Princeps or Tyrannus: The Literature and Imagery of Kingship in the First Century A.D.

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Princeps or Tyrannus:
The Literature and Imagery of Kingship in the First Century A.D.
by
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Dr. White
History 490: Senior Research Seminar
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Imperator Caesar Augustus is known to the world as the man who helped Rome change from a oligarchic Republic to an Empire under the rule of an individual. Until recently, in order to study the Roman emperors and the Roman idea of kingship, scholars have focused on Augustus or on the kingly virtues emphasized by the classical authors.¹ Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Dio Chrysostom, and Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, commonly known as Pliny the Younger, each wrote a substantial tract concerning kingship. These authors have a number of traits in common. Two wrote in Latin, while one wrote in Greek; two wrote for the emperor Trajan, while one wrote for Nero; two were exiled at some point by the previous emperor, while one maintained political favor; again, where two were philosophers, one was a politician. Yet all three used the same sort of language to urge their rulers to be just and virtuous, and not tyrannical.

The ancient concept of virtue is generally rendered in English as excellence. It could refer to several types of excellence, from courage on the battlefield, to moral uprightness and piety. According to Chrysostom, a king was not simply a maker of laws, but he was required to obey the laws as well.² If a ruler stepped outside legal boundaries, he was considered a tyrant.


The Romans were particularly concerned about tyranny. Their sequence of political positions grew out of a tradition that allowed many men to participate in the government. Nevertheless, they developed an empire in which ultimate authority rested in one man. Rule by one man can be either princely or despotic, and the Roman emperors were no different. However, they did not want to be perceived as despotic, and so they developed a political program for their coins, architecture, sculpture, and literature. This program emphasized the emperor's royal qualities and his right to rule, which were reflected in the works of Seneca, Pliny, and Chrysostom.

Even Augustus, the author of the Roman peace, can be described as a tyrant. He held powers far beyond what tradition and custom allowed. He held the consulship several years running, and at the same time he also held tribunician power. However, the Senate granted this extraordinary amount of authority to him. Since an act of the Senate was considered law, then Augustus' powers were legal. We must not forget that Augustus had just finished defeating his family's enemies, and that his army was powerful and intensely loyal to him. With this in mind, the Senate's gift does not seem quite so generous, as it does placating. Nevertheless, Augustus was legally not a tyrant, and since he maintained his Republican virtues, he was able to rule peacefully.

From the beginning, the Roman emperors sought to maintain power by controlling political thought. Some emperors were more adept at this control than others, but they all made full use of the tools of propaganda. Coins, sculpture, and statuary imbued with many layers of mythological and historical references spread the ideas of the emperor throughout Rome, Italy, and the provinces. The emperors introduced legislation against local violence and treason, determined appropriate
punishments, and employed secret police.\textsuperscript{3} Chester G. Starr has argued that "upon the Augustan foundations his successors built a mighty structure of propaganda and control, the development of which is a mark of the unfolding of their absolutism."\textsuperscript{4} However, the completeness of the absolutism seems instead to be a distinction of subtlety: Augustus was able to direct political matters through influence and suggestion, while rulers like Caligula, Nero, or Domitian resorted to brute force.

Modern students of history know the ancient world partially from its literature which has survived due to the manuscripts of medieval copyists. The monks copied some of the texts, like the orations of Cicero, because of their continued usefulness as educational tools. Some texts, such as Virgil's poems, exist today because the friars saw gems of Christian wisdom buried within the muck of the pagan literature. Certain works, like those of Aristotle, were forgotten by the west, until they were reintroduced from Jewish or Arabic sources. Still other works, like those of Catullus, are here only by the stroke of fortune.

The princes of the Renaissance saw themselves as the inheritors of the ancient Roman traditions, and they began to study the remaining documents in order to come closer to that classical ideal. Since they had moveable-type printing presses, they efficiently published many editions of Roman literature that were free from copyist errors. They also composed original works modeled on the high Latin style. In many ways, the scholars of the Renaissance stylistically were more Ciceronian than Cicero. It was in this culture that Machiavelli wrote \textit{The Prince}, a treatise on the proper behavior of a Renaissance ruler, which was very similar in form to the works by Seneca, Pliny, and Chrysostom, but not in content. Machiavelli


\textsuperscript{4}Starr, \textit{Civilization}, 45.
urged Prince Lorenzo de' Medici to take any action necessary, lawful or not, to secure his kingdom: another instance of tyranny.

In the seventeenth century, scholars were more active in publishing learned editions and translations of classical works than they were in composing. During this period, Du Cange compiled his Glossary of Medieval Latin, which scholars still consult. John Dryden at this time, published his verse translations of Virgil, Horace, and Juvenal.5

The period of the Enlightenment followed, a time in which learned men embraced not the beauty of the Latin language itself, but instead the beauty in the precision of classical logic and reasoning. In 1776, Edward Gibbon published the first volume of *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, an analysis of the causes which seemed to lead to the downfall of the Roman civilization. He was on a quest for the truth and, unhampered by a great religious devotion, felt free to name Christianity the main reason behind Rome's demise.

The citizens of the Romantic era rejected the calculation of the Enlightenment and the classics. Instead they turned toward the myth of the chivalric Middle Ages. This period also saw the introduction of history as a scientific discipline.

Theodor Mommsen was one of the major scholars of Roman history. During the course of his life, 1817 to 1903, he published more than twelve hundred works, most of which related to the Empire.6 In 1843 he published his first work concerning Roman law. He was one of the editors of the *Corpus Inscriptionum*


Latinarum, a collection of Latin inscriptions taken from public buildings, which indicates scholars' increasing interest in studying Latin sources not based on literary texts. He also helped to edit parts of the Monumenta Germaniae historica, which expresses the growth of rabid nationalism and the desire to know about the role of Germany in history. As a reflection of this violent patriotism for the German state, in 1883 Professor Mommsen was brought to trial for slandering Bismarck, the proponent of national unity, but was acquitted.

Mikhail Ivanovich Rostovtsev (1870-1952) influenced the study of the Roman Empire by using artistic and architectural evidence to support his arguments, especially in Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire (1926). Not only did he include non-literary sources in his studies of the Empire, but he also came from a non-western tradition. He studied and later taught at the University of St. Petersburg, Russia, until 1918. At that time he emigrated to England, presumably as a result of the chaos caused by the Bolshevik Revolution. Chester G. Starr noted in 1960 that other researchers in Communist regions seemed to have turned to the study of ancient history because it was politically less dangerous.

During the 1920s, Harold Mattingly began to catalogue the coins of the Roman Empire which were in the British Museum. This catalogue was a wealth of new evidence, which Michael Grant has used extensively in his own research. Roman coins were useful as tools for imperial propaganda, reflecting the ideas that the emperor wanted to emphasize. In his biography of Nero, Dr. Grant uses the example of coins to illustrate Agrippina's gradual fall from grace. Early in Nero's reign, images of Agrippina and Nero appeared on the front of the coin, facing each other.

7 Rostovtsev is non-western in the sense that, as an economic historian, he comes from a non-capitalist culture.

other. Agrippina's name and title were given in the monarchical nominative on the front, while Nero's name was in the "dedicatory dative." This indicates that Agrippina fancied herself the ruler of the empire. Soon they were shown facing the same direction, but with Agrippina's profile partially obscured by Nero's. Eventually, her portrait disappeared from the coinage entirely. This progression of coins shows how Agrippina's power over Nero waned, until she was eliminated entirely.

One of the current celebrities in classical scholarship is Peter Brown, whose specialty is the role of Christianity in the late antique period. Dr. Starr called him "one of the most sensitive and thoughtful scholars of recent years." His works, particularly The Cult of the Saints: its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity, examined the psychology and spirit of the later Roman Empire. Professor Brown himself said that he has become more aware of the religious and cultural ideals that shaped the way ancient people thought about their governments and societies.

Dr. Starr noted that there are still several areas of study which have not yet been fully explored. While the history of women has been gaining in favor, scholars have not by any means exhausted the possibilities. Questions such as the place of women in an ancient society, as well as their roles in shaping certain events certainly merit further study. Similarly, investigation of slavery in the ancient world deserves attention. Some authors put slavery at the root of all society's problems, when more appropriate explanations may exist.

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10Grant, Nero, 36-41.
11Starr, Past and Future, 55.
Imperialism is another subject that is much discussed, although usually negatively, probably due to the bias of Americans against anything remotely autocratic. This unfavorable judgement is not entirely warranted.\(^\text{13}\) The empire may have been declining, but it still took four hundred years to do so. If the administration had been wholly incompetent or wholly tyrannical, satisfying the emperor's court at the expense of his subjects, the fall surely would have come much sooner.

In the first century after Christ, men who claimed to be sons of deities ruled the Roman Empire. Imperator Caesar Augustus, nephew and adopted son of Julius Caesar, could trace his lineage back to the goddess Venus through the Trojan hero Aeneas. Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, builder of the *Domus Aurea*, imagined himself the deity at the center of the universe, keeping the cosmos in balance.\(^\text{14}\) Imperator Caesar Nerva Traianus Augustus displayed several titles which emphasized his authority and superiority. All the emperors claimed some sort of divinity, by relation, either through blood, or adoption, or simply chronological succession. The divinity of the predecessor reflected on the successor; for example, by declaring Augustus a deity, the Tiberius hoped to receive added glory, piety, and legitimacy. Nevertheless, even the gods were bound by rules, and divinity was not an acceptable reason for breaking the law.

The imperial state naturally changed the system of government of the Roman Republic. Political participation in the commonwealth had been determined by a family's placement on the census lists, whether that position was in the senatorial, equestrian, or plebeian class. A man generally was not allowed to enter political life until a certain age, and he had to run for the various offices in a certain order,


known as the *cursus honorum*.\(^\text{15}\) A citizen usually began his career as a *quaestor*, in charge of the treasury, at the age of thirty-one. After the time of Julius Caesar, forty quaestors were elected every year.

The next step for a rising political figure at age thirty-seven was to secure one of the six aedileships. This office was devoted to the performance of public games and to the care of public buildings and roads. When a man turned forty, he was eligible to run for the praetorship, which was an office created to handle legal matters in the city and, as Rome's territory expanded, in the provinces as well.

The highest office was the consulship, of which there were two seats elected yearly. The consuls had limited powers within the city, but beyond the sacred boundary of the *pomerium*, they were endowed with *imperium*, complete military power. All these offices were originally reserved to only the aristocratic patricians, but over time the plebeian class demanded and received equal rights to participate.

The office of the tribune was initially the only position to which plebeians could aspire. The tribune had the power of the *veto*, which was not simply a negation, but a forbidding. He also enjoyed the protection of *sacrosanctitas*, the inviolability of his body. These powers allowed the tribunes to stand up for the plebeians' political rights without fear of bodily harm.

With the advent of the principate, the emperors also enjoyed this sacred protection of the tribunes. The Senate granted tribunician power first to Augustus, and then to almost all of the emperors following.\(^\text{16}\) They did not hold the office yearly.\(^\text{15}\)

\(^\text{15}\) A much more detailed account than provided here can be found in Alexander Adam, *Roman Antiquities: or, an Account of the Manners and Customs of the Romans* (New York: E. Duyckinck, G. Long, Collins & Hannay, Collins & Co., 1826), 99-134. For the imperial changes to the *cursus honorum*, see the much more recent Richard J. A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 9-38.

itself, but they did possess the same rights: of calling a session of the senate and of vetoing proposals and decrees. The only emperors between Augustus and Hadrian not to hold these powers were Galba, Otho, and Vitellius.¹⁷ These three were military leaders, and took power through the force of their soldiers, though by no means were they the only ones to rise in this way. They each ruled only briefly and, along with Vespasian, their reigns have come to be known collectively as the year of four emperors. These emperors did not earn the same right to rule, because they took control by force, without any attempt to smooth the situation or any pretense of observing laws or customs.

While he was dictator, Julius Caesar instituted several changes in the political structure of Rome, modifications which Augustus retained. Caesar reduced the office of the consulship to a powerless honor, since all other magistrates were subordinate to him as a perpetual dictator. The high office still had a great amount of prestige, and the Caesars exploited this fact to reward their loyal supporters.¹⁸ Other changes included lowering the required ages for entering the competition for the cursus honorum, which meant that more men would be competing each year for the small number of offices.¹⁹ He also introduced a new entry-level office, the vigintiviri; there were twenty seats, and the officers were assigned to assist various positions within the government. A man could not proceed through the cursus honorum without earning this rank first.²⁰

By the time of Claudius, the gap between the active republican senate and the rising direct control of the emperor was apparent. Where the senate had

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¹⁷Ibid., 116.
¹⁸Adam, Roman Antiquities, 107.
¹⁹Talbert, The Senate of Imperial Rome, 522.
²⁰Ibid., 13.
previously heard trial cases, these were more often being tried personally by Emperor Claudius himself. As he took on more of these responsibilities, his assistants accordingly gained in importance. The senators and the knights considered this position of personal secretary below the dignity of their classes, so Claudius chose instead to appoint freedmen. The senators and knights were left out of the new power structure, and the freedmen owed their gratitude and loyalty to the emperor himself.21

Lucius Annaeus Seneca (4 B.C.-A.D. 66) was strongly against tyranny, and implored Nero to be merciful as a potentate. The son of a rhetorician, he was born in Corduba, Spain, but grew up mainly in Rome.22 He entered political life in A.D. 31, when he won the quaestorship. During the years following he earned the enmity of Emperor Caligula for his abilities as an orator. The rumor that Seneca was about to die of consumption kept Caligula from ordering his execution, perhaps a rare instance of mercy on Caligula's part.

Seneca outlived Caligula and later he was prominent in Claudius's court as an advisor to his nieces, Julia Livilla and Agrippina. In 41, Claudius exiled Seneca on a charge of "immoral intrigue" with Julia, an accusation perhaps instigated by the empress Messallina in order to weaken the political party which surrounded the princesses. While Seneca was only exiled to Corsica until A.D. 49, Julia was sentenced to death. After Messallina's execution in 48, the former princess Agrippina, now Claudius's wife, called for Seneca's return, so that he could become the tutor for her son Nero.23 According to the historian Suetonius, "Nero touched


23Ibid., 161-3.
on almost all the liberal arts; but his mother turned him from philosophy, warning that it was contrary to one about to rule; his teacher Seneca prevented him from the knowledge of the old orators, whereby he might hold him in the admiration of himself even longer. Because she had been the one to bring him back, Agrippina perhaps thought that she could exercise some control over Seneca, and in this way be able to dominate her son from many directions.

Seneca was a prolific writer, and only a fraction of what he published survives today. His interests ranged from philosophy to tragedy, from natural history to poetry. One work of the many which do survive is the De Clementia (On Clemency) addressed to the recently crowned Nero. Claudius had adopted Nero as his heir, despite the presence of his own son, Britannicus, and when the emperor died in October of A.D. 54, Nero assumed the throne. Suetonius reports that he addressed first the praetorian guard and then the Senate. The guard had been responsible for naming Caligula the emperor after Tiberius's death, and the soldiers had also rallied behind Claudius after the assassins killed Caligula. In the same way, the guard supported Nero.

On Clemency is Seneca's exhortation to Nero that mercy is the highest virtue for a princeps to exhibit. Seneca set forth in book two Nero's own great example of mercy: when the praetorian prefect Burrus needed Nero's signature on an order of execution, the emperor exclaimed, "Would that I had not learned to write!"

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27 Leader, first man, prince.

28 "Vellem litteras nescirem!" Seneca, De Clementia 2.1.2.
Seneca believed that Claudius had not shown enough mercy during his reign; in On Clemency, Seneca tells Nero, "Your father, in a period of five years, sewed up more men in a leather sack [for parricide], than we understand to have been sewn up in all ages." The harsh punishments and the sheer number of trials heard during Claudius's reign convinced Seneca that Claudius was tyrannical. In contrast, Seneca hoped that he would be able to foster Nero's natural desire for mercy in order to make him a good ruler.

Pliny the Younger (A.D. 61-113) was born in the northern Italian town of Como. His father died while he was still young, so he was brought up by his scholarly uncle Pliny the Elder and by the distinguished general Verginius Rufus. He entered the law-courts when he was in his nineteenth year and began his political career during the reign of Domitian.

The younger Pliny proceeded methodically through the cursus, and was serving as praetor while Domitian was trying to eliminate the "Stoic Opposition." This state of affairs put Pliny in something of a bind, because he wanted to help his Stoic friends, yet at the same time retaining the favor of the emperor. He survived Domitian and then Nerva, and in A.D. 100 Emperor Trajan appointed him suffect consul. The senators had a custom of presenting an oration to the emperor when they received such an honor, and this was the occasion that prompted Pliny's Panegyric.

The third author on kingship is Dio Chrysostom (A.D. 40-120). He was born in the city of Prusa in the province of Bithynia, which Pliny himself governed in 111-112. His father had been well-to-do, but he had lived beyond his means, leaving the

29 Pater tuus plures intra quinquennium culleo insuit, quam omnibus saeculis insutos accepimus. Seneca, De Clementia 1.23.1 (translation mine).
30 Duff, Literary History, 427.
31 Ibid.
family an inheritance of debt. He paid off his portion and traveled to Rome during the rule of Vespasian. While he was there, he became a proponent of Stoic philosophy. He also spoke indiscreetly about Emperor Domitian, and as a result was exiled from Italy. As an exile without any familial or financial support, Chrysostom adopted the code of the Cynics, wearing only a threadbare cloak and wandering about the countryside. He seems to have patterned himself after the Greek Cynic Diogenes, one of the characters in several of his discourses.

After Domitian's death, Chrysostom returned to Rome to pay his respects to Emperor Nerva, who had remitted his exile. Within a few years, Nerva was dead, and Trajan was the new prince. The two developed a fast friendship, and it was perhaps this familiarity which gave Chrysostom the latitude and the opportunity to present his discourses on kingship to the emperor.

Chrysostom's four discourses on kingship survive, and translator and editor J. W. Cohoon has assigned dates to them based on internal evidence. The first he places just after Trajan's assumption of the throne. Scholar H. von Arnim dates the second discourse to 104, just prior to the Second Dacian War. Mr. von Arnim suggests that Chrysostom presented the third and fourth discourses to Trajan for his birthday in 104 and 103 respectively.

These three treatises, Seneca's On Clemency, Pliny's Panegyric, and Chrysostom's On Kingship, are surprisingly similar in tone and example.

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32 Epictetus tells us in his Discourses that during the reign of Diocletian, soldiers dressed as civilians would slander the emperor in the presence of common citizens; if the unsuspecting man fell into the trap and spoke his mind against the emperor, the soldier led him off to prison to be charged with treason. Sherk, The Roman Empire, 142.

33 Chrysostom, Discourses, Loeb Classical Library, ix-x.

34 Ibid., x-xi.

35 Ibid., 1, 49, 103, 167.
Chrysostom's are by far the most literary, being rather like Plato's dialogues, using historical figures such as Philip and Alexander of Macedon and the philosopher Diogenes as characters. Seneca, being the philosopher and anticipating every question before it was asked, put questions and objections into the mouth of his subject in order to respond to them. Pliny addressed his work more to the senators than to Trajan, but the emperor still heard the praise and the admonition.

Both Seneca and Chrysostom exhort the emperor to model his behavior after the example of the gods. So Seneca "will establish this example for the prince, that he might shape himself toward this example, so that, as much as the gods are for him, he might wish to be so for his citizens." Deities do not punish severely and immediately for a wrongdoing; a prince ought to stay his anger as well.

Similarly, Chrysostom encourages the audience to consider any good king, either among Greeks or barbarians, and this king will seem to be a follower of Zeus, for only Zeus has the titles "Father," "King," "Protector of Cities," and "Guardian of the Race." Compare these titles to some held by Trajan: "Father of the Country," "Imperator" (which can mean military leader or emperor), "Augustus" (holy or majestic), and "Germanicus," "Dacicus," and "Parthicus," which all signify victories over foreign peoples, making him a protector of cities and the guardian of the race. Another title appended to Trajan's name is "Optimus," which resonates with the father of the Roman pantheon, Jupiter Optimus Maximus. Despite the

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36 ... hoc exemplum principi constituam, ad quod formetur, ut se talem esse civibus, quales sibi deos velit. Seneca, De Clementia 1.7.1 (translation mine).


38 Dio Chrysostom, First Discourse on Kingship, Loeb Classical Library, p. 21.

39 Sherk, The Roman Empire, 152.

presence of these divine connections which help to draw Trajan into the celestial realm, Pliny demands that the senators not flatter him as a god or a deity, "for we are not talking about a tyrant but about a citizen, not about a master, but about a parent." Indeed, Domitian had arrogated the title "Lord and Master" to himself, and his rule had not been pleasant.

In order to prove that a king ought to be merciful, Chrysostom and Seneca both relate the example from nature of the bees. The ancients believed that a hive of bees was led by a king bee, which had no sting. Seneca says, "Nature did not wish him to be cruel or to seek a revenge that would be so costly, and so she removed his weapon, and left his anger unarmed." In this way, the king cannot punish anyone in a fit of rage. Chrysostom interprets the same story to mean that the lack of a sting is a mark of nobility, because he does not have to bring a weapon against an opponent.

These two views are vastly different, in that Seneca's is preventative, assuming that the presence of arms or power will lead to violence and retribution, while Chrysostom assumes that there is an internal noble quality that makes such things unnecessary.

For Chrysostom, a good king is one who is just and virtuous. Virtue, according to the ancient definition, is excellence, but it is excellence dependent upon manliness and courage, especially in war. Thus Julius Caesar, Augustus, Claudius, Vespasian, and Trajan all proved their virtue by conquering or subduing

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41 Nusquam ut deo, nusquam ut numini blandiamur: non enim de tyranno sed de cive, non de domino sed de parente loquimur. Pliny, Panegyricus, 1.2.3 (translation mine).


43 Seneca, De Clementia, 1.19.2,3.

44 Dio Chrysostom, Fourth Discourse on Kingship, 63.
some foreign people. What can an emperor do to prove his virtue if he is unable to go to war? Chrysostom says that the activity most like warfare is hunting, and so is a noble pursuit. This statement is supported by the existence of coins, issued during the reigns of Hadrian and Commodus, depicting hunt scenes, accompanied by a legend mentioning the virtue of the emperor.

Chrysostom also refers to moral excellence in his writings. The just king cares for his subjects, rather like a father cares for his family. Seneca too says that the duty of a prince is fatherly, "to reprove his children sometimes gently, sometimes with threats, who at times admonishes them even by stripes." One of the common titles of the emperors is pater patriae, father of the country. Augustus, Nero, and Trajan, among others, held this designation. A virtuous ruler also exalts sincerity, truthfulness, and mercy. The tyrant, on the other hand, says, "Let them hate, as long as they fear."

In 1937, M. P. Charlesworth raised the objection to using the De Clementia, the Panegyric, and On Kingship, as the only sources for information concerning imperial kingship. He argued that even more effective in spreading the will of the emperor was the imperial coinage and especially the building programs of rulers such as Trajan and Hadrian. Inscriptions on roads, bridges, and buildings glorified the emperor's name; a temple consecrated to the divine Augustus impressed the

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46Dio Chrysostom, Third Discourse, 125.
48Chrysostom, First Discourse on Kingship, Loeb Classical Library, 11.
local population with its size and splendor, and reminded them that the current emperor, his successor, was in fact partly divine himself.\(^{51}\)

Pliny and Seneca both use the terms *princeps* and *imperator* equally. Neither one prefers one expression over the other. Seneca also applies the word *rex* to Nero in the *De Clementia*, which implies that there was less aversion to the idea of a king at Nero's court.\(^{52}\)

Julius and Augustus Caesar were the examples after which many of the emperors patterned themselves. However, in his tract, Seneca praises Nero for being even better than Augustus, because Augustus became merciful only after he had led armies against the murderers of Julius. He had spilled Roman blood near Sicily in 36 B.C. against Sextus Pompey, and again at Actium in 31 B.C. against Antony.\(^{53}\) Nero may not have been as innocent as Seneca would have us believe, because, according to Suetonius, Claudius's other son Britannicus died, poisoned by Nero himself.\(^{54}\) Miriam Griffin reports that the date of the murder was in early A.D. 55,\(^{55}\)\(^{55}\) which would make the plea for mercy that much more urgent, but which also makes the preceding passage much more problematic. Since laws constrained all citizens, but especially the virtuous ruler, the fact that Nero went outside the law to eliminate a rival makes him nothing less than a tyrant.


\(^{52}\)Octavian would have preferred to take the name *Romulus*, after the founder of the city, but he settled for *Augustus* instead. *Romulus* connoted an idea of kingship, which was still opprobrious to the citizens of the Republic. Starr, *Civilization and the Caesars*, 44.

\(^{53}\)Seneca, *De Clementia*, 1.11.1,2.


Seneca, Pliny, and Dio Chrysostom all wrote political tracts dealing with the nature of kingship during the first century after Christ. They all urged the emperor to rule with justice and virtue, and they all praised him for these qualities when comparing him to his predecessor. They apparently acted independently, yet their insistence on virtue and godliness combined quite well with the images the emperors emphasized in the impetus behind the art and architecture. The emperors were concerned about the right of one man to rule, while the authors contemplated his moral qualifications. As a result, the princeps and the tyrannus were often one and the same.
Glossary of Latin Terms

aedile: Roman official in charge of public works, the grain supply, and the public games.

consul: Held the greatest military power outside the city. When the consul was in Rome, he enforced the will of the senate.

cursus honorum: The sequence of public offices that were held by senators and equites. During the Empire, the order of offices, from least to greatest prestige, was vigintivirate, quaestorship, aedilesship or tribunate, praetorship, and consulship.

imperator: Literally a general. Originally a term used to honor extraordinary military performance, during the Principate it came to be associated with the emperor and his family, and the title even became one of their customary names.

imperium: Power and authority held by high Roman officials.

pater patriae: "Father of the country," title given to the emperors by the Senate.

praetor: Helped the consul administrate, especially in the provinces.

princeps: Literally, "chief man," an informal title which the emperors adopted.

quaestor: Kept the archives and were in charge of the financial matters.

sacrosanctitas: Inviolability of a tribune's body. To make any move against a tribune was an act of treachery that resulted in severe punishment.

tribune: Originally an official of plebeian, not patrician, rank. Possessed the right to aid any plebeian being oppressed.

tyrannus: A tyrant, in the sense of one who has usurped power that was not originally his, or who rules despotically.

vigintivir: junior magistrate fulfilling the first requirement in the sequence of high governmental positions.
Appendix : List of Roman Emperors from Augustus to Hadrian

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<td>Imp. Marcus <em>Otho</em> Caesar Augustus</td>
<td>69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aulus <em>Vitellius</em> Imp. Germanicus Augustus</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. Caesar <em>Vespasianus</em> Augustus</td>
<td>69-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. <em>Titus</em> Caesar Vespasianus Augustus</td>
<td>79-81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. Caesar <em>Domitianus</em> Augustus Germanicus</td>
<td>81-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. <em>Nerva</em> Caesar Augustus Germanicus</td>
<td>96-98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. Caesar Nerva <em>Traianus</em> Optimus Augustus</td>
<td>98-117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Germanicus Dacicus</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp. Caesar Traianus <em>Hadrianus</em> Augustus</td>
<td>117-138</td>
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</table>
WORKS CITED

**Primary Sources**


**Secondary Sources**


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