

## DID JULIUS CAESAR TEMPORARILY BANISH MARK ANTONY FROM HIS INNER CIRCLE?\*

Our ancient sources and most works of modern scholarship unhesitatingly assert that Julius Caesar and his chief lieutenant, Mark Antony, were estranged from one another in 46 and the first half of 45 B.C. This state of affairs, if true, is of great historical significance because it means that Caesar was deprived of the services of one of his most trusted and resourceful deputies during some of the darkest days of the Civil War when extremely difficult campaigns had to be fought in Africa and in Spain.<sup>1</sup> A rift between Antony and Caesar also turns Antony into a potential candidate for recruitment by those who murdered Caesar on the Ides of March. Plutarch (*Ant.* 13.1–2), in fact, credits the conspirators in 44 with entertaining the possibility of enlisting the support of Antony. According to Cicero (*Phil.* 2.34) and Plutarch (*loc. cit.*), in the previous year another Caesarian who *was* genuinely unaffected, C. Trebonius, supposedly sounded Antony on his loyalty to Caesar.<sup>2</sup>

This paper will examine the explanations that have been offered to account for Antony's presumed banishment from Caesar's inner circle in 46 and 45, and it will show why none of those explanations is satisfactory. It will expose as untenable the prevailing view that there existed a serious strain in relations between Caesar and Antony, and will demonstrate, on the contrary, that Antony continued to enjoy Caesar's confidence throughout the years 46–45. Indeed, not only did the bond between the two men remain strong, but convincing evidence points to the conclusion that Caesar placed in Antony's hands during those years a special and very demanding assignment, one that only the closest, most daring, and most loyal associate of the dictator might undertake. Not even the malice of Cicero in the *Second Philippic* entirely conceals what that assignment was, if we correctly interpret the evidence.<sup>3</sup> By

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<sup>1</sup> In the earlier campaign against Pompey in 48, Antony had played several key roles and made significant contributions to Caesar's victory. First, c. March 48 Antony overcame the dangers and difficulties posed by stormy weather and the blockade of the Pompeian navy to transport across the Adriatic four legions desperately needed by Caesar to supplement the seven legions already in the field (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.26, 29.2; Dio 41.48). Later, at the Battle of Pharsalus, Antony commanded Caesar's left wing (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.89.3) and led the flying squad that hunted down the fleeing enemy forces (*Phil.* 2.71).

<sup>2</sup> Trebonius' attempt to recruit Antony in a plot to murder Caesar in 45 is mentioned only in these two sources, and the incident is almost certainly invented by Cicero: see J. Ramsey, *M. Tulli Ciceronis in M. Antonium orationes Philippicae Prima et Secunda* (Cambridge, 2003), 212–13. The story makes sense only in the context of the enmity that supposedly existed between Antony and Caesar in 46 to mid-45, a state of affairs that will be shown to be a fiction.

<sup>3</sup> In trying to piece together Antony's career under Caesar, we are severely handicapped by the circumstance that most of our ancient sources tend to be coloured by the anti-Antonian bias of Cicero.

keeping in mind the principle that 'the best propaganda is the exaggeration of a known or credible element',<sup>4</sup> it is often possible to recover a kernel of truth by reading between the lines of Cicero's invective. And when we appreciate the importance of the task entrusted by Caesar to Antony, when we grasp the danger and difficulty involved, and the amazing success with which Antony carried it out, we can readily understand why Caesar rewarded Antony so handsomely by choosing him as his colleague in the consulate of 44 and by assigning to him the important proconsular province of Macedonia for 43 and 42.<sup>5</sup>

The truly striking feature of Antony's political career under Caesar is that Antony suddenly disappears from the political stage in 46 and 45, although immediately before and after that period Antony held positions of extraordinary power and prestige thanks to appointments conferred by Caesar. In the first two years of the Civil War, Caesar twice deputed Antony to serve as his chief representative in Italy during prolonged periods of absence. Caesar did so first in April 49 when he set out for Spain to do battle with Pompey's legions. From April until Caesar's return in December, Mark Antony was granted pro-praetorian power by Caesar and entrusted with administering the whole of Italy, although at the time Antony was only a tribune of the plebs (Broughton, *MRR* 2.260). The only other plenipotentiary representative whom Caesar left in Italy in 49 was the praetor Marcus Lepidus, who was put in charge of Rome (Broughton, *MRR* 2.257). A year later, in 48–47 Antony's powers were even more sweeping. As Caesar's *magister equitum* during Caesar's extended absence in Egypt and Asia Minor, Mark Antony exercised control over all of Italy and Rome until Caesar returned in September 47.<sup>6</sup>

In the following two years, the picture changes radically. In 46 and 45, Mark Antony occupied no position of authority, and Caesar's favouritism appears to have been transferred from Antony to Marcus Lepidus, who returned from governing Nearer Spain in the autumn of 47. Lepidus was granted a triumph, despite having achieved no victory of consequence (Dio 43.1.2), and Caesar selected Lepidus, not Antony, to be his colleague in the consulship of 46. Later, Caesar named Lepidus, not Antony, his *magister equitum* in 46 and 45.<sup>7</sup> In 45, Caesar took no colleague in the consulship at the opening of the year, and he left Lepidus, together with six or eight prefects, to look after affairs in Italy and Rome when he set out for Spain to do battle with the army raised by Pompey's sons (Dio 43.28.2). During the years 46 and 45 Antony fades into the background. He took no part in Caesar's African campaign in 46, he failed to complete his journey to Spain to participate in Caesar's campaign in 45, and he is portrayed by our ancient sources as indulging in a life of scandalous dissipation. More damning still, Cicero claims that Antony showed undisguised malice towards

<sup>4</sup> C. Babcock, 'The early career of Fulvia', *AJP* 86 (1965), 1–32 at 22.

<sup>5</sup> During those years Caesar expected to be on his eastern campaign against the Parthians, and he would naturally want Macedonia, the staging ground for his army, to be in reliable hands.

<sup>6</sup> Broughton, *MRR* 2.272, 286–7. Cicero characterizes Antony's appointment in 48 as an elevation to the foremost rank among Caesar's bandits (*ex latronibus suis principatum*, *Phil.* 2.5). The office was conferred on Antony after he returned to Italy, while Caesar was engaged in pursuing Pompey after defeating him at Pharsalus (*Phil.* 2.62).

<sup>7</sup> Broughton, *MRR* 2.295, 306. The preference given to Lepidus over Antony for the consulship of 46 is, of course, to be explained chiefly by the fact that Lepidus had achieved the minimum age for that office and had held the praetorship (in 49), whereas Antony had satisfied neither of those requirements. Lepidus had served Caesar loyally and was due his reward. Those considerations, however, do not explain why Lepidus was named Caesar's *magister equitum* in both 46 and 45, while Antony held no office whatsoever.

Caesar during that period and even attempted to have him assassinated in the autumn of 46.<sup>8</sup>

Then suddenly, in the summer of 45, all was reversed. Caesar paid Mark Antony the signal honour of having him ride in his carriage on the return journey from Spain. The second carriage was occupied by D. Brutus and Caesar's grandnephew and soon-to-be chief heir C. Octavius, the future Emperor Augustus (Plut. *Ant.* 11.1). In the following year, Mark Antony's public career flourished once more, and he emerged as Caesar's trusted and powerful second-in-command. Mark Antony was Caesar's choice to be his colleague in the consulship in 44, although Antony was most likely only thirty-eight years old at the time of his election (four years shy of the minimum age required), and he had never held the praetorship.<sup>9</sup> In those same elections, Antony's younger brother Gaius was honoured by being elected praetor for 44, and the youngest of the three brothers, Lucius, was elected tribune (Broughton, *MRR* 2.319, 323). Antony himself received a host of distinctions in addition to the consulship. He was selected by Caesar, the *pontifex maximus*, to be the *flamen* of the new Divus Iulius (*Phil.* 2.110). He was appointed head of the new Julian college of Luperi, which was established and named in Caesar's honour (Dio 45.30.2, cf. 44.6.2; *Phil.* 13.31; Suet. *Iul.* 76.1). And Caesar caused Antony's name to be inscribed on the new rostra, which replaced the old speakers' platform in the *comitium* and was erected at the western end of the Forum, where it remained in imperial times (Dio 43.49.1–2).

The striking absence of any political assignments for Antony in all of 46 and 45 has naturally inspired comment and speculation on the part of both our ancient sources and modern scholars. The conclusion is drawn that a serious rift occurred between Caesar and Antony in the years 46 and 45. There is a difference of opinion, however, concerning the cause of Antony's fall from Caesar's favour.

Cicero is the earliest source to claim that Caesar and Antony became estranged. He traces the rift in their relationship to Antony's purchase of the confiscated goods of Pompey the Great when Caesar sold them at auction in the autumn of 47. According to Cicero, Antony was made soft and decadent by the luxury and ease suddenly surrounding him when he took possession of Pompey's town house and suburban estate (*horti*). This orgy of self-indulgence is offered by Cicero as the sole reason why Antony remained behind in Rome when Caesar set out in late 47 to campaign against the republican armies in Africa.<sup>10</sup> Later, when Caesar returned in triumph from Africa in the summer of 46 and demanded payment for Pompey's assets, Antony supposedly reacted first with anger and then dismay. He was angry at Caesar's demand because (according to Cicero) Antony never expected to be asked to pay the price that he had

<sup>8</sup> *Phil.* 2.74, see below, n. 12. J. D. Denniston, *Cicero, Orationes Philippicae Prima et Secunda* (Oxford, 1926), 120, speculated that to this period of estrangement may belong the assertion oddly attributed to Antony in *Phil.* 2.35 (*ut tu dicebas*) that all who were unwilling to be slaves stood to gain from the removal of Caesar.

<sup>9</sup> Antony was born on 14 January, probably in 83 B.C.: G. V. Sumner, 'The *lex annalis* under Caesar', *Phoenix* 25 (1971), 363. His failure to hold the praetorship may have been deemed relatively unimportant by Caesar in view of Antony's *imperium pro praetore* in 49 and his position as *magister equitum* in 48–47 (above, p. 162). It should also be noted that although Caesar appears to have observed the requirements of the *lex annalis* when he filled the consulships in 48, 47, and 46 (Sumner, 271), by 45 and 44 he was promoting his supporters to public office without regard for their age or prior magistracies (Sumner, 363). The most striking example is furnished by P. Cornelius Dolabella, whom Caesar proposed to make suffect consul in his place in 44. Dolabella was only about 30 or 31 years of age in 44 (Sumner, 261–62) and, to the best of our knowledge, he had held no office after his stormy tribunate in 47.

<sup>10</sup> *Cui bello cum propter timiditatem tuam tum propter libidines defuisti* (*Phil.* 2.71).

bid. He viewed those confiscated estates as a fitting reward for past services.<sup>11</sup> Caesar, however, threatened to send soldiers to collect the debt, and so Antony was forced hastily to announce an auction in a forlorn attempt to raise some cash by offering to sell the few shabby bits and pieces of Pompey's property that he had not already frittered away. When this auction was prevented from taking place by a lawsuit, Antony became desperate and sent an assassin to murder Caesar in his home, but the man was caught and the plot foiled.<sup>12</sup>

So the story is presented in the *Second Philippic* (§§71–4), and a version of it is also found in Plutarch (*Ant.* 10.3) and Dio (45.28.3–4), two authors who knew that famous speech and drew freely upon it. Plutarch adds the detail that Antony justified his refusal to follow Caesar to Africa by calling attention to Caesar's unfair demand that he pay for Pompey's goods. This is not the chronology adopted by Cicero, who says nothing about Caesar's insistence on payment until *after* his African campaign (*Phil.* 2.71–2). Therefore, the suggestion has been made, based upon Plutarch's attribution of the complaint against Caesar directly to Antony himself (καί φησιν αὐτός), that Plutarch may have found the variant tradition in a work by Antony.<sup>13</sup> If we could be certain that Antony himself acknowledged a period of estrangement from Caesar, then there would obviously be no room to argue, as I do in this paper, that the quarrel between the two men is nothing but a malicious fiction invented by Cicero. It is only pure speculation, however, that Plutarch found the statement that he attributes to Antony in something written by Antony. More likely the biographer drew his inspiration from the angry words that Cicero puts into the mouth of Antony at *Phil.* 2.72 (*iusta dicebas: 'A me C. Caesar pecuniam? cur potius quam ego ab illo? an sine me ille vicit? ...'*).<sup>14</sup> Antony's complaint in §72 concerning Caesar's lack of proper gratitude and his failure to confer a just reward for past services is precisely the complaint assigned by Plutarch to Antony in justifying his refusal to accompany his old commander on the African campaign. Furthermore, it makes sense for Caesar to have pressed Antony for payment *after* the African campaign, as Cicero reports, rather

<sup>11</sup> Dio (42.50.5), doubtless drawing upon Cicero, claims that *a number* of Caesar's followers found themselves in a similar predicament and grew angry with Caesar when they were forced to pay the sums that they had bid for confiscated property sold at auction. Their false hopes for enrichment may have been raised by the recollection that Sulla had rewarded many of his supporters by remitting the purchase price of confiscated goods (*Sall. Hist.* 4.1M; 2 *Verr.* 3.81–2).

<sup>12</sup> The attempt on Caesar's life may be the one alluded to in the contemporary *pro Marcello* of September 46 (§§21–3), but in that speech there is no hint of any involvement by Antony. The claim made two years later in *Phil.* 2.74 that Caesar brought this matter before the Senate and charged Antony with complicity is hardly credible because in the very next breath Cicero states that Caesar granted Antony an extension of the due date for the payment of his debts. This is hardly the way in which Caesar would have treated someone whom he had just accused of sending an assassin to murder him.

<sup>13</sup> Perhaps in one of his replies to Cicero's *Philippics*, a source cited by Plutarch in connection with another incident (*Cic.* 41.6): so B. X. DeWet, 'Contemporary sources in Plutarch's life of Antony', *Hermes* 118 (1990), 80–90 at 85–7.

<sup>14</sup> This is the conclusion drawn by C. Pelling, *Plutarch: Life of Antony* (Cambridge 1988), 140. See Pelling (34–5) on Plutarch's elaboration of other material in his life of Antony which the biographer undoubtedly drew from Cicero's *Second Philippic*. This is not to deny that Plutarch had available to him a rich tradition of biographical sources and invective related to the life of Antony: see T. W. Hillard, 'Plutarch's late-republican lives: between the lines', *Antichthon* 21 (1987), 19–48 and Pelling, who counters Hillard's underestimation of Plutarch's habit of taking over and elaborating material that he found in Cicero ('Postscript (1994)' to reprint of 'Plutarch's method of work in the Roman lives' in B. Scardigli [ed.], *Essays on Plutarch's Lives* [Oxford 1995], 316).

than prior to his departure, as Plutarch would have it, since Antony would need to be given some time to raise cash, and in the autumn of 46 Caesar required huge sums to meet immediate expenses (see n. 37).

While the ancient sources universally regard Antony's purchase of Pompey's property as the chief cause of the strain in his relationship with Caesar, modern scholars offer an entirely different explanation to account for Antony's failure to receive from Caesar any political assignment in 46 and 45. They interpret the hiatus in Antony's political career as a sign of Caesar's displeasure with Antony's performance as *magister equitum* in 48 and 47. They point out that when Caesar returned to Rome from the east in September 47, he found his legions in a state of mutiny and the economy in a shambles. Cicero's son-in-law P. Dolabella, who was tribune of the plebs in 47, had pressed hard for the cancellation of debts, and bloody riots had as a consequence broken out in the Forum (Broughton, *MRR* 2.287). Antony did his best to check the violence of Dolabella's supporters and restrain Caesar's restless troops, but his efforts were fruitless.<sup>15</sup> To make matters worse, according to our ancient sources, Antony's high-handed tactics and his scandalous escapades brought Caesar, his commander, into disrepute in the eyes of the citizens (Plut. *Ant.* 10.2, *Caes.* 51.2; Dio 42.27). Caesar's presumed reaction, according to the prevailing modern view, can be summed up in the words of Gelzer:

The dictator would surely have been prepared to overlook his [Antony's] way of life, offensively dissolute even by Roman standards though it was, but he could not ignore the fact that he had been politically compromised by his *magister equitum*. His former favorite was punished by being dropped for two years.<sup>16</sup>

Syme alone sounds a note of caution, writing 'The task [of governing Italy in Caesar's absence] was delicate, and Caesar may not have been altogether satisfied with his deputy. Yet there is no proof of any serious estrangement'.<sup>17</sup>

In fact, not only is there 'no proof of any serious estrangement', but, on the contrary, if we look more closely at the years 46 and 45, it is possible to detect unmistakable signs pointing to a continued bond between Caesar and Antony, even if the latter received no appointment from Caesar during those years. Not even the gross distortions of the *Second Philippic* can entirely conceal this evidence. First, we note that Antony *did* set out from Italy in late 46 to join Caesar on his Spanish campaign. Cicero (*Phil.* 2.75) places all of his emphasis on Antony's failure to complete that

<sup>15</sup> The legions brought back to Italy by Antony after the Battle of Pharsalus in the autumn of 48 (*Phil.* 2.59) had been waiting a whole year for their discharge and for the bounties promised to them by Caesar. With the growing tide of enemy forces in Africa, Caesar was going to need those legions for further campaigning, and Antony's attempt to quell mutinies in the spring of 47 met with ignominious failure (Dio 42.30.1). The continued disaffection into the summer (*Att.* 11.21.2, 22.2) forced Caesar to change his plans and return to Italy instead of going directly to Africa. See S. Chrissanthos, 'Caesar and the mutiny of 47 B.C.', *JRS* 91 (2001), 63–75.

<sup>16</sup> M. Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman* (Cambridge, MA, 1968), 262. Cf. E. Rawson (*CAH* 9<sup>2</sup>.435), 'in Rome Caesar made it clear that Antony had lost his confidence, but surprisingly, that Dolabella had not'. This view is found in nearly all discussions of this period: e.g. Drumann and Groebe I<sup>2</sup>.54; E. Meyer *Cäsars Monarchie* (Stuttgart, 1922<sup>3</sup>), 379–80; T. R. Holmes, *The Roman Republic and the Founder of the Empire* (Oxford, 1923), 3.317; Broughton, *MRR* 2.287; Z. Yavetz, *Plebs and Princes* (Oxford, 1969), 64–5; H. Bengtson, *Marcus Antonius* (Munich, 1977), 64–5; E. Huzar, *Mark Antony, a Biography* (Minneapolis, 1978), 68; Pelling (n. 14, 1988), 140; and T. Watkins, *L. Munatius Plancus, Serving and Surviving in the Roman Revolution* (Atlanta, 1997), 44.

<sup>17</sup> R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939), 104.

journey, but the plain fact remains that Antony *did* leave Rome and make an effort to reach Caesar in Spain. This is a clear demonstration of Antony's continued loyalty to Caesar. Moreover, Cicero in spite of himself, provides a perfectly logical explanation for Antony's failure to reach Spain, and it had nothing to do with cowardice on Antony's part or a lack of wholehearted devotion to Caesar's cause. We learn from both the *Second Philippic* and from a letter to Atticus, contemporary with the event, that Antony was compelled to return to Rome suddenly and unexpectedly in March of 45 to prevent foreclosure on his debts.<sup>18</sup>

However, what is even more indicative of the true relationship between Caesar and Antony in March of 45 is the reaction of the populace to Antony's sudden and unexpected arrival in Rome. From *Att.* 12.19.2 we learn that Cicero received assurances from Caesar's trusted advisors Oppius and Balbus (at the request of Atticus) that he need not be alarmed by Antony's visit, that Antony had returned to Rome for strictly personal reasons, without any hidden agenda of Caesar's. The *Second Philippic* (§77) refers to the panic caused in Rome and throughout Italy by Antony's unanticipated arrival in the dead of night: *urbem terrore nocturno, Italiam multorum dierum metu perturbasti*. A tribune invited Antony to calm those fears by addressing a public meeting since the people had surmised, apparently, that Antony had come with secret orders from Caesar (*Phil.* 2.78). This reaction of the man in the street speaks volumes against the prevailing modern view (the one that Cicero too would have us accept) that Antony and Caesar were estranged in 46–45. Clearly in March 45 contemporary observers did not regard Antony as a disaffected ex-supporter of Caesar but rather as someone whom Caesar might well call upon to initiate a bloody purge of his political enemies. Such a commission is hardly of the sort to be entrusted to a disgruntled and disgraced follower.

In this same context, Cicero also happens to mention that on his journey to Rome in March of 45, Antony took time along the way to canvass the voters in Cisalpine Gaul for the consulship of 44 (*Phil.* 2.76), an office that he could hardly have hoped to win without Caesar's blessing. A campaign for the consulship would have been doomed to failure at the outset if Antony and Caesar had truly been at odds with one other.<sup>19</sup> And yet Cicero describes Antony courting the voters months in advance of his supposed reconciliation with Caesar in mid-45.

Finally, most damaging of all to the prevailing view that Antony and Caesar were estranged during all of 46 and the first half of 45 is the total absence of *any* good, or even plausible, explanation for the sudden reconciliation between the two men that is imagined to have taken place in mid-45. We should want to know not only why the two men ended their estrangement but even more importantly why Caesar chose in 44 to reward Mark Antony and Antony's brothers so handsomely with the offices and honours enumerated earlier in this paper. Cicero gives no satisfactory explanation for why Antony was supposedly accepted back into Caesar's good graces after having been estranged from him for more than a year. The orator lightly passes over this considerable gap in his portrayal of the quarrel between Antony and Caesar by merely

<sup>18</sup> *Phil.* 2.77; *Att.* 12.19.2 of 14 March 45 (cf. 12.18a.1 of 13 March). It is worth recalling that in August of the following year Cicero found himself in a similar predicament when he was forced to hasten back to Rome, in part, to attend to debts that called for his urgent, personal attention (*Att.* 16.7.6).

<sup>19</sup> Even if we discount the overblown claims that Caesar exercised unlimited control over the outcome of the consular elections and created consuls by fiat (e.g. *Phil.* 2.79–80; so also Dio 43.49.1 and Plut. *Ant.* 11.3), as the presiding magistrate at those elections, Caesar could easily have blocked an enemy by withholding the *renuntiatio* of his election.

asserting that the two men became friends once more 'somehow or other' (*nescio quo modo*, *Phil.* 2.78). Cicero goes on lamely to observe that Caesar always welcomed scoundrels to his circle of friends, especially if those good-for-nothings were debt-ridden, and so it follows, according to this cynical logic, that Antony was ideally suited to be Caesar's colleague in the consulship of 44.

Needless to say, such an explanation for the resumption of cordial relations between Caesar and Antony scarcely prepares us for Antony's spectacular advancement in 44. Modern scholars have similarly been at a loss to explain why Caesar is supposed to have reversed his negative judgment of Antony and suddenly showered him with so many honours. Gelzer is content merely to write: 'During Caesar's stay in Narbo [in the summer of 45 B.C.] Mark Antony arrived and was received with the greatest respect. Caesar regarded their quarrel as over, and promised him the consulship for next year.'<sup>20</sup> Drumann and Groebe speculate that in 45 Caesar felt the need for a daring agent who would stop at nothing in helping him to achieve his goal of absolute power.<sup>21</sup> Others, including Cicero, point out that Antony's marriage to Fulvia in late 47 (or sometime in 46?), coupled with his decision to drop his mistress, the mime actress Cytheris, caused Antony to turn over a new leaf and so bring order to his riotous and decadent mode of life.<sup>22</sup> Still, even assuming this to be true, one has to wonder why Caesar decided not only to include Antony once more in his inner circle of friends but also to elevate Antony in 44 to a place of honour second only to his own. Indeed no one, so far as I am aware, has shown why conditions in mid-45 provided sufficient motivation for Caesar to resume his friendship with Antony and promote his old lieutenant and that man's brothers to such prominent positions. At that time Caesar had just completed the conquest of all the enemy forces opposed to him and was more firmly in power than he had ever been since the outbreak of the Civil War. He had no compelling need, therefore, to patch up his differences with a deputy whose services had supposedly not been required during the past eighteen months. Nothing in the standard accounts of the relationship between Caesar and Antony in 46 to mid-45 prepares us for the spectacular re-emergence of Antony as Caesar's most trusted and loyal right-hand man in 44.

The solution, I firmly believe, lies in discarding the notion that Antony and Caesar experienced a parting of the ways in 46–45. We must look, instead, for some other explanation to account for the hiatus in Antony's political career during those years. Once again, the true picture can be pieced together on the basis of information that lies just beneath the surface in Cicero's *Second Philippic*.<sup>23</sup> We have already noted that according to *Phil.* 2.65–7, while Caesar was fighting in Africa, Antony was wholly absorbed in squandering Pompey's property, which he had just recently purchased at a

<sup>20</sup> Gelzer (n. 16), 299.

<sup>21</sup> Drumann and Groebe, I<sup>2</sup>.55–6.

<sup>22</sup> *Phil.* 2.69 *frugi factus est: mimulam suam suas res sibi habere iussit, ex duodecim tabulis clavibus ademit, exegit. quam porro spectatus civis, quam probatus! cuius ex omni vita nihil est honestius quam quod cum mima fecit divortium.* Plutarch (*Ant.* 10.4–6) credits Antony's new wife Fulvia with bringing order to his life, a view often repeated in modern treatments (e.g. Babcock [n. 4], 11; Huzar [n. 16], 70–1).

<sup>23</sup> I thank my colleague Alexander MacGregor for inspiring me to re-examine in a new light Cicero's account of Antony's activities in 46 and 45. MacGregor pointed out to me that Manilius' description of the native of the constellation *Haedus* (5.311–33) appears to be modelled on Cicero's portrayal of Antony in the *Second Philippic*. That figure is a drunken, playboy magistrate who is notorious for his activities as a *sector*, which is easily understood as an allusion to Antony's disposal of Pompey's confiscated property.

sale held by Caesar before his departure. As Cicero relates the story, painting the picture in the most lurid colours possible, Antony was a drunken spendthrift who simply handed over Pompey's vast holdings to his circle of disreputable followers comprising actors and actresses, gambling partners, and drinking companions. There is an element of truth in what Cicero says, but we must strip away the distortion of invective in order to grasp the true nature of Antony's liquidation of Pompey's assets and his goal in doing so.

One recurring theme in Cicero's invective is his repeated use of the derogatory term *sector* ('purchaser of confiscated goods') to describe Antony's dealings with Pompey's property (*Pompei sector*, *Phil.* 2.65, cf. 39, 75; 13.30). A *sector* was a person who bought confiscated property at a public auction (*Gai. Inst.* 4.146), for which he paid the *aerarium* a lump sum and then proceeded to sell off the collective holdings in bits and pieces in order to realize a profit.<sup>24</sup> Profit derived from this activity is characterized by Seneca (*Brev. vit.* 12.1) as *infamis*, and the activity itself, as distinct from the acquisition of select properties for one's personal enjoyment, not resale, would ordinarily not be undertaken by a man of Antony's station.<sup>25</sup> It was *déclassé* for Antony to act the part of a *sector*, let alone to carry out that function in connection with Pompey's confiscated properties. Cicero goes so far as to assert that Antony must have been out of his mind when he did so since by his act he was calling down upon himself the hatred of gods and men (*Phil.* 2.65). To describe Antony as a *sector*, to characterize his transactions in disposing of Pompey's vast holdings as a *sectio* (*Phil.* 2.71), dragged Antony's name through the mud.<sup>26</sup> The leading *sectores* in this period, those other than Antony who are specifically called *sectores*, comprise such persons as the disgraced political figure P. Sulla (cos. des. 65), whose career had been ruined by a conviction in the criminal courts,<sup>27</sup> the lowly M. Mindius Marcellus and unguent dealer Attius (*Fam.* 15.17.2), and L. Marcus Censorinus (pr. urb. 43), who supported

<sup>24</sup> *Sectorem autem dicit aestimatorem redemptoremque bonorum damnati atque proscripti, qui spem sectans lucris sui, . . . bona omnia reauctione vendit et semel infert pecuniam vel aerario vel sociis* (Ps.-Ascon. p. 236St, on Cic. 2 *Verr.* 1.52; cf. id. p. 239St, on 2 *Verr.* 1.61 and *RE* 2A.1 [1921] s.v. 'sectio').

<sup>25</sup> It was not, apparently, unacceptable to acquire choice pieces of confiscated property. For instance, L. Lentulus (cos. 49), who fought on the Pompeian side, staked a claim to Caesar's *horti* and house at Baiae in the event of victory (*Att.* 11.6.6). Servilia, the mother of the tyrannicide M. Brutus, picked up some bargains with the connivance of Caesar (*Suet. Iul.* 50.2; *Att.* 14.21.3). Various unnamed individuals whom Cicero characterizes as *qui hostium numero non sunt* (ex-Pompeians?) acquired properties that had once belonged to Pompey (*Phil.* 13.11). Even Cicero himself may have cast a longing eye on some of the property confiscated by Caesar if the *domus Sullana* at Naples which Cicero had hoped to acquire belonged not to P. Sulla, as is generally assumed, but rather was seized from Faustus Sulla after Caesar's victory in the African campaign (see Shackleton Bailey on *Fam.* 9.15.5).

<sup>26</sup> The insult with which Cicero branded Antony has left its mark. In addition to the passage in Manilius noted above (n. 23), the identification of Antony as the *sector* of Pompey's property is found in the Livian tradition as represented by Florus (2.18.5, *Pompeianorum bonorum, quorum sector ille* [Antonius] fuerat), and in the Elder Seneca, who preserves from Porcius Latro what is best interpreted as an allusion to Pompey's pitiful flight after his defeat at Pharsalus and the subsequent liquidation of his property by Antony as a *sector*: *Vidi ego magni exercitus ducem sine comite fugientem; vidi <ab> ambitiosa turba clientium limina deserta sub domino sectore venalia* (*Contr.* 2.1.1). For the justification for this interpretation, see 'The Elder Seneca, Controversiae 2.1.1: sub domino sectore', *CQ* 54 (2004), 307–10.

<sup>27</sup> P. Sulla was a notorious *sector* both at the time of the Sullan proscriptions in 82–81 and in the years following Caesar's victories (*Off.* 2.29; his obituary in Jan. 45, *Fam.* 9.10.3, 15.17.2, 15.19.3).



Antony at the siege of Mutina and whose family had suffered in the Sullan proscriptions.<sup>28</sup>

Significantly, the assets of Pompey were not the only confiscated properties that found their way into the hands of Mark Antony, but they are the only ones in connection with which Antony is said to have played the role of a *sector*.<sup>29</sup> The reason why this is so undoubtedly has to do with the size and complexity of the transaction. Cicero lays great stress on the fact that no one, except Antony, stepped forward at the auction to offer to purchase all that Pompey had owned (*Phil.* 2.64).<sup>30</sup> Cicero would have us believe that other potential buyers refrained from bidding out of a sense of modesty or sorrow over the death of the beloved Pompey. A much more plausible explanation, however, is that the vast size of Pompey's assets must have put them far beyond the reach of any single bidder without the connivance of Caesar.<sup>31</sup> To describe this unique situation in different, more modern terms, when Antony offered to buy all that had belonged to Pompey (the richest man in Rome except for Caesar), he was setting in motion what we would call today a leveraged buy-out. That is, Antony was agreeing to pay the *aerarium* in due course a vast sum of money that he did not have at his disposal but was trusted by the seller (Caesar) to raise by liquidating Pompey's holdings piecemeal at a series of future sales. Hence the reputation earned by Antony as *Pompei sector*.

The likely purchase price, 200 million sesterces, is indicated by the sum later voted by the Senate in 44 B.C. to make it possible for Sextus Pompey to repurchase his father's confiscated property.<sup>32</sup> That figure is said to have equalled the money realized by Caesar from the sale of Sextus' patrimony: *quantam (pecuniam) ex bonis patriis in praedae dissipatione inimicus victor [Caesar] redegisset* (*Phil.* 13.10). Opinion varies as to whether this 200 million was a reasonable price to pay for Pompey's assets.<sup>33</sup> The

<sup>28</sup> In *Phil.* 11.36, Cicero styles him *in bello hostem, in pace sectorem*. Censorinus went on to acquire Cicero's house on the Palatine in the proscriptions carried out by the Triumvirs (Vell. 2.14.3).

<sup>29</sup> Antony is not called a *sector* but is simply credited with acquiring, for his own enjoyment, a town house that had formerly belonged to M. Piso (*Phil.* 2.62), a villa at Tibur that had been owned by Pompey's father-in-law Metellus Scipio (*Phil.* 5.19; cf. 2.42), and a villa at Casinum that was previously much cherished by the scholar M. Terentius Varro (*Phil.* 2.103).

<sup>30</sup> Despite Cicero's explicit claim that Antony alone ventured to bid on Pompey's goods (*inventus est nemo praeter Antonium*), T. Frank, *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome* (Baltimore, 1933), 1.337, and P. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.–A.D. 14* (Oxford, 1971), 321–2, assert that Antony bought merely *some*, not all, of Pompey's confiscated assets. Presumably they drew this conclusion on the basis of the evidence in *Phil.* 13.11–12 (discussed below, p. 172) that in 43 B.C. the bulk of Pompey's properties were in the hands of a variety of new owners other than Antony. However, the dispersal of Pompey's vast holdings is best explained by attributing it to Antony's resale of the bulk of his purchase at Caesar's auction, what Cicero calls the *sectio* (*Phil.* 2.64). Cicero, in fact, points to this conclusion by distinguishing between the money that Antony owed Caesar for properties retained for his own use (Pompey's *domus* and *horti*) as opposed to what he owed for the *sectio*: *pecunia quam pro domo, pro hortis, pro sectione debebas* (*Phil.* 2.71).

<sup>31</sup> As we can tell from the allegations that Caesar sold some confiscated properties to his favourites at nominal prices (Suet. *Iul.* 50.2; Dio 43.47.5) and that the Triumvirs rigged auctions in 43–42 to pick up bargains for themselves (Dio 47.14.5), it must have been quite possible for Caesar to have arranged in advance for Antony to be the 'successful' bidder at the auction of Pompey's holdings.

<sup>32</sup> *Septiens miliens* (*Phil.* 13.12), corrected to *bis miliens* on the basis of App. 3.4. This agreement was never carried out, and under the settlement reached with Antony and Octavian in 39, Sextus was to receive only 70 million sesterces, a mere fraction of the earlier figure (Dio 48.36.5).

<sup>33</sup> Brunt (n. 30), 322 describes the price paid by Antony as 'excessive', whereas M. W.

figure is certainly not of the order of such bargains as those picked up in the Sullan confiscations: for example, the purchase of C. Marius' villa at Misenum for 300,000 sesterces and resale later for 10 million (Plut. *Mar.* 34.3–4). Based upon the resale price of Marius' villa, and taking into account the fact that we know of only fourteen properties belonging to Pompey, including his town house and *horti*,<sup>34</sup> a purchase price on the order of 200 million sesterces is probably in line with the fair market value of those holdings after the outbreak of the war. This can also be demonstrated by observing that the net worth of Pompey's contemporary, the millionaire M. Crassus, one of the richest men of his generation, is estimated in the range of 170.4 million sesterces (Plut. *Crass.* 2.3, 7100 talents) to 200 million sesterces (Plin. *HN* 33.134).

We can be certain that Mark Antony possessed no resources on anything like that scale in 47 B.C. His personal finances were always said to be shaky (*Phil.* 2.44–46), and according to Cicero (*Phil.* 2.93), Antony's debts two and a half years later amounted to 40 million sesterces at the time of Caesar's murder. In order to raise the 200 million sesterces, which he had bid for Pompey's goods, Antony had to carry out a complex and judicious resale of those assets over a period of many months so as not to depress the market value of the properties by trying to dispose of them all at once or too hastily. Still, even with the most careful, piecemeal resale of the bulk of Pompey's holdings, much was no doubt transferred to new owners at what amounted to fire-sale prices. Dio (42.51.2) attests the steep decline in the value of real estate because of the large number of properties that were being confiscated and sold by Caesar.<sup>35</sup> This slump in the market will explain Cicero's exaggerated claim that Antony simply handed over *gratis* all sorts of valuable goods to his favourites (*Phil.* 2.66–67).

This money-raising activity of Antony, which spanned something like a year and a half, from c. October 47 until at least March 45, is to be viewed in the context of Caesar's need to raise massive quantities of cold, hard cash to satisfy the demands of his veterans, whose promised bounties were long overdue in the autumn of 47.<sup>36</sup> During his return to Italy from the east in the summer of 47, Caesar used every possible means to raise cash from provincial communities along his route and from the treasuries of sanctuaries (Dio 42.49). Back in Rome by October, he sought to acquire more currency by taking out enforced 'loans' from both communities and individuals and by exacting payment in full for confiscated properties at their higher, pre-war

Frederiksen, 'Caesar. Cicero and the problem of debt', *JRS* 56 (1966), 128–41 at 132, characterizes it as 'laughably low', the view also of Frank (n. 30), 337.

<sup>34</sup> I. Shatzman, *Senatorial Wealth and Roman Politics* (Brussels, 1975), 389–90.

<sup>35</sup> It is arguable that property values did not recover anything resembling their pre-war levels until the influx of wealth from Egypt caused the value of property to soar and interest rates to drop from 12 per cent to 4 per cent at the time of August's triumph in 29 (Dio 51.21.5). Indicative of the continued depressed value of land in the 40s is the circumstance that in 42 B.C. the Triumvirs fell short of their needs by 800 million sesterces, despite ruthless confiscations of property in a systematic proscription of their enemies (App. 4.31).

<sup>36</sup> Since the outbreak of the Civil War, the scarcity of coin (*nummorum caritas*) had been a persistent problem and is a recurring theme in Cicero's letters of 49 (*Att.* 7.18.4; 9.9.4; 10.11.2; 10.15.4). The need for coined money also explains Caesar's forcible seizure of the cash in the *aerarium sanctius* in March of 49 (Dio 41.17.1–2; Plut. *Caes.* 35.6–11)—perhaps 48 million sesterces, equalling six months pay for his troops, Frank (n. 30), 338. Caesar also enforced a measure designed to discourage hoarding by setting a limit of 60,000 sesterces on the amount of silver and gold that any individual could possess (Dio 41.38.1). The problem persisted into 48 as revealed by Caesar's provision that loans could be settled by the assignment of land at pre-war valuations (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.1.2–3) and by his *lex de modo credendi possidendique intra Italiam*, which seems to have required money-lenders to invest no less than half of their capital in Italian land (Tac. *Ann.* 6.16–17).

valuations.<sup>37</sup> Even so, when Caesar undertook to mobilize his veteran legions, whose services he desperately needed for his African campaign, he could offer to pay immediately only part of the bounties previously pledged to them, with the remainder to be delivered in the near future with interest (Dio 42.54.2). According to Appian (2.92), the future historian Sallust was sent with a *promise* of an additional 4,000 sesterces per man but was driven off by the disgruntled veterans. To put this shortage of cash into perspective, the sum required to pay immediately the incentive announced by Sallust was a mere 60 million sesterces for the five veteran legions that accompanied Caesar to Africa (the fifth, ninth, tenth, thirteenth, and fourteenth).<sup>38</sup>

The conversion of Pompey's landed assets into cash was, therefore, of the utmost importance to Caesar, but besides the financial complexities associated with such a transaction, we must not leave out of account the huge personal risk to anyone who ventured to lay his hands on Pompey's properties while his sons and many loyal supporters still had a reasonable chance of prevailing in the Civil War. When Antony stepped forward as the sole bidder at the auction of Pompey's confiscated goods in the autumn of 47, Caesar still faced the daunting task of defeating the republican forces that had gathered in Africa. Blessed with hindsight, we know that Caesar was destined to prevail both in Africa in 46 and in Spain the following year. Contemporaries, by contrast, had grave doubts about Caesar's chances of defeating his enemies. Caesar's absence from Italy for more than a year after the Battle of Pharsalus in August 48 forced Cicero to revise his confident expectation of a quick end to the Civil War after the decisive defeat of the Pompeian forces in Greece (*Fam.* 15.15.2 of August 47). The vanquished Pompeian commanders and legions had regrouped in Africa. Already by January 47 those forces were impressive and well-prepared (*Att.* 11.10.2). By May, when Cicero observed their growing strength, he was tormented by the fear that he had made his peace with Caesar too soon.<sup>39</sup> On top of this, Caesarian commanders had suffered major defeats in Spain, Illyricum, and Asia (*Att.* 11.16.1 of June 47). Everywhere one looked in the autumn of 47 when Pompey's property was placed on the auction block, Caesar's fortunes appeared to be on the decline, while his enemies had every hope that victory would ultimately be theirs.<sup>40</sup> It is no wonder, therefore, if Antony was the only one to offer to purchase Pompey's confiscated goods.

<sup>37</sup> Dio 42.50.2–5; cf. Nep. *Att.* 7.3; [Caes.] *BAfr.* 64.2; Suet. *Iul.* 51. These measures appear to have been highly successful to judge from the size of the bounties paid to soldiers and civilians at the time of Caesar's four triumphs in September 46 and the quantity of booty displayed (60,500 talents of silver and 20,414 lb. of coronary gold, App. 2.102). Common soldiers are said to have received 20,000 sesterces each (App. 2.102, Dio 43.21.3; 24,000 according to Suet. *Iul.* 38.1), centurions 40,000, and military tribunes 80,000 (App. loc. cit.). Since there were at least eighteen legions to be rewarded (ten from Gaul, three enrolled in 49, and five more in 47) amounting to perhaps 50,000 men and more than 1,000 centurions (60 per legion), the disbursements were in the range of 1,000 million sesterces and 40 million, respectively. On top of this, Caesar gave 400 sesterces to each recipient of the corn dole, an estimated 150,000 citizens (Suet. *Iul.* 41.3 with Dio 43.21.4), requiring the expenditure of 60 million sesterces. To these staggering outlays must be added the cost of Caesar's lavish entertainment of the people in September 46 and the expense of finding land for his veterans. It is no wonder, therefore, if Caesar dunned Antony insistently to pay for Pompey's goods soon after his return from Africa, as Cicero reports.

<sup>38</sup> This assumes roughly 3,000 men per legion, a reasonable estimate to judge from the 22,000 men comprising eighty cohorts at the Battle of Pharsalus (Caes. *BCiv.* 3.89.2).

<sup>39</sup> *Att.* 11.15.2. A year later, Cicero was enormously relieved by Caesar's victory in Africa (*Fam.* 9.6.3 of June 46).

<sup>40</sup> The forces opposed to Caesar in Africa comprised ten Roman legions, four Numidian legions provided by King Juba, well-equipped naval forces, a strong cavalry, and 120 elephants ([Caes.] *BAfr.* 1.4). Caesar, by contrast, set sail from Sicily in December 47 with only six legions, a

Antony's success in liquidating Pompey's assets is revealed by one key passage in Cicero's *Thirteenth Philippic*. As mentioned above (p. 169), that speech (§12) seems to indicate that 200 million sesterces was realized from the sale of Pompey's goods. That same speech (§§11–12) also reveals that numerous properties formerly owned by Pompey had found their way into the hands of a host of new owners. The names of two can be recovered (P. Dolabella and Anser),<sup>41</sup> while a third is said to have been an ex-slave of Pompey's.<sup>42</sup> Cicero claims that the list of new owners included *alii plures*. Perhaps there were as many as seven in that group, if we subtract the properties enumerated here from the fourteen that can be identified as belonging to Pompey at one time or another (n. 34). The only Pompeian assets said to be still in Antony's possession in 43 are Pompey's town house in the Carinae district, his *horti* on the edge of the Campus Martius, a few bits of urban real estate (*urbana quaedam*), and his Tusculan villa (*Phil.* 13.11). Antony had clearly done his work well as the *sector* of Pompey's *bona*. The 200 million sesterces which he presumably paid into the treasury amounted to nearly one-third of the 700 million sesterces that remained in the treasury of Ops at the time of Caesar's murder (*Phil.* 2.93, 5.11), money that had been raised chiefly from the sale of confiscated property (*Phil.* 1.17).

In the light of this new interpretation of the evidence, we can now readily understand why Antony failed to accompany Caesar to Africa in December 47, a mere month or two after his purchase of Pompey's confiscated goods. At that time, Antony had his hands full with an extraordinarily complex financial transaction, and his job on the home front was crucial to Caesar's success. There is no need, therefore, to interpret Antony's absence from the African campaign as a sign of strained relations between Caesar and Antony. By late in the following year, Antony appears to have been still heavily engaged in liquidating Pompey's assets and satisfying his obligations to the *aerarium*. This conclusion follows from Cicero's portrayal of Antony's financial plight in 46–45: (i) his pressing need to raise cash by holding an auction in the autumn of 46 (*Phil.* 2.72–3); (ii) his request for an extension of the due date on his loans and his failure to leave for Spain at the same time as Caesar towards the end of 46 (*Phil.* 2.75); and (iii) Antony's decision to break off his journey to Spain and return hastily to Rome in March of 45 so as to prevent foreclosure on his debts. Clearly, Antony was still walking a financial tightrope in that period. It required monumental efforts to keep afloat the complex financial enterprise of liquidating Pompey's assets by resale.

This reinterpretation of the evidence also makes it clear why the offices and honours heaped upon Antony in 44 were so great, far surpassing what would seem appropriate if Antony and Caesar had, for no apparent reason, simply reconciled their differences

single one of which was veteran, and he had a mere 2,000 cavalry ([Caes.] *BAfr.* 1.5, 2.1). In Spain in 45 it was only thanks to Caesar's timely personal intervention in the battle that the tide turned and the Caesarians snatched victory from what appeared to be certain defeat (Plut. *Caes.* 56.2). Something of the precarious position in which Caesar found himself when he was setting out for Spain in late 46 can be gleaned from Cicero's contemporary comment that Caesar, 'from whom others beg their lives, has no plain assurance for his own' (tr. Shackleton Bailey): *nec tamen is ipse, a quo salus petitur, habet explicatam aut exploratam rationem salutis suae* (*Fam.* 6.1.2, c. January 45).

<sup>41</sup> It appears from Servius' comment on Verg. *Ecl.* 9.36 that Cicero's reference to the 'Geese' who were to be driven from Pompey's Falernian estate (*de Falerno Anseres depellantur*, *Phil.* 13.11) is to be interpreted as a witty allusion to the erotic poet Anser, who was a friend of Antony's and apparently acquired the property through Antony's disposal of Pompey's assets (cf. *Ov. Tr.* 2.435). D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Cicero, Philippics* (Chapel Hill, 1986), 329, n. 15 suggests that the plural *Anseres* may refer to brothers, one of whom was the poet.

<sup>42</sup> Probably not Demetrius of Gadara, as some have speculated: see Münzer, *RE* 4.2803.

in the summer of 45. In 46 and 45, despite holding no public office, and despite taking no part in Caesar's African and Spanish campaigns, Mark Antony had performed an extremely difficult and valuable service for Caesar. His assignment involved monumental risks of a financial and personal nature, and it exposed Antony to being pilloried by his enemies as a common *sector*. His less than glamorous assignment in 46 and 45 no doubt fuelled speculation on the part of Antony's detractors that he was no longer destined by Caesar for political advancement.

Antony's spectacular re-emergence on the political scene in 44 shows how mistaken those detractors were. His reward for labouring in the vineyards was elevation to a position of power and prestige in 44 second only to Caesar's. We should no longer picture Antony as the prodigal son requiring a reconciliation with Caesar in the summer of 45. Instead, Antony faithfully served his commander throughout the dark days of 46 and 45, when Caesar most needed loyal and competent agents. Antony's task in those years was on the home front, and this made it possible for his bitter enemy Cicero to accuse him of sloth and cowardice in failing to accompany Caesar to the scene of great battles in Africa and Spain (*Phil.* 2.75). However, Caesar's treatment of Antony at the conclusion of the Spanish campaign in 45 shows that the Dictator did not view his old lieutenant as a coward or useless spendthrift. Instead, the offices and honours showered upon Antony in 44 demonstrate that Caesar must have regarded him as someone who had played a vital role in making possible his ultimate triumph over all of his enemies in the Civil War.

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