

A STUDY OF FULVIA

by

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Abstract

Who was Fulvia? Was she the politically aggressive and dominating wife of Mark Antony as Cicero and Plutarch describe her? Or was she a loyal mother and wife, as Asconius and Appian suggest? These contrasting accounts in the ancient sources warrant further investigation.

This thesis seeks to explore the nature of Fulvia's role in history to the extent that the evidence permits. Fulvia is most famous for her activities during Antony's consulship (44 BC) and his brother Lucius Antonius' struggle against C. Octavian in the Perusine War (41-40 BC). But there is a discrepancy among the authors as to what extent she was actually involved. Cicero, Octavian and Antony, who were all key players in events, provide their own particular versions of what occurred. Later authors, such as Appian and Dio, may have been influenced by these earlier, hostile accounts of Fulvia.

This is the first study in English to make use of all the available evidence, both literary and material, pertaining to Fulvia. Modern scholarship has a tendency to concentrate almost exclusively on events towards the end of Fulvia's life, in particular the Perusine War, about which the evidence is much more abundant in later sources such as Appian and Dio. However, to do this ignores the importance of her earlier activities which, if studied more fully, can help to explain her later actions in the 40's BC.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first provides an introduction to the topic and a biography of Fulvia. The second is a review of the modern scholarship

on Fulvia. The third focuses on the contemporary sources, both the literary evidence from Cicero, Cornelius Nepos and Martial, as well as the surviving material evidence, namely the sling bullets found at Perugia and a series of coins that may depict Fulvia in the guise of Victoria. The fourth is a discussion of those authors born after Fulvia's death in 40 BC, of whom the most important are Plutarch, Appian, and Dio. The fifth provides a conclusion to the thesis, and returns to the questions posed above in light of the analysis of the sources provided throughout the thesis. It concludes that Fulvia played a significant role in events, particularly from Antony's consulship onwards, and that her actions were deliberate and politically motivated. Moreover, while these actions were done on her husbands' behalf, she nevertheless exhibited a remarkable degree of independence.

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Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Figures	vii
Abbreviations	viii
<i>Historiae Personae</i>	ix
Chapter One: Introduction	1
Brief Summary of the Life of Fulvia	2
Thesis Overview	10
Chapter Two: Literature Overview	13
Chapter Three: Fulvia in the Contemporary Sources	32
Cicero and Fulvia	32
Nepos and Fulvia	65
Octavian's Epigram (Martial, 11.20)	67
Sling Bullets Used in the Siege of Perusia	74
Coins	77
The Images of Antony's Victoria Coins (Figures 1.i-v)	83
The Images of the Idealized Victoria Coins (Figures 2.i-ii)	85
Summary	86
Chapter Four: Portrayal of Fulvia in the Sources After her Death	87
Efforts on Behalf of her Husbands and Children	88
Fulvia's Role in the Proscriptions of 43/42	99
Fulvia's Role in the Start of the Perusine War	109
Fulvia as Military Commander and a Commander of Men	123
Fulvia as Scapegoat for the Perusine War	131
Summary	135
Chapter Five: Conclusion	137
Bibliography	144

List of Figures

1.i	Victoria, Sear #122	83
1.ii	Victoria, Sear #126	83
1.iii	Victoria, Sear #186	84
1.iv	Victoria, <i>RRC</i> , #514/1	84
1.v	Nike, Sear pg. 83	84
2.i	Idealized Victoria, Sear #72	85
2.ii	Idealized Victoria, Sear #173	85

Abbreviations

Primary Sources

App. <i>B. Civ.</i>	Appian, <i>Bella Civilia</i>
Arist. <i>Pol.</i>	Aristotle, <i>Politica</i>
Asc. <i>Mil.</i>	Asconius, Commentary on Cicero, <i>Pro Milone</i>
Cic. <i>Ad Brut.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Brutum</i>
Cic. <i>Att.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>
Cic. <i>Cael.</i>	Cicero, <i>Pro Caelio</i>
Cic. <i>Fam.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad familiares</i>
Cic. <i>Mil.</i>	Cicero, <i>Pro Milone</i>
Cic. <i>Sest.</i>	Cicero, <i>Pro Sestio</i>
Cic. <i>Phil.</i>	Cicero, <i>Orationes Philippicae</i>
Cic. <i>Q. Fr.</i>	Cicero, <i>Epistulae ad Quintum Fratrem</i>
Cic. <i>Verr.</i>	Cicero, <i>In Verrem</i>
Dio	Cassius Dio
Flor.	Florus
Hor. <i>Sat.</i>	Horace, <i>Satirae</i>
Juv.	Juvenal
Mart.	Martial
Nep. <i>Att.</i>	Nepos, <i>Atticus</i>
Liv. <i>Per.</i>	Livius, <i>Periochae</i>
Luc.	Lucan, <i>De Bello Civili</i>
Ov. <i>Am.</i>	Ovid, <i>Amores</i>
Plut. <i>Vit. Alex.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vitae Parallelae, Alexander</i>
Plut. <i>Vit. Ant.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vitae Parallelae, Antonius</i>
Plut. <i>Vit. Cic.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vitae Parallelae, Cicero</i>
Plut. <i>Vit. Flam.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vitae Parallelae, Flamininus</i>
Plut. <i>Vit. Pomp.</i>	Plutarch, <i>Vitae Parallelae, Pompeius</i>
Polyb.	Polybius
Prop.	Propertius
Quint. <i>Inst.</i>	Quintilian, <i>Institutio Oratoria</i>
Suet. <i>Aug.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Divus Augustus</i>
Suet. <i>Iul.</i>	Suetonius, <i>Divus Iulius</i>
Tac. <i>Ann.</i>	Tacitus, <i>Annales</i>
Val. Max.	Valerius Maximus
Vell. Pat.	Velleius Paterculus

Secondary Sources

- BMCR* Grueber, H.A. *Coins of the Roman Republic in the British Museum*. 3 vols. London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1910.
- CIL* Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, Consilio et Auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae Editum*. ed. Theodorus Mommsen ed al. Berolini: G. Reimerum, 1862.
- Head, *Phrygia* B. V. Head, *A Catalog of Greek Coins in Phrygia*. Bologna: A. Forni, 1964.
- RE* A. Pauly, G. Wissowa and W. Kroll, *Real-Encyclopaedie der klassischen Alterumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart, Druckenmueller, 1893-.
- RRC* M. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974. References are to catalogue number unless otherwise specified.
- RPC* A. Burnett, M. Amandry and P. P. Ripolles, *Roman Provincial Coinage*. 2 vols. London: British Museum Press, 1992. References are to catalogue number.

Historiae Personae¹

Agrippa	M. Vipsanius Agrippa (cos. 37).
Agrippina Maior	Daughter of Agrippa and Julia (Augustus' daughter).
Agrippina Minor	Daughter of Agrippina and Germanicus.
Antonia	Antony's first cousin and second wife.
Antoninus Pius	T. Aurelius Fulvus Boionius Arrius Antoninus (emperor AD 138 to 161).
Antony	Marcus Antonius (cos. 44).
Appian	Born in Alexandria at the end of the 1 st cent. AD; Greek author of a history of Rome arranged ethnographically by conquest which included his <i>Bella Civilia</i> .
Asconius	Q. Asconius Pedianus (AD 3 to 88); Latin author of a commentary on Cicero's speeches, of which his work on the <i>Pro Milone</i> survives.
Asinius Pollio	C. Asinius Pollio (cos. 40); Latin author of a lost history covering the years 60 to 42 which was used by both Plutarch and Appian.
Atia	Mother of Octavian and Octavia.
Ateius	C. Ateius Capito (trib. 55).
Atticus	T. Pomponius Atticus; correspondent of Cicero.
Brogitarus	Deiotarus' son-in-law and ally of Clodius.
Brutus	M. Iunius Brutus (pr. 44).
Caelius	M. Caelius Rufus (trib. 52).
Caesar	C. Julius Caesar (cos. 59).
Caesetius Rufus	(senator, 43); barely anything is known about him.
Calenus	Q. Fufius Calenus (cos. 47).
Cassius	C. Cassius Longinus (pr. 44).
Catiline	L. Sergius Catilina.
Cicero	M. Tullius Cicero (cos. 63); Latin author of numerous works on philosophy and rhetoric; dozens of his speeches and hundreds of his letters were also published.
Claudia	Daughter of Fulvia and Clodius.
Cleopatra	Cleopatra VII, Queen of Egypt.
Clodia	Clodia Metelli, sister of Clodius.
Clodius	P. Clodius Pulcher (trib. 58).
Sex. Cloelius	Clodius' henchman.
Cornelia	Mother of the Gracchi.

¹ Information concerning magistracies has been obtained from Broughton's *MRR*, and biographical information (i.e. personal relationships, marriages) has been obtained from *RE*. For clarification purposes, persons are listed, if applicable, according to the year in which their highest magistracy was first achieved. Thus, for instance, repeated consulships are not mentioned.

Crassus	M. Licinius Crassus Dives (cos. 70).
Curio	C. Scribonius Curio (trib. 50).
Cytheris	Volumnia Cytheris, actress and Antony's mistress.
D. Brutus	D. Iunius Albinus Brutus (cos. desig. 42).
Deiotarus	Tetrarch of Galatia.
Dio	Cassius Dio (b. ca. AD 164; d. after 229); Greek author of a history of Rome from its foundation to AD 229.
Domitian	T. Flavius Domitianus (emperor AD 81 to 96).
Florus	L. Annaeus Florus (wrote no earlier than the mid-second cent. AD); Latin author of the <i>Epitome bellorum omnium annorum DCC</i> .
Fulvia	Daughter of M. Fulvius Bambalio and Sempronia.
Glaphyra	Cappadocian courtesan, Antony's mistress.
Hadrian	P. Aelius Hadrianus (emperor AD 117 to 138).
Hortensia	Daughter of the orator Hortensius.
Juba	King of Numidia: joined Pompey in 49, killed in 46.
Julia	Mother of Antony.
Laena	Centurion of Antony in 43.
Lentulus	P. Cornelius Lentulus Sura (cos. 71), Antony's step-father.
Lepidus	M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 46).
Livia	Livia Drusilla, third wife of Octavian.
Livy	T. Livius (59 BC to AD 17); Latin author of the <i>Ab urbe condita libri</i> , which covered Roman history from its origins to 9 BC; the relevant books for Fulvia's life do not survive, although there are short summaries (<i>Periochae</i>) of each book written by an anonymous author perhaps in the 4 th cent. AD.
Lucius	Lucius Antonius (cos. 43).
Manius	Antony's procurator in 41; very little is known about him.
Marius	C. Marius (cos. 107).
Martial	M. Valerius Martialis (b. ca. AD 38 to 41; d. ca. 101 to 104); Latin author of epigrams.
Milo	T. Annius Milo (pr. 55).
Mucia	Mucia Tertia, Pompey's third wife.
Nepos	Cornelius Nepos (b. ca. 110; d. 24); Latin author of biographies, most relevantly of Atticus.
Octavia	Sister of Octavian, Antony's fourth wife.
Octavian	Born C. Octavius, assumed the name C. Caesar after his posthumous adoption by Caesar, later received the title Augustus in 27. By modern convention, he is referred to as Octavian before 27 and as Augustus from 27 on.
Piso	L. Calpurnius Piso Caesonius (cos. 58).
Plutarch	L. (?) Mestrius Plutarchus (b. before AD 50; d. after 120); Greek author of philosophical works and biographies, including biographies of Antony and Cicero.
Pompey	Cn. Pompeius Magnus (cos. 70).

Sex. Pompey	Sex. Pompeius Magnus Pius (cos. desig. 35).
Plancus	L. Munatius Plancus (cos. 42).
Salvidienus Rufus	Q. Salvidienus Rufus Salvius (cos. desig. 39).
Sempronia	Daughter of C. Sempronius Tuditanus, mother of Fulvia.
Suetonius	C. Suetonius Tranquillus (b. ca. AD 70); Latin author of biographies, most notably of the emperors.
Tiberius	Ti. Julius Caesar Augustus (emperor AD 14 to 37).
Turia	Praised by her husband in a long funerary inscription (<i>CIL</i> VI.1527), and seen as an ideal Roman matron.
Valerius Maximus	Dates of birth and death unknown, but wrote under the reign of the emperor Tiberius; Latin author of a book of <i>exempla</i> , the <i>Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium libri IX</i> .
Velleius Paterculus	Dates of birth and death unknown, but wrote under the reign of the emperor Tiberius; Latin author of a succinct history of Rome.
Ventidius	P. Ventidius Bassus (cos. suff. 43).

Chapter One

Introduction

Ant. As for my wife,
I would you had her spirit in such another:
The third o' the world is yours, which with a snaffle
You may pace easy, but not such a wife.

Eno. Would we had all such wives, that the men might go to wars with
the women!

Ant. So much uncurbable, her garboils, Cæsar,
Made out of her impatience,—which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too,—I grieving grant
Did you too much disquiet; for that you must
But say I could not help it (Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, II.ii.82-91).

In this passage from Shakespeare's play *Antony and Cleopatra*, Antony and Enobarbus are discussing Fulvia, Antony's third wife. Throughout this play, Shakespeare presents Fulvia as a powerful woman who controlled her husband Antony, and through him influenced politics at Rome.¹ Not only that, but Fulvia is frequently described in the play as an active participant in military campaigns.² This image of Fulvia was not a unique creation of Shakespeare. But rather, it stems from a long tradition, dating back to the propaganda of her contemporaries, which also portrayed her as domineering, jealous, impatient and war-mongering. An ideal Roman matron was supposed to take care of the house, spin wool, rear her children and be loyal to her husband (Plut. *Ant.* 31). Well-known examples of the type are Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, Octavia, sister of Octavian, the future emperor Augustus, and

¹ E.g. 2.2.120-121, Antony states that "Fulvia, / To have me out of Egypt, made wars here"; 1.3.31, Cleopatra remarks about Fulvia "I have no power upon you; hers you are."

² E.g. 2.2.86, Enobarbus remarks "would that we all had such wives, that the men might go to war with the women"; 1.2.65, "Fulvia thy wife first came into the field."; 1.2.131-132, Antony states about Fulvia "The business she hath broached in the state / Cannot endure my absence."

the otherwise unknown Turia, who was an unselfish woman devoted to her duties to her husband and to her home (*CIL* VI.1527).³

As a woman in the male-dominated society that was Rome at the end of the Republic, Fulvia's ability to act in the sphere of politics was limited to influencing the men around her,⁴ particularly her three husbands: P. Clodius Pulcher, C. Scribonius Curio, and Antony. All three had active political careers, notably as tribunes (Clodius in 58, Curio in 50, and Antony in 49),⁵ and all three had supported Caesar. Fulvia's marriages to these men perhaps afforded her greater opportunities to exert influence in the political sphere than would have been available to most other women of her day.

Brief Summary of the Life of Fulvia

According to Babcock, Fulvia appears to have been the last surviving member of both the Fulvii and the Sempronii Tuditani, two very old and noble plebeian families that were both dying out by the end of the Republic.⁶ Fulvia's date of birth remains something of an unsolvable mystery. This is because there are no explicit statements in the ancient sources as to when Fulvia was born, or what her age was at any given time. Thus, it is a matter of speculation, something which most scholars have avoided by not mentioning Fulvia's age at all. The opinions range from Fulvia

³ For more information on Roman matrons see Pomeroy 1975: 149-189; Singer 1947: 173-178.

⁴ Pomeroy notes that Republican women were limited to the influence of her male relatives, Pomeroy 1975: 150.

⁵ All dates are BC unless otherwise indicated.

⁶ Babcock 1965: 3, 5; Delia 1991: 198; Marshall 1985: 167; Syme 1939: 19.

being born as early as the year 84,⁷ and as late as the year 70.⁸ It seems most likely, however, that she was born at Tusculum (Cic. *Phil.* 3.16), and that she was the only daughter of M. Fulvius Bambalio (Cic. *Phil.* 3.16) and Sempronia, daughter of Sempronius Tuditanus (Asc. *Mil.* 35). It should be noted, however, that it is not clear which Sempronia was Fulvia's mother.⁹ It has been suggested that Sempronia was the same conspirator described by Sallust.¹⁰ However, since Fulvia's mother was still alive and able to testify against T. Annius Milo (Asc. *Mil.* 35 says that Sempronia gave evidence with her daughter at Milo's trial), it is doubtful that she was the conspirator. It is also possible that Fulvia's mother was a sister of the Catilinarian conspirator of the same name.¹¹ As for her father's side, although the Fulvii were a distinguished family that could claim consuls going as far back as L. Fulvius Curvus in 322,¹² Bambalio was dismissed by M. Tullius Cicero, the orator and politician, as an insignificant man of no rank (*Phil.* 3.16, *homo nullo numero*).

Fulvia first appeared in the public sphere in January 52 after the murder of Clodius, her first husband, by his political rival Milo.¹³ Clodius was a politician who was extremely popular with the masses (Val. Max. 3.5.3), and who was consequently considered by some to be a demagogue (e.g. Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 10.1). This negative

⁷ Babcock 1965: 7.

⁸ Fischer 1999: 7-8.

⁹ Welch 1995: 197.

¹⁰ Pomeroy 1975: 185. For Sallust's Sempronia see Syme 1964: 135. For the contrary view of Fulvia's mother see Delia 1991: 209.

¹¹ Bauman 1992: 83.

¹² Broughton 1951: 149.

¹³ Milo pitted himself against Clodius by allying with Cicero. For Cicero and Milo's friendship see Cic. *Fam.* 2.6.1-5.

reputation has been influenced by the invective of his enemy Cicero.¹⁴ Before becoming famous as a popular politician, he was infamous for his role in the scandalous affair of 62 (Suet. *Iul.* 6.2, 74.2; App. *B. Civ.* 2.2.14; Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 28.1), in which he profaned the sacred rites of the Bona Dea, which were restricted to women (e.g. Cic. *Mil.* 72).¹⁵ Clodius' role as a popular politician truly started when he was elected to the tribuneship for the year 58. His patronage of the urban citizens was the most outstanding feature of the first half of his tribuneship.¹⁶ One of his laws, the *lex Clodia frumentaria*,¹⁷ provided free corn for the plebeians. Another of his laws, the *lex de rege Deiotaro et Brogitaro*, which gave Deiotarus' religious power to his son-in-law, Brogitarus,¹⁸ would play an important role in the relationship between Cicero and Fulvia fourteen years later. Clodius is, however, more famous for two laws which he proposed during the second half of his year of office. The first, the *lex de capite*

¹⁴ Tatum 1999: 78.

¹⁵ Clodius dressed himself as a woman and stole into Caesar's house, where the rites were being held, supposedly in an attempt to seduce Caesar's wife (Cic. *Att.* 1.12.3; Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 28.2). Cf. Tatum 1999: 64-7. It may be an indication of Clodius' powerful influence with the masses, even at this earlier date, that Caesar refused to press charges against him (App. *B. Civ.* 2.2.14; Dio 37.45.1; Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 29.9; Plut. *Vit. Caes.* 10.10; Suet. *Iul.* 74). Cf. Gruen 1966: 121; Tatum 1999: 68-9. The reasons for Caesar's silence are more complicated, but Clodius' status was most likely the main factor. Further confirmation of Clodius' popularity with the urban mob and Caesar's refusal to upset them can be found in Suetonius' statement that Caesar sought to connect himself to the popular support of his uncle C. Marius (Suet. *Iul.* 6).

¹⁶ Huzar 1978: 37; Lintott 1967: 159. Clodius was the "patron and champion" of the people, Syme 1939: 39. However, Clodius is most remembered by ancient and modern historians for his enmity with Cicero, Tatum 1999: 151.

¹⁷ Lintott 1967: 163; Tatum 1999: 119.

¹⁸ Clodius re-arranged the affairs of Galatia in an attempt to undercut Cn. Pompey Magnus' settlement in the East by placing Brogitarus in the highest position, and in Clodius' debt, Tatum 1999: 168-169.

civis Romani,¹⁹ was directed against Cicero and punished with exile anyone who put to death a Roman citizen without trial. Cicero had, of course, ordered the execution without a trial of the Catilinarian conspirators, amongst whom was Antony's step-father P. Cornelius Lentulus Sura. The second law, the *lex Clodia de exsilio Ciceronis*, confirmed Cicero's punishment of exile after he had fled Rome in fear of prosecution under the first law.²⁰

Five years after his tribuneship, when Clodius announced his candidature for the praetorship of 52, tensions with Milo, who was standing for the consulship of that year, erupted into violence; the result was Clodius' murder on 18 January 52 (Asc. *Mil.* 35; App. *B. Civ.* 2.3.21). Fulvia was left a widow with two children, a son and a daughter. After Clodius' death, Fulvia stirred the anger of the mob by publicly displaying his wounded corpse and dramatically lamenting over it. Later that year she, along with her mother, gave evidence at Milo's trial (Asc. *Mil.* 28, 35). Due to her young age at the time (she might have been about 23 years old), it is not surprising that she was not publicly active before this date.²¹ She was, however, well-known enough for Cicero to remark at Milo's trial that Clodius was rarely seen without her (Cic. *Mil.* 28; 55).

¹⁹ Tatum 1999: 153.

²⁰ Tatum 1999: 156. With Cicero gone, Clodius proved that he was no longer a tool of the First Triumvirate (composed of Pompey, M. Licinius Crassus and C. Julius Caesar), Gruen 1966: 127. For the contrary view see Tatum 1999: 113. Cicero returned from exile to find Clodius' popularity at its height. He was elected aedile in 56 (Cic. *Q. Fr.* 2.2.2; Dio 39.18.1). He also publicly displayed his popular support by pitting himself against Pompey. For example, Clodius, supported by Crassus, attacked Pompey's Eastern settlement and supported Brogitarus over Pompey's favourite, Deiotarus, Tatum 1999: 168-9.

²¹ Fischer 1999: 35.

In 51, Fulvia married another politician who was popular with the plebeians, Curio.²² The marriage most likely took place at least the required ten months (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 10.3) after Clodius was murdered in January 52. If they had not, then Cicero probably would have accused her of having violated this custom. Curio was a promising young man from a new consular family (Curio's family first reached the consulship in 76²³). He has also been considered to be the heir of Clodius' plebeian policies.²⁴ However, this does not necessarily mean that Clodius and Curio had a close relationship.²⁵ In fact, Curio seems to have been close to Cicero. According to Cicero, Curio missed his letters when they ceased to come regularly (*Fam.* 2.1.1), and Cicero saw himself as something of a father figure to Curio (*Fam.* 2.2.1). Cicero wrote to Curio in 53 asking for his support of Milo's election to the consulship (*Fam.* 2.6.3). Presumably, Cicero would not have approached Curio if he knew that he was a staunch supporter of Clodius.²⁶ Furthermore, Curio does not appear to have taken part in the actions of the mob at Clodius' funeral, or to have given evidence at the trial of

²² The *populares* were politicians who sought to increase the power of the plebeians, thereby increasing the power of the tribunate. In contrast, the *optimates* were the faction of the upperclass and thought that politics should be reserved for the nobility. Cf. Note 72 in Chapter Three. For a more detailed discussion of the complex factions the *populares* and the *optimates* see Tatum 1999: 1-7.

²³ Broughton 1951: 614.

²⁴ Welch 1995: 188.

²⁵ The suggestions of friendship between Clodius and Curio may have been somewhat exaggerated in modern scholarship, Tatum 1999: 70; Virioux 2001: 69-70. It is certainly a topic that merits more attention. Babcock states that "there would be a chance that the two husbands-to-be witnessed Fulvia's first marriage," Babcock 1965: 16. Welch makes the important connection between both men's political tendencies, Welch 1995: 188-9.

²⁶ "What he [Curio] had to say about Publius [Clodius] agreed well with your letter. He himself 'hates proud rulers' quite remarkably" (Cic. *Att.* 2.2.8, *valde eius sermo de Publio cum tuis litteris congruebat. ipse vero mirandum in modum 'reges odisse superbos'*). Cf. Cic. *Att.* 2.12.2; Dio 38.16.4.

Milo, as one might expect of a friend of the deceased. It is possible that he adopted his position as a champion of the plebeians only on Clodius' death, and attached himself to Fulvia because of her Clodian connection. On the other hand, even if Curio and Clodius had not been close friends, there is no reason to believe that they had been enemies either. Given that Fulvia was very loyal to Clodius (e.g. they were rarely seen apart [Cic. *Mil.* 28; 55], and her dramatic lamentation over Clodius' corpse [Asc. *Mil.* 28]), it seems improbable that she would marry an enemy of her late husband. Except for Curio's election to the tribunate in 50 and the birth of a son, their marriage was brief and uneventful. Curio was killed by the army of Juba, the king of Numidia, while fighting for Caesar in Africa in 49 (App. *B. Civ.* 2.7.45).

Interestingly, Fulvia's third husband, Antony, was close friends with both Clodius (Cic. *Phil.* 2.48) and Curio (Cic. *Phil.* 2.45).²⁷ Fulvia married Antony a few years after Curio's death, *ca.* 46.²⁸ At the time of the marriage, Antony had already been tribune (49), successfully commanded Caesar's left wing at Pharsalus (48), and had recently held the important position of Master of Horse in 47. His next office was his consulship with Caesar in 44. Together, Antony and Fulvia had two sons, M. Antonius (nicknamed Antyllus) and Iullus Antonius.

Fulvia first displayed active support of her husband when she canvassed on his behalf in December 44 while Cicero was attempting to convince the senate that Antony was an enemy of the state with designs for despotism (App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51),

²⁷ Huzar 1978: 26; Tatum 1999: 116.

²⁸ Babcock 1965: 7. Cicero was later to suggest wryly that Antony married Fulvia for her wealth (Cic. *Phil.* 3.16). For further on this and the topic of Fulvia's wealth, please see the discussion in Chapter Three.

and again while he was away from Rome in 41 while Octavian was winning the support of Antony's veterans (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14, 5.3.19). She is also alleged to have accompanied him to the military camp at Brundisium in the autumn of 44 where she witnessed the punishment of the rebellious soldiers (Cic. *Phil.* 13.18). Similarly, sources such as Appian and Dio assign to her a vicious and bloodthirsty role in the proscriptions which followed the creation of the Second Triumvirate (App. *B. Civ.* 4.4.29; Dio 47.8.2).²⁹ Most notably, Dio records that she was behind the cruel treatment of Cicero's corpse in December 43 (Dio 47.8.3). His account, however, is not confirmed by any other source.

Her marriage to Antony meant that Fulvia became the target of propaganda and invective from his enemies, first from Cicero through his attacks against Antony in the senate in 44 and 43, and later from Octavian when his alliance with Antony became strained in 42/41. Antony, after his victory at Philippi in 42 against the assassins of Caesar, departed for the East while Octavian returned to Rome to confiscate land in order to fulfil a promise to the veterans (App. *B. Civ.* 5.1.3). Octavian, therefore, was able to win over the support of Caesar's soldiers because he was in charge of distributing land and extra gifts (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.13). While Octavian was stirring up hatred against Antony, Fulvia brought her children before the soldiers to implore them not to forget the name of their former victorious general (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14).

²⁹ Antony, Octavian and Lepidus entered into an alliance (the Second Triumvirate) for the restoration of the Republic (*res publicae constituendae*), which was formalized by the *lex Titia* on 27 November 43. Their first major action together was to initiate the Proscriptions to raise funds and eliminate their enemies.

In Rome meanwhile, Antony's brother Lucius, one of the consuls of 41, took up the cause of the farmers displaced from their lands by Octavian's expropriation. Fulvia allied herself with Lucius and publicly championed her husband against Octavian in front of the soldiers (App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.19; Dio 48.10.3). In late 41, when the crisis escalated into a military conflict, Lucius gathered his troops at Praeneste, fortified the city of Perusia, and waited there for assistance from the legions in Gaul loyal to Antony (App. *B. Civ.* 5.4.32; Dio 48.15.1). Even though Lucius was besieged in Perusia by Octavian, Q. Salvidienus Rufus Salvius and M. Vipsanius Agrippa (App. *B. Civ.* 5.4.32), Antony's legions, led by C. Asinius Pollio, L. Munatius Plancus, P. Ventidius Bassus, Q. Ateius Capito and Q. Fufius Calenus were unsure of his wishes and did not offer assistance (App. *B. Civ.* 5.4.32, 33). Meanwhile, Fulvia waited on the outcome at Praeneste (Vell. Pat. 2.74.3). Perusia endured two months of siege, after which Lucius was forced by starvation to capitulate to Octavian around February 40 (App. *B. Civ.* 5.5.41; Dio 48.14.3).³⁰ Octavian treated him kindly and appointed him to a position in Spain (App. *B. Civ.* 5.6.54), from where he was never heard of again. Following Lucius' surrender, Fulvia fled from Praeneste with her children, along with the commander Plancus and a guard of cavalry, to Greece, where she soon succumbed to an unknown illness and died. Plutarch (*Vit. Ant.* 30.5) simply states that Fulvia fell sick and died; Appian (*B. Civ.* 5.7.62) reports that she fell sick because Antony was angry at her and that she wasted away from her grief.

³⁰ Münzer 1910: 7.284.

Thesis Overview

This thesis is the first study of Fulvia's life in English that takes into account all the extant ancient sources concerning her, both literary and material (i.e. epigraphic and numismatic). It aims to arrive at a better understanding of Fulvia's role in history and in the events of the late Republic, the nature of which is heavily veiled by the propaganda of her contemporaries, by her subsequent portrayal in imperial sources, and by modern scholars. Moreover, this thesis will provide a study of Fulvia's entire life. Previous studies have tended to restrict their discussions to her activities immediately preceding and during the Perusine War, while generally ignoring her life prior to these events. It is tempting for scholars to focus on the Perusine War, both because of the relatively abundant evidence from ancient sources that is related to Fulvia, and because it could be considered the climax of her involvement in political and military affairs. However, a closer study of her earlier activities can help us to understand better Fulvia's actions during the Perusine War.

Chapter One provides the reader with an introduction to the topic as well as a brief biography of Fulvia. Chapter Two discusses modern scholarship on Fulvia from the late nineteenth century to the present. It takes into account both the standard works on Roman history and those shorter studies that focus on particular aspects of Fulvia's life. Chapter Three examines the portrayal of Fulvia in contemporary or near contemporary sources, and discusses what they say about Fulvia and why they portray her as they do. The majority of this evidence is hostile, especially that of Cicero and Octavian. Both greatly affected how we view this period in history, Cicero because of the influence of his political speeches (e.g., the *Philippics*) and Octavian because he

was able to vanquish all his enemies, including Lucius, Fulvia, and finally Antony, and establish himself as Rome's first emperor.

On the other hand, not all these contemporary sources are hostile to Fulvia. Cornelius Nepos, for instance, refers to Fulvia in a much more positive manner (e.g., *Att.* 9.2; 9.4) and therefore his evidence presents an interesting comparison. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the material evidence pertaining to Fulvia. Such evidence includes sling bullets and a series of coins which may depict her in the guise of Victoria. The sling bullets were used during the siege of Perusia and the inscriptions on some of them refer to Fulvia personally. The coins commemorate Antony's birthday and were all cut in the late 40's. Moreover, they all depict a similar image of Victoria. Chapter Four considers those authors who lived in the generations after Fulvia's death. They probably had the writings of Cicero and Octavian to hand, but their depiction of Fulvia varies greatly. They show her as a loyal wife (*Asc. Mil.* 28; *App. B. Civ.* 3.8.51), a cruel woman during the proscriptions (*App. B. Civ.* 4.4.29), an instigator in the start of the Perusine War (*App. B. Civ.* 5.3.19), and a domineering and meddlesome woman during the war itself (e.g. *Vell. Pat.* 2.74.3; *Plut. Vit. Ant.* 10.5-6; *App. B. Civ.* 5.4.33; *Dio* 48.10.4). They also present her after her death as a scapegoat for the Perusine War, who was used by Antony and Octavian in order to facilitate a reconciliation between them (*Plut. Vit. Ant.* 30.5-6; *App. B. Civ.* 5.6.59). This chapter does not discuss the references to Fulvia source by source as was done in Chapter Three, but thematically. Some ideas occur consistently in a number of these sources and are best treated thematically to avoid repetition. Chapter Five, the Conclusion, summarizes the many different portrayals of Fulvia presented throughout

the sources. It will be shown that the evidence supports the conclusion that Fulvia played a significant role in events, particularly from the period of Antony's consulship onwards. Moreover, the evidence also supports the conclusion that Fulvia's actions were deliberate and politically motivated, and that the driving force behind them was her desire to look after the interests of her children and of her husbands. Nevertheless, while fulfilling her role as a loyal wife and mother, she demonstrated time and again her independence.

Chapter Two

Literature Overview

Recent historical accounts of the late Republic have approached the subject of Fulvia in a variety of ways. She has not been considered important in many of the standard works of the 20th century, but appears briefly in modern studies as a result of her association with Antony, whom Syme, perhaps influenced by Shakespeare, made popular as a tragic figure.¹ Attempts to study Fulvia have been made by historians throughout most of the 20th century, but they are generally critical of her. General histories, such as Holmes' *Architect of the Roman Empire*, do not consider Fulvia to be a significant historical figure. This is not necessarily surprising given the overwhelming focus of earlier scholarship on politics and warfare, and activities generally reserved for elite Roman men. In 1975, Pomeroy began a generation of scholarship on women in the ancient world, and those now studying the late Republic and writing biographies of Antony cannot omit a discussion of Fulvia's importance. However, there is now a danger of assigning to Fulvia a more influential role than she might deserve (e.g. Virioux in her article "Fulvia, the Woman of Passion," as will be discussed below). Perceptions of Fulvia have changed greatly over the years and as yet very few scholars have used all of the ancient sources for evidence. This overview of scholarship discusses the main scholars who deal with Fulvia, as well as the standard works on Roman history.

Cicero's *Pro Milone* is an important contemporary source for Fulvia, but Albert C. Clark in his 1895 commentary (reprinted in 1967) on the speech does not

¹ Welch 1995: 185.

mention her except in passing. This is the only modern commentary on Cicero's *Pro Milone*. Despite the reliability of the work,² Clark's brief presentation of Fulvia is narrow and problematic. Clark lessens the importance of her actions after the death of her first husband, Clodius, in 52, when he suggests that her public display was prompted by inherited insanity. He states that because her maternal grandfather has been described as insane (*Phil.* 3.16; *Val. Max.* 7.8.1), that fact "may throw light upon the excitable disposition of Fulvia."³ Thus, Clark ignores any political implications that resulted from Fulvia's actions.

The study of Fulvia as an important historical figure was initiated by Münzer in the entry on Fulvia in volume seven of *Real Encyclopädie* (1910). He coined the phrase that she was "the first princess of Rome" ("*Als die erste Fürstin Roms erscheint F.*") because she had immense power over her husbands and could thus be seen as a precursor to Livia, the wife of Augustus, the first emperor.⁴ Münzer's entry provides a chronological account of Fulvia's life which is based on the ancient sources. His references are extremely brief and are not accompanied by any comment or analysis.

An extremely negative portrayal of Fulvia can be found in Helen E. Weiland's article "The Position of Women in the Late Republic. Part II" (1917). She presents Fulvia as wholly evil and the antithesis of a Roman matron, the best example of whom was Octavia (Antony's wife after Fulvia's death). She states that Fulvia "was the quintessence of almost all the passions that were swaying women of that day – greed,

² Clark initially received positive reviews, Owen 1896: 119.

³ Clark 1967: xxvii. However, Asconius seems to describe Fulvia as conscious of the outcome that her actions might have on the mob. See Chapter Four for this discussion.

⁴ Münzer 1910: 7.284.

selfishness, thirst for power.”⁵ Weiland devotes approximately two pages to her, a significant amount in a fifteen page work. The portrayal is not only adverse, but it is also incorrect in many instances and the large number of errors brings into question the accuracy of the entire article.⁶ She also states that Fulvia

revelled in murder and revenge and she numbered among her victims Cicero. Above all things she knew no pity. She alone among the relatives of the triumvirs would speak no word for the women upon whom the tax was levied in 43 B.C.⁷

This article is a compilation of the least positive accounts of Fulvia.

Holmes, in his important work on the history of the late Roman Republic, *Architect of the Roman Empire* (1928), also does not assign much importance to Fulvia. He does, however, discuss her role in the Perusine War. Unfortunately, in doing so he neglects her activities beforehand. Despite the fact that he was writing after Münzer’s article, his presentation of Fulvia is selected from the sources most critical of her. His book is faithful to these ancient sources, but he does not account for the effect of propaganda by Antony and his enemies.

Weigall, in *The Life and Times of Marc Anthony* (1931), does not treat Fulvia in detail. He portrays her as dominating Antony, but he favours the Ciceronian

⁵ Weiland 1917: 430.

⁶ For example, Weiland states that Antony punished the “assassins at Brundisium, [in] October 44,” Weiland 1917: 430. This statement seems to state that Antony’s actions in Brundisium were part of the campaign against Caesar’s assassins instead of the discipline of the mutinous legions. There are many more errors. For example, Weiland lessens Lucius’ role in the Perusine War, describing him as a bumbling tool of Fulvia’s: “Lucius was sent into the field, where he had nothing to do; and his fellow legates only supported him for appearance’s sake.” Weiland 1917: 431. The discrepancies among modern scholars regarding Lucius’ role will be discussed in Chapter Four.

⁷ Weiland 1917: 430. Fulvia’s role in the proscriptions, especially with regard to the effects of biased sources will be discussed in Chapter Four.

invective which suggests this, and he does not analyze all the evidence in the contrasting sources. For example, he does not take into account the more favourable portrayals of Fulvia found in the writings of Cornelius Nepos and Asconius, but focuses largely on the adverse accounts of Dio and Cicero. In contrast, Reinhold, in his article “The Perusine War” (1933), only briefly mentions her role in the conflict. Scott’s article, “The Political Propaganda of 44-30 BC” (1933), discusses both Octavian’s and Antony’s propaganda. Unfortunately, Scott does not spend much time dealing with Fulvia’s position in the propaganda of Octavian, or Octavian’s and Antony’s agreement to use her as a scapegoat after the Perusine War. Lindsay, in his 1936 biography of Antony, *Marc Antony, His World and His Contemporaries*, discusses Fulvia in reference to Antony, but his account only makes use of the sources that are critical to her.

A significant discussion of Fulvia appears in Syme’s immensely important work on the Roman civil wars, *Roman Revolution* (1939). Syme mentions Fulvia mostly in reference to the Perusine War. He describes in detail her important role at the side of Lucius and details her fight on behalf of Antony and her association with Lucius.⁸ Syme notes the impossibility of ever writing a clear narrative about what really happened at Perugia.⁹ His work has influenced the modern view of Antony as a “misunderstood hero.”¹⁰ His depiction of Fulvia was similarly influential on the

⁸ See especially Syme 1939: 208-211.

⁹ Syme 1939: 208.

¹⁰ Welch 1995: 185.

writings of later scholars, especially his description of her as “the faithful and imperious Fulvia.”¹¹

Gabba contributed greatly to the study of the Roman civil wars with his 1956 publication, *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili*. The purpose of his study is to re-examine the civil war and to establish a solution for the identity of Appian’s sources.¹² He concludes that most of the history was derived from a source, most likely Asinius Pollio, or sources that were more sympathetic than usual to Antony.¹³ His work is important because it asks modern scholars to question the traditional view that Appian’s history is not as useful or as accurate as Dio’s. Gabba mentions Fulvia at length in the chapter on the Perusine War.¹⁴ Similarly, in his commentary on Appian’s fifth book of the *Civil Wars* (*Bellorum Civilium Liber V*, 1970), he discusses Fulvia for the most part in connection with the siege of Perugia. Gabba includes a short and concise biography of Fulvia in his description of the conflict.¹⁵ The commentary has a lengthy and useful introduction which once again analyzes the source problem.

Balsdon’s *Roman Women* (1962), briefly mentions Fulvia in the chapter on the emancipation of women. The book was an important development in the modern study of women in the Roman world,¹⁶ and looks at women from Romulus to Constantine who wielded immense power.¹⁷ As this book is a general overview of women from the

¹¹ Syme 1939: 208.

¹² Gabba 1956: iii. Cf. Bourne 1958: 216.

¹³ Gabba 1956: 79-88, 244-249. Cf. Badian 1958: 159.

¹⁴ Gabba 1956: 189-198.

¹⁵ Gabba 1970: 42.

¹⁶ “We are much in Mr. Balsdon’s debt for this look at Roman history from the women’s side,” Lacey 1964: 89.

¹⁷ Balsdon 1962: 13.

foundation of Rome to the imperial women of the Severan dynasty, Balsdon only briefly discusses any particular topic, and is not able to go into much detail about the individuals.¹⁸ Although this work in its time was important for the study of women's history, Balsdon's portrayal of Fulvia makes no attempt to determine the level of exaggeration in the propaganda and invective against Fulvia.¹⁹ He does not concern himself with Fulvia's life before the death of Caesar, and his discussion of her only constitutes a mere two pages.

Although Münzer started the modern consideration of Fulvia as an important historical figure, Babcock's 1965 article, "The Early Career of Fulvia", is the first work which looks at her as an important historical figure. He does not focus on accusations against her of cruelty or greed that were made by Cicero, and to some extent by Appian and Dio, but focuses more on her strengths in politics and on the battlefield. Babcock was heavily influenced by both Münzer and Syme's perspectives on Fulvia, and he echoes Syme's description of her as "imperious."²⁰ Babcock's article looks at her life through her marriages to Clodius, Curio, and Antony. As her importance for the career of Antony was undisputed, Babcock sought to discern if she played a vital role in all three of her husbands' careers.²¹ He states that "the presence

¹⁸ "Fulvia, for example, was an Amazon, a good wife to Clodius, Curio and Mark Antony in succession, infinitely loyal, a virago only in her last four years, yet these are the only years of which B. tells us much, and what he does tell us reveals merely the attitude of one of the ruthless *principes* of her day," Lacey 1964: 87.

¹⁹ Balsdon 1974: 49-50. Other scholars have noted this, for example see Lacey 1964: 87; Welch 1995: 187. Delia states that in describing Fulvia, Balsdon applies modern ideas of female emancipation to a society where they are inappropriate, Delia 1991: 197.

²⁰ Babcock 1965: 24.

²¹ Babcock 1965: 19-20.

of the same woman as wife to each during climactic moments of the career, and one woman ‘who is nothing like a woman except in body’ assumes some significance.”²² In this study, Babcock probably inflates Fulvia’s political importance to her first two husbands,²³ although he provides a very thorough overview of Fulvia’s early life. Moreover, like Balsdon, Babcock describes Fulvia in terms of contemporary social stereotypes. For example he depicts her as an emancipated woman with a political career, which should not be applied to the late Republic.²⁴

Pomeroy’s book *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves* (1975) was an important contribution to the study of women in ancient history and offered a critique of “the sexist bias inherent in traditional scholarship.”²⁵ Pomeroy does not look at individual women, but rather applies a thematic approach to her study of women in the ancient world. Her book is a comprehensive study of women in pre-Christian Greece and Rome and is especially valuable for its use of primary sources and large bibliography.²⁶ It should be noted that Pomeroy is a Greek historian, and, as such, she focuses mainly on women in the Greek world. This could account for the occasional errors in the Roman material.²⁷ Two examples pertaining to Fulvia include Pomeroy’s statement that Fulvia was Antony’s first wife, and mistakes Fulvia as the daughter of

²² Babcock 1965: 20.

²³ E.g. Babcock states that based on her assistance in the organization of Lucius’ campaign against Octavian, Clodius’ organization of the *collegia* was aided by Fulvia, Babcock 1965: 30.

²⁴ Delia 1991: 197. For example, Babcock states that Fulvia engineered all three of her marriages, Babcock 1965: 25.

²⁵ Balsdon 1977: 207. Cf. Pomeroy, 1975: xiv.

²⁶ Fantham 1976: 80. E.g. Pomeroy’s use of Plutarch is commendable, Pomeroy 1975: 156, 186.

²⁷ Balsdon also notes that she makes some historical errors, Balsdon 1977: 208.

the Catilinarian conspirator Sempronia.²⁸ She also tends to apply Augustan legislation to her discussion of women during the middle and late Republic, the periods to which she restricts her focus.²⁹ Fulvia is mentioned only briefly in the chapter “The Roman Matron,” which discusses paradigms of traditional Roman female virtue, such as Cornelia and Octavia. Pomeroy describes Fulvia as “the evil wife” and the foil of the virtuous Roman matron.³⁰ She adds that Fulvia accompanied her husbands to the army camps instead of spinning in the home.³¹ This is an exaggeration since there is no evidence for Fulvia doing this with her first two husbands, and only one alleged instance with Antony. While Pomeroy’s book was an important contribution to the development of the study of women in the ancient world, it adds little to the study of Fulvia.

Bengtson’s biography of Antony, *Marcus Antonius, Triumvir und Herrscher des Orient* (1977), has not been well received despite his reputation.³² Although he does not offer sufficient evidence to support his claims,³³ he does devote a large amount of this work to Fulvia. Unfortunately, in portraying her as the antithesis of a Roman matron, he selects only the most negative of sources.³⁴

²⁸ Pomeroy 1975: 185.

²⁹ E.g. Pomeroy 1975: 170. Balsdon also shares this opinion, Balsdon 1977: 208.

³⁰ Pomeroy 1975: 185.

³¹ Pomeroy 1975: 185. Fantham notes that Pomeroy not only frequently made dogmatic claims but she did not acknowledge the credibility of these statements, Fantham 1976: 81.

³² See Briscoe 1979: 179; Carter 1979: 189; Morgan 1978: 183.

³³ Briscoe 1979: 179. However, this criticism has been dismissed by Morgan given that the book was intended for a generally educated reader, Morgan 1978: 183.

³⁴ Bengtson 1977: 65.

Also in 1977, Hallett published “The Perusine *Glandes* and the Changing Image of Augustus,” in which she compares the sling bullets (*glandes*) found at Perugia (e.g. *CIL* XI 6721.5) and the epigram preserved by Martial (11.20) that he ascribed to Octavian. This is the first in-depth analysis of the sling bullets and the epigram. Hallett concludes that the epigram and the sling bullets, although similarly vulgar, had different functions.³⁵ As is the case with most of the modern studies, Hallett’s main object of analysis is not Fulvia, but rather the public image of Octavian before he became Augustus. Nevertheless, the article devotes a significant amount of space to a discussion of Fulvia. There is no attempt to gloss over the crude sexual language of the propaganda against Fulvia in the late 40’s. In order to show that they are both exceptionally vulgar, Hallett compares the sling bullets and the epigram from Martial 11.20 with Latin literary passages which use similar sexual vocabulary.³⁶

Huzar studied the life of Antony in her biography *Mark Antony* (1978), and in doing so also discussed his five wives. Nevertheless, she does not mention Fulvia in much detail, and the events in her life that are included are presented with no explanation or analysis. Huzar does, however, provide a concise survey of the ancient sources and their political sympathies.³⁷ This section takes account not only of Augustan propaganda, but also Antony’s. One of the major weaknesses of the book is that actual evidence is seldom cited and little attempt is made to evaluate variant

³⁵ By attacking Fulvia, the epigram bolstered Octavian’s image as a virile commander, while the sling bullets ridiculed the subject of the inscription, Hallett 1977: 151, 154. For further discussion on this topic, see Chapter Three.

³⁶ Hallett 1977: 154.

³⁷ Huzar 1978: 233-252.

interpretations.³⁸ She rarely attempts to sift through the evidence and present her own analysis.³⁹

Chamoux's work *Marc Antoine, dernier prince de l'Orient grec* (1986), focuses largely on the relationship between Antony and Cleopatra VII. Chamoux includes a discussion of Antony's marriage to Fulvia, but rarely mentions the importance of her political activities. For example, he refers only briefly to the Perusine War.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, there is no bibliography, index, or table of contents, and primary source citations are rare.

Almost twenty years after her biography of Antony, in her article "Mark Antony, Marriages vs Careers" (1986), Huzar once again addressed Fulvia's activities in the political sphere. She states that Fulvia "was essentially if not nominally the commander in chief of a military force, and even wore armor on occasion."⁴¹ Many of Huzar's statements about Fulvia are based on Dio, whose account may not be reliable. However, it is Lintott's opinion that the books on the late Republic are precise and contain few errors.⁴² As with her biography of Antony, Huzar presents many of her speculations as though they are indisputable (e.g. her conclusions regarding the depiction of Fulvia on Antony's Victoria coins [see Chapter Three below]).⁴³ In both

³⁸ Marshall 1981: 285.

³⁹ Marshall notes that her "use of Cicero's evidence is predictably uneven and Dio, heavily mined for narrative detail, is rejected only when suspect of retailing 'hostile propaganda'," Marshall 1981: 285-6.

⁴⁰ Chamoux 1986: 255-7.

⁴¹ Huzar 1986: 102. There are, however, no ancient sources that explicitly state that Fulvia ever wore armour on any occasion. The closest non-metaphorical reference is given by Dio (48.10.4), who describes Fulvia as having a sword at her side.

⁴² Lintott 1972: 2519.

⁴³ Huzar 1978: 132; Huzar 1986: 102.

this work and her preceding one, Huzar describes her as an emancipated Roman woman and more important than the evidence suggests.

Pelling's commentary on Plutarch's *Life of Antony* (1988), provides an interesting discussion of Fulvia. He gives a good overview in the introduction about Plutarch's sources and how they may have affected his account.⁴⁴ Pelling also makes frequent reference to Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* to show how influential Plutarch's version has been in shaping the modern reception of Antony. Fulvia appears prominently in only two sections of Plutarch's *Life of Antony* (*Vit. Ant.* 10 and 30), yet Pelling devotes considerable attention to her in his commentary on those sections.⁴⁵ His interest in her extends beyond a discussion of the text itself and also includes a discussion of the historical background and the importance of Plutarch's references to her.

A significant study devoted to the life of Fulvia is found in a chapter of *Women's History and Ancient History* (1991), edited by Pomeroy. Delia's chapter, "Fulvia Reconsidered," provides an important analysis of the evidence regarding her. The aim of the article is to reconsider the optimistic portrayal of Fulvia given by Balsdon and Babcock, and Delia attempts to investigate the extent to which she actually exercised power or assisted her husbands careers. Delia states that Babcock's conclusion that she directed the career of her first two husbands is extremely tenuous.⁴⁶ However, she concludes that the only reliable surviving evidence indicates

⁴⁴ Pelling 1988: 26-31.

⁴⁵ For example, Pelling 1988: 198-200.

⁴⁶ Delia 1991: 198-9.

that Fulvia's political activity began only with the death of Caesar. In so doing she dismisses Cicero's *Pro Milone* and Fulvia's actions after the death of Clodius.⁴⁷

Bauman's 1992 publication, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, is an important survey of the role of women in ancient Rome from the fourth century BC to the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty in AD 68. With a time span of this length, the aim is to apply the cumulated experience of the modern study of Roman women to the role of these women "in the business of politics, government, law and public affairs in general,"⁴⁸ and apply this study to discover the "cohesion and continuity of the steady expansion of women's role in public affairs."⁴⁹ He discusses Fulvia in the context of the triumviral period, which he calls the fourth period of political women in Rome, and says that it was a period of transition for Roman women.⁵⁰ He devotes a considerable number of pages in his survey to a discussion of Fulvia.⁵¹ Bauman's book has been described as an update of Balsdon's *Roman Women* and as an important addition to the attempt to recover women's history.⁵² Münzer's influence over Bauman is evident in his presentation of her as the first Roman empress and the precursor of Livia:⁵³ "Fulvia was the first empress in all but name... she is matched in courage and determination only by the elder Agrippina and her daughter."⁵⁴ Despite the value of this study, he occasionally does not comment on the reliability of some of

⁴⁷ Delia 1991: 199. Cf. Welch 1995: 188.

⁴⁸ Bauman 1992: xii.

⁴⁹ Bauman 1992: xiii.

⁵⁰ Bauman 1992: 5.

⁵¹ Bauman 1992: 81-90.

⁵² Bendix 2004.

⁵³ See Münzer 1910: 7.284.

⁵⁴ Bauman 1992: 89, 216.

the sources.⁵⁵ For example, he states that her ability to organize support for Antony's brother Lucius in 41 was "foreshadowed by her organization of *collegia* on behalf of Clodius."⁵⁶ There is, however, no evidence from the ancient sources to support this conclusion. In fact, Fulvia probably did not take part in Clodius' tribunate (58) as she would have been quite young. He focuses on the good qualities of her that the ancient sources suggest, namely, her bravery, loyalty, resourcefulness, and her supposed ability to organize military campaigns. Fulvia's reputed cruelty and greed are mentioned, but he states that those qualities were not unique to her and were exaggerated by ancient historians.⁵⁷ This is a very important note, but the same could also be said about her more positive qualities. He also does not discuss the problem of the influence of contemporary propaganda.

In "Politics and Gender in the Pictorial Propaganda of Antony and Octavian" (1992), Kleiner compares the representation of women on the coins of Antony with the lack of women on Octavian's coins.⁵⁸ The article concludes that some upper class women wielded considerable influence in the public arena and that the presentation of Antony's wives (i.e. Fulvia and Octavia) on the coins is evidence of their significant involvement in political affairs.⁵⁹ Kleiner's article seeks to discuss just the coins and not necessarily Fulvia herself but it gives a solid biography of Fulvia. The

⁵⁵ This view is shared by Bendix and Seager. Bendix 2004; Seager 1994: 359.

⁵⁶ Bauman does not note that there is no evidence for this statement in the ancient sources, Bauman 1992: 84.

⁵⁷ Bauman 1992: 216.

⁵⁸ Antony issued a series of coins in the late 40's with an image of Victoria on the obverse. Some scholars have attempted to identify the image of Victoria as Fulvia. See Chapter Three for further discussion of this topic.

⁵⁹ Kleiner 1992: 357.

identification of Fulvia on Antony's Victoria coins is by no means certain, although it is tempting to identify the figure of Victoria on these coins as Fulvia, thereby confirming the accounts of her as a strong political woman in the late 40's. This article is not meant to be an extensive study comparing the depictions of women on coins, but instead to "encourage further exploration of the archaeological record...in order to gain a fuller picture of the contribution of Roman elite women not only to public life but to the course of history."⁶⁰ It is an important study that links the historical and numismatic evidence relevant to Fulvia. For further discussion of these coins and the scholarly debate surrounding them, see Chapter Three.

Delia's work was challenged by Welch in "Antony, Fulvia, and the ghost of Clodius in 47 B.C." (1995), in which she gives a convincing refutation of Delia's argument that Fulvia was not a significant presence in the careers of Clodius, Curio, and even of Antony until Caesar's death. Welch seeks to establish the importance of the political implications of her connection to Clodius in relation to the marriage of Fulvia and Antony. For him, marriage with Fulvia, as the mother of Clodius' son and daughter and with her relationship to the Clodian clientele, would have been a very important prospect.⁶¹ Welch also notes her efforts on behalf of Antony, by which she "made it possible for him to survive Caesar's displeasure, and then to withstand Octavian."⁶² The article looks at her from an interesting angle, that is, the importance of the Clodian connection she brought to Antony.

⁶⁰ Kleiner 1992: 367.

⁶¹ Welch 1995: 192.

⁶² Welch 1995: 194.

Barrett's biography of Agrippina Minor, *Agrippina: Sex, Power and Politics* (1996), assigns a prominent place to Fulvia in the tradition of powerful women in Rome. Like Bauman, Barrett describes her as a precursor of politically active women such as Agrippina Minor and her mother. In his brief but concise overview of her life he writes that she "represented all the characteristics that the Romans feared as the outcome of female emancipation and the perversion of the idealized notion of a Roman matron."⁶³ He revisits the topic again in *Livia: First Empress of Rome* (2002). This book also contains a concise overview of the situation of Roman aristocratic women in the late Republic. Barrett, following the tradition inspired by Münzer and furthered by Bauman, presents Fulvia as an example for Livia:

Livia would have seen in Fulvia an object lesson for what was to be avoided at all costs by any woman who hoped to survive and prosper amidst the complex machinations of Roman political life.⁶⁴

She is again given a prominent place as a model for women who wanted to be politically active.

Wood examines Fulvia and the Victoria coins in detail in her books *Imperial Women: a Study of Public Images* (1998). She analyzes in detail the numismatic and related historical evidence and the history of the debate, but leaves conclusions open to the reader.⁶⁵ As a general study, the work deals only briefly with the coins and does not try to sift through the propaganda of Antony's enemies and rivals. She gives a concise background to Fulvia and the historical context of the coins.

⁶³ Barrett 1996: 10.

⁶⁴ Barrett 2002: 118.

⁶⁵ Wood 1998: 41-4.

Cluett discusses women and politics in his article “Roman Women and Triumviral Politics, 43-37 BC” (1998). He looks at four prominent women in the late Republic: Julia, Hortensia, Fulvia and Octavia, and makes an interesting defence of Fulvia. He tries to discover if Cicero’s descriptions of her as a domineering *virago* could be seen as a portrait of a loyal wife.⁶⁶ His article is brief, but provides an interesting starting point for a more detailed study of her political role.

Tatum’s biography of Clodius, *The Patrician Tribune* (1999), is an important contribution to the field.⁶⁷ Tatum does not seek to condemn or defend Clodius but makes the important differentiation between Ciceronian rhetoric against Clodius, which he sometimes calls “baseless Ciceronian slander,” and actual events.⁶⁸ For example, Tatum notes the inaccuracy of Cicero’s portrayal of Clodius and later of Antony as heirs of L. Sergius Catiline.⁶⁹ He mentions Fulvia briefly in reference to what little evidence we have about her during her marriage to Clodius, namely, her actions after Clodius’ death.⁷⁰ He also notes that she was a remarkable wife and an important historical figure.⁷¹

A very detailed discussion of Fulvia is Fischer’s *Fulvia und Octavia: die beiden Ehefrauen des Marcus Antonius in den politischen Kämpfen der Umbruchszeit zwischen Republik und Principat* (1999), where the author compares these two wives of Antony, two seemingly opposite women. Fischer’s study covers the main aspects of

⁶⁶ Cluett 1998: 82.

⁶⁷ Clodius is commonly seen as a villain and tool of the First Triumvirate, Babcock 1965: 26-7; Syme 1939: 36, 459. For the contrary view see Gruen 1966: 120.

⁶⁸ Tatum 1999: 238.

⁶⁹ Tatum 1999: 78.

⁷⁰ Tatum 1999: 241.

⁷¹ Tatum 1999: 61.

her life: her three marriages, her role in the proscriptions of 42, the Perusine War, and her death, as well as Augustan propaganda, the sling bullets and Martial's epigram (11.20).⁷² She also discusses in detail the coins supposedly pertaining to Fulvia, and the debate surrounding the identity of the woman presented on the coins.⁷³ There is a need for a similar approach to the study of Fulvia in English.

A recent study of Fulvia can be found in a chapter by Virlouvét in Frascchetti's, *Roman Women* (translated into English in 2001). This chapter provides an overview of her entire life, but it is occasionally misleading. Virlouvét does not use all the primary sources or cite specifically those which she uses, nor does she discuss conflicting accounts or identify possible bias and propaganda. She embellishes Fulvia's power when she states that after Caesar's death Fulvia dominated the political scene in Italy.⁷⁴ She is most likely influenced by Balsdon in the decision to amplify her actions on the battlefield and to describe her as a "war commander... [and an] Amazon."⁷⁵ Virlouvét does not justify why she labels Fulvia 'a woman of passion.'

A new commentary on the first two *Philippics* by Ramsey was published in 2001. It is principally historical and is a valuable contribution to Ciceronian scholarship.⁷⁶ The historical background given in the introduction and before the commentary on each speech is useful in aiding the modern reader,⁷⁷ especially since Cicero "often deliberately selects pieces of information and puts them in a way which

⁷² Fischer 1999: 48.

⁷³ Fischer 1999: 160.

⁷⁴ Virlouvét 2001: 75.

⁷⁵ Virlouvét 2001: 80. Cf. Balsdon 1962: 49.

⁷⁶ As noted by Manuwald 2003. Although, the author noted that he tried to be as thorough as possible in his historical and literary comments, Ramsey 2001: x.

⁷⁷ Ramsey 2001: 1-10.

need not be historically exact, but is best suited to his goal.”⁷⁸ Ramsey discusses most of the references to Fulvia found in *Philippics I* and *II*.

The publication of *Brill's New Pauly: Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World* includes an entry on Fulvia. The focus is on her exceptional political power as well as her less positive characteristics. Stegmann makes the important observation that it was Fulvia's conduct in spheres reserved for men that caused the negative portrayal of her in the ancient sources.⁷⁹ As a result of such conduct, the ancient sources ignored her loyalty to her husband. Stegmann is aware of the varying surviving evidence for Fulvia, and the need to view propaganda by Cicero and Octavian critically.⁸⁰ Her work is different from Münzer's, however, in that she discusses Fulvia's life only after the death of Caesar, thereby ignoring the evidence from Asconius and the *Pro Milone* (see Chapter Four for the preference to rely on Asconius' account rather than Dio, Appian and Plutarch).

This review of the modern scholarship has revealed the tendency of scholars to manufacture their own portrayals of Fulvia.⁸¹ She remains a mysterious figure: she has been described as the most vicious of women and an obsessed wife. Yet, she also has been interpreted as an independent, steadfastly loyal and liberated wife of the undeserving Antony. Some scholars focus on her less attractive aspects, whereas

⁷⁸ Manuwald 2003.

⁷⁹ Stegmann 2004: 577-8.

⁸⁰ Stegmann 2004: 577.

⁸¹ This point had previously been made by Fischer. “Die Aufzählung zeigt, dass die Auswahl der Belegquellen von den Hypothesen der einzelnen Forscher bestimmt wird.” Fischer 1999: 57.

others focus on her unusual power and they attempt to portray her as an emancipated woman. The truth probably lies between these two fiercely opposing accounts.

Chapter Three

Fulvia in the Contemporary Sources

Although there are numerous references to Fulvia, as we shall see, in the works of later authors such as Plutarch, Appian, and Dio, the evidence from contemporary sources (i.e. Cicero, Cornelius Nepos, Octavian [as preserved in Martial's epigram] and the sling bullets from Perugia) is more limited. There does not survive from Fulvia's own lifetime, for instance, anything of the sort of extended narrative accounts of her that will be the subject of Chapter Four. Rather, what survives concerning Fulvia from her own contemporaries generally consists of short passages and brief references that must be gleaned together from several sources of greatly different types. This is not to say, however, that the contemporary references to Fulvia are more reliable. Many of the references to Fulvia discussed below are altered to suit the author's purpose. The modern scholar must use caution when determining what is accepted in invective and propaganda.

Cicero and Fulvia

Cicero has been called in recent years one of the "most successful and abidingly influential orators of any age,"¹ and said that "in many respects [he was] the most attractive character whom antiquity produced."² Consciously or not, he

¹ May 2002: 1.

² Wooten 1983: 16.

succeeded in styling himself as the embodiment of the loyal elements of the Republic.³ Cicero tried to identify himself with the state when he wanted to defend a client, attack an opponent, or influence policy in order to give himself credibility. Many of Cicero's attacks in his forensic (e.g. *Pro Milone*) and deliberative speeches, especially the set of speeches denouncing Antony in 44/43 (i.e. his self-styled *Philippicae*⁴), contain rhetorical elements such as exaggeration, deceit, and, what Tatum calls "Ciceronian amplification."⁵ Nevertheless, the abundance of surviving material from Cicero's speeches and letters means that it necessarily remains a crucial source for the study of the late Republic. Consequently, the modern scholar must approach the evidence from Cicero with caution and critical awareness. The majority of his speeches use invective (e.g. such as stock accusations) as a means of weakening the credibility of his opponent and in turn enhancing that of himself and his supporters.⁶ This is not to say, however, that his invective relied solely on lies and fabrications. On the contrary, Cicero must have had some elements of reality on which to base his attacks in order for them to be plausible to his audience. We are thus faced with the difficult task of sifting through the layers of invective to find the element of truth.

³ Corbeill 2002: 215; May 2002: 149; Wooten 1983: 96. For Wooten, Cicero is the Roman counterpart of Demosthenes, and a valiant man struggling against evil and corruption, Wooten 1983: 16.

⁴ The choice of the term *Philippics* was Cicero's own (Cic. *Ad Brut.* 2.4.2; Cic. *Att.* 2.1.3; Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 24.48; App. *B. Civ.* 4.4.20), and was influenced by his great admiration for Demosthenes, the Athenian orator who delivered a series of speeches against Philip of Macedon. Cicero wanted to be seen as Demosthenes' Roman counterpart, Bengtson 1977: 300; Fischer 1999: 30 n. 118; Hall 2002: 301; Kennedy 1972: 270; May 2002: 16; Ramsey 2003: 17. Wooten writes: "like Demosthenes, he portrayed himself as a man of destiny, struggling valiantly against evil and corruption for traditional ideals," Wooten 1983: 16, cf. 50.

⁵ Cicero amplified his points in order to make his case stronger, Tatum 1999: 81.

⁶ Corbeill 2002: 198.

Kennedy writes that it was common in the Roman world for an orator to slander the female relations of an opponent in order to make his opponent seem more disreputable.⁷ Cicero was certainly no exception.⁸ An example of Cicero's use of this tactic can be found in the *Pro Caelio*.⁹ He turns the attention of the jury from the trial of Caelius to a trial of Clodia. For example, Cicero states that her evidence is false because she is a poetess and an inventor of stories (*Cael.* 64). Therefore, Clodia's accusations that Caelius had been attempting to murder her are intended to be deemed worthless in the jurors' minds by Cicero's descriptions of her as a liar and insults as a disreputable *meretrix* (*Cael.* 38).¹⁰

Although it was not common to name women in ancient oratory, it was also not entirely exceptional.¹¹ Schaps states that in Greek oratory, from which Roman oratory evolved, the names of respectable women were deliberately omitted, with reference being made to the woman through her male relations.¹² Thus, Cicero does not name Antony's mother Julia, Octavian's mother Atia, nor his sister Octavia, all women whom he presents as respectable (*Phil.* 2.62; 3.16). On the other hand, the women whom Cicero treats most harshly are referred to by name. Cicero uses Clodia's name throughout the *Pro Caelio*, a fact which indicates that she is the main object of

⁷ Kennedy 1972: 271. A Roman orator normally only needed to imply adulterous affairs on the part of a married woman in order to attack her husband.

⁸ Delia 1991: 199. Griffin notes that "the disgrace of being dominated by a woman is a common theme of Roman oratory," Griffin 1985: 43, n. 79.

⁹ Tatum 2006.

¹⁰ Austin 1960: 94; May 2002: 110-113. Skinner states that Cicero manipulates female stereotypes to present Clodia as a *meretrix* and an "imperious virago," Skinner 1983: 275. Cf. Hillard 1989: 172.

¹¹ Bauman 1992: 84. Cf. Ramsey 2003: 88. Ramsey states that to name someone is to lend that person dignity.

¹² Schaps 1977: 323.

attack. Similarly, in the *Philippics* he refers to Antony's mistress, Volumnia Cytheris by name. He does not, however, refer to Fulvia by name. In this respect, Cicero treats her more kindly than he does Clodia.

Cicero's earliest reference to Fulvia occurs in the *Pro Milone*, his speech in defence of Milo, the murderer of Clodius in 52. The published version of Cicero's defence, however, is not the same speech which he gave at the trial in the crowded forum on 8 April 52. The forum was surrounded by Pompey's soldiers, and Asconius records that Cicero was too frightened to complete his speech with his usual effectiveness (*Mil.* 33-36).¹³ The surviving version of the speech seeks to contrive a plea of self-defence for his client. Cicero does this in two ways. First, he argues that it was actually Clodius who plotted to kill Milo, and that therefore his client was merely acting in self-defence. Second, he attempts to convince the jury that Clodius' death is beneficial for the Republic. Cicero uses Clodius' relationship with his wife, Fulvia, as evidence for the first claim, and he mentions her in two brief statements.¹⁴ He states:

*obviam fit ei Clodius, expeditus, in equo, nulla raeda, nullis
impedimentis, nullis Graecis comitibus, ut solebat, sine uxore, quod
numquam fere.*

¹³ Clark 1967: xxvii, 80-81. Asconius (*Mil.* 41-42) states that Cicero was put off by the turbulence created by the Clodiani (supporters of Clodius), Marshall 1985: 191. Dio states that Cicero was overwhelmed by the sight of Pompey's soldiers (Dio 46.7.2-3), and Plutarch gives a similar account (Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 35.2-4). Asconius' account is most likely more reliable (for more information on Asconius' reliability see Chapter Three, especially note 20), Lintott 1972: 2515.

¹⁴ In contrast to Clodius, Milo was travelling with his wife Fausta, which was used by Cicero to suggest that Milo was not deliberately planning to lay an ambush, Marshall 1985: 166.

Clodius meets him unburdened on a horse, without a carriage, without hindrances, with no Greek companions, as he was accustomed, without his wife, which he scarcely ever was (*Mil.* 28).¹⁵

In other words, Cicero states that Clodius was almost always accompanied by his wife. Therefore, since he met Milo without her, we might consider that Cicero perhaps was implying that Clodius had been plotting to kill Milo, and that for Fulvia's safety he did not want her around. In the second passage, Cicero repeats the same evidence:

*age nunc iter expediti latronis cum Milonis impedimentis compare.
semper ille antea cum uxore, tum sine ea.*

Go now, compare the journey of this unaccompanied highwayman with the hindrances of Milo. That man always was with his wife before, now he was without her (*Mil.* 55).

These two statements are the only references to Fulvia in the *Pro Milone*, and they appear to describe what may have been a close marriage between her and Clodius.¹⁶ Some scholars take this statement to mean that Fulvia, since she was always with Clodius, had an active part in her husband's affairs.¹⁷ However, there is no definitive evidence to support this theory. Such a conclusion is probably based on her later activities during her marriage to Antony.

With the exception of being seen in public with Clodius on unspecified occasions, Fulvia's actions after the death of Clodius constitute her first known public activity; Asconius records that she displayed Clodius' wounded body to the crowd at his funeral (*Mil.* 28), an action which greatly contributed to the disorder (*Mil.* 28). Her testimony and that of her mother, both of which were given at Milo's trial later that

¹⁵ All translations are the author's own unless otherwise indicated.

¹⁶ Babcock 1965: 12; Münzer 1900: 7.281.

¹⁷ Babcock 1965: 31; Bauman 1992: 84; Welch 1995: 187, 198 n. 41.

year (*Mil.* 35), significantly moved the onlookers.¹⁸ Cicero does not mention the results of Fulvia's display of mourning over her husband's body¹⁹ or her testimony at the trial.²⁰ It is possible that Cicero would have been bitter after defeat in this case and the damage to his prestige, and subsequently would have blamed Fulvia in part for it. Cicero was certainly not above attacking women in courts (e.g. as mentioned above, he was relentless in his attacks against Clodia in the *Pro Caelio*). And yet, for some reason he does not attack the wife of his most hated enemy, the man who forced him into exile (*lex de exsilio Ciceronis*). Perhaps Cicero thought it might harm his reputation further if he attacked a widow who had previously gained sympathy at the trial.²¹ As the wife of the popular leader Clodius, now revered because of the manner of his death, Fulvia perhaps held a position of honour among the masses.²²

Just as there was great rivalry and enmity between Clodius and Cicero, so there was between Cicero and Fulvia's third husband, Antony. On Antony's part, at least, this can be traced back to Cicero's consulship in 63.²³ It was Cicero who ensured the

¹⁸ Asconius' commentary on the *Pro Milone* will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁹ Marshall 1985: 198.

²⁰ Craig notes that it is striking that the *Pro Milone* does not refer to all the witnesses that Asconius does. However, Powell believes that it is most likely that these witnesses did not contribute anything important, Powell 2007. Given that Asconius' account is unique, it is possible that he may have exaggerated her role.

²¹ Bauman 1992: 84. Morstein-Marx suggests that the masses were hostile towards Cicero because of the unpopularity of his defence of Milo, Morstein-Marx 2004: 4.

²² Welch 1995: 182, 187.

²³ In the *Philippics*, Cicero frequently defends his actions as consul (*Phil.* 2.11-20; 3.10; 4.1; 8.15), and claims that Antony and Clodius were the only people to have ever criticized his consulship (*Phil.* 2.11). This need to defend himself repeatedly suggests that Cicero's consulship may not have been as popular as he suggests (cf. Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 23-24 for the immediate critical reaction to Cicero's consulship). In fact, Cicero himself states that he wanted the history of his own consulship to be edited (*Fam.* 5.3.2). Cicero's exaggeration of his own positive attributes, such as during his

execution of Antony's step-father Lentulus for association in the conspiracy of Catiline (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 2.1). Plutarch says that "this seems to be the cause and origin of the violent hatred from Antony towards Cicero" (*Vit. Ant.* 2.1, αὕτη δοκεῖ τῆς σφοδρᾶς ἔχθρας Ἀντωνίου πρὸς Κικέρωνα πρόφασις καὶ ἀρχὴ γενέσθαι). However, according to Cicero himself, there was no hostility on his part towards Antony because of Lentulus (*Phil.* 1.11, *cui sum amicus, idque me non nullo eius officio debere esse prae me semper tuli* ["whose friend I am, and I have always brought myself to be on account of that office that I owe him"]).²⁴

Although Antony may have privately held a grudge against Cicero, there is no evidence that it ever manifested itself publicly, and the relationship between them seems to have been amicable enough. The events leading up to the *First Philippic* are therefore somewhat puzzling²⁵ (Cicero states in May 44, *ego tamen Antoni inveteratam sine ulla offensione amicitiam retinere sane volo* ["Nevertheless, I truly wish to retain my friendship with Antony, which has lasted long without being upset by a quarrel" *Fam.* 16.23.2]; *Ad Att.* 14.13b; *App. B. Civ.* 3.8.50). Indeed, it was Antony himself who, after the battle of Pharsalus, gave protection to Cicero and ensured that he received pardon from Caesar (*Cic. Phil.* 2.5-6). Moreover, Cicero

consulship, brings the accuracy of many of his hostile accusations against Antony and Fulvia into question.

²⁴ According to Bauman, Fulvia may have been the niece of Sempronia the Catilinarian conspirator. Given that Antony's relationship with Cicero was not tainted by his association with his step-father Lentulus, there is no reason to assume that Fulvia's connection with her aunt would have been a source of animosity between them. Furthermore, Cicero does not use Fulvia's aunt in the *Philippics* as a way to attack Antony or Fulvia, despite his desire to equate Antony with Catiline, Bauman 1992: 83. For Cicero's incorrect portrayal of both Clodius and Antony as successors of Catiline see Tatum 1999: 277 n. 117.

²⁵ Chamoux 1986: 129; Syme 1939: 140.

initially praised Antony for his good sense after Caesar's murder (*Phil.* 1.4-5). After spending most of the time after Caesar's assassination away from Rome, Cicero arrived back on 31 August 44.²⁶ His failure to attend a meeting of the senate on the very next day, 1 September, was seen as a personal attack by Antony because he had specifically requested Cicero's presence. His absence led him to attack Cicero with violent threats (*Cic. Phil.* 1.12; 5.19). The meeting of the senate was called to vote on a measure that would honour Caesar with public thanksgivings (*supplicationes*), a proposal which Cicero found disgraceful. His absence allowed him to avoid the necessity of voting on this measure (*Cic. Phil.* 1.12; 5.19). The public breach in their friendship therefore seems to have started with Cicero's absence from the senate on 1 September, and Antony's rebuke of Cicero on that day.²⁷

It is possible that Cicero's private hatred for Antony developed over time.²⁸ His animosity may have begun with Antony's actions in April, which Cicero alleges involved forgery of Caesar's memoranda (*Phil.* 1.16, *an in commentariolis et chirographis et libellis se uno auctore prolatis, ne prolatis quidem sed tantum modo dictis* ["brief commentaries have been carried out and memoranda and little books by his own one authority, not carried out, but indeed only declared, that the acts of Caesar are ratified"]), a dominant topic in the first two *Philippics* (*Phil.* 1.15, 16; 1.24; 2.6; 2.100; 5.11; 10.16). Hatred was then inflamed over the following months as a result of

²⁶ Shackleton Bailey 1986: 3.

²⁷ Syme 1939: 140.

²⁸ Frisch 1946: 74; Wooten 1983: 154.

his dislike of Antony's management of affairs (Cic. *Phil.* 2.117).²⁹ This situation then would have led to Cicero's avoidance of the meeting on 1 September and his response to Antony's insults with his delivery of the *First Philippic* on 2 September. Antony's subsequent public hostility indicates that he took great offence to this speech because it criticized his policies as consul and also suggested that he had betrayed Caesar's legacy.³⁰ It is important to keep in mind the animosity felt by Cicero towards Antony when the modern reader is considering what Cicero says about Fulvia in his *Philippics*.

Throughout these speeches, Cicero uses many different methods to attack Antony. While one method was to criticize him sometimes through his wife, Fulvia, however, was not an average Roman matron that Cicero could easily attack with accusations of adultery or prostitution as she may have been popular with the masses. Different tactics, therefore, might be needed on Cicero's part.

Throughout the *Philippics*, Cicero criticizes Antony's weakness of will and poor control over the affairs of the state. In doing so, he refers three times to disreputable business being conducted in Antony's household (*Phil.* 2.95; 3.10; 5.11). However, he claims that it is not Antony who is conducting this business but his wife Fulvia.³¹ Thus, one of Cicero's strategies in the *Philippics* is to suggest that Antony is weak and never in control of himself, a theme that Plutarch also uses as a topos in his

²⁹ Wooten 1983: 154. Frisch suggests that Cicero's hatred of Antony was warranted and deserved, Frisch 1946: 74, 119.

³⁰ Hall 2002: 275; Ramsey 2003: 82.

³¹ It should be noted, however, that women meddling in the affairs of the state is a common topos in invective, see Skinner 1983: 276.

Life of Antony.³² According to Cicero, however, Antony's submissive nature did not begin with his marriage to Fulvia, but could be traced back to his youth, when Antony was allegedly under the dominance of his long-time friend and Fulvia's second husband, Curio: "no slave bought for the sake of lust was ever so completely in his master's power as you [Antony] were in Curio's" (*Phil.* 2.45, *nemo umquam puer emptus libidinis causa tam fuit in domini potestate quam tu in Curionis*).³³ Cicero is implying that Antony's relationship with Curio was that of the receptive and passive partner in a homosexual relationship.³⁴ Men who participated in homosexual activity passively were seen to have willingly subjugated themselves to the domination of another, and therefore warranted the status of women.³⁵ Thus, by presenting Curio as the insertive and active partner in such a relationship, Cicero has given him a more masculine image.³⁶

³² Pelling 1979: 90; Pelling 1980: 129; Ramsey 2001: 266 n. 51.

³³ Russell 1998: 127.

³⁴ Butler sees this passage as an indication of a homosexual relationship between Antony and Curio, which Cicero refers to as a marriage (*Phil.* 2.44), Butler 2002: 121. Pelling states that Cicero likens Antony to a male prostitute, Pelling 1988: 118. This servile presentation of Antony presumably originated from his debt to Curio, whom Cicero claims had loaned Antony a sum of six million sesterces (*Phil.* 2.45), Fischer 1999: 19; Huzar 1978: 24.

³⁵ Hallett 1977: 156. Russell notes that a man was expected to take an active part not only in sexual activity, but also education and political life, Russell 1998: 126-127. Williams states that: "first and foremost, a self-respecting Roman man must always give the appearance of playing the insertive role in penetration acts, and not the receptive role," Williams 1999: 18, 125. See also Boyd 1987: 189. For the use of effeminacy in Ciceronian invective see Corbeill 2002: 209.

³⁶ Babcock 1965: 3 n. 5. This is not surprising, however, since Cicero and Curio had been close. In fact, Cicero describes Curio with "incredible affection" (*Cic. Fam.* 2.1.7, *meus incredibilis in te amor*).

Cicero adapted the motif of the sexual servitude of Antony in order to refer to Fulvia's control over her husband and his transactions. The *Sixth Philippic* describes Antony as very susceptible to the influence of his wife:

facile vero huic denuntiationi parebit, ut in patrum conscriptorum atque in vestra potestate sit qui in sua numquam fuerit! quid enim ille umquam arbitrio suo fecit? semper eo tractus est quo libido rapuit, quo levitas, quo furor, quo vinolentia; semper eum duo dissimilia genera tenuerunt, lenonum et latronum; ita domesticis stupris, forensibus parricidiis delectatur ut mulieri citius avarissimae paruerit quam senatui populoque Romano.

Truly he will easily obey this proclamation, and to submit to the power of the conscript fathers and to yours, he who has never had power over himself! For what has that man ever done that was from his own judgement? Always being drawn by his lust, or his levity, or his madness, or his drunkenness; he has always been controlled by two very dissimilar types, pimps and robbers; domestic dishonours and forensic murders are so delightful to him that he would obey his most greedy wife than the senate and people of Rome (6.4).

In this speech, Cicero is attempting to persuade his fellow senators not to send an embassy to negotiate peace with Antony. One argument which he uses, as is evident in the phrase *in sua numquam fuerit*, is the domination of Antony by others. If Cicero could convince his fellow senators that this is the case, then an embassy to Antony would be fruitless, given that Antony does not make his own decisions. The list of Antony's qualities that caused him to be dominated by others is long: lust, levity, insanity and drunkenness all play their part in creating Cicero's image of the submissive Antony who is dominated not only by pimps and robbers, but especially by his most greedy wife (*Phil.* 6.4).³⁷ The majority of the references to Fulvia in Cicero's *Philippics* are in this context of Antony's weakness and submissiveness. His portrayal

³⁷ Craig 2004: 191. All of these are stock accusations in invective.

of Antony as a lovesick, weak boy following Curio cannot help but remind the reader of his description of Antony's relationship with Fulvia as passive.³⁸

In the *Second Philippic*, Cicero impugns Antony with accusations of impropriety in conducting the affairs of the state both as a business and from his own home. He writes:

syngrapha sesterti centiens per legatos, viros bonos, sed timidos et imperitos, sine nostra, sine reliquorum hospitum regis sententia facta in gynaecio est, quo in loco plurimae res venierunt et veneunt.

A contract for ten million sesterces was entered into in the women's apartment, in which place many things have been sold and are being sold, through ambassadors, good men, but timid and inexperienced, without my opinion or that of the hereditary friends of the ruler (*Phil.* 2.95).

In this passage, Cicero uses the Greek word *syngrapha*, which means a contract for payment of a fixed sum. By also using the Greek word, *gynaecium*, a term for the secluded women's quarters of a Greek house, Cicero gives a derogatory description of the transaction because of the association of the women's quarters with a legal contract.³⁹ Cicero's use of *gynaecium* here is inappropriate when one considers that a Roman house did not segregate the women from the men as Greek homes did.⁴⁰ In the opinion of Wooten, such a perversion of norms places Antony and Fulvia in the world

³⁸ Pelling 1979: 89-90. Cicero describes Antony as *Catamitum* (*Phil.* 2.77), which is the Latin name for Ganymede. By doing this, Cicero evokes Ganymedes' servile sexual relationship with Jupiter. Therefore, Cicero implies that Fulvia controls her sex slave Antony just as Jupiter controls Ganymede, Ramsey 2003: 272.

³⁹ The use of the Greek terms present the transaction in a "disparaging manner," Ramsey 2003: 299.

⁴⁰ Ellis 2000: 24; Ramsey 2003: 299.

of satire and comedy.⁴¹ That Cicero describes the activities as taking place in the women's apartment is a clear suggestion that she was in charge of them. Cicero might even be suggesting that if Fulvia were a Greek woman, instead of a Roman matron, she would still be able to influence Antony. Thus, by describing Antony's home as segregated and controlled by a woman, Cicero is deriding Antony's status and Roman values.

The transaction that made Cicero particularly angry was Fulvia's alleged role in the 'sale' in April 44 of the kingdom of Galatia back to Deiotarus, the original ruler, only three years after it had been taken away from him by Caesar because of Deiotarus' support of Pompey. He writes to his correspondent T. Pomponius Atticus: "is the case of Deiotarus not similar? He, of course, is worthy of any kingdom, but not through Fulvia" (*Att.* 14.12.1, *Deiotari nostri causa non similis? dignus ille quidem omni regno sed non per Fulviam*). It will be remembered by the reader that Cicero's bitter enemy, Clodius, instigated the *lex de rege Deiotaro et Brogitaro* in 58. This action perhaps further explains Cicero's animosity towards Clodius, and subsequently Clodius' wife. Cicero is not upset about the outcome, but rather that the business was conducted by Fulvia. Cicero refers to this transaction briefly in the *Philippics*, but does not directly relate it to Fulvia's activities (5.11).

This association of business activities with women serves to suggest that Antony conducts the business of the Republic according to his own interests and

⁴¹ Wooten 1983: 81. It is interesting to contrast this derogatory presentation of business in Antony's home with a positive presentation of the same business from the *First Philippic* where Cicero mentions "the deliberations which he had at his house on the Republic [where] he invited chief men of state (*Cic. Phil.* 1.2, *ad deliberationes eas quas habebat domi de re publica principes civitatis adhibebat*).

therefore is unable to transact on behalf of the good of the Republic. That the contract was carried out by a woman makes it more repulsive to Cicero. He also seems to be insulted that it was Fulvia who was the key player and not himself (see above Cic. *Phil.* 2.95). It must be noted that in 47 Cicero defended Deiotarus against Caesar (*Pro Rege Deiotaro*), and perhaps Cicero was upset that he was not the one to benefit in prestige and funds from the sale.⁴²

Cicero alleges that the domestic and foreign affairs of the state, such as the sale of Deiotarus' kingdom, were being run from Antony's own house. However, Roman homes had always been centres of political power, and places where the aristocracy could meet with their peers and hold meetings with their clients in its audience chamber.⁴³ Although business in the male-dominated spheres of commerce and politics was frequently transacted within the privacy of a Roman house, the house itself was considered to be in the female-dominated sphere and therefore was usually controlled by the matron.⁴⁴ Roman matrons were in charge of rearing and educating children, supervising slaves, and the day-to-day operation of running the affairs of the house. In addition, their domestic power enabled women to influence matters of commerce and politics through their male family members.⁴⁵ In assisting her husband,

⁴² Bauman 1992: 84; Virlouvet 2001: 73. Cicero refers to Fulvia specifically here (*Att.* 14.12), but only to Antony in a letter written a mere three weeks later (*Att.* 14.19.2, *M. Antonius ad me tantum de Cloelius rescripsit*).

⁴³ Cluett 1998: 71; Ellis 2000: 171. According to Ellis, the main difference between Greek and Roman homes was that "even the richest aristocratic houses functioned as offices and political bases for their owners," Ellis 2000: 188.

⁴⁴ Ellis 2000: 171; Hillard 1989: 167.

⁴⁵ Cluett 1998: 72.

Fulvia may have acted as a supportive wife of a consul.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, Cicero complains in part that she is playing a man's role instead of the traditional one of a woman:

at vero huius domi inter quasilla pendebatur aurum, numerabatur pecunia; una in domo omnes quorum intererat totum imperium populi Romani nundinabantur.

but at the house of this man gold was constantly being weighed out in the spinning rooms, and money was being counted; and in one house everyone who was interested was being sold the whole empire of the Roman people (*Phil.* 3.10).

The reference to the counting of gold in the spinning rooms, *quasilla*, is sarcastic if one believes Plutarch's description of Fulvia as a woman "who took no thought to spinning or housekeeping" (*Vit. Ant.* 10.5, οὐ ταλασίαν οὐδ οἰκουρίαν φρονοῦν γύναιον). Plutarch, however, was almost certainly familiar with Cicero's *Philippics*,⁴⁷ and thus we cannot be sure if Fulvia did indeed have this reputation amongst her contemporaries, or if Plutarch perhaps described her thus because of this passage from the *Philippics*. The activity of spinning was considered to be one of the primary duties for a traditional Roman woman. These economic transactions were therefore a cause for criticism of Antony, given that he was apparently acquiring great wealth from such affairs (*Cic. Phil.* 5.11). The motif of buying and selling underlines the greediness of Antony, and perhaps also of Fulvia. Not only does Cicero advocate that Antony put his own selfish desires before the interests of the state, but that his selfish desires actually work to the detriment of the state.

⁴⁶ Fischer 1999: 57.

⁴⁷ Pelling 1979: 89; Russell 1998: 122.

There is a further reference to public affairs being conducted in Antony's house in one of Cicero's letters to Atticus. In mid-April 44 he writes that "all the grain in Rome is being conveyed to Antony's house" (*Att.* 14.3.1, *Romae domum ad Antonium frumentum omne portari*). Although Cicero does not explicitly say to Atticus that Fulvia is involved in the commerce, he reports the rumour that business is being conducted in Antony's home. Cicero, however, believes this rumour to be "certainly false" (*Att.* 14.3.1, *πανικὸν certe*) because Atticus had not reported the news himself to Cicero. Nevertheless, several months later, Cicero gives her an active role in such dealings when he accuses her of such activities in the *Philippics*. By saying that the business was conducted in the spinning rooms, Cicero suggests that she cast aside her feminine duties in order to control her husband's affairs. Here, it is not Fulvia whom Cicero seeks to attack, but her control over Antony, although in so doing he portrays her as having an active role in the management of these affairs.

Cicero also refers to such business and profits in the *Fifth Philippic*:

quid? illi tot immanes quaestus ferendine quos M. Antoni exhaustit domus? decreta falsa vendebat, regna, civitates, immunitates in aes accepta pecunia iubebat incidi... calebant in interiore aedium parte totius rei publicae nundinae; mulier sibi felicior quam viris auctionem provinciarum regnorumque faciebat; restituebantur exsules quasi lege sine lege.

What? Are those so much enormous profits to be endured which the house of M. Antony has emptied? He was selling fake decrees, kingdoms, citizenships, and having accepted money he ordered exemptions from burdens to be cut on bronze... In the inner chambers of his home markets of the whole Republic thrived; his wife, more fortunate for herself than for her husbands, was holding an auction of provinces and kingdoms: exiles were restored without any law, as if by law (5.11).

The recall of exiles almost certainly refers to the reinstatement of Sex. Cloelius, the friend and chief henchman of Fulvia's first husband, Clodius. Sex. Cloelius was assigned the larger part of the blame for the decision to burn Clodius' body with the Curia, and was accordingly exiled by Caesar.⁴⁸ Like Fulvia, Cloelius is never actually named in the *Philippics*, perhaps because Cicero did not want to lend him dignity by preserving his name.⁴⁹ His return in 44 can be seen as evidence for both the survival of Clodian politics and as a possible example of Fulvia's influence,⁵⁰ a suggestion that is reinforced by the placement of the phrase *restituebantur exsules* ("exiles were restored") immediately after the reference to Fulvia's auctions. However, it also must be noted that Antony recalled most of those exiled by Caesar (Cic. *Phil.* 2.98). Nevertheless, this mass recall of exiles does not necessarily lessen the possibility of her influence, given that it appears that it was Cloelius who was the first to be recalled (Cic. *Phil.* 1.3). It is logical to assume that his return was a matter of some importance and that it could be an indication of her political influence over Antony. It is equally possible that she was acting under her husband's instructions while he was away.

It was not so much Fulvia's marriage to Clodius, whom, it must be remembered, Cicero vehemently despised, that caused him to portray her so negatively but rather, it was her association with Antony, whom Cicero viciously attacked.⁵¹ It is

⁴⁸, Morstein-Marx 2004: 2; Vanderbroeck 1987: 55. For a recent discussion of the debate regarding Cloelius' name (i.e. whether it was Cloelius or Clodius), see Shackleton Bailey 1960: 41-42. For a recent discussion of his social status, see Damon 1992: 227-250. For a contrary view of Cloelius' status, see Tatum 1999: 115.

⁴⁹ Ramsey 2003: 88.

⁵⁰ Welch 1995: 192.

⁵¹ Wooten states that the Romans believed that characters of an individual were shared by families, Wooten 1983: 143. Cicero attacked Lucius as the worst character of his

tempting to make the assumption that Cicero's attacks on her, no matter how outrageous, contained at least an element of truth.⁵² It is possible that the accusations of her control over economic affairs outside her home were based on commonly known activities and so may indicate that she was politically active to a degree remarkable for a Roman matron.

Just as Cicero criticizes Antony for letting his wife control the affairs of the state, he also attacks him for the presence of women at the military camps in Brundisium. Cicero repeatedly refers to Fulvia's presence at Brundisium with Antony in 44 (*Phil.* 3.4; 5.22; 13.18), and he also mentions three times the presence of Antony's mistress Cytheris on journeys with him in 49 (*Phil.* 2.58; 2.61; 2.62). That Cicero makes such repeated accusations against Antony on this point, i.e. that women accompanied him in the military camps, suggests that it was not a common or accepted practice during the late Republic. Indeed, the only other probable example of such a thing occurring during this period concerns Antony's own mother Julia (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 9.7), a most respected woman.⁵³ Cicero states that Julia travelled with Antony while he was tribune in 49 (*Phil.* 2.58). That Cicero does not accuse him of violating customs in this instance may suggest that it was not necessarily the mere presence of a woman accompanying her husband or son on campaign that was deplorable, but rather, the character of that woman.⁵⁴ By the period of the early Empire, there were

brothers (*Phil.* 11.10) Thus, Lucius and Fulvia are deplorable because of their association with Antony.

⁵² Babcock 1965: 22; Fischer 1999: 32. This is especially true with respect to the issue of Deiotarus' kingdom since it is confirmed in a letter to Atticus (14.12.1).

⁵³ Huzar 1978: 21.

⁵⁴ Cf. Welch 1995: 196 n. 17.

numerous examples of wives and families accompanying commanders on campaign (e.g. Agrippina Maior and her husband Germanicus, Plancina and her husband Piso [Tac. *Ann.* 1.40; 2.55]).⁵⁵

Before considering Cicero's accusations in regard to Fulvia's presence at the military camp in Brundisium, it is worth taking into account what he has to say in this regard about Antony's mistress Cytheris.⁵⁶ In the *Second Philippic*, Cicero attacks Antony on the grounds that he brought his mistress, Cytheris, a mime, to Brundisium in 49: "you came to Brundisium, in the lap and indeed arms of your little mime... for what soldier was there that did not see that woman at Brundisium?" (*Phil.* 2.61, *venisti Brundisium, in sinum quidem et in complexum tuae mimulae... quis enim miles fuit qui Brundisi illam non viderit?*). In this passage in particular (2.61), the use of the diminutive *mimulae* belittles her even further.⁵⁷ Antony's lictors supposedly surrounded his mistress (Cic. *Phil.* 2.58). Cicero again attacks Antony by saying that he was accompanied on his travels by a mime (*Phil.* 2.62). In Cicero's view, the presence of his mistress at a military camp should have been embarrassing for Antony (*Phil.* 2.61). Not only that, but Cytheris' status as an actress should have been a further source of embarrassment to Antony because she would have been tainted by the infamy associated with her profession.⁵⁸ Antony does not seem to have been bothered

⁵⁵ However, despite these prominent examples, not all Romans believed that this was proper (e.g. Tac. *Ann.* 3.33).

⁵⁶ Cicero refers to her occupation on many occasions (*Phil.* 2.20; 2.58; 2.61; 2.69).

⁵⁷ Lacey 1986: 202; Ramsey 2003: 249.

⁵⁸ Lacey 1986: 202. In fact, Lacey also notes that Antony's embarrassment was derived solely from his association with an actress and mentions nothing about the presence of a woman at Brundisium. Cf. Hall 2002: 289; Ramsey 2003: 245; Traina 2001: 89; Williams 1999: 71. According to Hillard, mimes had the lowest reputation

by either. As Cicero presents it, Antony violated traditional Roman values and customs both as a commander and as a husband by cavorting with his little actress, whom Cicero mockingly describes as Antony's lawful wife (*Phil.* 2.20; 2.58; 2.69) in front of the soldiers. This 'marriage' to a mistress of low status demeans Antony even further.⁵⁹ Since he does not make the obvious accusation against Antony that he brought both his wife and his mistress to Brundisium, it must be assumed that only Cytheris visited Brundisium in 49 while Antony was tribune.⁶⁰

Although Cicero makes reference to Fulvia's presence at Brundisium, he does not do so in the same way nor with the same purpose as he did with Cytheris. In contrast to the case of Cytheris, where the accusation against Antony was that he had brought a mistress of particularly low status to a military camp, the accusations against Antony for bringing his wife to Brundisium related to a specific event at this camp. It is important to note that this is the only occasion when Fulvia is said to have accompanied her husband on campaign. In three different speeches (*Phil.* 3.4; 5.22; 13.18), Cicero uses Antony's execution of the mutinous soldiers at Brundisium in October 44, and particularly Fulvia's presence at this punishment, as one means of attacking him. No doubt Cicero intended to call into question Antony's leadership

of actors since they were often prostitutes and performed in the nude, Hillard 1992: 52. Traina states that a *mima* was synonymous with *meretrix*, Traina 2001: 90.

⁵⁹ Pelling 1988: 139; Ramsey 2003: 246. More will be said on this below.

⁶⁰ It is surprising that Cicero does not bother to mention what Fulvia's reaction to Antony's affair with Cytheris was. This is particularly striking to the modern reader since descriptions of Antony's later affairs (e.g. with Glaphyra and Cleopatra) recorded in other sources emphasize the jealous nature of Fulvia's character. Martial, 11.20, ascribes the cause of the Perusine War to Fulvia's jealousy over Antony's affair with Glaphyra. Appian and Plutarch assign the cause of the war to Fulvia's jealousy over Cleopatra, and that she was "moved by a woman's jealousy" (*App. B. Civ.* 5.3.19, γυναικός τι παθοῦσα ἢ Φουλβία; *Plut. Vit. Ant.* 30.4).

ability and to undermine his relationship with his soldiers. The repeated association of Fulvia with this incident was designed to heighten the outrage of the audience when they were told that not only did Antony punish Roman soldiers with decimation, but he did so in the presence of his wife. Fulvia may have received some of the blame if she was present at both the soldiers' camp and the punishment of the mutinous soldiers.⁶¹

In the first passage, from the *Third Philippic*, Cicero writes:

quippe qui in hospitis tectis Brundisi fortissimos viros optimosque civis iugulari iusserit; quorum ante pedes eius morientium sanguine os uxoris respersum esse constabat.

A man, who under the roof of his host at Brundisium, had ordered so many most brave men and best citizens to be murdered; and as she stood by the face of his wife was sprinkled with the blood of those dying before her feet (*Phil.* 3.4).

The citizens who were executed are described positively, and in the superlative, *fortissimos...optimos*, to emphasize the horror of Antony's use of the punishment of execution on Roman soldiers,⁶² which is made all the more tragic because the soldiers are said to have been the bravest and best citizens. The fact that Cicero specifically mentions the splattering of blood on Fulvia herself adds to the depiction of her as a most cruel and bloodthirsty woman.⁶³ It is intriguing that Cicero alleges that the executions did not take place in the camp, where one would expect, but "at the house

⁶¹ Delia 1991: 200.

⁶² This punishment for the mutinous legions was decimation, which was common in the Republic (App. *B. Civ.* 1.14.118; 3.7.43; Polyb. 6.38).

⁶³ Fischer 1999: 33; Münzer 1900: 7.281. Fulvia's proximity to the executions is a stark contrast to her notable absence the night Clodius was murdered, a fact which implies that if Clodius had intended to kill Milo, as Cicero claims, he wanted to spare his wife from such a scene. Now, however, Fulvia is portrayed as eager to witness death.

of [Antony's] host" (*Phil.* 3.4, *in hospitibus tectis*). Once again, Cicero, by placing clearly masculine activities (i.e. military discipline) within a domestic setting, suggests that Fulvia was a woman who did not know her place. Furthermore, it might also be intended to suggest that she had some part in the decision to execute the mutinous soldiers.⁶⁴

In the *Fifth Philippic*, Cicero again condemns Antony for the executions:

cum eius promissis legiones fortissimae reclamassent, domum ad se venire iussit centuriones quos bene sentire de re publica cognoverat eosque ante pedes suos uxorisque suae, quam secum gravis imperator ad exercitum duxerat, iugulari coegit.

When those bravest legions had cried out against his promises he ordered centurions whom he thought felt favourable to the Republic to come to him at his house and then he ordered them to be murdered before his own feet and those of his wife whom this serious commander had taken with him to the army (5.22).

As in the passage from the *Third Philippic*, the accusation that Fulvia accompanied Antony to the army at Brundisium is used by Cicero to attack his opponent. That she witnessed the execution of centurions from bravest legions only gave more ammunition to him. He emphasizes with heavy sarcasm the disreputable nature of this act. His description of Antony as *gravis imperator*, when taken in the context of a woman's presence on campaign, imply Antony's offence. This stands in sharp contrast to the emotional tone of the description of the executions.⁶⁵ Cicero juxtaposes his reference to Antony as a serious commander with an action that obviously does not become one who should display Roman *gravitas*.

⁶⁴ For this opinion see Virioux 2001: 73; Welch 1995: 193. Her presence does indicate, however, that Fulvia approved of and maybe even endorsed the punishment, Fischer 1999: 33.

⁶⁵ Wooten 1983: 113.

Cicero's final reference to Fulvia in connection with this incident at

Brundisium occurs in his *Thirteenth Philippic*:

Brundisi in sinu non modo avarissimae, sed etiam crudelissimae uxoris delectos Martiae legionis centuriones trucidavit.

At Brundisium in the lap of his wife, who was not only the most greedy but also the most cruel, he massacred the chosen centurions of the Martian legion (13.18).

The reader will no doubt notice that Cicero's wording in this passage (*Brundisi in sinu non modo avarissimae*) closely resembles the passage discussed above in connection with the accusation that Antony brought Cytheris to Brundisium in 49 (*Phil.* 2.61, *venisti Brundisium, in sinum... tuae mimulae*). Here, he states that Antony was "at Brundisium in the lap of his wife" (*Phil.* 13.18, *Brundisi in sinu... uxoris*). This public display of affection, rather than Fulvia's presence at the executions, is the main thrust of Cicero's accusation in this passage. As already noted, Cicero frequently describes Antony's excessive susceptibility to the influence of those nearest to him, be it Curio, Cytheris, or Fulvia (cf. *Phil.* 1.33, *quamquam solent domestici depravare non numquam* ["sometimes those in his household are accustomed to corrupt the man"]).⁶⁶ Cicero again suggests that Fulvia exerted a significant amount of influence over Antony.⁶⁷ As in the previous two passages, he uses the superlative in the description of

⁶⁶ It was common in oratory to declare that an opponent was an agent of others, Hillard 1989: 166. King notes that *domestici* refers especially to Fulvia, King 1908: 18. Ramsey states that the plural suggests a reference to both Fulvia and Lucius, Ramsey 2003: 145-146. It is probable that *domestici* refers to Antony's companions as well.

⁶⁷ However, it is also probable that this suggests that Antony and Fulvia were a publicly affectionate couple, which was similarly inappropriate, Griffin 1985: 41; Lacey 1986: 215; Virioux 2001: 71; Welch 1995: 188. Cicero also suggests that, because of his excessive displays of affection, Antony was effeminate (see *Cic. Phil.*

those executed, in this case describing them as the best (*optimi*).⁶⁸ The laudatory superlative is made more effective by the contrast provided with the derogatory superlative description of Fulvia as the most greedy and cruel woman (*avarissimae* and *crudelissimae*). Even more so, the word *optimi* may have political connotations, as it evokes the long-standing conflict between the *populares* and the *optimates*.⁶⁹

Now that we have considered the first two methods employed by Cicero to attack Antony through Fulvia, i.e. her alleged interference in affairs of the state and her involvement in the punishment of the mutinous soldiers at Brundisium, it is time to discuss a third method in Cicero's attack, namely, Fulvia's status and general character. In particular, Cicero attacks her on the grounds that she is wealthy and cruel. It is worth pointing out that Cicero is the only ancient source who makes a point of specifically referring to Fulvia as a wealthy woman. In the *Third Philippic*, he says:

*sed si Aricinam uxorem non probas, cur probas Tusculanam?
quamquam huius sanctissimae feminae atque optimae pater, M. Atius
Balbus, in primis honestus, praetorius fuit: tuae coniugis, bonae
feminae, locupletis quidem certe, Bambalio quidam pater, homo nullo*

2.77-78), Williams 1999: 141, 227. Chamoux states that this episode is recounted by Cicero to emphasize Antony's ridiculous childishness, Chamoux 1986: 89. Cf. Russell 1998: 127. According to the ancient viewpoint, Antony's excessive devotion to his wife and his mistress would have been seen as an indication of the tyrannical tendencies that Cicero accuses him of. Both references serve to show that Antony let his private feelings outweigh his sense of public duty, and thus was not in control of his own emotions. It was a popular technique, however, to state that an opponent was not in charge of his own unhealthy passions, Hillard 1989: 166.

⁶⁸ However, the frequent use of superlatives is stock amplification, Craig 2007.

⁶⁹ The *populares* supported the masses; the *optimates*, the elite. In Cicero's view, the *optimates* stood for the authority of the senate, the good of the Republic and the law (cf. Cic. *Sest.* 97), whereas the *populares* have been described by him as selfish demagogues leading wretched men (*Phil.* 13.16). Not surprisingly, Clodius was the paradigm of a *popularis* leader, Fischer 1999: 57; Tatum 1999: 1. For a concise discussion of the *optimates* and *populares* see Tatum 1999: 1-7.

numero. nihil illo contemptius qui propter haesitantiam linguae stuporemque cordis cognomen ex contumelia traxerit.

But if you do not approve of a wife from Aricia, why do you approve of a Tusculan woman? Even though the father of this most virtuous woman, M. Atius Balbus, honoured among the foremost of men, was a praetorian: but Bambalio was the father of your wife, a good woman, certainly a rich one, a man with no account. Nothing is lower than that man, who got his cognomen as an insult, on account of the stammering of his tongue and his dullness of mind (3.16).⁷⁰

As noted in Chapter One, Fulvia was from a distinguished plebeian family, albeit one which had fallen into recent decline.⁷¹ According to Babcock, Fulvia was likely the last surviving member of both her mother's and father's families, and as such, she may have inherited the wealth of both families.⁷² Nevertheless, the topic of Fulvia's wealth is a problematic one which has produced significant differences of scholarly opinion.⁷³ This disagreement is a result of the lack of clarity regarding the financial status of her inheritances. It is possible that Cicero is describing Bambalio as a man of little worth, and that as a result Fulvia would not have received significant wealth from her father. Therefore, what may be implied is that her own wealth was acquired from illicit activities, e.g. of the type which we have already seen Cicero accuse her.⁷⁴ However, he does not explicitly state this, and seems rather to be mocking Bambalio's person instead of his wealth. It is more likely that Cicero is saying that Bambalio was a man

⁷⁰ Fischer 1999: 10-11. Cf. Dio, 45.47.4: Similarly, Dio describes Antony as ridiculous because he restored many who were exiled by Caesar, and was fond of his father-in-law, who was a notorious stutterer (καὶ τὸν Βαμβάλιον τὸν καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς ἐπωνυμίας ἐπιβόητον ἀγαπᾷ).

⁷¹ The Fulvii had not produced a consul since M. Fulvius Flaccus in 125, Broughton 1951: 510.

⁷² Babcock 1965: 5; Delia 1991: 197-8.

⁷³ Babcock states that Fulvia was wealthy, and that her riches were an important factor in her marriages, Babcock 1965: 4-5. For the contrary view see Delia 1991: 197-8.

⁷⁴ Delia 1991: 198; Welch 1995: 197 n. 40.

with no rank, thereby insulting Bambalio's family because he was not known to have held office.⁷⁵ As for her mother's family, Valerius Maximus says that Fulvia's maternal grandfather Tuditanus was extravagantly wealthy (and insane for that matter) and had willed his wealth to his daughter Sempronia (Val. Max. 7.8.1).⁷⁶ Thus, it is possible that Fulvia inherited significant amounts of money at least from her maternal family, and probably her paternal one as well.

Cicero's description of Fulvia as "a good woman, certainly a rich one" (*Phil.* 3.16, *bonae feminae, locupletis quidem certe*) appears to be sarcastic when it is taken in the context of the passage, in which Cicero contrasts Fulvia with the virtuous Atia, mother of Octavian. The reason why Fulvia's wealth is portrayed disapprovingly by Cicero is because it suggests that Antony married her for her fortune.⁷⁷ Antony supposedly had a debt of six million sesterces (Cic. *Phil.* 2.45) at the time he married her, and consequently Babcock has argued that he may have needed her wealth in

⁷⁵ Babcock 1965: 4.

⁷⁶ Babcock 1965: 4; Delia 1991: 207-208 n. 5; Fischer 1999: 11; Welch 1995: 197 n. 40. However, there is a textual discrepancy regarding whether the text says *filiam* or *filium*. This discrepancy obviously makes a difference to the meaning of Valerius Maximus' passage. The two most reliable manuscripts, *L* and *A*, both have *filium*, whereas *filiam* appears in the margin of *A*. A reading of *filium* would mean that Sempronia's husband, Bambalio, was Tuditanus' primary heir. Scholars have doubted the manuscript reading because an inheritor, as long as he was a legitimate son of the deceased, could not be challenged in court. Furthermore, Babcock states that a daughter could also not be challenged. He believes that *filium* should be amended to read *Fulviam*. There is, however, no reason to believe that Tuditanus would overlook his daughter Sempronia to name his grand-daughter or his son-in-law as the primary heir. There is also no reason to not suspect that Valerius Maximus erred when he wrote that Ti. Longus attempted to annul Tuditanus' will. Babcock does not note that Ti. Longus was unsuccessful in his case (Val. Max. 7.8.1).

⁷⁷ Ironically enough, Plutarch states that Cicero married his ward Publilia to cover his many debts, amounting over many tens of thousands (Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 41.4-5; Dio 46.18.3).

order to maintain his excessive lifestyle as well as his political ambitions.⁷⁸ This debt adds to Cicero's portrait of Antony as a man who was unable to exercise restraint or independence, in that he was financially dependent on his wife.⁷⁹ However, there are some scholars who present a more positive view of Fulvia by arguing that her wealth was not the motivation for their marriage.⁸⁰

Despite the wealth which it seems that Fulvia possessed, it, according to Cicero, was simply not enough for her. In the *Philippics*, Cicero describes Fulvia as a greedy, if not the greediest, woman (2.113, 2.95, 6.4, 13.18). He goes about this attack on her character in two ways. First, except to accuse her as greedy and cruel, he does not comment directly upon her qualities, but rather, describes the illicit economic activities being conducted, presumably under Fulvia's control, from within Antony's home. The implication to Cicero's audience is clear: Fulvia, despite her inherited wealth, is a woman so consumed by her avarice that she auctions the affairs of the state to the highest bidder for her own personal gain.

Cicero, however, does not leave the allegation of Fulvia's greed merely implied, but directly accuses her of it on many occasions, each one more vehement than the last. He begins with the thinly veiled barb that Fulvia is: "the least greedy wife" (2.113, *minime avara coniunx*). The mocking nature of the compliment is

⁷⁸ Babcock 1965: 11; Huzar 1986: 99.

⁷⁹ Corbeill 2002: 205, 209; Tatum 1999: 66. Romans tended to condemn any sort of excessive behaviour. Russell states that control was integral to masculinity, Russell 1998: 130.

⁸⁰ Delia writes: "it is unlikely that Fulvia's spouses had earmarked her wealth for their own political advancement, and Cicero's reiterated criticisms that all three were spendthrifts should be dismissed as stock routine," Delia 1991: 198. For a different interpretation, see Austin 1960: 100; Babcock 1965: 5, 9, 11.

evident when it is considered that Cicero had earlier accused Fulvia of overseeing illicit transactions from Antony's home (*Phil.* 2.95). In the *Sixth Philippic*, Cicero abandons sarcasm in favour of a direct approach. He calls Fulvia "a most greedy woman" (*Phil.* 6.4, *mulieri... avarissimae*). In the *Thirteenth Philippic*, Cicero's invective against her reaches its height when he calls her "not only the most greedy, but also the most cruel" (13.18, *non modo avarissimae, sed etiam crudelissimae*). Similarly, he describes Antony as a "most cruel enemy" (*Phil.* 5.21, *crudelissimum hostem*) in reference to the incident at Brundisium (*Phil.* 5.22). In describing Antony as cruel, Cicero then taints Fulvia with her husband's cruelty. It is striking to the modern reader how frequently Cicero uses the word *crudelis* to describe Antony.⁸¹ Fulvia's place at Brundisium suggests that it is her cruelty that leads not only to her attendance but to her close proximity to the executions. This charge is later repeated by Appian in his narrative of her actions during the proscriptions (*App. B. Civ.* 4.4.29).

A fourth means by which Cicero attacks Antony through Fulvia is by accusing her of adultery. Cicero uses this standard method of attack against her on two occasions, but, oddly enough, the accusations date back to her marriages with Clodius and Curio, and her supposed lover then was none other than Antony himself. Except for these two brief references in Cicero's *Philippics*, Fulvia is nowhere else accused of adultery in the surviving sources.

⁸¹ For only a few of the references by Cicero to Antony as cruel, see *Phil.* 2.71; 2.99; 3.3; 3.4; 3.28; 4.3; 4.14; 5.21; 5.42; 12.9; 13.18; 13.19. This frequency suggests that Cicero is using the word somewhat liberally. It should be noted that accusations of cruelty against men were standard and therefore suggests exaggeration, Tatum 2006.

The first reference occurs in a passage in the *Second Philippic* in which Cicero implies that Antony had an affair with Fulvia while she was married to Clodius: “he was the torch that set light to all of Clodius’ conflagrations, and even at this period he was up to something in Clodius’ house – he best understands what I say” (*Phil.* 2.48, *eius omnium incendiorum fax, cuius etiam domi iam tum quiddam molitus est. quid dicam ipse optime intellegit*). Cicero does not state outright that Antony had an affair with Fulvia, but he does imply such a relationship. On the other hand, when one takes into account his accusation of Antony’s sexual relationship with Curio (*Phil.* 2.44, 2.45), it is more likely that Cicero is implying that Antony had an affair with Clodius. Regardless of which is the case, he is clearly trying to link Antony with another most hated enemy, Clodius.⁸² His description of Antony sneaking into Clodius’ house sounds similar to the infamous Bona Dea scandal of 62, when Clodius stole secretly into Caesar’s home in order to sleep with Caesar’s wife.

A second reference, also from the *Second Philippic*, has been interpreted by certain scholars⁸³ to imply that both Antony and Fulvia had affairs during previous marriages, when Fulvia was married to Curio and Antony was married to his cousin Antonia:

omnibus eum contumeliis onerasti quem patris loco, si ulla in te pietas esset, colere debebas. filiam eius, sororem tuam, eiecisti, alia condicione quaesita et ante perspecta. non est satis: probri insimulasti pudicissimam feminam.

⁸² Tatum 1999: 78, 277 n. 117. Cicero tries to present both Antony and Clodius as citizens as traitorous as Catiline.

⁸³ Babcock 1965: 13; Huzar 1986: 99; Viriouvét 2001: 71; Welch 1995: 192. For the contrary view, see Fischer 1999: 25.

You loaded him with all types of insult, whom you ought to have honoured in place of a father to you, if you might have any piety. You cast out his daughter, your own cousin, having already looked out and provided yourself before with another woman. That was not enough: you accused a most chaste woman of unchastity (2.99).

The reader will note that Cicero only alleges that Antony had an affair with his future wife, Fulvia, while married to Antonia, and that Antony, in order to be free to marry her, accused Antonia of infidelity and divorced her. There may be some truth in this, as some scholars have suspected that Antony married Fulvia almost immediately upon divorcing Antonia in 47 or 46.⁸⁴ This hasty marriage has led Babcock, Huzar, and Welch to suggest that she was the cause or even the instigator behind Antony's divorce.⁸⁵ Cicero makes no mention of Curio in this passage, and, given that Curio died on campaign in Africa in 49, it seems more probable, if one accepts that an affair took place, that Fulvia would have been Curio's widow at the time. Moreover, given that Cicero accuses Antony and Curio of a sexual relationship (*Phil.* 2.45), the credibility of Cicero's later accusation of Fulvia's adultery with Antony while married to Curio is minimized. It also must be noted that according to some modern scholars charges of adultery and homosexuality were stock accusations in oratory, satire and graffiti, and may not be entirely reliable.⁸⁶

Up to this point, Cicero makes Fulvia out to be a powerful woman who knew how to use her assets and to influence her husband's to her fullest advantage.

⁸⁴ Babcock 1965: 7 n. 14; Fischer 1999: 27; Huzar 1978: 26; Huzar 1986: 99; Welch 1995: 182.

⁸⁵ Babcock 1965: 13; Huzar 1986: 99; Welch 1995: 192.

⁸⁶ Adams 1982: 118; Corbeil 2002: 209; Delia 1991: 200. Wooten says that: "charges of immorality and greed establish an argument of probability based on character," Wooten 1983: 86.

According to this interpretation, her power would have reached its peak through her influence on her third husband Antony. Nevertheless, Cicero also uses her previous marriages to Clodius and Curio to his rhetorical advantage. In particular, he makes much of the fact that both Clodius and Curio suffered untimely and violent deaths. Cicero is the only ancient source to use Fulvia's ill fortune as a means of attack, and he does so repeatedly. In the *Second Philippic*, he sarcastically suggests that Clodius and Curio died because they were married to Fulvia, thus implying that she is cursed (a serious accusation for the superstitious Romans). Cicero states:

quis autem meum consulatum praeter te et P. Clodium qui vituperaret inventus est? cuius quidem tibi fatum, sicuti C. Curioni, manet, quoniam id domi tuae est quod fuit illorum utrique fatale.

Who ever found fault with my consulship except yourself and P. Clodius? Whose doom certainly awaits you, as it awaited C. Curio, since there is that thing in your house which was fatal to them both (*Phil.* 2.11).

Interestingly enough, she is referred to by the neuter pronoun *id*, which emphasizes the derogatory tone. Cicero does not suggest that Fulvia killed her husbands, but rather that she brought with her bad, or fatal (*fatale*) luck.⁸⁷ He predicts, or perhaps more accurately he hopes, that she will likewise bring about Antony's death.

There is, however, a different interpretation of this passage that has been put forward. Babcock argues that in this instance the word *fatale* (*Cic. Phil.* 2.11) has a possible double meaning. It is commonly understood to mean 'concerned with

⁸⁷ Cicero also refers to Fulvia's bad luck in the *Fifth Philippic*. He states that Fulvia "was more fortunate for herself than her husbands" (*Phil.* 5.11, *mulier sibi felicior quam viris*), which is also an obvious reference to the early deaths of Clodius and Curio.

destiny' or 'ordained by fate.'⁸⁸ Fate, however, is not necessarily negative, but rather something that cannot be controlled. Babcock suggests that *fatalis* implies that she was the cause of her husband's careers and successes.⁸⁹ This interpretation corresponds with Cicero's presentation of her as active in the management of the affairs of the state through her influence over her husband. This first reference to Fulvia's fatal luck (Cic. *Phil.* 2.11) is preceded by a strong defence of Cicero's own consulship, in which he contrasts his behaviour as consul with that of Antony in 44. Cicero claims that he did nothing during his consulship that was not first decided by the counsel and authority of the senate (*Phil.* 2.11). In contrast, he presents Antony's actions as deplorable, and yet, it is not Antony alone who controls his own affairs. Since Cicero has attributed to Fulvia a considerable amount of control in the affairs of the state he is also attacking her.

Cicero again mentions the ill-fortune of Fulvia towards the end of the *Second Philippic*. This second reference shares the same theme as the first, namely, Cicero's desire for Antony's death. Cicero claims that the Roman people hate Antony's leadership and that, having avenged the tyranny of Caesar by his murder, they were now eager to re-establish the Republic:

etenim ista tua minime avara coniunx quam ego sine contumelia describo nimium diu debet populo Romano tertiam pensionem.

For truly, that least greedy wife of yours, whom I describe without insult, has been too long owing her third payment to the Roman people (*Phil.* 2.113).

⁸⁸ Glare 1982: sv *fatalis*, 1a.

⁸⁹ Babcock 1965: 32. It could also be translated to say that Fulvia was "acting as the instrument of fate," Glare 1982: sv *fatalis*, 4a.

This passage is clearly sarcastic. The phrase *quam ego sine contumelia describo* is conventional for expressing respect: but it is out of place in a comment that implicates Fulvia in the death of her first two husbands.⁹⁰ According to Cicero, she owes a third payment to the Roman people.⁹¹ Thus, the deaths of her husbands are her gift to the Republic.

It is apparent that Cicero initially includes references to Fulvia in his *Philippics* to attack Antony. There are five distinct accusations which Cicero makes against her in order to damage the reputation of Antony. First, he claims that she conducts the business of the Republic from Antony's house, thus usurping Antony's role as consul. Second, Cicero attacks Antony for bringing women on campaign with him, women who continue to control him even in the military camps. Third, he criticizes Antony for marrying a woman who is greedy and cruel. Fourth, he accuses Antony of adultery with Fulvia before they were married. And finally, he accuses Fulvia of bad luck and hopes that Antony will meet the same fate as her two previous husbands, Clodius and Curio, and die an untimely death.

However, as the references to Fulvia increased in hostility, it is also apparent that these veiled and blatant attacks were against Fulvia herself. The contexts of these attacks suggest that she enjoyed a highly active and influential political and economic role in 44-43. Furthermore, the references to her domination of Antony suggest that her position was important enough to be commonly known to her contemporaries, and

⁹⁰ King 1908: 34; Ramsey 2003: 327.

⁹¹ This payment is a reference to dowries, which were usually paid in three instalments, King 1868: 99; Shuckburgh 1890: 74. Lacey 1986: 240.

therefore he was able to use it in his *Philippics* against Antony.⁹² In summary, it is possible that the majority of these attacks towards Fulvia stemmed from credible or commonly known truths or perceptions.⁹³

Nepos and Fulvia

Cornelius Nepos, writing after the Augustan settlement of the year 27,⁹⁴ is unique among all the ancient authors in his description of Fulvia.⁹⁵ In his *Life of Atticus*, he describes her as a victim of the hostility of Antony's rivals in 43, first in early February 43 when a state of tumult was declared, and again in late April 43 when he was declared a public enemy (Nep. *Att.* 9.2).⁹⁶ The enemies of Antony tried to profit from the situation by attempting to rob Fulvia and to destroy her children (Nep. *Att.* 9.2, *uxorem Fulviam omnibus rebus spoliare cupiebant, liberos etiam extinguere parabant* ["they desired to strip his wife Fulvia of all things, and were even preparing to kill the children"]). Fulvia was forced to seek assistance from Cicero's good friend and correspondent, Atticus.⁹⁷ He was a kind and generous man who gave her financial support and pled her case in courts against her debt collectors (Nep. *Att.* 9.4).

⁹² Fischer 1999: 32. Cf. Cic. *Phil.* 3.35, Cicero states that the members of Antony's entire household were commonly known.

⁹³ Babcock 1965: 22.

⁹⁴ Geiger 1980: 113; Millar 1988: 40, 42; Roebuck 1987: 2.

⁹⁵ Horsfall states that no account of Fulvia parallels that of Nepos, Horsfall 1989: 76.

⁹⁶ Horsfall states that due to her active participation in Antony's affairs in 44 (e.g. Cic. *Phil.* 2.95), Fulvia was no innocent victim of persecution, Horsfall 1989: 76.

⁹⁷ On Atticus' political neutrality see Nep. *Att.* 6.1. Geiger 1980: 114; Horsfall 1989: 65, 69. Millar states that while Atticus "would never join any *factio* or *coitio*, he did in fact deploy his wealth repeatedly to assist individuals in public life who needed it," Millar 1988: 45.

In his biography of Atticus, Nepos gives some remarkable details about Fulvia. She must have had a degree of wealth, as she had purchased an estate in the time of her prosperity (*Att.* 9.5, *cum illa fundum secunda fortuna emisset indiem neque post calamitatem versuram facere potuisset* [“when that woman had bought an estate when she was fortunate and she had not been able to make payment after her disaster turned her fortunes”]).⁹⁸ More importantly for this study, Nepos states that Fulvia was plagued by lawsuits from those seeking to take advantage of Antony’s misfortunes (*Att.* 9.4). This information suggests that the threats to Antony’s family were real, as is the fact that they are also mentioned by Appian (*B. Civ.* 3.8.51). Nepos does not mention any of the stories that portray Fulvia as greedy, cruel or domineering. This representation of Fulvia is more favourable than any in the other contemporary sources.

Nepos’ account is perhaps understandable in the light of his purpose in writing the *Life of Atticus*, which was to show Atticus as “mindful and grateful...and to be a friend to mankind” (*Att.* 9.5, *quaestum memorem gratumque... sed hominibus...esse amicum*). In order to show Atticus’ kindness, Nepos described the situation that Fulvia faced when her husband was declared a public enemy. In Geiger’s opinion, this information is also not surprising given that Nepos seems to favour Antony rather than Octavian.⁹⁹ He may have felt the same way about Antony’s wife. As a personal

⁹⁸ Although Nepos does not indicate the extent of Fulvia’s estate, it is very likely that Fulvia was wealthy, given that it was rare for women to own a house, Ellis 2000: 178. For the view that Fulvia was wealthy, see above regarding Cic. *Phil.* 3.16 and Babcock 1965: 11. For the contrary view, see Delia 1991: 197-8; Welch 1995: 187.

⁹⁹ Geiger 1980: 114; Horsfall 1989: xv.

acquaintance of Atticus (Cic. *Att.* 16.5.5) Nepos may have even known Fulvia, and thus it is even possible that his references to her are based on a personal assessment.¹⁰⁰

Octavian's Epigram (Martial, 11.20)

In late 41, Octavian launched a propaganda war against Fulvia.¹⁰¹ Clearly, the senators, influential men, and also the soldiers were familiar with her name (App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51; 5.2.14), and not just as Antony's wife. Martial preserves an epigram (11.20) that he claims was written by Octavian, one which makes a specific causal connection between Fulvia's jealousy of Antony's extramarital affairs and the Perusine War. One might ask why Martial would include an epigram written by Octavian, or why Octavian himself would write a poem that is a blend of both politics and obscenity? In fact, epigrams were quite popular in the late Republic, and many of Octavian's contemporaries also wrote epigrams (e.g. Cicero, Asinius Pollio, Gallus, Hortensius and Brutus).¹⁰² It has been suggested that Martial sought to elevate the literary status of epigram.¹⁰³ Thus, by including an epigram written by the revered first Emperor, the genre is given a certain degree of credibility.

The author of this epigram, supposedly Octavian himself, also presents Fulvia, an older matron, as sexually attracted to Octavian, her own son-in-law (11.20.3-4). He was married to Claudia, Fulvia's daughter, for two years before he divorced her in 41 with a claim that she was still a virgin (Dio 48.5.3, ὥς καὶ παρθένον ἔτι οὔσαν).

¹⁰⁰ In fact, Nepos may have been critical of Cicero, Marshall 1985: 49, 58; Horsfall 1989: xv.

¹⁰¹ Bauman 1992: 87. Cf. Vell. Pat. 2.74.3; Mart. 11.20; Liv. *Per.* 125; *CIL* XI 6721.5.

¹⁰² Sullivan 1991: 95.

¹⁰³ Sullivan 1991: 95.

Octavian, on the other hand, is presented in this epigram as confident enough in his military capabilities that he resorts to war in order to avoid having sex with Fulvia (11.20.8). These few lines ascribe the start of the Perusine War to an ultimatum given by Fulvia to Octavian: to either have sex or fight her (Mart. 11.20.7). In this version, the Perusine War was a result of Fulvia's sexual passions, and a conflict between Octavian and Fulvia alone. The epigram itself reads:

*Caesaris Augusti lascivos, livide, versus
sex lege, qui tristis verba Latina legis:
'quod futuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi poenam
Fulvia constituit, se quoque uti futuam,
Fulviam ego ut futuam? Quid si me Manius oret
pedicem, faciam? Non puto, si sapiam.
'Aut futue, aut pugnemus' ait. Quid quod mihi vita
carior est ipsa mentula? Signa canant.'
Absolvis lepidos nimirum, Auguste, libellos
qui scis Romana simplicitate loqui.*

Read six lewd verses of Caesar Augustus,
o spiteful fellow, who with a sad face read words of Latin:
'Since Antony screws Glaphyra, Fulvia has appointed
this punishment for me, that I too should screw her.
Therefore do I screw Fulvia? What if Manius himself were to beg me to
bugger him, should I do it? I don't think so, if I have any brains.
'Either screw me, or fight' she says. What, is my life more
dear to me than my prick itself? Let the trumpets sound!
You justify for certain my pleasant little books, Augustus,
who knows how to speak with Roman frankness (Mart. 11.20).

Although Martial was not a contemporary of Octavian and Fulvia, but was writing during the reign of the emperor Domitian, Bardon has given a convincing study of the poem which argues that lines three to eight of the epigram were composed by a contemporary of Fulvia.¹⁰⁴ In terms of style, the bawdy and rude nature of the

¹⁰⁴ The evidence to support this conclusion is analyzed by Bardon, Bardon 1968: 18; Kay 1985: 111.

epigram suggests that it was written for soldiers on campaign.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, Bardon uses metrical and stylistic analysis to demonstrate that the lines of this epigram conform to the style of this period.¹⁰⁶ There is no evidence to contradict Martial's claim that the contemporary was Octavian (11.20.1, 9), nor is there any evidence to support it. The identification of Antony's mistress as Glaphyra also supports the association of the authorship to this specific period. The later Roman historians were to claim that Fulvia started the war out of jealousy over Antony's more famous affair with Cleopatra (App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.19; Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 30.4; Dio 48.28.2), but the epigram taunts Fulvia over Antony's affair with Glaphyra, his Cappadocian mistress (Mart. 11.20.3).

As a result of the time it took to send letters across the Mediterranean, people in Rome were probably unaware of Antony's most recent affair.¹⁰⁷ It is likely that in late 41, when the siege of Perusia began, news of Antony's affair with Cleopatra, which had begun in the summer of 41 (App. *B. Civ.* 5.1.8), had not yet reached Rome.¹⁰⁸ This information supports the conclusion that the epigram is contemporaneous with the beginnings of the siege of Perusia. Octavian's attacks against Fulvia, and Antony's treatment of Octavia are probably two of the reasons that prompted Octavian to give Livia and Octavia tribunician sacrosanctity in 35. Octavian

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Suet. *Iul.* 49, for six lines sung by soldiers following Caesar's chariot in his Gallic triumph.

¹⁰⁶ Bardon 1968: 20; Hallett 1977: 161; Kay 1985: 111.

¹⁰⁷ Delia 1991: 205; Kay 1985: 111; Pelling 1988: 199.

¹⁰⁸ Delia 1991: 205; Gabba 1970: xliii; Kay 1985: 111; Pelling 1988: 199.

may have seen the effectiveness of propaganda against women, and may have wanted to protect his wife and sister from such attacks.¹⁰⁹

Having discussed the arguments for dating this epigram to the period of the Perusine War, it is worth giving some thought as to how the modern scholar is to approach this as a piece of evidence. First of all, if indeed it was written by Octavian, why might he have done so? Was it intended as a form of literary propaganda, to be circulated amongst the Roman elite? Or was it a more private composition, composed perhaps as a means of passing the time during the siege? If, on the other hand, it was not written by Octavian, then why does it purport to be so? Why does the poet pretend to be Octavian, and in what ways does that change how his audience is meant to respond to this epigram? Unfortunately, it is impossible to state with any certainty who the true author of this epigram was, and thus, it is difficult to know why it was written and what function it was meant to serve. Consequently, it must be treated with caution when using it as evidence for Fulvia's role in the Perusine War.

The rude humour of the epigram is its most striking feature, but the political context is most relevant here.¹¹⁰ The epigram ascribes the cause of the war exclusively to Fulvia. It is also rare among the literary sources in that it accuses Fulvia of attempting to be sexually promiscuous. The extant ancient sources emphasize Fulvia's cruelty (Dio 47.8.2), and greed (Cic. *Phil.* 13.18; App. *B. Civ.* 4.4.29), but, with the exception of the two instances in Cicero's *Philippics* (2.48, 2.99), do not accuse her of

¹⁰⁹ See also Bauman 1981: 167, 180.

¹¹⁰ For the vulgar use of the words *futuo*, *pedico* and *mentula*, see Adams 1982: 121. Cf. Hallett 1977: 154-5; Kay 1985: 113.

adultery;¹¹¹ in fact, she is sometimes accused of excessive loyalty to her husbands (Cic. *Mil.* 28, 55; Nep. *Att.* 9.2; App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51). Octavian's epigram shows Fulvia as a woman totally overwhelmed by her emotions, who is desperate for sex. However, her passions were such that, if she could not have sex, then war would be an adequate substitute to meet her needs. Her obsession is emphasized by the use of the verb *futuo*, which contains insulting and vicious connotations.¹¹² Thus, Fulvia violently commands Octavian to have sex with her, with an even more aggressive alternative: war. This crude depiction downplays any other role that Fulvia might have had in the period before the war by relegating the cause of the war to her sexual hunger instead of actions on behalf of her husband. This aspect of Fulvia's character contradicts the image of her mustering legions in support for Lucius' cause against Octavian that is portrayed in some of the later sources (e.g. Flor. 2.16.2; Vell. Pat. 2.74.3; Val. Max. 3.5.3; App. *B. Civ.* 5.5.33; Dio 48.10.4).¹¹³ The poem also includes a brief reference to Manius,¹¹⁴ Antony's procurator (Mart. 11.20.5), but the epigram does not assign any responsibility for the cause of the war to him.¹¹⁵ On the contrary, Appian's narrative gives Manius a larger role and states that he "villainously" (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19, πανούργως) convinced Fulvia that only war would bring her husband back from Cleopatra.

¹¹¹ As well, see below for a sling bullet which accuses Fulvia of sexual promiscuity (*CIL* XI 6721.5). This is the crudest form of propaganda, and employed standard attacks (such as accusing women of promiscuity and men of effeminacy or physical oddities) and were sometimes baseless, Adams 1982: 118; Ramsey 2001: 159.

¹¹² Adams 1982: 119.

¹¹³ Fischer 1999: 54; Hallett 1977: 162; Kay 1985: 111.

¹¹⁴ Unfortunately, Manius' full name remains unknown.

¹¹⁵ This epigram implies that a relationship with Manius is the equivalent to having sex with Fulvia.

This poem ascribes an important role to Fulvia in the origins of the Perusine War and ignores the role of Lucius, who was the key player in the conflict at Perusia (Liv. *Per.* 125-6; Suet. *Aug.* 14; App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.19).¹¹⁶ The poem may then be an attempt to attack Antony through his wife, a common rhetorical device that Cicero also employed in the *Philippics*. By attacking Fulvia as promiscuous, Octavian could be trying to ridicule the absent Antony as cuckolded by his wife.¹¹⁷

Fulvia's active role in defence of her absent husband¹¹⁸ would suggest, however, that the poem is not merely an attack on Antony's inability to satisfy his wife, but an attack on Fulvia herself. This suggests that she played a prominent role in the events of the period preceding the military phase of the Perusine War. Regarding the subject of the war itself, the epigram is certainly a work of propaganda that takes a very serious topic and tries to belittle it. The content reduces the conflict at Perusia to a tiff between Octavian and the wife of his colleague, which was caused by Fulvia's sexual voraciousness. The vulgar sexual language and light-hearted tone take away from the gravity of the war and serve to enhance Octavian's image.¹¹⁹

Octavian faced much criticism for his role at Perusia (e.g. Prop. 1.21, 22; Verg. *Ecl.* 1, 9; Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.49), and as a result of this condemnation, he tried to alter his

¹¹⁶ Lucius was the only one who defended the displaced farmers, and eventually led them against Octavian's confiscations as their champion, Gabba 1971: 146-7. For Lucius' dominant position in this conflict see also Delia 1991: 203; Gabba 1956: 193; Roddaz 1988: 318-319; Syme 1939: 208.

¹¹⁷ Delia 1991: 206; Syme 1939: 211.

¹¹⁸ See Chapter Four for further descriptions in the narratives of the later historians.

¹¹⁹ Hallett 1977: 163. This view of the war is reflected in the summaries of Livy (cf. Liv. *Per.* 126), which attempts to portray the war as a relatively bloodless conflict.

image to combat various accusations, one of which was effeminacy.¹²⁰ The epigram presents him as virile and irresistibly attractive to an older matron.¹²¹ The poem also reflects well on Octavian since he refused a sexual relationship with a married woman – who was, in addition, his mother-in-law. Furthermore, that Manius might beg Octavian to bugger him (Mart. 11.20.6) and not allow him to penetrate Octavian is important, as it assigns to Octavian the dominant role in an implied homosexual relationship.¹²² Furthermore, the verb *futuo*, where it is indicative of the subject's virility, is often used in the context of a male boast.¹²³

Octavian had to combat accusations of weakness and passive homosexuality primarily from Antony, particularly during this period immediately preceding the Perusine War, when he suffered criticism as a result of his physical and military conduct.¹²⁴ It was commonly known that during the two battles of Philippi, Octavian had not participated in any action on the battlefield because of illness (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14). Thus, the prestige from the victory, not to mention a reputation for military prowess, went entirely to Antony.¹²⁵ Sling bullets (discussed below on pages 72 to 74) found at the site of the siege of Perusia seem to confirm that Octavian was accused of effeminacy by Lucius' camp, as Octavian's name appears on these bullets in the

¹²⁰ Hallett 1977: 159; Kay 1985: 112.

¹²¹ Delia 1991: 216 n. 74; Hallett 1977: 160.

¹²² Williams 1999: 161, 182. Kay suggests that even by complying with Manius' offer, Octavian would still be taking the manly insertive role, Kay 1985: 112.

¹²³ Adams 1982: 120.

¹²⁴ Geiger notes that Antony's propaganda frequently attacked Octavian's sexual morals, Geiger 1980: 113. According to Suetonius, Antony implied that Octavian had a homosexual relationship with Caesar, with his willingness to submit being rumoured as the reason for his testamentary adoption (Suet. *Aug.* 68).

¹²⁵ Syme 1939: 208.

feminine form (*CIL* XI 6721.7, *PET[O] / OCTAVIA[NI?]* // *CULUM* [“I seek Octavian’s anus”]).¹²⁶ To judge by the bullets and the literary evidence, Octavian seems to lack key qualities that were desirable in a Roman *vir*, that is, courage, self-control and virility, which included taking only the insertive role in sex.¹²⁷

The allegation that Fulvia sought to have an affair with Octavian is likely a fabrication. Moreover, the idea that her sexual passions started the war should be considered a creation of Octavian’s propaganda in order to deflect attention both from the real causes of the conflict and his own role in it. Nevertheless, the important role that the epigram assigns to Fulvia in the poem suggests that she may have had a significant role before the military campaign itself.

Sling Bullets Used in the Siege of Perusia

Sling bullets inscribed with graffiti have been unearthed at the battle site near Perusia.¹²⁸ The use of inscriptions on projectiles was common in the ancient world.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ The graffiti could have originally included Octavian’s full name, but, it is unlikely that Lucius’ soldiers would have called Octavian by that name, which he took upon his adoption by Caesar, when Antony was trying to win the support of the Caesarian veterans. It is more likely that they used the feminine version of his birth name, Octavius.

¹²⁷ Williams 1999: 127. The allegation that Fulvia was sexually promiscuous may be discarded because there is no literary evidence to support it, and therefore it is most likely a stock attack used against women. The accusation that Octavian is effeminate was also a stock accusation, but it is corroborated in more than one literary source.

¹²⁸ Inscriptions on projectiles attack Lucius’ baldness, Octavian’s effeminacy, and Fulvia’s sexual promiscuity. All of which are stock insults, Ramsey 2001: 159-160. For the references to Fulvia see below, *CIL* XI 6721.3; 6721.4; 6721.5; 6721.14.

It is not surprising that crude inscriptions were placed on a sling-bullet, *glans*, the shape of which somewhat resembled a phallus. These inscribed *glandes* evoked the image of a penis both visually and verbally.¹³⁰ The graffiti on these projectiles seem to attack Fulvia personally, even though she was not in Perusia at the time where she could see the *glandes* herself, but in Praeneste (App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.21; Vell. Pat. 2.74.3; Dio. 48.10.3).¹³¹ The inscriptions on the projectiles are extremely fragmented, and the identification of many of the letters, and indeed what the words refer to, is not entirely clear (e.g. see below *CIL* XI 6721.4). As a result, modern scholars have neglected using these inscriptions as evidence.¹³² Besides mentioning Fulvia in a crude and sexual context, the inscriptions on the bullets do not give any specific details about her but may hint at the role she played in the period before the war.

CIL XI 6721.3, FVL[V][N]A // VL [] SEIS.

CIL XI 6721.4, BA // FAFΔI. AB FULVI[A]

CIL XI 6721.5, FVLVIAE [LA]NDICAM PET[O] (“I seek Fulvia’s clitoris”).

CIL XI 6721.14, L[ucius]A[ntonius] CALVE / [et] FVLVIA / CULUM PAN[dite] (“O bald Lucius Antonius and Fulvia open up your anus”).

¹²⁹ Prag 2007; Rosen 1976: 123.

¹³⁰ Adams 1982: 72; Fischer 1999: 46 n. 203; Kay 1985: 111; Williams 1999: 21.

¹³¹ The majority of the ancient sources (Livy, Suetonius, Florus and Plutarch) do not mention Fulvia’s location during the siege. The sources that mention Fulvia’s whereabouts during the war agree that she was in Praeneste (App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.21, Vell. Pat. 2.74.3, Dio 48.10.3-4). Some scholars use the omission of Fulvia’s whereabouts in most of the ancient sources to declare that Fulvia had an active role in Perusia during the siege, but this is inaccurate. According to Barrett 2002: 118; Huzar 1986: 102; Pomeroy 1975: 185. Some modern scholars note that Fulvia was in Praeneste, not Perusia. E.g. Bauman 1992: 88; Delia 1991: 204; Fischer 1999: 44; Welch 1995: 193.

¹³² Brief references in Gabba 1971: 149 n. 70; Syme 1939: 211. There are no references in Reinhold (1933) or Scott (1933).

Despite their fragmentary state, the inscriptions above are unique among ancient projectiles in their crude language for known Latin or Greek graffiti on projectiles.¹³³ Like the epigram, they insinuate that Fulvia had an active role in the period before the siege, one which was publicly known.¹³⁴ Even though she was absent from the scene of the siege itself, the sling bullets nevertheless refer to her personally. Thus, the presence of her name on sling bullets suggests that the soldiers were familiar with her. They may have known her because she travelled with Antony, but it is also possible that she had an active role in marshalling support for Lucius while he was besieged in Perusia, as Appian suggests (*B. Civ.* 5.4.33). Consequently, Fulvia must have held some sort of reputation among the soldiers that Lucius mustered in order for her name to have held any sort of significance. It can only be speculated if the soldiers knew of Fulvia as more than just the wife of their *imperator*.

Like the epigram supposedly written by Octavian, these bullets link sexual activity with warfare through obscene language. Both attribute to Fulvia an important role in the beginnings of the Perusine War. However, in contrast to Martial's epigram (11.20), the bullets do not seek to downgrade the severity of the war, but rather are a common method of ridiculing the enemy with insulting messages. The epigram plays down her importance, but nonetheless says that she was involved in causing it. The sling bullets, on the other hand, imply that she was a person of some importance and held in respect by Lucius' soldiers because the insults against her are intended to taunt them.

¹³³ Hallett 1977: 154.

¹³⁴ Welch 1995: 193.

Coins

Having now discussed the sling bullets, it is time to consider another set of contemporary material evidence. There survives a series of coins (*RRC* 489/5, 89/6, 94/40, 514/1; *RPC* Eumenea, 3139) issued by Antony's mints that may depict Fulvia in the guise of the figure of Victoria. However, the identification of the model for the image of Victoria on these coins is speculative as there is no conclusive evidence to date about her real identity, that is, of course, if the face on the coins even has a real identity.

As a result, most modern discussions of Fulvia neglect to mention these coins because of the tentative nature of their association with her. Nevertheless, since there is a large possibility that these coins might depict her, they should not be ignored. If indeed these coins actually presented images of Fulvia, it would be most significant, since not only would that make her the first living Roman woman to be portrayed on coinage, but also because the coins might be material evidence that she did in fact have an important enough role in the late 40's to be depicted on coins.¹³⁵

The coins under consideration were minted by the Roman mint and two of Antony's mints (Lugdunum, and Phrygia) and have been dated to approximately 43-40.¹³⁶ Each of the coins in question share a certain number of similarities.¹³⁷ For

¹³⁵ Some scholars believe that it is Fulvia's image on these coins, Babelon 1885: 168-169; Baisdon 1962: 49, cf. 295, n. 13; Bauman 1992: 89; Bengtson 1977: 19; Burnett, et al. 1992: 508; Head 1964: 213; Huzar 1978: 132; Huzar 1986: 102; Kleiner 1992: 360.

¹³⁶ Babelon 1885: 168-169; Burnett, et al. 1992: 151, 508-509; Crawford 1974: vol I, 499; Grueber 1910: 538, 570, 575; Sydenham 1952: 180-181, 189.

example, they all show a portrait bust of Victoria on the obverse. The facial features on the portrait bust of Victoria do not appear to belong to those of an idealized goddess figure or personification, a point that makes these coins unique for the Republican period. In the Roman Republic, it was common to idealize the features of the face and body when portraying divinities or personifications on coins (see figures 2.i and 2.ii). The apparently realistic nature of the portraits, combined with the fact that they originated from Antonian mints, have led some scholars to conclude that these coins portray the image of an individual woman from Antony's family. The first attempt to identify the woman on these coins was made in 1885 by the numismatist Babelon (figures 1.i and 1.ii), who believes that the coins represent Antony's wife, Fulvia.¹³⁸ Since then, there has been a fierce debate amongst scholars over whether or not the portrait bust of Victoria on these coins belongs to an idealized personification or to an actual historical woman, and if the latter, to which historical woman.

On these coins, Victoria is wearing her hair in a *nodus coiffure*, which according to Wood was a style typical of a Roman matron in the late Roman Republic.¹³⁹ Wood also states that there is no documented case of this coiffure on a purely idealized representation of a goddess or a personification.¹⁴⁰ Rather, they are always shown with a coiffure modelled on that of Classical or Hellenistic deities. Moreover, the features of the portraits on the coins do not appear to belong to those of an idealized Victoria (compare figure 1.i to a coin depicting an idealized Victoria,

¹³⁷ Burnett, et al. 1992: Eumeneia, 3139; Crawford 1974: 489/5, 489/6, 494/40, 514/1; Head 1964: pl. 27, 4-5.

¹³⁸ Babelon 1885: 168, n.132.

¹³⁹ Wood 1998: 42.

¹⁴⁰ Wood 1998: 42.

figure 2.ii below). The portrait has an arched nose, and her sagging cheeks suggest an older woman (especially in figure 1.ii). The apparent age of the face argues against the identification of Fulvia, who may have been quite young when she died.¹⁴¹

The features are noticeably different on each of the coins. For example, the coins in figures 1.i, 1.ii and 1.v certainly appear to depict an individual woman, but those of figures 1.iii and 1.iv are more similar to the coins depicting images of an idealized Victoria in figures 2.i and 2.ii. Furthermore, the image of Victoria on the coins of Vaala and Longus is undoubtedly more idealized than 1.i and 1.ii.¹⁴² Finally, the wings in some of the specimens (figures 1.i, 1.ii) are miniscule, and appear to have been added as an afterthought.

The numismatist Grueber is sceptical about the possibility of positively identifying the figure depicted on the Roman coins as Fulvia. His main argument against the identification is based on the date when C. Numonius Vaala was mint master in Rome.¹⁴³ Grueber dates the coins of Vaala, figure 1.iv below, to the year 40.¹⁴⁴ However, not only did Fulvia not live very long into the year 40, but her relationship with Antony by that time was not one that he would have sought to commemorate on coinage. By 40, Lucius was besieged in Perusia (*App. B. Civ.* 5.33), and Fulvia was in flight to Greece (*Vell. Pat.* 2.76.2; *App. B. Civ.* 5.50), where she was later severely berated by Antony for her role in the Perusine war (*App. B. Civ.*

¹⁴¹ Fischer 1999: 7. It is, however, difficult to say with certainty when Fulvia was born.

¹⁴² Crawford states that it is likely that this coin represents the victory over the conspirators at Philippi (42), Crawford 1974: 523.

¹⁴³ There is little known about Vaala except that he was a moneyer in Rome *ca.* 41 Crawford 1974: 523.

¹⁴⁴ Grueber 1910: vol. I, 571.

5.62). Antony's silence regarding his position during the Perusine war is further evidence against identifying the coins as anticipating a victory for Lucius. Fulvia's death occurred in mid-40, and Antony's subsequent marriage to Octavia followed the agreement at Brundisium in October 40. There would have been little time to commission coins of Fulvia before she died, even assuming that Antony was not displeased with her. Similarly, Grueber dates the term of L. Mussidius Longus to 39 (the mint master commemorated on coin 1.iv below), in which case it would be impossible to conclude that they depict Fulvia.¹⁴⁵

There is, however, another coin which may have some bearing on the identification of the figure of Victoria on these coins with Fulvia. On a coin issued in Eumeneia, a city in Phrygia which may have changed its name to Fulvia in the late 40's,¹⁴⁶ there is the face of an aged woman depicted in the guise of Nike (fig. 1.v). It is not entirely clear, but there is a similarity to the image on the coin (fig. 1.ii) commemorating Antony's 41st birthday. The city in Phrygia, Eumeneia, may have changed its name to Fulvia in recognition of hers and Lucius' efforts against Octavian. The Eumenean coin recognizes Fulvia's importance to Antony and the political situation in Rome, and suggests that the other coins depicting Victoria might have followed similar suit and also depicted Fulvia. Further evidence to the identification of Victoria as Fulvia is all the more probable when one considers Antony's portrayal of Octavia (for the first generally accepted portrayal of a living woman on coins see *RRC*, cat. no. 527/1) and later Cleopatra on coins.

¹⁴⁵ Grueber 1910: vol. I, 575.

¹⁴⁶ Welch, however, believes that Eumeneia did not change its name to Fulvia, Welch 1995: 198. Delia also shares this scepticism, Delia 1991: 202.

It is tempting to identify Victoria as Fulvia in recognition of her efforts on behalf of Antony, as many scholars have done (see note above). Such an identification might confirm the accounts that describe her as a military commander (see Chapter Four), since to identify her with the image of Victoria would suggest that she had an active role in the Perusine War. However, it is unlikely that the coins from Rome and Lugdunum were minted to proclaim an anticipated victory for Lucius and Fulvia over Octavian.¹⁴⁷ The coins appear to have been cut over a span of a few years, from as early as 43 to as late as 39. It is most significant that the coins were cut in different years since neither Fulvia nor Lucius had taken on the cause of the displaced landowners in either 43 or 42. It is possible that the coinage of 41 anticipates a victory over Octavian, but this is unlikely because the four specimens are so similar, despite the fact that they were produced over several years. The most probable explanation for the coins is Crawford's suggestion that the Roman coins may anticipate Antony's Parthian campaign.¹⁴⁸ It is possible that these earlier coins were copies of coins depicting Fulvia that were cut in Phrygia and Lugdunum, but Vaala and Longus failed to recognize the connection to Fulvia.

It is undeniable that some of the Victoria coins appear to show the features of a particular woman, as opposed to an idealized deity. However, to state that this woman

¹⁴⁷ Although, there are extant coins that were cut by Antonians in Gaul that were sympathetic to Lucius. For a sample of these coins see below.

¹⁴⁸ Crawford 1974: vol. II, 740.

is Fulvia is only speculation with the evidence available at this time.¹⁴⁹ Unfortunately, on present evidence, the coins cannot be used to say anything definite about Fulvia.

¹⁴⁹ Some scholars are sceptical about the identity of the face on these coins, Babcock 1965: 19-20; Delia 1991: 202; Mattingly 1960: 76, n. 2; Virioux 2001: 67; Wood 1998: 41.

The Images of Antony's Victoria Coins (Figures 1.i-v)

Figure 1.i¹⁵⁰



Winged bust of Victoria facing right, her hair drawn back and collected into a knot behind, one long plait arranged in a loop along the top of her head (*nodus*). Wings are barely visible.

Reverse: lion walking right, suggested to refer to Lugdunum, or perhaps

Antony's Zodiac sign. **LVGV/DVNI**

(Lugdunum) in exergue and above, **A**(nno) on left, **XL** on right, which is believed to signify Antony's 40th birthday. *Silver quinarius*. Lugdunum, autumn 43 BC¹⁵¹ (*RRC* cat. no. 489/5; Sydenham cat. no. 1160; *BMCRR* Gaul cat. no. 40; Babelon Antonia cat. no. 32; *RPC* 512).

Figure 1.ii¹⁵²



Winged bust of Victoria right, hair same style as figure 1.i. **III VIR** (triumvir) behind, **R P C** (*rei publicae constituendae*¹⁵³) before. Her wings are even more discreet than figure 1.i.

Reverse: lion walking right, **ANTONI** above, **IMP** (Imperator) in exergue, **A** on

left, **XLI** on right, thus signifying Antony's 41st birthday. *Silver Quinarius*.

Lugdunum, 42 BC. (*RRC* cat. no. 489/6; Sydenham cat. no. 1163; *BMCRR* Gaul cat. no. 48; Babelon Antonia cat. no. 32; *RPC* cat. no. 513).

¹⁵⁰ Image taken from D.R. Sear, *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 B.C.*, London: Spink, 1998, cat. no. 122.

¹⁵¹ Hill notes that the form LVGV DVNI would not have been used after mid-March 43, Hill 1975: 168.

¹⁵² Image taken from D.R. Sear, *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 B.C.*, London: Spink, 1998, cat. no. 126.

¹⁵³ All references to **R P C** (*rei publicae constituendae*) mean "for the restoration of the Republic."

Figure 1.iii¹⁵⁴



Winged bust of Victoria right, hair braided in strips on the top of her head and coiled in a tight knot at the back with plaits along the top of her head. *Reverse*: Victoria in galloping biga right, **L MVSSIDIVS** above, **LONGVS** below. *Silver denarius*. Rome, 42 BC (*RRC* cat. no. 494/40; Sydenham cat. no. 1095; *BMCR* cat. no. 4229; Babelon, Mussidia, cat. no. 4).

Figure 1.iv¹⁵⁵



Winged bust of Victoria right, elaborate nodus coiffure. *Reverse*: soldier advancing left, with sword and shield, attacking a palisaded earthwork with two armed defenders behind. **C NVMONIVS** on right, **VAALA** in exergue. *Gold aureus*. Rome, 41 BC (*RRC* cat. no. 514/1; Sydenham cat. no. 1086; *BMCR* cat. no. 4215; Babelon, Numonia, cat. no. 1).

Figure 1.v¹⁵⁶



Winged and draped bust of Nike right, her hair drawn back and tied in a knot just above the base of her neck. *Reverse*: **ΦΟΥΛΟΥΙΑΝΩΝ ΖΜΕΡΤΟΡΙΓΟΣ** on left, **ΦΙΛΩΝΙΔΟΥ** on right. Athena advancing left with vertical spear and shield. *Leaded bronze*. Phrygia, 41-40 BC (B. V. Head, cat. no. 213; *RPC* Eumenea, cat. no. 3139).

¹⁵⁴ Image taken from D.R. Sear, *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 B.C.*, London: Spink, 1998, cat. no. 186.

¹⁵⁵ Image taken from M. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974, cat. no. 514/1.

¹⁵⁶ Image taken from D.R. Sear, *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 B.C.*, London: Spink, 1998, pg. 83.

The Images of the Idealized Victoria Coins (Figures 2.i-ii)

Figure 2.i¹⁵⁷



Draped bust of Victoria right, wearing diadem of pearls, wings visible behind the shoulders. Note the absence of the *nodus* coiffure. *Reverse*: Victoria in galloping biga right, holding wreath in extended hand, **T CARISI** in exergue. *Silver denarius*. Rome,

46 BC (*RRC* 464/4; Sydenham 986; *BMCR* 4073; Babelon Carisia 2).

Figure 2.ii¹⁵⁸



Draped bust of Victoria right, wings visible behind the shoulders, S[enatus] C[onsultum] behind. *Reverse*: Victoria in galloping biga right, holding wreath in hand, **T CARISI** in exergue. *Silver denarius*. Rome, 46 BC (*RRC* 464/5; Sydenham 985; *BMCR* 4070; Babelon Carisia 3).

¹⁵⁷ Image taken from D.R. Sear, *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 B.C.*, London: Spink, 1998, cat. no. 72.

¹⁵⁸ Image taken from D.R. Sear, *The History and Coinage of the Roman Imperators 49-27 B.C.*, London: Spink, 1998, cat. no. 173.

Summary

Cicero attacked Fulvia as greedy, cruel, and, for a Roman matron, improperly involved in economic affairs and the business of her husband. Although these accusations were primarily a means to attack her husband Antony, nevertheless, the information they provide suggests something more, namely, that Fulvia was actively involved in her husband's political affairs. Cornelius Nepos' positive references to Fulvia bring into question Cicero's description of her less than admirable characteristics. The epigram (Mart. 11.20) ascribes the cause of the Perusine War to Fulvia and suggests that she was involved in the war itself. Her prominent position in masculine spheres is also reflected in this rude epigram. It is possible that Fulvia, as the wife of Antony, was merely a means by which Octavian (if Martial is correct) could attack his opponent.¹⁵⁹ However, she may have been more than an object of derision. The sling bullets used during the siege of Perusia in 41/40 (e.g. *CIL* XI 6721.14) may suggest that the soldiers knew of her as more than Antony's wife. The Victoria coins cut during the same period, if they were meant to resemble Fulvia, would also confirm that she was an important figure in the late 40's. Although Fulvia is used as a tool by which Antony could be attacked, the suggestion that she was more involved in public life than was usual or even proper for the ideal Roman matron is confirmed by her prominent role in the works of the later historians, and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

¹⁵⁹ Syme 1939: 211.

Chapter Four

Portrayal of Fulvia in the Sources After her Death

There is a wide variety of references to Fulvia in the generations after her death. They can be found in the writings of Livy, Asconius, Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus, Suetonius, Plutarch, Florus, Appian, and Dio. Most of these sources, such as Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius and Florus, refer to Fulvia only in passing. Other accounts, namely those of Plutarch, Appian, and Dio, devote significant attention to Fulvia. This discussion of Fulvia's portrayal in these sources will be conducted thematically, rather than by source. It is the best way to approach the wide variety of references to Fulvia by reducing the repetition that would result by going through the material source by source. These particular themes have identified them as being consistently present in the ancient portrayals of Fulvia written after her death.¹

The following themes will be examined. First, Fulvia's efforts on behalf of her husband and children will be considered. These generally constitute the only positive portrayals of Fulvia in the ancient sources. Second, her role in the proscriptions of 43/42 will be examined, and subsequently her role in the outbreak of the Perusine War. This will lead to a study of the sources' presentation of Fulvia as a military commander and a commander of men, and, finally, to her use as a convenient scapegoat for the Perusine War.

¹ The selection of themes were not set out in the ancient sources and may have arisen from this authors own personal bias.

Efforts on Behalf of her Husbands and Children

Two of Fulvia's qualities mentioned by these sources that appear positive are her steadfast loyalty to her husbands and her concern for her children.² Her loyalty is particularly emphasized in regard to Clodius and Antony (her marriage to Curio was all too brief), on whose behalf she is portrayed as being very active, not only in aid of their political careers, but also on behalf of their status and reputations (Asc. *Mil.* 28; App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51). In Welch's opinion, Asconius describes Fulvia as the avenger of the death of her first husband, Clodius (Asc. *Mil.* 28).³ Similarly, according to Appian, she worked constantly to support Antony while he was away from Rome (*B. Civ.* 5.2.14).⁴

Fulvia's actions after Clodius' death in 52 represent her earliest known specific public appearance at Rome. Asconius says that after his death, "Fulvia, the wife of Clodius, increased the anger at the deed, when she displayed his wounds with extravagant lamentation" (Asc. *Mil.* 28, *augebat autem facti invidiam uxor Clodi Fulvia quae cum effusa lamentatione vulnera eius ostendebat*). Asconius portrays Fulvia as a woman devastated and angry at her loss, which in turn increased the fervour of the mob on Clodius' behalf. This excessive display is unusual in a Roman matron but her loyalty towards her husband is clear. Her actions

² Bauman 1992: 85.

³ Welch 1995: 186.

⁴ Cluett 1998: 82; Delia 1991: 205.

seem to have contributed to making Clodius' murder a public concern.⁵ The mob was moved, apparently in part by her lamentations, to carry the body of Clodius to the forum, where they used the senate house as a funeral pyre (Cic. *Mil.* 33; Asc. *Mil.* 29). Fulvia's treatment of Clodius' body perhaps also instigated the identification of Clodius as, in Welch's opinion, a fallen martyr among his supporters.⁶ Although the showing of her husband's corpse may have simply been a natural display of grief,⁷ the manner in which she did it suggests that she intended to cause a riot. It is possible that her lamentations in the public setting were consciously intended to move the crowd. Thus, she appears to have presented herself, perhaps deliberately, as personally interested in the politics of her husband.⁸ Unfortunately, Asconius' account of her actions after Clodius' death is not confirmed by any other ancient source. Appian's description of events is very similar (*B. Civ.* 2.3.21-23). He states that, after Clodius had been murdered by Milo, his corpse was displayed on the rostra and burnt with the senate house (*B. Civ.* 2.3.21). However, his account makes no mention of Fulvia in connection with these events. Although Appian does not concur with Asconius regarding Fulvia's

⁵ Welch 1995: 186. However, it is Sumi's opinion that because of mob mentality, Fulvia may only have exercised a very limited influence over the mob, Sumi 1997: 92, 96.

⁶ Welch 1995: 186. Clark uses this passage as evidence of Fulvia's excitable disposition and the poor mental health which she inherited from her grandfather (Val. Max. 7.8.1, *Quam certae, quam etiam notae insaniae Tuditanus*), Clark 1967: xxvii. However, the display seems to be a conscious manipulation of the mob.

⁷ As suggested by Delia 1991: 199.

⁸ Fischer 1999: 17. Welch states that with this act she was also seen as "a person who was prepared to involve herself in and contribute to the fortunes of his political heirs," Welch 1995: 186.

participation in these events, modern scholars have generally viewed Asconius as a more reliable source.⁹ In fact, Appian also does not place Fulvia at Brundisium in 44 when Antony executed the rebellious soldiers (*B. Civ.* 3.7.52-3). However, the contemporary evidence from Cicero (e.g. *Phil.* 13.18) makes it almost certain that she was. Therefore, Asconius' account should be favoured regarding this event, especially as Appian does not explicitly state that Fulvia was not involved. Appian's omission does not preclude the possibility, and there is no valid reason to disbelieve Asconius' account. It is unclear why the two versions differ, and one could only speculate why this is so.

Some modern scholars take this event to be the beginning of Fulvia's political career and suggest that it was an act of conscious manipulation of the mob¹⁰ to bring Clodius' murderer to justice and to display herself as the bereaved

⁹ As with Nepos' account of Antony's enemies persecution of Fulvia in 44, there may be no reason to doubt Asconius' version. Although Asconius drew much of his material from Cicero's own works, the fact that he does not repeat Cicero's negative observations suggests that he exercised his own critical judgement as to what happened. Cf. Marshall 1985: 39, 46. As to Asconius' reliability as a source, some scholars believe him to be relatively devoid of exaggeration and biases, Tatum 1999: 239. Clark: "the fragments of his work [are] one of the most priceless relics of antiquity," Clark 1967: iii. Lintott states that Asconius' account is in some ways more reliable than Cicero's *Pro Milone*, since "Cicero also seems to have misrepresented the affray in order to make Clodius' exit from his villa the more suspicious... Therefore, Asconius' view of the affair, which was based on a study of the evidence and pleas on both sides in the *Acta Diurna*, should be accepted," Lintott 1974: 69. Marshall also sees Asconius as reliable, Marshall 1985: 62. See Chapter Three for a similar view of Nepos' credibility.

¹⁰ Babcock 1965: 21; Dixon 1983: 101; Münzer 1900: 7.281. Welch writes that "dragging the body into the street where it was viewed by an irate mob is not a simple matter of 'appearing at a funeral,'" Welch 1995: 188.

avenger of her husband.¹¹ Whatever her motive may have been, what is significant is that Fulvia may have made a name for herself by this incident.

Her loyalty to Clodius seems not to be limited to a public lamentation over his murdered corpse. Asconius records that both Fulvia and her mother, Sempronia, gave evidence at Milo's trial in 52 (*Mil.* 35).¹² He does not, unfortunately, preserve their testimonies.¹³ Asconius states that "finally Sempronia, daughter of Tuditanus and mother-in-law of Clodius, and his wife Fulvia gave evidence, and with their tears they created much emotion among those standing around" (*Asc. Mil.* 35, *ultimae testimonium dixerunt Sempronia, Tuditani filia, socrus P. Clodii, et uxor Fulvia, et fletu suo magnopere eos qui assistebant commoverunt*). Their evidence was apparently valued because they were the last to appear: the position supposedly placed upon it greater importance.¹⁴ The appearance of Fulvia and Sempronia at the trial could be significant because of its political implications.¹⁵ It is possible that the two reminded the jurors of the horrible act that left Clodius' wife a widow and his children without a father. Thus, Fulvia's display of Clodius' corpse in public and her appearance at the trial of Milo may in some ways foreshadow her actions in

¹¹ Marshall 1985: 167; Viriouv 2001: 68; Welch 1995: 186.

¹² Marshall 1985: 167. Cf. Dixon 1983: 101. That the two women gave evidence at the trial is not entirely unusual, however, as Dixon states that women frequently gave evidence at trials from the door of the senate house.

¹³ It is strange that Asconius states that they were very influential (*Mil.* 35), but does not mention any details about their evidence, Marshall 1985: 189.

¹⁴ Bauman 1992: 84; Welch 1995: 188. Cf. Münzer: "*und bei der Gerichtsverhandlung gegen seinen Mörder machten deshalb starken Eindruck*," Münzer 1900: 7.281. Indeed, Milo was convicted and sentenced to exile.

¹⁵ Dixon 1983: 101.

defence of Antony in 43 (App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51) and her alliance with his brother Lucius in 41 (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14).

As with her first husband, Clodius, Fulvia also seems to have demonstrated loyalty and support to her third husband, Antony. In December 44, while Atticus was acting as her surety (Nep. *Att.* 9.4, *sponsor*), Fulvia, along with Antony's mother Julia, was busy seeking support for her husband's case amongst the powerful and influential men at Rome (App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51).¹⁶ Appian's account echoes Nepos' description of their situation:¹⁷

οἱ μὲν δὴ ταῦτα ψηφισάμενοι διελύθησαν, ὥς τὸν Αντωνίου
ἔργῳ διὰ τῶνδε εἰδέναι πολέμιον ἔψηφισμένον καὶ τὸν
δήμαρχον ἐς τὴν ἐπιούσαν οὐδὲν ἔτι ἀντερουῖντα· Αντωνίου δὲ
ἡ μήτηρ καὶ ἡ γυνὴ καὶ παῖς ἔτι μεράκιον οἱ τε ἄλλοι οἰκεῖοι
καὶ φίλοι δι' ὅλης τῆς νυκτὸς ἐς τὰς τῶν δυνατῶν οἰκίας
διέθεον ἱκετεύοντες καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν ἐς τὸ βουλευτήριον ἰόντας
ἠνώχλουν, ῥιπτούμενοί τε πρὸ ποδῶν σὺν οἰμωγῇ καὶ
ὀλολυγαῖς καὶ μελαίνῃ στολῇ παρὰ ταῖς θύραις ἐκβοῶντες.

After having passed these decrees, they adjourned, so that the counted vote might lead Antony to know that he was declared a public enemy and that on the next day the tribune would no longer interpose his veto. The mother, the wife, and the son of Antony, still a boy, and his other family and friends went about throughout the whole night approaching the houses of powerful men and seeking their support, and in the morning, they intercepted those going to the senate-house, throwing themselves at their feet with wailing and lamentations, and in mourning clothes, they kept crying outside the doors (*B. Civ.* 3.8.51).

¹⁶ Such a supportive role was acceptable for women. The best example of an acceptable participation in diplomacy is, of course, Octavia's role in the agreement at Tarentum in 37 between Octavian and Antony, Pelling 1988: 213-14; Singer 1947: 174. For other female diplomats, see Bauman 1992: 79, 91.

¹⁷ Nepos refers to Fulvia's dilemma and response in the face of Antony's enemies who tried to destroy his family. He says: "further, to Fulvia herself, when she was distracted by lawsuits and tormented by great anxiety," (Nep. *Vit. Att.* 9.4, *ipsi autem Fulviae, cum litibus distineretur magnisque terroribus vexaretur*).

Such piteous displays as these were given by the relatives of someone facing a criminal charge in order to arouse sympathy for the accused.¹⁸ The lamenting family of Antony perhaps reminded the senate that to declare him a public enemy without a trial violated custom. Appian describes Fulvia and Julia defending Antony in a similar way to that in which Asconius describes Fulvia and Sempronia avenging Clodius at the trial of Milo (*Mil.* 35). It has been claimed that Appian gives Fulvia and Julia too much credit when he states that they helped to convince the senators to reconsider their actions against Antony.¹⁹ However, there is no way of knowing if Appian exaggerated the impact of their actions, although he must have thought it at least plausible to his readers that they could have made such an effect on the senators.

According to Appian, the allies of Antony were initially successful in their plea and moved the hearts of at least some of the senators, who were now beginning to question the decision to declare him an enemy without a trial (*B. Civ.* 3.8.51, 3.8.57). The senate then debated the issue. In Appian's version of this debate, Cicero, naturally, spoke against Antony, and L. Calpurnius Piso Caesonius, Caesar's father-in-law, spoke on Antony's behalf (*App. B. Civ.* 3.8.52, 3.8.54-60). Cicero's speech is largely a summary of his attacks on Antony drawn from the *Philippics*. Piso's rebuttal carefully discusses each accusation and reveals to the senators their hypocrisy regarding their former praises of Antony, which has now turned to blame.

¹⁸ Bauman 1992: 85-86; Sumi 1997: 96.

¹⁹ Frisch 1946: 181.

Although the family of Antony succeeded in moving the senators enough to convince them to debate the matter, Appian says that it was the speech of Piso that convinced the senate not to vote against Antony (*B. Civ.* 3.9.61).

Julia and Fulvia perhaps were regarded with some degree of respect by the senators in order for their initial pleas to have sparked the debate, as Appian claims. They apparently displayed Antony's young son before the senators to show them that they would be depriving an innocent young child of his father (*App. B. Civ.* 3.8.51). This episode also suggests that Fulvia knew how to use her children as a way to gain sympathy, a technique that reappears in her involvement in the events immediately preceding the Perusine War (e.g. *App. B. Civ.* 5.2.14).²⁰ Although one might criticize Fulvia for using her children in this way, it should be remembered that it was also being done in their interest, as their future surely depended on Antony not being declared a public enemy. Both Fulvia and Julia may have known what was at risk for them should Antony be declared a public enemy, and they may have used the pity of powerful men to their advantage.

When Fulvia is next recorded as acting in her husband's interest, a little over a year and a half later, the situation had changed dramatically. The defeat of the armies led by M. Iunius Brutus and C. Cassius Longinus at Philippi in October 42 resulted in Antony taking up the task of raising funds and support from the East, while Octavian was to assign land in Italy to the veterans of Philippi (*App. B. Civ.*

²⁰ Babcock 1965: 21. For more information on *B. Civ.* 5.2.14, see below. Cf. *App. B. Civ.* 3.8.58, which states that Antony gave his mother, wife, and young son to be held as hostages by Caesar's assassins who were hiding on the Capitoline.

5.1.3). Octavian's task appeared likely to create only animosity against him from the displaced farmers and jealous veterans instead of winning him glory,²¹ whereas Antony's task seemed certain to provide him with wealth, resources, and new allies. However, Octavian managed to emerge from the challenge all the stronger.²² Having initially run into trouble on account of the greed of the veterans, he soon began to supplement the allotment of land with many gifts, which turned the affections of the soldiers to his favour (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.13). Within months, therefore, it appeared that he was attempting to persuade the veterans that he was their special patron.²³ Antony's family noticed the rising popularity of Octavian and sought to ensure that he was not forgotten in his absence. In 41, Fulvia, together with Lucius, his brother, who was then consul, apparently attempted to delay the settlement of the colonies until Antony returned:

ἵνα μὴ Καίσαρος δόξειε τὸ ἔργον ἅπαν εἶναι μηδὲ μόνος αὐτοῦ
τὴν χάριν ἀποφέροιτο μηδ' ἔρημος ὁ Ἀντώνιος εὐνοίας
στρατιωτῶν γένοιτο, τὰς κατοικίσεις ἐτέχναζον ἐς τὴν
ἐπιδημίαν Ἀντωνίου διατρίβειν.

So that it might not seem to be the whole deed of Octavian, and that he alone might not obtain the gratitude, they worked to delay his arrival at the colonies, that Antony not be without the favour of the soldiers (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14).

Appian is unique amongst the ancient writers in his favourable portrayal of Lucius. He depicts him as a supporter of the Republic who is fighting for an

²¹ Gabba 1971: 139.

²² Huzar 1978: 131.

²³ Huzar 1986: 102.

oppressed people.²⁴ Lucius' speech after surrendering to Octavian also appears to paint him favourably by juxtaposing him with Octavian.²⁵

When the attempt to delay the establishment of the veteran colonies did not work, Lucius and Fulvia implored Octavian to appoint the colony leaders from Antony's friends so that his name might still have a presence, even though the agreement left the selection to Octavian exclusively (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14). Antony could not interfere with the confiscation and allotment of lands without breaking his agreement with Octavian, and thus it was left to his family and his supporters to remind the soldiers of his name.²⁶ Appian writes:

καὶ ἐς τὸν στρατὸν αὐτοὶ τὴν τε Φουλβίαν παράγοντες καὶ τὰ
παιδία τὰ Ἀντωνίου, μάλα ἐπιφθονῶς ἵκετευσον μὴ περιιδεῖν
Ἀντώνιον ἢ δόξης ἢ χάριτος τῆς ἐς αὐτοὺς ὑπηρεσίας
ἀφαιρούμενον.

they [allies of Antony] themselves brought Fulvia and Antony's children before the army, and, with much hostility, begged them not to forget Antony or to allow him to be deprived of the glory or the gratitude due to his services to them (*B. Civ.* 5.2.14).

According to Appian, Fulvia and Manius, Antony's procurator, claimed publicly that Octavian favoured his own soldiers over those of Antony in the allotment of

²⁴ Gabba 1970: xvii; Gowing 1992: 79, n. 56; Roddaz 1988: 321; Sordi 1985: 302-316; Syme 1939: 208, n. 1. According to Gabba, Lucius is "*alleato della cognata, in quanto quest'ultima, a lui prima ostile, gli si è affiancata nella lotta contro Ottaviano, ma egli in realtà non agisce come quella in nome di interessi contingenti, bensì di un'alta idealità*," Gabba 1956: 193.

²⁵ Appian depicts Lucius as a loyal republican, and Octavian as an aspiring dictator, sympathetic but powerless (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.15), Gowing 1992: 79. Again, it is particularly odd that Appian does not portray Octavian, the founder of the monarchy he so admires, very positively in this circumstance. Appian is not consistent in the images of Octavian that he presents, Bucher 2000: 440.

²⁶ Syme 1939: 215.

land and had initially yielded to their requests as a favour to Antony (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.14; 5.3.22). This suggests that he must have been concerned about how the soldiers who were loyal to Antony would react to the claims of his allies. Fulvia and her children were a visible symbol of Antony to the soldiers and reminded them that the victory at Philippi was largely due to him. She did not defend him alone, and she was not the instigator of this attempt to remind the soldiers of Antony. Appian portrays her, along with Lucius and Manius, as acting on behalf of Antony in order to maintain his position in Rome, and perhaps even to gain supremacy.²⁷ Fulvia, Lucius, and Manius are thus presented as championing the Antonian cause to the soldiers.

Fulvia herself apparently directed a second attempt to remind the soldiers of the absent Antony when both Octavian and Lucius were vying for the favour of the veterans (App. *B. Civ.* 5.2.19; Dio 48.6.2), whose support Gowing claims was essential if ever Antony was to attain sole power.²⁸ As well, Fulvia and Lucius acted together in the interests of the absent triumvir, and kept him informed of their activities (App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.21). Appian's description is paralleled by Plutarch, whose account of the event identifies Fulvia as active on her husband's behalf: "while Fulvia, his wife, was making war at Rome with Octavian on behalf of the interests of her husband" (*Vit. Ant.* 28.1, πολεμούσης μὲν ἐν Ῥώμῃ Καίσαρι Φουλβίας τῆς γυναικὸς ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐκείνου πραγμάτων). These two accounts

²⁷ According to Syme, Antony scarcely seemed to desire this supremacy, and seems to hint that Fulvia did, Syme 1939: 208.

²⁸ Gowing 1992: 80.

contrast with the claim by Dio, who states that Fulvia and Lucius were merely pretending to be working on Antony's behalf, but were actually serving their own interests (48.5.4, ὥς καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ Μάρκου ταῦτα δρῶν [“as if doing these things on behalf of Marcus”]; 48.6.5, καὶ γὰρ καὶ τῷ Μάρκῳ ταῦτα συνδοκεῖν ἐνόμιζον [“for they thought that these things seemed good to Marcus too”]). Of course, it is impossible to know their true motivations, but it is obvious that maintaining the loyalty of the veterans and resisting Octavian's attempts to win them over were in Antony's interest.

Regarding Fulvia's attempts to aid her husband, Appian then states:

ἔξιόντος δὲ τοῦ Καίσαρος ἐς τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν κατοικήσεων,
ἔπεμπεν ἐφομένους αὐτῷ τοὺς Ἀντωνίου παῖδας ἅμα τῷ
Λευκίῳ, ὥς μηδὲν ἐκ τῆς ὀψεως ὁ Καίσαρ ἐν τῷ στρατῷ πλέον
ἔχοι.

While Octavian was leading out the last of the colonies, she sent the children of Antony, together with Lucius, at once following him, so that Octavian should not have more dignity by appearance before the army alone (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19).

Appian's portrayal of Fulvia changes here. Whereas he earlier described her being brought by Antony's supporters before the soldiers (*B. Civ.* 5.2.14), he now shows her as instigating the efforts to defend Antony's name in his absence.²⁹ This involvement perhaps provoked hatred against her, especially from Octavian. With her appearance in front of the soldiers, Fulvia trespassed into the strictly male sphere of the army. Supporters of Antony, however, would most likely have seen

²⁹ Fischer claims that Fulvia was constantly active on behalf of her husband, Fischer 1999: 43. Gabba does not mention the development of Fulvia's role in Appian's narrative.

her actions as a commendable effort to ensure the continuance of her husband's popularity.

Appian's depiction of Fulvia in the period immediately before the Perusine War is ultimately a narrative of her and Lucius' combined actions. Thus, because of her alliance with her brother-in-law, she benefits by association from Appian's positive portrayal of Lucius (*B. Civ.* 5.2.14).³⁰ His remarks about Fulvia suggest that she transgressed social norms in order to defend the interests of her husband and the safety of her children. Asconius describes Fulvia only in reference to her actions after the death of Clodius, and as an avenger of his death.

Fulvia's Role in the Proscriptions of 43/42

Both Appian and Dio assign to Fulvia a significant role in the deaths that resulted from the proscriptions of 43/42. However, it should be noted that Octavian's propaganda sought to lessen his own role in these proscriptions, to emphasize instead the roles of Antony, M. Aemilius Lepidus, and even Fulvia.³¹ Appian describes the proscriptions as the most extreme in Roman history (*B. Civ.* 4.1.1).

Appian's remarks about Fulvia follow those that originated with Cicero's earlier description of her in the *Philippics*. As was previously discussed, not only

³⁰ Fischer 1999: 52; Babcock 1965: 19. Bucher also notes that Appian favoured the establishment of the empire, Bucher 2000: 429. Appian states, through a speech of Lucius', that Fulvia favoured a similar style of rule (App. *B. Civ.* 5.6.54).

³¹ Bengtson 1977: 305; Chamoux 1986: 180; Delia 1991: 201; Huzar 1978: 251; Stegmann 2004: 578; Syme 1939: 191; Virilouvet 2001: 74; Woodman 1983: 115.

did Cicero suggest that Fulvia conducted public business in her house (*Phil.* 2.95; 3.10; 5.11), but he also specifically referred to her as the greediest of women (*Phil.* 6.4; 13.18, *avarissimae*), and, in the putting down of the mutiny at Brundisium, the most cruel (*Phil.* 13.18, *crudelissimae*). Antony's punishment of the soldiers and Fulvia's alleged presence at the event are mentioned many times by Cicero in order to implicate her in the responsibility for the soldiers' death (*Phil.* 3.4, 5.22, 13.18). Dio and Appian both mention this incident, but with some important differences. Dio notes that she was present at the execution, but, unlike Cicero, he does not implicate her in the punishment or describe her as cruel (45.13.3). Appian, on the contrary, does not place Fulvia at the executions at all (*B. Civ.* 3.7.43), but describes her as adding men to the list of the proscribed in order to gain their wealth or to avenge wrongs that they may have committed against her (e.g., *B. Civ.* 4.4.29). The cruelty and greed that Cicero ascribes to her are also exemplified in Appian's story about Caesetius Rufus:

Ῥοῦφος δὲ ἔχων συνοικίαν περικαλλή, γείτονα Φουλβίας τῆς γυναικὸς Ἀντωνίου, πάλαι μὲν ἀξιούσῃ τῇ Φουλβίᾳ πρίασθαι τὴν οἰκίαν οὐ συνεχώρει, τότε δὲ καὶ δωρούμενος προεγράφη. καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ὃ μὲν Ἀντωνίος οἱ προσφερομένην οὐχ ἑαυτῷ προσήκειν εἰπὼν ἔπεμψεν εἰς τὴν γυναῖκα, ἣ δὲ ἀντὶ τῆς ἀγορᾶς ἐκέλευσεν ἐπὶ τῆς συνοικίας προτεθῆναι.

Rufus possessed a very beautiful house near that of Fulvia, the wife of Antony. She thought to have the house for herself, but he would not yield. Although he eventually offered it to her as a present, he was proscribed. His head was brought to Antony, although when it arrived he said it was not for him and offered it to his wife, who then ordered that it be fastened to the front of her own house instead of the rostra (*B. Civ.* 4.4.29).

This story shows Fulvia as insatiably greedy and vicious. The similarities between Cicero's attacks against Antony in the *Philippics* and Appian's version of his speeches in the *Bella Civilia* make it seem most likely that Appian was familiar with Cicero's writings. In Appian's narrative, Fulvia's brutality is closely connected to her greed; it was her desire to possess her neighbour's house that led her to have him proscribed. Her order that his decapitated head be displayed in front of her own house on the Palatine exemplified her desire for personal vengeance against Rufus for not complying immediately with her wishes. This vicious act also suggests that the display was a public warning to those who might cross her personally, and not just to those who would oppose the triumvirate. Perhaps, in order to emphasize that these proscriptions were unprecedented, Appian states that Fulvia herself added names to the list of proscribed men (*B. Civ.* 4.3.15-16).³² It has been suggested that Fulvia may have participated in the proscriptions in order to exact vengeance on those who persecuted her family when Antony was at odds with the senate in 44/43 (e.g. *Nep. Att.* 9.2).³³ However, besides Dio's account (47.8.3-5) of Cicero's death, there is no evidence in the ancient sources of Fulvia's personal enemies being proscribed by her. A woman's participation in the proscriptions would be unique and unprecedented.

³² Appian declares that the proscriptions of 43/42 were more memorable both because they contained the most shocking stories of murder, and most remarkable stories of courage (*B. Civ.* 4.1.1). As evident from Appian, *B. Civ.* 4.3.16 and 4.5.33, this is a topos influenced by Thucydides that resurfaces throughout the work, Scott and Carter 1996: xix. Dio also used Thucydides as a model, Lintott 1972: 2499-2501; Millar 1964: 42, 177; Rich 1990: 11. See also Bucher 2000: 434.

³³ Fischer 1999: 37, 51.

Contrary to Dio's uniformly negative portrayal of Fulvia, Appian includes both positive and fiercely negative depictions of Fulvia. That his narrative is neither entirely favourable or entirely critical towards her may indicate some accuracy in his portrayal or in that of one or more of his sources. It remains possible that she had some role in the proscriptions, but even if this is correct, the extent of her participation is unclear.³⁴

Dio implicates Fulvia in the death of those proscribed in a manner which is similar to Appian's account of Rufus' treatment at Fulvia's hands:

καὶ ἡ γε Φουλουία πολλοὺς καὶ αὐτὴ καὶ κατ' ἔχθραν καὶ διὰ χρήματα, καὶ ἔστιν οὓς οὐδὲ γινωσχομένους ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀνδρός, ἐθανάτωσεν· ἐνός γοῦν τινος κεφαλὴν ἰδὼν εἶπεν ὅτι “τοῦτον οὐχ ἠπιστάμην.”

And even Fulvia herself put to death many, both through hatred and on account of their wealth, and there were even those who were not known to her husband; upon seeing the head of one man, he said: “I did not know this man” (47.8.2-3).

Dio suggests that Fulvia was meddling in Antony's affairs, and that because of her cruelty she had men added to the list of those proscribed. He does not mention Rufus, but includes a statement by Antony that he did not recognize the head of the proscribed man.

Valerius Maximus also refers to this incident. Like Dio, he states that Antony saw the head and said: “I have no knowledge of this man” (9.5.4, *hunc ego*

³⁴ Babcock 1965: 21; Fischer 1999: 37. Gowing states that Appian knew the Augustan version, but frequently favoured Pollio's, Gowing 1992: 43. This is not to say, however, that Appian always selected accounts which were favourable to Antony. Unfortunately, it is impossible to say with certainty why Appian favoured Pollio over another historian such as Livy, Gowing 1992: 49.

notum non habui), but he makes no mention of Fulvia. This story is given as an example of excessive pride, and in doing so attacks Antony. Valerius Maximus presents Antony as arrogant because he did not recognize a senator, and as cruel because he spoke so casually of one put to death (9.4.5).

Dio also describes Fulvia as brutally vindictive in her maltreatment of Cicero's corpse after his execution during the proscriptions:

ἡ δὲ δὴ Φουλουία ἔς τε τὰς χεῖρας αὐτὴν πρὶν ἀποκομισθῆναι
ἔδέξατο, καὶ ἐμπικρανάμενη οἱ καὶ ἐμπτύσσα ἐπὶ τε τὰ
γόνατα ἐπέθηκε, καὶ τὸ στόμα αὐτῆς διανοίξασα τὴν τε
γλῶσσαν ἐξείλκυσε καὶ ταῖς βελόναῖς αἷς ἔς τὴν κεφαλὴν
ἐχρήτο κατεκέντησε, πολλὰ ἅμα καὶ μιὰρὰ
προσεπισκώπτουσα.

Fulvia took the head into her hands before it was removed, and after treating it bitterly and having spat upon it, she placed it on her knees, and after having opened the mouth she dragged out the tongue, and pierced it with the needles from her own hair, at the same time making many foul jests (47.8.4).

Thus, Fulvia apparently obtained revenge on behalf of Clodius and Antony against their most hated enemy. After Fulvia was finished, she ordered Cicero's head and hands to be placed on the rostra, where Cicero had delivered some of his *Philippics* against Antony. Some scholars have suggested that this treatment of Cicero's head could be seen as an act of loyalty towards Antony, although it is undeniably

vindictive.³⁵ Others claim that Fulvia's alleged mistreatment of Rufus suggests that she was cruel enough to mistreat the body of an elderly consular.³⁶

It is worthwhile to note that Dio is the only source that ascribes such a prominent role in Cicero's death to Fulvia, and the specific details of the gruesome story as preserved by Dio are not confirmed by any other source. Given that Dio is sometimes hostile to Cicero, it is possible that he exaggerated the brutality of Cicero's death.³⁷ Unless Fulvia committed the murder herself, she would not have seen Cicero's corpse before it was dismembered, as it was only the heads of the dismembered victims that were brought to the triumvirs for payment (*App. B. Civ.* 4.2.8). It is also doubtful that Fulvia would have deprived Antony of the opportunity for his own vengeance.

Velleius Paterculus (2.66.3) does not mention Fulvia or the mistreatment of his corpse, but describes the bonus paid by Antony to Cicero's murderers.³⁸ Fulvia's absence from his narrative is striking, since he was heavily influenced by Augustus' propaganda and he was fond of Cicero.³⁹

³⁵ Cluett 1998: 82; Fischer 1999: 38. *App. B. Civ.* 4.4.19, states that Antony's helpers were eagerly searching for Cicero more than anyone else. Fulvia would not have been any different.

³⁶ Bauman 1992: 85; Fischer 1999: 38. Chamoux states that Fulvia's treatment of Cicero was along the lines of her supposedly violent and untameable character, Chamoux 1986: 183.

³⁷ Huzar 1978: 249; Lintott 1972: 2516; Millar 1964: 46, 49; Rich 1990: 8.

³⁸ Woodman 1983: 147.

³⁹ Just as Velleius Paterculus places the blame for the destruction of Perusia on the soldiers and not Octavian (2.74.4), he also apologizes and defends Octavian's participations in the proscriptions (*Vell. Pat.* 2.66.2). See Woodman 1983: 115. Woodman also states that Velleius Paterculus pays tribute to Cicero's accomplishments as a statesman and orator, Woodman 1983: 145.

Appian states that it was Laena, a centurion of Antony, who hunted down Cicero, and on his own initiative removed his tongue and hands to present them as a gift in order to obtain the favour of Antony (*B. Civ.* 4.4.19-20).

Plutarch also does not mention any mistreatment of Cicero by Fulvia (*Vit. Ant.* 20.3; *Vit. Cic.* 48.4). He states that it was Antony who sought revenge against Cicero for the *Philippics*: “after Cicero had been butchered, Antony ordered his head to be cut off, and that right hand with which Cicero had written the speeches against him” (*Vit. Ant.* 20.3, Κικέρωνος δὲ σφαγέντος ἐκέλευσεν Ἀντώνιος τὴν τε κεφαλὴν ἀποκοπῆναι καὶ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν δεξιάν, ἥ τοὺς κατ’ αὐτοῦ λόγους ἔγραψε). It is natural that Antony, the target of Cicero’s invective in the *Philippics*, would have harboured more hatred against Cicero than Fulvia herself.

These stories of Fulvia’s gruesome participation in and eagerness for the proscriptions described above should be viewed with scepticism. Both Appian and Dio may have used Augustus’ *Memoirs* extensively.⁴⁰ These *Memoirs* would obviously have altered the depiction of the events to make them more favourable to Augustus (*App. B. Civ.* 5.5.45; *Dio* 44.34.3). Thus, Appian, in order to emphasize the proscriptions as the most extreme in Roman history, presents Fulvia, a woman, as instigator of some of the deaths. Similarly, Dio characterizes her as bloodthirsty and brutal, and portrays her as cruelly abusing Cicero’s body. This is sometimes in direct contrast to Appian’s account, and is the most negative in the ancient sources.

⁴⁰ Gowing 1992: 40. In fact, Gowing notes that Appian identifies by name only two of his sources for this period, one of which is Augustus’ memoirs (*App. B. Civ.* 5.6.45), Gowing 1992: 40-41. Similarly, Dio “identifies no work other than Augustus’ *Memoirs*” (44.35.3) for the same time period, Gowing, 1992: 42.

Dio perhaps sought to blame not Octavian but Fulvia for the deaths of many as a result of her own personal hatred and greed (e.g. 47.8.2).⁴¹ The lack of confirmation from other sources of Dio's version permits the conclusion that this detail may even have been invented by him when he came to write his history over two centuries after the event.

Appian also records another episode concerning the actions of Fulvia during the proscriptions that recall Cicero's earlier accusations that she was a greedy and cruel woman. The triumvirs, in need of more money for the war against Caesar's assassins, imposed a tax on the 1400 wealthiest women in Rome (*B. Civ.* 4.1.5).⁴² These women, insulted that they should be taxed when they had nothing to do with the war, sent representatives to the female relations of the triumvirs to request that they intercede on their behalf. Julia, the mother of Antony, and Octavia, the sister of Octavian, received the women kindly and offered support. However, Fulvia repulsed these women from her doors:

Φουλβίας δέ, τῆς γυναικὸς Ἀντωνίου, τῶν θυρῶν
ἀπωθούμεναι χαλεπῶς τὴν ὕβριν ἤνεγκαν.

but having been thrust away from the doors of Fulvia, the wife of Antony, they received the insult bitterly (*B. Civ.* 4.5.32).

Naturally enough, these women were insulted by Fulvia's refusal. As a result, they chose Hortensia as their representative. She was the daughter of the great orator

⁴¹ Fischer 1999: 37; Syme 1939: 191. Rich states that Dio is pro-Augustan *except* during his triumviral narratives, Rich 1990: 7.

⁴² This tax is also mentioned in Dio's account (47.16.4). Fulvia's rebuke of Hortensia is not included.

Hortensius, and evidently had inherited his oratorical skill.⁴³ Hortensia led the group of protesters to the forum, where she spoke out against the new tax.⁴⁴ Appian includes his own version of Hortensia's speech, part of which makes reference to Fulvia and her actions:

καὶ ἐς τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα τῶν ἀρχόντων ὥσάμεναι,
διισταμένων τοῦ τε δήμου καὶ τῶν δορυφόρων, ἔλεγον,
‘Ὀρτησίας ἐς τοῦτο προκεχειρισμένης· ὁ μὲν ἤρμοξε δεομέναις
ὑμῶν γυναιξὶ τοιαῖσδε, ἐπὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ὑμῶν κατεφύγομεν· ὁ
δὲ οὐχ ἤρμοξεν, ὑπὸ Φουλβίας παθοῦσαι, ἐς τὴν ἀγορὰν
συνεώσμεθα ὑπ’ αὐτῆς.

They forced their way to the tribunal of the triumvirs in the forum, the people and the guards separating to let them pass. There, they spoke as follows through Hortensia: ‘as befitted women of our rank addressing a petition to you, we fled for refuge to the women of your households; but having been treated as did not befit us, suffering on account of Fulvia, we have been forced together by her to the forum’ (*B. Civ.* 4.5.32).

It is interesting to note that Hortensia states that the women were forced to the forum on account of Fulvia, despite the support they received from both Julia and Octavia. It would seem, therefore, that to Appian it was Fulvia who was the most powerful of these women, or, at least, that she, not his mother, spoke for Antony.⁴⁵ Her behaviour is all the more striking if one remembers that she herself,

⁴³ Hortensia's speech was apparently well known and widely read, Gowing 1992: 260. Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 1.1.6; Val. Max. 8.3.3. However, as the original version of her speech does not survive, it is impossible to state with any certainty to what degree Appian's version resembles what she said that day or what she was reported to have said.

⁴⁴ Babcock suggests that the mention of Fulvia's rude treatment was an excuse for the public venue for their complaints, Babcock 1965: 24.

⁴⁵ Babcock 1965: 24; Bauman 1992: 86. Cf. Bengtson 1977: 131.

barely a year earlier, may have been in a similar position when she was attempting to prevent the senate from declaring Antony a public enemy.⁴⁶

These new taxes would have enriched Octavian and Antony, and in turn, possibly Fulvia. Therefore, her refusal to lend assistance to the women perhaps demonstrates the cruelty and greed which Cicero repeatedly accused her (e.g. *Phil.* 2.113; 3.16; 6.4; 13.18). As it is, she appears heartless in contrast to Octavia, who is here shown as having treated the women with kindness and dignity. Moreover, Octavia's behaviour reflects well on her brother, whereas Fulvia's insulting rejection of these women in turn reflects badly on her husband.⁴⁷

Her rebuke of the women has puzzled some scholars because it is possible that she herself may have been subject to the tax (according to Cicero she was very wealthy [*Phil.* 3.16]).⁴⁸ However, it seems improbable that Fulvia was subject to the tax, when she was the wife of one of the triumvirs. Nevertheless, if the story is true, Fulvia may have considered herself duty bound to pay the tax in order to help the 'restoration of the Republic' that the triumvirs claimed as their *raison d'être*. According to this interpretation, she was not always the greedy woman depicted by Cicero (*Phil.* 6.4, *mulieri...avarissimae*).⁴⁹ Fulvia emerges perhaps more positively

⁴⁶ Cluett 1998: 73.

⁴⁷ Delia 1991: 201.

⁴⁸ Bauman 1992: 86; Cluett 1998: 82; Fischer 1999: 39, n. 173.

⁴⁹ Some scholars see Fulvia sacrificing her own wealth as the dutiful act of the wife of a triumvir which anticipates the future attitude of a loyal empress, Bauman 1992: 86; Fischer 1999: 39.

from this story as one who subjected her own private interests to support the cause of the triumvirs by helping to finance the war against the assassins of Caesar.⁵⁰

Fulvia's Role in the Start of the Perusine War

The two most detailed accounts of the Perusine War are to be found in Appian and Dio, although other authors do mention the war and its origins (e.g. Livy, Velleius Paterculus, Suetonius, Plutarch and Florus). It was during this war, which lasted from December 41 to February 40, that Fulvia appears to have exerted the greatest influence on public affairs. The most compelling references to her exercise of power on behalf of her husband concern her role at this time.⁵¹ However, the degree of her participation in the events of the war differs between the two accounts, as will be discussed below.

Appian states that she was the immediate cause of the Perusine War (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19, τότε γὰρ δὴ γυναικὸς τι παθοῦσα ἡ Φουλβία τὸν Λεύκιον ἐπέτριβεν ἔς τὴν διαφορὰν [“then Fulvia, moved by a woman’s jealousy, inflamed Lucius to discord”]). She was supposedly motivated by her jealousy over Antony’s affair with Cleopatra to escalate into open war an already tense situation between Lucius and Octavian regarding the land allocation. Although Appian states that her jealousy was the immediate cause of the war, he notes that it was not as important as other causes (*B. Civ.* 5.2.15-17), in particular, the self-serving aspirations of the

⁵⁰ Fischer notes that this episode displays Fulvia’s loyalty, which was based not on sentimental motives, but on political convictions, Fischer 1999: 40.

⁵¹ Delia 1991: 203; Fischer 1999: 44; Welch 1995: 193.

commanders (*B. Civ.* 5.2.17), and their inability to exert control over the soldiers (*B. Civ.* 5.2.15-17).⁵² Unlike Dio, Appian also assigns a significant role to Manius in manipulating Fulvia's emotions:

καὶ Φουλβία ὥς πολεμοποιούντα ἐν ἀκαίρῳ, μέχρι τὴν
Φουλβίαν ὁ Μάνιος πανούργως μετεδίδαξεν ὥς εἰρηνευομένης
μὲν τῆς Ἰταλίας ἐπιμενεῖν Ἀντώνιον Κλεοπάτρα,
πολεμουμένης δ' ἀφίξεσθαι κατὰ τάχος.

and Fulvia blamed [Lucius] for stirring up war at an ill time, until Manius villainously converted her by telling her that while Italy was peaceful Antony would stay with Cleopatra, but that making war would bring him back quickly (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19).

Appian, in other words, does not say that Fulvia alone caused the war, but that she was goaded by Manius.⁵³ He allots her a far smaller role during the war itself. Thus, according to this ancient source, Fulvia appears to be responsible for the events leading up to the war, leaving Lucius in a position where he was constrained to follow.⁵⁴ The war is portrayed as a result of Fulvia's jealousy of her husband's extramarital affair, and not as a conflict of interest between Octavian and Lucius, or as a struggle between the triumvirate and the Republic.

Plutarch's account concurs with that of Appian, and he writes that Fulvia incited war because "she hoped to draw Antony back from Cleopatra" (*Vit. Ant.* 30.4, ἐλπίζουσιν δὲ τῆς Κλεοπάτρας ἀπάξειν τὸν Ἀντώνιον). Plutarch

⁵² One of the main causes was conflict between rival Caesarian leaders, Gowing 1992: 79. Bucher states that the *Bella Civilia* is actually divided based on generals or factional leaders who fought one another, Bucher 2000: 436.

⁵³ Fischer 1999: 44; Roddaz 1988: 319, n. 11. Appian, however, explicitly states in Lucius' speech to Octavian after his surrender that Fulvia had no part in the cause of the war (*B. Civ.* 5.5.43).

⁵⁴ Roddaz 1988: 325.

perhaps establishes Fulvia as Cleopatra's precursor. Just as Fulvia incites a war in order to draw Antony back to Italy from Cleopatra, so later Cleopatra provokes a war with Octavian to keep Antony from Octavia (*Vit. Ant.* 53.5).⁵⁵

Thus, according to Appian and Plutarch, the war at Perusia was a result of a woman's jealousy.⁵⁶ It is difficult to believe, however, that she would have been so jealous of Antony's relationship with Cleopatra in particular. His affairs were certainly nothing new to her. Indeed, he had been accused of adultery with Fulvia before they were married (*Cic. Phil.* 2.48; 2.99), and his affair with Cytheris was well-known (*Cic. Phil.* 2.61). There is no indication that Fulvia was jealous of Cytheris, or that she tried to stop Antony from seeing her. This is probably because Antony's relationship with Cytheris was, from a social and legal point of view, harmless.⁵⁷ Except for the epigram preserved by Martial, there is similarly no indication that Fulvia was jealous of Antony's royal mistress Glaphyra.⁵⁸ Roman aristocratic women would not have been surprised if their husbands were adulterous,

⁵⁵ For Plutarch's presentation of Antony's wives see also Cluett 1998: 83; Huzar 1986: 103; Pelling 1988: 199; Pomeroy 1975: 186.

⁵⁶ This depiction of Fulvia is different from his earlier portrayal of her as active on her absent husband's behalf (cf. *App. B. Civ.* 5.2.14, 5.3.19).

⁵⁷ Treggiari 1991: 263, 264, 302. It is important to note that Cytheris was of a substantially lower class than Cleopatra. Relationships with slaves, prostitutes and actresses were different from adultery with a matron or person of respectability, McGinn 1991: 342-343, 370; Treggiari 1991: 263.

⁵⁸ There was a large difference in the severity of affairs with slaves or women of higher status. For example, a *paterfamilias* could kill his wife's lover if he was a slave, Treggiari 2005: 131.

and Antony's wives would most certainly have been no different.⁵⁹ There is no way to say for certain how Fulvia would have felt about his affairs, and one can only speculate whether she saw a difference between Antony's relationship with Cytheris and that with Cleopatra. It is unlikely, however, that she suddenly became fanatically possessive in 41/40. Her jealousy as a cause for the war, therefore, seems to be nothing more than an invention of propaganda.⁶⁰ The explanation most likely served the purpose of covering up the real cause of the war, which was the conflict between Octavian and Lucius, or, alternatively, between the veterans and the land owners.

When Octavian first began distributing the Italian lands to the veterans of the battles of Philippi in late 42, Lucius and Fulvia were busy working to ensure that Antony received his share of the credit. However, at some point in the year between then and the start of the Perusine War, Lucius and Fulvia changed their strategy. Lucius, and perhaps also Fulvia, took up the cause of the farmers who were displaced to make way for the veterans, but still championed liberty and the name of Antony.⁶¹ It is unclear whether Lucius sincerely wanted to help the dispossessed farmers, or whether he decided to use them in order to gain more power in order to overthrow Octavian. It is even more unclear whether Fulvia allied herself with

⁵⁹ Finley states that "it was taken for granted, however, that men would find comradeship and sexual satisfaction from others as well," Finley 1968: 130. For a similar view of male adultery see Williams 1999: 51.

⁶⁰ Pelling 1988: 199. This will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

⁶¹ Syme 1939: 208.

Lucius because of their familial relationship, or because she shared his political views. Appian states:

τούς τε γεωργούς, ὅσοι τῆς γῆς ἀφηροῦντο, ἱκέτας
γιγνομένους τῶν δυνατῶν ἑκάστου μόνος ὑπεδέχετο καὶ
βοηθήσειν ὑπισχνεῖτο, κἀκείνων ὑπισχνουμένων ἀμυνεῖν, ἔς ὃ
κελεύοι.

He [Lucius] alone received them kindly, and promised to help the farmers who had been deprived of their lands and who were now the suppliants of every powerful man; and they promised to carry out what he might order (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19).

Appian portrays Lucius as the defender of the displaced Italian landowners,⁶² but his account also suggests that this image of Lucius may stem from Augustan propaganda. Lucius tells Octavian that the triumvir has misrepresented Lucius' own motives for the conflict. Thus, the blame for the war is shifted from Lucius' desire to uphold the Republic to his support of the displaced farmers, thereby downplaying the importance of his rebellion (*App. B. Civ.* 5.5.43). Although Octavian may have lost support for not assisting the farmers, the conflict is no longer an assault on him personally, but rather a rebellion against authority. According to Gabba, Appian portrays Lucius as a man who fought to defend against the triumvirate the laws of the Republic, the rights of the dispossessed, and the traditional magistracies.⁶³ It is unlikely, however, that Antony himself would have approved of his brother's

⁶² Appian reveals here his sympathy with an oppressed and war-hungry populace, and his interest in "elucidating the sheer misery to which the Italian peninsula had been reduced as a result of the triumvirs' exactions," Gowing 1992: 78. Gabba states that "the expropriated Italici saw in L. Antonius their own champion, without his wishing it," Gabba 1971: 148.

⁶³ Gabba 1970: xvii; Gabba 1971: 146; Syme 1939: 208. This portrayal of Lucius is inconsistent with Appian's positive view of the Augustan regime, Bucher 2000: 441.

republican sentiments, particularly Lucius' efforts on behalf of the displaced farmers at the expense of Antony's own veterans after Philippi.⁶⁴

Dio, on the other hand, portrays Lucius as a selfish man who used the name of his brother to further his own personal interests. Dio states:

ὁ γὰρ Καῖσαρ τὴν χαλεπότητα τῆς πενθερᾶς μὴ φέρων ἐκείνη γὰρ μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ Ἀντωνίῳ διαφέρεισθαι δοκεῖν ἐβούλετό... ἀλλ' ὁ τε Λούκιος μετὰ τῆς Φουλουίας τῶν τε πραγμάτων, ὥς καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ Μάρκου ταῦτα δρῶν, ἀντελαμβάνετο καὶ οὐδενὸς αὐτῷ ὑφίετό διὰ γὰρ τὴν πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφὸν εὐσέβειαν καὶ ἐπωνυμίαν ἑαυτῷ Πιέταν ἐπέθετο.

For Octavian could not endure the difficulty of his mother-in-law, and he wished to seem to be at odds with her rather than with Antony... but Lucius together with Fulvia attempted to take control of affairs, as if doing these things on behalf of Marcus, and would yield nothing to him [Octavian], in fact because of his piety to his brother he took the cognomen *Pietas* (48.5.3-4).

Lucius here is self-serving. Fulvia is similarly working selfishly at the side of her brother-in-law. Dio ascribes responsibility to Lucius for the failure of the negotiations (48.11.1), whereas Appian portrays him as eager to avoid the conflict (*B. Civ.* 5.3.22).⁶⁵ Fulvia is portrayed uniformly by Dio as domineering, especially over her husband and the arrogant Lucius, who also comes across as a bumbling fool.⁶⁶ Both Antony's brother and his wife, therefore, serve to shoulder the blame for the war, taking responsibility from Octavian.⁶⁷ Dio shows Fulvia working as an equal partner with Lucius from the very beginning of the war. In Appian, Fulvia

⁶⁴ Gabba 1971: 150; Syme 1939: 211; Welch 1995: 193.

⁶⁵ Gabba 1970: 47-48; Roddaz 1988: 336; Sordi 1985: 307.

⁶⁶ Gowing 1992: 79.

⁶⁷ Dio is not entirely favourable to Octavian, and his account of the Perusine War is the most critical of him, Gowing 1992: 84; Rich 1990: 7.

initially opposed Lucius (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19), and played little part in events after hostilities broke out between Lucius and Octavian. As indicated by the use of the word ὥς in the phrase (ὥς καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ Μάρκου ταῦτα δρῶν [48.5.4]), Dio seems to describe Lucius' efforts on behalf of his brother and his adoption of the cognomen *Pietas* with sarcasm. His attitude is not surprising given that Dio objected strongly to political change when brought about through violence, as it often led to the commander's inability to control his soldiers.⁶⁸ Thus, Dio's view of Lucius' rebellion against Octavian may have been influenced by his sentiment against violent political change.⁶⁹

Lucius and Fulvia are said to have originally planned to maintain Antony's reputation amongst the soldiers, but switched to helping the displaced land owners. Dio suggests that this change of plan was merely a pretext to further their own aspirations:

μετεβάλλοντο ἢ τε Φουλουία καὶ ὁ ὕπατος, πλείω δύναμιν ἐν τοῖς ἑτέροις τοῖς ἀδικουμένοις σχήσειν ἐλπίσαντες, καὶ τῶν μὲν ληψομένων τοὺς ἀγροὺς ἡμέλησαν, πρὸς δὲ ἐκείνους, ἅτε καὶ πλείονας ὄντας καὶ ὀργὴν δικαίαν ὑπὲρ ὧν ἀπεστεροῦντο ποιομένους, ἐτράποντο.

⁶⁸ Gowing 1992: 294; Lintott 1972: 2518; Rich 1990: 4.

⁶⁹ Lucius' actions may not have been simply a tactic to attract the loyalty of the veterans, but could have been a genuine display of fraternal piety. As Roddaz says: "*On ne peut pas ne pas considérer cette initiative comme une manoeuvre de Lucius pour attirer à lui les vétérans de Marcus en Italie ou tout simplement s'assurer de leur fidélité,*" Roddaz 1988: 324. See Sear (1998: cat. nos. 237-241) for a series of coins with the legend PIETAS COS (cf. Hill 1975: 174). Whatever Lucius' actual sentiments, the adoption of the cognomen *Pietas* was a brilliant manoeuvre. Since Lucius was claiming to be acting out of piety towards his brother, Antony could not publicly repudiate his pious brother Lucius for not supporting his veterans without severely damaging his own reputation, Gabba 1971: 150; Huzar 1978: 134.

thereupon Fulvia and the consul changed their position, hoping to have more power in the others being wronged, and they neglected those taking the lands and they turned to the others, who being more numerous and angry at being robbed (48.6.4).

The aid offered by Lucius to the farmers was not an attempt to help those evicted from their lands, but rather one to gather support to overthrow Octavian. Dio states that they were using the distribution of land as an excuse to gain power and the name of Antony to further their own ambitions. It is worth pointing out that Octavian's struggle is here depicted by Dio as being primarily against his mother-in-law Fulvia, rather than against his fellow triumvir, Antony, or against the consul Lucius .

The most interesting aspect of Dio's portrayal is that he says she was in control of the senate for the period preceding the conflict at Perusia (48.4.1-4). This claim is not confirmed by any other extant ancient source.⁷⁰ Dio may be expanding upon Cicero's descriptions of Fulvia from 44. The statement, however, links Fulvia to a position of considerable control. Dio states that in 41:

τῷ δὲ ἐχομένῳ ἔτει ὀνόματι μὲν ὃ τε Σερουίλιος ὁ Πούπλιος καὶ ὁ Ἀντώνιος ὁ Λούκιος, ἔργῳ δὲ οὗτός τε καὶ ἡ Φουλουία ὑπάτευσαν· τοῦ τε γὰρ Καίσαρος πενθερά καὶ τοῦ Ἀντωνίου γυνὴ οὔσα τὸν τε Λέπιδον ὑπὸ νωθείας παρ' οὐδέν ἦγε καὶ αὐτὴ τὰ πράγματα διεχειρίζεν, ὥστε μήτε τὴν βουλήν μήτε τὸν δῆμον ἄλλο τι παρὰ τὸ ἐκείνη δοκοῦν χρηματίζειν.

In the next year, Publius Servilius and Lucius Antonius were named consuls, but in reality it was [Lucius] Antonius and Fulvia; for being the mother-in-law of Octavian and wife of Antony, she had no respect for Lepidus because of his sluggishness, and handled affairs

⁷⁰ Gowing states that Dio digresses on this topic in order to establish Lucius and Fulvia's characters: Lucius as a tool of his sister-in-law, and Fulvia as meddlesome, Gowing 1992: 79.

herself, so that neither the senate nor the people negotiated any business against her (48.4.1).

This is a serious statement indeed. Dio demonstrates Fulvia's control over affairs of state by recounting that in 41 Lucius demanded a triumph for his skirmishes with some Alpine tribes, but that the senators were opposed to it on the grounds that it was not a significant enough victory for a triumph. However, when Fulvia gave her consent, the senate then unanimously voted in favour of the honour (48.4.3).

Later in this same passage, Dio writes:

πολὺ γοῦν πλεῖον ἐκείνου, ὅτε καὶ ἀληθέστερον, ἐσεμνύνετο· τὸ γὰρ δοῦναί τινι ἐξουσίαν τῆς τῶν νικητηρίων πέμψεως μείζον τοῦ διεορτάσαι αὐτὰ παρ' ἑτέρου λαβόντα ἦν. πλήν γε ὅτι τὴν τε σκευὴν τὴν ἐπινίκιον ὁ Λούκιος ἐνεδύσατο καὶ τοῦ ἄρματος ἐπέβη, τὰ τε ἄλλα τὰ καθήκοντα ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις ἔπραξεν, αὐτὴ ἡ Φουλουία τὴν πανήγυριν, ὑπηρέτη ἐκείνῳ χρωμένη, ποιεῖν ἔδοξεν.

At all events, she exalted herself more over the affair than he did, for she had a truer cause; to have given anyone authority to hold a triumph was greater than to celebrate one. Except that Lucius went out dressed in the triumphal dress, climbed up into the chariot, and performed the other rites in these cases, it was Fulvia herself who seemed to make the spectacle, with him as her assistant (48.4.4).

Dio states very clearly that Lucius needed Fulvia's permission in order to hold a triumph. This passage may not accurately reflect events. Unfortunately, this portion of the text contains large lacunae and it is difficult to know for sure what is said about Fulvia's influence over the senate. The lengthy digression on Lucius' undeserved triumph is probably intended to emphasize Lucius' arrogance as well as to portray Fulvia as dominating her brother-in-law and meddling in affairs of the

senate.⁷¹ Fulvia is listed, perhaps sarcastically, as Lucius' fellow consul and colleague, instead of Publius Servilius.⁷²

It is also interesting to note the ways in which Dio refers to both Fulvia and Lucius in his narrative of events. In some cases, Fulvia is named and Lucius is referred to only as 'the consul' (e.g. 48.6.4; 48.10.2, where he writes: Φουλουία καὶ ὁ ὕπατος), and even Fulvia's assistant (48.4.4). It is important that Fulvia's name is mentioned before Lucius' title. By doing this, Dio not only emphasizes her participation in the conflict, but calls attention to the fact that she was in charge.

The epitomator of Livy⁷³ blames Fulvia for inciting Lucius to war, and makes no mention of the role of Manius. It is likely that he is reflecting Livy's own Augustan point of view. The relevant section is as follows:

Seditiones exercitus sui, quas corrupti a Fulvia M. Antonii uxore milites adversus imperatorem suum concitaverant, cum grai periculo inhibuit. L. Antonius consul, M. Antonii frater, eadem Fulvia consiliante bellum Caesari intulit.

He [Octavian] checked at great risk civil discords in his army that soldiers, bribed by Fulvia, the wife of M. Antony, had roused up against their general. Consul L. Antonius, brother of M. Antony, consulting with the same Fulvia, attacked Octavian in war (*Per.* 125).

The degree of Fulvia's involvement described above is important. The passage does not say that Fulvia participated personally in the conflict, but rather, that she influenced the course of events through others. In contrast to the accounts of Appian

⁷¹ Gowing 1992: 79.

⁷² It is unclear whether Dio is referring to Lucius or Mark Antony. Considering that Antony was away most of the year in the East, he, most likely, means Lucius.

⁷³ Unfortunately, the books in Livy's history that cover this period are lost and only summaries (*Periochae*) survive. The author of these summaries is anonymous.

and Dio, Fulvia is portrayed as acting solely on behalf of her husband, and not from feelings of jealousy. The summary depicts Fulvia as the driving force behind the events leading up to the Perusine War, while Lucius is relegated to the role of her subordinate.⁷⁴ By describing Fulvia as the cause of the conflict, Octavian is freed from any embarrassment on account of the war. Similarly, since Lucius had claimed piety on behalf of his brother, Octavian's lenient treatment of Lucius helps both his and Antony's reputation.

The epitome of the siege of Perusia itself does not mention Fulvia. It would seem that in Livy's account Fulvia only had a role to play in causing the war, but none in the actual war itself. The summaries mention twice that she stirred up war (*Per.* 125, 127). They do not implicate Octavian in the destruction of Perusia, but rather, blame the destruction of the city on the soldiers (*Per.* 126, *et omnibus militibus eius ignovit, Perusiam diruit* ["and his soldiers ignored him and destroyed Perusia"]; cf. Vell. Pat. 2.72.4, *in Perusinos magis ira militum quam voluntate saevitum ducis* ["and the cruel treatment of the people of Perusia was due more to the anger of the soldiers than the wish of their leader"]). Augustan bias can also be found in the statement that the Perusine War was fought without any bloodshed (*Per.* 126, *bellum citra ullum sanguinem confecit* ["and concluded the war up to the point without any bloodshed caused by violence"]). According to Hallett, Given that

⁷⁴ Similarly, Florus states that Fulvia incited Antony (which should actually refer to Lucius and not Mark Antony) to stir up hostilities (Flor. 16.2.2), thereby implying that Lucius was Fulvia's tool.

the author makes special mention of this in a summary suggests that in fact the Perusine War was notoriously bloody.⁷⁵

In a later account of the same events, the biographer Suetonius places the blame for the war entirely on Lucius:

Quo tempore L. Antonium fiducia consulatus, quem gerebat, ac fraternae potentiae res novas molientem confugere Perusiam coegit et ad deditionem fame compulit.

at which time L. Antonius began a revolution, endeavouring with confidence in his consulship and his brother's power, he [Octavian] forced him to flee to Perusia, and forced him by hunger to surrender (Suet. Aug. 14).

He mentions Fulvia only to say that Octavian divorced Claudia because he quarrelled with her mother Fulvia (Suet. Aug. 62).⁷⁶ While this quarrel may be understood to refer to Fulvia's role in the war, Suetonius makes no direct references to Fulvia in the passages which might link the two.

Plutarch gives an account of the start of the war which is similar to Appian's account that Fulvia and Lucius initially disagreed about opposing Octavian's distribution of land (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19, καὶ Φουλβία ὥς πολεμοποιούντα ἐν ἀκαίρῳ [“and Fulvia blamed him for stirring up war at a bad time”]), but that they soon became allied against Octavian:

Λεύκιον τὸν ἀδελπὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ Φουλβίαν τὴν γυναῖκα
πρῶτον ἀλλήλοις στρασιάσαντας, εἶτα Καίσαρι
πολεμήσαντας ἀποβεβληκέναι τὰ πράγματα καὶ φεύγειν ἐξ
, Ἰταλίας.

⁷⁵ Hallett 1977: 163. Cf. Prop. 1.21, 1.22, in which he laments the deaths that resulted from the war.

⁷⁶ Bengtson 1977: 168; Chamoux 1986: 255. Claudia, however, may only have been thirteen in 42/41, Carter 1982: 182.

Lucius, his brother, and Fulvia, his wife, had at first quarrelled with one another, but then they made war against Octavian, although they lost the war and had to flee from Italy (*Vit. Ant.* 30.1).

However, he also reports that Antony was told by his friends that it was not Lucius, but Fulvia alone who instigated the war (*Vit. Ant.* 30.4, πολέμου τὴν Φουλβίαν αἰτίαν γεγονέναι [“Fulvia had been to blame for the war”]).

Plutarch’s description of the events of 41/40 has been considered by some to reflect reasonably accurately Fulvia’s role in this period.⁷⁷ However, he admits to using Augustus’ *Memoirs* as a source for his biography of Antony (*Vit. Ant.* 2.2), and this must be kept in mind. As well, Plutarch occasionally alters details in his biographies in order to focus on a certain theme or image that he wishes to associate with a particular *Life*.⁷⁸ Plutarch’s primary concern in his biographies is to reveal the character of his subject (see *Vit. Alex.* 1.2)⁷⁹ and, by doing so, to impart a moral lesson to his readers. A result of this is that he abbreviates the historical narrative where he feels it is necessary.⁸⁰ His concern is not to denounce Antony for his actions, but rather, to present him as an example of a weak man dominated by others; his portrayal of Fulvia prepares Antony to be dominated by Cleopatra (*Vit.*

⁷⁷ Babcock 1965: 19; Pelling 1988: 17.

⁷⁸ Pelling 1979: 77; Pelling 1988: 26. For example, his description of Caesar’s murder is different in his *Lives* of Caesar, Cicero, Brutus, and Antony.

⁷⁹ *Vit. Alex.* 1.2, οὔτε γὰρ ἱστορίας γράφομεν, ἀλλὰ βίους (“for it is not histories we are writing, but lives”), Pelling 1988: 10.

⁸⁰ Pelling 1980: 135.

Ant. 10.6, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀκροᾶσθαι γυναικῶν ["to endure the rule of women"]), is just one example of this.⁸¹

The ancient sources discussed above almost unanimously assign to Fulvia an important role in the start of the Perusine War. Appian, very clearly, blames Fulvia and Manius for instigating the hostilities (*B. Civ.* 5.3.19). Dio, on the other hand, states that the war arose from the machinations of both Fulvia and Lucius (48.5.4), although he makes Lucius a mere tool in the hands of his sister-in-law (48.4.3, 48.10.3). Plutarch's account corresponds to Appian's, and portrays Fulvia as active against Octavian (*Vit. Ant.* 30.1).⁸² Livy perhaps described Fulvia as the driving force behind the events leading up to outbreak of the war (*Per.* 125). In contrast to the majority of the sources, Suetonius does not mention Fulvia in connection with the Perusine War (*Aug.* 14). According to Syme, just as with much of the Perusine War itself, it is impossible to understand what really happened in the events preceding the war.⁸³ Its causes are heavily veiled by propaganda from both sides. Antonian propaganda portrays Octavian as cowardly, unwilling to face a fight, and concerned only for his own immoral interests.⁸⁴ Augustan propaganda, on the other hand, minimizes Lucius' role in the start of the war, while at the same time emphasizes that of Fulvia, and perhaps also of Manius, in order to reduce the

⁸¹ Russell states that "this mocking, contemptuous passage" (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 10.6) has a metaphor of a schoolboy being taught to obey and become submissive to his master. Thus, Plutarch presents a reversal of the appropriate gender roles in Antony's marriage with Fulvia, Russell 1998: 123.

⁸² This is not surprising as Plutarch and Appian were most likely both using Pollio's history as a main source, Pelling 1979: 84.

⁸³ Syme 1939: 210, 215.

⁸⁴ Charlesworth 1933: 174-5.

importance of the war itself.⁸⁵ The sources described above are sometimes contradictory and not altogether clear, and as a result, they may be interpreted differently. The one thing that is clear, however, is that Fulvia had an important role at the beginning of the war. The extent of that role is unfortunately unclear as a result of the vague and sometimes contradicting sources.

Fulvia as Military Commander and a Commander of Men

As has already been discussed, it seems that Fulvia played a significant role in affairs in Italy during the period before the Perusine War began.⁸⁶ Some sources also suggest that Fulvia was actively involved in the war itself (for example, the sling bullets and Martial's epigram). This image of Fulvia on a military campaign may be the result of Augustan propaganda and Octavian's desire to lessen the importance of the war (e.g., Martial 11.20), but it could be an accurate depiction of events from December 41 to February 40. The sling bullets found at the site of Perugia, discussed in the previous chapter, suggest that Fulvia had at the very least a public role in the war and was familiar to the soldiers (*CIL* 6721.5). Turning now to the later literary sources that are the focus of this chapter, the earliest reference to Fulvia is by Valerius Maximus, and it is possibly the basis for some of the later portrayals of her military activities (3.5.3). There are further brief references to

⁸⁵ Gabba 1970: 34. Roddaz: "*La propagande augustéenne s'est attachée à dénaturer ou à minimiser son rôle en le présentant comme au personnage un peu falot, dominé par sa belle-soeur Fulvie et l'agent de son frère, Manius,*" Roddaz 1988: 318.

⁸⁶ Babcock 1965: 19; Huzar 1986: 103; Virioux 2001: 75; Welch 1995: 193; Münzer 1910: 7.282.

Fulvia in a military association found in the writings of Velleius Paterculus (2.74.3), Plutarch (*Vit. Ant.* 10.5-6), Appian (*B. Civ.* 5.4.33), and Florus (2.16.2). It is, however, Dio's account of Fulvia's actions during the Perusine War which links her most clearly to military command (e.g. 48.10.4).⁸⁷

The scope of Valerius Maximus' narrative is limited by the aim of his compilation of *exempla*: to illustrate individual virtues and vices.⁸⁸ This should be kept in mind when discussing what he says about Fulvia. He does not describe Fulvia as a military commander in reference to the Perusine War, but rather, in reference to her first husband, Clodius:

possedit favorem plebis Clodius Pulcher, adhaerensque Fulvianae stolae pugio militare decus muliebri imperio subiectum habuit.

Clodius Pulcher possessed the favour of the common people and the dagger clinging to Fulvia's *stola* held military distinction subject to feminine power (3.5.3).

The *pugio* was a dagger worn by commanders as a symbol of military prowess (*militare decus*). By stating that Fulvia wore such a dagger, Valerius Maximus may indirectly associate her with a military role. However, this statement is somewhat obscure, and it should not be taken literally. It is just as probable that the reference is to her relationship with Clodius, and that he was affectionately clinging to her *stola* as a *pugio* clung to the belt of a commander.⁸⁹ This statement could then indicate that Fulvia and Clodius' marriage was close, or it could also suggest that Clodius was subjected to Fulvia's power as supposedly was Antony (Plut. *Vit. Ant.*

⁸⁷ Babcock 1965: 24.

⁸⁸ Wardle 1997: 324.

⁸⁹ Babcock 1965: 12, n. 24; Münzer 1900: 7.281; Virioux 2001: 68.

10.6). Evidence for the former interpretation can be found in Cicero's references that Clodius was rarely ever seen in public without his wife (Cic. *Mil.* 28; 55). There is no known reference to Fulvia having frequented military camps during her marriage to Clodius, nor does Cicero's allegation that Fulvia accompanied Antony to the camp at Brundisium in 44 (Cic. *Phil.* 13.18) make it any more likely that she did so with Clodius. It is also worth noting that Clodius spent the years of his marriage to Fulvia, approximately 62 to 52, for the most part in Italy, except for a quaestorship in Sicily about which the sources do not provide much information.⁹⁰

Valerius Maximus could also be referring to the control that Fulvia exhibited over her husband, although, it must be remembered that this is a notion generally applied to her marriage with Antony and not to Clodius. The ancient sources frequently describe Fulvia's control over Antony (something which seems to have been first mentioned by Cicero, *Phil.* 6.4). This passage could similarly mean that Clodius was tied to Fulvia's clothes as a sign of his subjection to her *imperium*, instead of as a sign of affection.⁹¹ Considering Fulvia's age at the time, this is a very unlikely situation. It would seem, then, that a metaphorical interpretation of this statement is better suited to Valerius Maximus' intentions.

Velleius Paterculus, like Valerius Maximus, may simply be repeating Augustan propaganda (e.g. 2.74.3, "thanks to Caesar's usual manliness and good

⁹⁰ Babcock 1965: 21; Tatum 1999: 89.

⁹¹ Bauman 1992: 84.

fortune” [*usus Caesar virtute et fortuna sua*]).⁹² Velleius Paterculus mentions Fulvia only in his narrative of the Perusine War, where he describes her as exhibiting masculine qualities. The implication of this accusation, of course, is that Antony is effeminate. Velleius Paterculus writes:

ex altera parte uxor Antoni Fulvia, nihil muliebre praeter corpus gerens, omnia armis tumultuque miscebat. Haec belli sedem Praeneste ceperat.

In another section Fulvia, the wife of Antony, who had nothing of a woman in her except her body, threw everything into confusion with armed disturbance. This woman had taken Praeneste as her seat of war (2.74.3).

Bauman describes Fulvia as a woman capable of organizing and embarking on military campaigns.⁹³ It should be noted that Velleius Paterculus was interested in brief moral *exempla*, and may have exaggerated his description of Fulvia.⁹⁴

⁹² There is some debate amongst scholars as to whether or not Velleius Paterculus was heavily influenced by Augustan propaganda. Woodman states that in this passage (2.74.4) Velleius Paterculus describes Octavian as “an ideal general, like Caesar before him,” Woodman 1983: 182. He does, however, note that it has been argued that Velleius Paterculus was writing an “anti-Augustan tradition of historiography.” This is not Woodman’s conclusion, Woodman 1983: 115. However, Babcock believes that Velleius Paterculus was less influenced by Augustan propaganda than other authors, such as Dio, Babcock 1965: 19. For a view that corresponds to Woodman’s see Bengtson 1977: 305; Huzar 1978: 242; Roddaz 1988: 318; Scott 1933: 23. Similarly, Sumner states that Velleius Paterculus’ work, as with many accounts of the late Republic, is an *apologia* for the establishment of the Principate, Sumner 1970: 282.

⁹³ Bauman 1992: 89.

⁹⁴ According to Starr, Velleius Paterculus was deliberately concise in order to be more useful, Starr 1981: 172-3.

However, the brevity of his account suggests that he says little that would not have been considered common knowledge.⁹⁵

Plutarch, meanwhile, portrays Antony as a man who is dominated by others throughout his life,⁹⁶ and the domination of Antony by his wives is key to Plutarch's theme of his subjugation to the control of others.⁹⁷ Plutarch introduces Fulvia into the story in a way which emphasizes her as a commander of men:

οὐ ταλασίαν οὐδ' οἰκουρίαν φρονοῦν γύναιον οὐδ' ἀνδρὸς
ἰδιώτου κρατεῖν ἀξιοῦν, ἀλλ' ἄρχοντος ἄρχειν καὶ
στρατηγούντος στρατηγεῖν βουλόμενον, ὥστε Κλεοπάτραν
διδασκάλια Φουλβία τῆς Ἀντωνίου γυναικοκρασίας ὀφείλειν,
πάνυ χειροήθη καὶ πεπαιδαγωγημένον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀκροᾶσθαι
γυναικῶν παραλαβοῦσαν αὐτόν.

She took no thought for spinning or housekeeping, nor did she deem it worthy to have power over an ordinary man, but she wished to rule a ruler and command a commander, so that Cleopatra was indebted to Fulvia for teaching Antony to obey a woman's nature, since she took him over accustomed and trained to listen to the rule of women (*Vit. Ant.* 10.5-6).

Plutarch portrays Fulvia as a woman who is imperious and who dominates the submissive Antony. This image of Fulvia is rare, since the other sources, with the exception of Appian, tend to stress Fulvia's cruelty and greed rather than her control over Antony (e.g. Florus 2.16.2; Dio, 47.8.2).

Plutarch stresses that Fulvia was "naturally a meddlesome and bold woman" (*Vit. Ant.* 30.4, φύσει μὲν οὔσαν πολυπράγμονα καὶ θρασεῖαν). The references to

⁹⁵ Starr states that "he presents very little information of any kind which would not be relatively familiar to the average educated Roman," Starr 1981: 172.

⁹⁶ Babcock 1965: 19; Pelling 1979: 89-90; Pelling 1988: 141. Russell notes that Pelling "dwells on Antony's passivity but makes no connection between passivity and emasculation," Russell 1998: 126.

⁹⁷ Russell 1998: 122.

her meddlesome nature, πολυπράγμων and θρασύς are not only negative but may also mean that she was meddling in the affairs of state.⁹⁸ Appian also calls her meddlesome (*B. Civ.* 5.6.59, φιλοπράγμονας). In this portrayal of Antony's married life, Plutarch seems to be indebted to Cicero's depiction of Fulvia as active in the business of the state from the *domus* (cf. *Cic. Phil.* 2.95; 3.10; 5.11).

Plutarch stresses Fulvia's power, and he may do this merely to depict Antony as weak and easily overpowered by others.⁹⁹ His submissiveness, it should be noted, is not unique to his relationship with Fulvia. Russell believes that Plutarch implies that Antony took a passive, feminine role in his marriage to Octavia.¹⁰⁰

Appian, in his one brief reference to Fulvia's involvement during the Perusine War itself, says that she raised an army to aid Lucius:

καὶ Φουλβία Οὐεντίδιον καὶ Ἀσίνιον καὶ Ἀτίον καὶ Καληνὸν
ἐκ τῆς Κελτικῆς ἤπειγε βοηθεῖν Λευκίῳ καὶ στρατὸν ἄλλον
ἀγείρᾳσα Πλάγκον ἔπεμπεν ἄγειν Λευκίῳ.

Fulvia urged Ventidius, Asinius, Ateius, and Calenus from Gaul to help Lucius, and having gathered another army, she sent it to Lucius under the command of Plancus (*B. Civ.* 5.4.33).

This passage is most significant, since it means that Fulvia in Appian's narrative has changed from being a figure used by Antony's allies to rally the troops to the

⁹⁸ In fact, πολυπράγμων is extremely negative and such a meddlesome person was seen as a great danger to the state, Ehrenberg 1947: 46, 58.

⁹⁹ Babcock 1965: 19; Pelling 1988: 141. Russell: "A slave to his appetites, dominated by his wives, seduced by foreign ways, Plutarch's Antony emerges as a character so utterly deformed by the manipulation of gender stereotypes that readers are left to wonder how such a man came to rule half the Roman world," Russell 1998: 136.

¹⁰⁰ Russell 1998: 122-123. Pelling states that Plutarch's Fulvia resembles a politically alert *domina* of Latin elegy, Pelling 1988: 141. Cf. Griffin 1985: 41.

point where she herself is actively engaged in recruiting soldiers and forming an army. Furthermore, the fact that the reference is so specific suggests that it may be accurate.

Florus is another author who was clearly influenced in his brief description of the Perusine War by Augustan propaganda concerning the triumvirate. He describes Fulvia as a contributor to Antony's degeneration (cf. Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 10.5-6). Florus states:

semper alias Antonii pessimum ingenium Fulvia tum gladio cincta virilis militiae uxor agitabat.

the nature of Antony was always evil, and on this occasion his wife Fulvia, girding herself with the sword of her husband's military service, stirred him up (2.16.2).

This statement is most likely not intended to literally refer to Fulvia's military activities, but rather describes Fulvia as active on behalf of her husband. Florus' image of a sword is remarkably similar to Valerius Maximus' statement of a *pugio* clinging to Fulvia's *stola* (Val. Max. 3.5.3). Valerius Maximus and Florus may in fact have been using the same source, or Florus may have copied Valerius Maximus.¹⁰¹ Both accounts are brief and link Fulvia with a military weapon.

Of all the ancient historians, Dio describes Fulvia the most colourfully, and most negatively. One theme in particular that recurs frequently in Dio's narrative is

¹⁰¹ Florus extensively used Livy, and his epitome of Roman history has been described as an epitome of Livy, Forster and Rolfe 1960: x; Gowing 1992: 282. Although Valerius Maximus ignores Livy, it is most likely that he was aware of his narrative, Wardle 1997: 330.

that of Fulvia's role as a military commander and her control of the events leading up to the Perusine conflict.¹⁰² Dio states:

Λούκιος μὲν πανταχόσε συνιστάς τε αὐτοὺς καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ Καίσαρος ἀποσπῶν περιήει, Φουλουία δὲ τό τε Πραινέστε κατέλαβε καὶ προσεταιριστοὺς βουλευτάς τε καὶ ἱππέας ἔχουσα τὰ τε ἄλλα πάντα μετ' αὐτῶν ἐβουλευέτο, καὶ τὰς παραγγέλσεις ὥς ἑκασταχόσε ἐχρῆν ἔπεμπε. καὶ τί ταῦτα θαυμάσειεν ἂν τις, ὅποτε καὶ ξίφος παρεζώννυτο καὶ συνθήματα τοῖς στρατιώταις ἐδίδου, ἐδημηγόρει τε ἐν αὐτοῖς πολλάκις; ὥστε καὶ ἐκεῖνα τῷ Καίσαρι προσίστασθαι.

Lucius went around everywhere, banding them together and detaching them from Octavian, while Fulvia occupied Praeneste. She was accompanied by senators and knights, and having set them about her as a council, she deliberated with them and even sent orders to wherever they were needed. And why should anyone marvel at this, when she would gird herself with a sword, give out the watchword to the soldiers, and many times, even speak to them. All of this gave offence to Octavian (48.10.3-4).

According to Barrett, Fulvia is portrayed here as a “power crazed termagant,” and as a woman who oversteps her bounds and interferes with the troops.¹⁰³ This passage also recalls Florus' description of Fulvia (2.16.2, *gladio cincta* [“girded with a sword”]), and also that of Velleius Paterculus (2.74.3, *Praeneste ceperat* [“she took Praeneste”]). This portrayal of Fulvia in Dio's writings has even led two modern scholars to use the word Amazon to describe Fulvia.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² For a few of such passages where Fulvia is described as an active commander see 48.4.1-4, 48.5.4, 48.6.4, 48.22.3, but see especially 48.10.3-4. In contrast to his presentation of Octavian, whom he presents as more conciliatory than Lucius or the soldiers, Dio gives the impression that the conflict was caused by Lucius and Fulvia, whose lust for power obstructed Octavian's mediation, Bengtson 1977: 168; Gowing 1992: 82-83. Appian, on the other hand, sometimes presents Octavian as the aggressor and the soldiers as the arbiters of peace, Gowing 1992: 86.

¹⁰³ Barrett 2002: 117.

¹⁰⁴ Balsdon 1962: 49; Virilouvet 2001: 80.

Dio's description of Fulvia as a military commander presents the conflict as a result of Fulvia's lust for power. For Dio, the quarrel between Octavian, on the one hand, and Fulvia and Lucius, on the other, was a personal one. As with Plutarch, the moral lessons to be gained from history are perhaps more important than accuracy in Dio's narrative.¹⁰⁵ The war seems to be treated as a lesson for Octavian,¹⁰⁶ and not as a significant event in Roman history. While it is clear from the sources that Fulvia played a significant role in the build-up to the Perusine War, It is unlikely that she played an active role in the military actions of the conflict.

Fulvia as Scapegoat for the Perusine War

Plutarch gives the clearest account of Fulvia as a scapegoat for the Perusine War:¹⁰⁷

συμβαίνει δ' ἀπὸ τύχης καὶ Φουλβίαν πλέουσαν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν Σικυῶνι νόσῳ τελευτῆσαι· διὸ καὶ μᾶλλον αἱ πρὸς Καίσαρα διαλλαγαὶ καιρὸν ἔσχον. ὥς γὰρ προσέμειξε τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ καὶ Καίσαρα ἦν φανερόν· ἐκείνῳ μὲν οὐθέν ἐγκαλῶν, αὐτὸς δ' ὦν ἐνεκαλεῖτο τὰς αἰτίας τῇ Φουλβίᾳ προστριβόμενος, οὐκ εἶων [δ'] ἐξέλεγχειν οἱ φίλοι τὴν πρόφασιν, ἀλλὰ διέλυον ἀμφοτέρους καὶ διήρουν τὴν ἡγεμονίαν.

It happened, too, that Fulvia, who sailed to meet him, became ill and died at Sicily. Consequently, there was even more opportunity for a reconciliation with Octavian. For when Antony arrived in Italy, and Octavian made it clear that he did not intend to make charges against

¹⁰⁵ Gowing 1992: 81.

¹⁰⁶ See Gowing 1992: 81. Cf. Dio, καὶ προσέτι καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων ἔμαθεν ὅτι οὐδὲν τὰ ὅπλα πρὸς τὸ τοὺς ἀδικουμένους εὐνοϊκῶς οἱ ἔχειν ἐδύνατο (48.8.4, "he learned by experience that arms had no power to make the injured feel friendly toward him").

¹⁰⁷ Pelling 1988: 199. Blaming Fulvia for the war is in the literary tradition (App. *B. Civ.* 5.6.59; Dio 48.28.3). Cf. Liv. *Per.* 127.

him, then Antony himself was ready to blame Fulvia for whatever was alleged against himself, and the friends of the two men would not permit any examination of the excuses they offered up, but reconciled them, and they divided up the empire... (*Vit. Ant.* 30.5-6).

Antony seems to have quickly, and conveniently, abandoned Fulvia's memory. It is interesting to note that Plutarch does not record Antony mourning or grieving for her. Indeed, the passage seems critical of Antony for his lack of feeling towards his wife.¹⁰⁸ Plutarch's account may create sympathy in the reader's mind for Fulvia, that is, until he begins to describe Antony's deplorable treatment of the virtuous Octavia (e.g. *Vit. Ant.* 53). Unfortunately, Fulvia found that her actions and loyalty to her husband were not enough to earn his appreciation and respect.¹⁰⁹ That is to say, despite all of Fulvia's efforts on behalf of Antony, he deserted her just as he would later desert Octavia (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 54.5).¹¹⁰ Ironically, even in her death, Fulvia continued to aid her husband's reputation by becoming the scapegoat for the war, thus facilitating Antony's reconciliation with Octavian.

In Appian's narrative, when he and Fulvia met in Athens, he severely reproached her for her role in the Perusine War (*B. Civ.* 5.6.59). However, Appian does not specify in this passage whether Antony reprimanded Fulvia for instigating the war against Octavian, or for failing in the endeavour. In the case of the former, his reproach would eliminate any claim of a breach of faith on his part in his

¹⁰⁸ Pelling 1988: 199; Pomeroy 1975: 156. Pomeroy notes that Plutarch "can scarcely miss the temptation to praise marriage." Plutarch describes Antony as disrespectful towards his wife, and therefore he himself is disgraceful.

¹⁰⁹ Barrett 2002: 118; Chamoux 1986: 259.

¹¹⁰ Welch 1995: 185. In contrast to his description of Antony's feelings regarding Fulvia, Appian presents Antony as torn between his love for Octavia, his virtuous Roman wife, and Cleopatra, Pelling 1988: 13.

agreement with Octavian. Appian had previously noted that although Antony blamed his wife, he blamed Manius the most (*B. Civ.* 5.6.52, καὶ μάλιστα πάντων Μάνιον). Fulvia is said to have become disheartened by her husband's harsh words, and apparently succumbed to disease willingly and died:

λεγομένη μὲν ἐπὶ ταῖς Ἀντωνίου μέμψεσιν ἀθυμῆσαι καὶ ἐς τὴν νόσον ἐμπεσεῖν, νομιζομένη δὲ καὶ τὴν νόσον ἐκούσα ἐπιτρίψαι διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν Ἀντωνίου· νοσοῦσάν τε γὰρ αὐτὴν ἀπολελοίπει καὶ οὐδὲ ἀπολείπων ἐωράκει.

it was said that [Fulvia] was disheartened from being blamed by Antony and became ill, and it has been thought that she willingly succumbed to the disease because of Antony's temper. He had left her behind, though sick, and did not see her as he was leaving (*B. Civ.* 5.6.59).

As was mentioned above, since his brother Lucius had claimed the cognomen *Pietas* and used it publicly, Antony could not openly rebuke Lucius for his part in the Perusine War without damaging his reputation with his own followers.¹¹¹

Fulvia's death eliminated any bond of loyalty between her and Antony, and he took advantage of the situation to place the blame on her. With her death, and the willingness of both he and Octavian to blame her for the Perusine War, a public reconciliation between Antony and Octavian became possible. For Appian, it seemed very convenient that Fulvia died just in time for the two triumvirs to come to terms:

γιγνομένων δὲ τούτων ἀγγέλλεται Φουλβία τεθνεῶσα... ἔδόκει δ' ἀμφοτέροις ἐς πολλὰ συνοίσειν ὁ θάνατος, γυναίου φιλοπράγμονος ἀπηλλαγμένοις, ἢ διὰ τὸν Κλεοπάτρας ζῆλον ἐξερρίπισε τοσόνδε πόλεμον.

¹¹¹ Gabba 1971: 150; Huzar 1978: 134.

While these events happened it was reported that Fulvia was dead... The death of this meddlesome woman, who had stirred up such a war on account of her jealousy of Cleopatra, seemed to be very useful to both of those who were free of her (*B. Civ.* 5.6.59).

Appian, however, does not depict Antony as entirely heartless towards his deceased wife; he states that Antony was saddened by the news of her death because he felt that he was responsible (*B. Civ.* 5.6.59, τό γε μὴν πάθος ἀσθενῶς ἤνεγκεν ὁ Ἀντώνιος, ἡγούμενός τι καὶ αἴτιος γεγονέναι [“indeed, Antony was much saddened by this incident because he believed that he had been the cause of it”]).

Antony, however, does not seem to mourn for long the loss of a wife who had supported him so much in their short marriage. Fulvia’s death is merely one less obstacle to overcome in order to reconcile with Octavian (*B. Civ.* 5.7.62).

Dio too seems to suggest that Fulvia was accepted publicly as the cause of the war, and that when news of her death reached Rome, both triumvirs immediately:

τά τε ὅπλα ἀμφοτέρω κατέθεντο καὶ συνηλλάγησαν, εἴτ’ οὖν ὄντως ἐκπολεμούμενοι πρότερον ὑπὸ τῆς Φουλουίας, εἴτε καὶ πρόφασιν τὸν θάνατον αὐτῆς πρὸς τὸ παρ’ ἀλλήλων δέος.

laid down their arms and were reconciled, either because Fulvia had really been the cause of their hostile war before or because they chose to make her death an excuse on account of fear of one another (48.28.3).

In this passage, Dio admits that he does not know what Fulvia’s role in the conflict was. Nevertheless, he makes her a possible cause of the war and states that with Fulvia gone, there was no longer any hindrance to a reconciliation between Antony

and Octavian.¹¹² The majority of the sources thus confirm that both triumvirs agreed that the Perusine War was merely the result of a jealous woman's scheme. Both men therefore had good reason to make Fulvia the scapegoat for the Perusine War.

Summary

In the early years of the Second Triumvirate, Antony dominated the political scene, due in no small part to Fulvia.¹¹³ She helped him survive the attacks of Cicero in the senate, maintain his popularity with the soldiers, and obstruct Octavian's rise to power.¹¹⁴ In late 44 and early 43, Fulvia was constantly active on behalf of her husband to prevent him being declared a public enemy. While Antony was re-arranging affairs in the East, Octavian benefited from personally overseeing the distribution of lands to the veterans. Once again, Fulvia displayed energy in defence of her husband's interests while he was away. Antony's reputation with the soldiers would have suffered had it not been for the efforts of Fulvia and Lucius to ensure that his name was not eclipsed. She is described by some writers as having an active role in the proscriptions after the formation of the Second Triumvirate. Such accounts describe her as greedy and cruel. Fulvia's role in the start of the Perusine War is likely exaggerated by hostile propaganda from the triumvirs, but the sources indicate she possessed a remarkable amount of political power for a woman in the late Republic. The links between Fulvia and military command suggest that

¹¹² Bauman 1992: 88-89; Bengtson 1977: 170; Gabba 1970: 100; Gowing 1992: 85.

¹¹³ Huzar 1986: 103.

¹¹⁴ Bengtson 1977: 172; Welch 1995: 194.

she had military influence during the Perusine War. After her death, Antony was not able to gain such a predominant position of influence again.¹¹⁵ Antony claimed that Fulvia was the cause of the war against Octavian and he thereby used his deceased wife's name to enable him to reconcile with Octavian. Thus, even in death, Fulvia continued to aid her husband's cause.

¹¹⁵ Welch 1995: 194.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Fulvia is considered by some scholars to have had the highest profile of any woman in the late Republic.¹ Without a doubt, she was one of the most conspicuous, and, as a result, one of the most memorable women of her day. By portraying Fulvia as the antithesis of a respectable Roman matron, ancient authors suggest she had an important role in the development of events in the late Republic.² This thesis set out to discover what role Fulvia had in historical events by using all the available evidence, both literary and material. The aim was to interpret her life and role in history without trying to portray her as either an emancipated woman or as the antithesis of the traditional Roman matron. This analysis attempted to discuss all of the relevant sources objectively and to consider their reliability.

Fulvia's first recorded public action followed on the murder of her first husband, Clodius. She played an important role in instigating the riots that resulted in the cremation of his body in the forum. There is no reason to doubt Asconius' account of Fulvia's involvement in these events as discussed in Chapter Four. The important question is whether or not her actions were deliberate and politically motivated. It is most likely that they were. This is suggested by the fact that she chose a public forum to display her grief. Furthermore, her testimony at Milo's trial

¹ Bauman 1992: 83; Bengtson 1977: 66; Fischer 1999: 44. It is striking to note that the three women whom Clark described as uniquely powerful (Sempronia, Clodia, Fulvia) were all related, Clark 1981: 204. Fulvia was Clodia's sister-in-law, as well as Sempronia's niece. Hillard, however, thinks Clodia had the highest profile of any woman in the late Republic, Hillard 1989: 170.

² Barrett 1996: 8, 10; Bauman 1992: 89; Delia 1991: 201; Viriouvét 2001: 80.

confirms that she intentionally incited the mob. Cicero's avoidance of any mention of Fulvia in the *Pro Milone* suggests that her testimony was in fact very influential with the jurors. Unfortunately, none of the ancient sources preserve her actual testimony at this trial.

Cicero's speeches against Antony, the *Philippics*, provide us with some important details about Fulvia. His references to her in his speeches generally occur as a means to attack Antony. However, the increasing level of hostility in the references towards her corroborates Appian's account of the important role that she played in political events during 44 and 43. According to Appian, she worked diligently to convince the senators not to declare Antony a public enemy during the Mutina campaign (*B. Civ.* 3.8.51). Nepos also records the threats that Antony's family faced during these months (*Att.* 9.2). The *Philippics* begin with polite indifference towards Fulvia (2.113) and culminate with accusing her of being a most greedy and cruel woman (13.18). This progression confirms that Cicero saw Fulvia herself becoming more and more of a threat to his policies, and suggests that she was successful to some degree.

Appian and Dio relate that Fulvia had a significant role in the proscriptions of the Second Triumvirate. Appian states that the wealthiest women in Rome chose Hortensia as their champion to beg the family of the triumvirs to rescind the decision to tax them (*B. Civ.* 4.5.32). The speech accuses Fulvia of cruelly rebuking the women from her doors, whereas Octavia and Antony's mother Julia received them kindly. This suggests that Cicero may have been correct in describing Fulvia

as a most cruel woman (*Phil.* 13.18). However, her actions in this instance could also be seen as the act of a loyal wife who realized that the triumvirs were in desperate need of funds.

During the proscriptions themselves, Fulvia is said to have ordered the deaths of many through greed and hatred (Cass. Dio 47.8.2). Appian's story of her treatment of her neighbour, Caesetius Rufus, is one of only two cases where Fulvia's victim is actually named (4.4.29). The second instance, of course, is Fulvia's alleged mistreatment of Cicero's dismembered corpse (Cass. Dio 47.8.4). However, the only author to relate this story is Dio, who was writing over two centuries after the events had occurred, and, although he had no personal bias against Fulvia, he may have exaggerated the details of the story for his own purposes. As such, the actual evidence for Fulvia's participation in these proscriptions appears rather slim. Besides the case of her neighbour Rufus, and the possible fabrication of her mistreatment of Cicero's corpse, there is no other evidence for her involvement besides vague generalizations. However, these vague generalizations are exactly what one would expect if her association with the proscriptions came about after the fact and from the propaganda of her enemies. The most likely source was Octavian, in whose best interest it was to disassociate himself from these events and to pass the blame onto others.

Despite her important role in supporting Antony during his struggle with the senate in 44/43, it was during the period in the months before the outbreak of the Perusine War when she exerted the most influence over events and displayed her

own independent power.³ While Antony was in the East in 41, Octavian was trying to win over the affections of Antony's veterans through gifts and the distribution of lands in Italy. Appian records that Fulvia again worked tirelessly on her husband's behalf in order to maintain the loyalty of his veterans (5.2.14, cf. 3.8.51). Initially, she and her children were brought before the soldiers to remind them of their victorious general. It was not long, however, before she soon began to arrange these events herself. This is how it is presented in Appian, and there seems no reason to distrust his account on this point. In fact, Fulvia's importance in this period is also recorded by Dio, who refers to Fulvia by name and Lucius only as the consul (48.6.4; 48.10.2). Her actions are very much along the same lines as her previous efforts on behalf of Antony in 44/43 (App. *B. Civ.* 3.8.51). As tensions with Octavian escalated in the summer and autumn of 41, Fulvia allied herself with Lucius. She did not work with him, however, in order to help the displaced farmers as he was doing, since that would have been contradictory to her goal of securing the loyalty of Antony's veterans. Nonetheless, Lucius and Fulvia found a common enemy in Octavian, and it made sense for them to work together against him. Moreover, it was important for them to publicly declare that they were working in Antony's interest, and not in their own. That the public, or, at the very least, the supporters of Antony, were aware of their actions and believed that they were

³ Welch 1995: 193.

working in Antony's interest is confirmed by a coin cut by Antony's mintmaster in Asia commemorating Lucius and his new cognomen *Pietas*.⁴

Fulvia is assigned an important role in the outbreak and the start of the war by some of the ancient sources. The accounts agree that Fulvia was constantly active on her husband's behalf during this period (Nep. *Att.* 9.4; App. 3.8.51, 5.2.14; Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 28.1). Interestingly, Martial preserves an epigram (11.20) allegedly written by Octavian in 41 which claims that Fulvia demanded to either have sex with him or to prepare to fight against her. The epigram alleges that she made this demand because of her jealousy and frustration at Antony's affair with his Cappadocian mistress Glaphyra, something which she could only alleviate with sex or war. However, with the exception of Cicero's stock accusation that Fulvia was adulterous, nothing of what we know about Fulvia, either her character or her actions, suggests that this is anything other than a fabrication. Octavian's reasons for presenting the conflict as stemming from the jealousy of a frustrated woman are obvious: by so doing, he lessens the importance of the war and of the real issues behind it. Indeed, the Perusine War is not even included in the 'official history,' that is, Augustus' *Res Gestae*. Nevertheless, the epigram confirms that Fulvia had an important and public role in the outbreak of the Perusine War, even if its purpose is to dismiss its significance as a result of her very involvement.

As for her actual role in the campaign of the Perusine War, it is unfortunately much more difficult to ascertain. It is probably metaphorical flourish

⁴ See pages 107-10 for further discussion on this.

when Florus and Dio say that Fulvia girded herself with a sword (Florus 2.16.2; Cass. Dio 48.10.4) and gathered armies (Appian's specific reference that Fulvia marshalled armies [App. *B. Civ.* 5.4.33] is not confirmed in other sources). There is no evidence to suggest that she was a Roman Amazon. Nevertheless, the archaeological evidence of the sling bullets found at Perusia does suggest that she was a well-known figure to the soldiers, not only those who fought for Lucius, but also obviously to those fighting for Octavian. From Dio, we learn that she addressed Lucius' soldiers (Dio 48.10.3-4), although it is unclear as to what capacity. As for how she was known to the soldiers of Octavian, there is no evidence at this time. Nevertheless, they must have known of her, and known of her importance to the soldiers of Lucius, otherwise they would not have taunted the besieged soldiers in Perusia with the insults against her on those sling bullets. However, Fulvia did not even spend the campaign at Perusia, but awaited the outcome at Praeneste (Vell. Pat. 2.74.3; App. *B. Civ.* 5.3.21; Cass. Dio 48.10.3).

After the war and Fulvia's untimely death, she became a convenient scapegoat for this most embarrassing of conflicts. Like the later allegations of her role in the proscriptions, it was in Octavian's best interest to pass the blame for the war onto her. Somewhat surprisingly, it was also in Antony's immediate interest to do so as well, since disassociating himself from his wife's actions enabled him to continue his alliance with Octavian. The two were able to reconcile and pretend that the war had nothing to do with Antony. Their alliance was sealed by Antony's marriage to Octavian's newly widowed sister, Octavia.

The true nature of Fulvia's role in history has been greatly distorted by the contemporary propaganda about her that originated with Cicero's relentless attacks against Antony, and continued with Octavian's attempts to rescue his reputation after the Perusine War and Antony's need to disassociate himself from her. The recurrent references to Fulvia as domineering, cruel and jealous in the ancient sources should thus be understood in the context of her portrayal in the propaganda of her enemies. Similarly, our view of Fulvia should be one free from reference to modern ideas such as female emancipation and liberation. Whatever her role was in the events that this thesis has examined may never be fully known, but what is clear is that she was a remarkable woman who played no small part in the history of her time.

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