

BEATRICE POLETTI

L. JUNIUS BRUTUS, A MODEL AND PREDECESSOR FOR THE EMPEROR AUGUSTUS. SOME REMARKS ON DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS 4. 71–75*

Summary: Contrarily to most traditional accounts on the foundation of the Republic, Dionysius describes the passage from the Tarquins' monarchy to the Republic as a lawful constitutional reform, in which L. Junius Brutus played a pivotal role. In my paper I analyze the speech that Brutus delivers to the Roman patricians to endorse the establishment of a new government in Rome. The new constitution, although remaining essentially monarchical, will keep its autocratic nature concealed from the people. Throughout this paper, I show how Dionysius in his presentation of Brutus picked up elements both related to the senatorial propaganda against M. Junius Brutus – Caesar's murderer, who claimed descent from L. Brutus and the tyrannicide Ahala – and, at the same time, the character of Augustus's newly-founded government. This account may thus be regarded as Dionysius' own elaboration of Augustus's constitutional reform.

Key words: historiography, tyranny, monarchy, patricians, legitimacy, constitution, propaganda, restoration, lineage, *pietas*

Toward the end of the first century BC, Dionysius of Halicarnassus composed a history of Rome from its legendary origins down to the First Punic War. Information about Dionysius' life is scanty: as he himself writes in the preface of his work, he arrived at Rome around 30 BC, at the end of the civil wars, and lived there for over twenty years.¹ Textual evidence suggests that Dionysius frequented the aristocratic circles of the city, perhaps as a private teacher, and was an aristocrat himself back home.² However, in

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¹ D. H. 1. 7. 2: ἐγὼ καταπλεύσας εἰς Ἰταλίαν ἅμα τῷ καταλυθῆναι τὸν ἐμφύλιον πόλεμον ὑπὸ τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ Καίσαρος ἐβδόμης καὶ ὀγδοηκοστῆς καὶ ἑκατοστῆς ὀλυμπιάδος μεσοῦσης, καὶ τὸν ἐξ ἐκείνου χρόνον ἐτῶν δύο καὶ εἴκοσι μέχρι τοῦ παρόντος γενόμενον ἐν Ῥώμῃ διατρίψας, etc.

² D. H. 1. 6. 5, 1. 7. 3; cf. BOWERSOCK, G. W.: *Augustus and the Greek World*. Oxford 1965, 130; BOWERSOCK, G. W.: Historical problems in late Republican and Augustan classicism. In *Le Classicisme à Rome: aux I^{ères} siècles avant et après J.-C.: neuf exposés suivis de discussions* / par Thomas Gelzer

his *Roman Antiquities*, Dionysius seldom refers to his own times, and while it has been possible to trace his literary inclinations – especially through his rhetorical treatises – his political thought remains largely conjectural.³

The declared purpose of Dionysius' history was to instruct his Greek readers about the distant past of the Romans in order to explain the reasons for the Romans' success by showing their persistent moral superiority, and ultimately to help his readers to hail their conquerors (D. H. 1. 5. 2–4, 1. 89. 1–2, 1. 90. 1). In his narrative, Dionysius often claims to follow accurately the accounts of his sources, which are mainly (but not exclusively) Roman annalistic writers.⁴ However, far from being a mere collage of his sources' opinions, the interpretation that Dionysius provides for many episodes is clearly his own, and could plausibly depend on his own understanding of contemporary issues that he experienced firsthand during his long stay at Rome and his assimilation of these into his own conception of the Romans. Following this idea, I will discuss the account that Dionysius provides for the foundation of the Republic, examining in particular the figure of L. Junius Brutus and the speech he delivers to the Roman patricians before the deposition of King L. Tarquinius Superbus. Dionysius' portrayal of L. Brutus reflects, on the one hand, the senatorial tradition about his ideology and lineage, and, on the other, Augustus' contemporary self-representation as the restorer of Republican values.

The background of Brutus's speech – and, at the same time, the pretext for the expulsion of the Tarquins – was the violation of Lucretia. According to the ancient literary tradition, this noble and virtuous woman was married to L. Tarquinius Collatinus, a relative of the king. Lucretia's moral uprightness arouses the perverse desire of Sextus Tarquinius, the youngest of the king's sons, who rapes her and so causes her to commit suicide. As a result of this tragic episode, those of the patricians closest to Collatinus resolve to expel the whole family of the Tarquins, in order to bring an end

[et al.]; *entretiens préparés et présidés par Hellmut Flashar, Vandœuvres-Genève, 21–26 août 1978*. Genève 1979, 57–78, here 70–72; GABBA, E.: *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome*. Berkeley 1991, 1–4, 30–31; HURST, A.: Un Critique Grec dans la Rome d'Auguste: Denys d'Halicarnasse. *ANRW* Vol. 2, Nr. 30.1, 1982, 839–865, here 845–851; ROBERTS, W. RHYS: The Literary Circle of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. *The Classical Review* 14.9 (1900) 439–442, here 439–441; SCHULTZE, C.: Dionysius of Halicarnassus and His Audience. In MOXON, I. S. ET AL. (ed.): *Past Perspective. Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing. Papers presented at a conference in Leeds, 6–8 April 1983*. Cambridge 1986, 121–141, here 121–123.

³ The significance of Dionysius' historical work, its connection with the Augustan present, and Dionysius' representation of the new imperial rule as the crowning of the classicist rebirth (both in language and civic ideals) has been discussed at length by GABBA (n. 2) 23–59, 190–216; cf. BOWERSOCK: *Historical Problems* (n. 2) 65–75; FOX, M.: *Roman Historical Myths. The Regal Period in Augustan Literature*. Oxford – New York 1996, 49–95. Nevertheless, scholars have disputed a too strict adherence to Augustus' cultural policy in Dionysius' work, and in some instances, Dionysius's narrative has appeared to contain criticism toward the contemporary Roman politics (cf., e.g., BOWERSOCK: *Augustus* [n. 2] 131; HILL, H.: Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Origins of Rome. *The Journal of Roman Studies*. 51 [1961] 88–93; HURST [n. 2] 839–865; SORDI, M.: La «costituzione di Romolo» e le critiche di Dionigi di Alicarnasso alla Roma del suo tempo. *Pallas* 39 [1993] 111–120).

⁴ I.e., M. Porcius Cato, Q. Fabius Maximus, Q. Valerius Antias, C. Licinius Macer, Q. Aelius Tullius, Cn. Gellius, and L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, whom Dionysius lists in his preface at 1. 7. 3; C. Sempronius Tuditanus is cited at 1. 11. 1, and M. Terentius Varro is mentioned at 2. 21. 2.

to their intolerable outrages.⁵ Dionysius relates that during this gathering of Roman nobles around the corpse of Lucretia a vivid debate takes place about the institutional future of the city (D. H. 4.71–75). This discussion is prompted and led by L. Junius Brutus, a descendant of one of Aeneas's companions on his father's side, and of the old king L. Tarquinius Priscus on his mother's. Down to that time, Brutus had feigned stupidity in order to appear harmless to the king and thereby escape his savagery. On the present occasion, however, Brutus reveals his true, clever nature and proposes to implement a detailed plan to take action against the Tarquins.⁶

It will be useful for the aim of this study to focus on the main points of Brutus's speech. At its outset (D. H. 4. 71), Brutus presents as his chief concern at such a crucial moment that of finding a legal way to banish Tarquin and his family. First, he suggests calling the people to assembly and publicly denouncing Sextus Tarquinius' crime; next, after they have obtained in this way the people's sympathy, the patricians will give them the opportunity of voting for the exile of the Tarquins. In order to carry out these operations lawfully, Brutus wants to make sure that someone who has legitimate power to do so, namely a magistrate, should assemble the people, so he takes up this task himself, in his capacity as commander of the *celerēs* – the body of knights created by Romulus for the personal defence of the king.⁷ Let us consider the following excerpt from this section:

ἔπειτα κομίσαντες τὸ σῶμα τῆς γυναικὸς ὡς ἔστιν αἵματι πεφυρμένον εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν καὶ προθέντες ἐν φανερῷ συγκαλῶμεν τὸν δῆμον εἰς ἐκκλησίαν. ὅταν δὲ συνέλθῃ καὶ πλήθουσιν ἴδωμεν τὴν ἀγορὰν, προελθὼν Λουκρήτιός τε καὶ Κολλατῖνος ἀποδυράσθωσαν τὰς ἑαυτῶν τύχας ἅπαντα τὰ γενόμενα φράσαντες. ἔπειτα τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστος παριὼν κατηγορεῖται τῆς τυραννίδος καὶ τοὺς πολίτας ἐπὶ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν παρακαλεῖται. ἔσται δὲ πᾶσι Ῥωμαίοις κατ' εὐχὴν, ἐὰν ἴδωσιν ἡμᾶς τοὺς πατρικίους ἄρχοντας

⁵ The series of the events from the rape of Lucretia down to the shutting out of the royal family from the *urbs* is related, in particular, by D. H. 4. 64–85; Dio 2. 13–19; Diod. 10. 20–22; Liv. 1. 57–60; Ovid. *Fast.* 2. 685–852; Plut. *Publ.* 1. 3–4; Serv. *ad Aen.* 6. 818, 8. 646.

⁶ The ancient sources agree that L. Brutus was the only surviving child of an ancient family related to the royal house of the Tarquini. As mentioned above, his mother Tarquinia was the daughter of King Tarquinius Priscus. When Tarquin the Proud had usurped the throne from Servius Tullius, he put to death several members of his own family, including Tarquinia's husband and sons, in order to prevent later claims to the royal power from unwanted heirs. Brutus managed to save his life by means of his supposed mental limitation (D. H. 3. 46. 3–5, 4. 68, 4. 76. 3–4; Liv. 1. 56. 7–8; Val. Max. 7. 3. 2; cf. MASTROCINQUE, A.: *Lucio Giunio Bruto. Ricerche di storia, religione e diritto sulle origini della repubblica romana*. Trento 1988, 17–20; WISEMAN, T. P.: *Unwritten Rome*. Exeter 2008, 293–309). F. MORA (*Il pensiero storico-religioso antico. Autori Greci e Roma. I: Dionigi d'Alicarnasso*. Roma 1995, 298–303) has pointed out the inconsistency of Dionysius' account in his attempt at harmonizing the chronology of the last three kings. Dionysius, indeed, disagrees with the tradition of Tarquin being son of Tarquinius Priscus because of the evident chronological discrepancy, and argues that Tarquin was instead his grandson, born from one of his daughters. However, if Tarquinius Priscus had two daughters who were both married (D. H. 4. 7. 4), one being the wife of Servius Tullius and the other the mother of Tarquin, who was Brutus's mother?

⁷ About the institution of this body see D. H. 2. 13; Liv. 1. 15. 8; cf. MASTROCINQUE (n. 6) 25 n. 2, 113–116.

τῆς ἐλευθερίας: πολλὰ γὰρ καὶ δεινὰ πεπόνθασιν ὑπὸ τοῦ τυράννου καὶ μικρὰς ἀφορμῆς δέονται. ὅταν δὲ λάβωμεν τὸ πλῆθος ὥρμημένον καταλῦσαι τὴν μοναρχίαν ψῆφόν τ' αὐτοῖς ἀναδῶμεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μηκέτι Ῥωμαίων Ταρκύνιον ἄρξειν καὶ τὸ περὶ τούτων δόγμα πρὸς τοὺς ἐπὶ στρατοπέδου διαπεμψώμεθα ἐν τάχει. (...) ταῦτα λέξαντος αὐτοῦ παραλαβὼν τὸν λόγον Οὐαλέριος, Τὰ μὲν ἄλλα, ἔφησεν, ὀρθῶς ἐπιλογίζεσθαι μοι δοκεῖς, Ἰούνιε: περὶ δὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔτι βούλομαι μαθεῖν, τίς ὁ καλέσων ἔσται αὐτὴν κατὰ νόμους καὶ τὴν ψῆφον ἀναδῶσων ταῖς φράτραις. ἄρχοντι γὰρ ἀποδεδόται τοῦτο πράττειν: ἡμῶν δ' οὐδεὶς οὐδεμίαν ἀρχὴν ἔχει. ὁ δ' ὑπολαβὼν: ἐγώ, φησὶν, ὦ Οὐαλέριε. τῶν γὰρ Κελερίων ἄρχων εἰμί, καὶ ἀποδεδόται μοι κατὰ νόμους ἐκκλησίαν, ὅτε βουλοίμην, συγκαλεῖν (D. H. 4. 71. 2–6).

Then, after we have carried the woman [Lucretia]'s body to the market place, defiled with blood as it is, and publicly displayed it, let us call the people to assembly. When they have assembled and we see that the market place is filled with people, let Lucretius and Collatinus step forward and lament their own misfortunes, telling all that has happened. Next, let each of the others who are present denounce the tyranny and urge the citizens to liberty. For all the Romans it will be the fulfillment of their prayer, if they see us, the patricians, making a beginning of liberty. For they have suffered many terrible evils at the hands of the tyrant and need only little encouragement. When we have the multitude eager to overthrow the monarchy, let us give them the vote that Tarquin shall no longer rule over the Romans and let us send off in all speed their decision about this matter to the army encamped. (...) When Brutus had said this, Valerius took up the discourse. 'In all other respects', he said, 'I think that your reasoning is correct, Junius; but as for the assembly I still would like to know who will call it in accordance with the law and give the vote to the *curiae*.⁸ To a magistrate it is permitted to do this: but none of us holds any office.' And Brutus said in reply: 'I will, Valerius. For I am the commander of the *celeres*, and it is permitted to me to lawfully call the people's assembly whenever I wish.'⁹

Dionysius confers on this preliminary phase of the establishment of the Republic a distinct aura of legitimacy, an element that is notably absent from the other literary sources. Livy, for instance, describes a furious and passionate revolt: Brutus arrives at Rome at the head of armed men, whom he himself has set in motion, and with his

⁸ The *comitia curiata* was the legitimate popular assembly under the kingdom, which originated from Romulus' subdivision of Rome's population in administrative and voting units called *curiae* (Cic. *Rep.* 2. 14; D. H. 2. 7; Liv. 1. 13. 6; Plut. *Rom.* 19. 4). For a recent analysis on the origins and functions of the *curiae*; see SMITH, C. J.: *The Roman Clan. The gens from ancient ideology to modern anthropology*. Cambridge – New York 2006, 184–234.

⁹ Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

words provokes turmoil in every quarter of the city.¹⁰ Similarly, Plutarch, in the *Life of Publicola*, relates that when the people's hatred against Tarquin had exploded because of Lucretia's death, Brutus espoused their revolutionary cause and played a chief role in the expulsion of the king.¹¹ In Dionysius, arms evidently are not an option. It is worth noting, moreover, that his Brutus highlights the role of the patricians, including himself in their number, as leaders of the Romans in their race to freedom (ἡμᾶς τοὺς πατρικίους ἄρχοντας τῆς ἐλευθερίας, 4. 71. 3). The people come out as a malleable entity in the patricians' hands: they are reminded of their sufferings, urged to action, and then are ready to follow the example of the best men, who are set before their eyes as guides.

In the following part of Brutus's speech (D. H. 4. 72–74), the young man urges his associates to define the form of government that is to succeed the old one. Therefore, each one of them expresses his view about what constitution seems best suited to Rome. Some are for the establishment of a democracy, others in favour of an oligarchy, but the winning opinion is the one advocated by Brutus, who advises those present – addressed as ἀγαθοὶ καὶ ἐξ ἀγαθῶν (4. 73. 1) –¹² against changing the existing constitution right away. Reforming the state in such a short time would be difficult and risky, Brutus says; in addition, the constitution previously established by Romulus and Numa is already the most desirable for the Romans. Thus, for the time being Brutus considers it preferable to maintain a monarchical government, but at the same time to eliminate from it its inherent evils. There follows a description of the changes that, in Brutus's view, need to be brought about to improve the old Roman constitution (4. 73. 2 – 74. 4): they will first have to modify the very titles of monarchy and king, which during Tarquin's reign had become hateful to the people, and

¹⁰ Liv. 1. 59. 2–7: *totique ab luctu versi in iram, Brutum iam inde ad expugnandum regnum vocantem sequuntur ducem. elatum domo Lucretiae corpus in forum deferunt concientque miraculo, ut fit, rei novae atque indignitate homines. pro se quisque scelus regium ac vim queruntur. movet cum patris maestitia, tum Brutus castigatior lacrimarum atque inertium querellarum auctorque, quod viros, quod Romanos deceret, arma capiendi adversus hostilia ausos. ferocissimus quisque iuvenum cum armis voluntarius adest; sequitur et cetera iuventus. inde parte praesidio relictis Collatiae custodibusque ad portas locatis, ne quis eum motum regibus nuntiaret, ceteri armati duce Bruto Romam profecti. ubi eo ventum est, quacumque incedit armata multitudo, pavorem ac tumultum facit; rursus ubi anteire primores civitatis vident, quidquid sit, haud temere esse rentur. nec minorem motum animorum Romae tam atrox res facit, quam Collatiae fecerat. ergo ex omnibus locis urbis in forum curritur. quo simul ventum est, praeco ad tribunum celerum, in quo tum magistratu forte Brutus erat, populum advocavit.* R. M. OGILVIE (*A Commentary on Livy. Books 1–5*. Oxford 1965, 227) compares this scene with the confusion that followed Caesar's assassination (cf. particularly Plut. *Caes.* 67).

¹¹ Plut. *Publ.* 1. 3–4: [Ταρκύνιον Σούπερβον] μισῶν ὁ δῆμος καὶ βαρυνόμενος, ἀρχὴν ὑποστάσεως ἔλαβε τὸ Λουκρητίας πάθος αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τῷ βιασθῆναι διεργασμένης, καὶ Λεύκιος Βρούτος ἀπτόμενος τῶν πραγμάτων τῆς μεταβολῆς ἐπὶ πρῶτον ἦλθε τὸν Οὐαλλέριον καὶ χρησάμενος αὐτῷ προθυμοτάτῳ συνέβαλε τοὺς βασιλεῖς, μέχρι μὲν ἐπιδοξος ἦν ὁ δῆμος ἓνα χειροτονήσῃν ἀντὶ τοῦ βασιλέως στρατηγόν, ἡσυχίαν ἦγεν ὁ Οὐαλλέριος, ὥς τῷ Βρούτῳ μᾶλλον ἄρχειν προσήκον ἡγεμόνι τῆς ἐλευθερίας γεγενημένῳ.

¹² It is uncertain if the term ἀγαθοὶ has been employed here with a moral connotation or with reference to the men's social status (recalling the appellative πατρικίοι used above) or both. Of the men present, Collatinus was thought to come from a notoriously poor family, being son of Egerius (D. H. 3. 50. 3, 4. 64. 3; Liv. 1. 34. 2–3).

replace them with new names agreeable to the people's ears. Secondly, the royal power shall be henceforth shared by two men, in order to ensure their restraining influence on one another – just as happens in the case of Sparta's shared kingship. Third, since the insignia of royal power (the sceptre, the golden crown, and the embroidered robes) have become grievous sights to the citizens after Tarquin's despotic display of them, they must be removed from men's eyes. With the exception of special celebrations, the rulers will ordinarily exhibit only the ivory chair, the toga edged in purple, and the twelve lictors with the *fascēs*. Finally, Brutus recommends limiting to one year the term of supreme office (an Athenian custom), which down to Tarquin had been life-long. Through these improvements, the chances for monarchy to degenerate into tyranny should become void. Then Brutus, with the same measures noted before, describes an elaborate procedure to lawfully elect the new magistrates, and, in the conclusion of his discourse, exhorts the future magistrates to always consult with the Senate in every matter, as the kings had also been accustomed to doing (4. 75).

The Greek inspiration of this long section is hardly disputable, its most obvious antecedents being the Herodotean debate among the seven Persians about the form of government to establish after the slain of the Magi (Her. 3. 80–82),¹³ and Polybius' discussion about the composite nature of the Roman constitution (Pol. 6. 3–9).¹⁴ In addition, Brutus mentions Sparta and Athens as eminent examples from which the Romans ought to draw useful elements for their institutional reform (D. H. 4. 73. 4, 74. 2); and perhaps also the Greek ancestry of Brutus could have represented an appealing detail for Dionysius in selecting him as absolute protagonist of this narrative.¹⁵ Nonetheless, an attentive reading of this passage could plausibly point as well to a contemporary inspiration for several of the features described by Dionysius. To begin with, I previously mentioned how, contrary to what happens in other traditional accounts, Brutus does not foment an armed rebellion against the tyrant, but instead devises a legal way to expel him – with much emphasis on this point. The idea for this variation of the story could have come to Dionysius through a motif of the Augustan propaganda. In his *Res Gestae* Augustus shows off his sense of justice by vaunting about having exiled the killers of his father through a fair trial and overcome them twice when they waged war on the Republic: *qui parentem meum interfecerunt, eos in exilium expuli iudiciis legitimis ultus eorum facinus. Et postea bellum inferentis rei publicae vici bis acie* (RG 2. 10–11).¹⁶ The allusion contained in this passage and

¹³ See LA PENNA, A.: *Fra teatro, poesia e politica romana. Con due scritti sulla cultura classica di oggi*. Torino 1979, 64–65.

¹⁴ An interesting echo of this sort of constitutional debate is later found in Cassius Dio's history. Dio relates a fictitious conversation between Octavian, Agrippa and Maecenas: these two give their advice to young Caesar about the form of government he ought to establish for the Romans after defeating Anthony (Dio 52. 2–40).

¹⁵ L. Tarquinius Collatinus had remote Greek origins as well, being the son of Egerius (the brother of Tarquinius Priscus, see n. 12 above). The literary tradition, though, has him unanimously banished because of his family name, which bears the memory of the tyranny.

¹⁶ For a detailed comment on this passage, see RAMAGE, E. S.: *The Nature and Purpose of Augustus' "Res gestae"*. Stuttgart 1987, 32–34, and 86–91 about the *iustitia* of Augustus.

confirmed by ancient sources¹⁷ is to the *lex Pedia* of 43 BC. In accordance with this provision, the assassins of Caesar had to undergo an expedited trial and, in case of proven culpability, be exiled. Even though the actual author of the law was Q. Pedius (Augustus' cousin and colleague in the consulship), the law is set forth here as an exclusive initiative of Augustus, who in fact expresses himself in the first person singular. The analogy with Brutus's story is compelling: both Augustus and Brutus manage to have their "tyrants" sent to exile through a lawful procedure, and in both cases, the final resort to war appears as a defensive action.¹⁸ That the Caesaricides were represented as tyrants by the official propaganda could be easily inferred from Augustus' own statement: *annos undeviginti natus exercitum privato consilio et privata impensa comparavi, per quem rem publicam dominatione factionis oppressam in libertatem vindicavi* (RG 1. 1–3).¹⁹

Next, it is remarkable that Dionysius describes the institution of the Republic not as the foundation of a new order, but as the restoration of the previous one after a period of tyranny:

ἐγὼ δ' (...) καινὴν μὲν οὐδεμίαν οἶομαι δεῖν ἡμᾶς καθίστασθαι πολιτείαν κατὰ τὸ παρόν. (...) ἐξέσται θ' ἡμῖν ὕστερον, ὅταν ἀπαλλαγώμεν τῆς τυραννίδος μετὰ πλείονος ἐξουσίας καὶ κατὰ σχολὴν βουλευομένοις τὴν κρεῖττον πολιτείαν ἀντὶ τῆς χειρόνης ἐλέσθαι, εἰ δὴ τις ἄρα ἔστι κρεῖττων, ἥς Ῥωμύλος τε καὶ Πομπήλιος καὶ πάντες οἱ μετ' ἐκείνους βασιλεῖς καταστησάμενοι παρέδωκαν ἡμῖν, ἐξ ἧς μεγάλη καὶ εὐδαίμων καὶ πολλῶν ἄρχουσα ἀνθρώπων ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν διετετέλεσεν (D. H. 4. 73. 1).

I am of the opinion that no new constitution should be established for the present. (...) It will be possible for us later, when we have got rid of the tyranny, with greater liberty and at leisure to choose if we want a better constitution instead of a worse one, if after all there is any better one than that, which Romulus, Numa, and all the kings after them have established and handed down to us, from which our state has continued to prosper and to rule over many persons.

¹⁷ Cf. Suet. *Aug.* 10. 1: *nihil convenientius ducens quam necem avunculi vindicare tuerique acta, confestim ut Apollonia rediit, Brutum Cassiumque et vi necopinantis et, quia provisum periculum subterfugerant, legibus adgredi reosque caedis absentis deferre statuit*; Vell. 2. 69. 5: *at lege Pedia, quam consul Pedius collega Caesaris tulerat, omnibus, qui Caesarem patrem interfecerant, aqua ignique interdictum erat*; App. *BC* 3. 95: νόμος δ' ἐτέρω ἀπέλυε μὴ εἶναι πολέμιον Δολοβέλλαν, καὶ εἶναι φόνον δίκας ἐπὶ Καίσαρι.

¹⁸ Cf. D. H. 5. 14. 1: the consuls Brutus and Valerius resolve to wage war against Tarquin and his allies only after they hear that these are raising armies and preparing to attack Rome (as also Livy confirms at 2. 6).

¹⁹ As RAMAGE (n. 16) 31 notes in his commentary to the *Res Gestae*, by using the word *libertas* in this passage Augustus puts himself and his deed in a direct line with the Republican tradition; in other words, he removes the role of saviour of the Republic from the assassins of Caesar and arrogates it for himself. The title of *libertatis vindex* appears on a famous coin (a *cistophorus*) from 28 BC, which bears the legend LIBERTATIS P. R. VINDEIX on obverse, and PAX on reverse (*RIC* I [2nd edition] Augustus 476).

In this way, Brutus persuades the other nobles to preserve the government established by Tarquin's predecessors. The idea of restoration of the constitutional form instituted by the forefathers that enhanced the greatness of the Romans was probably the most prominent theme of Augustus' propaganda. In the above-mentioned citation from the *Res Gestae*, Augustus depicts himself overtly as the restorer of the Republican liberty – and his entire policy was consistently oriented towards the revival of the old republican traditions.²⁰ Dionysius' assessment of Brutus as champion of the monarchy contrasts only superficially with the view of Augustus supported by his propaganda, that is, with Augustus' persistent denial of any monarchical connotations to his rule. For it is evident from its text that in Dionysius' account the emphasis lies not as much on the type of government to be enacted as on the traditional and established nature of the government. Besides, Dionysius – in accordance with a widespread conception²¹ – seems to make no substantial difference in terms of power between kings and consuls, as it emerges particularly from Brutus's successive discourse to the Roman people:

ἡμῖν σκοπουμένοις, τίς ἀρχὴ γενήσεται τῶν κοινῶν κυρία, βασιλείαν μὲν οὐκέτι καταστήσασθαι δοκεῖ, ἄρχοντας δὲ δύο καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἀποδεικνύναι βασιλικὴν ἔξοντας ἐξουσίαν, οὓς ἂν ὑμεῖς ἐν ἀρχαιρεσίαις ἀποδείξετε ψήφον ἐπιφέροντες κατὰ λόχους (D. H. 4. 84. 4).

When we consider what magistracy will have power over the common affairs, it seems best to us not to establish the kingship again, but to elect two magistrates every year holding the royal power, whomever you shall appoint during the elections casting your vote by centuries.²²

²⁰ RG 1. 1–3 (above); 8. 12: *legibus novis latis complura exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro usu revocavi et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi*; and 34. 13: *bella ubi civilia exstinxeram per consensum universorum potius rerum omnium, rem publicam ex mea potestate in senatus populique Romani arbitrium transtuli*. Cf. EDER, W.: Augustus and the Power of Tradition: the Augustan Principate as a Binding Link between Republic and Empire. In RAAFLAUB, K. A. – TOHER, M. (ed.): *Between Republic and Empire. Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*. Berkeley 1990, 71–122, here 83–120; GALINSKY, K.: *Augustan Culture. An Interpretative Introduction*. Princeton 1996, 42–77, 288–294; SCHEID, J.: Augustus and Roman Religion: Continuity, Conservatism, and Innovation. In GALINSKY, K. (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*. Cambridge – New York 2005, 175–193, here 175, 180–182.

²¹ Cf., e.g., Pol. 6. 12. 9, who considering the role of the consuls observes: ὥστ' εἰκότως εἰπεῖν ἂν, ὅτε τις εἰς ταύτην ἀποβλέψει τὴν μερίδα, διότι μοναρχικὸν ἀπλῶς καὶ βασιλικὸν ἐστὶ τὸ πολίτευμα; Liv. 2. 1. 7: *libertatis autem originem inde magis quia annum imperium consulare factum est quam quod de minutum quicquam sit ex regia potestate numeres*; cf. also the considerations about Caesar's power in Appian's account, when the historian reports the motivation for Caesar's murder. The conspirers feared that if Caesar had conquered the Parthians he would have become a king in every respect, but this – Appian says – was only an excuse, the only difference being the name of Caesar's office: ἐργὸν δὲ καὶ τοῦ δικτάτορος ὄντος ἀκριβῶς βασιλεύς (BC 2. 111). Cf. MASTROCINQUE (n. 6) 179–83 for a discussion about the main positions taken by modern historians on the origin of the consulship.

²² As J.-H. SAUTEL (L'autorité dans la Rome royale selon Denys d'Halicarnasse. Aperçus sémantiques. *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 77.1 [1999] 77–104, here 84–85) observes commenting on this passage “Les termes employés, ἀρχή et ἐξουσία, qualifient donc le pouvoir souverain à Rome, que ce soit sous la forme de la royauté ou celle de l'*imperium* consulaire auquel elle donne naissance... le pouvoir royal est fondamentalement le même que celui des consuls, parce que l'*imperium* ne change pas de nature”.

Again, in Brutus's speech the consular power because of its distribution between two men is openly compared to the shared kingship of Sparta. Next, elsewhere – in relating the story of the Decemvirate – Dionysius says that the Decemvirs “held power over every affair of the city, the same power that both the consuls and, before them, the kings used to have.”²³ Lastly, Dionysius' cultural background and provenience from the Hellenized East, where foreign domination and monarchy had been the norm since at least the sixth century BC, should not be undermined, as they may have significantly shaped his views on political power. Dionysius was certainly not the only contemporary to consider Augustus a monarch, as the case of Nicolaus of Damascus' enthusiastic biography of the *princeps* attests.²⁴ Then the later writers regularly refer to Augustus' Principate as a monarchy. A classic example of this is presented by Cassius Dio, who writing almost three centuries after Dionysius, offers a lucid description of the substantial changes that the Roman state underwent with the rise of Augustus:

οὕτω μὲν δὴ τό τε τοῦ δήμου καὶ τὸ τῆς γερουσίας κράτος πᾶν ἐς τὸν Αὐγουστον μετέστη, καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀκριβῆς μοναρχία κατέστη: μοναρχία γάρ, εἰ καὶ τὰ μάλιστα καὶ δύο καὶ τρεῖς ἅμα τὸ κύρος ποτε ἔσχον, ἀληθέστατα ἂν νομίζοιτο. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ὄνομα αὐτὸ τὸ μοναρχικὸν οὕτω δὴ τι οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι ἐμίσησαν ὥστε μήτε δικτάτορας μήτε βασιλέας μήτ' ἄλλο τι τοιουτότροπον τοὺς αὐτοκράτοράς σφον ὀνομάζειν: τοῦ δὲ δὴ τῆς πολιτείας τέλους ἐς αὐτοὺς ἀνακειμένου οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως οὐ βασιλεύονται (Dio 53. 17. 1–2).

Thus, all the power of both the people and the Senate passed into the hands of Augustus, and from that time on there was established, strictly speaking, a monarchy: for monarchy, even if at length mostly two or three people at the same time held the power, it would be named most truly. The Romans so hated the very name of monarchy that they called their emperors neither dictators nor kings nor any other thing of such kind; but with the supreme power of government laying upon them, it is not possible that they are not kings.²⁵

²³ D. H. 10. 55. 4: τούτους δ' ἄρχειν εἰς ἐνιαυτὸν ἀφ' ἧς ἂν ἀποδειχθῶσιν ἡμέρας, ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντας ὑπὲρ πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν ἦν εἶχον οἱ τε ὕπατοι καὶ ἐπὶ πρότερον οἱ βασιλεῖς, τάς τ' ἄλλας ἀρχάς πάσας καταλελύσθαι. Cf. also 5. 2. 1 about the suspicion with which the people regarded the two consuls, as a consequence, the axes had to be removed from the fasces.

²⁴ The work is dated c. 25–20 BC; see GABBA, E.: The Historians and Augustus. In MILLAR, F. – SEGAL, E. (ed.): *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects*. Oxford – New York 1984, 61–88, here 61–64.

²⁵ The concept is first introduced at 52. 1. 1: ταῦτα μὲν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ δημοκρατίᾳ ταῖς τε δυναστείαις, πέντε τε καὶ εἴκοσι καὶ ἑπτακοσίοις ἔτεσι, καὶ ἐπραξαν οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ ἐπαθον: ἐκ δὲ τούτου μοναρχεῖσθαι αἰθὺς ἀκριβῶς ἤρξαντο, καίτοι τοῦ Καίσαρος βουλευσαμένου τά τε ὅπλα καταθέσθαι καὶ τὰ πράγματα τῇ τε γερουσίᾳ καὶ τῷ δήμῳ ἐπιτρέψαι (cf. also Tac. *Ann.* 1. 2, 1. 9). The terms monarch/monarchy actually appear to have a rather neutral meaning, whereas the terms βασιλεύς/βασιλεία, *rex/regnum* in Latin, generally have a negative connotation for the Romans (cf., e.g., Cic. *Att.* 8. 11. 2, *Cat.* 1. 12. 30, *Off.* 3. 83–84, *Rep.* 2. 49, 52; D. H. 4. 73. 3, 5. 19. 1; Liv. 2. 1. 9; Plut. *Publ.* 1. 4; Sall. *Jug.* 31. 7).

Another point deserving attention in Brutus's speech concerns the use of the royal insignia. As previously mentioned, when Brutus advises the nobles to preserve the monarchy, he recommends some improvements in order to remove any tyrannical aspects from it. Among these improvements, Brutus warns against assuming the title of king and exhibiting the signs of royal power. We could recognize in this passage a subtle reference to C. Julius Caesar and the public attitude he assumed in his last years of life. It is well known that the Senate granted Caesar, in the period immediately preceding his murder, a large number of honours; of these, Cassius Dio provides a particularly detailed account:

1) τὰ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτα φέρεσθαι τε αὐτὸν αἰεὶ καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ πόλει τὴν στολὴν τὴν ἐπινίκιον ἐνδεδυκῶτα, καὶ καθέζεσθαι ἐπὶ τοῦ ἀρχικοῦ δίφρου πανταχῇ πλην ἐν ταῖς πανηγύρεσιν, ἐψηφίσαντο (44. 4. 2).

2) ὥς δὲ καὶ τούτοις ἔχαιρε, δίφρος τέ οἱ ἐπίχρυσος, καὶ στολή ἥ ποτε οἱ βασιλῆς ἐκέχρητο, φρουρά τε ἐκ τῶν ἱππέων καὶ ἐκ τῶν βουλευτῶν ἐδόθη (44. 6. 1).

3) καὶ ἐπειδὴ καὶ τούτοις ἡρέσκετο, οὕτω δὲ ἔς τε τὰ θεάτρα τὸν τε δίφρον αὐτοῦ τὸν ἐπίχρυσον καὶ τὸν στέφανον τὸν διάλιθον καὶ διάχρυσον, ἐξ ἴσου τοῖς τῶν θεῶν, ἐσκομίζεσθαι κἀν ταῖς ἵπποδρομίαις ὅχον ἐσάγεσθαι ἐψηφίσαντο (44. 6. 3).

4) ἐνταῦθα οὖν αὐτοῦ ὄντος οὐδὲν ἔτι ἐνδοιαστῶς οἱ ἐπιβουλευόντες οἱ ἔπραττον, ἀλλ' ὅπως δὴ καὶ τοῖς πάνυ φίλοις ἐν μίσει γένηται, ἄλλα τε ἐπὶ διαβολῇ αὐτοῦ ἐποιοῦν καὶ τέλος βασιλέα αὐτὸν προσηγόρευον, καὶ πολὺ τοῦτο τοῦνομα καὶ κατὰ σφᾶς διεθρύλουν (44. 9. 1).

5) ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐν τῇ τῶν Λυκαίων γυμνοπαιδίᾳ ἔς τε τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐσῆλθε καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος τῇ τε ἐσθῇ τῇ βασιλικῇ κεκοσμημένος καὶ τῷ στεφάνῳ τῷ διαχρυσῷ λαμπρυνόμενος ἔς τὸν δίφρον τὸν κεχρυσωμένον ἐκαθίζετο, καὶ αὐτὸν ὁ Ἀντώνιος βασιλέα τε μετὰ τῶν συνιερέων προσηγόρευσε καὶ διαδήματι ἀνέδησεν, εἰπὼν ὅτι... (44. 11. 2).

1) First then they voted that he would always be carried even in the city itself wearing the triumphal robe, and would sit in his official chair everywhere except at the games.

2) Since he was pleased by these things, a gilded chair was given to him, and a robe that once the kings had used, and a guard of men from the knights and senators.

3) And since he was pleased by these things, too, therefore they voted that his chair, the gilded one, and his crown set with precious stones and gold, equally as those of the gods, would be carried in the theatres and his chariot would be led in at the horse-races.

4) And so being himself in this position those who were plotting acted no longer with hesitation, but in order that he would become hateful even to his very great friend, they made false accusation against him and finally addressed him as king, and they advertised much this name even among themselves.

5) For after he entered the forum at the Lupercalia and was sitting on his gilded chair upon the tribunal being adorned with the royal dress and shining in his golden crown, and Anthony with his fellow-priests addressed him as king and wreathed him with a royal diadem, saying that... (etc.).

So, among countless other privileges, Dio says that 1) the senators voted for Caesar the right to wear the triumphal dress any time he rode around in the city; 2) they assigned to him a bodyguard of aristocrats and permitted him to dress with an attire once worn by the kings; 3) also, they voted that Caesar's golden throne and golden crown should be carried in the theatres. 4) Eventually, some senators started to salute Caesar as king – a title that seemed more and more congenial to him; 5) when Antony offered him the royal diadem at the Lupercalia, Caesar was said to be sitting on his golden throne, adorned with the royal apparel and his golden crown. The last report is partly confirmed by Plutarch (*Ant.* 12. 1), Appian (*BC* 2. 110), and Suetonius, who adds that Caesar would publicly exhibit his contempt toward members of the Senate (*Caes.* 78. 1, 79. 1).

The theme of Caesar receiving unheard of honours, accepting most of them, and displaying an autocratic attitude toward the other magistrates could certainly constitute an appropriate counterpart to the sober moderation shown, on the contrary, by Caesar's heir. Indeed a salient aspect of Augustus' public image – repeatedly attested in the *Res Gestae* and confirmed by ancient accounts – was precisely his systematic refusal of all the honours or powers he deemed contrary to the Roman ancestral customs.²⁶ Then, it seems reasonable that in Dionysius' account the insistence of Brutus on removing the most extravagant among the signs of power, along with his final appeal to the future rulers to always consult with the Senate, reflects the cautiousness with which Augustus avoided in public the excesses formerly exhibited by his father.

There could be a potential objection to associating L. Brutus with Augustus: the figure of L. Junius Brutus had been strongly connected, as ancestor and inspirer, with that of M. Junius Brutus, the assassin of Caesar. According to their genealogy, the Junii, a gens of plebeian origin, could supposedly count L. Brutus as ancestor in agnatic lineage,

²⁶ Cf., e.g., Suet. *Aug.* 52, 53. 1, and Dio 51. 19–20, 53. 6. 1, 53. 16. 4, 7–8. The list of Augustus' refusals of honours and/or professions of modesty is quite impressive – *RG* 4. 22: *cum autem pluris triumphos mihi senatus decrevisset, iis supersedi*; 5. 31: *dictaturam et absenti et praesentia populo et senatu Romano mihi oblatam M. Marcello et L. Arruntio consulibus non accepi*; 5. 35: *consulatum tum datum annuum et perpetuum non accepi*; 6. 38 (the Latin text is fragmentary): τῆς τε συνκλήτου καὶ τοῦ δήμου τοῦ Ῥωμαίων ὁμολογούντων, ἵνα ἐπιμελητῆς τῶν τε νόμων καὶ τῶν τρόπων ἐπὶ τῇ μεγίστῃ ἐξουσίᾳ μόνος χειροτονηθῶι, ἀρχὴν οὐδε μίαν παρὰ τὰ πάτρια ἔθῃ διδομένην ἀνεδεξάμην; 10. 23: *pontifex maximus ne fierem in vivi conlegae locum, populo id sacerdotium deferente mihi, quod pater meus habuerat, recusavi*; 21. 28–29: *et postea, quotienscumque imperator appellatus sum, aurum coronarium non accepi*; 24. 51: *statuae meae pedestres et equestres et in quadrigis argenteae steterunt in urbe XXC circiter, quas ipse sustuli*; 34. 21: *post id tempus praestiti omnibus dignitate, potestatis autem nihilo amplius habui quam qui fuerunt mihi quoque in magistratu conlegae*. Cf. GALINSKY (n. 20) 58–77; SCHEID (n. 20) 182–186.



Fig. 1. Denarius, 54 BC. Crawford 433/2



Fig. 2. Denarius, 54 BC. Crawford 433/1



Fig. 3. Aureus, 43–42 BC. Crawford 506/1

as we learn mostly from Cicero and Plutarch.²⁷ M. Brutus's mother Servilia was herself descended from another traditional hero and famous tyrannicide, C. Servilius Ahala. The propaganda deriving from M. Brutus's lineage and its ideological meaning in the struggle against Caesar's tyranny are well attested in three coin emissions minted by M. Brutus himself. One series reproduces the heads of L. Brutus and Servilius Ahala (Fig. 1); another shows the head of *Libertas* on the obverse, and L. Brutus between two lictors on the reverse (Fig. 2); the third one bears the head of M. Brutus and, on the other side, that of L. Brutus, with an oak-leaf border impressed around the two faces (Fig. 3).²⁸

Both Cassius Dio and Plutarch relate that at the time of Caesar's assassination the propaganda hostile to M. Brutus wished to deny his descent from L. Brutus, claiming that the latter had put his sons to death, thus leaving behind no offspring.²⁹ In particular, we gather from Plutarch (*Brut.* 1. 6) that Brutus's enemies insisted upon the plebeian origin of M. Brutus's *gens*, which was incompatible with the alleged patrician lineage of L. Brutus.³⁰ Dionysius keenly embraces this tradition adverse to M. Brutus, as emerges from the following passage:

(...) γενεὰν οὔτε ἄρρενα καταλιπὼν οὔτε θήλειαν, ὥς οἱ τὰ Ῥωμαίων σαφέστατα ἐξητακότες γράφουσι, τεκμήρια πολλὰ μὲν καὶ ἄλλα τοῦτου φέροντες, ὑπὲρ ἅπαντα δ' ὁ δυσαντίλεκτόν ἐστιν, ὅτι τοῦ πατρικίων γένους ἐκεῖνος ἦν, οἱ δ' ἅπ' ἐκείνης αὐτοῦς λέγοντες εἶναι τῆς οἰκίας Ἰουνιοί τε καὶ Βροῦτοι πάντες ἦσαν πλήβειοι καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς μετήσσαν, ἃς τοῖς δημοτικοῖς μετέναι νόμος, ἀγορανομίας τε καὶ δημαρχίας, ὑπατείαν δ' οὐδεὶς, ἥς τοῖς πατρικίοις μετῆν. ὥπὲρ δὲ ποτε καὶ ταύτης ἔτυχον τῆς ἀρχῆς, ὅτε συνεχωρήθη καὶ τοῖς δημοτικοῖς αὐτὴν λαβεῖν. ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ μὲν τούτων οἷς μέλει τε καὶ διαφέρει τὸ σαφὲς εἰδέναι παρήμι σκοπεῖν (D. H. 5. 18. 1–2).

He [L. Brutus] left behind no descent, neither male or female, as those who have investigated the Romans' affairs most accurately write, producing many other evidence for this and in particular, something that is above all hard to contradict, that he was of patrician family. On the other hand those who affirm to descend from that race, both Junii and Bruti, were all

²⁷ Plut. *Brut.* 1. 1, 1. 5. Among the several references of Cicero to L. Brutus as ancestor of Marcus, cf., e.g., Cic. *Att.* 2. 24. 3, 13. 40. 1, *Brut.* 53, *Phil.* 2. 11. 26. For an overview of Cicero's relationship with M. Junius Brutus before Caesar's assassination, see WELCH, K. E.: Cicero and Brutus in 45. In HILLARD, T. W. ET AL. (ed.): *Ancient History in a Modern University. Proceedings of a Conference Held at Macquarie University, 8–13 July 1993*. North Ryde (N. S. W.) 1998, Vol. I 244–256.

²⁸ Cf. EVANS, J. DE ROSE: *The Art of Persuasion. Political Propaganda from Aeneas to Brutus*. Ann Arbor 1992, 145–148; KLEIN, M.: Abstammung als Propaganda: die Familienprägungen des Marcus Iunius Brutus. *Numismatisches Nachrichtenblatt: Organ der deutschen numismatischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. 59, N. 8 (2010) 301–305; MASTROCINQUE (n. 6) 95 n. 6, 96 n. 11.

²⁹ Dio 44. 12. 1–3; Plut. *Brut.* 1. 6–7; cf. App. *BC* 2. 113.

³⁰ Posidonius, cited in Plut. *Brut.* 1. 7, advances a clumsy compromise for this matter: the present gens Junia would descend from a third son of L. Brutus, who was not put to death because still an infant at the time of the conspiracy, and so it would be ultimately patrician. About a plausible timing for the genesis of L. Brutus's story (and that of the other co-protagonists in the foundation of the Republic), see WISEMAN (n. 6) 312–319.

plebeians and canvassed for those offices, which the law permitted to the plebeians, the aedileship and the tribunate, but none of them canvassed for the consulship, which was open to the patricians only. At length, though, they obtained also this office, when it had been granted to the plebeians to hold it, too. But I leave it to those whose concern and interest is to know the truth to look into these matters.

Dionysius appears indeed rather eager, if not anxious, to assert the authority of his sources and present the plebeian origin of the contemporary Junii as unquestionable. He supports his argument by remarking the absence of Junii from the *fasti consulares* until at least the regular admission by law of the plebeians to the consulship (probably alluding here to the *leges Liciniae-Sextiae* of 367 BC).³¹ On the other hand, if there is no reason to disbelieve the plebeian origin of M. Junius' family, there is no certain evidence for L. Brutus's belonging to the patriciate, either; in fact, the latter might be a plebeian as well. As Attilio Mastrocinque has pointed out in his volume about the founder of the Roman Republic, in the ancient literary tradition the term noble or aristocratic, which is commonly used by ancient writers to define L. Brutus's status, was by no means a synonym for patrician. Secondly, the plebeians seem to have had actual access to the consulship in the first two decades of the Republic, even though the late Republican tradition accepted as a dogma the patrician status of the early consuls. Moreover, an alternative tradition, which is represented by Dionysius and Plutarch,³² indicates L. Brutus as the first tribune of the plebs; regardless of its plausibility, such a report casts doubt on Brutus's patrician origin and suggests the existence of a parallel tradition about an early connection of the Junii Bruti with both tribunate and plebs. Thus, the idea of distinguishing L. Brutus from the rest of the Junii of the fifth and early fourth centuries was an excellent weapon against M. Brutus and, at the same time, a way to appreciate Brutus the Elder without mingling him with the assassin of Caesar. This is confirmed by the diffusion in the late-republican period of senatorial pamphlets hostile to M. Brutus.³³

In addition, besides cutting the line of descent between the two Bruti, Dionysius discredits the tradition about Servilius Ahala, M. Brutus's maternal ancestor. Ahala was universally recognized as the slayer of Sp. Maelius, an agitator and aspiring tyrant of the mid-fifth century BC.³⁴ There were two main versions of Ahala's story:

³¹ The first Junius to be listed in the *fasti* as consul is C. Junius Bubulcus Brutus (cos. I 317 BC). As Richardson has recently observed, Dionysius' source here was conceivably an adherent of Julius Caesar, someone well versed in legal and constitutional matters, Q. Aelius Tubero appearing the most probable choice; cf. RICHARDSON, J. H.: L. Iunius Brutus the patrician and the political allegiance of Q. Aelius Tubero, *Classical Philology* 106.2 (2011) 155–161, here 157–160.

³² D. H. 6. 89: Brutus, receiving the tribunician power along with other four men, advises the plebs to render the office of tribune of the people (δημαρχος) sacred and inviolable by passing a law and ratifying it by an oath; Plut. *Coriol.* 7. 1: L. Brutus and L. Sicinius Vellutus are elected first tribunes of the people (in Liv. 2. 33. 1–3 the first two tribunes are C. Licinius and L. Albinus, to whom Sicinius is associated as colleague); cf. Suid. s.v. δημαρχοι (Δ 421 Adler), which reports the same information. Dionysius names L. Brutus also as aedile (ἀγορανόμος, 7. 14. 2). See MASTROCINQUE (n. 6) 95 n. 1–3.

³³ MASTROCINQUE (n. 6) 95–101; cf. RICHARDSON (n. 31) 155–156.

³⁴ Cic. *Cat.* 1. 3; Liv. 4. 13–14; Plut. *Brut.* 1. 5.

in one, the socio-political crisis that Sp. Maelius causes through his disturbances calls for the appointment of a dictator, who in turn appoints Ahala as his *magister equitum*. In this capacity, Ahala personally summons Maelius to appear before the dictator, and, upon his refusal, Ahala kills him while he attempts to flee. According to the other version, which Dionysius attributes to the annalists L. Cincius Alimentus and L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi, the Senate resolves to carry out the death sentence for Maelius without trial and appoints Ahala as his executioner.³⁵ Dionysius dismisses this account as hardly credible, but provides no explanation to justify his statement (D. H. 12. 4. 2). Of the former version, on the other hand, he relates a unique variant, in which Sp. Maelius does not die by the hand of Ahala, but is butchered by the horsemen who were escorting the latter. The reason why Dionysius (or possibly his source) changed the story of Ahala and so lessened one of the Romans' most glorious heroes may well be a different one, but the anti-tyrannical model that Ahala supplied for M. Brutus should at least be regarded as a conceivable explanation. Through such a device, in fact, Dionysius deprives M. Brutus's crime against Caesar of the legitimacy infused to it by his two ancestors, which made Brutus's deed appear as a moral duty toward the country. At the same time, Dionysius detaches L. Brutus from an inconvenient parentage: in this way, L. Brutus could be more opportunely regarded as the precursor of Augustus' action, not of his bitter enemy.

L. Brutus was said to have put his own sons to death; but if this act may have appeared cruel and unnatural to foreign readers (and thus an inappropriate counterpart for Augustus' *pietas*), yet it was viewed with genuine admiration by the Romans and in general by the writers of Roman history. Dionysius, indeed, introduces this episode to his Greek readers by an apologetic statement, which makes clear that Brutus's action must be judged in a Roman perspective and according to Roman moral values:

τὰ δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔργα θατέρου τῶν ὑπάτων Βρούτου μεγάλα καὶ θαυμάσια λέγειν ἔχων, ἐφ' οἷς μέγιστα φρονούσι Ῥωμαῖοι, δέδοικα μὴ σκληρὰ καὶ ἄπιστα τοῖς Ἑλλήσι δόξω λέγειν, ἐπειδὴ πεφύκασιν ἅπαντες ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων παθῶν τὰ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων λεγόμενα κρίνειν καὶ τὸ πιστὸν ἄπιστον ἐφ' ἑαυτοὺς ποιεῖν· ἐρῶ δ' οὖν ὁμῶς (D.H. 5.8.1).

As I have to relate the successive deeds of Brutus, one of the two consuls, enormous and stupefying, of which the Romans have the highest consideration, I fear that I will seem to tell bitter and incredible things to the Greeks, since all persons are inclined by nature to judge from their own

³⁵ Cicero usually quotes the episode of Sp. Maelius in connection with the other famous cases of aspiring tyrants (cf., e.g., *Amic.* 36, *Cat.* 1. 3, *Rep.* 2. 49). According to R. FIORI (*Homo sacer: dinamica politico-costituzionale di una sanzione giuridico-religiosa* [Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto di Diritto Romano e dei Diritti dell'Oriente Mediterraneo / Università di Roma «La Sapienza», vol. 72]. Napoli 1996, 375–380, 393–396), both versions of Maelius's death are plausible in Roman law, the first being perpetrated through the *imperium* of the dictator by his *magister equitum*, the second being executed *sine iudicio* and by a private citizen, as it was consented in the cases of *adfectatio regni*.

experiences the things said about others and make what is credible incredible by themselves; nevertheless I will relate them.

As the story goes, Brutus's two sons by Vitellia were caught while supporting a conspiracy, which aimed to restore Tarquin's rule over Rome (D. H. 5. 6. 4 – 5. 8. 6; Liv. 2. 3. 6 – 2. 5. 8; Plut. *Publ.* 3. 3 – 6. 4). According to the oath that Brutus had made all the citizens swear, whoever attempted to reintroduce Tarquin into Rome or re-establish a monarchy would receive capital punishment (D. H. 5. 1. 3; Liv. 2. 1. 9; Plut. *Publ.* 2. 2; cf. App. *BC* 2. 119)³⁶; the consul's sons were not an exception to this rule. With the death sentence upon his sons, Brutus demonstrates his resolve to set loyalty to country before family ties. This quality led to the approbation not only of Dionysius, who attributes to him a quasi-stoic endurance of his sufferings,³⁷ but previously also of Polybius, who alludes to this episode and implicitly counts Brutus's inspiring principle among the factors for the Romans' greatness.³⁸ A proof that in the time of Augustus the feeling of admiration for Brutus's deed was dominant may be provided by Virgil's description of Brutus (*Aen.* 6. 819–823):

*Consulis imperium hic primus saevasque secures
accipiet, natosque pater nova bella moventes
ad poenam pulchra pro libertate vocabit.
Infelix, utcumque ferent ea facta minores,
vincet amor patriae laudumque immensa cupido.*³⁹

This [Brutus] will be the first to receive the consul's power and the fierce axes, and as a father will call his sons, who were stirring new wars, to punishment, for the sake of fair freedom. Unhappy, however posterity will hand down his deeds, love of his fatherland and immeasurable desire of praises will prevail.

Therefore, Brutus's condemnation of his sons was not at all deemed a monstrosity, but, on the contrary, was held as the highest example of devotion towards the *res publica* that the Roman tradition could count – and perhaps it represented the highest model of true *pietas* that Augustus could look at.

³⁶ See OGILVIE (n. 10) 226, 236.

³⁷ D. H. 5. 8. 6: ὑπὲρ ἅπαντα δὲ τὰ παράδοξα καὶ θαυμαστὰ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τὸ ἀτενὲς τῆς ὄψεως καὶ ἄτεγκτον ἦν· ὃς γε τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων ὅσοι τῷ πάθει παρεγένοντο κλαίωντων μόνος οὐτ' ἀνακλαυσάμενος ὥφθη τὸν μόρον τῶν τέκνων οὐτ' ἀπομιμῶσας ἑαυτὸν τῆς καθεξούσης τὸν οἶκον ἐρημίας οὐτ' ἄλλο μαλακὸν οὐθὲν ἐνδοῦς, ἀλλ' ἄδακρὺς τε καὶ ἀστένακτος καὶ ἀτενὴς διαμένων εὐκαρδίως ἤνεγκε τὴν συμφορὰν. οὕτως ἰσχυρὸς ἦν τὴν γνώμην καὶ βέβαιος τὰ κριθέντα διατηρεῖν καὶ τῶν ἐπιταραττόντων τοὺς λογισμοὺς παθῶν καρτερός. Cf. Liv. 2. 5. 5–8; Plut. *Publ.* 6. 3–4; see OGILVIE (n. 10) 241–247.

³⁸ Pol. 6. 54. 5: καὶ μὴν ἀρχὰς ἔχοντες ἔνιοι τοὺς ἰδίους υἱοὺς παρὰ πᾶν ἔθος ἢ νόμον ἀπέκτειναν, περὶ πλείονος ποιοῦμενοι τὸ τῆς πατρίδος συμφέρον τῆς κατὰ φύσιν οἰκειότητος πρὸς τοὺς ἀναγκαιοτάτους.

³⁹ As MASTROCHINQUE (n. 6) 116–117 observes, these verses appear still influenced by the circulation of pamphlets against M. Brutus and the propaganda hostile to Caesar's assassins – not without interpretative ambiguities. Cf. the recent commentary by N. HORSFALL (*Virgil, Aeneid 6: A Commentary*. Berlin 2013, 558–561), which offers also up-to-date bibliographical references.

To summarize, this paper has shown that Dionysius' account about the overthrow of the Roman monarchy contains considerable innovative elements in comparison with that of the other extant sources. In particular, from L. Brutus's speech to the Roman nobility there emerges a solid cultural Greek background for Dionysius, accompanied by a rather complex interpretation of those events and of Brutus's character in the light of the late-republican senatorial ideology and, possibly, of Augustus' own deeds and self-portrayal. The official propaganda was certainly inclined to promote the association between Augustus and the various traditional fathers of the country, as Aeneas, Romulus, and Camillus; however, the association with the founder of the Republic presented more difficulties because of the presumed descent of M. Brutus, the assassin of Caesar, with L. Brutus. Nevertheless, Dionysius, by embracing a motif of senatorial propaganda that denied such a family tie and promoted L. Brutus's patrician origin, overcomes the impasse, detaches L. Brutus from inconvenient (plebeian) descendants, and ultimately depicts him as a fitting predecessor for Augustus' expulsion of the Caesaricides (connoted as tyrants) and his restoration of the established constitutional order. This view may have come to Dionysius from the ideology expressed by his sources (in this case, of senatorial origin and conceivably supporters of Caesar and/or Augustus), but also implies a personal assimilation and elaboration of Roman traditional concepts as well as contemporary politics – perhaps pointing to Dionysius' adherence to the Augustan ideals; surely strengthening his image as an aristocrat of pro-senatorial feeling.

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