

## OCTAVIAN AND THE THUNDERBOLT: THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO PALATINUS AND ROMAN TRADITIONS OF TEMPLE BUILDING

In 36 B.C. Octavian announced his intention of building a new temple to Apollo next to his house on the south-west edge of the Palatine Hill, and in 28 he dedicated the completed temple with its associated porticoes and libraries. Excavations conducted in the area in the 1950s and 1960s confirmed the identification of the temple's remains and revealed the adjacent portion of Augustus' house. However, the excavations were never fully published, and much remains uncertain about the topography of the sanctuary.<sup>1</sup>

The magnificence of the sanctuary's buildings and artworks is vividly evoked in Propertius' description and in many other ancient allusions.<sup>2</sup> In recent scholarship there has been much discussion of the symbolism of its visual programme and of the significance of its location.<sup>3</sup> Octavian/Augustus had chosen for his house a site with powerful associations with Rome's earliest past, in particular with Romulus, whose reputed hut stood nearby. The house itself was relatively modest, but he shared it with the god who was his particular patron, an association of sanctuary and ruler's residence that, as Zanker has observed, is reminiscent of Hellenistic palaces.

One aspect that has attracted relatively little discussion is Octavian's original decision to found the temple. This paper offers a closer examination of this decision against the background of Roman traditions of temple foundation. It will be shown

<sup>1</sup> Excavation reports: G. Carettoni, 'I problemi della zona augustea del Palatino alla luce dei recenti scavi', *Rend. Pont. Acc.* 39 (1966–67), 55–65, and 'Roma—Le costruzioni di Augusto e il tempio di Apollo sul Palatino', *Arch. Laz.* 1(1978), 72–4. Recent discussions include: L. Richardson, Jr, *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore and London, 1992), 14; P. Gros, in E. M. Steinby, *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* [hereafter *LTUR*], 1.54–7; L. Balensiefen, 'Überlegungen zu Aufbau und Lage der Danaidenhalle auf dem Palatin', *MDAI(R)* 102 (1995), 189–209; A. Claridge, *LTUR* 5.225, and *Rome: An Oxford Archaeological Guide* (Oxford, 1998), 131; M. A. Tomei, 'I resti del arco di Ottavio e il portico delle Danaidi', *MEFRA* 112 (2000), 557–610. See also n. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Hor. *Od.* 1.31; Prop. *Eleg.* 2.31; Verg. *Aen.* 8.720; Ov. *Fast.* 4.951–4, *Ars. Am.* 1.73–4, *Trist.* 3.1.59–64; *RG* 19.1, 24.2; Vell. 2.81.3; Asc. 90C; Plin. *NH* 36.11, 24–5, 32, 37.11; Joseph. *BJ* 2.81; Suet. *Aug.* 29.3, 52.1; Dio 53.1.3; Serv. *Aen.* 8.720.

<sup>3</sup> P. Zanker, 'Der Apollontempel auf dem Palatin', in *Città e architettura nella Roma imperiale, Anal. Rom.*, Suppl. 10 (1983), 21–40, and *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor, 1988), 50–3, 85–9; B. Kellum, 'Sculptural programs and propaganda in Augustan Rome: the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine', in R. Winkes (ed.), *The Age of Augustus* (Louvain, 1985), 169–76 (repr. in E. D'Ambra [ed.], *Roman Art in Context. An Anthology* [Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1993], 75–84); E. Simon, *Augustus. Kunst und Leben in Rom um die Zeitenwende* (Munich, 1986), 19–25; G. Carettoni, in *Kaiser Augustus und die verlorene Republik* (Berlin, 1988), 263–72; E. Lefèvre, *Das Bildprogramm des Apollo-Tempels auf dem Palatin* (Konstanz, 1989); M. J. Strazzulla, *Il principato di Apollo. Mito e propaganda nelle lastre 'Campane' dal tempio di Apollo Palatino* (Rome, 1990); G. Sauron, *Quis Deum? L'expression plastique des idéologies politiques et religieuses à Rome* (Rome, 1994), 501–10; G. K. Galinsky, *Augustan Culture: An Interpretive Introduction* (Princeton, 1996), 213–24; D. Kienast, *Augustus: Prinzeps und Monarch* (Darmstadt, 1999<sup>3</sup>), 231–8; P. Marchetti, 'Le substrat dorien de l'Apollon Palatin: de Rome à la Grèce et vice versa', in J.-Y. Marc and J.-C. Moretti (edd.), *Constructions publiques et programmes édilitaires en Grèce entre le IIe siècle av. J.-C. et le Ier siècle ap. J.-C.* (Athens, 2001), 455–71.

that the temple was not, as has often been supposed, a thank-offering for the victory in Sicily in the tradition of temples vowed by successful commanders. Nor could Octavian simply establish his patron god next to his house at his own whim, for to do so would have been an act of arrogance at a time when he was already seeking to adopt the stance of republican legitimacy and traditionalism which served him so well in his final struggle with Antony and as sole ruler. It will be argued here that in founding the temple Octavian drew on traditional practice in the expiation of prodigies, but radically adapted it for his own purposes.

### I. THE PROCLAMATION OF 36 B.C.

Octavian (or in reality his admiral Agrippa) won the decisive naval victory over Sextus Pompeius at Naulochus on 3 September 36 B.C.<sup>4</sup> Octavian then settled his remaining affairs in Sicily, ousting Lepidus and quelling a mutiny.<sup>5</sup> With this accomplished, he returned to Rome, where he held an ovation on 13 November, entering the city on horseback rather than on foot in the traditional manner.<sup>6</sup> This lesser form of triumph was appropriate for what he represented as a war against slaves.<sup>7</sup>

Appian (*BCiv.* 5.130–1.538–43) and Cassius Dio (49.15–16) give parallel narratives of Octavian's return to Rome. Before his arrival he was voted numerous honours. On arrival he made speeches to the senate and people, which Appian tells us he later published. In these he recounted his achievements and policies, proclaimed the ending of civil war, abolished various taxes and cancelled arrears to the treasury. He refused some of the honours decreed and declined to assume the office of Pontifex Maximus, still held by Lepidus. The honours accepted, as listed by Appian, were the ovation, the declaration of the day of the Naulochus victory as annual *feriae*, and the erection of a naval column surmounted by a golden statue of himself, adorned with prows captured in the battle and bearing the inscription, 'Peace, long disturbed, he re-established on land and sea'.<sup>8</sup>

Subsequently, two further honours were decreed for Octavian. One related to the tribunician power. The claim of Appian and Orosius that he now received the tribunician power for life is certainly wrong, but, if the honour conferred was in the more limited terms stated by Dio, namely *sacrosanctitas* and the right to sit on the tribunes' benches, Octavian may have accepted it.<sup>9</sup> Appian links this honour to moves by Octavian to re-establish republican forms and a promise he made to secure Antony's agreement on his return from Parthia for the surrender of their powers and

<sup>4</sup> A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae* 13.3.506 = V. Ehrenberg and A. H. M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius* (Oxford, 1952; repr. with addenda, 1976) [hereafter EJ], p. 51.

<sup>5</sup> On these events see now G. Mundubeltz, 'Octavien et son armée au lendemain de la guerre de Sicile (36–35 av. J.-C.)', *Athenaeum* 88 (2000), 169–201.

<sup>6</sup> *Inscr. Ital.* 13.1.569 = EJ 34; *RG* 4.1; Suet. *Aug.* 22; J. W. Humphrey and M. Reinhold, 'Res Gestae 4.1 and the ovations of Augustus', *ZPE* 57 (1984), 60–2.

<sup>7</sup> *RG* 25.1; J. Fugmann, 'Mare a praedonibus pacavi. Zum Gedanken der *aemulatio* in den *Res Gestae* des Augustus', *Historia* 40 (1991), 307–17.

<sup>8</sup> The first two honours are confirmed by the sources listed at nn. 4, 6. The column may be depicted at *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 271, but this may show one of the further naval columns erected after Actium (Serv. *Georg.* 3.29).

<sup>9</sup> App. *BCiv.* 5.132.548–9; Dio 49.15.5–6; H. M. Last, 'On the *tribunicia potestas* of Augustus', *Rend. Ist. Lomb.* 84 (1951), 93–110; R. A. Bauman, 'Tribunician sacrosanctity in 44, 36 and 35 B.C.', *RhM* 124 (1981), 166–83.

the restoration of 'the entire constitution'. Such a promise may well have been included in the speeches Octavian made on arrival.<sup>10</sup>

The other honour conferred after Octavian's return is mentioned by Dio alone:

τότε δὲ οἰκίαν τε αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ δημοσίου δοθῆναι ἔγνωσαν· τὸν γὰρ τόπον ὃν ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ, ὡστ' οἰκοδομηθεῖσθαι τινα, ἐώνητο, ἐδημοσίωσε καὶ τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι ἱέρωσεν, ἐπειδὴ κεραυνὸς ἐς αὐτὸν ἐγκατέσκηψε. (49.15.5)

They decided that a house should be given him from public funds; for the place which he had bought on the Palatine for house-building he had made public property and had dedicated to Apollo, since lightning had struck it.

Dio does not indicate when Octavian had made this gift, but for this we may resort to a passage of Velleius Paterculus. At the end of his account of the victorious campaign in Sicily, Velleius appends the following statement:

uictor deinde Caesar reuersus in urbem contractas emptionibus complures domos per procuratores, quo laxior fieret ipsius, publicis se usibus destinare professus est, templumque Apollinis et circa porticus facturum promisit, quod ab eo singulari exstructum munificentia est. (2.81.3)

Then Caesar, having returned in victory to the city, declared that he was making over for public use several houses which he had purchased through agents to make his residence more spacious, and promised to build there a temple of Apollo and surrounding porticoes, which he constructed with extraordinary munificence.

Velleius has thus passed over Octavian's other actions on his return to Rome, singling out for mention only the declaration of part of his Palatine property as public and the announcement of his intention to build there a temple of Apollo, accompanied by porticoes. Taken with the accounts of Appian and Dio, this passage enables us to pinpoint the moment at which Octavian announced his gift of the site to the Roman people and his intention to build a sanctuary of Apollo there. Although not mentioned at that point by Appian or Dio, it was evidently one of the announcements made in the speeches which, as they report, Octavian delivered when he arrived at Rome in early November.

Velleius says nothing about what had prompted Octavian to take this step, but the omission is made good by Dio's reference to the lightning strike, and more information is supplied in a passage of Suetonius:

templum Apollinis in ea parte Palatinae domus excitauit, quam fulmine ictam desiderari a deo haruspices pronuntiarant; addidit porticus cum bibliotheca Latina Graecaque . . . (Aug. 29.3)

He erected the temple of Apollo in that part of his Palatine house which, when it had been struck by lightning, *haruspices* had declared to be desired by the god. He added porticoes with Latin and Greek libraries . . .

The sequence of events can thus be reconstructed as follows. Octavian's first acquisition on the Palatine was, as Suetonius tells us (Aug. 72.1), the former house of Hortensius, but he subsequently purchased additional properties. When lightning struck there, *haruspices* were consulted and responded that the place was desired by Apollo. The lightning strike and the consultation of the *haruspices* may well have taken place during Octavian's absence in Sicily in the campaigning season of 36,

<sup>10</sup> Cf. R. E. A. Palmer, 'Octavian's first attempt to restore the constitution (36 B.C.)', *Athenaeum* 56 (1978), 315–28.

although an earlier date is not impossible. On his return to Rome in November 36 Octavian announced in his addresses to the senate and people that he would implement the *haruspices*' ruling by making public the part of his Palatine property where the lightning had struck and building there a temple of Apollo, accompanied by porticoes.

After making public the land designated for the sanctuary of Apollo, Octavian still retained for his own residence property extending well beyond the original Hortensian house.<sup>11</sup> As Dio tells us (49.15.5, cited above), he was voted a house at public expense in compensation for his gift to the Roman people of the land destined for the sanctuary of Apollo. This was a signal honour: houses at public expense were said to have been granted to various Valerii in the early Republic, and Dio reports such a vote for Caesar.<sup>12</sup> It is possible that part of the Palatine residential complex was acquired in accordance with this vote, but more likely that it was all acquired by Octavian's own purchases and that he declined the offer of a house at public expense. Such a refusal enabled him to make a show of modesty, while ensuring that he continued to live in proximity to the projected sanctuary. He later made his residence itself public property, part in 12 B.C., when he became *pontifex maximus*, and the rest in A.D. 3, after its rebuilding with public and private help following a fire.<sup>13</sup>

## II. COMMANDERS AND TEMPLES

In the mid Republic temples were most commonly built in Rome following vows made by commanders on campaign. Such temples were often built from the commander's spoils (*manubiae*), but arrangements for contracts and dedications were at the discretion of the senate.<sup>14</sup> Occasionally commanders erected other public buildings, such as porticoes, from their spoils. Eleven temples are known to have been vowed by commanders in the period 200–180 alone, but in the rest of the second century such temples became less common.<sup>15</sup> In the last years of the Republic ordinary commanders seem to have given up making temple vows altogether: no such commander is known to have vowed a temple in the period from 100 B.C. to the death

<sup>11</sup> The former house of Catulus was included in the residence (Suet. *Gram.* 17). On the formation and character of Augustus' Palatine residence see N. Degraasi, 'La dimora di Augusto sul Palatino e la base di Sorrento', *Rend. Pont. Acc. Arch.* 39 (1966–67), 77–116; G. Carettoni, *Das Haus des Augustus auf dem Palatin* (Mainz, 1983); A. J. Woodman, *Velleius Paterculus. The Caesarian and Augustan Narrative* (Cambridge, 1983), 208; M. Corbier, 'De la maison d'Hortensius à la Curie sur le Palatin', *MEFRA* 104 (1992), 871–916; M. Donderer, 'Zu den Häusern des Kaisers Augustus', *MEFRA* 107 (1995), 621–60, at 621–30; I. Iacopi, *LTUR* 2.46–8; M. Royo, *Domus Imperatoriae. Topographie, formation et imaginaire des palais impériaux du Palatin* (Rome 1999), 77–80, 119–23, 144–71; P. Pensabene, 'Elementi architettonici della casa di Augusto sul Palatino', *MDAI(R)* 104 (1997), 149–92; M. A. Tomei, 'Le case di Augusto sul Palatino', *MDAI(R)* 107 (2000), 7–36.

<sup>12</sup> Asc. 13C; Dio 43.44.6; S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), 276–80.

<sup>13</sup> Dio 54.27.3, 55.12.5; Suet. *Aug.* 57.2.

<sup>14</sup> On commanders' temples in the mid Republic see A. Ziolkowski, *The Temples of Mid-Republican Rome and their Historical and Topographical Context* (Rome, 1992); M. Abersson, *Temples votifs et butin de guerre dans la Rome républicaine* (Rome, 1994); E. M. Orlin, *Temples, Religion and Politics in the Roman Republic* (Leiden, New York, Cologne, 1997); M. Beard, J. North, and S. Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge, 1998), 1.87–91. More generally on temples and public building see D. E. Strong, 'The administration of public building in Rome during the late Republic and early Empire', *BICS* 15 (1968), 97–109; J. E. Stambaugh, 'The functions of Roman temples', *ANRW* 2.16.1 (1978), 554–608.

<sup>15</sup> Ziolkowski (n. 14), 311; Orlin (n. 14), 194–5, 201–2.

of Caesar.<sup>16</sup> The tradition of manubial temples and public works was, however, exploited by the two military dynasts of the late Republic, Pompey and Caesar. Pompey's great theatre complex incorporated a temple of Venus Victrix and various lesser shrines, and he also built temples to Hercules and Minerva.<sup>17</sup> Caesar responded by building a new forum from his spoils, incorporating a temple of Venus Genetrix.<sup>18</sup>

In the triumviral and early Augustan periods manubial building by lesser commanders revived. Numerous commanders undertook such work following their triumphs, from L. Munatius Plancus (triumphed 43) to L. Cornelius Balbus, whose triumph in 19 B.C. was the last celebrated by a non-member of the imperial family. Some, like Balbus with his theatre, built new utilitarian structures, but most opted for the grandiose rebuilding of existing monuments. The temples rebuilt in this way were Saturn (Plancus), Apollo in the Circus Flaminius (C. Sosius, triumphed 34), and Hercules of the Muses and Diana on the Aventine (respectively L. Marcus Philippus and L. Cornificius, following triumphs in 33 or 32).<sup>19</sup> Later in Augustus' reign the practice was revived by Tiberius: following his triumph in 7 B.C., he undertook in his own name and in that of his dead brother Drusus the restoration of the temples of Castor and Concordia, dedicating them in respectively A.D. 6 and 10.<sup>20</sup>

Augustus rebuilt or restored numerous temples and carried out many other public works in the city of Rome in his or others' names. However, he erected only four new temples: the temple of Divus Iulius in the Forum Romanum, dedicated in 29, the temple of Apollo Palatinus, dedicated in 28, the small temple of Iuppiter Tonans at the entrance to the Area Capitolina, dedicated in 22, and the temple of Mars Ultor in the new Forum Augustum, dedicated in 2 B.C.<sup>21</sup> Of these only Mars Ultor was manubial in character.

Augustus stated in the *Res Gestae* (21.1) that he built the temple of Mars Ultor and the Forum Augustum from spoils (*ex manubiis*). Both Ovid and Suetonius tell us that the temple was built in accordance with a vow made at the battle of Philippi in 42. However, Ovid goes on to say that the god earned his title of Ultor ('Avenger') a second time when the Parthians were compelled to return the captured Roman standards, and, as Augustus himself tells us, the recovered standards were eventually

<sup>16</sup> Cic. *Leg. Agr.* 2.61 attests continued expectation that commanders might spend their booty on temples or other public buildings (*in monumenta deorum immortalium . . . in urbis ornamenta*).

<sup>17</sup> *LTUR* 5.35–8, 120–1 (the theatre complex, P. Gros), 3.20–1 (Hercules, F. Coarelli), 3.253–4 (Minerva, D. Palombi).

<sup>18</sup> C. Amici, *Il Foro di Cesare* (Florence, 1991); *LTUR* 2.299–307 (C. Morselli, P. Gros). Appian's claim (*BCiv.* 2.68.281) that the temple was vowed before the battle of Pharsalus in 48 is problematic: Weinstock (n. 12), 80–2.

<sup>19</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 29.5 lists many of the commanders' buildings of the triumviral and Augustan period. For overviews see Zanker, *Power of Images* (n. 3), 65–71; N. Purcell, *CAH* 10<sup>2</sup> (1996), 787–9; D. Favro, *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge, 1996), 82–95; Kienast (n. 3), 410–17. For the individual buildings see *LTUR*. Sosius, a supporter of Antony, may have embarked on the rebuilding of the Apollo temple in deliberate rivalry with Octavian's planned new temple on the Palatine, but he was pardoned after Actium, and in its completed form the restored temple seems to have celebrated Octavian/Augustus: E. La Rocca, *Amazonomachia. Le sculture frontonali del tempio di Apollo Sosiano* (Rome, 1985); A. Viscogliosi, *Il Tempio di Apollo in Circo e la formazione del linguaggio architettonico augusteo* (Rome, 1996). The rebuilding of the temple of Neptune by a Cn. Domitius has often been dated to the triumviral period, but was probably earlier: F. Coarelli, *Il Campo Marzio. 1: Dalle origini alla fine della repubblica* (Rome, 1997), 397–446; *LTUR* 3.341–2 (A. Viscogliosi), 5.279–90 (P. L. Tucci).

<sup>20</sup> *LTUR* 1.242–5 (I. Nielsen), 316–20 (A. M. Ferroni).

<sup>21</sup> At *RG* 19–21 Augustus groups new buildings and rebuildings indiscriminately. Suet. *Aug.* 29 differentiates more accurately.

housed in the temple.<sup>22</sup> Whether or not there is any truth in the story of the Philippi oath, plans for the forum and temple were probably drawn up only after the recovery of the standards in 20. When it received the news of their recovery in 20, the senate decreed the erection of a small temple of Mars Ultor on the Capitol to receive these and any future recovered standards.<sup>23</sup> After his return, Augustus probably declined this proposal and undertook instead to erect a temple of Mars Ultor for this purpose in a new forum. Thus the tradition of the temple vowed by a commander in battle was only one element in the complex genesis of the temple of Mars Ultor.<sup>24</sup>

As we saw in the previous section, Octavian announced his intention of building a temple to Apollo on the Palatine on his return to Rome after his victory over Sex. Pompeius in 36. Many scholars have inferred from this that the temple was vowed at or immediately after the battle of Naulochus.<sup>25</sup> However, this cannot be correct. No source mentions such a vow, and as we have seen, both Dio and Suetonius tell us that the decision to found the temple was prompted by an event at Rome, namely a lightning strike on Octavian's Palatine property.<sup>26</sup>

It might none the less still be maintained that the temple was intended to serve as a thank-offering to Apollo for the Naulochus victory and was presented in that way when Octavian announced the project on his arrival at Rome. Such a conclusion would, however, be mistaken. In the first place, the contents of the speeches to senate and people which Octavian made on arrival were, as the accounts of Appian and Dio show, wide ranging, and not limited to the recent victory. Secondly, Apollo is nowhere credited with the Naulochus victory, and it was instead his sister Diana who was associated with this success.

Artemisium, a rural sanctuary of Artemis Phacelitis close to Mylae, played a part in the land manoeuvres that preceded the decisive naval battle off Naulochus.<sup>27</sup> The proximity of this sanctuary was evidently the basis for the association of Artemis/Diana with Octavian's victory, which is attested in various coin issues and may perhaps have led L. Cornificius, who was one of Octavian's legates in the Naulochus campaign, to choose the Aventine temple of Diana for rebuilding after his later triumph. An aureus of the IMP CAESAR series issued about the time of the Actium war has a bust of Diana on the obverse and on the reverse a temple enclosing a military trophy on a naval base; in the pediment of the temple stands a *triskeles*, the three-legged emblem of Sicily, clearly identifying the victory in question as Naulochus.<sup>28</sup> Diana's connection with the victory in Sicily is most emphatically

<sup>22</sup> Ov. *Fast.* 5.569–94; Suet. *Aug.* 29.2; *RG* 29.2.

<sup>23</sup> Dio 54.8.3.

<sup>24</sup> For this interpretation see J. W. Rich, 'Augustus's Parthian honours, the temple of Mars Ultor and the arch in the Forum Romanum', *PBSR* 56 (1998), 71–128, especially 79–97; M. Spannagel, *Exemplaria Principis. Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Ausstattung des Augustusforums* (Heidelberg, 1999), 15–89, with Rich's comments at *BMCR* 2002.03.21. See also T. Schäfer, *Spolia et Signa. Baupolitik und Reichskultur nach dem Parthererfolg des Augustus* (Göttingen, 1998).

<sup>25</sup> For example, Zanker (n. 3, 1988), 50; Richardson (n. 1), 14; Favro (n. 19), 89; Galinsky (n. 3), 213; Gros, *LTUR* 1.54; Claridge (n. 1, 1998), 131.

<sup>26</sup> So rightly R. A. Gurval, *Actium and Augustus. The Politics and Emotions of Civil War* (Ann Arbor, 1995), 113–5, though without mention of the crucial evidence of Suet. *Aug.* 29.3.

<sup>27</sup> Artemisium in the preliminary manoeuvres: App. *BCiv.* 5.116.484; Dio 49.8.1, 3. On the sanctuary, whose precise location remains unknown, see R. J. A. Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire* (Warminster, 1990), 290, 409.

<sup>28</sup> *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 273. On this issue as attesting Diana's link with Naulochus see especially L. R. Taylor, *The Divinity of the Roman Emperor* (Middletown, CT, 1931), 131–2; F. Coarelli, 'Il

celebrated on a series of aurei and denarii issued at Lugdunum c. 15–10 B.C. in belated commemoration of the victories in Sicily and at Actium. The reverses of these issues show figures of Apollo the lyre-player and Diana the huntress; underneath the figure of Apollo is the legend ACT and under that of Diana the legend SICIL.<sup>29</sup>

Diana participated in the Palatine cult of her brother. As Propertius tells us (2.31.15–16), the temple housed a group statue of Apollo, Diana, and their mother Latona, and one of the reliefs on the Sorrento Base clearly derives from this statue group.<sup>30</sup> It is thus conceivable that a subordinate function of the temple was held to be the giving of thanks to Diana for the Naulochus victory, and that Octavian included a statement to this effect in his speech when announcing his intention to build the temple. However, the temple was Apollo's and the victory did not concern him: the temple was to be built not because of the victory, but because Apollo had shown his wish for it through the lightning strike.

Thus the temple of Apollo Palatinus does not belong in the long tradition of temples resulting from commanders' victories. It would indeed be surprising if Octavian had chosen to commemorate in this way a conflict that was in reality a civil war and which he sought to represent as a war against pirates and fugitive slaves. We must now explore other possible precedents in the Roman temple-building tradition.

### III. TEMPLES, PRODIGIES AND *HARUSPICES*

Besides temples vowed by commanders, there were two other ways by which temples came to be founded in the mid Republic. Firstly, aediles sometimes built temples (as well as other monuments) on their own initiative from the proceeds of fines: six temple dedications of this kind are recorded, at dates from 304 to 194 B.C.<sup>31</sup> Secondly, the senate decreed temples, usually on the advice of the Sibylline Books, in response to prodigies or events so grave that they could be treated like prodigies. The recorded temple foundations of this kind are: Apollo (decreed 433) and Aesculapius (decreed 293), both in response to plague; Venus Erycina, Mens, and Magna Mater, all decreed during the Second Punic War; and Venus Verticordia, decreed in 114 following the conviction of Vestals for unchastity. That these decrees followed consultation of the Sibylline Books is likely for Apollo and attested in the remaining cases.<sup>32</sup> To what

tempio di Diana "in Circo Flaminio" ed alcuni problemi connessi', *Dial. Arch.* 2 (1968), 191–209; Palmer (n. 10), 324–8; W. Trillmich, in *Kaiser Augustus und die verlorene Republik* (n. 3), 507–8. Coarelli has now abandoned his suggestion that the depiction of a temple commemorates a restoration of the temple of Diana in the Circus Flaminius in honour of the victory: Coarelli (n. 19), 486; cf. A. Viscogliosi, *LTUR* 1.14.

<sup>29</sup> Apollo: *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 170–1, 179–80, 190–3. Diana: *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 172–3, 181–3, 194–7, 204. On these issues and the possibility that they reflect a monument at an unknown location see below at n. 80.

<sup>30</sup> Plin. *NH* 36.24–5, 32 tells us that the temple contained statues of Apollo, Diana, and Latona by respectively Scopas, Timotheus, and Cephisodotus, and these are commonly identified with the statue group. However, L. J. Roccas, 'Apollo Palatinus: the Augustan Apollo on the Sorrento Base', *AJA* 93 (1989), 571–88, argues that these antique works were separate individual statues and that the statue group was a newly commissioned work in the classicizing style.

<sup>31</sup> Concordia in *area Volcani* (dedicated 304), Venus Obsequens (begun 295), Victoria (dedicated 293), Iuppiter Libertas (begun 246), Flora (begun 241 or 238), and Faunus (dedicated 194).

<sup>32</sup> See Orlin (n. 14), 18–26, 76–115, and, for the individual temples, *LTUR*. Livy 4.25.3 mentions consultation of the Sibylline Books for the other expiations carried out when the temple of Apollo was vowed; this makes it likely that the Books also recommended the temple

extent may temple foundations of this second type have formed a model for those of Octavian/Augustus?

The building of one of Octavian's temples was indeed undertaken with the senate's authorization, but in circumstances quite different from these Republican instances and for which only Romulus–Quirinus formed any precedent: Caesar was deified as Divus Iulius in February 44, shortly before his death, and in January 42 the consecration was confirmed and it was decreed that his temple should be built in the Forum on the spot where he had been cremated.<sup>33</sup>

The temples of Apollo Palatinus and Iuppiter Tonans have a notable point of similarity with the Republican temples: each was built in response to a prodigy, namely a lightning strike. The Palatine temple was, as we have seen, erected in response to and on the site of a lightning strike, while Iuppiter Tonans was erected following Augustus' narrow escape from a lightning strike on campaign in northern Spain in 26–5.<sup>34</sup> However, they differ from the Republican prodigy temples in important ways. In the first place, the Republican temples were founded by decree of the senate, but we do not hear of any senatorial involvement in the decisions to build the temples of Apollo Palatinus and Iuppiter Tonans, and indeed the announcement of the projected Palatine temple was, as we have seen, made simply by Octavian, in speeches delivered to the senate and people. Secondly, the prodigies were both individual to Octavian/Augustus, bearing on his property and his personal safety. Thirdly, no part was played in the inception of these temples by the Sibylline Books or the priestly college responsible for consulting them, the *quindecimviri* (formerly *decemviri sacris faciundis*). A different priestly group was involved in the case of the Palatine temple, namely the *haruspices*.

We are well informed about the Republican handling of public prodigies, particularly for the period 218–167 B.C. for which Livy is extant.<sup>35</sup> Responsibility for deciding whether to accept a report as a public prodigy and then for determining how the prodigy should be expiated lay with the senate. In deciding on expiations the senate regularly consulted three different groups of priests, the Roman colleges of *pontifices* and *decemviri sacris faciundis*, and the Etruscan *haruspices*, and sometimes

(*contra* Orlin 98). The temple of Hercules Magnus Custos is said to have been founded on the authority of the Sibylline Books, but the date is contested and the circumstances are unknown: Ov. *Fast.* 6.209–12; Ziolkowski (n. 14), 50–6; Coarelli (n. 19), 498–503; *LTUR* 3.13–14 (A. Viscogliosi). L. Opimius' founding or refounding of the temple of Concordia in 121, after his suppression of C. Gracchus and his associates, may have been regarded as expiatory, but we are not told that the Sibylline Books were consulted.

<sup>33</sup> Decree of 42 B.C.: Dio 47.18.4. *ILS* 72 (from Aesernia) shows that the original consecration was voted by senate and people. See D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West* 1.1 (Leiden, 1987), 62–76, and M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott: Herrscherkult in römischem Reich* (Leipzig, 1999), 49–53, with further bibliography.

<sup>34</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 29.3, 90, 91.2. Dedication in 22 B.C.: Dio 54.4.2–4. Depicted on coins: *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 59, 63–7. On the temple see Richardson (n. 1), 226–7; P. Gros, *LTUR* 3.159–60; A. G. Thein, in L. Haselberger, *Mapping Augustan Rome* (Portsmouth, RI, 2002), 157.

<sup>35</sup> On prodigies and their expiation in Republican Rome see F. Luterbacher, *Die Prodigienlaube und Prodigienstil der Römer* (Burgdorf, 1904<sup>2</sup>; repr. Darmstadt, 1967); L. Wülker, *Die geschichtliche Entwicklung des Prodigienwesens bei den Römern. Studien zur Geschichte und Überlieferung der Staatsprodigien* (Leipzig, 1903); R. Bloch, *Les prodiges dans l'antiquité classique: Grèce, Etrurie et Rome* (Paris, 1963); J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford, 1979), 7–29; B. MacBain, *Prodigy and Expiation: A Study in Religion and Politics in Republican Rome* (Brussels, 1982); V. Rosenberger, *Gezähmte Götter. Das Prodigienwesen der römischen Republik* (Stuttgart, 1998). Livy's handling of prodigy notices is well analysed by D. S. Levene, *Religion in Livy* (Leiden, New York, Cologne, 1993); J. P. Davies, *Rome's Religious History: Livy, Tacitus and Ammianus on their Gods* (Cambridge, 2004), 21–78.



more than one of these groups was involved with the same set of prodigies.<sup>36</sup> The *haruspices* were quite often consulted by the senate over lightning prodigies, appropriately enough since divination from lightning was one of the principal subjects of the Etruscan *disciplina*, the lore of the *haruspices* preserved in their sacred books.<sup>37</sup> However, the other priestly experts were also consulted on lightning strikes: for this, as for most other prodigy types, no particular set of priests seems to have established a monopoly.<sup>38</sup>

Lightning strikes were among the commonest types of event taken up as public prodigies. Wülker analysed the reported instances as follows: temples (43), city walls and gates (22), statues (13), persons (15), animals (9).<sup>39</sup> Neither of the events which prompted Augustus' foundations of the temples of Apollo Palatinus or Iuppiter Tonans conforms to this pattern. The Palatine lightning strike was on private property, but we do not elsewhere hear of such events on private land being accepted as a public prodigy.<sup>40</sup> The lightning strike in Spain killed the slave carrying Augustus' torch, but the temple of Iuppiter Tonans was founded not to expiate this death as a prodigy but in thanksgiving for Augustus' narrow escape.<sup>41</sup>

Most prodigies were expiated with standard rituals such as sacrifices, *supplicationes*, or lustration. No clear pattern can be discerned for the methods of expiation selected for lightning prodigies, whichever group of advisers was followed.<sup>42</sup> Expiations of these prodigies did not normally include temple foundation. However, at least one Republican temple must have been founded in response to a lightning prodigy, namely that of Summanus, the Roman god of night lightning. Cicero and the Livian Periocha tell us that, when a terracotta statue of Summanus on the roof of the Capitoline temple of Jupiter was struck by lightning and its head broken off and lost, the *haruspices* located it in the Tiber. Its position in the Periocha dates this episode between Pyrrhus' withdrawal to Sicily in 278 B.C. and the second consulship of M.'

<sup>36</sup> MacBain (n. 35), 82–106, gives a convenient tabulation of prodigies with indication of the priestly group(s) involved in their expiation.

<sup>37</sup> C. O. Thulin, *Die Etruskische Disciplin* (1905–9, repr. Darmstadt, 1968), remains the fundamental account of the *haruspices* and their lore; see also his more succinct statement at *RE* s.v. 'Haruspices', 7.2431–68, and A. J. Pfiffig, *Religio Etrusca* (Graz, 1975), 36–49, 115–50. On their doctrine relating to lightning see also S. Weinstock, 'Libri Fulgurales', *PBSR* 19 (1951), 122–53. On the Roman use of *haruspices* see especially J. O. Lenaghan, *A Commentary on Cicero's Oration De Haruspicum Responso* (The Hague, 1969), 32–7; E. Rawson, 'Caesar, Etruria and the *Disciplina Etrusca*', *JRS* 68 (1978), 132–52, repr. in her *Roman Culture and Society* (Oxford, 1991), 289–323; MacBain (n. 35); J. North, 'Diviners and divination at Rome', in M. Beard and J. North (edd.), *Pagan Priests. Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (London, 1990), 51–71, and 'Prophet and text in the third century B.C.', in E. Bispham and C. Smith (edd.), *Religion in Archaic and Republican Rome and Italy* (Edinburgh, 2000), 92–107; M.-L. Haack, *Les haruspices dans le monde romain* (Paris, 2003).

<sup>38</sup> MacBain (n. 35), 51, 118–20; cf. also Thulin, *Disciplin* (n. 37), 1.114–17.

<sup>39</sup> Wülker (n. 35), 10. Cf. Luterbacher (n. 35), 22; Rosenberger (n. 35), 116.

<sup>40</sup> Rightly noted by C. J. Simpson, 'Horace, *Carm.* 1.2.30–44, Apollo Palatinus and allusions to shrines in Octavian's Rome', *Athenaeum* 81 (1993), 632–40, at 634–5, n. 17.

<sup>41</sup> E. Rodriguez-Almeida, 'Tra epigrafia, filologia, storia et topografia urbana: quattro ipotesi', *MEFRA* 103 (1991), 529–50, at 547–50, conjectures that the torchbearer survived and later dedicated an extant votive inscription to Jupiter Tonans. However, Suetonius' word *exanimasset* (*Aug.* 29.3) surely implies that the slave was killed, rather than merely rendered unconscious.

<sup>42</sup> Thus *haruspices* are reported as recommended widely differing lightning expiations in 207 B.C. (Livy 27.37.7–10), 65/63 B.C. (Cic. *Cat.* 3.19–21, *Div.* 1.19–21; Dio 37.9.1–2, 34.3–4; Obsquens 61; Arn. *Adv. nat.* 7.38), and A.D. 55 (Tac. *Ann.* 13.24.2). On variations in methods of expiation see MacBain (n. 35), 120–1.

Curius Dentatus in 275.<sup>43</sup> Ovid tells us that the temple of Summanus was founded ‘when Pyrrhus was a threat’.<sup>44</sup> In view of the coincidence of date, it must have been in response to this prodigy that Summanus was given his own temple in the Circus Maximus.<sup>45</sup> At some point Iuppiter Fulgur, the god of day lightning, also received his own temple in the Campus Martius, but nothing is known of the date or circumstances of this foundation.<sup>46</sup> It could have taken place at the same time as Summanus received his temple or later; if the latter, it may have been founded in response to a further lightning strike.

Summanus and Iuppiter Fulgur thus afford partial precedents for Augustus’ temple foundations. With Iuppiter Tonans Augustus established yet another temple to Jupiter in his guise as god of thunder and lightning. Apollo Palatinus, like Summanus, was founded following haruspical interpretation of a lightning prodigy.<sup>47</sup> However, for Summanus the involvement of the *haruspices* is attested only for the finding of the statue’s head. It may also have been they who recommended the foundation of the temple, but we cannot confidently infer this, in view of the attested involvement of more than one group of priestly experts over other prodigies. Moreover, by contrast with the Palatine temple, there was no suggestion for Summanus that the temple should be founded on the spot where the lightning struck.

Another obscure Republican temple provides a different parallel with Octavian’s foundation. According to Cicero, the temple of Honos outside the Colline Gate was founded in response to the discovery at a nearby altar of a metal plate bearing the inscription *Honoris*.<sup>48</sup> Here, as with the Palatine temple, a portent was interpreted as indicating a god’s desire for a temple. The decision to found the temple of Honos must have been taken by the senate. Priestly experts were presumably consulted, perhaps the *haruspices*.

It was both Etruscan and Roman practice that the place where a lightning bolt struck should be enclosed and either covered or, less usually, left open. The remains of numerous such stone enclosures have been found, bearing inscriptions such as *fulgur conditum*. The term *bidental* was used of some or all such enclosures, and both

<sup>43</sup> Cic. *Div.* 1.16, 2.45; Livy *Per.* 14.

<sup>44</sup> Ov. *Fast.* 6.731–2: *reddita, quisquis is est, Summano templa feruntur, I tum, cum Romanis, Pyrrhe, timendus eras.*

<sup>45</sup> Calendars give the temple’s location in the Circus and the *natalis*, 20 June (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.472), and Plin. *NH* 29.57 shows that it was near the temple of Iuventas: see Ziolkowski (n. 14), 154–5; F. Coarelli, *LTUR* 4.385–6. Iuppiter Fulgur and Summanus as the Roman gods of day and night lightning: Plin. *NH* 2.138; Festus 66, 254 L; August. *De civ. D.* 4.23. On the origin and etymology of Summanus see S. Weinstock, *RE* 4A.897; E. and A. Prosdocimi, ‘Summanus e Angerona: una solidarietà strutturale nel calendario romano’, in *Étrennes de septentaire. Travaux de linguistique et de grammaire comparée offerts à Michel Lejeune* (Paris, 1978), 199–207; ‘Summanus au solstice d’été’, in D. Porte and J.-P. Néraudeau (edd.), *Res sacrae. Hommages à Henri Le Bonniec* (Brussels, 1998), 83–100; B. García Hernández, ‘Summanus’, *Emerita* 60 (1992), 57–69, 205–15.

<sup>46</sup> Calendars show that the temple of Iuppiter Fulgur shared its *natalis*, 7 October, with Iuno Curitis, and their reference to the Campus surely applies to both temples (*Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.518). Nothing further is known of the temple except that it was unroofed (*Vitr. Arch.* 1.2.5). For discussions of its possible location see Ziolkowski (n. 14), 79; Richardson (n. 1), 219; D. Manacorda, ‘Il tempio di Vulcano in Campo Marzio’, *Dial. Arch.* 8 (1990), 35–51, and *LTUR* 3.136–8; Coarelli (n. 19), 210–8. The cult of Iuno Curitis was probably introduced by *evocatio* from Falerii on its capture in 241, but there is no good reason to postulate the same origin for Iuppiter Fulgur, as Coarelli argues.

<sup>47</sup> It is possible that a haruspical response was obtained before the foundation of Iuppiter Tonans as well, but has gone unrecorded in our scanty evidence for the temple.

<sup>48</sup> Cic. *Leg.* 2.58; Ziolkowski (n. 14), 57–8; D. Palombi, *LTUR* 3.30–1.

*haruspices* and *pontifices* are attested as involved in their establishment.<sup>49</sup> In other circumstances, this procedure would have been regarded as an adequate response to a lightning strike on private land, and it would not have been treated as a public prodigy. However, it is readily understandable that further measures should have been taken when such an occurrence took place on land which no less a personage than Octavian had acquired as part of his residence.

We do not know who consulted the *haruspices* about the Palatine lightning strike. The consultation could have been ordained by the senate, following a decision to treat the occurrence as a public prodigy. However, since the eventual decision to build the temple was merely announced by Octavian rather than made by senatorial decree, it seems more likely that he himself initiated the consultation. The *haruspices* responded, as Suetonius tells us, that the site was ‘desired by the god’ (*desiderari a deo*). This response may not have unambiguously indicated a requirement for a temple, and may even have been compatible with a stone enclosure of the traditional kind. However, it constituted sufficient justification for Octavian to embark on his grandiose sanctuary.

It is not surprising that Octavian should have turned to the *haruspices* or that they should have been ready to respond in terms that would please him. For the *haruspices* to frame their answers in accordance with the expectations of those who consulted them would not have been novel, and they, like diviners in other societies, would have been able to achieve this without conscious fraud, providing that their responses were at least in accord with their lore.<sup>50</sup> An alternative procedure would have been consultation of the Sibylline Books by the *quindecimviri sacris faciundis*, for which a senatorial instruction would have been required. Octavian’s recently acquired membership of that priesthood is attested by the tripod symbol on coins of 37 B.C.<sup>51</sup> However, he may not yet have felt sufficiently confident of his fellow priests as a group to feel sure that such a consultation would yield the answer he hoped for. A private consultation of *haruspices* gave him the possibility of hand-picking those to be consulted.

Octavian had doubtless already established the good relations with the *haruspices*, which he would maintain throughout his reign.<sup>52</sup> In his autobiography he reported that in 44 B.C. the *haruspex* Vulcatius or Vulcanius had hailed the *sidus Iulium* as the sign of a new *saeculum*, declared that he would die at once for revealing the gods’ secrets, and then instantly expired. This version co-opted haruspical support for the Caesarian cause, although another less favourable account of the episode survives.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Thulin (n. 37, 1905-9), 1.92–107; C. Pietrangeli, ‘Bidentalia’, *Rend. Pont. Acc. Arch.* 25–26 (1949–51), 37–52; P. Mingazzini, ‘*Fulgur conditum e bidental*, nonché l’etimologia del nome *bidental*’, in *Gli archeologi italiani in onore di A. Maiuri* (Cava dei Tirreni, 1965), 317–36. An instance of the open enclosure type may have been the Puteal Scribonianum in the Forum Romanum, reputed to be on the site of a lightning strike: Fest. 448–50 L; F. Coarelli, *Il Foro Romano. 2: Periodo repubblicano e augusteo* (Rome, 1985), 166–80; L. Chioffi, *LTUR* 4.171–3. *Haruspices*’ involvement: Lucan 1.606–8, 8.864; Schol. Pers. 2.27; Sid. Apoll. *Carm.* 9.192–3.

<sup>50</sup> On the sincerity of Roman diviners see especially Liebeschuetz (n. 35), 19–24.

<sup>51</sup> Crawford, *RRC* 537/2. See J. Gagé, ‘Les sacerdoces d’Auguste et ses réformes religieuses’, *MEFRA* 48 (1931), 75–108, at 79–80; M. W. Hoffman Lewis, *The Official Priests of Rome under the Julio-Claudians* (Rome, 1955), 48, 86; Gurval (n. 26), 112–13.

<sup>52</sup> On Augustus and the *haruspices* see Thulin (n. 37, 1905-9), 3.136–7, and *RE* 7.2434–5; Rawson (n. 37), 312–16; D. Briquel, *Chrétiens & haruspices. La religion étrusque, dernier rempart du paganisme romain* (Paris 1997), 27–50; Haack (n. 37), 89–92. In general on emperors and portents see now A. Vigourt, *Les présages impériaux d’Auguste à Domitien* (Paris, 2001).

<sup>53</sup> Augustus, ap. Serv. *Ecl.* 9.46; App. *BCiv.* 4.4.15 (surely the same event). See Rawson (n. 37), 312–13; J. F. Hall III, ‘The *Saeculum Novum* of Augustus and its Etruscan antecedents’, *ANRW* II.16.3 (1986), 2564–89, at 2576–8.

A curious incident just before the battle of Naulochus had afforded an opportunity for haruspical loyalty: a fish leaping out of the sea and landing at Octavian's feet was interpreted as a portent of victory.<sup>54</sup> Octavian/Augustus was himself a believer: as Suetonius tells us, he was in awe of thunder and lightning and attached great importance to omens and prodigies.<sup>55</sup> Maecenas was only the most prominent of his Etruscan friends. Marcus Aurelius mentions *haruspices* as part of Augustus' entourage, and Maecenas is represented as commending them to Augustus in the speech which Dio composed for him.<sup>56</sup> Augustus' reign remains the most likely time for the institution of a new formal organization, the *ordo* of sixty *haruspices*, attested on numerous imperial inscriptions.<sup>57</sup> Perhaps the most notable indication of Augustus' favour for the Etruscan *disciplina* relates to the Palatine sanctuary itself: he prescribed that the sanctuary should house not just the Sibylline Books (transferred there in 12 B.C.), but also the Etruscan books relating to lightning.<sup>58</sup>

#### IV. THE CHOICE OF APOLLO

On one point the *haruspices*' response of 36 B.C. must have been unambiguous, namely that it was Apollo who desired the site where the lightning bolt had struck. This is usually seen as unproblematic: Apollo was already established as Octavian's patron divinity, and the *haruspices* compliantly named him. But the matter needs further consideration. Is it so certain that Octavian had already chosen Apollo, and, if he had, how readily did this interpretation of the lightning strike accord with the Etruscan *disciplina*?

The evidence for Octavian's association with Apollo before 36 is in fact quite weak, as Gurval has recently stressed.<sup>59</sup> We cannot say when the tale began to be circulated that Apollo was Octavian's father, having impregnated his mother Atia in the form of a snake, but it may well have originated once he had achieved supremacy rather than early in his career.<sup>60</sup> According to Valerius Maximus, 'Apollo' was given as the password by Antony and Octavian at the final battle at Philippi; if this were true, it

<sup>54</sup> Plin. *NH* 9.55; Dio 49.5.5; cf. Suet. *Aug.* 96.2. The interpreters, styled *uates* by Pliny and *μάντιες* by Dio, were doubtless *haruspices*.

<sup>55</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 90, 92. Further haruspical responses during Augustus' reign are reported at Suet. *Aug.* 97.2; Dio 53.20.1, 56.29.4. After 27 B.C. public prodigies are reported for the reign only for 17/16 (Obsequens 71; Dio 54.19.7); on their paucity see Liebeschuetz (n. 35), 57–8.

<sup>56</sup> Marc. Aur. *Med.* 8.31; Dio 52.36.3.

<sup>57</sup> See now Haack (n. 37), 85–92, *contra* M. Torelli, *Elogia Tarquiniensia* (Florence, 1975), 105–35, who argues for a Republican date.

<sup>58</sup> Serv. *Aen.* 6.72; Thulin (n. 37, 1905–9), 3–8. For the transfer of the Sibylline books see also Suet. *Aug.* 31.1.

<sup>59</sup> Gurval (n. 26), 91–113. The case for Octavian's pre-36 association with the god is most cogently made by Taylor (n. 28), 118–20. See also e.g. P. Lambrechts, 'La politique "apollinienne" d'Auguste et le culte impérial', *La Nouvelle Clío* 5 (1953), 65–82; J. Gagé, *Apollon romain* (Paris, 1955), 479–85; Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (n. 12), 14–15; Liebeschuetz (n. 35), 82–5; Zanker (n. 3, 1988), 48–53; E. Bertrand-Ecanvil, 'Présages et propagande idéologique. A propos d'une liste concernant Octavien Auguste', *MEFRA* 106 (1994), 487–531, at 505–11. Despite Servius' claims, there is no good reason to detect a reference to Octavian in the proclamation of a reign of Apollo at Verg. *Ecl.* 4.10.

<sup>60</sup> Gurval (n. 26), 100–2. The story is attested by Suet. *Aug.* 94.4 (citing Asclepiades of Mendes); Dio 45.1.1 (reporting it as a claim made by Atia to Caesar). Domitius Marsus' couplet about Atia (F7 Courtney: *ante omnes alias felix tamen hoc ego dicor, / siue hominem peperit femina siue deum*) may not refer to the story, and its date of composition is uncertain. On the Atia legend see now G. Weber, *Kaiser, Träume und Visionen in Prinzipat und Spätantike* (Stuttgart, 2000), 148–55.

would not necessarily indicate a link with Octavian in particular, but in any case the appearance of Apollo's head and Apolline symbols such as the tripod, laurel, and lyre on their coinage suggests that it is more likely to have been Brutus and Cassius who gave this password, as Plutarch asserts.<sup>61</sup> The tripod which figures on Octavian's coinage of 37 advertises not a connection with Apollo, but his recent appointment as a *quindecimvir sacris faciundis*.<sup>62</sup>

The clearest attestation of an early link between Octavian and Apollo is Suetonius' story of a banquet in which the guests dressed as the twelve gods and Octavian took the role of Apollo. Suetonius cites as his sources a letter of Antony naming the diners and some anonymous verses, which he quotes. He goes on to report that the episode took place at a time of famine in the city of Rome, and that men said that the gods had eaten all the food and that Octavian was Apollo the Torturer.<sup>63</sup> The reference to famine suggests a date in the period 39–37 when Sex. Pompeius' operations were disrupting the corn supply to the city. However, although many scholars have taken it seriously, the banquet story is surely apocryphal and was probably circulated in the period after 36, as relations between Antony and Octavian broke down and each side traded insults.<sup>64</sup>

The tales of Apollo's impregnation of Atia and the banquet of the twelve gods are indeed evidence of a widely perceived association between Octavian and Apollo, but do not certainly show that such a link was established before 36. It is thus not inconceivable that it was the *haruspices* who began the connection, by identifying Apollo as the god who sent the Palatine thunderbolt. However, despite the weakness of our evidence, it remains more likely that Octavian had already formed the association and that in naming Apollo the *haruspices* were giving the answer which they knew he wanted.

As we have noted, the *haruspices* would have found no difficulty in giving those who consulted them the response they sought, providing it was compatible with their *disciplina*. It has been suggested that the *haruspices* interpreted the lightning strike as sent by Jupiter to indicate Apollo's wish for the site.<sup>65</sup> However, Suetonius' wording makes it more likely that they held it to have been sent by Apollo himself to show his desire. It is unfortunately impossible to establish with certainty whether the naming of

<sup>61</sup> Val. Max. 1.5.7; Plut. *Brut.* 24.4–7. Plutarch preferred: Gurval (n. 26), 98–100; *contra* J. Moles, 'Fate, Apollo and M. Junius Brutus', *AJP* 104 (1983), 249–56. According to Dio (47.43.1), Brutus and Cassius gave *libertas* as their password at the first battle of Philippi, but in view of the prominence of Apollo and *libertas* together as themes of their coinage (*RRC* 498–504), it would not be surprising that Brutus should switch to Apollo for the second battle.

<sup>62</sup> See above at n. 51. Other coins issued by Octavian at this time display the symbols of the other priesthoods he already held, the pontificate and augurate.

<sup>63</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 70. On the anonymous verses see E. Courtney, *The Fragmentary Latin Poets* (Oxford, 1993), 473–4.

<sup>64</sup> Against the story's authenticity (accepted even by Gurval [n. 26], 94–8), see M. P. Charlesworth, 'Some fragments of the propaganda of Mark Antony', *CQ* 27 (1933), 172–7, at 175; J. Pollini, 'Man or god: divine assimilation and imitation in the Late Republic and Early Principate', in K. A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (edd.), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford, 1990), 334–363, at 345. There is no reason to suppose that the alleged occasion was Octavian's marriage to Livia, as argued by K. Scott, 'The political propaganda of 44–30 B.C.', *MAAR* 11 (1933), 7–49, at 30–2; G. Cresci Marrone, 'La cena dei dodici dei', *RCCM* 44 (2002), 25–33.

<sup>65</sup> So Simpson (n. 40), 633–5. Simpson detects a reference to the inception of the temple at Hor. *Odes* 1.2.2–4, 29–32, but 'augur Apollo' must allude to Apollo's own associations with divination, not to the *haruspices*.

Apollo as the author of the strike was in accordance with haruspical lore. The Etruscans, we are told, held that there were eleven kinds of thunderbolts, sent by nine gods: three kinds belonged to Jupiter (Etruscan Tin or Tinia) as his *manubiae*, and the rest were sent by other gods.<sup>66</sup> There is evidence that the other gods held to send thunderbolts included Juno, Minerva, Vulcan, Mars, and Saturn.<sup>67</sup> The identity of the other three gods is unknown, and we cannot say whether or not Apollo (Etruscan Aplu or Apulu) was among them.<sup>68</sup> The Delphic Apollo is occasionally spoken of as sending thunderbolts, but this tells us nothing of Etruscan doctrine.<sup>69</sup> If Apollo was one of the gods whom their lore regarded as a sender of thunderbolts, we may readily imagine that the *haruspices* would have found it easy to identify him as the author of the Palatine thunderbolt. If he was not, they must in this case have consciously subordinated their religious expertise to political expediency.

### V. ACTIUM

The dedication of several notable monuments was reserved for Octavian's return after his victories over Antony and Cleopatra. In 29, only a few days after his triple triumph, he dedicated the temple of Divus Julius (18 August) and the altar of Victory in the restored senate-house (28 August).<sup>70</sup> On 9 October 28 B.C., he dedicated the temple of Apollo Palatinus.<sup>71</sup>

Between the announcement of the planned temple in 36 and its dedication eight years later, a remarkable coincidence had occurred: Octavian's decisive naval victory over his enemies, on 2 September 31, had taken place close to an ancient sanctuary of Apollo. After the victory Octavian rebuilt this temple of Apollo at Actium, on the south side of the entrance to the Ambracian Gulf, and dedicated ten captured ships there. On the north side of the straits, he founded a great new city, Nicopolis, and on its northern edge a new sanctuary of Apollo, with a stadium and gymnasium. This sanctuary was crowned by a victory monument on the site of Octavian's tent, now being revealed by remarkable excavations.<sup>72</sup> Octavian also refounded the games in honour of Actian Apollo, greatly enhancing their prestige: they were to be held every

<sup>66</sup> Plin. *NH* 2.138; cf. Serv. *Aen.* 1.42 (with Schmeisser's emendation of *quattuor* to *novem*). The three *manubiae* of Jupiter are discussed without mention of the other gods' thunderbolts at Sen. *QNat.* 2.41–6; Festus 114, 236L. See Thulin (n. 37, 1905–9), 1.23–49; Weinstock (n. 37), 125–9; Pffiffig (n. 37), 130–2.

<sup>67</sup> Plin. *NH* 2.139; Serv. *Aen.* 1.42, 8.429.

<sup>68</sup> Thulin (n. 37, 1905–9), 1.35–7, 43–4, discusses various possible identifications, considering Apollo, but concludes that there are no good grounds supporting his inclusion. On Apollo (Aplu) in Etruscan religion and art see Pffiffig (n. 37), 251–5; I. Krauskopf, *LIMC* 2.334–63; M. Bentz and D. Steinbauer, 'Neues zum Aplu-Kult in Etrurien', *AA* (2001), 69–77. (Pffiffig's claim, p. 252, that 'Aplu in der Spätzeit auch als Blitzgott gilt' is based solely on the haruspical response of 36.) Aplu was not one of the gods associated with the sixteen heavenly regions and the corresponding divisions marked on the Piacenza liver, for which see L. B. van der Meer, *The Bronze Liver of Piacenza: Analysis of a Polytheistic Structure* (Amsterdam, 1987). The *haruspices* prescribed expiation to Apollo in 99 when crows fought above a Roman assembly (*Obsequens* 46).

<sup>69</sup> Soph. *OT* 469–70; Paus. 9.36.3, 10.23.1; Justin 2.12.8. Propertius 4.6.29–30 associates Apollo with lightning at Actium (contrast Verg. *Aen.* 8.680–1).

<sup>70</sup> *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.497, 503–4 (= EJ 51); Dio 51.22.1–2.

<sup>71</sup> *Inscr. Ital.* 13.2.518–9 (= EJ 53); Dio 53.1.3.

<sup>72</sup> Strabo 7.7.6 (325C); Suet. *Aug.* 18.2; Dio 51.1.2–3; W. M. Murray and P. M. Petsas, *Octavian's Campsite Memorial for the Actian War* (Philadelphia, 1989); K. L. Zachos, 'The *tropaeum* of the sea-battle of Actium at Nicopolis: interim report', *JRA* 16 (2003), 65–92.

four years at the new sanctuary, with status equal to that of the Olympic games. Actian games on this model were in due course founded in many other locations.<sup>73</sup>

Thus by his actions at the battle-site in north-west Greece Octavian showed his gratitude to Apollo, and it is natural to conclude that, by the time of its dedication and subsequently, he and his contemporaries would also have associated the god's Palatine temple with the great victory. The link was indeed made, some years later, by Virgil, in his depiction of the shield of Aeneas, and then by Propertius, in his fourth book. In Virgil the association is only implicit: the culminating scene of the shield depicts the battle of Actium, with 'Actian Apollo' assisting the victorious cause, and Virgil then concludes by showing us Caesar Augustus in triumph and receiving the gifts of the peoples 'seated on the snowy threshold of gleaming Phoebus', that is, at the Palatine temple.<sup>74</sup> Propertius makes the connection quite explicitly. In the opening lines of the fourth book he gives the Palatine god the epithet *Navalis*.<sup>75</sup> The sixth elegy is one of several poems in the book which, in the Callimachean manner, offer aetiologies of Roman monuments. Propertius announces its theme as the temple of Palatine Apollo (4.6.11 *Musa, Palatini referemus Apollinis aedem*), and then passes to an account (with evident allusion to Virgil) of the battle of Actium and what he represents as Apollo's crucial role in the victory (4.6.15–68). The account is rounded off with the following couplet (67–8):

Actius hinc traxit Phoebus monumenta, quod eius  
una decem uicit missa sagitta ratis.

From this, Actian Apollo has won monuments, because  
one arrow of his has conquered ten ships.

There is deliberate ambiguity in this reference to *monumenta*, which should be understood as alluding both to the battle-site memorials, particularly the ten ships dedicated at the Actium temple, and, returning to the original subject, to the Palatine temple.<sup>76</sup>

Modern scholars have generally held that the Palatine temple of Apollo had by the time of its dedication come to be regarded by Octavian and his contemporaries as having taken on a new role, as a thank-offering for the Actium victory. As Gag e and Gros have put it, it had become an *ex-voto* for the battle.<sup>77</sup> Many of the artworks that adorned the Palatine sanctuary are usually interpreted as reflecting Octavian's victory. The ivory temple-doors depicting Apollo's crushing of the Niobids and the Gauls are taken as echoes of Octavian's defeat of his enemies; the terracotta relief showing the contest between Apollo and Hercules over the Delphic tripod is held to allude to the struggle between Octavian and Antony, who claimed a hereditary tie with Hercules;

<sup>73</sup> J. Gag e, 'Actiaca', *MEFRA* 53 (1936), 37–100; B. M. Tidman, 'On the foundation of the Actian Games', *CQ* 44 (1950), 123–5; R. Rieks, 'Sebasta und Aktia', *Hermes* 98 (1970), 96–116; Gurval (n. 26), 74–81. Instituted by Octavian in 31 (Dio 51.1.3), the games were first celebrated in 27 (Tidman, Rieks), not 28 (Gag e).

<sup>74</sup> Verg. *Aen.* 8.675–728. 704: *Actius haec cernens arcum intendebat Apollo. 720: ipse sedens niueo candentis limine Phoebi.*

<sup>75</sup> Prop. 4.1.3: *atque ubi navali stant sacra Palatia Phoebos.* The demonstration above (section II) that there was no connection between Apollo and the Naulochus victory confirms that the reference must be to Actium.

<sup>76</sup> So rightly J. Isager, 'Propertius and the *monumenta* of Actium', *Proc. Dan. Inst. Athens* 2 (1998), 399–411, at 403–5. (We are grateful to Carsten Hjort Lange for this reference.)

<sup>77</sup> Gag e (n. 59), 524; P. Gros, *Aurea Templata. Recherches sur l'architecture religieuse de Rome   l' poque d'Auguste* (Rome, 1976), 35 n. 133, 66, and at *LTUR* 1.54.

and the statues in the portico of the Danaids, who slew their husbands, the sons of Aegyptus, have been variously interpreted as evoking the defeat of Egypt or the evils of civil war to which Octavian's victory had put an end.<sup>78</sup>

This conception of the temple has been challenged by Gurval, who maintains that at the time of the dedication neither Octavian nor his contemporaries made a connection between the Palatine temple and the Actium victory. The association was, he holds, first made by Virgil in the *Aeneid* and then taken up by Propertius.<sup>79</sup>

Interpretation of the Palatine artworks is necessarily speculative, and it may well be that more of the iconographic scheme had been determined in the pre-Actium phase of the temple's construction than is usually allowed. Moreover, we cannot be confident that a statue in the precincts of the Palatine sanctuary explicitly identified Apollo as the victor of Actium, as has often been supposed. Denarii issued by the moneyer C. Antistius Vetus in 16 B.C. show on the reverse Apollo holding a lyre in his left hand and with his right making a sacrifice from a *patera* over an altar; he stands on a platform ornamented with what are probably two anchors and three prows, and the accompanying legend reads APOLLINI ACTIO. This has sometimes been taken as depicting the statue of Apollo with a 'silent lyre' (*tacita . . . lyra*) which Propertius (2.31.5–6) tells us stood outside the Palatine temple, but there are no firm grounds for making the connection. The image shown on Antistius' denarii is perhaps to be identified with the representation of Actian Apollo, shown only with his lyre and paired with Sicilian Diana, on the Lugdunum issues of c. 15–10 B.C. discussed above. These Rome and Lugdunum issues may well echo a monument, perhaps recently erected, for which the Palatine sanctuary would have been an appropriate location. However, both the existence and the location of such a monument are uncertain.<sup>80</sup>

It thus remains a matter for conjecture how far the iconography of the Palatine sanctuary reflected the Actium victory, and whether Apollo was ever worshipped there under the epithet *Actius*.<sup>81</sup> However, it is most unlikely that, as Gurval claims, Octavian and his contemporaries did not initially make the connection between the Actium victory and the Palatine temple.<sup>82</sup> It would have been hard to resist the perception that the Palatine temple now served not only to fulfil the god's wish as

<sup>78</sup> For such interpretations see the works cited at n. 3 above. On the problems surrounding Antony's association with Hercules see O. Hekster, 'Hercules, Omphale, and Octavian's "counter propaganda"', *BABesch* 79 (2004), 171–8, esp. 171–4.

<sup>79</sup> Gurval (n. 26), 87–136 and *passim*.

<sup>80</sup> Antistius' denarii: *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 365–6; for the Lugdunum issues see above at n. 29. See H. Jucker, 'Apollo Palatinus und Apollo Actius auf augusteischen Münzen', *Mus. Helv.* 39 (1982), 82–100; Gurval (n. 26), 285–8. Jucker refutes the view of H. Cahn, 'Zu einem Münzbild des Augustus', *Mus. Helv.* 1 (1944), 203–8, that Antistius' issue shows the *foruli* in which the Sibylline Books were housed *sub Palatini Apollinis basi* (Suet. *Aug.* 31.1). Zanker (n. 3, 1983), 31–2, 38–9 and (n. 3, 1988), 85–6, upholds the identification of the image on Antistius' issue with the statue referred to by Propertius, but without cogent argument. Jucker (91–2) rightly notes that the discrepancies in Apollo's portrayal between the earlier and later Lugdunum issues and between these and Antistius' issue (e.g. *plectrum* or *patera* in the right hand) need not preclude their alluding to the same monument. His suggestion (96–100) that the coins depict an Apollo statue erected at the Nicopolis victory monument does not appear to be compatible with the excavated remains: cf. Zachos (n. 73), 81–92. For the iconography of Apollo the lyre-player see M. Flashar, *Apollon Kitharoidos. Statuarische Typen des musischen Apollon* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1992).

<sup>81</sup> For this epithet see the texts and coins cited above and also *Ov. Met.* 13.715.

<sup>82</sup> Gurval's thesis forms part of a more wide-ranging attempt to minimize the significance of the Actium victory in Augustan ideology. This too fails to convince: see the reservations of C. B. R. Pelling, *JRS* 87 (1997), 289–90.



expressed through the lightning strike of 36, but also as a thank-offering for the decisive victory. It is not significant that the earliest poetic references to the battle or the temple do not happen to assert the connection. The linking made in the *Aeneid* and in Propertius' fourth book is much more plausibly taken as reflecting a generally held view rather than as the poets' innovation.

The year 28 B.C. also saw the first celebration of the four-yearly votive games at Rome for the health of Octavian/Augustus which had been established by decree of the senate as one of the honours voted on receipt of the news of the Actium victory. The establishment of these quadriennial games, the first of their kind at Rome, may well have been prompted by Octavian's refoundation of the Actian games as a quadriennial festival. The games were celebrated by the consuls and each of the four major priestly colleges in turn, and continued to be held to the end of Augustus' life (celebrations are attested in 16 B.C. and A.D. 9).<sup>83</sup> It is natural to suppose that Apollo was the god honoured by these games and that their first celebration in 28 was linked with the dedication of the Palatine temple in the same year. If this is correct, the games will have made explicit the connection between the temple and the victory. However, the conclusion remains uncertain. We are never told the identity of the god to whom the games were vowed, and, although an aureus of the moneyer C. Antistius Vetus commemorates the games of 16 B.C., we cannot be sure that an association was intended between this issue and his denarii depicting Apollo Actius, discussed above.<sup>84</sup> Dio mentions the first celebration of the games immediately after the dedication of the Palatine temple, but he does not explicitly state that the two events were connected, and his account of the events of this year is organized on thematic rather than chronological principles.<sup>85</sup>

## VI. THE TEMPLE AND THE THUNDERBOLT

As a great commander should, Octavian/Augustus enjoyed more than his fair share of luck. In the case of the Palatine temple he benefited from two remarkable chances: first, the lightning strike on his Palatine land, and, secondly, the decisive battle's happening to take place close to a sanctuary of Apollo. Modern scholarship has made much of the latter coincidence, but has paid little attention to the lightning strike. This paper has sought to make good that omission.

One reason why the lightning strike has received insufficient attention is the widespread belief that the Palatine temple was vowed to Apollo for the victory at Nauclonus and so belongs in the tradition of commanders' manubial temples. This conception has been shown here to be erroneous.

A further reason why the significance of the lightning strike has not been fully

<sup>83</sup> Institution: *RG* 9.1; Dio 51.19.2; Suet. *Aug.* 44.3. 28 B.C.: Dio 53.1.4–5. 16 B.C.: Dio 54.19.8; *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 369 (aureus of C. Antistius Vetus); cf. *CIL* 6.877a. A.D. 9: Plin. *NH* 7.158. On the games see T. Mommsen, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (Berlin, 1883<sup>2</sup>), 41–3; Rieks (n. 96), 107–9; Weinstock (n. 12), 310–17; Gurval (n. 26), 120–3. Weinstock and Gurval mistakenly minimize the games' connection with the Actium victory. These games are not to be confused with the vowing of games to Jupiter for Augustus' safe return on his departures from Rome: the first such games attested were vowed in 16 B.C. and held on Augustus' return in 13 B.C., and the vowing of these games was celebrated on the coinage of Antistius' colleague L. Mescinius Rufus (Dio 54.19.7, 27.1; *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 353–8).

<sup>84</sup> The association was already presumed by Mommsen (n. 83), 42. For Antistius' coinage see nn. 81, 84 above.

<sup>85</sup> J. W. Rich and J. H. C. Williams, 'Leges et iura p.R. restituit: a new aureus of Octavian and the settlement of 28–27 B.C.', *Numismatic Chronicle* 159 (1999), 169–213, at 196.

appreciated is a tendency to assume that, with his vast power, Octavian was free to pursue his wishes without restraint, and so proceeded to establish a temple to his patron god next to his house because it suited him to do so. However, in 36 Octavian was already beginning to adopt the policy of giving his power a republican guise which was to serve him so well as sole ruler, notably through his promise that he and Antony would in due course surrender their exceptional powers. For him to establish a great temple to his patron god simply at his whim would have smacked of arrogance. The choice of site would have made the arrogance still greater, since Apollo thereby acquired his first cult within the *pomerium* and a temple close to and in intimate relationship with Octavian's own house.<sup>86</sup> If it had not been for the lightning-strike, Octavian could not have announced a temple of Apollo in 36. He might have vowed such a temple later, as a manubial thank-offering for Actium, but he would surely have felt obliged to locate it in one of the existing public spaces rather than next to his home.

Octavian's founding of the Palatine temple drew not on the tradition of the manubial temples of commanders, but on a different tradition, namely the establishment of temples on the recommendation of priestly experts in expiation of a prodigy. He departed in various ways from the traditional practice, just as Pompey and Caesar did in their use of the manubial tradition. The dynasts largely bypassed the senate, which had traditionally played a central role in temple foundation: Pompey and Caesar seem to have gone ahead with their benefactions without consulting the senate; Octavian may have consulted the *haruspices* himself, and on his return in November 36 he simply announced his intention to build the temple in accordance with their recommendation. Prodigy temples had more usually been founded on the authority of the Sibylline Books rather than the *haruspices*; a lightning strike on private land had not traditionally been viewed as a public prodigy; and the *haruspices* may have been hard pressed to find authorization in their traditional lore for their announcement that Apollo desired the land where the lightning had struck (though on this last point we cannot be sure). None the less, despite these divergences, the old tradition of prodigy temples did provide a framework for Octavian's action, and the temples of Summanus, Iuppiter Fulgur, and Honos provided comparatively close precedents. The Palatine temple was thus not an innovation without precedent, but stood within an established tradition. The same held good too for Augustus' next new foundation, Iuppiter Tonans, which gave Rome its third temple to a lightning god.

Octavian had, almost certainly, already settled on Apollo as his patron before the decision was taken that a temple to the god should be built next to his house. However, his relationship with the god must have been greatly strengthened both in his own eyes and in those of his contemporaries first by the decision to build the temple and secondly by the god's association with the Actium victory. It may have been only in these later contexts that the stories that Octavian had impersonated Apollo at a banquet and that the god was his real father came to be widely circulated. Octavian's own readiness to promote the association would be strikingly confirmed if it were true, as late sources claim, that he permitted a statue of Apollo to be erected bearing his own features in one of the Palatine libraries.<sup>87</sup> However, his devotion to

<sup>86</sup> It has been widely supposed that the founding of the Palatine temple contravened a taboo on the building of temples to gods of foreign origin within the *pomerium*, but Ziolkowski (n. 14), 265–306, shows that there is no good reason for postulating the existence of such a principle.

<sup>87</sup> Ps.-Acron on Hor. *Epist.* 1.3.17; Serv. *Ecl.* 4.10. Perhaps to be identified with the statue of Apollo mentioned in the senate's decree honouring the dead Germanicus: M. H. Crawford, *Roman Statutes* (1996), 37, Tabula Hebana 4.

Apollo was never exclusive: the most explicit representation of Octavian/Augustus as a divinity occurs on coinage issued about the time of Actium which links him with Jupiter, and Horace, in a poem written perhaps in 27, opts for an identification with Mercury.<sup>88</sup>

The actual spot where the lightning had struck must have received special veneration in the Palatine sanctuary. It is tempting to associate it with a pillar-type object, which features both on one of the terracotta plaques recovered in the excavation of the Palatine sanctuary and on wall-paintings in the 'Room of the Masks' in the 'House of Augustus' and in the 'Triclinium' of the 'House of Livia'.<sup>89</sup> This feature has been identified as depicting an 'agyieus' or 'baetyl', a tapered pillar serving as an aniconic cult object. Its appearance on a terracotta plaque and on wall-paintings from the adjacent houses shows that it had local importance and makes it likely that such a baetyl will have stood in the sanctuary. If so, it will have been dedicated to Apollo, and the plaque shows the baetyl as decorated with his lyre and quiver as well as being adorned with fillets by maidens standing on either side. Baetyls are known to have been a widely diffused feature of the cult of Apollo Agyieus (Apollo as protector of streets), which had a particular importance in some of the former Corinthian colonies in north-west Greece, such as Apollonia and Ambracia. The baetyl's role in the Palatine sanctuary is likely to have been linked with the battle of Actium, fought in the region where baetyls played so prominent a part in Apollo's cult, and such a connection is made even more probable by the recent discovery of a baetyl at Nicopolis.<sup>90</sup> However, the Palatine baetyl may also have been associated with the lightning strike, as has been suggested by Picard-Schmitter and Strazzulla.<sup>91</sup> If so, it may have marked the actual spot where the bolt struck, and enclosed it, just as a traditional *bidental* would have done.

The establishment of Apollo's temple next to his home and the later extension of its role as a thank-offering for the Actium victory served the purposes of Octavian/Augustus very well, but it does not follow that he viewed these developments solely in terms of political and cultural expediency. As his biographer tells us, he had a traditional reverence for religion, feared thunder and lightning, and attached importance to omens and prodigies.<sup>92</sup> His dedication of the temple of Iuppiter Tonans may have been prompted by sincere gratitude to Jupiter for sparing him from the lightning strike that killed the accompanying slave. He may have genuinely believed that he enjoyed Apollo's special protection. He may have accepted the Palatine lightning bolt as a divine sign, and persuaded himself that it had been sent by Apollo as a demand for a temple on the site. The location of the decisive conflict with Antony and Cleopatra will have been determined by strategic considerations, but

<sup>88</sup> *RIC* 1<sup>2</sup> Augustus 269–70; cf. Pollini (n. 64), 348–9. Hor. *Odes* 1.2.

<sup>89</sup> G. Carettoni, 'Terrecotte "Campana" dallo scavo del tempio di Apollo Palatino', *Rend. Pont. Acc. Arch.* 44 (1971/2), 123–39, at 129–31; id., 'Nuova serie di grandi lastri fittili "Campana"', *Boll. d'Arte* 58 (1973), 75–87, at 78–80; id., *Das Haus des Augustus* (n. 11), 23–7; M. T. Picard-Schmitter, 'Bétyles hellénistiques', *Monuments Piot* 57 (1971), 43–88; Zanker (n. 3, 1988), 89–90; Strazzulla (n. 3), 22–9; V. Fehrentz, 'Der antike Agyieus', *JDAI* 108 (1993), 123–96, esp. 154–69; Marchetti (n. 3).

<sup>90</sup> C. Tzouvara-Souli, 'The cults of Apollo in north-western Greece', in J. Isager (ed.), *Foundation and Destruction: Nicopolis and Northwestern Greece* (Athens, 2001), 233–555.

<sup>91</sup> Picard-Schmitter (n. 89), 77; Strazzulla (n. 3), 27–8.

<sup>92</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 90–92; above, at n. 55.

Octavian's confidence may have been boosted by the presence of a sanctuary of Apollo, and he may have believed that the god had helped him to victory.<sup>93</sup>

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