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CLAS 406

23 April 2021

Why Augustus was the single most influential person to Rome's cementation as arguably the world's most revered ancient civilization.

When Octavian was named as Julius Caesar's heir, absolutely nobody could have known what he would later do and how he would restructure how the Roman republic operates for the rest of its rule over most of the western world. His changes to the military, implementations of social safety nets, architecture, and the start of the Pax Romana.

How Octavian rose to power was rather bizarre. He was outside of Italy when his predecessor, Julius Caesar was assassinated. Being Caesar's grandnephew, Octavian must have been quite shocked to be named his heir. But nonetheless he later took up arms against Caesar's assassins with the backing of Caesar sympathizers.¹ He would then form the Second Triumvirate with Mark Antony and Marcus Lepidus. This would later dissolve to infighting between the three of them and at the end leave Octavian all of Rome's territory. Octavian would then head back to Rome and would be given high praises from both the citizens and

¹ Augustus [3] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 15.

senators. Here is where Octavian would change his name to Augustus and implement policies for the betterment of Roman society across the republic.²

The infighting of the Second Triumvirate left Rome with an extremely bloated military force after Augustus' victory. Augustus would fix this by paying soldiers his own money to discharge themselves which considerably shrank the military's size.³ He treated his soldiers very well when he was alive. He would spend lots of money for the settlement of Rome's veterans in its colonies. He would do this on many occasions lending out hundreds of millions of sesterces each time. This along with the Pax Romana gave all Romans a sense of safety like no other time before.

The social safety nets implemented by Augustus would turn out to be very useful for the Roman people. On many occasions Augustus would give each man money out of his own pocket. He would also do the same with grain in times when food was hard to come by in Rome.⁴ These were some of the first forms of supplementary payment by a government, a practice which is a mainstay of all developed nations today to help the economically disadvantaged members of the population. He also built early fire and police stations for firefighters and police officers to be able to assist the public. He also conducted a census on a couple of occasions

² Augustus [1] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 15.

³ Augustus.[16] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 18.

⁴ Augustus [15] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 18.

showing Rome's population at nearly five million inhabitants.⁵ For reference, Los Angeles has a population of less than four million.

Architecture is one of the few things a civilization can leave its mark on the world as because structures tend to outlast its people. A good example of this is the Great Sphinx of Giza. Its time of construction is estimated to be either around 4,500 years old or up to 800,000 years old. One of the most recognizable part of ancient Rome is its architecture. Its mark has been left across Europe and many of its structures are standing in their entirety like the Ara Pacis which was paid for by Augustus himself. Augustus also was responsible for the construction of the Curia, the Chalcidicum, and the Augustan Forum, among others.⁶⁷ He also restored countless aqueducts, temples, and theaters throughout Rome's territory.⁸ Architecture is also enjoyed by all members of society. Architecture is often portrayed in art like a painting of a bridge or even the setting of a play.

Though Augustus kept the peace inside of roman territory, it did not stop him from continuing to expand roman territory. During his lifetime, he added much of Egypt northern Africa along with central Turkey.⁹ He also strengthened the borders added soldier colonies in numerous locations.

⁵ Augustus [8] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 16-17.

⁶ Augustus [19] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 19.

⁷ Augustus [21] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 19.

⁸ Augustus [20] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 19.

⁹ Augustus [27] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 21.

What Augustus did over his lifetime and his illustrious legacy he would later leave behind would lead the senators, the equites, and regular citizens to give him the title of the Father of the Fatherland.¹⁰ I believe that Augustus as a single person, did more for the advancement of Rome than any other person before or after him. He was responsible for restructuring parts of the military's operations, implement liberal social policies, both building and improving infrastructure, all while not waging war with itself nor another state.

¹⁰ Augustus [35] "The Accomplishments of the Deified Augustus" In Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith, Ancient Rome. (Hackett 2014) 22.