

PART III

ROMAN THEMES, ROMAN VALUES

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ROMAN VALUES IN VELLEIUS

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Uxori carissimae necnon filiis filiaeque

In Germany, more than in other European countries, the study of Latin literature and culture was for long in the shadow of Greek. This was the case since the 18th century, since Winckelmann, Humboldt and Schleiermacher. Only in the first half of the 20th century did the difficult work begin of giving Latin studies their proper status. In this process an important role was played by research into Roman value terms. That research, however, was carried out against a background of intense conservatism, not to say reactionary attitudes – on which more below. Even without the influence of such ideology, we should expect that our contemporary historical methods, when applied to the topic of Roman values, will uncover a deeply conservative strand of Latin historiography.¹ On this topic, an author as assertive as Velleius Paterculus provides ideal material. As a starting-point, I choose a passage particularly rich in loaded terminology:

reuocata in forum fides; summota e foro seditio, ambitio campo, discordia curia, sepultaeque et situ obsitae iustitia aequitas industria civitati redditae; accessit magistratibus auctoritas, senatui maiestas, iudiciis grauitas; compressa theatralis seditio; recte faciendi omnibus aut incussa uoluntas aut imposita necessitas; honorantur recta, prava puniuntur; suspicit potentem humilis non timet, antecedit non contemnit humiliorem potens. quando annona moderatior? quando pax laetior? diffusa in orientis occidentisque tractus et quicquid meridiano aut septentrione finitur pax augusta <homines> per omnes terrarum orbis angulos a latrociniolorum metu seruat immunes. fortuita non ciuium tantummodo sed urbium damna principis munificentia

uindicat: restitutae urbes Asiae, uindicatae ab iniuriis magistratum provinciae; honor dignis paratissimus, poena in malos sera sed aliqua...²

Credit has been restored in the forum, strife has been banished from the forum, canvassing for office from the Campus Martius, discord from the senate-house; justice, equity, and industry, long buried in oblivion, have been restored to the state; the magistrates have regained their authority, the Senate its majesty, the courts their dignity; rioting in the theater has been suppressed; all citizens have either been impressed with the wish to do right, or have been forced to do so by necessity. Right is now honoured, evil is punished; the humble man respects the great but does not fear him, the great has precedence over the lowly but does not despise him. When was the price of grain more reasonable, or when were the blessings of peace greater? The *pax augusta*, which has spread to the regions of the east and of the west and to the bounds of the north and of the south, preserves every corner of the world safe from the fear of brigandage. The munificence of the emperor claims for its province the losses inflicted by fortune not merely on private citizens, but on whole cities. The cities of Asia have been restored, the provinces have been freed from the oppression of their magistrates. Honour ever awaits the worthy; for the wicked punishment is slow but sure... (Vell. 2.126.2–4)³

Thus, almost at the very end of his work,⁴ Velleius Paterculus⁵ praises the blessings that Tiberius' reign has afforded the Imperium Romanum and the whole world.⁶ He does so not by listing the emperor's actual *res gestae*, but by distilling them down to an abstract catalogue of virtues and values. This is paradigmatic of the approach Velleius takes towards the ruler of the day⁷ – and in all likelihood with good reason. For contemporary history always remains open, in its judgement, to revision based on ongoing political developments beyond the day of its capture in writing.⁸ Velleius had – we may presume – to undergo that painful experience when, after having completed his work, Sejanus whom he had (albeit cautiously) praised was ousted and harsh judgements passed on his dependents. In his final major digression on literary criticism, Velleius explicitly describes a reserve which is comparable *per analogiam* (Vell. 2.36.3): *nam uiuorum ut magna admiratio, ita censura difficilis est*. Velleius shifts his appreciation of Tiberius' rule away from the domain of individual measures to the more abstract one of ideologemes, positive notions of value and their negative opposites.

The crucial words are these: *fides, iustitia, aequitas, industria, auctoritas, maiestas, grauitas, recta* (resp. *recte facere*), *pax (augusta), munificentia* and *honor*. Their negative opposites are: *ambitio, discordia, seditio, latrocinia* as well as in general (punished) *mali* and *mala*. A catalogue that has been inserted in such a prominent position deserves a more detailed investigation, if only because

it contains a whole range of terms that are of importance to Roman political thought and practice beyond Velleius and Tiberius.

First, however, a few fundamental introductory statements are in order about the current state of research into value terminology. Investigation of Roman value terms has been pre-eminently the domain of German-speaking Latin literary scholarship and ancient history since the early 20th century.⁹ There are a number of contributing factors: for one thing, the start of the publication of the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* at the beginning of the 20th century, under the aegis of the Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Bavarian Academy of Sciences) in Munich, offered an almost ideal basis for such research – in particular the fact that even before the completion of each volume the complete documentation for all Latin words included in it was available, so that the study of vocabulary based on secure foundations became possible for the very first time.¹⁰ This was combined with an inclination within German-speaking classical research to focus on people and personal relationships rather than institutions, turning away from Theodor Mommsen's constitutional-legal approach.¹¹

Yet research, even when its object is the ancient world, does not take place in a social or political vacuum. This movement towards a terminological history and debate around semantic groups took place in the period after the first World War, when the bitterness in Germany about its recent defeat led to a conservative-reactionary rejection of modernity among many, including and especially at the universities, which showed itself for example in the espousing of traditional values and virtues and which also made its mark on the study of Roman values.¹² Moreover, it was of concern also on methodological grounds that, for instance, Richard Heinze attempted to capture those traits that defined the whole essence of *Römertum* (Romanness) in his research about *auctoritas*¹³ and *fides*,¹⁴ since this assumed a timeless continuity, not in any way subject to the historical process, indeed almost an anthropological constant. In a trivialised form this understanding of history was used to derive guidance for how to act in the present, in the sense of 'to learn from the Romans means to learn to win', in the end with truly catastrophic consequences through national-socialist educational and historical politics. Even after the Second World War there were still conservative classicists like Hans Oppermann¹⁵ or Hans Drexler,¹⁶ who continued this tradition with only minor changes (not least thanks to the support of the Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft as a publisher).¹⁷ One might be forgiven for thinking that the pursuit of the terminology of Roman values was hopelessly obsolete and belonged to a historical(-scholarly) era long since superseded.

We are not going to concern ourselves here with abstract timeless values and value terms nor with the issue of whether or not ‘Romanness’, the nature of Roman society etc., can thereby be captured once and forever, but rather with the question of how Velleius Paterculus deals with value-laden, politically-potent words, how he employs them, in what context and in relation to whom, be it in their positive or negative forms. For there can be no doubt that Roman politics employed such key words to play on the emotions from republican times onwards. We think of Cicero’s conservative *concordia ordinum*-maxim or the coinage of those who had murdered Caesar with its inscription *l(e)ibertat*.¹⁸ Closer to Velleius’ time, since the civil wars and the start of the Principate coins with their maxims gain increased significance, as also did exceptional honours such as the *Clupeus uirtutis* awarded to Augustus,¹⁹ of which the emperor himself proudly wrote in his *Res Gestae* (*Mon. Anc.* 34).

Senatus populusque Romanus Imp[eratori] Caesari Divi f[ilio] Augusto
co[n]s[ul]i VIII dedit clupeum uirtutis, clementiae, iustitiae, pietatis erga
deos patriam. (CIL 9.5811)

The way in which coins served as means to transmit certain values can also be observed in Tiberius’ times, when Velleius was active as a writer; for example, in the case of a dupondius from 21/22 AD on which Livia is highlighted by means of the caption *Iustitia* (RIC Tiberius 46) or of another dupondius around the same time on which Livia appears again, now with the legend *Pietas* (RIC Tiberius 72).²⁰ Therefore we shall have to explore how the slogans employed by Velleius fit into this kind of context.

Scholarly research is beginning cautiously to re-engage with the terminology of Roman values. This is where interdisciplinary approaches based on modern methodological expertise come into play (especially those approaches applying archaeological and numismatic insights). Examples are Gabriele Thome’s research,²¹ or pre-eminently those studies produced as part of the fitting Dresdener Sonderforschungsbereich (Special area of research) 537 ‘Institutionalität und Geschichtlichkeit’ (‘Institutionalism and historicity’), which are able both to provide solid foundations and to open up new avenues.²²

Stefan Rebenich has outlined the overall goal of further research as follows: ‘We have to pose clearly defined socio-, political-, cultural- and thought-historical questions in relation to the central notions of the “socio-political conceptual universe”. Investigations must not stop at etymology and lexicometry. Rather we have to represent the process by which a word turned into a term and through which its meanings came to change.’²³

Taking all this into account, the passage from Velleius quoted at the beginning lends itself to a kind of pilot study. We want to trace the actual use of value terms by induction,²⁴ in order to discover what they serve to achieve within their context. Our goal must ultimately be to analyse the political atmosphere in Rome in greater detail by means of the statements made by the participants themselves and thus to gain an insight into the (political) state of affairs of each era. What follows should therefore be understood as a prelude to such a history of the political terminology of the early Empire.²⁵ The passage from the praise of Tiberius quoted above offers an ideal basis for such a seminal analysis of values,²⁶ since for Velleius Roman history culminates in the current *princeps*, so that it is to be expected that terms employed in relation to him should be of supreme significance. We shall study the key phrases that appear together in the passage quoted in more detail, in the order in which they are employed, so as to investigate also the internal organisation of Velleius' approach and the way in which his concept of loyalty is realised.²⁷

1. *fides*

Fides is one of the terms that has been most intensely debated by scholars for almost a century, particularly since both the veritable classics of Fränkel (adding to a Thesaurus entry) and Heinze.²⁸ Velleius employs *fides* in three ways.²⁹ In particular at the beginning of his work it refers to the relation of other states, and especially Rome's allies, to Rome itself.³⁰ Thus he writes concerning the two Greek colonies of Cumae and Naples:

utriusque urbis eximia semper in Romanos **fides** facit eas nobilitate atque amoenitate sua dignissimas; sed illis diligentior ritus patrii mansit custodia, Cumanos Osca mutauit uicinia.

The remarkable and unbroken loyalty to the Romans of both these cities makes them well worthy of their repute and of their charming situation. The Neapolitans, however, continued the careful observance of their ancestral customs; the Cumaeans, on the other hand, were changed in character by the proximity of their Oscan neighbours. (Vell. 1.4.2)

This use in connection with foreign affairs is especially clear to see in the case of Rome's relations with Rhodes, in the context of the third Macedonian war, in that it is doubled paronomastically:³¹

quin Rhodii quoque, **fidelissimi** antea Romanis, tum dubia **fide** speculati fortunam, proniores regis partibus fuisse uisi sunt.

even the Rhodians, who in the past had been most loyal to the Romans, were now wavering in their fidelity, and, watching his success, seemed inclined to join the king's side. (Vell. 1.9.2)

This is one of two passages in which *fides* acquires a negative, or at least ambiguous, connotation by means of an attribute. Linguistically, Velleius takes inspiration from Livy, who appears to have coined this combination in 1.54.6 (*huic nuntio, quia, credo, dubiae fidei uidebatur, nihil uoce responsum est*), in the well-known story of Tarquinius and the Gabinians (and repeated in 2.21.3 before the battle at Lake Regillus). Later, the combination is also known to Ovid (*Epist.* 19.200) and Valerius Maximus (7.3.7). Accordingly, the majority of relevant examples are to be found in passages dealing with early Roman history (understood in a wider sense), so that Velleius may also have taken thematic inspiration from this.

From a historical perspective, the situation is by no means clear cut, as the ultra-conservative Cato Maior had taken the side of the Rhodians after the war against Perseus of Macedon, when the Roman Senate wished to punish them for having attempted to mediate. At this particular juncture in foreign relations Velleius immediately employs *fides* once as a noun, then the adjective derived from it in the superlative. He does, however, convey his preference by means of the qualification he makes.

This parallel linguistic use acquires an even stronger negative connotation through the context, in that a specific kind of *fides* is ascribed to Plancus, an intimate of, amongst others, Antony:³²

Plancus deinde dubia (id est sua) **fide**, diu quarum esset partium se cum luctatus ac sibi difficile consentiens, et nunc adiutor D. Bruti designati consulis, collegae sui, senatuique se litteris uenditans, mox eiusdem proditor, Asinius autem Pollio firmus proposito et Iulianis partibus fidus, Pompeianis aduersus...

Plancus, with his usual loose idea of loyalty, after a long debate with himself as to which party to follow, and much difficulty in sticking to his resolutions when formed, now pretended to co-operate with his colleague, Decimus Brutus, the consul designate, thus seeking to ingratiate himself with the Senate in his dispatches, and again betrayed him. But Asinius Pollio, steadfast in his resolution, remained loyal to the Julian party and continued to be an adversary of the Pompeians... (Vell. 2.63.3)

Vell. 2.18.1 shows a similar paronomastic usage as in Vell. 1.9.1, in the context of a report relating to king Mithridates of Pontus, as Velleius again comments on the Rhodians:

quo tempore neque fortitudine aduersus Mithridatem neque **fide** in Romanos quisquam Rhodiis par fuit (horum **fidem** Mytilenaeorum **perfidia** inluminauit, qui M. Aquilium aliosque Mithridati uinctos tradiderunt, quibus libertas in unius Theophanis gratiam postea a Pompeio restituta est), cum terribilis Italiae quoque uideretur imminere, sorte obuenerit Sullae Asia prouincia.

In this crisis none equalled the Rhodians either in courageous opposition to Mithridates or in loyalty to the Romans. Their fidelity gained lustre from the perfidy of the people of Mytilene, who handed Manius Aquilius and other Romans over to Mithridates in chains. The Mytilenaeans subsequently had their liberty restored by Pompey solely in consideration of his friendship for Theophanes. When Mithridates was now regarded as a formidable menace to Italy herself, the province of Asia fell to the lot of Sulla, as proconsul. (Vell. 2.18.1)

Other passages confirm Velleius' inclination to repeat certain terms that were of importance to him and so to create a certain emphasis by linguistic means. Thus it appears to have been important to him, in the case of the Rhodians, to include a discussion about the relation between loyalty and disloyalty in the briefest form possible, and also to have recourse to the general perception of the Rhodians in the Roman conception of history.³³

Such doubling-up need, however, not always signify a qualification. When Velleius writes of his own ancestors, he not only employs noun and adjective in the superlative, but also adds further value-laden terms in *uerecundia*, *gloria* and the additional superlative *celeberrimi*:

neque ego **uerecundia** domestici sanguinis **gloriae** quicquam, dum uerum refero, subtraham: quippe multum Minati Magii, atai mei, Aeculensis, tribuendum est memoriae, qui nepos Decii Magii, Campanorum principis, **celeberrimi** et **fidelissimi** uiri, tantam hoc bello Romanis **fidem** praestitit ut cum legione quam ipse in Hirpinis conscripserat Herculaneum simul cum T. Didio caperet, Pompeios cum L. Sulla oppugnaret Compsamque occuparet;...

...nor shall I, through excess of modesty, deprive my own kin of glory, when that which I record is the truth; for much credit is due to the memory of my great-grandfather Minatius Magius of Aeculanum, grandson of Decius Magius, leader of the Campanians, of distinction and proven loyalty. Such fidelity did Minatius display towards the Romans in this war that, with a legion which he himself had enrolled among the Hirpini, he took Herculaneum in conjunction with Titus Didius, was associated with Lucius Sulla in the siege of Pompeii, and occupied Compsa;... (Vell. 2.16.2)

Velleius makes these pronouncements in his own cause since he emphasises the role of his ancestor in the Social War,³⁴ this time no longer by opposing *fides* qualified by an adjective with *fidelissimus*, but by a concurrence: in difficult external-political and military circumstances, Minatius Magius retains a notable loyalty towards the Romans. The topic of personal loyalty thus introduced by Velleius in particular in a military context leads almost directly to Tiberius, with whom the author's undoubted loyalty lies. And as Rome's supreme general, he could expect

and demand such loyalty of his soldiers. Velleius projects this back *ex euentu* to the time before he took on the Principate. Among his soldiers, Tiberius is the most important recipient of *fides*, for instance in two passages from Tiberius' German expeditions that follow on each other closely and benefit, moreover, from Velleius' own experience as a member of the campaign. In one, Tiberius is greeted by his soldiers after extended absence:³⁵

at uero militum conspectu eius elicita gaudio lacrimae alacritasque et salutationis noua quaedam exultatio et contingendi manum cupiditas non continentium protinus quin adicerent 'uidemus te, imperator? saluum recepimus?', ac deinde 'ego tecum, imperator, in Armenia, ego in Raetia fui, ego a te in Vindelicia, ego in Pannonia, ego in Germania donatus sum', neque uerbis exprimi et fortasse uix mereri **fidem** potest.

Indeed, words cannot express the feelings of the soldiers at their meeting, and perhaps my account will scarcely be believed – the tears which sprang to their eyes in their joy at the sight of him, their eagerness, their strange transports in saluting him, their longing to touch his hand, and their inability to restrain such cries as 'Is it really you that we see, commander?'; 'Have we received you safely back among us?'; 'I served with you, general, in Armenia!'; 'And I in Raetia!'; 'I received my decoration from you in Vindelicia!'; 'And I mine in Pannonia!'; 'And I in Germany!' (Vell. 2.104.4)

In the other, an elderly German rows across the river in order to see the renowned general at close quarters:³⁶

tum adpulso lintre et diu tacitus contemplatus Caesarem 'nostra quidem' inquit 'fuit iuuentus, quae, cum uestrum numen absentium colat, praesentium potius arma metuit quam sequitur **fidem**.'

Then he beached his canoe, and, after gazing upon Caesar for a long time in silence, exclaimed: 'Our young men are insane, for though they worship you as divine when absent, when you are present they fear your armies instead of trusting to your protection.' (Vell. 2.107.2)

This is a unique passage in Velleius, in that such a reverent remark is attributed to an enemy of the Roman Empire and the Roman Emperor – it is full of respect also in the sense that religious and worldly-political categories blend into each other. It appears unthinkable that Velleius could claim this for any Roman other than Tiberius. The renown of the ruler of the day transcends the boundaries of the *imperium Romanum*.

Unsurprisingly, such *fides* is also attributed to Sejanus, Tiberius' most important supporter, a personal loyalty that in this case is of especial importance:³⁷

sub his exemplis Ti. Caesar Scianum Aelium, principe equestris ordinis patre natum, materno uero genere **clarissimas** ueteresque et insignes **honoribus**

complexum familias, habentem consulares fratres consobrinos auunculum, ipsum uero **laboris** ac **fidei** capacissimum, sufficiente etiam uigori animi compage corporis, singularem principalium **onerum adiutorem** in omnia habuit atque habet, uirum priscae seueritatis, laetissimae hilaritatis, actu otiosis simillimum, nihil sibi uindicantem eoque adsequentem omnia, semperque infra aliorum aestimationes se metientem, uultu uitaque tranquillum, animo exsomnem.

With these examples before him, Tiberius Caesar has had and still has as his incomparable associate in all the burdens of the Principate Sejanus Aelius, son of a father who was among the foremost in the equestrian order, but connected, on his mother's side, with old and illustrious families and families distinguished by public honours, while he had brothers, cousins, and an uncle who had reached the consulship. He himself combined with loyalty to his master great capacity for labour, and possessed a well-knit body to match the energy of his mind; stern but yet gay, cheerful but yet strict in an old-fashioned way; busy, yet always seeming to be at leisure. He is one who claims no honours for himself and so acquires all honours, whose estimate of himself is always below the estimate of others, calm in expression and in his life, though his mind is sleeplessly alert. (2.127.3–4)

Even more so than in the case of Minatius Magius, Velleius turns his description of Sejanus' virtues into a canon of values of his own: the superlatives, the repeated emphasis on reinvigorated traditional behaviour patterns and attitudes, but above all his focus on the active component, expressing more than just approval in fact precisely co-operation. And yet words meaning 'effort' such as *labor* and *onus* have formed part of the ideology of the Principate at least since Augustus.³⁸ Horace was direct:

Cum tot sustineas et tanta negotia solus,
res Italas armis tuteris, moribus ornes,
legibus emendes, in publica commoda peccem,
si longo sermone morer tua tempora, Caesar. (*Epist.* 2.1.1ff.)

Vergil's portrayal in the *Aeneid* of Augustus' typological paradigm Aeneas, has a similar focus, albeit expressed differently, e.g. when he lets him shoulder the shield showing the future history of Rome in Book 8 and thus depicts him as a hero of *labor*. From this perspective, the canon of values that is applied to Sejanus appears to be derived from Tiberius rather than being of independent origin, as indeed an *adiutor imperii* merits. Only in the mixture of *seueritas* and *hilaritas* does the depiction of Sejanus differ markedly from that of Tiberius. Perhaps this is a discreet indication of what Velleius would have wished from Tiberius himself.

Indeed it is perhaps not particularly surprising that, as an ex-soldier, Velleius sets such store by *fides*. For him it is a universal virtue that plays an important role both in domestic and foreign affairs of state, and also in

personal relationships. It coincides with a nostalgic feeling about the history of Rome that was growing in particular during the period of restoration after the end of the civil wars, with the official ideology of *res publica restituta*. The *Fides*-cult was traced back to Numa Pompilius, the temple on the Capitol originates from the mid-republican period and served as the location for Senate meetings, e.g. in times of political crisis. How important the notion of *Fides* was especially in the early days of the Principate, is illustrated for instance by Horace's *Carmen Saeculare*, which also features the terms *Pax* and *Honos* that will be discussed shortly:³⁹

iam **Fides** et Pax et Honos Pudorque
 priscus et neglecta redire Virtus
 audet adparetque beata pleno
 Copia cornu. (*Carm. Saec.* 57–60)

We can now understand why it is *fides* in particular that takes precedence in the sequence of those values that are again accorded their customary position in Tiberius' times. It matches Velleius' view of the ideal development of society as one bound together by loyalty to a particularly high degree.

2. *Iustitia*⁴⁰

The contrast with other terms also proves that *fides* held a particular significance for Velleius. For instances of *iustitia* the underlying adjective *iustus* is far less frequent. In most cases it is also not truly legal issues that are of concern but rather a wider sense of justice respecting the question of appropriateness. This element of appropriateness is most obvious in passages such as the following:

Harum praeteritarumque rerum ordo cum **iustis** aliorum uoluminibus promatur, tum, uti spero, nostris explicabitur.

As to the order of these events, and of those which have been mentioned before, the reader is referred to the special works of other historians, and I myself hope some day to give them in full. (Vell. 2.48.5)⁴¹

Thus *iustus* becomes a synonym of what is *aptum* or *decorum*, apart from the fact that it goes hand in hand with an even more potent bonding power.⁴² *Iustus* may also more generally refer to personal probity, as when Velleius justifies himself for mentioning certain individuals not at the heart of historic events:

horum uirorum mentioni si quis quaesisse me dicet locum, fatentem arguet; neque enim **iustus** sine mendacio candor apud bonos crimini est.

If anyone shall say that I have gone out of my way to mention these men, his criticism will meet no denial. In the sight of honest men fair-minded candour without misrepresentation is no crime. (Vell. 2.116.5)

Moreover it accords with Velleius' literary strategy to prepare for events that are only treated *expressis verbis* later by means of the associative use of semantic word groups. In this case it is his discussion of the *clades Variana* in the Teutoburg Forest in AD 9. The pair of opposites falsehood and justice, one applied to the Germans the other to the Romans, plays a special role. In fundamental contrast to the view of the Germans as conveyed by Caesar and Tacitus, in Velleius the enemies of Rome appear not as naive, artless strongmen but as the countertype of institutionalised Roman justice, whose representative in this instance, however, does not act appropriately, therefore does not embody the criteria of what is *aptum / decorum / iustum* and thus sows the seeds of a military disaster that cannot be resolved by civil means.

Yet this statement also prepares for the more detailed explanation of the ruse by which the Germans lulled Varus into a sense of safety while already secretly planning their revolt:

at illi, quod nisi expertus uix credat, in summa feritate uersutissimi natumque mendacio genus, simulantes fictas litium series et nunc prouocantes alter alterum in iurgia, nunc agentes gratias quod ea Romana **iustitia** finiret feritasque sua nouitate incognitae disciplinae mitesceret et solita armis decerni **iure** terminarentur, in summam socordiam perduxere Quintilium, usque eo ut se praetorem urbanum in foro **ius** dicere, non in mediis Germaniae finibus exercitui praeesse crederet.

But the Germans, who with their great ferocity combine great craft, to an extent scarcely credible to one who has had no experience of them, and are a race to lying born, by trumping up a series of fictitious lawsuits, now provoking one another to disputes, and now expressing their gratitude that Roman justice was settling these disputes, that their own barbarous nature was being tamed by this new and hitherto unknown method, and that quarrels which were usually settled by arms were now being ended by law, brought Quintilius to such a complete degree of negligence, that he came to look upon himself as a city praetor administering justice in the forum, and not a general in command of an army in the heart of Germany. (Vell. 2.118.1)

Such a passage also helps to illustrate very well why Velleius is not a suitable informant for the debate concerning the actual location of the *clades Variana*, a debate vigorously pursued in recent times especially in Germany and in which, based on current archaeological evidence, the village of Kalkriese, near Osnabrück, appears to be best placed.⁴³ For Velleius structures his report not as a companion piece to the detailed archaeological hunt for

physical evidence, but as a literary *monumentum* of treason, failure and – in contrast – the affirmation of *virtus*. Varus' mistake is (*inter alia*) to believe Germany to be a province already for the most part properly subdued and therefore to transfer Roman institutions, in particular the legal system, to it. Velleius employs an extended sequence of synonyms and antonyms here, such as *iustitia*, *disciplina*, *ius*, *ius dicere* as well as *mendacium*, *lis*, *provocari*, *iurgium*, *feritas*, creating a dense group of words that underlines his statement on a linguistic level.

It has incidentally to be added, however, that Velleius treats Varus with particular unfairness. For one, Varus cannot have been quite as incompetent as portrayed here, since Augustus had previously entrusted him with governing Palestine, notorious for unrest, and then sent him to where a new military confrontation was looming. Either Augustus himself had underestimated how serious the situation in Germany in fact was and sent a governor who was not sufficiently competent (so that the mistake in the end reflects on him), or Arminius' revolt and the defeat in the Teutoburg Forest had indeed not been foreseeable since the Germans proceeded with exceptional skill. But Velleius joins the chorus of those in Rome who (from republican times onwards) would pull to pieces *imperatores victi*.⁴⁴ In Velleius' case, in addition to this general attitude, it affords him the opportunity to give particular prominence to Tiberius, as he had perhaps even been one of Varus' rivals, but certainly had been leading a military mission in Dalmatia and Pannonia at the same time as the *clades Variana* took place. Tiberius, like Varus, had to deal with a revolt of peoples seemingly already defeated yet he was able to bring his mission to a successful end. Thus Velleius gains an opportunity to highlight his hero once more.

And yet this last passage already leads back to our key source text, the praise of Tiberius, for Varus too had presumed an orderly system of justice which he had believed himself able to implement in Germany. In Tiberius' case, however, it is not a seeming but an actual ordered justice system, one able to re-lay the foundations of the state as a whole, in the shape of a functioning legal system. In Velleius such contrasts also operate across greater distances. Moreover, it fits that – I believe – the single piece of numismatic evidence for *Iustitia* as a political catch-phrase happens to fall precisely into Tiberius' times as he ordered the minting of a dupondius in AD 21/22 on which a legend describes his mother Livia as an embodiment of *Iustitia* (see above). Across the whole of Velleius' work, however, as has been mentioned, the word group *iustitia/iustus* does not appear particularly frequently. And even in the praise of Tiberius it requires, so to speak, supporting synonyms, in order to bring out the significance of this value

term, i.e. that of *aequitas*, a term that tends even more generally towards notions of fairness and equity, as well as of the completely general *industria*, where it is indeed difficult to understand what in reality it refers to.

3. *auctoritas*, *maiestas*, *gravitas*

As with *iustitia*, *aequitas* and *industria*, the following combination in our initial text assigns three truly central terms to three institutions and is likewise in the form of a tricolon: *magistratibus auctoritas, senatui maiestas, iudiciis gravitas*. This terminology is, however, on closer inspection, by no means applied just stereotypically or mechanically, but contains a pointed twist in relation to the history of the Principate. Velleius employs *auctoritas* with non-political meaning fairly frequently, as in 1.7.1, where Hesiod is characterised as *auctoritate proximus* to Homer and thus as deservedly an influential poet of ancient times.⁴⁵ In a political context *auctoritas* appears in connection with the return of Q. Metellus who had been unjustly exiled and whose son was able to engender universal support for him: *pietate sua, auctoritate senatus, consensu populi Romani*. Indeed the combination *auctoritas senatus*⁴⁶ is the more frequent variant in Velleius, as for example also in 2.20.3 and 2.49.2. It is only at the point when Caesar, the first great individual of Roman history, appears, that *auctoritas* also refers to individual magistrates, indeed preferably to consuls and then again to Caesar. In this Velleius follows a development which had been prompted in particular by the emergence of the Principate and had found its most memorable, now virtually classic, turn of phrase at the end of the *Res Gestae*:⁴⁷

Post id tempus **auctoritate** omnibus praestiti, potestatis autem nihilo amplius habui quam ceteri, qui mihi quoque in magistratu conlegae fuerunt.
(*Mon. Anc.* 34)

Whether consciously or not, Velleius thus also accurately portrays contemporary political reality in Rome, for within the framework of the Principate little now remained of the former decision-making power of the Roman Senate that had for the most part been uncontested – and not only in relation to foreign affairs. For someone who, like Velleius, was born later, the *auctoritas senatus* indeed remained only a historical rather than a contemporary fact.

The combination of *maiestas*⁴⁸ and *senatus* on the other hand is also significant. It occurs only once previously in Velleius, at 2.89.3–4, precisely as the author speaks – in almost hymnic fashion – of the end of the civil wars brought about by Augustus' victory:⁴⁹

finita uicesimo anno bella ciuilia, sepulta externa; reuocata pax, sopitus ubique armorum furor; restituta uis legibus, iudiciis **auctoritas**, senatui

maiestas; imperium magistratum ad pristinum redactum modum; tantummodo octo praetoribus adiecti duo. prisca illa et antiqua rei publicae forma reuocata. rediit cultus agris, sacris honos, securitas hominibus, certa cuique rerum suarum possessio. leges emendatae utiliter, latae salubriter; senatus sine asperitate nec sine seueritate lectus. principes uiri triumphisque et amplissimis honoribus functi hortatu principis ad ornandam urbem inlecti sunt.

The civil wars were ended after twenty years, foreign wars suppressed, peace restored, the frenzy of arms everywhere lulled to rest; validity was restored to the laws, authority to the courts, and dignity to the Senate; the power of the magistrates was reduced to its former limits, with the sole exception that two new praetors were added to the existing eight. The old traditional form of the Republic was restored. Agriculture returned to the fields, respect to religion, to mankind freedom from anxiety, and to each citizen his property rights were now assured; old laws were usefully emended, and new laws passed for the general good; the revision of the Senate, while not too drastic, was not lacking in severity. The chief men of the state who had won triumphs and had held high office were at the invitation of Augustus induced to adorn the city.

Before proceeding with analysing its terminology, we must briefly note the remarkable correspondence of this passage with our initial text concerning Tiberius. In this passage Velleius describes with some precision how Augustus himself would have wanted to have his constitutional restorations perceived; the way in which the restoration of traditional arrangements is emphasised twice as well as the frequent prefix *re-* underlines his train of thought. Unless we suppose that Velleius had completely forgotten towards the end of his work what he had written some 30 chapters previously, the logic implicit in the text suggests that Augustus had not succeeded in retaining this ideal state of the *res publica* permanently after it had been recovered. Rather, Tiberius again had to address chaotic circumstances, as before the initial restoration of the *res publica*.⁵⁰ Velleius may refer to the (to us) somewhat obscure circumstances of Augustus' last years when domestic tensions (such as famine riots, supply shortages due to earthquakes, but also the problems of his succession) coincided with problems on the northern and north-western frontiers of the Empire to create a volatile atmosphere. Then there was the unhappy role played by the Senate during the transition from Augustus to Tiberius which is portrayed so masterfully by Tacitus. This is not explicitly mentioned by Velleius, for easily understandable reasons, but such memories continued to reverberate below the surface.

At any rate it is important for Velleius that in such an atmosphere of restoration the Senate is again accorded *maiestas*. Traditionally, *maiestas* is a

quality that (for example in Cicero, but also in the earlier days of the Republic) was attributed more to the *populus Romanus* and had to be preserved by Roman institutions on its behalf. For the entire *populus Romanus* as such is of course unable to take action. Isolated instances of a *maiestas senatus* of course already occur in Cicero and Livy, but they are clearly an exception. That Velleius juxtaposes the Senate with *maiestas* in two such prominent passages could be seen as complementary to the development just mentioned in relation to *auctoritas*. The Senate has lost its real opportunities to act, it is primarily just a venerable institution, which while it enjoys high regard, with almost religious overtones, is no longer active in practical politics – this at least is how Velleius sees it, and in this he is not completely wrong.

Finally we come to the third term in this triad, *grauitas*. Leaving aside clearly non-political usages, as especially those involving the cognate adjective *grauis* (as in *grauiter ferre*), in its regular relevant usage it signifies a conservative virtue of dignity and steadfastness, as in the comparison of Caesar and Pompey in the mirror of their estimation by others:⁵¹

uir antiquus et **grauis** Pompei partes laudaret magis, prudens sequeretur Caesaris et illa gloriosa, haec terribiliora duceret.

The stern Roman of the old-fashioned type would praise the cause of Pompey, the politic would follow the lead of Caesar, recognizing that while there was on the one side greater prestige, the other was the more formidable. (Vell. 2.49.3)

This sentence, incidentally, illustrates the problem that Velleius faced in view of his conservative attitude regarding Caesar's usurpation of the state and thus the very concept of the resulting Principate. Not without reason does Seneca rhetor state (*Contr.* 10.3.5) that the best protection against civil war is – to forget: *optima ciuilibus belli defensio obliuio est*. Yet as a writer of contemporary history Velleius does not have this option, so that he has to find another solution.

Gravitas is a trait also characteristic of Tiberius, as is apparent from the (albeit somewhat polemical) report by Suetonius:

Multa praeterea specie **grauitatis** ac morum corrigendorum, sed et magis naturae optemperans, ita saeue et atrociter factitauit, ut nonnulli uersiculis quoque et praesentia exprobrarent et futura denuntiarent mala...

He kept doing so many other cruel and savage deeds under the guise of strictness and improvement of the public morals, but in reality rather to gratify his natural instincts, that some resorted to verses to express their detestation of the present ills and a warning against those to come... (*Tib.* 59).

Yet Tiberius' *dissimulatio* (later to be memorably castigated by Tacitus) is naturally not a subject for Velleius; for him Tiberius is a person of unrivalled *gravitas*.

Reviewing together the three value terms *auctoritas*, *maiestas* and *gravitas*, it becomes apparent that all three derive from the predominant ideology of the Principate and thus could also be attributed to the ruler of the day – and in their entirety it should be noted, while the structures to which Tiberius has restored their former prestige only partially partake in them. This too is an implicit statement about the superficial and barely subsisting republican character of the Roman state after Actium.

4. *pax*⁵²

In contrast to modern, at least to idealising, notions, the Roman concept of peace, *pax*, is conceptualized asymmetrically from the start. Taking its cue from its etymology – *pangere*, to reach an agreement – it refers to a legal state of affairs that leads to the cessation of conflict by means of a contractual agreement. This carries forward the existing balance of power, in particular a position of superiority established in military conflicts. Plautus' *Persa*, where the victory is mentioned first, then the resulting peace, exemplifies this (753):

Hostibus uictis, ciuibus saluis, re placida, **pacibus** perfectis....

The civil wars did nothing to change this fundamentally outward-looking notion, although they did lead to an increasingly urgent need for a domestic peace, in particular since for Rome a *bellum ciuile* in any case represented a perverse oxymoron. Augustus channelled the primarily internal need for peace in Rome with predictable skill: he spoke of an external peace and yet meant an internal one, when he reinvented an allegedly ancient Roman ritual, the closure of the temple of Janus, as a sign of universal peace. This finds even stronger expression in the mythical-vegetative pictorial universe of the Ara Pacis which hints at peace extending to the whole of nature (cf. Sauron 2000). Velleius also speaks of the closure of the temple of Janus:

Immane bellicae ciuitatis argumentum quod semel sub regibus, iterum hoc T. Manlio consule, tertio Augusto principe certae **pacis** argumentum Janus geminus clausus dedit.

It is a strong proof of the warlike character of our state that only three times did the closing of the temple of the double-faced Janus give proof of unbroken peace: once under the kings, a second time in the consulship of the Titus Manlius just mentioned, and a third time in the reign of Augustus. (Vell. 2.38.3)

With these turns of phrase, Velleius positions himself almost exactly in the middle of the spectrum marked out by Augustus, in that he draws a line from a historical and surely marginal event forward to the pre-history of his own times, and closely associates peace with a bellicose temperament. Augustus too had phrased it this way in his *Res Gestae*, writing *cum per totum imperium populi Romani terra marique esset parva uictoriis pax* (*Mon. Anc.* 13). In the passage about the end of the civil wars already quoted above, Velleius summarizes this integrative notion of *pax*, which had been elevated to an ideology of the Principate by Augustus, with extreme brevity:

Finita uicesimo anno bella ciuilia, sepulta externa; reuocata pax... (Vell. 2.89.3).

Yet the *pax* of which Velleius writes is not so much a *pax Augusta*, but rather to a greater extent a *pax Tiberiana*. A fundamental structural argument, deduced from how the work is organised, speaks for such an interpretation:

Accipe nunc, M. Vinici, tantum in bello ducem quantum in **pax**e uides principem.

Listen now, Marcus Vinicius, to the proof that Caesar was no less great in war as a general than you now see him in peace as an emperor. (Vell. 2.113.1)

Velleius' work is in the main structured biographically, especially in the second book. In each case a dominating character appears, e.g. Caesar, Augustus or indeed Cicero. Historical events during their lifetimes are then, so to speak, fitted into the broader pattern of their (political) biography. Taking this internal organisation of the *Historia Romana* into account, all of the final section starting with 2.113 must already be the Tiberius section – thus, for example, the fighting in Germany, Dalmatia and Pannonia which also took place under Augustus' rule, yet for Velleius belonged wholly to the period of Tiberius' political dominance. When he promises to tell of Tiberius' deeds *militiae domique*, Velleius employs a standard pattern of ancient biography: the addressee, M. Vinicius, has first-hand experience of the current activities of peace (*uides*), while Velleius offers to act himself as guarantor of Tiberius' military glory before his Principate. Overall this early military success is the necessary preparation for the peace that now reigns, the same as the victories in the civil wars up to Actium were, for Augustus, an indispensable pre-condition for the *pax Augusta*. It is not by chance that the coinages with *pax*-motifs, which Augustus had issued, fall in the period immediately after Actium.

Tiberius had no need for numismatic activities of this kind; doing so might even have drawn attention to the (Senatorial) accusation spread by Tacitus:

nobis in arto et inglorius labor; immota quippe aut modice laccessita pax, maestae urbis res, et princeps proferendi imperi incuriosus erat. (*Ann.* 4.32.2)

It is significant that Tiberius appears only as initiator of a military mission to create peace. In complementary fashion, Velleius also omits to mention specific wars and peace treaties under Tiberius' reign. An equal peace would have been wholly alien to how the Romans saw themselves in terms of international law. And thus there is no internal contradiction when Velleius places Tiberius' actions as a whole under the *Leitmotiv* of *pax*, as can be deduced from the ring-compositional usage. For not only does the initial passage above accord *pax* a central position, but so also does the end, the prayer for the *princeps*:

Iuppiter Capitoline, et auctor ac stator Romani nominis Gradiue Mars, perpetuorumque custos Vesta ignium, et quicquid numinum hanc Romani imperii molem in amplissimum terrarum orbis fastigium extulit, uos publica uoce obtestor atque precor: custodite seruate protegite hunc statum, hanc **pacem**, <hunc principem>, eique functo longissima statione mortali destinate successores quam serissimos, sed eos quorum ceruices tam fortiter sustinendo terrarum orbis imperio sufficientiam quam huius suffecisse sensimus, consiliaque omnium ciuium aut pia...

O Jupiter Capitolinus, and Mars Gradivus, author and stay of the Roman name, Vesta, guardian of the eternal fire, and all other divinities who have exalted this great Empire of Rome to the highest point yet reached on earth! On you I call, and to you I pray in the name of this people: guard, preserve, protect the present state of things, the peace which we enjoy, <the present emperor,> and when he has filled his post of duty – and may it be the longest granted to mortals – grant him successors until the latest time, but successors whose shoulders may be as capable of sustaining bravely the Empire of the world as we have found his to be: foster the pious plans of all good citizens... (*Vell.* 2.131.1).

The god of war, Mars, is one of the most important divine guarantors for the endurance of the *pax Tiberiana*. This holds no contradictions for Velleius who had once been an officer in the army; the majority of his contemporaries certainly felt similarly.

At a lesser level the eradication of **seditiones** in the theaters is likewise an act of establishing peace, at least a measure in order to keep Rome and the cities of the Empire calm. What Velleius is aiming at with his phrase *compressa theatralis seditio*, becomes apparent from Suetonius:

Populares tumultus et ortos grauissime coercuit et ne orerentur sedulo cauit. Caede in theatro per discordiam admissa capita factionum et histriones, propter quos dissidebatur, relegauit, nec ut reuocaret umquam ullis populi precibus potuit euinci.

He took great pains to prevent outbreaks of the populace and punished such as occurred with the utmost severity. When a quarrel in the theater ended in bloodshed, he banished the leaders of the factions, as well as the actors who were the cause of the dissension; and no entreaties of the people could ever induce him to recall them. (*Tib.* 37.2)

This way of peace-making, which removed the popular heroes of the Roman theater from the eyes of their public, is likely to have caused much less delight amongst the Roman population than the military deeds of peace.

5. munificentia⁵³

The next value term no longer leads to the heart of Velleius' understanding of the Principate, but characterizes an important secondary aspect. In principle, munificence, the distribution of gifts, is an intrinsic feature of the Roman system of patronage with the two-way relationship between *patronus* and *cliens*, which relied on material as well as immaterial gifts. With the emergence of the Principate, Augustus (and his successors) were, so to speak, the super-*patroni* above the existing *clientelae* (this was made easier since – as recent research has clearly shown – these *clientelae* were by no means set in stone but part of a dynamic, changeable system: Hölkeskamp 2004, 85–105). With this, the princeps had also taken on most of the responsibility for the material well-being of *urbs* and *orbis*, as Augustus indeed clearly emphasises in the *Res Gestae*.

In emphasizing care for the well-being of the public, Velleius can see himself in harmony with traditional Roman virtues. Cicero had stated bluntly in his speech *Pro Murena* (76):

odit populus Romanus priuatam luxuriam, publicam **munificentiam** diligit.

In accordance with the conception of his work, however, Velleius only seldom has the opportunity to discuss such public subsidies. Moreover he is slightly weary of the encouragement of luxury,⁵⁴ as we may see in an inconspicuous passage of his work, where he writes about the founder of the Porticus Metelli, later the Porticus Octavia:

Hic idem primus omnium Romae aedem ex marmore in iis ipsis monumentis molitus <huius> uel **magnificentiae** uel **luxuriae** princeps fuit.

This same Metellus was the first of all to build at Rome a temple of marble, which he erected in the midst of these very monuments, thereby becoming the pioneer in this form of munificence, or shall we call it luxury? (Vell. 1.11.5)

With his Sallustian view of history, Velleius finds it difficult to approve of such developments unreservedly. But he is also unable to escape the

standard panegyric patterns completely, so that he comes to mention the subject seldom yet emphatically. Most significant is the sentence just before the conclusion of his work, where Tiberius' achievements are praised in the context of a difficult personal lot and where Velleius employs both *munificentia* and its synonym *liberalitas* (*beneficium* likewise sometimes occurs in Velleius, more so referring to the immaterial):

Quanta suo suorumque nomine extruxit opera! quam pia **munificentia** superque humanam eucta fidem templum patri molitur! quam magnifico animi temperamento Cn. quoque Pompei munera absumpta igni restituit, qui, quod umquam claritudine eminuit, id ueluti cognatum censet tuendum! qua **liberalitate** cum alias tum proxime incenso monte Caelio omnis ordinis hominum iacturae patrimonio succurrit suo!

What public buildings did he construct in his own name or that of his family! With what pious munificence, exceeding human belief, does he now rear the temple to his father! With what a magnificent control of personal feeling did he also restore the works of Gnaeus Pompey destroyed by fire! For a feeling of kinship leads him to protect every famous monument. With what generosity at the time of the recent fire on the Caelian Hill, as well as on other occasions, did he use his private fortune to make good the losses of people of all ranks in life! (Vell. 2.130.1–2)

Here too the frame of reference is obvious: Velleius picks up the thinking that had guided Augustus in his self-representation in the *Res Gestae* when he related how many building works he had initiated employing his own means but under someone else's name. Since, overall, Tiberius' impact on the city's fabric was clearly less spectacular than that of his predecessor (apart from the temple for Divus Augustus no major developments are, to my knowledge, recorded), Velleius has to recur to his general, somewhat vague phrase in order not to let Tiberius suffer by comparison with Augustus. For however much the inner circles of the ruling elite appreciated his frugality, the policies that Tiberius preferred (according to Suetonius) could please Rome's wider public little:

Ludorum ac munerum impensas corripuit mercedibus scaenicorum recisis paribusque gladiatorum ad certum numerum redactis. Corinthiorum uasorum pretia in immensum exarsisse tresque mullos triginta milibus nummum uenisse grauitur conquestus, adhibendum supellectili modum censuit annonamque macelli senatus arbitratu quotannis temperandam, dato aedilibus negotio popinas ganeasque usque eo inhibendi, ut ne opera quidem pistoria proponi uenalia sinerent. Et ut **parsimoniam** publicam exemplo quoque iuuaret, sollempnibus ipse cenis pridiana saepe ac semesa obsonia apposuit dimidiatumque aprum, affirmans omnia eadem habere, quae totum.

He reduced the cost of the games and shows by cutting down the pay of the actors and limiting the pairs of gladiators to a fixed number. Complaining bitterly that the prices of Corinthian bronzes had risen to an immense figure and that three mullets had been sold for thirty thousand sesterces, he proposed that a limit be set to household furniture and that the prices of food in the market should be regulated each year at the discretion of the Senate; while the aediles were instructed to put such restrictions on cookshops and eating-houses as not to allow even pastry to be exposed for sale. Furthermore, to encourage general frugality by his personal example, he often served at formal dinners meats left over from the day before and partly consumed, or the half of a boar, declaring that it had all the qualities of a whole one. (Suet. *Tib.* 34)

6. honor

This term differs from those discussed so far in that it does not refer to a specific characteristic of the princeps, in which other significant individuals shared, but represents a reward, mainly symbolic, that is awarded from the top down, and thereby also reveals a hierarchical structure. This is especially clear at 2.129, where a veritable nest of terms can be found in the context of the portrayal of Tiberius' achievements:

quibus praeceptis instructum Germanicum suum imbutumque rudimentis militiae secum actae domitorem recepit Germaniae! quibus iuventam eius exaggeravit **honoribus**, respondente cultu triumphi rerum quas gesserat magnitudinil quotiens populum congiariis **honoravit** senatorumque census, cum id senatu auctore facere potuit, quam libenter expleuit, ut neque luxuriam inuitaret neque honestam paupertatem pateretur dignitate destitui! quanto cum **honore** Germanicum suum in transmarinas misit prouincias!...quam illum ut **honorate** sic secure continet!

How well had Germanicus been trained under his instructions, having so thoroughly learned the rudiments of military science under him that he was later to welcome him home as conqueror of Germany! What honours did he heap upon him, young though he was, making the magnificence of his triumph to correspond to the greatness of his deeds! How often did he honour the people with largesses, and how gladly, whenever he could do so with the Senate's sanction, did he raise to the required rating the fortunes of senators, but in such a way as not to encourage extravagant living, nor yet to allow senators to lose their rank because of honest poverty! With what honours did he send his beloved Germanicus to the provinces across the seas!... With what honour does he treat him while at the same time he holds him securely!

Here, Velleius has to deal with the incredibly tense relationship between Tiberius and his adoptive son Germanicus.⁵⁵ The latter was much more popular in Rome than the sombre Tiberius, indeed after Augustus' death

there had been those calling for Germanicus to be declared *princeps* immediately. While Germanicus had immediately rejected this proposal, his unauthorized journey to Egypt a few years later, which violated the rule forbidding senators to enter this province without authorisation and where he allowed himself to receive honours derived from the ancient Egyptian cult of the ruler, was clear provocation. His ultimately unexplained death in AD 19, the role subsequently played by his widow Agrippina in the 20s, and Sejanus' cruel proceeding against her under the pretence of imminent high treason, compelled Velleius to write with the utmost caution. His literary counter-strategy is obvious: he emphasizes how respectfully Tiberius treated Germanicus, so that implicitly Germanicus is branded as ungrateful since he nonetheless did not act with unquestioning loyalty.

This impression of the significance of the term *honor* is confirmed when we look at Velleius' report about events when Tiberius came to rule. At that time it was inevitably feared that the whole world might sink into chaos, and yet Tiberius hesitated for some time to enter upon the succession:

una tamen ueluti luctatio ciuitatis fuit, pugnantis cum Caesare senatus populique Romani ut stationi paternae succederet, illius ut potius aequalem ciuem quam eminentem liceret agere principem. tandem magis ratione quam **honore** uictus est, cum quicquid tuendum non suscepisset periturum uideret; solique huic contigit paene diutius recusare principatum quam ut occuparent eum alii armis pugnauerant. Post redditum caelo patrem et corpus eius humanis **honoribus**, numen diuinis **honoratum**, primum principalium eius operum fuit ordinatio comitiorum, quam manu sua scriptam diuus Augustus reliquerat.

There was, however, in one respect what might be called a struggle in the state: the Senate and the Roman people wrestled with Caesar to induce him to succeed to the position of his father, while he on his side strove for permission to play the part of a citizen on a parity with the rest rather than that of an emperor over all. At last he was prevailed upon rather by reason than by the honour, since he saw that whatever he did not undertake to protect was likely to perish. He is the only man to whose lot it has fallen to refuse the Principate for a longer time, almost, than others had fought with weapons to secure it. After heaven had claimed his father, and human honours had been paid to his body as divine honours were paid to his soul, the first of his tasks as emperor was the regulation of the comitia, instructions for which Augustus had left in his own handwriting. (Vell. 2.124.2–3)

The question of the *recusatio imperii* and *dissimulatio*, which – as already mentioned – is treated pre-eminently by Tacitus, but also by Suetonius, need not concern us here. For our purposes, what is important is the reciprocal usage of *honor*: Tiberius is reluctant to be honoured by the

Senate, even when he is meant to receive the highest position in the state, yet after having taken on the rule he is able to endow his dead predecessor and adoptive father with *honores*; this likewise is an act which is simultaneously entirely natural and also bears the hallmarks of a hierarchical organisation.

It is clear that the eulogy which Velleius gives to the rule of Tiberius at the end of his work in 2.126 is by no means just a colourful miscellany of catch-words but purposefully harks back to the store of Roman value terms and notions, and has a clearly conservative quality. This combination also reveals how Velleius measures the Roman state and its citizens in their actions by Tiberius' standard, in that he assigns or denies them a particular share not only in power but also in ideological concepts. In this way, the value discourse in Velleius fits the general conception of his historical work. He is concerned not just with an informative and easily tractable universal history. Rather, the whole history of the world and especially that of Rome from its foundation is governed by a teleological premise: it takes its definition from the person of the ruler of the day. I am inclined not to impute opportunism to the author but to grant him sincerity based on biographical and also socio-historical reasons. (On this see Schmitzer 2000, *passim*.) Seldom has there been – at least in antiquity – a work more loyal than that of Velleius Paterculus.

Perhaps we can see here the last vestiges of a conservative discourse of the early Empire in which the traditional values of the *res publica libera* are transplanted into the new framework of the Principate and thus were meant to undergo a quite innovative synthesis that was also new. The catalyst for this specific combination is Tiberius' similarly conservative nature, which very much irked Tacitus, but which in Velleius' eyes represented the incarnation of his social ideal. This is quite new, in that it leads beyond the forms of historiography that were known to Rome up to that point. And it is innovative in another way – compare the analogy closest in time, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. There the author also arrives at his own period within the framework of a universal historical overview (the difference that one is poetry the other prose is not significant in this context). There likewise the concrete actions of the ruler's predecessor are mentioned, and there too the reign of the current ruler is extolled only in general panegyric fashion, without an assessment of individual actions. This parallel is reinforced further by the fact that in Ovid as in Velleius a prayer for the ruler – respectively, Augustus and Tiberius – stands at the end, something which, in surviving literature, recurs only much later, as in Pliny's Panegyricus to the emperor Trajan. It appears that we are

uncovering a widespread rhetorical method of the early Empire, which aligns the writing of contemporary history much more closely with poetry of contemporary slant than with a ruler's own account of himself, the *Res Gestae*.

Through this combination of thematic and formal innovation, dispensing for understandable reasons with the detailed recounting of concrete historical facts, Velleius finds his way to the conclusion of his catalogue of values. The current *princeps* is allowed to become an exemplary character of exemplary behaviour:

nam facere recte ciues suos princeps optimus faciendo docet, cumque sit imperio maximus, exemplo maior est.

for the best of emperors teaches his citizens to do right by doing it himself, and though he is greatest among us in authority, he is still greater in the example which he sets. (2.126.3)

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Notes

¹ The present chapter deals mainly with traditional German approaches to Latin studies, and accordingly restricts itself to secondary literature in German. Among work in other languages, one fundamental study is Syme (1939), 149–161, 276–330.

² The text quoted is that of Watt (1998).

³ English translations are taken from Shipley (1924).

⁴ Woodman (1977), 236–244.

⁵ What follows is of course based on Schmitzer (2000) (here: 300f.). However, I have attempted to take the opportunity to investigate further aspects not covered previously. Secondary sources already listed there are usually not referenced again. On the character of Velleius' work see now also Lobur (2007) and Gowing (2007).

⁶ Cf. overall Christ (2001).

⁷ Cf. on this Schmitzer (2000) *passim*.

⁸ A fundamental study is Christ (2003).

⁹ See also, however, the important compilation by Hellegouarc'h (1963) who has done much in particular for Velleius.

¹⁰ Hiltbrunner 1981–1992 which otherwise would be a most useful tool has unfortunately only reached the lemma *cura*.

¹¹ See on this Rebenich (2005) and Schmidt (1995).

¹² E.g. Peter Lebrecht Schmidt, 'Philology', Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World, English edition by Hubert Cancik and Helmuth Schneider, Leiden, Brill, 2002–.

¹³ Heinze (1925).

¹⁴ Heinze (1929); against Fränkel (1916).

¹⁵ Cf. esp. the widely-used compilation by Oppermann (1967); in addition Malitz (1998).

¹⁶ Drexler (1944), Drexler (1988), Wegeler (1996), 244–253.

¹⁷ Cf. Malitz (1998) 541.

¹⁸ Crawford (1974) no. 505/4; cf. as a key work Classen (1986).

¹⁹ Galinsky (1996) 80–90 (in the context of the chapter ‘Ideas, Ideals, Values’); Kienast (2009) 95–98.

²⁰ Cf. RIC Tiberius 47 (Salus) and RIC Tiberius 45 (Pax).

²¹ Thorne (2000).

²² <http://www.tu-dresden.de/sulifkp/Werte/Wertbegriff0.htm> (14/5/2010).

²³ Rebenich (2005) 45f: ‘An die zentralen Konzepte der ‘politisch-sozialen Begriffswelt’ müssen klar definierte sozial-, politik-, kultur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Fragestellungen herangetragen werden. Die Untersuchungen dürfen sich nicht in Wortgeschichte und Lexikometrie erschöpfen. Vielmehr ist der Prozeß darzustellen, durch den ein Wort zu einem Begriff wurde und durch den seine Bedeutungen sich veränderten.’

²⁴ Thus a contribution by Bianca-Jeanette Schröder on *pietas* is to be published soon (in the journal *Gymnasium*), which will provide a wholly new basis for our knowledge of this term’s semantic history and structure by means of an unprejudiced examination of all the available Latin linguistic evidence.

²⁵ Cf. on this also Schmitzer (2000) 190–255 on Fortuna in Velleius.

²⁶ Other value terms outside of 2.126 taken from the Dresden project (see note 22), which this article does not deal with are *aequitas, ambitio, amicitia, amor, auctoritas, avaritia, bellum, bellum iustum, beneficium, benevolentia, clementia, comitas, concordia, conscientia, crudelitas, cura, decorum, dignitas, diligentia, disciplina, elegantia, exemplum, felicitas, fides, gloria, gratia, grauitas, bonos, hospitium, humanitas, imperium, inuidia, ius, iustitia, labor, liberalitas, libertas, luxuria, magnitudo animi, maiestas, moderatio, modestia, mos (maiorum), negotium, nobilitas, officium, ordo, otium, patria, pax, pietas, potentia, potestas, princeps, prudentia, pudicitia, pudor, religio, res publica, sapientia, societas, spes, superbia, temperantia, urbanitas, uerecundia, ueritas, uirtus*. They can easily be found using the Velleius-Thesaurus: Elefante 1992.

²⁷ Lobur (2008) sets slightly different accents, esp. 94–127 on the meaning of notions of unity and harmony in Velleius.

²⁸ Fränkel (1916), Heinze (1929).

²⁹ Cf. most recently also Clark (2007) (regarding Velleius only concerning 2.3.1, but with brief remarks about the deity *Fides* in general); see for a start Freyburger (1986).

³⁰ Cf. Thome (2000) II. 64–66; Thes. VI. 1, s.v. *fides*, 665.26–665.72.

³¹ See Elefante (1997) 175f.

³² Cf. Elefante (1997) 36; Woodman (1983) 136; the treatment in *Thes. Ling. Lat.* VI, 1, sv. *fides* offers little illumination: **II ea qualitas hominum uel rerum, qua iis confidere licet: A de hominibus (raro tantum et translate de rebus): i. q. fidelitas, constantia, bonestas sim.** (E. Fränkel) – On the question of an original neutral meaning of *fides* or one that developed over time see Heinze (1929) esp. 147–149.

³³ Cf. on this Wiemer (2002) *passim*.

³⁴ This passage also reveals how Roman values, especially *fides*, are ‘bound to actions’; cf. Haltenhoff (2005) 86: ‘*fides* ist *fides*-Handeln’ [*fides* is acting with *fides*].

³⁵ Schmitzer (2000) 298.

³⁶ Woodman (1997) 148 points out that *sequitur fidem* is a primarily legal phrase

which Velleius here transposes to a wholly different context; *Theo. Ling. Lat.* VI, 1, s.v. *fides*, 664, 75–665, 1.

³⁷ Woodman (1997) 251–255.

³⁸ Cf. Binder (1971) 62–65.

³⁹ Schmitzer (2000) 300.

⁴⁰ Cf. Kuntze (1985) 110–117.

⁴¹ Schmitzer (2000) 293.

⁴² *Theo. Ling. Lat.* VII, 2, s.v. *iustus*, 720.33–721.65.

⁴³ Schmitzer (2007) 399–417; Gruber (2008).

⁴⁴ Rosenstein (1990); Will (1983).

⁴⁵ Schmitzer (2000) 80.

⁴⁶ Graeber (2001) 215 and *passim*.

⁴⁷ Cf. Kienast (2009) 84f.

⁴⁸ Sietz (1974).

⁴⁹ Woodman (1983) 252–254.

⁵⁰ Schmitzer (2000) 301.

⁵¹ Woodman (1983) 85.

⁵² Schmitzer (2004); Thorne (2000) II, 85–116; Kuntze (1985) 187–199.

⁵³ Kuntze (1985) 117–120.

⁵⁴ Schmitzer (2000) 107f.

⁵⁵ Schmitzer (2000) 271–279.