**CHW3M Augustus (Primary Evidence by Augustus)**

*The Deeds of the Divine Augustus*, By Augustus, Written 14 C.E.

Translated by Thomas Bushnell, BSG

A copy [of selected items] below of the deeds of the divine Augustus, by which he subjected the whole wide earth to the rule of the Roman people, and of the money which he spent for the state and Roman people, inscribed on two bronze pillars, which are set up in Rome.

**5.** When the dictatorship was offered to me, both in my presence and my absence, by the people and senate … I did not accept it. …

**8.** … By new laws passed with my sponsorship, I restored many traditions of the ancestors, which were falling into disuse in our age, and myself I handed on precedents of many things to be imitated in later generations.

**15.** I paid to the Roman plebs, HS 300 [a sum of money] per man from my father's will and in my own name gave HS 400 from the spoils of war when I was consul for the fifth time (29 B.C.E.)…

**18.** From that year …, when the taxes fell short, I gave out contributions of grain and money from my granary and patrimony, sometimes to 100,000 men, sometimes to many more.

**20.** I rebuilt the Capitol and the theater of Pompey, each work at enormous cost, without any inscription of my name. I rebuilt aqueducts in many places that had decayed with age, and I doubled the capacity of the Marcian aqueduct by sending a new spring into its channel. … I rebuilt eighty-two temples of the gods in the city by the authority of the senate, omitting nothing which ought to have been rebuilt at that time.

**22.** Three times I gave shows of gladiators under my name and five times under the name of my sons and grandsons; in these shows about 10,000 men fought. …

**25.** I restored peace to the sea from pirates. ….

**26.** I extended the borders of all the provinces of the Roman people which neighbored nations not subject to our rule. I restored peace to the provinces of Gaul and Spain, likewise Germany, … with no unjust war waged against any nation….

**27.** I added Egypt to the rule of the Roman people. ….

**34.** In my sixth and seventh consulates (28-27 B.C.E.), after putting out the civil war, having obtained all things by universal consent, I handed over the state from my power to the dominion of the senate and Roman people. …

**How do these words from Augustus change your view of him?**

**Source**: Augustus: Augustus. *The Deeds of the Divine Augustus*.

Retrieved from <http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html> via SHEG - Stanford History

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**CHW3M Augustus (Primary Evidence by Cassius Dio)**

*Cassius Dio was a Roman writer who lived after Augustus’ time. He was probably born somewhere around 155 CE. Historians differ on their interpretations of him, whether he was accurate or not. At times he seemed to have given his own opinion. At times he seemed to have consulted public records (in this case from Augustus’ own words and from his time).*

This excerpt about Augustus is from Dio’s *Roman History*.

In this way the power of both people and senate passed entirely into the hands of Augustus, and from his time there was, strictly speaking, a monarch; for monarchy would be the truest name for it, no matter if two or three men did later hold the power at the same time. The name of monarchy, to be sure, the Romans so detested that they called their emperors neither dictators nor kings nor anything of the sort; yet since the final authority for the government devolves upon them, they must needs be kings. The offices established by the laws, it is true, are maintained even now, except that of censor; but the entire direction and administration is absolutely in accordance with the wishes of the one in power at the time. And yet, in order to preserve the appearance of having this power by virtue of the laws and not because of their own domination, the emperors have taken to themselves all the functions, including the titles, of the offices which under the republic and by the free gift of the people were powerful, with the single exception of the dictatorship.

**Source**: Cassius Dio: Dio, C. *Roman History*, p. 234. Retrieved from

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius\_Dio/53\*.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cassius_Dio/53%2A.html) via

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**Questions:**

1. **What is Dio’s ultimate conclusion about Augustus?**
2. **Even though this source is from after Augustus’ time, why is it important to include this view in our study of Augustus?**
3. **Did Augustus contribute anything to the decline of the Roman Empire?**