuilding, and public utilities overhaul respectively, with Agrippa at the helm of implementation until his death. The moral imperative attached to Augustus' agenda, inclusive of the built environment, should not be understated; moral legislation (*Lex Iulia* – marriage, and *Lex Papia-Poppaea* – marriage and children[33]), despite Farrell's reservations on Augustus' hypocrisy[34], was as much a foundational element of Augustus' reign as the built environment. Agrippa's proximity to Augustus – first as trusted ally, then as his son-in-law and aide-de-camp – should be recognized for the bolster it clearly was: they spoke with one voice. Additionally, to consider Agrippa himself as foundational would be no exaggeration; the impression of unstinting support provided to Augustus by him serves as a convenient metaphor for the foundational regeneration previously discussed, present through the entirety of their relationship, and which directly influenced the built environment of Rome.

A critical consequence of the duumvirate, however base its overtones, was the controlling influence of money; Horace was rather scathing in his assessment of this aspect of Rome's enrichment[35]. The level of enrichment Agrippa achieved throughout his career, particularly

[30] Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy*, 44; NB: the status mentioned is translated 'new man'
[31] J. Farrell, 'The Augustan Period: 40 BC – AD 14', in *A Companion to Latin Literature*, Stephen Harrison (Ed.), (Oxford, 2007), 48 (this refers also to *Res Gestae*, 34; NB: the designation mentioned is translated 'authority'
[32] 'morals'
[33] R.I. Frank, 'Augustus' Legislation on Marriage and Children', *California Studies in Classical Antiquity,* Vol. 8 (1975), 43-44; NB: the laws stated are translated 'Julian Law' (introduced/enacted by the Julian *gens*, or family) and 'Papian-Poppaean Law' (introduced/enacted by the *consuls* M. Papius Mutilis and Q. Poppaeus Secundus) subsequent to the *Lex Iulia*
[34] Farrell, 'The Augustan Period: 40 BC – AD 14', 53.
[35] Horace, *Odes, II.15*, trans. J. Michie (Penguin 1967, repr. 1978), in *Rome: The Augustan Age, A Source Book*, Chisholm and Ferguson (eds), 261.

manubiae[36] gained from his military service on behalf of the state and Augustus, served two crucial purposes: it financed the extent and scale of the public works he undertook, with its concomitant benefits, essentially at the behest of Augustus; it provided a comfortable lifestyle replete with recognition, communicated through named public spaces and facilities in Rome, and facilitated philanthropy (see earlier reference to Dio Cassius, n.17). This can be recognized as a mechanism of control, however passive, that enabled Augustus to retain the loyalty of a subordinate, as Augustus mentioned many times within the *Res Gestae* the figures involved in supporting and beautifying both Rome and the empire[37]. While it is unclear whether the requirement for control with Agrippa existed or not, given his refusal of well-deserved triumphs [38], other glories existed in perpetuity through the same kind of monumentality that *viri triumphales* had previously enjoyed and exploited. Equally, it seems both perverse and ironic that Agrippa could no sooner celebrate a triumph than Augustus, with full awareness of his own unique status, initially post-Actium (31 B.C.), then, post-Senate decree of the title Augustus (27 B.C., see *Res Gestae* 34), could admit that his general achieved most (if not all) of his major military victories. In the new regime, Augustus, as *imperator*, had to also be *vir supremus triumphalis*[39]. The commitment, purpose, resolve and expenditure of Agrippa provide a compelling testimony to the effectiveness of personal and close control, understood within the mechanism of Augustus' overall control, and with the concomitant benefits expected from such: *vox et potestas*.

If a final, representative example from the built environment of Rome of the acute nature of personal expression and control were to be offered, contributed, specifically, by Agrippa, it would be the Pantheon[40]. Setting aside the modern popular impression of a coffered concrete vault atop a vast rotunda, with sumptuous interior decoration (which is the reconstructed Pantheon of Hadrian), the significance of the space Agrippa dedicated to the gods – with whom he intended to place the person of Augustus[41] – cannot be forgotten. A hall of gods, Iulius Caesar included, synthesized the new message of Rome, with obvious integration of the *gens Iulia*[42], of which Agrippa would become a part, by marriage and progeny, into the mythology of Rome itself. Complementarity seems evident in the similar message expressed by Augustus within the *Forum Augusti*[43], with *summi viri*[44] and an aetiological sculptural

[36] F.W. Shipley, *Agrippa's Building Activities in Rome*, (St. Louis, 1933), 12; NB: the term is translated 'war booty'
[37] Augustus, *Res Gestae*, 15, 16, 21, in *Rome: The Augustan Age, A Source Book*, Chisholm and Ferguson (eds.), 7-8; NB: the term is translated 'achievements'
[38] Shipley, *Agrippa's Building Activities in Rome*, 11-12.
[39] 'the highest man of triumph'
[40] Shipley, *Agrippa's Building Activities in Rome*, 57.
[41] R. Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, (London, 1897), 476-477.
[42] 'Julian family'
[43] 'Forum of Augustus'

programme. While a visual example would be beneficial for supporting this point, there is no agreement on what Agrippa's Pantheon actually looked like[45]. Lanciani profers a very plausible descriptive image that is qualified by his archaeological rigour: expensive materials used (travertine, marble) within its floor plan were found to reside at a considerable depth below the extant ruins[46]. Sadly, we must satisfy ourselves with its acknowledged existence and intent, if not its true image.

TIBERIUS NERO

The often-strained relationship between Augustus and his adopted son, Tiberius, aptly conveys, through restricted or muted voice, a theme of control, whereby, Augustus managed (or did not, depending on your point of view) both the line of succession, and the timing of naming his successor. Despite Tiberius' visibility and early involvement in the plans of Augustus[47], the security of his accession did not appear to be guaranteed. As Tacitus points out (rather acidly)[48], it was obvious that all of Augustus' other blood-relative options had been exhausted: Marcellus, Augustus' nephew and son-in-law, adopted, and married to Augustus' daughter, Iulia, died 23 B.C.; Lucius and Gaius, his grandsons (from the marriage of his daughter, Iulia, to Agrippa after Marcellus' death), who died A.D. 2 and A.D. 4 respectively, and Agrippa Postumus, another grandson who, according to Suetonius, was an 'adopted' successor[49], but was eventually exiled A.D. 7. While Tiberius was noted as having been confirmed after Gaius' death in A.D. 4[50], the delay in, or absence of, unequivocal confirmation of his succession by Augustus up to this point, as Farrell contends[51], until the exhaustion of other family options – even after Augustus, effectively, prostituted his daughter, Iulia, to Tiberius as yet another dynastic suitor – can only have been a serious source of rancour on the part of Tiberius. His self-imposed exile in Rhodes attests, at least partly, to this schism with Augustus[52]. The ignominious setting aside of his wife, Vipsania (Agrippa's daughter), at Augustus' insistence[53] to secure the dynastic claim, would only have added to the problematic dynamic between them. What does this have to do with the built environment of Rome? From the historian's point of view, the absence of evidence can often say as much as its presence, and it is on this point that the interconnection of Augustus,

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[44] 'the greatest men'
[45] Shipley, *Agrippa's Building Activities in Rome*, 56ff.
[46] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 476-477.
[47] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Tiberius, VI*, 112.
[48] Tacitus, *Annales: From Augustus to Tiberius*, 33.
[49] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Tiberius, XV*, 118.
[50] *Ibid*.
[51] Farrell, 'The Augustan Period: 40 B.C – A.D 14', 53.
[52] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Tiberius, X*, 114.
[53] *Ibid*. *VII*, 112.

Tiberius and the built environment can be illustrated; not through their fractious relationship, but through the paucity of proper 'visual' (read monumental) involvement in Rome. Absence of appropriate reverence for Augustus by Tiberius can be inferred, as can damning with faint, or muted, praise.

Using the observations and archaeological evidence of Lanciani[54], Shipley[55] and Favro[56], there are two attested, substantial monumental contributions from Tiberius throughout the entire period of Augustus' Principate: the *Templum Castoris et Pollucis*[57], which is dependent upon accepting Shipley's assertion that 7 B.C. is when Tiberius 'decreed' he would accept responsibility for it, rather than its dedication (A.D. 6, see Shipley, 55), and, of a more ironic nature, the *Templum Concordiae* (A.D. 10[58]). The former temple rebuilding, or acceptance of responsibility to rebuild, rather than dedication upon completion, coincides with the period just prior to Tiberius' self-imposed exile – this despite celebration of triumph in 7 B.C.[59] – while the latter represents, despite its irony, the sea-change in the later years of Augustus' reign. Tiberius was properly recognized as *filius Augustae*[60]; the duopoly of power between Augustus and Tiberius was formalized, akin to the earlier relationship of Augustus and Agrippa, and the significance of ratified succession was advertised to all. Each monument attested to the dichotomy of separate-but-similar messages: the reconstruction of the *Templum Castoris et Pollucis* demonstrated Tiberius' initial place in the Augustan family monopoly of Rome's built environment; that it was well-established, controlled and reserved. His dedication of the *Templum Concordiae* not only resolved the issues of succession, but dispelled (in theory, at least) the rancorous atmosphere that had existed between Augustus and Tiberius. A long wait for triumphal honours to materialize, we might suggest, but delivered none-the-less. Recognition of Augustus' advanced age and his failing health[61], whether tacit or acknowledged, allied to formal, joint sharing of *imperium*[62], provided a reversal in the one-way mechanism of control enjoyed by Augustus to that point; an irony unlikely to have gone unnoticed, particularly by Tiberius.

[54] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 238, 272 & 288.
[55] Shipley, 'Chronology of the Building Operations in Rome from the Death of Caesar to the Death of Augustus', 53 & 56.
[56] D. Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*, (New York, 2007), 132-133.
[57] 'Temple of Castor and Pollux'
[58] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 597 & Shipley, 'Chronology of the Building Operations in Rome from the Death of Caesar to the Death of Augustus', 56; NB: the building is translated 'Temple of Concord'
[59] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Tiberius, IX*, 114.
[60] 'son of Augustus'
[61] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Tiberius, IX*, 114.
[62] 'power of command'

AUGUSTUS' FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Prior to family monopoly of the built environment of Rome, others were involved in making their mark upon the environs of the city, the extended network of Augustus' family and friends among them. Syme lays out these multi-faceted relationships, and comments extensively on the 'aristocratic' network of this period[63]. One of the earliest examples of this is the *Templum Saturni* reconstruction by Lucius Munatius Plancus in 43 B.C., as attributed by Lanciani[64]. There is, however, a problem: Shipley refutes Plancus' closeness to Augustus, in that he was a recognized associate of Antony, therefore, not well-disposed to Augustus, and that the date was 42 B.C. (43 B.C. being the date of his triumph)[65]. Additionally, that there was later reconciliation suggests, perhaps, that acknowledgement of Plancus' place in the coterie of Augustus (at least, those involved in building projects) is, however retrospective, deserved. It certainly worked for Messalla[66], another associate of Antony. Association with Antony, as *Dux Orientalis*[67], may not, necessarily, have precluded adherence to the control or dictats of the *Dux Italiae*, or, as may be better acknowledged, *Dux Occidentalis*[68]: the future Augustus. Cornelius Balbus is another example, with the *Theatrum et crypta Balbi* from 13 B.C.[69], but, as Suetonius states, as a prominent Roman who was also closely associated with Augustus, through connection to Iulius Caesar[70], his 'late' contribution to the fabric of Rome, through his populist theatre and the personal space of his own crypt, is unique for the period. No other prominent Roman was able to build any such structure, as efforts were 'guided' by Augustus away from an earlier prompt regarding embellishment and restoration, toward upkeep of the roads network[71]. Maecenas, as Augustus' conduit for patronage of the arts, is another exemplar of constructor-by-proxy, with the *Horti Maeceanatis*[72]; landscaped during the 30s B.C., using 6-8 metres of soil over the top of a public dump and paupers' gravesite[73]. A named space or structure did not preclude the options of associative honour, nor appropriated glory through appropriated space. We might

[63] Syme, *The Augustan Aristocracy*, 51-52.
[64] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 293, NB; the building is translated 'Temple of Saturn'
[65] Shipley, 'Chronology of the Building Operations in Rome from the Death of Caesar to the Death of Augustus', 11.
[66] *Ibid*., 35.
[67] 'Eastern Leader'
[68] The titles are translated thus: 'Italian Leader', and 'Western Leader'
[69] Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*, 118 & 122; NB: the buildings are translated 'Theatre and crypt of Balbus'
[70] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Augustus, IV*, 46.
[71] *Ibid*., *XXX*, 62, & R. Laurence, *The Roads of Roman Italy: Mobility and Cultural Change* (London, 1999), 42.
[72] 'gardens of Maecenas'
[73] A. Claridge, *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide* (Oxford, 2010), 330.

offer that Maecenas, as *patronus artis*[74], and through his gardens, represented the other side of the coin to Agrippa: an intellectual, ethereal, moral contributor to the fabric and voice of Rome, versus the visceral, physical, interactive efforts of Agrippa; equality of power, yet, difference of approach.

Augustus' immediate family – more appropriately, their memory – also benefited from this largesse; his nephew and son-in-law, Marcellus, had the *Theatrum Marcelli*[75] built (or, as Claridge contends, completed by Augustus from an unfinished project of Iulius Caesar[76]) and named, posthumously, in his honour. Appropriate space planning does not appear to have been a major consideration, as the juxtaposition of secular and religious appears haphazard. It is, therefore, difficult to conceive of deliberate propaganda, however, the proximity of other major sites of religious significance, such as *Templum Bellonae*?; *Aedis Iovis*; *Aedis Iunonis*; *Aedis Herculis Musarum*[77], alludes to certain possibilities: simply, a lack of care in placement, or a design borne out by Augustus' (or popular) love for Marcellus that, perhaps, was better reflected in a secular way, but with proximity to religious spaces meant to convey a higher purpose and message. That this also contained an experiential dimension for the *populi Romani* should not be forgotten. Equally, Claridge's earlier mention of the theatre as an inherited project from the time of Iulius Caesar (in competition to Pompey?) could answer for its placement and encroachment.

Following on from commemoration of Marcellus, the loss of Augustus' next adopted successors, his grandsons, Lucius and Gaius, resulted in further explicit visual imagery, as Suetonius states:

> Some of Augustus' public works were undertaken in the names of relatives; such as the colonnade and basilica of his grandsons Gaius and Lucius;

Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Augustus*, XXIX[78]

The corollary between Augustus' family and public commemoration was made obvious; no privacy of mourning was envisaged, and public access to aid remembrance appeared to be encouraged. Visual imagery, as Zanker mentions[79], was replete with metaphor and symbolism, and was utilized to reinforce Augustus' message: control of public space rested,

[74] 'patron of the arts'
[75] 'Theatre of Marcellus'
[76] Claridge, *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide*, (Oxford, 2010), 275.
[77] The temples are translated thus: Temple of Bellona?; Temple of Jove; Temple of Juno; Temple of Hercules of the Muses
[78] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Augustus, XXIX*, 62.
[79] Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, 18.

solely, in aristocratic (or 'imperial') hands. Whether through familial commemoration, or through, as Suetonius states, the early urgings of Augustus to his associates 'to embellish the city with new public monuments or to restore and improve ancient ones'[80], thereby, creating *publica magnificentia*[81], the voice of the *princeps* resounded. This position would change to one of 'imperial' family monopoly, with less opportunity for the expression of others, as stated earlier. Additionally, through *publica magnificentia*, the importance of *publica munificentia*[82] also prevailed; Vitruvius' earlier statement rings true, regarding the beneficent Augustus and legacy aspects of the built environment of Rome, and the extended empire.

CONCLUSION

The built environment of Rome, particularly for our time period, reflected social, religious and political changes on a grand scale. That these things were under the auspices of one man – Augustus – is significant, for two reasons: the number of visual markers and reminders attest to the duration, as much as the success, of his Principate; and the immense scope of works undertaken to redeem and revamp Rome illustrate his, and others', commitment and expenditure toward the 'idea' of a resplendent Rome. That these reasons are also riven through with the personal control of Augustus seems obvious. Where someone like Favro asserts that '[…] choreographed experiences, imprinted signs and symbols, and unifying narratives […] have the power to affix in the memory'[83], it is, however, difficult to confirm that this was the case for the vast majority in Rome; the built environment reflected hierarchical control, both in an aristocratic and in an individual sense, and evidence for participatory zeal on the part of the *populi Romani* is scant and unconvincing. What is clear is that the Roman *nobilitas*, by active participation or exhortation, were able to leave their imprint upon the city landscape, allowing monumental Rome to speak to us of them. This brings us to the conclusion that, much like prior, individualistic, civic blandishments of earlier Republican times, those improvements to the fabric of Rome undertaken and completed by Augustus and his associates may very well be taken to communicate personal statements of power and control, rather than conscious improving gestures for the benefit of all. Not to disprove a personal argument, it is also evident that an individual – in this case, Agrippa, not Augustus – could embody a selfless principle of beautification and 'giving' that revolved around the idea of Rome, as represented by its people. This is balanced against an earlier statement concerning the potential for Agrippa to be celebrating triumphs by another method.

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[80] Suetonius, *De Vita Caesarum: Augustus, XXIX*, 62.
[81] Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, 135ff.; NB: the term is translated 'public magnificence'
[82] 'generous public gift'
[83] Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*, 2.

With this, it seems appropriate to give the final word to, some might suggest, the last free voice of the Roman Republic, before Augustus' Principate morphed in to a closed imperial dynasty (and he was exiled):

> There was crude simplicity before: now Rome is golden,
> and owns the vast wealth of the conquered world.
> Look what the Capitol is now, and what it was:
> you'd say it belonged to a different Jove.
> The Senate-House, now worthy of such debates,
> was made of wattle when Tatius held the kingship.
> Where the Palatine now gleams with Apollo and our leaders,
> what was that but pasture for ploughmen's oxen?
> Others may delight in ancient times: I congratulate myself
> on having been born just now: this age suits my nature.

Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, III.113-122[84]

[84] Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* (Works of Love)*, III*, trans. A. S. Kline (2001), taken from <http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/ArtofLoveBkIII.htm> [Accessed 28.1.13] NB: this version has been used for its clarity and adherence to the Latin text (see <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/ovid/ovid.artis3.shtml>), rather than the Perseus version in rhyming couplets.

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