

# Consecratio

Autor(en): **Bickerman, Elias**

Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique**

Band (Jahr): **19 (1973)**

PDF erstellt am: **28.06.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-660657>

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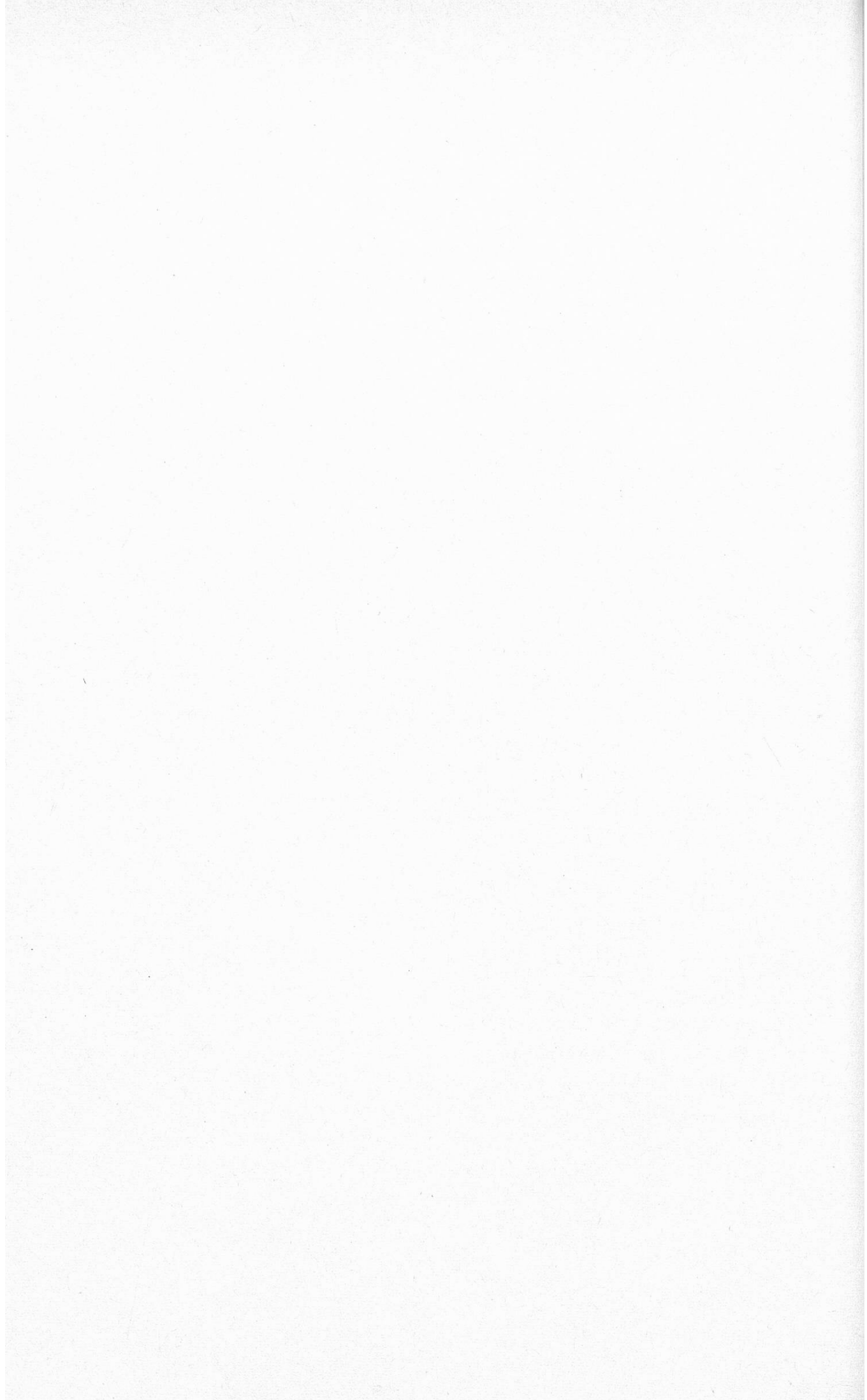
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I

ELIAS BICKERMAN

*Consecratio*



## CONSECRATIO

The honor of giving the introductory lecture at this Symposium allows, and even obliges me, to ask some preliminary questions concerning our topic. To begin with, what is "Le culte des souverains dans l'empire romain"?

Let us first proceed by elimination. The rhetoric of poets and sycophants offers no evidence of cult. Lucan could say of Nero: *mibi iam numen*, but this servile rapture did not prevent him from conspiring against his august protector. Messala could say that the lasting prosperity (*felicitas*) of Rome depended on the luck of Augustus. Yet, in Roman coinage *Felicitas* first appears on bronze coins of Galba. When Horace calls Augustus *filius Maiæ*, this metaphor, which finds its full meaning in the context of the ode, does not need and cannot be explained by reference to some petty traders who at Cos worshipped *Mercurius Augustus*<sup>1</sup>.

The same caution is required in interpretation of works of fine arts. That a Mercury in the Louvre (No. 1207) has the features of the young Octavian, does not prove, nor even suggest, that the sculptor, or his patron, worshipped their ruler as Mercury. Claudius and Agrippina, or according to another interpretation Septimius Severus and Domna, are invested with attributes of Jupiter and Nemesis on the Stuttgart cameo, yet we do not need to suppose that the couple was worshipped, or even regarded, as Jupiter and Nemesis. The cameo only indicates that at a certain moment, the emperor and his spouse were represented as exercising some functions of the above named gods or enjoying their protection<sup>2</sup>. Germanicus (?) and Drusus

<sup>1</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 58; on Hor. *Carm.* I 2, cf. *PP* 76 (1961), 5-19 and A. LA PENNA, *Orazio e l'ideologia del principato* (1963), 82.

<sup>2</sup> M.-L. VOLLENWEIDER, *Der Jupiter Cameo* (1964); H. MÖBIUS, *Schweizer Münzenblätter* 16 (1966), 110.

Junior (?) appear as heavenly beings on the great cameo of Paris. Yet, they were never deified in Rome. The cameo only attests to the pious hope of stellar immortality. *Moribus et coelum patuit. Sum digna merendo, cuius honoratis ossa vehantur aquis*, as the shadow of Propertius' Cornelia says to her husband <sup>1</sup>.

Nevertheless, a great part of our Symposium is dedicated to reflexes and echoes of the imperial worship in poetry, rhetoric, Christian literature, and so on. That is perfectly right and necessary. Only in this way can we learn something about the spiritual world in which men could deify a man. As a matter of fact, Cicero's letters after the death of his daughter, and the last poem in the second book of Horace's *Odes* (*non usitata nec tenui feram penna biformis*) adumbrate Augustus' apotheosis.

Yet, in Rome it was "the worship of the Man in power" <sup>2</sup>, and not that of a poet. Why? Napoleon regretted that the age in which conquerors were deified had passed. In his speech after the death of Benjamin Franklin, Mirabeau said that antiquity would have erected altars to the powerful *Genius* "who knew how to subdue lightning and the tyrans" <sup>3</sup>. In 1802 Saint-Simon suggested substituting Newton for Christ, and making obligatory a yearly pilgrimage to the tomb of Newton <sup>4</sup>. Was the deification of Roman Emperors

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. ERNOUT, *RPh* 95 (1969), 194.

<sup>2</sup> W. W. FOWLER, *Roman Ideas of Deity* (1914), 160.

<sup>3</sup> Napoléon, *Vues politiques* (1939), 354; Mirabeau's speech on 11 VI 1790 *ap.* G. CHINARD, *L'apothéose de Benjamin Franklin* (1935), 18. Beaumarchais, in the dedication to Franklin of his *Le vœu de toutes les nations*, already wrote in 1778: "L'Amérique ne pouvant reconnaître dignement ses libérateurs, devra les vénérer à jamais, en quelque sorte, et de la même manière qu'elle vénère les Dieux immortels." Of course, in this age of gallantry, one speaking of a beauty, could say: "La Grèce lui eût élevé des temples." See e.g. *La chronique scandaleuse* (by Imbert de Bourdeaux) I (1791), 196.

<sup>4</sup> *Lettres d'un habitant de Genève* (1802), in SAINT-SIMON (C. H. de Rouvroy, C<sup>te</sup> de), *Œuvres choisies* (1859), 36.

facilitated by man's longing for immortality? Ovid ends the *Metamorphoses* by predicting the deification of Augustus, and adds the expression of hope for his own afterlife: *parte tamen meliore mei super alta perennis astra ferar*. Was not the apotheosis a realization of man's secret desire to become god? *Eritis sicut dii*. . . . Rulers became objects of worship which man craves for himself. Voltaire<sup>1</sup> tells us that the greater part of the Parisians born under Louis XIV "and moulded by the yoke of despotism", regarded a king "as a divinity and a usurper as a sacrilegious person". People are daily queuing up before Lenin's mausoleum<sup>2</sup>, and the grave of de Gaulle has become a place of pilgrimage.

On the other hand, we may and should ask whether and how far the imperial worship was accepted and favored by the common man. Think of the portraits of Stalin, of Hitler, and even of Nasser, in every shop, in every home of their respective subjects. In Rome, about A. D. 150, painted or sculptured images of heir apparent (M. Aurelius) and, presumably, of the ruler (Antoninus) were displayed in virtually every shop<sup>3</sup>. Yet, in excavations through the Empire, portraits of the emperors have been found, as a rule, in public buildings only<sup>4</sup>. Private houses in Pompeii<sup>5</sup>, in Herculaneum and, I believe, elsewhere, hardly, if ever, were

<sup>1</sup> VOLTAIRE, *Le siècle de Louis XIV*, ch. xv.

<sup>2</sup> At a meeting of the XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R., an old female member of the party (D. A. Lazurkina), who knew Lenin personally, in supporting the motion to remove the remains of Stalin from Lenin's mausoleum, told the audience: "Yesterday, I consulted Lenin again. . . and he said to me: 'It is unpleasant to be beside Stalin who has done such a great harm to the party'." See the *Stenographic Report of the XXII Congress III* (1962), 121 (in Russian).

<sup>3</sup> Fronto, *Ep. ad M. Caes.* IV 12, 4 (p. 206 Haines).

<sup>4</sup> See the lists of surviving portraits in M. WEGNER *et alii*, *Das römische Herrscherbild* (1939 ff.) and in H. G. NIEMEYER, *Studien zur statuarischen Darstellung der römischen Kaiser* (1968).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. M. DELLA CORTE, *Case ed abitanti di Pompei*<sup>3</sup> (1965), Index.

adorned with images of present or deified rulers. The numberless mosaics which beautified villas from Morocco to Mesopotamia and from Tunis to Britain again offer no evidence for imperial worship or the glorification of emperors, nor even for the patriotic religion generally. I remember a mosaic from Lixus in the museum of Tetuan which shows Mars descending to Rhea Silvia. But the treatment of the subject shows it was the erotic aspect of the legend which interested the villa owner. The same is true, of course, for Aeneas and the undressed Dido on a mosaic found in England. What is the provenance of numerous reliefs and sculptures of the She-wolf with the twins? In the museum of Toulouse you can see over a hundred busts of members of Augustus' family and of emperors from Trajan to the Severi<sup>1</sup>. But these portraits come from a villa at Martres Tolosanes, a villa which obviously was the home of a family with connections to the court in Rome<sup>2</sup>. All these pieces are of Italian marble, and probably come from Italy, while the reliefs and statues of locally venerated deities are of local stone and workmanship. The idol of Hercules in the villa of a Roman veteran in Pannonia somewhat resembles Commodus. But the statue is dedicated to Hercules alone<sup>3</sup>. Again, we have innumerable dedications to the deified emperors. But who set them up? My impression is that only few private persons are to be found among the dedicants<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> E. ESPÉRANDIEU, *Recueil général des bas-reliefs de la Gaule romaine* II (1908), 948-1004. Cf. *ibid.* p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> A courtier of the Medicis decorated his palace in Pistoia with busts of the grand dukes of Tuscany. G. SPINI, *RSI* 83 (1971), 830.

<sup>3</sup> E. B. THOMAS, *Römische Villen in Pannonien* (1964), 14.

<sup>4</sup> We should not forget that dedications to deified rulers "are all of the nature of homage and not of worship in the full sense". A. D. NOCK, in *CAH* 10 (1934), 481.

As a matter of fact, a sociological and psychological study of evidence for the imperial worship would be welcome. Mysteries of the imperial cult existed in Asia Minor, but even here the documents distinguish between the ἀγάλματα of the Olympians and the εἰκόνες of the emperors. Yet, the usage was not and could not be uniform. A man in Lapethos (Cyprus), who in 29 dedicated a temple to Tiberius, called the cultic statue of the latter ἄγαλμα<sup>1</sup>.

To sum up : By all means, let us study and discuss the ideological background of the imperial worship, but let us not confuse ideology with the sacral law which alone determines the worship. We should not confuse the divinity and the association with the divine. The monarch by the grace of God, by definition is no deity himself.

Let us now pass to the next question. We speak of the worship of the emperors. But what is pagan worship? Let us first observe that anyone could establish his own cult of some force which appeared to him superhuman. Tityrus of Vergil (*Ecl.* I 6-8) says of his benefactor, who is the young Octavian :

*O Meliboe, deus nobis haec otia fecit.  
Namque erit ille mihi semper deus ; illius aram  
Saepe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.*

But the cult vowed by Tityrus does not involve Meliboeus whom Octavian did deprive of his ancestral land. Again, P. Perelius Hedulus built on his own land a temple *Gentis Augustae* and was its *sacerdos perpetuus*<sup>2</sup>. Similar was the case of the just mentioned Adrastus of Lapethus. He calls Tiberius his "own", that is his personal, god, while at the same time he was also the priest of city gods worshipped

<sup>1</sup> L. ROBERT, *REA* 62 (1960), 317 ; *OGI* 583.

<sup>2</sup> L. R. TAYLOR, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (1931), 283 ; L. POINSSOT, *L'autel de la Gens Augusta à Carthage* (1929).



in the gymnasium<sup>1</sup>. Likewise, a shrine erected by one of her freedmen "in honor and memory" of Domitia, the widow of Domitian, expressed personal, private, piety, as did the decision of the father of an Egyptian girl not to bewail but worship her by libations at the table, inasmuch as he "learned" that she had become a deity, that is a nymph<sup>2</sup>. Such private deification of a deceased occurred often in the Hellenistic and then in the Roman Age. It was up to the family to recognize a deceased relative as θεός, that is as possessor of supernatural power. In the same way, even today the popular belief sanctifies holy men. I have before me a list of contributions to a charitable work in Turin made in June 1972<sup>3</sup>. Again and again, the gift is sent "in memory of Pope John XXIII", often to obtain his *suffragio* for dead kinsmen of the donor, or "in thanks to *Maria Ausiliatrice* and Pope Jean XXIII", "in homage to St. Antony and Pope John XXIII", and so on. We have here the evidence of private devotion which anticipates the future beatification of the Pope, yet does not involve the Church of Rome.

Again, private groups of all kinds could choose the object and the form of their worship. In Republican Rome men made offerings to statues of the murdered Gracchi, and after the peace with Sextus Pompeius in 39 B.C. men sacrificed to M. Antonius and Octavian. Later an association of Roman businessmen in a small town in the mountains of Tunisia worshipped Augustus as *Augustus deus*<sup>4</sup>.

The public cult of an emperor was regulated by Augustus. At least before Nero the imperial authorization was necessary

<sup>1</sup> Cf. J. and L. ROBERT, *REG* 62 (1949), 217.

<sup>2</sup> H. DESSAU, *ILS* I, 272; E. BERNAND, *Inscriptions métriques de l'Égypte gréco-romaine* (1969), 87.

<sup>3</sup> *La Stampa* of 13 VII 1972.

<sup>4</sup> *ILS* III 2, 9495.

for a city, or a province, to establish the cult of an emperor or a member of the imperial house. But each community was free to organize the worship at its own convenience. Nero was "New Apollo" in Athens and "Asclepius Caesar" at Cos. There was Hadrian "Zeus of boundaries", "Hadrian, the Olympian Zeus", etc. etc.<sup>1</sup>. The goddess Roma was worshipped together with the emperors in Hispania Tarraconensis, but not in Baetica and Lusitania<sup>2</sup>. The oath of Paphos coupled "Augustus god Caesar and the everlasting Rome". In another Cyprus town "the immortality of the Augusti" had its priest<sup>3</sup>.

Thus, a universal cult of the ruler did not exist in the Roman Empire. Each city, each province, each group worshipped this or that sovereign according to its own discretion and ritual. In practice, virtually every emperor was worshipped everywhere, but this coincidence does not negate the fundamental diversity of cults honoring an emperor. Similarly Zeus of Olympia and Zeus of Athens were not the same deity. Only in Christian Rome did the Holy Trinity become the official and universal deity of the Empire.

Therefore, the cult of the Emperor in Rome and among the Roman citizens was again a local phenomenon on the same level as the cult rendered to him in Pergamum or in Paphos, etc.

Yet, the Roman worship of the emperors was essentially different of that rendered to them by Pergamum, Paphos, and so on. Following the principle established by Augustus, and observed until the end of the Roman religion, the pro-

<sup>1</sup> E. M. SMALLWOOD, *Documents illustrating the Principates of Gaius Claudius and Nero* (1967), 145 ; 147. J. BEAUJEU, *La religion romaine à l'apogée de l'empire I* (1955), 200. Abdera honors Hadrian as "Zeus of boundaries" because he extended its territory: E. M. SMALLWOOD, *Documents illustrating the Principates of Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian* (1966), 448.

<sup>2</sup> R. ETIENNE, *Le culte impérial dans la péninsule ibérique* (1955), 232 ; 293 ; 417.

<sup>3</sup> J. et L. ROBERT, *Bull. épigr. in REG* 74 (1961), 825 ; 72 (1959), 459.

vincials were free to worship a living emperor. In Roman religion he could become god only after his death.

This principle was often stated by ancient writers, and Greek historians noted its singularity. "The Romans pay divine honors to every holder of supreme power at his death, provided he was not a tyrant or otherwise blamable, though they could not bear to call them kings while they were alive". Dio Cassius adds that no emperor, even if he was worthy of deification "dared" to obtain this honor in his lifetime. As a matter of fact, court flatterers, promising deification to a reigning prince, prudently added the wish, he should take his place among the gods as late as possible, "in centuries". Christians sneered that the emperors received the name of *divus* against their will. "They wish to remain men, they fear to become gods; even when they are old, they do not want it"<sup>1</sup>. Yet, as the just quoted Minucius Felix observes, the emperors were consecrated not because of the belief in their divinity, but in honor of power they had exercised. But in this case why was the apotheosis delayed until their death? As a Greek philosopher, a younger contemporary of Appian, acutely observed<sup>2</sup>: "The institutions and above all the fictions of rulers remain in force only as long as the potentates live, but are abolished when they die; you can tell of many who were deified in their lifetime and were despised after their deaths".

Why was the Roman apotheosis posthumous? I tried to answer this question in a paper published many years ago<sup>3</sup>. As the program of our Symposium does not comprise a lecture on Roman *consecratio*, I hope you will allow me to return to the topic. Some days ago, reading the

<sup>1</sup> App. *BC* II 148; Dio Cass. LI 20, 8; Mart. VI 3; Min. Fel. *Oct.* 21.

<sup>2</sup> Sext. Empir. *Adv. phys.* I 35, translated by A. D. Nock, *Aegyptus* 33 (1953), 288.

<sup>3</sup> *ARW* 27 (1929).

refutation of Julian the Apostate by Cyrill of Alexandria, I came across the observation that ruminant animals in the Law of Moses symbolize the well reasoning scholar in contradistinction to those who come to rash conclusions. Thus, let me ruminate about deification in Rome.

It seems to me that it is difficult to understand Roman ruler worship because we misunderstand the nature and function of Roman religion. What we call religion is *religio animi*, as Augustinus says <sup>1</sup>. It is, to quote William James, "the feeling, acts and experience of individual men... in relation to whatever they may consider divine". The Roman state religion concerned the Roman people and its needs. It was "fear and the rites of gods". For the Romans *religiosus* was the primacy of the augurs since no magistrate was allowed to act without the augural *auctoritas* <sup>2</sup>. Lactantius, born in the pagan world, clearly delineates the difference between the Roman religion and his faith. The pontifices and the other priests of Rome cannot prove or teach the truth of their religion. They have only "the silent faith in the holy ritual". When the pagans come to sacrifice, they offer nothing personal to their gods and after having performed the sacrificial act, they leave all their religion in the temple. "They do not bring anything in nor take back anything". But Christianity is always with us because it is in the soul of the worshipper <sup>3</sup>. And Lactantius asks: how could God love His worshippers were He not loved by them? A pagan would probably answer that what matters is what a deity can do for us and not what

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Aug. *Quant. anim.* (PL XXXII 1080): *religio vera qua se uni Deo anima . . . religat.* On the other hand, Cicero says, that virtues such as Piety are deified so that good men *deos ipsos in animis suis conlocatos putent* (*Leg.* II 28).

<sup>2</sup> Cic. *Leg.* II 31; *Inv.* II 22, 66.

<sup>3</sup> Lact. *Inst.* V 20: *tota in animo colentis est.*

one could feel for a supernatural being<sup>1</sup>. As a matter of fact, our religion would be philosophy for a Roman. Going to die a Roman senator did not call a priest, but received spiritual comfort from a philosopher. The Christians were persecuted in the Roman Empire because they mixed up philosophy with religion. Roman religion would judge personal fervor a *superstitio*. Scipio went daily to pray in the temple of Jupiter; Valerius Maximus records the story in the section *De simulata religione*.

To understand the Roman attitude to the Roman *religio*, let us open Cicero's work *On the nature of gods*. Here, a Stoic asks Gaius Aurelius Cotta, as a pontifex and as a member of a glorious family, to support the Stoic positive doctrine of the gods and their providence. Cotta answers that the *religio* of the Roman people consists of rites, auspices and the interpretation of omens. With regard to "rites and ceremonies" the ancestors and not the philosophers are his authorities. He believes "our ancestors" without questioning, but if philosophers want to offer a proof of their opinion on religion, he is ready to check this proof. And thus, Cotta, patricius and pontifex, undertakes to refute the Stoic belief in the providential government of the world.

Let us, therefore, try to understand the Roman deification in the context of the *ius sacrum*, and not according to our ideas of religion, or on authority of Roman intellectuals, who *qua* philosophers, understood the apotheosis as the supreme honor bestowed on a great man. This Euhemeristic view will not do, neither for the traditional gods nor for the new *divi*.

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle (*MM* II 11, 1208 b; cf. *EN* VIII 7, 6, 1159 a), somewhat pedantically, teaches that *φιλία* being a mutual affection, a god cannot *ἀντιφιλεῖσθαι*. Thus *ἀτοπον γὰρ ἂν εἴη εἶ τις φαίη φιλεῖν τὸν Δία*. When Dio Chrysostomus (XII 60) says that men desire to talk to the gods and to be with them, he thinks of images of the gods.

The Romans were pagans. That means that they did not believe that they already knew all the divine forces in the universe. Nor did they need to know them all. The Roman people worshipped those supernatural beings who by the ancestral custom and consent protected Rome. From time to time, if need be, further deities were recognized and worshipped. When, as Cicero says, "the helpful gods make clear their might", the Romans lure them into the service of the Roman people. For instance, for some five centuries, the Romans lacked a serious reason to worry about the supernatural force behind the storms. The situation changed during the First Punic War which essentially was a sea war. In the fifth year of this war, in 259 B.C., a heavy storm almost destroyed the Roman navy. Chastised, the Romans built the temple to the newly perceived divine might: *Tempestatas populi romani ritibus consecrati sunt*<sup>1</sup>. The introduction of a new cult was called *consecratio*.

A *divus*, too, was a *novum numen*<sup>2</sup>, a newly manifested supernatural force, and he, too, through *consecratio*, was inserted between the divinities of Rome. He, too, received his temple, his priests, his cult. Sacrifices were offered to him, prayers were addressed to him, oracles asked from him. His worshippers were called by a bell to the service and prostrated themselves before his sacred couch<sup>3</sup>.

Christian writers sneered that the Senate made gods. Yet, they knew that the vote of the Senate was declarative and not constitutive. Augustus certainly did not create the Mistral. But having learned the power of this wind during his stay in France, he vowed and dedicated a temple to the

<sup>1</sup> Cic. *Nat. deor.* II 6 ; III 51.

<sup>2</sup> Ov. *Fast.* I 531. The distinction between *dii perpetui* and *divus ex hominibus factus* (Serv. *Aen.* V 45) is an invention of some later grammarian which did not exist in the cult. Cf. J. BÉRANGER, *MH* 27 (1970), 243.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. e.g. Prud. *C. Symm.* I 247 ; R. ETIENNE, *op. cit.*, 175.

newly revealed supernatural power of *Circius* <sup>1</sup>. Likewise, the Church does not make saints. The saint is already in heaven, and his canonization only establishes his ecclesiastical worship on the evidence of his saintliness, such as the incorruptibility of the body.

In Roman state religion, however, "canonization" of the dead was impossible. As the supreme pontiff, Scaevola, consul in 95 B.C., stated, Asclepius or Hercules were not gods inasmuch as they were born and died as mortals <sup>2</sup>. But a mortal could escape death and, thus, become god by ascending to heaven bodily. Hercules did it, according to the common opinion of the Romans. As Minucius Felix says, Hercules put off humanity when burned up by the funeral fire at Oeta. Accordingly, Justin the Martyr, writing about A.D. 155, explains the Ascension of Christ by referring to the translation of Asclepius, Dionysus, Hercules etc., and to "the cremated Caesar, who rises to heaven from the funeral pyre". On the other hand, Celsus who attacks the Christians for deifying Jesus' moral body and parallels his worship and that of Asclepius and Hercules, concedes that if Jesus had suddenly disappeared from the cross, this miracle would be a proof of his divinity <sup>3</sup>.

Julian poured scorn on the Christians who adored the dead Jesus and built sanctuaries to the dead martyrs. On the other hand, Tertullian derided the Romans, who "consecrated as gods" those whom, shortly before, they had bewailed in public mourning. The apostate and the convert both refused the miracle believed by their former co-religionists. But pagan intellectuals denied generally the possibility of translation to heaven of a terrestrial body. Augustinus, however, contradicting Cicero, assures his

<sup>1</sup> Tert. *Nat.* I 10; Sen. *Nat.* V 17, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. *Civ.* IV 27; cf. Cic. *Nat. deor.* III 49 (with Pease's note).

<sup>3</sup> Min. Fel. *Oct.* 21; Just. *I Apol.* 21; Or. *Cels.* II 68.

readers that the earthly body can be received into heaven, as the Ascension of Christ proves. That of Romulus, however, is a superstitious fable<sup>1</sup>. What is important for our study of Roman apotheosis is the fact that contemporary opinion, both pagan and Christian, agreed that the deification of a mortal, be it Romulus, a Caesar, or Jesus presupposed that the body somehow was taken up into heaven and changed into a divine being.

The authority of ancestors of which the pontiff Cotta speaks in *De natura deorum* established the Roman precedent for apotheosis. As Ennius says, Romulus was translated alive to "the azure vault of heaven". Cicero does not doubt that Hercules and Romulus who obtained a place in heaven by merit should be worshipped in the same way as the divine beings (*divi*) who always belonged to heaven<sup>2</sup>. In his time, the identification of the translated Romulus with the traditional god Quirinus was generally accepted<sup>3</sup>: *Quirinus Martis equis Acheronta fugit*<sup>4</sup>.

When, around the beginning of our era, Ovid in his *Fasti* had to relate the apotheosis of Caesar in the framework of Roman *religio*, he already used the Romulean

<sup>1</sup> Tert. *Apol.* 10; Aug. *Civ.* XXII 4; P. DE LABRIOLLE, *La réaction païenne* 9 (1954), 419.

<sup>2</sup> Cic. *Nat. deor.* II 62 (with Pease's note).

<sup>3</sup> As Dio Cass. LVI 34, 2 shows, Romulus was not recognized as a god in the state religion. His identification with Romulus obviated this difficulty: *Receptus in deorum numerum Quirinus appellatus est.* A. DEGRASSI, *Inscr. Italiae* XIII 3 (1963), *Elogia*, 86. The priests who performed the ancestral rites for Quirinus did not need to care, *qua* priests, whether he was or was not Romulus, and every one was free to speculate about the nature of Quirinus, or any other deity.

<sup>4</sup> The scene on the backside of an Augustean altar now in the Belvedere of the Vatican Museum illustrates the verse of Horace (*Carm.* III 3, 15). A hero is carried upward in a chariot drawn by winged horses. I. RYBERG, *Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art* (1955), pl. XIV = *CAH* Plates IV 130. The usual identification of the scene as representing the ascension of Caesar is very doubtful.



pattern: Vesta had carried away her pontifex, and it was his mere semblance that fell by the daggers of the conspirators: *Ipsa virum rapui simulacraque nuda reliqui: quae cecidit ferro, Caesaris umbra fuit*<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, a deified emperor did not die. A legacy could be left to gods, but a legacy to an empress became invalid at her deification since she "ceased to be among men", "was snatched away from men", as Roman jurists put it<sup>2</sup>. Caligula punished those who failed to mourn his sister Drusilla, but also those who bewailed her because *diva Drusilla* did not die<sup>3</sup>. After her funeral, as after the demise of Augustus and Claudius and after the disappearance of Romulus, a reliable witness testified to her bodily translation to heaven. The *divus* dwelled with the immortal gods; immortal as they, next to Hercules and Pollux, *quos inter Augustus recumbens purpureo bibet ore nectar*. Accordingly, the likeness of a *divus* was not carried among the images of dead ancestors of a prince at the latter's funeral.

On the other hand, after his demise, the mortal being who had reigned in Rome, continued to live as a shadow in the imperial mausoleum where his bones, collected after cremation, or later his corpse, reposed beside the remains of the non-deified members of the dynasty.

Thus, the tomb and the temple of the same emperor were separated in the ritual and in the official language<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> In the graecised narrative of the *Metamorphoses* (XIV 824; XV 844) the souls of Romulus and of Caesar reach the stars. On the difficult question of the deification of Caesar, cf. J. P. V. BALSDON, *Gnomon* 39 (1967), 150. More recent studies of the topic have not advanced our knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> *Dig.* XXXI 56: *ab hominibus ereptus est*. XXXI 57: *inter homines esse desiit*. Cf. Ael. Spart. *Sept. Sev.* 22.

<sup>3</sup> Sen. *Dial.* XII 17, 5 (*ad Polyb.*); Dio Cass. LIX 11, 5. Cf. Luc. *Cal.* 18.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. e.g. Vell. II 124: After the death of Augustus, *corpus eius humanis honoribus, numen divinis honoratum*. Some scholars conjecture that Titus' funeral urn was deposited inside his arch. See J.-C. RICHARD, *REL* 44 (1966), 355. But the triumphal arch dedicated *divo Tito* is not his temple. I would like to add that

The coins commemorating Domitilla, a daughter of Vespasian, bear the legend: *Memoriae Domitillae*. Some years later she was deified. The coins issued on this occasion are inscribed: *divae Domitillae Aug.* When Trajan issued gold coins commemorating his predecessors, different coins, though with the same likeness, honored *C. Julius Imp. Cos. III* and *divus Iulius, Caesar Augustus divi f. Pater Patriae* and *divus Augustus*, and so on. *T. Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, Pontifex Maximus*, etc. was buried in Hadrian's Mausoleum, but *divus Antoninus Augustus Pius* was worshipped among the immortal gods. The state cult was addressed to the *divus*, but family, friends and admirers of the deceased prince honored the departed at his grave. *Sunt aliquid manes. . .* Cornelia knew that C. Gracchus, her son, after her demise, would invoke her as *deus parens*. Vergil's Aeneas transformed the tomb of his father into a temple with a priest. Our ancestors, says Cicero, have desired that the deceased should be included among the gods<sup>1</sup>. Certainly, *divus Augustus* dwelt in heaven and had his state cult and state priests, but in private, domestic cult, Livia was priestess of her late husband. As such, beholding his portrait, she is represented on a Vienna cameo. She, and all the emperors after Augustus, performed a three-day observance at the anniversary of Augustus' death, whereas *divus Augustus* was honored at the anniversary of his birth. A generation after the demise of the first *princeps* the man Caesar Augustus, whom the people called *deus noster Caesar* was daily worshipped at his mausoleum<sup>2</sup>. Domitian trans-

the relief on the summit of vault of Titus' arch does not represent his translation, as scholars believe. Titus is not flying upwards on the eagle, but keeps his feet on the soil. The eagle is here an emblem of power.

<sup>1</sup> Verg. *Aen.* V 47. Cf. J. BAYET, *Croyances et rites de la Rome antique* (1971), 366. Cic. *Leg.* II 22, 55.

<sup>2</sup> Vell. II 75; Dio Cass. LVI 46, 5; Sen. *Dial.* IX (*De tranq. anim.*) 14, 9. Cf. D. PIPPIDI, *Recherches sur le culte des empereurs* (1939), 75. On the use of

formed the house on the Quirinal, where he was born, into a *templum gentis Flaviae*, that is a mausoleum of his family where, for instance, the ashes of his niece Julia were laid to rest. This "temple" was a shrine of the gentilitial cult of the Flavian family. There was no god called *gens Flavia* among the deities of Rome. In fact, the state cult of the Flavian *divi* was celebrated in the temple of Vespasian in the Forum, and in the Porticus divorum in the Campus Martius, that is on the spot where, in the flame of the funeral pile, these future *divi* became gods.

Thus, the difference between the private veneration of a defunct emperor and the public cult of the same emperor as *divus*, is essential and ineffaceable. A scholar who disregards the distinction between *sacra publica* and *sacra privata* does it at his own peril <sup>1</sup>.

But even within the domestic cult the tomb and the apotheosis were incompatible. The ashes of Tullia, the beloved daughter of Cicero, were buried, but he believed that in death she had joined the immortal gods, and wanted to build her a shrine (*fanum*). For the shrine he sought to avoid any likeness to a tomb "in order to achieve apotheosis as far as may be". And in the *Consolatio* which he addressed to himself, Cicero apostrophizes Tullia as follows: "With the approval of the immortal gods themselves, in whose company you are placed, I shall consecrate you (*consecrabo*) for all the mortals to confirm." He supports this idea by the example of Hercules, the Dioscuri, Helena and Semele, who became gods. For some months he hesitated where to build Tullia's shrine, but he never thought of transforming

the word *templum* for a funeral monument, cf. J.-C. RICHARD, *RHR* 170 (1966), 133.

<sup>1</sup> Cic. *Leg.* II 23, 58: the *Pontifices* decreed: *locum publicum non potuisse privata religione obligari*.

her sepulchral monument into her temple. For she now dwelt with the immortal gods <sup>1</sup>.

In the second and third centuries the distinction between the deceased prince and the same prince as a *divus* became expressed in the rite of double funeral <sup>2</sup>. First the body was cremated (or inhumed) with due pomp. Afterwards, a wax likeness of the deceased was publicly displayed for several days, and he was mourned again. The wax figure was treated as if it were the prince's corpse. For instance, a boy with a flapper of peacock feathers chased flies from the dummy. At last, the effigy was brought to the Campus Martius and, again, treated as a *cadaver*. The new emperor and the relatives of the dead prince gave the last kisses to the dummy, aromatics were poured on it, and so on. After the usual funeral rites were performed and the effigy placed into the multistoried pyre, the funeral pile was fired. From the top of the pile, an eagle flew aloft, as a visible sign of the ascension of the prince to heaven. "And from that time he was worshipped with the rest of the gods."

The new ritual is first clearly attested in the ceremonies following the death of Antoninus Pius. The body was buried in Hadrian's mausoleum after a magnificent funeral. But the state mourning (*iustitium*), which generally ended with the entombment, now began only after the burial. The state funeral and then *consecratio* followed <sup>3</sup>.

The reliefs of Antoninus' column make the meaning of the double funeral clear. We see Antoninus (and his wife

<sup>1</sup> Cic. *Att.* XII 36 = No. 275 in the edition of D. R. SHACKLETON BAILEY, whose translation I quote. Lact. *Inst.* I 5, 20. In my translation I used that of D. R. SHACKLETON BAILEY, *Cicero* (1971), 209.

<sup>2</sup> The custom of double funeral was already discovered and discussed by Casaubon in 1603. Cf. E. HOHL, *Klio* 31 (1938), 183.

<sup>3</sup> The now fashionable hypothesis that from the reign of Trajan on the *senatus-consultum* of deification preceded public funeral disagrees with the *ius sacrum* and the evidence. See my paper *Diva Augusta Marciana* in *AJPh* 94 (1973).

Faustina who died in 140 and was deified) carried to heaven on the back of a genius. A figure symbolizing the Campus Martius indicates the site of ascension. Consecration coins show the funeral pyre. The column dedicated *divo Antonino Augusto* was erected on the northern side of the plot chosen for the pyre. As a *locus religiosus*, this area of 13 sq. m. was surrounded by a double enclosure<sup>1</sup>. As Antoninus' corpse was interred, the pyre must have served for the cremation of his effigy. Thus, the rite of double funeral is attested for A. D. 161. But it appears that it was already used in A. D. 117.

Trajan died in Cilicia and was cremated there; the urn with his ashes was later placed in Trajan's column in Rome. At the unexpected and unprepared accession of Hadrian, which occurred in Syria, perplexed officials in Rome, in Egypt and probably elsewhere at first bestowed on the new emperor the titles of his predecessor; they even portrayed Hadrian on coins with traits of Trajan. To this group also belong gold coins with busts of Hadrian and Trajan, giving Hadrian the titles of Trajan, but on reverse dedicated *divo Traiano patri*, an inscription which validated Hadrian's dubious claim of having been adopted by his predecessor on Trajan's death bed<sup>2</sup>.

After the consecration of Trajan the new deity was invoked rather as *divus Traianus Parthicus*. The surname referred to a ceremony without precedent nor repetition in Roman annals. As death had prevented Trajan from cele-

<sup>1</sup> E. NASH, *The Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome*<sup>2</sup> III (1968), 487.

<sup>2</sup> H. CASTRITIUS, *JNG* 14 (1964), 89. I shall deal with Hadrian's first coinage on another occasion. On Trajan's funeral cf. J.-C. RICHARD, *REL* 44 (1966), 351 and P. VEYNE, *MEFR* 72 (1960), 220, who thinks that Trajan's posthumous *adventus* is represented on the arch of Beneventum. Trajan was still not consecrated in the beginning of 118. See *ILS* I 322. Eusebius' *Chronicle* places Trajan's death in the year 2132 of Abraham and records his consecration two years later.

brating his Parthian triumph, a standing effigy of the dead emperor entered Rome in the triumphal chariot. On this occasion a group of gold coins the unity of which is proved by common dies, was issued by Hadrian to honor Trajan and his closest relatives, his wife Plotina, his sister Matidia and Hadrian himself. Trajan's subgroup consists of three coins which all show the bust of the emperor and the legend: *divo Traiano Parth(ico) Aug(usto) patri*. The reverses, however, differ. On one coin we see the triumphal entry of Trajan's dummy. The legend is: *Triumphus Parthicus*. The other two coins bear no legend but show Phoenix standing, or standing on a branch (of laurel? of palm?). Trajan's effigy on the triumphal coin likewise carries a branch in its right hand. Thus, the Phoenix image refers to Trajan's triumph. From the Flavian age on, the idea is attested that the Phoenix rises from the ashes of its funeral pyre to live again<sup>1</sup>. We may assume that after the triumphal ceremony the deification of Trajan was achieved by cremation of his triumphal effigy. Leaping to a new life among the gods from his funeral pile, Trajan became *divus Traianus Parthicus*.

Two years later Matidia died and was deified. Under 23rd December 119, the acts of the Arval Brotherhood record that the sacred college had given 2 pounds of ointment and 50 pounds of incense "for the consecration of Matidia Augusta". As the legal machinery of consecration does not require incense nor ointment, the word *consecratio* is used in the document metonymically for the funeral pyre which leads to consecration. Further, from this time on (or perhaps from the apotheosis of Marciana, Trajan's sister, in 112), the term *consecratio* appears on the coins struck to commemorate a deification<sup>2</sup>. Last but not least, in the

<sup>1</sup> R. VAN DEN BROEK, *The Myth of the Phoenix* (1972), 409.

<sup>2</sup> The date of Marciana's consecration coins remains controversial. Cf. J. H. OLIVER, *HTbR* 42 (1949), 38 n. 13.

funeral *laudatio* of Matidia, Hadrian says of his mother-in-law: *dignemini rogo*, as if the funeral pyre were a particular honor<sup>1</sup>.

The convergence of evidence points to the new emphasis on the cremation ceremony. Later, from the apotheosis of Antoninus Pius in 161 to the last deification (of Constantius Chlorus) in 306, the funeral pyre is regularly displayed on consecration coins. Even earlier, from the apotheosis of Sabina, Hadrian's wife, ca. 136, on, the consecration coins show the *divus* or the *diva* carried up to heaven on an eagle soaring aloft (some empresses even fly up on a peacock) or translated by a winged genius, or in a chariot. As the cremation of an effigy is attested for the Antonini and is probable for Trajan, the above cited evidence suggests the use of the same ritual in the apotheosis of Matidia.

But why was the original Romulean and Augustean model of apotheosis based on the testimony of a witness of the ascension downgraded (if not abandoned) and the cremation of effigies introduced and emphasized?

In the first place, the burning of an effigy on the funeral pyre is *funus imaginarium*, as the ceremony is called with regard to the apotheosis of Pertinax. This rite was well known in the Roman religion. If a Roman "devoted" to the infernal gods as a vicarious sacrifice for the Roman army happened to survive the battle, an oversize effigy of the warrior was to be buried in his place. The wooden image of a warrior buried at Capestrano, in the Abruzzi mountains, was probably such a substitute. Again, the statutes of a burial association, founded in 136, prescribe that if a cruel master refuses to deliver the corpse of a slave for burial, "the funeral of the image" should be performed. And does not Dido place the effigy of Aeneas on her funeral pyre?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> E. M. SMALLWOOD, *op. cit.* (v.p. 9, n. 1), 114.

<sup>2</sup> Capitol. *Pert.* 15, 1. Cf. Serv. *Aen.* VI 325; Liv. X 8, 12 and L. A. HOLLAND, *AJA* 60 (1956), 243; *ILS* II 2, 7212 = V. ARANGIO RUIZ, *Fontes iuris romani*

Accordingly, A. Piganiol<sup>1</sup> had suggested that the change in the apotheosis ceremony corresponded to the substitution of interment for cremation. Yet, two of three emperors for whom the double funeral is directly attested, Pertinax and Septimius Severus, were cremated. Therefore, it seems that the effigy was used to replace the corpse, be it buried or cremated. Even the incinerated body leaves a residuum which had to be buried in the earth.

Thus, in the Augustean ritual, the funeral urn interfered with the postulate of the bodily ascension. But the wax effigy melted completely<sup>2</sup>. We remember that having found no bones in Hercules' funeral pyre, his companions assumed that he had passed from mens to gods.

Symbolic action is credited with supernatural validity in all systems of ritual<sup>3</sup>. Wax and bread images of animals could be offered in Roman sacrifices. The real presence of Christ in the eucharistic bread and the consecrated wine is taught by the Church. Likewise, burning up the wax image of an emperor put immortality on him and caused his bodily translation to the cognate stars: *Sciendum in sacris simulacra pro veris accipi*<sup>4</sup>.

But there was also another aspect of the double funeral. Under the Julii, the Claudii, and probably under the Flavii, the translation was reported to the Senate by a witness who could be (and was) easily disbelieved. In the second and third centuries, the ascension occurred in the sight of the man in the street. On Antoninus' relief the city of Rome

III (1943), 35; Verg. *Aen.* IV 508 (with Pease's notes). Cf. also G. Roux, *REA* 62 (1960), 5.

<sup>1</sup> A. PIGANIOI, *Histoire de Rome* (1939), 133.

<sup>2</sup> Plut. *De comm. not.* 31, 1075 c. Cf. Cic. *Leg.* II 22, 57.

<sup>3</sup> A. D. NOCK, *Essays on Religion* I (1972), 489.

<sup>4</sup> Serv. *Aen.* II 116. Cf. Serv. *Aen.* IV 512: *in sacris ... quae exhiberi non poterant simulabantur, et erant pro veris.* Cf. also Serv. *Aen.* IV 38; II 178; XI 316.



beholds the flight to heaven of the new *divus*. The intellectuals, as for instance Dio Cassius, could scorn the humbug on the Campus Martius. But in the age of *dolore di vivere*, men craved for miracles, were happy to believe blindly<sup>1</sup>. As we have mentioned, in the Antonine age there were mysteries of the imperial cult where images of emperors were revealed to the initiates<sup>2</sup>. In Rome, between 220 and 240, an emotional episode enriched the dry ceremonial of the Arval Brotherhood: at the end of the service the middle door of the sanctuary was opened, and the worshippers beheld the idol of Dea Dia amidst burning candles<sup>3</sup>.

The crowd on the Campus Martius perceived the highest rite of imperial worship: the transformation of a mortal into a god. The participation in the sacred ceremony, making him important, caused the onlooker to believe in the miracle. As Celsus says<sup>4</sup> (with reference to the Christians): "Such is the power of faith of whatever sort." But this appeal to the testimony of the common man emphasized the plebiscitary nature of the imperial power.

Yet, the performance in the Campus Martius, though politically motivated and exploited, was a sacral act which as such presents a striking difference with the schema of the Augustean apotheosis. The latter proceeding used the traditional technique of dealing with the announced portents, a technique which was bureaucratic and, thus, without surprise. The deposition of a witness of a prodigy (which had been observed on public land)<sup>5</sup>, if accepted by the

<sup>1</sup> R. BIANCHI BANDINELLI, *La fine dell'arte antica* (1974), I. W. den Boer kindly referred me to *Aur. Vict. Caes.* 33, where the pestilence in the time of Gallienus is said to be caused by worry and *animi desperatione*. Cf. W. den BOER, *Mnemosyne* 21 (1968), 254.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. H. W. PLEKET, *HTbR* 58 (1965), 331.

<sup>3</sup> A. PIGANIOL, *CRAI* 1946, 251. Cf. L. ROBERT, *Hellenica* XI-XII (1960), 544.

<sup>4</sup> *Or. Cels.* III 38: τοσοῦτόν τι ποιεῖ πίστις ὅποια δὴ προκατασχοῦσα.

<sup>5</sup> Th. MOMMSEN, *Ges. Schrift.* VII (1909), 168.

Senate, was necessary and sufficient for conciliating the gods. The authority on which the *divus* was worshipped was that of the Senate acting on a motion of the emperor, without further reference to any supernatural agency. As Nero says in a Roman tragedy<sup>1</sup>: *stultus verebor, ipse cum faciam, deos.*

The *funus imaginarium*, however, was to be seen by the Roman people, and, the gods unwilling, the rite could fail to do what it was intended to secure. The stage-setting was certainly very careful, but the best machinery may get wrong. A slip in the ceremony would have vitiated its legal (and psychological) effect. A sudden downpour could extinguish the pyre; the eagle, in its cage on the pile, could be sickened by smoke, etc. The immortal gods had still the last word.

<sup>1</sup> *Octavia* 449, ed. C. Hosius.

## DISCUSSION

*M. den Boer* : You said that ruler cult is a modern invention. Is it possible to explain this a little further? When one sees the Roman calendar, as it has been preserved in the *Feriale cumanum*, one gets the impression that the cult of the ruler, and also of the living ruler, and his family is part of the religion not only of the town but also of the farmers in the neighbourhood. There is, for instance, an offering of an animal to Augustus himself on his birthday (*CIL* X 8375 ; Dessau, *ILS* I,108).

*M. Bickerman* : As I now see, my statement was not explicit enough. I meant, and I mean, that there was not "the imperial worship", but a numberless variety of cults which modern scholars for their convenience, but wrongly, class together as "the worship of emperors". In fact, the sacrifice to Augustus on his birthday does not have the same religious meaning as, say, the offering to *divus Augustus*, or the cult of Nero as *Nero Asclepius*. Our common denomination « ruler worship » would be unintelligible to the Ancients. Augustus was worshipped not *qua princeps*, but because of such deeds he had performed. A ruler was worshipped *qua benefactor* and not *qua ruler*. *Hac arte Pollux et vagus Hercules...*

*M. Bowersock* : I agree very much with the general lines of Mr. Bickerman's argument, and I appreciate his point that the ruler cult is essentially an invention of modern scholars. Yet perhaps this striking observation goes too far. Certainly the worship of the emperors was, to some degree, officially organized, as the *Feriale Duranum* shows (among other things). I wonder whether we should not also grant that certain organized and recurring festivals associated with worshipped emperors consti-

tuted a part of a ruler cult that was not merely a modern invention. The republican cults of proconsuls show as well the connection that can but does not necessarily exist between worship and recurring festivals. Some of these, like that of Flamininus, lasted for a long time.

*M. Bickerman*: The *Feriale Duranum* and similar calendars concern certain bodies, army, cities, etc. Likewise, the cult of *divus Julius*, as Cassius Dio states explicitly, was obligatory for the *cives Romani*, as it was for them the cult of other deities of the *populus Romanus*. But there was not worship of the emperor common to the population of the Empire as a whole.

*M. Habicht*: Im Kult, der 191 v. Chr. dem lebenden Flamininus in Chalkis gestiftet wurde, spielt auch ein Paian eine Rolle, der noch zu Plutarchs Zeit gesungen wurde. Er vereinigt Zeus, Roma, Titus Flamininus und die *Fides Romana* in einer Zeile (Plut. *Flam.* 16, 6-7).

Wenn Herr Bickerman gesagt hat, der Kaiserkult sei eine moderne Erfindung, so hat er den Akzent darauf gelegt, es gäbe nicht den Kult *des* Kaisers schlechthin, sondern nur Kulte dieses oder jenes Kaisers. Das ist für den Anfang zweifellos richtig, denn am Beginn steht die Entscheidung, einem bestimmten Kaiser aus gegebenem Anlass kultische Ehren zu erweisen. Dann folgen Kulte anderer Kaiser aus anderen Gründen. Aber nachdem der Prinzipat als Staatsform dauerhaft etabliert ist, gibt es auch die Tendenz zum kollektiven Kult aller Kaiser: der Priester des Augustus, des Tiberius, usw. wird abgelöst vom Priester τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος, vom Priester τῶν Σεβαστῶν. Da ist die Tendenz deutlich, einen kollektiven Kult der Kaiser zu institutionalisieren. Der Kaiser ist dann Gott, weil er Kaiser ist (Wilamowitz) und für den Bestand der bestehenden Ordnung bürgt. Einen einheitlichen, das ganze Imperium umspannenden Kult eines Kaisers oder der Kaiser gibt es nicht: Individuen und Städte sind frei, Kulte zu schaffen oder nicht und die Kultformen zu bestimmen.

Einheitlichkeit besteht beim Provinzialkult, reicht aber über die Provinz nicht hinaus. Und der konsakrierte Kaiser ist *divus populi Romani*, ein Gott der römischen Bürger, nicht eigentlich ein Reichsgott.

*M. Bickerman* : You are right. Yet, even when every emperor became deified as *divus*, it occurred only, as Appian says, if he had been virtuous. The emperor is deified not *qua* emperor, but *qua* a good emperor. Very many popes became canonized, but it does not mean that the pope is canonized *qua* pope.

*M. Bowersock* : In the question of the universality of the cult there is an underlying problem of definition. In a sense Mr. Bickerman has so narrowed his concept of the imperial cult as to define it out of existence—hence his observation about a modern invention. But problems of definition should not obscure the fact that on substantive issues at this point (i.e. what actually happened) Mr. Habicht, Mr. Bickerman, and I are in complete agreement.

*M. Beaujeu* : M. Bickerman a évoqué le personnage d'Aurelius Cotta, dans le *De natura deorum*, comme exemple typique de la mentalité païenne, pour laquelle la religion, fondée uniquement sur le *mos maiorum*, consiste dans l'accomplissement des rites prescrits et ne se discute pas, par opposition à la *religio animi*, dont parle saint Augustin. Ce qui est remarquable dans le cas de Cotta, c'est qu'il n'éprouve aucune peine à concilier son scepticisme philosophique, au plan de la *religio animi*, et sa fonction d'augure. A cet égard, l'accès de certaines populations au mode de pensée rationaliste, tel qu'il s'observe de nos jours, en Afrique par exemple, révèle des faits comparables : l'assimilation de la culture, de la méthode critique coexiste avec la survivance des croyances animistes traditionnelles, même dans les esprits les plus évolués.

N'est-ce pas aller trop loin que de représenter les croyances et les pratiques de la religion traditionnelle comme étant purement instinctives, irraisonnées, comme un héritage qu'on ne chercherait pas à justifier? Les « païens » ont plus d'une fois entrepris de rendre compte de leur religion, d'en démontrer la valeur par des arguments d'ordre théologique, philosophique ou historique, notamment en essayant de faire la preuve de l'efficacité des dieux, et, par conséquent, de leur existence et de leur providence, au moyen d'exemples empruntés à l'histoire romaine : ainsi Balbus dans le *De natura deorum*, Celse, Caecilius dans l'*Octavius*.

*M. Millar* : I wish to return to your use of the evidence from private houses, such as mosaics. What reflections of ancient paganism would one *expect* to find in such a context? And, secondly, would you not regard the adornments of private houses as comparable in this respect to the evidence of poetry, in that it cannot by its nature show the presence, or the absence, of actual cults? For both reasons it is not clear how significant the absence of representations of the emperor as a god in the remains of private houses is for the question of how far individuals observed the cult of the emperor.

*M. Bickerman* : I confess that the difficulty I have raised may be illusory. Do we have cultic scenes on mosaics generally? Why should a private man, if he had no personal relation to the imperial worship, say, as a priest, refer to the cult of the sovereigns within the privacy of his villa? Yet, when we think of men of the same class proudly proclaiming their priesthoods of the imperial cult in publicly displayed inscriptions, or, say, of the appearance of Aeneas and Dido on a mosaic in Britain, albeit in an erotic scene, one may wonder why the imperial worship, and the patriotic religion generally, are absent on Roman mosaics. But as I have said, my intention is to ask questions leaving answering to the *docti*.

*M. Bowersock* : Mr. Bickerman's point that one would expect evidence of the imperial cult in private dwellings illustrates the methodological problem raised by Mr. Millar. Why should one expect such evidence? According to Mr. Bickerman, on the basis of modern parallels (Egypt, Iran, etc.). Yet to import modern notions into the interpretation of ancient religion is to commit the very fault which Mr. Bickerman has justly uncovered in his discussion of *religio animi*. Furthermore, it is also to ignore the fact, which he likewise stressed elsewhere, that there was a vast difference between traditional religion, with its wide-spread mythology, and the imperial cult.

*M. van Berchem* : La constatation faite par M. Bickerman de l'absence de toute allusion au culte impérial dans les maisons privées est sans doute frappante, mais peut-être convient-il de l'expliquer autrement que par l'indifférence de la classe possédante à l'égard de l'empereur et de la dévotion qui lui était due. Il me semble que l'épigraphie, et notamment les nombreuses dédicaces au *genius* ou au *numen* de l'empereur, pourrait apporter un correctif à cette vue. Revenant au point de départ de notre discussion, j'admets qu'un accord s'est fait entre nous sur l'inexistence d'un culte impérial, imposé d'en haut et pratiqué partout selon des règles uniformes. Il a pris au contraire des formes diverses, à Rome, en Italie et dans le reste de l'Empire, à l'échelon des provinces et des cités. Il n'en reste pas moins que l'accomplissement de ces rites multiples implique une croyance largement diffusée à l'efficacité surnaturelle, au charisme de l'empereur. La seule existence d'un Auguste est une garantie de paix et de prospérité. Le Tityre de la *Première églogue* exprime, en effet, une religion personnelle, mais le sentiment qui l'inspire a suscité, dans tout l'Empire, une vénération et des gestes cultuels comparables aux siens. S'il n'y a pas de culte, il y a au moins, à l'origine des manifestations que nous observons, une foi collective. Certains milieux, comme l'armée, en ont été pénétrés plus profondément que d'autres. Des usurpations, subies parfois à leur corps

défendant par leurs bénéficiaires, s'expliquent par la crainte où l'on était de se voir privé, dans un moment de crise, de la protection d'un Auguste. On imaginait cette vertu transmissible par hérédité dans certaines familles. De là le succès, local et éphémère, mais répété, des faux Nérons ; de là l'attachement obstiné des soldats aux fils supposés de Caracalla. On peut donc parler d'un phénomène religieux commun, qui a donné naissance à des rites divers, mais apparentés, selon les régions et les catégories sociales.

*M. Seyrig* : Ne peut-on citer, comme exemple d'une vénération spontanée pour l'empereur, le passage où Suétone (*Aug.* 98) décrit des marins alexandrins, sur la plage de Pouzzoles, brûlant de l'encens au passage d'Auguste : *candidati coronatique et tura libantes fausta omnia et eximias laudes congresserant : per illum se vivere, per illum navigare, libertate atque fortunis per illum frui*. Cette adoration d'un mortel semble naturelle en un temps où l'apparition d'un dieu sur la terre ne présentait rien d'anormal en soi, comme en témoigne par exemple le passage des *Actes des Apôtres* (14, 11-12) où Paul et Barnabé, près de Lystra, sont regardés par les habitants comme Zeus et Hermès.

En ce qui concerne l'argument des mosaïques, il est vrai qu'on n'y trouve pas de scènes du culte impérial. Mais ce sont des mosaïques de pavement, et l'on ne trouve pas non plus le Christ et les saints sur celles des églises. La raison semble être que l'on aurait hésité à exposer de telles images à être foulées aux pieds par le public. Aussi étaient-elles réservées à la décoration des parois. Il est vrai que les peintures murales de Pompéi ne contiennent pas non plus de scènes du culte impérial, ce qui paraît indiquer qu'elles appartiennent à un autre domaine de l'imagination religieuse.

*M. Calderone* : Vorrei ricordare, a proposito di quest'ultima questione, i mosaici della villa del Casale di Piazza Armerina, ove



è ampiamente presente la figura di Hercules ; si tratta di mosaici pavimentali, ed Hercules è bene una divinità. La cosa sembrerebbe, addirittura, particolarmente significativa, ove si ritenesse, con alcuni studiosi, trattarsi d'una villa di Maximianus, l'Herculus appunto (ma, per conto mio, non mi pare che questa tesi possa essere sostenuta).

Sono d'accordo che è necessario studiare le testimonianze del culto imperiale provincia per provincia ; chè, certamente, esistono profonde differenze nei modi e nell'entità della recezione dell'idea e del rito relativo : nelle linee molto generali, credo che si possa dire che ci sono «risposte» diverse nelle provincie orientali e nelle centrali ed occidentali del mondo romano. Importante l'osservazione del Prof. van Berchem, che rende almeno problematica l'interpretazione sociologica della «évidence» musiva proposta dal Prof. Bickerman. Un'analisi completa e metodica di tutte le testimonianze permetterà di «nuancer» sulle coordinate tempo-spazio il concetto moderno, forse un pò troppo astratto e schematico, di culto imperiale.

Ma sul generale processo di «interiorizzazione» (un aspetto della tendenza al «Kollektiv» di cui ha parlato Habicht) del culto imperiale, non credo che esistano dei dubbi. Me lo fa pensare il punto d'arrivo : l'interpretazione «sestoniana» della teologia politica diocleziana da un lato (solo la «fonction» imperiale è divina), la formula eusebiana della divina «regalità» cosmica dall'altro (si pensi alla *Tricennalis oratio*), a mio parere, sono la prova — mi si perdoni per l'impiego di un siffatto metodo *a posteriori* — di quel processo.

Un terzo punto ancora, a proposito della fondamentale e giustissima distinzione tra cristiana *religio animi* e religione romana dei *sacrificia* ; una domanda: quale è stato l'apporto del pensiero giudaico in questo processo di formazione della coscienza religiosa «cristiana»? Penso a Filone, per il quale la sola *θυσία* accetta a Dio è quella che l'uomo può fare del proprio *νοῦς* (e a Origene, ed Eusebio ancora, che si muovono nello stesso «milieu» culturale).

*M. Habicht* : Der Gang der Diskussion zeigt, wie interessant die von Herrn Millar aufgeworfene Frage zum Problem von Zeugnissen des Kaiserkultes in Privathäusern ist. Man könnte sich vorstellen, dass es solche Zeugnisse zahlreich gegeben hat, dass sie sich aber nicht erhalten haben (Altäre aus vergänglichem Material, usw.). Aber das ist nicht sehr wahrscheinlich ; man muss betonen, was A. D. Nock oft hervorgehoben hat : man betet im allgemeinen nicht zum Kaiser, ruft ihn nicht an als Helfer in der Not. Die alexandrinischen Schiffer in Puteoli opfern Weihrauch für den vorüberfahrenden Augustus, um ihm dafür zu danken, dass er diesen Zustand des Friedens, der sicheren Seefahrt, der ungestörten Handelsmöglichkeiten geschaffen hat. Aber in einem Seesturm hätten sie nicht ihn angerufen, sondern die Dioskuren, wie der Kranke nicht dem Kaiser ein Gelübde darbringt, sondern Asklepios. Daraus folgt, dass der Kaiser, auch wo ihm kultische Ehren erwiesen werden, doch im Bewusstsein seiner Verehrer auf einer anderen Stufe steht als die alten Götter.

*M. Beaujeu* : De tout ce qui vient d'être dit, en particulier par MM. Bickerman, van Berchem et Habicht, il ressort que nous nous trouvons devant une situation qui semble paradoxale : d'une part, l'empereur était entouré d'un halo divin — culte officiel des *divi*, opinion largement répandue chez la plupart des habitants de l'Empire que son chef bénéficiait d'un charisme surnaturel dont les effets profitaient à toute la collectivité et à chaque individu ; d'autre part, les demeures privées n'ont révélé aucun ou à peu près aucun document témoignant d'un attachement, d'une vénération à la personne des empereurs ; la raison n'en serait-elle pas dans le sentiment, conscient ou inconscient, que, l'empereur étant le chef politique de la collectivité, il n'appartenait pas aux individus, mais seulement aux collectivités — cités, provinces, corporations, associations, etc. — de lui manifester reconnaissance, dévouement, vénération ?

A propos du rapprochement établi par M. Bickerman entre l'ascension de l'empereur au ciel et l'Ascension du Christ —

notamment d'après certains documents figurés —, il faut observer que, selon la croyance chrétienne, le Christ est monté au ciel avec son corps, tandis que le corps de l'empereur était brûlé en public ; ce qui, de lui, montait au ciel était sans doute plus que son âme, c'était son *effigies* (Suet. *Aug.* 100), mais non pas son corps.

*M. Paschoud* : Le caractère strictement public de certains cultes est attesté d'une manière frappante à la fin du 4<sup>e</sup> siècle. Après la suppression du budget des cultes païens par Gratien en 382, les païens ne sont pas effleurés par l'idée de poursuivre la célébration de ces cultes à leurs propres frais, comme cela apparaît avec évidence dans la *Relatio* 3 de Symmaque. Or, de trois passages de Zosime (IV 18, 2 ; IV 59, 3 ; V 38, 2), on peut tirer la conclusion qu'une cérémonie religieuse officielle n'est célébrée de manière conforme que si l'Etat en assure les frais. Cette disposition, singulière au premier abord, viendrait confirmer l'observation que le culte impérial n'est jamais célébré par des privés, et la conclusion qu'il y a une frontière stricte entre les cultes de caractère étatique, patriotique (auxquels se rattache le culte impérial), et les pratiques privées de caractère personnel, se rattachant à des religions révélées visant au salut de l'individu et non pas à celui de la communauté politique. Ce sont les chrétiens, et en particulier Eusèbe de Césarée, qui installent dans le contexte d'une religion de salut, de caractère individuel, la conception d'un monarque charismatique, intronisé par Dieu le Père et reflétant par la nature de son pouvoir la monarchie divine.

*M. Millar* : Could I take up again a question which we reached earlier, namely what were the actual functions of the emperor as a god in the lives of individuals? We mentioned that there were many functions, such as healing, which were supposed to be performed by different gods, and which one would not expect to find in the part of a divine emperor. But there are at least two specific functions which the emperor is made to perform in the lives of individuals. One is the use of the name of the

emperor in the taking of oaths. The other is the use of statues of the emperor as places of refuge, or to receive petitions. Both of these are at least very similar to functions performed in ancient society by the gods.

*M. Bickerman* : I agree with Mr. Millar. The business of a sovereign was to preserve and increase the public wealth. A private man had no more reason to pray or sacrifice to him than a peasant would have to offer sacrifices to maritime gods.

Yet, the question still remains why there are no traces of imperial worship, or of the patriotic religion, in the remains of the villas of the municipal aristocracy, this mainstay of the imperial régime. Pagans freely walked on pavements decorated by mythological scenes; the seven-branched candelabrum appears on pavements in Palestine; an imperial law of 427 (*Cod. Just.* I 8) was required to stop the use of the *signum salvatoris Christi* on the floors of Christian houses. As a matter of fact, a mosaic in England portrays the head of Christ (*JRS* 1964). Why is the imperial religion absent on the mosaics of Roman country houses?

*M. Beaujeu* : M. Millar a judicieusement cherché ce qu'il y avait de spécifique dans la personnalité divine de l'empereur; une de ses fonctions propres était de servir de garant des serments : de nombreux textes nous attestent qu'on jurait *per genium Caesaris*. Il est clair que l'empereur a hérité de cette fonction de Jupiter, en tant que divinité politique garante de la *fides* sur laquelle reposait le « contrat social », les rapports entre les citoyens. Nous savons aussi que ce serment avait une valeur particulièrement grande et qu'on hésitait plus à se parjurer *per genium Caesaris* que *per Iovem*; l'abbé Beurlier en a donné la raison : en cas de parjure *per Iovem*, c'était à Jupiter d'infliger le châtement : il le faisait attendre longtemps et on pouvait toujours espérer y échapper; quand on prêtait un faux serment au nom de l'empereur dans une circonstance officielle, on s'exposait à une sanction redoutable. Cela n'infirme pas la thèse de M. Bickerman,

selon laquelle le culte impérial doit être soigneusement distingué des manifestations de révérence individuelle à l'égard de la personne «divine» de l'empereur.

*M. Habicht* : Zum Asylrecht wäre es zu sagen, dass es sicher in keinem Heiligtum absolut galt. Der Schutzsuchende muss sich einem Verfahren der Tempelbehörden unterziehen, die seinen individuellen Fall darauf prüfen, ob ihm Asyl gewährt oder versagt wird. Das Asyl ist nicht gedacht für kriminelle Täter, sondern als Zuflucht Unschuldiger, des von seinem Herrn ungerecht behandelten Sklaven. Der Bereich dieses Asylbezirks ist immer abgesteckt, so und so viele Schritte im Umkreis des Tempels (oder so weit der Pfeil des Mithridates Eupator fliegt). Auf diesem sakralen Boden kann die Hilfe der Gottheit wirksam werden. Den Kaiserstatuen muss eine sakrale Kraft ähnlicher Art beigelegt worden sein, aber auch in Rom gibt es früh staatliche Massnahmen gegen offenkundigen Missbrauch.

[*Herr den Boer* ergänzt die ersten Bemerkungen durch den Hinweis, dass das Grab des Theseus nach der Überführung seiner Gebeine von Skyros nach Athen als *φύξιμον οικόταϊς καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ταπεινοτέροις καὶ δεδιόσι κρείττονας* bezeichnet wird (Plut. *Thes.* 36, 2).]

*M. Bowersock* : M. Bickerman has indicated that one would expect references to the imperial cult in the Greek novel. This is scarcely different from saying that one would expect evidence of the cult in private dwellings. Why should one? The very appeal of these novels lay in their timeless and unrealistic character, such that on internal evidence most cannot even be assigned to a particular century. I agree that the readers of these rhetorical works of fiction were undoubtedly well educated and fairly well to do (contrary to the opinion of many scholars), in other words that the readers were essentially of the same social class as the owners of the private mansions invoked earlier in this discussion. We should perhaps be more careful to distinguish the evidence

for the cult, or the lack of it, according to the various levels of society. For example, the healing or saving aspect of the emperor, discussed by M. Beaujeu, is attested in connection with the poorer classes. One thinks of Vespasian. And the followers of the false Nero after his death were certainly not readers of novels or owners of mansions. Of course, neither the Vespasianic miracles nor the enthusiasm for Nero had anything to do with the imperial cult.

*M. Calderone* : A più riprese Bickerman ha sottolineato il nuovo che era nel culto dell'imperatore : culto per un uomo-dio, culto per un uomo in quanto esaltazione della virtù divina che può essere in un uomo. Quest'idea è ormai dottrina ufficiale in *Paneg. II (X) 2, 5* : *finguntur haec de Iove, sed de te vera sunt, imperator !*

*M. den Boer* : There are, as we have seen, different approaches to the study of social behaviour. It is possible that in such a social phenomenon as the cult of the leader a comparison with other animals than the *homo sapiens* would be useful. One has to be aware of the danger of applying human situations to animal life and reversely. This is what the fable does. On the other hand, it seems strange that we explore animal life (illness and death) for the benefit of our species. Why not the tribe organisation, leadership, aggression and submission (as studied in anthropology) applied to our problems, if and where possible?

*M. Millar* : We are all perhaps too ignorant of the work of anthropologists and biologists to be able to make proper use of it. But it would be possible to take up Prof. den Boer's suggestion in the sense of not attempting to reach the "psychology" of ancient pagans, but rather, in considering the imperial cult, to confine ourselves to an exact comparison of its *external* manifestations—cult-acts, dedications, prayers, oaths, erection of temples or whatever—with the external manifestations of the worship of the pagan gods. In this way it would be possible to arrive at limited, but factual, results.

