These thoughts were prompted by a reading of Karl Galinsky's *Augustan Culture* (Princeton, 1996), well reviewed in this journal by T.R. Stevenson (28.2 [1996] 52-7). Galinsky argues basically, as Stevenson says, that Augustan culture in government, literature, art, architecture etc. arose from Augustus himself and the leadership provided by his *auctoritas*, which evoked responses favourable to his policies and plans. What I want to do is to look at *auctoritas* critically, and to argue that the favourable responses derive from a mixture of recognition of power, fear, self-interest and dislike of the possible alternatives. Since even broad-based surveys of a cultural scene need a satisfactory basis in fundamental political and constitutional realities, I want to question some of Galinsky's assertions, and his uncritical acceptance of what Augustus says in *Res gestae* (R.g.). On many issues too the evidence admits a variety of opinions. At times Galinsky seems to me to choose an inferior one, and in surveying the literary scene to neglect facts which are relevant to his rosy picture of the cultural scene.

*Auctoritas*, the quality of being an *auctor*, is not a simple word with a simple meaning—see Oxford Latin Dictionary *s.v.* for example. On the one hand the holder of legally-granted powers (*imperium* or *potestas*) had the power to convene a *consilium* to advise him, to initiate, authorise or sanction a policy or action by virtue of his position as *auctor publici consilii*. In addition, a holder of *imperium* also enjoyed the right of *coercitio*, that is, the right to issue an order and insist that it be obeyed in the city, and outside the city the right to demand obedience on pain of death. *Auctoritas* was intrinsic in the power.
On the other hand auctoritas means moral authority—the power to express an opinion or wish, support a policy decision or a candidate for office and have that opinion or wish or support carry weight, the greater the auctoritas, the greater the weight, but without any power to demand its execution or fulfilment.

Auctoritas in this sense could wax and wane, as political support seems to tend to do. Imperium and its power of coercitio remained rock-solid and unchangeable, even if, as Crook points out (C.A.H. X², 86), the limits of the power of imperium were not closely defined.

When, as Caesar, Augustus returned from Egypt in 29BC his auctoritas in the former sense was overwhelming; he was in total control as he admitted (potitus rerum omnium, R.g. 34,1). As he discarded formal powers piecemeal and handed management of various parts of the res publica (or affairs of state) with their powers to the traditional managers, his auctoritas in the former sense diminished, but never very far, since he was consul (the office from which initiatives traditionally emanated) for another six years, till mid-23, and then proconsul commanding almost all the legions through his legati. For four years his imperium and the accompanying auctoritas in the city (in the former sense) may have been in doubt, but in 19BC it was explicitly accepted that his imperium was equal to that of the consuls in the city, and it remained that way for the rest of Augustus’ life.¹ Galinsky unfortunately forgets this, making the extraordinary claim that in 23BC Augustus became privatus, a citizen without office (11), and not acknowledging till p. 377 Augustus’ position as commander-in-chief of the armed forces and victories as sources of auctoritas (which they were) in considering its effects on writers, artists et al., but even here the element of coercitio within imperium is

---

I am grateful to Dr W.R. Barnes and his anonymous assessors for drawing my attention to a number of matters. The remaining errors are all my own work.

¹ P.A. Brunt, CQ n.s. 12 (1962) 70-5.
Augustus’ auctoritas in the second sense is more subtle, and it is in this sense that Galinsky conducts most of his discussion. We should consider its origins; what did it derive from? In a culture lacking any of the modern media for mass communications, there are three possible sources: expressed wishes and intentions (what he said), executive actions (what he did) and what he wrote, and people’s reactions to these.

We do not have the terms in which he wrote to the Senate about his successes in Egypt and elsewhere, nor the terms of his letters to the Senate as proconsul (e.g. in Spain), nor the thirteen books of his autobiography, which is known not to have gone beyond 25BC (Suet. Aug. 85.1). It has been hazarded that he did not have to justify his actions past that date, but we do not know; perhaps he just got busier, or bored with the project, or older and with less energy, or felt that the records would speak for themselves; but he suppressed the acta senatus from the public view, and Dio tells us that he found it very hard to find out what happened after 27BC (53.19.1). This makes it very hard to believe that Augustus wanted to disseminate information or incorporate more people in the government.

We know more about Augustus’ executive acts, and it may be reasonable to suppose that they reflected, and were reflected by, his expressed wishes and intentions, and since these seem to have left contemporaries in no doubt about the political, social and intellectual climate he wished to create it is reasonable to conclude that there was no conflict or confusion between them.

Augustus claimed to champion the mores maiorum (tradition), in ancient political rhetoric equated with res publica or libertas or leges et iura populi Romani; see Sir Ronald Syme, The Roman Revolution, 153. The concept was not clearly defined however, but was, as Syme put it ‘a vague and emotional concept’ and in practice a complex of practices, some religious, some political, some
neither, and all ‘a subject of partisan interpretation, of debate and of fraud’.  

Augustus’ actions in reviving religious cults and priesthoods, restoring temples and the whole religious calendar appealed to those who believed in religio—the right performance of the cult worship of the gods who had traditionally been the gods of Rome, and who had enabled Rome to be victorious successively over all the peoples of Italy, Carthage and the kingdoms of Alexander’s successors, and to beat off the wandering Germanic peoples around and beyond the Alps. In the last civil war this presentation was facilitated by Antony’s alliance with Cleopatra and threatened invasion of Italy with the foreign gods they could be alleged to be intending to foist on Rome. Ideas and actions in this field were clearly in harmony with one another. (By the mores maiorum of course the pontifex maximus should have had a prominent part to play, but this was quietly ignored till 12BC when Augustus got the post.)

How devoted were the middle and lower classes to these cults? We can not say, but if we agree with Peter Gamsey that ‘the first concern of inhabitants of the ancient world was how to feed themselves and their dependants’ we must think that keeping in with all the gods, especially those who governed the food supply, was important. Recent experience had taught the city-dwellers that the food supply could be cut off in civil war, so peace with the demobilisation of huge parts of the army and the re-imposition of discipline (Suet. Aug. 24-25) appealed to all who valued the status quo.

By his actions too, Augustus asserted concern for the common

---

2 Cf. Syme, op.cit. ch.XXII, esp. 315, W.K. Lacey, Augustus and the Principate (ARCA 35; Liverpool, 1996) (A.&P.) ch.2 et al., and for the coins, id. 85, esp. n.37, and nn. in both works for sources.

3 Trade and Famine in Classical Antiquity (Cambridge, 1983) 56.
people’s food—twelve rations of grain in his consulate of 23BC (R.g. 15.1), assuming responsibility for ending the food shortage in 22BC (R.g. 5.1f), supplementing the public supply from his own sources whenever it ran short from 18BC (R.g. 18), taking measures to deal with the next crisis in AD6 (Suet. Aug. 42.3, Dio 55.26.1f), and before his death establishing the systematic management of the food supply under a praefectus annonae, an official so important that he ranked with the consuls and praetorian prefect in leading the oath of allegiance to Tiberius in AD14 (Tac. Ann. 1.7.2). Augustus restored and promoted the common people’s cult of the food supply at the shrines of the Lares Compitales, associating himself with the cult, and giving men of low social rank the privilege of being the priests.4

Augustus emphasised his status as Caesar’s heir;5 this had been his only asset in the initial stages of his rise to power; granted that he overplayed his hand on his first appearance, and shocked many, he very quickly secured the adherence of Caesar’s followers among the civil population, and his victories, and those of Agrippa on his behalf, secured it among the soldiers. These victories were reinforced by Caesar’s and subsequently his own twenty-eight colonies of veterans settled in Italy (R.g. 28.2) who must have known that their tenure of their farms was most secure if Caesar’s heir remained in control. Caesar too was the name he used most consistently; even after 27BC he was Imperator Caesar Augustus, whether or no he added divi filius (son of the deified sc. Caesar). Associated with this was the notion of world-wide rule; Vergil expressed this as ‘imperium sine fine dedi’ (I have given them an empire without limit) and the charge ‘tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento... parere subiectis et debellare superbos’ (Remember to rule the peoples with your sway, Roman, to spare the conquered and beat down the proud); was Vergil

4 The vicomagistri; H. Dessau, ILS 6073, & id. p.489; I.A. Richmond and John North, Oxford Classical Dictionary1 1119-1120 s.v. and refs.

5 Cicero, Phil. 13.24-5, quoting M.Antonius; R.g.2; cf. Syme, R.R. ch.VIII, Lacey, op.cit. 60, and the habitual use of CAESAR and DIVI F. on coins.
expressing an original thought, or one in general currency? The spirit of aggressive nationalism had always appealed to Romans; completing Caesar's work in recovering from Parthia the standards lost by Crassus and Antony and expanding Rome's boundaries to the North were a constant preoccupation, engaging Augustus for most of the first twenty years of his principate.

Another element, quite ignored by Galinsky, is fear. When Augustus returned in 29BC it is inconceivable that there was not a strong element of fear in his reception; he had gained a reputation as the most cruel and uncompromising of the triumvirs (Suet. Aug. 27.3; cf. 13.1-2), whether the people looked at the proscriptions, the fate of Perusia or that of the sailors defeated at Naulochus, though perhaps the compensation given in 30BC to some of those who lost their farms to the twenty-eight colonies of veterans settled in Italy (R.g. 16.1f.) gave some hope of a more conciliatory approach.

We can have no idea how slowly the element of fear was dissipated; we have the evidence of Dio (54.25.6) that it was not till 13BC that landowners ceased to fear their lands might be taken for veteran settlements. Before that confiscation was always a possibility, especially among those who opposed Augustus. In fact some land was bought in AD14 (R.g. 16.1.); we do not know whether the sellers were willing or not.

Among the senators (or those who had survived) nervousness about retaining their membership must have lasted till after the purge of 29BC, to be revived again ten years later when the idea of reverting to the pre-Sullan figure of 300 was mooted (Dio 54.14), though this time it was allayed by settling for Sulla's figure of 600. The leading families long remained frustrated in their quest for the consulates they craved (bringing the rank of nobilis in their own generation). These were denied in effect for five years till Augustus decided, presumably late in 24BC, to offer Cn. Piso a well-directed bribe in the form of a suffect consulate, which was effective in persuading him to come out of his ostentatious
withdrawal from public life (the traditional way of criticising the consuls), something Augustus' *auctoritas* had not been successful in achieving. A similar bribe to L. Sestius had the same effect in mid 23BC when Augustus himself resigned. But meaningful competition was not restored till the senators had accepted (in 19BC) that Augustus' *imperium* was valid in the city. Even then, Augustus' dominance in the electoral assembly (the *comitia*) was so complete that they must have known that they would never get a consulship in the teeth of his opposition. This made Augustus quite different from Sulla, for example. So, fear, hope of support, and gratitude for it when received blended, the mixture varying from individual to individual and over the years.

In the ranks of those outside the Senate, gratitude for peace, lands, career openings, cash and food distributions or ambition quickly or slowly made men content to support his expressed wishes uncritically or with reservations as the case may be—that is, accept his *auctoritas* in making political and electoral decisions. This is the predominant sense in which Galinsky uses *auctoritas* in his discussions, taking his cue from *Res gestae* 34, and the claim that after 27BC Augustus excelled everyone in *auctoritas*. But Augustus is being disingenuous when he adds that his *potestas* (ignoring proconsular *imperium*) was no greater than that of his colleagues in each office. While this may be true of each office separately, overall it is not. This is exemplified in the power of *coercitio* which belonged to *imperium*, and was exercised in situations like the 'conspiracy' of Caepio and Murena, support or prompting of C. Sentius Saturninus (consul in 19BC) to deal summarily with Egnatius Rufus, and in dealing with the misdemeanours of his daughter and grand-daughter and their friends, and with the *eques* Ovid.

Moreover, even to his most devoted supporters, those who

---

rendered him electorally invulnerable, *auctoritas* without *imperium* within the city was not enough. The story of 23-19BC is of the people in their assembly thrusting consular *imperium* on Augustus, until it was decreed by the Senate that his proconsular *imperium* was equal to that of the consuls in the city. In other words, the *auctoritas* of *tribunicia potestas* plus a proconsular *imperium* was not enough for them, even if *tribunicia potestas* was ‘to defend the plebs’ as he said, or so Tacitus tells us (Ann. 1.2).

The acceptance of Augustus as *princeps*, endowed permanently with a consul’s *imperium*, the military powers of a proconsul governing provinces and the powers of a tribune, was (like a sturdy tree) slow in growth, but with firm roots. The assuaging of initial fears, the discovery that mercy (*clementia*) was now real, the freedom from rioting, disorders (except in favour of Augustus) and marches on the city must have impressed almost everyone favourably. Supporters reaped rewards,⁷ the ambitious found opportunities for public careers open, and business openings, and rewards for success; the *plebs* was rewarded with cash, food, entertainments and jobs on the great building programmes of Agrippa as well as Augustus’ own numerous restorations and constructions of temples. Important too, probably, was a well-founded distrust of the *nobiles* who had governed so badly, and selfishly, in their own interests (Tac. Ann. 1.2 fin. for their performance in the provinces).

For others too, it was more comforting to be told that the civil wars were caused by the anger of neglected gods rather than their, and their fathers’ and grandfathers’, greed and ambition. It was comforting too, perhaps, when Augustus abandoned his first plans for social and sumptuary legislation—both Sulla and Caesar had proposed these. Augustus’ absence on his provincial government for the last part of his consulship in 27BC helped to diminish his visible dominance (out of sight is often out of mind), even if the

⁷ Syme, R.R. 237ff.; add the horrible Vedius Pollio and whoever is concealed by the corrupt *que tedii* in the MSS of Tacitus, Ann. 1.10.
result was no new initiatives. It was also at this period, 25-23BC, that his always precarious health was at its worst, and this must have made everyone who thought about the future realise that, whatever Augustus or they thought about it, they might at any time have to start managing the res publica and the army without him.

Most of the positive elements in this complex climate of opinion can be found in Horace's Odes, but was Horace taking them from Augustus or vice versa? To me the former seems much more probable and that the flow of ideas came from the top down, and were supported by actions.

Augustus' auctoritas was doubtless enhanced by the Parthian 'victory' and the extensive public relations campaign which followed; the publicity from the revival in use of the temple of Jupiter Feretrius where the recovered standards were first housed, and the new little temple to Mars Ultor on the Capitol (which Galinsky does not believe in) and the coins. After the Julian laws and the Secular Games Augustus' auctoritas was still not sufficient to persuade leading senators to hold the lower magistracies; they were ready enough to compete for the consulates, and to join the six-monthly consilium; however any 'opposition' from members of patrician families to standing for the tribunate (Galinsky 38) simply is not 'interesting'. They were prohibited by the most ancient mores maiorum.

---

8 Cf. Crook, C.A.H. X² 84-5.

9 Augustus rebuilt this temple, which was so derelict it had lost its roof, so completely that he lists it among those he built rather than those he restored (R.g. 19.2). Its state of neglect reveals the attitude of the nobiles towards the gods of the state, compared to that towards the temples which glorified their own families, and Augustus' concern for the state gods of the Roman tradition. Jupiter Feretrius was associated with Romulus and the spolia opima. Cf. P. Zanker, The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus (Ann Arbor, 1988) 103, 187, who offers evidence for it being an early piece of work.
Augustus’ relationship with the other organs of state changed fundamentally after 13BC, when he returned after another three years away to stay in Rome for most of the time. In 13, he turned fifty, and the renewal of his provincia showed a determination to keep him as commander-in-chief, even if he was unlikely to take the field in person again. 13 also brought a grant of tribunicia potestas to Agrippa his son-in-law; it was made by the Senate, not by the people’s assembly. That must have hurt, since we have good evidence of the mutual dislike of Agrippa and the nobles of the Senate (Syme, op.cit. 343ff. and nn.). Did this conversion of tribunicia potestas from a personal grant to something more like a magistracy increase Augustus’ auctoritas? We do not know, but it seems a clear indication that Augustus’ position was being thought of as hereditary, especially if, as seems probable, numbered tenures were already part of the consular fasti, as they appear to be from the surviving fragments. These are not extant for the period of Agrippa’s tribunicia potestas, so we cannot say whether his tribunicia potestas was also entered on them.

Certainly the next year Augustus’ election as pontifex maximus proved his auctoritas and popularity, probably enhanced it, and it probably reached its apogee in 2BC with the grant of the title of Pater Patriae. How much damage did his popularity and auctoritas suffer from the Julia affair (we hear of opposition to her exile)? And how much from the later social legislation, the manipulation of elections by the lex Valeria Cornelia—laws which did not bear his name—and the taxation introduced to fund the aerarium militare which we know was bitterly attacked? And how much damage did his reputation of invincibility suffer from the defeats in Pannonia in AD6, and even more from the clades Variana? We do not know, but we should bear them in mind when assessing Augustus’ enduring auctoritas.

Augustus’ auctoritas then was an important instrument of government, of fluctuating force and varying, and for a time

---

generally increasing, power, as Galinsky agrees. The constant, never changing instrument, always available to deal with dissent, was the armed forces of the state commanded by the lieutenants (legati) of the proconsul of all the armed provinces but Africa, Augustus himself, commander also of the contingents of troops in the city. Augustus omitted his proconsulare imperium from Res gestae, but the residents of Rome could hardly forget it, and if they thought about it must have recognised that the peace they enjoyed depended on it.

*Imperium* was fundamental in the government of Rome at all periods. It was formally granted (or given or bestowed), not taken: *domi* following elections in the comitia, *militiae* following the grant by the Senate of a *provincia* in which to exercise it either directly or by lot after the Senate had decided which provinces should be those subject to sortition. When these things were done without coercion, there was *res publica*, in pre-Augustan Rome as well as in Augustan. When provinces, magistracies and commands were granted under coercion or arbitrarily, there was no *res publica* but civil war, actual or potential. Military commands were the issue which precipitated both Sulla’s and Caesar’s repudiation of the *res publica*. That is why the grant of provinces to Augustus in January, 27BC was the keystone of the whole Augustan edifice. Galinsky seems not to understand this.11

In all Augustan studies there are some questions on which there are inevitable differences of opinion because of the evidence. One is on the issue of propaganda. Galinsky raises this question, and specifically how far is the coinage propagandist? He supports scholars who think that coins hardly seem designed to form opinion, but that does not answer the question of whether the coins are not, like so much modern advertising publicity, designed to keep particular ideas in people’s minds. Tradition enters the equation too: republican *asses* carried a picture; Augustus’ portrait was perhaps no more than a value-indicator; SC claims that there

was no change in the issuing authority, but the new pictures like the oak wreath ob cives servatos (whose significance Galinsky ignores), the clupeus virtutis and the olive branch of victory on sestertii asserted for the citizens the claims that Augustus made for his rule. Publicity might be a better word than propaganda for this.

However, numismatists have also pointed out that the gold and (more especially) silver coinage bears legends often of particular interest to the soldiers for whose pay they were probably minted. Victories in which they had participated and their results were more likely to be commemorated than peace and saving the lives of citizens. Propaganda? On the meaning that propaganda means advertising the events you wish to commemorate in the way you wish to commemorate them, yes; on the meaning that propaganda is designed to form opinion, no. The term needs a more subtle analysis, as Galinsky agrees.

More like propaganda, as I would understand it, perhaps, are coins and poems which portray the Parthian King kneeling in submission. That never happened, and by the end of Augustus' principate the Parthian kingdom was far from submissive. By putting the 'victory' (199 et al.) in inverted commas Galinsky seems to agree without agreeing that claims in those terms are propagandist.

Another issue is Augustus' six-monthly consilium. Galinsky calls this 'the consilium principis' (70) dating it, with Dio, to between 27 and 18BC, and describes it as 'consisting primarily of fifteen senators chosen by lot'. But this six-monthly consilium was essentially a development from the republican salutationes at which the amici of the consul gathered before meetings of the

13 C.H.V. Sutherland, R.I.C. 1, 13-14 et al., and cf. Lacey, op.cit. ibid.
Senate or People to discuss and perhaps plan the discussions. The consul(s) attended it, and representatives of the other colleges of magistrates; though numerically inferior to the fifteen selected by lot these magistrates must often, if not usually, have been the dominant element in discussion, especially when the comitia had preferred Augustus’ amici. Whether this was a consilium principis proprio nomine already, or not till much later (the Greek of the Cyrene edicts [4BC] calls it ‘the council drawn by lot from the Senate’) was very acutely discussed by John Crook in Consilium Principis (Cambridge, 1955), chap.2. He concluded that it was an Augustan experiment which evolved into a consilium principis only gradually, perhaps not till AD13. This seems a sounder view.

Another issue is whether there was a temple to Mars Ultor on the Capitol, built in 19BC to receive the standards recovered from Parthia, or always only one, that built in the Forum Augustum? Few, I think, will support Galinsky’s view that the one in the Forum Augustum was ‘still being built in 19BC’ (157), as this implies that by 19 Augustus had already completed the purchase of the properties he needed for his forum, and that work had already been started, and perhaps the massive rear wall had also been at least begun. This seems very unlikely; Suetonius (Aug. 29) says that Augustus had said that another forum was needed for judicial work, and this was the reason for buying properties.14 A forum for judicial work should have had a basilica, not a temple as its main feature, did not need the great wall which made the Forum Augustum a temple precinct, and it would hardly have been designed with porticoes full of statues. It seems much more likely that Augustus changed his mind at least once in deciding how to fulfill the vow he had made on the field of Philippi in 42BC. Fewer still will assent to the view that 30 January was the last day of the month (146) and that the globe of the sundial/obelisk

14 And perhaps for avoiding criticism for compelling landowners to sell if at the time he did not have a monument of great national significance in mind, let alone the detailed plans envisaged by Galinsky.
was below the point (ibid. and cf. fig.64). This is careless, not to say sloppy, work.

Chapters IV and V, as Stevenson remarks, are the core of Galinsky’s work, and on the field most familiar to him, and are supported by very fine pictures; but to gain a more balanced view of the Augustan scene, perhaps, we should not forget Pollio, whose history seems not to have been influenced by Augustus’ auctoritas, and Cornelius Gallus, one of the pioneers of elegy, a distinguished soldier and administrator and supporter of Augustus, who fell foul of him and had to commit suicide in 26BC (see Galinsky 269-70). He seems to reflect Augustus’ dislike of competition rather than his auctoritas.

Two questions also arise in discussing the literary scene: in discussing tragedy in this age Galinsky remarks (265) ‘After the bad times of the civil wars, it was not surprising that the public should have been tired of tragic subjects and unwilling to experience pity and fear through the deep involvement and shared spiritual experience that tragedy demanded’. This sounds likely enough till we consider Varius’ Thyestes, first produced at Augustus’ Actian games in 29 (or 28)BC.15 In the play Thyestes is portrayed as a tyrant, and proved to be one by having the same characteristics as are attributed to Antony by Cicero (cf. App. BC 4.20). This somewhat propagandist portrait of a tyrant pleased someone very much; a contemporary (surely Augustus himself or Maecenas) gave Varius one million sesterces. Posterity also admired the play very much; Quintilian (10.1.98) said it was as good as any Greek tragedy. Varius is bracketed with Vergil as loved by Augustus himself (Hor. Ep. 2.1.247), and Ovid mentions him as a tragedian along with a contemporary Gracchus who also wrote a tragedy on a tyrant (Pont. 4.16.31). Did the Augustan public not share Augustus’ admiration, and dissent from him (and later literary critics) about this? Certainly, some fifteen years later Horace says that the plebs didn’t like any plays, and the

more prosperous citizens preferred show to text (Ep. 2.1.185ff.) Yet it was precisely under the shadow of the civil war that Thyestes was written. A Medea by Ovid was also widely acclaimed (Tac. Dial. 12.6); the date is unknown, but it was perhaps later than Amores 3.1. Was there a change of taste then? If so, was it under the auctoritas of Augustus? The change seems likely, and, as I have argued elsewhere16 the introduction of the pantomimi into the public games in 23 or 22BC may have been intended to keep the plebs entertained rather than thinking about politics. Their performances were hardly appropriate for a people justifying their empire by setting a higher moral tone as Galinsky suggests (133-4).

Another question: in a book on cultural history it is surprising that Ovid’s oeuvre, other than the Metamorphoses and Fasti (which Ovid never got round to finishing), is hardly mentioned. This seems extraordinary, for if wit and humour are prominent features of Augustus’ character and leadership, why was Ovid’s wit and humour not appreciated? and, conspicuously, Ovid was not silenced by Augustus’ auctoritas. It may be useful to compare Tibullus, a much inferior poet whom Galinsky discusses carefully, and his contrast (270-1) of the life of a soldier with that of a comparatively poor peasant happy with a modest life-style and content with his lot with Ovid’s picture. When Ovid compares a soldier’s life with a civilian’s, it is with the escapades of an erotic adventurer in town; Ovid actually defiantly holds up his lifestyle as no less perilous and much more worthwhile, with instant booty—the prize of a willing girl in his arms (Am. 1.9, 2.11). He may, like Tibullus, lose his girl to a soldier who has made a pile (Am. 3.8), but he will win immortal glory (Am. 1.15). Galinsky offers no comparison of this poem with Horace Odes 3.30. Do we have a change in the Augustan ethic at the end? If so, was it sanctioned by Augustus’ auctoritas, or only that of his daughter, who was also a wit? And it was not auctoritas but imperium which enabled Augustus to send Ovid off to Tomis. The trouble

16 Ancient History 27/1 (1997) 40.
with trying to forget about _imperium_ is that it keeps cropping up, and its right of _coercitio_; there is no polysemy about it, even if most contemporaries wanted _imperium_ to remain in Augustus' hands.

_Res publica_, for which Galinsky offers the translation 'Commonwealth'—better perhaps _common_ wealth, the community's material things, physical and governmental, is aligned with the _res privatae_ of the private citizens—their interests, wealth and (I would say) business. This is a useful concept; the _res publica_ should defend the _res privatae_ of the citizens, but the republican _nobiles_ had used the _res publica_ for their own interests, and did not defend the _res privatae_ of the people at large, let alone use the resources of the _res publica_ for the amenities of a city. Rather, they had misappropriated the property of other people, especially in the Italian communities (who had by now become citizens) and used the profits of empire for their own luxury and ostentation. Augustus changed all that; the profits of civil war were spread very widely indeed, so that his fellow-profiteers were so numerous that those with an interest in the _status quo_ equalled, if they did not outnumber, those who had not profited (and dead men make no claims). Moreover, after that Augustus spread his vast wealth widely, if sporadically, as Galinsky points out, and his right hand man, Agrippa, provided the infrastructure as we call it of a great city. If the surviving _nobiles_ did not see fit to join in these activities Augustus simply took them over; road building is an example, of which Galinsky gives a good account, except that he thinks that ex-praetors might be _equites_ (366). That was not possible. They were senators of some seniority. In the end, though, it must seem that the _res publica_ and Augustus' _res privatae_ had got so intermixed that they were inseparable; the _heres_ to Augustus' estate had to be _heres_ of his position in the _res publica_, but without his _auctoritas_ in the second sense, which was not heritable because it was personal. This had become clear from the time Gaius Caesar had been made _princeps iuventutis_, when there had been some resistance to the idea of his succession to Augustus' position. But
his death, and Augustus' response in replacing him with Tiberius as heres as well as the commander of the forces of the state under Augustus himself, unveiled the future. And in AD14 this was not challenged, though Tiberius' auctoritas was not great enough for there to be no criticism. Moreover, the continuing representation of Gaius and Lucius Caesar on the coins was a reminder that there was a continuing dynasty.

The creation of a dynasty may be sudden and violent. It usually is, but it may also occur by gradual accretion, as Tacitus, who was a perceptive historian (pace Galinsky), understood. It is a real question whether Augustus foresaw and planned the evolution. In the religious sphere Galinsky thinks he did; in the political Syme thought he did, taking his cue from Tacitus, who seems to me also to provide a sounder, if more critical, starting point for analysis than Res gestae, which has been shown to be a tendentious document.

W.K. Lacey
Auckland

---

17 Tacitus, Ann. 1.7-15 for a full, if not continuous account.