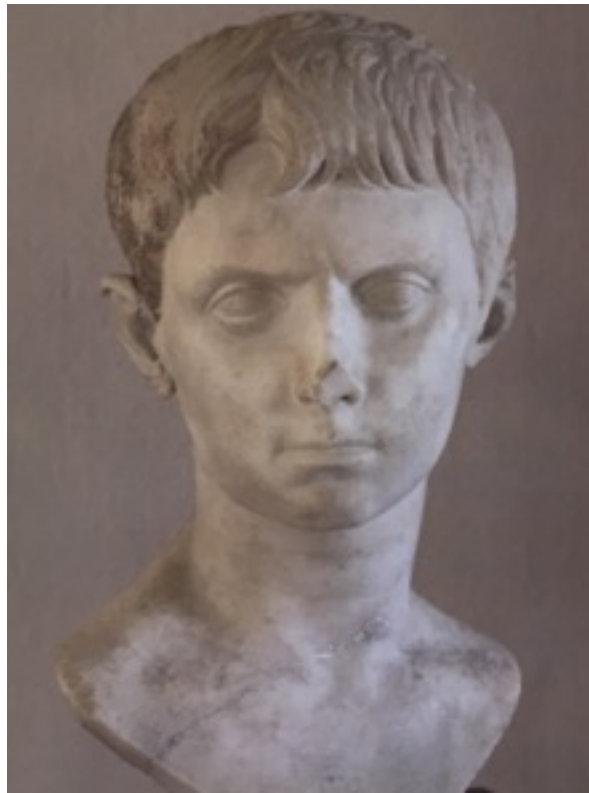


Herrschaft in the age of Octavianus

Bachelor's Thesis



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Abstract

In order to effectively rule any leader or group needs to legitimise their power to his subjects. Max Weber describes three ideal types of legitimation that can be distinguished throughout history. In this paper the visual language used by Octavianus during the civil war will be examined and shall be analysed for their relation to the aforementioned three ideal types of authority. To explain via the change in type of *Herrschaft* the major shift in the Roman political system. Octavianus' use of propaganda shifts from predominantly charismatic authority over the course of the civil war to a more sustainable legitimation relying ever more on the traditional type.

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I. Introduction:

Few figures of history represent such a pivotal point in history as does Octavian. The political life of Octavianus encompasses the transformation of the Roman state from the republic to the autocracy of Imperial Rome that would be the system for centuries to come. Much research has been done into Octavianus' life and politics. One of the most intriguing aspects of Octavianus'/ Augustus' role is the contrast between his claim to bring Rome back to the republic and his actual policy of instating the autocratic form of government known as the *principate*, which had no base in Roman tradition. The transformation from revolutionary to protector of Roman tradition obviously did not occur the day Octavianus became Augustus but rather has a longer lead up. In this research, I will study this transformation, using a theory of power and legitimation of power put forward by Max Weber.

Weber describes three forms of legitimated power or *Herrschaft* as he calls it that have been utilised throughout history.¹ Weber described these theories and applies them to several historical figures such as Napoleon Bonaparte. However, he does not include Octavianus. I shall apply Weber's theory of *Herrschaft* to interpret how Octavianus tried to legitimate the way he presented his power through images. To limit the scope of this research I shall focus solely on the pre-Augustan period from 44 B.C. to 27 B.C. This research is relevant because Weber's theory may help us understand Octavianus' political transformation from revolutionary to traditionalist.

Weber argues that ways of legitimating power by society's leaders or their forms of *Herrschaft* and the structures that come with it are in fact the defining factor in the advance of history. It follows from this concept that one should expect to find a change in *Herrschaft* at such a turning point in history as was the transformation of the Roman Res Publica into the principate which may contribute to our understanding of this change. Therefore I think it may be useful to approach this aspect of history through the spectre of Weber's theory.

Weber's theory has not been connected with the representation of Octavianus in visual language. Zanker and others have written about representation in the visual communication of Octavianus without applying Weber's *Herrschaft* model.² Weber's theory may help to illuminate how, when and why this transformation came about. As such, the scope of this research is to answer the question: How does the use of images by Octavianus during the civil war relate to Weber's types of *Herrschaft*?

¹ Weber, Max. *Wirtschaft Und Gesellschaft: Grundriss Der Verstehenden Soziologie*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1922.

² Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1988.

To attempt to answer this question the research shall be divided into three chapters that are arranged thematically as well as chronologically. In each of the three chapters one of the following questions shall be attempted to be answered respectively:

How did Octavianus establish and legitimise his power in Rome's political scene?

How did Octavianus make use of myth and religion to legitimise his power starting with the divination of Julius Caesar in 42 B.C.?

How did Octavianus exploit the dichotomy between himself and Marcus Antonius to legitimise his position of power?

In the conclusion after having answered these questions the findings of this research shall be briefly discussed and the research question shall be answered as best as possible.

II. Theory:

Weber with his theory provides an alternative to Karl Marx' notion that the course of history is centred around what Marx calls modes of production and the social structures that facilitate them. Weber in his work *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* argues that the legitimation of power by leaders and subsequent structures of society are the central theme of history.³

According to Weber in order for a person or a group of people to effectively command power over another for any length of time there is always the need for some legitimation of that power. Throughout history a variety of ways to legitimise one's power have been proven to be more or less successful. Weber's theory states that all of these ways of legitimation fit one (or in reality more) of three ideal types. The need for legitimation is described by Weber in a very concise manner. He makes a distinction between *Macht* and *Herrschaft*. *Macht* is the traditional concept of power meaning that one individual (A) can make another (B) do what A wants despite any resistance on the part of B. This power is essentially held by the use of, or the threat of the use of force. Essentially this means that the physically stronger or those who control the armed forces possess this power. According to Weber however this form of power is unstable and rarely effective in the long term. What is needed to rule effectively is *Herrschaft* which describes the probability that a command by A will be observed by B without need of coercion. There is no need for coercion because B has internalised the notion that A's power is legitimate. The holder of power A has the *Macht* that comes from the threat of force and B believes that to be right or legitimate. In a nutshell *Herrschaft* can be described as *Macht* plus legitimacy. Translated into English *Herrschaft* is commonly domination or authority but neither really has the same meaning as the German word in my opinion but by lack of alternative I shall use them sometimes nonetheless. The Latin term *auctoritas* may be the most fitting and apropos translation but as it is not conventional to use this term in this context I shall be careful not to be perceived as acting without precedent.

Weber's theory describes three ideal types of *Herrschaft*: Charismatic, Traditional and Rational-Legal. According to his theory these three types of legitimation in that order mark the ways to establish authority throughout history. Weber is very clear in the notion that the *Idealtypus* or ideal type is a construct for the use in scientific discourse and not conform reality in the sense that one should not hope to find any ideal types perfectly represented in historical evidence. Any historical case will be a combination of factors that are assigned to two or three of the ideal types but according to Weber the dominance of these types over the others changes throughout history.

³ Weber, Max. *Wirtschaft Und Gesellschaft: Grundriss Der Verstehenden Soziologie*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1922.

Charismatic authority being dominant in primitive societies, traditional authority being more present in more complex societies and rational-legal authority being the dominant form of legitimation in recent history. The three ideal types Weber describes as follows:

Charismatic *Herrschaft* is highly personal and often based on the fact that a person has some special, supernatural or exemplary quality. People accept the authority by the ideals, proclaimed plans or the conviction of a person. Often there is a claim to a special relationship to the gods. Prophets like Jesus and Mohammed but also iconised persona's such as Hitler are examples of holders of charismatic authority. Charismatic authority can be highly effective but tends to be difficult to sustain over the long term and because of its personal nature is nigh impossible to build a dynasty on. The charismatic type is based strongly on emotion rather than on rationality.

The second ideal type described is the traditional type. Apparently based on age old customs, rules and traditions this type of legitimation is less personal than the first and more easily transferred from one person to another. The heart of this type of legitimation is the reasoning that it has always been like this and therefore is right and should not be questioned. The Roman *Mos Maiorum* presents the perfect example for this type of authority. The customs are passed down or perceived to have been passed down through generations and from their ancient nature derive some force of persuasion. The traditional type can be perceived from the very institutional such as the Roman Res Publica to the seemingly instinctive such as the authority a parent holds over his/her child. Traditional authority is closely bound to honour and the upholding of that honour personal or collective. The loss of honour or the betrayal of tradition will likely lead to a crisis in authority. Like the charismatic type the traditional type is not rational. Rules are obeyed because they have always been obeyed, there is no rational process of questioning them.

Lastly Weber defines the rational-legal source of *Herrschaft*. This in essence implies the rule of law. The power held by a person or group is dictated by pre-existing formal rules. These rules are the source of the power and since the rules are rationally accepted as being legitimate the power is perceived as being legitimate. Democracies as well as constitutional monarchies are examples of rational-legal authorities. This third type is the only truly rational of the three and is the dominant legitimation of power in modern societies.

III. Method:

This research shall take the form of a critical discourse analysis. This approach focuses on interpreting and analysing communication for its possible intended meaning in both linguistic as well as visual forms. In the case of this research the sources used will be mostly visual in nature and therefore non-linguistic language will be more present than the linguistic. This research will thus have an interpretive rather than empirical nature. The way of research chosen is in line with Weber's approach to history he called *antipositivism*.⁴ According to Weber it is vital to interpret historical evidence for its meaning or intended purpose to the actor so to understand it (*verstehen*) rather than purely looking at the empirical evidence at hand.

To analyse how Octavianus sought to legitimise his power I follow Paul Zanker's *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. What Zanker does in his book is study the representation of power in Roman art and visual language in the time of Octavianus/Augustus and interpret what purpose the representations may likely have had. Like Zanker I will interpret the visual language used by Octavianus by looking for symbolism, conventions or breaks from convention and general historical context. Unlike Zanker I will then seek to make the connection between this representation and Weber's theory of *Herrschaft*. To see whether and when changes in the nature of domination can be perceived in the visual language.

The source material for this research will be primarily objects produced in the final part of the Roman civil war between the death of Caesar 44 B.C. and 17 B.C. when Octavianus became Augustus. Because of the martial character of this period the visual language examined will for the most part be in the form of coinage. Coins provide a good and abundant source for images of representation because they were used as a means of propaganda by the leaders of armies. All sides in the civil war commanded armies that consisted of a large number of soldiers who had to be paid. The coins minted for such purposes doubled as a means of communication to the soldiers and the world at large. Moreover the function of coins as a currency means they and the message upon them would get spread around without any additional effort. This made coins a very effective medium for propaganda, an early form of 'broadcasting'. Other forms of visual communication will play a lesser role in this research. The architecture that plays such a large role in Zanker's book will not be featured much in this research since the Augustan building plan came only after 27 B.C. and thus falls outside the scope of this research.

⁴ Weber, Max. "The Nature of Social Action." *Selections in Translation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

To help interpret the possible intended meanings of the images and to provide overall context I shall rely on both modern scholars most notably Zanker as well as authors more contemporary to Octavianus such as Suetonius, Cicero, Ovidius and Cassius Dio. Keeping in mind that these authors have been influenced by Augustan propaganda and are therefore not objective portrayal do provide the closest thing to an eye witness report.

The paper will be ordered mainly chronologically starting in chapter one with the appearance of Octavianus on the political stage in 44 B.C. and his initial claim to power. The second chapter will focus on Octavianus' use of the realm of myth and the divine starting with the divination of his adoptive father Caesar in 42 B.C. The third and final chapter will focus on the culmination of the civil war between Octavianus and Marcus Antonius and its climax the battle of Actium in 31 B.C. I have chosen this set-up because the chronological order is most natural and most clear when dealing with historical events, additionally it makes it most clear how and when certain changes in authority occurred.

Please note that throughout this paper I shall use the Latin version of names also for those who more commonly go by the Anglo-Saxon form so Octavianus, Plutarchus and Ovidius rather than and Octavian, Plutarch and Ovid. At first appearance the name including preanomen, cognomen and agnomen will be mentioned after which I shall keep to the name that is most conventionally used by historians. As for Octavius, Octavianus, Augustus, Caesar etc. I shall attempt to use the name that befits the time discussed with the exception of Caesar. To avoid confusion I shall keep to the convention and refrain from using Caesar to refer to Octavianus unless specifically stated so. Caesar thus will usually refer to Gaius Julius Caesar.

IV. How did Octavianus establish and legitimise his position in Rome's political scene?

When in 44 B.C. Octavianus came to Rome the sole claim to fame or fortune he had was that he had been named the heir to Julius Caesar, nothing more. Given that Rome had no hereditary rule and that the name Caesar came with enemies in high places made that it was not a whole lot to have. Yet it was this claim that Octavianus used to such effect to accumulate power that his rival Marcus Antonius mockingly said "Puer, qui omnia nomini debes".⁵ Octavianus indeed owed much to his name as shall be the topic of this first chapter.

When Julius Caesar was assassinated on the ides of March in 44 B.C. Octavius was stationed in Apollonia in Greece. A mere eighteen years of age Octavius acted resolutely and headed straight for Italy to Brundisium to see what possibility the situation gave him. Although Antonius mocked Octavianus for the fact he owed all to his name it can be argued that it were in fact his actions that set Octavius up to capitalise on it. As Caesar's right hand Antonius was the logical leader of those who were loyal to the assassinated dictator and Antonius let no time go by to establish his position as such. Two days after the assassination Antonius voted to give clemency to the conspirators and in exchange the Senate ratified and thus legitimised all Caesars actions and granted him the honour of a public funeral.⁶ It was Antonius who read the will of Caesar to the people of Rome before the funeral and spoke there where he implied the conspirators against Caesar were assassins rather than liberators or regicides as they would have it. The anti-Caesarians had waged a campaign of propaganda against Caesar that is mostly lost to us, making him out to be a *rex*.⁷ The will that Antonius read to the people made Caesar appear far from the selfish power hungry figure that *rex* would imply, rather it made him look like a man who had only the glory of Rome and the Romans interest at heart. The will made all citizens of Rome heir to the estate of Caesar which persuaded them that the propaganda by his adversaries had been slander.

With the reading of the will Antonius attempted to bind himself directly to the honourable deeds that Caesar calls for in his testament. Caesar's honourable actions providing for the people of Rome as a father would for his children gives him both traditional and charismatic *Herrschaft*. Antonius with by his reading of the will attempts to transfer this authority from the persona of Caesar to his own.

⁵ Cicero, Marcus Tullius, Philippics 13.11.

⁶ Weinstock, Stefan. *Divus Julius*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1971. 385.

⁷ Nordling, John Gilbert. *Indirect Discourse and Rhetorical Strategies in Caesar's Bellum Gallicum and Bellum Civile*. Madison: U of Wisconsin, 1991. 148.

In the same will Octavius was named Caesar's son and heir. The adoption of Octavius in Roman convention made him the fully recognised son of Caesar. Unlike one may expect in the modern West there was no difference in validity, cause for doubt of the father-son connection because of adoption as opposed to biological ties.⁸ Octavius thus from this moment on was the true son of Caesar. In Roman naming convention it would be expected that Octavius would take the name of both his adoptive father as well as retain his birth name with a derivative suffix thus: Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus. This is indeed what Octavianus did but he decided to lose the connection to the plebeian Octavii almost immediately and despite convention among historians was never referred to as Octavianus. This can be seen in the source material since there are no coins or any other images which mention the name Octavianus.

Like Antonius Octavianus would use the persona of Julius Caesar to further his own political position and like Antonius he therefore had an interest in promoting the good name of Caesar among the Roman public. To this end Octavianus commissioned a variety of coins celebrating Julius Caesar and his achievements in life as well as his divine status which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Octavianus as son of Caesar tried to tie his name and persona as much as possible to the late Caesar as can be seen from his name change. With the losing of 'Octavianus' there was no way to distinguish the two on paper. The same difficulty to tell the two apart is reflected in the visual images of the time. A good example can be seen in **FIG I**.



FIG I.

Gold coin 43 B.C. depicting Caesar on the obverse and Octavianus on the reverse.

⁸ Lindsay, Hugh. *Adoption in the Roman Worlds*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009. 107.

In **FIG I** Caesar and Octavianus are quite literally two sides of the same coin. The most fundamental thing that is of importance here is one that may be very easily overlooked by the modern observer but would unlikely be missed by a Roman contemporary of Octavianus. It was very unusual to see the portrait of a living person in the Roman world. In the Hellenistic East it was commonplace for leaders to have themselves shown in this manner on coinage often to liken themselves to a god.⁹ In Roman tradition however it was the convention to show portraits only of the gods themselves or mythical persons on coins. Roman mortals could be displayed on coinage in different poses but not in close up profile and probably not on gold coins. The only exception to this rule may have been Julius Caesar who was possibly given the honour by the Senate to have his portrait on coinage. It is a matter of debate whether he was indeed given this honour and made use of it. Dio Cassius writes of the honour bestowed on Caesar to mint coins with the title *Parens Patriae* but never mentions the portraits.¹⁰ Yet the appearance of coins like **FIG II** with the title and Caesar's portrait according to historians may suggest that he was granted the honour along with the use of the name.¹¹ It is however possible that coins such as the one shown in **FIG II** were minted only after the death of Caesar. Both Antonius and Octavianus had a vested interest in the image of Caesar and could benefit from the message communicated by such visual messages. Whoever minted the coin clearly aimed at traditional *Herrschaft* with the inscription. The authority of a father over his children is one of the strongest and most universal forms of traditional authority and especially potent in Roman society where the father was absolute ruler over the family. By implying that Caesar is the father of the fatherland one consequently implies that he is due the submission of that fatherland as a Roman family submits to the father at the head of it. Caesar himself would obviously be served by such parallels but Octavianus as heir could expect to do so as well. If it was Octavianus who minted these coins he appears to have abandoned this strategy soon since it does not reappear in his later propaganda.

⁹ Sheedy, Kenneth A. *Alexander and the Hellenistic Kingdoms: Coins, Image and the Creation of Identity : The Westmoreland Collection*. Sidney: Macquarie University, 2007. 159.

¹⁰ Dio, Lucius Cassius,. *Roman History* 44.4.

¹¹ See for Example: "Macquarie University." *A New Honour: The Image of Caesar on Coins*.



FIG II.

Portrait of Julius Caesar with the words Parens Patriae. Possibly minted after Caesar's death.

Coming back to **FIG I** it can be expected that the fact that Octavianus had himself portrayed in this unusual fashion just like his father must have had a tremendous effect of association on the Roman public beholding such a coin. The two being on either side of the same coin would naturally strengthen that connection. The connection goes beyond the similarity alone. Appealing to the emotion of the observer Octavian appears bearded which in the clean shaven Roman world signals his state of mourning over his father.

The inscription strengthens the comparison between father and son even more. Both sides read the same exact name *C(aius) Caesar* but the rest of the inscription differs from one another yet provides a similar mirroring effect to the images. Accompanying Julius Caesar the lettering reads *DICT PERP PONT MAX*.¹² This is a listing of accolades meaning *Dictator Perpetuo Pontifex Maximus*. The inscription on Octavianus' side mirrors this reading: *COS PONT AUG*¹³ standing for *Consul Pontifex Augur*. The coin was probably minted to commemorate the first consulship of Octavianus that had been entrusted to him a decade earlier than Roman custom prescribed.¹⁴ Thus although the titles of Octavian on both the political and religious field are less grand than that of his father his youth make them impressive nonetheless. The inscription here serves a dual purpose for not only do these titles link the two Caesars closely together they also communicate an approval from the Roman state. These titles were given to Octavianus by the Senate making him a legitimated rather than self proclaimed leader.

¹² Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

¹³ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

¹⁴ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1988. 38.

This same use of the honours given him by the ‘state’ can be seen on the coins such as **FIG III** that Octavianus had made to commemorate the statue the Senate had voted him. The first of such coins was minted in 43 B.C.¹⁵



FIG IIIa.

Coin 43 B.C. Obverse showing portrait of Octavianus with inscription Caesar IMP(erator).



FIG IIIb.

Reverse displaying the equestrian statue of Octavianus with the inscription S C.

The initials *S C* that accompany the image of the equestrian figure stand for *Senatus Consultum* a clear message that Octavianus had the support of the Roman Senate. Marcus Antonius who was Octavianus’ main rival for the succession of Caesar in fact had fallen out with the Senate and its most famous orator Marcus Tullius Cicero at the time Octavianus had the first of this series of coins minted.¹⁶ The recognition by the Senate gave Octavianus a legitimacy for those who were not part of the Caesarian faction and a legitimation on the basis of rules and tradition rather than his father’s name. Octavianus could thus claim legitimacy of the charismatic type by invoking his

¹⁵ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1988. 37.

¹⁶ Cicero, Marcus Tullius, *Philippics* 4.2.

personal connection to Caesar as well as using the Senate's approval of him to legitimise through the traditional and rational-legal types all on one coin.

An interesting deviation from the series is presented in **FIG IV** in which not only has the pose of the horse changed somewhat more importantly the inscription has changed. Instead of the *S C* from the earlier versions here the inscription reads *POPULI IUSSI*.¹⁷ No longer was the Senate used as a legitimator of Octavianus' power but rather the people or Rome themselves. Given that Octavianus was snubbed by the Senate after the victory over Marcus Antonius he may have felt this legitimation was unreliable.



FIG IV

Coin 41 B.C. in the series displaying the statue inscription reads POPULI IUSSI

It was following the aforementioned snubbing by the Senate that Octavianus came together with Marcus Antonius and Lepidus to form the Second Triumvirate and forego the Senate entirely. The three Caesarians suspected that the Senate was planning to buy time until one of the conspirators against Caesar Marcus Junius Brutus could mobilise his armies in the East and march on Rome. If one goes by the speeches given by Cicero that seems to have been a justified suspicion.¹⁸ The union formed by Octavianus, Antonius and Lepidus was called the Second Triumvirate named after the Triumvirate that Julius Caesar had formed in 59 B.C. with Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus and Marcus Licinius Crassus. The decision to name it so served to again reinforce the connection between Caesar and his successors but can also be interpreted to serve another form of legitimation. The Roman *Mos Maiorum* functioned in some regards by way of precedent somewhat comparable to modern judicial system with common law (*Iudis Prudentia*)

¹⁷ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

¹⁸ Cicero, Marcus Tullius, Philippics 10.1.

meaning that one could justify action by recalling precedent in Roman history. The name that clearly referred to precedent can be argued to have given the Second Triumvirate a form of traditional authority as well. The absence of the *SC* on **FIG IV** could be explained by the fact that Octavianus because of the Triumvirate did not really need the Senate as a legitimator. The inscription *SC* would reappear on coins by Octavianus but only in the Augustan era. During the remainder of the Triumvirate the inscription would commonly read *III VIR R P C* meaning Triumvirate for the Roman Res Publica as can be seen on **FIG V**.¹⁹ Octavianus here lists his title *Imperator* (which he would take as a part of his name) and his religious position as *Pontifex*.



FIG V.

Coin 41 B.C. Obverse: Marcus Antonius with inscription MANTIMP AVGVSTI VIR R P C M BARBAT Q P. Reverse: Octavianus accompanied by inscription: CAESAR IMP PONT III VIR R P C.

Though Octavianus used senatorial and other political titles to legitimate his power on occasion possibly to cater to non-Cesarions his main claim to power remained his connection to Julius Caesar and he kept exploiting it. Where the mirror technique used in images on coins with inscriptions of achievements such as discussed earlier is relatively safe as far as legitimation goes, Octavianus used more daring imagery. A good example of this is displayed in **FIG V** in which Octavianus makes the connection not so much between him and Caesar but rather with him and Caesar's power.

¹⁹ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.



FIG V.

Silver coin 42 B.C. Obverse with bearded Octavianus. Inscription CAESAR VIR R P C. Reverse showing Julius' sella curulis with the inscription Caesar DIC PER.

The portrait of Caesar here is completely omitted in favour of an object that symbolises him or rather his position of power. This practice of replacing Caesar with a symbol would become more common in Octavianus' visual language as the years went by. It is quite possible that Octavianus although he derived his power from Caesar's name was aware of the problematic nature of Caesar's revolutionary persona in relation to the traditional Roman custom he would later lean upon for legitimation.²⁰ It is possible he decided to act upon this problem as early as 42 B.C. Naturally this is pure and somewhat wild speculation since it would require tremendous foresight on the part of Octavianus.

To conclude: As Octavianus' *raison d'être* on the political stage it is reasonable to expect the relation to Caesar to feature heavily in the use of images in the period right after 44 B.C. In fact it has been the visualisation of this personal relation that has been much discussed in this chapter. Caesar can be seen as the typical charismatic authority and although this type of authority is particularly hard to transfer due to its personal nature Octavianus aims at exactly that. By relating himself so closely to Caesar that the two men are almost inseparable Octavianus seems to have succeeded in transferring his father's charismatic *Herrschaft* unto himself quite effectively. However he diversifies his legitimation by also using his political and religious titles and honours. A good example of this is the commemoration of the equestrian statue combined where the lettering S C can be viewed as a form of rational-legal legitimation. Here apart from the name inscribed

²⁰ Ramage, Edwin S. "Augustus' Treatment of Caesar." *Historia Zeitschrift für Alle Geschichte* 34.2 (1985): 223. Franz Steiner Verlag.

Octavianus does not rely strongly on his Caesarian connection. Rather he builds on his own independent persona and his own honours given him by the existing and accepted power structure.

All in all the lion's share of legitimation discussed in this chapter is of the charismatic type, either by connection to Caesar or by establishing his own persona. This is conform the Weberian idea that charismatic authority is often the type used by revolutionaries as Octavianus at this stage can certainly be described.²¹

²¹ Weber, Max. *Wirtschaft Und Gesellschaft: Grundriss Der Verstehenden Soziologie*. Tübingen: Mohr, 1922.

V. How did Octavianus make use of myth and religion to legitimise his power starting with the divination of Julius Caesar in 42 B.C.?

It is not entirely clear when it was decided and widely accepted that Julius Caesar was a god. Some historians argue that Caesar was granted the honour of divination by the Senate during his life. The title DICT(ator) PERP(etuo) as is shown on the gold coin in **FIG I** so the theory goes does not stand for the more common interpretation of being dictator for life but rather should be taken more literal. Perpetual should be taken to mean for eternity as a god. This would be in line with the theory that Caesar was granted the honour of minting coins with his portrait on it since this was usually a honour of the gods. Yet since the exact date of the first appearance of coins with Caesar's portrait is unknown and there is no account of this senatorial decision this is not entirely convincing. Cicero does allude to the fact that Caesar because of his honours had indeed become a god in life but it can be argued that this should be taken as an accusation or insult rather than literally.²² The cult of *Divus Iulius* as Caesar's divine persona was known gained prominence after his death in 44 B.C. promoted by Octavianus as well as Antonius. In 42 B.C. the Senate unable to resist the Caesarian faction that had now effectively taken control of Rome decreed the divine status of Caesar.

The cult of *Divus Iulius* was quite probably helped tremendously by a natural phenomenon that transpired in the months after the death of Caesar. Most commonly the event is believed to have taken place in July 44 B.C. during the games organised by Octavianus in honour of Caesar who himself had vowed the games earlier to Venus.²³ According to Augustus himself a comet appeared in the sky that was visible for seven days.²⁴ Here again there is some doubt whether this actually happened or that Augustus instigated these stories to strengthen the mythical story of *Divus Iulius* in later years. Ramsay and Licht in their 1996 book do give some convincing albeit circumstantial evidence linking the comet seen in Rome to reports of sightings in Han-China during the same period.²⁵ In the foreword to Ramsay and Licht's book Brian Marsden states it is quite possible that the event never occurred at all but this interpretation would be "deeply disturbing to the classical community".²⁶ It would indeed demand some explanation how the symbol of the *Sidus Iulius* would

²² Cannadine, David, and Simon Price. *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992. 71.

²³ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 34.

²⁴ Plinius, Gaius Secundus. *Historia Naturalis*. 2.23.94

²⁵ Ramsey, J. T., and A. Lewis Licht. *The Comet of 44 B.C. and Caesar's Funeral Games*. Atlanta: Scholars, 1997. 8.

²⁶ Pandey, Nandini B. "Caesar's Comet, the Julian Star, and the Invention of Augustus." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 143 (2013): 405-49.

be so frequently used by Octavianus if there was no such happening, for how powerful would such a symbol be without it. Moreover there is no custom in Roman or Greek tradition to depict divinity as stars in the way Octavianus did with Caesar. From this reasoning I shall here assume that the event did take place and Octavianus capitalised on it rather than dreamt it up entirely.

Octavianus would stand to benefit substantially from the divination of Caesar and therefore there is the possibility that Octavianus convinced or encouraged the Roman populous to interpret the celestial sign as the apotheoses of Caesar. Yet Augustus himself records that it was not him to start the conviction but rather it was a belief generally held by the Romans.²⁷ According to Pandey the idea that Octavianus had such persuasive power over the 'Roman mind' is overestimating his power and based merely on the flattering accounts of Ovidius which makes it highly unlikely that Octavianus had any agency in this belief.²⁸ What is clear is that Octavianus used the situation to his advantage. To cement the connection between the day time star and Caesar Octavianus placed a star on the statue of Caesar in the Forum or possibly all such statues in Rome.²⁹ Augustus would later even commemorate the action of placing the star on the statue with a coin.

Probably persuaded by the popular support and pressure from the Caesarian Triumvirate the Senate in 42 B.C. officially added Caesar to the pantheon of gods. To reinforce the cult construction began on a temple for *Divus Iulius* on the Forum Romanum. Such a presence on a place of such prominence would be a strong symbol of the importance of the new god for Rome but building a temple takes a fair amount of time and during the construction phase the site would be not much more than a building site. Octavianus found a way not to wait for the construction to be completed and use the temple as an image straight away as can be seen in **FIG VI**.



²⁷ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 35.

²⁸ Pandey, Nandini B. "Caesar's Comet, the Julian Star, and the Invention of Augustus." *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 143 (2013): 405-49.

²⁹ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 35.

FIG VI.

Denarius 36 B.C. depicting Octavianus on the obverse and the temple of Divus Iulius on the reverse.

This image of the temple would communicate the message for until the temple would be completed in 29 B.C. In the pediment of the temple a grand *sidus Iulius* shines. It is not conclusive whether the star was in fact displayed on the real temple. Plinius describes the temple as the temple of the comet star which may be referring to the star on the pediment but there is no written description of it that survives.³⁰ The coin also depicts a figure standing in the middle of the temple. This figure is quite possibly the cult statue of the divine Caesar standing inside the temple or a statue in the portico as it seems on the coin.³¹ Knowing that Octavianus placed a star on one or more statues of Caesar upon his divination it is quite possible that it was there where the star in the real temple could be seen.

The obverse of the coin depicts Octavianus like in coins discussed earlier still bearded out of mourning for his now godly father. The inscription shows the great value of the deification of Caesar for Octavianus. Antonius in many regards had as much a claim to the association with Caesar as did Octavianus but the deification gave Octavianus the upper hand which is marked by the inscription right above the portrait: *DIVI FILIUS*, son of a god.³² This direct connection to god is a typical base for charismatic legitimation in Weber's theory. It gave a Octavianus a claim to authority that no one else could make and one that places him between the realm of the gods and that of men. This is typically the sort of authority held by prophets. In fact the depiction of the temple with its star on the reverse of the coin may very well remind anyone from the Christian world of the typical depiction of the manger of another son of God.

Octavianus used his new title frequently and did so for the remainder of his life.³³ **FIG VII** shows that he must have felt this new title was more useful for legitimation than some of his older ones. Both coins shown are in effect later iterations of the ones discussed in chapter I with the notable difference that instead of listing accolades, senatorial approval or popular support as was

³⁰ Ball Platner, Samuel. "Aedes Divi Iuli." A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome. Oxford University Press, 1929.

³¹ Ball Platner, Samuel. "Aedes Divi Iuli." A Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome. Oxford University Press, 1929.

³² Zanker, Paul. The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1988. 35.

³³ Zanker, Paul. The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 33-54.

done earlier now the inscription only refers to the divine nature of the two Caesars. With this Octavianus uses charismatic legitimation exclusively, he does not rely on political rules as a basis for legitimation as he did earlier.



FIG VIIa

Coin with the same equestrian statue as discussed in chapter I. Instead of S C or POPULI IUSSI the inscription now read CAESAR DIVI F(ilius).³⁴



FIG VIIb.

Coin 38 B.C. in similar fashion as FIG I the obverse and reverse appear a sort of mirror binding the portraits. Inscription obverse CAESAR DIVI F(ilius) and reverse DIVOS IULIUS.³⁵

³⁴ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

³⁵ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

Like Julius Caesar before him Octavian also sought to capitalise on the Julian line's alleged descent from figures from the mythical past. Julius Caesar in his propaganda had established the claim that he was a direct descendant from the mythical founders of Rome.³⁶ For it was Aeneas' descendant Romulus who would eventually found the city of Rome. During his life Caesar had minted coins with which he made the connection between Aeneas and himself and via him to Aeneas' divine mother Venus. He did so on coins such as the one shown in **FIG VIII**.



FIG VIII.

Coin minted by Julius Caesar. Obverse displaying the portrait of the goddess Venus. Reverse showing Aeneas carrying his father Anchises and a statue of Athena Palladium.

Octavianus took his father's propaganda and built on it. His connection to Divus Iulius gave Octavianus tremendous charismatic authority but with the establishment of his direct connection to the Roman mythical past he could establish traditional authority as well. He could suggest that if he was the true descendant of Aeneas and Romulus it would only make sense that he would be in power in Rome, someone in his family had always been. Of course this is not entirely conform reality. Even if one assumes for the sake of argument that Rome was indeed founded by Romulus who was Venus-born Aeneas' descendant and that the Julian family was descended from Romulus there is still no continuity in the power of the Julian line in Rome. Before Julius Caesar there had been other Julians in positions of importance but it had been far from any resemblance to a dynasty. Even one generation further back the father of Caesar was in the words of Zanker "a man of no consequence".³⁷ Octavianus however certainly in later years sought to establish the Julii as a sort of

³⁶ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 35.

³⁷ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 210.

dynastic family of great importance stretching from Aeneas to himself as can be seen in the row of statues of Julii that lined the forum Augusti as seen by Ovidius.³⁸

To this end like Caesar had done Octavianus minted coins in which he bound himself to Rome's mythical past. His method was slightly different from that of his father. Caesar kept to the convention of minting coins with the portrait of a goddess with Venus on the obverse and only his name inscribed on the reverse next to the scene featuring Aeneas. Octavianus's version is less traditional and replaced the portrait of Venus with that of himself as can be seen in **FIG IX**. The coin is from the same year that Caesar was officially decreed a god and it may be that it was minted before that time because the inscription does not read *DIVI FILIUS* and this is a title that Octavianus would have not been have likely to willingly omit.³⁹ Instead here his political position is recorded as *III VIR R P C* or *Tres Viri Rei Publicae Constituendae* - Triumvir for the establishment of the republic.⁴⁰ Here then Octavianus achieves the full trifecta of Weber's ideal types in one coin. The portrait likening him to a god (see chapter I) as well as his father provides him with charismatic authority while the accompanying inscription establishes legitimation based on the rational-legal type and the reverse anchors Octavianus in mythical tradition giving him traditional *Herrschaft*.



FIG IX.

Gold coin 42 B.C. Obverse: portrait of Octavianus with the inscription C CAESAR III VIR R P C.

Reverse: Aeneas carrying Anchises, inscription reading L REGULUS III VIR A P F. © Trustee of

the British Museum

³⁸ Ovidius, Publius Naso. *Fasti*. Vol. IV. (as seen in Elaine Fantham. *Ovid's Fasti*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998. 39.)

³⁹ Crawford, MH. *Roman Republican Coins in the British Museum*. The British Museum Online Research Catalogues.

⁴⁰ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

Octavianus also stressed his connection to Venus via the Julii as Caesar had done before him.⁴¹ He did so especially in the final part of the Roman civil war round the time of the battle of Actium. **FIG X** shows two coins that Octavianus had minted between 32 and 29 B.C. both showing himself and the goddess Venus.



FIG Xa.

Denarius 32-29 B.C. obverse profile of Octavianus. Reverse full body Venus holding a helmet and sceptre/spear. Shield with a star (possibly referring to the Sidus Iulius) accompanied by the inscription CAESAR DIVI F.



FIG Xb.

Denarius 32-29 B.C. Obverse profile of goddess Venus. Reverse full body Octavianus in military apparel holding a spear. Inscription: CAESAR DIVI F.

Both these coins have a specifically military character probably due to their chronological vicinity to the climax of the civil war. Venus in **FIG Xa** is somewhat reminiscent of *Athena Promachos*' statue on the Acropolis with the shield at her feet and sceptre/spear in hand.⁴² Augustus

⁴¹ See for Example: DeRose Evans, Jane. *The Art of Persuasion: Political Propaganda from Aeneas to Brutus*. U of Michigan, 1992. 28.

⁴² Palagia, Olga. "Not from the Spoils of Marathon: Pheidias' Bronze Athena on the Acropolis." (2013): 131.

is known to have used reference to the wars between the Athenians and the Persians of which the *Athena Promachos* statue was a memorial, to allude to his conflict with Antonius.⁴³ It is not entirely unthinkable that Octavianus likened Venus to *Athena Promachos*, the protectress of Athens, to suggest himself the protector of Rome.

To summarise: the divination of Caesar provided Octavianus with the means to build on his charismatic authority tremendously and he capitalised on it. Having a special relation to a god is one of the most effective ways to establish charismatic *Herrschaft* in Weber's theory. By communicating his position as *Divi Filius* prominently and frequently in his visual language Octavianus reinforced his charismatic authority. More than in the first chapter though the sources show that Octavianus diversified his strategy. He utilised the realm of religion and myth also to create traditional authority or at least created a base from which to do so. By suggesting that he was the descendant of the founders and first rulers of Rome as he did with the Aeneas coinage Octavianus subtly and cunningly created the idea of a sort of dynastic lineage leading down to himself that created the illusion of continuity.

⁴³ Swan, Peter Michael. *The Augustan Succession: An Historical Commentary on Cassius Dio's Roman History*. New York: Oxford UP, 2004. 110.

VI. How did Octavianus exploit the dichotomy between himself and Marcus Antonius to legitimise his position?

This final chapter shall explore the rivalry between Octavianus and Marcus Antonius that would lead eventually to the battle of Actium in 31 B.C. This chapter shall differ somewhat from the previous two for a part of the sources shall not be of Octavianus' making but rather of his adversary Antonius. They were instrumental to Octavianus' propaganda however since he put a spin on the images used by Antonius by juxtaposing them with his own visual language which he did mostly via speeches but also visually on some occasion.

The Second Triumvirate much like its predecessor was not so much a political association to achieve a common goal but rather a means of each of the three men involved to further their own personal agenda's.⁴⁴ This led to a constant struggle within the Roman leadership. Lepidus had been relegated early on because of suspicions that he had been negotiating with Sextus Pompeius Magnus Pius first and then after his name having been cleared the attempting to forcefully maintain Sicily for himself against Octavianus. Technically the Triumvirate should have ended there since the third man was stripped of his titles but the name remained and Octavian as well as Antonius kept referring to themselves as Triumvirs. The Roman territories were divided into spheres of influence the West including the city of Rome under Octavianus while the East was ruled by Antonius. After the elimination of Lepidus, the naval victory of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa over Pompeius and the death of the two conspirators Brutus and Marcus Cassius Longinus, Octavianus and Marcus Antonius only had rivals in each other when it came to power in Rome.

Antonius in many ways had gotten the better half of the Roman world. The eastern provinces were much wealthier and culturally far more influential. His provinces included Greece, which had so captured the Roman cultural imagination throughout the years and the province of Macedon, once the kingdom of Alexander the Great who was held in upmost regard by Octavianus and the Roman world at large.⁴⁵ On top of that Antonius was much better situated to deal with wealthy Ptolomeic Egypt. Although these were advantages Octavianus managed over time to turn them at least to some degree into disadvantages.

⁴⁴ Goldsworthy, Adrian Keith. *Caesar: Life of a Colossus*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006. 164.

⁴⁵ Saunders, Nicholas J. *Alexander's Tomb: The Two-Thousand Year Obsession to Find the Lost Conquerer*. New York: Basic, 2006. 81.



FIG XI.

Coin around 40 B.C. Obverse: Portrait of Marcus Antonius with ivy leaf crown accompanied by inscription: M ANTONIUS IMP COS DESIG ITER ET TERT. Reverse: Bust of Octavia above cista surrounded by snakes with inscription: III VIR R P C.

Antonius likened himself, as had many rulers in the East done before, to the Greek god Dionysus as can be seen in **FIG XI** which was minted some time after and possibly to commemorate the marriage between Antonius and Octavianus' younger sister Octavia Thurina Minor.⁴⁶ The marriage had been part of an attempt by the two Triumvirs to establish some sort of peace. What is most remarkable about this coin for this research is the fact that Antonius is shown wearing an ivy crown. The crown is a clear symbol with which Antonius wants to communicate a connection with Dionysus or make himself out to be the god. This would in itself not be that remarkable at all, it was a well established custom in the Greek world to do so and even in the Roman world it was no longer foreign to establish such claims. In the previous chapter there are ample examples of Octavianus doing the same and many more can be found by other contemporary Romans such as Pompeius who depicted himself as Neptune.⁴⁷ What makes it noteworthy in hindsight is Octavianus' use of such images to orientalise Antonius. Due to of the nature of Dionysus' character as the god of wine and ecstasy he was associated particularly with the Orient's love of luxury and drama. This did not match particularly well with the traditional Roman values of discipline and simplicity.

⁴⁶ Broadbent, Valerie. "Augustus, Egypt and Propaganda." (2012): 4.

⁴⁷ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 40.



FIG XII

Denarius from before 31 B.C. Obverse showing Octavian wearing a laurel wreath. Reverse statue of Octavian holding a spear on top a column. Inscription: IMP CAESAR.

Octavianus answered the divine pretensions of his rivals as Neptune and Dionysus with his own Olympian god namely Apollo as can be seen in **FIG XII**. The coin resembles the one depicting Marcus Antonius in so much as the portrait alludes to the respective god only via the headwear. The laurel crown worn by Octavianus in this comparison clearly signals Apollo who is closely associated with the plant. Octavian's headwear also reinforces the connection with Caesar who was given the honour to wear the laurel wreath whenever he wished and according to Suetonius he used the honour gratefully to cover his bolding head.⁴⁸ Octavianus himself was granted the honour to wear the laurel crown at festivals and may have used it to appear to the Roman public wearing this symbol of Apollo and Caesar. The connection to Caesar not only linked the two generations yet again it also strengthens the link to Apollo. Caesar was born by a Caesarian section and as such via the myth of Asclepius had an association with Apollo.⁴⁹ So Octavian could present his association with Apollo as being not novel but rather one of continuity.

The references to Apollo were far from contained to coinage with the temple to Apollo on the palatine hill as the most grand expression of Octavianus' patron god. The temple's size and splendour though impressive were not its redeeming features but rather as it often is in real estate its location. After lightning struck the terrain on the Palatium hill where Octavianus planned to build his residence he vowed a temple of Apollo to be erected there, not however instead of Octavianus' house but rather accompanying it.⁵⁰ The two buildings were physically connected to

⁴⁸ Suetonius, Gaius Tranquilius. *The Lives of the Caesars*. 45.1.

⁴⁹ Morford, Mark P. O., and Robert J. Lenardon. *Classical Mythology*. New York: Longman, 1985. 241.

⁵⁰ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 67.

one another, the god and his favourite Roman essentially being neighbours. Octavianus' location for his residence had an additional positively Roman connotation for according to legend the Palatium was where Romulus first founded Rome.⁵¹ The third attribute of the location is its visibility within the cityscape of Rome elevated above the Circus Maximus.⁵² With this form of visual communication Octavianus' implies both charismatic as well as traditional authority. He ties his house with that of Apollo and therefore implies a special connection between the two. The fact that the house stands where Romulus founded Rome combined with the ancestral claims made on coins (**FIG IX**) and by other means such the unsuccessful attempt to adopt the name Romulus this alludes to the fact that Octavianus' rule is a natural state of affairs and implies there is a direct line from the first king of Rome down to Octavianus.⁵³ He thusly implies it part of a long standing tradition that his (or his family's) authority is a constant in Roman history.

A crucial advantage for Octavianus in this propaganda war is that he contrary to Antonius only needed to please the Roman public. To effectively rule the East Antonius made use of images that legitimises his power there. The Dionysus likeness was only one of several ways Antonius did this. His family's ancient legendary ancestor was Anton a son of Hercules and Antonius used this connection to try and establish legitimacy.⁵⁴ The coin in **FIG XIII** was actually minted in 42 B.C well before Antonius was ruler of the eastern Roman provinces but one can see how a connection to a Greek hero and god would work well in the Hellenic world, much less so in Rome however. Because of the juxtaposition with Octavianus' claimed connection to the Roman hero Aeneas as discussed in chapter II the Hercules claims fitted perfectly into Octavianus' narrative of Antonius' *otherness* and the Roman public must have seen this.

⁵¹ Dio, Lucius Cassius. Roman History LIII 16.5.

⁵² Claridge, Amanda, and Judith Toms. "House of Livia and Augustus - Temple of Apollo." Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide to Rome. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.

⁵³ Suetonius, Gaius Tranquillus, Divus Augustus, 7.

⁵⁴ Zanker, Paul. The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 45.

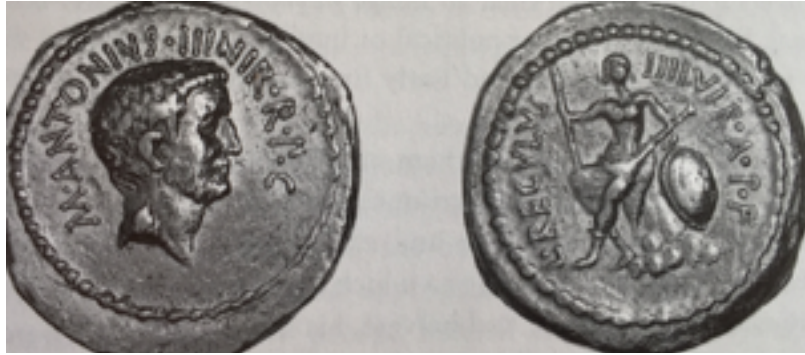


FIG XIII.

Coin 42 B.C. obverse depicting Marcus Antonius with the inscription M ANTONIUS III VIR R P C. Reverse displaying Anton son of Hercules and mythical ancestor to Marcus Antonius. Inscription L REGULUS III VIR A P F relates to the moneyer.⁵⁵

A third way of legitimise his power in the East for Antonius was to establish a connection between himself and Alexander of Macedon the greatest conquerer the world had ever seen. Because of his relationship and children with Cleopatra he could do so quite convincingly since she was the last descendant of the Ptolomaic dynasty that ruled Egypt founded by Ptolemaios Soter, Alexander's general and one of his successors. To communicate this connection to Alexander Antonius minted coins on which he appeared with Cleopatra such as shown in **FIG XIV**.



FIG XIV.

Coin 32 B.C. Obverse displaying profile of Cleopatra with inscription REGINEA REGUM FILIORUM REGUM CLEOPATRAE. Reverse showing profile of Antonius with inscription ANTONI ARMENIA DEVICTA.

⁵⁵ Elliot, Tom. "Department of Classics Abbreviations in Latin Inscriptions Comments." Department of Classics. College of Arts and Sciences Case Western Reserve University, 1998.

For a Roman to see that Antonius wedded a virtuous Roman wife as seen on the coin in **FIG XI** and then disposed of her to marry an exotic Egyptian queen in combination with Octavianus' propaganda must have raised eyebrows. Octavianus made sure to point this out to anyone who may have missed it. He presented Antonius as being enchanted by Cleopatra who had emasculated him.

The bowl displayed in **FIG XV** is not conclusively established as such but given the time in which it was made (ca 30 B.C.) is likely to have been part of Octavian propaganda.⁵⁶ The bowl shows a procession of some sort with two figures of importance. On the one side a male figure representing Hercules is shaded by a slave to protect him from the sun. On the opposite side a female representing Omphale holding Hercules' signature attribute his club in hand and wearing his typical lion skin on her head.⁵⁷ As discussed with relation to **FIG XIII** Antonius had asserted a relation with Hercules. A Roman contemporary seeing this after hearing Octavianus' speeches must have made the connection to Antonius and Cleopatra. There are doubts among scholars whether the connection between Antonius and Hercules was sufficiently strong for Octavianus to effectively use this as propaganda.⁵⁸ The decoration for the temple of Apollo which Octavianus commissioned right after the battle of Actium gives another clue that the Hercules connection may very well have been tangible.⁵⁹ The murals in the temple depict the mythical fight between Apollo and Hercules over the tripod from the Oracle of Delphi. The depiction of a fight between two figures with strong association to Octavianus and Antonius respectively and its chronological proximity to the battle of Actium where the temple was vowed makes its perceived meaning probable. Add to that the nature of the myth in which Hercules is emasculated as a slave to Omphale and its obvious parallels to Octavianus' narrative of Antonius and Cleopatra presents strong circumstantial evidence that justifies the belief that the images were indeed part of Octavianus' propaganda.

⁵⁶ Zanker, Paul. *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 1988. 58.

⁵⁷ Morford, Mark P. O., and Robert J. Lenardon. *Classical Mythology*. New York: Longman, 1985. 523.

⁵⁸ See for Example: Hekster, Olivier. "Hercules, Omphale and Octavian's 'Counter Propaganda'" *BABesch* 79 (2004).

⁵⁹ Claridge, Amanda, and Judith Toms. "House of Livia and Augustus - Temple of Apollo." *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide to Rome*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.



FIG XV.

Cast of silver bowl ca. 30 B.C. showing Hercules (a) and Omphale (b). © Museum of Fine Arts Boston.

All of Octavianus' demagoguery had not been enough to persuade the Senate to support his cause. This changed when Lucius Munatius Plancus and Marcus Titius two of Antonius' men defected to Octavianus and pointed out that Antonius' will had incriminating content.⁶⁰ Octavianus seized the document and made its content known to Rome. There was much in the will that would have displeased the Romans most notably that territory that belonged to Rome was given to the children of Cleopatra and Antonius. The thing that appealed most to the imagination of the Romans however was the fact that Antonius wanted to be buried beside Cleopatra in Alexandria. Antonius snubbing the ancient Roman burial traditions and instead choosing an oriental grave was right in line with Octavianus' propaganda narrative and was one that Octavianus would use. In perfect juxtaposition to Antonius' funeral wishes Octavianus in 28 B.C. initiated the building of a grand mausoleum on the banks of the Tiber. With this grand building served as a visual message to the Romans Octavianus emphasised his ubiquitousness with Rome. His coins suggested Octavianus and his lineage had always been there in turn his mausoleum said he would always be there.

⁶⁰ Plutarchus, Lucius Mestrius. *Parallel Lives*. 58.3.

Antonius' will had been enough to convince the Senate and people of Rome to side with Octavianus and war was declared. Ever political Octavianus had the war declared on Cleopatra not Antonius. This meant that it would be easier for Antonius' troops to defect without being traitors and it forced Antonius to fight against his fatherland on his own accord rather than being forced and most significantly it made the war a *bellum externum* rather than a civil war.⁶¹ The importance of this to Octavianus can be seen in the visual language he used after he successfully defeated Antonius and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium. To commemorate the victory Octavianus vowed the temple of Apollo Palatium in which the earlier disputable reference to Antonius is made. In coinage on the other hand there is clearly no reference whatsoever to Antonius or the civil nature of the conflict.⁶²



FIG XVI.

Coin 28 B.C. Obverse showing Octavianus with lituus. Reverse showing a crocodile accompanied by the inscription AEGYPTO CAPTA.

FIG XVI was minted to celebrate the victory at the battle of Actium and the consequent capture of Egypt for Rome. There is no mention of Antonius or for that matter Cleopatra or any of their possible alter ego's instead the inscription simply read AEGYPTO CAPTA. The only image that could possibly refer to Antonius is the *lituus* next to the portrait. This religious attribute was the instrument of an augur and since Antonius held that title there is a chance that it refers to him but since there is no precedent and there were ample much clearer visual cues at hand this seems highly unlikely. Another option is that the *lituus*, also a horn used in the army refers to the military prowess

⁶¹ Meyer, Reinhold. "The Declaration of War against Cleopatra." *The Classical Journal* 77.2 (1982): 97. The Classical Association of the Middle West and South.

⁶² Gurval, Robert Alan. *Actium and Augustus: The Politics and Emotions of Civil War*. U of Michigan, 1998. 64.

of Octavian.⁶³ Cicero connects the *lituus* to the foundation of Rome saying that Romulus drew the confines of the city with it.⁶⁴ Given its function in Roman religious practice it is also possible that it refers rather to the will of the gods. The *lituus* was used in the observation of birds and their flight patterns to read the will of the divine.⁶⁵ It may be that Octavianus implies in this way that the war and his victory at Actium was merely him following the will of the gods. By defeating Antonius and Cleopatra there was the possibility that Octavianus could alienate his new eastern subjects or even those in southern Italy where the Dionysus cult was widespread. This would fit the story recorded by Plutarchus that on the eve of the battle of Actium music was heard leaving the camp of Antonius the music leaving being a symbol of Dionysus leaving Antonius.⁶⁶ It is not clear however whether this story was indeed perpetuated by Octavianus as propaganda at the time or that it came about independently and was later wrongfully ascribed to his propaganda machine.⁶⁷ With this narrative Octavianus would avoid creating a mythical nemesis and possible problem of legitimisation in the Hellenic world. Instead he could present himself as the leader endorsed by all the gods granting him charismatic legitimacy in the East as well as the West. His youthful portrait with his flowing hair on the obverse to likening him to Alexander who likewise captured mighty Egypt would provide him with some basis to build traditional legitimisation in the East as well as he may have intended to accentuate by visiting Alexander's tomb.

Although association with a god is one of the most typical examples of charismatic authority in the case of Octavianus and Apollo it is not solely that. Of course the personal special relationship between the two does provide Octavian with charismatic authority but Apollo here represents more than the god himself. Apollo in contrast with Antonius' Dionysus stands for the Roman values and traditions. Octavianus' relationship with Apollo then represents Octavianus' bond with the Roman culture pitting him as protector of Rome. Therefore the association with the god serves as much to give Octavianus traditional authority. Not by implying that Octavianus' rule is traditional and therefore not questioned but rather that Octavianus and his position in power is seen to uphold the

⁶³ Stewart, Roberta. "The Jug and Lituus on Roman Republican Coin Types: Ritual Symbols and Political Power." *Phoenix* 51.2 (1997): 170-89. Classical Association of Canada.

⁶⁴ Cicero, Marcus Tullius *De Divinatione*. Book 1.17

⁶⁵ Rüpke, Jörg, and Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser. "Roman Cult Sites: A Pragmatic Approach." *A Companion to Roman Religion*. Chichester: Blackwell, 2011. 206.

⁶⁶ Plutarchus, Lucius Mestrius. *Parallel Lives*. 75.3.

⁶⁷ Scott, Kenneth. "Octavian's Propaganda and Antony's *De Sua Ebrietate*." *Classical Philology* 24.2 (1929): 134. The University of Chicago Press.

traditions by which Rome lives and therefore his authority is perceived as natural and unquestionable.

VII. Conclusion

After having examined, analysed and discussed the sources in the previous three chapters I shall now shortly recap the research and answer the previously stated research question: How does the use of images by Octavianus during the civil war relate to Weber's three types of *Herrschaft*?

Initially sources show Octavianus focusses quite apparently on acquiring authority of the charismatic kind even if it is sometimes accompanied by rational-legal support. He actually builds on the charismatic authority of his father which be seen in the use of Caesar's image in tandem with that of Octavianus. This focus on the charismatic type is also present in the use of the title *divi filius* and the visual language that goes with it as seen in chapter V. His special connection with the divine provides Octavianus with quintessential charismatic *Herrschaft*. So far then Octavianus holds to the convention of a revolutionary. He is a charismatic leader who has the trust of (a section of) the populous because they believe in his persona. This sort of *Herrschaft* is however hard to maintain over time and into peaceful times when normality returns. Looking at the evidence Octavianus seems to have understood this conundrum and acted to avoid the drawbacks of this type of authority. To do this Octavianus sought to and ultimately succeeded in establishing some form of traditional authority. There is no watershed moment in his visual language but rather a subtle shift over time that although remaining in line with his earlier images increasingly builds on a traditional note. With the binding to the mythical Roman past with Aeneas displayed on coins, the founding of the city with the development on the Palatium to Rome, and the juxtaposition between Rome/Octavianus versus the Orient/Antonius-Cleopatra he makes himself ubiquitous with Rome's past and present. His monumental mausoleum in turn binds him to Rome's future. In this manner Octavian suggests a continuity stretching from Aeneas to the foreseeable future. With this continuity he established a form of traditional authority to work in tandem with the charismatic type. Octavianus manages to beat the odds as far as Weber's theory is concerned. Not only does he manage to transfer the by nature highly personal charismatic authority of his father onto himself he then manages to transform it into a sustainable authority by merging it with traditional *Herrschaft* which then serves the base of his principate.

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