

of *o* + vocative and *mi/mea* + vocative, it does not do so within a clearly defined social register in the way that Latin does; for the ubiquitous Latin *amabo* there is no exact Greek equivalent,³⁰ while the exclusively female exclamation *au* not only has no effective Greek equivalent,³¹ but is overwhelmingly a Terentian usage (there being only one example in the whole of Plautus). In all the above cases Pythias' use of the idioms needs to be seen against both the Menandrian norm and the practice of other female speakers in Terence. We must then add instances where Pythias uses words or phrases that are otherwise male gender markers (e.g., *furcifer* [862], *apage* [904], *pro deum fidem* [943]). In most, if not all, of the foregoing cases we can be reasonably sure that Terence has given to Pythias' utterances an emphasis that was not present in Menander's Greek.³²

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30. Menander's use of ἰκετεύω shows some degree of overlap, but (unlike *amabo* in Terence) is not confined to women speakers only.

31. There is some similarity between *au* and Greek αἶ as a female utterance of distress or dismay, but neither in manner nor in frequency is Menander's usage comparable with that of Terence; for αἶ in Menander cf. Bain, "Female Speech in Menander," 35–36.

32. I am grateful to Mr. P. G. McC. Brown and my Leeds colleagues Professor W. G. Arnott and Dr. Robert Maltby for their comments on an earlier draft of this paper; I have also profited from the comments of the two anonymous readers for *CP*.

POSTUMUS, CURTIUS POSTUMUS, AND RABIRIUS POSTUMUS

Commentators seeking to identify the recipient of Horace's *Eheu fugaces, Postume, Postume* (*Carm.* 2.14) complain about the unhelpfulness of the man's name and the blandness of the portrait Horace draws of him. But they have usually ventured an identification all the same: Horace's Postumus is the Postumus whom Propertius addresses in elegy 3.12, and Propertius' friend in turn can be identified with a senator C. Propertius Postumus known from an Augustan inscription (*ILS* 914). I will argue that this identification is untenable and that a better candidate has been overlooked.

It will be simplest to begin with the image of Postumus as it is inscribed in the respective poems. Like many of the men to whom the *Odes* are addressed, the Postumus of *Odes* 2.14 is established and rich. Horace draws attention to his fine house with its arboreal plantings (21–23) and its reserve of wines "choicer than the banquets of priests" (25–28). Postumus is also married, to a lady characterized as "a congenial wife" (*placens uxor*, 21–22).¹ But he is apparently both childless and expected to remain so, since at the end of the poem Horace alludes pointedly to the prospect of an

In working out this argument I benefited greatly from comments by D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Jerzy Linderski, T. P. Wiseman, and a referee for the journal, none of whom would want me to leave an impression here that all their reservations had been overcome.

1. Unremarkable as it is, this detail is sometimes dismissed as window-dressing of no relevance to the life of Postumus, but casually appropriated from Lucretius' set piece on the man who bids goodbye to life at 3.894–96. No doubt Horace had the Lucretian exemplar in mind, but he has not simply appropriated it.

heir rather than of a son (25–28).² This intimation that Postumus may now be far along in years is fully confirmed by the whole tenor of Horace's discourse with him. There is no staving off of "wrinkles and encroaching age and invincible death," the poet begins, "not even if you propitiate Pluto every day" (2–7). In the third and fourth stanzas, he associates himself with Postumus in a series of "we" utterances: "whether we be lords or peasants, we must all traverse the Styx; in vain will we escape war and the waves of the Adriatic, in vain will we worry about the autumn wind." Horace, now himself in his forties, appears to be addressing at least a coeval.

The Postumus to whom Propertius' short elegy is directed, on the other hand, is a man young enough to think of taking service in the army, his aim being (according to Propertius) to enrich himself with plunder from Eastern lands (*spoliati gloria Parthi*, 3; *omnes pereatis avari*, 5).³ He is married to a woman who is herself young (*puella*, 17) and he is upbraided for leaving her unprotected amid the allurements of the capital. She is evidently a woman confronting different opportunities than the congenial helpmate of Horace's Postumus.

Apart from the coincidence that they share a not uncommon cognomen,⁴ what has encouraged assimilation of this incongruous pair are two pieces of extraneous information. One is linked to an emendation. Propertius names the wife of the would-be campaigner as "Laelia (or "Lellia") Galla," according to all manuscripts at 3.12.38 ("Galla" simply at lines 1, 4, 15, 19, and 22). But in 1583 Janus Gulielmus proposed to read "Aelia Galla," not because the transmitted name posed any difficulty but because the change would facilitate a link with known contemporaries. His emendation was quickly incorporated into the vulgate text of Propertius where it has been lodged ever since.⁵ Although the particular Aelius Gallus whom Gulielmus had in mind was evidently a chimera,⁶ replacements were available. Modern prosopographers hold that Propertius' friend must have married a kinswoman (sister,

Lucretius had spoken of *domus*, *uxor*, and *nati*; Horace retains house and wife but withholds children, substituting an heir instead. It is reasonable to surmise that he is varying his model in order to adapt it to Postumus' real-life circumstances. Furthermore, in the same stanza in which he evokes a house and a wife, he explicitly locates Postumus within the *mise-en-scène*, gesturing to "these trees which you tend" (22). In the context, it is perverse to argue that Postumus has the trees but not the wife.

2. For the rhetorical opposition of heir to son in its more developed form, see Stat. *Silv.* 4.7.29–40. W. S. Anderson ("Two Odes of Horace's Book Two," *CSCA* 1 [1968]: 56, n. 34) also infers that Postumus is childless, and notes other commonplaces on heirs.

3. This characterization of Postumus conforms to a familiar stereotype in Augustan poetry that invariably features a young man in his prime: Macer in Tib. 2.6.1–6, Iccius in Hor. *Carm.* 1.29, Albinovanus Celus, Julius Florus, Munatius, and Titius in Hor. *Epist.* 1.3, and Numida in Hor. *Carm.* 1.36.

4. The name Postumus occurs both as a praenomen and as a cognomen in Latin (see Iiro Kajanto, *The Latin Cognomina*, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 36.2 [Helsinki, 1965], 39–43 and 172–79, and Olli Salomies, *Die römischen Vornamen: Studien zur römischen Namengebung*, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 82 [Helsinki, 1987], 164–66), but in the two poems it should be understood as a cognomen. Use of the praenomen "Postumus" is exceptional during this period, and in any case Horace, whose naming habits are amply documented, does not address friends by praenomen in his poems (except to follow the lead of his contemporaries in using the distinctive praenomen of Servius Sulpicius Rufus).

5. "Mihi non liquet fuisse Romae Propertii aetate Gallos familiares ex gente Laelia; et inclino credere verius scribi posse, *Aelia Galla*. nam eius gentis id peculiare cognomen, et notissimum circa ea tempora Sex. Aelius Gallus quem Varro audivit," *Plautinarum quaestionum commentarius* (Paris, 1583), 239. W. A. Camps' twice-repeated warning that Gulielmus' conjecture "is not inevitably right" (*Propertius: Elegies, Book III* [Cambridge, 1966], 113 and 115) appears to have been little heeded, perhaps in part because Camps himself printed the vulgate text.

6. The Aelius whom Varro heard was not an Aelius Gallus, but L. Aelius Stilo, cf. Varro *Ling.* 7.2 and Cic. *Brut.* 205. Passerat in his 1608 commentary on Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius accepted Gulielmus' emendation, but identified Galla's kinsman as C. Aelius Gallus the jurist. Broekhuizen finally settled on Aelius Gallus the Prefect of Egypt in his edition of Propertius.

daughter, niece) of the Aelius Gallus who was Prefect of Egypt about five years prior to the date of the poem. Connection with a powerful equestrian official not only afforded a possible clue to the circumstances under which Postumus might have played a role in Augustus' projected Parthian expedition, but seemed to suit well with the aura of affluence surrounding the couple of Horace's ode.

On present information the identification of the Propertian lady as Aelia Galla cannot be ruled impossible, but it is arbitrary. It depends both on a textual manipulation and on reconstruction of a family stemma that is scarcely known and therefore malleable. And there has never been anything beyond the ripple effect of the Propertian passage to connect "Aelia Galla" with the *uxor* of Horace's poem.

The second datum that has been used to fix the identity of Postumus is a now lost inscription (*ILS* 914 = *CIL* 6.1501), and it too was initially invoked apropos of Propertius' poem. Although the text of the inscription contains no exact indication of date, historians have assigned it roughly to the reign of Augustus. It commemorates three kinsmen, one of whom bears the name C. Propertius Postumus and is revealed by his *cursus* to be a Roman senator. His name and status together with the presumptive date of the inscription have suggested that he is a relative of the poet, and the target of his strictures about forsaking a young wife for military adventure.

The case for equating the Postumus of Propertius 3.12 with the senator of *ILS* 914 is if anything weaker than the hypothesis about his wife's identity. Unlike such names as Lentulus or Varro, the cognomen Postumus does nothing to pinpoint a man's lineage; an otherwise unidentified Postumus is no more likely to belong to the Propertian *gens* than to any one of scores of others. But there is a more substantive objection as well. Of the two biographical details that Propertius imparts about his friend, one is that he is preparing to embark on a military campaign in the East. According to *ILS* 914, C. Propertius Postumus busied himself in successive rotations as *triumvir capitalis*, "protriumvir" for another year, quaestor, "road supervisor by senatorial decree as praetor designate," "praetor with jurisdiction as curule aedile by senatorial decree," and proconsul. This is as Rome-centered and civilian a career as a Roman senator could possibly have. Not until his last post, when he is shooed away and made to accept a minor governorship abroad, does Propertius Postumus set foot beyond the capital. Where in this quiet *cursus* are we to imagine that a stint of army service (to last for years, the elegy presumes) would have fit?⁷

As for the notion that Propertius Postumus and the elegist may be related, all that connects them is a widely distributed gentilicium. The inscription comes from Rome, not from the environs of Assisi where the poet originated. And it can be asserted

7. Two further considerations may be raised in passing. If (as Jerzy Linderski and T. P. Wiseman indicate to me is likely) the triple commemoration recorded by *ILS* 914 originally belonged to a funerary monument, Propertius Postumus' proconsulate has to represent the end stage of his public career. In that case it would be certain that he never saw army service abroad, since the only foreign duty recorded is his one-year term as governor in a non-military senatorial province. The second point concerns a problem of synergy between the identities hypothesized for the husband and the wife of Prop. 3.12. The career displayed in *ILS* 914 is not only city-bound but undistinguished. Of the four functions that made up the vigintivirate, that of *triumvir capitalis* had the lowliest status. Half of Propertius Postumus' subsequent employments were not regular magistracies but acting appointments that Mommsen relegates to a category of "sehr zahlreichen und meist politisch bedeutungslosen Magistraturen" (*Römisches Staatsrecht*³, vol. 2 [Leipzig, 1887], 667; Werner Eck in *Die staatliche Organisation Italiens in der hohen Kaiserzeit*, Vestigia 28 [Munich, 1979], 41, wants to make Postumus one of the first imperial road commissioners, but has to admit that his *cursus* does not fit the account given at Cass. Dio 54.8.4). There is no stage in Propertius Postumus' career that suggests that it was buoyed by the commendation of a Prefect of Egypt.

confidently that Propertius Postumus himself could not have come from in or around Assisi. The inscription specifies the tribe of Propertius and a brother as the Fabia. That was not the tribe of Assisi (which was enrolled in the Sergia) or of any town in the region of Umbria, and west of Assisi it was not the tribe of any town in Etruria but Luca.⁸ On the other hand, it is frequently attested as a tribe of persons domiciled at Rome.⁹ Both components of the Propertius Postumus hypothesis, then, are at odds with information we have about the poet and his friend.

As with "Aelia Galla," no reason has ever been offered for linking Propertius Postumus specifically with *Odes* 2.14. In the absence of other leads, the Propertian prosopography has simply been foisted onto Horace's poem (perhaps on the tacit premise that persons acquainted with one Augustan poet are probably acquainted with the others too). But it is time to make a fresh start. The case that has been made concerning the identity of Galla in Propertius' poem is weak, the case for identifying Postumus is untenable, and the case for carrying either identification into Horace's poem is non-existent.

For Propertius' couple I have no substitute candidates to propose, but we would do well to consider the possibility that Horace's friend is Curtius Postumus. This man poses his own identity problem, which I will address below, but for the moment he can be taken to be the person silhouetted in a series of letters that Cicero wrote between March of 49 and May of 44 B.C.¹⁰ Curtius first crops up two months after the start of the civil war, when he calls on Cicero in Formiae while en route to Caesar and gives offense by spouting a swaggering Caesarean line (*Att.* 9.2a.3 = 169 SB). Another two months pass and Cicero jokes with his friend Caelius that Curtius (along with Oppius) is waiting to take delivery on robes that will signify his elevation by Caesar to a priesthood and the senate (*Fam.* 2.16.7 = 154 SB). Three years later, after the Pompeian cause has been almost completely crushed, Cicero tells a now-banned partisan that he has been interceding for him with mutual friends of Caesar and himself: "Pansa, Hirtius, Balbus, Oppius, Matus, and Postumus cherish a quite singular devotion to me" (*Fam.* 6.12.2 = 226 SB). A year after that, he privately rues the prospect that Curtius is one day to become consul (*Att.* 12.49.2 = 292 SB). Then in the aftermath of Caesar's assassination he rails against the compromises that have permitted Caesar's arrangements to outlive Caesar, naming Postumus as one of several henchmen who batten on their crooked gains (*Att.* 14.10.2 = 364 SB). Finally, in May of 44 he shares with Atticus his doubts about the young Octavian's political soundness, adding "and I don't like the build-up for his games,

8. T. P. Wiseman had hinted at the difficulty of connecting Propertius Postumus with the poet in *New Men in the Roman Senate* (Oxford, 1971), p. 254, no. 345, where he noted apropos of Propertius Postumus that "the Fabia tribe does not occur in Umbria."

9. See J. W. Kubitschek, *Imperium Romanum tributim descriptum* (Prague and Vienna, 1889), 7–8, and for another inscription featuring a Propertius of Roman origin and Fabian tribe, see *CIL* 6.32526.a13.

10. Since there are several Curtii to be distinguished and other complications besides, and since one's picture of Curtius Postumus will depend crucially on the particular texts one selects, let me list en bloc those passages on which I rely: *Cic. Att.* 9.2a.3 = 169 Shackleton Bailey ("Postumus Curtius"), 9.3.2 = 170 SB ("Postumus"), 9.5.1 = 171 SB ("Postumus"), 9.6.2 = 172 SB ("Curtius"), *Fam.* 2.16.7 = 154 SB ("Curtius noster"), 6.12.2 = 226 SB ("Postumus," emended from "Postumius"), *Att.* 12.49.2 = 292 SB ("Curtius"), 13.9.1 = 317 SB ("Curtius"), 14.10.2 = 364 SB ("Postumus"), and 15.2.3 = 379 SB ("Postumus"). I should emphasize that this is not so much an eclectic as a minimum set: other accounts differ in adding material, but so far as I am aware, all agree in including all these passages in the dossier of Curtius Postumus.

or Matus and Postumus being in charge of them" (*Att.* 15.2.3 = 379 SB). After the assassination it evidently took Curtius no time at all to discern the rising star.

At no point does Cicero intimate that Curtius Postumus had any military role to play during the civil war. When Curtius visited Cicero in March of 49, he had evidently come from Rome and not from Caesar's army, and he was misinformed about Caesar's whereabouts at the time (*Att.* 9.3.2 = 170 SB). That he was based in Rome and Italy is also the implication of *Att.* 9.6.2 = 172 SB, where after the fall of Corfinium Cicero writes that it would be better for Domitius Ahenobarbus to go to Spain or to Greece or anywhere else than to have to endure the sight of Curtius. Every subsequent reference also seems to place Curtius in Rome or Italy, as does his frequent association with Oppius and Matus, whose role as civilian caretakers tending Caesar's interests at home is well documented. But the most telling indication is Cicero's identification of Curtius as a *procurator* helping to organize the *Ludi Victoriae Caesaris* for Octavian. It would be unusual for anyone but a civilian to act in this capacity.¹¹

Moreover, and despite Cicero's prognostications about Curtius' future, it appears that Curtius was not yet a senator when Cicero knew him. But since others have been able to draw the opposite conclusion from what Cicero says, a closer scrutiny of the letters is warranted. It is essential to read his comments about Curtius in the light of other things he has to say in letters of the 40s, in which a persistent note is his resentment of the creatures whom Caesar threatened to promote at the expense of the old political establishment. What Cicero seems to hold against Curtius more than anything else is that he is one of these upstarts of the civil war. That is what leads him to call the sight of Curtius unbearable, as he brings out immediately by stressing the status difference between them: "as his *patronus*, I cannot bear the sight of him."¹² And it is what gives an edge to the ironical amplitude in Cicero's initial report of how Curtius "talked of nothing but fleets and armies: he was wresting away the Spains, he was taking control of Asia, Sicily, Africa, Sardinia, he was heading in hot pursuit into Greece" (*Att.* 9.2a.3 = 169 SB). Cicero is implying that his officious caller had no business being concerned with any of these things.

11. See the other references to Matus' involvement in these games at Cic. *Fam.* 11.27.7 = 348 SB and 11.28.6 = 349 SB, and to activity by Atticus at 15.18.2 = 395 SB with *Att.* 15.12.1 = 390 SB and by Lepta at *Fam.* 6.19.2 = 262 SB and *Att.* 13.46.2 = 338 SB.

12. *Att.* 9.6.2 = 172 SB, cf. 14.10.2 = 364 SB and (of other Caesarean upstarts) 10.8.3 = 199 SB. At *Att.* 9.6.2 Shackleton Bailey observes, apropos of *patronus*, that Cicero "must have defended Curtius in the courts," since he "does not use *patronus*, where individuals are concerned, in the general sense of 'patron.'" The point has an importance beyond its immediate context: understood as Shackleton Bailey interprets it, the occurrence of the term *patronus* here becomes one of the strongest arguments supporting Dessau's hypothesis (discussed below) that Curtius is the Rabirius Postumus whom Cicero defended in 54 B.C. It is certainly possible that Cicero is here alluding to earlier forensic activity on Curtius' behalf, and it is true that in Latin of the late Republic and early Empire *patronus* is rarely attested, "where individuals are concerned, in the general sense of 'patron.'" But that sense is not unexampled (cf. Caecina at Cic. *Fam.* 6.7.4 = 237 SB, Curius at *Fam.* 7.29.2 = 264 SB, Hor. *Epist.* 1.7.92), and there is a reason for thinking that Cicero might have had recourse to it in speaking of Curtius. In another letter in which he vents his displeasure over the ascendancy of the Caesareans, he refers to a connection of Atticus whom he terms a *cliens*: "tacita esse poterit indignitas nostra? pati poterunt oculi me cum Gabinio sententiam dicere, et quidem illum rogari prius? praesto esse clientem tuum Cloellium?" (*Att.* 10.8.3 = 199 SB). It is not known for what service Cloellius was beholden to Atticus, but it cannot have been for activity at the bar. If Cicero's snobbery about the divide between a client and a patron contributes to his indignation here where he speaks of Cloellius, that (rather than some earlier forensic activity) may also be what is uppermost in mind when in a parallel context he identifies himself as the *patronus* of Curtius.

Both of Cicero's remarks about Curtius' senatorial prospects reflect chiefly his own disgust and foreboding over Caesar's ascendancy. The first prediction is archly framed as an in-joke for Caelius: "I believe you have heard that a [priest's or curule magistrate's] purple-bordered toga is being woven for Oppius; as for friend Curtius, *he* has his mind on the [augur's] two-tone robe, but the 'dyer' is holding him up. I toss this out so you will know that I keep up the jokes despite my vexation."¹³ Since Roman priesthoods were usually reserved for the senatorial elite, Cicero's words are equivalent to saying that the two agents of Caesar have been tipped for promotion into the top echelons of the senate. In fact, however, the rumor was at least partly false. As Shackleton Bailey notes, Oppius "was and remained an *eques*." The same is true of another rumored promotion about which Cicero wrote in a darker vein to Atticus only a day or two after the letter to Caelius: "What enormities (*monstra*) Trebatius has to tell! Can even Balbus be thinking of entering the senate?" (*Att.* 10.11.4 = 202 SB). As it turned out, though, Balbus (who according to Cicero's style of reference in the letters can only be the elder Balbus, not his nephew) was not brought into the senate by Caesar. He obtained his seat from the triumvirs, three years after Caesar's death and almost a decade after the false alarm that set off Cicero.¹⁴

Cicero's assessment of Curtius' future is one of dozens of predictions, most gloomy and many mistaken, that fill the letters of this period. We have no reason to think that it was any better grounded than his information about Oppius and Balbus. And the same holds for the second vaticination he made about Curtius four years later, in a letter to Atticus in May of 45. As before, the train of thought involves upstarts and Caesar. Cicero tells Atticus that he has been asked to provide legal representation for "Gaius Marius," an impostor of servile origin who claimed descent from the hero of Aquae Sextiae, and that he in turn replied that "Marius" had no need of legal process. He had only to turn to his "kinsman" Caesar (Marius' nephew), who was now all-powerful and could surely solve his problems. Then by an abrupt transition comes the reference to Curtius: "O tempora! fore cum dubitet Curtius consulatum petere! sed haec hactenus" (*Att.* 12.49.2 = 292 SB).

In the standard edition of the letters, the key sentence is translated: "To think that a time was to come when Curtius would have his doubts about standing for the

13. *Fam.* 2.16.7 = 154 SB. I have incorporated Shackleton Bailey's explanation of the passage into the translation. The dyer (*infector*) is Caesar, of course. These in-jokes, which often turn on the names of trades and occupations, are a convention in the epistolary discourse between Cicero and his friends. They are often difficult to interpret, in part because we usually lack any prior communication that might have served to frame a joke (though in this case the letter of Caelius to which Cicero was responding is extant [*Fam.* 8.16 = 153 SB] and it sheds no light on the *infector* image). But because they were meant to challenge an interlocutor's wits, sometimes they were hard for the Romans themselves to interpret. The *locus classicus* is *Att.* 7.13.5 = 136 SB with 7.13a.1 = 137 SB.

14. For Balbus' career, see Friedrich Münzer, *RE* 4 (1940): 1260–68, Cornelius 69, and Claude Nicolet, *L'ordre équestre à l'époque républicaine (312–43 av. J.-C.)*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1974), pp. 853–55, no. 118. It is usually assumed that Velleius Paterculus has mixed up the younger with the older Balbus at 2.51.3, where he describes the younger man as "ex privato consularis." For a dissident view of the passage, see A. J. Woodman, *Velleius Paterculus: The Caesarian and Augustan Narrative (2.41–93)* (Cambridge, 1983), 93. What made the prospect of Balbus' elevation such a *monstrum* in Cicero's eyes was that Balbus (by contrast, say, with either Oppius or Curtius) was not even of Roman stock: he was a recently enfranchised Spaniard.

The journal's referee points out another case in which Cicero's anxiety about an upstart's advancement ran years ahead of actual events. In a letter written in 59 (*Att.* 2.9.2 = 29 SB, cf. *Vat.* 19), Cicero voices an expectation that Vatinius will soon be invested with the augurate, a dignity that Vatinius did not in fact attain until a decade later (*Cic. Fam.* 5.10a.2 = 259 SB).

Consulship!" This rendering in effect locates the action in the present and implies that Curtius was contemplating a run at the time of writing.¹⁵ And that is also the inference that prosopographers have drawn from the passage. But it is not what the Latin should mean. *Fore* is future, and although exclamatory infinitives in the future are rare, a parallel use of *fore* at *Att.* 5.20.7 = 113 SB shows that Cicero must be talking about the future and not the present.¹⁶ He is sure that the time will come when Curtius will (or will not) hesitate to offer his candidacy, but he makes it clear that that time has not arrived yet.¹⁷

One influence on Shackleton Bailey's approach to Cicero's Latin here was undoubtedly a preconception he brought to the text. Following a near-universal consensus, he believed that Cicero's *bête noire* was someone known from other sources to have been a senator in the 40s. This consensus dates from 1911 when Dessau published a paper arguing that the Curtius Postumus of Cicero's letters was none other than the *equus* and *publicanus* Gaius Rabirius Postumus whom Cicero had defended in the winter of 54/53.¹⁸ As Dessau pointed out, Cicero discloses in the course of that pleading that his client was the posthumously born son of another *publicanus* named Gaius Curtius, but that he had been adopted in later life by his maternal uncle Gaius Rabirius (coincidentally another old client of Cicero's): hence the hybrid name Gaius Rabirius Postumus. Having used this wand to transform the Curtius Postumus of the letters into a Rabirius Postumus, Dessau then waved it again. Noting that the client whom Cicero had defended was well connected with Caesar too, Dessau pointed to a Rabirius Postumus mentioned as assisting in Caesar's African campaign in early 46 (*BAfr.* 8.1 and 26.3). He identified him also as the upstart of the letters, now manifestly in possession of senatorial rank. One last refinement was added in the train of Dessau's paper, with the annexation of a Gaius Rabirius on record as proconsul of Asia, arguably in the 40s.¹⁹

Although every link of this triple concatenation is problematic, only the issue of senatorial identity strictly relates to the present argument and that is the point on

15. I should append the comment on this rendering that Shackleton Bailey has offered *per litteras*: "I think . . . that Cicero was as it were placing himself in the past and that he gives us a livelier equivalent of *quis putaret Curtius umquam dubitaturum* . . . ? (cf. *Flacc.* 102). Obviously he is answering something in Atticus' letter, who had been talking to Postumus or repeated something he had been told. A priori I should find it hard to believe that the doubts were located in the after all quite uncertain future rather than the present."

16. Shackleton Bailey translates the infinitive at *Att.* 5.20.7 straightforwardly as a future. For the construction, see A. R. Anderson, "Studies in the Exclamatory Infinitive," *CP* 9 (1914): 60–76, who observes on p. 62 that "the future is looked upon as the inevitable consequence of present facts." But Anderson was able to cite only three examples of the future infinitive from all of Latin literature (the two passages from Cicero plus Livy 3.67.1).

17. For my purpose, what is important is only to establish that *Att.* 12.49.2 does not document that Curtius belonged to the senate, or was on the verge of entering it, in 45 B.C. With further hermeneutic on the passage I am less concerned. But anyone who accepts that Cicero is referring to the future will also suspect that emendation may be in order. The passage would make better (or at least easier) sense if Cicero had written "fore cum (non) dubitet Curtius consulatum petere!" *Non dubitare* is far more often met than simple *dubitare* in indignant utterances such as this, and in the sorry manuscript tradition by which the letters to Atticus have descended to us, *non* is one of the words that have most often had to be restored to the text where no ancient manuscript authority exists to support it. A hasty scan of Shackleton Bailey's Cambridge edition yields well over a dozen examples, of which here are a few, none involving obvious haplographies (line numbers as in the Cambridge edition): 6.1.8 = 115 SB, line 4; 9.5.2 = 171 SB, line 14; 12.45.1 = 290 SB, line 4; 15.13.3 = 416 SB, line 1.

18. Hermann Dessau, "Gaius Rabirius Postumus," *Hermes* 46 (1911): 613–20; 47 (1912): 320.

19. Peter von der Mühl, *RE* 1A (1914): 25–28, Rabirius 6.

which I wish to concentrate. One objection to his proposal Dessau himself anticipated: contemporary texts that mention a Curtius Postumus and a Rabirius Postumus ought *prima facie* to be naming different men rather than the same man under different names. Dessau, however, suggested that since Curtius had been adopted in his uncle's will relatively late in life, his old name would have clung to him in private life (reflected in Cicero's letters), while his new name "Rabirius" would occur in more formal references (in judicial or military contexts, for example). As a parallel he cited the case of Titus Pomponius Atticus, adopted by an uncle Quintus Caecilius. For purposes of congratulating Atticus, Cicero saluted him right after the adoption as "Quintus Caecilius Pomponianus Atticus" (*Att.* 3.20 = 65 SB), but thereafter, if he used Atticus' *nomen*, he always used the old name "Pomponius."

While Dessau's distinction between causal and formal nomenclature has some validity, he greatly exaggerated the scope of the latter in Latin sources.²⁰ It was natural, he supposed, for Cicero to call the same man "Curtius Postumus" in letters, but "Rabirius Postumus" in court, because the judicial setting called for a more precise statement of a man's civic identity. Similarly, in a military history like the *Bellum Africum* it was important for the author to introduce Postumus under his proper citizen name. But these suppositions do not correspond to the naming practice that emerges in comparable texts, as a few examples should quickly show. In one of his letters, Cicero imagines himself and Atticus as senators participating in a House debate, in which he rises to second something said by Atticus: "adsentior . . . T. Pomponio" (*Att.* 7.7.7 = 130 SB). He uses the parliamentary term for "I second," but as Shackleton Bailey notes *ad loc.*, "even in this supposedly formal context, C. does not use Atticus' adoptive *nomen*." In the Tenth *Philippic*, Cicero urges his fellow senators to throw the authority of the senate behind Brutus. Brutus was by birth a Marcus Junius Brutus, whose name had become "Quintus Servilius Caepio Brutus" as the result of an adoption. Yet throughout the speech Cicero refers to him simply as "Marcus Brutus," as he generally does in public and private elsewhere. Only in the peroration, when Cicero finally frames his recommendation in the form of a *sententia*, does he resort to the official name style "Quintus Caepio Brutus." For a last example, we may turn to the military history that Dessau cited. Publius Cornelius Scipio Nasica changed his name to Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio when he was adopted by Metellus Pius, and he went on to become a major actor in the civil war. Yet the author of the *Bellum Africum* never styles him by any appellation more formal than "Scipio" (exactly as Caesar names him from beginning to end of the *Bellum Civile*). Roman naming practices do often pose difficulties for the modern reader. But the fluctuation between the names "Curtius Postumus" and "Rabirius Postumus" should be acknowledged as one of those difficulties, if a single person is held to be involved. The principle to which Dessau appealed in order to explain it will not suffice.

The name discrepancy is not the only problem with Dessau's identification. From Cicero's defense, it is apparent that Rabirius Postumus was in the full swing of his career as an equestrian *publicanus* down to his trial for *repetundae* in 54 or 53. The outcome of the trial is unknown, but Dessau proposed a highly circumstantial sequel

20. For the late Republic, this problem is most helpfully covered by Shackleton Bailey, *Two Studies in Roman Nomenclature*², American Classical Studies 3 (Atlanta, 1991), 51–86, from which the data cited in this paragraph are drawn.

for it. Since he wanted to keep Rabirius in play with his citizen status unimpaired, he hypothesized that the trial ended in an acquittal. It signaled the fiscal ruin of Rabirius, however, with the result that he abandoned his career as a *publicanus* and cast his lot with Caesar. (Dessau evidently accepted Cicero's representations to the jury that after heavy losses in Egypt, Rabirius had no resources to pay the sums demanded of him, even though known bankrupts are not ordinarily targeted for *repetundae* prosecutions.) Rabirius served Caesar as an *eques* until the putsch of 49, in the aftermath of which he was brought into the senate and assigned to active duty in the civil war.

According to this reconstruction of his career, Rabirius had no opportunity to acquire significant field experience before the outbreak of the conflict. If he had ever seen military service, it must have lain far back in his youth before he settled into the role of a *publicanus*. Yet barely three years into the civil war, on the supposed evidence of the *Bellum Africum*, Rabirius was functioning as an officer with Caesar's forces in north Africa and was given the crucial assignment of mustering and transporting troops from Sicily through hostile waters to Caesar.²¹ So far as I know, no parallel to this transformation of a middle-aged *publicanus* has yet been cited. Though Caesar had the power to seat Rabirius in the senate with whatever title he chose to confer, one must doubt that even Caesar's power sufficed to infuse into Rabirius in three years' time the logistical and command experience that the Sicilian assignment presupposes.²² It is more likely that the *publicanus* and the officer are different men.²³ And once they are separated, there is of course no basis for connecting the officer with Curtius Postumus.

The last pin on which the senatorial identity of Curtius Postumus has been hung is an inscription honoring a Gaius Rabirius as proconsul of Asia (*ILLRP* 399). But

21. Rabirius' position is not specified either at *BAfr.* 8.1 or 26.3, but there should be no doubt from the narrative that he had a military charge with authority over legionary forces (cf. 26.3 "litteris . . . ad Alienum et Rabirium Postumum conscriptis ut . . . quam celerrime exercitus sibi transportaretur"). Moreover, as the sequel shows (44.1–2, 53, 62.1, 77.3), he had a protracted and perilous mission to carry out. Sallust, who was sent off on a parallel assignment at the same time (8.3), was already praetor designate and had been a senator for at least six years.

22. Let me emphasize that it is the suddenness of Rabirius' transformation into an officer that makes Dessau's hypothesis problematic. There are of course other Caesarean partisans of vaguely known background, like the young senators Curio and Sallust, who emerge to take important roles. But if their first steps along the senatorial cursus are unknown to us, their careers at least contain a space of several years in which they might have carried out significant assignments (some perhaps involving military responsibility), and they may have held military tribunates before they entered the senate. What is missing from Rabirius' career (on Dessau's reconstruction of it) is any room in which he might have proved himself before Caesar employed him as an officer. Contrast the seasoning received by another of Caesar's protégés: Ventidius Bassus accompanied Caesar to Gaul when Caesar took up his command there in 58, and "because he had acquitted himself pretty actively in that province and because later he briskly and energetically carried out many assignments during the civil war" (Gell. *NA* 15.4.3), he was finally promoted to the senate after more than ten years' probation.

23. Since hardly any other first-century Rabirii are known, and since in any case it would be hard to accept that two unrelated Rabirii Postumi flourished within ten years of each other, the most economical hypothesis must be that the officer is the son of the *publicanus*, probably by adoption. In the *Pro Rabirio* Cicero makes frequent reference to the *amici* of Rabirius but none to family, not even when he deprecates the harsh view of Rabirius' critics that Rabirius ought to have committed suicide rather than endure the indignities he suffered in Egypt (sections 28–29), or at the end when he draws attention to the *fletus* of Rabirius' partisans in section 48 (the absence of reference to family is an anomaly noted by Claudia Klodt, *Ciceros Rede Pro Rabirio Postumo: Einleitung und Kommentar* [Stuttgart, 1992], 182: "Abweichend von der üblichen Gepflogenheit führt Cicero hier allerdings keinen nahen Verwandten des Rabirius als jammervollen Bittflehenden persönlich vor"). Rabirius may have transmitted his name and estate by will, just as his uncle had done, and just as Sallust was to do in the 30s.

this connection is still less compelling than that which has been traced to the officer in Caesar's African campaign. In a little-noticed discussion of the Delian inscription, Syme pointed out that it is difficult if not impossible to find an opening for Rabirius' proconsulate in the 40s, and that "it is difficult to mesh his career with that of the Rabirius Postumus of *BAfr.* 8"; he further suggested that the inscription was not a first-century inscription at all.²⁴ To state the problem as it applies specifically to Curtius Postumus, it is unlikely that Caesar would have appointed a non-consular to govern Asia, given that even during the turbulence of the 40s Caesar's other appointments were of consulars (Domitius Calvinus, Servilius Isauricus, Trebonius). In a letter discussed above (*Att.* 12.49.2), Cicero indicates that Curtius was not only not yet consul, but not yet a candidate for consul in May of 45. Even if one were to accept that he was by this time a senator, therefore, the earliest he could possibly have governed Asia was in the latter half of 44, when there is no room for him. He cannot be the proconsul.

In sum, we have no reason to think that the Curtius Postumus of Cicero's letters ever became a senator, and little reason to follow Dessau in identifying him with the *publicanus* Rabirius Postumus. Cicero's information is all that exists to define him: he was an equestrian agent of Caesar, junior in influence to Balbus, Oppius, and Matus, who enriched himself by serving the Caesarean cause and opted to follow Octavian in 44. His career closely parallels that of another of Cicero's Caesarean friends, Trebatius Testa.

Like Trebatius, such a man can surely be supposed to have come comfortably through the civil wars. As a non-combatant he was at little risk of violent death and his instinct for choosing the winning side was flawless. And if Curtius Postumus survived, we could expect him to resemble the aging, prosperous gentleman who entertained Horace in the 20s. But apart from the faint clue of the name "Postumus" in Horace's poem, what proof is there that Curtius Postumus did survive? Macrobius, describing Augustus' patience with jokes at his expense, reports this odd anecdote (*Sat.* 2.4.22):

Curtius, eques Romanus deliciis diffuens, cum macrum turdum sumpsisset in convivio Caesaris interrogavit an mittere liceret. responderat princeps quidni liceat? ille per fenestram statim misit.

It gives us a bumptious, luxury-loving knight named Curtius who enjoyed the friendship of Augustus: a perfect double for Curtius Postumus the partisan and profiteer.²⁵

If this identification of Horace's friend is accepted, then Curtius Postumus can be added to the roll of Ciceronian characters whom Horatian scholars have long been struck to see turning up again in Horace's poems. But perhaps he can be set in a more interesting perspective. Among the people to whom Horace dedicated the lyrics he was writing during the 20s, a sizable contingent is made up of ex-contestants in the civil wars. Without counting either Augustus or Maecenas, there are eight besides Postumus: Sestius (*Carm.* 1.4), Agrippa (1.6), Munatius Plancus (1.7), Asinius Pollio

24. *Roman Papers*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1979), 639–40; Syme's discussion has presumably escaped notice because it was originally buried in a book review, *JRS* 57 (1967): 262–63.

25. The Curtius of Macrobius' story is *PIR*² C 1607, and no. 149 (p. 144) in Ségolène Demougin's *Prosopographie des chevaliers romains julio-claudiens 43 av. J.-C. – 70 ap. J.-C.* (Paris, 1992); Demougin notes "l'identification avec un personnage contemporain reste impossible."

(2.1), Sallustius Crispus (2.2), Dellius (2.3), Pompeius (2.7), and Messalla Corvinus (3.21).²⁶ They are particularly prominent in the second book of *Odes*. To be sure, the war thematic varies greatly in these pieces, from its direct treatment in the *Pollio Ode* to the bare whisper of Horace's words to Postumus, "in vain will we escape war." It is also true that the nine poems by no means contain the totality of Horace's ruminations on the war (the tour de force being *Odes* 1.2, which presents Augustus as the redeemer who will expiate the nation's war-guilt as though he had not been one of the war's protagonists). Nevertheless, the link that at least nine of Horace's dedicatees can now be seen to share should invite us to think again about the treatment of civil war in the *Odes*. Horace was the only one of the Augustan poets, so far as we know, who had actually participated in it, and his oblique but repeated evocations of it form a counterpoint to his forthright celebration of the new Augustan order. This prosopographical note is not the medium in which to pursue so broad a topic. But having listed the nine names, I would like to point out that they represent all factions in the struggle recently concluded. There are partisans of Brutus (Pompeius, Sestius), of Antony (Pollio, Sallustius Crispus), of Octavian (Agrippa, Curtius Postumus), as well as some who had changed sides (Dellius, Messalla, Plancus). Perhaps in the *Odes* Horace was pursuing his own project of national reconciliation.

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26. The true number is likely to be somewhat higher. We know enough about the nine I have listed to know what they were doing in the 40s and 30s. But other, more obscure recipients of Horace's odes may well have played some part in the war that we happen not to be informed about.

SIC TE SERVATO: AN INTERPRETATION OF PROPERTIUS 1.21

"Tu qui consortem properas evadere casum, miles ab Etruscis saucius aggeribus, quid nostro gemitu turgentia lumina torques? pars ego sum vestrae proxima militiae. sic te servato ut possint gaudere parentes, ne soror acta tuis sentiat e lacrimis; Gallum per medios ereptum Caesaris ensis effugere ignotas non potuisse manus, et quaecumque super dispersa invenerit ossa montibus Etruscis, haec sciat esse mea."	5 10
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The final words of Gallus are so condensed and elliptical that they excite our curiosity even more than our compassion. No narrator prepares us for the voice that breaks the silence and arrests our attention with its abrupt second-person address. From here until Gallus falls silent again, this time forever, his words tell us hardly more than enough to raise questions. Who is the Gallus whose name we learn in line seven, other than a man who opposed Octavian at Perusia? Is Gallus alive or already dead when he speaks? Who is the addressee, and what is his relationship to Gallus?

1. The text printed is that common to manuscripts NAFF.