CHAPTER 3

The Augustan Transformation

The last two chapters explored how Roman thinkers used the metaphor of the body politic to respond to the increasing turbulence of Late Republican politics. Chapter 1 began with the Fable of the Belly, which figured the senate and people as interdependent parts of an autonomous organism. As civil strife exposed the difficulty of achieving consensus within this structural framework, however, imagery of a body that had lost its physical coherence began to proliferate. Chapter 2 traced a moralizing tradition that identified vices as contagions that had spread from the elite to the citizenry at large. Both chapters foregrounded the pivotal year of 63 BCE, when Catiline and Cicero articulated two rival visions of the *res publica* on the senate floor. Catiline described the senate and people as two separate bodies that should be governed by different heads, challenging the ideal of civic unity and revealing his monarchical ambitions. Cicero rejected his proposal by comparing Rome to an organism sickened by statesmen acting against its interests. Identifying Catiline and his co-conspirators as malignancies in need of amputation, he portrayed himself as a civic healer dispensing remedies on behalf of the Republic. He maintained this persona even after his consulship came to an end, suggesting that exemplary statesmanship could serve as a solution to civil strife. He thereby joined Catiline in using organic imagery to rethink the relationship between the statesman and *res publica*.

Between the Battle of Actium and the Year of the Four Emperors, Roman thinkers reimagined the shape of their political community in response to the implementation of sole rule. In a process that began under Augustus, became explicit under Tiberius, and peaked under Nero, the models of the healer and the head of state converged around the figure of the *princeps*. Their divergent Republican pasts, however, invested them with very different Imperial trajectories. Thanks in large part to Cicero, the ideal of the civic healer had already been integrated into normative political language. As a result, it could be used to describe the

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nascent Principate with relative ease. Horace and Vergil took the first steps in this direction, while Ovid more fully exploited the political resonance of medical metaphors. It was only under Tiberius, however, that such rhetoric began to be systematically tied to the end of the civil wars. The head of state metaphor, in contrast, had regal connotations that located it outside the boundaries of acceptable political language. To employ it in relation to Augustus would have been an admission of his seizure of power and a violation of the still dominant paradigm of Roman Republicanism. Yet for a discourse community steeped in organic imagery, the comparison was ripe for exploitation. The next two chapters show how those writing under the early Principate responded to this quandary. Unwilling to use capital symbolism in relation to the present, they instead incorporated it into their narratives of the Republican past. By investing the head of state metaphor with the ancestral pedigree that it historically lacked, they eventually made it available for contemporary usage.

This story begins with Livy, whose first pentad identifies three phases in the life cycle of the Roman body politic: a regal *corpus* governed by a *caput*, an autonomous organism akin to that described in the Fable of the Belly, and a reconciliation of these two models under the exemplary leadership of Camillus. The carefully crafted imagistic arc culminates in the celebration of Camillus as the *caput rei Romanae*. Arguing that Rome has always relied on extraordinary statesmen for its success, Livy's narrative resolves the apparent paradox of a Republican head of state. When the late Augustan poet Cornelius Severus praised Cicero as the *patriae caput*, he applied Livy's historical lesson to more recent events. Around the same time, Ovid took the bold step of calling Augustus the *caput orbis*. Mining the ambiguity latent in this symbolism, his exilic poetry reveals an imagistic framework in the midst of transition. The fact of this transition confirms that Roman thinkers were under no illusions about the constitutional changes wrought after Actium. Figurative speech provided an avenue to explore them without transgressing the boundaries of a discourse community that remained committed to traditional modes of expression. In the place of a radical rupture in political language was a more gradual process of adaptation and accommodation over the span of half a century.

The Curative Powers of the *Princeps*

Over the course of the Principate, Augustus became the prototypical healer of the body politic in Roman political discourse. According to Tacitus, the supporters who gathered at his funeral justified his seizure of power in these

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terms: *non aliud discordantis patriae remedium fuisse quam ut ab uno regeretur* ("There was no other remedy for the strife-ridden country than to be ruled by one man," Tac. *Ann*. 1.9.4). Identifying sole rule as the only viable remedy for discord, Tacitus articulates a key tenet of the *apologia* for the Principate that became normative during the second century CE.[1] Dio puts the same sentiment in the mouth of Tiberius, whose eulogy for his adoptive father compares him to a physician: ὥσπερ τις ἰατρὸς ἀγαθὸς σῶμα νενοσηκὸς παραλαβὼν καὶ ἐξιασάμενος, ἀπέδωκε πάντα ὑμῖν ὑγιᾶ ποιήσας ("Like a good doctor taking hold of and curing a body that has grown ill, he handed back everything to you after making it healthy," Cass. Dio 56.39.2).[2] Tacitus and Dio were not alone in tracing the origins of this rhetorical tradition back to the Augustan era, but contemporary evidence suggests that the portrayal of the first *princeps* in these terms only emerged under Tiberius.[3] Those writing under Augustus were more circumspect about the long-term stakes of his position. They instead invoked the theme of healing in generalized terms, assigning curative powers to the *princeps* without explicitly tying them to the end of the civil wars. Even so, they facilitated the process by which Cicero's ideal of the civic healer made its way into the burgeoning paradigm of Imperial panegyric. Their efforts exemplify the gradual reworking and renegotiation of Republican political language in a new constitutional context.

We might begin by asking whether Augustus played a role in the circulation of medical imagery in relation to his rule.[4] While there is little evidence that he actively encouraged his representation in these terms, he did cultivate a privileged relationship with Apollo, a deity linked to medicine, that might have pointed thinkers in this direction. As we saw in the last chapter, the relationship between the Julian *gens* and cult of Apollo went back to the fifth century BCE. Caesar likely advertised the connection during his dictatorship, but it was Octavian who made it central to his public persona. By vowing the Temple of Apollo on the

[1] See Syme 1986: 448 on "the medical metaphor."

[2] Dio attributes the same rhetoric to Livia, who advises Augustus to use surgery and cautery sparingly: Ἦ οὐχ ὁρᾷς ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἰατροὶ τὰς μὲν τομὰς καὶ τὰς καύσεις σπανιώτατά τισι προσφέρουσιν, ἵνα μὴ ἐξαγριαίνωσιν αὐτῶν τὰ νοσήματα, τοῖς δὲ αἰονήμασι καὶ τοῖς ἠπίοις φαρμάκοις τὰ πλείω μαλθάσσοντες θεραπεύουσι; ("Do you not see that even physicians very rarely apply surgery and cautery to patients, so that they don't worsen their diseases, but for the most part relieve and heal them with ointments and mild remedies?" Cass. Dio 55.17.1). Although Dio's speeches are of little value as sources of Augustan history (Swan 2004: 27), it is perhaps worth noting the recurrence of the same metaphor in a similar context at Sen. *Clem.* 1.9.6 (on which see further discussion in Ch. 5).

[3] For Augustus as the *salubris princeps*, see also Suet. *Aug.* 42.1.

[4] In exploring this question, however, we should keep in mind that "'Augustanism' was not a dogma conceived by a small band and handed down to a receptive, passive audience," (Feeney 1992: 3).

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Palatine in 36 BCE, he tied his victory in the civil wars to the god's protection.[5] Apollo's connection to healing became relevant when Gaius Sosius, an Antonian partisan, began restoration on the Temple of Apollo Medicus in 34 BCE. T. P. Wiseman suggests that Sosius transformed the temple into "the *monumentum* of an enemy of the new regime."[6] Whether Roman viewers interpreted the resulting monument in relation to the antipathy of the triumviral era or the clemency of Octavian, who pardoned Sosius, it is clear that Apollo Medicus had taken on a degree of political import.[7] Octavian's connection to the temple was flagged through its dedication date, which was his birthday, and its pedimental sculptures, which featured an Amazonomachy applicable to his victory over Cleopatra.[8] It was reinforced through the circulation of the story about Atia's coupling with Apollo, which identified the temple as the site of his conception.[9] The figurative significance of the relationship, however, was left to others to articulate.[10]

In the first book of the *Odes*, published in 23 BCE, Horace ties the medicinal powers of Apollo to the civic renewal over which the new *princeps* presided.[11] This project takes center stage in *Od.* 1.21, which addresses Apollo, Diana, and Latona, the triad featured on the Palatine Temple of Apollo. Encouraging a chorus of children to direct their prayers towards these deities, Horace suggests that they will persuade Apollo to expel disease from the people and *princeps*: *hic bellum lacrimosum, hic miseram famem | pestemque a populo et principe Caesare in | Persas atque Britannos | vestra motus aget prece* ("He, moved by your prayer, will drive mournful war, terrible famine, and disease away from the people and Caesar as *princeps* and towards the Persians and Britons," Hor. *Od.* 1.21.13–6).[12] The traditional *SPQR* is replaced by *populus et princeps*,

[5] The importance of Apollo to Augustus' self-presentation, especially in relation to the Temple of Apollo Palatine, has been extensively treated. See Lange 2009: 166–80; Miller 2009: 185–252; Zink 2008; Gurval 1995: 87–136; Zanker 1988: 50–3; Kellum 1985.

[6] Wiseman 1984: 125.

[7] Miller 2009: 176 agrees with Wiseman that Octavian and Sosius "contested for Apollo topographically during the 30s," but argues that the former's pardon of the latter allowed the Temple of Apollo Medicus to be interpreted in relation to the ideal of clemency. Gurval 1995: 119 doubts that the building projects of Sosius and Octavian were competitive or confrontational.

[8] See Dowling 2006: 127–31 and Kellum 1997: 161–3.

[9] Suet. *Aug.* 94.4; Cass. Dio 45.1.2.

[10] Zanker 1988: 50 argues that Octavian's "sense of mission and his entire program for healing Rome's wounds bore the stamp of Apollo." Miller 2009: 28–9 describes this scenario as possible but never made explicit.

[11] Tarrant 2020: 43 stresses the influence of the *Odes*' composition date (30–23 BCE) on the text.

[12] Miller 2009: 268 compares Livy's description of the vowing of the Temple of Apollo Medicus: *multa duumviri . . . avertendaeque a populo pestis causa fecere* ("The *duumvirs* did many things to avert pestilence from the people," Liv. 4.25.3).

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a revision of Republican political language that collapses the distinction between Rome's citizenry and its first citizen.[13] The vitality of both is safeguarded by Apollo, who uses his healing powers to end violence at home and direct it towards enemies abroad.[14] The future tense of the verb, in turn, conveys confidence in the realization of this wish. Alluding to the Temple of Apollo Palatinus through his choice of dedicatees yet evoking the Temple of Apollo Medicus through his prayer, Horace integrates both monuments into a celebration of civic restoration. He returns to Apollo's curative capacities in *Od.* 1.31, which addresses a prayer for health to the god, and *Od.* 1.32, in which Apollo's lyre acts as a salve. While these poems address healing on a more personal level than *Od.* 1.21, they also assert the relevance of public life to the private pursuit of poetry.[15] They link Horace's well-being with that of Rome, which is secured by the favor of Apollo. Insofar as the god's beneficence stems from the honorific efforts of the *princeps*, the health of the *res publica* indirectly depends upon him.

Horace further develops this theme in the *Carmen Saeculare*, commissioned by Augustus for performance at the Secular Games in 17 BCE.[16] The poem foregrounds imagery of a *res publica* that has been restored to its ancestral vitality.[17] After celebrating the abundance of crops nourished by Jupiter's salubrious showers and breezes, Horace urges Apollo to put down his spear and become a pacific god.[18] Leaving "the Actian Apollo behind," as Richard Thomas puts it, Horace recasts him as a god of peace.[19] Among the roles that he will now play is that of a healer: *qui salutari levat arte fessos | corporis artus* ("He who alleviates the wearied limbs of the body with his healing art," Hor. *Carm. saec.* 63–4). Tying his medicinal abilities to the longevity of Rome, Horace continues, *si Palatinas videt aequus aras, | remque Romanam Latiumque felix | alterum in lustrum meliusque semper |*

[13] Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 254 call Horace's coupling of *populus* et *princeps* "frankly shocking." On Horace's equation of Augustus' and the *res publica*'s well-being, see Lowrie 2016: 77–8.

[14] La Bua 2013: 269 argues that for Horace, "war at the edges of the empire acts as a purgation of civil bloodshed."

[15] The dedication of the Palatine Temple is explicit at Hor. *Od.* 1.31.1 (*dedicatum . . . Apollinem*) and implicit in *Od.* 1.32, which sustains the thematic focus of the previous poem (see Babcock 1967). Miller 2009: 222 and Santirocco 1986: 71 stress the intersection of private and public in these poems.

[16] On the circumstances surrounding the Secular Games and Horace's performance, see Galinsky 1996: 100–6. Barchiesi 2002: 108 stresses the importance of interpreting the poem in its ritual setting.

[17] While Zanker 1988: 167 interprets the *Carmen Saeculare* as a key element in the proclamation of a new Golden Age, Galinsky 1996: 102 argues that Horace stops short of this idea. Barker 1996 suggests that Horace in fact critiques the notion of a renascence, an argument extended by Zanker 2010.

[18] *nutriant fetus et aquae salubres | et Iovis aurae. | condito mitis placidusque telo | supplices audi pueros, Apollo* (Hor. *Carm. saec.* 31–4).

[19] Thomas 2011: *ad loc*.

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prorogat aevum ("If he looks favorably upon the Palatine altars, he extends Rome's affairs and Latium's fortune for another cycle and ever better age," Hor. *Carm. saec.* 65–8). As the one who has secured the divine favor that will prolong the lifespan of the *res publica*, Augustus assumes implicit responsibility for the health of the body politic.[20] This idea was reinforced by the prayer that the *princeps* delivered on the second night of the games, which enjoined the gods to increase the *maiestas* and *imperium* of the Roman people and secure their *victoria* and *valetudo*.[21] His supplication worked alongside Horace's poem to harness the curative powers of Apollo on behalf of a renewed *res publica*.

At first glance, Vergil seems to complicate Horace's effort to link the curative properties of Apollo to the figure of Augustus. A well-known passage from *Aeneid* 12 links the inefficacy of Apollonic medicine to the Julian *gens*. Describing how the physician Iapyx fails to heal Aeneas of the wound inflicted by Turnus, Vergil writes, *multa manu medica Phoebique potentibus herbis | nequiquam trepidat* ("With his healing hand and the potent herbs of Phoebus, he bustles about in vain," Verg. *Aen.* 12.402–3). Implicating the god in the failure but providing no explanation for it, he simply comments, *nihil auctor Apollo | subvenit* ("Apollo's counsel provides no help," Verg. *Aen.* 12.405–6). Scholars have long puzzled over this scene, which seems to challenge the privileged relationship between Apollo Medicus and the ancestors of Augustus.[22] Yet Julia Hawkins points out that by deemphasizing Apollo's curative abilities, Vergil is able to reassign them to Aeneas' own mother.[23] Disturbed by her son's pain, Venus journeys to Crete to retrieve the medicinal herb dittany. Steeping it in river water and applying it to his wound, she cures her son in secret: *occulte medicans* (Verg. *Aen.* 12.418). Vergil's characterization of Venus as a healer well-versed in botanical lore finds no parallel in extant Latin literature, though Hawkins points out that the goddess was linked to medical botany

[20] The poem does not praise the *princeps* directly, Putnam 2000: 5 notes, but rather the version of Rome realized under his rule.

[21] *CIL* 6.32323.93–99. See Schnegg 2020: 128–34 for text and commentary. On the prayer's integration of the *princeps*, his family, and the Roman people, see Sumi 2005: 244.

[22] See Tarrant 2012: *ad loc.* 391–7 on the "difficult questions" raised by Apollo's portrayal. Miller 2009: 179 argues that Apollo's unwillingness to heal Aeneas "remains a very troubling moment, in terms of both the narrative and the god's imperial significance." Nicoll 2001: 193–4 lays the blame on Iapyx for falling short of heroic ideals, while Stok 1988: 65–181 emphasizes the disjuncture between the divine and human practice of medicine.

[23] Hawkins 2004: 79. Skinner 2007: 95–7 interprets Venus' role more ambivalently; by curing Aeneas with dittany, a herb linked to Dido earlier in the text, Vergil suggests that the palliation of Aeneas' suffering is only temporary.

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in the cult practices of the Greek East.[24] Perhaps evoking this association, Vergil grants the Julian *gens* its own ancestral healing knowledge.[25] He thereby joins Horace in connecting the *princeps* to the medical arts via a divine intermediary.[26] Characteristic of a tradition that is just beginning to develop rather than one that is fully fledged, their shared project laid the conceptual groundwork for later engagements with this theme.

The earliest extant author to explicitly attribute healing powers to the *princeps* was G. Valgius Rufus, a member of Maecenas' literary circle and suffect consul in 12 BCE.[27] The Elder Pliny reports that he left behind an unfinished treatise on medicinal herbs that was dedicated to Augustus. Summarizing its contents, Pliny writes, *inchoata etiam praefatione religiosa, ut omnibus malis humanis illius potissimum principis semper mederetur maiestas* ("His devout preface began with the hope that the *maiestas* of that *princeps* especially would always heal all human ills," Plin. *Nat. Hist.* 25.4). Whereas Vergil and Horace implicitly connect Augustus to healing through Venus and Apollo, Valgius Rufus posits a more direct relationship. He promises to convey literal medical knowledge to the *princeps*, who already possesses figurative knowledge about healing mankind. In a particularly revealing formulation, he attributes these curative capacities to Augustus' *maiestas* rather than his personage. A key constitutional innovation of the Principate was the evolution of *maiestas* from an attribute of the Roman people to one of the *princeps*. This transfer indicated the practical relocation of governing authority from the collective to the individual.[28] Valgius Rufus reflects and reinforces the conceptual shift through the verb *medeor*, which frames the *maiestas* of Augustus as a boon to the *res publica*.[29]

[24] Hawkins 2004: 90–1. She notes that Pompey brought Mithridates' botanical treatises back to Rome as *spolia* and displayed them in the *Porticus Pompeiana*, over which Venus presided as patron. On the illustrated books of Mithridates' "plant library," see Kuttner 1999: 345. She stresses Augustus' rededication of the complex in 32 BCE, which is interpreted as a "symbolic statement of his own stewardship of Republican *gloria*," (350).

[25] Hawkins 2004: 79.

[26] Armstrong 2019: 167 stresses the coexistence of "good botanical certainties" with "the supernatural and miraculous" in Vergil's construction of this scene.

[27] See Dahlmann 1983: 34–47 for the collected fragments of Valgius Rufus, who is primarily associated with elegy but also composed epigrams, bucolic poetry, and rhetorical works. Farrell 2004: 52 sees him as exemplary of the shift in literary authorship towards lower-ranking professionals with ties to the *domus Augusta*. Kronenberg 2018 proposes that Macer, a mysterious poet mentioned by Tibullus and Ovid, is a pseudonym for Valgius Rufus.

[28] Bauman 1967 addresses the evolution of *maiestas* from a legal perspective, while Ando 2011b: 105 argues that the attribution of *maiestas* to the *princeps* rather than *populus Romanus* was "part of a conceptual and social revolution that received only gradual articulation in contemporary political theoretical discourse, which culminated . . . in Ulpian's *lex regia*." Fantham 2006: 406 considers the appearance of this concept in Augustan poetry.

[29] Cicero often uses this verb in relation to the body politic (e.g. Cic. *Agr.* 1.27; Cic. *Sest.* 31).

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Invoking the ills of humanity rather than those of Rome, however, he still stops short of portraying Augustus as an explicitly civic healer.

Ovid provides the most direct, yet also most ambivalent, evidence for Augustus' curative capacities. Repeatedly figuring his expulsion from Rome as a wound (*vulnus*), his exilic poetry revolves around the search for a cure.[30] The programmatic importance of this quest emerges in the opening poem of the *Tristia*, which asserts, *namque ea vel nemo, vel qui mihi vulnera fecit | solus Achilleo tollere more potest* ("For either no one is able to heal these wounds, or, in the fashion of Achilles, only the one who gave them to me can," Ov. *Tr.* 1.1.99–100).[31] Ovid uses the tale of Telephus, who was wounded and healed by the spear of Achilles, as a mythological model for his quest to be absolved by the one who hurt him.[32] Identifying Augustus as both the source of and remedy for his wounds, he exposes the porous boundary between healing and harming. He returns to this idea in Book 5, explaining, *Telephus aeterna consumptus tabe perisset, | si non, quae nocuit, dextra tulisset opem* ("Telephus would have perished, consumed by an eternal infection, had not the hand that harmed him brought him aid," Ov. *Tr.* 5.2.15–6). Making the analogous powers of Achilles and Augustus explicit, he continues, *et mea, si facinus nullum commisimus, opto, | vulnera qui fecit, facta levare velit* ("And my wounds, if I have committed no crime, I beg that he who made them be willing to heal them," Ov. *Tr.* 5.2.17–8). In granting Augustus the ability to alleviate his injuries, Ovid portrays him as a healer in more explicit fashion than Horace or Vergil. Yet he also suggests that his medicinal powers derive from the same authority that allowed him to cause harm in the first place.[33] Which path the *princeps* selects seems less important than the fact that he alone gets to decide.[34]

Whereas the *Tristia* chips away at the salience of the boundary of healing and harming, the *Epistulae ex Ponto* expresses skepticism towards the efficacy of medicine and its practitioners. This theme comes to the fore in *Pont.* 1.3, a poem addressed to G. Vibius Rufinus that stands out for its

[30] e.g. Ov. *Trist.* 1.1.99–100; 3.6.29; 3.11.19; 4.1.36; 4.1.97; 4.4.41–2; 5.1.52; 5.2.9–10; 5.7.34. Ovid's engagement with this theme responded to the elegiac tradition, which frequently mined the intersection between love and ill health. See Hejduk 2011; Fish 2004; Nagle 1980: 61–70.

[31] For Ovid's "overt use of mythic victimology," see Hinds 2007: 198.

[32] Claassen 2001: 26 identifies the Telephus episode as one of many myths rendered self-referential through their retelling in the exilic poetry. See also Ov. *Tr.* 2.1.19–20.

[33] McGowan 2009: 14 illustrates how Ovid's apparent submissiveness is undercut "by the lingering image of a capricious autocrat."

[34] I paraphrase Lowrie 2009: 364–5.

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sustained medical imagery.[35] Ovid opens the poem with the prospect of healing, thanking his addressee for restoring strength to a body wounded by a terrible blow (*acerbo saucius ictu*, Ov. *Pont.* 1.3.7).[36] As quickly as he introduces the prospect of recovery, however, he withdraws it again: *non tamen exhibuit tantas facundia vires, | ut mea sint dictis pectora sana tuis* ("Nevertheless, your eloquence is not so strong that my heart is healed by your words," Ov. *Pont.* 1.3.11–2).[37] Rejecting the notion that time might act as a salve, he continues, *tempore ducetur longo fortasse cicatrix: | horrent admotas vulnera cruda manus* ("Perhaps one day a scar will form; the bloody wound shies from the application of a hand," Ov. *Pont.* 1.3.15–6).[38] Ovid crafts a striking personification of his wound, which shrinks away from the surgeon's scalpel.[39] Its hesitation stems from the limitations of medicine in curing inveterate diseases: *non est in medico semper relevetur ut aeger: | interdum docta plus valet arte malum* ("It is not always in the power of a physician to alleviate the sick: sometimes a disease is stronger than a learned art," Ov. *Pont.* 1.3.17–8). Ovid's earlier portrayal of Augustus as a healer inflects the pessimism of this poem with political significance. It raises the possibility that the damage inflicted by the *princeps* exceeds the therapy that he is able – or willing – to provide. His healing hand, the subject of so much attention in the *Tristia*, largely recedes from view in the *Epistulae ex Ponto*. It is replaced by imagery of a wound left to fester: *vulneris id genus est quod, cum sanabile non sit, | non contrectari tutius esse puto* ("The wound is of such a sort that, since it cannot be cured, I think it safer not to be touched" Ov. *Pont.* 2.2.57–8).[40] Although the symbolism is oriented towards Ovid's personal experience of the political world, it carries troubling ramifications for all those whose well-being depends upon the beneficence of the *princeps*.

Ovid's medical metaphors complicate the panegyrical overtones of earlier Augustan poetry, mining the ambiguities latent in a rhetorical tradition that proliferated amid the conflicts of the Late Republic. Those writing under Tiberius did not sustain his line of critique, though it would emerge once more under Claudius and Nero. They instead began to make

[35] Ovid might have crafted this imagery in response to C. Vibius Rufinus' expertise in the medicinal use of plants, but it was also common in consolatory literature (see Morgan 2020: 97; Tissol 2014: 92; Davisson 1983: 176–8).

[36] Setting aside the example of Telephus, he compares himself to Philoctetes in these lines.

[37] Gaertner 2005: *ad loc.* discusses Ovid's reversal of the standard therapeutic language of consolatory treatises.

[38] Davisson 1983: 176 stresses the pessimism of these lines.

[39] On the Younger Pliny's imitation of this image (Plin. *Ep.* 5.16.11), see Tissol 2014: 26.

[40] See Ov. *Pont.* 3.7.25–6 for a similar sentiment.

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explicit that at which the Augustan poets only hinted: that the establishment of the Principate had cured a body politic ravaged by civil strife. Yet it was only in hindsight that they could perceive Rome's regeneration so clearly. Those who lived through the civil wars were enthusiastic at the prospect of Augustan healing but uncertain of its long-term ramifications. Their reticence makes an important point about political discourse during this era. Many of the linguistic and conceptual innovations that strike us as "Augustan" in fact crystallized under Tiberius. Only after Rome had been at peace for half a century did its thinkers begin to see sole rule as the remedy for civil war. In the formative years of the Principate, this lesson was far from self-evident.

Historicizing the Head of State

In the preface to his monumental history, Livy advertises his interest in reprising and reworking the theme of moral and civic decline considered in the last chapter.[41] He combines organic and structural metaphors to contrast Rome's illustrious past with its degenerate present, writing, *labante deinde paulatim disciplina velut dissidentes primo mores sequatur animo, deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint, tum ire coeperint praecipites, donec ad haec tempora quibus nec vitia nostra nec remedia pati possumus perventum est* ("Then let [the reader] note how, with discipline slipping bit by bit, at first morals crumbled, as it were, then declined more and more, then began to accelerate headlong, until we arrived at the present times, when we can bear neither our vices nor their cure," Liv. *Praef.* 9).[42] Like Sallust and Varro, Livy figures moral corruption as a disease that has infected the Roman citizenry at large.[43] Whereas they remain silent on the question of a cure, he confirms the existence of *remedia* that might restore Rome to health. The treatments to which he alludes have long been debated; Augustus' failed marriage legislation was once viewed as a likely

[41] Scholarly consensus once held that Livy began composition on the first pentad between 27 and 25 BCE, based primarily on his use of the name Augustus at 1.19.3 and 4.20.7. Yet Luce 1965, drawing on Soltau 1894, argued that these passages were later insertions and dated the first pentad around the time of Actium. His argument, reinforced by Burton 2000, has since gained fairly wide acceptance. On the uncertainty that the historian would have had to confront at this time, see Vasaly 2015: 3.

[42] Jaeger 1997: 6 discusses "the architectural metaphor of the construction and collapse of a massive edifice."

[43] On "the Sallustian analysis of Rome's decline" in the preface, see Moles 1993: 159–60. Yet Syme 1959: 54 argues that in both his style and politics, "Sallust was repellent to Livy."

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referent, but one-man rule has since gained interpretive favor.[44] In my view, however, the ambiguity is productive. It reflects the uncertainty of the era, in which neither the long-term rule of Augustus nor the establishment of a new constitutional form were clear.[45] Unwilling to take an explicit stance on these questions, Livy leaves it to his readers to fill in the blanks. His use of the plural works to similar ends, allowing for the possibility of multiple remedies that operate at different levels in the text.[46] Foremost among them in the preface is the practice of historiography, the therapeutic power of which is conveyed through adjectives of good health (*salubre ac frugiferum*, Liv. *Praef.* 10). By examining the customs and policies that enabled the ancestral vitality of the body politic, he suggests, readers might be able to chart a course back to its contemporary regeneration.

In the first pentad of his history, Livy depicts a civic organism that changes its shape in response to constitutional developments. This arc begins with Romulus, who is identified as the king and father of the city in Book 1 (*regem parentemque urbis Romanae,* Liv. 1.16.3).[47] Equating his establishment of the law with the creation of a body politic, Livy writes, *rebus divinis rite perpetratis vocataque ad concilium multitudine quae coalescere in populi unius corpus nulla re praeterquam legibus poterat, iura dedit* ("After divine matters were properly established and the crowd was called to the assembly, he gave it a system of law, for it was not able to coalesce into the body of a single people by any means except through laws," Liv. 1.8.1). Like Cicero's Scipio, Livy makes a clear distinction between a crowd (*multitudo*) and a people (*populus*); the former might reside in the same place, but the latter share the same values.[48] The codification of these

[44] Dessau 1903 initially proposed the Augustan marriage legislation as the referent of *remedium*, but the argument has lost favor since Badian 1985 questioned the existence of this legislation in the first place. For one-man rule as more fitting, see Syme 1959: 42; Woodman 1988: 132–4; von Haehling 1989: 19, 213–5. Drawing on Walsh 1955: 370, Burton 2008: 83–5 suggests instead that Livy's remedies are "of a specifically *moral* kind."

[45] Woodman 1988: 134 asserts that Livy and his contemporaries knew that autocracy would result from the civil wars, but Burton 2000: 446 stresses the uncertainty of a world "tottering on the edge of destruction."

[46] Moles 1993: 153 describes *remedia* as a "true plural, alluding both to one-man rule and to the moral value of AUC history." Hammer 2014: 229–70 approaches Livy's political thought as a form of *remedium*.

[47] Romulus' role as the father of Rome was well-established by the time Livy wrote (e.g. *huius urbis parens Romulus*, Cic. *Div.* 1.3). For the lessons that Livy embeds in the figure of Romulus, see Stem 2007.

[48] For Cicero's famous distinction between a *multitudo* and a *populus*, see *Rep.* 1.39.

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values into a legal system enables the realization of a civic community.[49] The key term *corpus*, reinforced through the verb *coalesco*, signifies the shift. This cohesive organism serves an ideal that the Roman citizenry will struggle to sustain over the course of the first pentad.[50]

The unity of the body politic established by Romulus is first called into question in the power vacuum created by his death.[51] Faced with choosing a new king, the Romans and Sabines begin to sort themselves along ethnic lines. The problem, Livy explains, is that each side wants the new king to be drawn from its own body: *sui corporis creari regem volebant* (Liv. 1.17.2). The emergence of these separate bodies looks back to the Rape of the Sabine Women, a crisis only recently resolved through the merging of two rival political communities into one: *civitatem unam ex duabus faciunt* (Liv. 1.13.4).[52] Although this legend rendered Rome a city doubled from its earliest years (*geminata urbe*, Liv. 1.13.5), it was still able to achieve concord under the command of Romulus. In his absence, however, division threatens to devolve into factionalism (*factionibus inter ordines certabatur*, Liv. 1.17.1). Drawing on the language of Late Republican politics, Livy locates the Romans and Sabines in the roles later played by the senate and people. He describes a body politic predicated upon social divisions but able to overcome them under specific historical conditions. With the removal of these conditions, however, civic cohesion is called into question.

The potential conflict between the Romans and Sabines soon finds resolution through their mutual commitment to kingship as the best form of government. Their consensus on this question allows them to overcome the divergence of their private interests: *in variis voluntatibus regnari tamen omnes volebant* ("Amid their various wishes, all nevertheless wanted to be ruled," Liv. 1.17.3). Livy rearticulates this wish figuratively as the shared desire for a head: *et esse igitur aliquod caput placebat* ("And it was therefore pleasing that there be some sort of head," Liv. 1.17.4). The leading citizens settle upon Numa Pompilius, who takes on the constitutional role of king and the figurative role of head of state. Livy stresses these dual roles at his inauguration, where the augur prays, '*Iuppiter pater, si est fas hunc*

[49] According to Milnor 2007: 21, "it was the *fact* of law rather than any particular legal stipulation that was supposed to bind the fledgling community together."

[50] On the difficulty of "the coalescing of distinct populations into a single people," see Konstan 1986: 204.

[51] For *interregna* as "the exceptions that prove the rule" of strife's rarity under monarchy, see Sailor 2006: 347–8.

[52] See Brown 1995: 292 on Livy's construction of the Sabine Women myth as "an original and powerful expression of the ideal of *concordia*."

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Numam Pompilium cuius ego caput teneo regem Romae esse . . . ' ("Father Jupiter, if it is right that this Numa Pompilius, whose head I hold, be king of Rome . . . " Liv. 1.18.9).[53] Setting up a parallel between *Numa*, *caput*, and *rex*, Livy confirms the initially regal resonance of capital imagery in his narrative. By tying it to an exemplary founder of the *res publica*, however, he strips it of the negative associations familiar from Late Republican discourse. Monarchy and its attendant symbolism serve as the initial solution to discord, which becomes a recurrent theme in subsequent books.[54]

The association of the head with kingly command reappears in the relationship that Livy constructs between Rome and the territory under its control. He first figures Rome as the head of the world upon the apotheosis of Romulus, who appears in a vision to Proculus Julius and commands, '*Abi, nuntia' inquit 'Romanis, caelestes ita velle ut mea Roma caput orbis terrarum sit*' ("'Go now,' he said, 'announce to the Romans, that the heavens wish my Rome to be the head of the whole world,'" Liv. 1.16.7).[55] As Claude Nicolet points out, these words mark the first instance of the *caput orbis* figure in Latin literature.[56] They are used to naturalize Rome's imperial prerogative, an idea that becomes even more explicit in a later scene of Latin surrender: *ea erat confessio caput rerum Romam esse* ("This constituted a confession that Rome was the head of everything," Liv. 1.45.3).[57] Rome's occupation of this role is traced back to the discovery of a human head in the soil of the Capitoline Hill.[58] While Late Republican writers were familiar with this legend, as we saw in Chapter 1, they oriented it towards the etymology of *Capitolium* rather than the project of empire. Livy, in contrast, declares, *quae visa species haud per ambages arcem eam*

[53] For Livy's emphasis upon the touching of Numa's head, a gesture that reappears in the accession of Servius Tullius, see Feldherr 1998: 215.

[54] Dionysius likewise draws attention to the reestablishment of concord through a musical metaphor: ἁρμοσάμενος δὲ τὸ πλῆθος ἅπαν ὥσπερ ὄργανον ("He fit together the whole multitude as if an instrument," Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.62.5).

[55] Cicero tells the same story (*Rep.* 2.20) but without the *caput orbis* figure and Livy's emphasis on imperial conquest (see Bréguet 1978: 264–7).

[56] "The metaphor of *caput/corpus*, for Rome and her empire appears precisely in the period of Augustus," Nicolet 1991: 192, fn. 9 comments. For the concept of center and periphery crystallizing under Augustus, see Richardson 2008: 117–45. Ovid is the only other Latin writer to use this figure under the first *princeps* (e.g. Ov. *Am.* 1.15.26; *Met.* 15.435; *Fast.* 5.93; *Tr.* 3.5.46), on which see further later.

[57] This naturalization of imperial prerogative goes hand-in-hand with the quelling of discord at home, which Weeber 1984: 342–3 identifies as a key function of the prophecy.

[58] As Borgeaud 1987: 91 notes, the discovery of the head locates the imperial destiny of Rome in the religious topography of the city. Such an idea could only have arisen, of course, after the expansion of the empire.

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imperii caputque rerum fore portendebat ("Such a sight not at all ambiguously portended that it would be the citadel of empire and the head of the world," Liv. 1.55.6).[59] His words establish the programmatic importance of the *caput* as a signifier of Roman hegemony in the text, one that recurs at the ends of Books 1, 5, and 30.[60] It operates both externally and internally in the first pentad, denoting the absolute authority that Rome exercises over its empire and that the *rex* exercises over the *res publica*.[61] As long as the body politic remains under regal rule, this symbolism can operate unproblematically in both contexts.

Because Livy links the head of state metaphor to the rule of kings, the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus prompts a shift in the shape of the body politic. Livy encourages this reading by framing the foundation of the Republic as a process of organic maturation. If liberty had been achieved too soon (*libertatis immaturae*, Liv. 2.1.3), he explains, the young *res publica* would have succumbed to civil strife. Like a wheat field, it had to ripen before it could harvest the fruits of liberty: *dissipatae res nondum adultae discordia forent, quas fovit tranquilla moderatio imperii eoque nutriendo perduxit ut bonam frugem libertatis maturis iam viribus ferre posset* ("The *res publica* – not yet grown – would have been destroyed by discord; yet the peaceful moderation of command fostered and nurtured it to such a point that it was able to bear the fruits of liberty with its strength already matured," Liv. 2.1.6).[62] Livy's description of the kings rearing the young *res publica* merges a metaphor of farming with one of human development.[63] A similar metaphor appears in Cicero, who portrayed Romulus raising a *novus populus* from the crib (*in cunabulis*) to young adulthood (*adultum iam et paene puberem*, Cic. *Rep.* 2.21). Both thinkers compare monarchy to parental supervision to posit the necessity of sole rule to the constitutional development of Rome. Yet whereas Cicero envisions a community that nears maturity by the end of Romulus' reign, Livy proposes a longer period of development. In doing so, he

[59] Dionysius likewise connects the discovery of the head to the expansion of Rome, though limits his metaphor to the Italian peninsula (κεφαλὴν . . . συμπάσης Ἰταλίας, Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 4.61.2).

[60] Jaeger 2015: 68 argues that the recurrence of the symbolism reinforces the architecture of the text. When Hannibal later refers to Rome the *caput orbis* (Liv. 21.30.10), he "encourages his men to anticipate as their final goal the schematized Rome of Books 1–5."

[61] While the concept of absolute power arose in relation to that of sovereignty in the early modern period (on which see Lee 2021: 21–7), I use the term "absolute authority" more generally to denote a form of power that recognized no higher authority. For the locus of this idea in the concept of *imperium*, see Drogula 2015: 82.

[62] For Rome as "a ripening crop whose yield is freedom," see Phillips 1978: 87.

[63] See Vasaly 2015: 54 on the *educatio* of the Roman people under kingly rule.

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establishes civic strength (*vires*) as a precondition for Republican governance. Only a body politic that has achieved the former, he suggests, can reap the rewards of the latter.

Livy identifies discord as the primary threat that the Republic faces in its early years. Nearly as soon as self-governance is implemented, factionalism takes root between the patricians and plebeians. It is initially tied to the problem of debt bondage, which produces a form of class-based resentment akin to a disease: *civitas secum ipsa discors intestino inter patres plebemque flagrabat odio* ("The political community was at war with itself and burning with intestinal hatred between the senate and people," Liv. 2.23.1).[64] The fever metaphor implicit in *flagro* becomes more pronounced as popular resentment festers (*invidiamque eam sua sponte gliscentem*) and bursts into flame (*accendit*) via the body of an old man covered in scars (Liv. 2.23.2). His decrepit frame, marked by filth (*squalore*), paleness (*pallore*), and emaciation (*macie*), signifies the plight of the plebeians in microcosm (Liv. 2.23.3). Comparing usurers to a gangrenous infection (*velut tabem*), the old man offers his own injuries as proof of their rapacity (Liv. 2.23.6). Only after unrest spreads through the city (*passim totam urbem pervadit*, Liv. 2.23.7) does the senate meet to discuss a potential cure (*remediis*, Liv. 2.23.15). Yet their debate is interrupted by news of an impending Volscian attack, an external threat that finally prompts the senate and people to recognize that discord has divided their community into two (*duas ex una civitate discordia fecerat*, Liv. 2.24.1).[65] Importing a familiar signifier of civil strife into his portrait of the fifth century BCE, Livy confirms that the structural conflict between the senate and people was woven into the fabric of the Republic from its origins. While some Roman writers stressed its generative nature, Livy more often represents it as an obstacle to the realization of civic health.[66] Writing in the aftermath of the civil wars, he was highly attuned to the vulnerability of a political community whose internal differences prevented the realization of common ends.

[64] Arena 2019 addresses the role of debt bondage in the conceptualization of Roman liberty as nondomination, paying special attention to this passage of Livy.

[65] On the coalescence of the *patres* and *plebes* in response to external threats, see Kapust 2011: 93–5. On the contrast between Livy and Sallust's use of the *metus hostilis* trope, see additionally Pedullà 2018: 104; Miles 1995: 77–9.

[66] Recent work on Roman Republicanism stresses its conflictual nature, perhaps best represented in the works of Sallust. This reading is available in Livy's first pentad but goes against the grain of the historian's own analysis. It is more pronounced in Machiavelli's reception of the text, as discussed by Pedullà 2018 and McCormick 2011.

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It is within this context that Menenius Agrippa delivers the Fable of the Belly in Book 2.[67] Although the myth existed independently of Livy's narration, it gains interpretive significance from the thematic framework in which it is situated.[68] Menenius crafts his speech in response to the problem of the doubled *res publica*, which finds practical expression in the withdrawal of the plebeians to the Sacred Mount. Seeking to naturalize concord in a political community inclined towards its opposite, he cites the example of the human body. The body might seem like the perfect illustration of cooperation and harmony, he explains, but it was not always this way: *tempore quo in homine non ut nunc omnia in unum consentiant, sed singulis membris suum cuique consilium, suus sermo fuerit* ("There was a time when all the parts in a person did not agree as one, as they do now, but individual members had their own judgment and their own speech," Liv. 2.32.9). The members fell into disagreement because they lacked a shared sense of the greater whole to which they contributed. Each could only see itself, a point underscored through the repetition of *suus* throughout the fable. Their blinkered perspective led them to suspect injustice in the distribution of responsibilities between the belly, which seemed to eat all the food, and the members, which seemed to do all the work in procuring it: *indignatas reliquas partes sua cura, suo labore ac ministerio ventri omnia quaeri, ventrem in medio quietum nihil aliud quam datis voluptatibus frui* ("The other parts were aggravated that everything was obtained for the belly by their care, by their effort and aid, and that the belly, resting in the middle, did nothing but enjoy the pleasures it was given," Liv. 2.32.9). Rather than detailing the contributions of each of the aggrieved members, as Dionysius does (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.86.2), Livy sacrifices specificity to construct a simple dichotomy that maps onto the patrician–plebeian divide. Embarking on an ill-fated plot to starve the belly, the members demonstrate the unviability of a political community that prioritizes individual interests over collective needs.[69]

[67] See Ch.1 for the fable's origins, role in Late Republican discourse, and relevant scholarly treatments.

[68] According to Connolly 2015: 63, "we should not make the mistake of identifying Menenius' parable with Livy's vision, still less with Roman self-understanding." Vasaly 2015: 98 concurs, arguing that the fable does not "convey a distinctly Livian conception of the archaic plebs." Although Livy advertises the eventual failure of Menenius' model, as we will see later, Books 1–5 suggests his persistent commitment to an ideal of organic wholeness.

[69] *conspirasse inde ne manus ad os cibum ferrent, nec os acciperet datum, nec dentes quae acciperent conficerent* ("They conspired then that the hands would not bring food to the mouth, and that the mouth would not accept what was given, and that the teeth would not chew what was received," Liv. 2.32.10).

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In explaining the rebellion of the members as the result of an error in judgment rather than a response to inequity, Menenius confirms the senatorial orientation of his analogy.[70] He suggests that the aim of the members' strike was not to redistribute resources within the body, but to subjugate the belly: *hac ira, dum ventrem fame domare vellent, ipsa una membra totumque corpus ad extremam tabem venisse* ("Because of this anger, while they wanted to subdue the belly with hunger, every one of the members and the whole body wasted away," Liv. 2.32.10).[71] The key word *tabes* puts Menenius in dialogue with the scarred old man, who used the same metaphor to describe patrician greed.[72] Menenius counters his claim by suggesting that plebeian discontent is a disease too. It is not only exploitative creditors, but also ungrateful borrowers, who threaten the vitality of the Republic. Less important than the assignation of blame, however, is the mutual recognition of interdependence.[73] As parts of one organism, he suggests, neither the belly nor members could exist on their own. As soon as the members came to appreciate that fact, they abandoned their revolt and yielded their individual autonomy to the collective good. According to Livy, the plebeians soon followed suit: *comparando hinc quam intestina corporis seditio similis esset irae plebis in patres, flexisse mentes hominum* ("By comparing in this way how the intestinal sedition of the body was similar to the anger of the plebeians towards the patricians, he changed the minds of men," Liv. 2.32.12). Reinvesting themselves in a political order predicated upon their subordination, they descended from the Sacred Mount and reestablished the civic unity towards which the speech aims.[74] The subsequent creation of the tribunate validates their decision, confirming their ability to achieve legal protections without challenging senatorial prerogative.[75] In this way, Menenius Agrippa's retelling of the Fable of the Belly justifies a paternalistic model of politics

[70] Mineo 2015b: 126 stresses the priority assigned to the senate in the fable, though his characterization of this institution as "the head of State" diverges from its imagistic framework.

[71] The frequent usage of *domo* in relation to the taming of animals conveys its force (*OLD* s.v. 1).

[72] Gardner 2019: 50, fn. 11 connects the use of *tabes* in the two passages. Dutoit 1948: 117–8 addresses the semantic scope of the word in Livy's text.

[73] As Feldherr 1998: 121 puts it, "the inherent comparability of the state to the family or the body provides a constant resource for generation of collective loyalty."

[74] Lincoln 1989: 146 argues that the fable exemplifies "a discourse that mystifies exploitative social relations while stimulating strong sentiments of affinity among those who might otherwise find themselves enemies."

[75] Livy characterizes the tribunate and its powers as the bastion of Roman liberty (e.g. *tribunicium auxilium et provocationem plebi Romanae, duas arces libertatis tuendae*, Liv. 3.45.8; *consularem legem de provocatione, unicum praesidium libertatis*, Liv. 3.55.4). On this idea, see Arena 2012: 48.

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in which the rights of the people are secured through their deference to the senate.[76]

Livy positions the Fable of the Belly as a new model of the body politic that represents the transition from monarchical to Republican governance.[77] He stresses the stakes of the transition by omitting the *caput* from Menenius' analogy, despite its inclusion in other versions of the myth.[78] No longer able to rely on a king to secure concord, the patricians and plebeians must now achieve this ideal on their own. Livy initially expresses faith in their ability to do so, declaring the problem of discord to have been "cured" in the aftermath of the First Secession (*domi sanata discordia*, Liv. 2.34.1). Observing the Romans from afar, however, their Etruscan enemies are less convinced. They are among the first to identify *discordia intestina* (Liv. 2.44.7) as an obstacle standing between Rome and the realization of its imperial ambitions: *principesque in omnium Etruriae populorum conciliis fremebant aeternas opes esse Romanas nisi inter semet ipsi seditionibus saeviant* ("And the leading men in the councils of all the Etrurian peoples were grumbling that Rome's power would be permanent unless they turned against each other through dissensions," Liv. 2.44.8). They elaborate upon this idea within the imagistic parameters set by the text, identifying discord as a poison uniquely capable of killing empires: *id unum venenum, eam labem civitatibus opulentis repertam ut magna imperia mortalia essent* ("This was the one poison, the one instability found in wealthy civic communities that could make great empires mortal," Liv. 2.44.8).[79] In their evocation of a sick body with *venenum* and an unstable building with *labes*, the Etruscans employ the same metaphors of decline that structure Livy's preface. The resonance confirms the contemporary stakes of the questions with which the first pentad engages. Foremost among them is whether the realization of civic cohesion is feasible in a political community that lacks the unifying command of a head of state.

Livy uses the speech of the Etruscans to engage in a familiar debate in Greek and Roman philosophy over the susceptibility of political communities to the cycles of growth and decay that afflict other organisms.[80] In his

[76] Kapust 2004 illustrates the compatibility of republican liberty and paternalism in Livy's first ten books. In his view, the patricians exemplify an order that can "disempower the citizenry while leaving them free," (401). This reading has important consequences for the proponents of neo-republicanism today.

[77] As noted by Connolly 2007: 63. [78] e.g. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 6.86.2; Val. Max. 8.9.1.

[79] For the agrarian legislation of the tribunes as a typical *venenum* in the first pentad, see Liv. 2.52.2.

[80] For an overview of this tradition, see Trompf 1979: 60–115.

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influential theory of anacyclosis, Polybius employs a biological analogy to explain the constitutional trajectories of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, all of which experience cycles of growth, acme, and decline in accordance with natural law.[81] The advantage of Rome's mixed constitution lay in its ability to slow, but not avert, the cycle.[82] Polybius makes this clear when he promises to provide his readers with knowledge not only of Rome's birth (τῆς συστάσεως), growth (τῆς αὐξήσεως), and peak (τῆς ἀκμῆς), but also of its future degeneration (τῆς εἰς τοὔμπαλιν ἐσομένης ἐκ τούτων μεταβολῆς, Polyb. 6.9.12–13). Just as this πολιτεία arose naturally, he asserts, so too will it decline naturally: κατὰ φύσιν ἔξειν καὶ τὴν εἰς τἀναντία μεταβολήν ("It will also have its contrary decline according to nature," Polyb. 6.9.13).[83] Polybius goes on to identify two vices that contribute to the decline of the mixed constitution: the love of office and the extravagant display of wealth (Polyb. 6.57.6).[84] He thereby anticipates, and perhaps serves as the inspiration for, Sallust's portrayal of *ambitio* and *avaritia* as the primary diseases responsible for the degeneration of the Roman body politic.[85]

Cicero revised Polybius' theory of anacyclosis to allow for the possibility, if not probability, of an immortal *res publica*. In the *Pro Rabirio Perduellionis*, he urged his fellow citizens to be on guard against intestinal ills (*intestinis malis*) if they desire an immortal political community (*immortalem hanc civitatem*) and permanent empire (*aeternum hoc imperium*, Cic. *Rab. Perd.* 33).[86] In the *Pro Marcello*, he cast the immortal *res publica* as an ideal put at risk by its dependence upon the mortal Caesar: *doleoque, cum res publica immortalis esse debeat, eam in unius mortalis anima consistere* ("I am saddened that the *res publica* depends upon the life of one man, since it should be immortal," Cic. *Marcell.* 22). Both speeches suggest that Romans should work towards the goal of civic immortality but warn

[81] See Hahm 1995; Trompf 1979: 4–59; Cole 1964; Roveri 1964: 181–5, 194–7; Brink and Walbank 1954; Ryffel 1949. For Polybius' parallel application of this theory to the Roman and Achaeans, see Champion 2004: 100–69.

[82] On the difficulty of reconciling the stability of the mixed constitution with the inevitability of decay in Polybius' thought, see Brink and Walbank 1954: 102–7.

[83] Walbank 2002: 193 suggests that Polybius was in fact "not particularly interested in the concept of decline."

[84] See Hahm 1995: 44 on these vices.

[85] Shaw 2022: 168 argues that Sallust's pessimism signals his rejection of Polybius' model of constitutional development. Yet we might also see his texts as an investigation into the civic mortality that Polybius posits.

[86] Moatti 2011: 474 argues that *aeternitas* connotes permanence rather than eternity in debates over the longevity of political regimes.

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of significant obstacles to its realization.[87] Cicero makes a similar point in the third book of *De Republica*, where Laelius says, *tamen de posteris nostris et de illa immortalitate rei publicae sollicitor, quae poterat esse perpetua si patriis viveretur institutis et moribus* ("Yet I worry about our descendants and about that immortality of the *res publica*, which could be eternal, if life were conducted according to ancestral habits and customs," Cic. *Rep.* 3.41). James Zetzel argues that Laelius' counterfactual denies the realizability of civic immortality in the present; Rome "could be, but is no longer, eternal."[88] His pessimistic reading of the passage is echoed by Atkins, who stresses the disjuncture between Laelius' words and his insistence upon the contingency, temporality, and change that govern human affairs. "In assigning the attribute of eternality to political affairs," he writes, "Laelius is reduced to grasping at straws."[89] Even as Cicero pursues a more optimistic line of analysis than Polybius, then, he too confronts the unlikelihood of a *res publica immortalis*. Livy's Etruscans draw on this tradition in their identification of discord as the poison that will make Rome mortal. As long as class-based antagonisms continue to fester, the Republican body politic will eventually begin to decline.

At the conclusion of Book 2, Livy confirms the prescience of the Etruscans' analysis. Reporting the return of discord to a body politic only recently reunified through the Fable of the Belly, he details a conflict between the patricians and plebeians that nearly reaches the point of bloodshed. In an effort to calm the anger of the consul Appius Claudius and restore order, his fellow senators urge him to recognize the fractured state of their community: *dum consules tribunique ad se quisque omnia trahant, nihil relictum esse virium in medio; distractam laceratamque rem publicam* ("While the consuls and tribunes were all taking everything for themselves, no strength was left to be shared; the *res publica* had been ripped apart and mangled," Liv. 2.57.3). Livy crafts their words in unmistakable dialogue with Sallust, who describes factionalism in the Late Republic in the same terms: *res publica, quae media fuerat, dilacerata* (Sall. *Iug.* 41.5). Yet the similarity of their language belies a difference in their political perspectives. As we saw in Chapter 1, Sallust correlates the *res publica dilacerata* with a period of decline caused by the downfall of Carthage. Prior to this point, he represents the struggle between the senate and people as conducive to civic vitality. Livy, in contrast, describes discord as a weakness rather than

[87] Marquez 2011: 423 argues that Cicero views a virtuous governing class as a precondition for civic eternity that no longer exists in Rome. Ferrary 1995: 71 instead identifies the absence of true law in the *res publica* as the barrier to its immortality.

[88] Zetzel 1996: 316. [89] Atkins 2013a: 41.

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strength of the Republic from its foundation. He consistently identifies it as a *malum*, *morbus*, *contagio*, and *venenum* that prevents the realization of consensus upon which a healthy body politic is based.[90] It is for this reason that Kapust classifies Livy as a "consensualist" rather than "antagonistic" Republican.[91] The organic imagery of the first pentad supports this view; it frames the patrician–plebeian divide as an obstacle to, rather than component of, Rome's success.

Book 3 uses the descent of a plague to literalize the failure of the organic ideal laid out by Menenius Agrippa.[92] Livy heralds the arrival of an *annus pestilens* (Liv. 3.6.2) that sees the spread of a *morbus* through the countryside and city. Counted among the dead are both consuls, as well as most of the senators and men of military age. Summing up the scope of the catastrophe, he writes, *deserta omnia, sine capite, sine viribus* ("Everything was abandoned, without a head and without strength," Liv. 3.7.1). The *caput*, appearing for the first time since Book 1, denotes the absence of political leadership in Rome, which has been deprived of its magistrates and leading citizens. As discord brews within this power vacuum, L. Quinctius Cincinnatus proposes the appointment of a dictator, explaining, *non ita civitatem aegram esse ut consuetis remediis sisti possit; dictatore opus esse rei publicae* ("The sickness in the civic community was not one that could be cured with typical remedies; the *res publica* needed a dictator," Liv. 3.20.8). He does not call for a head of state, suggesting the unavailability of this regally inflected symbol in Republican political discourse. He instead invokes the Ciceronian ideal of a civic healer able to remediate ills both literal and figurative. His fellow citizens are initially unwilling to consider his proposal, fearful of concentrating so much power into the hands of one man. As the threat of enemy armies grows too large to ignore, however, they realize their mistake. Persuading him to leave his farm and return to Rome, they appoint him to the dictatorship (Liv. 3.26–9). His subsequent success within this role confirms the efficacy of individual authority, as opposed to patrician–plebeian cooperation, in remediating the problem of civil strife.[93]

[90] An idea summed up in a consular speech at the end of Book 3 (*discordia ordinum et venenum urbis huius, patrum ac plebis certamina*, "the discord of the orders and the poison of this city, strife between the patricians and plebeians," Liv. 3.67.6).

[91] Kapust 2011: 22.

[92] Gardner 2019: 45–78 persuasively illustrates Livy's use of literal pestilences as metaphors for ideological contagion. She argues that Rome's susceptibility to plague "retrospectively infuses Menenius' paradigm of the *corpus* as civic body with all the structural entropy and renovation that pestilence would come to mean in the evolving project of Livy's history," (51).

[93] See Ogilvie 1965: 436 on Cincinnatus as "the Roman ideal" whose career occupies the center of the first pentad, a point elaborated by Vasaly 2015: 85–6. Atkins 2018b: 74–5 argues that his exemplarity

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In Book 3, the Roman citizenry experiments with another solution to the conflict between the patricians and plebeians: the second decemvirate.[94] Livy portrays this constitutional innovation as another stage in the life cycle of the body politic, writing, *anno trecentesimo altero quam condita Roma erat iterum mutatur forma civitatis, ab consulibus ad decemviros* ("In the three hundred and second year after the foundation of Rome, the shape of the political community changed again, from consuls to decemvirs," Liv. 3.33.1). Although he notes that the significance of the change (*mutatio*) was lessened by its brevity (*non diuturna*), he devotes a significant portion of Book 3 to illustrating its corrosive effects.[95] Looking back to the metaphor of the wheat field that announced the foundation of the Republic, he compares the decemvirate to a fruit that matured too quickly and began to rot: *Laeta enim principia magistratus eius nimis luxuriavere; eo citius lapsa res est* ("For the prosperous beginnings of this office ripened too quickly; it therefore quickly perished," Liv. 3.33.2). The verb *luxurio*, used to describe both the excessive ripening of a plant and the swelling of a body, foregrounds the organic stakes of the decemvirate, which risks accelerating the life cycle of the *res publica*.[96] The tyranny of the decemvirs culminates in the death of Verginia, which has long been interpreted as a figurative assault on the body politic.[97] The deleterious effects of this constitutional innovation confirm its failure as a solution to the perennial problem of patrician–plebeian strife.

The corruption of the second decemvirate and the temporary nature of the dictatorship point to the need for a more permanent remedy for the perpetually beleaguered body politic. A speech delivered by the staunch patrician Appius Claudius in Book 5 confirms that it will not be found in the model of the civic healer. Comparing tribunes to physicians who profit by keeping their patients sick, he says, *sic hercule, tamquam artifices improbi, opus quaerunt et semper aegri aliquid esse in re publica volunt, ut sit ad cuius curationem a vobis adhibeantur* ("By Hercules, like quack physicians, they seek employment and always want there to be a disease in the *res publica*, so that there is something for you to invite them to cure," Liv. 5.3.6).[98] Exploiting Roman skepticism towards Greek medicine and its

derives from his willing resignation of the dictatorship, which signals his respect for the boundaries of Republican governance.

[94] Ungern-Sternberg 1986 argues for the second decemvirate as an invention of the Roman annalists.

[95] On the exceptional length of Livy's account, as well as its careful placement in the center of the first pentad, see Vasaly 2015: 73–6.

[96] See *OLD* s.v. 1. [97] Claassen 1998: 92–4; Joshel 1991; Joplin 1990.

[98] See *OLD* s.v. 2 for *artifex* as an expert practitioner of any art.

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practitioners, Appius Claudius encourages his audience to view the tribunes with suspicion. Later in his speech, he addresses the tribunes directly and accuses them of treating the symptoms while worsening the disease: *haec sunt, tribuni, consilia vestra, non hercule dissimilia ac si quis aegro qui curari se fortiter passus extemplo convalescere possit, cibi gratia praesentis aut potionis longinquum et forsitan insanabilem morbum efficiat* ("These are your plans, tribunes, not at all different, by Hercules, than if someone should make a sick man's disease lasting and perhaps incurable by granting his wish for food and drink, when he could have recovered immediately by allowing himself to be treated vigorously," Liv. 5.5.12).[99] His analogy recalls the conclusion of the *First Catilinarian*, when Cicero argues that expelling Catiline alone is akin to giving cold water to a feverish patient (Cic. *Cat.* 1.31). A treatment for the symptom rather than disease, the remedy will only worsen the condition of the body politic over time. The allusion allows Livy to import the factionalism of the Late Republic into his portrayal of Archaic politics once more. The inefficacy of the tribunician healers whom Appius Claudius castigates looks ahead to the failure of the senatorial healers upon whom Cicero calls. Whether representatives of the senate or people, the physicians to the body politic seem to exacerbate the social antagonisms they intend to remedy. This model of statesmanship therefore does not provide a viable way out of civil strife.

In Book 5, Livy explores a final possibility for remediating the patrician–plebeian divide: the physical separation of the Roman citizenry into two cities. Accomplished through a mass migration to Veii, the proposal is put forward by the tribunes amid *multiplex seditio* (Liv. 5.24.4). They argue that a political community can be divided into two parts without losing its unity: *duasque urbes communi re publica incoli a populo Romano posse* ("Two cities could be inhabited by the Roman people while the *res publica* remained shared," Liv. 5.24.8). Yet the patricians recognize the impossibility of such a bargain, asking, *quippe nunc in una urbe tantum dissensionum esse: quid in duabus urbibus fore?* ("Seeing as there was so much dissension in one city, how much would there be in two cities?" Liv. 5.24.10). In their view, the literal division of the city would only magnify the symbolic dissolution of the *res publica*.[100] On the day of the vote, they approach each of the tribes and beg them not to turn the Roman people into an exile

[99] See also Liv. 5.6.1; 5.12.7.

[100] "The motion at best threatens civil strife," Kraus 1994b: 280 remarks, "at worst it would cause the unfounding of Rome."

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bereft of its native soil: *ne exsulem, extorrem populum Romanum ab solo patrio* (Liv. 5.30.6). The comparison grants the plebeians a body of their own but one that is no longer Roman and therefore unworthy of inhabitance. The move to Veii is subsequently abandoned, proving that the senate and people have not lost their faith in the ideal of organic wholeness, but are simply unable to find a path to its realization.

Rather than exiling themselves, the tribunes instead inflict this punishment on M. Furius Camillus, a statesman whose prominence in the city derives from both his military exploits and his conciliatory politics.[101] Voluntarily leaving the city rather than participating in a sham trial, Camillus is last seen delivering a prayer that his ungrateful community recognize the error in its ways. Anticipating the events to come, Livy blames the Gallic Sack on the banishment of the one citizen who could have averted the disaster: *expulso cive quo manente, si quicquam humanorum certi est, capi Roma non potuerat, adventante fatali urbi clade legati ab Clusinis veniunt auxilium adversus Gallos petentes* ("After the expulsion of that citizen whose presence could have prevented the capture of Rome, if anything of human affairs is certain, deadly destruction approached the city and ambassadors arrived from Clusium seeking help against the Gauls," Liv. 5.33.1). Without Camillus' guidance, the Roman citizenry becomes paralyzed by discord yet again. Unable to agree upon the appointment of a dictator to respond to the marauding Gauls, it has only itself to blame for what comes next. In this way, Livy frames the destruction of the city as an act of figurative self-harm rooted in civil strife.[102]

The Sack of Rome marks the climax of Livy's first pentad and the death of the civic organism operative in Books 2–5. Because Romans analogized their city to a physical body, with the Capitoline as its head, the gates as its senses, the treasury as its intestines, and the Cloaca Maxima as its bowels, they were primed to interpret its destruction in corporeal terms.[103] Livy invites this reading by comparing those who witnessed the invasion from the Capitoline Hill to mourners at a funeral: *quocumque clamor hostium, mulierum puerorumque ploratus, sonitus flammae et fragor ruentium tectorum avertisset, paventes ad omnia animos oraque et oculos flectebant, velut ad spectaculum a fortuna positi occidentis patriae* ("Wherever the shouts of the enemies, the wails of women and children, the thundering of the flames, and the crashing of falling buildings had captured their attention,

[101] On Camillus' connection to the ideal of concord, see Momigliano 1942.
[102] See Mineo 2015a: 141 on the Gallic sack as "the end result of political evolution fostering *discordia*" that began with Tarquinius Superbus.
[103] See Gowers 1995 alongside discussion in Ch. 1.

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they fearfully turned their minds and faces and eyes to all these things, as if placed by Fortune at the spectacle of their dying homeland," Liv. 5.42.4). Evoking the sounds of funereal lamentations and the crackling flames of a pyre, Livy suggests that the corpse on display is that of Rome itself. Its death plays an integral role in the cycle of history governing the text. Only a political community that has died, after all, can experience the rebirth that scholars have long identified at the beginning of Book 6 (*secunda origo*, Liv. 6.1.1).[104] With this revival comes a new model of the body politic to replace that of the Fable of the Belly.

In the concluding chapters of Book 5, Livy looks ahead to the shape that this new body politic will take. While the Gauls are occupied with pillage and plunder, residents from the countryside begin to gather with allied Latins in Veii and hatch a plan to recapture Rome. Describing the gradual growth of their strength (*viresque crescebant*, Liv. 5.46.4), Livy compares the group to a maturing body: *maturum iam videbatur repeti patriam eripique ex hostium manibus; sed corpori valido caput deerat* ("It seemed that the time was now ripe for the country to be taken back and snatched from enemy hands; but a head was lacking to the strong body," Liv. 5.46.5). His phrasing recalls the opening of Book 2, where the new Republic is described in similar terms (*maturis iam viribus*, Liv. 2.1.6). Whereas the Republican body politic is shaped without reference to a head of state, however, those assembled in Veii realize they need one to survive. Their openness to this model of authority suggests that the *res publica* is entering a new stage in its evolution. The ramifications of their decision are nevertheless limited by the military context in which it is made. Because the sphere of war admitted stronger forms of individual authority than that of peace, it was less jarring to refer to a *caput* in this context.[105] Whether capital symbolism will make its way into the domestic sphere is a question that Livy initially leaves unanswered.

Seeking a statesman to take on the head of state role, those gathered in Veii think of the banished Camillus: *locus ipse admonebat Camilli* ("The place itself reminded them of Camillus," Liv. 5.46.6). Now in need of the sort of strong leader they once feared, they decide to recall him from his exile in Ardea and appoint him to the dictatorship. The application of

[104] Kraus 1994a: 25 argues that the first two pentads have three important divisions: the beginning of Rome, the beginning of the Republic, and the *secunda origo* that follows the Gallic Sack. Each juncture is not only formally marked, but also thematized to show how "a past destruction gives way to future growth." See also Oakley 1997: 301–6; Miles 1986: 19–21.

[105] For the sharp distinction between the authority of the military commander and that of the civilian magistrate in Roman thought, see Drogula 2015: 55.

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capital symbolism to this office, a possibility raised but not realized in Book 3, suggests the adaptation of a once regal metaphor to the parameters of Republican magistracy. Livy emphasizes that this adaptation takes place in response to public consensus and in accordance with constitutional norms: *consensu omnium placuit ab Ardea Camillum acciri, sed antea consulto senatu qui Romae esset: adeo regebat omnia pudor discriminaque rerum prope perditis rebus servabant* ("By the consensus of all it was decided to recall Camillus from Ardea, but only after the senate was consulted in Rome: to such an extent was propriety ruling everything, and were they protecting the distinctions of matters, even though things were nearly ruined," Liv. 5.46.7). The insistence of those in Veii upon following legal procedures confirms that they see themselves as legal representatives of the *res publica*.[106] That the senate accepts their status as such is suggested by its response: it agrees to recall Camillus from exile through the *comitia curiata* and appoint him dictator in absentia. Acknowledging that it is unclear whether Camillus departed from Ardea before or after the appointment was completed, Livy writes that it is preferable to believe (*quod magis credere libet*) that he waited for the law to be passed so that he did not violate the will of the people (*iniussu populi*, Liv. 5.46.11). Livy thereby betrays his own investment in a narrative in which the authority of Camillus is constitutionally sanctioned. Republican customs set the boundaries within which Camillus becomes the head of state, allowing the metaphor to shed its regal heritage.

As Book 5 comes to an end, Livy confirms the vitality of the new body politic over which Camillus presides. Its health is thrown into sharp relief by the descent of a plague on the Gauls (*Gallos pestilentia*, Liv. 5.48.1). Their illness mirrors that suffered earlier by the Romans and renders them equally vulnerable to attack. They are subsequently expelled from the city by the Veiian collective, a victory that prompts Camillus to be heralded as the savior of Rome: *Romulus ac parens patriae conditorque alter urbis haud vanis laudibus appellabatur* ("He was praised in not at all empty terms as Romulus and father of the country and another founder of the city," Liv. 5.49.7). Through these titles, Livy introduces the intertwined themes of rebirth and refoundation, which will extend into and peak in the opening

[106] Kraus 1994b: 278–82 illustrates that the creation of *alterae Romae* is a major theme of Book 5; Haimson Lushkov 2015: 122 argues that the Veiian collective represents one such *altera Roma* instantiated through legalism.

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of Book 6.[107] He reinforces the parallel between the two founding fathers at the conclusion of Book 5, when Camillus delivers a speech to discourage another proposed move to Veii. Reminding his fellow citizens of the prophesy that Romulus delivered in Book 1, he asserts, *hic Capitolium est, ubi quondam capite humano invento responsum est eo loco caput rerum summamque imperii fore* ("Here is the Capitoline, where it was once said upon the discovery of a human head that this spot would be the head of the world and peak of empire," Liv. 5.54.7).[108] In assigning the same speech to both founders, Livy ties Rome's imperial ambitions to its exemplary statesmen. The success of expansion abroad, he suggests, depends upon having a viable head of state at home.

Because Camillus becomes the head of state through the office of the dictatorship and in the context of a military crisis, it is initially uncertain whether this model of authority will remain operative in peacetime. The opening chapter of Book 6, however, suggests that his extraordinary position in the body politic extends beyond the Gallic crisis. It begins with an extended organic metaphor that makes the rebirth of Rome explicit in the narrative: *clariora deinceps certioraque ab secunda origine velut ab stirpibus laetius feraciusque renatae urbis gesta domi militiaeque exponentur* ("Hereafter the civil and martial deeds of the reborn city will be set forth more clearly and certainly from its second origin, as if springing again from its roots more abundantly and fruitfully," Liv. 6.1.3). Having experimented with metaphors of fields and fruits upon the foundation of the Republic and Second Decemvirate, respectively, Livy now turns to the vine. The shift allows him to incorporate the exemplary statesman into an organic model of constitutional development: *ceterum primo quo adminiculo erecta erat eodem innixa M. Furio principe stetit* ("But it [the city] stood by leaning on the same support by which it had been first raised, on Camillus, the first citizen," Liv. 6.1.4).[109] Livy's portrayal of the *res publica* leaning on a stake accentuates rather than avoids the idea of collective reliance upon one man. Viticulture, after all, was frequently used as a model of dependence in Roman thought. Cicero's *De Finibus* suggests

[107] On the significance of Camillus' titles, see Ungern-Sternberg 2001: 291–2 and Miles 1986: 24–5, who describes them as "deliberate anachronisms" that reflect Livy's own view of Rome's foundation and refoundation.

[108] Jaeger 1997: 90–1 draws attention to this parallel. Kraus 1994b: 281 describes Camillus' evocation of "the twin powers of head and boundary" as "a perfect means of persuasion in a time of crisis," while Jaeger 1997: 90–1 stresses Romulus' and Camillus' "comprehensive vision" of Rome and its place in the world.

[109] The primary definition of an *adminiculum* is a stake on which vines lean, but it could also be used to describe anything serving as a prop (*OLD* s.v. 1).

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that vines can only thrive under the care of a vinedresser equipped with the knowledge to trim (*circumcidat*), prune (*amputet*), straighten (*erigat*), lift (*extollat*), and prop (*adminiculet*) them. Summing up the reliance of the vine on external aids, he writes, *in ipsa enim parum magna vis inest, ut quam optime se habere possit, si nulla cultura adhibeatur* ("For it has insufficient strength in itself to reach its highest form unless it is aided by cultivation," Cic. *Fin.* 5.39). In applying the same metaphor to Rome, Livy suggests that its citizens have sacrificed a degree of autonomy in the pursuit of political stability. The language of rebirth and regeneration implicitly validates their decision.

Clarifying the implications of his agricultural imagery for the metaphor of the body politic, Livy finally calls Camillus a head of state. He opens the third chapter of Book 6 by declaring, *caput rei Romanae Camillus erat* (Liv. 6.3.1). As Christina Kraus points out, the "striking epithet" combines Rome's hegemonic role as the *caput rerum* and Ennius' famous line, *moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque* (Enn. *Ann.* Fr. 156 Skutsch).[110] Stamping the head of state metaphor with Ennius' imprimatur, Livy grants it the ancestral legitimacy it lacked in the political discourse of the Late Republic. This section has illustrated how the imagistic arc of the first pentad makes such a rehabilitation possible. In Book 1, Livy describes a regal *res publica* that enjoys stability but eventually succumbs to tyranny and loses its liberty. The Republican *res publica* operative in Books 2–5 faces the opposite problem. It enjoys independence but cannot regulate civil strife, leading to prolonged periods of instability that culminate in the Gallic Sack. The solution is not a return to monarchy, but a new governing model that makes space for the exemplary statesman to guide the *res publica* towards concord. Camillus' transformation into the *caput rei Romanae* represents the fulfillment of this vision. As a Republican head of state, he embodies the reconciliation of two conflicting models of the body politic.

The figurative framework that I have traced is specific to Livy's Archaic history; though organic imagery continues to appear in the rest of the text, it does not demarcate distinct phases in the life cycle of the *res publica*. Two other instances of capital symbolism, however, merit brief mention. The first comes in Book 6, when the rise and fall of M. Manlius Capitolinus is used to illustrate the danger posed by statesmen who exploit the head of state metaphor for personal gain. Manlius, who earns the cognomen *Capitolinus* due to his protection of the Capitoline Hill during the Gallic

[110] Kraus 1994a: *ad loc*.

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invasion, initially acts as a complement to Camillus, defending the city from the inside while Camillus rescues it from the outside.[111] In Book 6, however, he becomes a plebeian rabble rouser who reopens the recently healed wounds of civil strife: *recrudescente Manliana seditione* (Liv. 6.18.1).[112] The rare verb *recrudesco* confirms that the body politic is once again in peril, so much so that the senate tries to avoid foreign wars lest it be distracted from healing domestic ills: *ab sanandis domesticis malis* (Liv. 6.18.2).[113] Appropriating capital symbolism to gain popular favor, Manlius declares, *solo aequandae sunt dictaturae consulatusque, ut caput attollere Romana plebes possit* ("Dictatorships and consulships must be leveled to the ground so that the Roman plebs are able to lift their head," Liv. 6.18.14). His proposal constitutes a rejection of the belly–members and head–body dualities; while the former validates the authority of the senate and the latter that of the statesman, both presume popular obedience as the natural order of things. Manlius instead steps into the mold of Catiline, who sought to grant the people their own head and gain personal power along the way.[114] The senate consequently responds to Manlius as it later would to Catiline, implementing the *senatus consultum ultimum* to prevent an *intestinum bellum* (Liv. 6.19.2) against a plague-bearing citizen (*pestiferum civem*, Liv. 6.19.6). Thrown off the Tarpeian Rock, the man named *Capitolinus* plunges to his death from the *caput mundi*. The overdetermined capital symbolism hints at the risk posed by this figuration of statesmanship.[115] Falling into the hands of a populist demagogue rather than exemplary founder, it could be used to subvert rather than support the ancestral constitution.

The same set of concerns reemerges later in relation to Scipio Africanus. Although Livy denies that Scipio ever represented a threat to the Republic, his outsized influence earns him the ire of radical tribunes who make false charges to secure his exile. Among their accusations is that Scipio acted more like a dictator than a legate during his recent trip to Greece, showing

[111] Jaeger 1997: 58. On Camillus and Manlius as doubles, see also Neel 2015: 207–20.

[112] On Manlius as a proto-*popularis* figure in the Roman tradition, see Kaplow 2012; Seager 1977: 378–82.

[113] For *recrudesco* as the reopening of a wound, see *OLD* s.v. 1. The only Late Republican use of the verb comes from a letter in which Cicero laments that the death of his daughter has reopened (*recrudescunt*) wounds suffered in the public sphere (Cic. *Fam.* 4.6.2).

[114] Oakley 1997: 483 notes the echoes of Catiline in Livy's portrayal of Manlius Capitolinus, foremost among which is Manlius' borrowing of the phrase *quousque tandem* (Liv. 6.18.5) from Cicero's *First Catilinarian* (Cic. *Cat.* 1.1) and Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* (Sall. *Cat.* 20.9).

[115] Neel 2015: 220 argues that the conflict between Manlius Capitolinus and Camillus is used "to problematize the question of political power after the Gallic sack."

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those in the East what those in the West had long known: *unum hominem caput columenque imperii Romani esse, sub umbra Scipionis civitatem dominam orbis terrarum latere* ("That one man was the head and column of the Roman empire, and that a political community that was mistress of the world lay under the shadow of Scipio," Liv. 38.51.4).[116] The tribunes revive the head of state metaphor, dormant in Livy's history since Book 6, to accuse Scipio of exercising authority that exceeds the bounds of Republican statesmanship.[117] At the same time, they also acknowledge Rome's dependence on him by comparing him – like Camillus – to a prop upon which the empire relies for support.[118] They articulate a tension at the heart of Roman politics, namely that the same statesmen upon whom the Republic depended for its acquisition of empire threatened its longevity through their accumulation of outsized influence. As Rome recedes under his shadow, Scipio subsumes the body politic into himself.[119] The speech of the tribunes confirms that the head of state metaphor could still be used to police the boundaries of Republican statesmanship, sounding a note of caution for those interested in laying claim to this role.[120]

Over the course of *Ab Urbe Condita*, Livy himself applies capital symbolism to only two men: Numa and Camillus. It is well known that both played key roles in the self-fashioning of Augustus, who framed his role in the *res publica* in relation to those played by exemplary ancestors.[121] Livy contributes to this project by comparing the religious and civic refoundations over which Numa and Camillus presided to acts later performed by Augustus.[122] When Numa closes the Temple of Janus, for

[116] Briscoe 2008: *ad loc*. notes that *caput columenque* appears nowhere else in Latin literature. The only other usage of *columen* in Livy is found at 6.36.10, perhaps suggesting a link between the symbolism of Books 6 and 38.

[117] Livy perhaps reproduces an actual accusation wielded against Scipio; as we saw in Ch. 1, his contemporary P. Licinius Varus joked that his head was growing too big (Cic. *de Or.* 2.250).

[118] Livy explicitly compares Scipio to Camillus due to their shared experience of exile (Liv. 45.38.7), on which see Chaplin 2015: 107.

[119] See Tipping 2010: 127, who notes further parallels between Camillus and Scipio, including the identification of each as a *fatalis dux* (Camillus at Liv. 5.19.2; Scipio at Liv. 22.53.6; 30.28.11).

[120] On Scipio Africanus as a prototype for Julius Caesar, see Rawson 1975: 149.

[121] Numa and Camillus were popular *exempla* before the Augustan era; Gaertner 2008 demonstrates Camillus' importance as a political paradigm in the Late Republic, while Gruen 1990: 158–92 shows how Numa's rumored studies with Pythagoras were used to explore the relationship between Rome and Greece. See Chaplin 2000 on exemplarity in Livy's history and Langlands 2018 and Roller 2018 on its role in Roman discourse more broadly.

[122] As Edwards 1996: 50 argues, we should not try to plot a direct relationship between Augustus' program of restoration and Livy's first pentad. Both should instead "be seen as emerging from the same cluster of concerns and as serving to reinforce one another." Miles 1995: 109 similarly stresses their shared interest in integrating concerns about decline with the emergence of powerful political leaders.

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example, Livy looks ahead to Augustus' completion of the same act: *iterum . . . post bellum Actiacum ab imperatore Caesare Augusto pace terra marique parta* ("Again . . . after the Actian war, when peace over land and sea was secured by Caesar Augustus as *imperator*," Liv. 1.19.3).[123] The parallel invites readers to link capital symbolism to both men. The same idea found iconographical expression in a series of *asses* likely minted in 23 BCE that depict Augustus' head on one side and Numa's on the other, establishing the latter as an *exemplum* for the former.[124] Andrew Wallace-Hadrill suggests that the ideological power of double-headed coins stems from the sense of confusion that they produce in their users as to which side is the obverse and which the reverse.[125] There is no easy way to distinguish between them, so that the two heads become interchangeable symbols of authority. In this way, the coin type visually expressed a message that could also be extrapolated from Livy's text: as a second Numa, Augustus was another head of state.

Livy draws even more pronounced parallels between Augustus and Camillus, who share the task of refoundation in the aftermath of civic destruction. By calling Camillus *Romulus ac parens patriae conditorque alter urbis* (Liv. 5.49.7) and referring to him as the first citizen (*princeps*, Liv. 6.1.3), he evokes the language with which Augustus was praised.[126] He himself characterizes Augustus as a *conditor* at 4.20.7, suggesting the purposefulness of the resonance. And though the title *pater patriae* was not officially bestowed on Augustus until 2 BCE, he was already being addressed as *pater atque princeps* in Horace's roughly contemporary

[123] We can compare Augustus' reference to the same event: *Ianum Quirinum, quem claussum esse maiores nostri voluerunt, cum per totum imperium populi Romani terra marique esset parta victoriis pax* ("The Temple of Janus Quirinus, which our ancestors wished to be closed when peace over land and sea had been secured by victory through the whole empire of the Roman people," Aug. *RG* 13). The similarity between the two passages can be viewed in relation to "the social and discursive practices of which each is a node," Kennedy 1992: 44 argues. For the renewed significance of the Temple of Janus during this period, see DeBrohun 2007.

[124] Evans 1992: 142–3 discusses the coin type and its interpretive difficulties, including its ambiguous date of issue (hypotheses have ranged from 23–15 BCE). She follows Mattingly in arguing for a date of 23 BCE and interprets its iconography in relation to the closing of the Temple of Janus, a view that has become somewhat standard. Grant 1953: 105–6 argues for an "implied analogy" between Numa and Augustus, writing that Augustus was now playing the role of "a second Numa." Yet it is worth noting that the Numa *asses* were issued by Gn. Calpurnius Piso, whose *gens* traced its heritage back to Rome's second king. Even as the coin type signified Augustus' authority, then, Piso's role in minting it speaks to traditional expressions of aristocratic competition. "In true Augustan style," Galinsky 1996: 34 remarks, "the framework of references is more than one-dimensional."

[125] Wallace-Hadrill 1986: 71–2. "That sense of confusion," he writes, "is precisely the 'message' the coin conveys."

[126] See Miles 1995: 98–108 for Livy's reception and reworking of the titles *parens patriae* and *conditor*.

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Odes.[127] These allusions point towards deeper thematic parallels that operate throughout Book 5 and have been the subject of much scholarly discussion.[128] For our purposes, it is sufficient to note that the statesman whom Livy calls the *caput rei Romanae* is the same one to whom he most directly compares Augustus. He thereby primes his readers to interpret his metaphors of the body politic in relation to contemporary affairs. The lessons that they take away from his narrative, however, are not necessarily straightforward. While Camillus rescues the *res publica* from the brink of death, his ambitions also earn him the distrust and displeasure of his peers.[129] The tale of Scipio Africanus, to whom Horace compares Augustus in his ninth *Epode*, reflects similar ambiguity.[130] Although it is a tribune, not Livy, who accuses Scipio of acting like a head of state, his words confirm that this symbolism could still be used to criticize excessively powerful statesmen. Rather than offer unqualified support for any one model of the body politic, Livy crafts a more complicated picture of their various risks and rewards. His willingness to broach such questions, however, marks him as a thinker of a new age.

Augustus as the *caput orbis*

While Livy's rehabilitation of the head of state metaphor took place in the 20s BCE, the identification of the *princeps* as the *caput rei publicae* did not occur until the reign of Tiberius. The late Augustan era, however, illustrates two significant steps in this direction. The first came in the eulogy that Cornelius Severus composed for Cicero in his *Res Romanae*. As we saw

[127] e.g. Hor. *Od.* 1.2.50. Roller 2001: 253–4 stresses the dialogue between the Roman people and Augustus in the construction of the father paradigm. For the Late Republican contest over the titles *parens patriae* and *pater patriae*, see Stevenson 2000.

[128] Miles 1986: 19–20 draws attention to Livy's dating of Rome's three foundations – by Romulus, Camillus, and Augustus – exactly 365 years apart, which casts the present moment as a reenactment of Camillus' refoundation. Edwards 1996: 48–51 stresses the religious aspect of Camillus' role, which is echoed in Augustus' characterization as the "restorer and founder of all the temples" (*templorum omnium restitutorem ac conditorem*, Liv. 4.20.7). Additional parallels include Camillus and Augustus' shared commitment to the physical space of Rome (Syme 1959: 47–8), celebration of a triple triumph (e.g. *triplicem triumphum*, Liv. 6.7.4; *triplici . . . triumpho*, Verg. *Aen.* 8.714), and connection to the Temple of Concord (Orlin 2007: 87).

[129] Coudry 2001 illustrates the ambivalent aspects of the tradition surrounding Camillus.

[130] *io Triumphe, nec Iugurthino parem | bello reportasti ducem, | neque Africanum, cui super Carthaginem | virtus sepulcrum condidit* ("Hail, Triumphus! You have not brought back a general like the one in the Jugurthine War, nor one like Africanus, whose valor built a grave over Carthage," Hor. *Ep.* 9.23–6). Cairns 2012: 139–40 and Gurval 1995: 154 note the likely intentional ambiguity of "Africanus", which could refer to the Elder or Younger Scipio. Both, however, see the Elder Scipio as the primary referent of the passage.

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in the Introduction, the eulogy advertises Severus' fluency in the paradigm of Roman Republicanism. Glorifying Cicero as the champion of the senate, forum, courts, ritual practice, and civilian life (*ille senatus | vindex, ille fori, legum ritusque togaeque*, Sen. *Suas.* 6.26), the poet enumerates the key pillars of public life and political legitimacy in the Late Republic. Yet he also calls Cicero an eternally outstanding head of state: *egregium semper patriae caput*. Cicero himself would never have described his statesmanship in these terms. Like his contemporaries, he used the head to denote non-Republican governance. Severus reverses the signifying force of the symbol, so that it becomes emblematic of traditional political ideals. In this way, his historical epic participates in the same revisionary project as Livy's first pentad. Rather than search for heads of state in the Archaic past, however, he finds at least one in the last generation of the Republic. That the current body politic might also have a head was an idea quickly losing its transgressive force.

The second step towards the portrayal of the *princeps* as the *caput rei publicae* appears in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Tristia*, both of which identify Augustus as the *caput orbis*.[131] Ovid had begun exploring this figure as early as the *Amores*, where he promises that Vergil will be read *Roma triumphati dum caput orbis erit* ("As long as Rome will be the head of the world over which she has triumphed," Ov. *Am.* 1.15.26).[132] Linking the longevity of Latin poetry to the success of the Roman empire, he joins other thinkers in using the head–body comparison to validate imperial hegemony.[133] He stresses the absolute nature of this authority in the *Fasti*, which links world domination to the importation of the goddess Cybele to Rome in 204 BCE: *post, ut Roma potens opibus iam saecula quinque | vidit et edomito sustulit orbe caput* ("Later, after Rome – powerful in wealth – had already seen five centuries and lifted her head over a thoroughly subjugated world," Ov. *Fast.* 4.255–6). Like Livy, he portrays this dominion as preordained in the Archaic past. As Evander tours the future site of Rome in Book 5, Ovid writes, *hic, ubi nunc Roma est, orbis caput, arbor et herbae | et paucae pecudes et casa rara fuit* ("Here, where Rome is now, the head of the world, were once trees and fields and scanty flocks and scattered homes," Ov. *Fast.* 5.93–4). The contemporary stakes of this symbolism emerge in

[131] The *Metamorphoses* are typically thought to have been written and circulated in Rome prior to Ovid's exile in 8 CE (Anderson 1997: 4–5), though their revision in exile complicates matters (as thematized in Hinds 1985).

[132] The *Amores* were likely completed around 15 BCE, but the date of the extant "second edition" is unclear (on their revision, see Martelli 2013: 35–67).

[133] On "Ovid's position as both subject and object of the imperial gaze," see Habinek 2002: 46–7.

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the *Tristia*, a text that Thomas Habinek has shown to be deeply engaged "in the project of Roman imperialism."[134] Rome's status as the head of the world stands in contrast to the submission of the Germans, who lower their own head beneath Tiberius' feet: *teque, rebellatrix, tandem, Germania, magni | triste caput pedibus supposuisse ducis* ("And you, rebellious Germany, have finally lowered your sad head under the feet of our great ruler," Ov. *Tr.* 3.12.47–8).[135] Ovid evokes the literal body of a prisoner prostrated before a Roman general and the metaphorical body of Germania, who must submit to Rome to survive. Mediating between these two levels of meaning is the *princeps*, who undertakes the military campaigns necessary for the formation and survival of an imperial body politic.[136]

The gradually developing perception that Augustus embodied the authority of Rome allowed him to step into its role as the head of the world. Ovid foregrounds such slippage between the *res publica* and its *princeps* in Book 15 of the *Metamorphoses*. When the *caput orbis* figure first appears, it operates in the terms we have come to expect. Like Livy's Romulus, Pythagoras delivers a prophesy predicting and naturalizing Roman rule: *nunc quoque Dardaniam fama est consurgere Romam | . . . haec igitur formam crescendo mutat et olim | immensi caput orbis erit* ("And now rumor has it that Dardanian Rome is rising . . . then by growing it changes form and one day will become the head of the whole world," Ov. *Met.* 15.431–5).[137] Ovid foregrounds the shifting shape of the Roman body politic, which is characterized by its mutability rather than constancy. As history moves towards the apotheosis of Caesar and the deification of Augustus, he hints at its acquisition of a head: *tarda sit illa dies et nostro serior aevo, | qua caput Augustum, quem temperat, orbe relicto | accedat caelo* ("May that day be far off and later than our era, when Augustus' head, after abandoning the world which it rules, approaches the sky," Ov. *Met.* 15.868–70). It is now Augustus' rather than Rome's head that presides

[134] Habinek 1998: 152.

[135] A similar image recurs at Ov. *Tr.* 4.2.43–6. Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 69 suggest that Ovid identifies himself with Germania in a meditation on the cost of imperial power.

[136] We might compare Nicolaus of Damascus' celebration of Julius Caesar as the man who brought the world under one head (εἰς μίαν ἀρχὴν κεφαλαιωθείη γῆς πάσης καὶ θαλάττης τὰ κράτη, "so the power of the whole earth and sea would be brought under his head into one empire," Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 Fr. 130). The date of the biography is debated; Jacoby assigned it to the late 20s BCE, but Toher 1985 has since argued that it was unlikely to have been published before Augustus' death.

[137] The accuracy of his vision is confirmed upon the arrival of Asclepius' ship: *iamque, caput rerum, Romanam intraverat urbem* ("and now it had entered the Roman city, the head of everything," Ov. *Met.* 15.736).

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over the world. The potentially transgressive nature of this admission is nevertheless limited in two ways. First, the verb *tempero* suggests moderation and restraint rather than the absolute rule conveyed in Ovid's earlier use of this imagery. Second, Ovid's gaze is directed outwards towards the empire rather than inwards towards the *res publica*. The text thereby avoids disrupting the fiction that the power Augustus exercised abroad had little to do with the norms that prevailed at home.[138]

The symbolism introduced in the *Metamorphoses* becomes more explicit in *Tristia* 3, which repeatedly stresses the poet's displacement from Rome.[139] It is perhaps the unique perspective granted by this distance that allows him to transform the head of the *princeps* into the head of the world. Returning to the question of his fault, he asserts, *non mihi quaerenti pessumdare cuncta petitum | Caesareum caput est, quod caput orbis erat* ("Caesar's head, the head of the world, was not attacked by me in an attempt to destroy everything," Ov. *Tr*. 3.5.45–6). The repetition of *caput* draws attention to the parallel positions occupied by Augustus and Rome, so that the former becomes the embodiment of the latter. In connecting this theme to his exile, however, Ovid gestures towards the risks posed by a man whose fickle favor determines membership in the body politic. Even a citizen who has done nothing wrong might find himself expelled from the organism of which he was once a part. In this way, Ovid's engagement with capital symbolism echoes his use of healing tropes to destabilize the distinction between benevolent and autocratic rule. His poetry suggests that the metaphor of the body politic could be used to criticize or validate the power of the *princeps*. In the hands of a thinker highly attuned to the paradoxes of the Principate, it could do both at the same time.[140]

This chapter has explored how Roman thinkers used the metaphor of the body politic to respond to the constitutional changes of the late first century BCE. Participants in a discourse community that favored continuity over change, they used figurative speech to address the arrival of sole rule without naming it as such. The metaphor of the healer, already validated through its prominence in Ciceronian oratory, was quickly if tentatively taken up by Horace, Vergil, and Valgius Rufus to describe the

[138] See Ando 2011b: 81–114 on this fiction and its legacy.

[139] Curtis 2015: 412 argues that *Tristia* 3 confronts "Ovid's rupture from Rome from the perspective of long-term displacement."

[140] Identifying subversion in Ovid's poetry remains notoriously difficult. As Hinds 1987: 25 writes, "Every passage ever written by Ovid about Augustus admits of a non-subversive reading: but that is not in itself a refutation of Ovidian subversion." Barchiesi 1997: 30 comments, "Everything the poet says of and to the prince lends itself to a double interpretation, depending on the angle from which it is looked at."

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salutary effects of Augustus' rule. The head of state metaphor faced a more arduous path to acceptance due to its regal heritage. Only after it had been rehabilitated as a positive signifier of statesmanship, a project that began in historical narratives, could it be used in relation to contemporary affairs. This process exemplifies how the paradigm of Roman Republicanism evolved in response to the establishment of the Principate. It was not only that Republican political language changed to meet the needs of autocracy, but that autocracy transformed what Romans perceived to be Republican political language in the first place. Yet even as Romans grew accustomed to the models of the civic healer and head of state, ambivalence remained. The ambiguity of Ovid's poetry serves as a reminder that subversion lurks where panegyric proliferates. The trajectory of Julio-Claudian political discourse, the subject of the next two chapters, confirms as much.

I would like to conclude by considering the broader conceptual import of the imagistic evolution traced thus far. Scholars have long debated how – or if – those living under Augustus understood the significance of the revolution that they witnessed. In the absence of any direct admission of the arrival of autocracy, this question will surely continue to provoke debate. The transformation of the body politic metaphor, however, indicates collective awareness of a shift in governing form. Roman thinkers might have lacked the historical perspective that allows us to identify the establishment of "the Principate," but they reworked a foundational model of social organization to account for the command of an extraordinary statesman over the *res publica*. The decades that separate Livy's first pentad from Ovid's *Tristia* illustrate how gradually this process took place. That it happened at all, however, confirms that no political language can resist addressing the lived reality of power for too long. What cannot be expressed literally finds expression figuratively. The Augustan age represents only one moment in this story, which had its origins in the Late Republic and reached its conclusion in the aftermath of Nero's downfall. Turning to the period from Tiberius to Claudius in the next chapter, we will see how a new generation of thinkers catalyzed the next phase in the life cycle of the Roman body politic.

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