Asinius Pollio

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Western Australia

Susan Lutton

M.B.B.S. B.A. Honours (UWA)

School of Humanities

Department of Classics and Ancient History

University of Western Australia

2012

How many times must the cannonballs fly
Before they are forever banned
The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind
The answer is blowing in the wind

Blowin in the Wind: Bob Dylan

Abstract

From 49 until 31 BC the people of Rome were embroiled in civil war. The onset of this conflict is often dated back to 60 BC with the formation of the first triumvirate of Caesar, Pompey and Crassus. And prior to this date Rome had only just recovered from the Social War and the horrific proscriptions of Sulla, a starting point that takes us back to at least 90 BC. A sense of peace and stability would only return to Rome in 27 BC when Octavian was named Augustus. The deeds of individuals throughout this period have come under intense scrutiny as they themselves sought to make sense of their world and survive. Gaius Asinius Pollio was one such individual. He was born in 76 BC and died ten years before Augustus in AD 4. Interest in Pollio in modern scholarship has focused on his political ideology and his writing of a contemporaneous history of the civil wars. Syme, in his enormous contribution to this field with his study the *Roman Revolution,* was particularly enamoured of Pollio. He perceived an individual who throughout remained independent, a strong republican, and holding the voice of *libertas*. Pollio's name is also recorded in history for building the first public library in Rome, and as a patron of Vergil. Nevertheless, we must also contend with the evidence that Pollio appeared to procrastinate significantly when his involvement in the war might have changed the outcome. He is also associated with the proscriptions and by implication with the murder of Cicero, whom Pollio attacks through most of his life. He is also known for his *ferocia* and generally acerbic and critical personality. Debate has emerged as to whether he truly remained a republican as described by Syme, never submitting to the regime of Augustus, or whether he did indeed turn from Antony and support the future principate as suggested by Bosworth in 1972. Answers have been sought in the history that Pollio composed, but we are faced with the fact that we have only eight very brief fragments from this history. Considerable research suggests Pollio was a source for both Appian and Plutarch in their accounts of this period, and Pollio's writings have often been sought through these writers but with varied conclusions. If Pollio is a significant source for Appian and Plutarch, and possibly also for Suetonius and Dio, writers who have all shaped our impression of this period of Roman history, then the more we understand of Pollio the greater the insight we may gain of this time. But Pollio is not only of interest with respect to the history he wrote, but also as an individual who was seeking to survive through the most difficult of times when the actions of all those around him were similarly conflicted, opportunistic or altruistic as situations presented themselves. Pollio was born an Italian, *a novus homo*, and commenced his life as an orator. In his mid twenties he was dragged into a civil war that would change him forever, from which, after ten years, he retreated to return to an intellectual life. This thesis will aim to provide a chronological account of Pollio's eighty years with the hope that a greater insight of the man and his actions may more clearly emerge. Civil war scars all of its participants and each seeks to endure as they are able.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors Professor Brian Bosworth and the late Dr Judith Maitland. Professor Bosworth's insights, enormous knowledge of the source material and overall guidance and incisive thinking was invaluable and forced me to "write it down". Nor would this thesis have reached its completion without the ongoing encouragement and stimulating discussions with Dr Maitland. I thank them both. It was a privilege. I also wish to thank Professor John Melville-Jones who stepped in at the last moment and read a final draft with enormous perception and oversaw the submission of my thesis. I am indebted to him for his insights and generosity of time and assistance.

I also wish to thank the other members of the Department of Classics and Ancient History of the University of Western Australia who, from my first tentative entry into the world of ancient history, stimulated an interest and desire to learn that was exceptional and sustained.

I have also benefited greatly from support and input from associated scholars. Dr Andrew Stone translated realms of pages in languages I could not comprehend, for which I am most sincerely grateful. Dr Andrew Drummond, at the very beginning of my thesis, very kindly provided an early draft of the life of Pollio in preparation for the republication of Peter's *Historicorum Romanorum Fragmenta* which was of great assistance. Professor Robert Kaster provided a copy of his articles on Cicero and personal thoughts on Pollio for which I was most grateful. Dr Alexander Thein took the time to discuss with me his thoughts about Sulla, Pollio and recent ideas about Pollio's great library.

Fellow colleagues have also been invaluable in their support. Margaret Purdie encouraged the process and translated paragraphs of French with enormous patience. Dr Martin Drum discussed with me his thoughts about Pollio whilst completing his own thesis for which I offer my thanks.

I would also like to acknowledge the support from the University of Western Australia and their provision of an Australian Postgraduate Scholarship which allowed for more time to go into research and less into maintaining a living. The librarians of the University of Western Australia were endless in their diligence in searching for articles and tolerating overdue loans and provided an environment of learning which was precious.

Finally, it is all the other people in one's life who travel the path with you who make such a difference. To my dear friends Associate Professor Diana Hopper, Susanna Howlett, Jenny Stephenson and the many others who acted as cheer leaders. And most of all to my family. Both my parents, neither of whom had the opportunity for a formal university education, but who, from their own enquiring minds instilled a deep love of learning, would have been thrilled to see

the submission of this thesis. My two sons were always so encouraging and with great delight set and achieved their own life goals whilst I continually failed to reach mine on time. And most of all to my husband, to whom this thesis is dedicated, who listened, read drafts and who was unstinting in his love and support.

Note to the reader

All quoted Greek and Latin texts and all translations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the most recent Loeb edition. All letters from Cicero's correspondence have been referenced with Shackleton Bailey's numbering scheme in brackets.

All abbreviations of primary and secondary source material are cited according to the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* Third Revised Edition.

Abbreviations

AE	*L'année épigraphique*
Broughton *MRR*	Broughton, T. R. S., *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* Vol. 2 (New York 1952).
Brunt *IM*	Brunt, P. A., *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (Oxford 1971).
CAH	*The Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge 1923-).
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin 1863-).
Gruen *LGRP*	Gruen, E., *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley 1995).
ILS	Dessau, H., *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (Berlin 1892-1916).
OCD	Hornblower, S., et al *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3rd Revised Edition (Oxford 1996).
PIR	Groag, E., and Stein, A., eds. *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* 2nd Edition (1933-).
RÉ	Pauly, A., and Wissowa, G., et al*., Real-Encyclopådie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart 1893-)
Rice Holmes *RR*	Rice-Holmes, T., *The Roman Republic and the Founder of the Empire* (Oxford 1928).
Shackleton Bailey *Att.*	Shackleton Bailey*,* D. R.*, Cicero: Letters to Atticus,* 7 Vols. (Cambridge 1965-70).
Shackleton Bailey *Fam*.	Shackleton Bailey, D. R., *Cicero: Epistulae ad familiares*, 2 Vols. (Cambridge 1977).
Syme *AA*	Syme, R., *Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford 1989).
Syme *RP*	Syme, R., *Roman Papers* 7 Vols. (Oxford 1979-1991).
Syme *Rom. Rev.*	Syme, R., *Roman Revolution* (Oxford 1939).
Taylor *VDRP*	Taylor, L. R., *The Voting Districts of the Roman Republic: the thirty-five urban and rural tribes* (Rome 1960).
Tyrrell and Purser	Tyrrell, R., and Purser. L., *The Correspondence of Cicero*, 2nd edition 7 Vols. (Dublin 1855-1901).

Contents

Introduction

Asinius Pollio lived for eighty years. He also lived through one of the most conflictual and one of the most well documented periods of Roman history. His activities can be tracked in the primary sources through the Civil Wars and into the principate of Augustus. He is known in modern times for standing opposed to the regime of Augustus and declaring himself for *libertas*, for building the first public library in Rome and for writing a history of the Civil Wars. However, we have no actual recorded statement of his stance for *libertas*, no statement of his opposition to or support for Augustus and only eight very small fragments of his history. Nevertheless, he emerges as a significant figure within the time period.

The Pollio who is known in modern scholarship has been largely shaped by Sir Ronald Syme. In his *Roman Revolution* Pollio emerged as a favourite of Syme.[1] In Pollio Syme saw a headstrong individual, dedicated to the ideals of the republic who, as a lone figure, remained committed to these ideals and never submitted to the regime of Augustus and the emerging principate. For Syme, writing in 1939, Pollio was the idealized voice of *libertas.*

In his introduction to the *Roman Revolution* Syme highlighted Pollio as a contemporary historian of the period. He described Pollio as wishing to be neutral in the struggle between Caesar and Pompey but driven to choose sides. Subsequently, he would remain loyal to Caesar and support Antony aginst Octavian whilst maintaining his attachment to free institutions. Syme states the example of Pollio, and his great work, was an encouragement for him to attempt to also record the story of the Roman Revolution and its sequel from the Republican and Antonian side.[2]

This image of Pollio remained essentially unchallenged until 1972 when Bosworth reviewed the actions of Pollio and suggested there was sufficient evidence to conclude he might not have remained loyal to Mark Antony, the Antonians and the republic but moved his support to Octavian most probably at the time of his pro-consulship in 39/38 BC, and that he may not have remained hostile to Octavian/Augustus and the new regime.[3]

The other significant controversy surrounding Pollio has been his history of the Civil Wars. Syme considered Pollio wrote his history upholding the republican ideals he continued to

---

[1] Syme *Rom. Rev.* (1939).
[2] Syme *Rom. Rev.* (1939) 4-7.
[3] Bosworth (1972).

promulgate. Morgan, in his review of Pollio's writings, concluded that his history was more of an eye-witness account, whilst others consider that Pollio's history is the history we read in Appian.[4] If, as so many consider, subsequent historians of the period used the history of Pollio as a key source for the civil wars, then what Pollio actually wrote in his history is of interest. Alas, we have almost nothing of the document and all speculation as to its content must remain that, speculation.

It is also surprising Pollio emerges with such a strong image as compared with his peers in particular Messalla Corvinus. In Messalla we also have an individual who initially supported the assassins and fought with Brutus and Cassius at Philippi, and who, after their defeat, aligned himself with Antony and then finally supported Octavian. Messalla also wrote a history and biography, and rose to become an equally leading orator, yet has attracted little of the attention that Pollio has received. Perhaps it is because we know too much about Messalla as compared with the enigmatic Pollio and his often obscure intentions.

The great majority of Pollio's life was lived against a backdrop of civil war. His father was caught up in the Social War, and at the very point that Pollio was to launch his own career, when with all likelihood he wished to become an orator, Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon and a decision had to be made as to the camp of Caesar or Pompey. And just when Pollio could settle in his province of Spain and return his interests to his literary pursuits, Caesar was assassinated. Once again choices had to be made between the senate and the assassins and finally between Antony and Octavian. This political backdrop has produced significant source material and the opportunity to place the actions of Pollio within a detailed time and context. Throughout the thesis this has raised the challenge of how to provide a sufficient context for Pollio without also writing a history of the end of the Roman republic. The thesis is also written with an awareness that Pollio was one of the aristocracy and that the sentiments and actions of the everyday individual are under-represented in the literature of this period, although they were often the steering force behind the decisions and passions of the day. It was the exhausted soldiers or the starving, rioting peasants who often drove political decisions and with whom Pollio himself had to contend, as for example in distributing land to the soldiers, that we can fail to grasp and consider.

We also must contend with the fact that once Pollio himself withdrew from the activities of civil war he re-engaged with the intellectual class of Rome and references to his life now emerge within the writings of Horace, Seneca and Quintilian opening a whole new field of source material. To explore Pollio in this setting we must consider the world of the poet, the orator, the

---

[4] Morgan (2000).

courts and the legal system. Again, this is a source material that can potentially burgeon into another thesis of its own.

The personality of Pollio also emerges quite clearly: he is not easy. Perfectionistic, argumentative, competitive, without humour, are descriptions that could all be applied. But not all found him this way and he at one stage attracted the label – "a man for all seasons".

No recent history of Pollio has been written since the biography in French by André in 1949, reason enough to update this literature. The first landmark study of Pollio was by Kornemann in 1896 in a substantial monograph in German. He outlined the life of Pollio and explored in detail the similarities in the text of Appian and Plutarch on the Civil War as evidence that the common source was Asinius Pollio. Kornemann, tempted though he was, stated we must resist the temptation to distill Pollio's *Historiae* from the evidence that might be claimed to be found in the writings of Appian and Plutarch. Pelling in the 1980's would again raise these questions with his detailed examination of the source material for the *Lives* of Plutarch, where Pollio again emerges as a significant contender.[5]

In 1922 a much briefer monograph in English outlining the career of Pollio was written by Pierce but is rarely referenced.[6] André's biography in French followed and remained the definitive text. It is relatively brief and without exploration of conflicts, background history or social context. In 1967 the PhD dissertation by Haller in German was published which largely focused on the political situations that could be discerned within the history and times of Pollio. A more updated bibliography was included. But it was only in 1972 when Bosworth published an article questioning the political allegiance of Pollio as so strongly argued by Syme that new light was thrown on Pollio's life and activities. Subsequently, key scholars, such as Woodman and Zecchini, have all responded to Bosworth's comments.[7] Finally, in 2000, Morgan published a substantial article commenting on the *History* of Pollio from the perspective of autopsy or an eye-witness account. Nevertheless, it remains the case, that there is currently no substantial existing biography of Asinius Pollio in English.

The purpose of this thesis is therefore to provide a detailed and chronological account of Pollio's eighty years. The aim is to find some sense of the man himself, noting that he is the man who wrote a history of the civil wars that was most probably used by Appian and Plutarch and from whom we have our greatest insight into this period. Our curiosity about Pollio and the sort of history he may have written, is justified.

---

[5] Pelling (1979;1980).
[6] Pierce (1922).
[7] Woodman (1983); Zecchini (1982).

At around forty years of age Pollio's life takes a distinct shift as he disengages from military activity and the ongoing civil conflict and re-engages with the intellectual elite and picks up the mantle once again of orator and rhetorician. The source material shifts at this point, and we have a far less chronological narrative of Pollio's activities. Rather we must track his life through references to his actions in relation to others or in the courts. The thesis is therefore divided into two parts. The first covers his early years and military life and the second, Pollio in Rome as the intellectual. In the first part of his life a key focus is the three letters that he wrote from his province in Spain to Cicero. This is the only substantial writing of Pollio that is extant. However, he is writing in the context of a tense political environment and we must consider his letters are composed with this in mind. In the second half of his life the key focus is his writing a history of the Civil Wars. As noted we have only eight brief fragments from this history. The thesis is not a contextual analysis of these fragments, as has often been the focus in the literature, but rather to consider the times and aim of Pollio's writing.

In the writing of a biography it is also important that authors themselves monitor their own biases. There is often a desire to love or hate the individual under consideration as every action of the subject's life is held and examined in the consciousness of the writer. All individuals are at times inconsistent, floor us in their decisions or delight us in their actions. Pollio is no exception, but with almost no statements from the man himself, we must hold that we are constantly seeing him through the eyes of others. In an attempt therefore to detail the life of Pollio as objectively as possible it may appear to readers that there is no advocated viewpoint of Pollio as the rebel or hero. He was probably neither and the aim of the thesis is for readers to draw their own conclusions from the data presented as to where they may place him on this spectrum. Nevertheless, it is hoped that some sense of the man, his personality and the conflicts that he faced do emerge with enough clarity for readers to make their conclusions.

1 An Italian By Birth

According to Sir Ronald Syme, Gaius Asinius Pollio was 'a pessimistic Republican and an honest man'; he was 'of tough Italic stock, hating pomp and pretence'; he was 'a commander of armies and an arbiter of high diplomacy; he lived to within a decade of the death of Augustus.'[1] Like Cicero, Pollio was a *novus homo,* born an Italian and the first generation of his family to enter Roman politics. His family would emerge from a civil war, and he in turn would engage in civil war and live with its consequences for most of his life.[2]

Date of birth and family history

Pollio was born in Teate, and, contrary to many of his time who met premature death through murder or war, lived well into old age, Valerius Maximus citing him as an *exemplum* of longevity.[3] According to Jerome he was in his eightieth year when he died in his own villa in Tusculum in AD 4.[4] His date of birth is usually accepted as between June 76 and July 4 75 BC, further substantiated by the comment in Tacitus that Pollio was twenty-one years of age when he prosecuted C. Cato.[5] This trial is known to have occurred in 54 BC.[6] However, Sumner suggests there is room for error in both of these dates, arguing for his life span as between 77- 75 BC to AD 4-5.[7] Jerome's statement is ambiguous and could refer to death at eighty years of age or in his eightieth year.[8] Further, Tacitus in citing the age of Pollio for the prosecution of Cato couples this with the age of Julius Caesar and L. Crassus at the time of their first prosecutions, and is inaccurate in both.[9] It is therefore perhaps more correct to consider Pollio's lifespan within approximate dates, but as this may vary his age by only one or two years the accepted birth date of 76 BC will be maintained for the sake of consistency with recent writings.

---

[1] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 5-6.
[2] For the background of Pollio see Thorbecke (1820) 1-4; Münzer *RE* (1893) 25 col.1589; Kornemann (1896) 590 - 591; Pierce (1922) 3-5; Mendell (1928) 201; *PIR* (1933) 2. 1241; André (1949) 9-10; Haller (1967) 13-15; Peter (1967) 83-84; McDermott (1979) 55.
[3] Val. Max. 8.13 *ext.* 4 *et ipse neruosae uiuacitatis haud paruum exemplum*. Tacitus (*Dial.*17) also draws attention to the longevity of Pollio, noting that he lived almost to the end of Augustus' reign.
[4] Hieron Ad Euseb. *Chron. A. Abr.* 2020. Pollio was still alive in April of AD 4 when the news arrived of the death of Gaius Caesar, and in sufficient good health to be holding a full dress dinner party, much to the disapproval of Augustus. See Sen. *Controv.* 4, *pref.* 5 and Chapter 17.
[5] Tac. *Dial.* 34.7. Quintilian (*Inst.* 12.6.1) notes that Pollio prosecuted the case before he was old enough to hold the quaestorship. Under republican rules this would imply before thirty years of age.
[6] Cic. *Att.* 4.15.4 (90); 16.5 (89).
[7] Sumner (1971) 260-261.
[8] *Asinius Pollio, orator et consularis, qui de Dalmatia triumphaverat, LXXX aetatis suae anno in villa Tusculana moritur*. Jerome is frequently in error with respect to dates. For discussion of the fallibility of Jerome see Syme (1959) 40-43= *RP* 1. 414-415.
[9] Tac. *Dial.* 34.7.

Pollio's family was not of the Roman senatorial aristocracy, and as a consequence his family history can only be traced back two generations. The *nomen* connects him with the *gens Asinia* of the Marrucini. This is further confirmed by Catullus, who, in his poem of the famous stealing of the napkins, refers to Pollio and his brother, and addresses the brother as *Marrucine Asini*.[10] The *Fasti Triumphales* recording Pollio's triumph in 39/38 BC establish that he was the son of Gnaeus Asinius, but little else is known of his father.[11] Pollio names one of his sons Herius, which suggests a family link to Herius Asinius, praetor of the Marrucini, and one of the nine commanders in the Social War of 90 BC.[12] We know nothing of his mother.

The poem of Catullus, dated to c 58-60 BC, is crucial in identifying the brother of Pollio and also in placing Pollio himself as living in Rome early in his youth.[13] It was long thought the form of address of the brother by Catullus as *Marrucine Asini* suggested Marrucinus to be his *cognomen*.[14] Further, as Pollio did not carry the *praenomen* of his father the brother was assumed to be the elder. This uncertainty has now largely been settled by the work of Reynolds and subsequent discussion by Badian.[15] The *Senatus Consultum de Aphrodisiensibus* of 39 BC listing the ex-praetors who were present includes the name of the brother as *Cn. Asinius Cn. F*.[16] No *cognomen* is listed. Reynolds considers it has been omitted, but Badian argues strongly there is indeed space for five letters, suggesting the *cognomen* was included but that it was not Marrucinus. It would now appear the brother held the *praenomen* of his father, placing him as the elder son, and had an unknown *cognomen*. The spacing excludes Pollio as the *cognomen* and it can be noted none of the sons of Pollio were given the *cognomen* of either Pollio or Marrucinus.[17]

Further, if we consider that those present at the signing were listed in order of seniority, it also suggests, as will be further discussed, that Gnaeus Asinius was a praetor in the early to middle

---

[10] Catull. 12.1: *Marrucine Asini, manu sinistra non belle uteris*.

[11] C ASINIO CN F POLLIONe (*fasti augurum*, *CIL* 1 p60); C.ASINIUS CN F POLLIO (*acta triumphalia capitolina CIL* 12 p50); C*ASINIVS*CN*F (*fasti colotiani CIL* I^2 64). Degrassi 11.13.1 (1947) 21ff, p 569.

[12] Sen. *Controv*. 4, *pref*. 4; Livy *Per*. 73; App. *B Civ*. 1.40; Vell. Pat. 2.16.1. See later discussion for doubts about the certainty of this family connection.

[13] Catull. 12. This poem is dated to *c* 58-60 BC before Catullus left for Bithynia in 57 BC. See discussion Chapter 2.

[14] Note however that Horace addresses Quinctius of the Hirpinii in *Carm*en 2.11 (thought to be the same Quinctius referred to by Horace in *Epistle* 1.16) as *Hirpine Quincti* suggesting that *Marrucine* may not be the cognomen but reference to his place of origin. See Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 167.

[15] Reynolds (1982) 54ff esp. 69; Badian (1984) 107-109.

[16] The *SC de Aphrodisiensibus*, dated to 39 BC, granted the privilege of *asylia* to the sanctuary of Aphrodite in the city of Aphrodisias. It is probable Julius Caesar first granted *asylia* to the sanctuary, and that Octavian later confirmed it as a reward for the city's loyalty to Rome during the wars with Labienus Parthicus in 41/40 BC. See Rigsby (1996) 428 –432.

[17] "Pollio" is probably allied with the early Latin form of Paullus, a popular *cognomen* among the Oscan and Umbrian peoples. See Lindsay (1894) 112. Pollio does not appear as a common name in Rome until the period of Asinius Pollio. We then find three names with the *cognomen* Pollio: Cn. Agrius Cn. f. Pollio, *CIL* I^2 1542; L. Papius L. f. Ter. Pollio, *CIL* I^2 1578; M. Barbatius Pollio, *ILS* 9261.

50's.[18] This would make him some fifteen years older than Pollio, placing him closer in age to Catullus and so more easily linking him with their social circle in 60 BC. The only other information concerning the brother relates to the name 'Asinius' on a coin minted at Adramyttium in Mysia.[19]

The 'Asinius' named on this coin was first thought to refer to Pollio's father Gnaeus. Indeed Gabba lists Cn. Asinius in the Sullan senate as a praetor in 78 BC, although the date is not considered certain.[20] The praetor for Asia in 78 BC is unknown.[21] But we do know from the *SC de Asclepiade* that L. Cornelius Sisenna was both *praetor urbanus* and *inter peregrinos* in 78 BC suggesting an emergency situation for this year. If the coin is dated to the seventies then it is possible Cn. Asinius was slotted in to fill the gap of the Asian praetor for 78 BC. However, the style of the coin is now considered to be inconsistent with those minted in the seventies BC. Rather, it is far more in keeping with the coins of 40-30 BC. Hence the brother, Gnaeus Asinius, rather than the father, is the more likely contender. There are gaps in the record for the governors of Asia between 39 and 36 and again between 35 and 33 BC. Based on the features of the coin Grant argues Gnaeus Asinius was governor for the year 35-34 BC.[22] A particular defining feature of the coin is that the name Asinius is printed in the genitive case without a preposition – A∑INIOY. The only time a Roman official's name appeared in a like form was the year before, when we find an issue of coinage in the name of L. Sempronius Atratinus in Sicily. His name also appears in a genitive case without a preposition. Grant concludes:

> It can, therefore, be maintained that the new governor of 35-34 was Asinius Marrucinus, and that he used at Adramyttium precisely the methods familiarised in Sicily during the previous year. There they are illustrated by a special numismatic Case-Usage which appears also on the present issue of Adramyttium but at no other date whatsoever.

If so, it would appear Gnaeus Asinius never achieved the success of his younger brother, Pollio having obtained the consulship in 40 BC.

As Pollio was born c.76 BC his elder brother was probably born during or shortly before the Social War and so we could assume his father to have been at least in his twenties and an active

---

[18] P. Sestius was praetor in 54 BC (Broughton *MRR* 2. 222). See later discussion for further issues arising from dating the brother's praetorship to the 50's BC.

[19] Grant (1969) 394-395, referring to Wroth (1892) 14, no.7 (*BMC Mysia* Atarneus no.7). (Grant's footnote reads: *BMC*. *Mysia* pl. 14, 7. This appears to be an error as there is no pl. 14, and pl. XIV, 7 is a coin of Severus Alexander. The correction should be p., not pl.). The identification of the mint is uncertain, because the coin bears a monogram composed of Greek letters that can be interpreted as being the name of the people of Atarneus (therefore ATR) or Adramyttium (ADRT). Grant argued for the latter attribution because he states persuasively that Adramyttium was the only mint in Asia that used monograms at this time.

[20] Gabba (1951A) 267.

[21] See Brennan (2000) 557-559.

[22] Grant (1969) 394-395.

participant in the war. Herius Asinius is usually considered to have been Pollio's grandfather on the basis that Pollio, as already noted, named one of his sons Herius.

However, the career of Pollio's older brother raises questions if in fact Pollio was directly descended from Herius Asinius. Further, it also raises questions as to the status of the *Asinii* after the Social War with implications as to their political alliances in the post Sullan government. As these issues have not been raised before with respect to the background history of Pollio it will be useful to explore this history fully. It is necessary to consider the history of the Marrucini, their role in the Social War of 91-89 BC, the subsequent Civil War, and the proscriptions of Sulla.

The Marrucini

The *gens Asinia* almost certainly came from Teate, the capital of the territory of the Marrucini.[23] Teate is situated on the right bank of the Pescara river, some fifteen kilometres from the Adriatic sea, and spreads over the hill which is located in the valley formed by the Pescara and Alento rivers. The name "Marrucine" derives from the god Mars and indeed the Marrucini were to prove themselves as some of the toughest fighting men in Italy.[24] Appian quotes the proverb 'No triumph over the Marsi or without the Marsi,'[25] referring to their close neighbours.

Teate initially prospered as a city on the mountain passes, essential for herding stock, with a known route connecting the Marrucini with Apulia by way of the Frentani and past the town of Larinum.[26] The Marrucini are first mentioned in history in 325 BC at the end of the Second Samnite war. At this time Rome built the *Via Valeria* across the peninsula to secure control of central Italy and in the process formed an alliance with them.[27] But economically the Marrucini failed to prosper with the opening of the *Via Valeria* as it did not extend fully to the territories of

---

[23] Teate is modern day Chiete. It is the only known town of the Marrucini. See Salmon (1967) 241. The Marrucini were probably a Sabellian tribe who had assumed the name of a more ancient ethnic group. It appears the settlement arose on a protected mountain pass toward the country of the Paeligni. See Stillwell (1976) 888; Conway (1897) 233, 253; *CIL* 9 p. 282. For full discussion of the history of the people of the Central Apennines see Dench (1995). Also Bispham (2007) 161ff who looks at the municipalisation and the politics of enfranchisement of these people after the Social War.

[24] Pliny the Elder (*HN* 3.106) describes the Frentani, Marrucini, Paeligni, Marsi, Aequi, Vestani, Samnites and Sabines as *gentes … fortissimae Italiae*. Strabo (5.4.2.), concerning the bravery of the Vestini, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini and Frentani, implies a connection between the mountainous environments of the Central Apennines with the bravery of the people. An alternative myth for the origin of the name of the Marrucini is proffered by Cato (*Orig*. 2.13 = Prisc. *Inst*. 9. 487ff.) based on the belief they took their name after an individual named Marsus who killed his enemy before an individual called Paelignus; the name Marrucini a corruption of Marsus. See also Salmon (1967) 167, 255; Keaveney (1987) 25; Dench (1995) 127, 184.

[25] App. *B. Civ*. 1.46.

[26] Salmon (1967) 69.

[27] 304 BC. Strabo 5.3.11. The Romans were seeking the support of the allies as they feared they would give assistance to the Samnites in the lead up to the outbreak of further hostilities and the Third Samnite War. See Salmon (1967) 255; Dench (1995) 180.

either the Paeligni or the Marrucini. As a result they became increasingly isolated and distanced from Rome as other centres along the *Via* flourished.

The Marrucini are known as one of the Sabellic peoples speaking a form of Oscan dialect.[28] They fought with Rome against Hannibal and the Marrucini and the Paeligni were noted for their bravery whilst serving under Aemilius Paulus, in the war against the Macedonians, in 168 BC.[29] In 101 BC Gaius Marius rewarded the Marrucini soldiers with Roman citizenship for their actions in the war against the Cimbri.[30] Essentially, as one of the Italian allies, they formed a core of the Roman Confederacy. In this ongoing contact with Rome it could be expected their own Romanisation would follow. It is known the Marrucini used the Latin alphabet and the upper class spoke Latin and it is thought they were probably heavily Latinised by the time of the Social War.[31] However, Mouritsen argues the Romanisation that is perceived in the regions was a result of the Social War, and not a factor leading to the war.[32] There were probably "traces of Roman influence" prior to the Social War but overall the regions remained autonomous and culturally distinct.

Politically, the Marrucini, like all the Sabellic peoples, were a republic. There was an abhorrence of monarchy and the Marrucini had no word in their language for king or queen.[33] Constitutionally they had an assembly, at least from the third century, with the right to elect officials and legislative powers. Herius Asinius was a *meddix,* a title equivalent to *iudex* in the Latin and praetor in the Roman system.[34]

With the demand to supply troops as Rome requested, and with the threat to their lands as the Romans sought to settle on the *ager publicus*, and with an increasing sense of their own worth to Rome, they eventually demanded not only Roman citizenship but also equal power in the

---

[28] Sabellic is used to describe the peoples of central Italy who spoke an Oscan type dialect as compared with Sabellian peoples, speakers of pure Oscan which included the Samnites. The Sabellic tribes included the Paeligni, Vestini and Marsi. They shared a common harbour at the mouth of the Aternus (modern day Pescoura). See Salmon (1967) 33.

[29] Plut. *Aem*. 20. They were united under a single leader, Salvius.

[30] Plut. *Mar*. 28.2; Val. Max. 5.2.8; Cic. *Balb*. 46. Note the senate did not approve of this action. The Italians were not to become citizens but to remain second class inhabitants of Italy. See Salmon (1967) 335.

[31] Keaveney (1987) 23; Brunt (1965) 99. We know something of the language of the Marrucini from an inscription known as the "Bronze of Rapino", which belongs to approximately the middle of the third century BC. It is written in the Latin alphabet, but in a dialect which belongs to the North Oscan group. The earliest Latin inscriptions are of Ciceronian date. See Conway (1897) 253ff, for discussion of the inscriptions and peculiar features of the Latin syntax

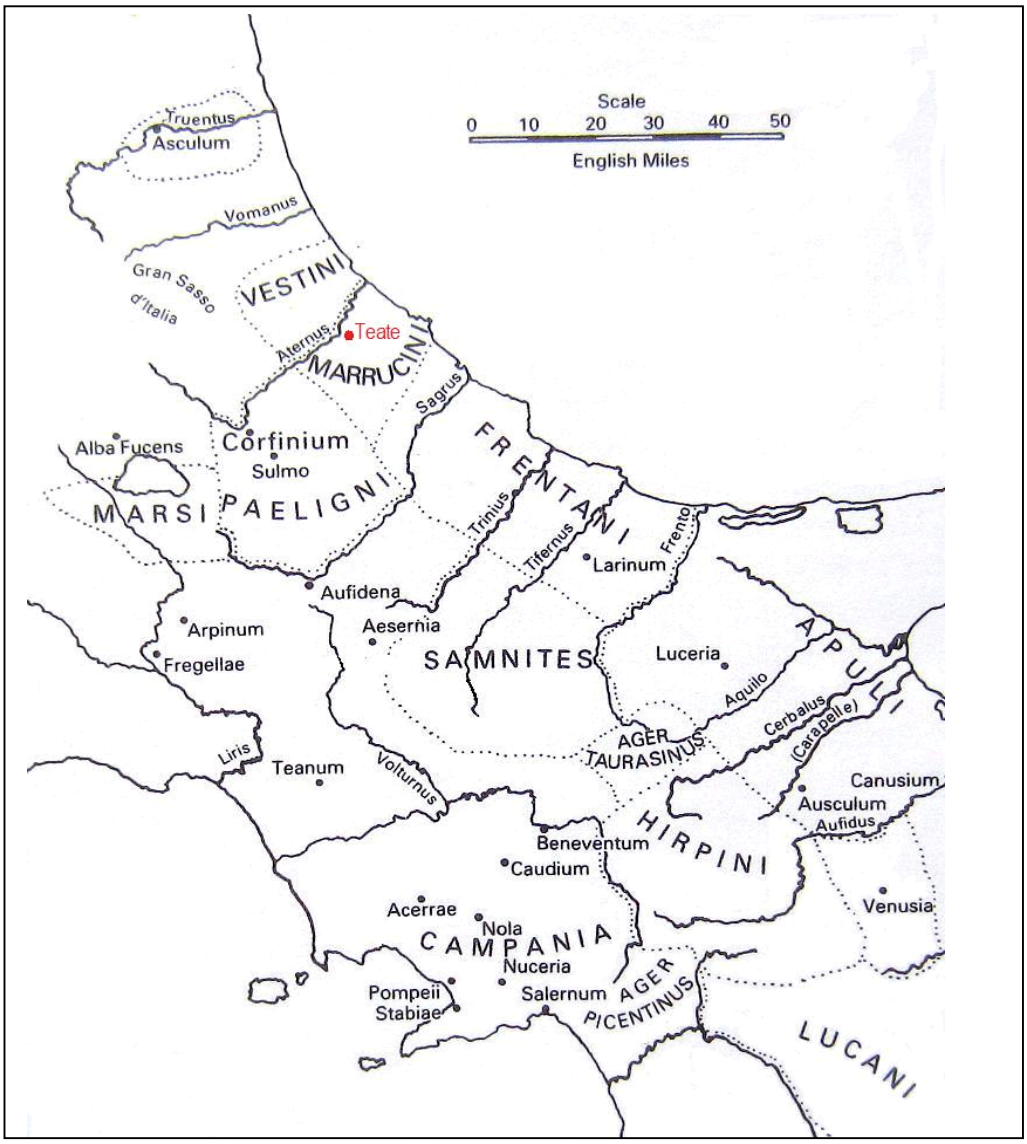
[32] Mouritsen (1998) 59-86

[33] Salmon (1967) 82. The Marrucini borrowed from the Latin for the word queen.

[34] Salmon (1967) 85, 88, 91, 94. Mouritsen (1998) 77 notes the term *meddix* appears to have applied to the supreme office supplemented by lower magistracies.

empire. Rome resisted.[35] In 91-90 BC the Marrucini were one of the twelve territories that rose to fight Rome in what became known as the Social War.[36] Salmon describes the people of the Marrucini at this time as un-urbanised and tribally organised.[37]

The Social war insurgents



Taken and adapted from from Keaveney (1987).

---

[35] For discussion of the possible causes of the Social War see Syme (*Rom. Rev.*); Gabba (1956, 1976); Badian (1958); Sherwin-White (1955, 1973); Cuff (1967); Salmon (1958, 1967); review of Salmon by Frederiksen (1968); Keaveney (1987); Brunt (1988); Mouritsen (1998).

[36]Appian (*B Civ*. 1.39) lists the Marsi, Paeligni, Vestini, Marrucini, Picentines, Frentani, Hirpini, Pompeians, Venusini, Apulians, Lucanians, Samnites and, with rather inaccurate geography, all the people from the river Liris to the extremity of the Adriatic Gulf, both inland and on the sea coast. The Latin colonies, except for Venusia, the Umbrians and Etruscans, remained loyal to Rome and were granted citizenship under the *lex Julia*.

[37] Salmon (1967) 91. He uses the term *touto* which is considered equivalent to the Latin term *populus*.

The involvement of the Marrucini in the Social War

In the north the rebelling Italian Allies formed a capital at Corfinium, which they renamed *Italica*, and nominated two consuls and twelve praetors.[38] Each consul was assigned six praetors. Herius Asinius was the commander of the Marrucini.

Coinage of the Marsic Confederation.[39]

Sydenham 620

Obverse : Head of Italia laureate with ear-ring and necklace. Reverse : Youth kneeling at the foot of a standard and holding a pig, at which eight soldiers, four on each side, point their swords.

The resistance was intense and bloody: *Nec Annibalis nec Pyrrhi fuit tanta vastatio.*[40] The Roman army in the North was led by the consul P. Rutilius Lupus and his legate C. Marius. Of importance to the Marrucini, early on in the conflict, Herius Asinius was killed in battle against Gaius Marius.[41]

The war continued into 90 and 89 BC. The Romans gradually began to reverse serious defeats and when some of the Latin colonists appeared to be considering joining the Italians the Romans granted Roman citizenship to all those who had not fought or now surrendered under the terms

---

[38] Diod. 37.2.4-7; Strabo 5.4.2; Vell. 2.16.4; Macrob. 1.11.24. The renaming of Corfinium is given as *Italica* in the written sources and as *Italia* on the coinage.

[39] For discussion of the coinage issued by the Italian insurgents see Sydenham (1952) 89-95, nos 617-643. Also Keaveney (1987) 123-124. The coinage reflects the rebel sentiments with images of Italia, often crowned by a victory or seated on a pile of shields, the bull of Italy goring the wolf of Rome, or scenes of oaths the Italians made with each other, proclaiming their unity and resolve. The insurgents most probably ceased to mint in 87 BC. The chronology of the coinage is difficult to establish. The legends are in both Latin and Oscan with the Latin legends usually assigned to the north-eastern regions. The coins are either copies or adaptations of Roman coinage or of original designs. The quality varies from fine Italian work to an almost primitive pattern.

[40] Flor. 2.6.11 also Diod. 37.2.15.

[41] Livy *Per*. 73.

of the *lex Julia*. This severely demoralized the fighting insurgents who correctly assumed that the citizenship granted would still leave them without a true voice.

In November 89 Pompeius Strabo obtained a decisive defeat of the Marsi with the capture of Asculum. It was a humiliating defeat for the Italian allies for which Pompeius celebrated a triumph. The Marrucini met their final defeat at the hands of Pompeius' *legatus* Ser. Sulpicius Galba, again losing their leader, Obsidius.[42] It is assumed the Marrucini made their *deditio* to the Roman commanders and consequently gained Roman citizenship under the *lex Plautia Papiria*.[43] The word *deditio*, as used by the epitomator of Livy, implies this was not a personal act but rather that the peoples were enfranchised as communities, not as individuals.[44] But having granted the citizenship to the Italians, the Romans rendered it almost useless by enrolling the allies not in the existing thirty-five voting tribes, where their numbers could potentially outvote existing members, but in eight newly created tribes which voted last with little impact on outcome. [45]

Nor was all resolved. And to understand the continuing distress of the Italians, and their further involvement in the conflicts in Rome, it is important to overview the subsequent critical events. In the south the Samnites hung on, and in 88 BC P. Sulpicius Rufus, tribune of the plebs, introduced a bill which proposed to disband these newly created voting tribes and register the new citizens across the existing thirty-five tribes. Sulla, as consul, announced a suspension of all public business. Sulpicius further proposed transferring the command for the war against Mithradates from Sulla to Gaius Marius. Suddenly, there emerged powerful men with armies at their disposal and bargaining power with Italic allies by which to seek their aims. In response to this potential loss of command, Sulla marched on Rome, declaring a need to free the city from tyrants. Sulla declared all measures enacted by Sulpicius to be invalid and the distribution of the enfranchised Italians throughout all the tribes annulled. As Seager comments 'had Sulla had the wisdom and generosity to re-enact that law (concerning the Italians) in his own name, much subsequent turmoil and bloodshed might have been avoided.'[46] In 87 Sulla departed for the Mithradatic War and Cinna was elected consul, most probably on the platform he would not tolerate Sulla's actions. He soon supported the friends of Sulpicius and Marius as they revived the issue of the voting tribes for the Italians. Once again violence followed. Cinna fled Rome and

---

[42] Oros. 5.18.25; App. *B Civ*. 1.52; Livy *Per*. 76. Sulpicius is only referred to by his *nomen* in both Livy and Orosius and could be either Servius Sulpicius Galba or Publius Sulpicius Rufus but is usually assumed to be Pompey's legate. See discussion by Keaveney (1987) 154.
[43] Livy *Per*. 80. *Italicis populis a senatu civitas data est*. The date is 87 BC as a follow on of the step taken in 89 BC. The details of the *lex P. Papiria* as also the *lex Julia* are poorly known, particularly as they were drawn up as war measures. See Sherwin-White (1973) 153ff.
[44] Livy *Per*. 75 *Cn. Pompeius Vestinos in deditionem accepit*; 76 *Sulpicius legatus marrucinos cecidit, totamque eam regionem recepit. Cn Pompeius pro cos. Vestinos et Paelignos in deditionem accepit*.
[45] App. *B Civ*. 1.49; Vell. Pat. 2.20.
[46] Seager *CAH* 9 (1994) 172.

Marius set out for Rome from Africa seeking support from the Italians as he progressed. The army and the support or otherwise from the Italians now became decisive factors. Cinna bargained with the Italians, in particular granting the Samnites all they requested, and as a result Cinna gained the upper hand and retained control in Rome. A purge of the enemies of Marius and Cinna followed, and the two were subsequently elected as consuls for 86.

By 87 all the Italians had been admitted to the citizenship. But it was not a popular outcome with the senate, which remained opposed to any further concessions to the Italians.[47] The promised tribal redistribution sat in abeyance and was not passed until 84.[48] In 85 Cinna would again need the support of the Italians with the return of Sulla from the Mithradatic campaign. Civil war followed. Cinna had championed the cause of the Italians and Sulla promised he had no quarrel with the majority of old or new Roman citizens.[49] The Italians had one need; to keep the rights of full citizenship. Neither Cinna nor Sulla inspired their choice.[50] The Italians now gave support less as a united force but as individual communities as each rated their success with each leader. The conflict centred around Rome, and the Marrucini being further away may have had less of a role, but they remained connected with the Marsic element who sided with Marius. Sulla emerged the victor.

The proscriptions of Sulla

Sulla on regaining control of Rome began a reign of terror that would haunt the history of Rome for years to come. All who had supported his opponents were proscribed, his friends allowed to eradicate personal enemies, and wealthy lands and properties were confiscated at will.[51] But most importantly for our purposes, the sons, and the grandsons, of the *proscripti* were prohibited from holding any public office: *Adiectum etiam, ut bona proscriptorum venirent exclusique paternis opibus liberi etiam petendorum honorum iure prohiberentur simulque, quod indignissimum est, senatorum filii et onera ordinis sustinerent et iura perderent*.[52]

---

[47] See in particular Bispham (2007), especially his conclusions 402ff, where he explores this degree of integration, the status of the *municipia* and their relationship with Rome.
[48] Livy *Per*. 84. In the census of 86 only 463,000 citizens were counted (Jerome, *Chron*.) suggesting that the vast majority of the Italians had not been registered compared with 900,000 registered in the census of 70-69 (Livy *Per*. 98). See Bennett (1923) 62ff; Sherwin-White (1973) 156.
[49] See discussion of Sulla's letter to the Senate in 88 BC; Seager *CAH* 9 (1994) 183. The promise of no retribution against those who had acquiesced with Marius and Cinna and now feared guilt by association was a significant step in undermining the support of the new citizens for Cinna.
[50] After Cinna was killed the consuls L. Cornelius Scipio and C. Norbanus continued his cause. Norbanus, a *novus homo*, symbolized a representative of Italy.
[51] App. *B. Civ*. 1.95 –96; Vell. Pat. 2.28. 2-4; Cic. *Off*. 2.8.27; Flor. 2. 9. 25-28. See also Keaveney (1982) ch.8; Broughton *MRR* 2.69 for a complete listing of all source references concerned with the proscriptions.
[52] Vell. Pat. 2.28.4. Also Livy *Epit*. 89; Plut. *Sull*. 31.4; Sall. *Hist*. 1.55.6.

The actual extent of the proscriptions is often thought to have been exaggerated in the sources and by modern writers.[53] Appian lists forty senators and sixteen hundred *equites*, Plutarch and Orosius list eighty names on the first proscription list and a further two lists, each containing two hundred and twenty names, giving a total of five hundred and twenty names.[54] But the fact that the unofficial actions and general looting was widespread cannot be ignored and the Italians were not excluded. Appian relates that there was much massacre, banishment and confiscation amongst the Italians who had obeyed Carbo, Marius, Norbanus, or their legates.[55] They were punished for holding military commands, serving in the army, contributing money, or even giving counsel against Sulla. Some were arrested for doing a kindness to a suspect or merely accompanying him on a journey. When charges against individuals failed, Sulla often took vengeance on a whole community. The Samnites in particular suffered with a massacre of three to eight thousand of their men.[56] Spoletium, Interamnium, Praeneste, Florentia, Sulmo, Arretium and Volaterrae are known to have undergone loss of land or destruction of their towns.[57] The Marsi, under whose name we often include the Paeligni and the Marrucini, were the heartland of the uprising in the north in the Social War and in the civil war that followed they were adherents of the Marian faction. When Julius Caesar invaded Italy in 49 BC these regions opened their doors to the man who was seen as the descendant of Marius.[58] All evidence suggests that these regions, and their leading inhabitants, were ruthlessly punished by Sulla. Sulla's proscriptions were aimed not only at his personal enemies but also those he considered would continue to destabilize his regime. Comments by Cicero confirm that the families of the rebellious Italian allies, as a result of the proscriptions, were broken and impoverished.[59]

Nor should we consider that these restrictions were temporary. In 63 BC a tribune, supported by Gaius Antonius, proposed that a motion for the Sullan proscriptions against the sons of those proscribed be lifted and their rights restored. The motion was defeated largely due to the speech of Cicero.[60] Gruen notes there was little reaction amongst the *populus* to the defeat, suggesting it

---

[53] For an overview see Hinard (1985) esp. 35-51.
[54] App. *B. Civ*. 1.95; Plut. *Sull*. 31.3-4; Oros. 5.21.3-4. Robinson (2007) 39 n. 54, 55 provides much higher figures for Appian and Plutarch. See also Keaveney (1982) 150–151 for actions against the Italians.
[55] App. *B. Civ*. 1.96; cf. Plut. *Crass*. 6.8; Cic. *Clut*. 25; *Verr*. 1.38.
[56] The Samnites had been had been directed to the Villa Publica just outside the Colline Gate and massacred. Vell. Pat. 2.27. 1-3; Plut. *Sull*. 29-30**;** Flor. 2.9. 24-25. Strabo 5.4.11 states 3000 - 4000 were massacred; Livy *Epit*. 88 and App. *B Civ*. 1.93 state 8000. See comment by Salmon (1967) 386 n. 2.
[57] Flor. 2.9.27; Sall. *Cat*. 28.4; Cic. *Att*. 1.19.3 (19). Badian (1958) 246 n.1 questions the degree of retribution against Spoletium and Florentia.
[58] Caes. *B Civ*. 1.23. Caesar stopped at Corfinium and then passed through the borders of the Marrucini, Frentani and Larinates to arrive at Apulia.
[59] Cic. *Dom*. 44; *Att*. 4.5.2 (80); 6.1.15 (115); *Phil*. 11.4.
[60] Cic. *Att*. 2.1.3 (21); *Pis*. 2.4; Plin. *HN* 7.30, 117; Plut. *Cic*. 12.1; Dio 37.25.3-4; Quint. *Inst*. 11.1.85. Cicero denounced the law in such style and so terrified the promoters of it that they could make no reply.

was not an issue affecting the majority.[61] It is most probably the Italians who were still labouring under this ruling. They had to wait until Caesar lifted the ban in 49 BC, forty years after the Social War.[62] Further, the rise of Sertorius and the Catiline conspiracy, also in 63, show there were persisting elements of the population, impoverished and disadvantaged by the regime of Sulla, who were prepared to join opportunities for rebellion against Rome.

The usual assumption is that the sons and grandsons of Herius Asinius suffered the penalties of Sulla. Syme is clearly of this opinion. Syme draws on the career of Pollio as an example of an Italian family waiting for the reforms of Caesar to enter the senate: 'Herius Asinius, praetor Marruciniorum, fought and fell in the cause of Italia. His grandson, C. Asinius Pollio, a friend and partisan of Caesar, entered the senate under the dictatorship and became consul in 40 BC';[63] and again: 'Herius Asinius, the first man among the Marrucini, fell in battle fighting for Italia. But the family did not perish or lapse altogether into obscurity' the reason being that Pollio was able to rise to public notice in the early 50's BC and gain public office in 47 BC as tribune of the plebs. [64] Wiseman notes that 'Sulla's law *de proscriptorum filiis* effectively kept out (of office) till 49 BC all but the pro-Roman elements in the states that had rebelled in 90.'[65] He gives Pollio as an example.

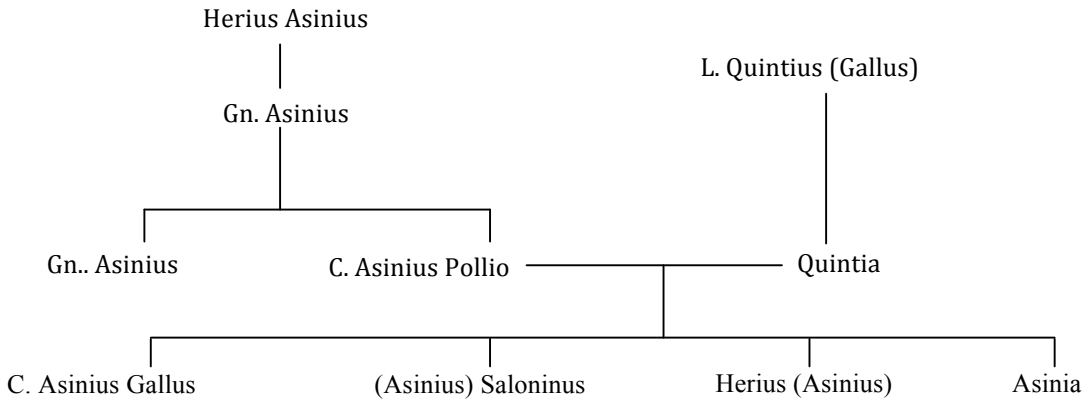
How then do we incorporate the career of Pollio's older brother into this system? From the inscriptional evidence of the *SC de Aphrodisiensibus* it would appear he was a praetor in the late to mid fifties. He, therefore, most probably entered public office around 65 BC, if not even earlier.[66] From consideration of the above this is atypical. It strongly suggests that the family of Pollio had not been barred from public office. This raises several hypotheses. Either Asinius Pollio was not a direct descendant of Herius Asinius and was not marked as the family of an Italian rebel, or, if he was a descendant, the family had not only escaped punishment by Sulla, but most probably acted to gain his approval to allow entry of the sons into the senate at the appropriate age; or, we must question the career evidence of the brother. Each possibility will be considered.

---

[61] Gruen (1995) 414-416.
[62] The *lex Antonia* of 49 BC removed all the legal effects of the *lex Cornelia de proscriptione*. See Dio 44.47.4. It is thought Caesar was behind the promotion of the reform in 63 BC. Velleius (2.43.4) notes Caesar's activities in this reform but places the success of the bill wrongly as occurring in the 60s.
[63] Syme (1938A) 20 = *RP* 1. 108.
[64] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 91. Also Salmon (1967) 389; Gabba (1976) 98.
[65] Wiseman (1971) 24.
[66] Sulla increased the annual complement of quaestors to twenty (Tac. *Ann*. 11.22). As an Italian Gnaeus would not have been promoted to the praetorship without progressing through the preceding offices of quaestorship and aedileship. Candidates for the quaestorship in this period were probably still required to be at least thirty years of age and for the praetorship thirty-nine years. See Sumner (1971) 246. Brennan (2000) 2. 392 states: 'The main innovation (of Sulla's legislation), so it seems, was the stipulation that those desiring a political career start with the quaestorship.' On this basis the brother probably stood for the quaestorship around 65 BC assuming a straight progression to the praetorship, or even earlier than 65 BC. Broughton *MRR* notes that only few of the quaestors are known for this period.

Herius Asinius and his relationship to Asinius Pollio

Herius Asinius is named in four sources as a leader of the Marrucini in the Social War of 91-89 BC.[67] No source connects him with the family of Gaius Asinius Pollio, the connection usually being inferred on the basis that Pollio named one of his sons Herius. The assertion that Herius was the grandfather of Pollio is further advanced on the ground that Pollio almost certainly belonged to the *gens Asinia* of the Marrucini, and Catullus clearly identifies the background of Pollio's elder brother as of the Marrucini. The father of Pollio is identified from the *Fasti Triumphales* as Gnaeus Asinius.[68] The stemma for the family of Pollio is therefore presented by Münzer as follows:[69]



A review of modern scholarship reveals a gradual cementing of the assumption of direct family descendancy based on the above reasoning. Thorbecke (1820), one of the earliest biographers of Pollio, stated: *Pollionem vero Herii fuisse nepotem, cum inde efficitur, quod Pollio filium habuit huius nominis.*[70] Kornemann (1896) acknowledges Thorbecke's early history of Pollio and follows the suggestion that the father probably moved to Rome soon after the Social War but makes no specific connection to Herius as the grandfather.[71] Pierce (1922) considers that the Herius described by Silius Italicus in the war against Hannibal was an ancestor of Pollio and that the Herius Asinius who fell fighting in the Social war was 'quite possibly' the grandfather of Pollio.[72] André (1949) is more definite, calling him: 'Herius Asinius, le grand-père de C. Asinius Pollio'.[73] André's biography of Pollio has been considered the most comprehensive and it can be

[67] App. *B Civ*. 1.40; Vell. Pat. 2.16.1; Livy (*Per*. 73) names him as Herius Asinius general of the Marrucini. Eutropius (5.3) wrongly places him with the Vettini.
[68] C. ASINIO CN F POLLIONe (*fasti augurum CIL* 1.60); C. ASINIUS CN F POLLIO (*acta triumphalia capitolina CIL* I^2 50); C*ASINIVS*CN*F (*fasti colotiani CIL* I^2 .64).
[69] Münzer *RE* 1587; *PIR* 2. 1241 considers Herius was perhaps the grandfather.
[70] Thorbecke (1820) 4-5.
[71] Kornemann (1896) 590.
[72] Pierce (1922) 3-4.
[73] André (1949) 9.

noted that from this point forward Herius Asinius is often stated categorically to be the grandfather. Syme, as has been noted, is in little doubt and describes Pollio as the grandson of Herius on several occasions.[74] Gabba (1956), in his consideration of Pollio as a source for Appian's account of the Social War, highlights the fact that his grandfather was Herius Asinius, and that the naming of one of his own sons as Herius was a testimony of the pride that he felt for his forebear.[75] Wiseman (1971) notes that Pollio named one of his sons Herius, and that Herius Asinius was praetor of the Marrucini. He includes Pollio in his list of grandsons of the leaders of rebel Italy who were proscribed by Sulla.[76] Zecchini (1982), like Gabba, considers Herius the grandfather and suggests that Pollio named his son Herius in recognition of the role of his grandfather in the Social War.[77]

A key argument in constructing this line of descent is the fact that Pollio named one of his sons Herius. But this does not necessarily imply direct descent. Gaius Asinius Gallus, bearing the *praenomen* of his father Pollio, is presumably the first born son. His date of birth has been linked to the fourth *Eclogue* of Vergil of 40 BC.[78] If this is correct, Herius must have been born in the thirties or even later. At this time there was a trend of using abnormal *praenomina*.[79] The *praenomen* was often chosen to publicise ancestry, to show *pietas* to an important friend or leader, or to chose a name ancient in the family. For example L. Aemilius Paullus transfered his *cognomen* to his son, calling him Paullus Aemilius Lepidus, (the consul suffect in 34 BC). Potitus Valerius Messalla, the consul suffect in 29, used the *cognomen* Potitus, an ancient family name, as a *praenomen* rather than his probable original *praenomen* of Manius.[80] The *praenomina* Paullus and Africanus were taken up by two of the Fabii, consuls in 10 and 11 BC, to show their Aemilian and Scipionic ancestry, and the Claudii Nerones chose the ancient family name of Nero which is of Sabine origin, hence Nero Claudius Drusus. Note also that Pompey's third son took the *cognomen* of "Magnus" as his *praenomen* and so was known as Magnus Pompeius Pius.[81] These provide sufficient examples to argue that Pollio may also have sought to publicise a heroic ancestry at this time, and chose the *praenomen* of Herius for his son without implying

---

[74] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 91; (1938A) 20 =*RP* 1. 108.
[75] Gabba (1956) 83.
[76] Wiseman (1971) 8 n. 4; 215.
[77] Zecchini (1982) 1268.
[78] Verg. *Ecl.* 4. esp. lines 8-10. Gallus declared he was the child of Vergil's poem, see Servius on *Ecl.* 4.11.
[79] Syme (1958) 172 = *RP* 1. 362.
[80] Syme (1955) 156 = *RP* 1. 261; (1989) 228.
[81] *ILS* 8891. The even more extreme example, as noted by Syme (*ibid*) is the *praenomen* "Imperator" used instead of "Gaius" by Octavian/Augustus.

an immediate family connection. From Silius Italicus it is known that Herius was a famous name among the Marrucini dating back to the war with Hannibal.[82]

Overall, there has been little debate in the literature, and Pollio has been identified as very probably the grandson of Herius if not in absolute terms.

The implications of this descent have also been only briefly considered. Either Pollio is presented as one of the Italian nobility, readily accommodated into the Roman system, as André suggests,[83] so that we see Pollio beginning his political career in 54 BC at the age of twenty-two years; or, as Syme argues, Pollio belonged to the Italian families, particularly as the grandson of a rebel leader, who were excluded from political life until Caesar reversed their status in 49 BC.[84] The alignment of Pollio with Caesar in 49 BC and his possible subsequent position as a tribune of the plebs in 47 BC supports this latter theory. Interestingly, André and Syme both use the same examples for different points. André notes the political success of the Samnite Staius, and also of P. Ventidius, the latter captured as an infant in the rebel city of Asculum and paraded in the triumph of Pompeius Strabo, as examples of their ready inclusion into the political system,[85] whilst Syme notes that Staius is an example of how the Italian rebels could only gain a position if they had supported Sulla, and that Ventidius (who became a tribune in 45 BC) represents the exclusion of the Italian leaders until receiving support from Caesar in 49 BC.[86]

Several issues have been ignored altogether. The sources, and in particular Appian and Velleius, who would have had an interest in identifying the family tree of Pollio, make no connection with this family relationship.[87] In fact Appian lists the names of nine Italian commanders and proceeds to detail their heroic deeds, all except for Herius, failing to mention even his death; it is Livy who provides this detail. If, as Gabba wishes to argue, that Pollio may have been Appian's

---

[82] Sil. *Pun*. 17.453-458. *Herium, cui nobile nomen Marrucina domus clarumque Teate ferebat*. Silius Italicus describes an incident in the battle of Zama in 204 BC with Hannibal, where a Herius, fighting for the Marrucini, dies heroically at the hands of Hannibal. The recording of this event, and the name of Herius, by Silius Italicus some 250 years later suggests it was a well known legend in the history of the Marrucini.

[83] André (1949) 10. He considers Pollio was not excluded from the Roman community, as the leaders at Rome, after their victory in the Social War, were conciliatory, permitting even their most outstanding adversaries entry into the senate.

[84] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 91. A view also endorsed by Wiseman (1971). See later discussion for exclusion and entry of the Italians into the post Sullan government.

[85] André (1949) 10 n. 2. P. Ventidius, born in Picenum, was perhaps a child of one of the rebel Italian leaders (see Syme (1958) 76-79). He later made his living as a muleteer according to Gellius (15.4.3), served with Caesar in the Gallic provinces and entered the senate as a tribune of the plebs. We find him with Pollio in the Perusine war and his legate in his war against the Parthians was a Poppaedius Silo (Dio 48.41.1), almost certainly a descendant from the rebel Marsic leader.

[86] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 91.

[87] Velleius writes positively of Pollio. He mentions the role of his own great grandfather Minatus Magius in the Social War (2.16.1). Appian, thought to have used Pollio as his main source for Books 2-4 of his *Civil Wars*, makes frequent mention of specific events involving Pollio.

source for Book One on the Social War, a theory vigorously debated and largely discounted, one could have assumed that Pollio would have highlighted the actions of his grandfather and that Appian would have included these deeds in his listing with all the other commanders.[88] But the usual warning against arguments *e silentio* must apply here.

Further, it is possible that we can identify from the sources the actual conflict in which Herius died, and, if correct, it is a conflict which raises significant questions about the actions of Sulla. The death of Herius occurred towards the end of summer of 90 BC in one of the major confrontations with the Marsi.[89] Livy is the only source to record this specifically:

> That the fortunes of war might be fickle, the colony of Aesernia, along with Marcus Marcellus, fell into the hands of the Samnites. For the Romans again, Gaius Marius routed the Marsi in a battle, after Hierius Asinius the general of the Marrucini had been slain. (*Per*. 73).[90]

The Roman consul Rutilius had died with heavy losses in an ambush in the valley of the river Tolenus. He was replaced by Q. Servilius Caepio who in turn had also been defeated in a trick played out by the Marsian leader Q. Poppaedius Silo. At this point Gaius Marius took over the command of the whole northern front and was attempting to hold the situation until there was a break in the fighting at the end of summer. Cornelius Sulla was the Roman commander in the region of Aesernia where L. Julius Caesar was endeavouring to hold off the Italian threat to Aesernia in Samnium and Acerrae in Campania. Appian records an intense engagement by Marius and Sulla with the Marsi which has the following sequence of events:

> There, though their camps were pitched opposite each other, neither dared to attack the other, but Cornelius Sulla and Gaius Marius defeated the Marsians, who had attacked them. They pursued the enemy vigorously as far as the walls enclosing their vineyards. The Marsians scaled these walls with heavy loss, but Marius and Sulla did not deem it wise to follow them farther. Cornelius Sulla was encamped on the other side of these enclosures, and when he knew what had happened he came out to meet the Marsians, as they tried to escape, and he also killed a great number. More than 6000 Marsians were slain that day and the arms of a still greater number were captured by the Romans.[91]

The difficulty with this account, as recorded by Appian, is that Sulla is placed in two positions at the one time. The usual view, as expressed by Gabba, has been to accept that Sulla fought with Marius and to disregard the view that Sulla was encamped on the other side of the vineyards.[92] Salmon, in a more complex hypothesis, considers it unlikely Marius needed or received help

---

[88] Gabba (1956) 83. The general consensus is that Pollio's History did not commence until 60 BC , See Chapter 13.
[89] Only mentioned by Livy (*Per*. 73).
[90] *Et ut varia belli fortuna esset, Aesernia colonia cum M. Marcello in potestatem Samnitium venit. Sed et C. Marius proelio Marsos fudit, Hierio Asinio praetore Marrucinorum occiso*.
[91] App. *B Civ*. 1.46.
[92] Gabba (1958) 141.

from Sulla in holding his position. He suggests a force of Italian rebels successfully evaded Sulla, who, at the time was in the Aesernia region, in order to reach the vicinity of Sora and encounter Marius. He speculates that Sulla, to avoid blame he had let the Italians pass through unopposed, rewrote the encounter in his memoirs placing himself as the hero of the situation; a version subsequently used by Appian.[93] Keaveney, finding this hypothesis untenable, resolves the difficulty on the basis that Appian attributes the command of an army to the general to whom it was originally assigned. Marius was therefore operating with his own army and a detachment of Sulla's whilst Sulla himself was in command of the army encamped on the other side of the vineyard.[94] The epitomizer of Livy records this encounter as the success of Marius alone.[95] Plutarch also highlights a great victory won by Marius in the Social war in which 6000 were slain; the figure of 6000 usually linking it to this particular encounter.[96]

The significance of the account for our purposes is that Herius Asinius died in one of the decisive battles in the Social War. The encounter occurred at a time when the Romans were at serious risk of defeat by the insurgents. The events obviously involved scrutiny of the actions of both Marius and Sulla. The actions of Herius would have placed him and his surviving family firmly in the role as a leading rebel and attracted the harsh penalties of Sulla and the proscriptions. Further, if Sulla had any doubt about his own role in the action there would have been little to immunise the family of Herius from retribution by Sulla.

However, even if we consider there may be reason to doubt the evidence for direct descent from Herius Asinius, the overall family affiliation still remains strong. The question remains as to why the family appears to have escaped the punitive actions of Sulla.

Senators in the post Sullan government

One possibility is that as Herius died in battle in 90 BC, the family may have subsequently taken no further part in the uprising, or in the civil war, and so escaped further recrimination. This would imply that Gnaeus Asinius, the father of Pollio, who we can assume was at least in his twenties at the time of the Social War, took no part in the uprising despite the status and actions of Herius; an unlikely scenario. Moreover, at least six of the leading Italian commanders are known to have died in the Social War and none of their families rose to prominence, suggesting that discrimination against the families persisted.[97]

---

[93] Salmon (1967) 355-356.
[94] Keaveney (1981) 247-248.
[95] Livy *Per*. 73.
[96] Plut. *Mar*. 33.
[97] Obsidius, P. Vettius Scato, C. Vidacilius, Marius Egnatius, L. Cluetius, T. Lafrenius.

It should also be asked if the penalties of Sulla affected all the families of the rebel leaders, to the extent that they are known to us; do we find exceptions? If we combine the list of names of the allied commanders in Appian and Velleius we have eleven individuals, and by reference to all sources at least twenty-two individuals, commanders and their legates, can be identified.[98] These persons were all considered the leading men of their regions. None of their descendants appear within the senate before 49 BC. For example, the descendants of M. Herennius, leader of the rebels in Picenum, do not have a member in the senate until a M. Herennius, presumably his grandson, becomes consul suffect in 34 BC.[99] The family of Quintus Pompaedius or Poppaedius Silo, leader of the Marsi, does not have a member until his descendant, also a Poppaedius Silo, becomes a legate with Antony in 39-38 BC.[100] The descendents of the other Marsic leader, P. Vettius Scato, are noted by Cicero to be without homes and impoverished in their province of the Marsi, and are not attested in public office until the 20's BC.[101] The descendant of P. Ventidius, P. Ventidius Bassus, did not enter the senate until 47 BC, he was a tribune in 45 BC.[102] C. Norbanus, who was praetor in 44/43 BC, was probably the grandson of C. Norbanus and, as Wiseman states, 'as the son of a proscribed Marian he would have had his career curtailed until Caesar's law of 49 BC'.[103] Exploration of the family of origin of L. Staius Murcus, legate of Caesar in 48 BC, again indicates he was of Sabellic (possibly of the Paeligni or Marsi) or Oscan origin and that he had to wait to gain a position in the senate until the legislation of Caesar.[104] Further, he is generally considered to be less likely a member of the Paeligni, as they had no senators before the time of Augustus.[105]

---

[98] Q. Poppaedius Silo, Marsi (Syme *Rom. Rev.* 91); C. Papius Mutilus, Samnite (Diod. 37.2.5-7; Sydenham (1952) 634-641); Marcus Lamponius, Luciani (Münzer *RE* 12); Clepitius/Cleptius, Luciani (Diod. 37.2.11, 27); Herius Asinius, Marrucini (Livy *Per* 73; App. *B Civ.* 1.40; Vell. Pat. 2.16.1; Eutrop. 5.3.2), Obsidius, Marrucini (Oros. 5.18.25); P. Vettius Scato, ? Marsi (Cic. *Phil.* 12.27; Macrob. 1.11.24; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 91); Fraucus, ? Marsi (Oros. 5.18.18); P. Praesenteius, ? Paeligni (App. *B Civ.* 1.41); C. Vidacilius, Picentes (App. *B Civ.* 1.47); P. Ventidius, Picentes (App. *B Civ.* 1.47; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 71,92); T. Herennius, Picentes (Eutrop. 5.3.2; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 92); Agamemnon, Picentes – a Cilician pirate in Ausculum who served as a legate of Vidacilius (Diod. 37.16; Oros. 5.18.10); Minatus Iegius, ? Samnite/Hirpini (Salmon 1958); Marius Egnatius, Samnite (App. *B Civ.* 1.45; Livy *Per.* 75); Duilius/ Lucilus, ? Samnite/Hirpini (Front. Strat. 1.5.17; Sydenham (1952) 642); Trebatius, Samnite (App. *B Civ.* 1.52); L. Cluentius, ? Samnite (App. *B Civ.* 1.50; Eutrop. 5.3.2; Oros. 5.18.23); Afranius, ? Venusini (Flor. 2.6.6), C. Pontidius, ? Vestini (Vell. Pat. 2.16.1; App. *B Civ.* 1.40); T. Lafrenius, Vestini (Salmon (1967) 353); Pontius Telesinius, ? Samnite (Diod. 37.2.9-11; Vell. Pat. 2.27.1). For further discussion of the Italian rebel leaders see Domaszewski (1924); Haug (1947); Syme (*Rom. Rev.*); Salmon (1958, 1967); Gabba (1958); Wiseman (1971); Keaveney (1987).

[99] Eutrop. 5.3.2; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 92; (1938A) 20-22 = *RP.* 1.108-109; Wiseman (1971) 235. Taylor *VDRR* 219-220 is not certain of the relationship; Salmon (1967) 356 also suggests his origin as a Picentene to be uncertain.

[100] Dio 48.41.1; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 91; Wiseman (1971) 253.

[101] Cic. *Dom.* 116; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 91; Wiseman (1971) 273.

[102] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 92; Wiseman (1971) 271; Taylor *VDRR* 264; Badian (1963) 141-142.

[103] Wiseman (1971) 245.

[104] Taylor *VDRR* 255-256; Syme *Rom. Rev.* 91; Wiseman (1971) 262-263.

[105] *ILS* 932. Q. Varius Geminus is recorded as the first man from all the Paelignians to have become a senator at Rome in the reign of Augustus.

But there are individuals who should have been numbered with the enemies of Sulla who did not suffer. Here we find men who, in the civil war, chose the winning side. The civil war, coming swiftly after the Social War, when the Italians still felt far from secure in what they had gained, now led to sharp divisions in individual communities. Regions and persons chose differing opponents according to their own needs. The Marrucini had gained citizenship at the end of the Social War in 89 BC. To the majority of the *populus* this may have had little significance, its importance only of relevance to the wealthier families who sought the prestige and status that Rome had to offer. As previously noted, one of the main concerns was the distribution of the enfranchised Italians into the voting tribes. By the outbreak of the civil war Cinna had promised full distribution across the eighteen tribes, and Sulla, finally recognizing the importance of Italian support, agreed he would not deprive them of citizenship or alter their distribution throughout the tribes.[106] The two sides desperately lobbied for Italian support using bribes and threats.[107] Throughout Italian towns pro- and anti-Sullan groups clashed violently as they sought to persuade their communities for one side or the other.[108]

And so we find the example of Statius the Samnite who, although he had great influence with the Samnites, entered the Roman senate.[109] Badian considers the most plausible explanation is that he made up for his rebel past by supporting the right side in the *bellum Sullanum*: 'Unless he did the latter, it is, in any case, hard to understand how he survived in honour and wealth.'[110] Similarly, Minatus Magius, great grandfather of the historian Velleius, with a legion he had formed from the Hirpini, fought bravely for the Romans taking an active part in the siege of Pompeii. He was awarded a special grant of citizenship and his sons made praetors.[111] Appian tells of Gutta the Capuan and his actions to support Marius; later we find a Tiberius Gutta in the senate of Sulla; the name is unusual and most likely belonged to the same individual.[112] Interestingly, we can also note the young Julius Caesar, with his strong associations to Marius,

---

[106] Livy *Per*. 86: *Sylla cum Italicis populis, ne timeretur ab his velut erepturus civitatem et suffragii ius nuper datum, foedus percussit*. It was the end of 83 when both sides were recruiting support for the crucial campaigns of 82 BC. It is probable Sulla did not include the Samnites in his statement as he had failed to recognize them as citizens in 87 BC and his actions in 82, when he executed all captured Samnites, shows he still considered them enemies of Rome.

[107] When Sulla initially arrived back in Rome he met a largely hostile response from Italy and Rome. In all regions north of Campania, and especially the Etruscan cities, fierce fighting occurred under loyalty to the name of Marius. See Diod. 38.12**.** During the winter of 82 Sulla devoted his time to wooing the Italian communities who had not yet committed. The names of the actual communities who finally supported Sulla are unknown. See Keaveney (1982) 136ff; Badian (1958) 244ff; Seager *CAH* 9 (1994) 187ff; Gabba (1951) 270 ff.

[108] Badian (1958) 247 comments: 'The greater part of Italy, disillusioned by deceit and indifference, had not greatly cared for either party by 83.' Nor was there any class interest in supporting either party. The son of Marius when elected consul for 82 BC appears to have aroused some enthusiasm but mainly because there was little support for Sulla himself.

[109] App. *B Civ*. 4.25.

[110] Badian (1958) 247 n.1 also Gabba (1951) 264; Syme *Rom. Rev*. 88; (1938A) 22-24 =*RP* 1. 110-111.

[111] Vell. Pat. 2.16.1. See also Syme *Rom. Rev*. 88 ff.

[112] App. *B Civ*. 1.90.

only escaped the retribution of Sulla due to the persuasion of powerful friends and fled from Rome whilst Cicero, also a young man, took on the case of Roscius of Amerina in 80 BC which launched his career, even though it brought him up against a favoured associate of Sulla. [113]

However, before we can pursue further the implications arising from the above it is necessary to review the evidence that Gaius Asinius did indeed enter the senate in the late sixties. This warrants further examination of the *SC de Aphrodisiensibus.*

The *Senatus Consultum de Aphrodisiensibus*

As already noted the epigraphic evidence from the *SC de Aphrodisiensibu*s appears certain to be identifying Gnaeus Asinius son of Gnaeus of uncertain *cognomen* and that this is the older brother of Pollio. The next question is whether the order of names reflects seniority. Reynolds notes this cannot always be certain but has no reason to doubt this procedure on this inscription, nor does Badian.[114] Gnaeus is listed ninth on the naming of twenty or so senators. The names above him are fragmented but can be identified with enough confidence not to challenge the order of precedence.

When the record was written there were present M. Valerius M.f. Lem. Messala, Appius [Claudius ?Pulcher, (L. Nonius) L.f.] Vel. Asprenas, L. Scribonius L.f. Fal. Libo, L. [. . ? . .] L.f. Ouf. Balbus, [. . ? . .] C.f. Claudonianus (sic), L. Ser[gius ?L.f.] Fal. Plautus, C. M.[. . ? . . f.] Pom., Cn. Asinius Cn. f. [?Arn.], P. Sestius L. [f. Col., Cn.] Pompeius Q.f. Arn., C. Hedius C.f.] Cla. Thorus, L. [. . ? . . f.] Arn. Capito, T. Licinius T. [f. . . ? . .]enus, C[. . ? . . , . . ? . .]nius Cn. f. Arn. Rufus, P. [. . ? . . , . . ? . .] ?Ani., Cn. Sedius C.f. Cla. [. . ? . . , . . ? . .]n, T. [Li]cinius T.f. Fab. Turannus, [. . ? . .]itus [. . ? . .[115]

The main challenge has arisen with the name immediately following that of Gnaeus; P. Sestius and his placement below L. Nonius Asprenas who is in third position. In the *SC de Panamaris* passed only shortly before this current decree P. Sestius is in second place above Nonius who is again in third place. The difficulty has been resolved to some degree by suggesting that in the time between the two decrees the consul designates were named for the next eight years by

---

[113] Cic. *Rosc. Am*. For discussion of Cicero's role in this case with respect to his standing with Sulla, see Badian (1958) 249- 251.

[114] Reynolds (1982) 67: 'It is probable – and normally assumed – that those present were listed in order of seniority. In so far as seniority can be assigned with confidence, it seems to be the rule observed here; but its observance is not proved to an absolute rule, so that arguments for identity which depend on seniority should be treated with a certain reserve.' The list contains at least twenty names, more than usual, suggesting a greater importance was attached to the decree. The names are presented formally with *praenomen, nomen*, filiation, tribe and often *cognomen*.

[115] Taken from Joyce Reynolds, Charlotte Roueché, Gabriel Bodard, *Inscriptions of Aphrodisias* (2007), available <http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007>, ISBN 978-1-897747-19-3.

Antony, Octavian and Sextus Pompeius in the meeting shortly before Misenum.[116] P. Sestius received no position, but L. Nonius Asprenas was named as a consul designate for 36 BC. Whilst the date for the meeting at Misenum cannot be given with accuracy, it is generally concluded to have occurred in middle or late August 39. [117] The *SC de Panamaris* is dated to August 14 and the *SC de Aphrodisiensibu*s to October 2 39. The naming of the consul designates therefore may have altered the order of precedence for the *SC de Aphrodisiensibu*s if we consider that the consuls designate took precedence over the ex-praetors on official lists. P. Sestius was praetor in the period 55-49 BC with 54 BC the most common listing.[118] If we move further down the list from Aphrodisias it is probable that the *Capito* listed in position eighteen is L. Ateius Capito, quaestor in 52 BC.[119] This remains in accordance with a listing in seniority.

If we accept that there is sufficient evidence to show the order of precedence is intact for this decree, then Gnaeus was most probably a praetor in the mid to late fifties and so commenced a political career in the late sixties. Gruen, building on the work of Syme, Broughton, Taylor and Wiseman, has collated the known praetors for the period 78-49 BC.[120] Two hundred and forty were elected, of whom one hundred and seventy eight are known. Of the known praetors forty have been identified as *novi homines*.[121] Most of these required the support of one of Rome's leading political families to gain success; Pompey and Caesar being the key backers. And the example of P. Attius Varus demonstrates the fluid nature of these alliances, as the probable support he received from Caesar for his praetorship in 53 did not prevent him from supporting Pompey in 49. Syme and Wiseman both note the lack of senators from the Marsi and Marrucini throughout this period.[122] Whilst this is principally taken to represent the consequence of their Marian support in the civil war, they were also regions impoverished by the wars, socially isolated, and intent on retaining a loyalty to their own *municipium*.[123] Dench, in a more thorough analysis of this lack of senatorial success, also makes the point that the provincial mentality of

---

[116] App. *B Civ*. 5.73; Dio 48.35.1-2. This meeting at Misenum is also known as Pact of Puteoli.
[117] See Reynolds (1982) 69 ff. for arguments concerning the date for the meeting at Misenum. See Drummond (1974) for discussion of the order of consular pairs; relevant to the consular listing here but not to the order of the senators.
[118] Broughton *MRR* 2.222; Badian (1984) 106 notes he was old enough to hold the praetorship by 54 BC; Brennan (2000) 574.
[119] Reynolds (1982) 71.
[120] Gruen (1995) 163ff; 176 n. 58; 508 ff.
[121] Gnaeus Asinius is not included in this listing. The number is probably less than forty as it includes praetors whose senatorial ancestry is unknown but who may have had ancestors in the senate.
[122] Syme (1938A) = *RP* 1.93; *Rom. Rev*. 86ff; Wiseman (1971) Appendix 2. In the period after 90 BC through to AD 14 Wiseman lists nine senators for the Marsi, four for the Samnites, two for the Vestinii, seven for the Paeligni with none before the Augustan era, and six for the Marrucini.
[123] Sherwin-White (1973) 153 notes that the tribe of the Marrucini continued to exist under the cover of the *municipium* Teate, the capital city of the old tribe, and 'individual Marrucini and others continued to employ the old tribal designations, so strong were the forces of local patriotism.' Cicero (*Leg*. 2.5) states that every Roman had two *patriae*, his native place and Rome.

the people of the Central Apennines may have been such as to inhibit their desire to seek involvement in the Roman system as much as it also alienated them.[124]

Conclusion

From the inscriptional evidence it is known that Pollio's father was a Roman citizen, but not his grandfather. It is possible Pollio's father came to Rome in 70 BC to enrol in the census and seek placement within the first class.[125] The Marrucini were incorporated into the tribe of Arnensis, the tribe of the Claudii Marcelli and the Pompeii Rufi.[126] He may have settled in Rome at this time, particularly as much of the land of rebel Italian communities had been confiscated or laid to waste, and also to provide a Roman education for his young son Pollio and to pave the way for Gnaeus to enter the senate.[127] However, we cannot exclude the possibility that the family was living in Rome even before this time, and in view of Gnaeus' career the father may have already been in the senate as a member of Sulla's expanded senate.[128] The poem of Catullus, dated to *c.* 60 BC, implies the Asinii were living in Rome, but that Gnaeus still had many of his undesirable provincial manners.

On the basis of the above, we could conjecture that Pollio's family, the Asinii, if not direct descendants of Herius, were almost certainly of a related family. Having established their reputation as a leading Italian family in the Social War they continued to prosper, unlike all other known families of the Italian rebels. This was most probably a consequence of their giving support for Sulla in the civil war and so gaining his favour. Having escaped the proscriptions the family were in a position to advance the political careers of their sons in the Roman system. Nor were the Asinii the only Marrucini to be in this position. Cicero, in 66 BC, when pleading the case of Aulus Cluentius Habitus against Statius Albius Oppianicus of Larinum, noted that many

---

[124] Dench (1995) 144-153.
[125] Taylor *VDRR* 120.
[126] Taylor *VDRR* 121; Sherwin-White (1973) 156. The rebel Italian communities were assigned to a group of seven tribes which included Arnensis for the Frentani and the Marrucini; Sergia for the Marsi and Paeligni.
[127] Seager *CAH* 9 (1994) 203-4. Sulla in his need to find land for his veterans ravaged the lands of Italian communities that had been hostile to him. In some, land in existing colonies was reallocated, in others, a new colony was added to the existing *municipium* and in others a new colony was added with a downgrading of the existing community. The Marrucini would have fallen into one of these categories. Syme (*Rom. Rev.* 88) notes that a hundred thousand veterans were settled on the lands of Sulla's enemies.
[128] Sulla expanded the senate to six hundred members. Whilst there is argument as to exactly whom Sulla included in his new senate, particularly as at least two hundred senators had probably perished in the decade (Oros. 5.22.4; Eutrop. 5.9.2) and noting his dislike of the *equites*, it is generally thought he began to incorporate the newly enfranchised Italians. Gruen (1995) ch. 5 suggests that one half of the known *pedarii* were new men without ancestors in the senate. However, they probably never rose to posts higher than junior magistracies without the backing of the élite. See also Hardy (1916); Hill (1932); Syme (1938A); Gabba (1958) 343ff**,** also Schulten (1926) for a comprehensive list of such Italian names as can be traced through the senatorial records. The integration of the Italians into the Roman system is probably far more complex than usually considered with resentments and ill feeling running deep. The concept of a *tota Italia* was not the immediate outcome of the Social War, even if spoken of in such terms.

had come to Rome to support Cluentius, including the noble class of the Marrucini, *homines nobilissimi*, suggesting there was a section of the Marrucini who continued to prosper.[129] Oppianicus had strong connections with Sulla, at one stage fleeing for his life to the camp of one of Sulla's generals. He returned to Larinum with orders from Sulla to purge the province of all those who expressed democratic sympathies.[130] The support of the Marrucini for Cluentius suggests they maintained an anti–Sullan stance; contrary to the proposed position of the Asinii.[131]

The presence of Pollio's brother in the post-Sullan senate, rising to the position of praetor by the mid fifties, must lead to re-evaluation of the activities of the Asinii through this period. Pollio has been a repeated example of either a career hindered by Sulla and requiring the support of Caesar before he could advance (as suggested by Syme, Wiseman and Gruen) or as an example of assimilation of the Italians into the Roman senate (he reached the consulship in 40 BC). As David (1997) states: 'Another outstanding fact is that even the descendants of those who had fought Rome in the Social War found themselves carried to the summit of the civic hierarchy. C. Asinius Pollio, the grandson of Herius Asinius, leader of the Marrucini, was consul in 40'. [132] Pollio's career in all probability should not be used to support either theory. It can be argued that the descent from Herius Asinius is not certain, and that the family continued to prosper after the civil wars. The first mention of the activities of Pollio in our sources is a reference by Cicero, in March 56 BC, to the assistance from a Pollio in the support of Lentulus Spinther in his attempt to restore Ptolemy to Egypt.[133] Pollio's activities in the courts follow in 54 BC. These facts fit more easily into place if we consider Pollio already had an opening into the senate and was in the course of pursuing his career independently of any reliance upon Caesar. In Pollio's letter to Cicero in 43 BC, when he explains his decision to support Caesar in 49, he comments he had enemies in both parties: *cum vero non liceret mihi nullius partis esse quia utrubique magnos inimicos habebam, ea castra fugi in quibus plane tutum me ab insidiis inimici sciebam non futurum*.[134] The reasons for this enmity are unknown.[135] However, as the Italian communities, especially those who had favoured Marius, gave support to Caesar, one reason may be found here. Further, Syme comments that there were factions of the Marrucini antagonistic to Pollio. On the occasion of the senate taking action against Antony in 43 BC, support was given to the

---

[129] Cic. *Clu*. 197.
[130] Cic. *Clu*. 25.
[131] Lanzani (1936) 105-8 states Oppianicus should be seen as a leader of a pro-Sullan group. In the proscriptions of Sulla, Oppianicus had his political opponents the Aurii and their friend Sextus Vibius put to death.
[132] David (1997) 174. This argument arises when the time frame between the Social War and the end of the Republic is collapsed into one brief period, so that the failure to obtain office at an earlier stage of an individual's career is overlooked.
[133] Cic. *Fam*. 1.6.1 (17).
[134] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.2 (368).
[135] Other reasons for this enmity will be further discussed in Chapter 4.

consul Hirtius by a faction of the Marrucini hostile to Pollio.[136] In the proscriptions of the triumvirs in 43 BC Syme comments: 'Pollio's rivals among the Marrucini will likewise have been found there'.[137] It would appear Pollio did not always have an easy relationship with his fellow countrymen.

It is also possible that it is this background history that we see reflected in Pollio's actions later in life, when contrary to expectation he gave support to the perceived winning side when again politics and loyalty were muddied by civil war. The background history may also be a reason why Pollio chose not to include the social and subsequent civil war in his own history: the actions of his descendents were contentious and open to scrutiny. However we interpret these events, the career of Pollio's brother alerts us to the fact the history of the Social War and the post-Sullan period should not be excluded from the history of Pollio himself.

---

[136] Syme *Rom. Rev*.169.

[137] Syme *Rom. Rev*.193 esp. n. 6. Syme cites the name of Urbinius Panapio, noting that Pollio had defended the heirs of a certain Urbinia who had married the Marrucini Clusinius. See Quint. *Inst*. 7.2.26 and Chapter 12.

2 60–50 BC: The Early Formative Years

In the decade 60 to 50 BC Pollio, progressing in age from sixteen to twenty-six years, was active in laying the foundations for his future career. We have four references in the sources from which to track his activities. A poem by Catullus presents him as a talented young boy living in Rome,[1] a reference by Cicero suggests he was the Pollio who gave support to Lentulus Spinther in his quest for the Egyptian command,[2] C. Helvius Cinna wrote a *propempticon* for Pollio as he set off on a journey to Greece in 56 BC,[3] and we know he was back in Rome to prosecute C. Porcius Cato in 54 BC.[4] In 49 BC he joined the camp of Caesar with the outbreak of civil war.

The politics in this decade were far from stable. The so-called first triumvirate was formed in 59 BC and the machinations of Pompey and Caesar went on to dominate the next ten years. Nor should we forget Pollio was of Italian background. The Italian nobility were becoming an important influence in Rome whilst at the same time their opportunities were limited as they belonged to the class of the *novi homines*.[5]

60 BC

60 BC, the year of the consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer and L. Afranius, the probable beginning year of Pollio's *Histories,* and the first reference to Pollio in the surviving sources.[6] He was sixteen years of age.

This first mention of Pollio occurs in a poem by Catullus (12). The poem is usually dated to 60 BC or the early 50s. The reference to Pollio as *puer* has led Fordyce to suggest his age as most probably sixteen or seventeen years, giving the poem a date of 60 or 59 BC.[7] Wiseman, on the

---

[1] Catull. 12.
[2] Cic. *Fam*. 1.6.1 (17).
[3] Charisius, *Gramm*. 124.4K.
[4] Cic. *Att*. 4.15.4 (90); 16.5 (89); Sen. *Controv*. 7.4.7; Tac. *Dial*. 34.7.
[5] See Taylor (1949); Wiseman (1971) esp. 50-52.
[6] Horace (*Carm*. 2.1.1) *Motum ex Metello consule civicum bellique causas et vitia et modos* implies Pollio commenced his *Histories* in the consulship of Metellus, generally accepted to be Q. Metellus Celer and the year 60 BC. See discussion Chapter 13.
[7] Fordyce (1961) 128. Cicero usually uses *puer* to refer to a young man up to the age of sixteen or seventeen years. When Cicero refers to Octavian as *pue*r, see esp. *Att*. 14.12.2 (366), at nineteen years of age, he is doing so to deliberately draw attention to his youth, as he would not normally apply the term to someone of this age. See also McDermott (1979) 55 n. 5; Manuwald (2007) 1.94-94 where Manuwald lists all references to Octavian as *puer* and notes Cicero is deliberately using the term in a positive context and so objects when Antony attempts to use it to the contrary; 2. 328-329.

basis of the whereabouts of Veranius and Fabullus, argues for 56 BC.[8] But even if we consider the later date for Pollio's birth of 75 BC he would still be nineteen years in 56 BC and unlikely to attract the label of *puer*.

Marrucine Asini, manu sinistra
non belle uteris; in ioco atque vino
tollis lintea neglegentiorum
hoc salsum esse putas? Fugit te, inepte:
quamvis sordida res et invenustast.
non credis mihi? crede Pollioni
fratri, qui tua furta vel talento
mutari velit; est enim leporum
differtus puer ac facetiarum.

quare aut hendecasyllabos trecentos
expecta aut mihi linteum remitte;
quod me non movet aestimatione,
verumst mnemosynum mei sodalis.
nam sudaria Saetaba ex Hiberis
miserunt mihi muneri Fabullus
et Veranius: haec amem necessest
ut Veraniolum meum et Fabullum

The poem locates Pollio as living in Rome and well educated. This is consistent with his family having survived the Social and Civil wars in good standing. His brother was no doubt established in his political career probably having served by this time as quaestor. The brother dines with the circle of Catullus. The reference to the brother as Asinius of the Marrucini highlights his Italian background as also the jibe at his provincial manners; an attitude not attributed to Pollio.[9]

This is the only mention of Pollio by Catullus but it has usually been considered sufficient, despite the objections of McDermott, to locate him within the poetic circle of Catullus through the decade of the fifties.[10]

Trial of 54 BC

In the summer of 54 BC Pollio made his first public appearance. He undertook the prosecution of C Porcius Cato – not to be confused with the famous Cato. His performance was such as to be noted by Tacitus, who comments not only on his age of twenty-one years, but also that his was one of several speeches still to be read with admiration.[11]

---

[8] Wiseman (1969) 38ff.
[9] See Voisin (2000) for a further interpretation of this poem and inference that this was the young Pollio's introduction, an early taste so to speak, to the neoteric circle. Farrell (1991) 280 notes Catullus' propensity to present people, as well as things, as good or bad, and comments that Catullus views the young Pollio in a favourable light compared with his uncouth brother and that the poem was written, at least in part, to express his approval of Pollio the poet. Farrell (280 n. 13) also raises the interesting but unsubstantiated suggestion that the so-called brother could just as easily be a cousin on the basis that he and Pollio had different *cognomina*.
[10] McDermott (1979) considers Pollio may have been offended by the poem believing it to be a lampoon, contrary to the majority of opinion that the poem is one of flattery to Pollio. See above.
[11] Tac. *Dial*. 34.7.

Cato, *adulescens nullius consili*, according to Cicero, had until the conference of Luca presented himself as an antagonist to the triumvirs.[12] In 59 BC he wished to prosecute C. Aulus Gabinius, a friend of Caesar,[13] for *ambitus,* but was thwarted in his attempt. In frustration Cato, at a public meeting, called Pompey a *privatus dictator* and had been fortunate to escape with his life.[14]

In December 57 Cato spoke against a proposal, favoured by the majority of the senate, specifically targeted at bringing Clodius to trial before he was elected aedile and so protected from prosecution by virtue of his magistracy.[15]

In 56 BC Cato became a tribune and from the beginning of the year took a leading role in the question of the restoration of Auletes to his throne in Egypt. This issue also appears to have actively involved the interest of Pollio.

The Egyptian question

Towards the end of 57 BC, a son of Ptolemy Lathyrus, known popularly as Auletes, mounted a campaign to gain assistance from the Romans for his restoration to the throne in Egypt.[16] In September 57 the senate decreed that Auletes, as an ally and friend, should be restored to his throne by Lentulus Spinther, the current consul, when in the following year he took up his province of Cilicia. But clearly the restoration would be a lucrative business and it attracted the attention of Pompey and possibly also Crassus. Lentulus was an unpopular choice for this commission and Gaius Cato in particular was opposed to him. Cicero, out of gratitude for Lentulus' support for his restoration from exile, supported him, and took up his cause in the senate, corresponding frequently with Lentulus on the state of play.

At the beginning of 56 lightning struck the statue of Jupiter Latiaris on the Alban Mount and the Sibylline books were consulted. According to Dio they found the verse: 'If the king of Egypt

---

[12] Cic. *Q Fr*. 1.2.15.
[13] App. *B Civ*. 2.14. Caesar designates him as consul.
[14] Cic. Q *Fr*. 1.2.15.
[15] Cic. Q *Fr*. 2.1.2. Clodius, after his activities of violence, was standing for the aedileship hoping he would avoid prosecution for *vis*. Dio (39.7.3-4), who describes these events, is out of chronological sequence as he places it before the recall of Cicero. The proposal was for the trials for *vis* to be held before the election of aediles in order that Clodius would not escape prosecution by virtue of his magistracy. The problem was that the election of the aediles preceded that of the quaestors and it was the quaestors (39.7.4) who drew the lots for the jury. At the end of the year in December it is to be assumed the current quaestors had already vacated their positions so that there were no quaestors available to draw the lots. The specific proposal was for the *praetor urbanus* to draw the lots for the jury and that the elections then be held after the allotment of jurors. See also Tyrrell and Purser 2. 20.
[16] After the murder of Ptolemy Alexander 11 in Egypt, the Romans allowed Auletes to ascend the throne. But the basis of the ascent was one of constant bribery by the Romans. In 59 BC, after paying a considerable sum to the then consul Julius Caesar, Auletes was declared *socius et amicus populi Romani*. However, when Auletes failed to protect his brother, the King of Cyprus, from confiscation of his wealth and occupation of the island by the Romans, he lost the already tenuous support of the Alexandrian people and had to withdraw from Egypt.

comes requesting any aid, refuse him not friendship, nor yet succour him with any great force; else you shall have both toils and dangers'.[17] At this point, Dio records Cato acted unlawfully. Cato advised the senate to rescind all their actions concerning Auletes and further announced to the populace the content of the verses before the senate had voted upon it. Cato feared the content would be suppressed and so had the priests brought before the populace and compelled them to utter the oracle; a direct violation of the constitution.[18]

On January 13 Cicero writes to Lentulus discussing the senate meeting of the day before.[19] Three proposals had been put forward concerning who should restore Auletes without an army; three commissioners with *imperium*, thus allowing inclusion of Pompey, three commissioners without *imperium,* thus excluding Pompey, and thirdly Lentulus as previously agreed and urged by Cicero. At this point Cato, along with another tribune, Cannius, declared that no further legislation could be brought forward before the elections for the aediles and quaestors such that the matter was postponed until February.[20] Nevertheless, Cicero believed he was making headway for Lentulus when on February 5 he wrote to him: *subito exorta est nefaria Catonis promulgatio quae nostra studia impediret et animos a minore cura ad summum timorem traduceret*. [21] Cato had proposed to deprive Lentulus of his province.[22] But it can be noted that this proposal had not been carried by the end of March when the consul Marcellinus, on the basis of adverse heavens, cancelled all further committal days. By July the issue had lost so much interest in the senate that Cicero now advised Lentulus to act as he saw fit.

In a letter of March (specific date unknown) Cicero had written to Lentulus as follows: *Quae gerantur accipies ex Pollione, qui omnibus negotiis non interfuit solum sed praefuit.*[23] The reference to a Pollio is usually assumed to be to Asinius Pollio.[24] Pollio would have been nineteen to twenty years old at the time and perhaps seeking to form a relationship with Cicero, the leading orator of the day. Whilst Syme urges caution in making the connection with Asinius, identifying at least two other references to a Pollio in Cicero's correspondence, neither of whom are necessarily Asinius, he can offer no other suitable candidate.[25]

---

[17] Dio 39.15.2. Loeb trans.
[18] According to Dio (39.15.3) it was unlawful to announce to the populace any of the Sibylline verses unless the senate had voted to do so.
[19] Cic. *Fam*. 1.1.3 (12).
[20] Cic. *Fam* 1.4.1 (14).
[21] Cic. *Fam*. 1.5a.2 (15).
[22] Cic. *Q Fr*. 2.3.1.
[23] Cic. *Fam*. 1.6.1 (17).
[24] André (1949) 11; Tyrrell and Purser 2. 47; McDermott (1979) 57-58.
[25] Syme (1961) 23-30 = *RP* 2. 518 –529. He suggests P. Vedius Pollio, notorious for feeding his slaves to the *muraenae* in his fishponds, may be the same individual as P. Vedius, a man detested by Cicero, who had a residence in Laodicea. However, the tone of Cicero's letter reflects Pollio as an individual with whom Cicero is favourably impressed and hardly the detested P. Vedius. Syme also identifies M.

The connection with Asinius Pollio is further strengthened by the knowledge that it was at this time that he left Rome for a trip to Greece, presumably for study. The poet C. Helvius Cinna wrote a *propempticon* for Pollio on his departure.[26] It is usually assumed that this is the same journey on which Pollio went to Cilicia. The weakness in this premise is that in 56 BC Cinna is thought to have been in Bithynia with Catullus on the staff of C. Memmius, and so not present in Rome to write the send-off poem for Pollio.[27] This evidence rests on Catullus' description of using Cinna's slaves as his own litter-bearers when in Bithynia and having brought them back to Rome.[28] Wiseman posits this is no indication Cinna was with Catullus in Bithynia, only that Catullus used the slaves of Cinna 'who had got them for himself', not specifying when they had been obtained. Wiseman considers it quite likely Cinna obtained the slaves in 66-65 BC. The Suda suggests Cinna was in Bithynia with Pompey's army in 66-65BC.[29] Further, Cinna himself states he had been in Bithynia in the poem he wrote to accompany a copy of Aratus he was giving as a gift.[30] Alternatively, it could be argued that as Pollio was friendly with Catullus and Cinna he may well have left for Cilicia, travelled to Bithynia to meet his friends, at which point Cinna wrote his *propempticon* when Pollio set off for Greece whilst they returned to Rome in the spring. It is noteworthy Pollio chose to leave Rome at this time when the Auletes question was still so active. The incentive may have been to meet his friends in Bithynia before they departed and came back to Rome. Or Cinna may have returned to Rome in the spring of 56 before Pollio had left, considering that Cicero's letter does not specify that Pollio had actually left Rome in March. Nor should we assume Cinna needed to be in Rome to write the valedictory poem: he could have penned his verses for his friend whilst in Bithynia, or even after Pollio had left on his journey. What we do know is that Pollio had returned to Rome by the summer of 54 BC. Wiseman considers, but without evidence, that Pollio may even have come back in the autumn of 56, as the Egyptian command remained unresolved and so he probably wished to continue his support.[31]

If Pollio had left Rome at the end of February or March of 56 he missed the conference of Luca, held in the April, an event which resulted in Cato's subsequent conversion to the cause of the triumvirs.

Barbatius Pollio as another candidate for the reference to a Pollio mentioned in *Philippic* 13.3. He can offer no certain identity for the Pollio being referred to here in Cicero's letter other than to question the connection with Cinna's *propempticon* on the grounds Cinna was probably not in Rome at the time.

[26] Charisius *Gramm*.124.5 K.

[27] Syme (1961) 30 = *RP* 2. 519; Fordyce (1961) 123. See also Hollis (2007) 21ff. for a more detailed analysis of when and where Cinna may have written the poem.

[28] Catull.10.

[29] Suda 664

[30] See Wiseman (1974) 47-48 who quotes Isidorus *Orig*. 6.12.1.

[31] Wiseman (1969) 39. The Egyptian command was not resolved until Gabinius invaded Egypt in 55 BC.

The prosecution of Cato

The plan of the triumvirs was for Pompey and Crassus to be the elected consuls for 55.[32] The current consuls, Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus and L. Marcius Philippus, were hostile to this arrangement. Toward the end of 56 Cato used his tribunician power to delay the meeting of the *comitia*. He was seeking to hold up the elections for 55 until Pompey and Crassus could be assured of gaining the positions. The actions of Marcellinus and L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, also hostile to Caesar, could have been sufficient to block their re-election in the normal voting procedure. Crassus arranged that Cato delay the elections in order that an *interrex* be appointed and that they then seek office in the following year once the current consuls had departed.[33] Dio describes in detail the turmoil in the senate caused by these doings until eventually the number of senators required by law to pass the vote failed to attend and the year ended with no business passed.[34] After this there was no further opposition to the election of Pompey and Crassus under an *interrex* at the beginning of 55.

In June of 54 BC, according to Cicero, charges were brought against Cato, first under the *lex Iunia et Licinia* followed by a second charge under the *lex Fufia*.[35] Both Tacitus and Seneca name Pollio as the accuser.[36]

The *lex Iunia et Licinia* was essentially concerned with the promulgation of legislative proposals. It required that a copy of every law promulgated be deposited in the *aerarium*.[37] For the prosecution of Cato under this law there must have been evidence of illegality in his promulgation of laws. It is known from a letter of Cicero to his brother on February 12 56 that Cato promulgated laws concerning Lentulus Spinther and Milo: *Cato legem promulgavit de imperio Lentuli abrogando* and *Catonis rogationibus de Milone et Lentulo.*[38] It is possible the violation of the law occurred at this time. Further, his action in forcing the reading of the Sibylline oracle to the people before this had been decreed by the senate may also have been an issue for prosecution.

---

[32] Suet. *Iul*. 24; App. *B Civ*. 2.17; Plut. *Crass*. 14.
[33] Livy *Per*. 105; Plut. *Pomp*. 51; *Crass*.15.
[34] Dio 39.27-31.
[35] Cic. *Att*. 4.16.5 (89).
[36] Tac. *Dial*. 34.7; Sen. *Controv*. 7.4.7.
[37] Greenidge (1901) 256; Tyrrell and Purser 2.154; Sumner (1963) 339; Broughton *MRR* 2.209.
[38] Cic. *Q Fr*. 2.3.1,4; 2.4.4-.5; *Sic legibus perniciosissimis obsistitur, maxime Catonis*… The consul, L. Marcellinus, was using every manoeuvre, such as moving the celebration of the *feriae latinae*, to bring about a delay in the elections in order to prevent Cato bringing in his bills. Cato is described at this time as having a bodyguard of beast fighters and clearly belongs to the rough gangs dominating Rome. Also *Fam*. 1.5a.2 (15); 5b.1 (16).

The second trial was under the *lex Fufia*. It would appear the *lex Fufia* allowed prosecution for *obnuntiatio,* referring to Cato's obstruction of the elections at the end of 56 BC.[39] Cicero's comment appears to confirm this point when he states: *Quibus si non valuerit, putant fore aliquem, qui comitia in adventum Caesaris detrudat, Catone praesertim absoluto.* (*Att*. 4.16.7).

Cato's prosecution occurred at the end of June and the beginning of July 54. The trial was a heated affair with Cato backed by the supporters of Pompey and Crassus. Seneca comments that Pollio was harassed by the clients of Cato to such an extent that Licinius Calvus threatened to prosecute Cato himself if it did not cease:

> *Idem* (Calvus*) postea, cum videret a clientibus Catonis, rei sui, Pollionem Asinium circumventum in foro caedi, inponi se supra cippum iussit – erat enim parvolus statura, propter quod etiam Catullus in hendecasyllabis vocat illum "salaputium disertum" - et iuravit, si quam iniuriam Cato Pollioni Asinio accusatori suo fecisset, se in eum iuraturum calumniam; nec umquam postea Pollio a Catone advocatisque eius aut re aut verbo violatus est*. (*Contr* 7.4.7).

It has been assumed from this statement that Calvus was acting for the defence of Cato, but that his friendship with Pollio remained on good terms. [40]

Asconius confirms that Aemilius Scaurus acted for the defence in the second trial of Cato.[41] It is therefore assumed Calvus acted for the defence in the first. The uncertain question is whether Pollio acted as the accuser for both trials.[42] A statement by Cicero needs to be considered. He predicts Cato will be acquitted in the second trial as much to the relief of his accusers as to his defendants. [43] This statement only makes sense if the prosecution was acting in collusion with the defence, and this is unlikely to apply to Pollio. The suggestion is one of bribery of the

---

[39] The *lex Fufia* is usually associated with the *lex Aelia* with debate as to whether they were two separate laws or one; the former is now usually considered to be the case, although, they are rarely referred to independently. The two laws concerned *obnuntiatio* with respect to *auspicia* and *spectiones* of a kind which prevented proceedings in the assemblies. A further clause also stated that no legislative assemblies could be held between the proclamation and the holding of electoral *comitia*. In 58 BC one of the laws Clodius carried modified the *leges Aelia et Fufia* but in what respect is unclear. The trial of Cato has been significant in attempting to determine the content of the *lex Fufia*, based on the belief the charges against Cato under the *lex Fufia* related to his activities to attempt to block the elections in 56 BC. For full discussion see Greenidge (1901); McDonald (1929); Balsdon (1957); Sumner (1963); Astin (1964). Gruen *LGRP* 315 n. 21 also considers Cato had employed *obnuntiatio* illegally in blocking the elections.

[40] Ambiguity in the interpretation of *rei sui* and *accusatori suo* has led Münzer *RE* 13.1.432; Marshall (1985) 121 and Alexander (1990) 137-8 to state that Calvus was the prosecutor for the case, either with Pollio or for one of the cases. Shackleton Bailey (1965) 2. 201-202, 208 argues Drusus was also one of Cato's prosecutors as well as Calvus, refuted by Linderski (1995) 640. Gruen (1966) 223-224; *LGRP* 314-315, and Linderski (1971) 296 argue convincingly the correct interpretation of *reus suus* can only make sense if Calvus is the defender of Cato and as such may turn to prosecute him himself if the harassment does not cease. This is now the more accepted interpretation.

[41] Asconius, *in Scaur*. 18 (Clark). M. Aemilius Scaurus, after returning to Rome on June 29, defended Cato who was acquitted on July 4. See also chapter 12.

[42] See Linderski (1971), (1995) 640 for a summary of this debate.

[43] Cic. *Att*. 4.16.6 (89): *Nunc ad ea, quae quaeris de C. Catone. Lege Iunia et Licinia scis absolutum; Fufia ego tibi nuntio absolutum iri neque patronis suis tam libentibus quam accusatoribus*.

prosecution. Next, we return to the statement of Seneca in which he notes Pollio needed to be rescued from Cato's clients by Calvus, who threatened to prosecute Cato himself.[44] This harassment is unlikely to have occurred if the prosecutor was favourable to Cato, and so is more likely to be referring to the first trial. We could therefore conclude that Pollio prosecuted Cato in the first trial and the defence was undertaken by Calvus. A second prosecution followed, not taken up by Pollio, who no doubt could see the futility of the exercise, noting the support Cato now had rallied for himself, in which Scaurus was the defendant. To the satisfaction of all involved Cato was again acquitted.

There is little doubt Cato was guilty of both charges. Pollio's failure to gain a conviction, however, is far more a reflection of the power of the support Cato was able to rally than a weakness in the prosecution. As noted, Tacitus considered his speech one to be admired. Calvus' oration in the trial also has been acclaimed.[45]

Pollio's actions against Cato probably served many purposes. At twenty-one years of age it was an opportunity to showcase his skills and competence.[46] The timing was right. In 55 and 54 offensives against the actions of the triumvirs were launched in earnest in the courts. The turbulence of 56, with delayed and disrupted elections, had provided ongoing material for prosecutions. Many had held office in 56 or 55 as a reward for their service but by 54 they became eligible for prosecution.[47] Pollio may well have held a personal dislike of Cato from his actions in 56 against Lentulus Spinther and from the descriptions in Cicero he was an aggressive, unprincipled individual.[48] Further, Pollio may have relished the opportunity to match his wits against his friend Calvus who was also attempting to establish himself as an orator equal to Cicero.[49] A political motivation is more difficult to determine. Clearly the prosecution could be perceived as a stance against Pompey and Caesar. This has led some to suggest we see here an indication of Pollio's support for the republic.[50] André considers Pollio may have maintained a personal animosity towards Pompey from Pollio's family history in the Social War, although he considers it probably not sufficient motivation in itself. Rather, he suggests it is perhaps more the legality of the constitution that Pollio wished to maintain, seeing

---

[44] André (1949) 12 incorrectly states Scaurus rescued Pollio from Cato's gang.
[45] Tac. *Dial*. 34.7.
[46] Quint. *Inst*. 12. 6.1-3.
[47] It is now considered very likely that Cato was rewarded for his activities in 56 with a praetorship in 55 BC so that he was not eligible for prosecution until 54. See Taylor (1964) who examined the magistracies of 55 BC, Linderski (1971) 287-288 who proposed that Cato was a praetor in 55 BC a suggestion accepted by Broughton *MRR* 3. 169-170 and Shackleton Bailey (1976, second edn.1991) 93.
[48] Frank (1919) 410 comments that 'Cato was hateful to the whole group' *i.e*. Catullus and his friends.
[49] Sen. *Controv*. 7.6. Calvus first prosecuted Vatinius in 58 BC when he was probably twenty-four years of age, if born in 82 BC, further providing Pollio with a role model and challenge.
[50] Pollio's support for Lentulus in 56 is also often seen as an anti-triumviral stance and support for the republic, a view taken by those who wish to consider Pollio had strong republican ideals. It is more likely Pollio was seeking an apprenticeship with Cicero rather than seeking to take action against Pompey.

in Cato a flagrant abuse of the system.[51] Zecchini considers that by 54 the cracks in the triumvirate were becoming evident with the hand of Caesar behind many of the attacks on Pompey's men. Pollio could therefore be seen as acting as an agent of Caesar, noting the support the *poetae novi* had now started to show for Caesar after Luca.[52] However, as Pollio did not go on to prosecute the second case against Cato it seems more likely that he was only interested in attacking Cato for behaviour in which he, Pollio, had been personally involved, as in the case of Lentulus. It would appear he considered action in the second trial to be futile, such were the forces against him, and that he was not prepared to make an attack on Cato for its political statement alone.[53] Regardless of motivation, Pollio made an impression with his oratorical skills.

After the prosecution of Cato we hear nothing more of Pollio until 49 BC when he is present with Caesar at the crossing of the Rubicon.[54] In this time Catullus and Calvus both die and Memmius is exiled.[55] The politically active young men of the day are Caelius, Curio, Dolabella and Antony, all of whom will side with Caesar at the end of 50 BC. Debate centres on whether Pollio left Rome in this period to serve with Caesar in Gaul, so forming the connection that would lead him to be with Caesar at the Rubicon. Bossiér considers Pollio joined Caesar in Gaul in the period 53-50 BC, basing his opinion on the traditional custom of the time to obtain military experience, an opinion also carried by Zecchini.[56]

However, the evidence is scant. It is based on two comments. In the first Strabo questions the accuracy of Pollio's *Historiae* concerning the length of the Rhine. Strabo considers Pollio is incorrect but implies that Pollio had actually been to Gaul and seen the river.[57] But it is equally possible that Pollio commented on the Rhine without ever having visited the region. In fact it is

---

[51] André (1949) 12. However, Lentulus himself had already manipulated the system the year before in order for his son to be elected as augur. He had transferred his son to the *gens* of Manlius Torquatus to prevent him being excluded on the basis that the *gens Cornelia*, the son's true *gens*, was already represented. See Dio 39.17. Kornemann (1896) 593-594 also argues it was Pollio's strong commitment to the ideals of the republic that led him to prosecute Cato.

[52] Zecchini (1982) 1269-1271.

[53] David (1997) 123-4 states there is little to suggest an anti-triumviral motivation in the prosecution. The fact Calvus maintained his friendship with Pollio supports the idea that there was little ideological fever driving the case. He further notes that Calvus' judicial activity in 54 is so politically inconsistent that any hypotheses about his political motivations are also suspect. From what is known of Pollio's personality he may also have felt humiliated by the defeat in the case and pursued no further action.

[54] Plut. *Caes*. 32. Appian (*B Civ*. 2.35) also mentions the Rubicon but does not name Pollio.

[55] Catullus is thought to have died in 54 BC and Calvus was definitely dead by 47 BC, but is usually assumed to have also died in 54. Memmius was exiled in 54 BC as a result of his self-confessed activities in the process of trying to obtain the consulship for that year.

[56] Zecchini (1982) 1267.

[57] Strabo 4.3.3 'Asinius says that the length of the river is six thousand stadia, but it is not. … He further says it has only two mouths, after first finding fault with those who say it has more than that.' See Fischer (1997) for discussion on the accuracy of Pollio. He is probably more accurate than Strabo has allowed. Vergil in the *Aeneid* (8.727), where he mentions the twin horned Rhine, was probably using Pollio's data. See further Chapter 13.

thought, according to Fischer, that Pollio may have obtained this information from such Roman informants as Agrippa.[58] The other is the statement by Pollio in his letter of 43 BC to Cicero that he had joined the camp of Caesar, who treated him with great kindness even though he had only recently come to know him – *Caesarem vero, quod me in tanta fortuna modo cognitum vetustissimorum familiarium loco habuit.*[59] Various interpretations have been made on the length of time referred to as '*modo*'. There appears to be no reason to extend the interpretation of *modo* beyond its most accepted – in close proximity of time, usually months, rather than years. Further, Pollio has an established friendship with Curio when he goes with him to Sicily in 49 BC. This connection can only have occurred in or before 50 BC when they were both in Rome. There is also an obscure reference to a Pollio in a letter of Cicero written in February or early March 50 BC.[60] Cicero writes from Laodicea to Papirius Paetus in Rome for his assistance in a feud between two brothers, one of whom is Cicero's friend, over their property in Herculaneum. He comments that Pollio is an enemy of his friend and by inference probably involved in the transaction. Tyrrell and Purser accept this to be Asinius Pollio, Syme is uncertain.[61] If it is our Asinius it adds to the evidence that he was in Rome at the beginning of 50 BC.

Pollio and the circle of Catullus

The three certain references to Pollio in this decade link him first with Catullus, next with Cinna and finally with Calvus. Catullus is full of admiration for Pollio, Cinna writes him a *propempticon* and Calvus, as we have seen, although acting in the defence of Cato, is prepared to prosecute Cato himself if his supporters do not cease from harassing Pollio. Calvus is a known close friend of Catullus and also Cinna.[62] It would appear that from the first reference to Pollio in 60 BC through to at least 54 BC Pollio has maintained a continuing connection with Catullus and his friends.[63] The strength of this connection can perhaps be assessed by the *propempticon* written for Pollio who at the time was only twenty years of age.

---

[58] Fischer (1997).
[59] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.3 (368).
[60] Cic. *Fam*. 9.25.3 (114).
[61] Tyrrell and Purser 3.174; Syme (1961) 24 = *RP* 2. 520.
[62] For Calvus see Catullus 14, 50, 96 and 53. The poems leave little doubt of a close and intimate friendship. For Cinna see Catullus 10 and 95.
[63] In 43 BC Pollio in his letter to Cicero (*Fam*. 10.32.5 (415)) indicates his friendship with the poet Cornelius Gallus, also a Transpadane, and considered to have continued the tradition of Catullus. The connection continues when Pollio is again in Gaul with Gallus in 42-41 BC and shortly after becomes a patron for Vergil.

A *propempticon* is penned for a close friend as he sets off on a journey. It laments his departure, outlines the journey ahead and prays for his safety. It is considered an intimate personal poem.[64] Nor is this poem of Cinna of little effort. From Charisius it is known that Julius Hyginus wrote a commentary on Cinna's *propempticon* demonstrating its literary talent.[65] It was one of the longer poems written by Cinna and thought to be related to the *propempticon* of Parthenius.[66] This suggests that Cinna not only had a close, personal relationship with Pollio, but also considered him of sufficient status to warrant such a literary effort.

If we accept that there is little evidence Pollio pursued military experience between 53 and 50 BC it would appear he was well set on the path to become an orator and, like Cicero and Calvus, make his mark in the courts. He had strong connections with Cinna and Calvus, so it is also probable he moved in the circle of Catullus and his friends.[67]

Catullus is known to have surrounded himself with a group of Italian intellectuals living in Rome. Catullus was a Transpadane, as was also Cornelius Nepos, whom Catullus addresses as *unus Italorum*. In this Italian group associated with Catullus we also find Gaius Memmius, who had married Sulla's daughter and was the patron of Lucretius, Quintus Cornificius, the orator and poet[68], Furius Bibaculus,[69] the satirist born at Cremona and pupil of Valerius Cato,[70] another Cisalpine, also a poet, and also in the circle of Catullus.[71] It is most probable they formed a "school" of poets. Cicero makes reference to the *neoteric* poets, the *poetae novi* and the *cantores Euphorionis* as a comment on this school of poetry.[72]

---

[64] Known Latin *propemptica* include those by Propertius, Horace, Ovid and Statius. It is considered Cinna's *propempticon* for Pollio, from the existing fragments, may have taken the form of an early Latin development of not only farewelling the friend but also outlining the sights to be seen and visited, almost as a guide book. See Quinn (1963) ch.9. See also Horace's *propempticon* for Vergil (*Carm*. 1.3) with discussion by Hendrickson (1907); Elder (1952); Bardon (1952) 346-7; Nisbet and Hubbard (1970) 1. 40ff esp 41.

[65] Charisius quotes a commentary by Julius Hyginus, *in Cinnae Propempticon, (Cinna* fr. 4 Courtney (1993) 217 = fr. 5 FPL3 [220]. Elsewhere Charisius directly refers to Cinna's poem and calls it *Propempticon Pollionis (*fr1) which may have been the original title. See Courtney (1993) 214-217; Nauta (2002) 270 esp. n. 50; and Hollis (2007) 21ff. for a more recent overview.

[66] Neudling (1955) 79ff.

[67] McDermott (1979). The suggestion by McDermott that Pollio was hostile to Catullus and that there is no basis for a relationship only highlights the degree to which the evidence suggests there was a strong relationship in view of the lengths to which he must go to dispute, rather unconvincingly, this evidence.

[68] *Catull*. 38.1.

[69] Tacitus (*Ann*. 4.34.8) associates Bibaculus with Catullus as the authors of the lampoons on Caesar, also Quintilian *Inst*. 10.1.26. It is also most likely he is the Furius in Catullus 11, 16, 23 and 26.

[70] Born 90 BC in Cisalpine Gaul. Helvius Cinna and Furius Bibaculus both compliment him and he is thought to be the Cato referred to by Catullus in 56.

[71] See Havelock (1939), who seeks to answer, somewhat abstractly the question why the leaders of the *neoteric* school all came from Cisalpine Gaul (except for Calvus).

[72] Cic. *Att*. 7.2.1 (125); *Orat*. 161; *Tusc*. 3.45. See also Lyne (1978 reprinted 2007) for an overview of the *neoteric* poets.

Dettenhofer also identifies in this period a group of young men whom Cicero has labelled as *perditi iuvenes*.[73] She describes a generation of young men who rose up to challenge the tradition and used the current political instability to further their own ambitions. Dettenhofer names seven such individuals; Curio, Caelius, Mark Antony, C. Publius Dolabella, D. Brutus, M. Brutus and Cassius. She places all of them as being born between 87 and 80 BC, although it would be difficult by any calculation to include Dolabella in this time span, his birth most likely occurring around 65 BC. This was a period that led to relative domestic peace after the Social and Civil wars and before the rise of Pompey and Caesar. Dettenhofer considers they grew up with the expectations of a certain "traditionalism" with respect to politics and their career; there was no other choice than republicanism.[74] However, with the events of the fifties, the political climate was in a constant state of flux. Dettenhofer comments there arose a demand on the senatorial hierarchy to specialize in either domestic politics or in military commands.[75] Essentially she sees this group of young men as grabbing political opportunity as it arose, regardless of political morality, such was the fickle climate of the decade.

Huzar, in commenting upon the early career of Mark Antony, notes also the unstable political climate for this generation of young men. She states: 'But the last century of the republic suffered the breakdown of so many familiar beliefs and traditions that the boys of the day, adrift from the secure moorings of their fathers, were tempted to impatient wildness and pleasure seeking. Antony … early gravitated to " the gang of young incorrigibles'.[76]

Dettenhofer did not include Pollio in her group of dissolute youth. He fits all the criteria neatly: born in 76 BC, he prosecuted a renowned case in 54 BC, joined Caesar in 49 BC, was probably tribune of the plebs in 47 BC and praetor in 45 BC. The parallels with the career of Dolabella are remarkable; both could be seen as young men who rose to their position through the favour of Caesar.[77] But Dettenhofer does not include Pollio because there is no evidence he fitted the model of a young Roman aristocrat, heavily in debt and pursing the political or military ambitions set by his family.[78]

If we then place Pollio in the circle of Catullus, as supported by the source references, it is of interest to note the political activities of this group throughout the fifties.

---

[73] Dettenhofer (1992).
[74] Dettenhofer (1992) 5.
[75] Dettenhofer (1992) 34.
[76] Huzar (1978) 24. With respect to their pursuing a military career it can be noted that in 58 BC Antony accompanied Aulus Gabinius to Syria and Marcus Brutus accompanied Cato to Cyprus.
[77] Dolabella, born in 65 BC, prosecuted his first case in 52 BC, was with Caesar in 49, tribune of the plebs in 47, with Caesar in Spain in 45, and consul suffect in 44 BC.
[78] He was also an Italian.

The politics of this decade was dominated by violence and propaganda. Caesar and Pompey both had their own men as tribunes, leading to the gang warfare of Clodius and Milo. Published speeches and verses also acted to deride and boost the public images of the triumvirs. In 58 BC Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus and Memmius, the latter patron of the poets Lucretius and Catullus, attacked Caesar's consulship and the perceived irregularities. They published their thoughts in speeches, as did Caesar in reply, beginning a propaganda war.[79]

However, the most significant propaganda attacks upon the triumvirs arose from Calvus and Catullus. Their motives are generally considered more personal than political.[80] As noted by Quinn, Catullus' iambic verses against Caesar, Pompey and Mamurra, the former's *praefectus fabrum*, express no political ideas, no political attitudes other than a general disgust with politics.[81] The themes reflect immorality and perversion on the part of Caesar, Pompey or their associates, their extravagance to unworthy men, and criticism of Caesar's intellectual pursuits whilst directing military operations. However, the general political attitude of Catullus towards Caesar and his associates during the years 59-54 BC reflects closely that of Cicero and other young pamphleteers, the *barbatuli iuvenes.*[82] This group of young men, Neudling considers, included Catullus, Calvus, M. Caelius Rufus, the younger Curio, Dolabella, C. Memmius, Q. Metellus Nepos, P. Sestius and probably Furius Bibaculus; 'its political sympathies were anti-triumvirate but otherwise independent, its oratorical creed was Atticism, and among its members were the "new poets"'.[83] Catullus' attacks upon Caesar reached their height in 56-55 BC after his return from Bithynia and finding Caesar and Pompey firmly in power. Their impact was significant, Caesar feeling he had been marked with *perpetua stigmata* (Suet. *Iul.* 73). Caesar responded, and persuaded Catullus and his friends to be more lenient, at first without success, if we consider the content of poem 93, but by the beginning of 54 Caesar had succeeded and swung Catullus, Calvus, Cinna and Memmius over to his cause.[84]

---

[79] Suet. *Iul*. 73. See also Taylor (1949) 142ff. Bibulus in 59 BC had also published his edicts, and the elder Curio published orations virulent in their attack upon Caesar.
[80] For this viewpoint see Frank (1919); Spaeth (1936); Taylor (1949) 145 contra Tatum (1997).
[81] Quinn (1972) 267 ff. Catullus mentions Caesar directly in poems 11, 57, 29 of which 29 is often considered the most hard-hitting.
[82] Cic. *Att*. 2.7.3 (27).
[83] Neudling (1955) 90-91. It can also be noted that in 57 BC the historian L. Cornelius Sisenna published his history of the Social War, expressing a bias in favour of the Italians, which may have again brought bitter feelings to the surface and given popular support to the Italian intellectuals in their anti-triumviral stance. Further, Cato's strong antagonism to the Italians may also have been fuelling these sentiments.
[84] Ovid names Memmius as a composer of erotic verse. He was for some time bitterly hostile to Caesar in his writing. After the conference of Luca he shifted his viewpoint, and in 54 BC Caesar assisted him in his candidacy for the consulship even though this failed as a result of his own behaviour (Suet. *Iul*. 73). Gaius Helvius Cinna is assumed to be the Cinna who was murdered in 44 BC as a friend of Caesar, and so considered a strong Caesarian. Marcus Furius Bibaculus, who wrote bitter attacks on Caesar, later wrote an epic on the Gallic wars, presumably favourable to Caesar, suggesting he too had changed his viewpoint at some time after the conference of Luca. See Frank (1919; 1928), Spaeth (1936-37); Quinn

Pollio's known later literary talents, a composer of tragedies equal to Sophocles if we believe Vergil, *en erit, ut liceat totum mihi ferre per orbem sola Sophocleo tua carmina digna coturno?,* may have attracted him early in life to this literary Italian circle.[85] Frank states Pollio was one of the important links between the Catullan and the Horatian groups, noting that the influence of Catullus and Calvus was very potent in his own work.[86] Nor should we argue that Pollio associated with Catullus because pursuing a political career as a *novus homo* would have been difficult. His brother was already in politics and by the mid fifties a praetor. Clearly the family had wealth and influence in Rome. Pollio would have easily mixed with the wealthy Valerii Catulli, noting that Caesar frequently stayed with Catullus' father in his villa, where the father was one of the *principes viri* of Verona. Wiseman argues convincingly against the belief that Catullus lacked for money, and places him at the upper end of the Roman social scale.[87]

Whilst there is no evidence that Pollio himself was writing verse in this period, although this is not at all unlikely, his promising ability may well have drawn Caesar's attention. Caesar, as we know, actively sought the support of talented young men, and especially those who might impact on the propaganda of the time. If by 54 BC Catullus and his friends had moved to give support to Caesar Pollio may also have moved in this period to this political stance.[88]

Pollio and Cicero

A further question pertinent to this decade is the relationship between Pollio and Cicero. After 49 BC, except for one year as a possible tribune of the plebs in 47, Pollio was almost continually absent from Rome and he was in Spain at the time of Caesar's death. This provides for little personal connection with Cicero. Yet it is well known Pollio was critical of Cicero and that at some stage hostility developed in their relationship.[89] As we have explored, we have only two references to Pollio by Cicero in this period of the fifties: one relating to his role in the

---

(1972); Fredricksmeyer (1973); and against McDermott (1979). For a more recent overview of the controversy on the extent of the political criticism in Catullus' poems see Tatum (1997) who summarizes the preceding views of Mommsen (political stance of the optimate), of Wilamowitz (no clear political stance), of Miller (no political content) and of Syndikus (clear political criticism) in particular.

[85] Verg. *Ecl*. 8. 9-10. See Chapters 7 and 10 for discussion of this statement.

[86] Frank (1928) 34. The argument that Pollio was critical of Catullus is based on a single reference to the Charisius fragment, *Asinius In Valerium,* which was most probably a grammatical critique of Catullus in the reign of Augustus, in an attempt to maintain the poet's status and popularity. Further, the identification of Valerius with Catullus is speculative, based on a later reference to Catullus in the same paragraph.

[87] Wiseman (1987) 274, and also (1971) 50-53, where he comments on the Roman *nobiles* and municipal men who surround Catullus.

[88] Frank (1919) 411 comments: 'Caesar … presently, he made a place for Asinius Pollio, another, though younger, friend of Catullus, Cinna, and Cicero'.

[89] In 43 BC Pollio still refers to Cicero as a close friend (Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.6 (368) *Quod familiarem meum tuorum numero habes, opinione tua mihi gratius est. invideo illi tamen quod ambulat et iocatur tecum. quaeres quanti aestimem; si umquam licuerit vivere in otio, experieris. nullum enim vestigium abs te discessurus sum.*

cause of Lentulus Spinther and the other, a more vague reference, to a 'Pollio' who is acting in a hostile manner to M. Fadius Gallus, a close friend of Cicero.[90] The case of Lentulus indicates Pollio was known to Cicero, was probably working as his pupil, as was the custom for a young man in order to develop his oratorical skills, and that he had impressed with his diligence.

In Pollio's prosecution of Cato it is of interest that Cicero does not name Pollio as the prosecutor when in the same paragraph he lists the prosecutors of all the other cases occurring. But neither does he mention Calvus as acting for the defence.[91]

With respect to Cicero's attitude towards the so-called *neoteric* school of poets, it has been claimed that this was antagonistic, based on Cicero's criticism of their Attic style. But the overriding evidence is for a harmonious relationship, as Cicero encouraged many young men in their development. Further, the political sympathies of these young men had much in common with his own.[92]

Pollio draws no specific comment from Cicero in this decade and we can only establish that they knew each other. However, Pollio was still young and yet to reveal his political potential. What we may say is that prior to 49 BC, and up until the age of twenty-six, Pollio's activities, other than the prosecution of Cato, were not of a consequence to attract comment from Cicero, nor was his behaviour of such interest as to warrant a specific verse by Catullus. Nevertheless, Pollio was well on his way to becoming an intellectual in Rome when civil war would once again impact on his life.

---

[90] See earlier section of this Chapter.

[91] Cic. *Att*. 4.16.5 (89). It could be that this information was well known to Atticus, to whom he was writing, and so unnecessary to the letter.

[92] Frank (1919) 415 concludes: 'it would seem that the band of *iuvenes* who in political matters frequently gathered about Curio between 61 and 55, the "poetae novi" best represented by Calvus and Catullus and the Atticists who accepted the leadership of Calvus, were to a greater extent than is generally assumed one and the same circle, that this group had very close personal relations with Cicero from the year 59 until its more important members died, and that the diversity of literary opinions between Cicero and the group came to a conscious expression only through the exigencies of the civil war.'

3 49–44 BC: Campaigning With Julius Caesar

On December 1 50 BC, L. Scribonius Curio as tribune and Antony as tribune elect proposed to the senate that both Caesar and Pompey give up their armies. It was a popular motion, but the anti-Caesarians led by Cato vetoed the proposal. The consul designate C. Claudius Marcellus**,** fearing Caesar was marching on Cisalpine Gaul and Italy, ordered Pompey to raise troops. Curio vetoed the motion but Pompey chose to accept the command, ignoring the tribunician veto.

On December 10 Antony entered office as one of the new board of tribunes and Curio left office. He went directly to Caesar and urged him to march on Rome.[1] Subsequently Curio returned to Rome as Caesar's emissary, and on January 1 he attempted to read a dispatch from Caesar to the senate. He was prevented from doing so. Antony, with fellow tribune Q. Cassius Longinus, read the letter which outlined Caesar's services to the state and his current demands. Pompey, Cato and the consul L. Cornelius Lentulus opposed the demands and a motion was made for a *senatus consultum ultimum* which, after bitter debate, was proclaimed on January 7. A state of war was declared and Pompey given authority to defend the state against the public enemy Caesar. Further, Lentulus insulted and physically threatened Antony and Cassius when they attempted to impose their tribuncian veto and they were forced to flee Rome disguised as slaves. The report of these actions of the senate reached Caesar by January 10 and on January 11 or 12[2] Caesar with one legion, his remaining troops having been summoned to follow, crossed the Rubicon.[3]

Antony and Curio had both fled to Caesar's camp as did M. Caelius Rufus and P. Cornelius Dolabella. Cicero was ambivalent and reluctantly supported Pompey.[4]

The first mention of Pollio in this series of events is his inclusion in a group of Caesar's intimate friends at the time of his crossing the Rubicon. This crossing of the Rubicon is described by Plutarch in his *vitae* of *Caesar* and *Pompey*, however it is only in *Caesar* (32.4*)* that he mentions Pollio:

---

[1] App. *B Civ*. 2.31.
[2] According to the pre-Julian Roman calendar Caesar crossed the Rubicon on January 11. In our Gregorian calendar this date is November 23. As Huzar (1978) 278 notes this allowed a campaigning season before the setting up of winter camp. It is possible Pompey thought Caesar would not mobilize, as November was usually wet.
[3] Gruen *LGRP* 488 considers war must have seemed inevitable to Caesar by the middle of December 50.
[4] According to Cicero (*Att*. 7.3.5 (126) Caesar commanded nearly all the young people, *iuventus*, of Rome

> When he (Caesar) came to the river which separates Cisalpine Gaul from the rest of Italy (it is called the Rubicon), and began to reflect, now that he drew nearer to the fearful step and was agitated by the magnitude of his ventures, he checked his speed. Then, halting in his course, he communed with himself a long time in silence as his resolution wavered back and forth, and his purpose then suffered change after change. For a long time, too, he discussed his perplexities with his friends who were present, among whom was Asinius Pollio, estimating the great evils for all mankind which would follow their passage of the river, and the wide fame of it which they would leave to posterity. But finally, with a sort of passion, as if abandoning calculation and casting himself upon the future, and uttering the phrase with which men usually prelude their plunge into desperate and daring fortunes, "Let the die be cast," he hastened to cross the river; and going at full speed now for the rest of the time, before daybreak he dashed into Ariminum and took possession of it. [5]

In the almost identical passage in *Pompey* (60.2) no mention is made of Pollio.[6] Appian and Suetonius also report the crossing of the Rubicon and a brief reference is found in Velleius.[7] Caesar in his own commentary, plus Cicero, Livy and Dio make no reference to the Rubicon at all.[8] Plutarch, Appian and Suetonius all include in their description of the crossing Caesar's famed utterance "Let the die be cast", Plutarch stating it was called out in Greek.[9]

This single reference to Pollio places him as closely connected to Caesar and amongst his entourage in January 49. It is generally assumed that the source of this information is Pollio himself; Plutarch quoting directly from Pollio's history. Pollio probably began writing his *Historiae* some time after 35 BC.[10] It would appear that he was not only keen to place himself in Caesar's camp, with close connections, but also to highlight Caesar's deliberation and deep contemplation of his action in precipitating civil war. The locating of himself within Caesar's inner circle affirms the sentiments in his letter to Cicero in 43 BC.[11] As will be discussed in the analysis of these letters, he explains his association with Caesar on the basis of the friendship that was extended to him and his own admiration for the man.[12] This sudden and close connection with Caesar is comparable with what is known of Dolabella's relationship with

---

[5] Plut. *Caes*. 32.4. Caesar gave instructions to a few of his friends to follow him to Arminium by different routes during the night. Pollio was in a small group that travelled directly with Caesar. It is to be noted that Pollio is the only individual named in the circle of friends, reinforcing the point he was probably the source for the information.

[6] The life of Pompey was written after *Caesar* as at *Caes*. 35.2 reference is made to the work of Pompey in the future tense.

[7] App. *B Civ*. 2.35; Suet. *Iul*. 31-32; Vell. Pat. 2.49.4. See Tucker (1988) for the description of the crossing of the Rubicon as found in Lucan (1.185-203) and its comparison with the other historical sources. A more recent analysis of all source references concerning Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon can be found in Rondholz (2009) which is referred to in the discussion of Pollio's *Histories* in Chapter 13.

[8] Caes. *B Civ*. 1.8; Livy *Per*. 109; Dio 41.4.1.

[9] Plut. *Pomp*. 60.2; *Caes*. 32.4; App. *B Civ*. 2.35. Suetonius (*Iul*. 31-32) also includes the description of an apparition that appeared to Caesar. The quote, which is from Menander, who was thought to be a favourite of Caesar, can be found in Athenaeus (13.559E). For discussion see Gomme and Sandbach (1973) 690-691. Also Hohl (1952) for Pollio as the origin for the famous quotation. See also discussion in Chapter 13

[10] See Chapter 13 for full discussion on the dating of Pollio's history.

[11] Cic. *Fam*. 10. 31.2 (368).

[12] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.2 (368). See Chapter 4 for further discussion of this letter.

Caesar. There is no extant evidence to connect Dolabella with Caesar prior to 49 BC. But with the outbreak of civil war Dolabella joins Caesar's camp, probably hoping to relieve his considerable debts, and a month later Caesar writes to Cicero expressing his affection for and positive impression of Dolabella.[13] Admittedly Caesar may have been hoping to win over Cicero with these positive comments about his son-in-law, but the close relationship with Dolabella persisted even when his behaviour made this support inexplicable. Pollio, who presumably was showing far more intellectual talent than Dolabella, could easily have attracted this same attention and friendship, particularly if his scholarly attributes had come to Caesar's notice from his association with Catullus and his circle.[14]

The chronology of events usually places Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon before his meeting with Antony and Curio which occurred at Ariminum.[15] On this basis it would appear Pollio had firmly established himself in Caesar's camp before the full events of January 49 unfolded, and that he did not flee to Caesar's camp from Rome, as so many did, with the declaration of war. Pollio had therefore chosen his allegiance to Caesar, his first choice in times of uncertain outcome, before the sequence of events forced such a decision. But other than the comment in which he is described as a *friend* of Caesar we have no other information as to his status.[16]

Sicily

The next mention of Pollio occurs in connection with Curio's command to take Sicily. After Pompey left Italy for Epirus in March 49 Caesar decided not to follow and made preparations to go to Spain. Before leaving he was keen to secure control of the grain supply for Italy and so he 'sent Curio as propraetor into Sicily with two legions, and bid him on recovering Sicily to transport his army forthwith to Africa.' (Caes. *B Civ.* 1.30). Marcus Cato was in control of Sicily at the time. According to Caesar, Cato was repairing old warships, raising levies of Roman soldiers and exacting a cavalry and infantry.[17] Cato, on hearing of the approach of Curio and not being fully prepared for war, left the island.[18] However, Appian (*B Civ.* 2.40) states Caesar sent Pollio to Sicily who confronted Cato, the latter again voluntarily leaving the island:

---

[13] Cic. *Att*. 9.16.3 (185).
[14] It should also be noted Pollio had a brother in the senate, and as Caesar continued to offer opportunity for the Italians in the senate, Pollio would have been keen to pursue this prospect. A further factor in his allegiance to Caesar was probably his background of having come from the Marrucini, noting that this province had given support to Marius in the Social War which subsequently gave support for Caesar. As Caesar advanced down the coast into Italy the Italians readily gave their assistance.
[15] Caes. *B Civ*. 1.8. Caesar in the *Commentaries* gives his address to the soldiers at Ravenna whereas in all other sources it is at Ariminum. See Raditsa (1973) 441ff for a summary of explanations for this difference.
[16] Plut. *Caes*. 32.5.
[17] Caes. *B Civ*. 1.30.
[18] Caes. *B Civ*. 1.30.

> He (Caesar) sent Asinius Pollio to Sicily, which was then under the command of Cato. When Cato asked him whether he had brought the order of the Senate, or that of the people, to take possession of a government that had been assigned to another, Pollio replied, "The master of Italy has sent me on this business".'

Plutarch (*Cat. Min*. 53) also implies Pollio held such a command, claiming Pollio arrived at Messina with a force from Caesar. Again, after confrontation, Cato fled, but Plutarch adds that Cato could have easily defeated Pollio but was aware another larger force, presumably Curio's, was on its way to the island. This has raised the issue of whether Pollio held a specific command.

Cicero's correspondence is helpful. In late March Cicero writes to Atticus that he has heard from reliable sources that Pompey embarked from Brundisium on the Ides of March (*Att.* 9.13.1, 14.3). We also know that Curio, on his journey to Sicily, stopped to visit Cicero at Cumae on April 14 (*Att*. 10.4.8; 5.1), but by April 20 he was in the Straits of Messina (*Att*. 10.7.1). Cato left Syracuse on April 23 (*Att* 10.16.3) with the news that Curio's force would soon arrive. This confirms Cato left Sicily before the arrival of Curio.

Cicero's correspondence also verifies Caesar's statement that Cato was in the process of building up forces. Further, the situation was urgent. If Pompey's fleet could come to assist Cato he would be able to hold his ground against Curio.[19] It is therefore most probable Curio decided to send a vanguard to Sicily to intimidate Cato before his position became stronger. Pollio, a colleague of Curio, fulfilled this task. Curio's two legions were formed from the troops at Corfinium and contained cohorts of the Marrucini.[20] Pollio, a member of the Marrucini himself, may well have taken such a cohort. Further, he would have relished the opportunity to confront Cato, noting Cato's past stance against the Italians. Appian (2.40) and Plutarch (*Cat. Min.* 53) appear to draw on the contents of a speech between Cato and Pollio as recorded in Pollio's history. In essence it reflects a discussion on the morality of civil war and the *dignitas* of Cato in his surrender to prevent further ruination and bloodshed. [21]

> At that time, however, having had Sicily allotted to him (Cato) as a province, he crossed over to Syracuse, and on learning that Asinius Pollio had come to Messana with a force from the enemy, he sent and demanded a reason for his coming. But having been asked by Pollio in turn a reason for the convulsion in the state, and hearing that Pompey had abandoned Italy altogether, and was encamped at Dyrrhachium, he remarked that there was much inconsistency and obscurity in the divine government, since Pompey had been invincible while his course was neither sound nor just, but now, when he wished to save

---

[19] Cic. *Att*. 10.4.9 (195).
[20] Caes. *B Civ*. 2.28; 34. This point of view is also considered by André (1949) 14 and Haller (1967) 28.
[21] By comparison Caesar (*B Civ*. 1.30) writes that Cato complained at a public meeting of his betrayal by Pompey who had undertaken an unnecessary war. See Goar (1987) 16-17 for the argument that it is unlikely Cato would have changed his viewpoint so early after joining Pompey and Caesar's persistent dislike of Cato. Neither Appian nor Plutarch use this speech as recorded by Caesar.

> his country and was fighting in defence of liberty, he had been deserted by his good fortune. As for Asinius, indeed, Cato said he was able to drive him out of Sicily; but since another and a larger force was coming to his aid, he did not wish to ruin the island by involving it in war, and therefore, after advising the Syracusans to seek safety by joining the victorious party, he sailed away. (*Cat. Min.* 53).

It has been argued a vanguard of this nature would not have required a formal command and so his role is not mentioned by Caesar. Pierce considers Pollio held a position of minor *legatus* but there is no evidence to support this.[22] André, in an opinion taken up by Haller, believes it is more likely he acted as a private individual.[23] However, the fact that Pollio no doubt emphasised in his *Histories* his own role in the negotiations with Cato leading to the latter's withdrawal would suggest he held an official position. The office of prefect would be the most likely as it was often conferred on young men of ability who were not yet eligible to become legates. Nevertheless, the fact that neither Appian nor Plutarch, who were most probably drawing on Pollio's history for this information, did not include he held a command is surprising and leaves the issue still in doubt.[24]

Africa

After establishing control in Sicily Curio set sail in August for Africa to engage the Pompeian commander Attius Varus who also had the support of the Numidian king Juba.[25] Following initial successes the final outcome was a disaster. Curio and all his men were massacred at Bagradas. A small force had remained behind at the camp at Utica. They attempted to flee on merchant ships but the majority were drowned and those left on the shore were put to death by Juba. Appian records the event as follows: 'The two Roman legions that sailed to Africa with Curio were totally destroyed, together with the cavalry, the light armed troops and the servants belonging to the army.'[26] It is only a handful of men who survived the African expedition, one of whom was Pollio. Appian alone places Pollio with Curio in Africa.[27] He describes an event at the beginning of the final battle at the river Bagradas. Pollio retreated with a small force back to the camp at Utica to prevent Varus from attacking it. When news was heard of Curio and all his men perishing, not one returning to the camp at Utica, Pollio attempted a rescue plan for the

---

[22] Pierce (1922) 10-11. In the African campaign Pierce (12) again considers he was one of the minor *legati*. See also Thorbecke (1820) 5.
[23] André (1949) 14-15; Haller (1967) 28-29 and esp. 30.
[24] The timing of events from Caesar issuing the command for the taking of Sicily around March 19 and Cato's withdrawal on April 23 also makes it unlikely Pollio was in charge of a separate formal command prior to the arrival of Curio. See André (1949) 14. Nor is there any evidence in the African campaign of extra forces other than the original two legions sent with Curio.
[25] Curio did not leave for Africa immediately after taking Sicily in April, and may have been waiting on the outcome of Caesar's campaign in Spain. See Rice Holmes *RR* 3.95 n. 3.
[26] App. *B Civ*. 2. 46.
[27] App. *B Civ*. 2. 45-46.

remaining troops.[28] The admiral of the fleet, on hearing of Curio's defeat, had immediately set sail leaving the army on the land. Pollio in a small boat rowed out to merchant ships and persuaded them to take the remaining troops on board. But the troops in their rush sank the small boats or were thrown overboard from the bigger vessels after their money had been stolen (2.46). Caesar, however, in his commentary, in a description that is almost identical, attributes this specific action to Curio's quaestor Marcius Rufus (*B Civ*. 2.43).

The omission of Pollio's name by Caesar has led to speculation as to the nature of their relationship. This has included a suggestion of a breach in their friendship, or, alternatively of a protection of Pollio by Caesar so that he would not be identified with the failed campaign.[29] There is little evidence for either supposition. Caesar gives extensive detail concerning the African campaign. Apart from the commanders Curio and Varus he names five other individuals in various capacities through this account.[30] There would have been no reason not to mention Pollio if he too held an official position and his actions were of note. The fact Caesar includes the attempted rescue of the men with the boats indicates it was an action he considered worthy of merit and inclusion. However, Welch in her analysis of Caesar's Gallic War commentaries concludes that Caesar writes principally about himself, his army and his enemies. He leaves little space for descriptions of legates or of their activities, 'they are not in the end the really memorable heroes or characters who emerge from the pages of Caesar's commentaries.'[31] We could therefore argue that Pollio also fell into this category of the legates and other lesser officers who failed to enter the writings of Caesar's commentaries for no other reason than their activities were not what Caesar sought to describe. This may lead us to conclude that Pollio in his own history corrected this omission by highlighting his own personal actions, the details of which were later included by Appian.[32] Nevertheless, the fact Caesar did name so many individuals, including a legate, in this particular account still must suggest that if Pollio held an official position it was very junior and of little note to Caesar.

---

[28] App. *B Civ*. 2. 46.

[29] Bailleu (1874) 24; considered it reflected a breakdown in the relationship between Caesar and Pollio. Gloede (1871) 16-18 argued for a special friendship and protection of Pollio in a failed campaign. Eyssenhardt (1862) 755-757 believes Caesar wished to create an impression that the Pompeians had been undermined and Cato fled without giving reference to the role of Pollio. See also André (1949) 14-15; Haller (1967) 26-27.

[30] The quaestor Marcius Rufus (2.23), the legate G. Caninius Rebilus (2.24), Sex. Quintilius Varus (2.28), Fabius, a Pelignian, of the lowest rank of centurion in Curio's army (2.35) and Gn. Domitius, prefect of the horse (2.42).

[31] Welch (1998) 85-110 with quotation from p. 102. For a further elaboration on the political context of Caesar's commentaries and the role of the continutators, the men who fought at the battle line and wrote clumsy dispatches, and whose deeds and writings were not included by Caesar see Cluett (2003)118-131.

[32] No one returned alive from Bagradas. Rufus was already at the base camp at Utica. Pollio was sent back to inform him of the course of events. Curio was in desperate need of all of his men and commanders and so it is more likely he gave this task to someone without a senior command. André and Haller both consider this further evidence Pollio did not hold an official command. See n.22 and 23.

Curio's failure was a significant loss, not only strategically but also psychologically. The role of King Juba in the fighting gave the African campaign a greater significance. Africa, and in particular Utica, was the site of P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus' successful campaign against Hannibal in 204-202.[33] Further, King Juba 1 of Numidia, was an enemy of Caesar and Curio, particularly since the latter, when tribune in 50 BC, had threatened to annex his kingdom. At the outbreak of the civil war Juba had joined with Pompey. There was therefore a bitter sweetness in his success at Utica against the young Curio. Varus, the Pompeian general, was overshadowed by Juba and his actions. Curio's defeat also reversed the victory of Scipio and was a loss for the Romans on African soil. Further, the crushing of Curio at Utica will soon be contrasted with Cato's heroic suicide out of commitment to the republican cause in 46 BC at the same site.

Caesar in his commentary attempts to highlight Curio's initial success but admits that in the final struggle, when he was deceived by Juba, and foolhardily led his men out to defeat, Curio was young and impetuous.[34] Lucan, whose account of the campaign is very similar to Caesar's, takes a much harsher view of Curio and his defeat. Juba's African identity is given greater significance than the fact he is just fighting for the Pompeains. As Ahl comments 'Lucan does not enjoy the spectacle of his (Curio's) defeat in Africa.'[35] Juba was an enemy of the Romans and a threat to Italy. Whilst Lucan expresses republican sympathies and could have been pleased at Curio's downfall he states: *Africa nos potius vincat sibi*, (4.793). He passes harsh judgement on Curio. He sees him as a citizen of great talent who was swayed by Caesar's money. 'Of all the men in the civil war and their violent actions it was he, Curio, who sold Rome.' (4.821 –824).[36]

Unfortunately, Cicero's correspondence ceases in May 49 and does not resume until January 48[37] so we lack his reaction to the news of Curio's death and the significance of Juba's victory to the people at the time. But it can be assumed it was a significant blow to the Caesarian cause.

For Pollio there was little that can be salvaged from this loss. Surviving the campaign, he was at pains to reveal his own heroic action no matter how small, and also to account for his escaping with his life when so few did.

---

[33] Curio, on landing at Utica, predictably pitched his camp at the famous site of Scipio's camp. According to Appian (2.44) Juba's men anticipated his thinking and poisoned the water at the wells. This event is absent from Caesar's commentary.
[34] Caes. *B Civ*. 2.38. Curio was thirty-five years of age. Rufus, Pollio and Caninius Rebilius are considered the most probable sources for Caesar's commentary on these events. See Rice Holmes *RR* 3. 421.
[35] Ahl (1976) 101.
[36] Lintott (1971) 491. Lucan claims that if young men like Curio had followed the right course and not descended into moral decadence then the Caesareans, the dynasts, could not have succeeded.
[37] Cicero leaves Italy for the camp of Pompey on June 7 49.

Pharsalus

We hear nothing more of Pollio after the African campaign until Pharsalus. Presumably he returned to Rome and then perhaps at the beginning of 48 crossed with Caesar and his troops to Epirus. In May Caesar was defeated by Pompey at Dyrrhachium, following which he retreated east into Thessaly with Pompey following behind him. As Caesar approached Gomphi he successfully took the city before continuing on to Pharsalus. It was now August, and at Pharsalus Caesar and Pompey again waged war.

Both Appian and Plutarch record Pollio's presence on the battlefield. Appian describes Pollio as: 'one of Caesar's officers in this battle' (2.82); Plutarch is less specific, simply noting that Pollio 'fought on the side of Caesar' (*Pomp*. 72.3). Anything more of his role is unknown and as Appian had also suggested Pollio had been given a command by Caesar for Sicily, we cannot be certain if Pollio indeed did have an actual command at Pharsalus or continued as a private individual supporting Caesar. Appian, Plutarch and Suetonius all report that Pollio, in the writing of his own history, commented not only on the losses of both sides at Pharsalus, giving actual numbers, but also on the sentiment of Caesar as he looked at the slain on the field: 'They would have it so. Even I, Gaius Caesar, after so many great deeds, should have been found guilty, if I had not turned to my army for help.' (Suet. *Caes*. 30).[38] Caesar in his own commentary makes no such comment and it is difficult to determine if these words were the utterance of Caesar or the sentiments of Pollio. Certainly from Caesar's supposed statement at the Rubicon and here again at Pharsalus Pollio depicts a contemplative Caesar forced reluctantly and without choice into civil war. Gruen considers that whether Caesar made the statement or Pollio provided the comment its purpose was to act as an apology for the massacre at Pharsalus.[39]

Pollio did not follow Caesar to Egypt[40] but returned to Rome, as did Mark Antony and Dolabella, for the next mention of Pollio occurs in connection with the activities of the tribunes in 47 BC.

---

[38] App. *B Civ*. 2.82; Plut. *Pomp*. 72.3; *Caes*. 46.2; Suet. *Iul*. 30. Caesar in his justification for invading Italy had stated he had been denied the right to stand for office *in absentia*. If he had returned to Rome as a private citizen he would have been prosecuted and excluded from political status. This comment of Caesar's is the basis for this belief. See Gruen *LGRP* 493-494. See also discussion Chapter 13.
[39] Gruen *LGRP* 494.
[40] The death of Pompey occurred on September 28 48. The Alexandrine war followed from October 48 to March 47.

47 BC Tribune of the Plebs

After the victory at Pharsalus Caesar had been granted the right to hold the consulship for five successive years, to be dictator for a whole year and to conduct all elections except in the plebeian assembly.[41] In October 48 Caesar had named Mark Antony as his *magister equitum* who had returned to Rome and become ruler of the capital. However, the elections for 47 BC were postponed until Caesar returned to Rome, and in fact, did not occur until October of that year, except for the election of the tribunes. It is the election of the tribunes that interests us. The tribunician activity in 47 BC was noteworthy and resulted in extensive rioting. Dolabella, on his return to Rome, immediately organized for his election as tribune.[42] Once in power he took up the reforms which his friend Caelius Rufus had been agitating the year before, namely the cancellation of debts and of all arrears in house rents. These were measures which out-bid Caesar's reforms. Caesar had decreed that the praetors for 47 continue the assessment of property, at the price paid before the civil war, deducting interest already paid.[43] Fellow tribune Trebellius opposed Dolabella and intense rioting occurred.

There are two main sources for this period of tribunician activity; a short statement in Plutarch and a detailed account in Dio.[44] Cicero's correspondence is essentially concerned with the activities of Dolabella as his son-in-law and gives little political content.[45]

Plutarch's account is as follows:

> However, Dolabella, who was tribune at this time – a newcomer in politics who aimed at a new order of things, introduced a law for the abolition of debts, and tried to persuade Antony, who was his friend and always sought to please the multitude, to take common action with him in the measure. But Asinius and Trebellius advised Antony to the contrary, and, as chance would have it, a dire suspicion fell upon him that he was wronged as a husband by Dolabella. Antony took the matter much to heart, drove his wife from his house (she was his cousin, being a daughter of the Gaius Antonius who was Cicero's colleague in the consulship), made common cause with Asinius and Trebellius, and waged war upon Dolabella. (*Ant*. 9.1-2)

It is known from Dio that L. Trebellius Fides was a tribune in 47.[46] The *Asinius* is believed to be Pollio. As he is referred to in a like manner as Trebellius, it is usually assumed he also is a

---

[41] Dio 42.20.3.
[42] He was possibly only twenty- two years of age at the time, unusually young for the position.
[43] Caes. *B Civ*. 3.1; Suet. *Iul*. 42. He considered this the most suitable method to reduce the fear a general repudiation of debts might cause.
[44] Plut. *Ant*. 9; Dio 42.29 -33; 46. 16. 2-5. Also Livy *Per*. 113; Caes. *B Gall*. 65.1; Plut. *Caes* 51.1; App. *B Civ*. 2.92; Cic. *Phil*. 2.62.
[45] Cicero expresses in passing his concern at Dolabella's activities relating to cancellation of debts. He is much more interested in Dolabella obtaining money in order to repay his debt to Cicero. See *Att*. 11.10.2 (221); 12.4 (223); 23.3 (232); 14.21.4 (375).
[46] Dio 42.29.1.

tribune.[47] But a statement in Dio raises doubt. Plutarch is quite clear that Pollio sided with Trebellius and opposed the actions of Dolabella and that he remained firm in this stance. Dio on the other hand, makes no mention of Pollio. He describes the tribune Trebellius as taking an opposing stance to Dolabella's proposals over debt with the result intense fighting broke out between the two. He then suggests that Antony, as *magister equitum*, at first sought to befriend Dolabella but when this failed gave support to Trebellius and then finally took a stand against them both with *all other tribunes* lined up behind him.[48] In this account the support Pollio was giving to Trebellius could not be from the position of a fellow tribune as all the other tribunes were opposed to Dolabella and Trebellius and gave support to Antony.

There are several factors to consider. The account in Plutarch is condensed and probably inaccurate with respect to Dolabella having an affair with Antony's wife at this time; it is usually considered that it occurred much later, but that Plutarch added it at this point in the history to emphasise that Antony's private life was compromising a political programme.[49] Plutarch states that Trebellius and Pollio sided against Dolabella and advised Antony against his measures. When Antony finally waged war on Dolabella, Plutarch emphasises that he first aligned himself with Trebellius and Pollio. Dio on the other hand describes the emergence of three parties; Dolabella, Trebellius and Antony with the backing of the senate. Antony at first tried to appease Dolabella, next he gave face value support to Trebellius and finally acted independently against them both. It is in this final separation that we hear that all the other tribunes lined up with Antony. It is possible that when the final confrontation occurred with Antony, Pollio abandoned Trebellius and supported Antony; contrary to the clear statement in Plutarch. Dio makes no mention of Pollio, but the overall references to Pollio in Dio's history are markedly infrequent and so we can give little weight to this particular omission.[50] However, as Dio gives a particularly detailed account of the events, analysing the motives of the key players and their desire for personal ambition, the failure to mention Pollio as a player in this particular scenario could be considered to be of more significance. It suggests that either his source material made little mention of Pollio, or that he perceived Pollio's actions to be of little consequence, or that he deliberately did not wish to include his role. The mention of Pollio in Plutarch's account has all the hallmarks of how Pollio has appeared in previous descriptions. It

---

[47] Broughton *MRR* 2: 287; Sumner (1971) 260-262.
[48] Dio 42.29.3-4.
[49] Pelling (1988) 136-137 on *Ant*. 9.
[50] Dio only mentions Pollio on four occasions in his history: 45.10.3-6 which concerns his fight against Sextus Pompeius; 48.15.1; 32.1; both of which refer to his consulship and 48.41.7. which mentions the uprising of the Parthine Illyrians. It has often been argued the source for Dio may have been Livy who took little interest in Asinius Pollio, perhaps miffed by Pollio's criticism of his *patavinitas* (Quint. *Inst*. 1.5.56), although literary criticism was the norm and probably not the source of insult as we may perceive it today. See Welch (1995) n. 81 who also considers Livy may have been the source for Dio and responsible for the details as expressed by Dio.

appears the information has come directly from Pollio's history, where consistent with giving an eye-witness account he inserts his own role at various points. It may well be that Pollio gave strong support to Trebellius without himself being a tribune and wanted his stance to be recorded. [51] Appian, whom we could consider most likely to have used Pollio as his source, gives almost nothing of the events and no mention of Pollio and his possible role.[52]

In 47 BC Pollio was twenty-nine years of age and had never held the quaestorship. His election as a tribune would have been in advance of the normal age of thirty-two years for the position,[53] although as Sumner notes the tribunes were not subject to the *lex annalis*.[54] Pollio may have been eligible for the quaestorship, but with the delayed elections he, like Dolabella, may have considered it more opportune to gain the tribuneship. It was a Caesarian victory and a good time for Pollio to establish himself within the senate which was under the control of Caesar.

If Pollio was a tribune he cannot have relished the position in which he found himself. Antony's rule in Rome at this time was oppressive and unpopular.[55] His main aim was to carry out Caesar's orders and raise money for the payment of the soldiers. Further, Caesar's return to Rome was uncertain, fuelled by varying reports of his success or otherwise in Egypt.[56] The measures of Dolabella resulted in intense quarrelling with Trebellius, who took up the cause of the creditors and hence of the nobility. The riots and fighting that followed resulted in over eight hundred perishing. Dolabella at one stage filled the forum with soldiers. In response Antony stormed the barricades and hurled rioters from the Tarpian rock. There was high expectation that on Caesar's return the tribunes, Dolabella in particular, would be harshly punished for causing such civil unrest.

Pollio gave his support to Trebellius and finally Antony, most probably to maintain favour with Caesar.[57] Zecchini considers the episode gives an insight into the position taken by Pollio with regard to the internal complexities of the Caesarian faction: he associated himself with and desired the aristocratic status of men like Antony and despised the populist excesses expressed

---

[51] André (1947) 137-139; (1949) 15-16; Haller (1967) 31. Both doubt if Pollio was a tribune, on the grounds that the reference in Plutarch is ambiguous and the lack of confirmation in Dio. Dio also notes that all the other tribunes are considered to be aligned with Antony.
[52] App. *B Civ*. 2.92.
[53] Whilst the tribuneship was not subject to the *lex annalis* the usual age for the position was thirty-two years and it was usual to have held the quaestorship first. But as noted Dolabella was possibly only twenty-two years old when he gained the tribuneship. In 47, with the delay in elections, a tribuneship offered entry into the senate and an official position in Rome at a time when there were few others in power.
[54] Sumner (1971) 260. He does not consider any irregularities in the *lex annalis* occurred under Caesar until 45-44 BC.
[55] Dio 42.27-29.
[56] Dio 42.27-29.
[57] Caesar was opposed to the cancellation of debts. See n. 43.

by Dolabella.[58] However, the viewing of these activities as a social class struggle of *populares* against *optimates* may be inflating what was in reality a personal power struggle between Dolabella and Trebellius.[59] Indeed, it is known that after Caesar's death in 44, Trebellius, in severe debt himself as Dolabella had been in 47, proposed this same law against which he had been so strongly opposed.[60] Welch strongly argues that Antony and Dolabella were acting to build up their own personal power in Caesar's absence, encouraged by the belief that Caesar was unlikely to return or, that if he did, they would then be in a position too powerful to remove.[61] It is also usually considered that on Caesar's return Antony fell from favour, unlike Dolabella, who appeared to gain even more favour with Caesar. [62] But if we follow the reasoning of Ramsey, who refutes this long held belief, it is more probable Antony remained in high regard but was too distracted by his financial situation to take further commands in 46 and 45 BC rather than this being any form of punishment.[63] Calenus, in his speech of reply to Cicero in 44 BC, stated, 'For the rebellion went no farther, and Antony, far from suffering punishment for his course, was subsequently appointed consul.'[64]

In view of the intense infighting between the tribunes, to the point that the senate issued a *senatus consultum ultimum* to give Antony full authority to quell the disturbance,[65] Pollio's role as an isolated tribune supporting Trebellius would surely have been given more attention in the sources. The most likely explanation is that after giving initial support to Trebellius, and advising Antony against Dolabella's reforms, Pollio finally abandoned Trebellius, who had taken on the cause with a vengeance, and joined the other tribunes in their support for Antony. From what we know of Pollio's later activities, this cautiousness to remain with what he perceived as the more political and victorious side, and to seek for negotiation and conciliation, could have been expected.

---

[58] Zecchini (1982) 1271; A view also expressed by Pierce (1922) 13.
[59] Dettenhofer (1992) 169.
[60] Cic. *Phil*. 6.10-11; 10.22; 11.13; 13.26. Cicero claims Antony hated Trebellius when he opposed the cancellation of debts but now loves him as he sees Trebellius cannot survive without the cancellation of debts, such is his financial ruin. Cicero accuses Trebellius of opposing the cancellation of debt in 47 only to seek the same bill in 44 when he was in personal debt.
[61] Welch (1995A). She emphasises the role of Fulvia in this power-play and the ongoing *popularis* influence of the murdered Clodius.
[62] Antony was perceived to have failed in his task as *magister equitum* and was not given the position of consul for the following year, or a military command, and remained in Rome as a private citizen. Dolabella, to whom Caesar indicated he owed some debt of great kindness (Dio 42.33.3), would be nominated as consul suffect in 44 BC. The friendship between Dolabella and Antony broke down at this point, further fuelled by Dolabella's having an affair with Antony's wife, according to Plutarch; see *Ant*. 9. cf Cic. *Phil*. 2.99.
[63] Ramsey (2004).
[64] Dio 46.17.1.
[65] Dio 42.29.3-4; 46.16.2-3.

If, however, we hold that Pollio was not a tribune or holder of an office in 47 BC we can only assume his time in Rome was without profile. However, it does seem that his relationship with Antony, if not already established was developed at this point, as also with Dolabella. Cicero in 44 BC considered that Antony hated Trebellius for his activities as tribune and the position in which he placed Antony. In turn Pollio's support for Trebellius may not have endeared him to Antony (or Dolabella), unless in the final outcome he had given his support to the *magister equitum*.

With Caesar in Africa

In December 47 Caesar was ready to leave Rome for the campaign in Africa, not returning to Rome until July 25 46. A single reference in Plutarch (*Caes.* 52) indicates Pollio was with Caesar in Africa. Once more the reference suggests Pollio was the source for this information and again it has the flavour of an eye-witness account of an event, but one which lacks detail of Pollio's actual status with respect to Caesar and a command. We cannot say if Pollio was with or without a command. Indeed, the source relates an incident early in the campaign when Caesar's men, relaxing and enjoying the antics of a Libyan flute player, were suddenly attacked. It was only the intervention of Caesar 'and with him Asinius Pollio' that saved the day. This attack is presumably one of the engagements described in the *Bellum Africum* (3-18),[66] and also in Appian (*B. Civ*. 2.95) and Dio (43.2.3-4). Shortly after landing on January 4 Caesar's men were unexpectedly attacked by the Pompeians Petreius and Labienus. His troops began to flee until he turned them around, and according to Appian it was due to Caesar's good fortune alone that he won the battle.[67]

We also have an interesting reference to Pollio by Cicero. He wrote to Atticus in early April 46 of rumours concerning the African campaign (*Att*. 12.2.1). Staius Murcus had been lost in a shipwreck, and 'Asinius carried alive into the hands of the soldiers,' presumably the Pompeians.[68] This would place Pollio at the battle of Thapsus, which occurred on April 4. The mention of his name by Cicero suggests he had some standing of importance, or at least of

---

[66] The author of the *Bellum Africum* is unknown. But as Way (1955) 141-142 states, the careful chronology and faithful recording of the feelings of the troops suggests a soldier, possibly a junior soldier, who was on the spot. He considers that the author was young and inexperienced, a keen observer, but without access to inner counsels, and with a weak historical perspective. He at times gives trivial details and at other times withholds important details. He has a blind admiration for Caesar. See also Bouvet (1949) xvii-xxxix. No mention is made of Pollio. Landgraf (1888) argued Pollio was the author of the *Bellum Africum*, but Rice Holmes (*RR* 3. 274) and others dismiss this on the basis that there is little in the style of writing as seen in Pollio's three extant letters to Cicero to support the hypothesis. The writing style is distinctive and marked by a poverty of expression inconsistent with all that is known of Pollio's writings. See also Suetonius (*Iul*. 56.1), who notes that even in his day the author is unknown.

[67] See also Gelzer (1969) 265.

[68] *Hic rumores tantum: Murcum perisse naufragio, Asinium delatum vivum in manus militum, L navis delatas Uticam reflatu hoc … sed auctor nullius rei quisquam.*

interest to Cicero. It also indicates Pollio had not fared well in the battle, but as Murcus was not lost, he reappears as a commander of an army in Syria,[69] the rumour concerning Pollio may also have been false.[70]

Caesar's victory in Africa against the Pompeians and King Juba was marred by the heroic suicide of Cato at Utica. Cicero responded to this event by writing his *Cato*, Caesar with his *Anticato*. Both Horace and Lucan would later write of the civil wars in Africa as a revenge upon the Romans for their past actions; in particular the destruction of Carthage.[71] For Pollio, returning to Africa, he again had the opportunity to encounter Juba and Cato. But campaigning in Africa proved to be no easier under Caesar than with Curio. Caesar nearly came to disaster in the same manner as Curio. Further, the knowledge of the defeat of Curio had clearly preoccupied the thoughts of Caesar's troops.[72] The futility of civil war must have impacted on Pollio at this time, when he had observed the carnage at Pharsalus and now the deaths of further great Romans at the same site for which he had fought and lost with his friend Curio three years before.

Pollio, if not earlier, in all probability returned to Rome with Caesar in July. At the beginning of November Caesar decided to set forth for Spain to put down the legions of the sons of Pompey who had become increasingly menacing. Cicero wrote to Atticus on May 6 45 that Asinius Pollio had written to him about the younger Quintus who was in the camp with Caesar and spoke ill of Cicero.[73] This places Pollio with Caesar in the Spanish campaign. It also suggests that Pollio was in communication with Cicero, establishing that they were at this time on

---

[69] Cic. *Fam*. 12.11.1 (366).

[70] It is a curious statement, for if Pollio was captured by the Pompeians this must have occurred early in the Thapsus conflict, and further, that he was released soon after, as he was with Caesar in his next campaign. There is also some difficulty in the dating of the letter. It is usually placed as late March or early April. If so the news of Thapsus, fought on April 4, would not have reached Cicero. It may therefore be referring to events before Thapsus, in which case Pollio was captured previously and may not have fought in the major battle as is generally assumed. See Shackleton Bailey *Att*. 5. 237 for discussion of the controversy of dating the letter.

[71] Thapsus was not far from Zama where Scipio Africanus had defeated Hannibal. The battle of Thapsus also occurred exactly one hundred years after the final destruction of Carthage. A further irony is that both of the Roman armies were commanded by a Scipio. King Juba, Metellus Scipio and Cato all committed suicide in the Thapsus campaign. Thapsus and Munda are considered the turning points in the civil war. Horace (*Carm*. 2.1.25-28), commenting on Pollio's history of the civil war writes:

Iuno et decorum quisquis amicor
Afris inulta cesserat impotens
tellure, victorum nepotes
rettulit inferas Iugurthae.

Lucan (6. 309-311) takes a similar viewpoint:

nec Iuba marmaricas nudus pressisset harenas
Poenorumque umbras placasset sanguine fuso
Scipio, nec sancto caruisset vita Catone.

i.e., if Pompey had not been defeated. It is probable Lucan also was drawing on the writings of Pollio in expressing these sentiments. See Ahl (1976) 82-84; Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 2. 24-25.

[72] Rice Holmes *RR* 3. 242 243. Caes. *B Afr*. 16.

[73] Cic. *Att*. 12.38.2 (278); 39.1 (280). See also later discussion this Chapter with n. 130.

friendly terms. We also find a reference in Suetonius concerning the speech Caesar made to his soldiers in Spain.[74] Pollio is quoted as a source for the speech, which suggests that this is his own eyewitness account of the speech and battle. This alone would not prove Pollio was actually with Caesar in Spain but, taken in conjunction with the correspondence of Cicero, it is apparent Pollio went to Spain and was most probably present at the battle of Munda. Dolabella also went to Spain as did the young Octavian.[75] Munda proved to be one of the bloodiest and most difficult campaigns of the civil war.[76]

Caesar returned to Italy in July and entered Rome for his triumph at the beginning of October 45. Cicero makes reference to a rumour concerning Pollio in July 45 which suggests that Pollio had not yet returned to Rome. The nature of the rumour is unknown and it is linked to one also concerning Pansa.[77] Interestingly, Cicero shows little curiosity in the rumour, which may suggest a more distant relationship with Pollio at this time. In October Caesar elected fourteen praetors and forty quaestors for the current year.[78] Pollio was included in the list of praetors. This is based on the reference in Velleius that in 44 BC Asinius Pollio was referred to as *praetorius* when governor of Spain.[79] Sumner considers he was therefore praetor in 45 BC by a process of elimination: tribune in 47 and with Caesar in Africa in 46.[80] André judges he only occupied the office for three months, perhaps like a suffect consul, without taking up the associated functions of the title.[81] Appointment as praetor at thirty-one years was a clear violation of the *lex annalis;* he was not in his fortieth year, nor had he held the quaestorship. But he was not the only exception; Dolabella was named as suffect consul for 44 at twenty-five

---

[74] Suet. *Iul*. 55:*"Apud milites" quoque "in Hispania" idem Augustus vix ipsius putat, quae tamen duplex fertur: una quasi priore habita proelio, altera posteriore, quo Asinius Pollio ne tempus quidem contionandi habuisse eum dicit subita hostium incursione*. See further comment on this speech in Chapter 13 and the suggestion that the speech cannot definitively be placed at the battle of Munda.

[75] Octavian as a young man of eighteen years independently followed Caesar to Spain. It is well recorded he impressed Caesar with the speed in which travelled through enemy territory in order to reach him at Munda (Nic. Dam. 22; Suet. *Aug*. 8).

[76] Plut. *Caes*. 56.2, App. *B Civ*. 2.104. Both sources quote the statement that Caesar had often fought for victory but that this time he had fought for his life. Immediately after Munda Caesar began writing the *Anticato* (Suet. *Iul*. 56.5).

[77] Cic. *Att*. 13.21.3 (351) *vides quanto haec diligentius curem quam aut de rumore aut de Pollione, de Pansa etiam. sed si quid certius (credo enim palam factum esse); et de Critonio si quid est certi, ne de Metello et Balbino*. Tyrell and Purser (5. 167-168) suggest the rumour may have been that these men, who were all Caesareans, were going to obtain distinctions or rewards. Dolabella returned to Rome in June.

[78] For the following years he designated sixteen praetors, among them Cassius and Brutus. Mark Antony was designated consul along with Caesar himself until he left for the Parthian campaign, at which time Dolabella would become consul suffect. The increase in official positions, the praetorship in particular, arose from the many promises Caesar had made to reward various individuals, but had the effect of devaluing the status of the office.

[79] Vell. Pat. 2. 73. 2.

[80] Sumner (1971) 358.

[81] André (1949) 17. Haller (1967) 34 takes a similar view, but adds that it was probably an honorary position consistent with his status in Caesar's retinue throughout the early campaigns, which he believes was without his having formal office.

years of age and Antony as consul for 44 at thirty-five years of age. It certainly suggests Pollio had earned a reward for his loyalty and campaigning with Caesar since 49 BC. By comparison, he had not risen to the status of other young men surrounding Caesar, namely Dolabella and Octavian, the latter named as *magister equitum* for 43 BC even though he would still only be nineteen years of age.[82] It is probable Pollio is an example of Caesar's policy to extend office to the Italians who had held the citizenship since the Social War.[83]

As a result of his praetorship Pollio was required to spend a year in a province, and he was accordingly awarded *Hispania Ulterior* for 44 BC.[84]

Spain

Pollio was already familiar with Spain, having been with Caesar in the Spanish campaign. Further, many Italians in the fall-out from the Social War had settled in Spain; an Italian governor may therefore have been a wise move. But the province was not settled; it was a Pompeian stronghold, Sextus Pompeius was on the move and the Caesarian commander in charge was exhausted.

After Caesar left Spain, Sextus Pompeius, who had retreated to the northern regions, reorganized his troops and was once again engaging the Caesarian forces.[85] Pollio was to take over from the commander of the Caesarian forces, C. Carrinas,[86] and was faced with dealing with the increasing threat from Sextus. He arrived in Spain before the Ides of March.[87]

The decision to send Pollio to Further Spain is rarely examined. If we consider the sources up to this point there is no evidence that Pollio had distinguished himself as a military commander, in fact the evidence is to the contrary. After the battle of Munda Caesar had not considered Sextus to be a significant threat: 'Sextus was at first disregarded by Caesar in Spain as not likely to accomplish anything of importance on account of his youth and inexperience.' (App. *B Civ.* 4.83.) (Interestingly, Pollio was the same age as Sextus).[88] But after Sextus continued to rally troops, Caesar was forced to send reinforcements to his commander Carrinas, and must now

---

[82] App. *B Civ*. 3.9; Dio 48.51.7.
[83] See Syme *Rom. Rev*. 90; 1938A 1-31 = *RP* 1. 88-11; Gelzer (1969) 310 n 2. cf. Raditsa (1973) 442-444 for discussion of Caesar's approach to the Italians and recognition of their need for Roman status. This issue has also been discussed in Chapter 1.
[84] Caesar had enacted a law which stated former praetors were to hold a province for one year, and consuls for two years. Cic. *Phil*. 1.19; 2.109.
[85] For Sextus Pompey see Hadas (1930); Powell and Welch (2002).
[86] For Carrinas see Münzer 3.1612; He was propraetor of Spain in 45, served as a suffect consul in 43, became governor of Spain in 41 and commanded three legions against Sextus in 36.
[87] App. *B Civ*. 4.84. Most probably Pollio left Rome in January 44, and as the sailing season was over, travelled by land.
[88] Sextus' date of birth is usually placed *c*. 76 BC, the same year as Pollio. They were thirty-two years of age when they came into conflict.

have considered there was a greater threat to the Caesarian forces in the wealthy province. Much of Further Spain was a Pompeian stronghold. However, several key cities had given their support to Caesar, the principal one being Gades. In 49 BC Caesar had raised the city to the level of a Roman *municipium,*[89] but in 45 he imposed banishments and confiscations upon the city indicating a wavering in Caesarian support.[90] We therefore find that the quaestor for Hispania Ulterior in 44 BC was L. Cornelius Balbus the younger, his native city was Gades and he was a loyal Caesarian.[91] Politically, Pollio's appointment served the same role as that of Balbus; a loyal Caesarian but an Italian whose family had served with distinction in the Social war.[92] In an environment of fluctuating Caesarian support and rising Pompeian activity Pollio was the ideal choice to hold and negotiate these fluxes. Further, Lepidus had been appointed in 44 as governor of Hispania Citerior. He also had proved himself as a negotiator in 48 BC in these unstable political alliances, but could also supply the military skill lacking by Pollio.[93]

Velleius describes Pollio as having distinguished himself in the war he conducted in Spain against Sextus: *ubi adversus eum clarissimum bellum Pollio Asinius praetorius gesserit*. (2.73.2).[94] But Appian and Dio, who both detail the events in Spain, differ in this perception of Pollio's campaign. Appian highlights Sextus' collection of troops and men. Caesar had sent Carrinas with a stronger army against Sextus, but he was worn down by guerrilla tactics, Sextus gaining possession of numerous towns.[95] Pollio was sent out to take over. According to Appian, Pollio waged war on equal terms with Sextus until the latter was recalled to Rome after the assassination of Caesar.[96] Dio, however, gives Pollio little credit. He recounts how Sextus, after Caesar had left Spain, occupied Baetica and gained possession of soldiers and cities, some voluntarily and some by force, as Pollio had no strong defence.[97] Sextus subsequently set out for *Carthago Nova*. In his absence Pollio attacked and inflicted damage on his forces. Sextus returned with a large force and routed Pollio.[98] Dio describes the final incident which led to the

---

[89] Livy *Per*. 110; Dio 41.24.1.
[90] Dio 43.39.4.
[91] Cic. *Att*. 15.13.4 (416); *Fam*. 10. 32.1 (415).
[92] At the time of the civil war in 49 BC over 10,000 male residents from immigrant families were enrolled in the Pompeian armies. See Wilson (1966) 10-11, 28-40; Brunt (1971) 230-231. Nomenclature reveals many came from the North of Italy and also the Oscan centre which included the territory of the Marsi and Paeligni. See Syme *Tacitus* 2: 784-785. Pollio's Marrucini background would have given him a significant credibility with these peoples.
[93] App. *B Civ*. 2.107; Dio 43.51.8. Also Weigel (1992) 37.
[94] Hadas (1930) 17 quotes this statement by Velleius as a clear example of his Caesarian bias and his desire to praise those who supported the Empire: 'Thus he (Velleius) invents the story that Asinius Pollio distinguished himself against Pompey in Spain, the truth being the reverse. '
[95] App. *B Civ*. 4.83. Sextus wore out his enemies with the guerrilla fighting tactics that his father had encountered in the war against Sertorius. See Hadas (1930) 16 for discussion that Sextus was in a similar position to Sertorius and that he used the same successful war tactics.
[96] App. *B Civ*. 4. 84.
[97] Dio 45.10. 2.
[98] Dio 45.10.4.

surrender of Pollio's troops.[99] Pollio had cast off his general's tunic in order to escape detection whilst fleeing. At the same time a distinguished knight of the same name had fallen. With the discovery of the cloak rumour spread that Pollio had perished leading his men to surrender. Dio believes Sextus conquered Pollio and gained possession of nearly the whole region until Lepidus arrived to govern *Hispania Citerior*.[100] Sextus was then persuaded to enter into agreement with Antony and left Spain.

Dio's account makes it clear that Pollio met with overwhelming defeat, and he highlights the inadequacy of his generalship: the launching of an attack when Sextus was absent, his being routed on the return of Sextus and his final fleeing from the field.[101] Lowe suggests Pollio's defeat was a significant turning point in Sextus' gaining control of southern Spain.[102] Indeed Sextus was hailed as *Imperator* after this success against Pollio, and coins were struck in his image.[103]

Validity for Dio's account can be gained from the correspondence of Cicero. We know from Cicero that the news of Caesar's death reached Sextus on the day he captured the town of Barea.[104] It is generally assumed this city fell at the end of April or beginning of May. With this news Sextus no longer considered himself a *hostis* and emerged with new status changing his warfare from guerrilla tactics to one of commanding an army.[105] Cicero next notes that Sextus has taken Carteia by mid June 44 and is at *Carthago Nova* in early July.[106] Further, in early April of 44 Cicero considers Sextus as a rallying point for the Republicans, and he is anxious that if civil war breaks out Sextus may bring his army against Italy. [107] Cicero makes no mention of Pollio, nor that Sextus was fighting a significant opponent in Spain; rather Sextus is perceived as gaining in strength and either becoming an increasing threat or ally dependant on where his loyalties lay.

The resolution of the conflict in Spain occurred with Antony's decision to negotiate with Sextus. The sources are somewhat confused in the chronology of the negotiations. Dio places

---

[99] Dio 45.10.5.
[100] Dio 45.10.6.
[101] The account of Pollio fleeing without his cloak implies an action of cowardice but can be compared with an account in Plutarch's life of Demetrius (44) for a general abandoning his cloak.
[102] Lowe (2002) 70.
[103] For discussion of the coinage and associated references see Hadas (1930) 58 n. 7; Grant (1969) 22-23; Lowe (2002) 81-85 in particular, who notes Sextus had possible mints at Corduba, Baelo and Salaria.
[104] Cic. *Att*. 16.4.2 (425).
[105] See Hadas (1930) 58.
[106] Cic. *Att*. 16.4.2 (425).
[107] Cic. *Att*. 15.20.3 (397). Also Tyrrell and Purser 5.348. Cicero first expressed concern about Sextus in early April 44, and how extensive the war he was waging might become (*Att*. 14.1.2 (355); 4.1 (358); 8.2 (362)). On April 26 (*Att*. 14.13.2 (367) Cicero even considered if he should join Sextus. On May 14 Cicero feared Sextus would continue to wage war and come towards Italy with a strong army (*Att*. 14.22.2 (376).

the pardoning of Sextus, which initially had been introduced by Caesar, after the battle of Munda, after Antony had been appointed as governor of Cisalpine Gaul in June 44; it was a measure to please the people.[108] According to Dio it was Lepidus who next decided to enter into further negotiations with Sextus; he included in the terms the politically charged issue of the return of his father's properties, which Antony subsequently ratified out of his friendship for Lepidus.[109] Appian states Antony proposed negotiation with Sextus, 'when he was still being attacked by Caesar's lieutenants' (presumably Pollio), in the aftermath of the Amatius Affair in May 44, in an action to appease the senate.[110] Certainly, Cicero's correspondence indicates negotiations with Sextus were under way by late June/early July 44, and that Lepidus was instrumental in the discussions.[111] It is probable Lepidus left Rome in April and arrived in his province in May or early June. We have a reference to his still being in Rome in mid April 44, but nothing afterwards.[112] Frisch attempts to resolve this chronological difficulty by placing the decision to pardon Sextus as occurring during the senate sittings in mid April in the midst of the Amatius affair. He considers the initiative was taken by Antony, but it was Lepidus who brought the matter to its conclusion, for which reason Cicero later gave the praise to Lepidus, although Cicero would have actively avoided praising Antony and was keen to nurture the support of Lepidus.[113] Lepidus earned the title of *imperator* for the second time, and celebrated a triumph in December 43 for his success with Sextus.[114] The decision to negotiate with Sextus confirms Pollio was not considered likely to obtain victory and subdue his forces.[115]

---

[108] Dio 45.9.4.

[109] Dio 45.10.6. This is also consistent with the chronology that Lepidus had left Rome before Antony issued the instruction to negotiate with Sextus. The comment that Antony ratified the negotiations out of friendship for Lepidus is inconsistent, since up to this time Antony had never been certain of his relationship with Lepidus and had probably been keen for him to leave Rome with his troops.

[110] App. *B Civ*. 3.4. However, Appian includes in the terms of the negotiations Sextus' appointment as commander of the sea, which is assumed to have occurred in the following April in 43. See Woodman (1983) 177–178. Gowing (1992) 126 comments that Appian makes Antony solely responsible for the decree and ignores the role of Lepidus in contrast to Dio who clearly outlines Lepidus' accomplishments. Lowe (2002) 71, also considers that Appian's chronology is confused, and negotiations with Sextus occurred much earlier than stated by Appian.

[111] In mid June Cicero writes that Sextus does not show any signs of laying down his arms (*Att*. 15.22.1 (399). But on the 6 July Cicero writes: *Sextum scutum abicere nolebam (Att*. 15.29.1 (408) also 16.1.4 (409), indicating if Sextus had not yet accepted the terms of Antony he was certainly about to do so.

[112] Cic. *Att*. 14.8.1 (362). This letter, dated 16 April 44, indicates Cicero received a letter from Lepidus who was now on his way to Narbonese Gaul. Syme *Rom*. *Rev*. 109ff. considers Lepidus had left Rome before Antony departed for Campania on April 21. Also Nic. Dam. 28.112 cf. Weigel (1992) 50 who suggests Lepidus was already in his province when the decree by the senate was passed.

[113] Frisch (1946) 71-72. For the significance of the role of Lepidus in the negotiations and the equestrian statue erected in his honour for this success see Cic. *Phil*. 3.23-24, 5.14.39; Dio 46.51.4; Broughton *MRR* 2: 326. The skill of Lepidus in carrying out the negotiations is commented upon by Hayne (1971) 116 and Welch (1995) 444-445.

[114] App. *B Civ*. 4.31; Cic. *Fam*. 10.34a (400); 35 (408) addresses Lepidus as *imperator* for the second time. See also Weigel (1992) 49-50.

[115] Thorbecke (1820) 13 and Aulard (1877) 16 both question the success of Sextus as reported in Dio on the basis Sextus may have only agreed to accept the terms of the senate as he was probably losing ground to Pollio. Against this argument is the fact Sextus settled for very positive terms. See Cic. *Att*. 16.4 (411);

One factor to be considered in Pollio's conflict with Sextus was the inequality of their forces. Sextus put together an army from the natives of Spain, from soldiers who had escaped from the battle with Caesar, and from soldiers gained either by force or voluntarily after he seized local cities and towns.[116] They were seasoned soldiers who were accustomed to fighting with guerrilla tactics. As noted they had already worn down Carrinas even after Caesar had sent him a stronger army. When Sextus left for New Carthage he returned to rout Pollio with a large force. Sextus is reported to have had seven legions in Spain, six of which were in *Hispania Ulterior*.[117] According to Pollio, in his correspondence in April 43, he had three legions, the Twenty-Eighth and Thirtieth legions and another unknown.[118] An unanswered question is whether Pollio himself transported troops when he left for Spain, or if he arrived to command existing troops and what exactly were their number. An obscure passage in Cicero mentions that there were already legions in Spain and that others were brought across. The text is corrupt and can be read as saying that either *Asinius,* that is Pollio, brought troops across or that *Annius*, who could be Annius Cimber, brought troops that had been in Spain across to Macedonia.[119] If the reference is to Pollio, as now generally accepted, it implies that there were troops already in Spain, and Pollio brought further reinforcements. Dio states that after Munda Caesar left behind a small army in Baetica.[120] Further troops were sent with Carrinas (App 4.83). Brunt considers Carrinas obtained reinforcements by the transfer of one legion from *Hispania Citerior*, perhaps the Thirtieth legion as Lepidus later insisted to have some claim on Pollio's Thirtieth.[121]

Dio reports Sextus found this force of Pollio's to be weak but Pollio describes the forces twelve months later as *firmas,* the context implying they were physically strong and probably veteran soldiers.[122] By all accounts it would seem Pollio could not readily match the forces of Sextus either in number or experience. Further, the loyalty of the Twenty Eighth and Thirtieth legions was later of concern to Pollio and may have been of concern from the beginning of the campaign, particularly once the news of Caesar's murder arrived in such a Pompeian

---

App. *B Civ*. 3.4; Dio 45.10.6. Also Hadas (1930) 61. Welch (2002) 15-17) outlines the very real political and financial difficulties in meeting Sextus' demands regarding the return of his father's properties.

[116] Dio 45.10.2. According to Florus (2.18.1) he also added a recruitment of slaves. Appian (*B Civ*. 2.105) includes those who had fled from Caesar after Munda. See Lowe (2002) 72ff. for a detailed discussion on Sextus' forces and his ability to draw support from both Spaniards and from survivors of earlier Pompeian armies.

[117] Cic *Att*. 16.4.2 (411).

[118] Cic. *Fam*.10.32.4 (415). Mommsen (4.162. n. 2) suggests Pollio's third legion was newly raised in either 44 or 43. *Contra* Schmitthenner (1958) 11ff.

[119] Cic. *Att*. 14.5.1 (359): *Quid tu illas putas quae fuerunt in Hispania? Nonne idem postulaturas? Quid, quas Annius transportavi<t> caninium volui* … See Brunt (1961) cf. Shackleton Bailey (1962); *Att*. 6. 359.

[120] Dio 45.10. 2.

[121] Brunt (1961) 200.

[122] Dio 45.10.3 cf. Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.4 (415) also 11.9.1 (220). According to André (1949) and Haller (1967) it was this inequality of forces that led Velleius to consider Pollio waged *clarissimum bellum* whilst Dio viewed it as a defeat

environment.[123] André believes Lepidus, on his arrival in Spain, failed to join forces with Pollio against Sextus, leaving him on his own. But Dio indicates Lepidus did not arrive to take up the province until Sextus had defeated Pollio and was well in control.[124] It is to be assumed that if Lepidus arrived in Spain with the intention to engage Sextus he rapidly assessed the situation as one of Caesarian defeat and entered into negotiations with Sextus which Antony subsequently conffirmed.[125] The more likely situation is that Lepidus left Rome with instructions to negotiate and never intended to pursue a military campaign or to assist Pollio.

After the departure of Sextus for Massilia, interest in Spain declined and the sources provide little information about ongoing events or Pollio's activities. On November 28 44 Antony reassigned *Hispania Ulterior* to Q. Cassius, but this was annulled by the senate on December 10 and Pollio remained in the province.[126] Cicero infers that there was no favouritism in the allocation of Cassius, as he was an opponent of Antony.[127] This suggests *Hispania Ulterior* at this point was not considered by Antony to be an overly important province in determining future political events. We have no indication of Pollio's response to Antony's attempted reallocation of his province to Cassius, or indeed if the news even reached him.

Conclusion

A summary of Pollio's activities from 49–44 BC can appear impressive. He joined with Caesar, undertook a command in Sicily and drove out Cato, was with Curio in Africa, with Caesar at Pharsalus, possibly tribune of the plebs in 47, and then again campaigned with Caesar at Thapsus and Munda before finally receiving a praetorship in 45 and becoming governor of Further Spain in 44 where he was active in defeating Sextus. However, on closer inspection it is noted that the majority of this information comes from Appian and Plutarch. Further, the references to Pollio in these historical accounts nearly always occur as a sudden insertion, a paragraph mentioning a particular incident involving Pollio, outside the general narrative. The

---

[123] Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.4 (415); Hayne (1971) 116. It is interesting to note Lepidus served his term as proconsul in *Hispania Ulterior* in 48 BC. Quintus Cassius was in charge of *Hispania Citerior*. Cassius had with him the thirtieth legion. When he attempted to raise further troops in this Pompeian stronghold rebellion broke out, necessitating the intervention of Lepidus, who brought peace by skilful negotiation (Caes. *B Alex*. 51-63).

[124] André (1949) 17-18; Dio 45.6. News of Caesar's death would have reached Pollio at the same time Sextus heard of the event in late April or early May. Haller (1967) 35 also considers Lepidus did not assist Pollio, noting that he had four legions at his disposal (App. *B Civ*. 3.46), and as a result Pollio had an inferior position to Sextus. But as noted Lepidus and his legions probably did not arrive until Pollio was well into the defensive position. Dio (45.10.3) states Sextus gained towns and provinces, particularly after Caesar's death, as Pollio's forces were not strong. This was probably in May and June.

[125] Cic. *Phil*. 5.38-9; Dio 45.10.6. Lepidus was accompanied by his brother Lucius Paullus, Quintus Thermus and Gaius Fannus (*Phil*. 13.13). See Hadas (1930) 63-64 for discussion of the difficulty in determining the date for the final conclusion of the negotiations.

[126] Cic. *Phil*. 3.26; 38.

[127] Cic. *Phil*. 3.26.

most consistent interpretation of this tendency has been that both Appian and Plutarch make use of Pollio's history, in which he no doubt included his own eye-witness account of the events he was describing. Thus we find Pollio the only individual named as a friend of Caesar at the crossing of the Rubicon, the incident of Pollio rescuing the stranded troops in Africa, his advice to Antony to resist the demands of the tribune Dolabella, the assistance given to Caesar during a sudden ambush of his men when being entertained by a flute player, and the words of Caesar at Pharsalus.

By contrast a mention of Pollio is absent in the contemporary sources for this period, in particular, in the works of Caesar and Cicero. With regard to Caesar, the most straightforward explanation is that Pollio only held a junior command and so failed to gain mention in the politically orientated commentary designed to highlight Caesar's own skills.[128] We could also note that Dolabella is also absent from Caesar's commentary and is known to have held a command as admiral of the fleet in May 49. His command was a disastrous failure and the argument that Caesar spared him the indignity of being named as the commander could well apply here. [129] Pollio also was involved in a disastrous defeat and as almost the sole survivor was spared recognition. But there is little doubt Pollio was a Caesarian and closely connected with Caesar throughout most of his campaigns. Pollio showed no hesitation at the outbreak of the civil war, and indeed appears to have already aligned himself with the Caesarian camp before the crisis of the Rubicon. It is more than likely Pollio was one of the young intellectuals with whom Caesar liked to associate. It was this persistent loyalty that Caesar rewarded with a praetorship in 45.

Cicero also has little to say about Pollio. He does not mention him as one of Caesar's supporters, a fact which suggests he either deliberately overlooked him or did not consider his support of political significance.[130] When Curio visited Cicero in 49 on his way to Sicily there is no indication that Pollio had gone in advance. During 47, when Cicero is concerned with Dolabella and the activities of the tribunes, there is again no reference to Pollio. Cicero was against the cancellation of debts and abhorred the situation of 47 but chooses only to mention the actions of Dolabella. [131] When Cicero worries about the situation with Sextus in Spain he makes only one, perhaps uncertain, mention of Pollio with regard to the movement of troops, and is inaccurate over Pollio's name, correcting the error as a lapse of memory. In the

---

[128] See in particular Welch (1998) 85-110 and the earlier discussion this Chapter.
[129] Caesar mentions only the defeat of C. Antonius at Corcyra and the betrayal of his army. See App. 2.41; Dio 41.40.1; Suet. *Iul*. 36; Oros. 6.15.8 cf. Caes. *B Civ*. 3.10.5; 67.5.
[130] Cic. *Fam*. 6.12.2 (226). This was written in October 46 after Thapsus and when Pollio would have been more than entitled to be listed as a Caesarian supporter if considered a person of significance by Cicero.
[131] Cic. *Att*. 7.11.1 (134).

continuing battle with Sextus, which Cicero follows with interest and concern, the role of Pollio is noticeably absent.[132]

However, we do have evidence Pollio was in communication with Cicero and that some form of relationship existed. As we have noted, Pollio in May 45 had written to Cicero concerning the activities of his nephew Quintus in the camp of Caesar. Cicero had already received news of his nephew's behaviour from Balbus the younger and Dolabella. Balbus had intimated what was happening with sufficient clarity for Cicero to grasp the essentials whilst Dolabella had been more discreet and only hinted at the difficulties, but still sufficiently for Cicero to understand. By contrast Pollio writes to Cicero in the plainest possible language, *apertissime*. Cicero indicates he would have been upset if he had not already known of Quintus' activities.[133] He sends Pollio's letter to Atticus and two days later writes he is anxious for his comments.[134] Under the guise of informing Cicero of the activities of his nephew it would appear Pollio has taken pains to outline exactly what odious comments Quintus was making about Cicero. It is to be assumed that it is on a basis of friendship that Pollio informs Cicero of these activities, although at the time the comments are well known to Cicero. But there is also the possibility Pollio was using the opportunity to inform Cicero of how he was being denigrated by his own family to Caesar himself.[135] Tullia had died in February 45, a fact which may have led both Balbus and Dolabella to temper their comments about Quintus when writing to Cicero. This cannot have been unknown to Pollio as Dolabella remained in Spain in Caesar's camp until June 45. Cicero was offended by the letter but at the same time was more concerned about the activities of Quintus than pursuing his feelings of insult. Pollio throughout his life became well known for his blunt and at times insulting language.[136] It is in keeping with these attributes that he would write the plain and harsh facts to Cicero; the degree of friendship or intended malice is difficult to determine. However, if he was writing as a friend of Cicero, it is to be noted that twelve months later Cicero seems to forget his name and never mentions he is the opponent of Sextus in Spain.

Pollio's military endeavours through this period show little success. Whilst he was present at all the major campaigns it is to be noted that he was sent by Curio back to the base camp before the

---

[132] André (1946 esp. 153-154) considers the absence of Pollio from Cicero's correspondence to be so unusual that he has hypothesised that in response to Pollio's final overt hostility to Cicero as manifest in his comments on Cicero's death, Tiro selectively removed all mention of Pollio from Cicero's correspondence as a form of *obnuntiatio*.

[133] Cic. *Att*. 12.38.2 (278): *Asinius Pollio ad me scripsit de impuro nostro cognato. quod Balbus minor nuper satis plane, Dolabella obscure, hic apertissime. ferrem graviter si novae aegrimoniae locus esset*. These activities of Quintus junior are not new to Cicero. After Pharsalus Quintus, Cicero's brother, and his son had both maligned Cicero to Caesar. See *Att*. 11.10.1 (221).

[134] Cic. *Att*. 12.39.1 (280). We do not hear of the reaction of Atticus.

[135] It is to be assumed Cicero replied to Pollio but there is no record of the letter.

[136] Dio 57.2.5.

final battle at Bagradas and was possibly captured by the Pompeians at Thapsus. However, his status is of a level that was of interest to Cicero, who comments on the rumour he may have been captured at Thapsus, and also remarks in 45 that there is a rumour he will be rewarded. Shortly afterwards Pollio was elected as praetor. It is possible therefore, that Pollio distinguished himself at Munda, but if so this was never reported in a contemporary source or in the later writings of Appian and Plutarch who draw heavily on Pollio's history.

The first documented military command for Pollio comes with his governership of Further Spain. This was one of the last arenas of conflict persisting from the civil war. Caesar had already indicated a pardon for Sextus, the decree yet to be passed. Sextus at the time was gaining the upper hand in Further Spain with the risk he could gain control of the whole of Spain. However, at the time of Caesar's murder there is no indication the events in Spain were of concern to Rome. Sextus only became a significant threat in the aftermath of the Ides of March and the potential for further civil war. Pollio was rapidly overcome by Sextus, but this failure must be seen in the context of the inequality of their forces and the fighting tactics of Sextus and his men. They had already worn down Carrinas, a more experienced commander. Pollio may well have felt he was left without support and his own inexperience brought to light. For the proud man that we know Pollio to be, the recognition and glory given to Lepidus for his achievements in dealing with Sextus can only have added insult to injury. Indeed we must consider that the subsequent ambivalence Pollio demonstrated in responding to Cicero and the senate and to Antony arose from this experience. Sextus gained the title of *imperator* for his successes in Spain and Lepidus a second triumph and recognition within the senate for his resolution of the conflict. Pollio was overlooked and emerged as the defeated general.

Further, the death of Caesar suddenly changed the perspective of the conflict with Sextus. Pollio had been sent by Caesar to mop up the remaining skirmish in Spain. After the Ides of March Sextus was in a position to continue fighting the republican cause and Pollio was now fighting for Antony. Whilst it was a clever political move by Antony to negotiate with Sextus, he was carrying out Caesar's instructions, and appeasing the senate, and it was obvious that Pollio was not in a winning position, it may also have been he was unsure of Pollio's personal support.

After Sextus left Spain Pollio began to settle into his province away from the unfolding events in Rome and engaged in the literary society that surrounded him. As winter approached he sent his troops inland for their winter quarters.

4 44-43 BC: Procrastination

Pollio remained in Further Spain until August 43 BC. But rather than being able to settle quietly to his own activities, he was soon embroiled in the continuing conflict between the senate, Antony and the demands of Octavian. We know he probably married at this time, sought to maintain his literary interests and remained in correspondence with Cicero and the senate. It is the three letters that Pollio wrote to Cicero in this period that provide the greatest insight into his thoughts and actions.

Marriage

In the proscriptions of 43 BC Pollio's father-in-law Quintus was proscribed.[1] We can therefore determine that Pollio married the daughter of L. Quintus (or Quinctius), (presumably Quintia) some time before 43 BC. Little is known of Quintus, although he was clearly prosperous enough to be proscribed. Nisbet and Hubbard speculate that the Quinctius referred to by Horace in *Ode* 2. 11 is probably the same prosperous and well-known Quinctius of *Epistle* 1.16.[2] This Quinctius, in line 2 of the ode, is addressed as *Hirpine Quincti*, and it is usually assumed that Hirpinius is Quinctius's *cognomen*.[3] But like Catullus's reference to Pollio's brother as *Marrucine Asini,* where we can be certain *Marrucine* is not the *cognomen* but geographical,[4] so *Hirpine* can be assumed to be geographical and not the *cognomen*. With this interpretation it can be noted that in 85 BC a certain C. Quinctius C. f. Valgus was patron of Aeclanum, one of the leading towns of the Hirpini.[5] This Valgus can be identified with the Valgus who was the father-in-law of P. Servilius Rullus.[6] The latter was frequently referred to by many authorities as "Valgius". He in turn is usually considered to be the "Valgus" referred to by Cicero and whom Cicero describes as having acquired significant land holdings from the Sullan proscriptions.[7] Nisbet and Hubbard conclude that Quinctius, the friend of Horace, may be a descendant, perhaps even grandson of this Valgus who prospered under Sulla. To further speculate, Nisbet and Hubbard also note the poem introduces the second half of the book, a position of some prominence. Now Quinctius may have deserved this distinction if his sister had married Pollio.

---

[1] App. *B Civ*. 4.12; 27. He drowned whilst escaping by sea.
[2] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 167-8.
[3] *Quid bellicosus Cantaber et Scythes,*
Hirpine Quincti, cogitet Hadria
Divisus obiecto, remittas
Quaerere, nec trepides in usum
[4] See Chapter 1 and discussion of Catull. 12.1.
[5] *ILS* 5318
[6] Cic. *leg. agr*. 3.3
[7] Cic. *leg. agr*. 2.69; 3.8;14. Also Salmon (1967) 390; Syme (1955A) 68 =*RP*1.287.

We know that Pollio's father-in-law was a Quinctius of unknown antecedants but prosperous enough to be proscribed. If he was a member of an Italian family which had made good after the Social War, his daughter may have made an attractive match for Pollio. In that case Quinctius, the friend of Horace, might have been Pollio's brother-in-law. This would further balance the first and eleventh poems of the book, the first to Pollio and the eleventh to Pollio's brother-in-law, just as the twentieth poem is to Maecenas and the tenth to Maecenas's brother-in-law. Whilst highly speculative as a theory it ties in nicely with Pollio's known friendship with Horace and the unknown history of the father-in-law Quintus, particularly as he was not of the Roman aristocracy, but of sufficient wealth and standing to make his daughter attractive to Pollio and also lead to his being named in the proscriptions. It also fits in well with the evidence that Pollio's family also prospered under Sulla as has been presented in the discussion of his family history. Syme has also considered the identity of L. Quinctius but concludes he remains unknown.[8]

During his stay in *Hispania Ulterior* Pollio almost certainly resided in Corduba. It was the established headquarters for generals campaigning in *Hispania Ulterior* and by 45 BC was considered the capital of the province.[9] It also had a thriving literary centre.[10] It was the home of the Seneca family, and the great orator Porcius Latro[11] and the poet Sextilius Ena[12] both had their origins in Corduba. Seneca, Latro and Sextilius would all become acquaintances of Pollio and these connections may have formed in Corduba before their individual moves to Rome. Pollio himself was writing plays and we know he also wrote to Cicero seeking to introduce his literary friend Cornelius Gallus.[13]

Political Alliances

At the time of Caesar's murder Pollio was absent from Rome, maintaining the campaign for Caesar in Spain against Sextus Pompey. As political alliances rapidly formed themselves in Rome into Caesareans and the largely Republican senate, Pollio maintained a silent neutrality. Furthermore, the only real interest in his activities and province at the time was in relation to Sextus. It was the son of Pompey, with his seven legions, who was slowly gaining the upper

---

[8] Syme (1955A) 68-69 = *RP* 1. 287-288.
[9] Caes. *B Hisp*. 3.1.
[10] Griffin (1972) 1-4 gives an overview of Spain in this period and the significant individuals who could be associated with the region, and also of its literary status, as part of her introduction to her work on Seneca the Elder and his origins in Corduba.
[11] A close and contemporary friend of the younger Seneca, he came from Spain and gained the reputation of being one of the four best declaimers of the period (Sen. *Controv*. 10 *pref*. 13) but was criticised by Messalla Corvinus (Sen. *Controv*. 2.4.8).
[12] In later years Pollio walked out on a recitation by Sextilius Ena, offended by his praise of Cicero. They had both been invited to the house of Messalla Corvinus, suggesting they mixed in the same circle. See Sen. *Suas*. 6.27.
[13] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.6 (368), 32.5 (415).

hand over Pollio, who aroused concern as to whether he would advance towards Rome and support or undermine the senate. Once this situation was resolved by the offering of negotiations, interest in Pollio and further Spain for the time disappeared.

In October 44 Cicero had written: *res Hispanienses valde bonae.*[14] But a passage in Appian, although referring to events a decade later, indicates the allies of Sextus maintained their campaigns and loyalty to Pompey's memory.[15] It is to be assumed Pollio continued to govern a politically unstable province even after the negotiations with Sextus.

Caesar

The loyalty of Pollio had been to Caesar. His appointment as propraetor to *Hispania Ulterior* was for one year. There is no evidence that any further office had been promised to him after this time. Therefore, Pollio had no particular investment in maintaining support for Caesar's *acta,* as did Plancus, for example, who had been allocated the consulship for 42 by Caesar and the promise of a triumph, or in ensuring that the Caesareans remained in power. However, as a *novus homo* his interests would be far better served under the Caesareans than under a Pompeian senate controlled by Cicero. In 43 Velleius describes the senate as almost entirely made up of Pompeians: *Quem senatus paene totus adhuc e Pompeianis constans partibus.*[16]

Pollio and his older brother were the first generation of his family to gain entry into the senate and as a consequence Pollio had established few political alliances with powerful men in the curia.[17] Since 49 BC, when he was twenty-five, he had been campaigning with Caesar, with the only substantial relief from this spent in Rome in 47 BC when he was embroiled in the activities of the tribunes. His appointment as praetor in 45 had occurred within the last three months of the year, prior to which time he had been with Caesar in Spain. He left for his province at the beginning of 44. With the death of Caesar his subsequent loyalty was unknown.

---

[14] Cic. *Att*. 15.13.4 (416).

[15] App. *B Civ*. 5.134: 'Pompeius has sent us to you (Antony), not because he cannot take refuge if he were minded to continue the war in Spain, a country friendly to him on his father's account, which espoused his own cause when he was younger, and even now calls upon him for that purpose, but because he prefers to enjoy peace with you, and if need be, to fight under your orders.'

[16] Vell. Pat. 2.73.2. Welch in Powell and Welch (2002) 3 considers Velleius wrong in this assessment, noting the high number of Caesarian senators in 44. A significant number of senators had gained their position due to Caesar's support and a number of those who conspired to kill Caesar had previously been his supporters.

[17] It is to be assumed Pollio's older brother was established in the senate by 44 BC but there is no evidence his position was any more than that of the vast majority, unknown, with little political influence and silent in the sources. See Chapter 1. In his youth Pollio had aligned himself with the poets and intellectuals. Later he will complain that if the greater part of the senate had known him better they would have gained more from him (Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.5 (415)).

The only insight we have into Pollio's relationship with Caesar is what he himself wrote to Cicero in March 43 BC.[18] However, at this time Pollio was writing well after Caesar's murder and in a climate in which loyalty to the state or otherwise was under close scrutiny, especially by Cicero, the recipient of the letter. In this correspondence Pollio introduced a discussion of his past relationship with Caesar by declaring that his own temperament was one which desired peace and freedom*, pax et libertas*.[19] Further, the outbreak of the civil war had been much to his dislike; *itaque illud initium civilis belli saepe deflevi* and by preference he would have remained uninvolved: *cum vero non liceret mihi nullius partis esse*. This was a valid sentiment expressed by Pollio, as subsequent events would show that when forced to make a political choice he preferred to retire from the scene; this was most evident at Perusia and again at Actium. But as he could not remain neutral his decision as to which party to support was driven, not by political ideology, but by a desire to ensure his personal safety; as he points out, he had powerful enemies on both sides. He avoided the camp where he knew he would not be safe from his enemy's plots*: ea castra fugi in quibus plane tutum me ab insidiis inimici sciebam non futurum.*[20]

But once he had joined Caesar's camp, with great reluctance, he then set about to take on the tasks as required. At this point Pollio explains his relationship with Caesar: he loved him with great loyalty and duty, *dilexi summa cum pietate et fide,* as he had treated Pollio as one of his oldest intimates even though he was a recent acquaintance. As for the policies of the man, he often obeyed his orders with reluctance and in a manner that revealed this feeling. He experienced the ill will of others and states he has learned how miserable life could be under despotic rule: *et quam misera sub dominatione vita esset*. It is open to speculation what tasks Pollio may have found so undesirable, or if indeed he was now only seeking to rationalize previous actions. The sentiments Pollio expresses parallel closely those of Gaius Matius in his letter to Cicero of October 44.[21] Matius, in one of the most significant letters in Cicero's correspondence, describes his loyalty and friendship for Caesar, grieves for his death, but states he held misgivings about his policies and did not agree with all of Caesar's actions: *neque enim Caesarem in dissensione civili sum secutus, sed amicum, quamquam re offendebar, tamen non*

---

[18] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.2-3 (368).
[19] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.2: *natura autem mea et studia trahunt me ad pacis et libertatis cupiditatem*.
[20] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.2. The only known activity of Pollio which could have led to the formation of such enemies was his attempted prosecution of C. Porcius Cato in 54 BC. Cato had the strong support of Pompey but nothing more is known of him after this time, his trouble-making activities having reached their peak in the mid-fifties. As Shackleton Bailey (2:507) notes, Cato was unlikely to be still such a powerful enemy in 49 BC. It also raises the possibility that Pollio was more active in Rome after 54 BC and before joining with Caesar in 49 than is known.
[21] Cic. *Fam*. 11.28 (349). Little is known of Matius other than he was a close friend of Cicero and a partisan of Caesar.

deserui, neque bellum umquam civile aut causam dissensionis probavi.[22] Like Matius, Pollio also may have found that the man to whom he gave his loyalty in 49 BC had moved uncomfortably to far more autocratic rule by 44 BC. Watkins, in his life of Plancus, raises the question of whether one could be simultaneously loyal to Caesar and to the *Res Publica*, whether following Caesar meant abandoning Roman traditions.[23] Whilst he doubts if Plancus had such a crisis of confidence the same should not be said for Pollio. However, unlike Matius, who had retired from political life in 44 and was no longer dependent on political favours and so could express his sentiments with ease, Pollio had only reached the position of obtaining the praetorship through Caesar's beneficence.[24]

Pollio concludes his assessment of his activities with Caesar with the statement : *ita, si id agitur ut rursus in potestate omnia unius sint, quicumque is est, ei me profiteor inimicum.* No individual is named but in the context of writing to Cicero it is assumed Pollio is referring to Antony. But equally this could be a barb for Cicero whom Pollio may have perceived as also seeking supreme power – he certainly wanted the consulship.

Cicero

Pollio's relationship with Cicero at this time is more difficult to determine. It is well known that in the *pro Lamia*, a defence of L. Aelius Lamia, a close friend of Cicero, but also of Antony, undertaken by Pollio within a few months of Cicero's death, Pollio was scathing towards Cicero.[25] This colours interpretation of the earlier correspondence. If we read Pollio's letters to Cicero without the assumption that their relationship eventually became embittered, the first letter reveals a formal but friendly tone: *quod familiarem meum tuorum numero habes, opinione tua mihi gratius est. invideo illi tamen quod ambulat et iocatur tecum. Quaeres quanti aestimem; si umquam licuerit vivere in otio, experieris. nullum enim vestigium abs te discessurus sum.*[26] But the true sincerity of this statement has been questioned.[27] Pollio is grateful for Cicero's response towards his friend. With respect to his own relationship with Cicero he speaks in the future tense; it is a relationship he hopes he will develop in the future; he uses the word *otium* implying a time of leisure incompatible with Cicero's present

---

[22] Cic. *Fam*. 11.28.2 (349).
[23] Watkins (1997) 50.
[24] As Sumner (1972) 358 notes, Pollio's praetorship was a clear violation of the *lex annalis*. He was only 31 years of age, certainly not over 32 years and quite definitely not thirty-nine years, the required age.
[25] See Chapter 5.
[26] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.6 (368). The *familiaris* is usually considered to be the poet C. Cornelius Gallus of letter 10.32.5. (415). See Tyrrell and Purser 6:71; Shackleton Bailey *Fam*. 2:508.
[27] See Gelzer (1972) 303; Zecchini (1982) 1273-74); Massa (1993) 506 *contra* Willcock (1995) 104. We could also note a rather similar statement by Cicero, writing to Brutus, where he concludes: 'I would like you, my dear Brutus, to have my son Cicero at your side as much as possible. He will never obtain a better training in the manly arts than by studying and imitating you.' (*Brut*. 5.6).

preoccupations. This tone has been considered by some to be sarcastic. However, there must have been at this time some measure of friendship between the two or his statement would have appeared incongruous at least.[28] The subsequent two letters in June are direct and without warmth, with no attempt to offer flattery to Cicero.[29] Pollio seemed miffed because Cicero and the senate had failed to enlist his support and provide him with a role. If we consider Pollio's relationship with Cicero at this time was at best distant, it is not to be assumed he had a close relationship with Antony.

Antony

Whilst Pollio himself states he had a former friendship with Antony, he qualifies the statement on the basis that it was no greater than the friendship that existed between Plancus and Antony: *mei propter amicitiam quae mihi cum Antonio, non maior tamen quam Planco, fuit*.[30] This statement implies the relationship between Plancus and Antony was not close, particularly as Plancus at this time was proclaiming his loyalty to the state. Plancus' loyalty had been to Caesar and his relationship to Antony unknown. In 45 Plancus is known to have been responsible for Antony hurrying back to Rome from Narbo at the beginning of the Spanish campaign as Plancus was forcing the sale of Pompey's property, which Antony now owned.[31] Four years earlier Pollio had been involved in the unsettling disputes with the tribunes which may have resulted in a conflicted relationship with Antony. And, as already discussed, Pollio may well have felt alienated by both Antony and Lepidus in their intervening negotiations with Sextus from which he was excluded, Lepidus and Antony both receiving the gratitude and rewards of the senate.

Plancus

The nature of Pollio's relationship with Plancus at this time is also unknown. Clearly he felt in mid-43 he would be able to negotiate with him and persuade him to support Antony, but this may have been due more to confidence in his own negotiating skills than his relationship with Plancus. It is also likely Plancus welcomed some intervention that allowed him a face-saving

---

[28] Hall (2009) 82-83 who, in his analysis of expressions of political politeness, also considers this paragraph in the correspondence to be more likely one of friendship.
[29] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33; 32. (409, 415).
[30] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.2. (409).
[31] Certainly Watkins (1997) 56 considers their friendship as no more than that of political affiliates: Plancus' 'rapid ascent to prominence under Caesar had coincided with Antony's temporary demise.' For the sale of Pompey's house see Cic. *Phil*. 2. 77-78; Plut. *Ant*. 10. Contra Ramsey (2004), who does not consider Antony was demoted after the events of 47.

step by which to join with the victors. It would appear the intense dislike Pollio later developed for Plancus was not evident at this stage.[32]

Octavian

In 44 BC a new player entered the scene in the person of Octavian. His relationship with Cicero and the senate split the Caesarean faction. He was the designated heir of Caesar and as such may have warranted Pollio's loyalty more than Antony. In April Pollio wrote to Octavian (along with Cicero and the consuls) asking how he could best help the state and Appian records subsequent communication from Octavian to Pollio.[33] This implies that Pollio from an early stage had identified Octavian as a key individual with whom he should be in communication.

At the beginning of 43 Pollio's political future was uncertain. His governorship had come to an end; Antony in November 44 had reallocated the province to Cassius, but the senate in December had revoked this act and for the time being Pollio was to remain in the province until he received instructions to formally hand it over to his successor from the senate. His only hope for a continuing rise in his political career was to ensure that he supported the side that would come to power. The consuls for 43 and 42 had been designated by Caesar and maintained by the senate's approval of his *acta.* The most ideal solution would be for the senate to reach a compromise with Antony and avert ongoing civil war. The Caesarean consuls, Hirtius and Pansa, were eager for this outcome, but Cicero's hatred of Antony kept pushing the senate towards civil war. Pollio's best option was to wait and carefully monitor the movements of the key players. From his point of view this would particularly involve watching Lepidus and Plancus.

The Three Western Governors: Pollio, Lepidus and Plancus

Of the three western governors Lepidus clearly held the balance of power. Geographically he could block the movement of both Pollio in *Hispania Ulterior* and Plancus in *Gallia Comata* whilst in a position to render rapid assistance to Antony in Cisalpine Gaul or to troops sent from Italy. Further, between November 44 and May 43 he recruited three extra legions bringing his total to seven.[34] His original four legions were veterans, providing him with a strong military

---

[32] Plin. *HN pref*. 31. Pliny is a significant source for this knowledge of Pollio's hostility towards Plancus. Wright (2002) esp. 181ff argues it may be an overlooked source for Velleius' constant hostility towards Plancus which is often thought to have arisen from his using Pollio's *Historiae* as his source. See also Chapter 5 n13. and Chapter 13. However, it remains that the hostility of Pollio towards Plancus is more likely to have developed during these course of events, and/or in the Perusine war, and been maintained through the period under Augustus rather than to have been present at the beginning of these events.
[33] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.3 (409); App. B *Civ*. 3.81. Zecchini (1982) 1272 considers Pollio's true conflict lay between Antony and Octavian.
[34] App. *B Civ*. 3.46; 84.

base. It is probable he maintained the majority of his legions in Narbonese Gaul, close to events in Cisalpine Gaul. Both Antony and the senate vied for his support. Plancus also recruited extra troops. He had three veteran legions and recruited a further two legions.[35] Between them they held twelve legions, and should they join forces Pollio would be unable to stand alone.

Pollio himself held three strong legions, the Twenty-Eighth, the Thirtieth and another.[36] However, he made no preparations for military conflict, he raised no further troops and he sent his legions to winter quarters in the interior of Lusitania.[37] Pollio's explanation was that he was unaware of any suspicion of a coming civil war: *et hercules longe remotus ab omni suspicione futuri civilis tumultus.*[38] The siege of Mutina was under way by December 44, and both Lepidus and Plancus were sufficiently alarmed to begin an active recruiting process; it is unlikely Pollio remained totally ignorant of these activities. Further, his troops had presumably returned to Baetica by the end of March, as Pollio reported that he would consider marching with them in his letter of March 16.[39] In fact he later complains that from the very beginning of the war, presumably in December or January, Antony had been trying to bribe the Twenty-Eighth legion and Lepidus had been demanding he hand over the Thirtieth. [40] Mutiny threatened, and this may have been a reason Pollio removed his troops to winter quarters. The attempted poaching of his troops suggests it was not anticipated he would be bringing his troops into war, or, it was considered unlikely he would be giving assistance to Antony.

Pollio's position within his province was also not secure. He sat in the midst of a Pompeian stronghold. Sextus had raised an army of seven legions in the campaign against Pollio and it is to be assumed they continued to hold a balance of power. Sextus had left Further Spain after the negotiations with Lepidus in August 44. He settled in Massilia with a fleet and several of his troops and from there watched the course of events in Rome.[41] As Antony began to gain the upper hand at Mutina, Cicero's response was one of increasing desperation. In this context he wished to enlist the support of Sextus. In delivering the Thirteenth Philippic on March 20 Cicero offered to co-opt Sextus into the college of augurs, and obviously had an intention of enlisting him to assist at Mutina.[42] The envoys from the senate, L. Aemilius Paulus, Q. Minucius Thermus and Gaius Fannius are reported to have turned aside, *devertisse,* at Massilia

---

[35] It is the veteran legions that are of significance; inexperienced recruits often of little effect.
[36] Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.4 (415). Brunt (1971) 479 n. 8 notes the Twenty-eighth and Thirtieth legions had been formed in 49 and the unknown third legion could have been formed from old soldiers in Spain.
[37] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.3 (409).
[38] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.3 (409).
[39] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.6 (368).
[40] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.5; 32.4 (368; 415). Presumably Lepidus had some claim over this legion, perhaps from the time of the conflict with Sextus. Pollio may have been given extra assistance from the Thirtieth legion of Lepidus.
[41] App. *B Civ*. 4.84; Dio 45.10.6, 48.17.1; Cic. *Phil*. 13.13.
[42] Cic. *Phil*. 13.12, 50.

to meet with Sextus, most probably on Cicero's instructions.[43] Sextus indicated he was ready to take his forces to Mutina but feared he would offend the veterans, or so he stated.[44] The senate persisted in trying to gain his support, not only as an opponent to Antony, but also as a counter to Octavian, as Sextus and Octavian were both sons of famous men with the potential to rally supporters.[45] To further entice Sextus, he was given the chief command of the maritime coasts and the Roman fleets.[46] But he did nothing. However, his high status with the senate can only have increased the power of the Pompeian stronghold of his troops in Further Spain. Certainly Pollio's Caesarian quaestor, Balbus, began to feel the pressure. His brutal treatment of Pompeian supporters failed to give him security, even the recall of men exiled in 56 [47] did little to stem the tide, and by May he had escaped from the province taking with him as much of the treasury as he could obtain.[48] Pollio himself appears also to have been under pressure. At a public meeting in Corduba he had indicated he would only hand over his province to an emissary from the senate.[49] As noted, he had also removed his troops from Baetica, sending them into the interior, as a further sign he was not about to engage in military activity with either side.[50] That there was a persisting Pompeian stronghold hostile to Antony is evident from Plancus' comment in July 43. He considers that if Lepidus and Antony had been pushed

---

[43] The use of *devertisse* implies they had been sent out with another destination intended. Shackleton Bailey (1986) 331 considers they were on their way to Lepidus. Sextus' reply is known for Cicero to include the statement in the Thirteenth *Philippic* delivered on March 20. This suggests their communication with Sextus had occurred in late February or early March.
[44] Cic. *Phil*. 13.13. Hadas (1930) 65-66.
[45] See Welch (2002) 20-21.
[46] Vell. Pat. 2.73.2; Dio 46.40.3; 48.17.1; App. *B Civ*. 4.84. Earlier Appian (3.4) had incorrectly placed this appointment with the negotiations in 44 BC. The dating of the appointment is argued on the basis that Dio places the event at the same time as Brutus and Cassius were granted their provincial commands which was confirmed on 27April 43 (Cic. *Brut*. 1.5 [=9].1). See Woodman (1983) 177-178. His coins bear the legend PRAEFECTUS CLASSIS ET ORAE MARITIMAE. See Sydenham 1344ff.
[47] Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.2 (415): *exsules reduxit, non horum temporum sed illorum quibus a seditiosis senatus trucidatus aut expulus est Sex. Varo pro consule*. The *seditosi* Balbus recalled probably belonged to an anti-Balban faction of 56 BC which he now recalled as a measure of goodwill. The recent exiles whom he did not recall were probably those Caesar had exiled in 45. See Weinrib (1990) 72-74.
[48] Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.1-3 (415). The elder Balbus had ties of friendship with both Pompey and Caesar. Pompey granted the franchise for him and his family and he developed a relationship with Caesar when he was quaestor in Gades in 69. In 62 he served as the *praefectus fabrum* of Caesar. His relations with both Caesar and Pompey kept his enemies in Gades under control. But with the imminent breakdown of the first triumvirate in 56, a prosecution of Balbus was undertaken, the key prosecutor a Gaditane. He was defended by Cicero. Local resentments in Gades were emerging. In 49 Gades was seen as a strong Caesarian *municipium* although rivalries were strong. By contrast the loyalty of Corduba to Caesar was suspect. The actions of Caesar in 45, in his surprise visit to Gades, suggest there was anxiety about its Caesarian loyalty and the appointment of the younger Balbus as quaestor suggests a move to control Pompeian uprisings in the city. After Caesar's murder it would appear Balbus was losing ground in this conflict. See Weinrib (1990) 75-76.
[49] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.5 (368).
[50] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.3 (409).

towards Spain, they would have encountered a province distinctly unfriendly, *aversissimam,* towards them.[51]

Pollio's Three Letters

After the negotiations with Sextus in August 44 we hear nothing of Pollio in the source material until he writes to Cicero in March 43. Between March and June he writes three letters; the only extant correspondence of Pollio which exists. There is no record of Cicero's reply to these letters. The letters are striking on several accounts. First, they have been used to determine Pollio's political sympathies at this point in time. Secondly, the content of the letters is remarkable for its degree of internal inconsistency, and finally, they reveal a parallel process between Pollio and Plancus as they both sit on the fence, buying time and waiting for events to unfold, before they declare their hands. The contradictions found within the letters, and the expressed political ambivalence, are in sharp contrast to the overall personality of Pollio that emerges from other sources; he is normally a forthright plain speaking individual, highly critical of others, stoical in his emotional expression, dry and to the point in his writing.[52] None of this is evident within the correspondence.[53]

The correspondence should also be considered in the context of Pollio's knowledge of events in Rome at the time of his writing, generally considered to be six weeks out of date.[54] The pickets of Lepidus also constantly interfere and delay his correspondence and Pollio indicates that he does not receive all communications. Further, Pollio in response, must also censor the content of his own communications.[55]

In the period covered by Pollio's letters Antony is initially engaged in the siege of Mutina, then on April 22 he flees in defeat towards Lepidus and on May 29 Lepidus joins forces with Antony. Between January and early March there is a shifting attitude in the senate towards Antony strongly driven by Cicero. The early policy of reconciliation and avoidance of civil conflict has by mid March given way to an outright declaration of war.

---

[51] Cic. *Fam*. 10.24.6. (428).
[52] See Chapters 11 and 12.
[53] For a discussion of this correspondence see Gelzer (1972).
[54] *Cic*. *Fam*. 10.31.1; 33.1, 5 (368; 409). The pickets of Lepidus delay his communications, with all news taking at least forty days to reach him and the news of Mutina delayed a further nine days due to interference by Lepidus. Whilst the sailing season did not open until April 15 it appears some mail was getting through by sea (*Fam*. 10.31.1). See also Nicholson (1994) esp. 54-55 on the delivery and confidentiality of correspondence with specific reference to Pollio.
[55] There is no record of Cicero's letter to Pollio or of Pansa's letter to Pollio. We also do not know if Cicero replied to the letters of Pollio. The overall flow of content in Pollio's three letters suggest they were probably the only three letters he wrote. See also Gelzer (1972).

The two consuls, Pansa and Hirtius, were both Caesarians but opponents of Antony. In the senate meeting at the beginning of January it was decided that Octavian, who had marched to give assistance to Decimus Brutus against Antony, should be given a formal command with the title of propraetor conjointly with the two consuls who would leave to join the engagement. But at the same time the senate also decided to send an envoy to Antony with proposals for reconciliation. At the beginning of February the envoy returned with demands from Antony which included that he should be allocated the province of Comatia currently held by Plancus. In outrage a state of war was declared against Antony, and Lepidus and Plancus were ordered to render assistance to Decimus Brutus at Mutina. Pollio was not included in this decree. [56] In early March it was again proposed in the senate to send a second embassy to Antony, but it was soon abandoned, and by March 19 Pansa left Rome with four legions to assist Hirtius who had joined Octavian at Ariminum.

Dating of the three letters

According to Tyrrell and Purser, Shackleton Bailey, and all standard references relating to Cicero's correspondence[57] the three letters written by Pollio between March and June 43 are sequenced as follows[58]:

Cic. *Fam*. 10.31 dated March 16.

Cic. *Fam*. 10.33 undated but placed as early June and before *Fam.* 10.32.

Cic. *Fam*. 10.32 dated June 8.

Before considering Pollio's letters in detail a comment is required on their dating. There is only one letter with a certain date, *Fam.* 10.32, which is securely dated June 8 43. The first letter (10.31) is dated March 16. But there is a strong argument that this letter can be linked with the letter mentioned in 10.33, which did not leave Gades until April 15.[59] In letter 10.33 Pollio states that in April he dispatched two couriers in two ships from Gades with letters to Cicero, the consuls, and Octavian. Further, he reckons that the ships did not leave Gades until the same day that Pansa joined battle, which we know to be April 15, as before that day there had been no

---

[56] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.1. (409); Dio 46.29.6. Dio confuses the chronology and places the decree at the time of the senate meeting in January. Lepidus complied half-heartedly, dispatching in advance a praetorian cohort under M. Junius Silanus.

[57] See Beard in Wiseman (2002) 103-144 and her chapter on "Ciceronian correspondences: making a book out of letters", especially the introduction, for an up to date discussion of the chronological ordering and publication of Cicero's letters.

[58] See Appendix One for the Latin transcript of the three letters.

[59] Shackleton Bailey *Fam*. 2. 506: 'This letter was not dispatched until April 14 on which date the sea became navigable.'

navigation since the previous winter: *nulla enim post hiemem fuit ante eam diem navigatio*. The statement is absolute; no correspondence by sea could have left Spain before April 15. Our difficulty is that in his letter of mid March (10.31), Pollio states that as the navigation season has now opened he will write to Cicero as often as possible: *nunc vero nactus occasionem postea quam navigari coeptum est cupidissime et quam creberrime potero scribam ad te.* We must assume therefore that Pollio was in error about the opening of the sailing season in one of the letters. However, if we could establish that the letters referred to as the letters sent in April, as mentioned in 10.33, and which includes a letter to Cicero, does not mean this was a new letter to Cicero but rather a continuation of the letter begun and dated to March, as in 10.31, we are a long way to resolving the dilemma. In his 10.31 letter Pollio is replying to Cicero and also indicates he is writing to the consul Pansa. He complains to Cicero that he has not been given specific instructions and indicates he will also be asking Pansa how best to proceed. In letter 10.33 Pollio refers to the content of the letters he had dispatched in April. He had written to Cicero and the consuls asking to be informed how best he could help the state. This is highly compatible with the content of the March letters and suggests the letters written in March did not leave Gades until mid April.

Letter 10.31.1; 6

> But now that the opening of navigation gives me the chance, I shall write to you most eagerly and as often as I can.
>
> What does very much surprise me is that you have not written to me whether I shall help the commonwealth more by staying in my province or by leading my own army to Italy. As for myself, although it is safer and easier for me to stay here, I perceive that at a time like this legions are needed much more than provinces, especially as the latter can be recovered without trouble. So I have decided as matters stand, to march. Further, you will learn everything from the letter I have sent to Pansa – I am sending you a copy.

Letter 10.33.3

> Accordingly in April I dispatched two couriers in two ships from Gades with letters to yourself, to the Consuls, and to Octavian asking to be informed how I could best help the commonwealth. But according to my reckoning the ship left Gades on the same day that Pansa joined battle; for before that day there had been no navigation since last winter.

Further, if we date the departure of these letters to April, several other inconsistencies within the March letter to Cicero may be resolved, especially if we consider that he may have written the letter dated to mid March over an extended period of time. In referring to the letter he received from the consul Pansa, Pollio states: *unas enim post Id. Mart. demum a Pansa litteras accepi.* As Shackleton Bailey argues, if Pansa's letter arrived on the Ides of March, and Pollio is writing on March 16, there was little point in his highlighting that it 'finally' arrived on the Ides, unless,

of course, he is writing in frustration some time after receiving this letter.[60] If, therefore, Pollio was writing this letter over an extended period of time, then the reference to when Pansa's letter arrived makes sense. Next, we find a sudden and somewhat inexplicable shift of tone and content two-thirds of the way through the letter. Pollio has at some length outlined how well he has acted in not handing over his veteran legion to Lepidus. He concludes with calls for peace and says that he is ready to defend the freedom of his country. The next paragraph typifies what is customarily seen in concluding a letter, especially to Cicero, an expression of friendship and a statement that he is waiting for the day when he can walk at Cicero's side. To all intents and purposes it would appear he had finished his letter. But the next paragraph suddenly launches into an attack on Cicero, querying why he has not written to him on how best to serve the state and, contrary, to all he, Pollio, has just written, he has now decided to march. Again this perplexing contradiction is more understandable if he added this paragraph later, when new information suddenly influenced his decision, as will be argued. It seems that Pollio, with a change of mind, has added an extra statement of his new intent some time after the composition of the original letter.

> I am more gratified than you imagine by your taking my friend into your circle. But I envy him his walks and jests with you. You will ask how highly I value that privilege: if we are ever allowed to live in peace, you will find out by experience. I shall not stir from your side.
>
> What does very much surprise me is that you have not written to me whether I shall help the commonwealth more by staying in my province or by leading my own army to Italy.

What is important in accepting that the March letter did not leave Spain until mid April is that no reply from Pollio to Cicero and the consuls reached Rome before the end of May by which time the most significant events in the civil war were well beyond their climax.[61]

Finally, what is customarily considered as the second letter in his correspondence (10.33), can only be dated from the content itself. Within the letter Pollio (10. 33.1; 5) states he has received news of the battle of Mutina and that it took forty-nine days to reach him:

> *Quo tardius certior fierem de proeliis apud Mutinam factis Lepidus effecit, qui meos tabellarios novem dies retinuit*

---

[60] Shackleton Bailey *Fam*. 2.507.

[61] See Casson (1971) 270 ff. on the difficulties of sea travel to Rome from Corduba. He notes the journey could take a month. Fairweather (1984) 519 also comments on the time to travel between Ostia and Gades and notes that it is not an unreasonable journey to be taken in peace time. However, she questions Pliny the Elder's statement that the journey could be made under sail in seven days (*HN* 19. 3-4) stating that this would require ideal weather conditions but also notes that the winds would have to be consistently adverse for it to take longer than a month.

and

> *maxime tamen doleo adeo et longo et infesto itinere ad me veniri ut die quadragesimo post aut ultra etiam quam facta sunt omnia nuntientur…*

The letter is usually dated to the end of May or the beginning of June. The battle of Mutina occurred on April 21 and Pollio received the news "at least", *ultra*, forty-nine days later. This readily places the letter at the end of the first week in June, perhaps even a little later.

This letter is usually sequenced as having been written before the letter dated June 8 (10.32). But as this letter can be placed within a very similar time frame many of the apparent contradictions that occur in the June 8 letter (10.32) resolve if we consider the undated letter was written after the letter of June 8. In the undated letter (10.33), Pollio reports he has just received news of the battle of Mutina. He is alarmed and he is aware an urgent response is required and indicates that there is no time to wait for senatorial decrees; he will take action; he will write with his plans in his next letter.

> *Anni autem tempus libertatem maiorem mihi dat propterea quia frumenta aut in agris aut in villis sunt. Itaque proximis litteris consilium meum expedietur. Nam neque deesse neque superesse rei publicae volo.*

If we consider that the next letter written is that dated June 8 (10.32) then its content is quite incongruous. He makes no mention of plans to march, nor is there any sense of urgency within the letter. Rather the whole first half of the letter is devoted to the domestic issue of the problems with his quaestor Balbus. He then acknowledges that what is of greater importance is for the senate to decide what they wish for him to do: *nunc quod praestat quid me velitis facere constituite.* He outlines his three legions and how he has resisted the constant poaching of his veterans by Lepidus and Antony. He concludes with a jibe that the state could have used him to much greater advantage if they had known him better, says that he is sending Cicero a copy of the letter he wrote to Balbus and tells Cicero to ask his friend Gallus for the play if he wishes to read it.

> *Sed res publica si me satis novisset et maior pars senatus, maiores ex me fructus tulisset.*
>
> *Epistulam quam Balbo cum etiam nunc in provincia esset, scripsi, legendam tibi misit. Etiam praetextam si voles legere, Gallum Cornelium, familiarem meum, poscito.*

There is nothing in this letter to suggest Pollio had news of Mutina, rather it is a casual letter informing Cicero of events in his province and again questioning why he has not received specific instruction, and, at the same time, justifying his continued inactivity. It would certainly be the letter he would write if the events at Mutina were still unknown to him. By reversing the order of these two letters there is no need to explain why Pollio indicated he would take action but then totally disregard this state of affairs in a subsequent letter written a few days later.

Bosworth also notes the different tone within the two letters, but argues that in the intervening period between the letters Pollio had received the news of the union of Lepidus and Antony and so had retreated once again to a neutral posture.[62] But as the news of the union of Lepidus and Antony did not reach Rome until June 9, Plancus himself only writes of this on June 6 and Decimus on June 3,[63] it is almost certain Pollio would have been unaware of these facts until at least the beginning of July.

Pollio's three letters do contain inconsistencies to a surprising degree. However, some of the more gross inconsistencies resolve if we consider his first letter was indeed the letter that was sent on April 15, and that he may have composed this letter over several weeks, and that he wrote of the domestic issues in his province concerning his quaestor before he had news of Mutina. The discussion of Pollio's letters will be based on this proposed chronology.

Letter One: Cic. Fam. 10.31. (368) dated March 16 Corduba

Pollio commenced his first letter to Cicero in mid March 43. It is to be noted he was responding to a communication from Cicero and had not independently initiated communication with either Cicero or the senate. Plancus and Lepidus had both written to the senate at this time in what appears to have been a collaborative exercise promoting negotiation and reconciliation with Antony.[64] Pollio, it is to be assumed, was not included in this exercise, and now writes independently of the two western governors. Cicero has queried his silence, implying there had been an expectation as governor of a province that he would have communicated his situation to the senate. However, there is no evidence that either Lepidus or Plancus (before their joint March communication) had been communicating with the senate at this time, the last known letter of Plancus to Cicero having been written at the end of December 44.[65] Cicero wants to be reassured Pollio has not been influenced by an undesirable individual: *ne movear eius sermonibus quem, tametsi nemo est qui videre velit, tamen nequaquam proinde ac dignus est oderunt homines, periculum non est.*[66] The identity of this individual has been variously debated, with most consideration given to Pollio's quaestor Balbus. The most likely individual, Antony, has often been excluded because of Pollio's use of *sermonibus*, as the latter could not have been in direct conversation with Antony. But Balbus does not sit easily in this context as only a few months before Cicero had written, anxious that he should be progressing well in the

---

[62] Bosworth (1972) 459-460.
[63] Cic. *Fam*. 11.26. (410).
[64] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 173 believes Antony was behind this exercise.
[65] Cic. *Fam*. 10.4 (358). Cicero replies to this letter in mid January 43 *Fam*. 10.5 (359) according to Shackleton Bailey but Tyrrell and Purser place it firmly in mid December.
[66] Cic. *Fam* 10.31.2. (368).

province.[67] However, he was known to be a committed Caesarian and Cicero's anxiety could be justified.[68] Pollio writes in clear terms of distaste for the individual, and further indicates that his own dislike for him is so strong that anything in common with him would be most disagreeable. This would certainly fit Balbus[69] but does not necessarily exclude Antony as it is easy to imagine that much of Antony's behaviour could have been offensive to Pollio and Pollio is writing to Cicero whose hatred for Antony at this time is well known. The identity of the individual must therefore remain uncertain.

Having taken this stance, Pollio is then obliged to define his past relationship to Caesar. His need to explain his Caesarian activities strongly suggests there had been no previous correspondence with Cicero. As has been discussed, he claims that his choice was forced by his enemies at the time and that he has a basic distaste for despotic rule, regardless of the individual ruler. Rather it is freedom, *libertas*, which he seeks, grabbing the political catch phrase of the time. Next he must explain why he has taken no action and he moves to blame the consuls: they had not instructed him how to act either by senatorial decree or by letter, although he must then admit he has finally, *demum*, received one letter from the consul Pansa who has requested he place himself and his army at the disposal of the senate.[70]

When he states that he has not been instructed by senatorial decree there is an implication he is aware both Plancus and Lepidus had received such instructions. The senate officially communicated with Lepidus and Plancus at the beginning of February 43, requesting them to render assistance to Decimus Brutus.[71] If we allow for the six weeks' travelling time for Pollio to receive communications it was probably shortly after this despatch to Lepidus and Plancus that both Cicero and the consul Pansa wrote to Pollio.

Having complained he had received no instructions, Pollio next argues that the request he has received to place his army at the disposal of the senate is in fact most unhelpful due to the actions of Lepidus.

---

[67] See Chapter 3.
[68] During the civil war, he served under Caesar and undertook for Caesar several important missions. He also participated in the Alexandrian and Spanish wars. As a reward for his services he was admitted into the College of Pontiffs. See Vell. Pat. 2. 51; Cic. *Att*. 8. 9A.2 (160). See also this Chapter n. 48 regarding the Elder Balbus, his uncle.
[69] In letter *Fam*.10.32.30. (415) Pollio writes of Balbus as a monster: *cum huiusce modi portento res mihi fuit*.
[70] See earlier argument that the nature of the reference to Pansa's letter suggests Pollio is writing over an extended time period.
[71] See Watkins (1997) 72 ff. for a detailed summary of the communications with Plancus and Lepidus through this period, drawing largely on Cicero's *Philippics* and the account in Dio. Also Cic. *Fam*. 10.5 (359).

Pollio launches into an attack on Lepidus which he maintains in his subsequent two letters.[72] Cicero at the time was actively trying to persuade Lepidus to maintain his loyalty to the state. He was awarded honours for his negotiations with Sextus and for resolving the threat of civil war from this conflict in Spain.[73] This can never have been popular with Pollio. Pollio now informs Cicero, no doubt with some delight, that the loyalty of Lepidus is doubtful to the extent that Pollio can make no active contribution to the state because of the perceived hostility of Lepidus. First, he claims Lepidus is intercepting all his couriers, so that if some letters had not got through by sea he would be totally ignorant of events in Rome, which is clearly most unlikely. Next, he declares he could not possibly respond to the request from the consuls that he place himself and his army at their disposal because of the attitude of Lepidus: *cum Lepidus contionaretur atque omnibus scriberet se consentire cum Antonio.* He further emphasises that he could not get provisions through the province controlled by Lepidus, and that he would be totally unable to lead his troops out through the province. Further, he has had to struggle to resist the advances of Lepidus in bribing his troops and his demands that he hand over the Thirtieth legion, noting that if he had done so it would have placed Lepidus in an even more powerful position. Certainly these activities of Lepidus confirm that there was no easy alliance between the two, and that Lepidus did not readily perceive Pollio as loyal to Antony or the Caesarian party. In turn Pollio makes good use of Lepidus' attitude. He can comfortably declare his own loyalty to the state but maintain a position of inactivity due entirely to the actions of Lepidus, and at the same time undermine Cicero's clutching belief that Lepidus will remain loyal. He concludes in grand style that he himself, however, is first and foremost anxious for peace, and secondly ready to defend his country's freedom.

Then, as noted, Pollio writes as if concluding his letter, expressing his friendship for Cicero and his hopes he will soon be at his side.

As previously discussed we then come to the paragraph where there is a significant shift in content. He complains to Cicero that he has not advised him whether he should stay in his province or lead his army out, states he is about to march, and has written to Pansa with the details: *constitui ut nunc est, cum exercitu proficisci. Deinde ex litteris quas Pansae misi cognosces omnia; nam tibi earum exemplar misi* (10.31.6).

This statement is in complete contradiction to all that he had previously established with respect to why he could not move from his province. In attempting to resolve this contradiction two

---

[72] It would have been imperative for these communications to be sent by sea to prevent Lepidus intercepting and reading the content, hence Pollio's comment that now the sailing season is open he will be able to be in regular communication with Cicero, which in fact did not happen.
[73] Cic. *Phil*. 5. 41; Dio 46.51.4.

facts may be helpful. In a subsequent letter Pollio informs us he had sent his troops to winter quarters in Lusitania, despite making mention of this action in this current letter.[74] It is to be assumed that some time in March or early April these troops returned, and suddenly became available to be deployed. We know the sailing season did not open until mid April and so if Pollio was now going to deploy his troops he would need to move through Lepidus' province. Pollio believed that Lepidus was openly announcing support for Antony, and locking Pollio within his province. However, when the senate ordered Lepidus and Plancus to give assistance to Decimus Brutus, Lepidus sent forth a legion under M. Junius Silanus. Lepidus probably never really wavered in his support for Antony, but at this time a peaceful resolution would have been in the interests of all. Pollio may have briefly read this as a shift in the stance of Lepidus, who had now decided to support the senate, and as such, it would have been in Pollio's best interests to indicate that he also would send forth troops, and so he writes that he will march. As argued this makes more sense if we consider Pollio wrote this letter over an extended period of time between March 16 and the letter's final departure from his province on April 15. All the Western governors in mid to late March still believed there was the possibility of negotiation with Antony, unaware of the rapid change of sentiment in the senate in favour of war.[75]

Pollio's overall tone in this first letter is defensive. He is replying to issues raised by Cicero. He first explains why he has not written, there are pickets everywhere, but nevertheless he must admit that some letters do get through by sea so that he cannot claim that he is totally ignorant of events in Rome! Next he rationalizes his support of Caesar and claims his real nature is a desire for peace and freedom; *pacis et libertatis*. He abhors placing power in the hands of one man no matter who he may be, he mentions no names, the statement is open to interpretation to mean Antony or even Cicero himself. He desires peace, and prays that none of his fellow countrymen should perish. Having established this stance he proceeds to reprimand the senate for not instructing him how to act; it is to be inferred he had heard that orders had been issued to Lepidus and Plancus and that he considers he has been overlooked. The letter he finally receives from Pansa he considers most unhelpful, as they should know he can take no action because of Lepidus. In his final paragraph he castigates Cicero for not writing to him with instructions to either remain in his province or to lead his army to Italy, as noted in complete disregard for the whole argument of his letter up to this point that he could do nothing because of Lepidus.

---

[74] Pollio may not have felt it was prudent to inform Rome at this time that rather than recruiting troops as had Lepidus and Plancus, he had sent his troops away to winter quarters.

[75] This shift of feeling in the senate changed rapidly after Cicero's Twelfth *Philippic* delivered either at the end of February or the beginning of March; see Frisch (1946) 225-226; 240-242 for this dating and its discussion.

It is interesting to compare Pollio's letter with the communications written at approximately the same time by Plancus and Lepidus.[76] At the beginning of March Lepidus and Plancus had both written to the senate (letters lost but the gist of their content can be found in Cicero's *Thirteenth Philippic* and in his replies to Lepidus and Plancus[77]), expressing a desire for peace and negotiation with Antony. They appear to have been written as a collaborative exercise in response to the sentiments in the senate for a desire for peace and reconciliation with Antony. But by the time their letters were received and read out on March 20 the feeling in the senate had changed and Cicero wrote a stinging reply to Lepidus condemning his stance of seeking peace with an enemy of the state.[78] Pollio's first letter, dated March 16, has the same tenor as those written by Plancus and Lepidus, although in more vague rhetoric than advocating specific negotiation with Antony.

The push for reconciliation in January and February was probably far stronger than emerges from Cicero's communications. The most significant source for the events of these critical few months of 43 is Cicero's correspondence and his *Philippics.* There are no personal communications from Cicero to Atticus at this time in which he may have more openly expressed his personal views and discussion of events; the majority of his correspondence is with the key players themselves. Cicero's sole aim is to prevent Antony coming to power, and any suggestion he may be gaining the upper hand or gaining support from others is underplayed by Cicero. It is unlikely Antony was as isolated as Cicero wishes to imply. Nor should we consider Pollio to have been as isolated as he wishes to suggest. From the beginning of the year both Antony and Lepidus had been in contact with Pollio and presumably between themselves. Plancus in his letter to the senate states: 'I had to elicit the sentiments of my fellow governors and commanders in adjoining provinces', which would presumably mean Pollio.[79] Antony must also have contacted and negotiated with Plancus the surrender of Comata as part of his demands to the senate, perhaps on the basis of a reward for Plancus that the latter was happy to accept.[80] In a communication to Lepidus and Plancus in March, Antony writes of these governors in terms of their loyalty and partnership in his counsels: *Nec Lepidi societatem violare, piissimi*

---

[76] The letters would have been written on March 2 to reach Rome by March 20.
[77] Cic. *Fam*. 10.27 (369); 6 (370); *Phil*. 13. 7-16.
[78] Cic. *Fam*. 10.27. Note Cicero refers to the peacemaking attitude as *istam pacificationem* (10.27.2). For discussion of the 'pacifist' movement in the senate at the end of February, see Frisch (1946) 248ff. Cicero's response to Lepidus is harsh and critical as compared with the more conciliatory tone towards Plancus who had written almost the same content. He concludes his letter to Plancus as follows: 'Prompted by goodwill, I have written rather gravely.' It would appear Cicero still hoped he could persuade Plancus to retain his loyalty but was far less convinced about Lepidus.
[79] Cic. *Fam*. 10.8.4. (371).
[80] See Watkins (1997) 73 who also notes Antony must have obtained the consent of Plancus for this exchange.

hominis and *Nec Plancum prodere participem consiliorum*.[81] Brutus in his letter to Cicero at the beginning of May also notes Antony has been in communication with all three western governors 'He (Antony) has not yet given up hope of even Plancus, as I have perceived from some of his papers which have come my way, in which he entered the names of various emissaries to Asinius, Lepidus and Plancus.'[82] Communication also occurred between Antony, the western governors and Octavian.[83]

The known communications from Cicero to the western governors commence in March with almost nothing on record prior to this month.[84] From this time forth there is extensive correspondence with Plancus, (nine letters to Plancus and ten letters from Plancus) between March and July 43, but only one letter to Lepidus and two letters from Lepidus, both of which occur in rapid succession as he moves and then finally joins with Antony at the end of May.[85] Cicero had the strongest relationship with Plancus, with the most hope of gaining his support for the state. Whilst he promulgated honours for Lepidus their relationship was not close, and Cicero, whilst constantly claiming that he had the support of Lepidus, knew it was unlikely, with a high possibility that he would remain loyal to Antony.

What is of interest is that of all the communications we have available for this total period of Pollio's three letters, that is March through to June, Decimus Brutus is the only one to mention Pollio by name.[86] Neither the senate, Cicero, Lepidus, Plancus or Antony make specific reference to Pollio in any of their extant communications.

We also have to take on board that the senate did not include Pollio in their decree to the western governors to render assistance to Decimus Brutus. As Bosworth argues, this is an indication they were unsure of his loyalty.[87] At the same time Pollio was under constant scrutiny from Lepidus, was not part of the collaborative communication from Lepidus and Plancus, was

---

[81] Cic. *Phil*. 13. 43-44. Antony had written to Hirtius and enclosed within it a copy of the letter he had also written to Octavian. Hirtius sent a copy of this letter to Cicero which was received shortly before the senate sitting on March 20. Again there is no mention of Pollio in these communications. It would appear there was some coming together of Antony and the two western governors at this point with a general push for negotiations and avoidance of civil war. Frisch (1946) 251 is incorrect when he states that Cicero knew from the letter of Pollio that Lepidus had been in contact with Antony before receiving the despatches of Lepidus and Plancus, and before the sitting of the senate on March 20, as Pollio's letter could not have reached Rome until May, having not left Gades until mid April.
[82] Cic. *Fam*. 11.11.1 (386). Also *Phil*. 13.43-44.
[83] Cic. *Phil*. 1343-44 in which Hirtius, reading out a letter from Antony, records Antony has been in contact with Lepidus and Plancus. Antony had also sent the letter to Octavian. Also Watkins (1997) 76.
[84] Cicero wrote a reply to a letter from Plancus in either late December or early January 43 with no subsequent communication occurring until his letters to Plancus and Lepidus on March 20.
[85] Lepidus writes to Cicero on May 19 and 22, *Fam*. 10.34 (396); 10.34A (400), and on May 30, *Fam* 10.35 (408), writes to the senate of his joining with Antony. Cicero only writes to Lepidus on March 20 *Fam*. 10.27 (369).
[86] Cic. *Fam*. 11.9.1 (380) written April 29 and 11.11.1 (386) written May 6.
[87] Bosworth (1972) 453ff.

not mentioned in the dispatches of Antony where Antony emphasises his respect for the other two governors, and further, both Lepidus and Antony attempted to bribe his troops. Pollio was marginalised, his loyalty unknown to both sides. Nor could Pollio easily take action. If he wanted to march from his province and give support to Decimus he would have to engage Lepidus and possibly even Plancus. With their greater number of troops, he was unlikely to achieve success. The letter of March 16 is a reply to Cicero and Pollio also indicates within this letter that he has enclosed a copy of a letter he has sent to Pansa. When he writes again in early June he makes reference to these two letters, which left Gades on April 15, but he also now includes that he had at the same time written to Octavian.[88] This is the first evidence Pollio considered him an important player and was seeking his comments. This may be an indication that if Pollio was maintaining a loyalty to the Caesarian faction he was now also considering Octavian in this context, not just Antony.[89]

It should also be noted that towards the end of March and into early April Antony appeared to be in a more favourable position, a factor which delayed both Lepidus and Plancus from taking any decisive action against Antony, but which at the same time prompted the senate to attempt to enlist their aid against Antony. The most prudent policy of all three governors was inaction.

We hear nothing more from Pollio until he writes two letters to Cicero at the beginning of June. However, after the second defeat of Antony at Mutina on April 21, the senate had written to Lepidus, Plancus and Pollio instructing them to continue the campaign against Antony.[90] It is in this period, at the beginning of May, that Octavian writes to Lepidus and Pollio. The content of the letter is detailed in Appian, the source almost certainly Pollio himself.[91] In the apparent defeat of Antony rewards go to Decimus Brutus, and Octavian is overlooked. This is a significant misjudgement by the senate as it pushes Octavian to move towards Antony. Octavian writes of this betrayal to Pollio. He advises Pollio and Lepidus that for the sake of appearances they should obey the senate but in reality confer with each other and maintain their safety. When Antony fled from Mutina he moved west, raising concern in the senate that he would join with Lepidus and Pollio. Whilst there had always been concern about Lepidus and his allegiance, Pollio now became a key player in his own right, no doubt the reason for this sudden increase in communication with him. On May 6 Decimus writes to Cicero that he has intercepted the emissaries of Antony and notes Antony is communicating with Pollio, Lepidus

---

[88] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.3 (409).
[89] See Zecchini (1982).
[90] App. *B Civ*. 3.74.
[91] App. *B Civ*. 3.81. The other source for this information is Augustus' autobiography. Note Pollio had already written to Octavian in March/April before this correspondence. Decimus Brutus in his letter to Cicero, dated May 24, indicates he has already heard of Cicero's clever joke concerning Octavian: *laudandum adulescentem, ornandum, tollendum,* suggesting it was well in circulation by early May which further dates Octavian's letters to this time period Cic. *Fam* .11.20.1 (401); 21.1 (411).

and Plancus.[92] Brutus himself at the end of April had pleaded with Cicero to write to Plancus and Lepidus to stiffen their resolve to remain loyal to the senate fearing that if they joined with Antony his victory at Mutina would come to nought. But he now considers Asinius is well decided to support Antony and that it is a waste of time to seek his support:[93]

> Let me especially ask you to send word to that arrant weathercock Lepidus, so that he does not let Antony join him and perhaps make us fight the war all over again. As for Pollio Asinius, I expect you see well enough what he is likely to do. The legions under Lepidus and Asinius are good and strong, and there are many of them … I am firmly convinced that Lepidus will never behave well … I also beg you to stiffen Plancus.

Meanwhile, both Lepidus and Antony continue to demand Pollio hand over his legions, and Pollio continues to blame Lepidus for his complete lack of action, and from what he writes, it would appear Lepidus indeed maintained a close and hostile scrutiny of Pollio and his activities.[94] The correspondence of Plancus reveals a similar ambivalence. Plancus, however, demonstrates a far more swinging allegiance as he is torn between his close relationship with Cicero, and the demands Cicero places on him to meet that obligation, and his increasing awareness that success will most probably be with Antony and that is where his own future career will lie. Further, both Cicero and Antony have promised him rewards. However, when Lepidus moves into position to join with Antony at the end of May, and Plancus also falls into place, Plancus appears to be genuinely seeking support from Lepidus not to join with Antony and wants success for the senate. If Lepidus and Plancus had joined forces against Antony at this time the outcome would have been different. By contrast it is to be generally accepted Lepidus always supported Antony. As noted, his correspondence with the senate through this period is minimal.[95] It is only in the last week of May when he comes into direct contact with Antony that there is a flurry of correspondence to Cicero. He declares his support for the republic at all costs, but it is to be assumed he is trying to quell mutiny in his troops.[96] There is little doubt he is actively coming into line with Antony who, with increasing confidence, continues to move towards him. Lepidus finally writes it was because of his mutinous troops he had no option but to join with Antony.[97]

---

[92] Cic. *Fam*. 11.11.1 (386).
[93] Cic. *Fam*. 11. 9. 1-2 (380) *nam de Pollione Asinio puto te perspicere quid facturus sit*. See later discussion this Chapter p. 108 for further discussion of this statement.
[94] Lepidus continued to demand the Thirtieth legion. Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.2 (409); 32.4 (415); 11.11.1. (386). Carcopino (1951) 515 n.1 considers Pollio did in the end hand over the legion.
[95] Cicero appears to cling to the support of Lepidus, and as late as mid May writes to Decimus Brutus that the senate has no anxiety about Lepidus 11.18.2. (397) *nec vero Lepidum timebamus*. It is likely Cicero did indeed suspect the loyalty of Lepidus but continued to play the game, perhaps hoping this would increase pressure on Lepidus. Carcopino interprets Cicero as being utterly fooled until the last (1951) 2. 512-514.
[96] Cic. *Fam*. 10.34. (396); 34a (400). Written on the 19 and 22 May respectively.
[97] Cic. *Fam*. 10.35 (408).

Pollio was therefore in receipt of regular communication from Antony and the other two western governors. He cannot have been in ignorance as he wishes to inform the senate although the communications he was receiving were not always accurate. On the other hand it is to be assumed no communication from Pollio reached Rome before the end of May, leaving his intentions and activities largely unknown. At the beginning of June he writes two letters to Cicero in short succession. He continues to blame Lepidus for his lack of action. We should also note that lurking in the background was the fact that the two consuls were dead and Pollio, like Octavian, may have wished for an opportunity; suffect consuls needed to be appointed.

Letter Two: Cic. Fam. 10. 32. (415) dated June 8, Corduba

Pollio writes to Cicero at the end of the first week of June. He commences this letter with a detailed account of the unsavoury activities of his quaestor Balbus.[98] It is a domestic issue and of little interest in view of the critical state of play of the civil war. It strongly indicates Pollio was unaware of the outcome of Mutina. Balbus has stolen the public revenue and has headed for King Bogud in Mauretania.[99] According to Pollio Balbus modelled his exploits on the example of Caesar; he presented a gold ring (the badge of a Knight) to an actor,[100] extended his own term of office,[101] and held unconstitutional elections in favour of his own candidates. Further, an act for which he could not quote Caesar's example, he executed a Pompeian soldier, ignoring his pleas of Roman citizenship. Pollio is probably taking some satisfaction in informing Cicero of these activities of his friend Balbus; but it also indicates a state of tension between the Caesarian quaestor and the Pompeian sentiments of the province. Having given over much of his letter to such details, Pollio then acknowledges that the issue of real importance is the civil war. As in his March letter he again asks for instructions on how to act, emphasising that he has three reliable legions at the ready. In fact, he stresses, he has already rendered great service to the senate. This service has taken the form of complete inaction; he has kept his province free from disturbance and the army under his control. He has not stirred outside his province's borders, has not despatched a single legionary or even an auxiliary to any destination, and has punished any men he found leaving. He has not allowed his men to be poached by either Antony or

---

[98] Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.1-3. Balbus is L. Cornelius Balbus the younger. For details of his career see Curchin (1990) 146.

[99] Caesar recognized him as King of Mauretania in 49 BC.

[100] Balbus gave a gold ring to the actor Herennius Gallus and seated him with the Knights. This parallels Caesar obliging a Roman knight, D. Laberius, to act in one of his plays, for which he was given 500,000 sesterces (sufficient money to be a knight, see Suet. *Iul*. 33) and a gold ring to reinstate him again as a knight. He had surrendered this status by appearing on the stage. (Suet. *Iul*. 39.2; Sen. *Controv*. 7.3.9; Macr. *Sat*. 2.3.10). The story is told by Velleius Paterculus (2.51) how Balbus, "with a daring almost passing belief," made his way into Pompey's camp at Dyrrachium, and tried to persuade Lentulus (consul 49 BC) to desert to Caesar.

[101] He extended his own term of office as a governing magistrate, as Caesar extended his own dictatorship.

Lepidus.[102] Further, he is put out that he has not been ordered to act, considering this a lack of recognition: *quarum rerum fructum satis magnum re publica salva tulisse me putabo. sed res publica si me satis novisset et maior pars senatus maiores ex me fructus tulisset.* [103]

Letter Three: Cic. Fam. 10. 33. (409) dated early June, Corduba

Pollio next writes to Cicero in response to receiving the news of the successful resistance of Mutina, as Antony flees across the Alps. The information has taken over forty-nine days to reach him; Lepidus held up his couriers for an extra nine days. Pollio is no doubt stressing this delay in receiving information to justify his continuing inaction. His immediate reaction to the news is that the senate should have ordered him back to Italy at the time they issued such a decree to Lepidus and Plancus, which occurred in February, for then the republic would not have suffered such a blow. Pollio believes his involvement would have been crucial to the outcome, but how this might have happened is unspecified. He then acknowledges that he is aware that what was really required from him was to join forces with Lepidus: *neque ego non videbam quanto usui rei publicae essem futurus si ad Lepidum venissem.*[104] Pollio must now explain his failure to do so, and also his continuing state of inaction. His first justification is the continuing hostility of Lepidus. Next he pleads ignorance of the coming civil upheaval with the result that he sent his troops to winter quarters. He had made no mention of this in his letter of mid March and it is quite incredible for him to state he had no knowledge of the civil war, particularly as he complained that both Antony and Lepidus had been agitating for his legions since the beginning of the year.

Pollio then criticises the speed of the battle, which he considers occurred with reckless haste. He next outlines the news he has received of Mutina. Pansa's army has been annihilated and Pansa is dead. The army under Hirtius, including the Fourth legion, has suffered severe losses, and Hirtius is also dead. He has also heard that Octavian has fallen. As he then considers that all the survivors of Hirtius' army will flock to Decimus it is to be assumed that Pollio believes the news that Octavian is dead. He is also aware Antony has abandoned the siege and has at his disposal five thousand horse, three armed legions and a considerable number of unarmed men, and that he has been joined by Ventidius with the Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Legions. He notes Brutus has seventeen cohorts and two legions of poor recruits which had been raised by

---

[102] Antony had promised the soldiers five hundred denarii each should they come to his camp, and if victorious a further share in the bounties (Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.4 (415). In October 44 Octavian had given five hundred denarii to each soldier who had come over to him (Cic. *Att*. 16.8.1 (418).

[103] Cic. *Fam* 10.32.5 (415). Bosworth (1972) 460 considers Pollio may have been expressing underlying resentment that no concrete honours had been offered him. Lepidus had been granted a statue; Plancus had a consulship for 42 and, as noted, Pollio may have thought that the position of *consul suffectus* was available.

[104] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.2 (409).

Antony.[105] Pollio also indicates that Antony remains uncertain of the allegiance of Lepidus: *si nihil in Lepido spei sit.*

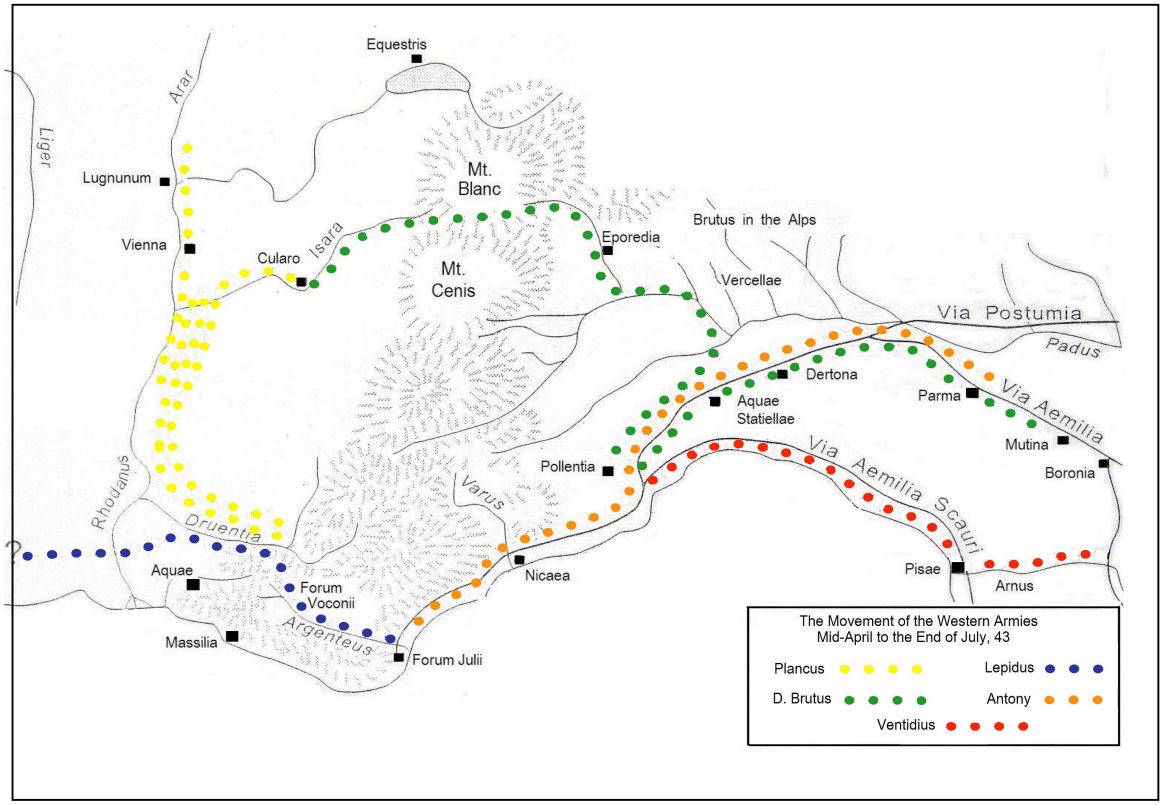
Finally, he blames distance; he is out of touch with events and receives news at least six weeks after the event. But now, having received news of Mutina, he will rally to the defence of Rome, there is no time to wait for senatorial decrees. He will explain his plans in his next letter.

It is difficult to ascertain how aware Pollio was of actual events and the significance of his own position at this point in time. However, Pollio indicates he knows that Ventidius has joined Antony with his three legions. Ventidius united with Antony at Vada, on May 5; Decimus Brutus wrote to Cicero to inform him of this event.[106] If we believe Pollio's claim that most news was taking six weeks or more to reach him this would place the writing of this letter to even later in June, to around the 23rd or after. Decimus also notes that at the time of Ventidius joining Antony the latter had been sending emissaries to Pollio, Lepidus and Plancus.[107] Plancus had moved from his province at the end of April, and on April 26 he had crossed the Rhone and was heading towards Vienne. He writes to Cicero that he hopes not to be held up by Lepidus.[108] He was also in communication with Octavian and relying on his armies against Antony. At the beginning of May Lepidus also moved, he headed to Forum Voconii only twenty-four miles upstream from where Antony was now stationed at Forum Julii.[109]

---

[105] That Antony's recruits joined Brutus after the flight from Mutina is most unlikely. After Pansa's death three of his recruited legions were taken over by Brutus. See Shackleton Bailey on 10.33.5 n. 3 (Loeb trans.) that Pollio's report is probably confused concerning these two events. Shackleton Bailey *Fam*. 2. 550-552; Tyrrell and Purser 6. 208-212; 315.
[106] Cic. *Fam*. 11.10.3. (385); 10.34.1. (396).
[107] Cic. *Fam*. 12.12.1 (386); 10.23. 2. (414). Cicero first writes of the news in his correspondence dated June 9, *Fam*.12. (416).
[108] Cic. *Fam*. 10.9.3. (379).
[109] See Stockton (1971) 312ff. and Watkins (1997) 87-88 for a detailed description of the movements of all the players in this period.

Movements of Plancus, Lepidus, Antony, Ventidius and Brutus from Mid April to July 43



Taken and adapted from Watkins (1997) 82.

At the end of May Lepidus joined with Antony.[110] This news was not known in Rome until June 9, and most probably Pollio did not know of this outcome until weeks later. He was, however, aware that Antony had hopes of assistance from Lepidus. Pollio would soon be required to declare his support, and in his vulnerable position it needed to be with the stronger side. The deciding factor would be Plancus. His letter also indicates a shifting relationship with Lepidus. Whilst Pollio continues to inform Cicero that Lepidus is hostile to the republic, and he probably continued to take some satisfaction in this, there is an indication that he must now explain what may have been his own increasing allegiance with Lepidus. He declares he has to stroke, *palpare*, Lepidus in the right way in order to get his provisions through his province. This can only mean that he was indicating to Lepidus that he was offering no resistance to his activities or even increasing support. In fact Pollio wishes to point out to Cicero how anxious he is that any communication he was having with Lepidus not be open to misinterpretation, and that he is aware that he is perceived as having a friendship with Antony, which he wishes to dismiss as of

[110] Cic. *Fam*. 10.35. (408).

no greater significance than the friendship Plancus had with Antony. Sufficient evidence to suggest Pollio was now having increased contact with Lepidus.[111]

Next he inflates his own power in the relationship with Lepidus, stating he could have persuaded Lepidus to give support to the republic, but does admit this would also have required the assistance of Plancus, but then realised Lepidus' hostility was too great to be reckoned with. His inability to act was blamed squarely on Lepidus and to some degree Plancus.

There is no further communication from Pollio and he remains in his province. The communications from Octavian, Antony and Lepidus would have reached him throughout June and early July. News of the junction of Lepidus with Antony probably coincided with the letter from Octavian which left Pollio in little doubt that he should join with the Caesarian party. It would also appear the senate had lost all interest in seeking his support as they dealt with the demands and hostility of Octavian, the defeat of Decimus Brutus and the increasing strength of Antony. If he wished to secure future career options it was time to move. Pollio must have also been aware, as was Plancus, that if Antony and Lepidus came under attack their flight would be into Spain, a region hostile to the Caesareans, which would place Pollio at the core of an undesirable conflict. At some time in July Pollio led two legions into Narbonese Gaul, leaving one legion to hold his province. Antony and Lepidus had been sitting in Gaul buying time as Octavian marched on Rome and claimed the consulship. Plancus had to all intents and purposes remained loyal to the republic; he had not joined Antony and Lepidus and had waited for the arrival of Decimus. He hoped that his force would be significant, and that combined they could still confront the two Caesarians. He was also hoping for assistance from Octavian. Plancus and Brutus remained at Cularo until the end of July. On July 28 Plancus had written to Cicero that he was anxious for the arrival of Octavian but had misgivings about his support.[112] Whilst he and Decimus had four veteran legions and nine of recruits he doubted if they were sufficiently strong to withstand an engagement with Lepidus and Antony.[113] Pollio therefore still held a wild card. Bringing two veteran legions, his support would have been crucial to Plancus and to Antony and he may have still been waiting to determine who would be the final victor. But the writing was on the wall, Octavian wrote to Antony that he would assist Antony and Lepidus in their fight against Decimus and by the end of July Decimus had decided to flee. Plancus now began negotiations with Antony. At some time in August, Pollio arrived with his two legions, joined with Antony, and negotiated the joining of Plancus and Lepidus, who had remained in a

---

[111] It was at this time in early April that Brutus wrote to Cicero urging him to still try to persuade Lepidus for support but that there seemed no point in contacting Pollio, Cic. *Fam*. 11.9.1 (380).
[112] Cic. *Fam*. 10.24 (428).
[113] Watkins (1997) 88 n. 65.

rather difficult stand-off, Pollio establishing for himself the role of peacemaker.[114] Rewards, no doubt promised in advance, followed. Both Plancus and Lepidus were the consuls for 42 and Pollio secured himself a favourable position in Antony's hierarchy and most probably the promise of a future consulship.

Political Ideology

Pollio's three letters have been cited extensively as an insight into his political orientation. His expressions of loyalty to the state have been taken as a clear indication of his republicanism. However, as Bosworth argues, these sentiments must be viewed with caution, noting he was writing to Cicero and professions of loyalty in such an uncertain political climate are to be expected. The only comment upon his loyalty in the other sources occurs in a single passage: the obscure statement in the letter from Decimus Brutus to Cicero of April 43, *nam de Pollione Asinio puto te perspicere quid facturus sit* (Cic. *Fam.* 11.9.1).[115] Interpretations have varied. Tyell and Purser consider that Decimus believes Pollio is a friend of Cicero's, so there is no need to write to him as of course he will act honourably.[116] But the stronger interpretation is that it is a waste of time to write to Pollio as he is certainly expected to support Antony.[117] However, there remains a third possibility, which is that Pollio is expected, as usual, to do nothing.[118]

It is useful to consider not only Pollio's expressed sentiments but also his actions. The siege of Mutina commenced in December 43. Plancus and Lepidus both began the process of recruiting extra troops; civil war loomed. Antony and Lepidus also began a process of trying to bribe Pollio's legions, and Lepidus undertook an active scrutiny of Pollio's communications. In contrast Pollio isolated himself within his province, sent his troops to winter quarters, thereby removing them from any military activity, and at a public meeting in Corduba indicated he would only hand over his province to an emissary of the state.[119] In late March, presumably once his troops had returned to Baetica, he considers he may march but does not do so.[120] He subsequently remains stationary and silent until June when he again communicates with Cicero.

---

[114] App. *B Civ*. 3.97.
[115] See earlier this Chapter p. 94-95 where the passage is quoted in full.
[116] Tyrrell and Purser 6.124.
[117] Bosworth (1972) 453 and his criticisms of the interpretation by Tyrrell and Purser.
[118] Carcopino (1951) 512 indirectly suggests this when he states Decimus Brutus considered Pollio as usual would abstain from action.
[119] Pollio may have found it almost impossible to recruit troops in his Pompeian province, since he was a governor appointed by Caesar. He and his legions had already been in active combat with Sextus' legions in the province and it may have been to prevent re-ignition of this conflict that he sent his troops away.
[120] On both these occasions he may have felt that Antony was in a weakened position and that it was advisable to move himself and his troops out of his hostile province. On the first occasion it was believed the senate might reconcile with Antony and on the second Antony had been defeated at Mutina and was in flight.

On receipt of the news of Mutina he considers once again he may march, but again does nothing until late July. His known communications through this time are with Cicero, Pansa and Octavian, with only the content of the letters to Cicero extant. Within his province political tensions ran high. The province is considered hostile to Antony and his Caesarian quaestor eventually runs. Pollio himself believes Lepidus is actively expressing support for Antony and that he is trying to poach his legions and is blocking his communications in and out of his province. His lack of movement has been interpreted as disloyalty to the state but it is equally true that he did nothing either to support Antony. In all reality it must be considered that Pollio could do nothing without first engaging Lepidus. It was unlikely he would engage Lepidus, particularly as the loyalty of his own troops was in doubt. His only action could have been to join with Lepidus. Pollio actively resisted, either for personal or political reasons, doing so. He was, from his perspective, therefore right when he proclaimed that the greatest service he had given the state is that he never moved from his province, nor allowed a single soldier to be poached.

His political sentiments expressed in this time can be summarised as follows. He has experienced how miserable life can be under despotic rule and will resist whoever wishes to place power in the hands of one man. His desire is for peace and freedom of his country and he abhors the loss of Roman lives in the conflict of civil war. He explains his own support for Caesar is based on joining a camp in which he has the fewest enemies, and that he stays with Caesar out of respect for his friendship for the man but often disagrees with his policies. He indicates his friendship with Antony is no greater than that of Plancus'. He is aware that his action should be to join with Lepidus, but is constantly trying to inform the senate that Lepidus is not the loyal supporter Cicero is claiming but will support Antony. Pollio's call for peace and freedom compare with the expressions of reconciliation with Antony by Plancus and Lepidus in their March letters, but he makes no specific reference to this process or to Antony. His only statement concerning the activities of Antony occurs after he has heard of the outcome of Mutina; Antony is regathering strength and should be crushed as soon as possible for the most dangerous thing of all would be to give Antony time to recover; *praesertim cum nihil sit periculosius quam spatium confirmandi sese Antonio dari.*[121]

Personally, Pollio feels a lack of recognition; he repeatedly complains he has received no instruction from the senate and that if they had known him better they would have gained more from him.[122] But it would appear neither side was certain of his loyalty. Whilst the senate ordered Plancus and Lepidus to join in opposing Antony they write to Pollio inquiring as to his

---

[121] Cic. *Fam*. 10.33.5 (409).
[122] Wageningen (1919) 77-83 believes Pollio joined Antony because of the contempt shown to him by the senate.

position. Similarly, Antony writes confidently of his support from Plancus and Lepidus but makes no mention of Pollio, and Lepidus is clearly suspicious. Plancus in his letter of March 20 also implies he is seeking to know the sentiments of his fellow governors, that is Pollio.[123]

According to Syme, Pollio was a loyal republican, an opinion based largely on the sentiments expressed in the three letters.[124] More recently Massa has also considered Pollio an inflexible republican and an historian of the "opposition".[125] Against this viewpoint Bosworth argues the sentiments expressed by Pollio must be kept in context: he was writing to Cicero and his political survival was dependent on non-alienation of the victor.[126] In all probability Pollio remained a Caesarian with the key question being when he changed his support from Antony to Octavian. Likewise Zecchini also views the content of Pollio's letters with suspicion, but considers that Pollio alone understood that the emerging schism in the Caesarian party between Antony and Octavian would promote further civil war. Pollio remained faithful to the Caesarian cause but feared they would not establish the peace and stability he so desired.[127] It is rarely commented upon that in March Pollio wrote to Octavian, an indication he was already a significant player in Pollio's mind. In support of Zecchini's assessment it can also be noted that Pollio did not join with Antony until it was certain Octavian would also come on board.

Pollio emerges from these events with his reputation intact and as the would-be peacemaker in ongoing conflict. He enters Antony's entourage with status and if he was not promised a consulship at this point in time, he certainly emerged from the conference of Bononia a few months later with the desired consulship for 40 BC. His status is difficult to explain. Prior to his negotiations with Plancus, Pollio had done little that would have scored him the gratitude of either Antony, Lepidus, Plancus or the senate. The deal with Plancus must therefore have been significant. But the sources indicate Plancus had already moved towards Antony before Pollio arrived.

Finally, the political reality of these times must be held in mind. All the major players were uncertain and their actions reflect the anxieties and fluidity of this period. Standing on principle would achieve little. Pollio, like all others, was assessing how to survive and to emphasis that his actions as a result supported a Republican or Caesarian stance is to perhaps over-state principle compared with practicality.

---

[123] Cic. *Fam*. 10.8.3 (371).
[124] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 5-7; 166.
[125] Massa (1993) esp. 515.
[126] Bosworth (1972) 452-462.
[127] Zecchini (1982) 1272-1273.

5 The Proscriptions and a Trial

After the final joining with Antony and Lepidus in Gaul in August 43 Pollio's movements remain obscure until he is located again in Gaul at the end of 42 BC. However, there is good reason to believe he returned to Rome and in early 42 undertook the trial of Aelius Lamia.

It is known that Plancus, after coming on board with the two triumvirs, stayed in Gaul through the autumn, but by late December he was back in Rome to celebrate his triumph and to share the consulship for 42 with Lepidus.[1]

Antony and Lepidus, however, immediately after the joining with Pollio and Plancus, began the return journey to Italy and arranged to meet with Octavian, who was still consul, outside of Mutina. In mid-November Octavian, Antony and Lepidus met on a small island located between Mutina and Bononia in what became known as the conference of Bononia, and led to the formation of the Second Triumvirate.[2] Neither Plancus nor Pollio were included in the arrangements.[3] Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume Pollio was present, as Antony and Lepidus had attended the meeting with five legions each and with trusted allies.[4]

At this meeting official positions were allocated for the next five years, the western provinces were divided between the three, land confiscations were nominated for the soldiers and a list was made of enemies to be proscribed. However, it is the proscriptions that highlight this meeting and impact on the reputations of all three men with respect to their violence and cruelty. Appian is the key source for the proscriptions, and he alone mentions Pollio and any role he may have had in these events.[5]

What we learn is that as an outcome from this conference, Pollio obtained the consulship for 40 BC. It would also appear he had to wait his turn, but not without reason. At the meeting Octavian resigned the consulship and the position was handed to Ventidius who was made *consul suffectus* for the remainder of 43; a clear reward for his loyalty. Plancus and Lepidus would be consuls for 42, Publius Servilius Vatia Isauricus and Lucius Antonius for 41 and then Pollio with Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus in 40 BC. It was known that Plancus had been promised

---

[1] Watkins (1997) 89.
[2] App. *B Civ*. 4.2 states it was on a small island near Mutina, but all other sources indicate it was near Bononia. It is unlikely Antony would have chosen the location of Mutina as it had been the site of his recent defeat. Dio 46.55.1 is clear it was on a small island in the river that flows past Bononia.
[3] Pelling *CAH* 10 (1996) 1 also noted the exclusion of Plancus and Pollio and that a quinquevirate was not formed.
[4] App. *B Civ*. 4.2; Dio 46.55.1-2.
[5] App. *B Civ*. 4.5;12.

the consulship of 42 by Julius Caesar, so it is highly likely Antony and Octavian simply maintained this agreement rather than actively rewarding Plancus; it was also probably part of the agreement in his having come over to Antony.[6] Lepidus was made consul with Plancus, as it had been arranged he would remain in Rome while Antony and Octavian went east. In 41 Antony nominated his brother as consul, which ensured he continued to have an influence in Rome, and as Octavian had now broken off his engagement to Servilia, the daughter of Vatia, in order to marry the daughter of Fulvia, it would appear Vatia was compensated with the consulship.[7] Finally, Pollio could follow in 40 BC.

Pollio is now placed within the circle of the triumvirs, but would seem to be without high seniority. Further, Antony, Octavian and Lepidus would return to Rome and enter the city in individual processions over three days, Ventidius would return as consul and Plancus and Lepidus would both celebrate triumphs; Plancus celebrating a triumph *ex Gallia* on December 29 and two days later Lepidus triumphing *ex Hispania.*[8] Pollio alone returned without parade.

Next, we come to the proscriptions themselves.[9] Antony and Lepidus each listed a relative to be proscribed followed in third place by a relative of Plancus and in fourth place a relative of Pollio. Lepidus nominated his brother Paulus, and according to Appian his name was at the head of the list. Antony added the second name, which was that of his uncle, Lucius Caesar. Plotius, the brother of Plancus followed and in fourth place was Quintus the father-in-law of Pollio.[10] Octavian is noticeably without mention.

> Lepidus was the first to begin the work of proscription, and his brother Paulus was the first on the list of the proscribed. Antony came next, and the second name on the list was that of his uncle, Lucius Caesar. These two men had been the first to vote Lepidus and Antony public enemies. The third and fourth victims were relatives of the consuls-elect for the coming year, namely, Plotius, the brother of Plancus, and Quintus, the father-in-law of Asinius. These four were placed at the head of the list, not only on account of their dignity but also to produce terror and despair, so that none of the proscribed might hope to escape. (App. *B Civ*. 4.12)

---

[6] Watkins (1997) 89 considers it was an act by Antony to bind Plancus with him over Octavian – it may have been part of the agreement at the time of joining Antony in Gaul.
[7] Plut. *Ant*. 20.1; Suet. *Aug*. 62.1.
[8] Broughton *MRR* 2.341, 348; Vell. Pat. 2.67.3; App. *B Civ*. 4.31 who does not mention Plancus. See Sumi (2005) 187ff. for a detailed description of these triumphs. He notes that there are several triumphs attested for the triumviral period. It is entirely unclear how these particular triumphs were awarded, but they were presumably for victories in Gaul and Spain, the latter, by Lepidus, no doubt including his defeat of Sextus Pompeius. But as Sumi comments, the triumphs of Plancus and Lepidus could not purge the memories of recent civil conflict. Lepidus even went so far as to publish an edict compelling residents of the city to take part in the sacrifices and feasting or face the prospect of proscription themselves.
[9] See in particular Hinard (1985).
[10] App. *B Civ*. 4.5;12.

Both Appian and Dio report this early list of the proscribed was made by the triumvirs themselves in secret.[11] The secrecy is high-lighted, noting in particular that the content of the proscription list was hidden from the soldiers when announcing the decisions of the meeting. This would imply that neither Plancus nor Pollio contributed the name of their relative to the list. However, Velleius, who has no liking for Plancus, makes specific note that Plancus had sufficient influence to have his brother's name put on the list.[12] He also stresses that Antony had his uncle placed on the list and Lepidus his own brother, but makes no mention of Pollio's father-in law as fourth on the list. It would appear Velleius wishes to avoid any connection of Pollio with the proscriptions and by implication with the death of Cicero. [13]

> That no sacred tie might escape inviolate, and, as it were, as an inducement and invitation to such atrocities, Antony had Lucius Caesar, his uncle, placed upon the list, and Lepidus his own brother Paulus. Plancus also had sufficient influence to cause his brother Plancus Plotius to be enrolled among the proscribed.

Weigel, in his discussion of Lepidus, having to deal with the fact Lepidus proscribed his brother Paullus, noting that all the evidence suggests he, like Plancus, had remained in a positive relationship with his brother, concludes 'The naming of relatives of the Caesarian leaders must have been a symbolic gesture to demonstrate the toughness and will of the new regime and make it clear that anyone who opposed the triumvirs would suffer a similar fate.'[14] Just the same, Lepidus arranged for his brother to safely escape and Antony spared the life of his uncle Lucius Caesar. Plancus' brother was murdered at Salernum whilst trying to escape; it would appear he could not be saved, as his opposition to Octavian had been so public.[15]

We have least information about Pollio's father-in-law Quintus. He did not escape, but according to Appian, in a rather odd description, he threw himself overboard during a tempest from the ship on which he was trying to flee. Appian's description is somewhat confused as in

---

[11] App. *B Civ*. 4.5; Dio 46.56.1. See also Florus 2.16.

[12] See in particular Wright (2002) who has outlined the maintained hostility of Velleius to Plancus in all of his writing.

[13] Vell. Pat. 2.67.3. Wright (2002) in his consideration of the hostility of Velleius towards Plancus notes the frequent pairing by Velleius of a critical statement of Plancus with a laudable statement about Pollio. As previously noted, Chapter 4 n. 32, this has led to a suggestion that Velleius may have been using Pollio's *Historiae* as his source. See Chapter 13. However, when we come to the proscriptions Velleius fails to juxtapose Pollio with Plancus as no doubt the association was problematic as Pollio had equally acted as badly. Watkins (1997) 90-91 considers it was Octavian who listed Plotius. See also Huzar (1978) 249ff. who notes the bias in the sources against Antony (esp. Plut. *Ant*. 19; 21) for his cruelty and responsibility for the proscriptions but also notes it was only Octavian who survived to "doctor" the records in his own favour, so that Dio (46.56.1; 47.3-7) Velleius (2.66) and Florus (2.16) see Octavian as the unwilling accomplice of a vengeful Antony. Also Plin. *HN* 7.147. Suetonius (*Aug*. 27.1) and Tacitus (*Ann*. 1.10), however, both note the cruelty of Augustus, and state that he was specifically responsible. Syme *Rom*. *Rev*. 193 is also confronted with Pollio's actions in the proscriptions and is led to comment that Pollio may have had a personal interest in the choice of those proscribed.

[14] Weigel (1992) 72.

[15] Valerius Maximus (6.8.5) describes Plotius' death with the anecdote that his hiding place was given away by the smell of his perfume; a somewhat fanciful story.

the two references to Pollio's father-in-law he indicates at first that Pollio is consul-elect for the coming year 42 BC and then describes the death of Quintus as occurring when Pollio was then consul; presumably 42 BC.[16] This error strongly suggests that Appian was not using Pollio as his source.[17] It is to be assumed Quintus was selected for proscription either because of his extreme wealth or because he was a personal enemy of one of the triumvirs, owing to his support for the senate and the tryrannicides. It is probable he was fleeing to Sextus. It is also probable Quintus would have escaped if he had not jumped overboard.

The listing of Quintus has been used as evidence of Pollio's standing with the triumvirs, but caution should prevail. His consulship was most likely promised at the time of his joining with Antony in August and he may have had little role in the proscribing of his own father-in-law.

Shortly after the meeting at Bononia, Antony, Lepidus and Octavian entered Rome, and on November 27[18] the tribune, Publius Titius, proposed and carried a law providing for a new magistracy allowing the triumvirs to hold office for five years with the same power as consuls.[19] The same night the proscription of one hundred and thirty men in addition to the seventeen already listed was proclaimed. Syme suggests Pollio may have added to this list, taking the opportunity to proscribe men from Marrucini who were his rivals; Urbinius Panapio, thought to be from Marrucini, was one of the proscribed.[20] Rome was gripped by fear, and on December 7 Cicero himself was murdered and his head and hands placed on the rostra in the forum. The death of Cicero is recorded by both Appian (*B Civ*. 4.19-20) and Dio (47.8.1-4) and we have an insight into the accounts by several other historians in Seneca the Elder (*Suas.* 6). Antony is usually seen as the key instigator of his death with varying descriptions of Octavian's participation, ranging from describing him as an active participant to painting him as a passive onlooker of the execution.[21]

Where Pollio was placed in all of this is difficult to determine. There is a suggestion that Ventidius as *consul suffectus* left Rome and took up his province, not wanting to oversee or be

---

[16] App. *B Civ*. 4.12: 'The third and fourth victims were the relatives of the consuls elect for the coming year, Plotius, the brother of Plancus, and Quintus, the father-in-law of Asinius' 4.27: 'Lucius, the father-in-law of Asinius, who was then consul, fled by sea, but, as he could not bear the anguish of the tempest he leaped overboard'.
[17] It is generally assumed Appian uses a different source for the proscriptions. See Gowing (1992) 157 n. 41.
[18] Dio 47.1.1; 2.1; App. *B Civ*. 4.7.
[19] App. *B Civ*. 4.7.
[20] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 193; Val. Max. 6.8.6.
[21] See Southern (1998) 55-56 in particular who argues Octavian was as fully involved as Antony, but over time, as the sole survivor of this trio, Octavian could mould the evidence and Antony emerges as the arch villain.

associated with the proscriptions.[22] However, we know Pollio remained in Rome to undertake the trial of Aelius Lamia, if not in the last few days of 43 certainly at the beginning of 42. This trial also links him directly with Cicero, and Pollio chooses to launch a scathing attack upon the now murdered orator. In this regard it would suggest Pollio was strongly aligned with the triumvirs, with the proscriptions, and perhaps also with the death of Cicero; if not directly at least by association. As will be discussed, Pollio never really moves from the hostile stance he expounds against Cicero in the Lamia trial, and it is possible we are seeing the expression of his anger and resentment towards Cicero for failing to include him in the deliberations of the senate in 43, failing to consider him for a consulship and actively bringing about the end of the republic.

The trial of L. Aelius Lamia

At the end of 43 Pollio did not return to Spain, his province having been reallocated to Lepidus. Rather he was allocated to a command in Cisalpine Gaul, most probably as a legate with imperium or a pro-magistracy. The date is uncertain. Broughton places his command as occurring in 41 BC, but he is often considered to have taken up the command in 42, perhaps alongside Ventidius.[23] It is almost certain Ventidius left Rome at the end of 43 to go to Transalpine Gaul, probably with Q. Fufius Calenus. [24]

Overview

The trial of Lamia involved the prosecution of Aelius Lamia, a man of equestrian rank, who was a close friend of Cicero, *L. Lamia uno omnium familiarissime utor* (Fam. 11.17.1).[25] Sometime after Cicero's death charges were brought against Lamia for a political offence; the details are unknown. The case is the key source for the evidence of Pollio's hostility towards Cicero. This is important, as this known hostility has been applied retrospectively to earlier interactions when in fact it appears the hostility emerged very clearly after Cicero's death. The hostility, as detailed in Seneca and Quintilian, focuses on Cicero's personality and literary style; it is apolitical. It should also be seen in the context of the "death of Cicero tradition" and the declamatory themes of the time. It did not originate from Pollio independently. We can also

---

[22] Seaver (1952) 277 considers Ventidius may have left for Transalpine Gaul whilst still *consul suffectus* avoiding the proscriptions; certainly his actions as consul in this period are not known. The consul Pedius, nephew of Octavian, had already died as result of the stress of the proscriptions, App. *B Civ*. 4.6.
[23] Broughton *MRR*. 2.372.
[24] Broughton *MRR*. 2.363 places Ventidius as most probably in command of a Gallic province for 42, and Dio (48.10.1.) lists Ventidius as in command of Transpadane Gaul in 41.
[25] This friendship had been established over many years, as in 51-50 Cicero writes of his good friend Lamia, Cic. *Fam*. 13.62 (136). In December 48 Cicero sent Lamia on his behalf to Antony to request Cicero be allowed to return to Rome, Cic. *Att* 11.7.2 (218). In May 43 Cicero writes L. Lamia is my most intimate friend, *hoc ego utor uno omnium plurimum* (*Fam* 11.16.2); 12.29.1-3 (434, 433).

note that all the evidence suggests that Appian, in his detailed discussion of the proscriptions, and the death of Cicero, did not use Pollio as his source, and this suggests that Pollio may have made only a brief discussion of this material, or even omitted it, in his *Histories*.

From the details given by Seneca the Elder the case occurred shortly after the death of Cicero and within the triumviral period, when the triumvirs, if not in Rome, were no doubt in Italy and available to comment on the case.[26] Seneca tells us that Pollio was unable to make certain statements in the trial that he later published, as the triumvirs, at the time of the trial, would have been able to correct him: *nec enim mentiri sub triumvirorum conscientia sustinebat.*[27] Antony and Octavian left Rome in the middle of 42 to pursue the fight against Brutus in the east and Octavian did not return until the latter months of that year. Cicero was put to death in early December 43 (the seventh). It is most likely therefore that Pollio took on this case early in 42 before he left for Gaul.[28] It is also known from the correspondence of Cicero that Lamia was seeking the praetorship for this year, and it is also known, that at some point, he did obtain the position as Pliny describes him as a man who held the praetorship: *similis causa in L. Lamia praetorio viro traditur* (*HN* 7.173). However if, as is most likely, this trial occurred in 42 BC, it is arguable that Lamia was not praetor for this particular year as the position would have given him automatic immunity from prosecution.[29]

The trial itself is complex to analyse as Lamia's political status crossed both camps. Whilst he was publicly recognized as a close intimate of Cicero, the relationship had existed over many years; Lamia had been active in his support during Cicero's exile, and he had also been a strong supporter of Julius Caesar.[30] At the festival to celebrate the success of Munda in April 44 he was noted to be wearing a wreath in honour of Caesar.[31] But during the events of 43 he supported Cicero and the senate, for we find that in the campaign for his praetorship Cicero wrote on his behalf to the two assassins Decimus and Marcus Brutus seeking their support and

---

[26] Sen. *Suas*. 6.15.
[27] Sen. *Suas*. 6.15.
[28] After leaving for Gaul there is no evidence Pollio was back in Rome again until his consulship in 40 BC and even then his stay here was brief, as he left soon for his campaign against the Parthini. It is highly unlikely he would have undertaken the trial during the events of Perusia which did bring him back to Italy in 41 BC nor was Antony present to be able to comment on the trial. André (1949) 69 likewise considers the trial must have occurred before the departure of Antony and Octavian from Rome at the end of 42 BC.
[29] Treggiari (1973) 249-250 attempts to place the trial as occurring between the 7 and 31 December 43 BC on the basis Lamia became praetor in 42 BC, but this is an almost impossibly tight time frame in view of the political events of the day.
[30] Cic. *Sest*. 29; *Red. Sen*. 12; *Fam* 11.16.2; 12.29.1 (434, 433). Lamia so strenuously defended Cicero when Clodius was trying by legislation to bring about Cicero's exile that Gabinus, the consul for 58 BC, banished – *relegatus* – Lamia from Rome. This appears to have been a well remembered event by the people of Rome.
[31] In April 44 Lamia attended the Shepherd's Day festival held in honour of the battle of Munda. He, along with Quintus, wore a wreath in memory of Caesar. Cic. *Att* 14.14.1 (368).

obviously believing this would be beneficial to his election.[32] Cicero's letter to Decimus in May or June 43 is as follows:

> L. Lamia is standing for the praetorship. He is the most familiar friend I have. Our intimacy goes back a long way, and we have had a great deal to do with one another; but what counts most is that his friendship gives me as much pleasure as anything in life (*Fam*. 11.16.2).

However, this support did not alienate him from the triumvirs as he was not listed in the proscriptions; his friendship with Caesar, and probably also with Antony being a protective factor. It is also possible Lamia attended to the burial of Cicero's body after his murder.[33]

We can only hypothesize Pollio's reasons for taking on the case. It was a high profile trial and it suggests Pollio was keen to continue to establish his reputation in the courts. It is also highly probable Antony requested him to take the case. Pollio's skills in oratory and negotiation were beginning to be noticed. It is also very unlikely Pollio would have acted for Lamia out of friendship for Cicero, but rather in support of Antony and the new regime. Pollio had felt overlooked by Cicero and the senate in the events of 43, and so the case provided him with an opportunity to publicly distance himself from Cicero, and to publicly affirm his allegiance to Antony. For Antony to have "his man" gain the acquittal of Cicero's close friend (the outcome is unknown but assumed to have been an acquittal), would show his benevolence and also ensure ongoing support from Lamia. The proscribing of Cicero had not been popular, and Antony, the known enemy and proscriber, may have sought this opportunity as a symbolic show of conciliation. For Pollio it may have been an opportunity to step into the shoes of the great orator. Overall, if we are looking for evidence of Pollio's relationship with the triumvirs at this point in time the trial of Lamia can be used to support the hypothesis that Pollio was now well aligned with both Antony and Octavian.

The Defence

Pollio's defence of Lamia involved an undermining of Cicero. The content of this attack he published as his speech for Lamia sometime after the trial, and appears to have voiced little of it during the actual trial, fearing it would be seen as a lie. The Elder Seneca provides the details:

---

[32] Cic. *Fam*.11.16.2; 17.1; 12.29.1-3 (434, 435, 433); *Att*. 13.45.1 (337); See also Broughton *MRR* 2. 307, 359. Lamia had been aedile in 45 BC, Cic. *Att* 13.45.1 (337) cf. *Fam* 11.16.3; 17.1 (434, 435).

[33] In the *Anthologia Latina* the twelve poets known as the *Duodecim Sapientes* compose epitaphs for the tomb of Cicero. Three mention Lamia has having been responsible for the burial of Cicero's body: Eusthenius 608, Vitalis 611, Vomanius 614. It would appear they were drawing on a source reference now lost. It would be quite reasonable to assume that the Lamia named is his close friend L. Aelius. For further discussion of the relationship between Lamia and Cicero and his possible involvement in Cicero's burial see Davis (1958) 174-177.

> Pollio wants to make us think it is the truth. For this is what he said in his published speech for Lamia: "Thus Cicero never hesitated to go back on his passionate outpourings against Antony; he promised to produce, more carefully, many times more speeches in the opposite sense, and even to recite them personally at a public meeting." This together with other things much more shabby: from which it is quite clear that the whole was false - in fact even Pollio himself did not venture to find a place for it in his history. Indeed eye-witnesses of his speech for Lamia assert that he didn't say these things, not being prepared to lie when the triumvirs could show him up, but composed them later. Sen. *Suas*. 6.15.[34]

It would seem that in defending Lamia Pollio chose an argument that required a devaluing of Lamia's relationship with Cicero, which Pollio chose to achieve by discrediting Cicero himself. But we must also accept that we really don't know what Pollio actually said at the time of the trial. We should also note that even if Pollio did relentlessly attack Cicero in a high profile trial it may not be a true insight into his thoughts about Cicero at that time; he was arguing a case for Lamia by whatever means necessary.[35] But the fact he later published his speech from the trial, which now included an even more intensified attack upon Cicero, indicates his intent had been, and remained, to discredit the great orator. We could also argue that by maintaining this attack it was also a statement of ongoing support for Antony and the new regime.

Our investigation into the trial of Lamia would have concluded here except for the fact that Pollio later published his speech from the case. It invites the question of why he would publish comments at a later time that he could not state without fear of discrediting himself at the time of the trial. It also raises the question as to when he may have published the speech. However, it can also be noted, that the inclusion of information in a publication that was not expressed in the original speech has been shown to have occurred in other cases. Calenus, in his speech in the senate against Cicero in defence of Antony in 43 BC, raises this exact issue as a criticism to be leveled at the orator, suggesting it may not have been uncommon practice.[36]

> Or do you think any one is ignorant of the fact that you never delivered one of those wonderful speeches of yours that you have published, but wrote them all out afterwards … Dio 46.7.3.

---

[34] See Appendix One for the Latin transcript.

[35] See Chapter 12 for further discussion of Pollio's role as advocate in his court activities.

[36] Dio 46.7.3 See Powell and Paterson (2004) 6ff. and esp. n. 24 who also comment on this passage from Dio, the anti-Ciceronian tradition (which will be discussed further in Chapter 13) and the addition of material to the published speech. See also McDermott (1972) 277-284 and Crawford (1984) especially the introduction which covers the speed of publication of speeches and suggests reasons why Cicero at times chose not to publish. Also Dugan (2005) 2 n. 3 for a summary of why Cicero published his speeches which includes: to advertise his skills as an orator, to shape the political inclinations of his readership and to provide textual exemplars.

We should also note that Cicero published a speech from his highly successful trial of Verres that he never even gave at the time of the trial.[37] However, despite these examples, it is generally accepted that Cicero's published speeches do reflect the content he gave at the time of delivery; if not it would have made a mockery of his conduct.[38] We must therefore consider Pollio's inclusion of such flagrant material not delivered at the time of his speech to be unusual.

One reason for the now added comments is that in the intervening time frame there emerged what came to be known as the "death of Cicero tradition". Seneca informs us of a developing trend to declaim on the death of Cicero. Before Pollio published his speech there already existed a *suasoria* with the title: *Cicero deliberates whether to beg Antony's pardon.*[39] With the publication of the Lamia speech a second *suasoria* on the death of Cicero emerged with the title: *Cicero deliberates whether to burn his speeches on Antony's promising him his life.*[40] We can recall from Seneca that the content Pollio added in the speech was as follows:

> "Thus Cicero never hesitated to go back on his passionate outpourings against Antony; he promised to produce, more carefully, many times more speeches in the opposite sense, and even to recite them personally at a public meeting." This together with other things much more shabby.[41]

Declamation is usually dated to the Augustan era but there is significant evidence its format was well in use before this. Suetonius tells us that Cicero declaimed in Greek as well as Latin, and that Antony and Octavian continued to declaim even during the war at Mutina.[42]

A topic to emerge for declamation was the death of Cicero, with evidence this had become a popular theme at least within a generation of his death.[43] The point for declamation related to the manner in which Cicero accepted his death. It is now considered that the impact of these *suasoria* and *controversia* can be detected even in the historical accounts of Cicero's death,

---

[37] See Butler (2002) 71ff. for discussion of the publication of the Verrine orations and inclusion of material never presented at the time of the trial.
[38] See Powell and Paterson (2004) 52-57 on the publication of Cicero's speeches and their overall consistency with what was delivered at the time of presentation.
[39] Sen. *Suas*. 6 *Deliberat Cicero an Antonium deprecetur*.
[40] Sen. *Suas*. 6.14 *deliberat Cicero an salutem promittente Antonio orationes suas comburat*.
[41] *adieceratque his alia sordidiora multo*.
[42] Suet *Rhet*. 25*; Aug* 54; Sen. *Controv*. 1 *pref*. 11. Cicero taught declamation to Hirtius and Pansa as grown men, whom he called his *big boys* and who declaimed well into old age. See Bonner (1969) 27-30; Roller (1997) 109- 111. Also discussed in Chapter 11.
[43] For detailed discussion of the role of declamation in the traditions concerning the death of Cicero, see Roller (1997). He questions conclusions made by Homeyer (1964) and her analysis of sources impacting on the tradition, in particular that Pollio was a source for Livy (115 n. 17). Also Gunderson (2003) 80ff. for a more psycho-analytical study of the impact of Cicero's death.

giving them a bias so that no single account of his final moments is thought to be entirely accurate.[44]

Pollio returned to Rome three years after the trial for Lamia, and it is not unreasonable to imagine publication of this speech shortly followed. The reason Pollio could now include details in his speech for Lamia that portrayed Cicero bargaining for his life, an idea that would not have been acceptable in the months immediately after Cicero's death, is that he was drawing on an emerging and popular topic for declamation concerning this event.[45] Pollio could draw on this tradition and embellish it with his own additional slant. In other words the belief that Cicero may have begged for his life was already in circulation.

Whilst we can be certain these declamations were in circulation by the first or second decade BC, as two of the declaimers mentioned by Seneca died in these decades, there is also evidence the declamations may have emerged within the triumviral period especially in the thirties BC.[46] It certainly suited Octavian for material to be circulating that was anti-Antonian, and several of the declaimers, Latro in particular, who were active in generating this declamatory material were known to be declaiming in Rome in the 30's.[47] The content of Lamia's speech is also cross-referenced by Seneca to Pollio's *Historiae* where he notes that Pollio, in contrast to all other historians, maintained a carping tone in relating the details of Cicero's death. As will be discussed, Pollio probably commenced his history in the mid thirties BC and it is almost certain he could only write of Cicero's death in this manner if there was an existing tradition upon which he could draw. Whether he published the speech for Lamia before or after his *Historiae* cannot be determined.

Nonetheless, although this debate generated great interest, Seneca remarks that few declaimers would employ the argument that Cicero was coward enough or stupid enough to hope that Antony could be won over. Most portray Antony as a thug, a glutton and un-Roman and argue the decision to kill Cicero was morally wrong.[48] Quintilian also commented on this specific declamation concerning the death of Cicero and sought to emphasize that such debates should

---

[44] See Rawson (1983) 295; Shackleton Bailey (1971) 277 and in particular Wright (2001) 437 who comments on the historical accounts of Cicero's death as recorded in Livy, Appian and Plutarch, and concludes: 'Almost certain proof exists that in the case of at least one piece of evidence, the historical record has been contaminated by a fiction generated by the practice of declamation.'

[45] However, Pollio may well have written this speech much earlier but delayed its publication. We know he had written an attack on Plancus, to be published after his death, well before he died. See Pliny *HN pref*. 31.

[46] See Roller (1997) 115ff.

[47] Passienus, mentioned in *Controv*.7.2.12, died in 9 BC and Latro, mentioned in *Controv*.7. 2; *Suas*. 6, died in 4 BC, which would suggest they were declaiming in the 30's BC.

[48] Sen. *Suas*. 6.12.

maintain a morality if they wished to portray an honourable man following a dishonourable course:

> Therefore when we advise Cicero to beg Antonius for mercy or even to burn the Philippics if Antonius promises to spare him on that condition, we shall not emphasise the love of life in our advice … but we shall exhort him to save himself in the interest of the state.[49]

Seneca quotes only two declaimers who attack Cicero; Romanius Hispo and Varus Geminius, and Geminius declaims on both sides which acts to balance his anti-Ciceronian invective.[50] In both of these declamations Antony's position, in contrast to the pro-Cicero debates, is considered sympathetically. As Roller concludes, it would appear that to argue an anti-Cicero stance entailed a pro-Antony stance and a pro-Antony stance in turn required an anti-Cicero stance. Antony's *fama* was as involved as Cicero's when it came to discussing the morality of the orator's death.[51]

Pollio is in a very small minority in his attitude to Cicero, not that this appears to modify his invective in the slightest. In his speech for Lamia he portrays Cicero as a coward when it came to his death, and claims that he promised to rewrite his *Philippics* in a manner that would praise Antony to the extent that he had defamed him in the original speeches. It implies the *Philippics* had been particularly hurtful to Antony, highlighting his often drunken and debauched behaviour. It also suggests Pollio's hatred for Cicero emerged even more strongly after the statesman's death and continued to intensify. He was now using his speech for Lamia to highlight Cicero as a coward. It would seem his dislike of Cicero was now a greater motive than support of Antony, who by this time was attracting much derision in Rome for his Eastern behaviours. But there was little in this attitude that made Pollio popular, as his criticisms in turn attracted significant hostility towards himself.[52] Seneca's reaction to Pollio's criticisms are palpable, and we could even state that in his account of the trial Seneca in turn was seeking to portray Pollio as the coward who could not publicly state his derision of Cicero but rather resorted to writing it later in a speech.

As noted, this attitude towards Cicero, as expressed in the Lamia speech, was maintained by Pollio in his *Historiae*, a clear indication it was more than just an argument for a successful trial. Seneca reports the accounts of Cicero's death by the leading historians to demonstrate there is no evidence Cicero ever considered retracting his *Philippics.* He quotes from Livy,

---

[49] Quint. *Inst*. 3.8.46.
[50] For Hispo Sen. *Controv*. 7.2.13 for Geminius *Suas*. 6.12. Gunderson (2003) 82 and n. 57 considers Geminius Varus spoke out of nastiness.
[51] Roller (1997) 116-117; See also Migliario (2007) 121-149 esp. 130ff. who notes the more personal impact of the proscriptions on the declaimers and a pro-or anti-Cicero stance in these declamations.
[52] See Chapter 13.

Aufidius Bassus, Cremutius Cordus, and Bruttedius Niger. Whilst he does not give the account by Pollio he notes that he was the only historian to relate Cicero's death in a malicious tone: *Ciceronis mortem solus ex omnibus maligne narrat.*[53] He further notes that Pollio had also chosen to relate 'the brave death of Cicero's victim, Verres' as an indication of a further slight towards Cicero. In this context Pliny's comment on the death of Verres is worth noting: 'Verres, who had been successfully prosecuted by Marcus Cicero, met the same fate as Cicero, being proscribed by Antony because he refused to give up some Corinthian pieces' (*HN* 34.6). Cicero in 70 BC had brought charges against Verres for corruption and extortion whilst the latter was governor of Sicily. The case had been so strong Verres eventually pleaded guilty and went into voluntary exile, where he remained until his death. In the Civil War between Marius and Sulla Verres had changed allegiance from Marius to Sulla, and so gained the latter's protection and was allowed to indulge in excessive extortion; a corrupt individual in the least.[54]

Further, as Wright comments, Seneca also uses Livy and his historical account of the death of Cicero as a weapon to cast doubts on the comments made by Pollio regarding Cicero's death.[55] Livy's account can also be contrasted with that in Appian in which Appian makes no mention of Cicero's bravery or of the grief of the people as described by Livy.[56] Wright and others therefore conclude that Appian appeared to have found his source material concerning Cicero's death sadly lacking, and that the source was unlikely to have been Asinius Pollio; again this suggests Pollio did not describe it any detail in his own *Historiae*.[57]

Seneca further notes that the recording of a death of a great individual is usually followed by a "eulogy" in which it is customary to give a summary of the person's life.[58] Seneca provides the eulogy for Cicero as recorded by both Pollio and Livy. It is the only direct passage from Pollio's *History* that survives. Seneca considers it the finest passage in the whole of the *History,* rivaling that of Cicero himself, with an implication the remainder of the work falls far short of this standard.

> I am ready to swear to you that there is nothing in his history more eloquent than the passage I have cited; Pollio, I think, here not merely praises Cicero – he rivals him. I do

---

[53] Sen. *Suas*. 6.24.
[54] Cic. *Verr*. Pollio's own family history during the Social War and subsequent Civil War as outlined in Chapter 1 may also be implicated in this support for Verres and jibe at Cicero. It is also possible we may be seeing a longstanding envy of Cicero's outstanding success in this trial at a relatively young age; now was the opportunity for Pollio to make derisive comment on Cicero's denunciation of Verres.
[55] Wright (2001) 440-441. Livy *Per*.120.
[56] App. B Civ. 4.19-20. Wright notes that while not casting Cicero in the role of a hero it could hardly be catorgorized as *maligne*. Appian also fails to mention the death of Verres again suggesting Pollio is not the source. See also Gowing (1992) and Chapter 13.
[57] Wright (2001) 440 esp. n. 16.
[58] *Suas*. 6.21. For discussion of death notices as recorded by historians and their relationship to funeral speeches see Pomeroy (1989) also Gunderson (2003) 83.

> not say this to deter you from a strong desire to read his history. Desire to do so – and you will make amends to Cicero.[59]

Seneca reserves praise for the greatest eulogy on Cicero for Cornelius Severus, who states the famous line that so upsets Pollio when paraphrased by Sextilius Ena: 'The eloquence of the Latin tongue grew dumb with sadness'.[60]

Pollio's eulogy on Cicero may now be considered:[61]

> This man's works, so many and so fine, will last for ever: and there is no need to pronounce on his genius and his industry. Nature and fortune smiled alike on him; for good looks and good health remained with him to old age. Further a long period of peace, in whose arts he was well equipped, came his way. The forms of law were being enforced with antique vigour, and there was a great crop of guilty men, many of whom he defended successfully and so bound to himself. Thanks to the great favour of the gods and his own wisdom and energy, he was very fortunate in his candidature for and administration of the consulship. Would that he could have shown more temperateness in prosperity, more stoutness in adversity! For when either had befallen him, he could not visualise their ever changing. Hence storm clouds of hatred gathered heavily over him, giving his enemies the more confidence in their attacks on him – for he displayed more spirit in picking quarrels than in carrying them through. But it has fallen to no mortal to be perfectly virtuous: one must judge of a man in accordance with the greater part of his life and character. Indeed, I should not judge him as having even met an end to be pitied, were it not that he thought death so pitiable.

Pollio outlines Cicero's literary achievements: his works will become immortal, and he was fortunate to have had prolonged periods of peace in which he could develop his arts, an opportunity so far denied Pollio. Cicero built support by defending and binding to himself guilty men, and his consulship came through the great favour of the gods, along with his wisdom and *industria*; this latter term a possible reference to his status as a new man.[62] Cicero's personality flaws are highlighted: he fails to hold personal strength in adversity. Pollio's use of *invidiae tempestates* is perhaps a reference to Cicero's first Catilinarian oration and his quarrels with his enemies, no doubt Clodius and Antony. Pollio considers these to be based more on personal dislike than political strategy.[63] He makes no comment on Cicero's political career or

---

[59] *Suas*. 6.25. The last phrase, which is rather odd, is usually taken to mean that "Cicero will punish you": *concupiscite et poenas ciceroni dabitis*. See notes on the Loeb translation by Winterbottom.

[60] *Suas*. 6.26. Sextilius Ena would later requote this line when reciting on the proscription of Cicero in the house of Messalla Corvinus: "I must lament Cicero and the silence of the Latin tongue" which enraged Pollio who was present at the recital. A similair line by Ovid, a protégé of Messalla,when writing to Cotta Maximus suggests he may have been present at this recital, 'That father of yours with an eloquence in the Latin lanuage not inferior to his lineage first urged me to grant my verse a public hearing' (*ex Ponto* 2.3.75-76). See Hollis (2007) 338ff.

[61] Sen. *Suas*. 6.24. See Appendix One for the Latin transcript. For discussions on Cicero's death and obituary see Edward (1928) 130ff. esp.144; Leeman (1963); Homeyer (1964); Ritcher (1968); Lebek (1970) 143ff.; Fairweather (1981); Woodman (1983) 144 ff.; Gunderson (2003) 82-84.

[62] See in particular Wiseman (1971) 109-111.

[63] Cic. *Cat*. 1.22 : *video… quanta tempestas invidiae nobis… impendeat*. Also quoted by Leeman (1963) 189.

judgments. But as Seneca admits, Pollio in spite of himself does do Cicero ample justice. Nevertheless there is a final sting in the conclusion: *Atque ego ne miserandi quidem exitus eum fuisse iudicarem, nisi ipse tam miseram mortem putasset*. Surely Pollio is here drawing on Cicero's own passage in his fourth Catilinarian speech where it is stated: 'for a disgraceful death cannot happen to a brave man, nor an untimely death to a man who has attained the consulship, nor a pitiable death to a philosopher,' reminding his audience that Cicero had failed to live up to these standards.[64]

Leeman considers the passage to be totally void of *nitor* and *iucunditas,* making here a direct reference to Quintilian regarding Pollio's style, and comments on the looseness of the word pattern.[65] He also notes the 'sting in the tail', the *in cauda venenum* in the final sentence, showing that Pollio's hatred of Cicero is detectable below the surface.

Livy's eulogy

Seneca also provides the eulogy for Cicero by Livy, one of the longest eulogies that we have by that writer, and provides for an interesting comparison. [66] Leeman considers it was written some forty-five years after Pollio's eulogy and should be seen as a response to the latter, although Pomeroy would see it as an improvement on Pollio rather than a repudiation. [67]

> "He lived sixty-three years: so that if no force had been brought to bear, his end could not be thought premature. His genius was fortunate in its works and their rewards; he himself long enjoyed good luck. But during the long flow of success he was from time to time afflicted with great wounds, exile, the collapse of his party, the death of his daughter and his own grievous and bitter end. Yet of all of these disasters he faced none but his death as becomes a man: and even that to a truthful critic might have seemed the less undeserved in that he suffered at the hands of his victorious enemy no more cruelly than he would have acted had he himself enjoyed that good fortune. But, weighing his virtues against his faults, he was a great and memorable man: and to sing his praises one would need a Cicero for a eulogist."

Livy begins by noting that Cicero lived 63 years, a good age, and that he enjoyed good fortune. Unlike Pollio, he states little of his political career, making no mention of his consulship, but like Pollio he acknowledges Cicero's misfortunes and his difficulty in enduring such events, listing his exile, the defeat of the Republican party and the death of his daughter; events that Pollio failed to mention. It is only his death, according to Livy, that Cicero met as becomes a man. This is a direct response to Pollio. However, Livy tempers this praise by noting that

---

[64] Cic. *Cat*. 4.3. Leeman (1963) 189-190 also notes this reference to the fourth Catilinarian speech.
[65] Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.113; Leeman (1963) 188-190.
[66] Sen. *Suas*.6.22. See Appendix One for the Latin transcript. For discussion see Leeman (1963) 190-191; Pomeroy (1988); Wright (2001).
[67] Leeman (1963) 190; Pomeroy (1988) 180ff. See also Chapter 13 for discussion of when Livy may have been writing in relation to Pollio with the suggestion it may have been more parallel than generally assumed.

Cicero's death occurred at the hands of Antony in the same fashion that Cicero would have incurred on Antony if the tables had been turned, noting here the personal enmity between the two and Cicero's reputation for picking quarrels. He concludes by weighing his virtues against his faults, and states that Cicero was a great and memorable man and that to sing his praises one would need a Cicero for a eulogist. This latter statement has led to debate as to its irony, that only Cicero could sing his own praises sufficiently, an irony that Pomeroy considers is most likely. But Livy also maintains a certain generosity as he praises Cicero and corrects Pollio's depiction of Cicero's death, but nevertheless highlights the idea that it was personal enmity that was played out in his death rather than a fight against tyranny.

Livy acknowledges many of the statements made by Pollio which include Cicero's personal failings and it is reasonable to agree with Leeman when he concludes, 'And it is after all amazing how far the judgments of Livy, Cicero's admirer and follower, and of Pollio, who hated Cicero and strove against him, agree with each other. Not only Pollio's *veritas*, but also that of Livy are reflected in this agreement.'[68]

Pollio's hatred of Cicero almost certainly dates to the downfall of the republic as it occurred in 43. But, as previously noted, this hostility is not evident in the correspondence of the time but emerges in his later writing. If we examine the four statements in Seneca and Quintilian which document Pollio's hostility to the statesman, two of the accounts relate to Cicero's death (this includes the speech for Lamia), and the other two relate to Cicero's skills of oratory [69] (his son Gallus continues to express this hostility even more vehemently[70]). The attacks are apolitical, and focus on personality and literary skill.

There is reason to argue that the nature of Cicero's death was in fact a heavy burden for Pollio. Antony is credited with the decision to proscribe Cicero and it is suggested that Octavian may have attempted to persuade him otherwise.[71] But it is Pollio who remains haunted by Cicero.

---

[68] Leeman (1963) 190-191.
[69] Sen. *Suas* 6.14; 24; which refers to Lamia and Pollio's *History*, and 6.27 which documents Pollio's outburst of anger at Sextilius Ena when he comments on the impact of Cicero on the Latin language, and the statement in Quintilian that Pollio and his son Gallus in a hostile manner attacked faults in the oratory of Cicero (*Inst*. 12.1.22).
[70] Quint. *Inst*. 12.1.22; Plin. *Ep*. 7.4. Also comments by Edward (1928) v.2; Leeman (1963) 189-90; Dugan (2005) 347.
[71] Plut. *Ant*.19.3 with Pelling (1988) 168.

6 42-40 BC: From Conflict To Consul

Pollio's role in the trial of Lamia indicates he remained in Rome, at least for the first half of 42, if not for the full year. In 41 he took up a command in the Transpadane region. Velleius informs us he was in charge of seven legions.[1] It is generally assumed that Pollio was located within Cisalpine Gaul, during which time he became embroiled in the land distribution to the veterans and also in the Perusine War. His literary friend C. Cornelius Gallus was active in the region, [2] and Pollio had also taken a keen interest in the talents of Vergil, whose lands were thought to have been located at Mantua, just outside Cremona, the latter destined to be handed over to soldiers.[3] Pollio, in this period, is considered to be one of Antony's generals and Bosworth has argued that it is Pollio's failure to act decisively in the Perusine War which brings about a rift in this alliance.[4] However, as in 43 BC, Pollio's political intentions much of the time in this period remain obscure. We can also observe what appears to be Pollio's continuing avoidance of direct involvement in military combat.

Pollio's placement in Cisalpine Gaul warrants scrutiny. After the battle of Philippi in November 42, Cisalpine Gaul, at the insistence of Octavian, who stated he was carrying out Caesar's wishes, was made independent.[5] Octavian returned to Rome with a letter from Antony confirming this decision and reporting that the Antonians had also directed Calenus to give Octavian the two legions he held in Gaul.[6] Dio also confirms that in 41 Cisalpine Gaul was included in the district of Italy.[7] Bennett implies Octavian unsuccessfully tried to free the province, on his own account, and without the approval of Antony,[8] but the evidence is clear: Cisalpine Gaul did become incorporated into Italy in 41, even though the move was resisted by

---

[1] Vell. Pat. 2.76.2.
[2] Serv. Dan. on *Ecl*. 6.64. Broughton *MRR* 2.376.
[3] There is no conclusive evidence Vergil had lands at Mantua but rather it is implied particularly from *Eclogue* 9.28. See p. 130 this Chapter for further discussion.
[4] Bosworth (1972) 471 ff.
[5] App. *B Civ*. 5.3 cf 5.22; Dio 48.12.5. Caesar had been keen to give the grant of *civitas* to the Cisalpines not necessarily full incorporation into Italy.
[6] App. *B Civ*. 5.12. Two legions had been left in Cisalpine Gaul under Calenus. These were to be handed over to Octavian. Appian implies Calenus handed over these legions, but he did not.
[7] Dio 48.12.5.
[8] Bennett (1930) 329.

the Antonian generals.[9] However, Calenus did not hand over his troops as requested and the generals perceived the decision as Octavian's having defrauded Antony.[10]

At the conference of Bononia, Cisalpine Gaul, along with Transalpine Gaul, had been alloted to Antony.[11] The significance of the province was well established. Twelve months earlier Antony had allocated to himself the province, passing over Decimus Brutus, as not only were the lands rich but it was a prime position in which to hold troops on the boundary of Italy.[12] A powerful general with troops in Cisalpine Gaul was a significant threat to the security of Italy.[13] It is also evident that after Bononia Antony had allocated to the region his most trusted commanders, Ventidius, Calenus and Pollio, a confirmation of Pollio's loyalty to Antony.[14] It also suggests invasion of Italy via the north was considered possible, and warranted sufficient deployment of legions for this purpose with Pollio as a key commander.[15]

At the battle of Philippi Antony had proved to be a successful leader, whilst Octavian had succumbed to illness and had had little effect on the engagement.[16] The decision by Antony to hand over the province of Cisalpine Gaul at this time, particularly as he was remaining in the East and sending Octavian back to Rome, is difficult to comprehend.[17] It was certainly to the advantage of Octavian. He was returning to Italy with Antony's brother in the position of consul, and Lepidus, who had remained in Rome, was an ally of Antony, although his commitment to the cause was under scrutiny. Octavian may well have argued the need of reducing Antony's influence in Italy to ensure his own position remained strong. It reflects suspicion between the two triumvirs was high.

---

[9] See Chilver (1941) 9-10. The incorporation of Cisalpina continued for seven years with the *Lex de Gallia Cisalpina* limiting the powers of the provincial governor in order that appeals from municipal magistrates be heard by the praetor at Rome.
[10] App. *B Civ*. 5.12; 22. Broughton *MRR* 2.373 lists Calenus, along with Ventidius, as a commander in Transalpine Gaul – not Cisalpine.
[11] App. *B Civ*. 4.2; Dio 46.55.4-5.
[12] App. *B Civ*. 3.27; 30.
[13] Dio 48.12.5.
[14] App. *B Civ*. 5.12; Dio 48.2.3; Vell. Pat. 2.76.2.
[15] Pollio may also have been instructed to subdue any Illyrian tribes that were friendly to Brutus and Cassius, a task he undertook or completed in 39. See Frank (1922) 124.
[16] After the first battle of Philippi Octavian had fled, hiding in a marsh for three days despite being ill. Even Agrippa and Maecenas had to admit this. See Plin. *HN* 7.148. Antony emerged the clear victor at Philippi. See also App. *B Civ*. 5.14; 53.
[17] One reason may have been that the towns of this northern region remained hostile to Antony, and in general supported republicanism even under Augustus. During the campaign of Mutina the towns had failed to assist Antony. It may therefore have been a political move to gain the support of this region by giving the inhabitants what they wished for most as a way of reducing the Antonian discontent. Cic. *Fam* 12.5.2 (365); *Phil* 3.13; 10.10; 12. 9-10. Pelling *CAH* 10 (1996) 9-10 considers Antony retained control of Gaul by maintaining Calenus with eleven legions in Transalpine Gaul and that the loss of Cisalpine was only a technical consideration as Pollio with his legions remained within the region and that there was no real advantage to Octavian. However, the soldiers in Italy did not perceive the instruction in this light, and in the complaints against Octavian it was stated Antony had been defrauded by Octavian to give up Gaul. App. *B Civ*. 5.22.

By the end of 42 Octavian had returned to Rome and Cisalpine Gaul declared part of Italy. Legally this required the removal of all commanders and troops from the province. As noted, Appian records Calenus was requested to hand over his two legions but no mention is made of Pollio and his seven legions. However, Pollio can be placed as being active within the Cisalpine region in 41 BC.[18] At Placentia he impeded the Octavian commander, Q. Salvidienus Rufus, in his movement of troops through the Alps.[19] Further, Macrobius states that Pollio exacted land from Patavium and this can only have occurred in 41.[20] The land distribution to the veterans did not commence until after Philippi, and once Perusia had fallen in February 40 BC, Pollio, who was consul, moved down the coast to Brundisium and had no further opportunity to be involved in the ongoing land settlements within the region.[21] It remains unclear why Pollio continued to hold troops in Cisalpine Gaul, except perhaps because Calenus also maintained his troops there and did not hand over his two legions as had been requested.

Land confiscations

Now that it is established that Pollio remained in Cisalpine Gaul throughout 41 BC, his actual activities are of interest.

At the conference of Bononia the triumvirs had promised the veterans eighteen cities of Italy as colonies, to be divided amongst them as if they had been captured in war. Appian lists the most renowned of these cities: Capua, Rhegium, Venusia, Beneventum, Nuceria, Ariminum and Vibo.[22] Antony and Octavian next set out for the East with twenty-eight legions.[23] Following the success at Philippi it was determined that only the soldiers who had fought there were entitled to the land allocations.[24] Octavian returned to Italy with the unenviable task of distributing the land; whilst it would make him popular with the soldiers it could only cause distress to the populace. Antony remained in the East with the purpose of collecting monies for the veterans. That conflict would eventually emerge between Antony and Octavian must have seemed inevitable. Certainly the consul Lucius Antonius,[25] propelled by the urgings of Fulvia, soon began to perceive Octavian's popularity increasing with the soldiers as he distributed land and

---

[18] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 209 considers Pollio continued to hold command in Cisalpine as the decision to abolish this territory had not been carried out which he suggests may have been due to Pollio himself adopting a recalcitrant attitude.
[19] App. *B Civ.* 5.20; Dio 48.10.1.
[20] Macrob. *Sat.* 1.11.22.
[21] After the fall of Perusia Pollio briefly returned to the Adriatic region but quickly began to move back down the coast towards Brundisium raising support for Antony who was now sailing towards Italy. There is no indication he became involved in land distribution in this brief period.
[22] App. *B Civ.* 4.3.
[23] Appian (*B Civ.* 5.6) later queries this figure and suggests it should be forty-three legions. See also Brunt *IM* 490 ff.
[24] App. *B Civ.* 5.20 cf. 5.5; Dio 48.2.3.
[25] The brother of Mark Antony, and henceforth referred to as Lucius.

demanded that certain distributions be carried out by Antonian generals in order to preserve Antony's standing with the troops. But when this still failed to gain any advantage for Antony he turned to support those dispossessed by the land distributions, encouraging hostility towards Octavian, and set in motion the events leading to the Perusine War.

During this period Pollio did not leave Cisalpine Gaul, but it is highly probable, as an Antonian general, that he was instructed to oversee the land distributions within the region. As noted it is known he undertook this task at Patavium, Macrobius reporting that he carried out the task in manner that was ruthless: *Asinio etiam Pollione acerbe cogente Patavinos ut pecuniam et arma conferrent.*[26]

The demands of the veterans soon outstripped the nominated cities and more and more land was confiscated. It is in this context that Cremona came to lose its estates to the soldiers and with it nearby Mantua.

Vergil is assumed to have held large estates in Mantua although we have no specific evidence for this assumption. In his *Eclogues*, generally accepted to have been written between 42 and 39 BC,[27] Vergil writes of the character Menalcas, whom the ancient biographers of Vergil have identified with Vergil himself, of his loss of his estate at Mantua and his appeal to the "young ruler" in Rome to save his land.[28]

> *"Vare, tuum nomen, superet modo Mantua nobis,*
> *Mantua vae miserae nimium vicina Cremonae,*

---

[26] Macrob *Sat* 1.11.22. Patavium had failed to support Antony which may have been a reason behind Pollio's attack on the region. See Cic. *Phil*. 12.10.

[27] This is on the basis of Donatus' *Life of Virgil* and the Servian commentary which states that Vergil wrote the *Eclogues* in three years, and the statement in Asconius that Vergil wrote them at twenty-eight years of age. The *Eclogues* are therefore dated to 42-39 BC. The ten *Eclogues* were almost certainly not written in the order they were published but all attempts to determine the exact order in which they were written remain speculative. See in particular Coleman (1977) 14-21. Two dates are certain in the book; the land confiscations of 42 (although this date can easily be extended to 41-40 or even later) and Pollio's consulship in 40. The Eighth *Eclogue* has usually been interpreted as referring to Pollio's triumph in 39 BC, but Bowersock (1971, 1978) has argued the *Eclogue* addresses Octavian not Pollio, and so makes reference to Octavian's Illyricum campaign in 35 BC. On this basis the composition of the book occurs between 42 and 35 BC. The argument is refuted by Tarrant (1978) and Farrell (1991). For an overview on the status of the two schools of thought, see Mankin (1988) who concurs with Bowersock. Subsequently, Clausen (1994) and Levi (1998), the latter having initially queried *Eclogue* 8 in 1966, have further supported the extended date. Hardie (1975) argued for the initial composition beginning in 45 extending through to 37 BC but this is in order to accommodate the belief Pollio was Vergil's patron, and so seek a time when this contact could have occurred, which he believes was in 45 BC when Pollio was praetor. For the most recent overview of the addressee of this *Eclogue* see Karakasis (2011) 126-132, who, whilst maintaining a general discussion of all theories, does consider the addressee may have been Octavian. See also Chapter 7, where discussion of the dating is again elaborated in an attempt to identify Pollio's province in 39 BC.

[28] Verg. *Ecl*.9 and 1 esp. 1.42: *hic illum vidi iuvenem* – assumed to be Octavian. The order of these two *eclogues* is variously debated with some scholars considering that 9 was written before 1. Also *Georgics* 2.198: *et qualem infelix amisit Mantua campum*.

Cantantes sublime ferent ad sidera cycni". Ecl. 9.27-29.

Interpretation of the *Eclogues,* and also these early biographers of Vergil, has linked Pollio with saving Vergil's estates and led to the suggestion that he, along with P. Alfenus Varus (the Varus referred to in the above lines) and C. Cornelius Gallus, formed the *Triumviri agris dividendis*, commissioners for land distribution, within the area.[29] It was suggested the distributions were in charge of Pollio, or perhaps Varus, who, it was stated, was appointed as Pollio's successor in Cisalpine Gaul by Octavian in 40 BC, or that the distributions involved all three, with one of the commissioners seeking the intervention of Octavian to save Vergil's estates. The historical evidence for this is scant, and at most it can be stated that Pollio was involved in the land distributions within the region as an Antonian commander but he almost certainly would not have approached Octavian concerning the distributions, and probably had little to do with Vergil's estates. From the statement in Macrobius it could be inferred he had little sympathy for the landowners, and was keen to settle the soldiers. Broughton (who is undecided on the issue) argues the members of the so-called commission were probably individual appointees with or without *imperium,* and that Pollio would have been a proconsul, Varus a legate, prefect, or possibly a promagistrate, and Gallus an equestrian.[30]

Perusine War

In Rome tensions over the land distributions continued to increase with the result Octavian and Lucius both began to mobilise armies. Pollio remained in Cisalpine Gaul concentrating his activities around the coast no doubt hoping the conflict would resolve or remain localized. However, earlier in the year Pollio had been obstructive towards Octavian's general Salvidienus Rufus and his movements through the region to such an extent that in the attempt to reach an agreement between Lucius and Octavian at Teanum one of the conditions was for this interference to cease.[31] Octavian had ordered Salvidienus to move six legions to Spain and

---

[29] *Triumviri agris dividendis* is the title given by Donatus (*Vit.Verg*. 61-63) to Pollio, P. Alfenus Varus and C. Cornelius Gallus. Bayet (1928) 276 (drawing on Carcopino) assumes the three men formed a board similar in structure to the land commissioners of the Gracchi. See also Iun.Philargyr.11 on *Ecl*. 1; Serv. Dan. on *Ecl*. 2.1; Iun.Philargyr.11 on *Ecl*. 6.7; Iun. Philargyr.1 and 11 on *Ecl*. 4.3; Serv. Dan. on *Ecl*. 9.10; Serv. Dan. on *Ecl*. 6.64. Servius (on *Ecl*. 9.10,11,27) also suggested Pollio was replaced as governor of Cisalpine Gaul by Alfenus Varus and on *Ecl*. 6.6 that Varus protected Vergil from a second expulsion from his farm. However, this statement contradicts 9.10 where he states Varus confiscated all of Mantua except that Cornelius Gallus states Varus had been commanded to leave three miles of territory around the walls – raising the issue of whether this was sufficient to include Vergil's estates.

[30] Broughton *MRR* 2.377. Bayet (1928) 269ff. suggests it was a rotating command with Pollio in charge in 41, Varus in 40 and Gallus in 39. Martial (8.56.7-10) is the only historical source to comment Vergil lost his farm. No reference is made to Pollio.

[31] App. *B Civ*. 5.20; 24. Dio (48.10.1) only mentions Calenus and Ventidius as obstructing Salvidienus. It is assumed that in 42 BC Salvidienus had defended Southern Italy with these six legions, and was now returning with them to Spain as the latter province was poorly defended. See Brunt *IM* 493-494. When conflict with Lucius appeared inevitable Octavian recalled Salvidienus and his troops back to Italy. App. *B Civ*. 5 27; Dio 48.18.1.

Pollio had interfered with their movement through the Alps. It signifies an active resistance to Octavian and his building of legions under his command in Spain and Narbonensis. The Antonian generals were no doubt aware of the importance of holding the northern provinces for Antony. Tensions between Octavian and Lucius continued to escalate, with veterans requesting Lucius to submit his case to arbitration at the meeting place, Gabii. Antony, residing in the East, remained silent throughout this time. But the arrangement soon broke down, and war between Lucius and Octavian became inevitable.

Octavian recalled his troops under Salvidienus from their march to Spain and Pollio was drawn into the conflict with what can only be stated as great reluctance. Lucius' actions hardly appeared to have been driven by Antony and it was clear Octavian was seeking resolution at all costs. But events were in motion and it was now a split between the Antonian and Octavian forces. For Pollio this scenario was a re-run of the events of 43 BC; no clear instructions from Antony, a command from Lucius for support but with a fear this would precipitate further civil war and the strong possibility of Octavian as the victor. Lepidus, the third triumvir, was ineffective and there was the potential of Pollio's old rival Sextus Pompeius on the sea also gaining power. Further, within a few months Pollio would become consul. With Octavian as victor Pollio's future would be dependent upon the triumvir, but to have failed to have supported the cause for Antony might equally have its consequences, particularly if Antony was behind the conflict. Once again delaying tactics would prove to be his best option and we observe a slow and reluctant engagement by Pollio followed by a sustained delay to act until it was too late.

According to Appian, Pollio and Ventidius followed Salvidienus on his turn-around from the march to Spain at a distance and to all accounts ineffectually.[32] In the meantime Lucius fell into a trap at Sutrium, laid by Agrippa, and withdrew to Perusia awaiting the support of Ventidius and Pollio who should by this time have been nearby. Salvidienus, Octavian and Agrippa now advanced against Lucius and surrounded Perusia with three armies. Lucius anxiously awaited the reinforcements of Ventidius and Pollio. Appian at this point states both Ventidius and Pollio hesitated as they were unhappy about the war, did not know Antony's thoughts for the situation and were in rivalry with each other for the position of military command.[33] Nor should we under-estimate the attitude of the soldiers themselves. It is highly probable they were reluctant to engage in battle against fellow Romans in the service of both triumvirs.

---

[32] See Appian (*B Civ*. 5. 31-35) for the movements of Pollio, Ventidius and Plancus. His reporting of events is confused and unable to be tracked geographically on a map. See Rice Holmes *RR* 3. 96 n.1.
[33] It would appear Ventidius and Pollio had not yet united their forces and were marching independently. Octavian sent what can be assumed to be a small force to halt the advance of Ventidius and Pollio.

> He (Octavian) sent others forward to hold in check the forces of Ventidius, who were approaching. The latter, however, hesitated on their own account to advance, as they altogether disapproved of the war and did not know what Antony thought about it, and on account of mutual rivalry were unwilling to yield to each other the military chieftainship (App. *B Civ.* 5.32).

Lucius sent Antony's agent Manius to Ventidius and Pollio urging them to come quickly, as he had now entered within the walls of Perusia in order to winter within a stronghold whilst awaiting the assistance of these two generals. With little response from Ventidius or Pollio, Fulvia also sent them messages and also messages to Calenus and Ateius in Gaul (Calenus did not respond). She also raised reinforcements and drew Plancus into the war, sending the reinforcements to Lucius under the command of Plancus who in the process destroyed one of Octavian's legions. Ventidius and Pollio, still without unity and ongoing rivalry between them, began a slow march towards Lucius. Octavian and Agrippa encountered them and they both retreated, Pollio to Ravenna, Ventidius to Ariminum. Plancus at this point sought refuge at Spoletium. Appian states Ventidius and Pollio had not yet joined with each other, but were marching independently.[34] Whilst Ventidius had three legions, Pollio had seven, and he would have been in a position to confront the forces of Octavian and Agrippa who had divided themselves to intercept both the Antonian generals. Nor had they organized to unite as ten legions which could have easily confronted Agrippa. Pollio, with the larger force, was the key player and clearly chose not to engage, nor perhaps his soldiers. Octavian now placed a force in front of each to prevent them from uniting, and returned to Perusia. It does not appear that a significant deployment was required to keep the three commanders in check.

Moved by the desperate plight of Lucius, who, as winter progressed, was perishing from hunger, Ventidius, according to Appian, rallied Pollio and Plancus to his assistance. They set out to overpower Octavian's forces surrounding Perusia, but were intercepted by Agrippa and Salvidienus who had now brought even greater forces to resist them.[35] They thus diverged to Fulginium a short distance away. Besieged by Agrippa, they lit fires as a signal to Lucius. Conflict between the three generals persisted. Ventidius and Pollio were now united in a decision to continue to assist Lucius, feeling unable to sit back while he perished from

---

[34] Earlier, Appian (*B Civ*. 5.32) states, Octavian had already sent forth a force to check the army of Ventidius who was approaching, and that when Ventidius and Pollio continued to approach, Octavian with Agrippa, leaving only a guard at Perusia (they had three armies and significant number of reinforcements holding the siege), again set out to halt their advance. The retreat of Pollio to Ravenna and Ventidius to Ariminum, which was further south, indicates Pollio was behind Ventidius the whole time and that it was the latter who was leading the advance. He would have been in desperate need of Pollio's seven legions to have had a chance of success.

[35] App. *B Civ*. 5.35: 'Agrippa and Salvidienus went to meet them with still larger forces.' Agrippa and Salvidienus now raised a greater force to encounter the united commanders, who at this point had thirteen legions between them. We know Salvidienus had six legions. It is not clear that they actually had greater numbers, rather that they brought forth a greater force than previously in place to hold the generals. This continues to imply they did not expect severe resistance.

starvation, whereas Plancus urged them to wait as they were caught between the forces of Agrippa and Octavian. Shortly after Lucius surrendered.

The three commanders, along with the thirteen legions between them, now rapidly retired to the sea-coast by various routes. Octavian's troops followed, harassing the soldiers and offering terms of peace. Two legions belonging to Plancus deserted to Agrippa at Cameria, but the rest remained loyal to their commanders. Fulvia also fled, rushing to Brundisium where she embarked on the warships that had been sent for from Macedonia, and headed for Athens. Plancus set sail with Fulvia, Appian making the comment he 'abandoned the remains of his army through cowardice'.[36] There is a hint of Pollio's *Histories* in this statement. The abandoned army of Plancus chose Ventidius as their commander. Velleius provides some insight into Pollio's immediate actions, indicating he returned to the north and continued to keep Venetia under Antony's control and also accomplished several "brilliant" exploits in Altinum and nearby cities before heading down the coast again to meet with Antony at Brundisium.[37]

The three generals brought together in this conflict were an interesting mix. Plancus and Ventidius were both consulars although Plancus was the senior (Ventidius had been *consul suffectus* at the end of 43).[38] Both Pollio and Ventidius were Italian, and rising to unprecedented positions under the influence of Antony. Ventidius' loyalty to Antony was without question, and his support of the triumvir in 43 had been decisive in Antony's final victory.[39] By contrast Pollio's loyalty through that time had been at the very least ambivalent, and Ventidius would have rightly considered himself the more experienced, capable and loyal commander. Plancus also had shown himself to be opportunistic, his support swinging in accordance with personal gain.[40] Pollio's hatred of Plancus may have developed in this time and added to the conflict.[41] Appian, who we can assume is using Pollio as his source, further emphasises that it was

---

[36] App. *B Civ*. 5.50.

[37] Vell. Pat. 2.76.2 *Nam Pollio Asinius cum septem legionibus, diu retenta in potestate Antonii Venetia, magnis speciosisque rebus circa Altinum aliasque eius regionis urbes editis*. Woodman (1983) 186 notes the overly enthusiastic praise of Pollio at this point in Velleius' history and its excessive detail suggests its derivation is from Pollio's *Histories*. See also Wright (2002) 181 who likewise notes the excessively hostile attitude of Velleius with the further suggestion the source may be the *orationes* of Pollio. See the discussion of Plancus in Chapter 13. The passage in Velleius also high-lights his frequent pairing of Plancus and Pollio. Once again we see a derogatory statement is made of Plancus followed by the achievements and ongoing exploits of Pollio.

[38] Watkins (1997) 96 in a very brief account of the Perusine War and the activities of Plancus also notes Plancus was senior to both Pollio and Ventidius.

[39] Schmidt (1892) 209 considers Ventidius the key figure in the War of Mutina. See also Seaver (1952) 276. Ventidius was also famous for his rapid march to assist Antony after the defeat at Mutina, meeting him at Vada, having travelled up to forty miles a day. He was therefore well equipped in himself to overtake Salvidienus if he had sufficient forces.

[40] See Chapter 4 and the correspondence of Plancus in the lead up to joining with Antony.

[41] See Chapter 13 for further discussion on Pollio's relationship with Plancus.

Antony's silence which heightened the indecision[42] (Appian implies the information from Antony's quaestor that Antony was displeased with those who were marching against Lucius was a deception[43]). Lack of clear instruction from Antony required independent decision and action by the three generals. Their dilemma was the same as the one that resulted in Antony's silence: it was not politically wise to fight Antony's brother who was consul, nor was it wise to fight his fellow triumvir Octavian. At the same time to do nothing implied failure to support Antony's interests. In theory their position was untenable. In reality it was an opportunity to gain a victory for Antony over Octavian, provided their forces were sufficient.

Pollio held the greater number of legions, and so by numbers alone had the authority. However, Appian's account of the movements of the three generals gives greater emphasis to Ventidius as the leader of the campaign. It is the approach of Ventidius that results in the Caesarians sending out a force to block him, it is Ventidius who unites Pollio and Plancus to assist Lucius and it is Ventidius whom Lucius awaits when besieged within Perusia and believes has been destroyed when the signal fires from Fulginium were extinguished.[44] Further, it is Ventidius who leads the march behind Salvidienius, and who must have been waiting for the reinforcements from Pollio before he could engage Salvidienus' six legions.[45] Pollio plainly failed to give this support. Ventidius' actions appear clear. Once war was declared his choice was to support Lucius and hopefully achieve success for Antony. His difficulty lay in gaining the assistance of Pollio and Plancus without whom he had insufficient forces to fight. Calenus had patently decided not to engage in the conflict and withheld his eleven legions – a major blow for the Antonians.[46]

The role of the soldiers themselves in this internal conflict is largely absent from the sources who concentrate on the actions of the generals, but their role must have been significant. Ventidius appears to always hold the loyalty of his men, but it is perhaps more questionable

---

[42] App. *B Civ*. 5.32; 33. See Chapter 13 for discussion on Appian's use of Pollio's *Histories*.

[43] App. *B Civ*. 5.31. Appian also considers a letter from Antony produced by Manius to be a forgery (5.29). Dio 48.27.1 states clearly Antony had been aware of events in Italy, but ignored it, using the response to highlight Antony's drunkenness and infatuation with Cleopatra. There is no doubt letters and embassies from both sides were being sent to Antony. However, Appian comments he could find no records of reply from Antony or that Antony kept the messengers so they were unable to return. App. *B Civ*. 5.21; 52; 60. Plutarch (*Ant*. 30.1) implies Antony heard nothing of the events until they were almost over. Pelling (1988) 197-8 considers Plutarch probably did know the truth, which was that Antony was indeed aware of events. Huzar (1978) 133 also believes this and Watkins (1997) 96 concurs.

[44] App. *B Civ*. 5.32; 35.

[45] This was a replay of events in 43 BC where the success of Antony relied eventually on Pollio's forces joining with Ventidius. Ventidius probably had little trust of Pollio on that occasion and again was unsure of his support now.

[46] Calenus held eleven legions and his intervention would have been vital. Little is known of his failure to act other than what can be assumed to be a manifest decision not to engage in civil war, and to await the outcome. He may also have considered it important to remain holding the province of Gaul for Antony, particularly if Octavian was successful. Earlier he had resisted handing over two legions to Octavian as the triumvirs had agreed at Philippi. It is also possible Calenus was ill as he died quite suddenly in May 40.

with Pollio and Plancus. Two legions, according to Velleius deserted Plancus to Agrippa, indicating loyalty was an issue.

In Pollio's ambivalence, however, there is no detectable evidence he was acting indirectly to give support to Octavian. During this period Octavian is known to have composed poems of abuse about Pollio whose witty reply was recorded by Macrobius: *at ego taceo: non est enim facile in eum scribere qui potest proscribere.*[47]

Finally, Ventidius did persuade Pollio that they should join forces and go to the assistance of Lucius. The argument, according to Appian, was now humanitarian, it would be shameful to watch Lucius and his men perish from starvation. But Plancus convinced them otherwise, fearing they would encounter defeat from Agrippa and Octavian.[48] It probably did not take much to sway Pollio in particular that the better option was to wait and see, but now the decision not to act could be placed squarely at the feet of Plancus. Lucius, in his speech to his soldiers as he prepares to surrender, openly blames the generals for leaving them to die of hunger.[49]

In the immediate aftermath of the war Plancus, after sailing with Fulvia to Greece, had then continued on to meet with Antony, and was the first of the generals to provide a report, no doubt favourable to himself.[50] Meanwhile, Ventidius and Pollio were rightly anxious how their actions would be perceived by Antony and also sent him full accounts highlighting their actions.[51] The outcome for Plancus was the reward of a governorship of Asia. Ventidius too received high command. He was sent to wage war against the Parthians in the East, who had intensified their activities during the distraction of the Perusine war.[52] Pollio, however, receives no specific mention.

Bosworth argues Pollio fell from favour with Antony over his actions in the Perusine War.[53] With the fall of Perusia it soon became evident that the Antonian commanders had lost the opportunity to bring about the downfall of Octavian, and had instead secured for him even greater favour with the veterans in Italy. If Pollio was seen as the designated leader of the campaign he had indeed acted poorly.

---

[47] Macrob. *Sat*. 2.4.21. See Hallett (1977) for inscriptions on the slingers pellets used during the war. The focus is on Fulvia and no mention is made of Pollio.
[48] App. *B Civ*. 5.35.
[49] App. *B Civ*. 5.39.
[50] Watkins (1997) 97 suggests Plancus probably went on to Phoenicia where Antony met with friends and according to Plutarch (*Ant*. 30.2) heard for the first time of the fighting – although it is almost certain he was aware of events well before this.
[51] App. *B Civ*. 5.50.
[52] App. *B Civ*. 5.65.
[53] Bosworth (1972).

However, in defence of Pollio and the three commanders it should be noted that with respect to the two sides the Antonians were overall the weaker force.[54] Lucius probably had eight legions, although the quality of the recruits is questionable. Pollio had seven legions and Plancus at least two, possibly three legions, and Ventidius three.[55] In other words the three commanders had only thirteen legions against the stronger forces of Octavian, Agrippa and Salvidienus.[56] As noted Calenus with his eleven legions had not moved from Gaul. Octavian was also using successfully the tactics of his adoptive father to lay siege to Perusia and would not be distracted by skirmishes from the Antonian side.[57] Neither Pollio nor Plancus had proven military skills,[58] Ventidius was by far the greatest strategist of the three, and so both numerically and in experience they were inferior to Agrippa, Salvidienus and Octavian. Lucius himself was weak in military skills, and without strong support the outcome was doomed to failure. On the other hand, when there was opportunity for the three commanders to bring a substantial combined force against the Caesarians at various points of conflict with a reasonable chance of success, they failed to do so.

Consulship

The Perusine war not only brought Pollio's leadership under scrutiny, it also ushered in his consulship; he was 36 years of age (well below the constitutional age for the consulship of 41 years). But with the defeat of Lucius, Pollio was in no position to enter Rome and take up his official position. It must have been a bitter blow, and if it had not been for the signing of the peace treaty between the two triumvirs in October his consulship would have gone unmarked except for the defeat of Lucius and the success of Octavian in the Perusine War. However, the pact of Brundisium brought such a relief to an exhausted Italy that Vergil recorded the event as

---

[54] Although, as Syme notes (*Rom. Rev.* 209-10), the Antonians overall had the advantage, as their fleets dominated the seas and their commanders the western province, the real issue being that they lacked unity and failed to unite this force against Octavian.
[55] Brunt *IM* 495-496.
[56] App. *B Civ.* 5.24. Appian describes Octavian's forces in the siege of Perusia as the more numerous and better trained (5.32); Agrippa and Salvidienus are also described as having the larger forces against Ventidius and Pollio (5.35) and he states Pollio, Plancus, Ventidius, Crassus and Ateius had thirteen legions between them (5.50). See also Brunt *IM* 495-96 for a breakdown of the legions in the Perusine War in which he notes it is difficult to accurately determine the numbers. Overall, the Antonian legions in 40 BC were about thirty whilst Octavian had over forty legions. Bosworth (1972) 471 comments Pollio had the greatest number of legions in the conflict against Salvidienus, but Octavian in total had the stronger forces.
[57] Advantage usually lay with the besieger. Gabba (1971) 151 cites Praeneste in the first Civil War and Alesia in the Gallic War as models of success which would have been known to both sides.
[58] Pollio had failed dismally to subdue Sextus in Spain in 44 and, subsequently had only joined with Antony when all military conflict had ended.

the beginning of a golden age occurring in the consulship of his friend Pollio.[59] If Pollio at any stage entered Rome as consul it would have been at this time, shortly before the end of the year.

His fellow consul was Cn Domitius Calvinus. He was a legate of Octavian and from a well established aristocratic family. He had already been consul in 53, and with the outbreak of civil war in 49 he had sided with Caesar and it appears was designated by Caesar as *Magister Equitum* for 43.[60] At the Conference of Bononia Octavian had nominated him as the fellow consul to serve alongside Pollio in 40 BC. This suggests Octavian was seeking to counterbalance the Antonian control on the consulship through Pollio, and chose an individual of seniority with established aristocratic background and high military skill.

We can also note that Agrippa after the Perusine War returned to Rome and celebrated the *Ludi Apollinares* as *praetor urbanus*.[61] The games also included the *Lusus Troiae* and could be conceived as celebrating a victory for Octavian and also highlighting his connection to the Julian *gens*. Around the same time Sextus Pompeius produced a mock naval battle to celebrate his victories on the sea over the soon to be accused Salvidienus Rufus.[62] It was divisive rather than unifying in its celebration, and a warning any negotiations forged at this time would be brief.[63] Pollio must have wondered if he would ever be free of Sextus.

The lead up to Brundisium

After the success of Perusia Octavian's position still remained far from secure. Calenus held Transalpine Gaul and Pollio had returned to Cisalpina. On the sea Sextus Pompeius remained threatening as did Domitius Ahenobarbus. Further, news was filtering through that Antony was returning with legions and Italy remained in the grip of a famine.

With the surrender of Lucius, Plancus had fled with Fulvia to Greece, and then proceeded to meet with Antony. Pollio had returned to the Adriatic coast. According to Velleius he still had all seven legions intact.[64] Pollio is next recorded at Brundisium in September/October, his in-between movements obscure, other than he moved down the coast securing provisions and possible landing sites for Antony's return to Italy.[65]

It is in this time that it is also recorded that Pollio captured Salona in Dalmatia; this is usually placed as having occurred before the Pact of Brundisium. The information comes exclusively

---

[59] Verg. *Ecl*. 4.
[60] Broughton *MRR* 2.319.
[61] Dio 48.20.2
[62] Dio 48.18.2; 19.1.
[63] See Sumi (2005) 194-196 for a detailed discussion of these games and their propaganda.
[64] Vell. Pat. 2.76.2.
[65] App. *B Civ*. 5.50; Vell. Pat. 2.76.2.

from the scholiasts of Vergil and there is no record of the event in the historians, in particular Appian and Dio. [66] It is clearly misplaced information, if the event even occurred at all.[67]

Bosworth suggests that it is in this period that the shift in Pollio's allegiance from Antony to Octavian can be observed.[68] In this context two further events occur; Pollio's negotiations with Domitius Ahenobarbus and the death of Calenus.

Domitius Ahenobarbus

It was after securing Venetia, and as he was planning to move down the coast and make preparations for Antony, that Pollio entered into negotiations with Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus. Ahenobarbus was an established anti-Caesarian; the nephew of Cato, he had been proscribed for his involvement in the death of Caesar and had supported Brutus and Cassius at Philippi.[69] In 42 Domitius had been sent by Brutus and Cassius to assist Lucius Staius Murcus who was seeking to block the passage of Antony and Octavian across the Adriatic. He was despatched with fifty ships, one legion and a body of archers.[70] He and Murcus had maintained a presence on the seas, harassing the triumvirs and their supporters. At some point after Philippi Murcus joined with Sextus in Sicily while Ahenobarbus remained in the Ionian Gulf. Appian implies a split occurred between the two commanders, Domitius forming an independent splinter group.[71] Dio adds that he then attempted to maintain control of the Gulf, but without support (presumably that of Murcus) he began to despair of success, at which point he joined with Antony. Dio makes no mention of Pollio in this outcome. The split between Murcus and Ahenobarbus, who was the junior, is significant. According to Welch, 'Ahenobarbus represents all the resentment and refusal to cooperate which hampered the efforts of Sextus to act on the

---

[66] For mention of Salona see: Serv. Dan. on *Ecl*. 3.88 and 4.1; Serv. Dan. on *Ecl*. 8.12 dates it before the peace of Brundisium; *Schol. Bern*. on *Ecl*. 8.6, 13 and 4.1 Preface; Iun. Philargyr. 1 and 11 on *Ecl*. 4.1 and 8.13. Broughton *MRR* 2. 378-88.

[67] See further reference to Salona in the discussion of Pollio's province in Chapter 7, in particular, the more recent work by Dzino (2011).

[68] Bosworth (1972).

[69] Appian (*B Civ*. 5.62) states he was not one of the murderers but a friend of Brutus. He had been proscribed out of personal animosity.

[70] App. *B Civ*. 4.86 cf. Dio 47.36.4. The two commanders between them had one hundred and thirty war ships, numerous smaller ships and a large military force.

[71] App. *B Civ*. 5.2. Velleius (2.72.3) also indicates Ahenobarbus acted independently seizing a number of ships and a large army on his own initiative, and established himself as leader. App. *B Civ*. 5.2 cf., Vell. Pat. 2.72, who states that after Philippi Ahenobarbus seized a large number of ships, accompanied by a large number of companions, whom he entrusted to himself to lead, and took flight. Compare Appian 5.15, who indicates that even before the fall of Perusia Ahenobarbus and Murcus were collecting a new fleet and army. Murcus, who acted for Cassius, was conducting combined naval operations with Sextus as early as 42, see App. *B Civ*. 4.86; Dio 47. 36.4. Welch (2002) 49 considers Murcus acted as a link between Sextus and the liberators.

behalf of the beleaguered *res publica.'*[72] In the end he chose to deal with the triumvirs rather than join with Sextus.

Pollio's role in this decision of Ahenobarbus is difficult to determine. Appian indicates the split with Murcus had occurred soon after Philippi, and Dio states he had been operating alone in the Ionian Gulf, with increasing difficulty, before joining with Antony.[73] At the time of his defection rumours were also rife that Antony was in negotiation with Sextus.[74] After the fall of Perusia in February 40, many who had supported Lucius fled to Sextus. Further, the Antonian cavalry which had been under the command of Plancus also went over to Sextus.[75] Julia, the mother of Antony had also taken refuge with Sextus, suggesting the relationship was strong. He subsequently sent her on to Antony with a proposal that they form an alliance against Octavian.[76] News of this negotiation rapidly reached Octavian, who either in May, before he left for Gaul, or certainly on his return in July, sought to counteract this alliance by arranging a marriage between himself and Scribonia, the sister of the father-in-law of Sextus.[77] The alliance of Ahenobarbus with Antony at this time would have been crucial in increasing Antony's position of power, it also reinforced the negotiations with Sextus and propelled the urgency for Octavian to counter the liaison.

It can therefore be assumed Ahenobarbus was well on the way to joining with Antony before Pollio arrived on the scene, but what Ahenobarbus required was a negotiator. He was failing to maintain an advantage at sea, and, with Sextus making overtures to Antony, Ahenobarbus would be in a more vulnerable position should he stay aloof from this outcome. His difficulty was his status as a well-identified aristocrat who had been proscribed for his role in the murder of Caesar and who was strongly hated by the Caesarians.[78] Pollio stepped ably into the role, successfully negotiating a liaison between Antony and the arrogant, headstrong Ahenobarbus. Velleius states that Pollio promised Ahenobarbus immunity.[79] Ahenobarbus immediately set sail to join Antony who was on his way to Italy. Appian (most probably citing Pollio) describes the

---

[72] Welch in Powel and Welch (2002) 50.
[73] Hadas (1930) considers Ahenobarbus had been operating independently in the region blocking grain supplies for two years, that is from 42-40 BC.
[74] Antony's mother, Julia, after the fall of Perusia had fled initially to Sextus.
[75] App. *B Civ*. 5.61.
[76] App. *B Civ*. 5.52 also 63,122,134; Dio 48.15.2-3,16 .2; Plut. *Ant*. 32.
[77] See Rice Holmes *RR* 3.220 for discussion of the chronology as occurs in Appian 5.53 and Dio 48.16.2-3. He concludes that when Octavian returned from Gaul in August he heard of the negotiations of Sextus with Antony and attempted to impede them with the marriage proposal. This suggests that the negotiations with Sextus, and no doubt Ahenobarbus, occurred in May-June. Octavian had most probably not made the proposal before he left for Gaul in May.
[78] On his arrival at Brundisium with Antony, it was the presence of Ahenobarbus that caused such alarm. Ahenobarbus is described as an old enemy and it was said that Antony was bringing this enemy with him. App. *B Civ*. 5.56.
[79] Vell. Pat. 2.76.2. See also Woodman (1983) 186-87. Frisch (1946) 37 describes Ahenobarbus as arrogant and pigheaded.

meeting of the two commanders, highlighting the cowardice of Plancus who was aboard Antony's ship.[80] Plancus feared Ahenobarbus, and indicated that Antony should defend himself, Antony responded that he would rather die respecting a treaty than breaking it. The event most probably occurred in May or June 40 BC.

The successful negotiation (much like that with Plancus in 43) certainly served the interests of Antony and confirms Pollio was acting in his support. Velleius, always supportive of Pollio, records the event as Pollio's greatest service to Antony: *quo facto, quisquis aequum se praestiterit, sciat non minus a Pollione in Antonium quam ab Antonio in Pollionem esse conlatum*.[81] However, Ahenobarbus' decision to act independently of Sextus soon after Philippi was the greater blow, it robbed Sextus and his men of the status of a known aristocrat and undermined any claim that Sextus might have made to be acting for the *res publica*.[82] Nevertheless, his support for Antony immediately after Perusia again tipped a political balance, giving Antony a sudden advantage over Octavian and one for which Pollio was keen to claim credit.[83] Suetonius claims that Ahenobarbus went over to Antony of his own free will and in the process did him great service; there is no mention of Pollio. [84]

Death of Calenus

Shortly after Perusia there was a further event in which Pollio, as an Antonian commander, may have failed to act. The province of greatest significance was Gaul. Up until this point it was firmly under the control of Antony. Whilst he had conceded that Cisalpine Gaul should become part of Italy, Pollio had not vacated the region, and after Perusia returned to the region with his seven legions, campaigning at Venetia. In Transalpine Gaul sat Calenus, an Antonian commander with eleven legions. He had not moved from the region during the siege of Perusia. With the increasing tensions between the triumvirs after the defeat of Lucius, Octavian had his sights on gaining control over Gaul. Opportunity presented itself in May 40 BC when Calenus died suddenly, leaving his son, who was inadequate for the task, to take charge of the eleven

---

[80] App. *B Civ*. 5.55. Appian indicates Antony had learned of Ahenobarbus' support at Corcyra. Watkins (1997) 97 believes Antony did not know of Ahenobarbus' agreement to join with him at the time of their meeting on the sea and that Antony trusted his intentions to come on side whilst Plancus did not. It is more certain Antony had been informed.

[81] Vell. Pat. 2.76.3. See Woodman (1983) 187.

[82] Hadas (1930) and Welch (2002) 49-51 both consider it was a greater loss to Sextus, Ahenobarbus being a representative of an individual of high status with *dignitas* which Sextus had attempted to recognize and maintain.

[83] Pollio had been humiliatingly defeated by Sextus in 44 BC, and may have further wished to align Ahenobarbus with Antony in an attempt to undermine Sextus not believing that either of the triumvirs would join with him.

[84] Suet. *Ner*. 3.1 states Ahenobarbus surrendered to Antony after he had been routed everywhere and did so of his own free will and as if it was of great service to Antony. Tacitus (*Ann*. 4.44.2), like Dio, is also silent concerning the role of Pollio.

legions. Appian records that the death of Calenus, according to Octavian, drove Lucius almost to a frenzy in anticipation of gaining the legions, and that Pollio and Ahenobarbus were near at hand and about to use the legions against Octavian.[85] The statement, which occurs in the context of a speech in which Octavian is justifying his actions in seizing the legions, and so must be considered with some scepticism, places Pollio within the region and makes it clear that he had not yet started to move down the coast. It would appear he was in contact with Ahenobarbus, and so had either won him over to the cause of Antony or was in the process of doing so. However, there is no evidence Pollio made any advance to secure control of Calenus' legions, a task that would not have been difficult for a fellow Antonian commander, and in the process then secure control of the whole of Gaul for Antony. Instead Octavian acted; without delay he travelled to the region and readily took over the legions, occupied Gaul and in addition secured Spain. He dismissed the existing chief officers and substituted his own, leaving the loyal Salvidienus in charge, before returning to Rome. This loss for Antony was substantial and would remain so in the longer term as Octavian gained mastery over all of Italy.

Ahenobarbus was no doubt the compensation to Antony for having failed to secure the legions in Gaul. It is also feasible Pollio put no obstruction in the way of Octavian gaining the legions; a belief Antony may also have come to hold. But more probably Pollio may not have wished to have engaged in active combat with Octavian; however, with his own seven legions and the addition of Calenus' eleven legions he would have commanded a substantial force, all loyal to Antony. Nevertheless it was an opportunity that Pollio failed to seize for the Antonians and inadvertently gave to Octavian.[86]

Pact of Brundisium

As Antony sailed towards Rome, accompanied by Ahenobarbus and Plancus, Pollio moved down the coast to meet him at Brundisium. How many of his seven legions accompanied him is unknown. Antony's appearance with Ahenobarbus and his fleet of ships appeared hostile to the waiting Caesarian commanders. Brundisium therefore refused to admit Antony, who laid siege to the city whilst Sextus commenced assaults on the southern coast. Octavian marched to the town with a strong force but paused before commencing to fight; the armies of both sides wanted reconciliation. The points of conflict between the two parties concerned Calenus and

---

[85] App. *B Civ*. 5.61 cf 5.51; 54; Dio 48.20.3. Octavian on his return from Gaul explains his actions to Lucius on the grounds that if Antony remained on friendly terms with him he was preserving the forces to hand over to Antony but if war broke out then he would be adding the forces to his own strength. Octavian then offers to send Lucius to Antony, with the hope he would communicate Octavian's actions to him, but when Lucius maintained his stance in support of a Republic only, he sends him to govern the whole of Spain under the supervision of two lieutenants.

[86] The specific whereabouts of Ventidius at this time are unknown. He is not referred to by Octavian as a threat within the region only Pollio (App. *B Civ*. 5.61).

Ahenobarbus. Octavian was accused of having taken over Antony's legions in Gaul and Antony accused of joining with the proscribed murderer of Caesar who had supported Sextus and who had been attacking the Adriatic coast. Lucius Cocceius Nerva, who had been sent by Octavian as a messenger to Antony in the build up of tensions with Lucius, but whom Antony had retained, and who was now with Antony at Brundisium, seized the opportunity. He indicated Octavian had requested to see him and set in motion a process of reconciliation between the two triumvirs, informing them both privately that their soldiers did not wish to fight. As a result it was arranged for delegates from both sides to meet. According to Appian it was the soldiers who chose the representatives; they chose Pollio as a representative of Antony's party, Maecenas for Octavian and Cocceius as a friend of both.[87] From the perspective of the soldiers Pollio was a practical choice. He was on site, he was consul, and there was no one else of sufficient status; Ventidius was (presumably) absent, Plancus was already on board with Antony and Calenus was dead. Further, Pollio had the skills to negotiate, he had already achieved this with Plancus and Ahenobarbus (and may even have possibly swayed Salvidienus over to Antony as will be discussed), and was no doubt known to favour reconciliation rather than conflict. The choice also confirms that the soldiers perceived Pollio as a supporter of Antony. It also highlights the fact that Antony did not personally choose Pollio, but clearly the choice was acceptable to him. Octavian may have had more influence on his selection, again confirming that Pollio was not seen as aggressively anti-Caesarian.

The representatives determined that Antony and Octavian should reach an amnesty, and that Antony would marry Octavia, the sister of Octavian, which occurred. The two triumvirs then proceeded to make a new partition of the Roman Empire.[88] The boundary line was to be Scodra, a city of Illyria. All provinces and islands to the east of Scodra were to belong to Antony and all to the west to Octavian. Lepidus was to govern Africa. Further, Octavian would make war against Pompeius unless they could reach an agreement, and Antony would make war against the Parthians to avenge the death of Crassus. Immediately they both despatched their friends on this business. As noted, Ventidius was sent to Asia against the Parthians and Plancus to govern Asia. However, no mention is made of Pollio, and it is to be assumed he now returned to Rome as consul with Antony and Octavian. The date was late September or early October – perhaps October 4-5.[89]

In this aftermath of Brundisium Antony also had his agent Manius put to death for inciting Fulvia to anger with rumours about Cleopatra and it was also at this time Antony revealed to

---

[87]App. *B Civ*. 5.64. Neither Dio (48.28.3-4) nor Velleius (2.76.3) make mention of the representatives. Velleius highlights Pollio's negotiations with Ahenobarbus but gives little mention to the Pact of Brundisium.
[88] App. *B Civ*. 5.65; Dio 48.28.4; 29.2.
[89] See Gabba (1976) 273.

Octavian the treachery of Salvidienus, who at the time was still in Gaul. [90] Salvidienus was recalled from Gaul, confronted in the senate by Octavian with the evidence that he had wished to defect to Antony and put to death.[91]

As the year reached its end Herod also arrived in Rome to present his case for kingship to Antony and the senate. There was intense debate followed by a celebratory sacrifice on the Capitol. Whether Pollio was consul for this event is arguable. Josephus comments that it occurred in the presence of the consuls, naming Asinius Pollio.[92] However, at the very end of the year Antony and Octavian removed Pollio and Calvinus from the consulship and appointed new consuls and praetors even though they would be in office for but a few days.[93] It could be argued that the year is dated by the eponymous consuls, and that the consuls present may have been the *consules suffecti* elected at the end of the year. It is an issue that will be further explored in consideration of Pollio's Jewish interests, which Feldman has stated were ignited by this contact with Herod when Pollio was consul.[94]

As the year ended the lines of Vergil ring out:

> And in thy consulship, Pollio, yea in thine, shall this glorious age begin, and the mighty months commence their march; under thy sway, any lingering traces of our guilt shall become void, and release the earth from its continual dread (*Ecl*. 4. 11-14).

But all would not remain well as was so desperately hoped.

---

[90] App. *B Civ*. 5.66; Dio 48.33.2; Vell. Pat. 2.76.4; Suet. *Aug*. 66.1.
[91] See Chapter 7 for a detailed discussion on Pollio's possible role in this affair of Salvidienus.
[92] Joseph. *AJ* 14.14.3-5 (378-389); *BJ* 1.15.2-4 (279-285).
[93] Dio 48.32.1.
[94] Feldman (1953); (1985). See also Chapter 15 esp. n. 21.

7 39 BC: The Proconsulship

'That old man, hero of triumphs'

As the year of Pollio's consulship came to an end Pollio's immediate movements are uncertain. However, Velleius is patently wrong when he states that Pollio remained in Italy.[1] What we do know is that in 39 or 38 Pollio undertook a brief campaign against the Parthini, celebrated a triumph and subsequently withdrew from further military commands. We cannot be certain when he made this decision but it would appear he first actively sought for himself a triumph. To this end he undertook a campaign against the Parthini. The recording of the campaign is somewhat obscure and it has none of the status that we see in the commands given to both Plancus and Ventidius in the immediate aftermath of Perusia. This has led to the conclusion, as will be explored, that Pollio fell from favour with Antony after Perusia, but, equally, we cannot exclude the possibility that Pollio himself may have wished for no further commands other than for a province that would provide an opportunity for an "easy" triumph in order to retire.

It is known from a statement in Dio that after the settlement with Sextus Pompeius in 39 an uprising occurred among the Parthini Illyrians which was put down by Pollio in a few battles.[2] The success of Pollio in these skirmishes is confirmed by the *Fasti Triumphales* which record that Pollio celebrated a triumph for his engagement with the Parthini.[3] The date of the triumph is October 25 in either 39 or 38 BC – the inscription is incomplete but it occurs after the triumph of L. Marcius Censorinus on January 1 39 BC and before the triumph of Ventidius Bassus on November 27 38 BC.

[39] L. Marcius L.f. C.n. Censorinus, consul, from Macedonia, *k. Jan.* (1st January)

[? 39] C. Asinius Cn.f. Pollio, proconsul, from the Parthini, *8 k. Nov.* (25th October)

[38] P. Ventidius P.f., proconsul, from Mount Taurus and the Parthians, *5 k. Dec.* (27th November)

---

[1] Vell. Pat. 2.86.3 cf. 2.76. 2-3.
[2] Dio 48.41.7.
[3] *Inscr. Ital.* 2.13.1 p. 86; Act. Tr., Degrassi 86ff., 568 The triumph is also referred to in Horace *Carm.* 2.1.15-16; Sen. *Controv. pref.* 4.2; Jerome *Chr* ad ann 4p. C., p170. See also Broughton *MRR* 2. 388 who considers the triumph was most likely in 39.

We can therefore be certain that Pollio held a command to put down uprisings of the Parthini in 39 BC. What is interesting is that Velleius and Appian also make reference to these uprisings but fail to mention Pollio.[4] This is particularly surprising if we assume Pollio is a main source for Appian through this period and how often the activities of Pollio intrude into the text.[5] Velleius also takes opportunity to highlight Pollio's activities and the silence of both these authors on an event of such significance in Pollio's career, one which Vergil chooses to celebrate in his *Eclogues*, is unusual to say the least. Further, Appian indicates it was Antony who sent an army against the Parthini whilst Velleius states it was Octavian.

At this point it is perhaps useful to compare the three source statements which provide evidence for Pollio's activities at this time:

Dio, who has just recorded the activities of Ventidius in the East, which dates to 39 BC, writes as follows:

> About this same time an uprising took place among the Parthini Illyrians, but it was put down by Pollio after a few battles. There was another on the part of the Cerretani in Spain and they were subjugated by Calvinus … And he (Calvinus) obtained a triumph in spite of the fact that Spain had been assigned to Caesar; for those in power could grant the honours at will to those who served as their lieutenants (48.41.7-42.4). [6]

Velleius, who having recorded the activities of Ventidius in the East and the death of Labienus, writes the following:

> During this time Caesar, wishing to keep his soldiers from being spoiled by idleness, the great enemy of discipline, was making frequent expeditions in Illyricum and Dalmatia and thus hardening his army by endurance of danger and experiences in warfare. At this time also Calvinus Domitius, who after filling the consulship, was now governor of Spain, executed a rigorous act of discipline comparable with the severity of the older days … (2.78. 2-3).

Finally, Appian who has just described the treaty with Sextus at Puteoli states:

> After these events Octavian set forth on an expedition to Gaul, which was in a disturbed state, and Antony started for the war against the Parthians. The senate having voted to ratify all that he had done or should do, Antony again despatched his lieutenants in all directions and arranged everything else as he wished. … Desiring to enrich as well as to exercise the soldiers, who were to go with him into winter quarters, he sent some of them

---

[4] Vell. Pat. 2.78.2-3; App. *B Civ*. 5.75.

[5] See in particular Gabba (1956) who argues Pollio was the key source for Appian's Book Five. But even if we assume Pollio's *Historiae* ended with the battle of Philippi in 42 BC, as is often argued, it could still be expected Appian would document the activities and triumph of his key source. It also raises the interesting speculation that Pollio himself may not have continued his history to cover the period of his own greatest activity: the Perusine war, consulship and triumph. This would suggest it was a period of unsettlement for the writer. Against this theory is Badian (1958A) 159-162, who posits that the lack of mention of the triumph in Appian strongly supports the suggestion that the *Historiae* ended at Philippi. These issues are further discussed in Chapter 13 on the writing of Pollio's History.

[6] The triumph was celebrated in 36 BC. *CIL* 2.6186, also Vell. Pat. 2.78.3.

> against the Partheni, an Illyrian tribe near Epidamus, who had been very much attached to Brutus; others against the Dardani, another Illyrian tribe, who were for ever making incursions into Macedonia (5.75).

Plutarch in his *Life of Antony* comments only on the exploits of Ventidius who, he states, modified his final victories in order not to upstage Antony himself. He further comments that both Antony and Octavian were more fortunate in what they did through the agency of their lieutenants than in their own persons. He then lists the exploits of Sossius and Canidius, but makes no mention of Pollio.[7]

Dio and Velleius follow a similar chronology of reporting; discussion of Ventidius, and the uprising of the Parthini followed by Calvinus in Spain. This dates the uprising to 39 BC and reasonably excludes the possibilty that Velleius is making reference to Octavian's campaigns in Illyricia in 36-35 BC.[8] Appian and Velleius appear to be discussing the same campaign, as they both detail that expeditions were made to prevent idleness by the soldiers and as an opportunity for them to gain riches. It is assumed this is the same campaign referred to by Dio, but this may not necessarily be so.[9] Dio places Pollio's campaign in 39 BC whereas Appian implies the campaigns organized by Antony occurred after the settlement with Sextus, and as he was about to winter in Athens which was at the end of 39. It is known from the work of Reynolds that Antony was still in Rome on October 2 39 BC.[10] This would imply that either Pollio did not celebrate his triumph until 38, or that Appian is not referring to the same campaign, or that Appian is referring to a follow-up campaign to the activities already undertaken by Pollio.

However, a key issue of relevance is that Velleius indicates Octavian organized the campaigns which occurred in Dalmatia whilst Appian states it was Antony against the tribes at Epidamnus. This point has raised considerable debate as to which province Pollio had command of, and whether he was working for Antony or Octavian.

Which province?

The Parthini were a tribe who had recently given support to Brutus at the battle of Philippi. They lived in the hinterland of Dyrrachium.[11] The Pact of Brundisium divided the world into East and West with the dividing line at Scodra on the river Drin which is approximately forty miles to the north of Dyrrachium. As a result this became a boundary between the provinces of Macedonia,

---

[7] Plut. *Ant*. 33.
[8] Velleius indicates it was at the same time, *eadem tempestate*, that Calvinus was governor of Spain. He was governor in 39 BC.
[9] Bosworth (1972) 466 argues it was a separate follow-up campaign.
[10] Reynolds (1982) doc 81.26 plus commentary.
[11] Caes. *B Civ*. 3.11; 41; 42; Plin. *HN* 3.145; Strabo 7.7.8 who states: 'for above Epidamnus and Apollonia as far as the Ceraunian Mountains dwell the Bylliones, the Taulantii, the Parthini, and the Brygi'. Also Wilkes (1969) 44.

under Antony, and Illyricum under Octavian. However, tribes known as "Illyrican" or "Dalmatian" often extended south and into the province of Macedonia.[12] It is to be noted that the Parthini were amongst the tribes conquered by Octavian in 35-33 BC, and were therefore to be found north-west of the Drin.[13]

Taken and adapted from *CAH* 10 (1996) Map 2 Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean

With respect to seeking a triumph, the region, regardless of the specific province involved, was a good choice. Wilkes comments as follows: 'Most of the recorded campaigns against the Delmatae, as in 156-155 BC, 119-117 BC, and 45-44 BC, were undertaken to benefit the military and political reputation of the commanders. Three of these wars produced triumphs on the Capitol at Rome. For as long as there was no military necessity to attack peoples who dwelt across the mountains, the political needs of the Roman commanders appear to have been

[12] Zaninovic (1977) 767-809; Wilkes (1969) 161ff.
[13] App. *Ill*. 16.

satisfied by modest operations along the coast and in the immediate hinterland.'[14] This is confirmed by both Appian and Velleius, who state that the army was sent against the Delmatae (Velleius) and the Parthini (Appian) in 39 BC as an exercise in warfare and to gain riches.[15]

Syme is of clear opinion that Pollio was proconsul of the province Macedonia, which lay under Antony's command, and defeated the Parthini within the region, at Epidamnus according to Appian, although Syme does concede Pollio may have needed to transgress the border into Octavian's region.[16] In so doing Syme needed to discount the more peripheral evidence to the historical source material that associates Pollio at this time with Dalmatia.[17]

This evidence arises from Vergil, the commentators on Vergil, Horace and Florus; all of whom associate Pollio with Dalmatia.[18]

***Eclogue* Eight**

The most contentious evidence occurs in Vergil's eighth *Eclogue,* in which Vergil addresses his unnamed patron. This particular *Eclogue* is central to the literature on Vergil's relationship with Pollio. It has implications for not only the evidence as to Pollio's province, but also as for his role as patron of Vergil. Its content in relation to Pollio's province will be discussed fully at this point whilst the wider context of Pollio's overall relationship with Vergil will be deferred to the later discussion of Pollio's affiliation with the poets.[19]

The unnamed addressee in *Eclogue* 8 is described as celebrating a triumph and sailing past the crags of the Timavus, located some four hundred miles to the North of Dyrrachium.

> *Tu mihi seu magni superas iam saxa Timavi*
> *Sive oram Illyrici legis aequoris en erit umquam`*
> *Ille dies mihi cum liceat tua dicere facta?*
> *En erit, ut liceat totum mihi ferre per orbem*

---

[14] Wilkes (1977) 737. In 45 BC P. Vatinus was sent as proconsul by Caesar against the Delmatae. The Illyrians were at first friendly as they feared Caesar's planned campaign against the Getae and their own possible involvement, but with the murder of Caesar they turned and attacked Vatinus. He retreated to Dryrrhachium which lay outside of his province and the Senate transferred his troops to Brutus. He however considered he had broken the power of the Delmatae and Wilkes comments Octavian could operate there in 35 BC without great risk. Vatinus celebrated his triumph in 42 BC. See also Wilkes (1969) 44. The Illyrian support for Brutus now provided the reason for further campaigns against them in 39 BC.
[15] App. *B Civ*. 5.75; Vell. Pat. 2.78.2-3.
[16] Syme (1937) 43 = *RP* 1. 24. See also later discussion this chapter.
[17] Prior to the argument of Syme in 1937 the accepted view had been that Pollio's province was Dalmatia. See for example Bennett (1930) 331 who states Pollio undertook a campaign against the Parthini in Illyrica and reduced their stronghold of Salona, whilst in the service of Antony. See also Dzino (2011) who also adds evidence to this theory regarding Salona as will be later discussed.
[18] Verg. *Ecl*. 8. 6-13; Horace *Carm*. 2.1 esp. 15-16; Flor. 2.25.11.
[19] See Chapter 10.

Sola Sophocleo tua carmina digna coturno?
A te principium, tibi desinam. Accipe iussis
Carmina coepta tuis atque hanc sine tempora circum
Inter victrices hederam tibi serpere laurus. [20]

The addressee is usually considered to be either Pollio or Octavian.[21]

Evidence from the scholiasts has not helped to resolve the issue. Servius on *Eclogue* 8 at line 6 considers the reference to be to the future Augustus and at line 12 to Pollio.[22] Further, the commentators have also held the view that Pollio captured the city of Salona during his campaign.[23] The confused chronology of the evidence has largely discredited this source material. The commentators believed that the capture occurred whilst Pollio was in command of a German army and that he celebrated his triumph before his consulship. Porphyrio, commenting on Horace's *Ode* to Pollio, makes a similar comment.[24] However, there is no historical evidence to support the capture of Salona by any commander at this time, nor was it possible for Pollio to celebrate his triumph before his consulship in 40 BC.[25] Nonetheless, Ganter in 1892, in his study of the administration of the provinces in the triumviral period did raise the suggestion that after Brundisium Pollio might have been given command of the legions of the disgraced Salvidienus Rufus, hence a German army as Salvidienus at this time was located on the Rhone, which he led on campaign from their location in Northern Italy via the route detailed by Vergil to his province of Macedonia.[26] On the way he captured Salona, but as this was in Octavian's province it was not acknowledged for a triumph in itself. Syme dismisses the suggestion outright and it has since gained little recognition, but it is worth reconsidering in the context of the activities of Salvidienus Rufus, as will be discussed.[27]

---

[20] Verg. *Ecl*. 8. 6-13.
[21] For a summary of the evidence see Briggs (1981) 1331-1332; Mankin (1988) 63-76.
[22] Servius on *Ecl*. 8 line 6: *ubi ubi es O Auguste, sive venetiae fluenta transcendis* … and at line 12 he states the lines were addressed to Pollio: *qui tunc Illyricum petebat oppugnaturus Salonas et inde ad orientem ad Antonium profecturus*.
[23] Serv. *Ecl*. 3.88; 4.1; 8.12; *Schol. Bern Ecl*. 4 pref; 8.6.
[24] Porph. ad Hor. *Odes* 2.1.15.
[25] For a detailed history of Salona see Wilkes (1969) 40; 220 -238 esp. 220-224. Salona was overrun by the Delmatae in the middle of the second century BC and remained in their possession until the campaigns of C. Cosconius in 78-76 BC. A flourishing community of settlers and traders from Italy, a *conventus civium Romanorum*, followed. In 56 BC it was established as a free and allied state and in the civil war Salona fought for Caesar. It was the headquarters of A. Gabinius in 48-47 BC and was relieved from attack by the Delmatae and Pompeians by P. Vatinius in 45-43 BC. It was probably a Roman base for Octavian in 34-33 BC. Dzino (2011) has added to this debate using the medieval historical source of Thomas the Archdeacon of Spalato which states Pollio did indeed capture Salona in the context of his campaign in Dalmatia. See also Sasel Kos (2005) for a comprehensive discussion of Illyricum in this period.
[26] Ganter (1892) 71ff. as quoted in Syme (1937) 43 = *RP* 1.23.
[27] Syme (1937) 43 = *RP* 1.23 indicates many objections could be raised against this hypothesis but lists none other than to state that there is no evidence Octavian bestowed eleven legions upon an Antonian commander. However Appian (*B Civ*. 5.66) clearly states that after the execution of Salvidienus Octavian

Until the 1970's the accepted interpretation of *Eclogue* 8 was that the unnamed individual was Pollio, but with some uneasiness over the geographical details concerning his triumph. Syme largely rejects the content of the *Eclogue,* focusing his argument on the evidence that Pollio could not have captured Salona as claimed by the scholiasts and supports this evidence by identifying Pollio's province as Macedonia. The geographical details in *Eclogue* 8 he considers to be no more than poetic description.[28] Bosworth uses the *Eclogue* to support the argument that the date of Pollio's triumph must be 39 BC, as Vergil is expecting his celebratory return and the writing of the *Eclogue* can be dated to 40-39 BC.[29]

In 1971 Bowersock argued the addressee of the *Eclogue* was not Pollio but Octavian.[30] One factor in his thesis is that the geographical details related to Octavian's campaign in Illyricum in 35 BC and not to Pollio who campaigned as proconsul in Macedonia.[31] Two major implications emerged from this: that Pollio was not the patron of Vergil and that the dating of the *Eclogues* should be extended to 35-34 BC. Bowersock's view was further supported by Clausen, Schmidt and Van Sickle, all of whom ran with the argument of re-dating the entire *Eclogue* collection.[32] Others remained unconvinced, with Tarrant and Coleman arguing for the accepted view that the addressee is indeed Pollio.[33] Embedded in the argument is Pollio's actual province. If Pollio is considered the proconsul of Macedonia, as argued by Syme and accepted by Bowersock, then

---

handed his eleven legions back to Antony, as he considered them disloyal to himself, and they must have come under an Antonian commander. See later discussion this chapter concerning Salvidienus.

[28] Syme (1937) 41-44; 47 = *RP* 1.22-24; 29.

[29] Bosworth (1972) 466. Dio (48.41.7) also places the triumph in 39. Against is the evidence from Reynolds, see n10 in this chapter, which places Antony as still in Rome until October 39, and so suggests Pollio did not undertake his campaign until late in the year with a triumph in 38.

[30] Bowersock (1971; 1978).

[31] Bowersock from the outset assumes Pollio's province was Macedonia; an assumption that the *Eclogue* itself is used to prove.

[32] Clausen (1972), (1994) esp. xxi-xxii; 233-239 who dates *Eclogue* 1 also to the year 35; Schmidt (1974) 6; Van Sickle (1981) 21. Also Zetzel (1984)139-142 who considers Servius believed the backdrop to the *Eclogues* was Actium and the only person referred to in *Eclogue* 8 could be Augustus. Mankin (1988) 63-76 gives an overview of the debate but also concludes the addressee is Octavian. He considers Briggs (1981) 1332 in his overview of Vergilian literature has also concluded the addressee is Octavian but that he appears to be giving undue emphasis on the findings of Bowersock in what should remain an open finding. Levi in 1966 (73-79) considered the lines 6-13 did not belong to Vergil at all but in 1998 (62) he has revised this stance to state the reference could only be to Octavian and dates the *Eclogue* to 35 BC. Bowersock's key argument was the geographical details and that they could not refer to Pollio whom he considered to be in Macedonia. Others since then have found the geographical details least convincing, particularly following Bosworth's argument that Pollio campaigned in Illyrica. Other evidence has since been considered to be more influential in particular the allusion to the writing of tragic poetry and the command to write the *Eclogues*. See also Chapter 6 n. 27.

[33] Tarrant (1978) 197-199; and Coleman (1977) 228-229 who still contends that Pollio held the province of Macedonia and that although the journey as described by Vergil is very roundabout 'it does not mean he did not take it.' See also Mayer (1983) 17-30; Farrell (1991) 56 n. 51; (1991A) 204-211 and Coppola (1998). As noted Bosworth's (1972) strong argument that Pollio's province was Illyricum and not Macedonia is a significant counter to Bowersock. See also Hardie (1975) 109-122 who, on political grounds, and the fact that Pollio was definitely the patron of Vergil, discounts the argument of Bowersock. For the most recent overview of this debate see Karakrasis (2011) 126-132 who, whilst summarizing the debate, does at one point consider the addressee may have been Octavian, as noted in Chapter 6 n. 27.

the geography in the *Eclogue* must be dismissed as either poetic licence, for which there is argument,[34] or it opens to the suggestion it is a reference to Octavian's campaigns in Illyricum and that the addressee is not Pollio. But if Pollio's province is within Illyricum there is no need to re-cast Vergil's writing and the addressee is Pollio.[35] Mankin, is his review of the evidence as it stood in 1988, concluded the addressee is most likely Octavian.[36] He notes the geographical details more likely fit the return of Octavian from his Illyricum campaign than Pollio, but still concludes that as the details could equally apply to Pollio or Octavian, if we assume Pollio's province was Illyricum, it cannot be a decisive factor in the argument and other evidence for the addressee must be sought.[37] More recently Thibodeau has argued that the *Eclogue* makes more sense if Vergil is describing the setting out for the campaign and not the return, as the order of the geography points in this direction.[38] On this basis the addressee is Pollio and the province in which he finally settled is inconclusive. In other words Pollio, having set out from Aquileia, from which base the shores of Timavus are visible, was moving down the coast past the Istrian Peninsula and into the Illyricum Sea. Thibodeau maintains Pollio was sailing for his province of Macedonia. But equally there is no reason not to assume that Pollio made his base at Salona from which he undertook his campaign in Dalmatia.[39]

Interpretation of *Eclogue* 8 has important ramifications for our viewing of Pollio at this time. If the addressee is Pollio it confirms his province was in Illyricum, which in turn raises his relationship with Octavian and Antony, and his being the patron of Vergil. If the addressee is Octavian we can no longer place Pollio in either of these positions. The arguments are inconclusive, and other factors than the geography have been actively sought within the poem

---

[34] It can be argued that the journey in Vergil's *Eclogue* retraces the route of Antenor on his journey from Troy to Padua as described in Sophocles' *Antenoridae,* considered to be the source for the tragedy of the same name by Accius, a work no doubt familiar to both Vergil and Pollio. In the *Aeneid* (1.242 ff.) Vergil refers to Antenor's wanderings in very similar terms to that of *Eclogue* 8. See Ogilvie 1965: 36 ff. This point is also made by Tarrant (1978) 199, who is inconclusive as to Pollio's province but argues on other evidence the addressee is Pollio. He considers that the province could have been either Dalmatia or Macedonia, that the geography described by Vergil could either be historical or poetic licence and so concludes that in these circumstances there is no reason to suppose that the addressee is not Pollio. Syme (1937) 47 = *RP* 1.29 makes the same point but uses the poetic reference to support the idea that the geography in the *Eclogue* is immaterial, and a poetic not an historical reference, in order to support his argument that the province is Macedonia.

[35] See Tarrant (1978) 197 n..2 who reaches the same conclusion and states: 'If Pollio governed Illyricum (as generally thought before Syme) there would be no reason whatever to question the traditional reading of Virgil's poem.'

[36] Mankin (1988) 63-76.

[37] Mankin (1988) 65-66. Sasel Kos (2005) 372 considers Pollio's and Octavian's campaigns in Illyricum should be seen as two different campaigns.

[38] Thibodeau (2006) 618-623. He neatly ties into his argument (p. 622) that the genre of Vergil's lines constitute a token *propempticon*, perhaps in the style of the *propempticon* already written for Pollio by Helvius Cinna in 56 BC (See Chapter 2). The allusion to Cinna would have been appreciated by Pollio and Vergil himself acknowledges Cinna directly in *Eclogue* 9.35.

[39] Carcopino (1930) 179 suggested Pollio may have made Salona his headquarters through the winter of 40/39 before commencing his campaign in 39.

by which to identify the recipient of the address. The most compelling factors are the allusion to the writing of tragic poetry in lines 9-10, the formula of line 11: *a te principium, tibi desinam* and Vergil's statement that the *Eclogue* began with his addressee's command in lines 11-12.[40] Again the arguments sway in both directions, the most contentious being the identification of Octavian as a writer of tragic poetry, an argument that is strong for Pollio but with little substance for Octavian other than his aborted *Ajax*.

Next, we have the statement in Horace, who, in his ode to Pollio, clearly describes him as having celebrated a Dalmatian triumph; *Delmatico ... triumpho* (16).[41] To discount this statement it has been argued that *Delmaticus* was the more poetically acceptable phrase than *Parthinicus* or *Macedonicus triumphus*.[42] But the most compelling evidence is that Vergil and Horace were both personal friends of Pollio and chose to write of him in their poetry. They would have been very aware of the distribution of the provinces and the association of each with either Antony or Octavian. They have both chosen to align Pollio with Dalmatia and hence Octavian's province which they must have considered was either desired by Pollio or a known fact at the time.

Further, Florus in his brief statement on the Dalmatian war states: *hos ... postea Asinius Pollio gregibus armis agris multaverat* (2.25.11). To place this in context, Florus first lists the raids of C. Marcius Figulus in 156 BC, who campaigned against the Delmatae and laid siege to the capital at Delminium, he then lists the exploits of Pollio and proceeds to outline the complete subjugation of the Delmatae by C. Vibius Postumus in AD 6-9. The Delmatae are generally described as occupying the area around Salona with their capital at Delminium. There is little doubt Florus considers Pollio's exploits occurred within Dalmatia. As Nisbet and Hubbard conclude 'there seem to be too many coincidences if Pollio had nothing to do with Dalmatia'.[43]

André attempted to resolve the issue by suggesting that after Brundisium Pollio was in favour with both Antony and Octavian and held a roving commission against the Parthini that allowed him to cross the provinces.[44] As André considers Pollio remained loyal to Antony, but must

---

[40] See Mankin (1988) 63-76 for a summary of this evidence. Also Briggs (1981) 1331-1332 cf. Farrell (1991A) 204-211.
[41] Hor. *Carm*. 2.1.16 also Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 19-20 who note *Delmatico* could have been used loosely for the area of Macedonia but overall consider the evidence Pollio campaigned in Dalmatia to be considerable.
[42] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 19-20; Wilkes (1969) 45; Bosworth (1972) 466.
[43] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 20. Woodman (1983) 193 also makes reference to this statement.
[44] André (1947) 142-145; (1949) 22-23 cf. Woodman (1983) 193-194 who raises objections to this argument of André on the basis that it defeated the very purpose of the dividing line at Scodra, that provincial governors should never cross their boundaries, and that it is unlikely Octavian would have agreed, but then counters all three objections on the basis it was a period of reconciliation, Macedonia had long been recognized as a special case where the boundary was crossed, and Pollio was a senior colleague with both Antony and Octavian at this time. André (1949) 23 n. 8 also raises the suggestion that Asinius

address the issue that Pollio appears to be conducting his campaign in the province of Octavian, a joint commission is the solution. But this leaves the issue of Pollio's triumph, and whether it would be conferred by the senate as having occurred under the command of Antony or Octavian.

Bosworth's paper argued strongly that Pollio's command was in Illyricum.[45] If that is so, Pollio is now serving Octavian and an explanation is required for this apparent change in sides. Bosworth reasons it arose in response to Pollio's falling from favour with Antony. Pollio had failed to act decisively in the campaign of Perusia, and as the commander with the most legions, he was held to be responsible for the outcome. As a result, Pollio, perceiving this disfavour, moved his support to Octavian. However, it must be noted neither Ventidius nor Plancus were treated in this way, and Lucius blamed all his generals for failing him.[46] Further, Pollio had brought Domitius over to Antony's side, surely a factor by which to redeem himself if this was required. On the other hand he did not intervene after the death of Calenus, and the fact Octavian now had control of these legions was the main point of contention in the negotiations at Brundisium. If Pollio did lose favour with Antony, this must be a significant factor. The argument of Bosworth is also based on the belief Pollio and the other Antonian generals were in a position to win the engagement at Perusia, in other words their decision not to act was political and not tactical.

Woodman also considers Pollio's province was Illyricum and agrees with André that Pollio most probably was acting for Antony and Octavian, but as Antony was the senior triumvir he claimed the credit for Pollio's success which was awarded for exploits carried out within the province of Antony.[47] This argument can be further supported by the work of Reynolds who has shown that within Antony's province the States could send petitions to Octavian who placed himself in the position to answer with authority. Similarly, there is evidence (doc. 12) that Octavian also sent a commission to Antony to restore loot to Ephesus, suggesting there was significant overlap and movement within the provinces without any perceived conflict of loyalty.[48]

Epicardus, mentioned in Suetonius, *item Asini Epicadi ex gente Parthina ibridae* (*Aug*. 19.2), was a protégé of Pollio from this campaign because of his being described as 'a half-breed, one of the Parthini'.

[45] Bosworth (1972) 462 ff. esp. 468.

[46] App. *B Civ*. 5.39.

[47] Woodman (1983) 192-196 esp. 194. Compare Haller (1967) 72-76, who writing before Bosworth and Woodman, also supports this viewpoint. Zecchini (1982) 1276-1277 considers Pollio worked for both triumvirs. He believes Pollio showed little support for Octavian and only came to support Octavian after Actium and after a progressive disillusionment with Antony through the thirties. In 40/39 BC Pollio chose his own province with the aim of gaining a triumph.

[48] Reynolds (1982) docs.10.12.13 .

But all issues are not resolved. If Pollio acted for both triumvirs it makes sense of much of the evidence except for the silence of Velleius and Appian concerning Pollio himself. As noted, both these writers are consistently favourable to Pollio. Why exclude mention of his exploits and triumph? Velleius in particular emphasises that Pollio remained in Italy and took no part in the exploits of the East. Bosworth considers the triumph was "discreditable", it could be used to support Antony's later claim against Pollio of ingratitude and therefore it was better to highlight his merits for Antony, which would have included his obtaining the support of Ahenobarbus for Antony, and to dismiss the triumph.[49] Woodman considers it was Pollio himself who over time became disillusioned with Antony, and then in retrospect wished to dissociate himself from support for Antony in the thirties. Woodman by contrast emphasises this does not mean Pollio was actively supporting Octavian as suggested by Bosworth.[50] Certainly Pollio escapes the charge in history of an opportunist who vacillates, as has been seen with Plancus and Messalla Corvinus; Pollio emerges the statesman, so his actions in this period appear to have remained within the limits of acceptability.

But there was a further incident in this period that although not directly associated with Pollio in the historical sources is worthy of scrutiny with respect to Pollio's significantly losing favour with Antony and/or Pollio's becoming disillusioned with Antony. It involves the death of Calenus in Gaul and the alleged treachery of Salvidienus Rufus.

As has been previously discussed, the death of Calenus caught both triumvirs unaware. We have also noted the statement in Appian indicating that at the time of this incident Pollio and Ahenobarbus were nearby and operating within the region.[51] It indicates that there was opportunity for Pollio to secure the eleven legions of Calenus, which he did not do allowing Octavian to gain this valuable stronghold. This was reason in itself for Pollio to be anxious that he might have some explaining to do to Antony. But there is also a further critical event at this time involving Octavian's chief commander that warrants investigation.

Salvidienus Rufus

Shortly after the death of Calenus in Gaul, and in the lead up to Brundisium, Salvidienus Rufus, the long standing supporter of Octavian, offered his support to Antony, for which he was put to

---

[49] Bosworth (1972) 468.
[50] Woodman (1983) 195-96 cf. Zecchini (1982) 1277 who argues that Pollio attempted to declare himself a "neutral" and that he did not abandon or betray Antony. Later Octavian used Pollio's impartiality for his own propaganda purposes. Welch (2009) 219 also questions the statement the triumph was "discreditable" and considers Pollio was a Caesarian committed to both triumvirs.
[51] App. *B Civ*. 5.61: 'Asinius and Ahenobarbus who were nearby were about to use them against us'.

death.[52] This is an interesting action and opens up a hypothesis of the possible involvement of Pollio. Pollio on two occasions previous to this had salvaged his standing with Antony by bringing on side a key opponent. [53] The loss of the eleven legions in Gaul to Octavian was a major setback for Antony and Pollio could clearly be accused of inaction. It is therefore possible Pollio once again attempted to salvage the situation by negotiating an agreement which would give advantage to Antony, in this case the defection of Salvidienus with his eleven legions in Gaul.

Salvidienus Rufus was born in the region of the Vestini, northeast of Rome, of obscure parentage.[54] As a young child he was adopted by a Salvius and became known as Q. Salvius Salvidienus.[55] His friendship with Octavian can be dated back to the beginning of Octavian's career; he was with him at Apollonia when news arrived of Caesar's death. Salvidienus encouraged Octavian to make a bid for power and remained with him throughout 43.[56] His loyalty was well known for when Brutus accused Cicero of flattering Octavian he compared him with the sycophant behaviour of Salvidienus towards Octavian.[57] As a consequence Salvidienus was soon promoted by Octavian and received a naval command to challenge Sextus; this promotion placed him even above Agrippa at this point in time. Initial success led him to be hailed as *imperator* but it was not sustained and he was finally defeated by Sextus. Nonetheless, he remained in favour with Octavian and he, along with Agrippa, were the active commanders in the siege of Perusia. As a result he was rewarded with a consulship for 39, a major achievement for an *eques* of obscure origin.[58] His alleged defection from Octavian just a few months later is therefore a puzzling shift.

As noted Salvidienus was placed in charge of the eleven legions Octavian had taken over after the death of Calenus in mid 40 BC. We hear nothing more of Salvidienus, or these legions, until the end of the year when Salvidienus was recalled back to Rome from his operations on the Rhone.[59] He was charged with treason and put to death; his legions were given to Antony.[60] Brunt indicates it is reasonable to assume that these were the legions of Calenus; it was most

---

[52] See App. *B Civ*. 5.66 also 51; 54. Dio 48.33.2-3; Livy *Per*. 127; Vell. Pat. 2.76.4; Suet. *Aug* 66.1. Also Broughton *MRR* 2. 383; Woodman (1983)188; Shackleton Bailey (1976) 64; 82.
[53] Plancus in 43 BC and Ahenobarbus shortly before Brundisium.
[54] See Wiseman (1964) 130 who states Salvidienus originated from the Vestini. Also Vell. Pat. 2.76.4 and Dio 48.33.2 who both comment on his obscure origins.
[55] Shackleton Bailey (1976) 64-65 who argues Salvidienus most probably maintained his original name and only used Q Salvius Salvidienus on official occasions. Salvius appears on coins he minted as consul designate in 40 BC: *Q. Salvius imp. cos. desig*. See Crawford (1974) no 523/1 who cites Syme *Rom. Rev*. 129 n. 2 for the form of the name; Sear (1998) no 300. Broughton *MRR* 2. 374.
[56] Vell. Pat. 2.59.5.
[57] Cic *ad Brut*. 1.17.4
[58] Vell. Pat. 2.76.4 with Woodman (1983)188.
[59] App. *B Civ*. 5.66.
[60] App. *B Civ*. 5.66.

probably the full eleven legions but it is possible Octavian extracted the two legions of Calenus he had been promised at Philippi but had never received.[61]

At the end of 40 BC Salvidienus was in a powerful position. He held eleven legions in Gaul and was about to become consul. As Antony sailed towards Brundisium Brunt estimates that Octavian held enormous numerical superiority.[62] But his legions were starved, unreliable and unwilling to fight.[63] By contrast Antony held the sea and the power to continue to starve Italy. Octavian was not popular with the people and his legions refused to fight Antony, insisting on negotiation. The action of Salvidienus has therefore been seen as reading the writing on the wall in an attempt to pick the likely winner in uncertain events.[64]

According to Appian (5.66), Salvidienus had been in negotiation with Antony on his arrival at Brundisium. 'He (Antony) also revealed to Octavian the fact that Salvidienus, who was in command of Octavian's army on the Rhone, had had the intention of deserting him, and had sent word to that effect to Antony while he was besieging Brundisium.'

If this is indeed the case, and there is the need to maintain a degree of scepticism if he ever intended such a betrayal at all, then it suggests negotiations had been under way for Salvidienus to bring his eleven legions on side with Antony. The mostly likely individual to act in this capacity would be Pollio. Having failed to secure the legions himself, and recognizing the advantage he had given to Octavian and the danger he had created for himself due to his inaction, the best way of saving himself would be to bring Salvidienus to the party; he had already persuaded Ahenobarbus to do so. With Antony's support, the commander of eleven Antonian legions and consul for the coming year, he could establish himself as the most powerful leader in Italy; a strong argument for persuasion. It is to be assumed that Salvidienus anticipated Antony would enter into conflict with Octavian, not negotiation.

The eleven legions of Calenus were a major point of contention between Antony and Octavian at Brundisium; Antony perceived Octavian's takeover of the legions as a hostile act, whilst Octavian attempted to argue it was for his own safety.[65] The matter was resolved by Antony's conceding the legions to Octavian along with all of Gaul as the Empire was now divided into East and West. Pollio acted as the representative for Antony. Salvidienus, having declared his

---

[61] Brunt *IM* 498; 502.
[62] Brunt *IM* 497. Also App. *B Civ*. 5.53.
[63] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 216-217.
[64] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 217.
[65] App. *B Civ*. 5.64. There were three points of contention the other two being Antony's liaison with Ahenobarbus and his agreement with Sextus. As a resolution Ahenobarbus was despatched immediately to govern Bithynia and Sextus was ordered to pull back to Sicily on the basis an agreement would be settled with Octavian or if that failed Octavian was to make war upon him.

support for Antony, was now firmly back under the control of Octavian, and the two triumvirs had come to terms, not conflict. This could not have been the outcome he had anticipated, and he could only hope his betrayal would remain undisclosed, as Pollio might have, if he had made any commitment to Salvidienus. Meanwhile, Antony must have had some sense of security that Octavian did not have the full support of his senior commander in a key province. But the matter did not end there.

In November, when the triumvirs had returned to Rome, Antony revealed to Octavian the betrayal of Salvidienus. As Appian (5.66) notes the action was not popular: 'This secret Antony revealed not with universal approbation, but because of his real frankness and eagerness to show his goodwill.' The comment that Antony was seeking to show his goodwill to Octavian is highly unlikely; Antony had no need to flatter Octavian. Rather it was a clever move by Antony; in one stroke he undermined Octavian's perception of the loyalty of his commanders, he removed Salvidienus from a position of potential power that could now act against him and he secured the legions for himself on the basis that they had no loyalty to Octavian.

Octavian had no option but to act, having apparently been presented with proofs of his treachery. According to Appian (5.66): 'Octavian instantly summoned Salvidienus to Rome pretending that he had some private communication to make to him, and that he should send him back to the army. When he came Octavian confronted him with proofs of his treachery and put him to death, and gave his army to Antony, as he considered it untrustworthy'. Dio (48.33.3) is more sceptical of the betrayal, suggesting that Salvidienus was a political victim: 'But nothing in the life of man is lasting, and he (Salvidienus) was finally accused in the senate by Caesar himself and slain as an enemy both of him and of the entire people.'[66] Velleius (2.76.4) however, holds the view Salvidienus fell from grace due to his desire to take extreme power over Octavian and the republic: 'It was at this time that the criminal designs of Rufus Salvidienus were revealed. This man sprung from the most obscure origin, was not satisfied with having received the highest honours in the state, and to have been the first man of equestrian rank after Gnaeus Pompey and Caesar himself to be elected consul, but aspired to mount to a height where he might see both Caesar and the republic at his feet'.[67]

Salvidienus was tried in the senate; the wording in Dio indicates he was declared a *hostis* and the mechanism of his trial can only have been that of a *senatus consultum ultimum*.[68] It

---

[66] See Rohr Vio (2000) 124-146 who emphasises this point as highlighted in the review by Cooley (2006).
[67] See also comment by Syme *Rom. Rev*. 120 n. 6: 'we have only the official version.' cf. Pelling *CAH* 10 (1996) 19: the accusation against Salvidienus 'strains belief'.
[68] Dio 48.33.3: 'Thanks givings were offered for his downfall and furthermore the care of the city was committed to the triumvirs with the customary admonition " that it should suffer no harm".' Under the Republic the senate had no role to act as a court. Senatorial trials only occurred when faced with an

highlights the superior position of Antony as he forced Octavian to sacrifice his most loyal and potentially most powerful commander. The trial required the presiding presence of the consul and as the event occurred before the end of the year almost certainly involved Pollio as the consul in office.[69]

If Pollio had had any role in the initial negotiations with Salvidienus the outcome can only have been disquietening. He may have hoped the negotiations at Brundisium would allow the matter to go undetected, whilst he could be secure in the knowledge he had shown his support for Antony in gaining the betrayal of Salvidienus and also had been trusted by Antony in the negotiations.[70] The subsequent public declaration of Salvidienus's treachery and his own role in the trial may have left him disillusioned. Even if Pollio had had nothing to do with the initial actions of Salvidienus he may well have found himself presiding over a political trial that brought about the downfall of a highly trusted commander that in itself highlighted the treachery of Antony. Bosworth argues Pollio fell from favour with Antony and so moved to Octavian, but equally Antony may have fallen from favour with Pollio and the affair of Salvidienus a significant factor.

As noted, an outcome from the whole unsavoury affair was that the legions of Salvidienus were handed over to Antony as they were no longer considered loyal to Octavian.[71] Pollio, still in Rome, was well placed as an Antonian general to be put in command.[72] With a so called "German army" under his command, the one thing Pollio now needed in order to retire with standing was a triumph. And where to obtain this success more opportunely than in Illyrica? This brings us back to the argument of Ganter, who suggests that Pollio may have commanded a German army, as documented by the scholiasts, and, following the route outlined by Vergil in

---

emergency. To pass a decree of this kind the *SCU* called upon the consul to ensure that the state took no harm followed by a declaration of the persons as public enemies, *hostes,* which allowed for their immediate execution. For discussion of the origin of senatorial courts see Bleicken (1962) cf. Kunkel (1973). Also Pelling *CAH* 10 (1996) 19-20 who emphasises the triumvirs were showing a certain constitutionalism as the traditionalist public sentiment was being courted. The trial should be compared with that of Cornelius Gallus in 26 BC who was also accused of disloyalty to Octavian (now Augustus). The senate did not condemn him but it was voted the courts should condemn him and deprive him of his estate. Gallus committed suicide before this decree could be implemented. See Dio 53.23.7-24.1; Suet. *Aug* 66. 1-2.

[69] It will be maintained Pollio remained in office until the last few days of the year as documented by Dio. Dio clearly places the event in 40 BC (48.34.1) where he states the events had all occurred in the preceding two years before the new consuls of 39 took office.

[70] However, it should be noted Antony did not chose Pollio as his representative at Brundisium; it was the soldiers who chose the representatives (App. *B Civ*. 5.64). Maecenas, a non-military commander, was chosen for Octavian who was matched by Pollio for Antony, suggesting Pollio was also perceived as favouring negotiation not conflict and may even have been seen as pro-Octavian from his actions at Perusia, which Antony may also have perceived in the same way. Appian comments that the choice of representatives led to accusations they had been chosen only to restore peace and not resolve controversy.

[71] App. *B Civ*. 5.66.

[72] Brunt *IM* 502 considers Antony took over the eleven legions. He is unsure if Pollio had kept together the seven legions under his command in Gaul; it was likely many would have been discharged.

Eclogue 8, marched towards Salona and gained a victory over the Parthini within the region. Pollio's position could easily have been negotiated between Antony and Octavian: with a triumph he could withdraw leaving the triumvirs to continue with their plans.[73] Vergil was keen to send off his patron on his soon to be successful campaign, and Horace, writing somewhat later, chose to recognize his triumph in the province of Octavian as Pollio sought to dissociate himself more and more from Antony. Further support for this argument comes from the recent work of Dzino and his exploration of a medieval source known as *Historia Salonitana* written by Thomas the Archdeacon of Spalato (1200/01-1268).[74] Thomas was interested in the history of Salona and includes a section on the actions of Pollio in Dalmatia. Thomas records that Pollio, a distinguished man amongst the consuls, was sent by Octavian to subjugate Salona to the Romans. On arriving in Dalmatia, Pollio therefore besieged Salona and after a prolonged attack the Salonitans surrendered. According to Thomas, Pollio's son was born during the siege and called Salonius. Dzino concludes that the passage adds to the evidence Pollio campaigned in central Dalmatia.[75]

Triumph of Pollio

All our evidence suggests Pollio left Rome at the beginning of 39 and after a brief campaign against the Parthini returned to Rome to celebrate his triumph.[76] The renowned orator Labienus many years later would refer to Pollio as 'That old man, hero of triumphs'.[77] Pollio gained significant wealth, and like all triumphing generals he would mark his name in Rome with a public building; the *Atrium Libertatis*. The campaign was of a short duration but we cannot be certain if Pollio returned to Rome in October 39 to celebrate his triumph and ending his proconsulship, or waited until the following year.

But triumphs in this period appear to be politically charged. We should compare the triumph of Ventidius, celebrated shortly after Pollio. Ventidius defeated the Parthians in three decisive battles in 39 and 38 BC. His feats were impressive and yet his victory goes largely unrecognized in the sources of the period and, in particular, none of the poets, Vergil, Horace nor Ovid, make reference to his feats. Dio implies Antony was reluctant to confer triumphal

---

[73] Pollio's possible involvement in the Salvidienus affair may have given him leverage with both triumvirs to negotiate for his own desired outcome.
[74] Dzino (2011) 158-166. The source is as quoted by Dzino.
[75] The key issue in the argument is the source material used by Thomas. Dzino believes Thomas used unknown source material and not just the information of the Vergilian *scholia*. If he was just using the *scholia* it would once again raise doubts about the accuracy of the information; the *scholia* on the issue of Pollio's campaigning in Salona is usually thought to be incorrect. The campaign is described as occurring before his consulship in 40 BC which is clearly wrong (see n. 25 in this Chapter). Dzino considers that perhaps Thomas was using a lost commentary of Aelius Donatus. Nevertheless, the source issue remains a topic for debate in his arriving at his conclusion.
[76] Dio (48.41.7) indicates the campaign was brief.
[77] Sen. *Controv*. pref. 4.2.

honours on Ventidius and the senate considered no reward should be conferred as Ventidius had not acted independently but as a lieutenant of Antony.[78] Later Augustus would also wish to ignore Ventidius' victories as they enhanced the status of Antony and he himself wished to claim victory in Parthia in 20 BC.[79] Soon after, Agrippa would decline to celebrate his triumph on the grounds that it would be inappropriate when Octavian was achieving so little success for his own exploits.[80] Similarly, Cn. Domitius Calvinus, who had been consul with Pollio, and was awarded a triumph for his victory in Spain, also chose not to celebrate his triumph immediately, as Pollio had done, but waited three years.[81] Sumi suggests it is probable he also did not wish to overshadow Octavian the *imperator* under whose auspices he won his victory.[82] This could help explain the lack of recognition in the sources of Pollio's triumph as he, like Ventidius, may have also been subject to these reactions from first Antony and then later Octavian. It also suggests Pollio may have celebrated his triumph in 39 rather than 38 BC before these political tensions became so acute.

There is also another interesting feature of Ventidius' triumph: he gave a speech. It is known from the sources that Ventidius, on the event of his triumph, commissioned Sallust to write a speech.[83] The inclusion of a speech by the *triumphator* in the ceremony is not usual, and not well documented, but there are four previous occasions in the literature on which it is known a speech was given.[84] It is almost certain Ventidius gave a speech, and this puts us in good stead

---

[78] Dio 48.41.5.

[79] For the neglect of Ventidius' triumph in the source material see Strugnell (2006) also Sumi (2005) 200-203 who notes the propaganda purpose of the triumph. Sumi draws attention to the fact Ventidius celebrated his triumph on the 27 November 38 BC which was the anniversary date of the *Lex Titia* that conferred on Antony, Octavian and Lepidus their extraordinary powers in 43 BC. He also notes Ventidius celebrated his triumph without the presence of the army, which remained with Antony in the East, which would have acted to remind the spectators that this triumph was due ultimately to the authority and goodwill of Antony.

[80] 37 BC. Dio 48.49.4.

[81] Dio 48.42.2-5.

[82] Sumi (2005) 203.

[83] *Ventidius ille, postquam Parthos fudit fugavitque, ad victoriam suam praedicandam orationem a C. Sallustio mutuatus est*. Front. *Ad Ver*. 2.1.9. See also Syme (1964) 223; Leisner-Jensen (1997) 325-46. In view of Sallust's antagonism to the regime and the new nobility holding office, Sallust was an interesting choice by Ventidius. There is no known friendship between Ventidius and Sallust. It is debated whether Sallust wrote him a speech for the occasion, (Sallust was not an established orator), or whether Ventidius borrowed from the writings of Sallust. If the latter, Osgood (2006) suggests it is possible he adapted Sallust's speech for Marius for the occasion. Mazzarino, as quoted by Leisner-Jensen (1997) 329, makes the interesting point that Sallust had not retired from politics but continued politics through other means. Sumi (2005) 203 considers that Sallust in the speech for Ventidius may have sought to further detach Ventidius from Antony, noting the already independent action of Ventidius in choosing to celebrate the triumph in the first place, and may have instead emphasized Ventidius' Italian roots and remarkable career.

[84] In 167 BC L. Aemilius Paullus on the occasion of his triumph gave a speech see Val. Max. 5.10.2; Livy *Per*. 45.40.4-42.1; Plut. *Aem*. 36; Vell. Pat. 1.10.4-5. In 106 BC Q. Caecilius Metellus Numidicus also made a speech. See Gell. *NA* 12.9.4. This speech may be related to the speech of Marius as documented by Sallust in his *Jugurtha* (85). In 63 BC L. Licinius Lucullus made a speech at his triumph on his conduct of the war. See Ath. 7.274 ff. And in 61 BC Pompey on the occasion of his third triumph made a

to consider Pollio may have also used the occasion for this purpose either immediately or few months before Ventidius. Pollio, unlike Ventidius, was a skilled orator, so what better occasion to highlight his own thoughts and future plans (it is possible the speech of Ventidius was in response to Pollio's)? Pollio may well have expounded his thoughts on civil war, and even outlined his intention to record for the people the events of the recent civil wars, which he, as an active participant, had the authority to do so.[85] If so it would behove Octavian and Antony to keep him on side.

Conclusion

The issue of Pollio's province cannot be resolved with any certainty. There is strong evidence his province was Illyricum, but that his triumph was over the Parthini who are firmly located around Dyrrachium in Antony's province. Either the Parthini made excursions into Dalmatia or Pollio crossed into Macedonia. If the former, it can be argued that Pollio was now working for Octavian, if the latter, that he had negotiated a position with Antony and Octavian.[86] If it was a negotiated position, which would have been for his own needs, it cannot be stated that he had necessarily turned against Antony or that he was working for Octavian. Regardless, at the end of 39 BC, we cannot ignore that Pollio undertook a significant shift in his career. But we know that both Antony and Octavian would later seek to enlist him in the Battle of Actium, so we must consider he nevertheless remained an individual of potential value to both.[87]

Rather than the issue of the province itself it is perhaps Pollio's continuing involvement with the triumvirs and his own desire for a triumph in order to return to Rome with *auctoritas* which is of greater significance. Pollio had had nothing to do with the murder of Caesar and the slowly emerging conflict between Antony and Octavian can only have filled him with a sense of futility.[88] It is from this perspective that we should consider his decision to now return to Rome, to celebrate his triumph, and to engage in the intellectual and political life of Rome rather than to fight in any further civil conflict.

---

speech. See Plin. *HN* 7.98; 37.12-19, also Leisner-Jensen (1997) 337-338. The speeches were probably given just before or after the triumph but probably not on the day which explains their absence in documentation of the ceremony of the triumph. The speeches are not mentioned in Beard's (2007) discussion of the Roman triumph.

[85] We can note the high praise by Velleius (2.128.3) for Pollio and his achievements.

[86] See in particular p.156 and the comments by Reynolds (1982).

[87] Pollio was also now a *consularis* and so would continue to have a status of potential value to both Antony and Octavian.

[88] Welch (2009) 209 in particular stresses this point.

PART TWO

Introduction

To date we have been able to present a chronological narrative of Pollio's life as he progressed through the civil wars, because his activities appear with regular frequency in the source material. But when Pollio, at thirty-eight years of age, celebrated a triumph and subsequently withdrew from further military commands, we lose this chronological narrative for the remainder of his forty-two years. Nevertheless, references to him occur often enough in the sources to give us an insight into the Pollio who was now living within Rome under the principate of Augustus. All the evidence suggests Pollio integrated well into the regime and was a firm friend of Augustus, and that he and his family continued to thrive.

Pollio now turns his career into one of intellectual pursuits. As Breebart notes, the prerequisite for this life was sufficient leisure and material wealth, both of which he had.[1] He expressly refrains from any further involvement in the civil wars, hence his absence from the conflict with Sextus, his absence from the peace negotiation with him, and his outspoken refusal to fight at Actium. Rather it is Pollio the orator and rhetorician that emerges, and of course the historian. We find him not to be outdone by triumphing generals and their extensive building, constructing a massive library in keeping with Julius Caesar's great ambition, and also taking on high profile cases in the courts. He mixes with the intellectual elite, initially with Vergil and the poets, but this soon gives way to the historians of an upper Roman and Greek class. He fosters public recitation and demonstrates the logic of a lawyer in declamations, and throughout he is obsessed by the memory of Cicero.

In his relationship with Augustus he supports Augustus' close friend Timagenes, almost certainly hosts the sons of Herod for Augustus, complains about the favoured Troy Games and has them stopped, and receives complaint from Augustus for dining on the day of the death of Augustus's adopted son. Pollio's own son achieves the consulship and marries Vipsania, the daughter of Agrippa and ex-wife of Tiberius.

But in all of his achievements there is an underlying subtext of a critical, harsh man, who readily comes into personal conflict and is outspoken in his comments.

---

[1] Breebaart (1987), especially 71-88, on the freedom of the intellectual in the Roman world.

8 Pollio's Return to Rome

After Pollio celebrated his triumph in 39/38 BC he took no further commands under Antony or Octavian. Velleius states that after Brundisium he remained in Rome.[1] According to Syme Pollio retired from public life, as literature meant more to him than war and politics.[2] And it is this viewpoint of Syme's which has continued to colour the life of Pollio and in particular that he no longer participated in the regime of Augustus but remained an independent voice of dissent. However, we have no statement in the sources that Pollio "retired" from public duty, only that he returned and engaged in the intellectual life of Rome without taking up any further commands. To what extent this decision was planned is unknown. Nevertheless, at thirty-seven years of age, his actions do stand in stark contrast to his peers.

In 39 BC Pollio, along with Ventidius, Plancus, Messalla and Agrippa, was one of the key men of the new nobility who had risen to unprecedented heights under Caesar, Octavian and Antony. Ventidius is the closest contemporary to Pollio in terms of origins and rise to fortune as a *novus homo*. In 39 BC Ventidius was established as Antony's right-hand man and military expert. He would celebrate a triumph in 38 BC and continue to support Antony until his death shortly after. Plancus too was currently in Antony's entourage, and governor in Asia. Similarly Agrippa, from an unknown background, had risen to be Octavian's leading man and military expert. Messalla Corvinus, some ten years younger than Pollio, had given support after Philippi to Antony, would fight against Sextus in 36, and at some point come on side with Octavian. Even Maecenas, his family from Arretium and of the equestrian class, who had never entered the senate, was in 39 BC establishing himself in literary circles and as a leading advocate of Octavian.

Politically the situation at the time of Pollio's return to Rome was far from stable. Pollio's old foe, Sextus Pompeius, was disgruntled by the outcome of the treaty of Misenum in 39; he had not obtained the Peloponnese as promised, and so commenced waging war against Italy again threatening the food supply throughout 38. Octavian planned to attack Sicily, the heart of Sextus' dominion and was seeking generals and troops. Agrippa was still in Gaul, not returning until the end of 38, and it was Maecenas who was sent on a diplomatic mission to Antony in the East to seek assistance for Octavian in the ongoing battle against Sextus. The eventual meeting between Octavian and Antony at Tarentum in 37 was attended by the poet Horace and Cocceius

---

[1] Vell. Pat. 2.86.3. As noted in Chapter 7 he makes no mention of Pollio's campaign against the Parthini or his subsequent triumph.
[2] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 241.

(who had been an instrumental player in the Pact of Brundisium); further evidence of the political involvement of the leading men of the time. Further, Ventidius, a key Antonian general died in 35 BC, no doubt leaving an important gap in military expertise.[3]

There can be little doubt Pollio's assistance would have been sought, and his absence from these events indicates a clear withdrawal from the civil war, and suggests that he was neither supporting nor opposing Octavian or Antony.

But refusal for further active commands at thirty-seven years was unusual, and would not have been without comment. Sallust refers to Caesar at thirty-seven years of age as *adulescentulus*.[4] Whilst he may have been using the term with his own specific agenda in mind, it highlights that the age was considered young within the context of public duty.[5] The established age at which to become consul was still forty-one years.

It would appear Pollio withdrew from further military commands to pursue his interest in the arts, and in particular in the writing of history. Morgan views Pollio's decision as a 'turning of literature into an alternative form of public activity'.[6]

But Pollio was turning his life to a task that was perceived as one worthy only for the statesman in retirement. In old age it was seen as a prolongation of public life, and one which benefited the community by experience and wisdom.[7] To withdraw from public duties at an early age was an abandonment of the *res publica*. Cicero in his series of letters to Varro in 46 BC writes:

> I am following your example as best I can, and most gladly find repose in literary studies. Surely nobody would begrudge us this. Our country will not or cannot use our services, so we return to a mode of life which many philosophers (mistakenly perhaps, but many) have considered to be preferred to the political. The state now grants its permission. Are we not then at liberty to give full rein to pursuits which in the judgement of great thinkers carry a sort of exemption from public employment? [8]

---

[3] Gellius 15.4.4. He was given a public funeral, and the inscription from his grave states he died in 35 BC. It is probable his death was of greater impact at the time than emerges in the source material. See also Strugnell (2006).
[4] Sall. *Cat*. 49.2. See also McGushin (1977) 50-51.
[5] Varro (according to Censorinus *DN* 14) in his ages of man describes *adulescentia* as fifteen to thirty years. Seneca discusses retirement as occurring in the late fifties or sixty years of age. See also Parkin (2003), esp. ch. 4, for a detailed discussion on retirement from public duty noting this is usually placed between sixty to sixty-five years of age. Cokayne in Harlow and Laurence (2007) 215 notes the desirability for the aged to remain in active public duty and points out that too early a retirement was frowned upon. See Sen. *Ep*. 36.2.
[6] Morgan (2000) 66. Wiseman (1981) 383 also notes that by the second half of the first century BC 'it was possible without absurdity for a Roman to claim immortal fame from literary achievement, even in direct comparison with the traditional ideal of military glory.'
[7] Syme (1964) 43.
[8] Cic. *Fam*. 9.6.5 (181). The letter is a full description of the joy of books and learning and *otium*. See also Leach (1999) 139-80 on this correspondence.

For Cicero active service to the state remained the highest form of duty. When he was fully engaged in politics philosophy could only fill his spare time. He distinguishes the *otium* that is a rest from politics from that which is a retirement from politics.[9] Cicero always intended to write a history, but when he died at sixty-three years of age the task was still in the future. As Griffin notes, politics in the time of Cicero was regarded as the most honourable way of life, and retirement before old age was badly in need of defence.[10] Leeman notes that the most capable Romans clearly had to overcome an aversion from devoting themselves to historiography.[11]

Further, the existing models for the writing of history who probably had the most attraction for Pollio were Thucydides, Cato the Elder and Sallust. Thucydides wrote his history whilst in exile, and for Cato it was the task of his old age and retirement. It remained for Sallust to actively retire from public life at forty years of age and declare his intent to write a history. However, he needed to justify his decision and did so in the prefaces to both his *Catiline Conspiracy* and *Jugurthine War*. Sallust wrote these two works between 44 and 40 BC.

In the *Catiline* Sallust outlines his reasons, which are worth quoting in full:

> My earliest inclinations led me, like many other young men, to throw myself wholeheartedly into politics. There I found many things against me. Instead of self-restraint, integrity, and virtue seeking, shamelessness, bribery and rapacity were rife. And although, being a stranger to the vices that I saw practised on every hand, I looked on them with scorn, I was led astray by ambition and, with a young man's weakness, could not tear myself away. However much I tried to dissociate myself from the prevailing corruption, my craving for advancement exposed me to the same odium and slander as all my rivals.
>
> After suffering manifold perils and hardships, peace of mind at last returned to me, and I decided that I must bid farewell to politics for good. But I had no intention of wasting my precious leisure in idleness and sloth, or of devoting my time to agriculture or hunting-tasks fit only for slaves. I had formerly been interested in history, and some work which I began in that field had been interrupted by my accounts of some episodes in Roman history that seemed particularly worthy of record – a task for which I felt myself the better qualified inasmuch as I was unprejudiced by the hopes and fears of the party man. *Cat. Pref.* 5.

In the *Jugurthine War* he continues his reasons; his disillusionment with the political system, the lack of genuine merit in those who hold political posts, the continuing violence of civil war and the benefit that will come from his recording of past events.[12] The significance of this

---

[9] Cic. *Off*. 2. 2-4; 3.2-4; *Planc*. 66; *Brut*. 7-8. For further discussion on *otium* in the time of Cicero see also McGushin (1977) 53; (1980) 65; Osgood (2006) 288 ff. Cokayne in Harlow and Laurence (2007) esp. 212ff. also discusses *otium* in the context of retirement and old age, which provides further useful insights.
[10] Griffin (1976) 344.
[11] Leeman (1963) 1: 184.
[12] Sall. *Iug*. *Pref*. 3-4.

conflict between public duty and *otium* is such that Seneca the Younger, especially in his *De Tranquilliate Animi* and *De Brevitate Vitae*, continues to debate the need for retirement or *otium* in order to develop the person as compared with public duty and loyalty to the *res publica*. Interestingly, like Cicero he does not advocate withdrawal from political life on the grounds of the evils of political life or a dysfunctional regime.[13] He insists that one should not retreat easily, nor completely desert the *res publica* even if it is sick.[14]

Was Pollio deserting the *res publica?* As noted, Syme considers Pollio's retirement the natural conclusion to his consulship and triumph – what else was there to achieve? But at his young age, and in the midst of an ongoing civil war, his action implied a more complex motive.[15] Osgood places Pollio's decision within the context of a rising new nobility and the antagonism that it had created within the populace.[16] There is certainly evidence for this viewpoint.

The political structure in this period was being dominated by the unprecedented rise of the *novus homo*. And this was not particularly popular.[17] When Ventidius was made consul in 43 BC, he was mocked for his obscure beginning in life and his career as a muleteer. [18] Seneca the Elder also taps into this hostility when he quotes a rhetorician as saying that if Cicero had received a reprieve he would have been forced to live alongside men like Ventidius, Canidius and Saxa – it would be preferable to lie dead than live with these. The reference is to Canidius Crassus and Decidius Saxa. Canidius was suffect consul in 40 BC after Pollio. [19] Ventidius' origins parallel those of Pollio, although whilst Ventidius required the support of Caesar to enter the senate and to rise in his political career, there is strong evidence Pollio had needed no such favour, his family being already in the senate.[20] Pollio felt in rivalry with Ventidius, as noted in the sources during the events of the Perusine War, and with the public hostility that emerged in response to Ventidius' triumph no doubt sought to distance himself from the image of the *novus homo* thriving on undeserved favours.[21] The decline, and also the death, of many of the aristocracy in the civil wars and the rise of the 'new man', rapidly promoted to positions which had once only been restricted to members of families who had already distinguished themselves,

---

[13] Compare Cic. *Off*. 1.71.
[14] See Griffin (1976) ch. 10 for a comprehensive review of Seneca the Younger's writings on *otium* and political life.
[15] Rawson (1985) 38 states 'Few members of the upper-class were so revolutionary as to abandon themselves largely or entirely to study; this was easier for those of equestrian than of senatorial background (but even here not common).'
[16] Osgood (2006) 276 ff.
[17] Osgood (2006) 257 ff. where in a slightly contrasting view to Syme he explores the impact of the *novus homo* on the political system.
[18] Gell. *NA* 15.1.1. See also Seaver (1952); Strugnell (2006) for the life of Ventidius.
[19] Sen. *Suas*. 7.3 *si servabitur, vivet inter Ventidios et Canidios et Saxas: ita dubium est utrum satius sit cum illis iacere an cum his vivere?*
[20] See Chapter 1.
[21] Appian (*B Civ*. 5.32) comments on the rivalry between Pollio and Ventidius as one of the main reasons why the two commanders did not move swiftly in the Perusine War. See Chapter 7.

was creating a greater hostility than perhaps readily emerges from immediate reading of the source material. In the ten years of triumviral rule nineteen of the consuls were *novi*, many of whom would never have reached the position previously.[22] Syme records that of the thirty-eight consuls for the years 44-33 BC only ten were sons or descendants of consular families.[23] Further, Dio notes that in 39 BC more than two consuls were chosen for the first time without the normal indication that a consul had died or been removed from office, and in 38 no fewer than sixty-seven praetors held office.[24] Pollio, like Sallust, but for different reasons, may have felt disquiet at the rise of this new nobility and perhaps no longer wished to associate or identify himself with this class.

We must also consider that the Pollio who emerges from the events of 42-40 BC was somewhat tarnished. He had participated in the proscriptions which saw the murder of Cicero, the burning of the great library of Varro and the removal of Varro's wealth, the death of his own father-in-law, his callous participation in the land confiscations and the unsavoury abandonment of Lucius Caesar to his own fate in the battle of Perusia. A certain ruthlessness in the service of ambition had emerged. As has been seen, his military achievements had been largely lacklustre, and his greatest defeat had occurred at the hands of Sextus Pompeius, who was again the enemy to be fought. Pollio knew better than most how difficult a foe he could be. After his grueling conflict with Sextus he had actively avoided any further direct military conflict (his triumph should not be considered in this category as it was not against fellow Romans, but rather over a nomadic tribe who could be easily defeated in order to obtain a military achievement). This has led to the perception that his slow response to conflict was one of being politically savvy, but equally it could reflect the psychological effects of the trauma of war and what today we would diagnose as post traumatic stress disorder; a condition noted for its emotional numbing and avoidance of the triggering stressor.[25]

On the other hand Pollio's interest in the arts was well established. Prior to joining with Julius Caesar, he had been a young man well on his way to carving out the career of an orator. In 43 BC Pollio had written to Cicero, expressing a desire for the literary life, if only there could be peace.[26] Pollio was also extremely wealthy because the proscriptions and the profit of war had served him well. He could afford to withdraw to the intellectual life.

---

[22] Wiseman (1971) 166.
[23] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 243 n. 2. Also Osgood (2006) 259.
[24] Dio 48.35; 43. The extra offices may have been created to reward men who were returning to Rome following the amnesty of 39 in the Treaty of Misenum.
[25] See Chapter 13 and the discussion of Pollio's refusal to fight in the Battle of Actium for further consideration of this diagnosis and its symptoms.
[26] Cic. *Fam.* 10.31 5-6 (368); 10.32.5 (415). Pollio was no doubt connected with the literary circle in Corduba in this time. See Chapter 4.

It is to be assumed Pollio indicated he wished to take up no further commands for either Antony or Octavian. For Syme and many others he became an independent voice and an expression of *libertas.* Political motivation is sought in Pollio's decision – was he now turning to give support to Octavian, or did he remain a staunch Republican hostile to the emerging principate? Arguments have favoured both interpretations, Syme in particular continuing to view Pollio as being in opposition to Octavian soon to be Augustus.[27] It is difficult to determine the reaction to Pollio's stance, there is little in the sources to give an indication. However, his relationship with Vergil appears to falter at this time, as will be explored in his association with the poets, and Antony's later antagonism to Pollio in the lead up to Actium may also have its roots in this decision.

The ideology that is strongly attached to Pollio from this time forth is his stance for *libertas.* But nowhere in the sources is this made explicit about Pollio except for two clues. Pollio is recorded as having restored the *Atrium Libertatis,* and Horace comments on his writing of a history in dangerous times.[28] It is largely modern scholars who have given Pollio this voice.

Libertas along with *dignitas* was the catchword of this period of the lead up to the death of Julius Caesar and in its immediate aftermath. But as Brunt states: '*Libertas* meant different things to different people'.[29] Mouritsen notes *libertas* was invoked by all Roman politicians, whatever their views and objectives. Cicero claimed to be the saviour of the *res publica* and its *libertas*, Caesar went to war in the name of *libertas* and was killed by his opponents in the name of *libertas* and Augustus would later present himself as the restorer of Rome's *libertas.*[30]

We also need to explore as much as possible the political climate between 40 to 36 BC, during which time Pollio must have made his decision. At the end of 40 BC Pollio was an active participant in the Pact of Brundisium. Ostensibly this was an end to Civil War, but he may well have been aware how difficult the negotiations between Antony and Octavian had been, and that

---

[27] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 166, 291, 320 and esp. 483-486. Also Kornemann (1896), Mendell (1928). Raaflaub and Samons (1990) 436 also note Pollio was included in a republican camp of intellectuals opposed to Augustus. By contrast Bosworth (1972) presents Pollio as a friend to Augustus. Raaflaub and Samons eventually remove Pollio from the list of those opposed to Augustus, stating that he developed some independence, had to some extent republican sentiments, but without evidence that he fostered any opposition to the princeps.
[28] Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.6-8.
[29] Brunt (1988) 283 and subsequent discussion.
[30] Mouritsen (2001) 9-12. Wirszubski (1960), the authoritative text on *libertas* in the late Republic, emphasises the people's desire for peace and shows that the republic was caught in a conflict between *libertas* and *otium*. He uses the term *otium* to refer to peace and security. Further, civil war was seen to occur as a rivalry for *dignitas* between ambitious individuals with the solution eventually emerging that sole power in the hands of one individual, with supreme *dignitas*, ended this conflict. Pollio's seeking of *otium* is consistent with this mood of the people. See also Fantham (2003) 1-18, esp. 8-10 on Caesar's misuse of the word *libertas* and how the *libertas* that Cicero valued disappeared after Caesar's Spanish campaigns. Raaflaub (2003) 35-67 further explores Caesar's concept of *libertas* and contends that he did not stress the term in his propaganda campaigns.

long-term peace was far from being a certain outcome. Further, to celebrate the Pact the consuls were dismissed and two new consuls put in place for the end of the year. The new consuls were appointed, not elected, once again confirming the power of the triumvirs, with the result that Pollio was replaced by L. Cornelius Balbus the elder, (as distinct from his nephew who was the undesirable praetor with Pollio in Spain in 43), a wealthy Spaniard and Caesarian.[31] Furthermore, consuls were appointed for the next five years. The triumvirate was also due to expire at the end of 38, but in the meeting at Tarentum in the summer of 37 it was renewed for another five years.[32] Further, popular support was not with the triumvirs, in fact Sextus was gaining status as the hero of the day, and Sumi comments on the aedileship of the obscure M. Oppius, who had previously been proscribed and was now supported and financed by the people to keep him in office, as further evidence of pockets of resistance having a voice against the triumvirs.[33] This voice was also gaining expression in public performances such as theatre, as in the drama of Vinius and Philopoemen, and Maecenas, perhaps in an attempt to control this expression, and maintain it in favour of Octavian, was rallying about him the leading poets.[34]

A new Cicero?

It is not difficult to see that Pollio out of political discontent and self-interest chose to dissociate himself from any further involvement in the machinations of civil war. But we know Pollio remained in the senate, as did his brother, and he became active in the courts.[35] He did not withdraw or retire from public life but rather moved the arena of his performance. Morgan considers Pollio established a relationship between literature and *libertas* as a form of 'senatorial self expression'.[36] Goldberg likewise considers Pollio's restoration of the *Atrium Libertatis*, and his promotion of literary discussion and recitation, as a pioneering of a new relationship between the creators and supporters of literature as a new post-Republican order began to emerge.[37]

It is interesting at this point to consider a comment by DuQuesnay in his assessment of Horace in this exact same period. He says of Horace, who was composing his poems in this very unstable political climate, that he does not overtly praise Octavian nor does he denigrate the opposition (i.e. Antony), but rather 'his basic strategy is to present an attractive image of himself and his friends as sophisticated, cultured and intelligent men who are humane in their

---

[31] Broughton *MRR* 2. 378-380.
[32] Southern (1998).
[33] Sumi (2005) 204-205.
[34] Sumi (2005) 199-200 for discussion of theatre and the drama of Vinius and Philopoemen.
[35] Hor. *Carm*. 2.1.14; Suet. *Aug*. 43.2. For the activities of his brother see Chapter 1.
[36] Morgan (2000) 66.
[37] Goldberg (2005) 192.

attitudes to others and mindful of the *mos maiorum'*.[38] Equally this statement could apply to Pollio.

Pollio, with *dignitas* and *auctoritas* established – he was now a consular and had celebrated a triumph – appears to have returned to Rome with one purpose: to re-establish himself as an orator and intellectual. And there was a huge gap in this world: the most famous of all recent orators was dead. The time was ripe for a new leading figure, for a "new Cicero", and Pollio may have not inappropriately thought he was just the man for the job. But he might have found himself caught in a time warp. Cicero, at the fall of the republic, had reached the peak of his career, and as Gunderson states: 'Cicero had needed to die'.[39] The Ciceronian age had come to an end and it was time for Cicero to 'leave his memory and his writing to posterity'.[40] Pollio had lived under the influence of Cicero, unlike the next generation, who would now use Cicero's writings and quote them in order to show their own brilliance, whilst knowing little of the man himself.[41] Pollio would therefore need to pit himself against both the real Cicero and the iconic Cicero.

Further, if we consider Pollio remained overall loyal to Caesar he can have seen little of benefit in a choice between Antony and Octavian and he must have surely perceived this would be the inevitable outcome. Pollio "retired" from civil conflict and returned to Rome to engage in its intellectual life leaving the conflicts to those who wished to fight. As we explore his subsequent activities it also will be seen there is little to support the belief of Syme that Pollio withdrew from public life and remained independent, opposed, or uninvolved to the emerging principate.

---

[38] In Woodman and West (1984) 19. Seager in Rudd (1993) 29 also comments on Horace's praise of *otium,* but in contrast to Pollio and his wealth and ambition, Horace seeks to praise a more contented life with an acceptance of moderate means with a disavowal of the pursuit of wealth and vast buildings, with an implication the 'cut-throat politics of the late republic and the extreme social mobility of the recent past are now no longer in fashion.' See esp. *Carm*. 2.16; 3.1.
[39] Gunderson (2003) 84.
[40] Gunderson (2003) 84.
[41] Gunderson (2003) 82ff. 'They (the next generation of Latin speakers) quote Ciceronian oratory only to top it and trump it with declamatory flourishes that are wholly un-Ciceronian".

9 The Building Of Rome's First Public Library

One of the first tasks Pollio undertook after celebrating his triumph was to commence building a large public library for the housing of Greek and Roman manuscripts. His building task was in stark contrast to the temples usually restored or built by triumphing generals. It has been taken as a statement of Pollio's *libertas.* It also reflects his desire to appeal to the intellectual elite of Rome and it is also a demonstration of his extreme wealth. There is little to suggest it was anti-Augustan in intent.

The *Atrium Libertatis*

In the decade after the Pact of Brundisium monuments in Rome built on the spoils of war flourished. It is in this context that we should view Pollio's building of the "first" public library in Rome, a building project that cemented his name in history.

Pollio returned from Illyricum a wealthy man, and he chose to restore one of the grandest buildings in Rome, the *Atrium Libertatis*, and house within it a public library of Greek and Roman manuscripts.[1] The idea was not his, but had been proposed by Julius Caesar who was assassinated before it could be carried out.[2] It was likely Pollio had been involved in these discussions and had a clear concept of what Caesar had envisioned. Caesar had also intended for the author, Marcus Terentius Varro, to aid in the collection of the manuscripts.[3] As Varro was the only living author whose bust Pollio included in his collection of sculptures which adorned the library it was very probable he engaged Varro in the task as had been planned with Caesar. It also dates the completion of the library as to before Varro's death in 27 BC.[4] The task in obtaining the manuscripts was substantial as he created two libraries, one for Greek and the other for Latin texts.

Within the library Pollio set up bronze busts of the authors of the works contained. Pliny highlights this aspect of the library, stating how pleasing it is for people to know the appearance

---

[1] Plin. *HN* 7.115; 35.10. Suet. *Aug*. 29.5 *Multaque a multis tunc exstructa sunt sicut … ab Asinio Pollione atrium Libertatis*; Isid. *Orig*. 6.5.1.

[2] Suet. *Iul*. 44.2; Plut. *Caes* 49; Gell. *NA* 7.17 also Isid. *Orig*. 7.5. It was reported that in 48 BC, whilst Caesar was in Alexandria, he had been forced to set fire to his own ships in order to divert the enemy and in the process the fire engulfed the great library. It remains controversial if this was the actual burning of this great library, or whether it was simply part of the collection that was destroyed, or if the destruction of the total library occurred at a later date. However, on returning to Rome Caesar had wished for public libraries at Rome and for these to be the greatest possible.

[3] Suet. *Iul*. 44.2: *bibliothecas Graecas Latinasque quas maximas posset publicare data Marco Varroni cura comparandarum ac digerendarum*.

[4] Val. Max. 8.7.3 and Jer. *Ab Abr*. 1992.

of an individual human, and ascribes this development of recording portraiture in the 30'sBC directly to Pollio.[5] Almost certainly Pollio collaborated with Varro in the project, especially as Varro had collected over seven hundred portraits of famous Greeks and Romans, mostly drawn from sculpture, in his *Imagines* which was published in 39 BC.[6] Pollio saluted the scholar by the inclusion of his bust. It leads to speculation what recently deceased authors (Varro being the only living author included at this stage) Pollio may have included in the library and if this included the works of Cicero.[7]

Not only did Pollio refurbish the *Atrium Libertatis* and establish the library within it, he also created a gallery in which to show his own personal art collection.[8] The collection was substantial, and Pliny, who states Pollio was an energetic and vehement person and wanted his collections to be seen,[9] lists at least 33 statues in it and we can assume there were more.[10] Pliny refers to the collection as *monumenta*. The items that he mentions are as follows: [11]

Sileni	by Praxiteles	36.23
Thyiads	by Praxiteles	36.23
Caryatids	by Praxiteles	36.23
Maenads	by Praxiteles	36.23

[5] Plin. *HN* 35.9-10. Also Isager (1991) 116-117 who highlights what was new, *nouicium inuentum,* was the placing of busts within the library.
[6] Rawson (1985) 198-199 describes the collection of portraits in Varro's *Imagines* which included Greek and Roman poets, statesmen, philosophers, architects and probably painters and sculptors. Varro, who had accumulated vast wealth, was proscribed by the triumvirs for his wealth and lost most of his own writings and his library in the plunder (Gell. *NA* 3.10.17.). He was protected by friends, particularly Fufius Calenus, and reinstated in 40 or 39 BC. Pollio may well have wished to offer personal restoration to Varro through his inclusion in the library. Varro also modelled the seeking of literary pursuits following withdrawal from politics.
[7] The library at Alexandria, which had inspired Julius Caesar to create such a library in Rome, had 490,000 Greek rolls or texts. But the library built in the Forum of Trajan, most probably Rome's largest library, had space for only 10,000 Greek texts, the Palatine library built by Octavian far fewer, and the same would have been true of Pollio's collection. Roman texts, however, probably dominated, and would have included most of the writings of the last two centuries, as compared with seven centuries of Greek writing. Ovid (*Tr*. 3.1.59-72) gives some insight into the texts held within the libraries when he laments that the Palatine Library, like the library of the Porticus of Octavia and Pollio's library, offers readers the works of men of learning of both the past and present but has none of his (no doubt due to his banishment). Further, there is a statement in Suetonius' *Life of Caligula* (34.2) that the works and busts of Vergil and Livy were in all the libraries in his time. For an overview of public libraries in ancient times as written from the perspective of a librarian see Casson (2001) especially ch. 6.
[8] André (1949) considers the collection would have been displayed in a garden, as does Zanker (1988) 70.
[9] Plin. *HN* 36.33-34: *Pollio Asinius, ut fuit acris vehementiae, sic quoque spectari monumenta sua voluit*.
[10] Anderson (1984) 23 n. 39, who also includes copies of the two Camoteres.
[11] This list has been compiled by Pollitt (1978) 170. Osgood (2006) 253 duplicates the list of Pollitt. Also Anderson (1984) 23 n. 39; Isager (1991) 165-166. Pliny (*HN)* devotes two sections to the collections of Pollio. The first is found at 36.23-24 and the second at 36.33-34. At 35.9-10 he talks of the founding of the library.

Dionysos	by Eutychides	36.34
Kanephoros	by Skopas	36.25
Aphrodite	by the sons of Praxiteles	36.24
Zeus	by Papylos	36.33
Hermerotes	by Tauriskos	36.34
Centaurs and Nymphs	by Arkesilaos	36.33
Thespiades	by Kleomenes	36.33
Oceanus and Zeus	by Heniochos	36.33
Appiades	by Stephanos	36.33
Zethos, Amphion, Dirke and bull	by Apollonios and Tauriskos	36.34

Also known as the Punishment of Dirce and later identified as the famous "Farnese Bull" in Naples.

"Farnese Bull" in Naples.

Isager provides a more detailed discussion of the statues and their sculptors, the majority of whom were neo-Attic artists from the first century BC.[12] He further suggests an arrangement of

[12] Praxiteles was an Athenian sculptor active around 375-330 BC. He worked in bronze and marble but was famous for his marble employing the painter Nicias for a final touch to the polished surface. His masterpiece was the completely nude Cnidia (see Anderson (1984)). Arcesilaus (Centaurs lifting Nymphs) was a neo-Attic artist from the first century BC who was also responsible for the Venus Genetrix statue in Caesar's Forum. The Appiads by Stephanos are also described by Ovid in the *Ars Amatoria* (1.84) as adorning a fountain in Caesar's forum, possibly near the temple of Venus Genetrix. Isager (1991) considers Pollio may have ordered a replica but Purcell (1993) 152 considers they may have been the actual statues of Pollio's collection if the *Atrium Libertatis* was connected with the building known as the tabularium, and that Ovid and Pliny were describing the same location. See the later discussion in this chapter. None of the pieces have survived except for perhaps the piece known as the

the statues within the collection with *The Punishment of Dirce* taking a centre position.[13] Pollio's taste in art has been described as: 'late classical and Hellenistic marbles with often erotic or Dionysiac themes, carved by leading sculptors, often in the Praxitelean/neo-Attic tradition'.[14] Pollitt considers Pollio was the most eminent art collector of the first century BC.[15] It is probable that the sculptors Stephanos (the Appian nymphs) and Arkesilaos (the Centaurs and Nymphs), who were working in the period of late Republican Rome, may have produced some of the statues for Pollio on commission.[16] Isager further concludes that Pollio's collection shows a particular taste that was prevalent within the Roman upper class at the time and that he collected with a definite intention.[17] This was not the plunder from Greek regions as seen with other military leaders but a use of the spoils of war to acquire specific pieces of art. The wealth of the collection is immense. For example Pliny records that Lucullus was prepared to pay a million sesterces for one statue by Arkesilaos, and the price for a Praxiteles can only be imagined; and Pollio had several works by this artist.[18]

Pollio's wealth had also extended to restoring the *Atrium Libertatis* in which to house the library and collection; a building of great antiquity. The historical sources provide references to the building dating back to 390 BC when ancient laws kept within the building were burnt at the time of the Gallic invasion of Rome.[19] However, its most significant association is with the censors. In 194 BC the censors restored the *Villa Publica* and the *Atrium Libertatis* and enlarged the latter.[20] The building was the meeting place of the censors for the admission of non-Romans and ex-slaves to the citizenship. In 169 BC Livy describes the censors, having been accused of irregularities, as going up to the *Atrium Libertatis* and sealing the public accounts.[21] In 167 BC it was the place where lists of former slaves, and the tribes to which they had been assigned, were posted.[22] The connection of the building with manumission and the role of the censors in relation to the Roman people probably explains the title of *libertas.* In 52 BC the slaves of Milo

---

Farnese Bull which was found at the Baths of Caracalla in Rome in 1546 and is now located in Naples, which some believe is the actual piece Pliny describes. See Isager (1991) 163-167.

[13] Isager (1991). He bases this arrangement on the work of Becatti (1956).

[14] See Stewart (1990) 308.

[15] Pollitt (1986) 163.

[16] Isager (1991) 166. Osgood (2006) 253 also makes this point. Also Pollitt (1986) 163.

[17] Isager (1991) 166. Pollio's taste was for marble sculpture to the complete exclusion of bronze.

[18] Plin. *HN* 33.147. See also Pollitt (1978) 162 who comments on Pollio's collection and also points out that Crassus paid 100,000 sesterces for a few cups by a Greek engraver of the fourth or fifth century BC; that Gaius Gracchus bought some figures of dolphins at a cost of 5000 sesterces a pound and that Hortensius paid 144,000 sesterces for a painting by a fourth century painter. Cicero was more modest and only paid 20,400 sesterces for some Megarian statues (*Att*. 1.8.2.) Purcell (1993) 134 comments that the 60,000,000 sesterces Cicero considers in the extension to the Forum in 54 BC was a colossal sum. In this context Pollio's collection is one of extreme wealth.

[19] This reference is taken from Anderson (1990) 21. See also Nicolet (1980) 63-64.

[20] Livy *Per*. 34.44.

[21] Livy *Per*. 43.16. 12-13.

[22] Livy *Per*. 45. 15. 1-5.

were examined under torture in the Atrium. [23] The building also offered a possible venue for the sitting of the senate. Purcell considers it was the building referred to as the *timeterion* for the *senatus consultum* of 80 BC where the senate met whilst the Curia Cornelia was under construction.[24] He further considers that Sulla may have undertaken work on the *Atrium Libertatis* noting he would have had his reasons for making his mark on the symbolic expressions of *libertas.* Without doubt the *Atrium Libertatis* was one of the major historical buildings of Rome, strongly associated with the workings of the censors, and deeply implicated in the ideological battle that accompanied the struggle of the orders.[25]

About the structure and location of the building we only know that it was an impressive building and that it had the normal shape of an Atrium. It is assumed to be on a hill as Livy, in his description of the activities of the censors in 169 BC, records the censors as going up, *escenderunt,* to the *Atrium Libertatis*.[26] The last noted restoration of the building was in 194 BC. The only other evidence to help locate the building occurs in a letter of Cicero to Atticus written in 54 BC in which he describes a planned extension of the Forum as far as the *Atrium Libertatis*:

> *Paulus in medio foro basilicam iam paene texterat isdem antiquis columnis. Illam autem quam locavit facit magnificentissimam. Quid quaeris? Nihil gratius illius monumento nihil gloriosius. Itaque Caesaris amici me dico et Oppium dirumparis licet in monumentum illud quod tu tollere laudibus solebas ut forum laxaremus et usque ad atrium Libertatis explicaremus contempsimus sescenties sestertium cum privatis non poterat transigi minore pecunia. Efficiemus rem gloriosissimam*.[27]

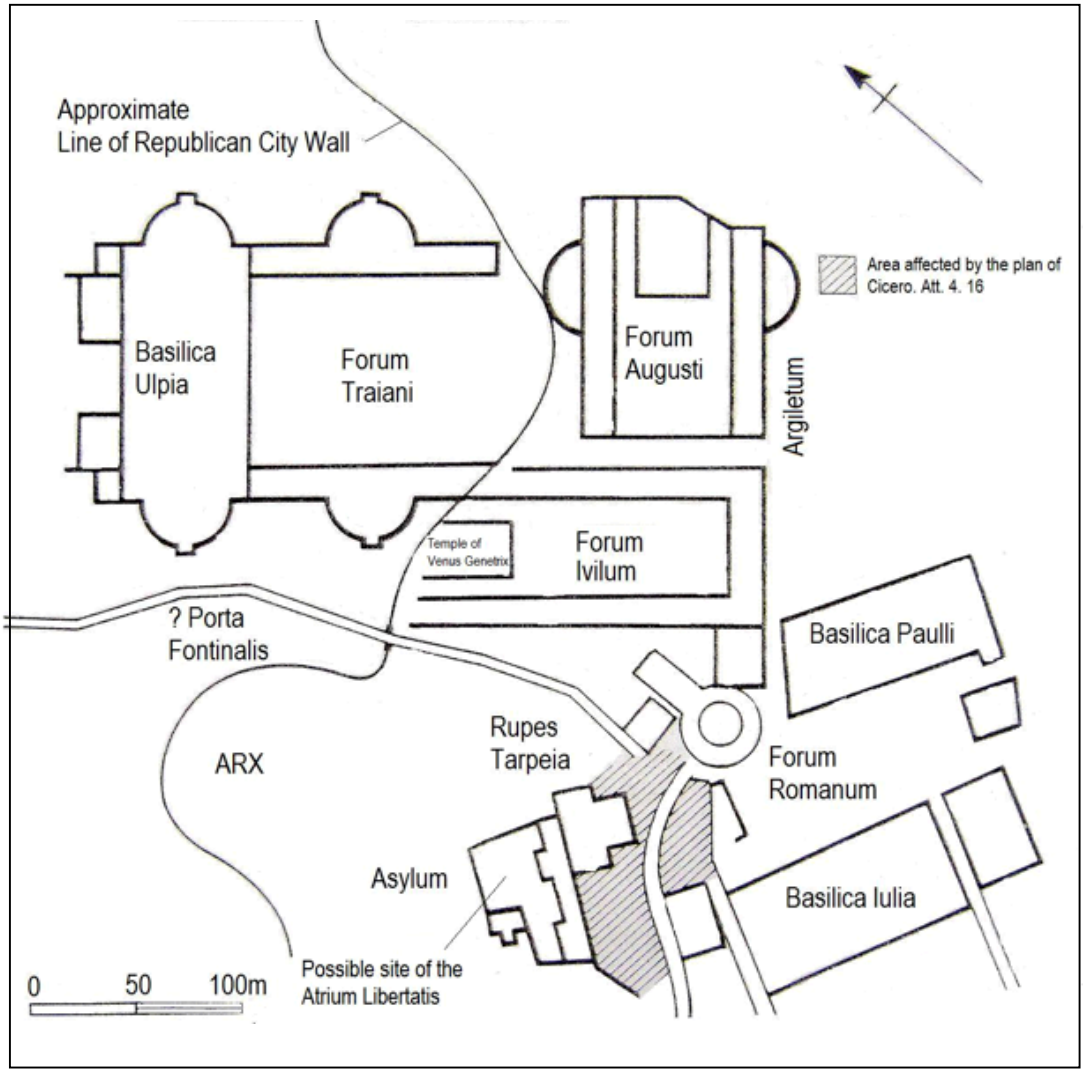
This statement has usually identified the *Atrium Libertatis* as being on the far side of the *Forum Iulium,* on the basis that the forum Cicero referred to within the letter was the proposed new forum by Julius Caesar, the *Forum Iulium*.[28] However, Purcell has countered this argument clearly outlining why the ambiguous forum referred to by Cicero could not be the *Forum Iulium* but rather the *Forum Romanum*.[29] Further, he identifies the magnificent building of the Tabularium which fronts the Capitoline Hill as the *Atrium Libertatis*. Subsequently, Tucci has also investigated the Tabularium and concluded it was only built in 78 BC, and that located above the building was the temple of *Juno Moneta,* leaving the location of the *Atrium Libertatis*

---

[23] Cic. *Mil*. 59.
[24] Purcell (1993) 144.
[25] This statement is made in Purcell (1993) 142.
[26] Livy *Per*. 43.16.13: *censores extemplo in atrium Libertatis escenderunt*.
[27] Cic. *Att*. 4.16.8 (89).
[28] Shackleton Bailey *Att*. 2. 204-205.
[29] Purcell (1993). See also Ulrich (1993) who comes to the same conclusion as Purcell regarding the forum referred to in Cicero's letter and concludes that the *Forum Iulium* was not conceived until after 48 BC. Building activity would have been most intense in the four years between the Battle of Pharsalus and Caesar's assassination.

once more open to speculation.[30] It also remains uncertain whether Pollio restored the *Atrium Libertatis* or reconstructed the building on the basis it had been previously demolished.[31]

General Plan of the Fora



Taken and adapted from Purcell (1993) 131.

[30] Tucci (2005). He locates the *Atrium Libertatis* as at the foot of the Capitoline on the saddle towards the Quirinal. See also Amici (1995-96) 295-321; Castagnoli (1946) 276-91. Castagnoli located the *Atrium Libertatis* in a region between the back of the Temple of Venus Genetrix and the old Servian fortification wall. Situated behind the temple it would have sat on the slope above the new forum. This would also concur with Livy's description of the building being on an elevated site.

[31] Thomsen (1941) argues that the *Atrium Libertatis* was destroyed in 54 BC by the building of the Temple of Genetrix and that Pollio rebuilt the Atrium. It is unclear from the reference to the building programmes of Octavian in Suetonius whether the *Atrium Libertatis* was only restored or completely rebuilt. Most other projects referred to were either complete reconstructions or new buildings. See Ulrich (1993) for discussion of these hypotheses.

We could also hypothesize that Pollio may have engaged in the building of his library the leading architect in Rome at that time, Vitruvius, who makes the following points regarding library design: 'libraries should be towards the east, for their purposes require the morning light: in libraries the books are in this aspect preserved from decay; those that are towards the south and west are injured by the worm and by the damp, which the moist winds generate and nourish, and spreading the damp makes the books mouldy.'[32] A further relationship may also have developed between the two as Vitruvius continued to explore the use of concrete and Pollio developed his brick works.[33]

Nor was this wealth and building activity of Pollio without precedent. Roman generals were returning to the city with vast sums from the spoils of war, and the building of monuments burgeoned. Zanker notes the monuments were intended primarily to give visibility to one or other of the rival factions in Rome.[34] Certainly, Octavian at this time was the most important patron of new buildings, but at least ten others individually put up temples or significant public buildings.[35] In particular the building of temples became very fashionable after Julius Caesar had begun to renovate the temple of Quirinus. Pollio may also have been urged on by his rival Plancus, who after his triumph *ex Gallia* in 42 BC had commenced a complete reconstruction of the Temple of Saturn in the Forum.[36]

There is a desire to gain insight into Pollio's political leanings from the nature of his building construction but it remains open to interpretation. Pollio was clearly carrying out a project envisioned by Julius Caesar. This is not surprising. After the assassination of Caesar there was a flurry of construction that continued his projects. Dio (47.18-19) comments that the triumvirs did everything which tended to Caesar's honour, in expectation of some day being themselves thought worthy of like honours. Construction of the *Curia Julia* was continued, and they decreed that a new temple to *Divus Julius* in the *Forum Romanum* be commenced. Lepidus continued the work of two of Caesar's projects; the *Saepta Julia* and the *Temple to Felicitas*.[37] After the Pact of Brundisium Octavian actively took on the other urban projects of Caesar as a filial obligation to his adoptive father. By contrast Antony never expressed his association with

---

[32] Vitr. *De arch*. 6.4.1; also 6.5.2.
[33] See later discussion this Chapter.
[34] Zanker (1988) 65.
[35] As for example C. Sosius after his triumph *ex Judaea* in 34 BC planned to rebuild the old temple of Apollo *in Circo*, C. Domitius Calvinus after his victory in Spain in 36 BC rebuilt the *Regia* in the Forum, and L. Cornificius after his triumph *ex Africa* in 33 BC rebuilt the old temple of Diana of the *plebs* on the Aventine. See Zanker (1988) 70-71. Statilius Taurus celebrated a triumph *ex Africa* in 34 BC and began work on the first public stone amphitheatre in Rome dedicated in 29 BC. He was a *novus homo* who as one of Octavian's generals was able to amass a huge fortune and become the founder of a noble house. Dio 51.23.1. See also Favro (1996) 83-84; Osgood (2006) 328-330.
[36] Suet. *Aug*. 29. See also n. 46 this Chapter.
[37] Dio 47.18-19; 51.22.

Caesar in this way; rather he took on the role of executor of Caesar's laws and political affairs. Once he left Rome in 39 BC he failed to have a presence in the city, a fact that Octavian capitalized upon, undertaking more and more works for the benefit of the people and as a glorification of his own name. As Favro states, by the late 30's BC Octavian could stand in the Forum and in every direction point to impressive architectural gifts he had bestowed upon the city and people. There was no *locus* in Rome where Antony could do the same.[38] What began as a glorification of Caesar soon became a glorification of Octavian. Favro believes the building schemes of Caesar that continued to be constructed represented less a promotion of the single individual in terms of Caesar himself but more a manifestation of belief in Roman tradition, strength and endurance.[39] Pompey and Caesar had both undertaken the construction of massive monuments and the continuation of this activity by individuals appeared to be a claim for similar status and power. There was a desire to surpass one's rivals and draw as much attention as possible to one's own project.[40]

The majority of triumphators built temples, often in recognition of the deity who had assisted them or with whom they sought connection. Pollio chose to restore the *Atrium Libertatis* and build a library. The focus in this case is that it was a building representing *libertas*. But there were also some interesting recent precedents. Caesar after his victory over Pompey was given the title of Liberator by the senate and a "temple of *libertas*" voted in his honour. Further, when Cicero was exiled, Clodius, after burning Cicero's house, erected on the site a "temple of *libertas*".[41]

Politically, the building may also have highlighted Pollio's own family connections with the Social War, his gaining the Roman citizenship and his association with Sulla.[42] Further, Rome was now in the grip of the rise of the 'new man' and a project of this magnitude was a strong expression of Pollio's *dignitas* and *auctoritas*.[43] Some have read the building as a statement against the triumvirs, and perhaps that it was anti-Octavian. Zanker, in particular, considers the building was no statement of loyalty to the triumvirate. He perceives a strongly anti-Octavian perspective in Pollio's choice of Hellenistic and Neo-Attic sculptors as compared with the archaic and classical taste of Octavian, and goes so far as to suggest that the Punishment of

---

[38] Favro (1996) 99.
[39] Favro (1996) 98.
[40] Zanker (1988) 68 illustrates this point by consideration of temple architecture, which in space of a few years became more and more ornate, as for example, the cornices.
[41] Dio 43.44.1; Cic *Dom*. 108; Plut. *Cic*. 33; Dio 38.17.6. Also Springer (1950) 390.
[42] See Chapter 1. We can also note Sulla himself was interested in restoring the building known as the *Atrium Libertatis*.
[43] See in particular Osgood (2006) ch. 6 for a discussion of the rise of this new nobility in Rome after the assassination of Caesar.

Dirce in Pollio's collection was an expression of Asiatic sympathies which would have been associated with Antony.[44]

Nevertheless, the reconstruction of the *Atrium Libertatis* is the clearest statement we have of Pollio's expression of *libertas,* but as we have seen, this was a common political catchword in the period after the assassination of Caesar and during the rivalries of the triumvirs. All the same it was a statement that he did not wish to build a monument in celebration of the civil wars, nor did he wish to continue to take part in these wars in any further capacity. In many ways he was giving " the fingers up" to Octavian and Antony as he sought to invest his time and wealth with the intellectual class of Rome. And the library he chose to build was immense. Politically it could be argued he was carrying out the wish of Julius Caesar himself, but strategically he was placing himself at the forefront of the intellectual elite in Rome. We can agree with Morgan when he states that Pollio was negotiating a new cultural stance and seeking to be a public figure in a manner that was distinct from the usual path of the Roman elite.[45] Whilst Octavian was struggling to defeat Sextus with the inevitable showdown with Antony looming, Pollio was busy collecting Greek and Roman texts, displaying the busts of the celebrated minds of the past, encouraging public recitations within his magnificent halls, and setting out to write his own account of the civil wars.

However, there is some indication Pollio's activities did not sit well with the poets of the day, especially with Vergil, as will be explored in the next chapter. It is to be noted they would meet in the Palatine Library built by Octavian with no suggestion that they ever favoured Pollio's great building. Octavian too appears to have responded to Pollio's building activity. According to Suetonius, Octavian put his own stamp on Pollio's library by encouraging Pollio to restore the *Atrium Libertatis* and associate his own name with it.

> *Sed et ceteros principes viros saepe hortatus est, ut pro facultate quisque monimentis vel novis vel refectis et excultis urbem adornarent. Multaque a multis tunc exstructa sunt, sicut … ab Asinio Pollione atrium Libertatis.* [46]

---

[44] Zanker (1987) 77-78; (1988) 70. Isager (1991) 166-167 questions this statement and considers it remains an open debate as to whether Pollio's art collection was more provocative than other collections in Augustan Rome.

[45] Morgan (2000) 66. See also Henderson (1998) 131ff.

[46] Suet. *Aug*. 29. The list also includes the Temple of Saturn built by Plancus which he commenced in 42 BC It is very likely that Plancus did not complete his building of the temple in 42 and that it remained under construction through the 30's. When Plancus left Antony and gave support to Octavian just before Actium he may have completed his temple in recognition of Octavian, and this may be why Octavian stated that he encouraged its construction as part of his own building campaign. This is not the case with Pollio.

This information is most probably taken from Augustus' autobiography and suggests Augustus was later keen to lay claim to Pollio's building, a clear indication of its significance to the Roman public.

In 36 BC Octavian had also commenced construction of a library to house Greek and Roman texts in a building on the Palatine, which became known as the Palatine library.[47] It is not known if this was to complement Pollio's library or to rival it. A third library followed.[48] Octavian also issued a ruling through Agrippa that individuals had an obligation to display their private art collections to the public.[49] This statement has often been used to demonstrate how Pollio met the wishes of Octavian by displaying his sculptures, but Pollio's collection by this stage was already established and open to the public. Again we could perceive Octavian as attempting to take credit for Pollio's public display, or attemping to undermine the generosity of Pollio's actions to the public and make it appear less special, or alternatively as complimenting his activity. In view of Pollio's wealth and independent status it is more likely Octavian was seeking to align Pollio with himself and bring his activities in line with his own administration rather than the other way around.

Source of Pollio's wealth

Pollio, along with Maecenas and Messalla, emerges as one of the richest men from the civil wars.[50] How did this happen? His campaign against the Parthini was brief, and conducted against a nomadic people, but sufficient for him to return with significant *manubiae.*[51] At some point he acquired a villa at Tusculum, in a location known for luxury villas.[52] From the end of 45 until mid 43 Pollio had been in Spain, a wealthy province where he no doubt acquired marked wealth.[53] It is also to be assumed his family continued to hold estates in Marrucini as he

---

[47] Dio 53.1; Suet. *Aug* 29. Construction of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine by Octavian began in 36 BC and was completed in 28 BC. He added Greek and Latin libraries to the portico adjoining the new temple. The Palatine Library was close to Octavian's, now Augustus, residence and slowly led to a new cultural and political focus developing on the Palatine. Augustus eventually held meetings of the senate in the Palatine library. For this shift in focus in urban Rome see in particular Favro (1996) esp. 200-206. See also Horace *Ep*. 1.3.17; 2.1. 215-218; 2.91-101 for comments on Augustus' relationship with Apollo and the Palatine Library with commentary by Passage (1983) who also notes that the newly edited Sibylline Books by Augustus himself were also deposited within the library (Suet *Aug*. 31).

[48] Octavian's sister sponsored another library in the Porticus Octaviae in honour of her dead son Marcellus. Plut. *Marc*. 30.

[49] Plin. *HN* 35. 26-28. See also comments by Zanker (1988) 141.

[50] This is also noted by White in Galinsky (2005) 328.

[51] Tac. *Ann* 11. 6-7. See Shatzman (1975) 47 -67 for a detailed discussion of senatorial sources of income and in particular the section on war profits.

[52] Shatzman (1975) 95, who lists twenty-five senators who were known to have villas at Tusculum thirteen of them being nobiles and sixteen consulars. Also Jer. *Ab Abr*. 170 b.h.

[53] Curchin (1983) 228 n7 describes L. Cornelius Balbus as Caesar's millionaire lieutenant and notes that the Spanish elite were as rich as they were magnanimous which he considers justifies the assumption of Spanish opulence. Spain was also known for its silver mines and what Diodorus called a 'gold rush' (25.37). See Griffin (1972) 2 and n18 for an overview of the ownership of the mines through this period.

belonged to the leading family of the province. The proscription of his father-in-law suggests that he too may have been very wealthy, and that Pollio had married into a family of high standing. It is also known Pollio established a brick works on his estate that was later maintained by his offspring.

The family brick works

Bricks with the inscription *Asin. Poll*. have been found on Pollio's estate at Tusculum.[54] Brick tile has also been found in the forum with the inscription 'C. Cosconius (manufactured in the) brickworks of Asinius Pollio'; *Teg.C. Cosconi Fig. Asini Poll.*[55] Similar tiles have also been found at Tusculum, Lanuvium and Aricia.

The Roman brick industry is known to have attracted those of high social standing.[56] As an industry it was considered as an offspring of agriculture, assuring it of acceptable status. One could exploit the resources of one's own estate, and as bricks became a key element in Roman construction it was a highly lucrative business. From the time of Vitruvius and the construction of the *Domus Aurea* burnt brick superseded traditional building materials. Oliver identifies a brick industry that was still being passed to the descendants of Pollio as late as 141 AD.[57] Subsequent brick stamps indicate the industry continued to progress well into the second century AD through the descendents of Pollio's daughter.[58] Octavian and Agrippa are also known to have manufactured tiles and bricks on their estates.[59]

Conclusion

The housing of Rome's first public library within the *Atrium Libertatis* established Pollio's name in history, perhaps a far greater achievement than he ever realised at the time.[60] Caesar had been an admirer of the great library he discovered at Alexandria, and returned to Rome with a desire

---

[54] *CIL* 15. 2231. Steinby (1974) 36 and Setälä (1977) 31-31 consider this particular inscription relates to C. Asinius Pollio consul in 23 AD but that all other stamps relate to our Pollio.
[55] *CIL* 15. 2232, 2233, 2234. See Setälä (1977) 31-31 for discussion of these stamps. She notes that Pollio is considered the landowner on whose land the bricks were manufactured.
[56] See Bloch (1947) for a detailed discussion of Roman brick stamps and especially his introduction on the manufacture of brick tiles. Also Steinby (1974) and Helen (1975) who discusses the use of brick tile and provides an explanation of the term *figlinae* as found on so many tiles. See also Setälä (1977) who includes discussion of the brick tiles as specifically related to Pollio as also Anderson (1991) 8-9.
[57] Oliver (1947) 156.
[58] Setälä (1977) 71 provides a stemma of the family relationships in the context of the ongoing brick industry.
[59] Shatzman (1975) 102 considers it likely Octavian inherited his brick industry in north Italy from Pansa. Agrippa appears to have manufactured tiles in Bruttium and had quarries in Phrygia and Africa.
[60] Large private libraries were certainly in existence. We know of the large library of Lucullus in his villa at Tusculum, and those of Cicero who kept libraries in all four of his villas but Pollio's name is associated with the first housing of a library within a public domain in Rome that could be accessed by all. See Rawson (1985) 40-42; Casson (2001) esp. 69-75.

to create an equal marvel. It was an ideal project for Pollio to undertake. In one building he aligned himself with Julius Caesar, affirmed his new role within the intellectual elite, demonstrated his massive wealth, made a statement for *libertas*, and indicated no allegiance to civil war or alliance with Antony or Octavian. Perfect.

10 Pollio And The Poets

When Pollio returned to Rome in 39/38 BC he was already established as a poet and a playwright.[1] We know this from Vergil, Horace and his own letter of 43. Whilst in Spain between 45-43 Pollio was writing plays, and engaged in the literary circle of Corduba.[2] In his letter to Cicero, dated March 43, he indicated he had sent one of his plays to Cornelius Gallus and that Cicero might care to obtain a copy.[3] After his prolonged military engagement with Sextus, and the latter's eventual negotiated peace, Pollio could settle into life at Corduba away from the political unrest at Rome. He actively tried to remain disengaged from the emerging civil war and we could assume that this period in Spain was highly productive with respect to his literary development. His friendship with the family of Seneca developed in this time as most probably his relationship with Sextilius Ena and Porcius Latro.[4]

On Pollio's return to Rome during the period of the proscriptions he not only takes on the defence of Lamia but shortly after is associated with Vergil. The young Vergil is in this period composing the *Eclogues* and Pollio encourages his writing.[5] When Vergil pens his third *Eclogue* he comments on Pollio and describes him as a composer of new songs: *Pollio et ipse facit nova carmina,* (86).[6] What is actually meant by 'new songs', however, must be considered somewhat ambiguous, noting in particular that *carmina* is rarely applied to dramatic verse, for which Pollio became known.[7] When this line is placed within its full context, Coleman considers that

---

[1] For an overview of Pollio as a poet see Malcovati (1923); *RE* 1597; André (1949); Néraudau (1983); Courtney (1993) ; Hollis (2007).

[2] We know from Pollio's account of the actions of his praetor Balbus that plays were being put on in Corduba, Balbus himself having written a play that was performed. Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.3 (415). See also Weinrib (1990) ch. 2 for a discussion on the key literary figures in this time period who originated from Spain.

[3] Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.5 (415). Note Courtney (1993) 259 gives a more probable interpretation of this line indicating it is the play of Balbus that Pollio has sent to Gallus, not his own play. Either way it confirms an active and ongoing communication between Pollio and Gallus at this time (*Epistulam quam Balbo, cum etiam nunc in provincia esset, scripsi, legendam tibi misi. Etiam praetextam si voles legere, Gallum Cornelium, familiarem meum, poscito*).

[4] See Chapter 4. Also Sussman (1978) 19-23; Fairweather (1984) 518; Griffin (1972)**;** also Weinrib (1990) and his chapter on the *The Annaei*.

[5] See Farrell (1991) 278-291 in particular for a more detailed discussion of the 'Pollio *Eclogues*'.

[6] Also comment by Clausen (1994) 112.

[7] Mendell (1928) suggests Pollio may have written an epic as well as a history of the civil wars. Courtney (1993) 255 also considers what is meant by *nova* and discounts the possibility that it means 'neoteric' in view of what is known of Pollio's style as archaic and therefore interprets *nova* to mean unprecedented or marvellous, and suggests that the phrase *nova carmina* refers to his tragedies. Servius (*Ad Buc*. 3.86) comments: *Nova carmina magna, miranda; novus magnus, ut Pollio et ipse facit nova carmina*. Compare Coleman (1977) 122, who considers it is a reference to Pollio's poems in the neoteric style, not his tragedies, and perhaps short poems on personal themes in the Alexandrian manner.

the reference to a bull in contrast with the heifer suggests the quality of the songs is of a higher genre than bucolic.[8]

> Pollio loves our muse, bucolic though she be
> Fatten a heifer for your reader, Pierians
> Pollio makes new songs for himself. Fatten a bull
> One old enough to toss his horns and paw the sand.
> Let him who loves you, Pollio, share your paradise. (84-88)[9]

Farrell has also pursued this train of thought.[10] From the structure of the poem, in which the shepherds invoke their Muses as a patron, Farrell considers that Vergil is making it clear that Pollio in this poem also plays the role of a patron. Further, Pollio is not just a patron, but also a poet who composes *nova carmina*. Moreover, he notes that Pollio loves Damoetas' Muse, bucolic though she be, but that she differs from Pollio's own Muse and so Menalcas bids the Pierides to produce for Pollio the more aggressive bull. This is an indication that this "new poetry" of Pollio's is something very different from the Vergilian pastoral. Pollio can be seen as striking out into a higher genre. Farrell considers this may be a hint of the 'unexpected about Pollio's poems', that he is being praised as a neoteric poet.

This celebration of Pollio as a composer of songs has also been seen as a forerunner to *Eclogue* 4 where he is saluted as the consul in whose year the Pact of Brundisium, and with it the golden age, will be ushered in.[11] No mention can be made of the fourth *Eclogue* without reference to the controversy of the "promised child":

> Only do thou, pure Lucina, smile on the birth of the child, under whom the iron brood shall first cease, and a golden race spring up throughout the world! Thine own Apollo now is king! *Ecl*. 4. 8-10.[12]

The debate is extensive, but Clausen is probably right when he concludes that the identity (or the symbolism) of the boy child was not in doubt in 40 BC; it was only when the expected male

---

[8] See Coleman (1977) 122 also Courtney (1993) 255; Mayer (1983) 24.

[9] *Pollio amat nostram, quamvis est rustica, Musam:*
Pierides, vitulam lectori pascite vestro.
Pollio et ipse facit nova carmina: pascite taurum,
iam cornu petat et pedibus qui spargat harenam.
Qui te, Pollio, amat, veniat, quo te quoque gaudet;

[10] Farrell (1991) 280ff.

[11] It has been considered by some (including Farrell 1991) that the mention of Pollio in *Eclogue* 3 appears to be intrusive in the context, occurring midway in the contest between the two shepherds, with a sense the lines may have been added at a later date with the intention of acting as an introduction to the mention of Pollio in *Eclogue* 4. See in particular Clausen (1994) xxi-xxii.

[12] *tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum*
desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo,
casta fave Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo.

child was not born that new interpretations of this child began to circulate.[13] Pollio's wife was pregnant in 40 BC, and as a consequence Pollio's name has been linked with the child. Thus we find Pollio's son, Asinius Gallus, in adult life, telling the literary critic Asconius Pedianus that he was the promised child of the *Eclogue*: *Asconius Pedianus a Gallo audisse se refert hanc eclogam in honorem eius factam*.[14] It is an interesting comment as clearly Gallus felt entitled to make the claim without overriding ridicule. This suggests not only his own sense of entitlement, but also that Pollio was and remained in high standing. The possibility that the child might be another of Pollio's, a child named Salonius, has now been almost completely discredited by Syme and others, who doubt if this child existed at all.[15]

In his eighth *Eclogue,* assuming the reference is to Pollio, as is generally held, Vergil again comments on Pollio's songs, stating they rival those of Sophocles: 'O shall I ever be free to spread through all the world those songs of thine, alone worthy of the buskin of Sophocles?' (9-10) [16]

The three Pollio *Eclogues* reflect his new poetry, a higher genre than the bucolic, and his tragic style. But mention is also made of his military feats, his consulship, his triumph, leading Farrell to comment that 'Pollio's tragedies are made the equivalent of his military deeds'.[17] It can be considered that in *Eclogue* 3 Pollio is seen primarily as the poet. In *Eclogue* 4 Pollio is addressed as consul. *Eclogue* 8 unites these two aspects of Pollio, literature and action, as Pollio is now praised for his Illyrian conquests and his tragedies. Farrell speaks of this as Pollio's 'heroic poetry and heroic deeds'.[18] This viewpoint is consistent with the premise that Pollio, on returning to Rome, turned to literature as an alternative form of public activity; a new form of campaigning.[19]

Pollio's Association with Vergil

Pollio's relationship with Vergil can reasonably be dated back to 54 BC. Vergil arrived in Rome as a young man, was soon connected to the circle of Catullus and undertook his first case in the

---

[13] Clausen (1994) 119-129 who considers the child was the expected baby of Antony and Octavia as Antony in 40 BC was still the supreme ruler.
[14] Serv. *Dan*. on 4.11.
[15] Syme (1937) 39-48 = *RP* 1.18-30. See also Briggs (1981) 1314 for a listing of those who consider the child to be either Salonius or Gallus. Also Chapter 6 for discussion of the child Salonius in relation to Pollio's possible capture of Salona and Chapter 15 for discussion of this child in relation to Pollio's Jewish interests. Dzino (2011) considers a later medieval source which clearly states Pollio captured Salona and named his son, born at this time, Salonius.
[16] See the detailed discussion of *Eclogue* 8 in Chapter 7.
[17] Farrell (1991) 284. However, we could note that Pollio's military deeds, as we have assessed, are lacklustre to say the least.
[18] Farrell (1991) 289.
[19] See Chapter 8 and especially the comments by Morgan (2000).

courts in the same time period that Pollio also made his first court debut.[20] The connections between Pollio, Vergil, Gallus and Varus probably all occurred in this environment. With the outbreak of civil war Pollio joined Caesar and Vergil moved to Naples and the East. Whilst Pollio was in Spain he remained in communication with Gallus, and when Pollio was in Cisalpine Gaul, Gallus was also in the region.[21] Gallus was a close friend of Vergil, who addresses him in his sixth and tenth *Eclogues*.[22] As Crowther concludes it is highly probable Gallus belonged to the circle of poets linked by common interests who included not only Pollio but also Vergil, Parthenius, Cinna (who wrote a *propempticon* for Pollio), Furius Bibaculus and Valerius Cato.[23]

Around 39 BC Vergil took Gaius Maecenas, the close and trusted friend of Octavian, as his patron.[24] He also introduced Horace to Maecenas who was readily accepted into the circle despite his support of Brutus and that he had fought at Philippi. Caesar had begun a patronage of the poets, inducing them to write of his military exploits, recognizing their political influence, and Maecenas, on behalf of Octavian, continued the process. It is in this period, immediately prior to this association with Maecenas, that it has been assumed that Pollio acted as the patron of Vergil. We have already considered this question of patronage in the context of who the addressee in *Eclogue* 8 was, Pollio or Octavian. The only other sources for evidence that Pollio was a patron of Vergil are the early biographers of Vergil. Whilst most mention Pollio, often in the context of Vergil's regaining his lost estates, there is no clear statement Pollio was the patron of Vergil, but it can still be reasonably inferred.[25]

Vergil is not the only poet in this period to praise Pollio; Horace also praises his writing. In his *Satires* he refers to Pollio as follows: 'In tragical trimeter Pollio sings of the feats of kings'.[26] And in his famous *Ode* to Pollio he refers to him as a writer of tragedy in the style of the classical Greeks: 'Your sterner muse of tragedy must a while be missed upon our stages;

---

[20] See Chapter 2.
[21] Cic. *Fam*. 10.31.6 (368); 32.5 (415); Broughton *MRR* 2.377.
[22] As Phillimore (1925) 18-19 highlights it was Gallus that Vergil truly admired as a fellow poet and it is probable that it was Gallus who introduced Vergil to Octavian.
[23] Crowther (1983) 1640.
[24] Some authors date this change to Maecenas as occurring at the end of 40 BC; see Starr (1955).
[25] Servius' Life 23 f.: 'through the patronage of Pollio and Maecenas' (*usus patrocinio Pollionis*) Vergil regained the farm he had lost, 'then Pollio proposed to him that he write bucolic poetry'.
Probus' Life 8: there is a lacuna, but the context is Vergil regained his land '*beneficio Asini Pollionis*'.
Foca's metrical Life 65: mentions Pollio's enthusiasm for Vergil alongside Maecenas.
[26] Hor. *Sat*. 1.10.42-43 *Pollio regum facta canit pede ter percusso*, assumed to have been published in 35 or 34 BC.

butsoon, when this historic work is well in order you will resume your Cecropic buskin' (*Carm*. 2.1. 9-10).[27]

The Younger Pliny had also heard or read Pollio's poetry, describing him as not only a writer of serious verses, but also of lighter scribblings:

> 'I (Pliny writing to Titius Aristo) admit that I do often write verse which is far from serious … But I am sure that those who realize what famous authors have set me an example can easily be persuaded to let me go astray, so long as I am in their company; for it is an honour to imitate their lighter as well their more serious work … (For) it was perfectly proper in the case of Cicero, C. Calvus, Asinius Pollio … (*Ep*. 5.3.5)'.[28]

What sort of *lusus* Pollio wrote is unknown. Was it erotic verse perhaps not befitting his *dignitas,* or lighter moments in his tragedies?

However*, Lusus* may also refer to the lighter writings of epigrams, and whilst we have no example from Pollio himself Suetonius provides an example that his son Gallus engaged in such writing:

> That he (Marcus Pomponius Marcellus, a most pedantic critic of the Latin language) had formerly been a boxer is shown by this epigram which Asinius Gallus made upon him:
> "He who learned 'head to the left' explains to us difficult language;
> Talent indeed has he none, merely a pugilist's skill." (*Gram*. 22).[29]

Catullus had been fond of the epigram, in fact Martial would consider Catullus the greatest of all Roman epigrammatists, and we could perhaps assume Pollio, like his son, may also have tried his hand.[30]

The only extant evidence we have of Pollio's writings as a poet is but one line of verse**:** *Veneris antistita Cuprus*.[31] The line makes reference to the island of Cyprus which was so devoted to the cult of Venus that the whole island was often spoken of as her priestess. Courtney considers the line is one of verse not prose and that in all probability it came from a tragic passage of lyrics,

---

[27] *Paulum severae Musa tragoediae desit theatris: mox, ubi publicas res ordinaris, grande munus Cecropio repetes cothurno*. Cecrops was a legendary king of Athens and Cecropic refers to Athenian or classical Greek style. Further, Coleman (1977) 229 notes that reference to *coturno,* meaning buskin or raised boot was commonly used to imply the tragic genre or style.

[28] The list also includes M. Messalla, Q. Hortensius, M. Brutus, L. Sulla, Q. Catulus, Q. Scaevola, Servius Sulpicius, Varro Torquatus, C. Memmius, Lentulus Gaetulicus, Annaeus Seneca and Verginius Rufus.

[29] *Pugilem olim fuisse, Asinius Gallus hoc in eum epigrammate ostendit: Qui 'caput ad laevam' didicit, glossemata nobis praecipit; os nullum, vel potius pugilis!* See also Dio 57.17.2 for comment on Marcellus as a grammarian. The epigram is often attributed to Pollio but Asinius 'Gallus' indicates it is the son.

[30] Mart. 10.78.14-16.

[31] Charisius, *Gramm*. 1 100.24: *et antistes habet antistitam, ut Varro Diuinarum 1111 et Cicero in Verrem 1111, et Pollio "Veneris antistita Cuprus" sed et Cornelius Severus "stabat apud sacras antistita numinis aras"*.

although the metre is not what would be considered for a standard line of tragic dialogue.[32] But that is all we can say.

Pollio also wrote plays, but we know nothing of their content. That his plays survived into the next century is evident from the fact that they had been read by Tacitus who provides an insight into their style: they were modelled on Pacuvius and Accius and were stiff and dry in their content.[33] However, we should perhaps note the comment comes from Tacitus' character Marcus Aper, who was more of a modernist in his views and so less likely to praise the more restrained Attic style of Pollio.[34]

There is no evidence Pollio's plays were ever performed in public but this is of little significance as not a single play performed publicly at Rome in this time has survived intact.[35] And of the plays that have survived, the ten plays of Seneca, there is no certain evidence they were ever staged.[36] However, neither Seneca nor Quintilian comment on Pollio as a poet or writer of tragedies. When Quintilian lists Rome's famous tragedians he does not include Pollio.[37] Tacitus also lists Pollio as an orator, not as a poet: 'While there is no published oration of Asinius or Messalla so celebrated as the Medea of Ovid or the Thyestes of Varius (*Dial*.12.6)'.[38] However, it is a tough comparison as Varius' Thyestes was greatly admired with Quintilian claiming that it can be compared with any of the Greek plays. Nevertheless, Varius is often thought to have replaced Pollio's more archaic old fashioned approach with a style 'owing more to learned Hellenistic and Latin neoteric poetry.' When Pollio switched from writing

---

[32] André (1949) 36-37 proposes two scansions :
Ve | neris an | tistita | Cuprus
Vene | ris an | tistita | Cuprus
Courtney (1993) 256 disagrees and considers the metre cannot be readily discerned. Note Pollio maintains the old spelling of Cyprus assuming the quotation has been correctly transmitted. See also Néraudau (1983) 1742-1743.

[33] Tac. *Dial*. 21.7 *Asinius quoque, quamquam propioribus temporibus natus sit, videtur mihi inter Menenios et Appios studuisse. Pacuvium certe et Accium non solum tragoediis sed etiam orationibus suis expressit: adeo durus et siccus est*. Cicero notes of Accius his gravity and passionate energy (*Planc*. 59) see also Horace *Ep*. 2.1.49-50:'Whenever the question is raised as to who is superior, Old Pacuvius is 'learned, Accius 'noble''. Martial 11.90 comments on Pacuvius as delighting in archaisms. Horace and Quintilian give Accius and Pacuvius the epithet *doctus* which was usually applied to those writers who were versed in Greek mythology and literature (see Peterson (1891) 98; Wilkins (1905)). It is known they wrote on Greek tragedy, especially from the Trojan cycle. See also Fantham (2004 A) 227, who notes that Pacuvius enriched Latin with new forms of abstract nouns and compound adjectives and unusual plots, whilst Accius was more rhetorical in style and chose to write of struggles for power. This may give some insight into the content of Pollio's writing.

[34] See Chapter 11 and further discussion of Tacitus' comment in relation to Pollio as an orator.

[35] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 16 comment that of Pollio's tragedies 'not even a title survives'. See also Goldberg (1996) 265.

[36] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 8.

[37] Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.97-98. He lists Accius, Pacuvius, the Thyestes of Varius, the Medea of Ovid and Pomponius Secundus, noting that he had seen the latter himself.

[38] *nec ullus Asinii aut Messallae liber tam inlustris est quam Medea Ovidii aut Varii Thyestes*. The character Maternus is replying to Marcus Aper, a 'modernist' who was an advocate of the new style of rhetoric of the late first century AD. See Gold (1975) 66ff.

tragedy to history it has been considered that 'old style Latin tragedy probably came to an end'.[39]

It can be argued that Pollio's flowering as a poet and writer of tragedy occurred in the years between 43-39 BC, that he wrote in iambic metre, and in the manner of the classical Greeks. Whilst prone to the occasional lighter or erotic verse, as common to many of his day, he wrote largely tragedy, (Horace comments on the content of kings), and that he was heralded as the new Sophocles. His style, according to Tacitus, is not of the neoteric school but of an older generation, more conservative and archaic. There is also a strong implication of Pollio's future potential. He has begun to write verse and it is anticipated he will soon write with even greater talent.

In modern scholarship Pollio is frequently listed as one of the three leading patrons of poets in this era along with Maecenas and Messalla. Certainly this is the view of Syme, also expressed in the biography of André and subsequent authors.[40] But careful examination of the sources fails to confirm this. Juvenal, in particular, when he lists the great patrons of poets in this era makes no mention of Pollio.[41] It can be argued that Pollio's writing of poetry probably occurred early in his life and did not continue into his later years, nor did he remain a patron of poets or continue substantially within their circle. Rather we see a shift in focus after 39 BC to historiography and rhetoric, Pollio establishing his reputation as one of the leading orators under the Augustan regime. This shift may have occurred for several reasons, not the least being his own personality, political factors and perhaps also a general decline in theatre and tragedy, and what he perceived as a decreasing opportunity for literary expression, and for his talent in this area.

Vergil never mentions Pollio again after 40 BC and Horace writes only of the *Historiae* that Pollio is undertaking. We can also perhaps detect some disillusionment on the part of Horace, for when in his *Satires* he describes a peace-making trip to Brundisium, most likely in 37 BC, he makes special reference to his travelling companions, Maecenas, Cocceius and Fonteius Capito. Maecenas and Cocceius are described as 'well used to reconciling estranged friends', which is a specific reference to their involvement in the Pact of Brundisium in 40 BC.[42] Osgood comments that these lines appear to be giving credit for the Pact of Brundisium to Maecenas and Cocceius, whom Vergil had failed to mention in his *Eclogue*.[43] It also highlights the

---

[39] Hollis (2007) 4-5.
[40] Syme *Rom. Rev.* 252ff.; André (1949) 27ff. ; Duff (1960) 446; Gold (1987) 112; Fantham (1996) 67ff.; White in Galinsky (2005) 328ff.
[41] Juv. *Sat.* 7.94-95. He gives first place to Maecenas and also names Proculeius, Fabius, Cotta and Lentulus. He fails to mention Messalla.
[42] Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.27-34.
[43] Osgood (2006) 248 n.173. The peace-making mission is either that of 38 or 37 BC, the latter more likely. See Rudd (1966) 280-281. The poem also shows a political caution, there is no mention of the

absence of Pollio as Maecenas and Cocceius once again seek peace; a task that Pollio has now abandoned.

Further, in his *Satire* 1.10, where, as already mentioned, he writes of Pollio as a singer of the feats of Kings, Horace concludes the poem with a list of men in Rome whose opinion he most respects (81-90).[44]

> Plotius and Varius, Maecenas and Vergil are the men whose approval
> I am content with: Octavius, Valgius, excellent Fuscus
> Too; and I trust that these pieces win favour with both brothers Viscus.
> All adulation aside, let me also make mention of your name,
> Pollio; and yours too, Messalla, along with your brother's; and also
> Servius and Bibulus; not to omit honest Furnius, your own; and
> Many another besides, all the men of discernment and taste whom
> I have not space to include.

Horace provides a list of the most notable literary figures at the time with whom he would like his name associated. As Ullman notes, the use of connectives in the poem makes it clear this is not an unconnected list of individuals but a deliberate grouping.[45] We can see that the first list includes Plotius Tucca, Lucius Varius Rufus, Vergil, Gaius Valgius Rufus, Octavius Musa, Arîstius Fuscus and the Visci; all men associated with Maecenas. The second list includes the brother of Messalla, L. Gellius Poplicola, Servius Sulpicius Rufus, L. Calpurnius Bibulus and C. Furnius who are all associated with Messalla. Between the two lists stands Pollio alone.[46] The names in this list have raised discussion with respect to either a political alignment or literary focus.[47] Hanslick argues they are grouped according to literary style but the evidence is weak, particularly as little is known of Messalla's own poetical style, and the far stronger

---

political task, a caution considered imperative in the 30s BC. This point is also made by Gold (Diss. 1975) in her assessment of the political orientation of these figures at this time. See also Du Quesnay in Woodman and West (1984) 39-43, and Reckford (1999), who interprets the political tension in the satire by arguing that Horace wants a "friendly" resolution to conflict but also maintains a skeptical awareness of the political reality. See also Noyes (1947) 70ff. on the journey to Brundisium and Oliensis (1998) 26-30, who also comments on Horace's companions as "men accustomed to reconciling friends at variance" the friends at variance being Antony and Octavian and argues that Horace's depoliticization of the journey is itself a political gesture. Contra Townend *CAH* 10 (1996) 910.

[44] *Plotius et Varius, Maecenas Vergiliusque,*
Valgius et probet haec Octavius optimus atque
Fuscus et haec utinam Viscorum laudet uterque.
ambitione relegate te dicere possum,
Pollio, te, Messalla, tuo cum fratre, simulque
vos, Bibule et Servi, simul his te, candide Furni,
compluris alios, doctos ego quos et amicos
prudens praetereo, quibus haec, sint qualiacumque,
adridere velim, doliturus, si placeant spe
deterius nostra.

[45] Ullman (1912) 163 notes the use of three connectives in two lines (85-86) *cum ... simul(que) … simul*.

[46] Hor. *Sat*. 1.10. 81-88. Passage (1983) 53-54 also provides a useful summary of each individual mentioned as also Brown (1993) 192-193; Levi (1997) 84.

[47] See Gold (1975) 110ff.; Williams (1994) 395-396.

argument, as so forcefully proposed by Carcopino, is of a political alignment.[48] All the men identified in the group with Messalla are pro-Antonian.[49] Thus it would appear Maecenas attracted a group, by far the greater, who supported Octavian, and Messalla those who remained partisans of Antony. [50] Over time the two circles were less exclusive and the members mixed easily but in this early formation a distinct political alignment is evident. The satire is reasonably dated to 36-35 BC. It is therefore, for our purposes, a significant statement of evidence that by this date Pollio was not aligned with either group and stood alone.[51] Gold also supports this view. She has also considered that two separate groups have been listed; those centred around Maecenas and a second group centred around Messalla and thirdly Pollio, about whom she states, 'Pollio was known as rather a curmudgeon, and did not have much in the way of a literary circle surrounding him … Pollio seems to be mentioned here in a category by himself, between the two groups around Maecenas and Messalla, as a man whose opinion Horace did respect, perhaps not in spite of but because of his harsh critical acumen'[52]

It can also be recalled that the famous poets of the day would gather to meet in the library in the Temple of Apollo as established by Augustus rather than in the magnificent library built by Pollio.[53]

In 39 BC Pollio possessed all the criteria to establish himself as both a leading poet and patron. His closest contemporary, at that time, with whom to compare his progress, is Messalla, who was also an established poet, patron of poets, orator and military statesman and senator. Messalla collected around himself a group of emerging poets as a separate choice to Maecenas and his circle. As noted initially, this may have been a group that was pro-Antony in attitude but over time this no longer became the binding tie. Pollio likewise appears to have taken a similar path, developing a friendship with Vergil and Horace. But within two years the relationship was gone.

What we see in this time after the Pact of Brundisium and his retirement from public duty is the same difficulty in establishing Pollio's true allegiance with the triumvirs as when we considered

---

[48] Hanslick (1952) 22-38; Carcopino (1946) 114ff.
[49] Sulpicius was the cousin of Decimus Brutus, his wife the sister of Messalla. See Gold (1975) 111ff. who lists each of the individuals and notes they were all early partisans of Antony.
[50] The date of Messalla's change of allegiance from Antony to Octavian is obscure. It occurred at some point before the battle of Actium. Hammer (1925) believes it can be dated to 40 BC, but Syme *AA* 207 is less certain and considers a date of 33 or 32 BC. See Chapter 13.
[51] Levi (1997) 84 considers this *Satire* was probably written no later than a year after the Brindisi poem which is dated to 38 or 37 BC. It was also written before Horace's *Ode* to Pollio in which Pollio had commenced his history and was no longer writing verse.
[52] Gold (1975) 110 ff. and esp. 140 n. 215.
[53] This also discussed in Chapter 9. Hor. *Ep*. 2.2.91-101; 1.3.17; 2.1.215-218 with commentaries by Passage (1983) 266 n. 17 and Rudd (1989) 135 also Fantham (1996) 88ff. who also considers the temple described by Horace in *Ep*. 2.2.92-101 to be the Temple of Apollo which was directly linked to Augustus' Palatine library.

his province. When Maecenas offered his services as a patron to the emerging poets of the day he was clearly linked with Octavian. Likewise Messalla was gathering about himself poets who could all be associated with Antony. Both Messalla and Maecenas were writing poetry themselves, so a literary attraction was probably also significant, although Maecenas is generally considered to have attracted poets who supplemented the skills he lacked, and with Messalla his literary works are largely unknown. This literary factor may have been the reason Vergil was initially attracted to the patronage of Pollio.

What is not subsequently known is if Vergil actively moved away from Pollio or if Pollio withdrew from his role. The political nature of patronage could not be denied. When Vergil moved to Maecenas it was seen as sign of his support for Octavian. It is possible that Vergil perceived in Pollio his continuing allegiance for Antony, or alternatively an active lack of support for Octavian, and so withdrew his association. It can be observed that Vergil was never associated with Antony. His allegiance to Julius Caesar was clear as also his gratitude and dedication to Octavian, the *iuvenis* of *Eclogue* 1.42. Others in this poetic group such as Gallus also praised Caesar and Varius appears to have denounced Antony in his work *De morte*. [54] Whilst Vergil avoids direct political comment in his *Eclogues* they still allude to the death of Caesar and his deification (*Ecl.* 5 and 9), the land confiscations (*Ecl*. 1 and 9) the consulship of Pollio (*Ecl*. 4), and the pact of Brundisium (*Ecl*. 4). As Tarrant states: 'The *Eclogue*s are paradoxically both the work in which contemporary events are most pervasively present and the one in which they are most thoroughly transformed to subordinate them to a poetic context'.[55]

Or equally, Pollio, grasping the political allegiance that emerged with patronage, withdrew from the arena, not wishing to declare himself as supporting either triumvir consistent with his stance of personal independence.[56] Nevertheless, it is to be noted that as an orator Pollio clearly worked as an advocate, as will be discussed in the next chapter, and he would have carried a large clientele.

The propaganda process of Octavian in this period, which has been commented upon by Ahl, is also of interest and perhaps provide a further reason why Pollio withdrew from such

---

[54] See Tarrant (1997) 172-3 for discussion of Gallus and Varius.

[55] Tarrant (1997) 173. Martindale (1997) 117-119 also comments (referring to the work of Iser) that the poems do not imitate politics, instead politics are inscribed within the poetry that has become its own concern. The politics may take both admiring and hostile form: thanks is given to Octavian for saving Vergil's farm but he is criticised for the sufferings of the dispossessed.

[56] The concept of patronage and the patron – client relationship in this era is complex and it has been useful to explore the viewpoints of Saller (1982), Wiseman (1982, reprinted 1987) 263-284, Konstan (1995) (2005) 345-359 and White (2005) 321-339. However, as there is no substantial evidence that Pollio maintained an active role as a patron of the poets this literature will not be further elaborated at this point. 2

involvement.[57] Ahl in his exposition on politics and power in Roman poetry considers there was the "Pharsalia-Philippi" school of rhetoric and the "Actium" school. The former could salvage *libertas* as the outcome of the civil wars but the latter still needed an 'ideal' to survive. Ahl believes Brutus and Cassius could claim to have restored the republic by murdering Caesar, and that now Octavian needed to remove "Octavian" and so Octavian 'simply vanished' and in his place appeared Augustus; a transformation that required image and propaganda and eradication of the cruelty of the civil wars. Pollio, we can assume, avoided this bandwagon of propaganda and in its place chose to write a history of the civil wars, perhaps as a reminder of what had truly been. Such a stance would further remove him from patronage and its role in political propaganda.

Nor should we ignore the personal attributes which allowed the successful patron to maintain his clients, essentially a tolerance, flexibility and an ability to engage socially. Pollio lacked these traits, he was noted for his criticism of others, lack of tolerance, and rigidity. It is just as likely he was outright too hard to work for. Further, evidence of an unsavoury aspect to Pollio's character had also emerged in the recent land confiscations. We can recall that Macrobius had noted that at Patavium, the birth-place of Livy, Pollio had been particularly ruthless in his actions towards the landowners.[58] Nor should we forget that, according to Appian, whilst Pollio was consul in 40 BC, and the fall out from the proscriptions continued, his father-in-law Lucius committed suicide from a ship as he attempted to escape, which suggests there had been no intervention to support him from Pollio.[59]

Finally, it is possible that as the talents of Vergil and Horace continued to develop, Pollio became increasingly aware of his own limitations in comparison and decided to withdraw completely; he was a proud man.[60] He could not meet the expectations of becoming a new Sophocles. We know he remained friends with Horace, at least until 35 BC, but after that time there is no evidence which indicates a continuing association with the poets.

There is also one further factor that should be considered in this period. It is very likely Pollio published his speech from the trial of Aelius Lamia undertaken in 42 BC.[61] The hostile and critical comments Pollio expressed within the speech towards Cicero may have alienated him significantly from the poets and Vergil in particular. That his comments did arouse condemnation is evident from comments in Seneca and Quintilian.[62] Pollio's ongoing hostility

---

[57] Ahl (1972) 40-62, esp. 46-47,
[58] Macrob. *Sat*. 1.11.22. See also Chapter 6.
[59] App. *B Civ*. 4.27.
[60] Note his outburst in the house of Sextilius Ena (Sen. *Suas*. 6.27).
[61] See Chapter 5.
[62] See Chapter 11.

to Cicero may have continued to create tensions and it is noteworthy his son Gallus also took up the cause against Cicero with equal vehemence. It will be a factor that will be considered again as we look at Pollio's next step in life as one of re-establishing his role within Roman society as an orator.

11 The Orator

In contrast to Pollio's activities as a poet we have significantly more evidence for his skills as an orator. If we detect a turning away from his role with the poets around 39 BC we can at the same time see his activities as an orator increasing.

In the *Pro Murena* Cicero notes that oratory ranked second only to generalship as an accomplishment that could advance a career to the consulate.[1] One hundred and fifty years later, Pliny the younger in his letters continued to highlight the importance of oratory. Rutledge notes that of the two hundred and forty seven letters in the first nine books of Pliny, over one third extol the importance of oratory among the elite.[2] Tacitus also notes that a good speech in the courts was still the way for a young man to make his mark and advance his career.[3] In his *Brutus* Cicero lists two hundred and twenty one orators, and the positive influence oratory had on their advancement is notable. Alexander further makes the observation that of these two hundred and twenty one orators approximately twenty-one appear to be of non-Roman Italian origin and another ten appear to be Romans who rose from obscurity to renown.[4] The conclusion is that oratory became a significant pathway for Italians to promote their careers in the expanded Roman state after the Social War. Moreover, with the enfranchisement of the Italians, and the emergence of a new wealthy Italian upper class, legal litigation increased and with it a literature of jurisprudence, in essence a sort of "how to" handbooks, as these classes did not have personal social relationships to support them.[5] In other words, there was a movement away from the traditional apprenticeship model for the transmission of skills. Similarly, rhetorical education had also moved away from the long apprenticeship model where a young man served a year's apprenticeship with an established orator in the forum, the *tirocinium fori* as described by Tacitus, to progressing to attendance at a rhetor's school.[6]

If, as according to Cicero, the two most recognized choices for rapid advancement were generalship or oratory, it would appear that from an early age Pollio had chosen the path of the orator. At twenty-one years of age, as we have seen, Pollio pitched his skills against Calvus in

---

[1] Cic. *Mur*.22. Oratory is rated second to generalship although it could be noted it is to the advantage of Cicero's client (Murena was extolled for his military achievements) for generalship to be ranked first. See Alexander (2007) 105 for this point.
[2] Rutledge (2001) 110-111.
[3] Tac. *Dial*. 38.
[4] Alexander (2007) 105.
[5] See Frier (1985) 155-158;279-282. It can also to be assumed that connections with the wealthy Italian class were even of longer duration as leading families in the Italian communities had been awarded Roman citizenship even before the wider enfranchisement which occurred at the end of the Social War.
[6] Tac. *Dial*. 34 -35.

the prosecution of Gaius Cato.[7] Calvus was a rising star. Another was Marcus Caelius Rufus, whom Cicero was most probably grooming as a successor in his own oratorical style.[8] Cicero favoured a style of oratory known as Asianism which stood in contrast to the new emerging style of Atticism.[9] The latter was favoured in particular by Calvus, Catullus and Brutus. This led Cicero in his *Brutus* and *Orator* to defend his views on Asianism versus Atticism, addressing both Brutus and Calvus. Atticism, which had arisen as a protest against the more flowery style of Asianism, began as a movement in Rome around 50 BC. However, it is only through the writings of Cicero that we gain some insight into its development and we know few of the key proponents other than those mentioned by Cicero who restricts himself to Calvus and Brutus.[10]

In his style of oratory and writing Pollio fits no easy model. This leads Fornara to comment 'that it is impossible to know if Pollio was the last of the republican writers or the first of the new age – he was probably neither'.[11] But overall, we would probably conclude he remained with the old school as befitted his personality and background. It is also of importance to note that Syme, Conte and Osgood have considered this time of 43-28 BC as unique and that we should consider a "triumviral period of literature." [12]

Further, if we consider the names of the classical orators mentioned by Cicero, Quintilian and Tacitus at this time we could generate the following list: Cicero, Caesar, Caelius, Calvus, Brutus, Servius Sulpicius and Asinius Pollio.[13] If we exclude Servius from the list on the basis of age and ability (he was seen as only a second rate orator), that leaves, in addition to Pollio, Cicero, Caesar, Caelius, Calvus and Brutus. But by 42 BC Calvus was dead, as were also Catullus, Caelius, Brutus and Cicero himself. Pollio emerges as the sole survivor of this rising group of orators of the classical generation. And in the growing debate between Asianism and

---

[7] Tac. *Dial*. 34.7. See also Chapter 2.
[8] See in particular Cic. *Pro Caelio* esp. 9ff.
[9] Leeman (1963).
[10] It is also possible Julius Caesar leaned towards the Atticist style in oratory but we have no surviving speech or major fragment from which to form judgement. Leeman (1963) 156-159 indicates it is doubtful if Caesar ever joined the Atticist movement, preferring to remain his own man, but there is evidence in his oratory he demonstrated the Atticist ideals. Von Albrecht (1989) 57-58 also doubts if Caesar was a strict Atticist. For an overview on Atticism in this period see O'Sullivan (1997) 40 ff., who notes that the Atticist movement first began as a rhetorical school in Rome in the middle of the first century BC and that Caecilius of Calacte could be considered as the most likely founder; an individual we can also probably associate with Pollio as will be discussed in Chapter 15.
[11] Fornara (1983) 75.
[12] Conte (1994) 249ff.; Osgood (2006) 4ff. who builds on this concept as initially proposed by Syme in *Sallust* (1964) 274-275.
[13] This list is adapted from Leeman (1963) 159ff.

Atticism we would have to place Pollio among the Atticists, with the suggestion that he was probably their most purist proponent.[14]

Pollio's career as an orator from 39 BC until his death in 4 AD straddles the divide between Republic and Empire. He will deliver the majority of his speeches under the regime of Augustus. He, along with Sempronius Atratinus and Messalla Corvinus, is one of the few orators who commenced their career under the influence of Cicero and continued into the principate. It is controversial as to whether oratory took a true decline in this period as implied by Tacitus and Seneca, although there is little doubt its expression under the principate was modified.[15] The nature of oratory during the Republic is well documented, as is also the new status of oratory under the principate post-Augustus. The transition period is grey.

Nevertheless, there is a sense political oratory became restricted and inhibited under Augustus as he reduced the size of the senate and his personal presence acted to intimidate any outspoken criticism.[16] Roman nobles were also encouraged to withdraw from public life and the art of oratory was forced to gain greater expression in minor judicial cases and in the schools of declamation.[17] Pollio's career reflects these changes and no doubt the frustration caused by lack of opportunity. There is no evidence he spoke with any significance in the senate and the greater part of his oratory occurred in the courts, with increasing time spent in the centumviral courts. There also arose a greater emphasis on publishing speeches from high profile trials, presumably where the orator had been successful, but we only have fragments of Pollio's *Pro Lamia* as evidence of this activity.

As evidence of his skills we have brief references to nine cases in the courts, none of which contain a full or even a substantial proportion of a speech, and references to his input into the debates of declamation, again with no substantial speech from which we could make an assessment of his style. All our knowledge comes largely from the recording of brief interjections by Pollio quoted by Seneca and Quintilian. Similarly, for his standing as an orator with respect to his peers, we must again rely on Seneca, Quintilian and comments in Tacitus. However, by the time of his death in 4 AD he was a noted orator of the period. The Pollio that comes down to us today is largely from this period of his life. It is a period that covers forty-three years and one for which we have the least historical evidence.

---

[14] On the Atticist-Asianist controversy see in particular D'Alton (1931) ch. 4 and 547ff. who looks at the controversy as a reflection of divergent ideals as regards Latin oratorical prose; Leeman (1963) 91-111; Bonner (1968) 444-449; Russell (1981) 48-51; Dihle (1994) 49-53.

[15] Osgood (2006 A) argues oratory did not so much decline but adapt to new circumstances.

[16] In 32 BC when the consul Sosius delivered a speech before the senate attacking Octavian and proposed to outlaw him, Octavian, who was absent at the time, attended the senate on his return accompanied by armed soldiers and Sosius duly fled to Antony, Dio 50.2.3-7.

[17] See Kennedy (1972) 301 ff.

Public recitations

An early step in Pollio's oratorical career was his involvement in public recitations. According to Seneca, Pollio's name was connected with the first of these events at Rome.

> *Primus enim omnium Romanorum advocatis hominibus scripta sua recitavit* (*Controv.* 4 *pref.* 2).

However, the statement in Seneca is somewhat ambiguous, which has led to various interpretations. According to Dalzell it is possible to interpret the meaning in several ways: Pollio was the first to give public recitations of his own work; or he was the first to invent public recitations; or he was the first to issue invitations to public recitations.[18] Dalzell argues very plausibly that the most practical interpretation, after considering the history of public recitation, which was well established before Pollio, is that Pollio established the practice of formal public recitations most probably within his library in the *Atrium Libertatis*.[19] Wiseman also questions the belief that *recitatio* was an innovation of the Augustan age and specifically related to Pollio, and interprets the evidence to mean that Pollio was the first to hold public *acroaseis* which Wiseman considers were held in Pollio's own home.[20] It is to be assumed Pollio recited his own works, *scripta sua recitavit*, that it is very likely he read from his *Historiae* of the Civil Wars and that it was at one of these readings Horace heard enough of its content for a reference to it to be included in his *Ode* to Pollio.[21] One cannot but think from Tacitus' description of Pollio's writing as 'dry'[22] that it may have been an effort to listen to him, although Horace appears to have been captured by descriptions of blaring trumpets, which suggests that he rose to the occasion to impress his audience. Indeed Duff has commented that the process of public recitation influenced the style of literature as 'natural feeling met its death

---

[18] Dalzell (1955). Winterbottom in the Loeb edition (1980) translates the statement as: 'indeed he was the first of all Romans to recite what he had written before an invited audience'. Tyrrell and Purser (6. lxxxiii) interpret the statement as 'the practice of reciting literary works which was so common under the empire was introduced by Pollio'. See also Wiseman (1987) 385.

[19] Dalzell (1955). Interestingly Dalzell does not include the famous incident recorded in Seneca (*Suas.* 6.27) in which Pollio attended a private recitation by the poet Sextilius Ena in the home of Messalla, which indicates small private gatherings also remained popular. The use of Pollio's library in this manner is consistent with the huge halls he designed modelled on the great Greek libraries where public recitation was an established practice. Fantham (1996) also notes the importance of libraries as places for both invited and uninvited recitation and literary discussions. The library of Lucullus, established in Rome in 73 BC, was the venue for cultural conversations and private reading. She further notes (71) it is not certain if Pollio only recited his own works, which would have set a literary precedent, or, like Messalla, invited others, especially the poets, to also present theirs. She has some doubt if he did allow for this, and hence questions his role as a true patron.

[20] Wiseman (1981) 385. He further comments that there were no mass built *auditoria* for public recitation, and that according to Horace they performed in the Forum, the baths and in the theatre. Again Pollio's library remains an ideal location to consider.

[21] Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.

[22] Tac. *Dial.* 21. See later discussion this Chapter.

in the exuberant riot of epigram, word-play, antithesis, apostrophes and other devices'.[23] The measure of literature became the audience's applause and it was a much wider public than the restricted aristocracy that listened to the poets.[24] Whilst public recitation existed before the introduction by Pollio, and it was an established custom of the Greeks to recite poetry in public, the impact of the introduction of the practice in Rome appears to have been significant. Pollio in particular may have been seeking to establish a presence for himself as distinct from the circle of poets, and in this he succeeded. Horace, Vergil and Propertius all avoided public recitations and continued to give private readings to small groups of friends, but all subsequent poets would come to recite their work publicly.[25]

Seneca clearly connects Pollio with this introduction of public recitation which, once established, had a significant impact on rhetoric and the style of writing. As Conte notes it heralded the decline from the Golden Age of Augustus to the so-called Silver Age of literature, and with it a rejection of the sober self-composure of classical expressionism that characterized the time of Caesar and the early principate.[26] Pollio would decline to declaim in public, which indicates that he, like Horace and Vergil, did not favour public spectacle and performance, and so it is ironic that his name became associated with the introduction of a new style of performance rhetoric that was antithetical to his own solemn archaic preference.

Senatorial speeches

We also know Pollio remained active in the senate well into his old age. Indeed, Horace indicates the senate continued to look to him for advice. [27] His name is recorded as a witness for the signing of a senatorial decree for the *Ludi Saeculares* of 17 BC, and in 2 BC, as will be later discussed, he complained about the dangers of the *Lusus Troiae* and had them brought to an end.[28] Apart from his complaint about the games, which no doubt involved an impassioned speech in the senate, we have no other evidence that Pollio gave other political speeches. It is highly likely he gave a speech on the occasion of his triumph in 39 BC, as previously discussed, as did Ventidius, but if so no extant source has recorded the event. But it can be argued that this dearth of recorded political speeches by Pollio was not unusual, since there was a general decline in the opportunity for political speeches throughout this period. Osgood has investigated

---

[23] Duff 1927: 10-11. Also quoted by Dalzell (1955) 20. See further Williams (1978) 303ff.
[24] See Conte (1994) 405-406 also Habinek (1998) 107-108 who notes the aim of recitation was to publicise the speaker and expose him to a network of influential listeners. By reciting his works in public the author reclaimed an authoritative presence that was in danger of being lost in the proliferation of writing.
[25] See Williams (1978) 303ff. and the impact of public recitation on the style of writing and poetry. Also Conte (1994) 405-406. Note Habinek (1998) 203 n. 26 who considers Williams "misleading".
[26] Conte (1994) 405-406.
[27] Hor. *Carm*. 2.1.13-14 with Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 18.
[28] CIL 6.pars 1 877; Suet. *Aug*. 43.2. See also Chapter 17.

the political speeches that have been recorded in the extant sources between 43 to 27 BC, and outlines at least thirteen major speeches: three by the triumvirs themselves and the others by Sempronius Atratinus, Messalla, Calvisius Sabinus, Marcius Censorinus, Ventidius Bassus, the younger Sulpicius Rufus and Fonteius Capito. He notes that Messalla, Atratinus and most likely Capito spoke only in conformity with the views of the triumvirs.[29] He also includes Pollio in his overall list, but mentions only his speech in the trial for Lamia, which occurred early in the period and before Pollio's retirement. There is no record of a speech after that date. Messalla is noted to have spoken in favour of support for Herod in the senate meeting of 40 BC and in the trial of Aufidia. Osgood does not include Pollio's involvement in the very political trial of M. Aemilius Scaurus, reasonably dated to 29 BC, nor does he consider that Pollio may have given a speech at the time of his refusal to participate in the battle of Actium. However, he does include forensic speeches in his list of political speeches, as they provided a venue for political expression. On this basis, after 27 BC, most of the leading orators of the time remained active in the courts, and we find quotations from the speeches given in the trials of Severus, Messalla, Labienus, and Haterius along with Pollio himself. But overall the opportunity for political expression within the senate appears to have been largely over,

Forensic speeches

Details on his activities in the courts will be discussed in the chapter on his forensic career.

Declamation

Post 39 BC was also the period when declaming in public began to emerge as a new cultural phenomenon.[30] The exercise of *declamatio* had been used in schools of rhetoric for some time but now, with the increasingly limited opportunities for political and judicial oratory, the masters of rhetoric themselves turned to the exercises of declamation which soon became forums for public spectacle.

Seneca states that he heard Pollio declaim in his prime and again in his old age.[31] This statement has often been used to date the movements of Seneca with respect to the time of his first arrival in Rome. The date is generally considered to be 38 to 36 BC, when Pollio was in his late

---

[29] Osgood (2006 A).
[30] On this change in declamation see Parks (1945) 62-101; Bonner (1949); Clarke (1953) 85-99; Leeman (1963) 219-237; Kennedy (1972) 312-337; Winterbottom (1974) vii-xi; Russell (1983); Corbeill (2007) 69-82.
[31] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 3.

thirties.[32] For our needs it also supports the view that Pollio was actively declaiming in this period. But as Pollio never declaimed in public we must assume Seneca heard Pollio in small private hearings.[33]

Towards the end of his life Seneca chose to record the notable orators of his time in a collection of *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*. The *controversiae* were exercises on fictitious themes set up on the genre of a trial with opposing sides debating the fictitious case and citing bogus laws.[34] The *suasoriae* were of a more political genre, with the orator guiding the action of an historical or mythical person facing a difficult or ambiguous situation. As the themes were limited and repetitive in nature (frequently leading modern scholars to comment on the artificiality of the exercises), the orator often aimed to surprise and impress with his response and gain the applause of the audience. We find the majority of the references to Pollio occur within the *controversiae.*

The *Controversiae* of Seneca

Seneca in his collection of *controversiae* commences each book with a preface in which he discusses the styles and personalities of one or more individual declaimers. He states his aim clearly:

> Indeed, I think I shall be doing a great service to the declaimers themselves, who face being forgotten unless something to prolong their memory is handed on to posterity; for in general there are no extant drafts from the pens of the greatest declaimers, or, what is worse, there are forged ones. So to prevent them being unknown, or known in the wrong light, I shall be scrupulous in giving each his due. I think I heard everyone of great repute in oratory, with the exception of Cicero (*Controv.*1 *pref.* 11).[35]

The book subsequently gives illustrations from the particular declaimers introduced in the preface. These illustrations are usually extracts, rarely is there a continuous speech. Book Four

---

[32] See Sussman (1978) 22, 29 n. 58; Griffin (1972) 5; (1976) 32 places the date *circa* 36 BC. Fairweather (1981) 329 n.17 considers Seneca may have first heard Pollio declaim in Corduba, not Rome as usually assumed.

[33] Sussman (1978) 29-30. Griffin (1976) 34-36 comments that the Elder Seneca attended the private declamations of Pollio, and Fairweather (1981) 7-8 considers Seneca was most probably allowed to gate-crash Pollio's private hearings on the basis of the friendship between Pollio and Seneca's family from their time in Corduba.

[34] Suetonius comments on the old and new forms of *controversiae* with a change in subject matter from the real to the unreal and from the specific to the vague. The older themes had been based upon history or of events in real life with names and places included as compared with the non-descript and vague settings of the newer form, (Suet. *Rhet*. 1). According to Clarke (1953) 86-86 this change probably occurred after Philippi. Favourite themes of the *controversiae* were disinheritance, rape, adultery, capture by pirates, tyrannicide, and loss of limbs. Beard (1993) has considered these themes of the *controversiae* in this period to act as a form of "cultural myth making" as they constantly challenged and reinforced what it meant to be "Roman". See also Corbeill (2007) 71-73.

[35] See Sussman (1978) 51ff. for discussion of Seneca's prefaces fitting more the mould of a preface to an historical work than a rhetorical work and 107ff. for the style of the character portraits.

of the *controversiae* is dedicated to Pollio and to the orator Quintus Haterius, although comments from Pollio are scattered throughout all the *controversiae.*[36] It is to be noted that Seneca records the debates from memory, many years after the events, but reassures the reader his memory is exceptional and well up to the task.[37] In order to gain a perspective on Seneca's comments concerning Pollio it is helpful to review the prefaces to all the extant books and his opinion on the leading orators of the period.[38]

In Book One Seneca comments on his close friend Porcius Latro. Seneca is enthusiastic in describing his friend, and the man, his habits and his style of oratory are described in detail. In Book Two he describes the philosopher Fabianus; the gentleness of the man and his style of speech clearly emerging. In Book three Cassius Severus is described and a long speech quoted in which Severus defends the accusation that his eloquence failed him in declamation. The man comes alive in the vigour of his reply. Book Seven outlines Albucius, who again comes to life in his purity of language and vulnerable personality, with his strengths and flaws highlighted. Book Nine introduces Votienus Montanus and the excerpts of a long reply he gave to Seneca explaining why he never declaimed even for exercise. Insights into the man himself readily emerge. Even in Book Ten when Seneca states there is no need to describe Scaurus to his son as the son has heard him declaim, he continues by giving a long description of his style, his deficits and his character. This is followed by detailed comments on Titus Labienus, who, he notes, gained a reputation as a genius but nevertheless was notorious and deeply hated. Brief mention is finally made of the rhetorician Musa and also of Moschus. He concludes with declaimers from his own native province whom his sons would not have known, and includes Gavius Silo and Clodius Turrinus. Seneca then lists his "first quartet", those superior to all others. They are M. Porcius Latro, Arellius Fuscus, C. Albucius Silus and L. Junius Gallio.[39]

---

[36] See this Chapter n. 44, 45.

[37] Sen. *Controv*.1 *pref*. 1-5. See Sussman (1978) 75-83 in particular for a discussion of this statement by Seneca and his use of memory who quotes extensively from the work of Lockyear (*The Fiction of Memory and the Use of Written Sources: Convention and Practice in Seneca the Elder and Other Authors*; Diss. Princeton 1970). If Seneca relied solely on his memory it would be, as Sussman states, one of the greatest memory feats in recorded history and would cast doubt on the validity of much of what was stated. Reason dictates this should be rejected, with good evidence that numerous written sources (as listed by Lockyear) were available for Seneca to consult which provides greater reassurance that Seneca's quotations are substantially accurate. *Contra* Bonner (1949) vii and Winterbottom (1974) X, who consider it written from memory. This debate has been further summarized by Fairweather (1984) 540-541 who concludes Seneca may have used a private cache of notes on the declamations which he had accumulated over the years. Also Sussman (1971) where he considers Seneca's discussion of the decline of eloquence and oratory and parallels this with Seneca's own decline of memory for similar reasons.

[38] Only five books of the *controversiae* remain (Books 1, 2, 7, 9, 10) with an excerptor later preparing a summary of all ten books to which he added the prefaces to Books 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10. Sussman (1978) 34-35. For further comparison of the prefaces see also Sussman (1971); (1978) 46ff.; 108ff.

[39] Neither Messalla Corvinus nor Iulius Montanus are listed as declaimers. See Leeman (1963) 227-231 for a more detailed discussion of this quartet. Leeman also adds to this four Q. Haterius and L. Cestius

It is therefore interesting to compare his description of Pollio in Book Four. Except for Book Ten in which Seneca is winding up and throwing in names he has not mentioned, and allowing for the fact that we do not have the prefaces for books five, six and eight, book four is the only one in which he describes two notable declaimers. By comparison with all other descriptions Pollio's is the least illuminating.

> Asinius Pollio never let a crowd in when he declaimed; but he was not without scholarly ambition – indeed he was the first of all Romans to recite what he had written before an invited audience. Hence the remark of Labienus (who had a sharper mind than tongue): "That old man, hero of triumphs, never put his declamations in the firing line against the people." Perhaps it was that he lacked confidence in them; or perhaps (as I prefer to suppose) so distinguished an orator regarded this occupation as unworthy of his talents, and, while prepared to get exercise from it, scorned to make a parade of it. However, I heard him both in his prime and afterwards when he was an old man and as it were instructing his grandson Marcellus Aeserninus. He would listen to him speaking; then first of all he would argue on the side Marcellus had taken, showing him what he had left out, filling out what he had skimmed over, and criticizing faulty passages: next he would speak on the other side. He was rather more flowery in declamation than in making speeches: that stern and harsh judgment, that he turned too angrily on his own genius, was so much in abeyance that in many respects he needed allowances made for him that he hardly granted to others. Marcellus, though only a boy, was already so clever that Pollio held him heir-apparent to his own eloquence, though he left a son, Asinius Gallus, a fine orator; the trouble was that, as always happens, the son was swamped rather than helped by the father's greatness. I recall that Asinius spoke a declamation to us within three days of losing his son Herius, but so much more forcefully than usual that you could tell that this naturally defiant man was quarrelling with his fate. Nor did he make any relaxation in his ordinary routine. Thus when Gaius Caesar had died in Syria, and the blessed Augustus had complained in a letter (using the polite and even familiar tone customary in that most forbearing of men) that despite this great recent bereavement of his one of his dearest friends had had a full dress supper party, Pollio wrote back: " I dined the day I lost my son Herius." And who would ask for greater grief from a friend than from a father? How great these men are, who do not know what it means to yield to fortune and who make adversity the touchstone of their virtue! Asinius Pollio declaimed within three days of losing his son; that was the manifesto of a great mind triumphing over its misfortunes, (*Controv.* 4 *pref.* 2-6).[40]

Essentially, Seneca makes three comments about Pollio. Firstly, he never declaimed in public. Next, he describes how Pollio instructed his grandson in the art of declamation, making the comment that Pollio was more flowery in declamation than in making speeches and that he needed allowances made for his delivery that he would rarely allow in others, highlighting his harsh and critical judgements. Further, he provides a brief insight into the relationship of Pollio with his son Gallus, who, although a fine orator, was swamped more than helped by his father's greatness; rather it was the grandson who could rise to prominence. And finally he remembers Pollio declaimed three days after losing his son Herius, commenting that this was an example of the mind triumphing over adversity. The latter example acts as an introduction to his description

---

Pius as key declaimers of the period about whom even more is known with respect to their style and character and considers this total group as the main representatives of the new oratorical fashion.

[40] See Appendix One for the Latin transcript.

of Haterius, who also had suffered the death of his son. Compared with the other descriptions of individuals in the *controversiae* we have very little of Pollio's style and mannerisms; Seneca can only state that Pollio's style in declamation was more flowery than his speeches: *Floridior erat aliquanto in declamando quam in agendo.* More comments emerge on his character; he was stern and harsh in his judgements of others: *asperum et nimis*, and that he was a naturally defiant man *natura contumacem.*

Seneca maintains a respectful distance, and there are none of the insights, both positive and negative, that emerge in discussion of the other individuals,[41] and none of the personal idiosyncrasies, gestures, or personal attributes. Pollio stands aloof just as he does in the list of poets given by Horace.

He emphasises that Pollio never took the risk of declaiming in public. But neither did Titus Labienus. Seneca explains Labienus did not allow a crowd because initially the custom had not been established, and, secondly, because he thought it was shameful and indicative of a boastful frivolity.[42] Seneca indicates he understands Labienus' behaviour reasonably well. However, he can only guess at Pollio's reasons. He reflects that Labienus, somewhat ironically, noting his own avoidance of public declaiming, was led to comment on Pollio as follows: "That old man, hero of triumphs, never put his declamations in the firing line against the people." Seneca considers Pollio may have lacked confidence or, as he prefers to think, Pollio was so distinguished an orator that he scorned to make a parade of this exercise of declamation which he considered below his talents, but overall he had no real insight into the reason. Labienus' comment also confirms Pollio was still declaiming well into later life, and that he had not shifted from his avoidance of public display, no matter how popular this had now become. [43]

In the excerpts of Book Four that follow Pollio is mentioned on four occasions.[44] But, as noted, we also find comments from him scattered throughout the *controversiae.*[45] These references to Pollio are nothing more than odd comments that he throws into the ring, and shed only small shafts of light on his style, argument or degree of involvement. Bonner notes these recorded interjections by Pollio frequently showed his legal bias as he directed declaimers to the contrast

---

[41] Compare Sussman (1978) 29 esp. n. 58 who considers Seneca and Pollio had a close relationship, but also notes (108) that in the preface concerning Pollio and Haterius, 'Haterius emerges as a more complex figure than the stern and rather one-dimensional Pollio' and again, 'Seneca seems to be more interested in Haterius' than in Pollio when comparing the two and the impact of emotion on performance (48).
[42] Sen. *Controv*.10 *pref*. 4.
[43] Pollio was not alone in his avoidance of public declamation as we know from Seneca that Cassius Severus (*Controv*. 3 *pref*.7), Montanus (*Controv*. 9 *pref*. 1) and Labienus (*Controv*. 10 *pref*. 4) all refused to declaim publicly. Also Sussman (1978) 9.
[44] Sen. *Controv*. 4.2; 3; 5; 6.
[45] Sen. *Controv*. 1.6.11; 2.3.13,19; 2.5.10,13; 3 *pref*.14; 7 *pref*. 2; 7.1.4, 22; 7.4.3,7; 7.6.12, 24; 9.2.25.

between their treatment and legal practice.[46] Bonner further notes that Pollio's criticisms on the arrangement of the argument itself were often sound; for example, he warns against risking the entire case on a single point (2.5.10), or putting all *colores* in one section (4.3.3). In 4.6.3 Pollio recommends keeping an eye on the judge and in 7.4.3 avoiding extravagant interpretations. In 2.3.19 he ridicules with shrewd wit a *color* all the other declaimers applaud. Bonner notes the criticisms of Pollio reflect the attitude of the older school and show common sense and shrewdness.[47] However, as Edward states: 'Seneca never quotes a declamation in its entirety. He records only short extracts or quotations. It is extremely dangerous to infer from such the general character of anyone's style'.[48]

In the *Suasoriae* Seneca mentions fifty declaimers but Pollio is not one of them (in the combined work of the *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae* Seneca mentions in total one hundred and twenty orators or declaimers).[49] However, we find significant reference to Pollio, as a historian, in the *Suasoriae* in relation to topic six; the death of Cicero.[50] It is here we find an account of Pollio's eulogy for Cicero. As this content, and the hostility it reveals towards Cicero, has been discussed previously in the trial of Lamia it will not be detailed again.[51]

Quintilian

Quintilian, in his *Institutio Oratoria,* frequently refers to Pollio and adds to our picture of Pollio the orator. In total he makes twenty-five separate references to him. For the exercise of comparison we can also note he only makes fourteen references to Messalla and twelve references to Cassius Severus, whilst Cicero dominates in overall references followed by Vergil. We can group the comments to those referring to Pollio's actions in the courts, to his use of syntax and semantics and, finally, to his overall qualities and status as an orator. At times it is equally as important to note Pollio's absence as much as his inclusion in a certain listing. We should also note that Quintilian's work was viewed within the Roman culture of the time as a defence of the Ciceronian style of oratory as compared with the more modernist views of

---

[46] Bonner (1969) 72-73.
[47] Bonner (1969) 72-73.
[48] Edward (1928) xxxiii.
[49] Edward (1928) xl; Leeman (1963) 227 states Seneca heard one hundred and seventy declaimers.
[50] Sen. *Suas*. 6.2, 4-5,14-15, 27. Reference to Pollio also occurs in *suasoria* two, in the case of the three hundred Spartans at Thermopylae holding a council of war in order to debate whether they should stay or go. Arellius Fuscus has argued his case and his style has come under review with the sons of Seneca asked to consider whether they consider his style was brilliant or excessively liberal. As Edward (1928) 108-109 notes the passage quoted is smooth and flowing but also with a jerky style with a strong flavour of poetry about it. Seneca then states regarding the style of Fuscus: 'Asinius Pollio used to say that this was playing with words not genuine suasoria, (2.10)'. The comment from Pollio is consistent with what we know of Pollio's own Attic style and practical approach. The comment should be in read in conjunction with Quintilian on poetic style in prose, where we find a further reference to Pollio and his more severe style (Quint. *Inst*. 9.4.76). See subsequent discussion on Quintilian.
[51] See Chapter 5.

Seneca. His ideals of rhetoric are based in Isocrates, Stoicism and Cicero's *De Oratore*.[52] It is therefore no surprise that Pollio features readily in Quintilian's work as he conforms to many of Quintilian's ideals but, as we shall see, he still falls short, in fact markedly so, of the ideal orator as defined by Cicero himself.

The *Institutio* was arranged by Quintilian into twelve books which can be divided into three sections. The first covers the definition of rhetoric and early education, the second covers the five *officia* or tasks of rhetoric and the third discusses the morals and ethics of oratory.[53]

In Book One we find four references to Pollio. The first relates only to a pamphlet written against Pollio, the *in Pollionem,* noting the author to be either Labienus or Cornelius Gallus (1.5.8) and the second a reference to Pollio's criticisms of Livy (1.5.56), an issue which is again referred to in book 8 (8.1.3). We shall return to both of these later.[54]

Next in Book One we find Pollio listed along with Cato, Messalla and Calvus as one who used words in a form that would never be tolerated in current times. For example, Pollio preferred to make the gender of the word blankets masculine, *hos lodices*, although few others would do so (1.6.42).[55] In Book Eight Quintilian returns again to the use of words with a discussion on the coining of new words, popular with the Greeks but which met with little success when used by Romans. Pollio is again quoted as using *Fimbriatus* and *Figularis,* presumably in the case of Clusinius Figulus, (as discussed in the trial "Heirs of Urbinia") as an example of fashioning new words from proper names. In this regard he is placed in company with Cicero who did likewise, and also with Messalla who rather more successfully brought into use the word *reatus* to describe the condition of an accused person (8.3.32-34). By contrast in Book Nine Quintilian notes Pollio rebukes Labienus for using common parlance with the phrase*, rebus agentibus*, to mean "while this was going on". Quintilian notes that the phrase subsequently became an accredited idiom (9.3.13).

Lastly in Book One Pollio, along with Cicero, is included amongst the great orators who would frequently draw upon the earlier poets to support their argument or adorn their elegance. They used quotations from Ennius, Accius, Pacuvius, Lucilius, Terrence, Caecilius and others,

---

[52] For an overview see Dominik (1997) 50ff.
[53] The five *officia* are *inventio* (3.6-6.5; three comments on Pollio occur here); *dispositio* (7.1-10; two comments on Pollio in this section); *elocutio* (8.1-11.1; the majority of comments occur here with fifteen comments on Pollio in this section). *Memoria* (11.2) has no comments and *actio* (11.3) has no comments. See Lopez in Dominik and Hall (2007) 307 ff. for a discussion of the divisions of Quintilian's *Institutio*.
[54] See Chapter 13: "Criticism of Others" and also brief mention in Chapter 12 " Heirs of Urbania".
[55] Colson (1924) 90 notes that as some other grammatical views are also attributed to Pollio there is a presumption he wrote a grammatical work and that this remark on *lodex* belongs to this publication, but Colson also does not discount the possibility that equally Quintilian in this case may be taking the use of the word from a speech by Pollio, as it appears he is using the plural without any apparent reason.

inserted not merely to show their learning but also to give pleasure, *iucunditas,* to their audience (1.8.11).[56]

The next reference to Pollio occurs in Book Four and relates to the legal case of the heirs of Urbinia.[57] Quintilian refers to the case on four separate occasions (4.1.11; 7.2.4-5, 26; and 8.3.32 as already discussed), but makes specific reference to Pollio on only three occasions (4.1.11; 7.2.26; 8.3.32). Pollio's involvement in the trials of Liburnia, M. Aemilius Scaurus and Nonius Asprenas also gain mention, either as illustrations of a technical point or as speeches worthy of reading.[58] This content will be discussed in the chapter on Pollio's legal activities and not repeated here.

We then find in Book Six an interesting character insight into Pollio. Quintilian is discussing the use of humour and in particular that which is "urbane"; a saying which has the same general character as humorous sayings without actually being humorous. He states: 'I will give an illustration of what I mean. It was said of Asinius Pollio, who had equal gifts for being grave and gay, that he was "a man for all hours,"' *ut de Pollione Asinio seriis iocisque pariter accommodato dictum est esse eum omnium horarum* (6.3.110).[59] Suetonius uses a similar phrase in his life of Tiberius where Tiberius describes two friends as the most agreeable of companions who could always be counted upon, *et omnium horarum amicos professus* (*Tib*. 42.2). The phrase stands in stark contrast to most other descriptions of Pollio, he is more often noted for his critical attitude and harsh manner.

In Book Nine Quintilian addresses the rhythm of oratory and in particular how the appearance of complete verse in prose is most uncouth. In so doing he comments on *iambic* endings in prose, a metre most akin to prose, which often slip out unaware. He comments that they were very common in the speeches of Brutus, due to his passion for severity of style, and that they were not infrequent in Pollio, further confirming Pollio's similar severity of style (9.4.76). Examples could also be found in Cicero. Any criticism implied here places Pollio in the good company of Brutus and Cicero.

---

[56] Colson (1924) 110 notes that the sense of the passage implies that such quotations add great charm not only in their sense of learning but also a pleasantness, *iucunditas*, as a contrast to the *asperitas* so often used to identify oratory as from other forms of literature. Pollio's style in his speeches and tragedy has frequently been compared with that of Pacuvius and Accius (Tac. *Dial*. 21).

[57] For details of the case see Chapter 12 on Pollio's career in the courts where the full content of this case is discussed.

[58] Liburnia 9.2.9; 34; Aemilius Scaurus 6.1.21; 9.2.24; Nonius Asprenas 10.1.22.

[59] The phrase was adapted to a description of Sir Thomas More when he was stated to be a "man for all seasons". Erasmus in his book *Adagiorum chiliades*, includes *omnium horarum homo* with the explanation: 'A Latin phrase often translated as getting on well with all men at any time, the man who suits himself to seriousness and jesting alike and whose company is always delightful this is the man the ancients call a man for all hours.' Erasmus 'Praise of Folly' *Collected Works* v 31. 4 trans. Margaret Phillips, ed. R. A. B. Mynors (1982) 304-5. See also Barker (2001) 71-72.

As Quintilian continues to explore the rhythm of oratory he does not agree that a single stereotyped form should be imposed upon the *exordium,* as Celsus had wished to advocate. Celsus in so doing stated the best example of the structure required for the exordium could be found in Pollio and gives the following example: *si Caesar, ex omnibus mortalibus, qui sunt ac fuerunt, posset huic causae disceptator legi, non quisquam te potius optandus nobis fuit* (9.4.132). Quintilian agrees that the structure is excellent, but that its rhythmical form should not be applied universally.

In Book Ten Quintilian reviews the great poets, historians and orators whom the rising orator should read or with whom he should be familiar. Pollio is not mentioned as a poet or an historian. The latter omission is of particular note, especially as Sallust and Livy receive high praise from Quintilian. It implies Pollio's history within his own time had not gained significant recognition. Rather we find Pollio listed among the orators. Cicero leads the way, Quintilian concluding that the name of Cicero has come to be regarded not as the name of a man but as the name of eloquence itself. Asinius Pollio is considered next: 'Asinius Pollio had great gifts of invention and great precision of language (indeed some think him too precise), while his judgement and spirit were fully adequate. But he is so far from equalling the polish and charm of Cicero that he might have been born a generation before him (10.1.113).' Next Quintilian goes on to discuss the role of imitation and that it is expedient to imitate that which is successful. But he criticises those who state that their faults are in imitation of a great orator. Here we find a further description of Pollio as Quintilian comments: 'those who are dreary and jejeune, think they are serious rivals to Pollio (10.2.17).'[60] Quintilian recommends not modelling on one single orator but drawing on different aspects of various orators, and he would recommend borrowing the precision, *diligentiam,* of Pollio (10.2.25). We have here a collection of statements on Pollio's style from which we could conclude that he is precise, of sound judgement, but dull. Tacitus will make a similar judgement and, as we have noted, Seneca also emphasised Pollio's precision of language and sound judgement, but also his unforgiving nature.

One cannot help but feel Pollio would have borne this judgement harshly. If, as hypothesized, Pollio sought to be the new Cicero, his style and personality fell short of the mark. But we should also compare his standing with his peers and how they also rate with Quintilian. After Pollio, Quintilian next considers Messalla. He is considered polished and transparent and displays his nobility in his speech but fails to do his powers full justice. Julius Caesar fares better, and is the one orator who could have been a serious rival to Cicero if he had survived. Caelius also had natural talent and wit, and could have gone further, likewise Calvus, who

---

[60] *tristes ac ieiuni Pollionem aemulantur*. See Peterson (1891) 131 who draws attention to 8.3.49 for the opposite of *tristes ac ieiuni* which is *hilares et copiosi*.

Quintilian considers may have been one of the greatest orators but again death took him too early. Cassius Severus is also rated highly, and would have deserved a place amongst the greatest of orators if he had maintained better control over his temper, which often robbed him of good judgement.

Perhaps we should therefore turn to Book Twelve for the final comments on Pollio made by Quintilian. In this last book Quintilian reflects on the ideal orator. In so doing he considers the age at which an orator should first perform: not too young, but neither should he delay for too long. Pollio is listed along with Caesar and Calvus as one who undertook a case of importance before they were old enough to qualify for the quaestorship; Pollio was twenty-one years of age when he undertook the case against Cato with Calvus acting for the defence. With respect to Quintilian's criteria the age was just about right but the case probably too complex for the initiation of one's skills. Next we find again a further reference to Pollio's style as one of accuracy, *diligentia*, as compared with the vigour of Caesar, the dignity of Messalla, the austerity of Calvus, the gravity of Brutus and the bitterness of Cassius, (12.10.11). Finally, we have Quintilian's ranking of the orators, and for him none can surpass Cicero. Having said that he still believes that if one cannot surpass the great orator himself, it is an honour to follow in his footsteps. At this point he mentions both Pollio and Messalla as orators who began to plead in the time of Cicero and yet were still able to obtain sufficient honour in their lifetime and hand down a fair name to posterity, (12.11.28). A backhand compliment implying that they were good, but not as good as Cicero.

Tacitus

Finally, we can turn to Tacitus for comments on Pollio as an orator as he appears in the dialogues of Marcus Aper with Curiatius Maternus and Vipstanus Messalla in the *Dialogus de Oratoribus,*[61] usually dated to the reign of Nerva 96-98 AD.[62] Essentially, in one of the most significant works on rhetoric and literary criticism of the period, Aper defends contemporary rhetorical practice against the argument of the decline of oratory.[63] To appreciate the comments relating to Pollio it is necessary to note briefly the layout of the *Dialogus.* After an introduction there are three sections, each consisting of two speeches. In the first (5.3-13.6), Aper and Maternus examine the question whether oratory or poetry is the better. Aper supports the case for oratory, and Maternus the case for poetry. There is one reference to Pollio in this section,

---

[61] See Mayer (2001); Goldberg in Woodman (2009) 73ff.

[62] Brink (1994) favours an early Trajanic date of 98-103 AD on the basis of style of writing, literary theory and political history. Contra Murgia (1980) (1985), who places the *Dialogus* in the reign of Nerva 96-98 AD and specifically as preceding the *Agricola* and *Germania*. Bartsch (1994) 122 ff. also supports Murgia. See also Luce (1993) 11; Edwards (2008) 35-58.

[63] For a recent overview of th*e Dialogus* and its controversies see Luce (1993) 11-38. See also Goldberg in Woodman (2009) 75ff. for Aper.

and it occurs in the speech by Maternus. Maternus, speaking in defence of the poets, notes 'there is no published oration of Asinius or Messalla so celebrated as the Medea of Ovid or the Thyestes of Varius' (12). For our purposes it is a statement that both Pollio and Messalla were considered the leading orators of their day. It also confirms, as previously noted, that Pollio was held in higher regard for his oratory, not his poetry.

In the second section Messalla and Aper debate the worth of past and present orators (15.1 - 27.2). Aper acts as an advocate for current orators whilst Messalla pleads the case of past orators. The issue under debate is that of a decline in oratory. The majority of the references to Pollio in the *Dialogus* occur in this section. Aper leads off the debate: 'But I pass on to the orators of Rome. Among them it is not Menenius Agrippa, I take it – who may well be considered an ancient, – that you are in habit of rating above good speakers of the present day, but Cicero, and Caesar, and Caelius and Calvus and Brutus and Asinius and Messalla; though in regard to these I fail to see any reason why you should credit them to antiquity rather than to our own era' (17). He further goes on to note that a number of old men currently alive may have listened to Corvinus and Asinius, noting that their deaths did not occur until the middle and almost at the end of the reign of Augustus respectively (17).

Aper next comments that it was Cassius Severus who was the first to turn away from the straight and conservative path of eloquence (19), an observation which leads into a criticism of the associated orators of the time. After attacks on Calvus, Caelius, Caesar and Brutus (although the latter two are harder to criticise), he comes to Pollio, and gives the frequently quoted comment on the dryness of his style: 'Asinius too, though he is nearer to our own time, must have pursued his studies, as it seems to me, in the company of people like Menenius and Appius: at all events he modelled himself upon Pacuvius and Accius in his speeches as well as in his tragedies: so stiff is he and so dry' (21).[64] This is a comment, as we have seen, also made by Quintilian. Criticisms of Messalla Corvinus and Cicero follow.

Messalla replies, arguing that this era of eloquence, which he describes as including persons who have lived within the last hundred years, refusing to argue whether they should be called "ancients" or "ancestors", is by universal consent considered to be the best. He states:

> so at Rome it was Cicero who outdistanced the other speakers of his own day, while Calvus and Asinius and Caesar and Caelius and Brutus are rightly classed both above their predecessors and above those who came after them. In face of this generic agreement it is unimportant that there are special points of difference. Calvus is more concise, Asinius more rhythmical, Caesar more stately, Caelius more pungent, Brutus

[64] See Chapter 10 where this passage is discussed further with reference to Menenius, Appius, Pacuvius and Accius.

> more dignified, Cicero more impassioned, fuller and more forceful … there is a certain family likeness in taste and aspiration (amongst them all) (25).

Next we gain a more personal insight into Pollio. Messalla reflects that despite this similiarity in taste and style amongst the above orators it was also known from their correspondence in particular that there was a certain degree of bad blood between them. He considers this should be seen not in the context of their skills as orators, but in their failings as human beings. He gives an example: *'*With Calvus and Asinius – yes, and with Cicero himself – it was quite usual I take it to harbour feelings of jealousy and spite; they were liable to all the failings that mark our poor human nature*.'* It is only Brutus out of all of them who showed no rancour and no ill-will, not even towards Cicero or Julius Caesar (25).'

Next Messalla responds to Aper's claim that Cassius Severus is the one who may be called a real orator, and states: *'*if he (Cassius Severus) is compared with those who came after him he may be called a real orator, though a considerable portion of his compositions contain more of the choleric element than of good red blood (26)*.'* But Messalla notes: 'Aper could not prevail upon himself to name any of those successors of Cassius and to bring them into the firing line. My expectation on the other hand was that after censuring Asinius and Caelius and Calvus he would bring along another squad and would name a greater or at least an equal number from whom we might pit one against Cicero, another against Caesar, and so champion against champion throughout the list (26).'

Finally, we come to the third section of the *Dialogus*. Maternus, who has no doubt that the orators of the past were better than those of the present, turns the discussion back to the question of the reasons for the alleged decline in oratory. Messalla replies, discussing the education of young orators in the past, and advocating for real experience, as may be gained in the courts, over the "bad" practice of declamation. Pollio provides a ready example for what Messalla is seeking to show by his prosecution of Gaius Cato when he was twenty-one years of age and he comments that his speech delivered on that occasion is still read today with admiration (34.7). Next, Messalla laments the lost opportunity for real oratory as it occurred in the courts, as no longer are such political cases brought to trial. We also find our final comment on Pollio. He notes that even the structure of court procedure has changed and the centumviral courts, which have now gained great status were in this earlier period held in little regard and not a single speech read before those courts by either Cicero, Caesar, Brutus, Caelius or Calvus is read in current times except for a case by Pollio: 'The only exceptions are the speeches by Asinius Pollio entitled 'For Urbinia's heirs'. And yet these are just the ones which he delivered well on in the middle of the reign of Augustus, when in consequence of a long period of peace and the unbroken spell of inactivity on the part of the commons and of peaceableness on the part of the

senate, by reason also of the working of the great imperial system, a hush had fallen upon eloquence, as indeed it had upon the world at large (38). '[65]

Conclusion

Pollio the orator emerges largely through the descriptions of Seneca, Quintilian and, to a lesser extent, Tacitus. As for all orators in this period we have no extant speech from Pollio from which to make our own judgment. It is therefore relevant to consider how Pollio might have fared in the eyes of Seneca and Quintilian who no doubt did have access to Pollio's speeches as published. Chronologically Seneca stands between Cicero and Quintilian. Whilst we have brief comments from Pollio scattered throughout the *controversiae* the most important contribution from Seneca comes from the prefaces to the *controversiae* and his semi-biographical descriptions of the leading declaimers of this time. As Fairweather, amongst others, notes, the biographical descriptions are unique and convey a much greater insight into the individuality of the declaimers than the descriptions of the orators in Cicero's *Brutus* or *Orator.*[66] Pollio is the least defined, but the numerous comments by Pollio scattered through the *controversiae* suggest he was well known to Seneca, a fact we also know from Pollio's period in Corduba and his almost certain association with Seneca's family.[67] What we gain from Seneca is the picture of a rhetorician who was precise in his language and logic, more flowery in his declamations than as an orator, one who was reticent to display his skills to the public and harsh in his criticisms of others. Seneca admired his stoical emotional control in response to the death of his son, but was critical of his hostility to Cicero. It is to be noted that Seneca can be scathing in his criticisms of some orators, and the frequent references to Pollio scattered through the *controversiae,* usually highlighting a point missed by another declaimer, suggest Pollio was held in high regard. But

---

[65] Peterson (1893) n. 61 comments that it was only when political passions had subsided that an orator of standing like Pollio could afford to interest himself in a private case.

[66] Fairweather (1984) 529 ff.; D'Alton (1931) 546. As Fairweather notes Seneca's style is more in line with the biographical approach of Suetonius with a 'warts and all' description.

[67] Seneca has arranged his books on the basis of a preface which introduces a declaimer who then features significantly in the book that follows. Further, the description of the declaimer usually is the lead-in to the first *controversiae* in the book that follows. On this basis it is noted that the majority of the references (18) to Fabianus occur in Book Two where he is introduced with only few (four) other comments in the rest of the *controversia*. By contrast there are only four references to Pollio in Book Four, in which he is introduced and at least fourteen other references scattered through the *controversia,* suggesting Seneca regularly drew on his comments. However, we do not have the full content of Book Four which may have contained further references to Pollio. We can also note that in the preface of Book Four Pollio's introduction is shared with Haterius, the only extant preface where this occurs if we dismiss Book Ten and its summing-up intent. Further, it is Haterius who provides the model for the introductory scenario of the *controversia,* as clearly the orator who weeps when taking on the role of the father who has lost his son is a description of Haterius himself, which has just been described. This is a format consistent with the other prefaces. See Winterbottom (1974) xv-xvi; Fairweather (1984) 538 and Sussman (1971), (1978) 64 ff. in particular for this observation. Also Duff (1960) 41.

Pollio did not make Seneca's quartet of the best orators, and the leading talents of the day for Seneca were those of Porcius Latro and Junius Gallio.[68]

Nor can we draw any significant conclusions about Pollio's style from Seneca. The declaimers as a group showed more poetic diction in their prose, but overall were eclectic in their style. We are faced with the dilemma of how much of the expressions of the individual declaimers come from Seneca alone, as opposed to quoting the direct speech of the individual concerned. Little work has been done on the usage of words attributed to the individual declaimers as distinct from the word usage of Seneca himself.[69] Overall, it is generally considered, Seneca was more aligned with the critics of oratory in the century after his death than he was with the literary group of Cicero's era; he is usually described as more of a modernist than Quintilian.[70] Pollio's style was therefore less in favour with what Seneca desired in an orator and therefore failed to meet his expectations in ranking, the more "progressive" style of a Latro or Severus meeting this mark.

Nor is there evidence from Seneca to support or negate Pollio's political orientation in this period. Seneca himself adapted to the Augustan principate, and there is nothing to suggest that Pollio also did not. If anything Seneca appears to imply Pollio had a close relationship with Augustus'.[71]

Seneca often praised or tolerated technicalities of rhetoric that Quintilian condemns. Quintilian was seen as an ardent defender of the Ciceronian style and opposed to the innovations of Seneca. He composed his work after he retired in 88 AD, probably around 93, with its publication in 95 AD.[72] Quintilian aimed to outline the instruction required to produce the ideal orator, drawing on the field of rhetoric of the preceding five hundred years. Pollio appears frequently in the *Institutio* with praise for his speeches and arguments in the courts, but also as an example of an orator who remained archaic in his style. His contributions in poetry and history are ignored, but as an orator he is ranked in the leading field with Messalla and Severus, but is constantly overshadowed by Caelius, Caesar, Calvus and most of all by Cicero. In many ways Pollio came close to Quintilian's ideal orator, the active statesman who was a practising orator, not just a declaimer, who undertook legal cases, who had a knowledge of philosophy, history and poetry, and who was a good man not just a good speaker.[73] On the other hand his

---

[68] Sen. *Controv*. 10 *pref*. 12-13.
[69] Fairweather (1984) 542-543.
[70] Fairweather (1984) 535.
[71] See in particular the death of Gaius and the relationsip it implies between Pollio and Augustus (*Controv*. 4 *pref*. 4). This is discussed fully in Chaper 18.
[72] Peterson (1891) xiv; Conte (1994) 512.
[73] See Kennedy (1969) ch. 6 for a detailed discussion of Quintilian's ideal orator. The lack of political opportunity to meet many of the requirements as, for example, influencing the emperor and speaking in

style whilst precise and accurate was too archaic, his personality too abrupt and lacking in tact, his criticisms of others too well known, especially his hostility to Cicero, and his withdrawal from political leadership too public.

Tacitus in his debate on the decline of oratory helps us to place Pollio within a context of his contemporaries more fully than any other source. Again we have no speech from Pollio, in fact we have almost no comment on his linguistic style at all, but rather a much clearer ranking of his status as an orator in the period immediately after his death. Cicero remains the gold standard. Around him we have Calvus, Caesar, Caelius and Brutus. Pollio is frequently included in this group along with Messalla Corvinus and Cassius Severus. Severus emerges as the orator who most impacted on a change of style in oratory with his bombastic style. Pollio and Messalla, who rank almost as equals, although very different in their style, remain strongly associated with Calvus, Caelius, Caesar and Brutus. And for Tacitus, like Seneca and Quintilian, Cicero remains the benchmark

---

the senate, is noted, but also placed in the context in which Quintilian is defining the "ideal". Compare Lopez (2007) 307-322, who summarizes the qualities as not just those of someone who has mastered all the rhetorical devices, but rather of a man who has also acquired a vast knowledge of culture both philosophical and literary, who is gifted with high moral sense, and who puts his entire legacy to the service of the community through the successful practice of rhetoric in public life where political leadership is mentioned as the ideal orator's supreme function.

12 Pollio's Career In The Courts

As a successful orator Pollio could be certain of a career in the courts.

The legal system at the end of the republic consisted of two main courts; the *quaestio perpetua* or standing criminal court and the centumviral court.[1] The former consisted of a panel of jurors, often up to seventy-five in number. The accusations brought to this court were usually concerned with actions against the government, as, for example, subversion of the electoral system, or excessive violence that undermined the established law and order. It was customary in these trials for one, and more often two, speeches to be given by the prosecutor and the defense advocate. The centumviral court, which consisted of one hundred and five jurors, heard cases largely concerned with inheritance and property disputes. In the imperial period it became the court in which orators could showcase their skills, but at the end of the republic it was still in transition as the emphasis slowly moved from the criminal court to the centumviral court with the decline of political prosecutions.

Work as a lawyer was often hard and demanding. Bablitz highlights the long hours, quoting Quintilian and Seneca and their descriptions of the multiple speeches and endless hours of preparation undertaken by orators in the court.[2] A comment from Pollio, recorded by Pliny the Younger, confirms this view. Pollio complains that the more work he undertakes, especially in the centumviral court because of his skill, the less skilled he becomes in the work:

> by pleading cleverly it came to pass that I pleaded frequently, and by pleading frequently that I pleaded less cleverly (*Ep*. 6.29) .[3]

Cicero states that pleading in the courts required strong lungs and physical fitness.[4]

The evidence of Pollio's court work is limited to a brief mention of five cases; three in the criminal court and two in the centumviral. Of the three cases in the criminal court Pollio lost two. These were cases that entered the source material due to the political nature of the case or the direct involvement of Augustus.

The approximate dates of these cases confirm Pollio was active in the courts from the thirties BC almost to the time of his death in AD 4; it is possible he was still working in his seventies.

---

[1] See Alexander (2007) 100.
[2] Bablitz (2007). Also Crook (1995) for a general overview on legal advocacy.
[3] *"Commode agendo factum est ut saepe agerem, saepe agendo ut minus commode,"*
[4] Cic. *Orat*. 1.114.

His opponents in the courts were the key orators of the day: Cassius Severus and Titus Labienus in particular. He also worked closely with Messalla, and there is evidence that on occasions they joined to present cases.[5] In fact they are often paired as the leading orators of this period.

The cases themselves throw little light on Pollio's political orientation. Certainly Augustus took a strong interest in two of the cases; this is why we have reference to the cases in the source material, but one would need to be cautious indeed about framing a political insight into Pollio from this evidence.

In all the five cases recorded in the sources, in addition to the trial for Lamia, Pollio acted for the defence. We can therefore assume Pollio, like Cicero, took on the role of the orator as an advocate for defendants in legal cases. And advocacy was very much seen as a service to the state and an obvious means of gaining public recognition. Cicero in particular considered forensic speeches the most significant:

> But while there are occasions of many kinds that call for eloquence, and while many young men in our republic have obtained distinction by their speeches in the courts, in the popular assemblies, and in the senate, yet it is the speeches before our courts that excite the highest admiration (*Off.* 2.49).

However, we know that Pollio, as a young man, had undertaken his first case as a prosecution, that of Gaius Cato, as was often the tradition of young men seeking to launch their career as an orator. It was largely a means by which to establish reputation, but once established it behooved the good orator to act as an advocate rather than a prosecutor.

> But if it shall be required of anyone to conduct more frequent prosecutions, let him do it as a service to his country; for it is no disgrace to be often employed in the prosecution of her enemies. And yet a limit should be set even to that. For it requires a heartless man, it seems, or rather one who is well-nigh inhuman, to be arraigning one person after another on capital charges. It is not only fraught with danger to the prosecutor himself, but is damaging to his reputation, to allow himself to be called a prosecutor (Cic. *Off.* 2.50).

The task of the advocate was to represent his client to the best of his ability. There was also a moral and social obligation to take on the majority of cases presented to him. In the few instances when Cicero did not take on a case as requested he is at pains to justify why he was unable to do so, often stating that the client already had an advocate or that the case clashed with another that was underway.[6] This is a fact to be considered when assessing the cases with which Pollio was involved; as an advocate he would be expected to accept the case as requested unless perhaps, as Quintilian seeks to elaborate, there was clear indication of guilt:

---

[5] Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.23.

[6] See for example Cic. *Att*. 1.1. (10) Cicero is caught in a situation of clashing friendships and seeks to absolve himself from the case much to the disgruntlement of the client. Also discussion of the role of the advocate in Powell and Paterson (2004) 1-28.

> On the other hand, this same orator of ours will not defend all and sundry: that haven of safety which his eloquence provides will never be opened to pirates as it is to others, and he will be led to undertake cases mainly by consideration of their nature. However, since one man cannot undertake the cases of all litigants who are not, as many undoubtedly are, dishonest, he will be influenced to some extent by the character of the persons who recommend clients to his protection and also by the character of the litigants themselves, and will allow himself to be moved by the wishes of all virtuous men; for a good man will naturally have such for his most intimate friends ... Nor, again, will a sense of shame deter him from throwing over a case which he has undertaken in the belief that it had justice on its side, but which his study of the facts has shown to be unjust, although before doing so he should give his client his true opinion on the case (*Inst.* 12.7).

An advocate was known as a *patronus* or patron based on a system in which every Roman citizen of lower status would be the client of an aristocratic patron. There was an expectation the patrons would speak for their clients. But by the time of Cicero it was clear an aristocratic patron could defend equally aristocratic litigants and, further, could be sought for their services by other patrons if considered to have a special skill or expertise. Nevertheless, advocacy was not a recognized way of making a living. No fee should be charged for the service but favours for having provided the service could still be substantial.[7] Tacitus makes this point of charging no fee in particular with respect to Pollio and his grandson, Aeserninus:

> He (Silius, consul-elect,) cited as examples the orators of old who had thought fame with posterity the fairest recompense of eloquence. And, "apart from this," he said, "the first of noble accomplishments was debased by sordid services, and even good faith could not be upheld in its integrity, when men looked at the greatness of their gains. If law suits turned to no one's profit, there would be fewer of them. As it was, quarrels, accusations, hatreds and wrongs were encouraged, in order that, as the violence of disease brings fees to the physician, so the corruption of the forum might enrich the advocate. They should remember Caius Asinius and Messala, and, in later days, Arruntius and Aeserninus, men raised by a blameless life and by eloquence to the highest honours," (*Ann*. 11.6).

But the reply to the argument highlights the difficulty of this injunction for many advocates and the favoured circumstances of Pollio who had gained wealth through civil war. A statement which reflects that even in the time of Tacitus this perception of Pollio persists:

> But eloquence cannot be obtained for nothing; private affairs are neglected, in order that a man may devote himself to the business of others. Some support life by the profession of arms, some by cultivating land. No work is expected from any one of which he has not before calculated the profits. It was easy for Asinius and Messala, enriched with the

---

[7] Cicero was paid two million sesterces by P. Sulla for his defence but it did lead to public criticism! See Powell and Paterson (2004) 15. Dio (54.18 1) notes the *Lex Iulia Iudiciaria* of 17 BC in which Augustus 'ordered the orators to give their services as advocates without pay, on pain of a fine of four times the amount they received; and he forbade those drawn as jurymen to enter any person's house during their year of service.'(Fantham (2009) notes it seemed to have met the same success as the adultery laws.) Quintilian also addresses the issues of fees and finally concludes: 'the orator will not seek to make more money than is sufficient for his needs, and even if he is poor, he will not regard his payment as a fee, but rather as the expression of the principle that one good turn deserves another, since he will be well aware that he has conferred far more than he receives. For it does not follow that because his services ought not to be sold, they should therefore be unremunerated, *(Inst*. 12.8).'

> prizes of the conflict between Antony and Augustus, it was easy for Arruntius and Aeserninus, the heirs of wealthy families, to assume grand airs, (*Ann.*11.7).

Advocates were primarily orators rather than lawyers, they were more interested in the argument of the case than the point of law, although Cicero was a competent lawyer and Pollio also, from what we can glean from Seneca in the *Controversiae,* had the skills and knowledge of a lawyer.

A distinction was also made between political oratory (the *genus deliberativum*) and forensic oratory (the *genus iudiciale*). The difference in approach and style between the two was often quite pronounced. Whilst Cicero would no doubt have wished to be viewed as a statesman as much as an orator, it was his role as an orator and advocate in the courts that sustained his reputation.[8] Similarly, for Pollio, we have more insights into his role as an advocate than into his speeches within the senate, but even so our sources are deficient.[9] Nevertheless, political issues often found their way into the courts rather than into the senate, and opportunity existed for the orator to express his views and also to attack his defendant's enemies, especially if they also held political status.[10] The legal system no doubt provided for Pollio an ongoing voice within the principate.

With respect to Pollio's oratorical style in the courts the brief quotations we have from the five extant trials offer us little. Cicero claimed a good orator should be a master of all styles, and in the courts should be able to adjust his style as needed.[11] However, as we have seen, Cicero himself was coming under criticism for his rather elaborate style in the manner of the Eastern Greek schools at a time when a more austere "Attic" style was becoming fashionable; a style with which we associate Pollio.

Legal cases within the Criminal Court

The Trial of M. Aemilius Scaurus

In 29 BC Pollio acted to defend M. Aemilius Scaurus in what was a highly political case.[12] The Aemilii Scauri were a branch of the ancient *gens Aemilia.* The defendant's grandfather had been

---

[8] See Powell and Paterson (2004) 40-41 for this statement. Even whilst consul Cicero continued to work in the courts in order to maintain his public exposure.
[9] See Chapter 11.
[10] See in particular Gruen *LGRP* chapters 7 and 8; the trial of M. Aemilius Scarus is especially illustrative, also Kelly (1976) chapter 4; Tellegen-Couperus (1993) 58-59; Bablitz (2007) chapter 6 on personal attacks on the opponent and his associates.
[11] Cic. *Orat*. 69ff. See also Kelly (1976) 111.
[12] The trial is dated between 31-29 BC but as Octavian did not return to Rome until 29 BC it is unlikely the case could have occurred before this date. See André (1949) 70 cf Pierce (1922) 28-29.

consul in 115 BC, and had been granted the title of *princeps senatus*. Pollio had already had a connection with the family in the trial of Gaius Cato in 54 BC. As we have discussed, early in his career Pollio had brought about an unsuccessful prosecution of Cato on a charge of irregularities in the elections whilst Cato was in office. A second trial rapidly followed, and the father of Scaurus successfully acted in defence of Cato.[13] But the father soon fell into disrepute and enlisted the aid of Cicero for his own defence in his own trials; hence the statement of Quintilian that Cicero acted in defence of the father and Pollio for the son.[14]

> If we turn to the defendant (Aemilius Scaurus), we must note that his worth, his manly pursuits, the scars from wounds received in battle, his rank and the services rendered by his ancestors, will all commend him to the goodwill of the judges. Cicero, as I have already pointed out, and Asinius both make use of this form of appeal: indeed they may almost be regarded as rivals in this respect, since Cicero employed it when defending the elder Scaurus, Asinius when defending the son (Quint. *Inst*. 6.1.21).

The mother of Scaurus was Tertia Mucia, a powerful and influential woman, who had been married to Pompey and was also the mother of Sextus Pompeius.[15] As a consequence Scaurus was the half brother of Sextus.[16]

In the civil wars Scaurus had initially sided with Sextus, but in 35 BC he betrayed his half brother to Antony and remained a loyal supporter of the triumvir.[17] He fought with Antony at Actium and was captured by Octavian and brought to trial. Pollio acted in his defence. It was a political case with the presence of Octavian hanging heavily over the proceedings. An awareness of this factor led Pollio to lay the issue on the table in his opening comments: 'Gentlemen, I never thought it would come to pass that, when Scaurus was the accused, I should have to entreat you not to allow influence to carry any weight on his behalf.'[18] Nevertheless Scaurus was found guilty and condemned to death. Ironically, he was released due to the influence and status of his mother.[19]

In the immediate aftermath of Actium the case was charged politically. Pollio had refused to participate at Actium, and now chose to defend an active supporter of Antony. But rather than seeing this as an indication of a hostile relationship with Octavian, which there is little reason to

---

[13] See Chapter 2 where it is argued Pollio probably only acted in the first trial, Scaurus in the second trial.
[14] For a detailed review of the life of the father Marcus Aemilius Scaurus see Henderson (1958) 194-206. For the grandfather, the *princeps senatus*, see Bates (1986) 251-288. Also Gruen *LGRP* 331-337 for the details of the trial against the father and his extraordinary acquittal. Gruen notes 'No other trial in the Republic evoked the participation of so many distinguished and diverse individuals.'
[15] In 61 BC Pompey divorced Mucia on the grounds of infidelity. She subsequentially married Marcus Aemilius Scaurus. and gave birth to two children.
[16] Dio 51.2; 56.38.
[17] App. *B Civ*. 5.142.
[18] Quint. *Inst*. 9.2.24.
[19] Dio 51.2. We can note this also happened in the proscriptions, as for example in the case of Lucius Antonius, the uncle of Antony, who was saved by the intervention of Antony's mother App. *B Civ*. 4.37.

suspect, it far more probably represents a personal connection with the family. The presence of Octavian in the case can be compared with the subsequent trial of Nonius Asprenas, at which Octavian sat silently in the court in order to support his friend, but did not give evidence. His presence, silent or not, naturally influenced the outcome of cases, as Pollio sought to make clear.[20] Syme comments on the clemency shown by Octavian after Actium, as Julius Caesar had shown before him, and that he spared all Roman citizens who asked to be spared.[21] Scaurus, according to Syme, is included in this group who asked for mercy, but it would not appear to be so, his pardon according to Dio being only due to the intervention of his mother.[22] The trial highlights Pollio's stance of independence within the political climate. There was little reason to condemn a man for taking sides in a war where Romans fought Romans.[23] From the comments of Quintilian we can also conclude Pollio conducted the case on the basis his client was from a distinguished family and his own, and his ancestors heroic deeds should be commended.[24]

However, the failure of Pollio to save Scaurus does suggest there were other factors at play. It raises the possibility we cannot be sure of the actual charge against Scaurus, particularly as Octavian took such an intense personal interest in the case. Why did Octavian not show his clemency to Scaurus and what drove Pollio to defend him so publically? It strongly indicates there were other political factors to this case than those mentioned within the sources.

Trial of Volcacius Moschus

At some point between 25-20 BC Pollio undertook the defence of the orator Volcacius Moschus who was accused of poisoning. The identity of the victim or victims is unspecified. All we know of Volcacius is that he originated from Pergamum, was a follower of Apollodorus and rose to prominence as a rhetorician in Rome.[25] The details of the case are unknown. He was

---

[20] Suet. *Aug*. 56.

[21] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 299; Vell. Pat. 2.86.2; *Res Gestae* 3. Also Sen. *De Clem*. 1.9.11.

[22] See Dowling (2006) for discussion of the concept of clemency as shown by Julius Caesar and the subsequent slow transformation by Octavian from his initial reaction against the clemency shown by Caesar and his own *crudelitas* at the time of the proscriptions to his *clementia* as it was advertised in the *Res Gestae*; in particular 29ff. for this transformation and the associated political propaganda and 62ff. for the *clementia* shown after Actium.

[23] See Osgood (2006) ch. 8 for discussion of the aftermath of Actium and the development of the "myth of Actium". See also Beard (2007) 303-304 who comments on the triple triumph of Octavian in 29 BC. She notes the *Fasti Barberiniani* for this triple triumph appear as just two celebrations, omitting the victory of Actium. This was perhaps an attempt to 'clean up triumphal history by finessing Actium out of the picture'. Actium had been a civil war and a victory over fellow Romans, a viewpoint no doubt held by Pollio and expressed in his defence of Scaurus.

[24] According to Dio (40.52) Pompey had outlawed defending a case on a general eulogy of character alone, but later had resorted to the same tactic himself (40.55).

[25] Schol. Porph. in Hor. *Ep*. 1.5.9. Apollodorus of Pergamum was the founder of the Apollodoran school. In 45 BC he was an established scholar in Rome, and Julius Caesar gave him charge of the education of the young Octavian. See Leeman (1963) 221; Kennedy (1972) 338-339 for a discussion on the style and thought of Apollodorus. It suggests that if Moschus was a pupil of Apollodorus he may well have moved in the circle of Pollio, who appears to have enjoyed the company of Greek rhetoricians, as noted by

prosecuted by a certain Torquatus, found guilty and exiled.[26] He lived out the remainder of his life in Marseilles.[27]

The date of the trial is dependent upon the identity of the prosecutor, Torquatus. He has been identified as either Nonius Asprenas, to whom Augustus gave the title of Torquatus after he broke his leg in the *Lusus Troiae* or, as is more likely, Manlius Torquatus.[28]

We know that Nonius Asprenas himself came to trial, accused of poisoning, and was defended by Pollio in 9 BC.[29] His participation in the *Lusus Troiae* would have been as a young boy, a *puer*, of less than fourteen years of age, perhaps around nine or ten years of age. His coming to trial in 9 BC would exclude his participation in the games of 2 BC and very probably in the games of 13 BC (as in 13 BC he would still have been an adolescent if he was prosecuted in his own trial in 9 BC). His most likely participation in the *Lusus Troiae* is in the games of 29 BC.[30] This would suggest he could not have acted as the prosecutor in this particular case until some time after 20 BC. Overall, the evidence is scant, based only on his being given the title Torquatus.

We can more confidently identify the prosecutor as Manlius Torquatus.[31] Horace addresses *Epistle* 1.5 and *Ode* 4.7 to his friend Torquatus and notes that he is busy with the trial of Moschus, *Moschi causam* (9). Torquatus is a hard working lawyer involved in a demanding perhaps sordid case.[32] This provides an insight that the case was of interest and high profile. Reference to the wine that will be served, that from Taurus's second consulship (26 BC), and the actual occasion of the dinner, Augustus' birthday, allows for dating of the trial as occurring in September between 26 and 20 BC when the epistle was published. In *Ode* 4.7 Horace again addresses his friend and characterizes Torquatus by his *pietas*, his *genus* and his *facundia* (23).[33]

Timagenes, and who would have found some affinity with the "precise and rational" (Leeman) Apollodorean style.

[26] Sen. *Controv*. 2.5.13. Also André (1949) 70-71 n1.

[27] Tac. *Ann*. 4. 43.7; Sen. *Controv*. 10 *pref*. 10.

[28] See Smith (1853) 2.1208 for discussion of the question whether it is Nonius Asprenas.

[29] See subsequent discussion this chapter.

[30] The games were held in 33, 29, 13 and 2 BC. See Chapter 16.

[31] See Syme *AA* 158, 395-396. He is of the *Manlii*. The family had had their last consul in 65 BC. Several members perished on the side of Pompeius, or for the Republic.

[32] Kilpatrick (1986) 63 in an analysis of the legal jargon Horace uses in his letter to persuade his lawyer friend to come that evening to dinner notes that Horace refers to the case in which Torquatus is embroiled, that of Moschus, and suggests the case is a celebrated, perhaps sordid (a case of poisoning?), prosecution that is taking too much of his time.

[33] For a detailed discussion on the identity of the Torquatus in Horace see Nisbet (1959) 73-76; Mayer (1994) 138 on *Ep*.1.5.9; Eidinow (1995) 191-199; Putman (2006) 387-413 esp. n. 10. Nisbet suggests the reference to the specific region from which the wine has come (line 5) is a direct reference to the family history of the Manlii Torquati.

The hard work of Torquatus paid off and Moschus was found guilty and exiled. He established himself in Marseilles, continued to teach and left his property to the state.[34]

The Trial of Nonius Asprenas

In 9 BC Pollio was again involved in a case of poisoning when he defended Nonius Asprenas.

L. Nonius Asprenas was the son of the consul of 36 BC, married to Quinctilia, the sister of Quinctilius Varus, and a close friend of Augustus. He became well known for having given a sumptuous banquet following which one hundred and thirty of his guests perished.[35] The renowned orator Cassius Severus accused Asprenas of poisoning and Pollio acted for the defence.[36] The case became infamous and the speeches of both Severus and Pollio were preserved, Quintilian making the point that the speeches from both orators in this case were very worthy of reading[37] However, the case of Nonius Asprenas is recorded more for the dilemma it created for Augustus, and as an example of the activities of Cassius Severus, than because of any mention of Pollio.

Asprenas was a close friend of Augustus, which immediately placed the Emperor in a difficult position. According to Suetonius Augustus feared that if he spoke up for his friend he would be seen as defending a guilty man, and that if he did not he would be seen as abandoning a friend. As a compromise, and with the senate's approval, Augustus decided to sit on the benches of the hearing but remain silent, which indeed he did.[38]

> When Nonius Asprenas, a close friend of his, was meeting a charge of poisoning made by Cassius Severus, Augustus asked the senate what they thought he ought to do; for he hesitated, he said, for fear that if he should support him, it might be thought that he was shielding a guilty man, but if he failed to do so, that he was proving false to a friend and prejudicing his case. Then, since all approved of his appearing in the case, he sat on the benches for several hours, but in silence and without even speaking in praise of the defendant, (*Aug*. 56.3).

We have come across Asprenas in association with Augustus earlier on in the sources when he broke his leg in a fall during the *Lusus Troiae* and Augustus presented him with a golden

---

[34] Sen. *Controv*. 2.5.13; Tac. *Ann*. 4. 43.7.
[35] Plin. *HN*. 35.164; Suet. *Aug*. 56.3. Smith (1853) 2.1208 questions the figure of one hundred and thirty as recorded by Pliny suggesting it was more likely thirty guests.
[36] Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.22; 11.1.57; Plin. *HN*. 35.164; Suet. *Aug*. 56.3.
[37] Plin. *HN*. 35.164: 'That dish was no more infamous than the poisoned dish with which Asprenas caused the death of 130 guests'. Quint. *Inst*.10.1.22.
[38] See also Feeney in Powell (1992) 8 who refers to the case as an example of Augustus' self-advertising self-effacement which the novel circumstances required. Augustus openly chooses to put limits on his own self expression whilst finding a way of calling attention to his own self-denial.

necklace and conferred on him the hereditary name of Torquatus.[39] Pollio would later complain in the senate about these games which brought the performances to an end.[40]

We also have insights into the activities and personality of the prosecutor in the case, Cassius Severus, whom Quintilian, when he chooses a single word to describe him, emphasises his *acerbitas*, was known for his delight in the prosecution of others.[41] The elder Seneca, who knew him well, describes the impressive physique and outspokenness of the man. He was known not to declaim as well as he prosecuted, and in his defence Severus indicates his disregard for declamation and also took the opportunity to rate Pollio as an orator below that of the great orators Cestius and Latro. [42] We also can assume he was two to three decades younger than Pollio as he lived for twenty-eight years after Pollio who died age eighty.[43]

Severus conducted the case against Asprenas in his usual style. He opened the case as follows: 'Thank heaven I am still alive; and that I may find some savour in life, I see Asprenas arraigned for his crimes'. Quintilian strongly disapproves of these comments and goes on to state: 'it is impossible to suppose that he (Cassius Severus) had just or necessary reasons for accusing Asprenas, and we cannot help suspecting that his motive was sheer delight in accusation'.[44] Throughout the trial Severus maintained his brash, outspoken manner, and the interaction with Pollio, also known for his *ferocia*, must have drawn a crowd.[45]

It is assumed Asprenas gained an acquittal. This is based on the statement in Dio that Augustus (not Pollio) saved his friend.[46] Dio provides no names of persons involved in the case, but the details so closely parallel the details as recorded by Suetonius that it is reasonable to assume they are discussing the same case.[47] Suetonius also records that no friends of Augustus except for Salvidienus Rufus and Cornelius Gallus ever fell from favour; they all continued to enjoy wealth and power to the end of their lives.[48] Further evidence for Asprenas' acquittal has been based on the belief that he went on to hold the consulship in AD 6, a position not possible if he had a criminal charge.[49] However, as Syme shows in the family tree of Varus, the consul in AD

---

[39] Suet. *Aug*. 43.2. See also discussion on trial of Vocacius Moschus.
[40] See Chapter 16.
[41] Quint. *Inst*. 12.10.11. Also Tac. *Dial*. 26.4-5 who notes Aper described Severus' compositions as containing more 'bile than of good red blood'. For a description of Severus and his style see also Sen. *Controv*. 3 *pref*. 1-17; Leeman (1963) 222-223; Kennedy (1972) 311-312; Fairweather (1981) 278 -283; Rutledge (2001) 209-212.
[42] Sen. *Controv*. 3 *pref*.
[43] Severus died in AD 32 after twenty-five years in exile.
[44] Quint. *Inst*. 11.1.57.
[45] See in particular Bosworth (1972) who comments on the *ferocia* of the father and the son.
[46] Dio 55.4.
[47] Dio 55.4.
[48] Suet. *Aug*. 66 1-3.
[49] See Bauman (1967) 258 who states Asprenas held the consulship in 6 AD and uses this as evidence for his acquittal. Bauman further quotes Syme as the reference failing to note Syme's specific note (*Rom*.

6 is not our Asprenas but his son.[50] There is no record of Asprenas's holding a consulship and Syme considers he forfeited the opportunity. Hence, we cannot argue that he must have been aquitted because he progressed politically.[51] We are left therefore only with the non-specific detail in Dio that Pollio gained an acquittal in what must have been a high profile case in the presence of the Emperor. We could also consider the statement of Macrobius (2.4.9), who states that many who were accused by Severus gained an acquittal.

Dio places the case as occurring in 9 BC. Bauman has raised some queries over this date, suggesting we can only be certain the trial occurred before the death of Pollio in AD 4. Doubts over the date have arisen in the context of the fallout from the case. According to Dio, Severus' outspokenness was so great that it brought him before Augustus on a charge of *convicium,* of which he was acquitted. It is assumed this charge relates to the debate in the trial against Asprenas, but, as Bauman has convincingly shown, a subsequent charge against Severus, also mentioned by Dio, is probably not related to the trial of Asprenas but rather to his activities in AD 6.[52] The linking of the statements in Dio implies a chronological closeness and that the trial of Asprenas may have occurred later than 9 BC and closer to events in AD 6 but obviously while Pollio was still alive.[53] For our purposes it confirms that Pollio remained active in the courts well into his later life. In 9 BC he would have been sixty-eight years of age and if the trial occurred later than this, well into his seventies.

The case no doubt attracted enormous attention, with at least one hundred and thirty relatives of the poisoned guests interested in the outcome. Pliny notes that the "dish" of Asprenas became infamous.[54] One cannot help be curious as to what led to such poisoning, and feel if it was inadvertent, the tragedy of the event, and if it was deliberate, its brazenness. Pollio, who as we know had already taken on a case of poisoning but unsuccessfully, may have relished the opportunity to challenge Severus, may have been a friend of Asprenas, or was quite probably requested to take on the case by Augustus who was anxious to protect his friend.[55] Quintilian

---

Rev. 424) that the Nonius Asprenas brought to trial was not the consul of 6 AD. Also André (1949) 72 n. 11.

[50] Syme *Rom. Rev*. Table V11.

[51] Syme *AA* 316.

[52] Bauman (1967) 258 -265. He argues that the charge brought against Cassius as stated in Dio took place in AD 6. He was acquitted and the trial which led to Cassius' exile and to which Tacitus (*Ann*. 1.72.3) refers occurred in AD 8. See further Rutledge (2001) 210-211, who also accepts this argument.

[53] Dio 55.4: 'he (Augustus) also stood by a friend who was defendant in a suit, after having first communicated his purpose to the senate; and he saved his friend, but was so far from being angry with the friend's accuser, though this man had indulged in the utmost frankness in his speech, that later on when the same man appeared before him, as censor, for a scrutiny of his morals, the emperor acquitted him, saying openly that the other's frankness was necessary for the Romans on account of the baseness of the majority of them'.

[54] Plin. *HN*. 35.164.

[55] Bosworth (1972) 446 notes the friendship of Asprenas with Augustus and considers it is unlikely Pollio would have taken on the case if hostile to Augustus. Whilst not necessarily suggesting he was friendly

implies the case was once again an example of the unnecessary prosecutions set in motion by Severus, suggesting there was probably little reason to suspect Asprenas.[56]

Centumviral Court

Pollio's legal work was extensive and, as, the political climate settled and with it the level of prosecution of political cases, he turned to undertake cases in the centumviral court.[57] The centumviral courts had continued after 17 BC when Augustus abolished the *legis actiones* as the regular kind of procedure.[58]

This court largely dealt with claims concerning inheritances, with a minimum value of 100,000 sesterces, and possibly with disputes about ownership of land and guardianship. The inheritance trials in the presence of the *centumviri* often attracted significant attention, due not only to the speeches delivered but also for the revelations about the private lives of wealthy citizens, which were frequently scandalous.[59]

However, the cases before this court were generally considered inferior in prestige to the other tribunals, which led to the comment by Aper in Tacitus that not a single speech delivered before the centumviral court was read in his time except for the speeches of Asinius Pollio entitled "For Urbinia's heirs."[60] It is noted that Cicero, Caesar, Brutus, Caelius and Calvus had all undertaken cases in this court.[61] Why the speeches of Pollio in the case of Urbinia were retained and read is not indicated.

The Heirs of Urbinia

The case of Urbinia involved a wealthy Marrucini family. It is possible Pollio already had a connection with the family through the proscriptions of 43 BC. In a well-documented incident, Urbinius Panapio, who Syme indicates may have been a member of the Marrucini elite who were hostile to Pollio, had been proscribed, and was saved only due to the actions of his slave. [62]

---

with Augustus it does imply he was not in opposition. Contra Zecchini (1982) 1279 who considers Pollio was acting to defend a descendant of a friend of Julius Caesar's and it reflects a stance of solidarity amongst the Caesarians and should not be seen as a sign of a good relationship with Augustus.

[56] Quint. *Inst*. 11.1.57.

[57] It was only when political passions had subsided that an orator of standing like Pollio could afford to interest himself in a private case. See also discussion on the status of oratory at this point of time.

[58] See in particular Gaius *Institutiones* 4, 16, 31, 95.

[59] Tellegen-Couperus (1993) 57-58 also Kelly (1976).

[60] Tac. *Dial*. 38.

[61] Tac. *Dial*. 38. However by the time of Tacitus the centumviral court outranked all other courts and tribunals.

[62] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 193 n. 6. Syme indicates Pollio may have been instrumental in the proscription of wealthy Marrucini families whom he perceived as hostile. For the details of the slave's actions see Quint. *Inst*. 7.2.26; Val. Max. 6.8.6; App. *B Civ*. 4.44; Sen. *Ben*. 3.25.1; Macrob. 1.11.16; Dio 47.10.2-4.

It is very likely Urbinia was a member of this family. It implies Pollio maintained a connection with the wealthy Marrucini.

The details of the case are recorded by Quintilian.[63] The crux of the matter is that the son of Urbinia was seeking to claim his right as heir to the estate, but doubt had arisen as to his identity with the possibility he might not be the son, Clusinius Figulus, but the slave, Sosipater. Quintilian's interest in the case may have arisen from the fact that he had also pleaded a similar case, and so perhaps had studied this trial in particular.[64]

Quintilian uses the case to discuss the question of personal identity. The man in the case existed, he was standing before the court, it was more the matter of who he was, and whether it could be shown that this man Clusinius Figulus was born of Urbinia.[65] Secondly, the case illustrated the comparison of two opposite and different sets of conjecture. No accusation had occurred but rather two parties must each defend its own statement of the case.[66] Quintilian provides a brief insight into the specific facts and Pollio's response, a clever reframing of the material:

> Thus in the estate concerning the estate of Urbinia the claimant says that Clusinius Figulus, the son of Urbinia, on the defeat of the army in which he was serving, fled and after various misfortunes, being even kept in captivity by the king, at length returned to Italy and his own home in the Marrucini district, where he was recognized. To this Pollio replies that he had been a slave to two masters at Pisaurum, that he had practised medicine, and finally after receiving his freedom, inserted himself into a gang of slaves who were for sale and was at his own request purchased by himself (7.2.26).

Pollio's defence also included an attack on the choice of the claimant's advocate, who was none other than the renowned orator Labienus.[67] Titus Labienus was a known enemy of Pollio, but was hated by most.[68] However, for all Labienus' fame, there are only three references to his oratory in the historical sources, two of which relate to Pollio; one in relation to the case of Urbinia and the other to his being the most likely author of the *in Pollionem*.[69] Quintilian does not approve of abuse or slander towards another individual and especially not within the courts,

---

[63] He refers to the case on four separate occasions: *Inst*. 4.1.11; 7.2.4-5; 26; 8.3.32.
[64] See Bablitz (2007) 4, who also comments on Quintilian's defending a case of a forging of a will.
[65] Quint. *Inst*. 7.2.4-5. He is discussing an issue of conjecture which is concerned with either facts or intentions and which he considers especially relevant to matters in the court. In this case Quintilian considers the issue of identity reflects the issue of past time; was this man standing before the court born of Urbinia?
[66] Quint. *Inst*. 7.2.26.
[67] Quint. *Inst*. 4.1.11: 'occasionally, though very seldom, we may abuse him (the opponent's advocate), as Asinius did in his speech on behalf of the heirs of Urbinia, where he includes among the proofs of the weakness of the plaintiff's case the fact that he has secured Labienus as his advocate'.
[68] Quint. *Inst*. 1.5.8: *et in oratione Labieni (sive illa Cornelii Galli est) in Pollionem "casamo" adsectator e Gallia ductum est*. See also Sen. *Controv*. 10 *pref*. 4-8; Kennedy (1972) 309-310; Leeman (1963) 222.
[69] Quint. *Inst*. 4.1.11; 1.5.8. The other possible author is Cornelius Gallus. See discussion in Chapter 13. The third reference, Sen. *Controv*. 10 *pref*. 8, is an oration against Bathyllus, the freedman of Maecenas, who was defended by Gallio.

but admits that very occasionally such events do occur, as for example, here, in this trial, by Pollio against Labienus.

The case also gains mention in Quintilian for Pollio's coining of a new word from a proper name: his use of *Fimbriatus* and *Figulatus* from Figularis.[70]

The outcome is unknown.

The Heirs of Liburnia

A second case in the centumviral court is also recorded. All we know of this case is that Pollio defended Liburnia against Publius Novanius Gallio as a beneficiary of the will. Quintilian provides two direct quotes from Pollio which give some slight flavour of the proceedings.

In the first Quintilian cites the case as an example of the use of imaginary writings, and records Pollio's statement as he reads from an imaginary will to counter the will which has been read out. The prosecution has read from the will as follows:

> 'Let Publius Novanius Gallio, to whom as my benefactor I will and owe all that is good, as a testimony to the great affection which he has borne me (then follow other details) be my heir. Pollio, with sarcastic style, replies: let my mother, who was the object of my love and my delight, who lived for me and gave me life twice in one day (and so on) inherit nought of my property, (9.2.34-35)'.[71]

In the second, Quintilian quotes directly from Pollio, in what it is reasonable to assume is the same case, as an example of how to embarrass the opponent and deprive him of the power to pretend ignorance:

> 'Do you hear? The will which we impugn is the work of a madman, not of one who lacked natural affection (9.2.9)'.[72]

According to André, Pollio was assisted in the case by Messalla Corvinus. He places the trial as occurring around 10 BC. This is based on the statement in Quintilian (10.1.23) that Pollio and Messalla defended the same clients. However, why this statement should refer to this particular case is difficult to determine.[73]

---

[70] Quint. *Inst*. 8.3.32.
[71] Quintilian is discussing the oratorical skill of *impersonation*, and uses this trial material as an example of imaginary writing.
[72] Quintilian is using the case as an example of inquiry or question in order to embarrass the opponent and to deprive him of the power to feign ignorance of meaning: *Audisne? furiosum, inquam, non inofficiosum testamentum reprehendimus*. It is assumed this is the case of Liburnia as referred to by Quintilian at 9.2.34.
[73] Butler in his notes to the Loeb translation also makes this statement.

Again the outcome is unknown.

Conclusion

Whilst we have only a few brief statements from five of Pollio's cases in the courts, in addition to the trial of Lamia, there still emerges a strong sense of his activity and skill within the legal system. He was sought after, and on two occasions at least had to deal with the presence of Augustus; in both trials Augustus gained his desired outcome; a successful prosecution in one case and an acquittal in the other. Pollio's sarcastic replies and attacks on his opponent are noted, confirming the impression we have of him as an orator who was precise, harsh and calculating.

It would appear that his activities in this last forty years of his life centred around the courts. We have no evidence he took up, or was offered any further official positions, as for example Messalla accepting the role of *praefectus urbanus* (only to resign a few days later), but rather that his status was built on that of an advocate and orator. He could speak his mind in such an arena but there is little to indicate he was active in challenging the regime.

13 A History Of The Civil Wars

In 35 BC the historian Gaius Sallustius Crispus died. At the time of his death he was writing a history of Rome and had reached the year 66 BC. He had sought assistance in his task from the grammarian Ateius Philologus. Shortly after Sallust's death Ateius was employed by Pollio to assist in the writing of a history that Pollio had now commenced.[1]

We can be certain Pollio wrote a history of the civil wars. Nevertheless, we only have eight brief fragments from this history, as quoted by other authors, and it is rarely referred to by his contemporaries.[2] We cannot be certain of its starting date, nor where he terminated the account. Despite these significant limitations, scholarship has often focused on this work, as it is one of the few contemporary accounts of the civil wars, and it is thought to have been a key source reference for Appian, Plutarch and Suetonius.[3]

Regardless of the fact only a few fragments of Pollio's history exist, various interpretations have been made concerning the philosophy and attitude of Pollio in writing his *Histories*. Syme, in particular, states Pollio wrote his history in a 'Roman and Republican spirit. … The Roman and the senator could never surrender his prerogative of liberty or frankly acknowledge the drab merits of absolute rule: writing of the transition from Republic to Monarchy, he was always of the opposition, whether passionate or fatalistic.'[4]

---

[1] Suet. *Gram*.10.6.

[2] Eight fragments as documented by Peter *HRRel*. – soon to be re-issued – :**1.** Val. Max 8.13 ext. 4; **2.** Plut. *Caes*. 46.1-3 cf. Suet. *Iul,* 30; Plut. *Pomp*.72; App. *B Civ*. 2.82. **3.** Suet *Iul*. 55.4; **4.** Suet. *Iul*. 56.4; **5.** Sen. *Suas*. 6.24-25 cf. App. *B Civ*. 2.15; **6.** Tac. *Ann*. 4.34. **7.** Strabo p193; **8.** Prisc. *Inst*. 11 386.9-10. Plus testimonia to the *History* in Joseph. *AJ* 14.138; Hor. *Carm*. 2.1; Sen, *Suas*. 6.14-1; Suet. *Gram*. 10.6; *Suda* 1.381; 4.185; Plin. *HN* 7. André (1949) 57-61 lists eighteen passages which he considers were included in the history: the cause of the civil war as in Horace's *Ode*; Timagenes' use of *vates* as taken from Pollio regarding the war in Gaul and the Druids; a discussion of the Rhine; the crossing of the Rubicon; the campaign in Sicily; the campaign with Curio in Africa; a discussion of Arganthonius of Gades; the battle of Pharsalus; the text on Hyrcanus in Egypt; the affair of abolition of debts and conflict with P. Cornelius Dolabella; the campaign in Africa with Caesar and the incident of the flute player; the battle of Munda; the memory of Brutus and Cassius; the death of Cicero and Verres; Seneca's discussion on the death of Cicero and the declamation that he would have retracted the *Philippics*; the judgment on Caesar's commentaries and finally the fragment in Priscian commenting on a use of grammar.

[3] See Kornemann (1896); Pelling (1979), (1980); Gowing (1992). Interestingly, when Wiseman (1981) 375 recently reviewed Roman historiography from 91 BC to the late years of Augustus he failed to mention Asinius Pollio. Rather he listed as the three great classic Latin historians Sallust, Livy and the forgotten Pompeius Trogus, he also mentions the Greeks Diodorus of Sicily, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Strabo, the biographer Cornelius Nepos, the historian Aelius Tubero, the fragments of the historians Licinius Macer, Valerius Antias and Nepos and finally, above all others, Cicero.

[4] Syme *Rom*. *Rev*. 4-5.

Havas seeks to find within Pollio's history confirmation of an organic or biological approach to history and states, 'Pollio considered not only human *natura, ingenium* and *vita* as well as human ambition factors that determine history, but also the historical criteria of *virtus,* perseverance and unsteadiness, moreover *fortuna* and *fata*.'[5]

Zecchini's conclusion to his article on Asinius Pollio is also notable for his exposition of Pollio's pro-Caesarean, pro-Antonian, anti-Augustan approach, to the point that Zecchini considers Pollio indulged in conscious falsification of his history to maintain his republican stance, and highlights that Pollio expressed a bitterness towards all his dead enemies and towards anyone who, like Octavian / Augustus, could forget and reconcile.[6]

This sense of Pollio's opposition to Augustus in the interpretation of Pollio's history has been maintained by Clark[7], Williams[8] and Woodman[9]. Against is Bosworth[10], supported by Millar,[11] who consider Pollio adapted to the new regime. Certainly, from all that we know of Pollio's subsequent activities it would be reasonable to support Bosworth's view; it is difficult to demonstrate Pollio's continuing outright anti-Augustan stance. Further, we need only to look at Nepos' *Life of Atticus* to see an example of a high profile individual maintaining independence and a clear neutrality right up to the time of his death in 32 BC, the very moment when Pollio was declaring his own neutrality regarding Actium. Morgan likewise believes Pollio's attitude to Augustus, and also within his history, is far more complex than an either anti – or pro – regime. He considers that 'Pollio's relationships with the Augustan regime are not so much a symptom of political dissidence as of the radically new socio-political conditions with which the Roman elite were having to come to terms.'[12] This is a far more fruitful outlook on Pollio's attitude than whether it was anti – or pro – Augustus as set in motion by Syme. But before we argue for an attitude in Pollio's *Histories* we should first consider what is the actual evidence.

---

[5] Havas (1980) 32 also 35: These excerpts 'will testify more or less to Asinius Pollio's moralizing approach to history, in which the merciless function of fate has a role, with the state conceived as an organic unit, according to which the fall of the state was inevitable as a result of retaliation after the conquests.'

[6] Zecchini (1982) 1292-1293.

[7] Clark (1973) ch. 3, who considers Pollio a Caesarian but concludes that he had stopped supporting Antony well before Actium and the knowledge of Cleopatra. Clark emphasizes a neutrality and independence by Pollio rather than an outright anti-Augustan stance, and concedes there is even some evidence of friendship between the two.

[8] Williams (1968) 82 'C. Asinius Pollio remained an intransigent Republican, hostile to Augustus and committed to that implacable neutrality' and (1978) 66 'the difficult and intransigent Pollio, and Pollio was, at least from 40 BC an implacable enemy of Augustus.'

[9] Woodman (1983) 233-234; also Martin and Woodman (1989) on Tacitus *Annals* Book 4: 4.34.4.

[10] Bosworth (1972).

[11] Millar (1981) esp. 146.

[12] Morgan (2000) 66 . See also Henderson (1998) esp. 133-134 and n. 54.

Pollio's History

We can state clearly the following: Pollio wrote a history of the civil wars.[13]

He was assisted in the task by the grammarian Ateius Philologus and advised to use familiar, unassuming, natural language.[14]

Philologus' assistance to Pollio occurred after the death of Sallust in 35 BC, but this does not preclude the possibility that Pollio was already under way with his history before this date. Pollio wrote a history that contained at least seventeen books; a substantial work.[15]

Valerius Maximus tells us that in Book Three of his history Pollio made reference to Arganthonius of Gades and his longevity.[16] However, the only surviving extract from these

---

[13] Suda IV.185 Adler = *FGrH* 193T: 'Pollio, styled Asinius, of Tralles, sophist and philosopher. He practised as a sophist at Rome in the time of Pompey the Great and took over the school of Timagenes. He wrote an epitome of Philochorus' Atthis, recollections of Musonius the philosopher, an epitome of Diophanes' Georgica in two books, ten books addressed to Aristotle on animals, and a work on the Roman civil war fought between Pompey and Caesar.' This is a somewhat confused entry in the Suda with Asinius Pollio interchanged with Pollio of Tralles. (See Bowersock (1965) 110 n. 5.) As Musonius lived in the reign of Nero this must be an error. It is also our Pollio who wrote a history of the civil wars. It is often considered Pollio of Tralles was a freedman of Asinius Pollio (See Pierce (1922) in particular) and it is even thought he may have translated Pollio's history into Greek. See also Hor. *Carm*. 2.1; Suet. *Gram*. 10.6; *Suda* 1.381 for reference to Pollio writing a History of the civil wars.

[14] Suet. G*ram*. 10.6: 'He (Philologus) was afterwards a close friend of Gaius Sallustius, and after Sallust's death, of Asinius Pollio; and when they set about writing history, he provided the one with an epitome of all Roman history, from which to select what he wished, and the other with rules of composition. This makes me wonder all the more that Asinius believed that Ateius used to collect archaic words and expressions for Sallust; for he knows that the grammarian's strongest recommendation to him was to use familiar, unassuming, natural language, especially avoiding Sallust's obscurity and his bold figures of speech.'

[15] *Suda* 1.381: 'Asinius Pollio of Rome. He composed a Roman History in seventeen books. He was the first to write a work of Greek history in Latin'. Various attempts have been made to define Pollio's History as covering seventeen years on the basis of one book per year giving a time span from 60 up to 44 BC. This however creates a difficulty in that his history almost certainly went beyond 44 BC and included the battle of Philippi if not Actium.

[16] Val. Max. 8.13 *ext*. 4: 'Now Arganthonius of Gades reigned for so long a period that to have lived that long would be more than enough to produce satiety. For he ruled his country for eighty years, having ascended the throne at the age of forty. For that fact there are reliable authorities. And Asinius Pollio, not the least part of Latin literature, relates in the third book of his histories that he completed a hundred and thirty years. Pollio himself was no mean example of vigorous longevity.' This is almost certainly a digression and has raised the question of whether Pollio was discussing Caesar's activities in Spain in 61/60 BC, or his visit there in 49 BC, or his own period in Spain. If the latter, this suggests he had reached 44 BC by book three, and if the former that Pollio commenced his History earlier than 60 BC, and either way discounts the theory that each book represented a year – see above note. André (1949) 59, who believes it relates to events of 49 BC, considers Pollio therefore dealt with the period 60-50 BC in his first two books as a summary and Kornemann (1896) 661-2, who favours the events of 61-60 BC, considers that Pollio in the first two books dealt with a summary of events prior to 60 BC. However, it is a digression that could fit numerous contexts including age and death. The length of Arganthonius' long reign was also well known, and Pollio was obviously contributing to a contemporary debate as to the actual age at which he died. Herodotus (1.163; 165) had stated one hundred and twenty years, Cicero

books, as originally written by Pollio, is his eulogy for Cicero; Seneca the Elder compared the death notices composed for Cicero by all the historians, and quoted Pollio in full. Seneca considered Pollio's account to be the most undermining in tone, but nevertheless judged that there was nothing more elegant in Pollio's history than this passage: 'Pollio not merely praises Cicero but rivals him'. But Seneca also implies that the rest of the *Histories* is far from this standard.[17]

According to Horace, Pollio commenced his history with the consulship of Metellus; *ex Metello consule*.[18] The actual Metellus is uncertain as several of the Metelli were consuls in years of significance to the events in the prelude to the civil war.[19] The general consensus is that it was Metellus Celer who was consul in 60 BC, but there is also reason to argue for the Metelli who were consuls in 69 and 68 BC.[20]

(*Sen*. 19) one hundred and twenty years, Strabo (3.2.14) one hundred and fifty years and Pliny (*HN* 7.154) one hundred and fifty years. See also Harrison (1988) 53-55, who notes the mythical status of the kingdom of Tartessos and considers the king Arganthonios was not a single historical individual but the Greek for "He of the silver land", a description which might refer to any chieftan in southwest Spain, hence there would have been an Arganthonius for eighty years with whom the Greeks could trade. Also see Scullard *CAH* 8 (1989) 17-43 for a history of Arganthonius who had governed the Tartessians *c* 600 BC, which Pollio now confuses with Gades. It is also probable Varro included Arganthonius of Gades in his discussion of potential life span in the *Antiquitates Humanae* with which Pollio would have been very familiar, and further Pollio may have been emphasising his own knowledge from his time in Spain.

[17] Sen. *Suas*. 6.24-25 also 6.14-15. See Chapter 5 for a full discussion of this obituary by Pollio and the comments by Seneca.

[18] Hor. *Carm*. 2.1.1.

[19] According to Broughton *MRR* we can list Q. Metellus 143 BC, L. Metellus Calvus 142 BC, Q. Metellus 123 BC, L. Metellus 119 BC, L. Metellus 117 BC, C. Metellus 113 BC, Q. Metellus 109 BC, Q. Metellus Nepos 98 BC, Q. Metellus Pius 80 BC, Q. Metellus Creticus 69 BC, L. Metellus 68 BC, Metellus Celer 60 BC, Q. Caecilius Metellus Nepos 57 BC and Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica 52 BC. The dates of most significance with respect to historical events are 123 BC and the Gracchi, 80 BC and Sertorius and most of the dates in the 60's BC would be relevant.

[20] André (1949) 48 was the first to consider the reference was to the consulship of Metellus Celer in 60 BC and this date has been accepted by the majority view since. It is based on the fact that a suitable beginning for Pollio's history would be the formation of the first triumvirate: however this has the difficulty that in terms of true accuracy the triumvirate did not form until 59 BC and did not occur in the actual consulship of Metellus. Havas (1980) argues for 69/68 BC as the starting point noting this would fit well with a continuation of Sallust's history which was left incomplete at 67 BC, that Appian commences Book 2 of his *Emphylia* with the year 69 BC and there is evidence Pollio was the key source for Appian Books 2-4 and that the earlier starting date allowed Pollio to cover the Catiline conspiracy. This may have been particularly attractive to Pollio who would have had his own views on the events in contrast to Sallust and Cicero and there is evidence the account in Appian is drawing on information not contained within Sallust and with qualities of eyewitness detail. Livy is not considered to be the source and Pollio therefore is an obvious choice. By contrast Nisbet and Hubbard draw on the historical sources who viewed the events of 60 BC with foreboding (Cic. *Att*. 2.3.3 (23); Plut. *Caes*. 13.3; *Pomp*. 47.2; Cic. *Epist*. 6.6.4; *Phil* 2.24) and later historians who also took this date as a starting point (Vell. Pat. 2.44.1; Luc. 1.84; Flor. 4.2.8)) as evidence Pollio had identified this date as the beginning of the conflict. Porphyrio on Horace 2.1.1 also considers the consul is Metellus Celer. Leeman (1963) and Haller (1967) have also taken 60 BC as the starting date. But there is enough doubt, sufficient for our purposes, to state the year of commencement of his *Histories* is not certain, and not to consider it definitive that it was 60 BC as is becoming the accepted view. We would also have to accept Pollio is in error as to the year of the formation of the triumvirate if he states it was 60 BC, which is an unlikely mistake. See also Henderson (1998) 109-114 for further exploration of which year and which consulship of a Metellus.

There is no clear indication of the point at which Pollio ended his history. Events in his record certainly included the death of Cicero and most probably the battle of Philippi, but it is possible he may even have continued to the battle of Actium.[21]

From Josephus, quoting Strabo, who quoted Pollio, we know he commented on the controversial role of Hyrcanus in the campaign against Caesar in a positive light.[22]

He also commented on the length of the Rhine, the context unknown, as Strabo criticized Pollio's geography concerning the length of the river and its origin.[23]

---

[21] We can be certain he covered the proscriptions and the death of Cicero in 43 BC, as recounted by Seneca. There is no fragment or reference to the history that can be dated after this time, but this in itself does not discount a continuation. The comments in Tacitus (*Ann*. 4.34) that Pollio praised Brutus and Cassius suggest the battle of Philippi, and the telling of the history that Pollio is writing by Horace includes a description of blood stained seas: *quod mare Dauniae non decolorauere caedes? Quae caret ora cruore nostro?* (*Carm*. 2.1.34-36). Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 2. 28-29, suggest that this description is either the battle with Sextus in 35 BC or Actium in 31 BC. But it is not clear at what point Horace himself takes up Pollio's history and recounts what Pollio is still to write. Appian certainly contains details of the Perusine war which include Pollio's actions in detail, and Pollio has been considered to be the source used by Appian to continue the history past Philippi. The Pact of Brundisium in the year of Pollio's consulship may have been the ideal finishing point (and justification for Pollio's retirement from public service). Nisbet and Hubbard (8) opt for a probable ending at Philippi, noting Appian appears to know little of Pollio's activities in 39 BC as also André (1949) 47-48; Badian (1958A) 161-162; Havas (1980) 26; Zecchini (1982) 1285-1286. Compared with Kornemann (1896) and Gabba (1956) 242-243, who consider the termination date to be Actium 31 BC. Pelling (1979) 74-96 argues for a continuation beyond Philippi on the basis that there are parallel accounts in Appian, Dio and Plutarch suggesting Pollio as their common source, also Haller (1967) 96-105. But as Morgan (2000) 54 n. 18 comments, there was other source material available to these authors including the memoir of Messalla and it is not necessary to attribute their accounts solely to Pollio, a view also expressed by Hahn as noted by Havas (1980) 26 n. 9. Morgan favours 42 BC. See also the later discussion in this chapter on the fragment by Priscian which raises a more definitive possibility that Pollio continued beyond Philippi and into the 30's BC.

[22] Joseph. *AJ*. 14.138: 'And it is reported by many, that Hyrcanus went along with Antipater in this expedition, and came himself into Egypt. And Strabo of Cappadocia bears witness to this, when he says thus, in the name of Asinius: "After Mithridates had invaded Egypt, and with him Hyrcanus the high priest of the Jews".' See discussion Chapter 16. It is assumed this quote is from Pollio's *Histories*.

[23] Strabo p193. 4.3.3: 'Asinius says that the length of the river (the Rhine) is six thousand stadia, but it is not … He further says it has only two mouths, after first finding fault with those who say it has more than that.' Caesar (*B Gall*. 4.10) states it has many mouths, Pliny (*HN* 4.101) states it has three mouths, Ptolemy (2.9.1-2) four and Tacitus (*Ann*. 2.6.4) states two. The comment, assumed to have been taken from Pollio's history, would suggest it was included in a description of Caesar's crossing of the Rhine in 55 BC. It is often compared with Vergil's description of the twin horned Rhine in the *Aeneid* 8.727. The data does not necessarily mean Pollio had seen the Rhine himself, as often argued, to prove he was with Caesar in the 50's BC, (see Chapter 2), as Pollio could quite have easily obtained the information from others, in particular Agrippa. Dueck (2000) 93-94 lists Pollio as a source for Strabo, one of eight Latin authors mentioned by that writer, and suggests that he either read Pollio directly or, as Strabo preferred Greek, a translation of Pollio's history into Greek, suggesting this had been done by Asinius Pollio of Tralles. She also notes that Klotz (*Caesarstudien, nebst einer Analyse der strabonischen Beschreibung von Gallien und Britannien*, Leipzig, 1910) had hypothesized Strabo used Timagenes as a source for the description of Britain and Gaul which Strabo compared with Caesar's commentaries (See Caes. *B Gall*. 4.10 where he describes the origin of the Rhine and the many mouths by which it flows into the ocean), and that the criticism of Pollio's estimate of the Rhine came directly from Timagenes. However, what it does perhaps help to confirm is the relationship between Pollio and the Greeks in Rome, in particular, Strabo and Timagenes and knowledge of each other's work. Whilst the date of composition of Strabo's

Suetonius and Plutarch both record the words Caesar spoke at Pharsalus when he surveyed the dead and quote Pollio as their source:

> Suet. *Iul.* 30.2-4: 'The latter opinion (that he would have been impeached as soon as he disbanded his army) is the more credible one in view of the assertion of Asinius Pollio, that when Caesar at the battle of Pharsalus saw his enemies slain or in flight, he said, word for word: "They would have it so. Even I, Gaius Caesar, after so many great deeds, should have been found guilty, if I had not turned to my army for help".'
>
> Plut. *Caes*. 46.1-3: 'But Caesar, when he reached Pompey's ramparts and saw those of the enemy who were already lying dead there and those who were still falling, said with a groan: "They would have it so; they brought me to such a pass that if I, Caius Caesar, after waging successfully the greatest wars, had dismissed my forces, I should have been condemned in their courts." Asinius Pollio says that these words, which Caesar afterwards wrote down in Greek, were uttered by him in Latin at the time; he also says that most of the slain were servants who were killed at the taking of the camp, and that not more than six thousand soldiers fell.' [24]

Also, Plutarch and Appian both record the number of Pompeian casualties in this war as 6000 according to the account of Pollio.[25]

Caesar's speech to his troops in Spain is also noted by Suetonius, who again quotes Pollio as his source.[26] The actual battle is difficult to determine. It is tempting to consider it is Munda, but the description of two incursions does not quite fit and could be a reference to a battle in 61/60 BC.[27] It is elusive.

> Augustus also questions the authenticity of the address "To his Soldiers in Spain" although there are two versions of it: one purporting to have been spoken at the first battle, the other at the second, when Asinius Pollio writes that because of the sudden onslaught of the enemy he actually did not have time to make an harangue, (Suet. *Iul*. 55).

We also know Pollio wrote of Brutus and Cassius, most probably of their deaths at Philippi, as Tacitus in his speech of Cremutius Cordus noted that several historians praised Brutus and

---

Geography is debatable – most probably 18-24 AD – Dueck (1999; 2000) comments that the actual collection of data and source material occurred in much earlier periods of his life.

[24] The comment that Caesar spoke the words in Latin but later recorded it in Greek has led to considerable discussion and attempts to amend the text (See Peter (1906) XC111) or that Pollio was writing a Greek version of his History (see André (1949) 51-53; Gabba (1956) 245-246) or it means exactly what it says and that Pollio is perhaps correcting some existing confusion (see Chilver (1952) 31).

[25] Suet. *Iul*. 30.2-4: also Plut. *Pomp*. 72.3; App. *B Civ*. 2.82 cf. Caesar (*B Civ*. 3.99) who states about 15,000 Pompeians fell. Pollio is choosing to correct the figure issued by Caesar who had also included that 24,000 surrendered.

[26] Suet. *Iul*. 55.

[27] Kornemann (1896) 603 and André (1949) 16 n. 7; 60 both identify the battle as that at Munda and compare the statement with that in Appian *B Civ*. 2.103-104 and Plutarch *Caes*. 56.2. Drummond (personal communication) questions if it is the battle of Munda and raises the possibility the fragment could be describing Caesar's operations in the Herminian mountains in 61/60 BC.

Cassius including Pollio: 'the writings of Asinius Pollio pass on an illustrious memorial of these same men'.[28] Livy and Messalla Corvinius are also included in this list.

Finally there is a fragment in Priscian: *Asinius: cuius experta virtus bello Germaniae traducta ad custodiam Illyrici est.*[29] Priscian is citing Pollio as an example of the passive use of *expertus* but as this passive use is rare in rhetoric or oratory it is highly suggestive that the example is from Pollio's history.[30] It is thought to be a reference to either Agrippa or Tiberius but as neither conducted a campaign that would fit neatly into this description it must remain without clear identification.[31]

There are also several passages in Appian and Plutarch where direct mention is made of Pollio's activities but without any indication that the information came from his history. As these references all involve minor actions in the main narrative it is likely that they are in fact events recorded by Pollio in his history, highlighting his own actions. For example, Appian (2.40) notes that 'Caesar sent Asinius Pollio to Sicily, which was then under the command of Cato. When Cato asked him whether he had brought the order of the Senate, or that of the people, to take possession of a government that had been assigned to another, Pollio replied. "The master of Italy has sent me on this business." Cato answered that in order to spare the lives of those under his command he would not make resistance there. He then sailed away to Corcyra and from Corcyra to Pompey.'

In the campaign of Curio in Africa Appian (2.45) includes the note that 'Asinius Pollio at the beginning of the trouble had retreated with a small force to the camp at Utica lest Varro should make an attack upon it as soon as he should hear the news of the disaster at the river. Curio perished fighting bravely with all his men, not one returning to Utica to join Pollio.' As Appian

---

[28] Tac. *Ann*. 4.34.4. See Martin and Woodman (1989) 180 who argue that Pollio was hostile to Augustus, and that he wrote a history in which that hostility was probably evident. The comment from Tacitus occurs in the famous trial of Cremutius Cordus who has been charged with praising Brutus and Cassius in his *Annals*. As Tacitus is writing the speech of Cremutius we cannot be certain of what Cremutius actually said. However, it is evident that Pollio's history was well known, and that it did contain praise of Brutus and Cassius, but so did the writings of Livy and Messalla who were both supporters of Augustus. Marincola (1997) 251-253 considers Tacitus in this speech of Cremutius is seeking to ally his work with a tradition of free speech and incorruptibility, and with the great models of republican historiography with whom he seeks to show a continuity, and so mentions Livy, Sallust and Asinius Pollio.

[29] Prisc. *Inst*. VIII 19 p 386 H. = *GL* II 386. 9-10

[30] See Peter (1906) LXXXXVII; André (1949) 61.

[31] Gabba (1956) 243 and Haller (1967) 103 consider it is a reference to Agrippa and his Rhine campaign of 38, whilst Nipperdey-Andresen on Tacitus. *Ann*. 4.34 and also Badian (1958A) 161 argue that the reference is to Tiberius and his campaign in the Alps – which is not Germany – and André (1949) 61 that the fragment more likely refers to one of Pollio's speeches rather than his history, and could refer to either Agrippa or Tiberius. Also Zecchini (1982) 1285 esp. n. 91 who notes both André and Gabba and also considers it may refer to a campaign by Agrippa. Drummond (personal communication) concludes it is difficult to determine, but that the war in question cannot be earlier than 38 BC which increases the evidence Pollio's history continued past Philippi.

(2.46) continues the account of Curio's death he writes: 'As soon as the news of this disaster reached the camp at Utica, Flamma, the admiral, fled, fleet and all, not taking a single one of the land forces on board, but Pollio rowed out in a small boat to the merchant ships that were lying at anchor near by and besought them to come to the shore and take the army on board.' A detailed description continues of the panicking soldiers sinking the ships and the eventual demise of all the troops, although Pollio obviously survived.

Plutarch (*Caes*. 32) in his description of Caesar crossing the Rubicon includes the detail: 'For a long time, too, he (Caesar) discussed his perplexities with his friends who were present, amongst whom was Asinius Pollio, estimating the great evils for all mankind which would follow their passage of the river, and the wide fame of it which they would leave to posterity.'

And again, when describing Caesar's African campaign, Plutarch (*Caes*. 52) includes the following incident: 'Indeed, while Caesar's horseman were once off duty (a Libyan was showing them how he could dance and play the flute at the same time in an astonishing manner, and they were sitting delighted on the ground), the enemy suddenly surrounded and attacked them, killed some of them, and followed hard upon the heels of the rest as they were driven headlong into the camp. And if Caesar himself, and with him Asinius Pollio, had not come from the ramparts to their aid and checked their flight, the war would have been at an end.'

None of these details involving Pollio are included in Caesar's commentaries.

We also have passages in Plutarch and Appian and in Suetonius and Plutarch which agree in so many details that it is likely that they came from a common source.[32] That source is usually considered to be Pollio, with the argument that Plutarch, Appian and Suetonius used Pollio as a source for the Civil Wars either directly or through a secondary source.[33] They cover descriptions of Pharsalus, the Ides of March, Caesar's death and the crossing of the Rubicon. We shall return to explore this further, and consider whether Pollio's *Histories* can be detected in secondary source material.

We also know Pliny the Elder had read Pollio, as he quotes him as a source for his information in Book Seven of his Natural History; a chapter on man and his struggles and the vicissitudes of fortune.[34]

---

[32] For example Plut. *Caes*. 66 cf. App. *B Civ*. 2.116; Plut. *Caes*. 66 cf. App. *B Civ*. 2.117; Plut. *Caes*. 32 cf. Suet. *Iul*. 32; Plut. *Caes*. 45, *Pomp*. 72 cf. App. *B Civ*. 2.81.
[33] See later discussion in this Chapter on the source question with reference to Gabba (1956); Pelling (1979), (1980) and Gowing (1992) in particular.
[34] Plin. *HN* 7. 115. However, Pliny in his works quoted over 146 Roman authors and 327 foreign authors.

We can also find references to Pollio's style of writing. Horace's famous ode to Pollio appears to be quoting almost directly from the book, although it is difficult to determine at what point Horace may be taking up the story himself and embellishing the descriptions with his own style.

Both Seneca and Quintilian fail to mention Pollio as a historian of note, and within his own lifetime he was overshadowed in popularity by Sallust and Livy.[35]

However, the younger Seneca appears to have been referring to Pollio's history when he writes in reply to a correspondent who has criticised the writings of the philosopher Papirius Fabianus.

> You write me that you have read with the greatest eagerness the work by Fabianus Papirius entitled The Duties of a Citizen, and that it did not come up to your expectations; then, forgetting that you are dealing with a philosopher, you proceed to criticize his style. Suppose, now, that your statement is true – that he pours forth rather than places his words; let me, however, tell you at the start that this trait of which you speak has a peculiar charm, and that it is a grace appropriate to a smoothly-gliding style … Furthermore, opinions vary with regard to the style … Read Cicero: his style has unity; it moves with a modulated pace, and is gentle without being degenerate. The style of Asinius Pollio, on the other hand, is "bumpy," jerky, leaving off when you least expect it. And finally, Cicero always stops gradually; while Pollio breaks off, except in the very few cases where he cleaves to a definite rhythm and a single pattern.
>
> Mention someone whom you may rank ahead of Fabianus. Cicero, let us say, whose books on philosophy are almost as numerous as those of Fabianus. I will concede this point; but it is no slight thing to be less than the greatest. Or Asinius Pollio, let us say. I will yield again, and content myself by replying: "It is a distinction to be third in so great a field." You may also include Livy; for Livy wrote both dialogues (which should be ranked as history no less than as philosophy), and works which professedly deal with philosophy. I shall yield in the case of Livy also. But consider how many writers Fabianus outranks, if he is surpassed by three only – and those three the greatest masters of eloquence! [36]

A ranking of Cicero, Pollio and Livy – Pollio would have delighted in this outcome.[37]

The only political comment on the nature of his history is from Horace, who warns Pollio he is treading on dangerous ground: *Periculosae plenum opus aleae, tractas et incedis per ignis suppositos cineri doloso* (*Ode*: 2.1.6-8) and Tacitus in the speech of Cremutius Cordus raises

---

[35] See Chapter 11. Quintilian (*Inst*. 10.1.101-104) in particular fails to list Pollio as a historian.

[36] Sen. *Ep*. 100.7. See Leeman (1963) 261ff. for a detailed discussion on this epistle and the style of Fabianus. Also Griffin (1976) 39-40 on Seneca's relationship with Fabianus. Fabianus also gains mention in the preface of *Controversia* 2 by the Elder Seneca. See Chapter 11 on Pollio as an orator.

[37] However, as Graver (1998) 624-625 notes, for Seneca excellence of style is simply the observable aspect of soundness of character. Griffin (1972) 16 similarly notes that the correspondent Lucilius was probably not alone in his criticism of Fabianus' style and that Fabianus' style was " cold, flat, lacking in point, brilliance and precision." Leeman makes the same conclusion. It is not clear if Fabianus is being compared with Pollio's writings as a historian or as a philosopher (since there is some evidence he may have written on philosophy), or his eloquence as an orator. The comparison with Livy is clearly with his writings as a philosopher, but these blur with history. It is therefore more likely this is a reference to Pollio's writings as a philosopher, and if so this is the only comment we have on this aspect of his literary output.

the issue Pollio has praised the assassins Brutus and Cassius.[38] It is unknown if Pollio suggested to Horace that the history he was writing was dangerous or if it was Horace's own conclusion but it certainly appears he was able to make favourable comment on Brutus and Cassius without consequence, as did other writers of his time.

We have almost nothing on which to base a pro-Antonian, anti-Augustan or any other stance unless we try to seek this attitude through the use of Pollio by Appian or Plutarch and consider how each author may have adapted Pollio to support their own political stance.

The Source Question

In assessing Pollio's History we therefore come to the question of whether we can elicit the content of this work through the use of it by other authors. This takes us to the initial work of Kornemann and the later work of Pelling in particular. As we have noted, both Plutarch and Appian have on occasions quoted Pollio as their source, they have also described incidents in their work where they state Pollio was present, suggesting this content has come directly from Pollio's history. We also have passages in Plutarch and Appian which agree in sufficient detail to suggest they have drawn on the same source for their content. The conclusion appears to be, to quote Gowing: 'Few would now doubt, for instance, that in some fashion (i.e. directly or indirectly) Asinius Pollio's lost History … was a major source for Appian and perhaps a subsidiary source for Dio.'[39] The same can be said for Plutarch and probably for Suetonius and Lucan.[40]

Kornemann

In his monograph of 1896 Kornemann extensively reviewed the evidence that Appian and Plutarch used a common source, and that the source was most likely Asinius Pollio.[41] Kornemann views Pollio as an individual of high intellect, possessed of knowledge in all areas of life, political as well as literary.[42] Pollio observed the tumultuous events of his time with a detachment and, according to Kornemann, posterity should hold him in the highest regard. He therefore considers Pollio's history to be of exceptional value and laments its loss. Kornemann's view of Pollio is built upon that expressed by Thorbecke in his monograph on Pollio but Kornemann believes Thorbecke did not go far enough in expanding the importance of Pollio's history, confining himself only to considering the number of books, citations and the

---

[38] Tac. *Ann*. 4.34.
[39] Gowing (1992) 40.
[40] Pelling (1979) (1980) reprinted in Scardigli (1995) 77; Carter (1996); Rondholz (2009); Pelling (1979) (1980) (1986) (2002). Also Scardigli (1995) 287-288.
[41] Kornemann (1896) 557-691.
[42] Kornemann 557.

linguistics.[43] Kornemann's view of Pollio and his *Histories* was subsequently taken up by André and, in particular by Syme, who promoted Pollio to an individual of high ideals standing alone as the voice of *libertas*.[44]

Kornemann examines the evidence of a common source used by Appian in his History of the Civil Wars and by Plutarch in his lives of *Caesar* (from chapter 13 onwards) and *Pompey* (from chapter 44 onwards) and, as already noted, concludes that this source is Pollio.[45] He discusses the views of those who consider Pollio has been used as a direct source, as compared with those who consider Pollio was used through a Greek intermediary source, and in particular that this source may have been Strabo.[46] After a thorough assessment of the evidence he concludes that it is more likely Pollio was used as a direct source or possibly in a Greek translation.[47] However, he notes the enthusiasm of Ranke for the idea that the 'lost work of Asinius' could be 'reconstructed fragment by fragment'as detected in Appian and Plutarch as going too far.[48] He further comments on Pollio's proclivity to highlight his own actions and also his critical judgements on people and events, but views these traits as the result of Pollio's eye-witnessing of events, his being a seeker of truth, and his desire for the dramatic. [49]

Nevertheless, Kornemann remains aware of errors and inconsistencies in Appian in particular, and considers they have occurred in the source material rather than being created by Appian himself, and therefore reflect errors in Pollio's *Historiae*.[50] For example, the misplacing of the prophecy of the soothsayer, as occurring on the day of Caesar's death, as recorded in Appian (*B Civ*. 2.116 cf. Plut. *Caes.* 63) he considers is due to Pollio.

In a somewhat circular argument Pollio's personality is considered by Kornemann to influence the attitudes detected in Appian and Plutarch but also the attitudes expressed by these authors is considered to reflect the personality of Pollio. Kornemann also seeks examples of poetic or dramatic description as recorded in Appian or Plutarch as evidence of the style of Pollio, and also as evidence of Pollio's sentiments towards a declining free state which he considers Pollio laments over and again.[51]

---

[43] Kornemann 557-558; Thorbecke (1820).
[44] André (1949); Syme *Rom. Rev*.
[45] Kornemann lists 130 examples.
[46] Kornemann (1896) in particular citing Thouret.
[47] Kornemann 578.
[48] Kornemann 559.
[49] Kornemann 601-604; 628.
[50] Kornemann 575-577.
[51] Kornemann 627- 628 in particular.

In support of his argument Kornemann provides numerous examples of correlation in content between Appian and Plutarch, suggesting they were using the common source of Pollio.[52] However, the majority of the examples reflect more a similarity in narrative than direct word correlation and do not adequately resolve the source question and use of a single source, let alone that that single source was Pollio in contrast to all other source material that was also readily available. This material includes the writings and letters of Cicero, the *Commentaries* of Caesar, the memoirs of Messalla Corvinus, Marcus Agrippa, Bibulus (stepson of Brutus), Empylus of Rhodes and P. Volumnius, the autobiography of Augustus by Nicolaus of Damascus, the *History* of Sallust, the *History* of Livy, the *History* of Strabo, the works of C. Oppius, and the additional memoirs of Munatius Rufus.

Plutarch's sources

Pelling, nearly eighty years later, considered the use of source material by Plutarch in the composition of his *Lives*. He established that six of Plutarch's later lives – Crassus, Pompey, Caesar, Cato, Brutus and Antony – were prepared as a single project and from the same store of source material.[53]

Just the same Pelling notes that in these later six lives Plutarch quotes by name twenty-five sources he has used, alerting us to the fact he did not work with an exclusive single source. [54] It is, however, worth quoting Pelling in full to see how Pollio emerges as the most probable source for Plutarch.

> First, it is clear that the later six lives are not based merely on a sequence of earlier biographies. The great similarities among these lives, both of language and content, have already been noted: these are odd in themselves, if Plutarch had consulted only a series of individual biographies, but perhaps not inexplicable. More important is the regular contact which these lives show with the narratives of other authors. Time and again, we find identical narrative structure and articulation in Plutarch and in another account; or a regular tendency to reproduce the same items; or even in a series of verbal echoes … Dio too, often shows contact with this tradition; so, rather more rarely, does Suetonius. One possible explanation of this systemic contact might be that the later writers had read Plutarch himself: and it is indeed quite likely that these authors, especially Appian, did know Plutarch, and that some of the verbal parallels arise from echoes of Plutarch's own words. It is, however, impossible to think that all the points of contact are explicable in this way, that Appian, Suetonius, and Dio all systematically used Plutarch as a historical authority. It is easy to show that both Appian and Dio would have known all of Plutarch's six versions. Such a combination of biographies would be an odd procedure for any historian: for both of them, independently, it is quite impossible. So regular contact must arise from a shared inheritance from a common source, whether or not the later authors knew that source directly; and again, it must surely be a historical source which Appian

[52] Kornemann . See tabulation 672-91 with 131 examples.
[53] Pelling (1980) reprinted in Scardigli (1995) 265-318 with added 1994 Postscript.
[54] Pelling (1980); Scardigli (1995) 285-286.

> and Dio are using, not a combination of biographies. This is one occasion where the source – at least the ultimate source – can be identified: it is surely Asinius Pollio. [55]

Pelling considers Plutarch encountered Pollio's work when he reached the years 60-59 BC and assumes Pollio's history commenced with this year.[56] He believes Plutarch was using an historical source, rather than biographical material, for the fifties, forties and thirties, and that three quarters of this material shows contact with the detailed account in Appian and seems to be drawn from this source.[57] Nevertheless, he also concedes, it cannot have been the Pollio source alone which informs these lives.

A particularly interesting example is the description of Caesar's murder. The content in Plutarch's lives shows contact with Appian, and Pollio is assumed to be the common source. However, there is also a greater amount than usual of non-Appianic material included in the events, suggesting Plutarch supplemented the Pollio source with other material. Pelling lists these additions and there is no need to repeat the details again here. But the nature of this extra material suggests a source favourable to the tyrannicides that was not evident in the main source.[58]

The Battle of Philippi is a further example, Pelling draws attention to the increase in non-Appianic material in the description, again suggesting Plutarch drew on other source material.[59] Plutarch has favoured a description of Brutus's struggling with an adverse destiny rather than the picture assumed to have been favoured by Pollio of a man persuaded into civil war against his better judgement.[60]

It would appear that in the above two accounts Plutarch supplemented his key source, assumed to be Pollio, with more dramatic detail, implying the main source was rather austere and lacking in personal and theatrical content.

Pelling argues that Plutarch essentially used a single source when writing the later lives, even though he had extensively read other source material, and at times supplemented his key source with this information. Nevertheless, Plutarch brought his own bias in his use and interpretation of this source material. For example, it can be noted that Plutarch is much more interested in the

---

[55] Pelling (1979); Scardigli (1995) 286.
[56] Pelling (1979) 76 accepts that Pollio's *Historiae* commenced in 60 BC with the formation of the first triumvirate: 'Plutarch accepted the view of Asinius Pollio: it was the pact of Crassus, Pompey and Caesar which set Rome on the path to civil war.'
[57] Pelling in Scardigli (1995) 288.
[58] Pelling in Scardigli (1995) 290. Pelling suggests the sources may be Bibulus, Empylus of Rhodes and also probably Brutus' own letters. As noted Kornemann considers Pollio, as recorded in Appian, is inaccurate in describing these events.
[59] Pelling in Scardigli 293 The source material here is most likely the memoirs of Messalla Corvinus, and the work of P. Volumnius.
[60] Pelling in Scardigli 293 n. 94.

urban *demos* than soldiers and the army, and his description of the treaty of Brundisium shows little understanding of the role and influence of the veterans as compared with the description in Appian, even though they are both using a similar source.[61] Further, Pelling would later note, in response to criticism that Plutarch may have used more biographical material than he has given credit, that he may have given too much emphasis to the Pollio source.[62]

Appian

If we turn to Appian and his use of source material similar criticisms apply. Gowing has extensively reviewed Appian and Cassius Dio and the triumviral narratives of these authors.[63] He retains a more objective approach, noting that after a century of debate there is no clear consensus on the precise identity of the sources used by Appian or Dio, but that Asinius Pollio is a strong contender for Appian especially for the period 60 to 42 BC. (The argument by Gabba that Pollio was the source for Book One by Appian, which covers the Social War, has been largely discounted.[64]) Messalla Corvinius is also another likely source for Appian, as also the memoirs of Augustus, and it has long been considered that Livy is the most probable source for Dio.[65] Gowing rejects the notion, as we have seen promulgated for Plutarch, that Appian used a single source to the exclusion of all others.[66] Rather, Gowing stresses a point of view that is relevant to our consideration of Pollio. He considers that if Appian did use a single source more exclusively than all the other sources, although Gowing would emphasise the use of multiple sources, he is very likely to have re-arranged the material, and compressed and omitted the content as he saw fit.[67] If, therefore, we consider Pollio to be this single source, we should not believe that we have a true window into the content of Pollio's *Histories*. Carter, in his introduction to Appian's Civil Wars, likewise details how he considers Appian almost certainly impressed his own viewpoint and colouring on his sources and states: 'Appian was prepared to subordinate both detail and viewpoint of the sources he used to his own idea of what was important in his own unfolding story.'[68]

---

[61] Plut. *Brut*. 23.1; *Ant*. 30. 6-31.3 cf. App. *B Civ*. 6. 63-64. Pelling (1986) 346.
[62] Pelling postscript 1994 (in Scardigli (1995) 316) in response to a critique by Hillard (1987).
[63] Gowing (1992) esp. ch. 4.
[64] Gabba (1956) contra Badian (1958A) 159-162.
[65] Gowing (1992) 40.
[66] Gowing (1992) 40-42. He provides examples of Appian commenting on various explanations for an event without committing himself to any one explanation, suggesting that Appian had read several sources, and that he was not following the content in one source alone.
[67] Carter (1996) XXX11 makes the same point stating: 'Recent scholarship has therefore tended to discount the idea that Appian simply follows for long stretches the version of Pollio or any other authority. Along with this idea there also vanishes any misconceived hope of using Appian to arrive at the views of those lost historians.'
[68] Carter (1996) XXX111. Carter highlights this point with the example of Octavian's report of the speeches between Lucius Antonius and himself after the fall of Perusia (App. *B Civ*. 5.45) noting that Magnino (1984) has also observed the co-existence of pro-Antonian positions with others that are pro-

Nor can we ignore the fact that numerous inconsistencies are often noted in Appian.[69] These have often been attributed to the source he was following, leading Schwartz and Kornemann to state the errors were in Pollio, and Gabba that Pollio had a faulty memory. Others argue for carelessness by Appian. Overall, it would appear Pollio may have made an occasional error (see Plut. *Ant* 7.2-3 with commentary by Pelling) but most of the inaccuracies probably belong with Appian himself.[70]

Further, Gowing asks the question: 'why would Appian prefer the account of Asinius Pollio to that say of Livy?'[71] In other words what were Appian's criteria by which he selected his source material? Even if we could answer this question with any accuracy it would still tell us more about Appian than about Pollio.[72]

As a further example of seeking "Pollio" through later authors, Rondholz, building on the work of Bicknell and Nielsen, has examined the accounts of Caesar's crossing the Rubicon as found in Velleius, Lucan, Plutarch, Suetonius, Appian and Orosius.[73] Again Plutarch and Appian both provide an account which is similar, which suggests a common source, thought to be Pollio. The belief it is Pollio holds weight in this example, as Plutarch records that Pollio was with Caesar at the time of the crossing, a detail that must surely have come from Pollio himself. But there are also slight differences between Plutarch and Appian (Plut. *Caes*. 32.1-6; *Pomp*. 60.1-2 cf. App. *B Civ*. 2.34-35). Appian is less detailed, and Caesar does not confer with his friends as detailed by Plutarch (who includes Pollio), hence a clear example of Appian's editing and compressing his source material, nor does Appian consider the evil for all mankind that would

---

Octavian, and notes that Appian can express pro and anti monarchial attitudes together. This is a particularly pertinent example, since Pollio participated in the battle at Perusia and no doubt expressed his own version of this controversial series of events; but see also n. 75. Carter further lists examples of where Appian questions his sources or attempts to answer the questions raised in the source material: See App. *B Civ*.1.86; 4.19; 5.21; and 1.16,104; 2.19,120; 5.13,17.

[69] See Magnino (1984) who lists all such errors in Book 3 of Appian.

[70] These opinions are summarized by Gowing (1992) n. 24. See also Pelling (1988).

[71] Gowing (1992) 49.

[72] See also the article by Buchner (2000) 411-458 for an overview of Appian and his approach to writing the *Civil War*, noting his acceptance of the demise of the republic, and also his own need to hold on to his Alexandrian background and Roman identity. He states with respect to the source question: 'If we rightly drop the idea that Appian transplanted or grafted grown stalks and stems from their original context into his own garden, we must then accept that everything in the history was included — and much left out of the history deliberately omitted — by a man who was operating from complex motives that did not necessarily overlap with our needs and expectations as modern consulting historians.' Carsana (2007) in her recent commentary on Appian Book 2 appears to have added little more to the discussion on Pollio as the historical source than what was proposed by Gabba in 1956.

[73] Rondholz (2009); Bicknell and Nielsen (1998). Similarly, we can also note that Moles (1983) has analysed the accounts of Pompey's death as it occurs in Velleius, Lucan, Plutarch, Appian and Dio and their similarity to Vergil's description of the death of Priam in the Aeneid with the Servian gloss that the passage relates to the death of Pompey. He concludes the similiarity in the descriptions suggests a single source which is Pollio. He further suggests that we can extrapolate from the descriptions what Pollio may have written about the death of Pompey. See also Morgan (2000) 52-53 on Moles.

.

occur from Caesar's crossing as stated in Plutarch, but instead considers the consequences for Caesar himself rather than those for mankind.[74] Despite these differences Rondholz nevertheless seeks an insight into Pollio: 'Asinius Pollio, as a child of the late Republic … tried in his account to mitigate Caesar's transgression by having Caesar hesitate, consider the consequences, blame his adversaries, be under the influence of supernatural powers and act in self-defense.'[75]

Conclusion

The outcome is that if we are seeking an insight into the *Histories* of Pollio as it may have been used by Plutarch or Appian in particular we have a version that is compressed, distorted and used by the individual authors for their own purpose and gives us little of the original document. Whilst Plutarch and Appian may have used a common single source, and that source may have been Pollio, more and more we must also consider contamination of that source by other material and the bias of the author himself. Nor can we ignore that there was a range of other source material available to these authors. Nevertheless, Pollio's history may have been the most contemporary, and one of the few eyewitness accounts available of the period 60 to 42 BC, since he participated actively in so many events during this time.

From the dissection of Plutarch's later lives by Pelling we can also note that Plutarch appears to supplement his main source for events in which he wishes to highlight the drama and personalities involved, such as the murder of Caesar or the Battle of Philippi, suggesting the Pollio source was lacking in this intensity. This would be consistent with Tacitus' description of Pollio's writing as tedious. There are also important negatives in the sense that Appian does not appear to have used Pollio as a source for the proscriptions and also for the death of Cicero, both of which actively involved Pollio.[76] Again this implies Pollio as a source may have been lacking in detail or in personal insights as sought by Appian. By contrast, the battle of Perusia in Appian has a strong sense of an eyewitness account by Pollio, with a subtle shifting of responsibility for outcomes to Ventidius and Plancus, suggesting Pollio may have well documented this account with a view to self-justification.[77]

---

[74] Wiseman (1998) 60-63 in a similiar analysis of the descriptions of Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon also considers the account in Suetonius (*Iul*.32), and notes the Pollio version only extends as far as the dialogue at the bridge, which is followed by a most remarkable passage describing the appearance of an apparition. Wiseman states this scene is evidently *not* from Pollio as there is no sign of it in Appian or Plutarch. He considers it may have been invented by another historian.
[75] Rondholz (2009) 448.
[76] See Wright (2001) 441.
[77] However, in the speech between Lucius Antonius and Octavian, Appian (*B Civ*. 5.45) indicates his source as the "memoirs". What exactly are the memoirs is unclear with suggestions it is Augustus' memoirs, Messalla's, or the *acta diurna*. For discussion see Gowing (1992) Appendix 5. What it does

But, tempting as it may be to look for Pollio in Plutarch, Appian and Suetonius what we find is heavily distorted, and subject to the bias of the author, and tells us little of Pollio himself and his history.

Perhaps, therefore, a question we can explore more productively than what Pollio wrote in his history and the attitude he took is why Pollio wrote a history of the civil wars when he did. Several issues can be explored, most importantly the socio-political and cultural climate of the time.

But first it is helpful to consider when Pollio may have begun writing his *Histories* as clearly the political climate of the thirties was distinct from the principate that emerged under Augustus in the twenties BC.

When did Pollio write his History?

We can reasonably assume Pollio commenced writing his history around the time of Sallust's death. Suetonius tells us that after the death of Sallust the grammarian Ateius, a friend of Sallust and Pollio, was later employed by Pollio to assist in the history he was writing.[78] As Sallust died in 35 BC this must have occurred some time after this date. This does not preclude the possibility that Pollio was already writing his History whilst Sallust was still alive but if we hold to the belief, as will be discussed, that his *Histories* were a continuation of Sallust's, the odds are that he commenced writing after Sallust's death after the latter had left his history incomplete at the year 67 BC.

We also know that Horace dedicated the first poem of his second book of Odes to Pollio and the history he was currently writing. The first three books of Horace's *Odes* were published together in 23 BC but when Horace actually wrote his Ode to Pollio is uncertain.[79] Nisbet and Hubbard suggest a date of 34 BC.[80] This would place the composition before the battle of Actium and Pollio's stated neutrality in the events. Woodman suggests a date of 28 BC.[81] Lyne,

---

indicate is Appian used another source at this point that was not Pollio unless Pollio had used the *memoirs* and Appian is quoting this reference from the Pollio source itself – less likely.

[78] Suet. *Gram*. 10.6.

[79] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978)1 cf. Nisbet (2007) 12-13 who notes a more recent argument by Hutchinson that the three books of *Odes* may have appeared separately perhaps in 26, 24 and 23 BC. See Hutchinson (2002) 532-534 for an overall insight on the content of Book 2 of *Odes* and the note that the *Ode* to Pollio is the only poem of political content in Book 2.

[80] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 9-10. They assume the preface to Pollio's history had been published along with the first few books on the events of the fifties and the events immediately following the death of Antony. A further detailed discussion of this Ode is also provided by Henderson (1998), and we have a very early comment by Kornemann published in 1903.

[81] Woodman (2003) 200-201. One of Woodman's key arguments is the reference to a Dalmatian triumph (*Carm*. 2.1.16). Woodman considers that Pollio set out to disguise his previous contact with Antony after the 30's BC and that Horace is tactfully colluding with Pollio's revisionism and therefore wrote the *Ode*

also launching into this debate, states that the only certain fact is that the ode was published in 23 BC and there is no reason why it should have been written a decade earlier.[82] However, Horace's relationship with Pollio was probably most evident in the thirties, and the reference to the perilous task that is being undertaken by Pollio is also more relevant to a date in the thirties.

Reference has also been made to a similarity between Horace's lines 29-30 and the lines in Vergil's *Georgics* at 1.491-2 and 497, suggesting Vergil may have taken his lines from Pollio's *Histories*.[83] The *Georgics* were completed in 29 BC.[84]

> What fields are not enriched with the blood of Rome,
> to bear witness with their graves to this impious
> struggle of ours. (Hor. *Carm*. 2.29-30).
>
> And the gods thought it not unfitting that Emathia and the broad plain
> of Haemus, should twice be enriched with our blood. (Verg. *G*. 1.492-492).
> and wonder at giant bones in the opened grave. (1.497).

It would therefore appear reasonable to consider Pollio was active in writing his *Histories* in the thirties, in the period between Brundisium and Actium, during which time the political climate remained unstable.

A key event marking this period is the battle of Actium and it raises the issue that Pollio's history writing should be considered against this background, particularly as it involved his own declared response.

The Battle of Actium

As the conflict between Octavian and Antony moved to its inevitable showdown in 32 BC Velleius states the following:

> The remarkable conduct of Asinius Pollio should not be passed by nor the words which he uttered. For although he had remained in Italy after the peace of Brundisium, and had never seen the queen nor taken any active part in Antony's faction after this leader had

---

after 30 BC. If we do not accept this argument the dating again remains uncertain. See the previous section on Pollio's province in 39 BC, and the counter argument by Bosworth (1972). Henderson (1998) 127 is less committed to a date, noting the stages of progress may reflect Horace's anticipation of the work rather than its actual progress.

[82] Lyne (1995) 93 n. 102. But as Moles (2002) 88 quoting West notes, the question of dating needs to be reconsidered under the headings of date of composition, dramatic dating and date of reception. For our purpose it is the date of composition which is most relevant and not the date of reception. It is suggested the dating as quoted by Lyne may be the date of reception and not the date of composition.

[83] Nisbet and Hubbard (1978) 9-10. See also Moles (1983), (2002) and Morgan (2000) 52-55. See also n. 73 this Chapter on Moles (1983) which further adds to the evidence Pollio's *Histories* were known to Vergil.

[84] Donat. *Vit. Verg*. 25; 27. However, the *Georgics* are largely seen as a product of the 30's BC. See Thomas (1988) 1.1; Osgood (2006) 311.

> become demoralized by his passion for her, when Caesar asked him to go with him to the war at Actium he replied: "My services to Antony are too great, and his kindness to me too well known; accordingly I shall hold aloof from your quarrel and shall be the prize of the victor." (2.86.3).[85]

The context of the passage is important. Velleius is discussing the clemency of Augustus after the victory at Actium. The clemency shown to Sosius (a staunch supporter of Antony) has just been described before turning to discuss the words of Pollio.[86]

Several other comments are also important. Velleius is the only author to record the invitation to Pollio to fight at Actium and his refusal. There is no mention of this in Appian or Dio. Velleius is also inaccurate when he states Pollio never left Italy again after Brundisium; he has overlooked Pollio's campaign against the Parthini and his subsequent triumph; a significant oversight. This led Bosworth, as we have seen, to consider Velleius did not comment on Pollio's campaign and triumph because Pollio was already in the services of Octavian.[87]

Woodman makes several other points.[88] The *dictum memorabile* attributed to Pollio may or may not be authentic, noting the propensity for giving characters speeches when writing history.[89] The passage can also be compared with Seneca (*Clem*. 1.10.1), who also uses Pollio as an example of Octavian's *clementia,* but without specific context: '… whom would he (Octavian/ Augustus) have had to rule? Sallustius and a Cocceius and a Dellius and the whole inner circle of his court he recruited from the camp of his opponents; and now it was his own mercifulness that gave him a Domitius, a Messala, an Asinius, a Cicero, and all the flower of the state. What a long time was granted even Lepidus to die! *'* [90]

However, the key issue is what Velleius' passage reveals of Pollio's political stance in 32 BC. Bosworth argues that Pollio felt obliged to support Antony due to the latter's benefactions towards him but had now repaid this debt and his neutrality is a vote of support for Octavian.[91] Woodman argues to the contrary.[92] Whilst he also considers Pollio was disillusioned by

---

[85] *Non praetereatur Asinii Pollionis factum et dictum memorabile: namque cum se post Brundusinam pacem continuisset in Italia neque aut vidisset umquam reginam aut post enervatum amore eius Antonii animum partibus eius se miscuisset, rogante Caesare, ut secum ad bellum proficisceretur Actiacum: mea, inquit, in Antonium maiora merita sunt, illius in me beneficia notiora; itaque discrimini vestro me subtraham et ero praeda victoris*.

[86] 'But, in the case of Sosius, it was the pledged word of Lucius Arruntius, a man famous for his old time dignity, that saved him; later, Caesar preserved him unharmed, but only after long resisting his general inclination to clemency.'

[87] Bosworth (1972) 447-448. See Chapter 7.

[88] Woodman (1983) 231-234.

[89] It may have come from a collection of deeds and sayings, not unlike the collection put together by Valerius Maximus.

[90] See commentary by Braund (2009) 281-282.

[91] Bosworth (1972).

[92] Woodman (1983).

Antony's behaviour he believes Pollio remained too emotionally and politically connected to Antony to support Octavian; he was, as Syme wishes to argue, the aloof figure of independence.[93] Welch, who considers Pollio was always a Caesarian, concludes he was happy to support whoever was the winner, Antony or Octavian, as they were both Caesarian generals.[94]

Pollio's statement raises an interesting parallel with the statement by Atticus during the Social War. Whilst Atticus was residing in Athens Sulla had asked Atticus to return with him to Rome for the campaign that would ensue. Atticus replied '" Do not, I pray you, try to lead me against those with whom I refused to bear arms against you but preferred to leave Italy."' Whereupon Sulla praised the young man for his sense of duty.' (Nep. *Att*. 4.2).

In 32 BC Atticus died and his biography by Nepos was in circulation. This dictum by Atticus, a man who triumphed in his neutrality, was no doubt well known. Pollio could easily draw on his example. Nor should we view Pollio's neutrality at Actium without consideration of events in the lead up to the battle.

From all we know of Pollio, his procrastination in 43 BC, not moving until he had little choice and when the victor was certain, his procrastination again at Persusia where he would need to choose sides between Antony and Octavian, his withdrawal from all military duties after the Pact of Brundisium, can there have been any other response from Pollio other than to stand back at the battle of Actium – it would have been surprising if he *had* chosen to support Octavian or Antony. His response is entirely consistent with all we know of him to date, and so should not cause surprise or the need to look for any added intention, rather it is the reverse that should surprise, if he had chosen to become involved. It is the nature of this persistent lack of involvement that is more elusive. One possible theory, as previously considered when reflecting on his procrastination in 43, is that after his experience on the battle-field against Sextus in Spain in 44 BC, where we have a description of him running from the field in highly traumatic battle circumstances, Pollio ever afterwards actively avoided military engagement.[95] His only recorded action is against the Parthini with the specific purpose to gain a triumph, or he would have had little by which to mark his military career. When Actium presented itself, if Pollio had

---

[93] Carter (1970) 172-173 likewise – but this is before Bosworth's argument was put forward. Syme (Tacitus 1.136) considers Pollio was the sole neutral at the battle of Actium.
[94] Welch (2009) 219 n.81.
[95] See Chapter 8.

remained scarred by the trauma of war, a trauma which is known to be chronic in nature, it is almost certain he would have declined regardless of his political circumstances or allegiances.[96]

Watkins considers the actions of Plancus, who at this time was a strong stalwart of Antony, within the same light. 'As was true of many others, Plancus had been through similar crises twice in 50 and 43. Neither contender showed much respect for constitutional niceties. Neutrality would be impossible for someone of Plancus' standing and past. It was time to choose, and in wartime one should side with the probable victor. '[97] Plancus chose in spectacular style, abandoning Antony and bringing in secret his Will to Octavian, an action not always viewed in Plancus' favour, although it provided Octavian with the final propaganda edge he needed to totally discredit Antony.

Octavian's propaganda against Antony had been slowly gaining momentum since his successful defeat of Sextus in 36-35 and the subsequent power struggles amongst the elite. Allegiances were fluid. Lepidus went into a steady decline as Octavian stripped him of his power, Plancus rose to be Antony's leading man before changing his allegiance, Agrippa was in the same position with Octavian. Men of standing such as Calpurnius Bibulus and Domitius Ahenobarbus, the nephew of Cato, remained loyal to Antony.[98] Messalla was interesting, at some point in this time, he changed his allegiance from Antony to Octavian and in 31 BC was consul with Octavian.[99]

Generals were also returning to Rome and celebrating triumphs. They restored and built temples with the result that the building in Rome through this time was extensive. The majority of these works were by generals who had remained loyal to Octavian.[100] Rome was caught in a grip of renewal, what some authors have called a 'religious fervour', as temples everywhere were under construction or refurbishment.[101] Pollio's extensive new library no doubt stood as a centrepiece of culture and learning. Along with many others of the elite, Maecenas in this period, who had

---

[96] Shay (1994) highlights how easily the psychological impact of war and war trauma is missed in ancient times. Pollio had fought with Caesar through the forties. The war in Spain was the most rigorous and lacked all traditional aspects of warfare but rather was guerilla-like in tactics. The diagnosis according to the American Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (currently DSM 4R) lists the disorder as occurring after a life threatening event, of which war trauma is a prime example, with symptoms of ongoing avoidance of the trauma, intrusive flashbacks, high levels of irritability and arousal and in its chronic form a sense of mistrust and disengagement from associated events, in this case war and conflict.
[97] Watkins (1997) 105.
[98] Bowersock (1965) esp. ch 2 where he lists the leading individuals and their allegiances through this period.
[99] See Hammer (1925) who suggests a date of 40 BC cf. Syme *AA* 205-206 who suggests Messalla may have kept his independence up to 33 or early 32 BC.
[100] See Favro (1996) for the list of buildings and temples built by triumphing generals and their allegiance to Antony or Octavian. See also the list of temples temples built and repaired by Octavian in this time as he listed in the *Res Gestae* 19-21.
[101] Purcell *CAH* 10 (1996) 787-788; Osgood (2006) 330.

claimed the estate of Favonius in the proscriptions, was building his extensive gardens and heated swimming pool, and Messalla took over the Pincian gardens once owned by Lucullus, whose son was killed in the same battle with him at Philippi, and arranged to share with Agrippa the mansion of Antonius on the Palatine.[102] It is not unlikely that Pollio also benefited in this exchange of estates, and that his wealth continued to prosper, particularly as he owned a large brickmaking enterprise: reason enough to want to stay in Rome and continue to benefit under the victor.

Antony's behaviour in the East (his rejection of Octavia when she sought to visit him in 35, his war against the Armenians and celebration of a Roman triumph in an Oriental city, declaring Cleopatra the "Queen of Kings" and providing her with a Roman bodyguard) fuelled Octavian's propaganda for the restoration of Roman ideals and unity. Correspondence began to flow between Antony and Octavian as tensions increased in their relationship. These letters, initially private in nature, soon became more public and slanderous. Antony began to write pamphlets which in turn resulted in public responses.[103] Pollio must have become embroiled in this debate, as Charisius records that both Messalla and Pollio wrote in reply. Messalla composed a work *Contra Antonii litteras* and Pollio another bearing his own name, *Asinius contra maledicta Antonii.*[104] What these comments were by Antony we do not know but they were obviously of sufficient content to engage Pollio in a debate of defence. In reality there can have been little that would have attracted Pollio to support Antony and his excesses in the East particularly from the way this was being portrayed in Rome.

As war loomed, illegal from many aspects as the triumvirship had expired at the end of 33 BC and the consuls of 32 BC had fled to Antony, and Octavian had no real power to declare a foreign war, Octavian still sought support from all levels of society. He extracted an oath of allegiance from the Italian communities and enlisted the support of the senate.[105] Seven hundred senators went with Octavian to Actium but three hundred left to support Antony.[106] Many were neutral.[107] Pollio's response no doubt reflects that it was well known that his position and success had been given to him by Antony but now he no longer wished to support him and so the ever diplomatic Pollio crafted a reply of ethical neutrality, most probably with an eye on how it might be recorded for posterity, if not within his own *Histories* then certainly by another

---

[102] Dio 53.27.5; Shatzman (1975) 428**;** Osgood (2006) 320 ff.
[103] Scott (1933).
[104] Charis. GL129.7; 1.80.2 See also Scott (1933) 7ff. Messalla also wrote *De Antonii statuis* and *De vectigalium Asiae constitutione* in the same period *GL* 104.18; 146.34.
[105] *Res Gestae* 25.3.
[106] Dio 52.42.1; *Res Gestae* 25.3.
[107] See the amusing anecdote in Macrobius (*Sat*. 2.4.29-30) of the bird keeper who had one crow who could sing in praise of Octavian and another who could praise Antony – just in case! Also noted by Osgood (2006) 357ff. who further provides an insight into the mixed feeling within the populace and Octavian's demand for allegiance.

of his peers. But one thing was certain: he was not going to fight in another civil war, no matter what the circumstances.

Writing of history

It is against this background we should return to Pollio's writing of his *Histories*. When the great icons of the civil war, Caesar and Cicero, were murdered, they both left unfinished tasks – Caesar to build a library of Greek and Roman texts, rivalling that of Alexandria, and Cicero to write a history of Rome. When, in 39 BC, Pollio returned to Rome he took on both these tasks, this was no withdrawal from public life. Was he setting out to complete this unfinished business of the past, and attempting to restore a cultural and moral decay that had occurred and continued in the ongoing civil rivalries in which he had taken an active part, or was he seeking to claim these ambitions for his own? Either way he was actively aligning himself with these great figures.

After Brundisium, and with it some sense of agreement between Antony and Octavian, and even more so after the death of Sextus in 36 BC, the upper class in Rome had a breathing space in which to contemplate the recent civil war and the actions of those involved. Many were now dead, including Ventidius.

Sussman comments that there emerged a class of capable and intelligent men with wealth, talent and ambition, who, disenchanted by the regime, had either withdrawn from public life or were only grudgingly cooperating with their new rulers, and who now found themselves with considerable leisure time.[108] They formed a new intellectual class, drawn to the increasing interest in declamation and literary pursuits.

It was in this climate that the correspondence and writings of the Civil Wars were beginning to circulate. In particular, Caesar's commentaries had appeared, although these made no mention of Pollio or his activities. Cicero's letters, if not in circulation, would certainly have been known and discussed.[109] It is to be assumed they contained Pollio's three letters to Cicero in 43 BC in which he declared his loyalty to Cicero and the republic.[110] This statement of friendship must have stood in stark contrast to the now also published speech of Pollio's for the defence of

[108] Sussman (1978) 14.
[109] Carcopino (1951) 14ff. esp. 33 where he states the publication of Cicero's letters occurred in the time of the Triumvirate (43-31 BC) drawing on a quotation from Domitius, in which he alludes to the Cicero Correspondence as evidence. Shackleton Bailey (1986) considers the letters to Atticus did not appear much before the middle of the first century AD, but that the letters to friends probably appeared much earlier in piecemeal fashion as edited by Tiro.
[110] See Chapter 4.

Lamia, in which he decried Cicero and suggested he had pleaded for his life and would have retracted the *Philippics*. The fallout from the death of Cicero loomed large within the Roman *populus*.

Pollio, Cicero and the Post Cicero Tradition

From the thirties onwards a post Cicero tradition was strongly emerging. The great orator, cut down by the proscriptions, became a master of oratory, philosophy and literary style to be emulated. Kaster comments that it was no longer Cicero the man who was idealized but CICERO (his capitals) as an icon of oratory and rhetoric.[111] We know Pollio was antagonistic and critical towards this movement. It can be recalled that when invited to the house of Messalla Corvinus to hear a recital on the proscription of Cicero by Sextilius Ena, when the orator commenced with the phrase: 'I must lament Cicero and the silence of the Latin tongue', Pollio reacted angrily and stormed from the house stating: 'Messalla, you can decide for yourself what goes on in your own house: I do not propose to listen to someone who thinks I am dumb.'[112] In his eulogy for Cicero, which he wrote in his history, whilst Pollio no longer states Cicero pleaded for his life, as clearly this was untrue, and he rises to the occasion to praise the great orator, Seneca still considers his tone is critical and without true generosity. As has been discussed, Pollio may have been carrying the guilt and also the public association of involvement in the proscription and death of this great figure of the republic. This criticism of Cicero it would seem alienated Pollio, as Seneca and Quintilian strongly imply it was met with disapproval: 'the Asinii, who in various passages attack the faults of his (Cicero's) oratory in language which is positively hostile.'[113] It is also a factor we have considered in the reasons for his loss of association with the poets and in particular with Vergil.

The extent of this attitude of Pollio towards Cicero is further seen in the publication of Cicero's grammar by Pollio's son Gallus, as highlighted by Pliny the Younger in the following letter: 'While I was staying in my house at Laurentum I had Asinius Gallus's works read aloud to me, in which he draws comparison between his father and Cicero and quotes an epigram of Cicero's on his favourite Tiro.'[114] Pliny then quotes from his own verse in which we learn Gallus favoured Pollio over Cicero in the comparison:

> Reading the works of Gallus, where he ventures
> To hand the palm of glory to his father,

---

[111] Kaster (1998) 248-263. Also especially Narducci (2003).
[112] Sen. *Suas*. 6.27. The line had originated from the eulogy for Cicero by Cornelius Severus (not to be confused with Cassius Severus) as discussed in Chapter 5.
[113] Quint. *Inst*. 12.1.22: *nec Asinio utrique, qui vitia orationis eius etiam inimice pluribus locis insequuntur*.
[114] Plin. *Ep*. 7.4. 3-6

The work by Gallus was considered one of significant learning, as even the Emperor Claudius read it, and in consequence was compelled to write a defence of Cicero against the criticisms of Gallus.[115]

Gellius was also drawn to comment on Asinius Gallus and his criticisms of Cicero.[116] In a statement of outright condemnation he takes exception to Gallus for criticizing a saying of Cicero's in the speech which Cicero delivered 'For Marcus Caelius':

> Just as there have been monsters of men who expressed impious and false opinions about the immortal gods, so there have been some so extravagant and so ignorant that they have dared to say that Marcus Cicero spoke without correctness, propriety, or consideration; amongst these are Asinius Gallus and Largius Licinus …

What is interesting is that whereas Pollio's criticisms of Cicero focus on his style of writing and on his status as the greatest orator of the period, we have no evidence that his criticisms ever related to Cicero's actions as a politician. And Cicero's actions in the final stages of the republic were open to scrutiny. Syme notes that Cicero's attitude in 43 BC failed to recognize the complexities of entangled factions and personalities, and to recognize that there was another side in the debate 'not Antonius only, but the neutrals.'[117] Osgood has also made the comment that if Cicero had not entered the fray, the advocates of concord and compromise might have had more of a chance.[118] It is not our purpose to analyse the actions of Cicero in this crucial period, but rather to note that his actions would have been under review as the civil war continued to rumble forwards in the thirties. Wirszubski notes the idealization of a figure such as a Cicero, and a defence against these criticisms, was often seen as an indication of staunch Republicanism.[119] That being so, Pollio's expressed hostility towards Cicero does little to align him with this form of Republicanism.[120]

However, Pollio's criticisms of Cicero's style were not in isolation. Certainly, by the time the Elder Seneca was writing, Cicero was on the decline. Sussman references the various criticisms of Cicero that had emerged but concludes nevertheless that for both Seneca and Quintilian

---

[115] Suet. *Claud*. 41:'He also composed an autobiography in eight books, lacking rather in good taste than in style, as well as a "Defence of Cicero against the Writings of Asinius Gallus," a work of no little learning.'

[116] Gell. *NA* 17.1.1. Gellius further comments that Gallus and Licinus were 'in their own opinion very keen critics of language.' See also comments by Shackleton Bailey (1982) 67-75 esp. 71-72. Also Dugan (2005) 347ff. who briefly summarizes the literature on this controversial letter of Pliny and the relationship between Cicero and Tiro as found in the works Gallus and notes that Gallus is referred to as a "second generation Cicero-hater."

[117] Syme *Rom. Rev*. 146.

[118] Osgood (2008) 4 also notes the comment by Syme.

[119] Wirszubski (1950) 129.

[120] See also Edward (1928) 140 who notes Pollio was an orator and a jealous one who was irritated by the great favour in which Cicero was held. He concludes that there were both literary and political reasons for this feud between the Pollio family and Cicero,

Cicero remained the highest ranking orator.[121] But in the thirties this partly negative assessment was far from the case, and Cicero remained the icon of the day. And, when he died, he left one task unfinished which set the literary elite of the Roman world into a frenzy – to fill the gap, and write the great Roman history.[122]

Cicero and history

In 55 BC Cicero had published his *De Oratore* which contained a discussion on the writing of history.[123] Cicero had been critical of Roman historians in his own time and of those before him, considering their content lacked the style and interest created by Greek historians. The task he threw out to the rhetoricians, whom he considered to be most suited as a class to the undertaking, was to write a history with interest and flare. Truth was essential, but clearly this could be embellished for the sake of style and entertainment. This is beautifully illustrated in Cicero's personal letter to Lucceius in 55 BC where he asks Lucceius to write a history that will cover his, Cicero's, own consulship and amplify his good deeds: 'Therefore I ask you again, not mincing my words, to write of this theme more enthusiastically than perhaps you feel. Waive the laws of history for this once.'[124] The first law of history required that the writer must not dare to tell anything but the truth, and the second that he must make bold to tell the whole truth without suggestion of partiality or malice.[125] This concept of truth as described by Cicero in the *De Oratore* has led to considerable debate, particularly as the genre of historiography in ancient times was intrinsically linked to the genres of oratory and poetry, an association which has often not been sufficiently understood in modern scholarship.[126] As Woodman states:

> Though today we see poetry, oratory and historiography as three separate genres, the ancients saw them as different species of the same genus – rhetoric. All three types of activity aimed to elaborate certain data in such a way as to affect or persuade an audience or readership … Quintilian was able to say that when an orator retires from his profession, he can devote himself to the writing of history (Quint. *Inst.* 12.11.4) … Aristides in the second century AD maintained that historians " fall between orators and poets" (Arist. *Or.* 49) … and Marcellinus, the biographer of Thucydides said that " some people have ventured to demonstrate that the genre of historiography is not rhetorical but poetic" (Marc. *Vita Thuc*. 41).[127]

---

[121] Sussman (1978) 32 n. 66. Also Narducci (2003) for an extensive survey of Cicero in the century after his death from the age of Augustus through to the age of Nero.
[122] Wiseman (1981) 376 comments that the status of writing the great Roman history was as powerful an obsession in the fifties BC as writing the great American novel was in the 1980s.
[123] Cic. *De or*. 2. 51-64.
[124] Cic. *Fam*. 5.12 (22).
[125] Cic. *De or*. 2.62.
[126] See in particular Rawson (1972), (1985) 215-232; Brunt (1980) 311ff; Wiseman (1981) 389 ff. = (1987) 258 ff; Woodman (1988) 70-116; Cameron (1989) 33-63; Marincola (2007) 504-527.
[127] Woodman (1988) 100.

This concept of the historical containing the style of the poetical or that of the tragedian was not at the expense of truth itself but rather to engage the audience. As Brunt concludes, Cicero was demanding that the historian should write well.[128]

Further, the style of writing was important, not only to entertain, but also because it served as a reflection of the individual's character. Cicero's style of writing with its fluidity was considered to reflect his even temperament. It was in the style of Herodotus and stood in stark contrast to the variations, interruptions and obscurity of Thucydides.

History writing in this period was falling broadly into three categories; the history of the past, writing of annals and contemporary history.[129] The former required significant research and literary style.[130] The latter would be judged on the grounds of accuracy and impartiality. Overall, historiography at the end of the first century BC was taking on a new momentum. Woodman comments that there emerged a shift from the encomiastic view of Rome and her history as believed by Cicero to one of disillusionment and the decline of Rome.[131] Conti describes the period between the death of Caesar and the battle of Actium as "the great fear" and considers the literature of this period reflects an anxiety with descriptions and reminders of the experience of bloodshed and civil war.[132]

We should also note the developing trend of autobiography, as Pollio must have clearly been influenced by these developments. In the period of the Social War and the rise of Sulla there emerged a movement of politicians who wrote commentaries on their own lives and political actions. Sulla in particular appears to have glorified himself and his divine mission.[133] There can be little doubt that some were written as a form of political self-defence. Caesar maintained this trend by writing his own commentary, and Augustus would follow with his *Res Gestae*. Further, Messalla and Agrippa would both write their memoirs or autobiographies in line with this trend. Actions of the individual were under greater scrutiny. Varro, with whom Pollio was creating his great library, was writing his *Imagines,* completed around 39 BC, and Nepos had published his *De Viris Illustribus.* To add fuel to the fire, Nepos in a eulogy for Cicero had lamented that Cicero never wrote a history in the following words: 'You ought not to be unaware that this (history) is the only branch of Latin literature that even in my own time cannot be compared with what the Greeks accomplished, and that it was left wholly rude and unfinished by the death of Cicero. For he was the only man who could, or even sought to, give history a worthy

---

[128] Brunt (1980) 340. See also Cornell (1986) esp. 67-86.
[129] Wiseman (1981) 377ff.; Rawson (1985) 215ff.
[130] See Wiseman (1981) 389ff.; Woodman (1988) 78ff.
[131] Woodman (1988) 124ff.
[132] Conte (1994) 250-251 with examples from the writings of Vergil, Horace, Propertius.
[133] See Conte (1994) 123ff. who also notes this trend of autobiography coincided with the birth of realistic portraiture in Roman figurative art.

utterance, since he highly polished the rude eloquence handed down from our forefathers, and gave Latin philosophy, which before his time was uncouth, the finish of his style. Which leads me to doubt whether his loss brought greater grief to our country or to history.'[134]

But individuals were rising to this challenge as set forth by Cicero, and one of the first was Sallust who, in the year of Cicero's death, wrote, and shortly after published, the *Bellum Catilinae* and the *Bellum Iugurthae* and in 39 BC he began his work on the *Histories* which covered the period in history from the death of Sulla (78 BC) to the end of Pompey's war with the pirates (67 BC). Sallust died with his great task incomplete, and it is highly probable he intended to finish his *Histories* at a more definitive point in time – perhaps the rise of the triumvirate or even the death of Pompey or Caesar.

But what is of greater significance is that Sallust's historical writing took the form of an investigation into the political crisis of the civil wars. Whilst he chose to follow Cicero in the nature of the content of history he opposed him outright in style. As noted, Cicero had promulgated a smooth harmonious fluid style in accordance with Herodotus and a Hellenistic model. Sallust by contrast developed a style more in the tradition of Thucydides and Cato the Censor with frequent use of antithesis, asymmetry, abruptness and archaising. The younger Seneca described Sallust's style as having sentences which stop short and phrases which end before you expect and brevity to the point of obscurity.[135] Sallust was choosing not to reflect Cicero in his writing or his personality and in choosing the style and the attitude of Thucydides was further underlining his attitude, one of harshness and severity in contrast to the positive and heroic outlook of Cicero.[136] Sallust saw the Roman state as corrupt, and his account was filled with the actions of villains rather than heroes.

Further, in accordance with an existing tradition of historical writing, Sallust acted as a continuator of the history of Lucius Cornelius Sisenna.[137] In indicating a link with an admired predecessor the historian often began where his predecessor had left off. As Marincola notes Sallust allied himself with Cato's style and brevity, with Sisenna's diligence and accuracy, and with Fannius' impartiality, and distanced himself from Cato's harsh use of history and Sisenna's failure to speak as openly as he should.[138] When Sallust died he also left a history to be

---

[134] Nepos frag. 2.1. Atticus had also constantly encouraged Cicero to write a history and had in fact written his own history of Rome although we know little of its content. Nepos in his biography of Atticus mentions it only briefly, Nep. *Att*. 18.
[135] Sen. *Ep*. 114.17 also Quint. *Inst*. 8.3.82 on the extreme brevity of Sallust's style. Also Syme (1964) 257ff.; Woodman (1988) 126.
[136] Woodman (1988) 126-127; Marincola (1997); Osgood (2006).
[137] Lucius Cornelius Sisenna 120-67 BC wrote a *Historiae* which covered the events of the Social War to the death of Sulla. His history has been described as " tragic " history as it was full of dramatic events. See Conte (1994) 122-123.
[138] Marincola (1997) 247.

continued, written in a style that allowed for interrogation and criticism of the existing social structure, most particularly the nobility. And the period to be covered was that of the recent civil wars.

It is also suggested that Sallust, excluded from public office, had chosen to write history as a statement of conversion from a political to an intellectual life.[139] Woodman further conjectures that Sallust resorted to the medium of history to obtain revenge.[140] Others also were writing and contemplating current times. Nepos in his *Life of Atticus* seeks to explain why Atticus chose not to become consul when clearly the opportunity was available to him, noting that the equestrian Balbus had successfully achieved this office. Nepos concludes that Atticus chose not to do so as the office had lost its status, having become corrupted by politicians and obtained by bribes and constitutional irregularity. Osgood notes the comments of Nepos reflect strongly the attitude in Sallust.[141]

In this literary context, Pollio's *Historiae* is usually placed as having been written between those of Sallust and Livy. This is based on the assumption that Livy did not begin writing until the twenties and was very pro-Augustan in his outlook. However, Woodman presents a strong argument that Livy wrote the preface to his history much earlier than this dating of the twenties and while the civil wars were still in progress, in other words before the battle of Actium.[142] He goes on to suggest that in composing the preface Livy drew in particular on Sallust in his depiction of the destruction of Rome as occurring under its own forces. Woodman concludes the preface of Livy should be seen in the context of Sallust's history where decline not glorification of Rome is the dominant theme. It is only as Livy continues writing his extensive history, well into the principate of Augustus, that he begins to shift from this perspective as he experiences the stability and prosperity of the sole leadership of Augustus.

With this intense analysis of the current civil wars the actions of its leading generals were open to scrutiny. Sallust had left a history to be continued, and Livy was about to embark on a history of Rome up until the present day. A history spanning 67 BC to 43 or 31 BC was waiting to be written. And Pollio had one advantage over Sallust, Atticus, Nepos, Tubero and Livy: he alone had participated in these wars, he was no casual armchair observer, and so could bring an eye-witness account to these events. And, as Kornemann argued over a century ago, Pollio also wrote his *Historiae* to ensure his own actions received the correct interpretation, just as Cicero

---

[139] Osgood (2006) 291. See also section on *otium* Chapter 8.
[140] Woodman (1988) 125.
[141] Osgood (2006) 293; 319.
[142] Woodman (1988) 128ff. esp. 134.

had wished for his own actions in the Catiline affair, and Caesar in his commentary, to be viewed in a positive light. [143]

In fact we can imagine Pollio may have been under significant pressure to write this history. We also have an interesting comment in Appian concerning the actions of Octavian at this time. Appian records that Octavian, on returning to Rome after the defeat of Sextus in 36 BC, ordered all documents concerning the years after the Ides of March be destroyed.[144] An even greater reason for Pollio to write his history.[145]

Furthermore Pollio, having established the great library as envisioned by Caesar, was surrounding himself with men of learning, both Roman and Greek, who were interested in history. Investigation of Pollio's relationship with Herod and with Timagenes will show that he had close connections with the Greek intellectuals living in Rome.[146] We know Strabo had read Pollio's history.[147] Strabo was in Rome in 44, 35, and 29 and returned in 20 BC, remaining until at least 7 BC, if not until the end of his life in AD 22.[148] We can also note that around 30 BC Dionysius of Halicarnassus arrived in Rome and would assert enormous intellectual influence, in particular favouring the Atticist style over Asianism. [149] It is highly likely he mixed in Pollio's circle and would have been drawn to the great library of Greek and Roman manuscripts. Bowersock highlights the Greeks that moved to Rome after Actium and lists, apart from Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Strabo, Crinagoras, the rhetor Caecilius, the poet Parthenius, who was a friend of Cornelius Gallus, and Nicolaus of Damascus, all of whom we have been able to connect with Pollio.[150]

Criticism of others

However, there is a further aspect to Pollio's writing his history that we should also consider, one that brings us back to the man himself. Strabo, commenting on the mouth of the Rhine as noted in Pollio's history states: 'He (Pollio) further says it has only two mouths, after first finding fault with those who say it has more than that.' Strabo is irritated by Pollio's fault

---

[143] Kornemann (1896).
[144] App. *B Civ*. 5.132.
[145] This may have led Horace to make the comment that Pollio was undertaking a dangerous task. Clearly Octavian did not wish the actions of the triumvirs after 44 to be available for scrutiny and official recording.
[146] See Chapter 14 on Pollio's relationship with Timagenes and Chapter 15 for his connection with Herod.
[147] Josephus quotes Strabo who is quoting Pollio: Joseph. *AJ* 14.138. See Chapter 15.
[148] See Dueck (2000) 85. Strabo may have remained in Rome between 44 and 35 BC or made separate visits.
[149] There is extensive literature on Dionysius of Halicarnassus; for a summary of his works and style see Innes (1989) 267ff.
[150] Bowersock (1965) 122 ff. Also noted in Chapter 14.

finding, which appears to have been a characteristic of his history. This attribute of Pollio to criticize others was well known and prevalent in this period of writing.

Of all the leading literary men of the day – Cicero, Caesar, Sallust and Livy – Pollio had a critical comment to make about them all. There is no time-frame or context for the criticisms, which occur within various sources, but they may well reflect a reply to criticisms of his own work or perhaps occurred within the content of his history as in the preface.

Pollio's criticism of Cicero is well documented, noting in particular it was literary rather political.[151] The comments appear to have become public after Cicero's death and to have been maintained by Pollio throughout his life and also by his son Gallus.

Caesar and his commentaries also came under censure. Suetonius states:

> Asinius Pollio thinks that they were put together somewhat carelessly and without strict regard for truth: since in many cases Caesar was too ready to believe the accounts which others gave of their actions, and gave a perverted account of his own, either designedly or perhaps from forgetfulness and he thinks that he intended to rewrite and revise them,' (*Iul*. 56.4).[152]

The comment comes after Suetonius has noted the praise of Caesar's commentaries by both Cicero and Hirtius. This praise by Cicero can be found in a dialogue in the *Brutus* where Brutus discusses with Cicero the *Commentaries,* and Cicero replies in full admiration of their brevity and lack of adornment.[153] Similarly, the praise by Hirtius can be noted in his preface to Book 8 of the *Bellum Gallicum.*[154] The accuracy or not of Pollio's comments leads into a debate on Caesar's content, intent and style which is beyond our current purpose. However, several points remain of interest. Both Cicero and Hirtius make the statement that Caesar wrote his *Commentaries* 'to provide material for others to have when writing history' (Cicero) or 'to prevent writers from lacking accurate information concerning such important events' (Hirtius). And both conclude that Caesar has 'scared sane men away from writing' (Cicero) and 'taken away rather than granted an opportunity to other writers' (Hirtius).

It is most probable that the *corpus Caesarianum* in total covered events from the Gallic invasions down to Munda and even to the Ides of March.[155] Pollio was therefore facing a

---

[151] Quint. *Inst*. 12.1.22; Sen. *Suas*. 6.14; 27; Plin *Ep*. 7.4; Suet. *Claud*. 41.
[152] *Pollio Asinius parum diligenter parumque integra veritate compositos putat, cum Caesar pleraque et quae per alios errant gesta temere crediderit et quae per se, vel consulto vel etiam memoria lapsus perperam ediderit; existimatque rescripturum et correcturum fuisse*.
[153] Cic. *Brut*. 262.
[154] Caes. *B Gall*. 8 .3-7.
[155] See Hall (1996) 411 who comments Caesar wrote *Bellum Gallicum*, *Bellum Civile*, *Bellum Alexandrinum*, and two other narratives in the *corpus Caesarianum* the *Bellum Africum* and the *Bellum Hispaniense* and perhaps even a lost account of the events from Munda to the Ides of March.

daunting task to cover the same period when the *Commentaries* were now in circulation. Further, Pollio's criticisms have been noted to directly counter the comments of Hirtius and may even have been in reply to these comments.[156] The criticisms also imply that Pollio may have wished to counter comments made by Caesar, and in so doing needed to discount the validity of Caesar's work in favour of his own; commentary that often occurs in the preface of an historical work where the writer comments on his predecessors.[157] But his criticism is severe; he states Caesar gave false versions of things done by himself; perhaps deliberately or perhaps through slips of memory; a polite statement which avoids actually saying that Caesar lied. He suggests Caesar would have rewritten the work and corrected the mistakes as a counter to this attack on Caesar's credibility. Most modern scholars perceive these statements as indicating that Pollio, the astute historian, demanded accuracy from historical authors and was emphasising his own veracity in writing.[158] But there is a similarity in these comments to his statement that Cicero would have retracted the *Philippics* against Antony and rewritten them if given the opportunity.[159] Pollio is an iconoclast. He seeks to cast aspersions on Cicero and Caesar and it is very likely he incurred the same hostile response as his comments on Cicero had elicited. Morgan also considers the comments "stern criticisms", and states that 'the boldness of the statement should not be underestimated, written as it was in the context of the complete victory of the Caesarian party.'[160] However, he goes on to view the comments from the perspective of autopsy and the methodology of eyewitness–based history, comparing Pollio's criticisms with those of Thucydides (1.22.2-3), who also questioned the reports of others and their eyewitness accounts. Certainly, the criticisms distance Pollio from Caesar and associate him more with Thucydides, but they also reflect a defensiveness and desire to establish his own validity at the expense of others.

Negative criticism of Sallust followed. According to Suetonius Pollio wrote a book criticizing Sallust: 'Asinius Pollio, too, in the book in which he criticizes the writings of Sallust as marred by an excessive effort for archaism, writes as follows: "He was especially abetted in this by a certain Ateius, when I was a boy a Latin grammarian and later a critic and teacher of declamation, in short a self styled "Philologus." '[161]

---

[156] See Kraus (2005); Pelling (2006).
[157] André (1949) 61; Marincola (1997) 112-117; Kraus (2005) 99-100; cf. Pelling (2006) 15-21.
[158] Fornara (1983) 60-61, Kraus (2005) cf Pelling (2006) who also questions Pollio's motives but concedes (although with some scepticism) that it may also reflect an insight into the status of free speech rather than just Pollio's personality. Also Morgan (2000).
[159] 'Thus Cicero never hesitated to go back on his passionate outpourings against Antony; he promised to produce, more carefully, many times more speeches in the opposite sense, and even to recite them personally at a public meeting.' Sen. *Suas*. 6.14-15.
[160] Morgan (2000) 59.
[161] Suet. *Gram*. 10.

Gellius also notes this criticism of Sallust by Pollio: 'Asinius Pollio, in a letter which he addressed to Plancus, and certain others who were unfriendly to Gaius Sallustius, thought that Sallust deserved censure because in the first book of his Histories he called the crossing of the sea and a passage made in ships *transgressus*, using *transgressi* of those who had crossed the sea, for which the usual term *is transfretare.'* But Gellius considers Pollio showed ignorance in criticizing Sallust, and continues with a long discussion on the use of *transgressus* to prove his argument. [162]

Pollio appears to have gone to significant lengths to criticize Sallust, writing a book on the subject and also personally writing to friends, including Plancus, whom he considered unfriendly to Sallust. We cannot therefore confine these comments to the preface of Pollio's history, and must note their more personal intent. Nor can the irony be missed. Pollio himself employed Ateius who was noted as advising Pollio to refrain from using archaic language, advice which led Suetonius to comment*: 'This makes me wonder all the more that Asinius* believed that Ateius used to collect archaic words and expressions for Sallust; for he knows that the grammarian's strongest recommendation to him was to use familiar, unassuming, natural language, especially avoiding Sallust's obscurity and his bold figures of speech.' Again it would appear the criticisms were met with some degree of skepticism. Pollio's comments would also make more sense if they were made whilst Sallust was still alive. It can be noted his comment on Sallust's grammar relates to Book One of the histories, and it would also appear Pollio had not yet employed Ateius in his own service, or his criticism would appear incongruent. All this

---

[162] Gell. *NA*. 10.26.1 Gellius continues: I give Sallust's own words: "Accordingly Sertorius, having left a small garrison in Mauretania and taking advantage of a dark night and a favourable tide, tried either by secrecy or speed to avoid a battle while crossing (*in transgressu*)." Then later he wrote: "When they had crossed (*transgressos*), a mountain which had been seized in advance by the Lusitanians gave them all shelter. "This, they say, is an improper and careless usage, supported by no adequate authority. "For *transgressus,* says Pollio, "comes from *transgredi*, 'to step across,' and this word itself refers to walking and stepping with the feet." Therefore Pollio thought that the verb *transgredi* did not apply to those who fly or creep or sail, but only to those who walk and measure the way with their feet. Hence they say that in no good writer can *transgressus* be found applied to ships, or as the equivalent of *transfretatio*. But, since cursus, or "running," is often correctly used of ships, I ask why it is that ships may not be said to make a *transgressus*, especially since the small extent of the narrow strait which flows between Spain and the African land is most elegantly described by the word *transgressio*, as being a distance of only a few steps. But as to those who ask for authority and assert that *ingredi* or *transgredi* is not used of sailing, I should like them to tell me how much difference they think there is between *ingredi*, or "march," and *ambulare*, or "walk." Yet Cato in his book *On Farming* says: "A farm should be chosen in a situation where there is a large town near by and the sea, or a river where ships pass (*ambulant*)." Moreover Lucretius, by the use of this same expression, bears testimony that such figures are intentional and are regarded as ornaments of diction. For in his fourth book he speaks of a shout as "marching" (*gradientem*) through the windpipe and jaws, which is much bolder than the Sallustian expression about the ships. The lines of Lucretius are as follows: The voice besides doth often scrape the throat; A shout before marching (*gradiens*) doth make the windpipe rough. Accordingly, Sallust, in the same book, uses *progressus*, not only of those who sailed in ships, but also of floating skiffs. I have added his own words about the skiffs: "Some of them, after going (*progressae*) but a little way, the load being excessive and unstable, when panic had thrown the passengers into disorder, began to sink."

would suggest Pollio was a member, if not the leader, of a group hostile to Sallust in the thirties BC.

Nor did Livy escape Pollio's criticism, as Quintilian was quick to note: 'Pollio reproves Livy for his lapses into the dialect of Padua'[163] and 'Asinius Pollio held that Livy, for all his astounding eloquence, showed traces of the idiom of Padua.'[164] Modern scholarship has found little to support this comment, although this does not exclude the possibility that it was apparent at the time.[165] Pollio also was an Italian from Marrucini, and his comments indicate that he took no pride in revealing his origin, but rather aimed to win approval by being as Roman as possible.[166] Further, we may guess that Pollio had a particularly hostile relationship with Padua, when we note his actions in the land distributions in the area in 41BC.

Nor were others safe from criticism. Whilst Pollio may have written to Plancus concerning Sallust, the tables soon turned and Plancus himself became a target. 'When told that Asinius Pollio was composing declamations against him, to be published by himself or his children after his death (so that he would not be able to reply), Plancus said, not inelegantly: " Only ghosts fight with the dead!" This retort had such an effect on those declamations that in learned circles nothing was judged more shameful.'[167] We do not know what could have been the content of these declamations, but Plancus was a sufficiently controversial figure for there to have been many incidents for Pollio to attack, either from personal interaction or from Plancus' career.

One possibility may have been Plancus' significant success in the principate. (We can note Pollio's potential to feel in rivalry with others, as he felt towards Ventidius in the Perusine War.[168]) In 22 BC Plancus held the office of Censor, the first *novus homo* for over a century to do so. Cicero had wanted the position but to no avail, and Agrippa had only held the power of the office as consul with Augustus in 28 BC when Augustus had declared the *censoria potestas,* which allowed for the consuls to have the status of the position but without actually holding the

---

[163] Quint. *Inst*. 1.5.56 *quemadmodum Pollio reprehendit in Livio Patavinitatem*.
[164] Quint. *Inst*. 8.1.3 *Et in Tito Livio, mirae facundiae viro, putat inesse Pollio Asinius quandam Patavinitatem*.
[165] Chilver (1941) 216ff. makes the interesting point that Padua had a reputation for Puritanism and 'was notorious for Republicanism during the civil wars.' He considers Pollio despised Livy's whole outlook and the comment a gibe by suggesting that Livy's style and manners too, were derived from his northern home. Chilver concludes that there is little to support Pollio's accusations.
[166] See André (1949) 89ff., Syme *Rom. Rev*. 485-486; Levene in Marincola (2007) 276, who considers it is a criticism of Livy's language rather than of the theory of his history and McDonald, in Chaplin and Kraus (2009) 258, who makes the point that the criticism was more likely personal or an attack on Livy's provincial politics, 'his original *rusticitas*', than related to literary style.
[167] Plin. *HN pref*. 31. Comment on Pollio's association with Plancus in the Perusine war has also been noted and the possible conflict in their relationship that may have occurred in the fall out from Perusia. See Chapter 6.
[168] See Chapter 6.

office.[169] This was a significant coup for Plancus and may hardly have endeared him to Pollio. Watkins commented that Plancus might well have become one of the senators held in high regard by Octavian, and noted in particular, that it was Plancus who proposed that the *cognomen* "Augustus" be awarded to Octavian in January 27 BC. Watkins likewise considered this period might have been the setting for Pollio's feud with Plancus, and that it was stimulated largely by jealousy.[170]

This hostility by Pollio towards Plancus has been vindicated by the writings of Velleius who maintains a consistent portrait of Plancus as a treacherous, immoral individual and a scoundrel. It has long been thought that Velleius was simply recording the official hostility present in his own time against the granddaughter of Plancus, Munatia Plancina, who was connected with the poisoning of Germanicus.[171] Watkins has further suggested that Velleius is also portraying the hostility of the 30's B C and the period after Actium when all those who had supported Antony were now denigrated. However, it is difficult to include Plancus in this group as he had abandoned Antony to support Octavian.[172] Bosworth has largely discredited the theory the hostility was related to Plancina as she was not prosecuted until after the period when Velleius was writing.[173] Rather, he considers Plancus may have become unpopular in his own right. Bosworth cites Plancus' censorship in 22 BC not as an honour but as a deliberate humiliation as Augustus undertook many of the functions himself and the appointment was seen as a failure. Wright questions this interpretation by Bosworth suggesting that other sources do not show the office disgraced Plancus.[174] This has led Wright to reconsider the source material Velleius may have been using. It is generally considered it is the *Historiae* of Pollio where a hostile attitude towards Plancus could be expected. However, the hostility directed towards Plancus by Velleius extends well beyond the termination point of the *Historiae.* Wright considers it is the *orationes* mentioned by Pliny as a more probable source.[175] This may be a valuable insight. It is consistent with Pollio not attacking Cicero in his history but publishing the comments as a speech at a later time. Similarly, he may not have attacked Plancus in his history but in separate publications such as the *orationes*, where he may have criticised others besides Plancus.

Pollio's comments regarding Plancus parallel his comments concerning Cicero and the declamation this occasioned. But it was Pollio who fared badly from the attempt to discredit Plancus; his actions were considered highly shameful, a severe censure. As Plancus died *circa*

---

[169] See Wiseman (1971) 169. *RG* 8
[170] Watkins (1997) 120 n. 15; 126.
[171] See in particular Syme *Rom*. *Rev*. 512 n.1; *AA* 429.
[172] Watkins (1997)144-158.
[173] Bosworth (1972) 448 -451.
[174] Dio 54.2.1-3 gives little detail. Suet. *Ner*. 4. Wright (2002)180 and n.16.
[175] Wright (2002) esp. 183-184.

15 BC we can only know that the comments were written before this date, although there is some suggestion Plancus may have been in ill health, or close to death, at the time.

Quintilian also notes Pollio's antagonism of the orator Labienus. Pollio rebuked Labienus for the use of an accredited idiom,[176] and on another occasion abused his opponent for choosing Labienus as his advocate: 'When discussing the opponent's advocate very seldom we may abuse him, as Asinius did in his speech on behalf of the heirs of Urbinia, where he includes among the proofs of the weakness of the plaintiff's case the fact that he has secured Labienus as his advocate.'[177] Again we can note not only a criticism of grammar but also a personal vindictiveness.

Pollio's criticisms appear to have attracted a retort, for we also find in Quintilian a reference to a pamphlet written against Pollio with the suggestion its author may have been either Labienus or Cornelius Gallus: 'while the author of the *in Pollionem*, be he Labienus or Cornelius Gallus …'[178]

Attribution of the pamphlet to Labienus makes sense, but the suggestion that the author may have been Gallus (assuming it is the Cornelius Gallus long associated with Pollio) creates the possibility of a new aspect to their relationship. It suggests that even in this longstanding relationship, hostility had arisen.

Discussion of Pollio's relationship with the Greek historian Timagenes will also show the severe falling out he had with this individual, which was only repaired by the latter's argument with Augustus and his turning afresh to Pollio.[179]

All in all Pollio's proclivity for criticism was a well-known and defining trait of his personality.[180] Seneca notes Pollio's harsh judgments, and states that he rarely made allowances for others.[181] Pliny also notes his harshness.[182]

Conclusion

Several issues emerge as being of significance in judging Pollio's *Histories*. First we must conclude that a history of the civil wars written in the thirties with the battle of Actium looming, and Octavian being very much Octavian and not Augustus, will differ from a history written in

---

[176] Quint. *Inst*. 9.3.13.
[177] Quint. *Inst*. 4.1.11.
[178] Quint. *Inst*. 1.5.8 *et in oratione Labieni (sive illa Cornelii Galli est) in pollionem* .
[179] Sen. *Ir*. 3.23.7-8. See Chapter 14.
[180] Bosworth (1972) comments on the *ferocia* of Pollio and his son.
[181] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 3.
[182] Plin. *HN* 36. 33.

the twenties, during a period of emerging peace and the sense of restoration that Octavian, now with his new title of Augustus, was beginning to create. Although, it is to be acknowledged that the twenties continued to be marked by unrest and uncertainity and it is more with hindsight that we recognize the gradual stability occurring under Octavian/Augustus. Nevertheless, our research would suggest Pollio was writing in the former period and in the context of his own decision not to fight at Actium. However, from the few fragments that exist we can say little about his history. Morgan stresses the autopsy in Pollio's history. We would have to conclude this is most evident from the references to Pollio in secondary sources such as Appian, Plutarch and Suetonius rather than directly from the surviving fragments of Pollio's history. There is good reason to argue Pollio's history was a form of self-justification. Caesar had already set the standard, autobiographies from the social war had been written, Sallust had set out his own agenda in writing his history and challenged Rome with its current decline and he had also left a history to be continued. Further, with any history of the civil wars Pollio's actions through those wars and again in the context of Actium were certain to come under scrutiny. We could argue there was considerable pressure for him to write this history at this point in time.

The lack of a firm start and finish date of Pollio's history is also of significance as this, if clear, might have helped define not only the historical period covered but also the approach. If, as is the majority view, although still by no means certain, the dates are 60 to 43 or 42 BC it would suggest his *Historiae* focused on the rise and fall of Caesar. We can follow Pelling's line of thought here, that a history focused on these dates is more centred on the individual Caesar as compared with a history that extends beyond Philippi where the consequences of the death of Caesar take greater meaning than that of the individual alone.[183] Nicolaus of Damascus in his biography of Augustus wrote a full account of the conspiracy against Caesar and of his assassination which is still extant.[184] It is the earliest depiction by an ancient author that we have of Caesar and his death. According to Toher, Nicolaus' account of the conspiracy against Caesar is of a 'conspiracy against a weak and imperceptive ruler by more ruthless and ambitious rivals.' [185] It is not in line with the later historical tradition of a heroic figure cut down in his

---

[183] Pelling (2006) 7-15. 'The death of Caesar is central, but it works differently if it is told as a "Brutus story "or a "Caesar story " or a story of "mistakes of rule" and what was morally good or bad'. Compare Fornara (1983) 75-76 who suggests that Pollio wrote a monograph rather than a continuous history. 'His (Pollio's) choice of 60 BC as the starting point is only suitable as the prelude to the great final act of the Civil Wars. For a history of Roman *stasis*, however, the date was unsatisfactory.' Fornara considers Sallust went back in time to the death of Sulla in order to chart the course of revolution, whereas Pollio selected a period of dramatic unity. The fact that Pollio did not cover the events of 67-61 BC (Fornara unequivocally accepts the starting point as 60 BC) suggests to Fornara that Pollio did not maintain the history of Sallust and the theme of unresolved conflict and exacerbated crisis, but rather chose the dramatic events of Caesar's death and so is more in the style of Sisenna than Sallust.
[184] Nic. Dam. 19 ff.
[185] Toher (2006) 38.

prime, symbolic of the conflict between Roman aristocratic ambition and *libertas*.[186] The source material for Nicolaus' biography has been extensively argued, and Pollio, especially according to Scardigli who draws on the work of Dobesch, remains a key contender.[187] But we know little of Pollio's relationship with Caesar other than his comments in his letter to Cicero in 43 BC where his joining with Caesar was largely due to having more enemies in the opposing camp and an attraction to Caesar's intellect.[188] Scardigli argues that Nicolaus wrote his history in retaliation to the stance taken by Pollio in his history against Augustus, but as Toher reasons there is good evidence that Nicolaus' account is written from his own independent perspective and that 'attempts to detect and identify other sources in Nicolaus tell us little of significance about either those lost sources or Nicolaus' work itself.'[189] It is also relevant that Pollio was absent from Rome at the time of Caesar's assassination and remained disengaged from the immediate events that followed, declaring in his letters a lack of knowledge and information of the activities.[190]

Horace indicates Pollio was undertaking a dangerous task in writing of the civil wars when fires still existed beneath the ashes.[191] However, the greater challenge was that Pollio was writing of events that others could contest in respect of their veracity. As Pliny the Younger noted, to write a history of present times where no author has gone before risks giving offense to many and will please but few.[192] But from all we know there appears to have been little reaction to Pollio's history unless we consider his criticisms of others a defensive reaction to comments he may have received on his writings.[193] Both Sallust and Livy became well known for their histories; Pliny tells of a Spaniard who came all the way to Rome to gain just one look at Livy.[194] Livy attracted high praise from both Senecas, Quintilian and Tacitus. Sallust also reaped high reward and was second only to Vergil and Cicero in popularity.[195] Tacitus only mentions Pollio as a

---

[186] Toher (2006) 41 'Caesar was a victim of his own military ambitions and of the ambitions of those closest to him. Hardly a hero, and his murderers hardly noble.'
[187] Scardigli (1983). The key sources for Nicolaus are generally considered to be Pollio's history, Livy and Augustus' autobiography.
[188] See Chapter 4.
[189] Scardigli (1983); Toher (2006) 32-33 and n. 13. Scardigli (121) considers Pollio wrote his history after Actium and most probably after the appearance of Augustus' autobiography, as also argued by Dobesch and Gabba. This would place his writing in the late twenties BC but before Horace had published his *Odes* in 23 BC. It was also at this time (22 BC) that Pollio took in Herod's sons, as a respected friend of Augustus. His own son Gallus was also heading for membership of the *XV viri sacris faciundis* in 17 BC further suggesting Pollio was well connected in the principate and unlikely to write a hostile history at this time.
[190] See Chapter 4 and discussion of Pollio's letters written in 43 BC.
[191] Hor. *Carm*. 2.1.
[192] Plin. *Ep*. 5.8.13. Pliny is comparing the task with writing history of the past and the need to collate the work of many historians.
[193] Fantham (1996) 98 also notes there appeared to be little interest in Pollio's work and that it was eclipsed by the work of Livy.
[194] Plin. *Ep* 2.3.8.
[195] Conte (1994) 243. Quint. *Inst*.2.5.19 where he states Sallust is the greater historian than Livy.

historian of the late republic in the speech of Cremutius Cordus, and openly reserves all of his praise for Sallust and Livy.[196] Quintilian lists all the leading historians of his time; Sallust is compared to Thucydides and Livy to Herodotus. Servilius Nonianus, Aufidius Bassus, and Cremutius follow in gaining a mention.[197] Pollio, however, does not make the list.

[196] Tac. *Ann*. 4.34.4. See also Gowing (2009) 17-24 who also notes this cursory reference to Pollio by Tacitus as compared with the other annalists of the period.
[197] Quint. *Inst*. 10.1.101-104.

14 Pollio, Timagenes And Augustus

Pollio's literary pursuits ensured he maintained relationships with the elite intellectual class of Rome who included both Greek and Roman historians and philosophers. Amongst this group was the Greek historian Timagenes. An incident in Augustus' reign, documented by both Seneca the Elder and the Younger, concerning Timagenes, acts to provide an insight into Pollio's relationship with Augustus and also Pollio's interpersonal relationships.[1]

Timagenes was born to a royal moneylender in Alexandria. When Gabinius laid siege to the city in 55 BC Timagenes was captured, brought to Rome as a prisoner and bought by Faustus Sulla. He subsequently worked his way up the Roman hierarchy, from cook to a chair carrier, before finally entering into the circle of Augustus and living within the emperor's palace.[2] But we can note that he was initially with Antony's circle before joining with Augustus.[3]

Timagenes wrote many books but we only have the title of his universal history *On Kings* which covered an account of the eastern empire down to the time of Caesar.[4] His attitude was generally held to be anti-Roman. This is largely based on his identification as one of the frivolous Greeks referred to by Livy in the following account: [5]

> I am only stating facts about which there is no dispute. Are we to regard none of these things as serious drawbacks to his (Alexander's) merits as a commander? Or was there any danger of that happening which the most frivolous of the Greeks, who actually extol the Parthians at the expense of the Romans, are so constantly harping upon, namely, that the Roman people must have bowed before the greatness of Alexander's name – though I do not think they had even heard of him – and that not one out of all the Roman chiefs would have uttered his true sentiments about him, though men dared to attack him in Athens, the very city which had been shattered by Macedonian arms and almost well in sight of the smoking ruins of Thebes, and the speeches of his assailants are still extant to prove this?

---

[1] Seneca the Younger (*Ir*. 3.23.7-8) outlines the incident in detail. The Elder Seneca was also drawn to comment on Timagenes (*Controv*. 10.5.22).
[2] Jacoby *FGrH* 88 with commentary; Sen. *Controv*. 10.5.22. See also Bowersock (1965) 109-110;125; Stern (1974) 1. 222 and Sordi (1982) 775ff.
[3] Plut. *Ant*. 72 with Pelling (1988) 298.
[4] *RE* 6A 1936: 1063 ff.
[5] *levissimi ex Graeciis*. Livy 9.18.6 = FGrH 88 T9.

The evidence that this refers to Timagenes is controversial and largely conjectural; Oakely concludes it is likely but not certain.[6] However, we have the more explicit statement of Seneca in *Epistle* 91.13 on the anti-Roman attitude of Timagenes:

> Timagenes, who had a grudge against Rome and her prosperity, used to say that the only reason he was grieved when conflagrations occurred in Rome was his knowledge that better buildings would arise than those which had gone down in the flames.

Timagenes was an intelligent, charismatic individual, outspoken and critical and according to the Elder Seneca had a certain attractiveness in his acid statements.[7]

> He (Craton) used often to clash before the emperor with Timagenes, a man of acid tongue, and over-free with it because, I imagine, he hadn't been free himself over a long period … He was a fluent and witty man, who came out with many outrageous but attractive things.

He no doubt entered Pollio's circle of acquaintances, as he was associated with the leading rhetoricians and established his own school of rhetoric.[8] The two quarreled, easily understandable when considering the character of both men, and were alienated from each other when Timagenes pushed his luck too far with Augustus. Timagenes was repeatedly critical of Augustus and his household, and after repeated warnings to refrain, Augustus was forced to act. Timagenes was banished from the house of the Emperor and sought refuge with Pollio. Both Senecas chose to recount the incident:

According to Seneca the Elder:

> But he (Timagenes) despised both his present and his past fortunes to such an extent that, when the emperor, angry at him on many accounts, barred him from his house, he burned the histories he had written recounting the emperor's deeds, as though barring him, in his turn, from access to his genius (*Controv*. 10. 5.22).

Seneca the Younger provides even greater detail and includes the role of Pollio in resolving the crisis:

> The deified Augustus also did and said many things that are memorable, which prove that he was not ruled by anger. Timagenes, a writer of history, made some unfriendly remarks about the emperor himself, his wife, and all his family, and they have not been lost; for reckless wit gets bandied about more freely and is on everybody's lips. Often did Caesar

---

[6] Oakley (2005) 203. See also Atkinson (2000) 314 ff., who notes Timagenes' hostility in his history towards Pompey over his actions in the restoration of Ptolemy Auletes in 54 BC. It can be noted that Pollio was also actively engaged in the issue at the time with a similar hostility towards Pompey – a factor which might have linked the two men. See Chapter 2.

[7] Sen. *Controv*. 10.5.22 and Hor. *Ep*.1.19.15-16: 'Emulating Timagenes'speeches ruined Iarbitas, through straining so hard to be witty and eloquent.'

[8] He is associated with Caecilius the rhetor from Sicily, according to the *Suda*, and Seneca in this extract associates him the outspoken Kraton. See also Atkinson (2000) 314.

> warn him that he must have a more prudent tongue; when he persisted, he forbade him the palace. After this, Timagenes lived to old age in the house of Asinius Pollio, and was lionized by the whole city. Though Caesar had excluded him from the palace, he was debarred from no other door. He gave readings of the history which he had written after the incident, and the books which contained the doings of Augustus Caesar he put in the fire and burned. He maintained hostility against Caesar, yet no one feared to be his friend, no one shrank from him as a blasted man; though he fell from such a height, he found some one ready to take him to his bosom. As I have said, Caesar bore all of this patiently, not even moved by the fact that his renown and his achievements had been assailed; he made no complaint against the host of his enemy. To Asinius Pollio he merely said, "You're keeping a wild beast." Then, when the other was trying to offer some excuse, he stopped him and said, "enjoy yourself, my dear Pollio, enjoy yourself!" and when Pollio declared, "If you bid me, Caesar, I shall forthwith deny him the house," he replied, "Do you think that I would do this, when it was I who restored the friendship between you?" For the fact is, Pollio had once had a quarrel with Timagenes, and his only reason for ending it was that Caesar had now begun one (Sen. *Ir.* 3.23.7-8).

Timagenes' critical comments of Augustus could be considered as slander of the emperor and placed him at risk for being charged with treason.[9] But Augustus responded within an established tradition and decided to withdraw his friendship, *amicitiam renuntiare,* [10] and to ban him from his house*, interdicere domo.* It was a measure invoked by the emperor when offended and remained in use at least to the end of the fourth century AD. [11] Private citizens also responded similarly: Cicero had renounced his friendship with Cato the Younger when they clashed over the tribuneship of Clodius even though no formal decalaration of the breach was ever made; reconciliation followed some time later. Similarly, Cassius Severus had been banned from the house of the brother-in-law of Maecenas due to his outspoken statements.[12] For the distinguished *nobilis* it could be a heavy penalty and lead to the ruin of a career. Timagenes considered the action severe and responded with even greater hostility (in stark contrast to the *nobiles* who committed suicide, as, for example, Cornelius Gallus) burning the sections of his history that recorded the deeds of Augustus.[13]

It is not known whether Timagenes sought refuge with Pollio, or Pollio offered his house. For Timagenes it was a clever move. He sought the assistance of a leading individual, a known

---

[9] See Tac. *Ann*. 1.72.
[10] See Rogers (1959) 225 n. 2 for the use of *renuntiare* versus *renuntiatio*.
[11] See Rogers (1959) for examples of use of this sanction under the late republic and early empire**.** It was a personal rather than official response but with equal weight.
[12] Plut. *Cat*. *Min*. 40.2; *Cic*. 34; Quint. *Inst*. 6.3.79.
[13] Sen. *Ir*. 3.23.5; Sen. *Controv*. 10.5.22. For Timagenes it was equivalent to having been exiled. Comparison is called for with Cassius Severus who was equally outspoken and eventually exiled. His books were burned. For a more symbolic and mythological interpretation of Timagenes and his actions against Augustus and argument that Seneca presented the Greek as a "suffering Timagenes" and his sacrifice for free speech see Gunderson (2003) 95-96. Comparison can also be made with Cornelius Gallus who also showed ill-will and ingratitude towards Augustus and who gave open support to Q. Caecilius Epirota who had been sent from the house of Augustus due to his gross moral violations. As a result Gallus was punished; Augustus expelled him from his circle of friends and prohibited him from entering the imperial provinces so ending his political career. See also Raaflaub and Samons (1990) 423-424.

supporter of *libertas*, with whom he had previously quarrelled, to aid him on the basis he had been "exiled" for speaking his mind. This placed Pollio in a difficult position: he supported the emperor, or he upheld the right of freedom of speech.

Seneca the Younger gives a glimpse of the dialogue between Pollio and Augustus. Initially Pollio attempts to make some excuse for housing the outspoken Greek, but then states that if Augustus forbids the relationship he will ban Timagenes from his house – *si iubes Caesar, statim illi domo mea interdicam* (*Ir*. 3.23.28). This is a direct expression of deference to Augustus. It implies Pollio wishes to remain in favour with the emperor. Pollio himself has not voluntarily refused to house Timagenes, but has asked Augustus to be responsible for any ban, an act that would highlight Augustus' attitude towards free speech and cast him as responsible for any restriction. In this we could perhaps see an element of hostility or challenge to the regime.

Augustus responds that he has no issue with Pollio's taking in Timagenes; he will assert no restriction, in fact he feels responsible for having restored Pollio's relationship with Timagenes that had previously broken down. Augustus considers Pollio has taken in a "wild beast", and if anything is querying his judgment in doing so. He sees Pollio as a zookeeper. The ball is now back in Pollio's court. Pollio then maintains Timagenes living in his house on an indefinite basis.[14]

Feeney uses this exchange between Pollio and Augustus to challenge Syme's belief that Pollio remained the hero of *libertas* and in opposition to Augustus.[15] It is Augustus who would determine the extent of freedom of speech and Pollio submitted to this authority.[16] The incident highlights his adaptation to the new regime. Pollio offers respect to this regime, demands Augustus take responsibility for his rulings, and yet maintains his own independence by keeping a close relationship with an outspoken enemy of Augustus with the "consent" of the latter. Pollio cannot be accused of acting in defiance of the emperor but he does not support him.[17] If

---

[14] According to the *Suda,* Timagenes died during a banquet when he was attempting to vomit between courses.
[15] Feeney (1992) 7-8; Syme *Rom. Rev*. 482 cf. 486.
[16] As Rogers (1959) 226 notes, the action of Augustus was not an official act but a private and personal response, one also used by private citizens against their enemies, and so did not debar others from continuing a relationship with Timagenes which the majority of the populace did indeed maintain.
[17] André (1949) 25 also considers the incident is not sufficient evidence of either Pollio's opposition to the regime or of his maintaining a pro-Antonian stance. More recent authors, however, do attempt to use the incident as evidence that Pollio was hostile to Augustus. Griffin (1984) 189-218 considers the attitude of Pollio "provocative", but as Bosworth (1972) 445-6 notes, there was little of political significance in Augustus' actions and little to suggest hostility on the part of Pollio. Raaflaub and Samons (1990) 443 comment that the whole matter seems to have caused no friction between Pollio and Augustus, and that the treatment of Timagenes by Augustus suggests it was more a violation of *amicitia* than a sign of serious political opposition to the regime. McGill in a review of Thomas (2001) comments that in the

anything the nature of the dialogue suggests more an element of friendship and banter over what to do with the outspoken Greek. Augustus appears somewhat amused that the problem will now belong to Pollio who, if he upholds his belief in *libertas,* can hardly refuse to take in Timagenes. It should also be noted that the rest of Rome also continued to support Timagenes, none barred him from their door, and evidently did not feel that this was an affront to the emperor.

The dating of the incident is unknown. Some attempt can be made to place it within a time frame by noting that after the ban Timagenes burned the sections of his History relating to the deeds of Augustus. In fact it would appear his anti-Roman attitude might not have emerged until after the expulsion by Augustus and his giving vent to his anger. Horace *circa* 20 BC comments on the style of Timagenes in his histories, which suggests they were well advanced by this time and, as Timagenes burned what he had written about Augustus, it is possible that this may have occurred during this period.[18] Indeed, it is quite likely the actual content he had written on Augustus was complimentary which now motivated him to burn this section and so develop his anti-Roman attitude. The incident also occurred in a period in Augustus' reign before his greater restrictions on free expression were developed. Augustus was largely absent from Rome until 29 BC, then away from 27 to 24 before a brief return, and then away again from 22 to 19 BC. This allows for two possibilities for this event; when Augustus was in Rome between 29 to 27 BC or again in 23 BC. The latter date of 23 BC would correspond more fully with Augustus' being established as emperor. There is also a strong possibility Timagenes was accommodated in the house of Pollio before Herod's sons arrived in Rome, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

---

incident of Timagenes we could see an Augustus who punishes criticism, although not severely, and an audience, in this case Pollio, who liked to hear that the emperor had been criticized.

[18] Hor. *Ep*. 1.19.15-16. See Mayer (1994) 10 for a date of publication of the *epistles* of either 20 or19 BC. There is little to support the date of 38 BC for Timagenes' falling out with Augustus as suggested by Passage (1983) 296. Laqueur (*RE*) considers the *History* may have been published before Actium, but the implication from Seneca is that the incident with Timagenes occurred within the reign of Augustus.

15 The Sons Of Herod

By the late twenties BC Pollio is well established in Rome and living under the principate. Augustus, in this period, has a strong connection with Herod, and it is in the context of this Jewish association that further insights can be gained into Pollio, his relationship with the emperor and his own possible Jewish interests, although the evidence for the latter is slim.

In *c* 23 BC, according to Josephus, Herod sent his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, to Rome to further their education.[1] 'They lodged at the house of Pollio who was very fond of Herod's friendship'.[2] They returned to Jerusalem *c* 16 BC.[3]

Groag and Stein in their first edition of *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* considered the Pollio referred to by Josephus to be Asinius.[4] Willrich subsequently queried this assumption noting that it would have been scandalous for Herod to send his sons to live with a gentile; it was far more likely that the Pollio mentioned by Josephus was a Jew and not Asinius.[5] In the second edition of *PIR* Groag and Stein queried whether the Pollio referred to by Josephus was Asinius.[6]

Syme, in his investigation into the individual known as Vedius Pollio, in view of the query by Groag, added an addendum to his work, raising the possibility that if the Pollio was not Asinius it could perhaps have been Vedius Pollio.[7]

Around the same time Feldman argued strongly that the Pollio was Asinius Pollio, and further proposed that he had developed Jewish interests and orientation.[8] Grant next entered the debate,

---

[1] Josephus dates the event at the time when the city of Sebaste was built. Sebaste was rebuilt between 27 and 22 BC and completed before the building of Caesarea Maritima was undertaken, which commenced in 22 BC. Josephus further notes Augustus also gave Herod at this time the territory of Trachonits, Batanaea and Aurantis. According to *BJ* 1.398 this occurred after September 24.
[2] Joseph. *AJ* 15.343 (the sons of Herod by Mariamme 1).
[3] Joseph *AJ* 16.6. Herod visited Rome to fetch his sons. The visit occurred between 19-16 BC when Augustus had returned to Rome from Syria and before he departed for Gaul. It is assumed the two sons were born between 36-34 BC and so their education would not have been considered complete until eighteen years. This would favour the later date of 17-16 BC for Herod's visit and the return of the sons. See Smallwood (1976) 89; Richardson (1999) 231. Schürer (1973) 321 suggests 18-17 BC.
[4] *PIR* 1929 1st Edition.
[5] Willrich (1929) 117; 184-185 See also a review of Willrich (*JRS* (1929) 90) which noted that Willrich might have wished to maintain a very traditional figure in Herod as, for example, not wishing to believe that Herod was responsible for the elder son's death and that he did indeed drown in his swimming pool as Herod wished to state. Willrich contends that the Roman friends in general of Herod were wealthy Jews. He also notes that Josephus does not specifically state "Asinius" Pollio as he had identified him at other points in his writings. See later discussion on this point.
[6] *PIR* 1933 2nd Edition A 1241, 253.
[7] Syme (1961) 30 = *RP* 2. 529.
[8] Feldman (1953) reprinted in (1996) 52-56; 1985.

stating it could not have been Asinius Pollio because of his opposition to the regime of Augustus and supported the suggestion it was Vedius Pollio.[9]

Subsequent literature has generally acknowledged that the identity of the Pollio referred to by Josephus is questionable, noting it is either Vedius Pollio or Asinius Pollio. Most go no further, but where a preference is given it is often to Asinius largely because of his high status.[10] André in his biography of Pollio makes no mention of the incident at all, and Bosworth in his article on Pollio and Augustus footnotes that it was probably Vedius Pollio but that either way it gives no insight into Pollio's political inclination at this time.[11] Zecchini in his overview of Pollio considers it was Asinius, and again uses the evidence to support the argument of Pollio's ongoing loyalty to Julius Caesar in view of Caesar's support for the Jews. He further upholds the views of Feldman with respect to Pollio's having a Philo-Judaic interest [12]

The incident, if referring to Asinius, is an important insight into his activities and relationships during the reign of Augustus and therefore of interest to explore.

There are several problems which emerge from the existing scholarship. Feldman has overstated the case for Pollio's Jewish interests and this has to some extent weakened his viewpoint.[13] Similarly, the argument of Pollio's opposition to Augustus, and therefore that it is unlikely that Herod would have sent his sons to him, is also overstated and without solid evidence. The search for another Pollio, to whom Josephus may have been making reference, has promoted Vedius Pollio into this position, a theory largely based on a possibility raised by Syme, who was

---

[9] Grant (1971) 145.

[10] Schalit (1969) 413-414 questions if it was Asinius Pollio, because he was not a Jew; Smallwood (1976) 89 n. 103 states it is inconclusive. She gives evidence for Asinius, but notes also it could be Vedius Pollio; Schürer (1973) 321 n. 132 agrees it is more likely to have been Asinius but notes the reference to Vedius; Hoehner (1983) 15 considers it was Asinius Pollio, who probably hired a Jew to look after the sons whilst Pollio provided for their instruction; Roller (1998) 24-28 reviews all the evidence and concludes it is most likely Asinius Pollio, and that this supports an argument of Pollio's having established a friendship with Herod in 40 BC (see later discussion). Richardson (1999) 231 n. 49 also considers all arguments and favours Asinius on the basis of inclination and previous acquaintance; Horbury (2003) 115-116 again considers all the evidence, and whilst he considers Asinius the most likely, notes the main drawback is Pollio's detachment from Augustus; Goodman *CAH* 10 (1996) 742 n. 6 considers it is probably Asinius Pollio, but notes Vedius Pollio is also possible.

[11] André (1949); Bosworth (1972) 446 n. 33.

[12] Zecchini (1982) 1281. He does not acknowledge Augustus' strong support of Herod, only that of Caesar. Zecchini's viewpoint is that Pollio's goals in the regime were to act as a protector of the legacy and memory of Caesar that had been betrayed by the regime, and to gather about himself intellectual dissidents also not in favour with Augustus. He includes in this group Timagenes. See also Haller (1967).

[13] References to Vergil's fourth *Eclogue* with respect to Pollio and a messiah certainly should be regarded with caution. Feldman (1953) 80 concludes his argument on Pollio's Jewish interests by noting possible Jewish sources for Vergil's Fourth *Eclogue,* which was dedicated to Pollio, implying Pollio had such interests. See also Phillimore (1925) 29, who suggests Pollio had an interest in Orientalism, and in particular an interest in Jewish prophecy, and that Vergil was making reference to this in the fourth *Eclogue*. Coleman (1977) 152-154 also comments on Pollio's Jewish contacts and the oriental material in the fourth *Eclogue*.

exploring all references to "Pollio" which could not be definitely ascribed to Asinius.[14] He simply noted that the identity of the Pollio referred to by Josephus in this context was uncertain and perhaps he was Vedius, nothing more. Further, compounding difficulties have been thrown into the argument by noting variations in the spelling of Pollio by Josephus and his use of the full name or not.

Pollio and Herod

The reference in Josephus (*AJ* 15.343) implies Pollio had a friendship with Herod: 'for they (the sons) lodged at the house of Pollio who was very fond of Herod's friendship' (the Loeb translation states: 'who (Pollio) professed himself one of Herod's most devoted friends').[15] The only other reference, and opportunity, for possible contact between Asinius and Herod, occurs in Pollio's consulship of 40 BC. Herod, who had established a strong connection with Antony, came to Rome seeking the assistance of his friend. He arrived shortly after the Pact of Brundisium when Antony and Octavian were both present in the capital. Josephus records the presentation of Herod's case within the senate, his being granted the kingship of Palestine and subsequent ritual of sacrifice on the Capitol in the presence of the consuls (unnamed).[16] Josephus states that Messalla [17] and Atratinus [18] spoke for Herod in the senate. He concludes the event by noting that it occurred in the 184 Olympiad and when Gaius Domitius Calvinus and Asinius Pollio were consuls.

The event is usually dated to early December 40 BC. It occurred after the signing of the Pact of Brundisium and during the winter months. Josephus makes specific mention of the hazards of Herod's journey through the rough seas, and reports that the events in Italy were tumultuous, which suggests that he set sail in the period immediately before Brundisium.[19] However, we

---

[14] Feldman (1953) 79 lists six other "Pollios" that could be considered (Asinius Pollio Trallianus, Romilius Pollio, Vedius Pollio, M. Vitruvius Pollio the famous architect, Cn Pullius Pollio, C. Annius Pollio) and concludes the only other serious contender is Asinius Pollio Trallianus but excludes him on the lack of sufficient social standing. Feldman assesses the contenders on the basis of their known Jewish interests or relations. On this criterion he excludes Vedius Pollio.

[15] Ἐπὶ τοιούτοις δὲ ὢν καὶ τῆς Σεβαστῆς ἤδη πεπολισμένης ἔγνω τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ πέμπειν εἰς Ῥώμην Ἀλέξανδρον καὶ Ἀριστόβουλον, συντευξομένους Καίσαρι.τούτοις ἀνελθοῦσιν καταγωγὴ μὲν ἦν Πολλίωνος οἶκος ἀνδρὸς τῶν μάλιστα σπουδασάντων περὶ τὴν Ἡρώδου φιλίαν, ἐφεῖτο δὲ κἀν τοῖς Καίσαρος κατάγεσθαι.

[16] Joseph. *AJ* 14.378-389; *BJ* 1.279-285.

[17] Messalla Corvinus.

[18] Presumably L. Sempronius Atratinus, thought to be *praetor suffectus* at the time and supporter of Antony. Broughton *MRR* 2. 615. Reference is made to Atratinus in Syme *Rom. Rev*. 231, 282, 328, 339 and *AA* 29,41, 45, 109, 329, 354.

[19] Appian (*B Civ*. 5.75) includes the event in 39 BC listing Herod as one of several kings Antony appointed. However, that does not exclude the granting of the kingship had occurred in 40 BC. See Schalit (1969) 146-148; Smallwood (1976) 55-56 esp. n. 30; Braund (1983) 24-25. Talbert (1984) 208-209 notes that foreign embassies were only received by the senate in February of each year. This routine

cannot be certain Pollio was present. Pollio and Calvinus were replaced as consuls before the year ended. The exact date is uncertain, but Dio comments it was in the last few days before the year-end. [20] The naming of the consuls by Josephus could suggest that Pollio was still consul at this time, and so confirm he had remained in Rome after Brundisium or, equally, Josephus could be naming the consuls by whom the year was dated, even if Pollio had now left Rome and the *consules suffecti* were in place; this would be the usual practice. We cannot therefore be absolutely sure if Pollio was present, or indeed when Herod arrived in Rome.[21] However, if we assume Herod arrived in Rome before the end of the year in 40 BC, on balance it is very likely Pollio was still consul. He was present to meet Herod, and a possible connection may have formed between the two, particularly, if Pollio's friendship with Messalla Corvinus was also developed at this stage, who we know was actively supporting Herod. Also we should consider that Pollio did not actually need to be consul at the time to have met Herod; his status alone would have ensured he was included in official gatherings. Rather, it is whether Pollio was still in Rome, and from all we know of his subsequent activity it does appear he did not leave Rome until well into 39, and, no matter when Herod arrived, it would have occurred in this time-frame.

Doubt over the identity of this person has also been raised by the variation in the spelling and use of the name Pollio by Josephus. He mentions the name seven times in the *Antiquitie*s.[22] But as Roller notes, the variations mean little.[23] The only occasion in which Pollio's full name is

---

was well established in the late republic. On this basis Herod is more likely to have come to Rome in February 39 BC. But Josephus highlights the urgency of the mission and that Herod had come to seek assistance from his friend Antony rather than a formal hearing with the senate which may or may not have been functioning noting the turmoil before the Pact of Brundisium. Roller (1998) 12 n. 8 notes Antony was only in Rome from summer 40 to summer 39 when he left for the East, thereby supporting the date as 40 BC, but if we include the evidence of Reynolds, see Chapter 7, Antony was still in Rome on October 2 39 BC, opening the possibility that Herod's visit could still have occurred in the winter of 39. In that case Josephus would have to be wrong about the year of the consuls and the Olympiad. However, it is thought Josephus is in error over the 184 Olympiad which ended in July 40 BC**.** See also Filmer (1966) for the argument Herod's visit occurred in 39 BC, *contra,* Schürer (1973) 281-282 esp n. 3 where he rejects Filmer's dating outright.

[20] Dio 48.32.1. Broughton *MRR* 2.378 indicates it was the *praetores suffecti* who convened the Senate and introduced Herod, implying the consuls had already changed.

[21] Feldman (1953) 77-78; (1985) 243 makes no reference to the fact that Pollio as consul was replaced before the end of 40 BC and that there exists some doubt if he was present. His linking of Herod's accession to power in the year in which Vergil dedicated his fourth *Eclogue* to Pollio further weakens the argument. Interestingly Braund (1983) 240-241 in his argument against Feldman also fails to stress the possible doubt over Pollio's presence in 40 BC. As Herod only visited Rome on three occasions; the granting of his kingship in 40 BC, to collect his sons between 19-16 BC and again in c 12 BC to accuse his sons of conspiracy and deliver his older son to Rome, the only opportunity for Pollio to have met Herod before taking in his sons was 40 BC.

[22] The name of Pollio occurs in *AJ:* 14:389 (Consul Gaius Asinius Pollio); 15.3; 15.4 (Pollio the Pharisee); 15.343 (the house of Pollio); 15.370 (Pollio the Pharisee is mentioned twice); 19.267 (Pollio whom Claudius had made captain of his guards).

[23] Roller (1998) 26-27 provides the example of Julius Caesar in Josephus' writings as a further example of variation in name and spelling. Caesar is referred to progressively through the writings as " Caesar", "Caesar Julius", "Gaius Julius Caesar" "Gaius Caesar", "Julius Gaius' and finally "Gaius". Feldman

given is when he is named as the consul for the year. There is clear distinction from Pollio the Pharisee who is identified as such whenever being referenced and also from Pollio the Claudian prefect. The only other Pollio is therefore Asinius. Pollio is spelt the same way on all occasions except when named as consul when it is spelt as Πωλίωνος as compared with Πολλίωνος.[24]

Vedius Pollio

Nevertheless, this has led to consideration of other individuals with the *cognomen* Pollio who might have been in Rome and had sufficient status to receive Herod's sons. The only serious contender is Vedius Pollio.[25] Syme in his investigation of this person describes a Roman *Eques* who, although, a financial expert who set in order the affairs of Asia, was also well known for his cruelty and lavish way of life.[26] A supporter of Augustus, he disregarded the emperor's friendship in the dramatic incident of the myrrhine goblet.[27] When he died in 15 BC Augustus saw to it that no monument to his memory was established despite Vedius' having bequeathed most of his property to Augustus and requesting a public monument to his memory. Dio's judgment of Vedius is harsh: 'a man who in general had done nothing deserving of remembrance … had performed no brilliant deeds; but had become famous for his wealth and for his cruelty.'[28] Syme looks at several references to "Pollio" in the sources, where the individual concerned is uncertain and is "not Asinius".[29] He seeks a connection between the P. Vedius whom Cicero hated, the *magnus nebulo*, and P. Vedius Pollio as one and the same person. In a brief addendum Syme notes that in view of the hesitation of Groag (*PIR* A1241) to identify Asinius as the Pollio to whom Herod entrusted his sons, it may have been Vedius Pollio. He offers no other evidence to support this suggestion, and it must remain enigmatic. The reference is consistent with other examples in his investigation of references to a "Pollio", often with significant possibly of it being Asinius, as for example in the *propempticon* of

---

(1985) also provides the examples of Tiberius Julius Alexander, Apollonius Molon, Cestius Gallus and Gessius Florus where Josephus varies the use of *praenomen* and *cognomen*. Both writers note that the use of "Asinius" as the reference to Pollio only occurs where Josephus is quoting Strabo and it is Strabo who refers to Pollio as "Asinius" in his writings.

[24] The spelling variant used for the host of Herod's sons conforms more to the Latin spelling of Asinius Pollio's name than does the specific citation of his name as consul. Contra Braund (1983) 240, refuted by Feldman (1985) 240-242.

[25] Feldman lists six Pollios who could be considered. See n. 14.

[26] Syme (1961) 23-30 = *RP* 2:518-529; Dio 54.23.1-6.

[27] Dio 54.23.1-6; Sen. *Ir*. 3.40.2; cf *Clem* 1.18.2 'could anyone have been more hated even by his slaves than Vedius Pollio'; Pliny *HN* 9.77 Also Tac. *Ann* 1.10.5: *que tedii et Vedi Pollionis luxus;* and 12.60.4 with commentary by Goodyear (1972) 163ff.

[28] Dio 54.23.1-2; Ov. *Fast*. 6.643 ff. See also Zanker (1988) 137 who notes the size of the city mansion Vedius built for himself. After it had been levelled, Tiberius, in 7 BC, built on the site the magnificent Porticus Liviae. The extent of this building reveals how vast had been Vedius' palace, how recklessly he built over the old streets even setting one corner of it on a main thoroughfare. He also owned a large estate, the *Pausilypon*, on the Bay of Naples.

[29] Syme (1961) 24 = *RP* 2: 519.

Helvius Cinna for "Pollio", where he considers the identity is open to discussion, but almost certainly it is our Pollio.[30]

Vedius' only redeeming feature is his reasonable management of the financial affairs in Asia in 31/30 BC.[31] Whatever friendship he had with Augustus had long been renounced by the time of his death. Cicero despised the man, Dio can record little of note in his activities and Tacitus noted his extravagant way of life but nevertheless makes it clear that he was a powerful figure.[32] Vedius died in 15 BC, a year after Herod's sons left Rome.[33] Augustus had the site of his luxurious mansion leveled to the ground wishing to obliterate all memory of the man despite his having left a substantial benefit to the emperor. This would indicate that Vedius' standing with Augustus was well in decline by the time of his death and therefore in the period when Herod's sons would have been living in his household. It is almost inconceivable Augustus would send Herod's sons to be educated in his household.[34]

The Greek connection

One of the key factors in identifying Asinius Pollio as the host for Herod's sons is Pollio's relationship with Timagenes and Messalla, both of whom were connected to Herod. In particular, if Timagenes was already living with Pollio when Herod's sons arrived in Rome, this may have been a substantial reason for choosing Pollio's household. Further, Pollio can also be identified with a group of intellectuals who were interested in the East, Jewish affairs and Judea.[35]

In 40 BC Herod and Antony had an established friendship.[36] Another to enter this circle was Messalla Corvinus. Messalla had been with Cassius in 42 BC, at which time Cassius was in contact with Herod regarding the recent murder of Herod's father. When in 41 BC Jewish

---

[30] See discussion Chapter 2.
[31] See Braund (1985) no. 586 also nos. 429-431. The evidence is from Tralles-Caesaria, Ilium, Beneventum and Ephesus. See also Grant (1969) 382. The status of his appointment is obscure but as an *eques* it indicates a promotion.
[32] Tac. *Ann*. 1.10.5; 12.60.4.
[33] Dio 54.23.1.
[34] There is no evidence to support Vedius had an established friendship with Herod unless they had made some contact during his time in Asia in 31/30 BC – a difficult point of transition for them both from Antony to Octavian. Nor is there any indication he was Jewish, if we wish to apply the argument of Willrich or that he would have allowed for Jewish instruction.
[35] See Bowersock (1965) 134ff.; Roller (1998) 17ff. Rawson (1985) makes brief mention of the interest in Jewish affairs in the various intellectual disciplines; the source of this knowledge largely from Greek writers.
[36] Herod's father, Antipater, had developed a friendship with Julius Caesar and after the assassination had supported Cassius and the liberators. When Antipater himself was assassinated shortly after Herod soon rose to become his successor. He continued to support Cassius, raising considerable sums of money for their cause. But after Philippi he skillfully suggested he had been an unwilling participant in the support and maintained the friendship of Antony.

leaders made accusations against Herod at Daphne, Messalla spoke in his favour.[37] He spoke again in the senate on behalf of Herod in 40 BC. We also know Messalla changed allegiance from Antony to Octavian at some point between 41 and 32 BC.[38] Friendship with Messalla would have introduced Herod to the literary world he inhabited. Messalla became well known as a patron of poets, especially Tibullus and Ovid.[39] He also had an established friendship with Pollio and the two were frequently compared in their oratory skills.[40] Pollio was at the house of Messalla when he left affronted by the comments of Sextilius Ena.[41] They are also known to have collaborated in the defence of some clients.[42] There was ample opportunity for Messalla to have introduced Herod to Pollio or in the least for there to have been discussion of Herod. Both were also friends of Horace and it is known that Horace was aware and interested in Herod and the customs of the Jews. Horace makes direct reference to Herod in *Epistle* 2.2.184, dated to 18-19 BC.[43] Vergil also chooses to make reference to Idumaea, Herod's homeland, in a poem written shortly after Herod's visit to Rome in 40 BC.[44]

Another high-ranking Roman who had an interest in the East and Jewish affairs was Marcus Terentius Varro. As noted, Pollio worked with Varro in establishing and cataloguing his library. Two main passages exist from Varro's work, the *Res Divinae,* in which he discusses Jewish worship and also identifies the Jewish God with Jupiter.[45]

But a more direct link of Pollio and Herod, or his interest in Herod, occurs through Timagenes. Whilst Timagenes may have been considered anti-Roman in his writings, although the evidence for this is meagre, he is one of the few Greeks from Alexandria who wrote favourably of the Jews.[46]

---

[37] Joseph. *BJ* 1.243-245; *AJ* 14. 324 -326.
[38] See Hammer (1925) 25-27 who states Messalla left Antony in 40 BC cf**.** Syme *AA* 207ff. who considers Messalla maintained his independence until 33-32 BC. Up until this point it had been to his advantage to be solicited by both triumvirs.
[39] Tibullus in the "Day of Saturn" 1.3.15-18 refers to the Jewish Sabbath. Stern (1974) 318 notes the reference as a further example, along with Horace and Ovid, of the impact of Jewish customs on Roman society.
[40] Hor. *Sat*. 1.10.84.
[41] Sen. *Suas*. 6.27.
[42] Quint. *Inst*. 10.1. 23.
[43] More general references to the Jews can be found in *Sat*. 1.4.143; 1.5.100-101; 1.9.69-70; 2.3. 288-295.The suggestion that Horace might have been of Jewish ancestry, or indeed, that his mother was Jewish, must remain as a most unlikely conjecture. See Alexander (1942) 385-397.
[44] Verg. *G*. 3.12. It is the only reference to Judaea in his works. As Stern (1974) 316 comments, the theories of a presumable Jewish influence on the fourth *Eclogue* are weak.
[45] See Stern (1974) 207ff.; Rawson (1985) 309, 312-316. In considering the ideas of Varro she notes the interest in general the Romans were showing in the last century BC in new *artes,* extending their horizons to orientalism and Pythagorism. Again the Greeks were the key sources for this knowledge.
[46] See Chapter 14 on Pollio and Timagenes.

Timagenes was a member of the Greek intellectual circle, initially formed around Antony, and then Augustus, whose members were interested in the East and the affairs of Syria and Palestine and, as a consequence, interested in Herod. The group included Alexandros Polyhistor of Miletus, and Strabo and Nicolaus of Damascus. We should also note that the epigrammatist Crinagoras of Mytilene and the rhetor Caecilius of Caleacte, often said to have been of the Jewish faith and a known friend of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and the poet Parthenius also belong in this circle, and Parthenius was a friend of Cornelius Gallus and C. Helvius Cinna, both friends of Pollio.[47]

Timagenes introduced Antony to the Greek Alexas of Laodikeia. After Actium Alexas was sent by Antony to persuade Herod not to join with Octavian. It is to be assumed he was chosen as he might have had some influence with Herod and perhaps was known to him.[48]

Strabo was in Rome c 44-35 BC before returning in 29 BC. It was at this time he began writing his forty-seven books, using Timagenes as a source. It is thought Timagenes' own History was probably near complete when Strabo came back to Rome in 29 BC, and was available for Strabo's use. In turn Strabo appears to have rapidly written his forty-seven books from this time of his arrival until their completion in the mid twenties. Whilst Strabo uses many sources he makes specific reference to three in his *History*: Timagenes, Asinius Pollio and Hypsicrates.[49] He also acknowledges Nicolaus and Crinagoras. His works, especially the *Geographica,* contain his views about the Jews, their religion, their state and their history.[50]

Nicolaus, the only one not to spend a substantial period of time in Rome, although he visited at least three times, became an intimate associate of Herod. The date of his actual inclusion into the circle of Herod is difficult to pinpoint but as he was the tutor to the offspring of Antony and Cleopatra and Herod was a close friend of Antony the connection may have occurred in this

---

[47] Bowersock (1965) 124 lists the greater Greek writers of the Augustan age as Timagenes, Dionysius, Strabo and Nicolaus of Damascus, also Crinagoras and the rhetor Caecilius.

[48] The misson was disastrous as Herod had already joined with Octavian and persuaded Alexas to betray Antony. Octavian had him returned to Laodikaia and executed despite Herod pleading on his behalf. Plut. *Ant*. 72 with Pelling (1988) 298. Joseph. *BJ* 1.393; *AJ* 15. 197-198. Roller (1998) 21 suggests Alexas and Herod may have met in the summer of 43 BC in Laodikeia when Herod and Messalla were there with Cassius.

[49] Hypsicrates is referred to several times by Strabo. In the fragment available Hypsicrates emphasizes, like Pollio, the part played by Hyrcanus in the campaign launched for the rescue of Julius Caesar in Alexandria in 47 BC. See Stern (1974) 220-221.

[50] See Stern (1974) 261-315. Roller (1998) 22; 64-65 raises the possibility Strabo may have visited Herod's court after he finished his History. Although there is no clear evidence he suggests this may have occurred when Strabo joined the staff of Aelius Gallus, the prefect of Egypt, and his campaign up the Nile. Nicolaus was at Herod's court and this may have led to a visit from Strabo.

time. He, like Herod, subsequently transferred his allegiance to Octavian. He was a frequent intermediary at Rome on behalf of Herod and held in high regard by both.[51]

As already noted, we have an established connection between Timagenes and Pollio; Augustus stated that he was pleased his quarrel with Timagenes had restored the friendship Pollio had with Timagenes, indicating it was a longstanding one.[52] It is almost certain this relationship would have introduced Pollio to Strabo and Nicolaus. In turn Strabo and Nicolaus were in close connection with Herod. [53]

These Greek authors, many of whom came to Rome after Actium, associated themselves with the Roman aristocracy. Dionysius of Halicarnassus arrived in 30 BC. Dionysius' friend at Rome was the rhetor Caecilius identified as Caecilius of Caleacte; the Sicilian, who, according to the *Suda,* was associated with Timagenes.[54]

What we observe is a Greek intellectual school in Rome, interested in the East, whose members had often written on Jewish history, and some of whom had direct connection with Herod. Nor was a connection with Herod to be shunned. He was a strong ally of Augustus and this must have been well known, as was also his friendship with Agrippa. Pollio's name can be linked with several members of this group, as also with other notable Romans who had a connection with Herod, in particular Messalla.[55]

Pollio himself had also written on Jewish history and is quoted by Strabo who in turn is quoted by Josephus: *'*And Strabo of Cappadocia bears witness to this, when he says this, in the name of Asinius: "After Mithridates had invaded Egypt, and with him Hyrcanus the high priest of the Jews". *'* [56]

---

[51] For his relationship with Augustus and Herod see Bowersock (1965) 134-138.
[52] Sen. *Ir*. 3. 23. 7-8.
[53] Bowersock (1965) 124 notes it would be surprising if these men failed to encounter one another at Rome. All of them, except for Nicolaus, worked in Rome for extended periods, and he was in the city on three separate occasions. Roller (1998) 21-23 makes the same statement. He comments Alexandros Polyhistor, Timagenes, Strabo and probably Nicolaus were all in Rome in 40 BC when Herod arrived. All had interests in the East and all were in the intellectual circle associated with Antony who was the patron of Herod. Contact with Herod at this time is highly likely.
[54] Adler 4.549; *OCD* Caecilius (1). See also O'Sullivan (1997) 40ff.
[55] Roller in his exploration of the intellectual circle that surrounded Herod and its influence on his thinking, and in turn on his great building projects, notes Herod's interest in establishing a library in a similar vein to Julius Caesar's vision. Various authors have attempted to reconstruct the shelf list of Herod's Greek library. The works contained those known to Nicolaus and Alexandros Polyhistor and probably Strabo. Cross fertilization with Pollio's library, noting its Greek texts, is more than likely. See Roller (1998) ch. 4 in particular.
[56] Joseph. *AJ 14. 138*. Also *AJ* 14.127-137; cf. *BJ* 1.187-194.

It is only a fragment, almost certainly from a section of the *Histories,* relating Caesar's campaigns in the East after the death of Pompey. It was probably written in the late thirties to early twenties BC.[57] However, it addresses a contentious issue of the period; the role of Hyrcanus in the Alexandrian campaign.

Hyrcanus

After the death of Pompey in August 48 BC, Antipater, the father of Herod, and the high priest Hyrcanus were keen to maintain the favour of Julius Caesar. When Caesar was besieged in Alexandria, Mithridates of Pergamon came to his assistance with an army that included a significant Jewish force under Antipater.[58] Antipater was instrumental in gaining support from Arabia and Syria and also for the capture of Pelusium. He further won over the Jews of Onias and was also active in the victory at the Camp of the Jews.[59] As a result Mithridates commended Antipater to Caesar who granted him Roman citizenship and exemption from taxation. He also confirmed Hyrcanus in the high priesthood. Hyrcanus had accompanied Antipater on the campaign and it is thought that it was due to his presence that they gained the support of the Jews in Egypt. This crucial role of Hyrcanus is confirmed by the edict of Julius Caesar which is quoted by Josephus.[60] This is in contrast to Josephus' own earlier narrative of the events, in which he ignores the role of Hyrcanus in favour of Antipater.

It is thought Josephus may have been using as his source Nicolaus, who was keen to highlight the role of Herod's father in the campaign. Support for Herod at this time was very strong.[61] However, Pollio, in his account, has affirmed the direct involvement of Hyrcanus.[62] Hypsicrates, also quoted by Strabo and in turn quoted by Josephus, takes the middle ground, acknowledging the active role of both Hyrcanus and Antipater in the expedition. [63] It can be noted Pollio has not been influenced by the propaganda or Herod's close relationship with Antony and then Augustus to devalue the role of Hyrcanus, but rather supported the edict of

---

[57] See Chapter 13. Pollio's *Historiae* was available to Strabo who was writing in the late twenties.
[58] Josephus in his narrative states 3000 men (*AJ* 14.128;139), in the edict of Caesar 1500. (*AJ* 14.193).
[59] Joseph. *AJ* 14.127-137; *BJ* 1.187-194.
[60] Joseph. *AJ* 14.190ff. See Schürer (1973) 1; 267-280 esp. 270-274; Smallwood (1976) 37-38 esp. n. 53.
[61] See also comments in Stern (1974) 242 regarding a pro-Herodian propaganda strongly supported by Nicolaus of Damascus who sought to embellish Herod's ancestry in response to the criticisms that his Idumaean background was not Jewish. Timagenes, like Pollio, does not follow the pro-Herodian attitude of Nicolaus, (Stern 223).
[62] Stern (1974) 213 comments Josephus only cites Pollio on the authority of Strabo, and it is almost certain he did not consult his work directly.
[63] Hypsicrates as quoted by Strabo in Josephus in *AJ* 14.139. See also Stern (1974) 221 who comments that Hypsicrates agrees with Pollio on the role of Hyrcanus. Strabo (265) is also known to have been familiar with the work of Timagenes and drawn on it for his own writings. It would appear Strabo's own account of the role of Hyrcanus is in line with Pollio's.

Caesar, and the more objective evidence – as far as we can assume from the one quoted line of his History as selected by Strabo and re-quoted by Josephus.[64]

If Timagenes was already living with Pollio in 22 BC, his household would provide the ideal intellectual and educational environment for Herod's sons.[65] It is also to be assumed the sons, like Herod, spoke Greek but not Latin.[66] The Greek speaking Timagenes, favourable to the Jews and their customs, living with Pollio, was a highly suitable influence. Herod was keen to Hellenize his kingdom as far as possible. He used the Greek language and the Greeks held positions of high rank in his court and entourage. He is known to have employed Greek tutors for his sons and studied Greek philosophy with Nicolaus of Damascus .[67] Herod was interested in Greco-Roman literature, philosophy, art and religion.[68] Again there was no better household for the education of his sons than Pollio's, with his interest in Greek sculpture, his library, his skills in oratory, his historical writings and his associations with Messalla, Timagenes, and other leading intellectuals, many of whom were interested in the East and Herod.

Grant has argued Pollio's opposition to Augustus would have made it unlikely Herod entrusted his sons to Asinius. This is based largely on Syme's depiction of Pollio as remaining a Republican and a thorn in the side of Augustus.[69] But as we explore Pollio's interactions and activities under the principate there is little to show active opposition. Rather it reveals an adaption and integration with the new regime whilst maintaining his own independence. The relationship with Augustus emerges as one of mutual respect and friendship. We see this in particular in the documented discussion of Augustus' grief at the death of Gaius. Further, Augustus' discussion with Pollio over Timagenes, as has been noted, suggests a friendly banter

---

[64] Edicts and Roman grants mentioned by Josephus are often found to be corrupt or inaccurate, leading to caution as to their value. With respect to this edict of Caesar, see in particular Pucci Ben Zeev (1995) 113-121 who considers the grants given to Hyrcanus in this instance to be reliable. She compares the grant with that given to Seleukos of Rhosos in the same period, as found on a limestone inscription, and for the inscription and edict in Josephus in form and content to be in high agreement. See also Pucci Ben Zeev (1998) 31 ff. for a more detailed discussion of this edict and even stronger agreement with Josephus.
[65] Even if Timagenes was not yet living with Pollio his household and connection with Timagenes remained ideal. If we assume it was because Timagenes was already installed with Pollio we could date the argument with Augustus as occurring between 29 and 23 BC when Augustus was in Rome. It can also be noted Josephus states the sons were sent to live with Augustus, but when they arrived were then sent to live with Pollio before eventually returning to live with Augustus. This would coincide with Augustus's having left Rome in 22 BC and not returning until 19 BC. It implies Herod's arrangement had been with Augustus who in turn organized a suitable household for their education whilst he was away.
[66] The official language of the Herods was Greek. See Rajak (1983) 53-55 for Greek speaking Jews connected with the Herodian dynasty.
[67] Joseph. *AJ* 16.242. Andromachus and Gemellus. Smallwood (1976) 83 considers the names indicate one was Greek the other Roman. Nicolaus of Damascus frag. 135, 4 (FGrH 11A, no. 90, p. 422).
[68] See Smallwood (1976) 82-83.
[69] See in particular Syme *Rom. Rev*. 5-8.

with Pollio asking for Augustus' instructions. Again it is Pollio who defends Augustus' close friend Nonius Asprenas.[70]

Feldman has suggested Pollio's connection with Herod implies he had an interest in Jewish affairs and customs and even that he may have been Jewish.[71] Whilst he notes the same connections as have already been outlined between Pollio and the Greek intellectual circle, Feldman implies it was Pollio's own Jewish interests which drove the connections, and also Pollio's strong connection with Antony who had a strong connection with Herod.[72] The emphasis appears misplaced. There was no reason to suggest anything other than an intellectual group which took an interest in the East, Jewish history and the activities of Herod, noting this was topical in Rome. What the exploration does expose is a greater insight into the intellectual circle of Pollio, the breadth of his interests, and his standing in the community.

The other objection we need to consider, as initially raised by Willrich, is that Herod would not have sent his sons to the house of a gentile.[73] In other words the Pollio named needed to be Jewish. According to Josephus, Herod sent his sons to live with Augustus, who in turn organized their stay with Pollio, and at some point they returned to reside with Augustus.[74] The issue of a Jewish household was not raised. Further, Augustus showed a wide tolerance for the Jews and their customs.[75] As Hoehner suggests it is quite possible the sons maintained their Jewish customs and may have received independent Jewish instruction.[76] It is often raised that when the subsequent sons of Herod came to Rome for their education Josephus makes the point

---

[70] This should stand in contrast to Augustus' outright dislike of Vedius Pollio. Grant however dismisses this aspect of Vedius' reputation highlighting him as a leading supporter of the new regime and highly esteemed by Augustus (1971)145. See also Bosworth (1972) 444-446 and Raaflaub and Samons in Raaflaub and Toher (1990) ch.19 esp. 438-447 who consider there is little to support Pollio was in active opposition to Augustus but rather should be seen as an *amicus* to Augustus, independent, and to some extent with republican sentiments, but which could scarcely be viewed as opposition.

[71] Feldman (1953). See also Phillimore (1925) 28-29 who suggests Pollio may have had an interest in Orientalism and Hebrew prophecy – largely based on an interpretation of *Eclogues* 3 and 4. He further quotes Garrod who also implied Pollio had Jewish interests and perhaps Jewish blood.

[72] Feldman (1953) 77-78; (1985) 243. However, there is reason to doubt the strength of Pollio's friendship with Antony at this time.

[73] Willrich's (1929) argument is rejected outright by Hoehner (1983) 15 who states Pollio may have hired a Jewish attendant, but that Pollio would have been their instructor. Compared with Braund (1983) 240 who considers Willrich's point has been overlooked, and notes that the later sons sent to Rome were brought up a by a certain Jew but agrees the text is open to interpretation. See main text above.

[74] Joseph. *AJ* 15.343.

[75] Jewish communities had existed at Rome for some time See in general Schürer (1973) 3:73-81. Pompey in 61 BC returned to Rome with Jewish prisoners and Cicero in 59 BC, in his defence of L. Valerius Flaccus, describes a politically active Jewish community existing in Rome, *Flac*. 66-69. In 44 BC the Jews were a noticeable group at Caesar's funeral, Suet. *Jul*. 84.

[76] Hoehner (1983) 15. Alexander and Aristobulus would have been about thirteen and fourteen years of age. Another of Mariamme's sons had also gone with them and apparently died in Rome. Nothing more is known, not even his name (Joseph. *BJ* 1.435). In 17-16 BC (see n. 3) Herod went to Rome and brought the sons home because their education was complete (*AJ* 16.6).

that they stayed with a certain "Jew".[77] But the manuscript is obscure, Niese's emendation is of a *certain Jew,* as compared with the more favoured reading of a *certain private person*.[78] However, the point is perhaps more the fact that they did not stay again with Pollio. It is also of note that soon after the first two sons, who had stayed with Pollio, returned from Rome their relationship with Herod deteriorated; he became suspicious of their intentions towards him and they were eventually exceuted. It is unlikely therefore that these next sons to arrive would be desired by the same household.[79] Further, Herod's popularity had changed following his expedition against the Arabs, which required considerable intervention by Nicolaus to repair the relationship with Augustus.[80]

When Horbury reviewed the evidence for the sons of Herod's having stayed with Asinius Pollio he could not ignore the evidence that he was a far more likely contender for this position than anyone else, in particular Vedius.[81] He established that Herod had many friends among the Romans, Jews and gentiles, and Augustus' tolerance towards the Jews would have overcome any objections regarding the need for a Jewish household, as argued by Willrich. Jewish instruction by a tutor would not have been difficult to arrange. His main stumbling block was the perception that Pollio was hostile towards Augustus and that therefore it was unlikely that the emperor would have recommended Pollio. If we remove this perception, it is very likely that Asinius Pollio, now in his mid fifties, educated the sons of Herod and in so doing enjoyed the status and connections that this provided.

---

[77] Joseph. *AJ* 17.20 Ἀρχέλαος δὲ καὶ Ἀντίπας ἐπὶ Ῥώμης παρά τινι ἰδίῳ τροφὰς εἶχον.
[78] Niese's emendation would indicate the host is Jewish, but the more accepted reading of the manuscript makes more sense if read as a "member of the household", and is more consistent with the Latin. Malthace's sons, Antipas and Archelaus were brought up in Rome by this household. Herod and Philip, the sons of Cleopatra, were likewise brought up in Rome. The household itself is unknown and clearly the sons were educated by a member of the household who may or may not have been Jewish. See Braund (1983) 240; Feldman (1985) 240-242.
[79] At the time the sons had come to Rome Augustus had decreed Herod could name his successor – in the singular, καὶ γὰρ ἐξεδέξατο μετὰ πάσης φιλανθρωπίας τοὺς παῖδας (*AJ* 15.343). This set in motion the succession struggles and increasing conflict with these two sons. In 12 BC Herod returned to Rome with these sons to accuse them of conspiracy before Augustus. They were declared innocent but, nevertheless, they were later executed by Herod, (*AJ* 16.90-130; *BJ* 1.445).
[80] Joseph. *AJ* 16.271ff.
[81] Horbury (2003) 114-116.

16 In His Father's Footsteps

As a background to Pollio's activities in Rome through this latter half of his life it is pertinent to also briefly note the progression of his family, in particular of his eldest son, Asinius Gallus. The reason being it highlights Pollio's ongoing relationship with the principate, Augustus and his own status.

Asinius Gallus first comes to attention in 17 BC at the age of twenty-three. We can date his age as we know Gallus was born in 40 BC, due to the fact in his adult life he would claim to be the famed child of Vergil's *Eclogue* 4, written to celebrate Pollio's consulship of that year.[1] Donatus in his *Vita Vergilii* also writes of Gallus:

> The son of this Pollio, Gaius Asinius, or Gallus, was a splendid speaker and no mean poet: Virgil esteemed him with a wondrous love, (Donat. *Vit. Verg*. 25).

In 17 BC Gallus was a member of the *XVviri Sacris Faciundis* and his name was officially mentioned three times in the commentary on the *Ludi Saeculares* of Augustus celebrated in May to June of that year.[2] It was the same year in which Pollio was recorded as a senator who was present at the signing of a *senatus consultum.*[3] Gallus was co-opted into this prestigious position at an early age, but we can also note that M. Valerius Messalla Messallinus, the eldest son of Messalla, was also co-opted to the same position in that same year.[4]

The next mention of Gallus occurred in 11 BC when, at the age of twenty-nine, he married Vipsania, the ex-wife of Tiberius and daughter of Agrippa.[5] In 12 BC, Agrippa, the right-hand man of Augustus, had died leaving his wife Julia, who was the daughter of Augustus, a widow. Augustus immediately insisted that Tiberius, the son of Livia, divorce his wife Vipsania and marry Julia. Tiberius had married Vipsania out of love and he was devastated by the decision, but nevertheless he dutifully divorced her and married Augustus' daughter. It is at this point we come across Pollio's son Gallus. He at once married the now divorced Vipsania and so placed himself within the inner circle of Augustus. Tiberius never forgave Gallus for this action which set in motion a hatred of Gallus by the future Emperor until Gallus' imprisonment and death in

---

[1]Serv. Dan. on 4.11. See Chapter 10.
[2] *CIL* 6. 32323; *ILS* 5050 (107 and 168).
[3] *CIL* 6. pars 1. 877.
[4] *CIL* 6. 32323 1.152.
[5] Tac. *Ann*. 1.12.

AD 33.[6] A first son from the marriage was born in 10 BC and named after Pollio, Gaius Asinius Pollio; and a second son followed in 8 BC named after Agrippa; Marcus Agrippa.[7]

Vipsania was the daughter of Agrippa and his first wife Pomponia, who was the daughter of Atticus the famous friend of Cicero. It suggests the *Asinii* remained very connected with these influential families..[8]

Gallus continued to progress. In 8 BC, at thirty-two years of age, he was elected consul with Marcius Censorinus.[9] Dio provides an interesting insight into the elections, noting that both Gallus and Censorinus were accused of bribery over the elections but were protected from the charge as Augustus refused to investigate the matter 'for he was unwilling either to punish any of them or yet pardon them if they were convicted'.[10] It was in the same year in which both Horace and Maecenas died and we also know that Pollio had in this time period defended Augustus' close friend Nonius Asprenas against a charge of poisoning.

As might be anticipated, Gallus, in 6 BC, followed his consulship with a pro-consulship and became governor of Asia – a highly prized province.[11] It is in this period that the name of Asinius Gallus appears in a letter written by Augustus to the people of Cnidus. Augustus refers to Gallus as 'the friend of the princeps' – *amicus principis*.[12] Gallus was helping Augustus obtain testimony for a prominent murder case referred to Rome.

We can also note Gallus' name appears on a dedication to the *domus Augusta* from Teate Marrucinorum. Augustus had built an aqueduct for the local community, and was warmly remembered.[13]

There is little doubt that Gallus was in favour with Augustus and actively advancing his career.

Finally, in AD 14 we find reference to Gallus in the succession debate after the death of Augustus. Tacitus provides the details.[14]

---

[6] Tac. *Ann*. 1.12; Dio 57.2.7. See also Shotter (1971) for discussion of this fraught relationship between Gallus and Tiberius through to Gallus' death.
[7] Oliver (1947) 147.
[8] Woodman (2004) 6 notes that in the Tiberian Books Asinius Gallus is mentioned more than any other individual apart from members of the imperial family.
[9] *ILS* 5923; *Res Gestae* 8.
[10] Dio 55. 5. 2-3.
[11] See Sherk (1969) 341-345 for discussion of the actual date as either 6/5 BC or 5/4 BC. Also Levy (1987; 1994).
[12] Dittenberger *SIG* 3 11.780.
[13] As noted in Flower (2006) 97.
[14] Tac. *Ann*. 1.11-13.

Tiberius was protesting at the responsibility being thrust upon him and expressing his fears and doubt. Tiberius then happened to state that whilst he felt unable to take on the whole burden of the State he could take charge of whatever part might be intrusted to him. At this point Tacitus records that Asinius Gallus asked Tiberius what part of the State he would wish intrusted to him. In response Tiberius appears to have been offended and angered by Gallus who then attempts to flatter him:

> Confounded by the sudden inquiry he (Tiberius) was silent for a few moments; then, recovering his presence of mind, he replied that it would by no means become his modesty to choose or to avoid in a case where he would prefer to be wholly excused. Then Gallus again, who had inferred anger from his looks, said that the question had not been asked with the intention of dividing what could not be separated, but to convince him by his own admission that the body of the State was one, and must be directed by a single mind. He further spoke in praise of Augustus, and reminded Tiberius himself of his victories, and of his admirable deeds for many years as a civilian. Still, he did not thereby soften the emperor's resentment, for he had long been detested from an impression that, as he had married Vipsania, daughter of Marcus Agrippa, who had once been the wife of Tiberius, he aspired to be more than a citizen, and kept up the arrogant tone of his father, Asinius Pollio (*Ann*. 1.12).

Next Lucius Arruntius echoed the same statement as made by Gallus and also gave offence. Tacitus then digresses to record that Augustus had considered who should succeed him and lists both Gallus and Arruntius. However, Tacitus appears to record this discussion with the purpose of highlighting the inadequacies of these men and of the hatred of Tiberius towards them.

> Next, Lucius Arruntius, who differed but little from the speech of Gallus, gave like offence, though Tiberius had no old grudge against him, but simply mistrusted him, because he was rich and daring, had brilliant accomplishments, and corresponding popularity. For Augustus, when in his last conversations he was discussing who would refuse the highest place, though sufficiently capable, who would aspire to it without being equal to it, and who would unite both the ability and ambition, had described Marcus Lepidus as able but contemptuously indifferent, Gallus Asinius as ambitious and incapable, Lucius Arruntius as not unworthy of it, and, should the chance be given him, sure to make the venture. About the two first there is a general agreement, but instead of Arruntius some have mentioned Cneius Piso, and all these men, except Lepidus, were soon afterwards destroyed by various charges through the contrivance of Tiberius. (*Ann*. 1.13).

Dio gives a very similar account of the debate.[15] He also takes the opportunity to describe Gallus with the f*erocia* of his father, 'Asinius Gallus who always employed the blunt speech of his father more than was good for him.' and also implies Tiberius was irritated and in response

[15] Dio 57. 2. 4-7.

Gallus then strove to placate him.[16] Dio likewise suggests Tiberius remained angered by Gallus' marriage to Vipsania until Gallus was murdered in AD 33.[17]

The description of the succession by Tacitus suggests Gallus offended Tiberius by his interjection and then attempted to retrieve the situation by flattery. Tacitus further implies that Gallus failed to correct the situation because of Tiberius' longstanding hostility towards him. This hostility is assumed to be both political and personal. Gallus had never been forgiven for marrying Vipsania and is also seen as having the *ferocia* of his father, and to be ambitious but incapable. However, the actual nature of the offence by Gallus is rather diificult to determine, it is more implied by Tacitus stating Tiberius appeared thrown by the comment and lost for words. It equally could be seen as a rather awkward attempt by Gallus to move the debate forward in order for Tiberius to accept the full reigns.[18]

Further, Tacitus also goes on to state that of all the three individuals mentioned in the succession debate, M. Lepidus, Asinius Gallus and L. Arruntius, all except for Lepidus were brought down by Tiberius.[19] This statement in modern scholarship has been rightly questioned. Gallus was not attacked until AD 30 and Arruntius AD 37, well beyond the succession debate.[20] It would seem unlikely these outcomes had their origin from almost two decades before.

The importance of this depiction of Gallus by Tacitus is that it has led to the assumption Gallus was hostile to Tiberius and by implication to the regime.[21] This has been used to support the argument Asinius Pollio remained independent of the regime and non-accepting of Augustus and that it was this attitude that was maintained by the son.

But this depiction of Gallus by Tacitus is consistent with Tacitus' tendency to describe whole families as a tradition in themselves. When in AD 42 L. Arruntius Camillus Scribonianus, the adopted son of Arruntius, led an uprising against the Emperor Claudius it is to be noted that the later tradition attributed to the father the political ambitions of the son.[22] And so with Gallus, who had two sons that came to grief under the reign of Claudius, there was a tendency to attribute to Asinius Gallus, their father, a similar hostility to Tiberius

---

[16] Dio 57.2.5.

[17] Martin (1981) 204 suggests Dio may have used Tacitus as his source, or that they used a common source, but not exclusively as there is evidence one was using a source not used by the other. For this particular point on the accession debate it would appear Dio was using Tacitus or the common source.

[18] Bosworth (1977) 183 notes that Grenade (*Essai sur les origines du Principat* (Paris 1961) 435) in his examination of the response considered it was a demonstration of loyal flattery.

[19] Tac. *Ann*. 1.13.2-3.

[20] See Bosworth (1977) 185; Goodyear (1972) 183.

[21] Syme (1958)1.381;2.573; Shotter (1971) 457; Seager (1972) 211ff.

[22] Bosworth (1977) 185-186.

whether this was evident or not.[23] This has led to the rather inconsistent portrayal of Asinius Gallus by Tacitus and a depiction that he was hostile to the monarchial regime.[24] In fact Gallus has often emerged from this debate as a monarchist who held significantly more radical views of the absolutist nature of the principate than the "republican" Tiberius.[25] This in turn could then be attributed to Asinius Pollio.

Rather the succession debate can be seen as further evidence of the *Asinii* having been included within the principate. It is far more likely the debate was a staged affair in which Tiberius initially declined the responsibilities being offered but is then slowly forced to accept. Gallus was playing his part in this debate as a senior consular which Tacitus has chosen to re-interpret.[26] Tacitus never actually resolves the debate and Tiberius simply accepts the position. Syme has considered the debate was a later addition by Tacitus inspired by the execution of four consulars executed in AD 118 although he was aware the story of the debate had been in fashion for some time.[27]

It is far more likely that the comments by Gallus and Arruntius were reinterpreted by Tacitus with the deliberate motive of depicting them both as opponents of the regime and hostile to Tiberius for which they both became future martyrs.

For our purposes the succession debate acts as continuing evidence that Pollio and his son were well entrenched within the regime and furthering their own careers as a consequence. If there is any doubt as to whether Pollio remained independent and hostile to Augustus the career of his son should clearly lay this to rest. From a young age Gallus was moving up the *cursus* and linked with the inner circle of Augustus. We can also note that the sons of Gallus all achieved in distinction in the early reign of Tiberius, confirmation once again of the positive standing of the *Asinii*.

Gallus never becomes an orator of standing like his father, this status was left to the son of his sister.[28] But we do know he maintained the hatred of his father towards Cicero and, as we have

---

[23] The younger Asinius Gallus conspired against Claudius in AD 46 and was exiled but later received clemency, and another son, Ser. Asinius Celer, suffect consul in AD 38 also came in to conflict with Claudius and was listed by Seneca (*Apoc*.13.5) as having been sent 'prematurely to the underworld'. See Bosworth (1977) 185-186.
[24] Bosworth (1977) lists numerous mentions of Gallus in the reign of Tiberius which show an inconsistent recording by Tacitus of the actions of Gallus and a desire at times to impose a bias on his subject.
[25] See in particular Levick (1976) 77ff;114.
[26] Goodyear (1972) 171-174; Bosworth (1977); Martin (1981) 113-114; Woodman (1998) esp. 42-44, 51-52;
[27] Syme (1958) Suetonius (*Tib*. 24.1.) states it was a 'shameless pantomime.'
[28] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 2-6. See Chapter 11.

noted, wrote a book comparing the grammar of Cicero and his father, strongly favouring Pollio.[29]

Pollio's daughter, Asinia, also maintained the family's high standing. She married Marcellus Aeserninus. Oliver has identified this Marcellus Aeserninus, by a process of elimination, as the consul of 22 BC and the father of Marcellus Aeserninus, the praetor of 19 AD.[30] This grandson was greatly favoured by Pollio as Pollio recognized from an early age his significant oratorical skills.[31] And indeed he grew to become a gifted orator and one whom Tacitus records along with Pollio himself and Messalla as one of the few orators who did not charge fees:

> And, "apart from this," he said, "the first of noble accomplishments was debased by sordid services, and even good faith could not be upheld in its integrity, when men looked at the greatness of their gains. If law suits turned to no one's profit, there would be fewer of them. As it was, quarrels, accusations, hatreds and wrongs were encouraged, in order that, as the violence of disease brings fees to the physician, so the corruption of the forum might enrich the advocate. They should remember Gaius Asinius and Messala, and, in later days, Arruntius and Aeserninus, men raised by a blameless life and by eloquence to the highest honours." (Tac. *Ann*. 11.6).

As Oliver comments, it would appear the grandson of Pollio had inherited great wealth and rose to the top of society through eloquence, personality and social position.[32]

---

[29] Plin. *Ep*. 7.4. See Chapter 13.
[30] Oliver (1947) 152-153.
[31] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 5.
[32] Oliver (1947) 153-154.

17 The *Lusus Troiae* – Pollio Complains

In 2 BC (the date is established with reasonable certainty), we find a reference to an incident in which Pollio speaks out in the senate against the tradition of the *lusus Troiae* which he considers dangerous and a threat to Rome's emerging youth. Pollio is now seventy-four years of age and the occasion reflects his continuing rank and respect within Roman society.

As previously noted, at a signing of a *senatus consultum* within the senate in 17 BC the record of the names of the senators present includes that of Asinius Pollio. It is confirmation that Pollio remained active in the senate and continued to participate in the government of the day.[1]

Pollio's complaint about the *lusus Troiae* is now further evidence of this political profile and also of his ongoing outspokenness. Suetonius provides the details:

> Besides he (Augustus) gave frequent performances of the game of Troy by older and younger boys, thinking it a time honoured and worthy custom for the flower of the nobility to become known in this way. When Nonius Asprenas was lamed by a fall while taking part in this game, he presented him with a golden necklace and allowed him and his descendants to bear the surname Torquatus. But soon afterwards he gave up that form of entertainment, because Asinius Pollio the orator complained bitterly and angrily in the senate of an accident to his grandson Aeserninus, who also had broken his leg (*Aug.* 43.2).[2]

The grandson concerned was M. Claudius Marcellus Aeserninus, born from the marriage of his daughter Asinia, presumably to the son of M. Claudius Marcellus Aeserninus consul of 22 BC.[3] This gifted young boy, as we have discussed, was a favourite of Pollio's and he had keenly instructed him in the art of oratory from a young age.[4] He is known to have been *praetor peregrinus* in 19 AD which, allowing for the normal progression through the *cursus* (praetorship at 30 years under the principate) would place his birth in 11 BC.[5] The incident in the *lusus Troiae* would therefore have occurred in the games of 2 BC when the grandson was nine years of age.[6]

---

[1] *CIL* 6.pars 1 877.
[2] See also Suet. *Iul*. 39.2.
[3] See *PIR* 2 (1936) 215; Oliver (1947) 153.
[4] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 3-4.
[5] See the *Fasti Arvalium CIL* 1(2) p70.
[6] Dio lists the games that were held in 33, 29, 13 and 2 BC. André (1949) 24 n. 7 dates the incident to the games of 13 BC, a date which is also maintained by Malcovati (1955) 521. Clearly this date is in error, and before Aeserninus' birth. Bosworth (1972) 444 n. 24 notes there is no reason to limit the number of games to those listed by Dio and points out that they may have continued beyond 2 BC, this date being the earliest possible for Aeserninus.

Pollio's concern appears well founded. Nonius Asprenas had also broken his leg in the games, and such an injury could significantly retard the career of a young noble; Nonius had been left lame. Further, Augustus' grandson Agrippa had likewise participated in these games, and if Pollio's favoured grandson had not performed ably from what we know of the personality of Pollio he might have attacked the nature of the games themselves as the reason.

But in condemning the games Pollio was also attacking the heart of a traditional institution that Augustus had used to promote his connection to Julius Caesar, his descent from the goddess Venus and also from the ancient kings of Rome.[7]

Before taking the *toga virilis* at fifteen years high-born boys were trained in the *lusus Troia*e, equestrian exercises that were performed on the occasion of various stated games. An insight into the intricate manoeuvres of the games can be gained from the description of the event in Vergil's fifth book of the *Aeneid*.[8] He relates the games as part of the funeral celebrations for Anchises, the father of Aeneas:

> They all have their hair properly circled by a cut garland:
> they each carry two cornel-wood spears tipped with steel,
> some have shining quivers on their shoulders: a flexible
> torque of twisted gold sits high on their chests around the neck.
> The troops of horse are three in number, and three leaders
> ride ahead: two groups of six boys follow each,
> commanded alike and set out in gleaming ranks (5. 556-562).
>
> They gallop apart in two equal detachments, the three
> groups parting company, and dissolving their columns,
> then, recalled, they wheel round, and charge with level lances.
> Then they perform other figures and counter-figures
> in opposing ranks, and weave in circles inside counter-circles,
> and perform a simulated battle with weapons.
> Now their backs are exposed in flight, now they turn
> their spears to charge, now ride side by side in peace (5. 580 - 587).

It was believed the games had their origin with Aeneas, who was said to have brought the tradition with him to Italy, and that they were further revived by his son Iulus when he was a king of Alba Longa.[9] In reality the games were most probably of an invented tradition that Sulla had called "revived" in order to demonstrate his special devotion to Venus.[10] Julius Caesar

---

[7] See Sumi (2005) who notes Octavian had already used the games in the triumviral period as a means of celebrating his connection to Julius Caesar and continued the games under the principate. Also Erskine (2001) 19-20.
[8] Verg. *Aen*. 5.552-602. In a treatise attributed to Galen mention is made to rhythmical dances performed on horseback by high-born young boys of Rome. See Taylor (1924)164.
[9] Verg. *Aen*. 5. 545- 603.
[10] Sulla held the games during his dictatorship in 81 BC (Plut. *Cat*. *Min*. 3.1.). See Taylor (1924) 160-161 who notes the *Troia* were probably Italic in origin citing an Etruscan vase which shows youth on

similarly revived the games, this time for the benefit of the Julian *gens*. They subsequently remained a tradition under Augustus and the principate. Augustus demanded his sons and stepsons participate in the games. In the games of 29 BC Tiberius participated, in 13 BC Augustus' grandson Gaius and in 2 BC his youngest grandson Agrippa.[11]

Maecenas had encouraged Augustus to insist on training for the youth of Rome, and for all sons of senators and knights to be instructed in exercises with horse and armour.[12] Horace and Vergil had also praised the physical prowess of youth.[13] The victories in these games, performed by the young aristocratic youth, were a symbolic assurance of the continuity of the state which depended for its welfare upon the emperor.[14]

When Julius Caesar revived the games at the time of the dedication of the Temple of Venus Genetrix during his triumph of 46 BC, this was perceived as an intertwining of his own family's legends with Roman mythology.[15] In 40 BC Agrippa included the games in his celebrations, and again in 33 BC. Under the principate Augustus actively promoted the games in the context of building his image of his own divine descent, and of his connection with Julius Caesar.

After Pollio's attack on the event in the senate there is no record they were held again during the principate. It is probable Pollio was supported in his complaint but it highlights his standing and activity in the senate, well into the latter years of his life, and his ongoing relationship with Augustus. It could be argued it was an attack on Augustus – after all, Pollio did have the games brought to an end. But at the same time their meaning for Augustus had probably expired. He had no further sons or grandsons to participate in the games and his status was well established by 2 BC. The outburst is more an example of Pollio's *ira* and outspokenness as he protested against an event that had impacted directly upon his own family. Augustus in turn responded to his concerns and the event disappeared from future games. Augustus chose to respect the aging senator, and this can be seen as another example of Pollio's independence, but also his participation in the new regime.[16]

---

horseback emerging from a labyrinth with the inscription *truia,* an early form of *Troia*, dating back to at least the sixth century BC.

[11] Dio 51.22.4; 54.26.1; 55.10.6.

[12] Dio 52.26.

[13] Hor. *Carm*. 3.12.24, 51ff. ; Verg. *Aen*. 7.162ff.; 9.60ff. Also Taylor (1924) 158-159.

[14] See also Harmon (1988) 249-250 for the symbolism of the *Lusus Troiae* and a possible connection with early Greek mythology. In particular he notes the reference in Vergil's description to a labyrinth: 'Like the Labyrinth in mountainous Crete, they say that contained a path winding between blind walls' and the labryrinth noted on the Etruscan vase and also that of the Minotaur.

[15] See Sumi (2005) 60-61.

[16] Bosworth (1972) 444-445 also considers the incident demonstrates Pollio had considerable influence with Augustus and does not indicate consistent hostility to the *princeps* and all his works, but rather, that Augustus could simply bear the brunt from time to time of Pollio's *ferocia*.

However, there is a further context to these games that may be relevant. The games were part of the celebrations of Augustus' sixtieth birthday and the occasion on which the title *pater patriae* was conferred upon him. It is Messalla who nominates Augustus for the honour.[17] We can also recall that the title of *Augustus* in 27 BC had been proposed by Plancus. This observation led Syme to comment that it was not Asinius Pollio, the senior among ex-consuls, who proposed the honour but the illustrious Messalla Corvinus, who under a show of republican independence accommodated himself to the new order.[18] The title was conferred in February in preparation for the month of August when Augustus would celebrate his achievements and the Troy games would be held. Nevertheless, it was a difficult year for the emperor as his daughter's promiscuity was taken in hand, the young princes, now with the title *principes iuventutis,* were being groomed for succession and titles and promotions were being sought by many. Nor can we ignore that Iullus Antonius, the son of Mark Antony, and coeval of Pollio's son Gallus, born almost in the same year, 43 BC, with a parallel career and literary and political ambitions, was charged with treason and put to death over his affair with Julia.[19]

Pollio's voice in this landmark year for Augustus is one of discontent. Messalla may have been chosen, or promoted himself, to give the new title to Augustus, but Pollio, ambitious for his own family, could only grumble. But this may reflect his annoyance and competitiveness with Messalla as much as any disagreement with Augustus.

---

[17] Suet. *Aug*. 58.2.

[18] Syme (1974) 12-13 = *RP* 3.918-919 also *AA* 88. Augustus in his *Res Gestae* records that the title was conferred not only by the senate and the Roman people but also by the equestrian order (*RG* 35).

[19] See Syme (1974) = *RP* 3. 912-936. Iullus Antonius was born 43 BC, consul 10 BC, Asian pro-consul 7 BC and a poet mentioned by Horace (*Carm*. 4.2).

18 The Death of Herius

The last glimpse we gain of Pollio before his own death in 4 AD arises from the death of one of his sons.

Pollio's son, Herius Asinius, died at sometime before AD 4, his age and the circumstances unknown.[1] The Elder Seneca records the event, and in so doing provides further information about the character of Pollio, and also about his connection with Augustus. This is information that comes from the later years of Pollio's life.

Seneca in the preface to Book Four of his *controversiae,* as previously noted, decides that rather than bringing on his declaimers one by one he will take the example of gladiator-producers and bring them on in pairs.[2] First, he introduces Asinius Pollio, and then Quintus Haterius. In so doing he notes that they had both lost their sons and compares the impact of their grief upon their ability to declaim. He writes of Pollio as follows:

> I recall that Asinius spoke a declamation to us within three days of losing his son Herius, but so much more forcefully than usual that you could tell that this naturally defiant man was quarrelling with his fate (*Controv*. 4 *pref.* 4).

Further, Seneca goes on to emphasise this response by Pollio by noting that Augustus had complained that Pollio had failed to show adequate grief as a friend in the time of his, Augustus' mourning for the loss of his adopted son Gaius. In reply Pollio had justified his action by stating that he had shown the same response to the loss of his own son.

> Nor did he make any relaxation in his ordinary routine. Thus when Gaius Caesar had died in Syria, and the blessed Augustus had complained in a letter (using the polite and even familiar tone customary in that most forebearing of men) that despite this great recent bereavement of his one of his dearest friends had had a full-dress supper party, Pollio wrote back; " I dined the day I lost my son Herius" (*Controv*. 4 *pref.* 5).

This leads Seneca to make a declamatory *sententia*:

> And who would ask for greater grief from a friend than from a father? (*Controv*. 4 *pref.* 5).

Finally, Seneca concludes that Pollio's response reflects the triumph of the mind over great tragedy.

---

[1] He had died before the death of Gaius Caesar in 4 AD.
[2] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 1.

> Asinius Pollio declaimed within three days of losing his son; that was the manifesto of a great mind triumphing over its misfortunes (*Controv.* 4 *pref.* 6).

To further highlight Pollio's emotional control, Seneca compares his reaction to that of another distinguished orator, Quintus Haterius, who had taken the loss of his son so severely that his grief remained palpable years later and continued to overwhelm him. He was reduced to tears when declaiming about the reactions of a father to the death of his son.[3] Again, Seneca comments that his emotion added to the impact and eloquence of his declamation, but there was an implication that greater self-control was desirable.[4]

It is interesting to contrast this comparison of grief with another comparison Seneca makes in his *Suasoria.* Again he compares the reactions of two noted orators, Potomon from Mitylene and Lesbocles, to the loss of their sons. Potomon declaimed immediately after his son's funeral, whilst Lesbocles shut down his school and was never heard of again.[5] Seneca considers both reactions too severe and in need of modification; there is not the same praise for the emotional control of Potomon as there was for Pollio.[6]

The Elder Seneca held a view, in keeping with the Stoic principles expressed at that time by Sextius and his disciple Fabianus, which stated that the emotions should be kept under strict control.[7] It was a view also held by his son.[8] But both father and son appear to have come to the conclusion that whilst total control of the emotions was the ideal, especially in grief, it was usually beyond the ability of the common man.[9]

---

[3] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref* . 6.
[4] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 6. The first *controversia* of Book Four appears to be the one in which Haterius and Pollio spoke. It is probable Haterius was the first speaker (in the brief excerpt the speakers are not identified), and took the role of a grieving father at the tomb of his three sons who is carried off by a wanton youth to a nearby party and forced to change his clothes and cut his hair. He sues for injury. The father argues for his grief and his tears. On the other side, presumably spoken by Pollio, the speaker argues for the cessation of grief and a duty to make a person cease grieving. See Gunderson (2003) 96-101 who explores this parallel of declamation and the social world of the speaker.
[5] Sen. *Suas*. 2.15.
[6] Sen. *Suas*. 2.15: 'I think the reactions of both require modification: one bore his affliction more stoutly than a father should, the other more weakly than a man should.' Edwards (1928) 112 notes that Seneca makes no criticism of Pollio as he does of Potomon, a famous Greek rhetorician, and questions if this is a bias by Seneca against the Greeks. However, it would appear Potomon's response is more extreme than Pollio's and deserving of some reservation if this was an ideal reaction. Pollio was returning to normal activities whilst still bearing his grief rather than the total emotional denial of Potomon.
[7] See in particular Griffin (1976) 38-39.
[8] See Sen. *Ep Mor*. 63.1. Fairweather (1981) 309 -310 notes the Elder Seneca's views on the emotions are also taken up by his son the Younger Seneca.
[9] Fairweather (1981) 310.

Pollio has risen above the common man; his strong emotional restraint in a time of great adversity exemplifies the Stoic doctrine.[10] It is our most significant insight into Pollio's personal philosophy, and clearly one he maintained until the end of his life, noting that he retained the same emotional control in relation to the death of Gaius Caesar in AD 4 as to his own son some years earlier. His daily routine further highlights this approach to life:

> He (Pollio) would divide his day into periods of work and periods of relaxation. He never worked at anything beyond the tenth hour of the day, that is in the two hours before sunset. He would not even read letters after that hour for fear something new might arise that needed his attention. Rather he sought to keep those two hours as a time to lay aside the weariness accumulated from the day (Sen. *Tranq*. 17.7).

Emotional containment of grief was a Roman ideal. The loss of close friends and in particular the loss by a parent of a child was considered the most difficult to bear and a form of literature emerged to address this loss; the *consolationes.* What we see in this literature, which appears independent of any one particular philosophy, is the argument that man is born to sorrow, that death is inevitable and that one should be prepared and anticipate the loss, with the need to remember what was gained from the relationship not what has been taken, and that the soul of the deceased has been freed. The mourner is called upon to show resilience and character.[11] The Stoics considered that weeping was a weakness and that grief for the dead was without reason. But even they could not avoid the humanity of the situation and were forced to admit there were circumstances in which there was justification for grief and tears. What therefore emerged in Roman thought was a precept of a time limit for grief. Prolonged grief was considered ostentatious and a self-indulgence of sorrow.[12] The Younger Seneca, no doubt inheriting his father's attitudes, was a strong Stoic but when it came to grief he expressed many of the Peripatetic and Epicurean beliefs about the expression of grief, nor was he personally able to control his own grief at the loss of his close friend Serenus.[13] We can therefore perhaps detect that the Elder Seneca would have allowed for a controlled and limited expression of grief, that he did not fully endorse the complete inhibition of grief shown by Potomon, and that he perceived in Pollio the ideal of a man controlling his grief in true response to the Stoic principles.[14] Pollio was wrestling with his loss, but did not allow his mind to be overtaken by emotion.

---

[10] Essentially, the Stoics maintained that the passions were an irrational mental contraction and that the wise man would not allow himself to be subject to any of them. See Arnold (1911) for an overview of Stoicism in the Roman period.

[11] See Cic. *Tusc*. 3.31. Also Plutarch and his *Consolatio ad Apollonium* in which he discusses grief for a son.

[12] Arnold (1911) 342-344.

[13] See Sen. *Ep*. *Mor*. 63.15; *Marc*. 6; 7.1.

[14] There was a shift from the extreme rationalism of grief as expressed in *Consolatio* at the end of the century to a more humane and sympathetic stance in the first century AD which is reflected in the

Pollio's success in controlling his grief can be compared with Cicero and his prolonged mourning after the death of Tullia. The letter of consolation by Servius Sulpicius Rufus to Cicero outlines the philosophy of grieving and contains an admonition to Cicero to grasp and act on his own philosophy.[15]

Quintilian also writes of grief. He lost his young wife, his youngest son when he was five years of age and then his eldest son also at a young age, most probably at ten years. In the Preface to Book 6 he writes of his grief and how he also must find some way to continue.

> No man grieves long save through his own fault. But I still live, and must find something to make life tolerable, and must needs put faith in the verdict of the wise, who held that literature alone can provide true solace in adversity.
>
> But for this very reason I must rouse myself to face my task with greater spirit, since it is easy to despise fortune, though it may be hard to bear her blows. For there is nothing left that she can do to me, since out of my calamities she has wrought for me a security which, full of sorrow though it be, is such that nothing can shake it. And the very fact that I have no personal interest in persevering with my present work, but am moved solely by the desire to serve others, if indeed anything that I write can be of such service, is a reason for regarding my labours with an indulgent eye. Alas! I shall bequeath it, like my patrimony, for others than those to whom it was my design to leave it' (*Inst.* 6 *pref.* 14-16.).

The response of Augustus to Pollio's behaviour during the period of mourning for Gaius Caesar is therefore of interest. He writes to his friend, *homo carissimus*, a statement in itself about the nature of their relationship, and complains he has attended a dinner party during this time of painful loss. Pollio responds that no insult can be inferred as he had behaved the same way during the time of the loss of his own son. It suggests a close connection has been maintained between Pollio and Augustus for the latter to be aware and upset by Pollio's activities. Pollio at seventy-nine years of age was in the last year of his life and so his actions were hardly of political significance. More it reflects the complaint of friendship when one feels the other has not responded to ones feelings adequately. Seneca seeks to affirm Pollio's response just in case there was any doubt as to the sincerity of Pollio's statement. There is little to suggest the criticism from Augustus indicates a hostility to Pollio or that Pollio's actions in dining during the period of mourning were intended as an insult to Augustus.[16] This is of particular significance as the mourning for the death of Gaius would have been a major public event and so it is to be inferred that Pollio's action should not be seen as offensive to the public protocol.

---

writings of both the Elder and Younger Seneca. See Grollios (1956) 70-76; Coffey (1959) 202. Pollio was therefore reflecting the sterner approach of the end of the century. See Sussman (1978) 27 who also comments that the Elder Seneca admired the resilience and inner strength of Pollio.

[15] Cic. *Fam*. 4.5 (248); also 5.16 (187); 6.3 (243); *Att*. 12.10 (247); *Ad Brut*. 1.9. See Manning (1981) 12 n. 6 for a list of extant prose dealing with bereavement. Also Wilcox (2005) 237-256 for further examination of grief and consolation that occurs in the letters of Cicero.

[16] Bosworth (1972) 445 similarly considers the comment to have been one of friendship.

It also provides the insight that Pollio did not attend the public mourning for Gaius but most probably had remained in Tusculum, as we know he died at his Tusculum villa shortly after.

The actual period in which Herius died is unknown, but a few factors may provide some clues. It would appear Asinius Gallus was the first born son with his birth occurring in 41/40 BC.[17] Another son, Salonius, may also have been born and died shortly thereafter in this same time period, although Syme has raised significant doubts if this child existed at all.[18] It would therefore seem Herius was a third or fourth child, born either before or after the daughter Asinia, so perhaps in the mid-thirties BC. There is no record of Herius' holding a political position as compared with his brother Asinius Gallus, which suggests he may have died before this could occur.[19] The elder Seneca was present to hear Pollio declaim on the third day after Herius' death. Seneca has noted that he personally heard Pollio declaim early in his life and again in his prime.[20] This has led to the conclusion that Seneca was in Rome in 38 or even 36 BC, and then back again in AD 2-5.[21] Further, we know that Herius was already dead when Gaius Caesar died in AD 4. On this basis it could be assumed that Herius died either in the early thirties BC, most probably as a young child, or as an adult man at the turn of the century at perhaps 35-40 years of age but without having been recorded as active within the senate. The higher rates of mortality in childhood may lead us to favour the conclusion Herius died as a child, but the description in Seneca, in the context of the death of Gaius Caesar, suggests it may have been a more recent grief than one which had occurred almost forty years earlier.

---

[17] Gallus was born *c* 40 BC as according to Servius he told Asconius Pedianus that he was the special child of Vergil's poem, *Serv*. *Dan*. on *Ecl*. 4.11. Oliver (1947) 149 places the birth of Herius between Gallus and Asinia, *RE* places Herius between Salonius and Asinia.
[18] Syme (1937) 39-48 = *RP* 1. 18-30. Even if this son existed he died shortly after birth and therefore has no bearing on our evidence.
[19] See Chapter 16 on the career of Asinius Gallus.
[20] Sen. *Controv*. 4 *pref*. 3.
[21] This has often been interpreted as Seneca hearing Pollio around 39-38 BC, see Sussman (1978) 22 n22 or shortly after 36 BC, see Griffin (1976) 32 and again in the year or two before Pollio's death in 4/5 AD.

19 Final Days

> *when I (Tiberius Claudius) took my leave of Pollio he drew me aside and muttered: "Little Claudius, goodbye! But don't be a fool about popular liberty. That cannot come yet. Things must be far worse before they can be better." Then he raised his voice: "And one thing more. If, when I'm dead, you ever come across any important point in my histories that you find unhistorical I give you permission – I'll stipulate that you have the authority – to put the corrections in a supplement. Keep them up to date. Books when they grow out of date only serve as wrappings for fish." I said this would be an honourable duty.*
>
> *Three days later Pollio died.* (Robert Graves: *I Claudius* 140)

The above meeting between the future emperor Claudius and Pollio is placed within the Apollo Library in Rome. Graves is wrong when he states Pollio died three days later, as we know he died whilst residing in his villa at Tusculum. However, what Graves has captured is that Pollio appears to have remained active and engaged within the principate until the end of his life.

According to Jerome, Pollio was in his eightieth year when he died in AD 4 or 5.[1] His death occurred after April of AD 4 as he was still alive when Gaius Caesar died. It was during this period of mourning for the young prince that Augustus had written a letter of chastisement to Pollio for holding a full dress dinner party.[2] All these factors indicate that Pollio was socially active, mentally sound, and in ongoing communication with Augustus right up to his death. The actual year of his death is somewhat ambiguous as it is dependent on whether Jerome was referring to Pollio at eighty years of age or in his eightieth year. And as noted in the discussion of his early life, his actual date of birth is also provisional between 76 and 75 BC.[3] We have no record of a funeral oration, nor the location of his tomb. Nor is there any surviving bust of Pollio, unlike those of Cicero, Horace, Vergil. Maecenas or Agrippa, and so he remains to the very end physically unknown.

As in 42 BC, when Pollio emerged from the death of Julius Caesar as almost a sole survivor from amongst his contemporaries of rising orators, so at the end of his life he outlived most of his peers. Ventidius died early in the day, c. 35 BC, Vergil in 19 BC, Plancus c. 15 BC,

---

[1] Hieron Ad Euseb. *Chron. A. Abr.* 2020.
[2] Sen. *Controv.* 4 *pref.* 5.
[3] See Chapter 1. See also Parkin (2003) 26ff. for further discussion on how statements of death were expressed.

Agrippa in 12 BC as also Lepidus, Horace in 8 BC along with Maecenas, with only Messalla living longer to AD 8 or 13[4], and Augustus himself dying in AD 14.

Pollio died a rich man. A villa at Tusculum could only be afforded by a few of the wealthy. Cicero owned such a villa and in 45 BC commented that there were no more than eighteen villas, including his own, at Tusculum.[5] Seneca the Younger would much later write that nobody who wanted to acquire a home in Tusculum or Tibur for health reasons or as a summer residence, would calculate the yearly payments.[6] Tusculum remained a locality for the privileged few right through to the end of the republic and into the principate. The retired and elderly often retreated to live in their villas, and Cicero described his villa at Tusculum in terms of its library, statues and gardens, and as a location of cultural and literary retreat.[7]

It would appear Pollio dealt with old age well.[8] The passage in Seneca outlining Pollio's daily routine suggests a structured and ordered day, which he no doubt maintained well into his latter years.[9]

Cokayne in her recent exploration of old age in Roman society notes the old were seen as either paradigms of wisdom, demanding respect and reverence, or as marginalized citizens, weak and a burden to society. To have eminence and status in society was the highest goal, and this did not diminish with aging.[10] Cicero saw *auctoritas* as "the crowning glory of old age." 'Surely old age, when crowned with public honours, enjoys an influence which is of more account than all the sensual pleasures of youth.'[11]

Continued activity into advanced old age, especially in service of the State, was also highly regarded; families would often record this fact on the deceased's tombstone.[12] By contrast early retirement from public life was frowned upon; an issue that has been considered in Pollio's own

---

[4] There is extensive debate over the date of Messalla's death. It is has been stated as either AD 8 or 13. See Syme *AA* ch. 16 for the full discussion and preference for AD 8.
[5] Cicero wrote his *Tusculanae disputationes* whilst at Tusculum.
[6] Sen. *Ben*. 4.12: 'No one, when about to buy a villa at Tusculum or Tibur, for a summer retreat, because of the health of the locality, considers how many years' purchase he gives for it; this must be looked to by the man who makes a profit by it.'
[7] Plin. *Ep*. 3.1. See also Strabo (5.3.12) for a description of Tusculum and its countryside and expansive views. Also Marzano (2007) esp. 96-97.
[8] See Parkin (2003) and Harlow and Laurence (2007) esp. for an interesting exploration of the social, cultural and political aspects of aging in the Roman world. As Parkin argues, an exact definition of age for "old age" is difficult to define, with some considering life was short and any one over 40 years an old person whereas others would place this as beyond 60 years or even 70 years. Overall the age of 60 appears to emerge as the dividing line for *senectus,* but it is arbitrary. However, for our purposes Pollio is well defined at 80 years as being a *senex*.
[9] Sen. *Tranq*. 17.7. The full quote is given in Chapter 18.
[10] Cokayne (2007) 210.
[11] Cic. *Sen*. 17.61.
[12] Cokayne (2007).

apparent retirement at an early age. But as has been documented he remained highly active in the principate, continuing to attend the senate and work in the courts. Such activity often bestowed upon the individual a status of sage. [13]

> An old man active in word and deed and held in honour is a sight to arouse reverence, but one who spends the day in bed or sits in the corner of the porch chattering and wiping his nose is an object of contempt, (Plut. *An seni* 788b)[14].

Maecenas appears to have died after a long period of deterioration and decline afflicted by the symptoms of physical and mental impairment.[15] Messalla also, according to Jerome, lost his memory over several years and ended his life by starvation.[16] But all the evidence points to the fact Pollio remained active and astute until the end; a figure of eminence.

At the time of Pollio's death the principate was well established, with the key issue being one of succession. There would be no return to a republic. Pollio's descendants can be traced to possibly the third century AD and the family brick works were still in production in AD 141.[17] Gallus would in the end fair badly, and die within the prisons of Tiberius. Pollio's grandson would become a renowned orator.

Asinius Pollio, the Italian from Marrucini, his father largely unknown, at the time of his death left a family dynasty that would continue to progress through the Empire. Oliver describes the *Asinii* as 'one of the great houses of Rome, revered throughout the empire'.[18] 'That old man of triumphs' as Labienus had called him, had clearly prospered under Augustus, befriended the emperor and continued to have his voice. Pollio and Augustus, they had both survived well.

---

[13] But as Parkin (2003) 109-110 questions not all old senators probably enjoyed the respect and authority Plutarch and Cicero would seek us believe and many may have felt overlooked. Parkin also notes it was unusual for individuals in the high level of politics to survive into advanced old age noting that suspicious deaths were notoriously common. See comment in Tacitus regarding L. Calpurnius Piso, *cos*. 15 BC. (*Ann*. 6.10.3).
[14] Also quoted in Cokayne (2007) 215.
[15] See Pliny HN (7.172) for a detailed description of the ill health of Maecenas and the various remedies sought to relieve his symptoms. It is stated he never closed his eyes for the last three years of his life!
[16] Jer. *Chron*. p.170 H; Syme *AA* 219-220.
[17] Oliver (1947).
[18] Oliver (1947) 147.

Conclusion

Having come to the end of Pollio's eighty years it leaves the task of attempting to make some assessment of the man and his actions. The aim has been to provide a detailed and chronological account of Pollio as can be traced through the sources. It is a biography that seeks to examine not only Sir Ronald Syme's strong portrayal of Pollio as a staunch republican, fighting for *libertas* and the lone voice of opposition to Augustus but also of the man himself.

We can conclude that Asinius Pollio was first and foremost an orator. His engagement for ten years in the civil wars has often overshadowed this fact, but it is as an orator, advocate and historian that he spent the majority of his life. However, his decade of service in the civil wars left its impact, and the Pollio that returned to Rome in 39/38 BC was a changed individual from the orator at twenty-seven years of age who joined Caesar as he crossed the Rubicon.

Interest in Pollio has focused largely on his choices; in a time of civil war whom did he support? In seeking to answer this question, evidence has been sought in his relationship with Julius Caesar, in the content of his three letters, in the fragments of his history, in his actions in joining Antony and finally in his life under Augustus. This interest, as we have noted, has largely been driven by Syme, who sought to find in Pollio an intellectual and a republican. But the reasons behind his decisions were often obscured and contradictory and occurred at crucial points in history where his decision may have influenced the outcome. Also, we must remember that Pollio was a *novus homo* of Italian background, who was ambitious and seeking to survive politically, who lacked the network of the aristocracy, and whose career depended on the victor in each successive conflict. What we actually see in Pollio's life is a man who successfully negotiated his way through civil conflict, obtained for himself a consulship and triumph, then had the courage to withdraw from the ongoing conflicts, re-established his life among the intellectual elite and thrived under Augustus. Further, his actions were often no different from his peers who were all struggling with the changing viscitudes of civil war and were equally making decisions as each new situation emerged. Ambivalence in these circumstances is much more likely to be one of survival than ideology.

Even before he was born civil war had impacted on his family. But the evidence suggests Pollio was not one of the proscribed sons disempowered by the rulings of Sulla and only gaining entry into the Roman political system through the mercy of Julius Caesar, but that he and his family had prospered. Here, most probably, was a wealthy Marrucini family that had supported Sulla and went on to do well. Pollio's older brother entered the senate and Pollio was growing up in

Rome with a good education mixing with the new young intellectual elite. His family knew how to survive through a civil war.

Pollio's early life indicates he was seeking the career of an orator and shows a remarkable similarity to Cicero's initial beginnings. Cicero, like Pollio, was an Italian and a *novus homo*. Cicero also had survived the Social War as a young man, but, with little inclination for a military life, had returned to Rome to commence his career in law. When Pollio was six years of age Cicero made a name for himself in the prosecution of Verres. And seven years later, when Pollio was thirteen, Cicero became the first *novus homo* since Marius to obtain the consulship. His success continued with a house on the Palatine, country estates and a large library. Pollio would have followed the events of Cicero's political life, noting his resistance to join the first triumvirate in 60 BC, his exile in 58 BC and glorious return the following year. Here was the perfect model for Pollio of how to succeed. Little could we anticipate that ten years later he would be an active participant in his murder and go on to express his hatred of this great orator for the rest of his life.

Pollio's early life is an important backdrop to his activities in the civil war. He would appear to have been a young man of talent and potential exhibiting little of the *ferocia* that emerges in his later life. Catullus was impressed by the young Pollio who had none of the provincial ways of his older brother. The poet Cinna was so enamoured with Pollio that he wrote him a *propempticon* and the orator Calvus stated he would personally deal with anyone who attacked Pollio during his prosecution of Gaius Cato. Pollio therefore appears likeable and affable, and to be making a good impression. He also appears to have been an apprentice to Cicero who engaged him to assist in pleading the cause of Lentulus. And like Julius Caesar, Calvus and Cicero himself, Pollio also tried his hand in the prosecution of a high profile case, an *illustris accusio,* with such success that Tacitus would later comment on the worthiness of his speech. Pollio was on his way, and unmistakably treading the career path of an orator.

Civil war interrupted all of this. The young poet Vergil, whom we can also assume was known to Pollio in this time, fled to Naples, Catullus was dead and so probably was Calvus, Cicero reluctantly went with Pompey as an onlooker to the unfolding events, and Pollio went with Caesar. This was his first choice. Six years later, when writing to Cicero, Pollio would state his choice was driven by choosing the lesser of two evils: he had enemies in both camps. but less so with Caesar. This is a comment that we should consider with some scepticism in view of the circumstances in which he was writing. But there is no doubt Pollio would have been attracted by Caesar's intellect and interest in the poets; Caesar had actively cultivated Catullus and his circle, who, although often outspoken and critical of powerful men, especially Caesar, had still to be won over. And, according to Pollio, Caesar treated him well.

Pollio's profile as a military commander through the civil wars is not as illustrious as many would like to believe. Certainly he returned to Rome as a *triumphator*, but this came from an easy battle fought outside of the realm of the civil war. Caesar, in his commentaries, makes no comment on Pollio's activities and we have no clear documented evidence of a military command. The insights we obtain into Pollio's actions are largely found in Appian, and would appear to have come from Pollio's own history where he no doubt recorded his actions with some embellishments. But there is sufficient evidence to indicate Pollio was present at all the major battles of this civil war and it is useful to consider for a moment what he would have seen.

We know Pollio was with Curio in Africa, and witnessed the death of Curio and nearly all of his men. The account is not only horrific but shaming. Curio's inexperience had led him into a trap and Pollio was as an active participant. Next he was at Pharsalus with Caesar and counted the many dead Romans; he would later record the words of Caesar as he surveyed the scene: "They would have it so …". There is a rumour that Pollio was captured by the Pompeian forces at Thapsus, and we have no evidence either way, but it does indicate he was present at Thapsus to witness another brutal siege, once again in Africa, and the slaughter by Caesar of the 10,000 enemy soldiers who surrendered. Next we find Pollio with Caesar at Munda, one of the bloodiest battles in the civil war. At least 30,000 Pompeians died and, according to Plutarch (*Caes*. 56), even Caesar was unpopular in his triumph on his return to the capital at having caused the death of so many Romans. Civil war was a bloody affair.

Pollio's loyalty to Caesar was rewarded, but no more and no less than any other; and he was given a praetorship and the province of Further Spain. If we are looking for a period of significant impact on Pollio that may help to explain all of his subsequent actions, this time spent in Spain should be considered.

There is a sense Pollio hoped to return to a more intellectual life in Spain and leave war behind, but Caesar was assassinated. Pollio was far removed from the political tensions that had led to the deed in Rome, but was confronted with its outcome. This is important. He could not be aligned with the liberators nor was he in the camp with Antony. However, the only insight into Pollio's thoughts occur in his letter to Cicero. He indicates in this that whilst he had remained a loyal officer to Caesar, he had come in himself to question the man and his decisions. He declares his dislike of autocratic rule, but at the time this could have also been a judgement on Cicero himself as much as on Caesar or Antony.

Pollio was now forced into serious conflict with Sextus Pompeius, and he failed to gain the upper hand; Dio outlines a humiliating defeat. To be fair the fighting was tough, the terrain difficult and Pollio lacked experience. But the outcome was that Lepidus was sent to deal with

the conflict and was rewarded with a triumph and a statue from the senate for his success. From this point onwards Pollio appears to actively avoid any further direct military engagement, and we can assume his psychological trauma and feeling of humiliation was great. In today's society we might more actively consider he had been traumatized by war and that he went on to demonstrate all the symptoms of war avoidance, anger and irritability.

The need for him to choose now arose again. And his political life, like for many other key players, would significantly depend on the outcome. After the death of Caesar he had sent his troops into winter quarters and had hoped to ride through the subsequent fighting without involvement. It was not the action of a man wanting to fight for a cause. But Cicero, the senate, Decimus Brutus and Antony all wanted Pollio's support and more importantly his legions. Pollio wrote three letters to Cicero in this time, outlining his situation and requesting direction from the senate. Some of the contradictions within the letters are removed if we reconsider their chronology, but nevertheless they still reflect an enormous ambivalence. It is in these letters that Pollio declares his support for the republic, his abhorrence of dictatorship and even more strongly his aversion to civil war. This is no doubt true, but he was also writing to Cicero; what else could he say? Pollio's correspondence is no more ambivalent than that written by Plancus, Lepidus and Octavian in the same time period. All declared their support for the senate, and all changed sides. Any insight we may wish to discover into Pollio's ideology at this point needs to be tempered by circumstances and by the wisdom to say nothing and promise loyalty to all.

There is little doubt Pollio only acted once he could determine the likely victor. He does appear to have been genuinely upset because Cicero and the senate did not give him a command and perhaps even a consulship; the position after all was vacant. This provides an insight into Pollio's own somewhat inflated sense of self. From the evidence, Cicero showed little interest in Pollio. His joining with Antony could be perceived as a retaliation to this neglect by the senate, but equally as an action of political survival, once it was evident that Brutus was a broken man, Octavian was moving to support Antony and Lepidus had already handed over his troops.

Pollio emerged from these events with the promise of a consulship. His father-in-law was also fourth on the proscription list. How or why he achieved such status is not easy to discern. His role in negotiating with Plancus to support Antony was in reality a done deal. It can only be assumed that he maintained a position of such ambivalence that he was wooed for his final support and legions. And if there was one thing Pollio wanted, it would have been a consulship.

But this reward had come at a high price and the more unsettling aspects of Pollio's personality began to show themselves. He vehemently attacked Cicero in the trial for Lamia at a time when Roman citizens were still reeling from the death of this great man. Pollio not only criticised Cicero, but proposed that he was a coward and would have retracted his writings to save his

own life. These were comments Pollio chose to write, not in the context of a political trial, when they might be understood as the voice of argument, but inserted later so that the deliberateness of the attack could not be assuaged. He wanted to attack Cicero for dying and the way he died. However, the trial also indicates Pollio was now very much aligned with the triumvirs.

And whilst it is often believed that Pollio acted to save the estates of Vergil from the land confiscations there is little evidence for this, and even greater evidence to the contrary, that he actively engaged in the confiscations and on one occasion incited the slaves to rise up against their owners.

But soon choices would yet again need to be made. The Perusine war placed Pollio, and the other commanders, in an untenable conflict between Octavian and Lucius and by proxy with Antony. The account of the war by Appian provides an insight into his feelings of rivalry towards Ventidius, and also an explanation of the failure of all three generals to act. But Pollio, unlike Ventidius and Plancus, does not emerge as cleanly from these events and there is a sense he had fallen from grace with Antony or that he had chosen to turn towards Octavian. Scholarship has focused on the confused nature of his allocated province in an attempt to gain an insight into his political alignment. But in reality it probably allows for little insight. Bosworth strongly advocates Pollio moved his support from Antony to Octavian but it is as equally likely that Pollio, who had supported both triumvirs, could forsee the emerging conflict between the two and wished no part. Pollio returned to Rome and his own interests. He had actively participated in negotiating the Pact of Brundisium, which Vergil wanted to believe was the beginning of a golden age, but Pollio perceived that further conflict between Antony and Octavian was inevitable. Peace, and the end of civil war, was most probably his overall desire, a statement he had expressed on several occasions, and ongoing allegiance with either triumvir showed no signs of achieving this outcome. We should also consider the strong possibility that he wanted no further military commands or military conflict. He no longer had the stomach for war and he wanted out. And besides, he was now a consular and about to celebrate a triumph; he was returning with *auctoritas.* Personally, he had little more to gain, and this could lead us to speculate that fighting for an ideal was not his motivation. Nevertheless, withdrawal from further military commands at thirty-eight years of age was unusual and in contradistinction to all his peers who remained active in their support for either Antony or Octavian. But we should not see this as the "retirement" from public life as proposed by Syme but rather a re-engagement at a new level. Morgan's view that Pollio would now turn literature into a new form of public activity is correct.

Pollio returned to his life as an orator and advocate. His wealth was enormous and he would build a huge public library filled with his own priceless collections of sculptures. This was not a building that celebrated Antony, Octavian or civil war but his own intellectual desires and to

some degree aligned him with Julius Caesar. If he was ever the patron of Vergil it was short lived and he appears to have no ongoing close associations with the poets except for Horace. Patronage requires some degree of personableness and probable political alignment, and Pollio had little of either at this time.

His success as an orator and in the courts was substantial and maintained well into his old age. He rates continuously with the leading orators of the day but always sits under the shadow of Cicero. But it is the interest in Pollio as a historian that has gained most attention. In view of the fact that we have almost nothing of this history it is surprising. It is perhaps the possibility that we can detect Pollio's writing in the works of Appian and Plutarch that has been most alluring. But even here there is increasing evidence that these writers were using many other sources than just Pollio and that we should temper our belief that we can detect the history of Pollio within the writings of these historians. It is also of great interest that his history was an account written as a personal participant – an autopsy, according to Morgan. It leaves us wanting to know his view of these extreme times. Horace warned Pollio that the task was treacherous but from the evidence there is nothing to suggest his history was inflammatory or brought him into disfavour, and in fact it barely rates a mention when compared with the writings of Sallust and Livy. We can also speculate that Pollio needed to write his history before others took on this task that was clearly ready for the doing, and before others might have recorded his actions. It was far better he document his own personal achievements and bring them to prominence. Why we have so little of Pollio's history remains unknown, but it again suggests it did not become as an important source as did Livy and Sallust.

It would also appear that we must give up the image of Pollio as the defender of *libertas,* and forever the republican. From the sources that we have available that outline his activities in this last forty years of his life Pollio integrates into the principate well. He remained a leading figure, he hosted the sons of Herod for Augustus and his own son moved into the inner circle of Augustus. The *Asinii* became a leading family of the regime, ambitious and successful. All the evidence suggests we must abandon the belief put forward by Syme that Pollio remained an independent voice against Augustus and the emerging principate.

Pollio's personality also emerges more strongly in the second half of his life. From the glimpses we gain in the sources he was a critical man, without compromise, blunt according to Tacitus, sarcastic in the courts and bitter in his comments towards his rivals and competitors. He was noted for his *ferocia* as was his son. There is little to suggest he was well liked, but more respected, considered intelligent and clever, rather than admired or popular. His criticisms of others were well known and neither Julius Caesar, Cicero, Plancus, Sallust or Livy will escape. But none of this gains him respect. He was a belligerant individual.

Cicero the man and Cicero the legend never really leaves Pollio. He hates him. Augustus is known to have remarked when he was well on in his principate that Cicero was a great and learned man; a comment of resolution about the issues of the past.[1] Pollio however continues to attack him and at the same time emulate him; always wanting to be the "new Cicero". Pollio's criticisms focus on the man and his oratory rather than his politics. It is almost a justification for Cicero's murder; how else to live with the knowledge he had been involved in the destruction of one of the greatest orators of the time?

Osgood considers Pollio could not shake off the Roman intoxication with *gloria* and there is much to support this.[2] His great library, his wealth, writing his own history, dismissing the actions of civil war by declining to participate at Actium, his high profile in the courts, his ambition for his son, his complaints to Augustus. Pollio tolerated and survived his decade in the civil wars but at the first opportunity he returned to his own desires and the building of his own empire.

---

[1] Plut. *Cic*. 49.5-6: 'I learn that Caesar, a long time after this, paid a visit to one of his daughter's sons; and the boy, since he had in his hands a book of Cicero's, was terrified and sought to hide it in his gown; but Caesar saw it, and took the book, and read a great part of it as he stood, and then gave it back to the youth, saying: "A learned man, my child, a learned man and a lover of his country." Moreover, as soon as he had finally defeated Antony, and when he was himself consul, he chose Cicero's son as his colleague in the office, and it was in his consulship that the senate took down the statues of Antony, made void the other honours that had been paid him, and decreed besides that no Antony should have the name of Marcus. Thus the heavenly powers devolved upon the family of Cicero the final steps in the punishment of Antony.'

[2] Osgood (2006) 296.

Appendix One

Pollio's Three letters to Cicero between March and June 43 BC.

10.31

Scr. Cordubae xvii K. Apr. an. 43.

C. ASINIUS POLLIO CICERONI S. D.

1 minime mirum tibi debet videri nihil me scripsisse de re p., postea quam itum est ad arma. nam saltus Castulonensis, qui semper tenuit nostros tabellarios, etsi nunc frequentioribus latrociniis infestior factus est, tamen nequaquam tanta in hora est, quanta qui locis omnibus dispositi ab utraque parte scrutantur tabellarios et retinent. itaque nisi nave perlatae litterae essent, omnino nescirem quid istic fieret. nunc vero nactus occasionem, postea quam navigari coeptum est, cupidissime et quam creberrime potero scribam ad te.
2 ne movear eius sermonibus quem tametsi nemo est qui videre velit, tamen nequaquam proinde ac dignus est oderunt homines, periculum non est ; adeo est enim invisus mihi, ut nihil non acerbum putem, quod commune cum illo sit. natura autem mea et studia trahunt me ad pacis et libertatis cupiditatem. itaque illud initium civilis belli saepe deflevi ; cum vero non liceret mihi nullius partis esse, quia utrubique magnos inimicos habebam, ea castra fugi, in quibus plane tutum me ab insidiis inimici sciebam non futurum ; compulsus eo quo minime volebam, ne in extremis essem, plane pericula non dubitanter adii.
3 Caesarem vero, quod me in tanta fortuna modo cognitum vetustissimorum familiarium loco habuit, dilexi summa cum pietate et fide. quae mea sententia gerere mihi licuit, ita feci ut optimus quisque maxime probarit; quod iussus sum, eo tempore atque ita feci ut appareret invito imperatum esse. cuius facti iniustissima invidia erudire me potuit quam iucunda libertas et quam misera sub dominatione vita esset. ita si id agitur ut rursus in potestate omnia unius sint, quicumque is est, ei me profiteor inimicum, nec periculum est ullum quod pro libertate aut refugiam aut deprecer
4 sed consules neque senatus consulto neque litteris suis praeceperant mihi quid facerem ; unas enim post Idus Mart. demum a Pansa litteras accepi, in quibus hortatur me ut senatu scribam me et exercitum in potestate eius futurum. quod, cum Lepidus contionaretur atque omnibus scriberet se consentire cum Antonio, maxime contrarium fuit ; nam quibus commeatibus invito illo per illius provinciam legiones ducerem? aut si cetera transissem, num etiam Alpis poteram transvolare, quae praesidio illius tenentur? adde huc quod perferri litterae nulla condicione potuerunt ; sescentis enim locis excutiuntur, deinde etiam retinentur ab Lepido tabellarii.
5 illud me Cordubae pro contione dixisse nemo vocabit in dubium, provinciam me nulli, nisi qui ab senatu missus venisset, traditurum. nam de legione tricesima tradenda quantas contentiones habuerim quid ego scribam? qua tradita quanto pro re p. infirmior futurus fuerim quis ignorat? hac enim legione noli acrius aut pugnacius quicquam putare esse. qua re eum me existima esse, qui primum pacis cupidissimus sim (omnis enim civis plane studeo esse salvos), deinde qui et me et rem publicam vindicare in libertatem paratus sim.
6 quod familiarem meum tuorum numero habes, opinione tua mihi gratius est ; invideo illi tamen, quod ambulat et iocatur tecum. quaeres quanti aestimem. si umquam licuerit vivere in otio, experieris ; nullum enim vestigium abs te discessurus sum. illud vehementer admiror, non scripsisse te mihi manendo in provincia an ducendo exercitum in Italiam rei p. magis satis facere possim. ego quidem, etsi mihi tutius ac minus laboriosum est manere, tamen, quia video tali tempore multo magis legionibus opus esse quam provinciis, quae praesertim reciperari nullo negotio possunt, constitui, ut nunc est, cum exercitu proficisci. deinde ex litteris, quas ' Pansae misi, cognosces omnia ; nam tibi earum exemplar misi.
xvii K. Apr. Corduba.

10.32

Scr. Cordubae vi Id. Iun. an. 43.

C. ASINIUS POLLIO CICERONI

1 Balbus quaestor magna numerata pecunia, magno pondere auri, maiore argenti coacto de publicis exactionibus, ne stipendio quidem militibus reddito duxit se a Gadibus et triduum tempestate retentus ad Calpem K. Iun. traiecit sese m regnum Bogudis plane bene peculiatus. his rumoribus utrum Gadis referatur an Romam (ad singulos enim .nuntios turpissime consilia mutat) nondum scio.
2 sed praeter furta et rapinas et virgis caesos socios haec quoque fecit, ut ipse gloriari solet, eadem quae Q. Caesar : ludis, quos Gadibus fecit, Herennium Gallum histrionem summo ludorum die anulo aureo donatum in xiiii sessum deduxit (tot enim fecerat ordines equestris loci); quattuorviratum sibi prorogavit; comitia bienni biduo habuit, hoc est renuntiavit quos ei visum est ; exsules reduxit non horum temporum sed illorum quibus a seditiosis senatus trucidatus aut expulsus est Sex. Varo procos.
3 illa vero iam ne Caesaris quidem exemplo, quod ludis praetextam de suo itinere ad L. Lentulum procos. sollicitandum posuit, et quidem cum ageretur, flevit memoria rerum gestarum commotus ; gladiatoribus autem Fadium quendam, militem Pompeianum, quia, cum depressus in ludum bis gratis depugnasset, auctorare sese nolebat et ad populum confugerat, primum Gallos equites immisit in populum (coniecti enim lapides sunt in eum, cum abriperetur Fadius), deinde abstractum defodit in ludo et vivum combussit, cum quidem pransus nudis pedibus, tunica soluta, manibus ad tergum reiectis inambularet et illi misero quiritanti : 'C. R. natus sum' responderet : 'abi nunc, populi fidem implora'; bestiis vero civis Romanos, in iis circulatorem quendam auctionum, notissimum hominem Hispali, quia deformis erat, obiecit. Cum huiusce modi portento res mihi fuit.
4 sed de illo plura coram nunc, quod praestat, quid me velitis facere constituite. tris legiones firmas habeo, quarum unam, xxviii, cum ad se initio belli arcessisset Antonius hac pollicitatione, quo die in castra venisset, denarios quingenos singulis militibus daturum, in victoria vero eadem praemia quae suis legionibus (quorum quis ullam finem aut modum futurum putabit ?) incitatissimam is retinui aegre me hercules, nec retinuissem si uno loco habuissem, utpote cum singulae quaedam cohortes seditionem fecerint. reliquas quoque legiones non destitit litteris atque infinitis pollicitationibus incitare. nec vero minus Lepidus ursit me et suis et Antoni litteris ut legionem xxx mitterem sibi.
5 itaque quem exercitum neque vendere ullis praemiis volui nec eorum periculorum metu, quae victoribus illis portendebantur, deminuere, debetis existimare retentum et conservatum rei p. esse atque ita credere, quodcumque imperassetis, facturum fuisse, si quod iussistis feci. nam et provinciam in otio et exercitum in mea potestate tenui, finibus meae provinciae nusquam excessi, militem non modo legionarium sed ne auxiliarium quidem ullum quoquam misi et, si quos equites decedentis nactus sum, supplicio adfeci. quarum rerum fructum satis magnum re p. salva tulisse me putabo ; sed res p. si me satis novisset et maior pars senatus, maiores ex me fructus tulisset epistulam, quam Balbo, cum etiam nunc in provincia esset, scripsi, legendam tibi misi ; etiam praetextam si voles legere, Gallum Cornelium, familiarem meum, poscito.
vi Idus Iun. Corduba.

10.33

Scr. Cordubae parte priore m. Iun. An. 43

POLLIO CICERONI S. P
S. v. h. e. e. q. v.

1 quo tardius certior fierem de proeliis apud Mutinam factis Lepidus effecit, qui meos tabellarios novem dies retinuit ; tametsi tantam calamitatem rei p. quam tardissime audire optandum est, sed illis, qui prodesse nihil possunt neque mederi. atque utinam eodem s. c., quo Plancum et Lepidum in Italiam arcessistis me quoque iussissetis venire! profecto non accepisset res p. hoc vulnus. quo si qui laetantur in praesentia, quia videntur et duces et veterani Caesaris partium interisse, tamen postmodo necesse est doleant, cum vastitatem Italiae respexerint ; nam et robur et suboles militum interiit, si quidem quae nuntiantur ulla ex parte vera sunt.
2 neque ego non videbam quanto usui rei p. essem futurus, si ad Lepidum venissem ; omnem enim cunctationem eius discussissem, praesertim adiutore Planco ; sed scribenti ad me eius modi litteras quas leges et contionibus videlicet, quas Narbone habuisse dicitur, similis palparer necesse erat, si vellem commeatus per provinciam eius iter faciens habere. praeterea verebar ne, si ante quam ego incepta perficerem proelium confectum esset, pium consilium meum raperent in contrariam partem obtrectatores mei propter amicitiam, quae mihi cum Antonio non maior tamen quam Planco fuit
3 itaque a Gadibus mense Aprili binis tabellariis in duas navis impositis et tibi et consulibus et Octaviano scripsi ut me faceretis certiorem quonam modo Nurimum possem prodesse rei p. sed, ut rationem ineo, quo die proelium Pansa commisit, eodem a Gadibus naves profectae sunt nulla enim post hiemem fuit ante eam diem navigatio. et ego me hercules longe remotus ab omni suspicione futuri civilis tumultus penitus in Lusitania legiones in hibernis conlocaram. ita porro festinavit uterque confligere, tamquam nihil peius timerent quam ne sine maximo rei p. detrimento bellum componeretur. sed si properandum fuit, nihil non summi ducis consilio gessisse Hirtium video.
4 nunc haec mihi scribuntur ex Gallia Lepidi et nuntiantur, Pansae exercitum concisum esse, Pansam ex vulneribus mortuum, eodem proelio Martiam legionem interisse et L. Fabatum et C. Peducaeum et D. Carfulenum ; † Hirtino is autem proelio et quartam legionem et omnis peraeque Antoni caesas, item Hirti, quartam vero, cum castra quoque Antoni cepisset, a quinta legione concisam esse ; ibi Hirtium quoque perisse et Pontium Aquilam ; dici etiam Octavianum cecidisse (quae si, quod di prohibeant! vera sunt, non mediocriter doleo); Antonium turpiter Mutinae obsessionem reliquisse sed habere equitum v legiones sub signis armatas tris et P. Bagienni unam, inermis bene multos ; Ventidium quoque se cum legione vii, viii, viiii coniunxisse ; si nihil in Lepido spei sit, descensurum ad extrema et non modo nationes sed etiam servitia concitaturum ; Parmam direptam ; L. Antonium Alpis occupasse.
5 quae si vera sunt, nemini nostrum cessandum est nec exspectandum quid decernat senatus ; res enim cogit huic tanto incendio succurrere omnis, qui aut imperium aut nomen denique populi R. salvum volunt esse. Brutum enim cohortis xvii et duas non frequentis tironum legiones, quas conscripserat Antonius, habere audio. neque tamen dubito quin omnes qui supersint de Hirti exercitu confluant ad eum. nam in dilectu non multum spei puto esse, praesertim cum nihil sit periculosius quam spatium confirmandi sese Antonio dari. Anni autem tempus libertatem maiorem mihi dat, propterea quia frumenta aut in agris aut in villis sunt. itaque proximis litteris consilium meum expedietur ; nam neque desse neque superesse rei p. volo. maxime tamen doleo adeo et longo et infesto itinere ad me veniri, ut die quadragesimo post aut ultra etiam quam facta sunt omnia nuntientur.

Pollio's Defence of Lamia: Seneca *Suas*. 6.15.

haec inepte ficta cuilibet videri potest; Pollio vult illam veram videri; ita enim dixit in ea oratione quam pro Lamia (e)didit. ASINI POLLIONIS. Itaque numquam per Ciceronem mora fuit, quin eiuraret [suas esse] quas cupidissime effuderat orationes in Antonium; multiplicesque numero et accuratius scriptas illis contrarias edere ac vel[ut] ipse palam pro contione recitare pollicebatur. (Ad)ieceratque his alia sordidiora multo, ut ibi facile liqueret hoc totum adeo falsum esse, ut ne ipse quidem Pollio in historiis suis ponere ausus sit. huic certe actioni eius pro Lamia qui interfuerunt, negant eum haec dixisse, nec enim mentiri sub triumvirorum conscientia sustinebat, sed postea composuisse.

Pollio's Eulogy for Cicero: Seneca *Suas*. 6.24

Pollio quoque Asinius, qui Verrem, Ciceronis reum, fortissime morientem tradidit, Ciceronis mortem solus ex omnibus maligne narrat, testimonium tamen quamvis invitus plenum ei reddit: ASINI POLLIONIS. Huius ergo viri tot tantisque operibus mansuri in omne aevum praedicare de ingenio atque industria superva(cuum est). natura autem atque fortuna pariter obsecuta est ei, (si) quidem facies decora ad senectutem prosperaque permansit valetudo. tunc pax diutina, cuius instructus erat artibus, contigit. namque [a] prisca severitate iudiciis exacta maxima noxiorum multitudo provenit, quos obstrictos patrocinio incolumes plerosque habebat. iam felicissima consulatus ei sors petendi et gerendi magno munere deum, consilio (suo) industriaque. utinam moderatius secundas res et fortius adversas ferre potuisset! namque utraeque cum (e)venerant ei, mutari eas non posse rebatur. inde sunt invidiae tempestates coortae graves in eum, certiorque inimicis adgrediendi fiducia. maiore enim simultates appetebat animo quam gerebat. sed quando mortalium nulli virtus perfecta contigit, qua maior pars vitae atque ingenii stetit, ea iudicandum de homine est. atque ego ne miserandi quidem exitus eum fuisse iudicarem, nisi ipse tam miseram mortem putasset.

Livy's Eulogy for Cicero: Seneca *Suas.* 6.22

T. LIVI. Vixit tres et sexaginta annos, ut, si vis afuisset, ne immatura quidem mors videri possit. ingenium et operibus et praemiis operum felix, ipse fortunae diu prosperae; sed in longo tenore felicitatis magnis interim ictus vulneribus, exilio, ruina partium, pro quibus steterat, filiae amatae exitu tam tristi atque acerbo, omnium adversorum nihil, ut viro dignum erat, tulit praeter mortem, quae vere aestimanti minus indigna videri potuit, quod a victore inimico (nihil) crudelius passus erat quam quod eiusdem fortunae compos victo fecisset. si quis tamen virtutibus vitia pensarit, vir magnus ac memorabilis fuit, et in cuius laudes (ex)equendas Cicerone laudatore opus fuerit.

Seneca Preface to *Controversia* 4. 2-6

2 Pollio Asinius numquam admissa multitudine declamavit, nec illi ambitio in studiis defuit; primus enim omnium Romanorum advocatis hominibus scripta sua recitavit. et inde est, quod Labienus, homo (tam) mentis quam linguae amarioris, dixit: 'ille triumphalis senex ACHROASEIS suas [id est declamationes suas] numquam populo commisit, ' sive quia parum in illis habuit fiduciam sive, quod magis crediderim, tantus orator inferius id opus ingenio suo duxit et exerceri quidem illo volebat, gloriari fastidiebat.
3 Audivi autem illum et viridem et postea iam senem, cum Marcello Aesernino, nepoti suo, quasi praeciperet. audiebat illum dicentem et primum disputabat de illa parte quam Marcellus dixerat: praetermissa ostendebat, tacta leviter implebat, vitiosa coarguebat; deinde dicebat partem contrariam. floridior erat aliquanto in declamando quam in agendo. illud strictum eius et asperum et nimis iratum in censendo iudicium adeo cessabat, ut in multis illi venia opus esset, quae ab ipso vix impetrabatur.
4 Marcellus, quamvis puer, iam tantae indolis erat, ut Pollio ad illum pertinere successionem eloquentiae suae crederet, cum filium Asinium Gallum relinqueret, magnum oratorem, nisi illum, quod semper evenit, magnitudo patris non produceret sed obrueret. Memini intra quartum diem, quam Herium filium amiserat, declamare eum nobis, sed tanto vehementius quam umquam, ut appareret hominem natura contumacem cum fortuna sua rixari. nec quicquam ex ordine vitae solito remisit.
5 itaque cum mortuo in Syria C. Caesare per codicillos questus esset divus Augustus, ut erat mos illi clementissimo viro, non civiliter tantum sed etiam familiariter, quod in tam magno et recenti luctu suo homo carissimus sibi pleno convivio cenasset, rescripsit Pollio: 'eo die cenavi, quo Herium filium amisi. ' quis exigeret maiorem ab amico dolorem quam a patre?
6 O magnos viros, qui fortunae succumbere nesciunt et adversas res suae virtutis experimenta faciunt! declamavit Pollio Asinius intra quartum diem, quam filium amiserat; praeconium illud ingentis animi fuit malis suis insultantis.

Key Source References for Asinius Pollio

App. *B Civ.*
1.40
2.40
2.45-46
2.82
3.46
3.74
3.81
3.97
4.12
4.27
4.84
5.20
5.23
5.31-35
5.50
5.64

Catull.
12

Charisius, *Gramm*.
GL 1 80.2
GL 124.5K
GL 1 134.3
GL 1 1244

Cic. *Att.*
12.2.1 (238)
12.38.2. (278)
12.39.1 (280)
13.21.3 (351)
14.5. 1 (359)

Cic. *Fam.*
1.6.1 (17)
9.25.3 (114)
10.31 (368)
10.32 (415)
10.33 (409)
11.9.1 (380)
11.11.1 (386)

Dio Cass.
45.10. 3-6
48.15.1
48.32.1
48.41.7

Eutr.
5.3

Flor.
2.25

Gell. *NA*
10.26.1

Hor.
Carm. 2.1
Sat. 1.10 42-43
Sat. 1.10. 85

Joseph. *AJ*
14.138
14.389
15.343

Livy *Per.*
73
120

Macrob.
Sat. 1.2.22

Plin. *HN*
Pref. 31
7.115
34.10
35. 9-10
36. 23-24
36. 33-34

Plin. *Ep.*
5.3.5
6.29.5
7.4.3-4

Plut. *Vit.*
Ant.
9.1-2
Caes.
32.5
46.1-3
52.6
Cat. Min.
53.2-4
Pomp.
72.3

Prisc. *Inst.*
GL 11 386. 9-10

Quint. *Inst.*
1.5.8
1.5.56
1.6.42
1.8.11
4.1.11
6.1.21
6. 3.110
7.2.26
8.1.3
8.3.32
9.2.9
9.2.24
9.2.34
9.3.13
9.4.76
9.4.132
10.1.22
10.1.24
10.1.113
10.2.17
10.2.25
12.1.22
12.6.1
12.10.11
12.11.28

Sen. *Controv.*
1.6.11
2.3.13
2.3.19
2.5.10
2.5.13
3. *pref.* 14
4. *pref.* 2-6
4. *pref.* 11
4.2.
4.3
4.5
4.6
7 *pref.* 2
7.1.4
7.1.22
7.4.3
7.4.7
7.6.12
7.6.24
9.2.25

Sen. *Suas.*
2.10
6.14-15
6.24-25
6.27

Sen. *Ira*
3.23.7-8

Sen. *Ep.*
100.7

Strabo
p.193

Suet. *Iul.*
30.4
55.4
56.4

Suet. *Aug.*
29.5
43.2

Suet. *Claud.*
13.2

Suet. *Gram.*
10.6

Suda
1.381 Adler
1V.185 Adler

Tac. *Ann.*
1.12
11.6
4.34

Tac. *Dial.*
12
17
21
25
26
34
38

Val. Max.
8.13. ext. 4

Vell. Pat.
2.16.1
2.36.2
2.63.3
2.73.2
2.76.2
2.86.3
2.128.3

Verg. *Ecl.*
3. 84-88
4. 11-14
8. 6-13

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adler, A., ed. *Suda* (Leipzig 1928-71).

Ahl, F. M., 'The Rider and the Horse; Politics and Power in Roman Poetry from Horace to Statius' *ANRW* 2. 32.1 (1972) 40-110.

Ahl, F. M., *Lucan: An Introduction* (Ithaca/ New York 1976).

Alexander, W. H., 'The Enigma of Horace's Mother' *Cl. Phil.* 37 (1942) 385-397.

Alexander, M. C., *Trials in the Late Roman Republic 149 BC to 50 BC* (Toronto 1990).

Alexander, M. C., *The Case for the Prosecution in the Ciceronian Era* (Michigan 2002).

Alexander, M. C., 'Law in the Roman Republic' in N. Rosenstein and R. Morstein-Marx, eds. (2006) 236-255.

Alexander, M. C., 'Oratory, Rhetoric and Politics in the Republic' in W. Dominik and J. Hall, eds. (2007) 98-121.

Allen, W., 'On The Importance of Young Men in Ciceronian Politics' *CJ* 23 (1937) 357-359.

Amici, C. M., 'Atrium Libertatis' *Rend. Pont.* 68 (1995-96) 295-321.

Anderson, J. C. Jr., *The Historical Topography of the Imperial Fora* (Brussells 1984).

Anderson, J. C. Jr., *The Thomas Ashby Collection of Roman Brick Stamps* Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome Vol. 3. (London 1991).

André, J., 'Les relations politiques et personnelles de Cicéron et Asinius Pollion' *R.E.L.* 24 (1946) 151-169.

André, J., 'Quelques points obscurs de la vie d' Asinius Pollion ' *R.E.L.* 25 (1947) 122-147.

André, J., C. 'Asinius Pollion et la propagande pro-octavienne' *R.E.L.* 26 (1948) 215-221.

André, J., *La vie et l'oeuvre de C. Asinius Pollio* (Paris 1949).

Arnold, E. V., *Roman Stoicism* (Cambridge 1911).

Ash, R., *Ordering Anarchy. Armies and Leaders in Tacitus' Histories* (London 1999).

Astin, A. E., 'The Lex Annalis Before Sulla' *Latomus* 16 (1957) 588-613 and *Latomus* 17 (1958) 49- 64.

Astin, A. E., 'Leges Aelia et Fufia' *Latomus* 32 (1964) 421-445.

Astin, A. E., Walbank, F. W., Frederiksen, M. W., and Ogilvie, R. M., eds. *Rome and the Mediterranean to 133 B.C.* The Cambridge Ancient History Vol. 8 (Cambridge 1989).

Atkinson, J., 'Originality and its Limits in the Alexander Sources of the Early Empire' in A. B. Bosworth and E. Baynham eds. (2000) 307-325.

Aulard, F. A., *De C. Asinii Pollionis vita et scriptis* (Paris 1877).

Bablitz , L., *Actors and Audience in the Roman Courtroom* (London/ New York 2007).

Badian, E., *Foreign Clientelae* (Oxford 1958).

Badian, E., 'Appian and Asinius Pollio' *CR* 8 (1958A) 159-162.

Badian, E., 'Caesar's *Cursus* and the Intervals Between Offices' *JRS* 49 (1959) 81-89.

Badian, E., 'Waiting for Sulla' *JRS* 52 (1962) 47-61.

Badian, E., 'From the Gracchi to Sulla' *Hist.* 11 (1962A) 197-245.

Badian, E., 'Notes on Roman Senators of the Republic' *Hist.* 12 (1963) 129-143.

Badian, E., *Lucius Sulla the Deadly Reformer* (Sydney 1970).

Badian, E., 'Notes on a new list of Roman senators' *ZPE* 55 (1984), 101-113.

Badian, E., 'The Consuls, 179-49 BC ' *Chiron* 20 (1990) 371-413.

Bailleu, P., *Quomodo Appianus in Bellorum Civilium Libris 2-5 Usus Sit Asinii Pollionis Historiis* (Göttingen 1874) Facsimile reprint 2010.

Balsdon, J. P. V. D., 'Some Questions About Historical Writing in the Second Century B.C.' *CQ* NS 3-4 *(*1953*)* 158-164.

Balsdon, J. P. V. D., 'Three Ciceronian Problems. I. Clodius' "repeal" of the lex Aelia Fufia' *JRS* 47 (1957) 15-20.

Bardon, H., *La Littérature Latine Inconnue* Vol.1 (Paris 1952).

Barker, W., *The Adages of Erasmus* (Toronto 2001).

Bartsch, S., *Actors in the Audience* (Harvard 1994).

Bates, R. L., '"Rex in Senatu". A Political Biography of M. Aemilius Scaurus' *Proceedings of American Philosophical Society* 130 No 3 (1986) 251-288.

Batstone, W. W. and Damon, C., *Caesar's Civil War* (Oxford 2006).

Bauman, R. A., *The Crimen Maiestatis in the Roman Republic and Augustan Principate* (Johannesburg 1967).

Bauman, R. A., *Lawyers in Roman Transitional Politics* (Munich 1985).

Bayet, J., 'Virgile et les triumvirs " de agris dividundis"' *R.E.L.* 6 (1928) 270-298.

Beard, M., 'Looking (Harder) for Roman Myth: Dumézil, Declamation and the Problems of Definition' in F. Graf ed. (1993) 44-64.

Beard, M., *The Roman Triumph* (Harvard 2007).

Beaujeu, J., *Cicéron Correspondance* Tome X (Paris 1991).

Becatti, G., 'Letture Pliniane: Le opere d'arte nei monumenta Asini Pollionis e negli Horti Serviliani' in *Studi in Onore di Calderini e Paribeni* Vol.3 (Milano 1956) 199-210.

Bennett, H. M., *Cinna and his Times* (Menasha 1923).

Bennett, H. M., 'Vergil and Pollio' *AJPhil.* 51 (1930) 325-332.

Bertman, S., *The Conflict of Generations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Amsterdam 1976).

Berwick, E., *Lives of Caius Asinius Pollio, Marcus Terentius Varro and Cneius Cornelius Gallus* (London 1814) Facsimile reprint 2010.

Bicknell, P. and Nielsen, D., 'Five Cohorts Against the World' in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History*, C. Deroux, ed. 9 (1998) 138-166.

Bispham, E., *From Asculum to Actium: the Municipalization of Italy from the Social War to Augustus* (Oxford 2007).

Bleicken, J., *Senatsgericht und Kaisergericht: eine Studie zur Entwicklung des Prozeßrechtes im frühen Prinzipat* (Göttingen 1962).

Bloch, H., 'The Roman Brick–Stamps Not Published in Volume XV1 of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*' *Harv. Stud.* 51 (1947) 1-128.

Bloomer, W. M., *Valerius Maximus and the Rhetoric of the New Nobility* (Chapel Hill/ London 1992).

Boissier, G., *Ciceron et ses amis* (Paris 1874).

Bonner, S. F., *Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire* (Liverpool 1949 reprinted 1969).

Bosworth, A. B., 'Asinius Pollio and Augustus' *Hist.* 21 (1972) 441-473.

Bosworth, A. B., 'Tacitus and Asinius Gallus' *AJAH* 2 (1977) 173-192.

Bosworth, A. B., and Baynham, E., *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction* (Oxford 2000).

Bouvet. A., *César: la Guerre d' Afrique* (Paris 1949).

Bowersock, G. W., *Augustus and the Greek World* (Oxford 1965).

Bowersock, G. W., 'A Date in the Eighth *Eclogue*' *Harv. Stud.* 76 (1971) 73-80.

Bowersock, G. W., 'The Addressee of Virgil's Eighth *Eclogue*: A Response' *Harv. Stud.* 83 (1978) 201-202.

Bowman, A. K., Champlin, E., and Lintott, A., eds. *The Augustan Empire, 43 B.C-A.D. 69* The Cambridge Ancient History Vol. 10 (Cambridge 1996).

Braund, D. C., 'Four Notes on the Herods' *CQ* 33 (1983), 239-242.

Braund, D. C., *Augustus to Nero: A Sourcebook on Roman History 31 BC-AD 68* (Totowa 1985).

Braund, D. C., and Gill. C., eds *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome*, *Studies in Honour of T. P. Wiseman* (Exeter 2003).

Braund, S. M., *Seneca: De Clementia* (Oxford 2009).

Breebaart, A. B., *Clio and Antiquity: History and Historiography of the Greek and Roman World* (Hilversum 1987).

Brennan, T. C., *The Praetorship in the Roman Republic* (Oxford 2000).

Briggs, W. W., 'A Bibliography of Virgil's Eclogues' *ANRW* 2. 31. 2 (1981) 1267-1357.

Brink, C., 'Can Tacitus' *Dialogus* be dated? Evidence and historical conclusions' *Harv. Stud.* 96 (1994) 251-280.

Brodersen, K., 'Appian und sein Werk.' *ANRW* 2. 34.1 (1993) 339-363.

Broughton, T. R. S., *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic* Vol. 2 (New York 1952).

Brown P. M., ed. *Horace Satires 1* (Warminster 1993).

Brunt, P. A., 'Cicero, *Ad Atticum* XIV. 5.1' *CR* NS 11 (1961) 199-200.

Brunt, P. A., 'Italian aims at the time of the Social War' *JRS* 55 (1965) 90-109.

Brunt, P. A., *Italian Manpower 225 B.C. - A.D. 14* (Oxford 1971).

Brunt, P. A., *Social Conflicts in the Roman Republic* (London 1971A).

Brunt, P. A., 'Cicero and Historiography' in *Miscellanea Di Studi Classici in Onore Di Eugenio Manni,* Vol 1 (1980) 311-340.

Brunt, P. A., *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays* (Oxford 1988).

Bucher, G. S., 'The Origins, Program, and Composition of Appian's Roman History' *TAPA* 130 (2000) 411-458.

Buchheim, H., *Die Orientpolitik des Triumvirn M. Antonius* (Heidelberg1960).

Butler, S., *The Hand of Cicero* (London 2002).

Cairns, F. and Fantham, E., eds. *Caesar Against Liberty: Perspectives on his Autocracy* (Cambridge 2003).

Cameron, A., ed. *History as Text. The Writing of Ancient History* (London 1989).

Carcopino, J., *Virgile et le mystère de la IVe Éclogue* (Paris 1930).

Carcopino, J., 'Notes biographiques sur M. Valerius Messala Corvinus' *RPh* 20.1 (1946) 96-117.

Carcopino, J., *Cicero; The Secrets of his Correspondence* Vols.1&2 (London 1951).

Carsana, C., ed. *Commento storico al libro II delle Guerre Civili di Appiano. (parte I)* (Pisa 2007).

Carter, J. M., *The Battle of Actium: The Rise and Triumph of Augustus Caesar* (London 1970).

Carter, J. M., trans. *The Civil Wars By Appianus (of Alexandria)* (London/ New York 1996).

Casson, L., *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1971).

Casson, L., *Libraries in the Ancient World* (New Haven 2001).

Castagnoli, F., 'Atrium Libertatis' *Rend. Linc*. 8 (1946) 276-91.

Chaplin, J. D., and Kraus, C. S., eds. *Livy* (Oxford 2009).

Chilver, G. E. F., *Cisalpine Gaul* (Oxford 1941).

Chilver, G. E. F., 'Review of *La vie et l'oeuvre de C. Asinius Pollio* by J. André' *CR* NS 11 (1952) 30-31.

Chrissanthos, S. G., 'Caesar and the Mutiny of 47 BC' *JRS* 91 (2001*)* 63-75.

Clark, E. G., *Augustus and the Historians* (Diss. Oxford 1973).

Clarke, M. L., *Rhetoric at Rome. A Historical Survey* (London 1953).

Clausen, W. A., 'On the Date of the *First Eclogue' Harv. Stud.* 76 (1972) 201-205.

Clausen, W. A*., Commentary on Virgil's Eclogues* (Oxford 1994).

Cluett. R., 'In Caesar's Wake; The Ideology of the Continuators' in F. Cairns and E. Fantham eds. (2003) 118 -131.

Coffey, M., Review of *Seneca's* Ad Marciam: *Tradition and Originality* by Constantine Grollios 1956 *JRS* 49 (1959) 201-202.

Cokayne, K., 'Age and aristocratic self-identity: activities for the elderly' in M. Harlow and R. Laurence eds. (2007) 209 -216.

Coleman, R., *Vergil Eclogues* (Cambridge 1977).

Collins, J. H., 'On the Date and Interpretation of the *Bellum Civile*' *AJPhil.* 80 (1959) 113-132.

Colson, F. H., ed. *Quintilian* : *Institutiones oratoriae* (Cambridge 1924).

Conte, G. B., *Latin Literature A History* Trans. J.B. Solodow (Baltimore 1994).

Conway, R. S., *The Italic Dialects* (Cambridge 1897 reprinted1967).

Cooley, A. E., Review of *Le voci del dissenso. Ottaviano Augusto e I suoi oppositori* by Rohr Vio *CR* 56 (2006) 170-171.

Coppola, A., 'Asinio Pollione poeta. Nota a Verg. *Ecl*. 8, 6-10' *RFIC* 126 (1998) 170-4.

Corbeill, A., 'Rhetorical Education and Social Reproduction in the Republic and Early Empire' in W. Dominik and J. Hall eds (2007) 69-82.

Cornell, T., 'The Formation of the Historical Tradition of Early Rome' in I. Moxon, J. D. Smart and A. J. Woodman (eds) (1986) 67-86.

Costa, C. D. N., *Seneca Four Dialogues* (Warminster 1994).

Coulter, C. C., 'Pollio's History of the Civil War' *CW* 46 (1952) 33-36.

Courtney, E., *The Fragmentary Latin Poets* (Oxford 1993).

Crawford, M. H., *Roman Republican Coinage* 2 Volumes (Cambridge 1974).

Crawford, J. W., *M. Tullius Cicero: the lost and unpublished orations* (Göttingen 1984).

Crook, J. A., Lintott, A., and Rawson, E., eds *The Last Age of the Roman Republic, 146-43 BC* Cambridge Ancient History Vol. 9 (Cambridge 1994).

Crook, J. A., *Legal Advocacy in the Roman World* (Ithaca 1995).

Crowther, N. B., 'C. Cornelius Gallus. His Importance in the Development of Roman Poetry' *ANRW* 2. 30. 3 (1983) 1622-1648.

Cuff, P. J., 'Prolegomena to a critical edition of Appian, *B.C.* 1.' *Hist.* 16 (1967) 177-188.

Cuff, P. J., 'Appian's Romaica: A Note' *Athenaeum* NS 61 (1983) 148-164.

Curchin, L. A., *The Local Magistrates of Roman Spain* (Toronto 1990).

Curchin, L. A., *Roman Spain; Conquest and Assimilation* (London 1991).

D'Alton, J. F., *Roman literary theory and criticism* (London 1931).

Dalzell, A., 'C. Asinius Pollio and the Early History of Public Recitation at Rome' *Hermathena* 86 (1955) 20-28.

Dalzell, A., 'Maecenas and the Poets' *Phoenix* 10 (1956) 151-162.

David, J- M., *The Roman Conquest of Italy* English trans. (Oxford 1997).

David, J.-M. 'La clientele, d'une forme de l'analyse a` l'autre,' *La fin de la Republique romaine, Un débat franco-allemand d'histoire et d'historiographie*. EFR 235 (1997A) 195-210.

Davis, H. H., 'Cicero's Burial' *Phoenix* 12 (1958) 174-177.

Degrassi, A., *Inscriptiones Italiae. 13.1, Fasti consulares et triumphales* (Rome 1937-1963).

Dench, E., *From Barbarians to New Men* (Oxford 1995).

Deroux, C., 'Le frere d'Asinius Pollion' *ACL* (1981) 209-221.

Dessau, H., *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (Berlin 1892-1916).

Dettenhofer, M., *Perdita Iuventus* (Munich 1992).

D' Hendecourt, O., *De vita, gestis et scriptis Asinii Pollionis* (Louvain 1858).

Dihle, A., *Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire: from Augustus to Justinian* (London / New York 1994).

Dittenberger, W., 'Römische Namer in Griechischen Inschriften und Literaturwerken' *Hermes* 6 (1876) 129-155.

Domaszewski, A. von, *Bellum Marsicum* (Vienna/ Leipzig 1924).

Dominik, W. J. ed. *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society and Literature* (London/New York 1997).

Dominik, W. J., and Hall, J., eds. *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric* (Oxford 2007).

Donatus, Aelius. *Life of Virgil*. Trans. David Scott Wilson-Okamura. 1996. Rev. 2005, 2008. Online. Internet. 2012. Available HTTP: www.virgil.org/vitae/a-donatus.htm.

Dowling, M. B., *Clemency and Cruelty in the Roman World* (Michigan 2006).

Drummond, A., *The history and reliability of the early Fasti Consulares, with special reference to the so-called plebeian consuls* Vol. 1 (Oxford 1974).

Dueck, D., 'The Date and Method of Composition of Strabo's "Geography"' *Hermes* 127 (1999) 467-478.

Dueck, D., *Strabo of Amasia: A Greek Man of Letters in Augustan Rome* (London/ New York 2000).

Duff, J. M., *A Literary History of Rome in the Silver Age* (London 1927).

Duff, J. M. and Duff, A. M., *A Literary History of Rome in the Silver Age: From Tiberius to Hadrian* (London 1960).

Dugan, J. R**.,** *Making a new man: Ciceronian self-fashioning in the rhetorical works* (Oxford 2005).

DuQuesnay, I. M. le M., 'Horace and Maecenas: The Propaganda Value of *Sermones* 1' in A. J. Woodman and D. West eds. (1984) 19-58.

Dzino, D., 'Asinius Pollio in Dalmatia: What happened in Salona 39 BC?' *Klio* 93 (2011) 158-166.

Earl, D. C., *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge 1961).

Edward, W. A., *The Suasoriae of Seneca the Elder* (Cambridge 1928).

Edwards, M. J., *Plutarch: The Lives of Pompey, Caesar and Cicero* (Bristol 1991).

Edwards, R., 'Hunting for Boars with Pliny and Tacitus' *Cl Ant.* 27 (2008) 35-58.

Eidinow, J. S. C., 'Horace's Epistle to Torquatus (EP. 1.5)' *CQ* 45 (1) (1995) 191-199.

Elder, J. P., 'Horace, C.1.3' *AJPhil.* 73 (1952) 140-158.

Ellis, R., *A Commentary on Catullus* (Oxford 1889).

Erskine, A., *Troy between Greece and Rome. Local Tradition and Imperial Power* (Oxford 2001).

Eyssenhardt, F., 'Zur Frage über die Glaubwürdigkeit von Caesars Commentarien' *Jahrb. F. Philol.* 85 (1862) 755-764.

Fairweather, J., *Seneca the Elder* (Cambridge 1981).

Fairweather, J., 'The Elder Seneca and Declamation.' *ANRW* 2. 32.1 (1984) 514-556.

Fantham, E., *Roman Literary Culture: From Cicero to Apuleius* (Baltimore 1996 reprinted 1999).

Fantham, E., 'Caesar Against Liberty? An Introduction' in F. Cairns and E. Fantham eds (2003) 1-18.

Fantham, E., *The Roman World of Cicero's De Oratore* (Oxford 2004).

Fantham, E., 'Literature in the Roman Republic' in H. I. Flower ed. (2004 A) 271-292.

Fantham, E., Review of *Actors and Audience in the Roman Courtroom* by L. Bablitz *BMCR* 09. 56. (2009).

Farrell, J., *Vergil's Georgics and the Traditions of Ancient Epic* (Oxford 1991).

Farrell, J., 'Asinius Pollio in Vergil Eclogue 8 ' *Cl. Phil.* 86 (1991A) 204-211.

Favro, D., *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome* (Cambridge 1996).

Feeney, D., '*Si licet et fas est*: Ovid's *Fasti* and the problem of free speech under the Principate' in A. Powell ed. (1992) 1-25.

Feldman, L. H., 'Asinius Pollio and His Jewish Interests' *TAPA* 84 (1953) 73-80.

Feldman, L. H., 'Asinius Pollio and Herod's Sons' *CQ* 35 (1985) 240-243.

Feldman, L. H., *Studies in Hellenistic Judaism* (Leiden/ New York 1996).

Filmer, W. E., 'The Chronology of the Reign of Herod the Great' *JTS* 17 (1966) 283-298.

Fischer, F., 'Rheinquellen und Rheinanlieger bei Caesar und Strabon' *Germania* 75 (1997) 597-606.

Flower, H. I., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic* (Cambridge 2004).

Flower, H. I., *The Art of Forgetting: Disgrace and Oblivion in Roman Political Culture* (Chapel Hill 2006).

Fordyce, C. J., *Catullus: A Commentary* (Oxford 1961).

Fornara, C., *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley 1983).

Fraenkel, E., *Horace* (Oxford 1957).

Frank, T., 'Cicero and the Poetae Novi' *AJPhil*. 40 (1919) 396-415.

Frank, T., *Vergil a Biography* (Oxford 1922).

Frank, T., *Catullus and Horace* (Oxford 1928).

Frederiksen, M. W., Review of E.T. Salmon*, Samnium and the Samnites,* 1967 *JRS* 58 (1968) 224-229.

Fredricksmeyer, E. A., 'Octavian and the Unity of Virgil's First Eclogue*' Hermes* 94 (1966) 208-218.

Fredricksmeyer, E. A., 'Catullus 49, Cicero and Caesar' *CPhil*. 68 (1973) 268-278.

Frier, B. W., *The Rise of the Roman Jurists: Studies in Cicero's Pro Caecina* (Princeton 1985).

Frisch, H., *Cicero's Fight for the Republic* (Copenhagen 1946).

Gabba, E., 'Ricerche su alcuni punti di Storia Mariana' *Athenaeum* NS 29 (1951) 12-24.

Gabba, E., 'Ricerche sull'esercito professionale romano da Mario ad Augusto' *Athenaeum* NS 29 (1951A) 171-272.

Gabba, E., *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili* (Florence 1956).

Gabba, E., 'Note sulla polemica anticiceroniana di Asinio Pollione' *RSI* 69 (1957) 317-339.

Gabba, E., ed. *Appiani bellorum civilium liber primus* (Florence 1958).

Gabba, E., *Appiani bellorum civilium liber quintus* (Florence 1970).

Gabba, E., 'The Perusine War and Triumviral Italy' *Harv. Stud.* 75 (1971) 139-160.

Gabba, E., *Republican Rome, the Army and the Allies* Trans. P. J. Cuff (Oxford 1976).

Gabba, E., 'True History and False History in Classical Antiquity' *JRS* 71 (1981) 50-62.

Gabba, E., 'The Historians and Augustus' in F. Millar and E. Segal eds. (1984) 61-88.

Gaisser, J. H., *Catullus. Blackwell Introductions to the Classical World* (Chichester/Malden 2009).

Galinsky, K., *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus* (Cambridge 2005).

Geiger, J., *Cornelius Nepos and Ancient Political Biography* (Stuttgart 1985).

Gelzer, M., Review of *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili,* ed by E. Gabba *Gnomon* 30 (1958) 216 -218.

Gelzer, M., Review of *Appiani Bellorum Civilium Liber Primus,* ed. by E. Gabba *Gnomon* 31 (1959) 179-181.

Gelzer, M., *Caesar Politician and Statesman* English trans. (Oxford 1969).

Gelzer, M., 'Die drei Briefe des C. Asinius Pollio' *Chiron* II (1972) 297-312.

Gentili, B., and Cerri, G., *History and Biography in Ancient Thought* (Amsterdam 1988).

Gloede, H., *Über die Quellen des Pompejanischen Bürgerkriegs. i. Caesars historische Glaubwürdigkeit in den Commentarien vom Bürgerkrieg* (Diss. Kiel 1871).

Goar, R. J., *The legend of Cato Uticensis from the First Century B.C. to the Fifth Century A.D.* (Brussells 1987).

Gold, B. K., *Literary Patronage in the Augustan Age: Propertius and Maecenas* (Diss. North Carolina 1975).

Gold, B. K., ed. *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome* (Austin 1982).

Gold, B. K., *Literary Patronage in Greece and Rome* (Chapel Hill 1987).

Goldberg, S. M., 'The fall and Rise of Roman Tragedy' *TAPA* 126 (1996) 265-286.

Goldberg, S. M., *Constructing Literature in the Roman Republic: Poetry and its reception* (Cambridge 2005).

Goldberg, S. M., 'The faces of eloquence: the *Dialogus de oratoribus'* in A. J. Woodman ed. (2009) 73-84.

Gomme, A. W., and Sandbach, F.H., *Menander: A Commentary* (Oxford 1973).

Goodman, M., 'Judaea' in A. K. Bowman, E. Champlin and A. Lintott eds. (1996) 737 -781.

Goodyear, F. R. D., *The Annals of Tacitus Books 1-6* Vol.1 (Cambridge 1972).

Gowing, A. M., *The Triumviral Narratives of Appian and Cassius Dio* (Michigan 1992).

Gowing, A. M., "From the annalists to the *Annales*: Latin historiography before Tacitus' in A. J. Woodman ed. (2009) 17-30.

Graf. F., ed. *Mythos in mythenloser Gesellschaft: Das Paradigma Roms* (Stuttgart 1993).

Grant, M., *From Imperium to Auctoritas* (Cambridge 1969).

Grant, M., *Herod the Great* (London 1971).

Grant, M., *Greek and Roman Historians: Information and Misinformation* (London/ New York 1995).

Graver, M., 'The Manhandling of Maecenas: Senecan Abstractions of Masculinity' *AJPhil.* 119 (1998) 607-632.

Greenidge, A. H. J., *The Legal Procedure of Cicero's Time* (Oxford 1901).

Griffin, M., 'The Elder Seneca and Spain' *JRS* 62 (1972) 1-19.

Griffin, M., *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics* (Oxford 1976).

Griffin, J., 'Augustus and the Poets: 'Caesar qui cogere posset,'' in F. Millar and E. Segal eds. (1984) 189-218.

Grisart, A., 'Asinius Pollion commentateur de Virgile' *Athenaeum* 42 (1964) 447- 488.

Groag, E., and Stein, A., eds. *Prosopographia Imperii Romani* 2nd edn, (1933-).

Grollios, C. C., *Seneca's Ad Marciam: Tradition and Originality* (Athens 1956).

Gruen, E., 'Cicero and Licinius Calvus' *Harv. Stud.* 71 (1966) 215-233.

Gruen, E., 'Pompey, The Roman Aristocracy, and the Conference of Luca' *Historia* 18 (1969) 71-108.

Gruen, E., *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic* (Berkeley 1995).

Gunderson, E., *Declamation, Paternity, and Roman Identity: Authority and the Rhetorical Self* (Cambridge 2003).

Habinek, T. N., *The Politics of Latin Literature*: *Writing, Identity, and Empire in Ancient Rome* (Princeton 1998).

Hadas, M., *Sextus Pompey* (New York 1930).

Hahn, I., 'Appien et le cercle de Sénéque ' *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 12 (1964) 177-188.

Hall, L. G. H., 'Hirtius and the *Bellum Alexandrinum*.' *CQ* NS 46 (1996) 411-415.

Hall, J., *Politeness and Politics in Cicero's Letters* (Oxford 2009).

Haller, B., *C. Asinius Pollio als Politiker und zeitkritischer Historiker* (Diss., Munster 1967).

Hallett, J., 'Perusine Glandes and the Changing Image of Octavian' *AJAH* 2 (1977) 151-171.

Hammer, J., *Prolegomena to an Edition of the Panegyricus Messalae* (New York 1925).

Hanslik, R., 'Der Dichterkreis des Messalla' *AAWW* 89 (1952) 22-38.

Hardie, C. G., 'Octavian and Eclogue 1' in *The Ancient Historian and His Materials*, Essays in Honour of C. E. Stevens, ed. B. Levick (Farnborough 1975) 109- 122.

Hardie, P. R., ed. *Virgil: Critical Assessments of Classical Authors* (London 1999).

Hardy, E. G., 'The Number of the Sullan Senate' *JRS* 6 (1916) 59-62.

Harlow, M., and Laurence, R., eds. *Age and Ageing in the Roman Empire* (Portsmouth 2007).

Harmon, D. P,. 'The Religious Significance of Games in the Roman Age' in W. J. Raschke ed. (1988) 236-255.

Harris, W. V., *Rome in Etruria and Umbria* (Oxford 1971).

Harrison, R J., *Spain at the Dawn of History: Iberians, Phoenicians and Greeks* (New York 1988).

Harrison, S., ed. *A Companion to Latin Literature* (Oxford 2005).

Harrison, S., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Horace* (Cambridge 2007).

Havas, L., 'Asinius Pollio and the Fall of the Roman Republic' *ACD* 16 (1980) 25-36.

Havelock, E. A., *The Lyric Genius of Catullus* (Oxford 1939).

Haug, I., 'Der römische Bundesgenossenkrieg 91-88 v. Chr. bei Titus Livius' *WJA* 2 (1947) 100-139; 201-258.

Hayne, L., 'Lepidus' Role After the Ides of March' *Acta Classica* 14 (1971) 109-117.

Helen, T., *Organization of Roman Brick Production in the First and Second Centuries A D. An Interpretation of Roman Brick Stamps* (Helsinki 1975).

Henderson Jr, C., ' The Career of the Younger M. Aemilius Scaurus' *CJ* 53 (1958) 194-206.

Henderson, J., 'Polishing off the politics; Horace's Ode to Pollio (*Odes* 2.1)' in *Fighting for Rome: Poets and Caesars, History and Civil War* (Cambridge 1998) 108-164.

Hendrickson, G. L., 'Horace's Propempticon to Virgil' *CJ* 111 (1907-8) 100-104.

Hendrickson, G. L., 'A witticism of Asinius Pollio' *AJPhil.* 36 (1915) 70-75.

Hill, H., 'Sulla's New Senators in 81 B.C. ' *CQ* 26 (1932) 170-177.

Hillard. T., 'Plutarch's Late-Republican Lives: Between the Lines' *Antichthon* 21 (1987) 19-48.

Hinard, F., *Les proscriptions de la Rome républicaine* (Rome 1985).

Hoehner, H. W., *Herod Antipas: A Contemporary of Jesus Christ* (Michigan 1983).

Hohl, E., 'Cäsar am Rubico' *Hermes* 80 (1952) 246-249.

Hollis, A. S., *Fragments of Roman Poetry c 60 BC-AD 20* (Oxford 2007).

Homeyer, H., *Die antiken Berichte über den Tod Ciceros und ihre Quellen* (Baden 1964).

Hopkins, K., *Death and Renewal* (Cambridge 1983).

Horbury, W., *Messianism among Jews and Christians: twelve biblical and historical studies* (London/ New York 2003).

Hornblower, J., *Hieronymus of Cardia* (Oxford 1981).

Hornblower, S., et al *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3rd Revised Edition (Oxford 1996).

Hutchinson, G. O., 'The Publication and Individuality of Horace's *Odes* Books 1-3' *CQ* 52.2 (2002) 517-537.

Huzar, E. G., *Mark Antony: A Biography* (Minneapolis 1978).

Innes, D. C, 'Dionysius of Halicarnassus' in G. A. Kennedy ed. (1989) 267-271.

Isager, J., *Pliny on Art and Society* (London 1991).

Jacob, Fr., *Asinius Pollio* (Lübeck 1852).

Jenkyns, R., *Virgil's Experience* (Oxford 1998).

Jones, C. P., 'Towards a Chronology of Plutarch's Works' *JRS* 56 (1966) 61-74.

Karakasis, E., *Song Exchange in Roman Pastoral* (Berlin/New York 2011).

Kaster, R., 'Becoming: 'CICERO' ' in P. Knox and C. Foss, eds *Style and Tradition: Studies in Honor of Wendell Clausen* (Stuttgart 1998) 248-263.

Keaveney, A., 'Four Puzzling Passages in Appian' *Giornale Italiano Di Filologia* NS 12 (1981) 247-250.

Keaveney, A., 'Sulla, The Marsi, and The Hirpini' *CPhil.* 76 (1981A) 292-296.

Keaveney, A., *Sulla the last Republican* (London 1982).

Keaveney, A., 'Caesars in the Social War' *Rh.M.* 126 (1983) 273-281.

Keaveney, A., *Rome and the Unification of Italy* (London 1987).

Kelly, J. M., *Studies in the Civil Judicature of the Roman Republic* (Oxford 1976).

Kennedy, G. A., *Quintilian* (New York 1969).

Kennedy, G. A., *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World* (Princeton 1972).

Kennedy, G. A., ed. *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism: Classical Criticism* Vol.1 (Cambridge 1989).

Kenney, E. J., and Clausen, W. V., eds *Cambridge History of Classical Literature* Vol 2*: Latin Literature* (Cambridge 1982).

Keppie, L.*, Colonisation and Veteran Settlement in Italy 47-14 BC* (London 1983).

Kilpatrick, R. S., *The Poetry of Friendship: Horace, Epistles 1* (Edmonton 1986).

Kleijwegt, M., 'Review of *Perdita Iuventus* by Maria Dettenhofer 1992' *Mnemosyne* 48 (1995) 619-626.

Konstan, D., 'Patrons and Friends' *CPhil.* (1995) 328-342.

Konstan, D., 'Friendship and Patronage' in S. Harrison ed. (2005) 345-359.

Kornemann, E., 'Die historische Schriftstellerei des C. Asinius Pollio' *Jahrbücher für classische Philologie und Pädagogik* 22 Suppl. (1896) 557-691.

Kornemann, E., 'Pollios Geschichstwerk und Horaz, carm. 11.1' *Klio* 3 (1903) 550-551.

Kraus, C. S., 'Hair, Hegemony, and Historiography: Caesar's Style and its Earliest Critics' in T. Reinhardt et al eds (2005) 97-115.

Kunkel, W., *An Introduction to Roman Legal and Constitutional History* Trans. J. M. Kelly 2nd edition (Oxford 1973).

Landgraf, G., *Untersuchungen zu Caesar und seinen Fortsetzern ins besondere Autorschaft und Komposition des Bellum Alexandrinum und Africanum* (Erlangen 1888).

Lanzani, C., *Lucio Cornelio Silla Dittatore* (Milan 1936).

Latte, K., 'Livy's Patavinitas' *Cl. Phil.* 35 (1940) 56-60.

Leach, E., 'Ciceronian "Bi-Marcus": Correspondence with M. Terentius Varro and L. Papirius Paetus in 46 B.C.E.' *TAPA* 129 (1999) 139-179.

Lebek , W. D., *Verba Prisca* (Göttingen 1970).

Leeman, A. D., *Orationis Ratio* Vols. 1&2 (Amsterdam 1963).

Leisner-Jensen, M., 'P. Ventidius and Sallust ' *Classica et Mediaevalia* 48 (1997) 325-346.

Levene, D. S., 'Roman Historiography in the Late Republic' in J. Marincola ed. (2007) 275-289.

Levi, P., 'The Dedication to Pollio in Virgil's Eighth Eclogue' *Hermes* 94 (1966) 73-79.

Levi, P., *Horace: A Life* (London 1997).

Levi, P., *Virgil His Life and Times* (London 1998).

Levick, B. M., *Tiberius the Politician* (London 1976 Rev, ed. 2000).

Levy, B., 'Dating Asinius Pollio's Asian Proconsulship' *AAPhA* (1987) 10.2.

Levy, B. 'The date of Asinius Pollio's proconsulship' *JNG* 44 (1994) 79-89.

Linderski, J., *Studi in onore di Edoardo Volterra* Vol. 2 (Milan 1971).

Linderski, J. *Roman Questions* (Stuttgart 1995).

Lindsay, W. M., *The Latin Language* (Oxford 1894).

Lintott, A. W., 'Lucan and the History of the Civil War' *CQ* NS 21 (1971) 488-505.

Lopez, J. F., 'Quinitilian as Rhetorician and Teacher' in W. Dominik and J. Hall eds (2007) 307-322.

Lowe B., 'Sextus Pompeius and Spain: 46-44BC' in A. Powell and K. Welch eds (2002) 65-102.

Luce, T. J., *Livy: The Composition of his History* (Princeton 1977).

Luce, T. J., 'Reading and Response in the *Dialogus*' in T. J. Luce and A. J. Woodman eds (1993) 11-38.

Luce T. J., and Woodman A. J., eds *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton 1993).

Lyne, R. O. A. M., 'The Neoterics Poets' *CQ* 28 (1978) 167-187 reprinted in R.O.A.M. Lyne *Collected Papers on Latin Poetry* (Oxford 2007).

Lyne, R. O. A. M., *Horace: Behind the Public Poetry* (New Haven 1995).

Mackie, N., 'Popularis Ideology and Popular Politics at Rome in the First Century B.C.' *Rhein. Mus. F. Philol*. 135 11 (1992) 49-73.

Magnino, D., ed. and tr. *Appiani Bellorum civilium liber tertius* (Florence 1984).

Malcovati, H., 'De C. Asinii Pollionis carminibus' *Athenaeum* NS I (1923) 131-136.

Malcovati, H., *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta. Liberae Rei Publicae* 2nd edn (Turin 1955).

Mankin, D., 'The Addressee of Virgil's Eighth *Eclogue*: A Reconsideration' *Hermes* 116 (1988) 63-76.

Mankin, D., *Horace: Epodes* (Cambridge 1995).

Manning, C. E., 'The Consolatory Tradition and Seneca's Attitude to the Emotions' *Greece & Rome* 21 (1974) 71-81.

Manning, C. E., *On Seneca's " Ad Marciam"* (Leiden 1981).

Manuwald, G., *Cicero, Philippics 3-9* Vols 1 & 2 (Germany 2007).

Marincola, J., *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge 1997).

Marincola, J., ed. *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* (Oxford 2007).

Marshall, B. A., *A Historical Commentary on Asconius* (Missouri 1985).

Martin, R. H., *Tacitus and the Writing of History* (Berkeley 1981).

Martin, R. H. and Woodman, A. J., *Tacitus: Annals 1V* (Cambridge 1989).

Martindale, C., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (Cambridge/ New York 1997).

Marzano, A., *Roman Villas in Central Italy. A Social and Economic History* (Leiden 2007).

Massa, G., 'Pollione a Cicerone: le epistole del 43 a. C. come testimonianza di un ideale politico' *Athenaeum* 71 (1993) 499-515.

Mayer, R., 'Missing Persons in the Eclogues' *BICS* 30 (1983) 17-30.

Mayer, R., *Horace Epistles Book 1* (Cambridge 1994).

Mayer, R., *Tacitus: Dialogus de Oratoribus* (Cambridge 2001).

Mazzarino, S., *Il pensiero storico classico*, 3 Vols. (Bari 1966).

McDermott, W. C., 'Cicero's Publication of his Consular Orations' *Philologus* 116 (1972) 277-284.

McDermott, W. C., 'C. Asinius Pollio, Catullus, and C. Julius Caesar' *Ancient World* 11 (1979) 55-60.

McDonald, A. H., 'Review of *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili,* ed. by E. Gabba*' JRS* 48 (1958) 186-187.

McDonald, A. H., 'The Style of Livy' in J. D. Chaplin and C. S. Kraus eds (2009) 222-259.

McDonald, W. F., 'Clodius and the Lex Aelia Fufia' *JRS* 19 (1929) 164-179.

McDougall, I., 'Dio and his Sources for Caesar's Campaigns in Gaul' *Latomus* 50 (1991) 616-638.

McGill, S., 'R. F. Thomas, Virgil and the Augustan Reception.' *BMCR* 9 (2001).

McGushin, P., C. *Sallustius Crispus, Bellum Catilinae: A Commentary* (Leiden 1977).

McGushin, P.*, Sallust, Bellum Catilinae*, *Text with Introduction and Notes* (Bristol 1980).

McGushin, P., trans. *Sallust: The Histories* Vols. 1&2 (Oxford/ New York 1992).

Mckay, A. G., *Vergil's Italy* (Bath 1970).

Mellor, R., *The Roman Historians* (London 1999).

Mendell, C. W., 'The Epic of C. Asinius Pollio' *Yale Classical Studies* 1 (1928) 201-203.

Migliario, M., *Retorica e storia: una lettura delle Suasoriae di Seneca Padre* Quaderni di Invigilata lucernis 32 (Bari 2007).

Millar, F., 'Triumvirate and Principate' *JRS* 63 (1973) 50-67.

Millar, F., 'Style Abides: Review of Ronald Syme Roman Papers 1-11, edited by E. Badian' *JRS 71 (1981) 144-152.*

Millar, F., and Segal, E., eds *Caesar Augustus Seven Aspects* (Oxford 1984).

Millar, F., 'Cornelius Nepos, "Atticus" and the Roman Revolution' *Greece & Rome* 35 (1988) 40-55.

Moles, J. L., 'Virgil, Pompey and the *Histories* of Asinius Pollio' *CW* 76 (1983) 287-288.

Moles, J. L., 'Reconstructing Plancus (Horace, C.1-7)' *JRS* 92 (2002) 86-109.

Mommsen, T., 'The Temple of Liberty' *Hermes* (1888) 631-633.

Mommsen, T., *Gesammelte Schriften* Vol. 4 (Berlin 1904).

Morgan, L., 'The Autopsy of C. Asinius Pollio' *JRS* 90 (2000) 51-69.

Mouritsen, H., *Italian Unification: A study in ancient and modern historiography* (London 1998).

Mouritsen, H., *Plebs and Politics in the late Roman Republic* (Cambridge 2001).

Moxon, I. S., Smart, J. D., and Woodman, A. J., eds *Past perspectives: Studies in Greek and Roman Historical Writing* (Cambridge 1986).

Murgia, C. E., 'The Date of Tacitus' Dialogus' *Harv. Stud.* 84 (1980) 99–125.

Murgia, C. E., 'Pliny's Letters and the Dialogus' *Harv. Stud.* 89 (1985) 171-206.

Mynors, R. A. B., ed. Erasmus 'Praise of Folly' *Collected Works* v 31 trans. M. Phillips (Toronto1982)

Narducci, E., ed. *Aspetti della fortuna di Cicerone nella cultura Latina* (Florence 2003).

Nauta, R. R., *Poetry for Patrons: Literary Communication in the Age of Domitian* Mnemosyne Supplement 206 (Leiden 2002).

Nauta, R. R., Van Dam, H-J., and Smolenaars, J. J. L., eds *Flavian Poetry* (Leiden 2006).

Néraudau, J. P., 'Asinius Pollio et la poésie' *ANRW* 2. 30.3 (1983) 1732-1750.

Neudling, C. L., *A Prosopography to Catullus* (Oxford 1955).

Nicholson, J., 'The Delivery and Confidentiality of Cicero's Letters' *CJ* 90 (1994) 33-63.

Nicolet, C., *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome* (Berkeley 1980).

Nielsen, R. M., 'Virgil: *Eclogue* 1' *Latomus* 31 (1972) 154-160.

Niese, B., *Flavii Josephi opera* 7 Vols. (Berlin 1885-1895).

Nigdélis, P. M., 'M. Insteius L. F. *Autokrator* et la province de Macédoine au début du second triumvirat: à propos D'une Inscription D'europos' *BCH* 118.1 (1994) 215-228.

Nipperdey, K., and Andresen, G., *P. Cornelius Tacitus. Ab excessu Divi Augusti 1-V1* (Berlin 1915).

Nisbet, R. G. M., 'Notes on Horace, Epistles 1' *CQ* 9 (1959) 73-76.

Nisbet, R. G. M., and Hubbard, A., *A Commentary on Horace; Odes Book 1* (Oxford 1970).

Nisbet, R. G. M., and Hubbard, A., *A Commentary on Horace; Odes Book II* (Oxford 1978).

Nisbet, R. G. M., 'Horace. Life and Chronology' in S. Harrison ed. (2007) 7-21.

Noyes, A., *Portrait of Horace* (London 1947).

Oakley, S. P., *A Commentary on Livy Books VI-X. Volume III. Book IX* (Oxford 2005).

Ogilvie, R. M., *A Commentary on Livy, Books I-V.* (Oxford 1965).

Oliensis, E., *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority* (Cambridge 1998).

Oliver, J. H., 'The Descendants of Asinius Pollio,' *AJPhil.* 73 (1947) 147-160.

Osgood, J., *Caesar's Legacy: Civil War and the Emergence of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge 2006).

Osgood, J., 'Eloquence Under the Triumvirs' *AJPhil.* 127 (2006 A) 525-551

Osgood, J., Review of Manuwald, G., ed. *Cicero, Philippics 3-9. Volume 1. Introduction, Text and Translation. Volume 2. Commentary BMCR 03. 04. (2008).*

O'Sullivan, N., 'Caecilius, the 'canons' of writers, and the origins of Atticism' in W. J. Dominik (1997) 32-49.

Parkin, T. G., *Old Age in the Roman World: A Cultural and Social History* (Baltimore 2003).

Parks, E. P., *The Roman Rhetorical Schools as a Preparation for the Courts under the Early Empire* (Baltimore 1945).

Passage, C. E., *The Complete Works of Horace* (New York 1983).

Pauly, A., and Wissowa, G., et al*., Real-Encyclopådie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart 1893-)

Pelling, C. B. R., 'Pharsalus' *Historia* 22 (1973) 249-259.

Pelling, C. B. R., 'Plutarch's Method of Work in the Roman Lives' *JHS* 99 (1979) 74 -96.

Pelling, C. B. R., 'Plutarch's Adaption of his Source Material' *JHS* 100 (1980) 127-140.

Pelling, C. B. R., Review of *Cassio Dione e la Guerra gallica di Cesare* by Giuseppe Zecchini *CR* NS 32 (1982) 146-148.

Pelling, C. B. R., 'Plutarch and Roman Politics' in I. Moxon, J. D. Smart and A. J. Woodman (eds) (1986) 159-187. Reprinted in B. Scardigli ed. (1995) 319-357.

Pelling, C. B. R., *Life of Antony* (Cambridge 1988).

Pelling, C. B. R., 'The Triumviral Period' in A. K. Bowman, E.Champlin and A. Lintott, eds. (1996) 1-69.

Pelling, C. B. R., *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies* (London 2002).

Pelling, C. B. R., *'Judging Julius Caesar'* in M. Wyke ed. (2006) 3-28.

Peter, H., *Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae Vol. 2* (Stuttgart 1906, reprinted 1967).

Peterson, W., ed. M. *Fabi Quintiliani Institutionis Oratoriae Liber Decimus* (Oxford 1891).

Peterson, W., ed. *Tacitus Dialogus de claris oratoribus* (Oxford 1893).

Phillimore, J. S., *Pastoral and Allegory* (Oxford 1925).

Pierce, E. D., *A Roman Man of Letters: Gaius Asinius Pollio* (New York 1922).

Pollitt, J. J., 'The Impact of Greek Art on Rome' *TAPA* 108 (1978) 155-174.

Pollitt, J. J., *Art in the Hellenistic Age* (Cambridge 1986).

Pollitt, J. J., *The Art of Ancient Greece: Sources and Documents* (Cambridge 1990).

Pomeroy, A. J., 'Livy's Death Notices' *Greece & Rome* 35 (1988) 172-183.

Pomeroy, A. J., 'Seneca on Death Notices' *Mnemosyne* 42 (1989) 102-107.

Powell, A., *Roman Poetry and the Propaganda in the Age of Augustus* (Bristol 1992).

Powell, A., and Welch, K., *Sextus Pompeius* (London 2002).

Powell, J. G. F., and Paterson, J. J., eds *Cicero the Advocate* (Oxford 2004).

Pucci Ben Zeev, M., 'Seleukos of Rhosos and Hyrcanus 11' *Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period* 26. 2 (1995) 113-121.

Pucci Ben Zeev, M., *Jewish Rights in the Roman World. The Greek and Roman Documents Quoted by Josephus Flavius* (Text and Studies in Ancient Judaism 74, Tübingen 1998).

Purcell, N., 'Atrium Libertatis' *PBSR* 61 (1993) 125-155.

Purcell, N., 'Rome and its Development under Augustus and His Successors' in A. K. Bowman, E. Champlin and A. Lintott eds. (1996) 782 -811.

Putnam, M. C. J., 'Horace to Torquatus: Epistle 1.5 and Ode 4.7' *AJPhil.* 127.3 (2006) 387-413.

Quinn, K., *Latin Explorations* (London 1963).

Quinn, K., *Catullus. An Interpretation* (London 1972).

Raaflaub, K. A., 'Zum politischen Wirken der caesarfreundlichen Volkstribunen am Vorabend des Bürgerkrieges' *Chiron* 4 (1974) 293-326.

Raaflaub, K. A., 'Caesar the Liberator? Factional Politics, Civil War and Ideology' in F. Cairns and E. Fantham eds. (2003) 35-67.

Raaflaub, K. A., and Samons, L. J., 'Opposition to Augustus' in K. A. Raaflaub, and M. Toher, eds (1990) 417-454.

Raaflaub, K. A., and Toher, M., *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Empire* (Berkeley 1990).

Raditsa, L., 'Julius Caesar and his Writings' *ANRW* 1.3 (1973) 417-456.

Radke, G., ed. *Cicero ein Mensch seiner Zeit* (Berlin 1968).

Rajak, T., *Josephus. The Historian and his Society* (London 1983).

Ramsey, J. T., 'Did Julius Caesar temporarily banish Mark Antony from his inner circle?' *CQ* NS 54 (2004)161-173.

Raschke, W. J., ed. *The Archaeology of the Olympics: the Olympics and other festivals in antiquity* (Wisconsin 1988).

Rawson, E., 'Cicero the Historian and Cicero the Antiquarian' *JRS* 62 (1972) 33-45.

Rawson, E., *Cicero; A Portrait* (Bristol 1975, revised edition 1983).

Rawson, E., *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London 1985).

Rawson, E., 'Cassius and Brutus: the Memory of the Liberators' in I. Moxon, J. D. Smart, and A. J. Woodman eds (1986) 101-120.

Rawson, E., *Roman Culture and Society: Collected Papers* (Oxford 1991).

Reckford, K. J., 'Only a Wet Dream? Hope and Skepticism in Horace Satire 1.5' *AJPhil.* 20 (1999) 525-554.

Reinhardt, T., Lapidge, M., and Adams J. N., eds *Aspects of the Language of Latin Prose* Proceedings of the British Academy 129 (Oxford 2005).

Reynolds, J., *Aphrodisias and Rome* (London 1982).

Rice-Holmes, T., *The Roman Republic and the Founder of the Empire* (Oxford 1928).

Rice-Holmes, T., *The Architect of the Roman Empire 27 BC to AD 14* (Oxford 1931).

Richardson, J. S., 'The Senate, The Courts, And The *SC de Cn Pisone patre' CQ* 47 (1997) 510-518.

Richardson, P., *Herod: King of the Jews and Friend of the Romans* (Columbia 1999).

Rigsby, K. J., *Asylia: Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World* (California 1996).

Ritcher, W., 'Das Cicerobild der romischen Kaiserzeit' in G. Radke (1968) 161-197.

Robinson, O. F., *Penal Practice and Penal Policy in Ancient Rome* (London/New York 2007).

Robinson, R. P., 'Valerius Cato' *TAPA* 54 (1923) 98-116.

Robson, E. I., 'Virgil, Eclogue 1V. 18 –20' *CR* 42 (1928) 123-124.

Rogers, R. S., 'The Emperor's Displeasure – amicitiam renuntiare' *TAPA* 90 (1959) 224-237.

Rohr Vio, F., *Le voci del dissenso. Ottaviano Augusto e i suoi oppositori* (Padova 2000).

Roller, D. W., *The Building Program of Herod the Great* (Berkeley 1998).

Roller, M. B., 'Color-blindness. Cicero's death declamation and the production of history' *Cl.Phil*. 92 (1997) 109-130.

Rondholz, A., 'Crossing the Rubicon. A Historiographical Study' *Mnemosyne* 62 (2009) 432-450.

Rosenstein, N., and Morstein-Marx, R., eds *A Companion to the Roman Republic* (Malden/ Oxford 2006).

Rosner–Siegel, J. A., 'The Oak and the Lightning: Lucan, *Bellum Civile*1.135-157' *Athenaeum* NS 61 (1983) 165-177.

Rostovtzeff, M., *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* Vols. 1 & 2 (Oxford 1957).

Rudd, N., *The Satires of Horace* (Cambridge 1966).

Rudd, N., *Horace Epistles Book 11 and Epistle to the Pisones ('Ars Poetica')* (Cambridge 1989).

Rudd, N., ed. *Horace 2000; A Celebration. Essays for the Bimillennium* (London 1993).

Russell, D. A., *Criticism in Antiquity* (London 1981).

Russell, D. A., *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge/ New York 1983).

Rutledge, S. H., *Imperial Inquisitions: Prosecutors and Informants from Tiberius to Domitian* (London 2001).

Saller, R. P., *Personal Patronage Under the Early Empire* (Cambridge 1982).

Salmon, E. T., 'Notes on the Social War' *TAPA* 89 (1958) 159-184.

Salmon, E. T., *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge 1967).

Sasel Kos. M., *Appian and Illyricum* (Ljubljana 2005).

Scardigli, B., 'Asinius Pollio und Nikolaos von Damaskus' *Historia* 32 (1983) 121-123.

Scardigli, B., ed. *Essays on Plutarch's Lives* (Oxford 1995).

Schalit. A., *Konig Herodes: der Mann und sein Werk* (Berlin 1969).

Schmidt, E. A., *Zur Chronologie der Eklogen Vergils* (Heidelberg 1974).

Schmidt, O. E., 'P. Ventidius Bassus' *Philologus* 51 (1892) 198-211.

Schmitthenner, W. C. G., *The Armies of the Triumviral Period: a study of Roman Imperial Legions* (Diss. Oxford 1958).

Schulten, A., 'Italische Namen und Stämme' *Klio* 2 (1902) 167-193; 440-465; 3 (1903) 235-267.

Schulten, A., *Sertorius* (Leipzig 1926).

Schürer, E., *The History of the Jewish People In the Age of Jesus Christ (175B.C.-A.D. 135)* Vol.1 (Edinburgh 1973).

Scott, K., 'The Political Propaganda of 44-30 BC*' Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 11 (1933) 1-49.

Scott, W. C., 'Catullus and Caesar' *Cl.Phil.* 66 (1971) 17-25.

Scullard, H. H., 'The Carthaginians in Spain' in A. E. Astin, F.W. Walbank, M. W. Frederiksen and R. M. Ogilvie eds. (1989) 17-43.

Seager, R., *Tiberius* (London 1972).

Seager, R., 'Horace and Augustus: Poetry and Policy.' in N. Rudd ed. (1993) 23-40.

Seager, R., 'Sulla' in J. A. Crook, A. Lintott and E. Rawson eds. (1994) 165-207.

Sear, D. R. *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 BC* (London 1998).

Seaver, J. E., 'Publius Ventidius – Neglected Roman Military Hero' *CJ* 47 (1952) 275-280.

Setälä, P., *Private Domini in Roman Brick Stamps of the Empire. A Historical and Prosopographical Study of Landowners in the District of Rome.* Annales Academiae Scientarum Fennicae Dissertationes Humanarum Litterarum 10 (Helsinki 1977).

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., 'The Roman nobility in the Second Civil War' *CQ* 54 (1960) 253-267.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., 'Two Tribunes 57 B.C.' *CR* NS 12 (1962) 195-197.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., *Cicero: Letters to Atticus,* 7 Vols. (Cambridge 1965-70).

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., *Cicero: Epistulae ad familiares*, 2 Vols. (Cambridge 1977).

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., *Profile of Horace* (London 1982).

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., *Cicero: Philippics* (North Carolina 1986).

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., 'Nobiles and Novi Reconsidered' *AJPhil.* 107 (1986A) 255-260.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R., *Two Studies in Roman Nomenclature* 2nd Edition (Atlanta 1991).

Shatzman, I., *Senatorial Wealth and Roman Politics* (Brussells 1975).

Shay, J., *Achilles in Vietnam: combat trauma and the undoing of character* (New York 1994).

Sherk, R. K., *Roman Documents from the Greek East: senatus consulta and epistulae to the age of Augustus* (Baltimore 1969).

Sherwin–White, A. N., 'Emilio Gabba, Le origini della Guerra Sociale e la vita politica romana dopo L'89 a.C.' *JRS.* 45 (1955) 168-170.

Sherwin–White, A. N., *The Roman Citizenship* (Oxford 1973).

Shotter, D., 'Tiberius and Asinius Gallus' *Historia* 20 (1971) 443-457.

Smallwood, E. M., *The Jews under Roman Rule: from Pompey to Diocletian* (Leiden 1976).

Smith, C., and Powell, A., *The Lost memoirs of Augustus and the Development of Roman Autobiography* (Oxford 2009).

Smith, W., *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology* (London 1853).

Sordi, M., 'Timagene di Alessandria: Uno storico ellenocentrico e filobarbaro' *ANRW* 2. 30.1 (1982) 775-797.

Southern, P., *Augustus* (London / New York 1998).

Spaeth, J.W., 'Caesar's Friends and Enemies Among the Poets' *CJ* 32 (1936-37) 541-556.

Springer, L. A., 'The Temple of Libertas on the Aventine' *CJ* 45 (1950) 390-391.

Starr, C. G., 'Virgil's Acceptance of Octavian' *AJPhil.* 76 (1955) 34-46.

Steinby, M., *La cronologia delle figlinae doliari urbane dalla fine dell'eta repubblicana fino all'inizio del III sec*. Estratto dal vol 84 (1974) dal Bullettino della Comm. Arch. Communale di Roma.

Stern, M., *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem 1974).

Stewart, A., *Greek Sculpture An Exploration* Vol. 1 (New Haven 1990).

Stillwell, R., MacDonald, W. L., and McAllister M. H., eds, *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites* (Princeton 1976).

Stockton, D., *Cicero. A Political Biography* (Oxford 1971).

Strocka, V. M., 'Römische Bibliotheken' *Gymnasium* 88 (1981) 298- 329.

Strugnell, E., 'Ventidius' Parthian War: Rome's Forgotten Eastern Triumph' *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae -– Budapest* 46 (2006) 239-252.

Stull, W., Review of E. Narducci (ed.) *Aspetti della fortuna di Cicerone nella cultura latina. Atti del III Symposium Ciceronianum Arpinas BMCR* 08. 12. 2003.

Sumi, G. S., *Ceremony and Power: Performing Politics in Rome between Republic and Empire* (Michigin 2005).

Sumner, G. V.,' Lex Aelia, Lex Fufia' *AJPhil.* 84 (1963) 337-358.

Sumner, G. V., 'The *Lex Annalis* under Caesar' *Phoenix* 25 (1971) 246-271; 357-371.

Sussman, L. A., 'The Artistic Unity of the Elder Seneca's First Preface and the Controversiae as a Whole' *AJPhil.* 92 (1971) 285-291.

Sussman, L. A., *The Elder Seneca* Mnemonyne Suppl. 51 (Leiden 1978).

Sydenham, E. A., *The Coinage of The late Roman Republic* (London 1952).

Syme, R., 'Pollio, Saloninius and Salonae' *CQ* 31 (1937) 39-48 = *RP* 1. 18-30 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., 'The Origin of Cornelius Gallus' *CQ* 32 (1938) 39-44 = *RP* 1. 47-54 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., 'Caesar, the Senate, and Italy' *PBSR* 14 (1938A) 1-31 = *RP* 1. 88-119 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford 1939).

Syme, R., Review of A.E. Gordon, *Potitus Valerius Messalla Consul Suffect 29 BC JRS* 25 (1955) 155-160 = *RP* 1. 260-270 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., 'Missing Senators' *Historia* 4 (1955 A) 52-71 = *RP* 1. 271-291 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958).

Syme, R., 'Imperator Caesar: A Study in Nomenclature' *Historia* 7 (1958A) 172-188 = *RP* 1. 361-377 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., ‘Sabinus the Muleteer’ *Latomus* 17 (1958 B) 73-80 = *RP* 1. 393-399 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., ‘Livy and Augustus’ *Harv. Stud.* 64 (1959) 27 = *RP* 1. 400-454 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., ‘Who was Vedius Pollio?’ *JRS* 51 (1961) 23-30 = *RP* 2. 518-529 (Oxford 1979).

Syme, R., *Sallust* (Berkeley 1964).

Syme, R., *Roman Papers* 7 Vols. (Oxford 1979-1991).

Syme, R., *The Augustan Aristocracy* (Oxford 1989).

Talbert, R. J. A., *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton 1984).

Taplin, O., ‘Contemporary Poetry and Classics’ in T. P. Wiseman ed. (2002) 1-19.

Tarrant, R. J., ‘The Addressee of Virgil’s Eighth Eclogue’ *Harv. Stud.* 83 (1978) 197-199.

Tarrant, R. J., ‘Poetry and Power: Virgil’s poetry in contemporary context’ in C. Martindale ed. (1997) 169-186.

Tatum, W. J., ‘Friendship, Politics and Literature in Catullus Poems 1, 65 and 66, 116.’ *CQ* NS (1997) 482-500.

Taylor, L. R., ‘*Seviri Equitum Romanorum* and Municipal *Seviri:* A Study in Pre-Military Training Among the Romans’ *JRS* 14 (1924) 158-171.

Taylor, L. R., *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Berkeley 1949).

Taylor, L. R., *The Voting Districts of the Roman Republic: the thirty-five urban and rural tribes* (Rome 1960).

Taylor, L. R., *Roman Voting Assemblies* (Michigin 1966).

Tellegen-Couperus, O. E., *A Short History of Roman Law* (London /New York 1993).

Thibodeau, P., ‘The Addressee of Vergil’s Eighth Eclogue’ *CQ* 82 (2006) 618-623.

Thomas, R. F., *Virgil: Georgics.* Vol. 2 (Cambridge 1988).

Thomas, R. F., *Virgil and the Augustan Reception* (Cambridge 2001).

Thomsen, R., 'Studien über den ursprünglichen Baues Caesarforums' *Opuscula Archaeologica* II (1941) 195-218.

Thorbecke, R., *De C. Asinii Pollionis vita et studiis doctrinae* (Leyden 1820).

Toher, M., 'The Earliest Depiction of Caesar and the Later Tradition' in M. Wyke ed. (2006) 29-44.

Townend, G. ‘Literature and Society’ in A. K. Bowman, E. Champlin and A. Lintott, eds. (1996) 905-929.

Treggiari, S., ‘Cicero, Horace and Mutual Friends: Lamiae and Varrones Murenae’*Phoenix* 27 (1973) 245-261.

Treves, P., *Il mito d'Alessandro e la Roma d'Augusto* (Milan/Naples 1953).

Tucci, P. L., '"Where high Moneta leads her steps sublime". The "Tabularium" and the Temple of Juno Moneta' *JRA* 18 (2005) 6-33.

Tucker, R.A., 'What Actually Happened at the Rubicon?' *Historia* 37 (1988) 245-248.

Tyrrell, R., and Purser, L., *The Correspondence of Cicero*, 2nd edn. 7 Vols. (Dublin 1885 - 1901).

Ullman, B. L., 'Horace and Tibullus' *AJPhil.* 33 (1912) 149-167.

Ullman, B. L., 'History and Tragedy' *TAPA* 73 (1942) 25-53.

Ulrich, R. B., 'Julius Caesar and the Creation of the Forum Iulium' *AJA* 97 (1993) 49-80.

Van Sickle, J. B., "Commentaria in Maronem Commenticia: a Case History of Bucolics Misread," *Arethusa* 14 (1981) 17-34.

Varela, J. U., 'Identifying the *Clarus Orator* at Quintilian, *Inst*. 8.2.3.' *CQ* 50 (2000) 314-316.

Voisin, D. C., 'C. Asinius Pollio et le néotérisme (Catulle X11, 1-9)' *Latomus* 59 (2000) 671-672.

Von Albrecht, M., *Masters of Roman Prose from Cato to Apuleius* Trans. N. Adkin (Leeds 1989).

Wageningen J. Van., 'De C. Asinii Pollionis ad Antonium transitu' *Mnemos* 47 (1919) 77-83.

Watkins, T. H., *L. Munatius Plancus Serving and Surviving in the Roman Revolution* Illinois Classical Studies suppl. 7 (Atlanta 1997).

Watson, l., *A Commentary on Horace's Epodes* (Oxford 2003).

Watson, L. C., 'Epigram' in S. Harrison ed. (2005) 201-212.

Way, A. G., trans. *Caesar; Alexandrian, African and Spanish Wars*, Loeb Classical Library (Havard 1955).

Weigel, R. D., 'Lepidus Reconsidered' *Acta Classica* 17 (1974) 67-73.

Weigel, R. D., *Lepidus The Tarnished Triumvir* (London 1992).

Weinrib, E. J., *The Spaniards in Rome: from Marius to Domitian* (New York/ London 1990).

Weinstock, S., *Divus Julius* (Oxford 1971).

Welch, K., 'The Career of M. Aemilius Lepidus 49-44 B.C.' *Hermes* 123 (1995) 443-454.

Welch, K., 'Antony, Fulvia and the Ghost of Clodius' *Greece and Rome* 62 (1995 A) 182-201.

Welch, K., 'Caesar and his officers in the Gallic War commentaries' in K. Welch and A. Powell eds. (1998) 85-110.

Welch, K., and Powell, A., eds. *Julius Caesar as Artful Reporter: The War Commentaries as Political Instruments* (London 1998).

Welch, K., 'Both Sides of the Coin: Sextus Pompeius and the so-called Pompeiani' in A. Powell and K. Welch (2002) 1-30.

Welch, K., 'Alternative memoirs: tales from the 'other side' of the civil war' in C. Smith and A. Powell eds. (2009) 195 – 224.

White, P., 'The Presentation and Dedication of the *Silvae* and the *Epigrams*' *JRS* 64 (1974) 40-61.

White, P., 'Poets in the New Milieu: Realigning' in K. Galinsky ed. (2005) 321-339.

Wilcox, A., 'Sympathetic Rivals: Consolation in Cicero's Letters' *AJPhil.* 126. 2 (2005) 237-256.

Wilkes, J. J., *Dalmatia* (London, 1969).

Wilkes, J. J., 'The Population of Roman Dalmatia' *ANRW* 2. 6 (1977) 732-767.

Wilkins, A. S., *Roman Education* (Cambridge 1905).

Willcock, M. M., *Cicero: The Letters of January to April 43 BC* (Warminister 1995).

Willems, P., *Le Sénat De La République Romaine* Vol.1 (New York 1975).

Williams, G., *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry* (Oxford 1968).

Williams, G., *Change and Decline: Roman Literature in the Early Empire* (Berkeley 1978).

Williams, G., 'Public policies, private affairs, and strategies of address in the poetry of Horace' *CW* 87 (1994) 395-408.

Willrich, H., *Das Haus des Herodes zwischen Jerusalem und Rom* (Heidelberg 1929).

Wilson, A. J. N., *Emigration from Italy in the Republican Age of Rome* (Manchester 1966).

Winterbottom, M., *Seneca the Elder. Declamations*. 2 Vols. (Cambridge 1974).

Winterbottom, M., 'Virgil and the Confiscations' *Greece & Rome second series* 23 (1976) 55-59.

Wirszubski, Ch., *Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome during the Late Republic and Early Empire* (Cambridge 1950).

Wiseman, T. P., 'Some Republican Senators and their Tribes' *CQ* NS 14 (1964) 122-133.

Wiseman, T. P., *Catullan Questions* (Leicester 1969).

Wiseman, T. P., *New Men in the Roman Senate: 139 B.C.-A.D. 14* (Oxford 1971).

Wiseman, T. P., *Cinna the Poet and other Roman essays* (Leicester 1974).

Wiseman, T. P., 'Catullus, His Life and Times' *JRS* 69 (1979) 161-168.

Wiseman, T. P., *Clio's Cosmetics: Three Studies in Greco-Roman Literature* (Leicester 1979A).

Wiseman, T. P., 'Practice and Theory in Roman Historiography' *History* 66 (1981) 375-393 reprinted in *Roman Studies: Literary and Historical* Collected Classical Papers 1 (Liverpool 1987) 244-262.

Wiseman, T. P., ' *Pete Nobiles Amicos*: Poets and Patrons in Late Republican Rome' (1982) as reprinted in in *Roman Studies: Literary and Historical* Collected Classical Papers 1 (Liverpool 1987) 263-284.

Wiseman, T. P., ed. *Roman Political Life 90 B.C.- A.D. 69* (Exeter 1985).

Wiseman, T. P., *Catullus and his World* (Exeter 1985A).

Wiseman, T. P., *Roman Studies: Literary and Historical* Collected Classical Papers 1 (Liverpool 1987).

Wiseman, T. P., *Historiography and Imagination* (Exeter 1994).

Wiseman, T. P., *Roman Drama and Roman History* (Exeter 1998).

Wiseman, T. P., ed. *Classics in Progress: Essays on Ancient Greece and Rome* British Academy (Oxford 2002).

Woodman, A. J., *Velleius Paterculus: the Caesarian and Augustan Narrative, (2.41-93)* (Cambridge, 1983).

Woodman, A. J., and West, D., eds *Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus* (Cambridge 1984).

Woodman, A. J., *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography* (London 1988).

Woodman, A. J., *Tacitus Reviewed* (Oxford 1998).

Woodman, A. J., 'Poems to Historians: Catullus 1 and Horace *Odes* 2.1' in D. Braund and C. Gill eds (2003) 191-216.

Woodman, A. J., Trans. and notes, *Tacitus. The Annals* (Indianapolis/ Cambridge 2004).

Woodman, A. J., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge 2009).

Wright, A., 'The death of Cicero. Forming a tradition: the contamination of history' *Historia* 50 (2001) 436-452.

Wright, A., 'Velleius Paterculus and L. Munatius Plancus ' *Cl.Phil*. 97 (2002) 178-184.

Wyke, M., ed. *Julius Caesar in Western Culture* (Oxford 2006).

Zaninovic, M., 'The Economy of Roman Dalmatia' *ANRW* 2. 6 (1977) 767-809.

Zanker, P., *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (Munich 1987).

Zanker, P., *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Michigan 1988).

Zecchini, G., 'La Morte di Catone e l'opposizione intellettuale a Cesare e ad Augusto' *Athenaeum* 58 (1980) 39-56.

Zecchini, G., 'Asinio Pollione: dall' attivitá politica alla riflessione storiografica' *ANRW* 2. 30. 2 (1982) 1265-1296.

Zetzel, J. E. G., 'Servius and the Triumviral History in the *Eclogues*' *CPhil.* 79 (1984) 139-142.