

CONSTRUCTING CAESAR: JULIUS CAESAR'S CAESAR
AND THE CREATION OF THE MYTH OF CAESAR
IN HISTORY AND SPACE

DISSERTATION

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By

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ABSTRACT

Authors since antiquity have constructed the persona of Caesar to satisfy their views of Julius Caesar and his role in Roman history. I contend that Julius Caesar was the first to construct Caesar, and he did so through his commentaries, written in the third person to distance himself from the protagonist of his work, and through his building projects at Rome. Both the war commentaries and the building projects are performative in that they perform “Caesar,” for example the dramatically staged speeches in *Bellum Gallicum* 7 or the performance platform in front of the temple of Venus Genetrix in the Forum Iulium. Through the performing of Caesar, the texts construct Caesar. My reading aims to distinguish Julius Caesar as author from Caesar the protagonist and persona the texts work to construct.

The narrative of Roman camps under siege in *Bellum Gallicum* 5 constructs Caesar as savior while pointing to problems of Republican oligarchic government, offering Caesar as the solution. *Bellum Civile* 1 then presents the savior Caesar to the Roman people as the alternative to the very oligarchy that threatens the *libertas* of the people. The text dramatizes the aristocratic game that Julius Caesar engaged in and won. Caesar simultaneously champions his own cause and that of the people because Julius Caesar has already conflated the private *dignitas* of Caesar with the public *dignitas* of all Romans. Caesar’s enemies threaten the dignity of both Caesar and the Roman people. Thus Caesar’s *inimici* become Rome’s.

In both commentaries, Julius Caesar devotes attention to engineering projects. Two of these engineering projects, the bridge over the Rhine in *Bellum Gallicum* 4 and the siege tower at Massilia in *Bellum Civile* 2, receive a great deal of attention in the texts. Both descriptions contribute to Caesar's power and his claim for power, constructing the *potestas Caesaris*. The engineering projects within the texts serve a similar purpose to the building projects at Rome. Social space is a social product, created by a society while producing and reproducing the relations of production for the society. Julius Caesar's building projects, as part of the Late Republican social framework, served this process, while producing a new framework that allowed for the shift from oligarchic to autocratic rule. Julius Caesar's building projects were numerous, and reached a broader audience at all levels of society. These projects presaged the Augustan propaganda of later decades because they sought to reconstruct the city for the greater glory of Julius Caesar. The Forum Iulium, Julius Caesar's most effective use of civic space, conflated public and private as it celebrated the achievements of one individual as well as Rome.

Readers of Julius Caesar's commentaries tend to conflate Caesar the protagonist with Caesar the author. Yet, by doing so, we miss an important element of the Caesarian texts, and consider too narrowly their veracity as reports. Only by understanding the fiction of Julius Caesar's literary output can we understand how Julius Caesar constructed his persona and how that persona affected his audience, both at Rome in the 40s BCE, and today.

For E. H. H. and in memory of E. H.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Constructing Caesar is an activity authors have engaged in from antiquity. Julius Caesar was first to offer Caesar to the Roman public.¹ The persona that he created served as protagonist of his commentaries and continued to influence his public image as he struggled in and eventually won the contest for power. However, it is a general tendency among readers of Julius Caesar's commentaries to conflate Caesar the protagonist with Caesar the author. Such a reading of the texts overlooks the fact that 'Caesar' is a literary construct of its author. We cannot directly apprehend Julius Caesar by reading the commentaries because he is always already hidden by 'Caesar.' This conflation of author and protagonist has shaped the scholarship of Julius Caesar; for example, many scholars question Julius Caesar's veracity. Michel Rambaud and those who have followed him regard Julius Caesar as having distorted history to disguise his unlawful actions and to present himself as a *grand homme*.² Since historians have made up the bulk of the scholars who study Caesar, the literature has been largely concerned with separating fact from fiction. Yet Julius Caesar's fiction is every bit as important to

¹ In the discussion that follows, I make a distinction between Julius Caesar, the historical figure and author of the commentaries, and Caesar, the persona constructed by Julius Caesar for his public image.

² Rambaud 363-364.

understand as the facts his accounts preserve. Until we understand how Julius Caesar constructed the persona of ‘Caesar’ and the effect that construct had on his audience, we are doomed to continue to misread him.³

Julius Caesar was an artist working in a variety of media. He was a bold innovator who reworked and revolutionized the traditions. To begin with, there is his career itself. Weinstock points out that every one of his honors had a precedent,⁴ yet each honor was unlike any before awarded. Julius Caesar also redefined the genre of the *commentarius*, preserving not a general’s log or official report to the senate, but a historical account written in the manner of ancient historiography; however, the texts do not advance a moral agenda as the works of ancient historians so often do. And finally, his efforts in civic building were not unusual in the Late Republican context, yet he worked on a grandiose scale that outdid all of his fellow aristocrats in the agonistic game of self-promotion. All of these activities contributed to the construction of the persona ‘Caesar.’

Authors since antiquity have engaged in the activity of constructing ‘Caesar’ in their own fashion. Both Suetonius and Plutarch construct him as an ambitious man cut down by his desire for greatness. As we will see, later authors who discussed his building projects put him in the company of Xerxes and Nero, emphasizing Caesar the tyrant. Modern authors, too, have engaged in constructing ‘Caesar.’ For example, Mommsen casts Caesar as the great Democrat working on behalf of the people. Jakob Burkhardt, while not agreeing entirely with Mommsen, did assert that in Julius Caesar “everything great came together” (Meier 15). Thus, Mommsen’s position held throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th, but the post World War II view of him tended to see

³ Because “Caesar” is not confined to the commentaries, it can be read as a product of the various projects that Julius Caesar engaged in, that is, in the building projects at Rome, especially the Forum Iulium.

⁴ *passim*, see especially 163-174.

sinister motives in everything he reported. Indeed, in post-Hitler Europe, the notion of “the great man” lost much currency:

much that was once ascribed to Caesar has become highly questionable. The threat of the Germani, for instance, which Mommsen credited him with removing, did not exist. Above all, Caesar’s statesmanly abilities--or rather potentialities--have been increasingly called into question. Whatever great feats of organization he performed as ruler, it is uncertain, if not improbable, that he knew a way out of the crisis that faced the Roman republic” (Meier 18).

Zwi Yavetz provides a useful summary of the scholarship from Mommsen to the 1970s, classifying the various approaches into five different schools. Thus he points to the varied response to Caesar from modern scholars. What Yavetz does not recognize is that this tendency to recreate Caesar as each scholar perceives him--so often guided by his or her own cultural and political milieu--derives from Julius Caesar’s presentation of Caesar in legendary terms. The texts the author created drive readers to “reconstruct” Caesar, that is, to “master the master.” In many ways, these authors compete all over again with Julius Caesar in specifically Republican terms, working to establish their own *virtus* and to advance their *gloria* through their reconstruction of Julius Caesar’s construction. The purpose of this study is to investigate how Julius Caesar created the myth of Caesar through various projects--both literary and architectural--that simultaneously glorified the self and eclipsed all competition. But the myth was no mere myth. Its power continued to increase during the last years of his life, catapulting him to divine status upon his death and granting his heir a legacy of great political and military power that served as the basis for the principate.

I will draw a distinction between author, protagonist, and narrator. In doing so, I am following the tenets of the theory of narratology which regards the narrator, or narrative agent, as “the linguistic subject, a function and not a person, which expresses

itself in the language that constitutes the text” (Bal 16). Julius Caesar himself invites us to draw this distinction. Consider the statement at *Bellum Gallicum* 4.17.1, one of many such examples: *Caesar his de causis, quas commemoravi, Rhenum transire decreverat* (For the reasons I have recalled, Caesar decided to cross the Rhine). In this statement we have a speaking “I” who draws our attention to something mentioned earlier. The occurrence of a first person verb along side “Caesar” leads us to ask who this “I” is. The traditional reading would identify the “I” with Julius Caesar, the author, speaking to the reader directly, even though he speaks of Caesar in the third person. This “I,” however, is distinct from the protagonist, who is labeled as “Caesar.” Indeed the use of the third person throughout is the strongest indication of the distinction between author and protagonist, one the author himself so forcefully made.⁵ The “I” of this clause is the narrator, intruding upon the scene to offer some clarification.

Not only does narratology help to draw the distinction between author, protagonist, and narrator, it works to dispel the notion of authorial intention. Umberto Eco speaks of the *intentio operis*, the intention of the text as being the source of interpretation. In fact, he regards the text as “a machine conceived in order to elicit interpretations” (85). Both Bal and Eco ask us to rethink radically how we approach texts; Bal depersonalizes the narrative agent and Eco removes authority from the author. Indeed, his privileging of text over empirical author rejects authorial intention, something that might well require an interview with a living writer; even then Eco sees such access of little use. “My idea of textual interpretation as the discovery of a strategy intended to produce a model reader, conceived as the ideal counterpart of a model author (which appears only as a textual strategy), makes the notion of an empirical author’s intention

⁵ Despite such indications, readers are at pains to conflate these three elements. The best example of such a conflation is John Warrington’s 1955 translation in which he changed the story from third person to first person narrative.

radically useless. We have to respect the text, not the author as person so-and-so” (66). The intention of the text is to produce the model reader who makes conjectures about the text. “Thus, more than a parameter to use in order to validate the interpretation, the text is an object that the interpretation builds up in the course of the circular effort of validating itself on the basis of what it makes up as its result” (64). ‘Caesar,’ then, becomes an object constructed by the text, but also built up through the interpretation of the text.

By applying Eco’s strategy to Julius Caesar, I am setting to one side the dominant mode of Caesarian scholarship⁶ wherein one has endeavored to determine the general’s aims throughout the 50s and the beginning of the 40s. No doubt his personal experiences influenced his texts, but the *intentio operis* cannot be reduced to the *intentio auctoris*. My approach offers a reading of the texts as literary artifacts produced for a model reader capable of interpreting the text *qua* text and not as a confession sheet or a cryptogram of the author’s plans for world domination. To the extent that one ‘discovers’ such in the text, these dimensions are themselves best viewed as artifacts of the work and not the author.

A third influence on my reading of Julius Caesar is Hayden White’s essay, “The Historical Text as Literary Artifact,” in which the author points to the importance of recognizing the fictive element in historiographical narrative. White argues that the shape and tenor of the narrative is a literary creation of the historian as he “emplots” the events he is narrating. The events themselves are neither tragic nor comic, but only become so when the historian presents them as such. The literary quality of history, then, must always be borne in mind by the reader. That history is in part fictive does not impair the

⁶ Yavetz identifies scholars of recent years who have rejected authorial intention, the most prominent of these is Collins.

truth of the narrative. Within the framework of the narrative, Julius Caesar is truthful; that is, the story he tells obeys its internal truth regardless of whether the author played fast and loose with the historical facts. Thus, I am foregrounding “narrative truth” or the “logic of storytelling” as the *intentio operis*. The goal is strictly Caesar-as-story, not “the history of Caesar.” This story is played out in the various texts of Julius Caesar, both literary and architectural.

The area of literary studies in Caesarian scholarship is rather small. F. E. Adcock, in 1956, addressed what he considered to be a gap in the scholarship, a tendency to disregard the literary quality of Julius Caesar’s writing. Sadly, his book did little to advance interest in the field. It was received with deference and disappointment. For instance, Lloyd Daly remarked, “This little book hardly lives up to the expectations its title arouses for it is not primarily a critique or an analysis of Caesar’s writing from a literary point of view” (447). Adcock’s strengths as a historian did not serve him as a literary critic. One criticism leveled against him uniformly was his general disregard of Michel Rambaud’s 1952 edition of *L’art de la déformation historique dans les commentaires de César*. Rambaud’s book changed the way historians read Caesar, which brought to the foreground the tendentious nature of the commentaries. While Rambaud does analyze Caesar’s writing, he was a historian, and, once again, read the texts not as a literary critic. Nonetheless, Yavetz, in his survey of Caesarian scholarship in *Julius Caesar and his Public Image*, leaves Rambaud’s book out of any discussion since he was concerned only with developments in historiography, an area he regards Rambaud as not contributing to.

As I have noted, Caesarian scholarship has been primarily the domain of historians. The guiding questions have centered around the veracity of Julius Caesar’s

commentaries and his intended purpose in writing. Many scholars in the twentieth century have declared that the texts serve Julius Caesar's political ends as propaganda. In order to show that the commentaries did indeed serve this purpose, scholars have been at pains to establish when they were written and when they would have been published, and why he left the *Bellum Civile* unfinished, or rather, why he broke off the narrative before the conclusion of the war.

The question of veracity is an important one for historians. As Rambaud has pointed out, Julius Caesar distorted the facts without really lying. Sorting out the exaggerations and positive spins is a necessary task for scholars wanting to secure the historical record. While historians have been weighing the facts, they have tended to ignore what a literary critic would regard as important, that is the narrative structure and subtexts. The purpose of this study is not to investigate Julius Caesar's veracity, but rather to study the stories he tells. This study is not a biography either, although engaging biographical elements is necessary. A number of biographies abound, including a quite recent study.⁷ Mattias Gelzer's work (original German publication 1943) still stands as one of the important biographies in the field. Nonetheless, Gelzer's biography has been followed up by others of merit. J. P. V. D. Balsdon in 1967 wrote a political biography and Christian Meier came out with yet another in 1995. Jiménez' study is an indication that scholars never tire of narrating the life of the great man even as they chafe against the very "great man" narrative penned by Julius Caesar.

Propaganda has also been a major concern of scholars in the last fifty years. This concern seems to have arisen in the post-World War II years as a reaction to the political experiences in Europe in the 30s and 40s. Collins called into question, however, scholars' claims that the commentaries served political propaganda. He concludes that the *Bellum*

⁷ Jiménez (2000).

Gallicum does little to hide Caesar's brutality so it cannot serve the purpose of concealing his actions or justifying his involvement in Gallic affairs. Collins does argue, however, that the *Bellum Civile*, though more inherently political "can scarcely be described as a work of 'propaganda' in the modern sense" (962). Julius Caesar's aim, as Collins sees it, was to address posterity rather than his contemporaries, that is, he wrote to establish his reputation for history and not to gain political advantage. He reasons that the limitations of book distribution in antiquity would not have permitted the kind of effect that the modern mass media could produce in the twentieth century.

This problem of ancient publishing has not stopped some scholars. T. P. Wiseman speculates that Julius Caesar got his message out to the masses by means of public performances. Wiseman imagines that Julius Caesar sent copies of his commentaries of the *Bellum Gallicum* to agents in Rome and other Italian cities upon completing them each year. These agents, then, would hold public readings, thrilling the audience with Caesar's latest exploits. Such performances would have easily overcome such difficulties of mass distribution and low literacy rates. Wiseman's is a rather clever solution to the problem, but still it is pure speculation. Had there been such performances, we would surely have some reference to them in our sources because Julius Caesar's activities always stimulated much notice. For example, we know that when Julius Caesar was aedile his games, with their extraordinarily high number of gladiators, made his fellow senators so nervous that they passed a special decree limiting the numbers of fighters allowed in the city. Of course armed combatants pose a more immediate threat to the safety and welfare of the city than a literary reading, but any move by Julius Caesar that seemed to court the favor of the lower orders caused such consternation among his political enemies that one imagines they would have raised some

sort of protest. That neither Suetonius nor Plutarch mention any such performances argues strongly against Wiseman's thesis.

Questions of how propaganda worked in general during the Late Republic and Early Principate have been addressed in recent scholarship, and these studies illuminate ways in which we can read Julius Caesar in light of the cultural and political milieu of the 50s and 40s BCE. Paul Zanker and Diane Favro speak of the competitive nature of the Late Republican ruling elite who strove against one another to advance their families' prestige and to make their bid for a share in governmental power. Jane Evans' study of propaganda explores how Romans used important myths of their city's legendary past to advance their own politics, using visual arts such as sculpture and coinage to reach a wide audience. Thomas Habinek's *The Politics of Latin Literature* falls within the scope of scholarship considering texts and contexts, but he shifts the emphasis. "Instead of viewing texts as chiefly illustrative of or reactive to social, political, and economic practices, [my study] regards literature as a medium through which competing sectors of Roman society sought to advance their interests over and against other sources of social and political authority. In other words, literature is here studied not only as a representation of society but as an intervention in it as well" (3). My approach to Julius Caesar is to consider ways in which his construction of 'Caesar' comes about because of the society in which he lived as well as how that construct worked to shape the political and social milieu of succeeding generations.

One of the key themes of Roman political propaganda was the exhibition of a candidates' aristocratic virtues,⁸ which T. Quinctius Flaminius summarizes thusly in Polybius: "Gentlemen need to be stern and impassioned when fighting, noble and high-

⁸ Rosenstein 130-135.

minded when bested, and measured and humane when conquering.”⁹ Julius Caesar constructs again and again ‘Caesar’ as possessing these qualities. Moreover, Julius Caesar engaged in the aristocratic *agon* and excelled, standing out from his contemporaries not because he so brazenly blew his own horn, but because he competed in and won the aristocratic game. Rosenstein shows that the political culture of the Republic was such that it simultaneously encouraged and controlled competition among its ruling elite. Over time the controls broke down and the competitive spirit ran rampant.

Zanker ascribes this break-down to a schizophrenic pairing of traditional Roman values and Hellenistic culture among the ruling elite. The private lives of senators of the Late Republic was dedicated to *otium*, that is, philhellene pursuits of poetry and philosophy. They fitted out their pleasure villas like the palaces of Hellenistic monarchs, lavishing vast sums on their luxuries. At the same time, in their public lives dedicated to *negotium*, they decried the very excesses they committed at home.¹⁰ The vulgar displays of wealth that the villas, with their copies of Hellenistic sculptures, their libraries, and their place names taken from Greek like *gymnasium* and *palaestra*, became “a vehicle for self-glorification” (Zanker, 26).

The act of glorifying the self was commonplace in the final decades of the Republic and into the early years of the principate, although the sphere for this activity became increasingly limited. As the political system collapsed, the highly competitive aristocracy turned to private architecture as a means to advertise their families’ status. The roads leading to the city became cluttered with ever grander funeral monuments. This

⁹ πολεμοῦντας γὰρ δεῖ τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἄνδρας βαρεῖς εἶναι καὶ θυμικούς, ἡττωμένους δὲ γενναίους καὶ μεγαλόφρονas, νικῶντας γε μὴν μετρίους καὶ πραεῖς καὶ φιλανθρώπους (18.37.7).

¹⁰ “In their leisure time people thus tried to shed all that was Roman about them as they did their toga. The creation of an alternative way of life in the private sphere, that is, removed from the empire building of the Late Republic, clearly explains the collapse of the integral system of values among the Roman upper-class” (31).

activity was not limited to the social elite. Wealthy freedmen, in imitation of the upper classes, erected elaborate monuments, such as that of M. Vergilius Eurysaces, whose tomb stands before what is now called the Porta Maggiore at a busy crossroads leading into the city. This odd structure made of a series of cylinders is thought to represent a baker's oven, the builder's profession. This tomb works well as a medium for personal propaganda because any one who sees it is impressed by its size and unique design. There is nothing elaborate about its message; its builder was a man of means who was proud of his profession.

Julius Caesar's propaganda, then, was of the self-aggrandizing sort, similar to that practiced by any Roman of means. He advertised his exploits, to support his claim for *dignitas* and *virtus* and to ensure he won for posterity the *gloria* he had won on the battlefield. Through the writing of his commentaries, Julius Caesar constructed the persona of 'Caesar,' and he created the myth of Caesar. This myth was furthered through the building projects at Rome. The immensity of the projects advertised to all Romans Caesar as a man of extraordinary qualities, a man of largesse and magnanimity. His forum, in particular, did much to advance the public image of Caesar, performing with space what the commentaries perform in words, that is, constructing Caesar as the victorious general without equal. Moreover, the forum's temple, dedicated to Venus Genetrix, openly proclaimed Caesar's divine status as descendant of the goddess. Through this temple, Julius Caesar was able to connect his ambitions with the welfare of the Roman people. Already in the commentaries, he had continuously associated 'Caesar' and the *populi Romani*, showing that Caesar's standing, power, and victories were also the Roman people's. Caesar becomes a subset of the collective populace. The temple furthers this association because Venus was genetrix of both the Julian clan in particular and the

Roman People in general: all Romans were Aeneadae. This mingling of private and public laid the foundation for establishing imperial rule. By equating Caesar's welfare with that of the people,¹¹ Julius Caesar prepared the populace to see the autocrat as someone who possessed superior skills to lead, but as a Roman he shared the common origin of all. It was this very construct of 'Caesar' that would allow Augustus to equate the name of Caesar with the office of emperor.

As I explore how Julius Caesar constructed Caesar I will begin first with a discussion of the commentaries before considering Julius Caesar's manipulation of physical, public space for his self-fashioning. The plan is as follows:

Chapter 2 Performing Caesar

Bellum Gallicum 7 demonstrates the performative quality of Julius Caesar's texts. This quality can be seen throughout the commentaries and in the architectural program that the *imperator* developed. This chapter explores how the texts perform 'Caesar' and how it constructs Caesar as master of Gaul. Through a variety of displays and performances and through the theme of revealing and concealing the text depicts Caesar as mastering Gaul at the same time as it masters the reader.

Chapter 3 Constructing Caesar as Savior

Here I will be looking at the emergence of Caesar as savior of the state. The discussion will focus on *Bellum Gallicum* 5 in which the text points to problems of Republican oligarchic government and offers Caesar as the solution. *Bellum Civile* 1 then presents the savior Caesar to the Roman people as the alternative to the very oligarchy

¹¹ Meier points out that the senate had been accustomed to viewing its welfare as the same as the state's (27). Thus, this kind of mingling was already an element of Roman political life.

that threatens the *libertas* of the people. The text becomes a dramatization of the aristocratic game that Julius Caesar engaged in and won. Caesar simultaneously champions his own cause and that of the people because Julius Caesar has already conflated the private *dignitas* of Caesar with the public *dignitas* of all Romans. Both Caesar's and the p. R.'s dignity are threatened by Caesar's enemies. Thus Caesar's *inimici* become Rome's.

Chapter 4 Constructing *Potestas Caesaris*

In both texts, Julius Caesar devotes a great deal of attention to engineering projects, suggesting an interest in how structures are built. Two of these engineering projects, the bridge over the Rhine in *Bellum Gallicum* 4 and the siege tower at Massilia in *Bellum Civile* 2, receive a great deal of attention in the text, yet scholars have given them little attention, content with passing them off as engineers' reports tacked onto Julius Caesar's narrative. However, both descriptions contribute to Caesar's power and his claim for power. The construction of *potestas Caesaris* is carried out in the commentaries through building projects. Likewise at Rome, building served a similar purpose; this chapter, then, serves as a bridge between literary texts and architectural texts.

Chapter 5 Constructing Rome

Lefebvre defines social space as a social product, created by the society while producing and reproducing the relations of production for the society. Julius Caesar's building projects serve this process, fitting in with the social framework of the Late Republic, while producing a new framework that allowed for the shift from oligarchic to autocratic rule. Julius Caesar's building projects were numerous, although he did not live

to see any of them completed, and many were not even begun at the time of his death. This chapter will consider both those begun under his dictatorship and those planned but never started, such as shifting the channel of the Tiber. The building projects did more for Julius Caesar's propaganda than the commentaries could have since they reached a broader audience at all levels of society. These projects were the precursors of the Augustan propaganda of later decades. The chapter will begin with a discussion of the planned projects, namely the shifting of the Tiber and culminate in the Forum Iulium, the most effective use of civic space for Julius Caesar's message.

Often the approach to Julius Caesar has been to regard what he did as unusual. Meier claims that Julius Caesar, like all reformers at Rome, was an outsider (25-50, esp. 27-28). But Julius Caesar was a product of his society and he used elements of his society to create the image of Caesar he put forth. Just as Augustus would later do, Julius Caesar manufactured a new tradition from traditional elements. By looking at Julius Caesar as an insider rather than an outsider, as a master spin-doctor among spin-doctors, rather than as an anomaly, we come to a better understanding of the social framework of the Late Republic that allowed for what seems to be a monumental shift from oligarchic to autocratic rule.

CHAPTER 2

PERFORMING CAESAR

Bellum Gallicum 7 is perhaps the most artfully crafted piece of Julius Caesar's extant works. Caesar appears as an adept stage manager as he also serves as an actor in the drama that unfolds, but again he is also a spectator of much of what happens. As an actor in the drama, his scope of vision is limited, whereas the reader is privy to the private councils of Gauls as well as the activities inside the Roman camp. The reader becomes a spectator of the spectacle that Julius Caesar produces. Just as Caesar serves the role of director within the text, Julius Caesar as author directs the drama that he stages for the reader's eyes and for Caesar to star in, creating a play within a play, a meta-theatrical spectacle. We could, then, say that the text of *BG* 7 is performative.¹² The drama that unfolds tells of a region in revolt. Caesar, after seven years of campaigning, is on the brink of losing all that he has fought for, yet as the Gauls are on the edge of success, Caesar rides among his men in a flash of color that instills his soldiers with the valor they need to overwhelm the enemy while he inflicts such fear in the Gauls that their united front against the Romans crumbles. In a moment, Caesar defeats the Gauls, at last

subjugating them to Roman power. The text carries out this performance with a series of

¹² In his analysis of the *Bellum Civile*, Henderson notes, "Caesar's writing pretends to be anything but a speech before the Senate, yet in miming as his provincial 'governor's report' to the house, it supposes we will recognize it as performatively nothing else. Through the insufferable third-person mock-remoteness of his power-driven prose, we should listen to the history Caesar would compel to follow along the tracks he has imposed, and reflect on how briefly that story retained its pertinence to the political agenda at Rome; but, yet, how centrally its hero's self-profile would persist through so much of Roman and Western ideology" (38).

displays, disguises, and pretences worthy of the stage, ultimately constructing Caesar as master of Gaul as he sits enthroned to receive the surrender of Vercingetorix.

The various displays of words and of actions show that each has defined purposes. Words have the power to conceal, and in the mouths of Gauls are used to dissimulate. Actions, on the other hand, reveal what words conceal, namely a man's true character. Ultimately, the text, a collection of words describing actions, works to reveal the truth it has constructed about the character of its primary figure. The text becomes a spectacle that affirms the abilities of Caesar and the power of Roman might. One example of spectacle occurs near the end of Book 7.

*erat ex omnibus castris, quae summum undique iugum tenebant, despectus
atque omnes milites intenti pugnae proventurum ex<s>pectabant.*

(7.80.2)

There was a view [of the battlefield] from all the camps that were everywhere along top of the ridge, and all the soldiers, anxious for the battle, were anticipating the outcome.

The men posted on the ridge are looking down on the battle like spectators in the arena while the reader becomes a spectator of both the spectators and the action. In the arena, mock battles would be staged, fighters dressed like Gauls would contend with men dressed as Roman soldiers for the amusement of the audience. In this situation, more like the staged battle than the real one it depicts, the text displays a mock battle, like those in the arena, based on the original. The battle plays out in full view (*despectus*) for its various spectators, those within the text, and the reader who watches the men watching. Indeed, the reader is spectator here as throughout the narrative of the Gallic wars.

The drama, then, is played out through the central device of revealing and concealing. Indeed, the text reveals and conceals continuously. The reader becomes privy to information as it unfolds, at times before Caesar is made aware of certain

developments. For instance, the Gauls hold various assemblies, some in secret (*clam*), others in their camp during the campaigns. These are meetings that no Roman witnesses, but the text relates them as an eyewitness, revealing to the reader what supposedly happened at these sessions. Often, the text displays a dramatic spectacle at these meetings, revealing to the reader what is concealed from the Romans within the text. Indeed, *BG* 7 begins with just such a secret meeting at which the Gauls decide to organize and revolt against Caesar's domination. The reader knows of these events as they happen, but Caesar is not informed until chapter 6.

The notion of revealing and concealing appears most strongly in word choice: *occulere/occultare*, *conspicere/conspectus*, and *ostendere*. These words appear throughout the commentaries,¹³ but are found with greatest frequency in Book 7.¹⁴ More interestingly, words for concealing occur in the same paragraphs with words of revealing six out of eight times in Book 7. The text, then, points to a strong relation between these two opposites which come to work as corollaries. Further, the union of the hidden and the revealed indicates a broader theme at work in Book 7. For the text does more than narrate the concealing of troops or booby traps and sudden surprise arrivals of armies; it provides the readers with a drama of political machinations working to conceal truth, all of which are undone by the actions of brave men.

The military strategy of concealment works in tandem with the literary strategy, which reveals the author as tactician. That the phrases *in occulto* and *in conspectu* recur throughout the text, usually within the same paragraph, points to the revealing and

¹³ *occulere/occultare*: 1.27, 1.31, 1.32, 2.18, 5.19, 5.32, 6.17, 6.20, 6.21, 6.31, 6.34, 6.35, 6.43, 7.27, 7.30, 7.35, 7.38, 7.45, 7.73, 7.83, 7.85; *conspicio/conspectus*: 1.11, 1.25, 1.51, 2.25, 2.26, 2.27, 3.3, 3.14, 3.26, 4.12, 4.37, 5.6, 5.9, 5.45, 5.48, 5.49, 5.56, 6.17, 6.18, 6.39, 6.43, 7.15, 7.19, 7.30, 7.35, 7.40, 7.45, 7.48, 7.80, 7.84, 7.88; *ostendere*: 1.8, 1.19, 1.20, 1.21, 3.10, 3.26, 4.11, 4.23, 5.2, 5.3, 5.17, 5.32, 7.27, 7.38, 7.45, 7.62, 7.67, 7.83.

¹⁴ *occulere/occultare* appears eight times in Book 7, *conspicio/conspectus* occur ten times while *ostendere* occurs six.

concealing game the text plays. Militarily speaking, whenever deceptive maneuver is carried out, there is often a display of activity intended to mislead the enemy. Romans leave camp with a great show of commotion such as happens *en route* to Gergovia. Both armies, marching on opposite banks of the Elaver, always pitch camp in sight of one another: *in conspectu fereque e regione castris castra ponebant* (they would place their camps in plain sight and almost directly opposite one another [7.35.1]). This is part of the game armies often play, revealing themselves to let the enemy know of their presence.¹⁵ Because they are separated by the river and cannot engage, Caesar must let Vercingetorix know that he is following closely. The truth of the matter, that the Romans are at hand, is revealed and in plain sight. Being constantly seen, however, also creates a problem because Caesar cannot build a bridge to cross without the Gauls knowing what he is doing. He overcomes this problem by means of a deception that involves concealing and revealing. After camping beside one of the destroyed bridges, he sends on the baggage and almost the whole army, keeping back two legions, which remains in hiding near the destroyed bridge: *cum duabus legionibus in occulto restitit* (he stayed behind in hiding with two legions [7.35]). When the Gauls see the Romans advancing with a greater show of noise than usual, they advance. After both parties have gone, Caesar and his legions come out of hiding, rebuild the bridge, cross, and make camp on the other side of the river. Then Caesar recalls the army so that he can pursue Vercingetorix on the same bank. When Vercingetorix sees the Romans returning, he knows Caesar has crossed (*Vercingetorix re cognita* [7.35]), a fact which compels him to advance by forced marches so as not to be caught in the open by Caesar. Putting on a show of a noisy departure is an effective ploy that Caesar resorts to on more than one occasion.¹⁶

¹⁵ Labienus employs the same tactic at *BG* 6.8.

¹⁶ cf. *BG* 7.45

Vercingetorix also makes use of hiding troops to make an attack on Roman fortifications. Concealing troops becomes a necessary part of the war, and the most effective concealments are accompanied usually by some display to make the enemy think the army is doing something other than what it is planning. Caesar makes use of other types of concealing as well. At the siege of Alesia, the Romans build a network of pitfalls, trenches fitted out with sharpened spikes and then camouflaged with brush. The description of these booby traps points to revealing and concealing on another level because the names the soldiers give the various contraptions play a revealing and concealing game:

itaque truncis arborum aut admodum firmis ramis abscisis atque horum delibratis ac praeacutis cacuminibus perpetuae fossae quinos pedes altae ducebantur. huc illi stipites demissi et ab infimo revincti, ne revelli possent, ab ramis eminebant. quini erant ordines coniuncti inter se atque implicati. quo qui intraverant se ipsi acutissimis vallis induebant. hos cippos appellabant. ante hos obliquis ordinibus in quincuncem dispositis scrobes tres in altitudinem pedes fodiebantur paulatim angustiore ad infimum fastigio. huc teretes stipites feminis crassitudine ab summo praeacuti et praeusti demittebantur, ita ut non amplius digitis quattuor ex terra emerent. simul confirmandi et stabiliendi causa singuli ab infimo solo pedes terra exculcabantur. reliqua pars scrobis ad occultandas insidias viminibus ac virgultis integebatur. huius generis octoni ordines ducti ternos inter se pedes distabant. id ex similitudine floris lilium appellabant. ante haec taleae pedem longae ferreis hamis infixis totae in terram infodiebantur mediocribusque intermissis spatiis omnibus locis disserebantur, quos stimulos nominabant.

(7.73.2-9)

The trunks of trees or very thick branches were cut down, stripped, and sharpened to points. Then they dragged them to ditches five feet deep where they lowered the stakes and secured them at the bottom so they couldn't be ripped out, leaving the branches sticking out. There were five rows joined together and interlinked. Whoever fell into them would be impaled on the sharpened stakes. They called these "headstones." In front of these in a quincunx pattern three-foot deep trenches were dug with openings slightly wider than the bottoms where smoothed stakes, thick as

a man's thigh and sharpened and burned at the end were placed so that no more than a four-finger width stuck up above the ground. In order to shore up and stabilize the posts, they tamped down a foot of earth at the bottom of each. The remaining part of the trench was covered with twigs and shrubs to hide the pitfall. There were eight rows of this kind separated with three feet between them. They called these "lilies" from the resemblance to the flower. In front of these foot-long logs with iron hooks stuck into them all over were buried in a scatter pattern in the intervening places which they called "goads."

These traps demonstrate just how fatal the concealed can be. The physical concealment of implements of death in pitfalls serve as deathtraps for the enemy. These land mines are another version of the use of concealment for the sake of deception. Pits are fitted out with sharpened spikes and covered over to catch the enemy unawares. Yet there is more concealment here than of the just physical nature of the traps. Scattered throughout the description are the little jokes, the names the men give these deadly things. The names themselves play a game of revealing and concealing. Indeed, the language of *BG* is double and deceptive. The sharp stakes in the pits are called *cippi* or "gravestones". This nickname reveals the nature of these implements which are meant to impale their victims fatally. Thus the signified and the signifier both point to death. Like the *cippi*, the name *stimuli* also accurately reveals the nature of the obstacle. A *stimulus* is a goad to prod animals, but also an instrument for inflicting torture. These hook-covered logs are scattered about to inflict severe damage upon any enemy rushing the fortifications. The third obstacle, the brushwood-covered pits concealing sharpened stakes, are called "lilies" because they resemble that flower, but these camouflaged deathtraps are anything but soft and delicate flowers. This name conceals the true nature of the obstacle. The language of the text, then, is revealing to those who know the joke, but deadly to those who do not.

The effect of these pits is seen during a nighttime raid, carried out under the cover of darkness, which obscures sight: *prospectu tenebris adempto* (darkness took away the view [7.81.5]). The language conveys something stronger than mere concealment. Darkness is an agent that removes sight, not simply obscuring it. Yet the action is not completely obscured; the scene is not taken entirely away from view because the reading audience still sees everything, and all actions are exposed. As the Gauls attack they are taken unawares by the pitfalls the Romans have placed, resulting in many casualties (7.82.1). Here, revealing has fatal consequences. There is a double concealment--darkness, and the brushwood coverings over the pits--while the revelation of these pitfalls is the sudden death of the *inopinantes*.

A third means of concealing as a military tactic is using disguises to fool the enemy. During the siege of Gergovia, Caesar notices an abandoned hill that had been previously teeming with Gallic soldiers. He learns that Vercingetorix has withdrawn all of his men to a ridge giving access to the town which he fears the Romans will take. Caesar then sets about planning an attack on this place. He first sends out several of the cavalry in every direction making a great deal of noise (*tumultuosius*). Then:

prima luce magnum numerum iumentorum ex castris mulorumque produci
deque his stramenta detrahi mulionesque cum cassidibus equitum specie ac
simulatione collibus circumvehi iubet. his paucos addit equites, qui latius
ostentationis causa vagarentur. longo circuitu easdem omnes iubet petere
regiones.

(7.45.2-3)

At first light Caesar orders a great number of pack animals and mules to be led out and the saddles to be removed from them. Then he commands the muleteers in the aspect and appearance of the cavalry and wearing helmets to circle the hills. To these men, he adds a few cavalymen who were to wander farther afield making a show of themselves. He orders all to make for the same place taking the long route.

As always, a deception relies heavily on revealing and concealing. In this case, the muleteers masquerade as cavalry, making a big show of their presences (*ostentationis causa*). Pack horses and their attendants are disguised (*deque his stramenta detrahi mulionesque cum cassidibus*) in order to create the illusion of a large contingent of cavalry (*equitum specie ac simulatione*). This is a regular production worthy of the theater. Caesar creates a spectacle to lure the Gauls in. He certainly gets their attention: *haec procul ex oppido videbantur, ut erat a Gergovia despectus in castra, neque tanto spatio certi quid esset explorari poterat* (this far-off activity was seen from the town as there was a view down into the camp from Gergovia, but with so much space between it was impossible to ascertain for sure what it was [7.45.4]). The revealed is then seen, as intended, while what needs to remain hidden is concealed: *legionem unam eodem iugo mittit et paulum progressam inferiore constituit loco silvisque occultat* ([Caesar] sends one legion to the same ridge and a little below that place he stations an advanced legion and hides it in the woods [7.45.5]). Again the revealed exists along side the concealed and works in tandem with it.

Sometimes an intended sign is misread as a deceit when in fact it is meant to reveal the truth. Before Caesar sets out with the troops to attack this ridge, he warns the men not to go too far, but some parties get ahead and, when the signal for retreat is sounded, they do not hear it and do not turn back. The men soon find themselves in a dangerous situation in the town. Caesar sends a band of Haedui to help them, but, despite their exposed right shoulders--the sign that they were friendly Gauls--the Romans panic because the Haedui's weapons so closely resemble those of the enemy Gauls. Even though they know that bared shoulders indicate friendly Gauls, they think this is a trick.

hi similitudine armorum vehementer nostros perterruerunt, ac tametsi dextris [h]umeris exsertis animadvertabantur, quod insigne pacatum esse

consuerat, tamen id ipsum sui fallendi causa milites ab hostibus factum existimabant.

(7.50.2)

These [Haedui] frightened our men very much because of the similarity of their armor [to that of the other Gauls], and even though they saw that these men had their right shoulders bared, which was the usual sign for friends, still they thought that it was perpetrated by the enemy for their downfall.

This scene is another version of something revealed that causes a false belief. However, this time it is an honest mistake and not a deceit. These men are not masquerading as friendly Gauls, but are friendly. Even though the *insigne* signifies what it is meant to, the Romans interpret it as a false sign used by the enemy to fool them. A sign meant to reveal in fact conceals.

A sign, then, is a display, something shown to another intending to convey meaning. Displays take various forms. The use of speeches as displays was a well developed method of historiography by the time Julius Caesar wrote his commentaries. Both Herodotus and Thucydides made heavy use of speeches in their histories; however, Thucydides presents speeches as verbal spectacles, displays for the listening/reading audience. Kleon in addressing the Athenians, lashes out at those among them who delight in competitive speaking, calling them “spectators of speeches and listeners of spectacles” (3.38.4).¹⁷ Julius Caesar, too, understands the audience as spectators of words, as is shown when Caesar addresses Haedui warriors among his army before he sends them home. In this speech, he displays for the Haedui all that he has done to elevate the standing of their nation.

¹⁷ αἵτοι δ' ὑμεῖς κακῶς ἀγωναθετονοῦντες, οἵτινες εἰώθατε θεαταὶ μὲν τῶν λόγων γίγνεσθαι, ἀκροαταὶ δὲ τῶν ἔργων, τὰ μὲν μέλλοντα ἔργα ἀπὸ τῶν εὖ εἰπόντων σκοποῦντες ὥς δυνατὰ γίγνεσθαι, τὰ δὲ πεπραγμένα ἤδη, οὐ τὸ δρασθὲν πιστότερον ὄψει λαβόντες ἢ τὸ ἀκουσθέν, ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων καλῶς ἐπιτιμεσάντων.

discedentibus iis breviter sua in Haeduos merita exposuit, quos et quam humiles accepisset, compulsos in oppida, multatos agris, omnibus ereptis sociis, inposito stipendio, obsidibus summa cum contumelia extortis, et quam in fortunam quamque in amplitudinem deduxisset, ut non solum in pristinum statum redissent, sed omnium temporum dignitatem et gratiam antecessisse viderentur.

(7.54.4)

Before they departed, [Caesar] briefly put on a display [*exposuit*] of his good services to the Haedui, how he had found them in a lowly position, having tribute imposed upon them and hostages taken from them in a greatly demeaning manner, and how he had led them into fortune and abundance so that not only had they reclaimed their former status, but they seemed to have surpassed the honor and esteem of all time.

Caesar dismisses these men even though he knows the Haedui are preparing to revolt. He acts to create an appearance of being just and without fear (*ne aut inferre iniuriam videretur aut dare timoris aliquam suspicionem* [7.54.2]). He creates a show, then, by means of his actions. His words as well create a spectacle as the text suggests: *sua in Haeduos merita exposuit*. The word *exponere* denotes exhibiting, that is, putting on a display, or putting something on view. Caesar puts his words on view for the people to see, as it were, so that they might know his *merita*. In this speech, we see an instance of revealing (the benefits Caesar has brought to the Haedui) and a display to conceal something else (any fear he might have of a Haeduan revolt). The reasons for his conduct are concealed from the Haedui, but revealed to the reader. There is a twofold display for each audience.

Another instance of display intended for both the Gauls and the reader occurs shortly after in the text, after the Haedui have joined the rebel Gauls. Caesar needs to cross the Liger but the river is swollen with the spring melt. Still he finds a fordable place, although the water is quite deep, and the men must hold their weapons high since

the water is nearly to their shoulders. The cavalry stands in the river upstream to break the current. This crossing is made in sight of the enemy, disturbing them: *atque hostibus primo aspectu perturbatis, incolumem exercitum traduxit* (from the first view, the enemy was thrown into disarray as Caesar led his army across to safety [7.56.5]). Here a sight causes perturbation because natural obstacles are overcome by Caesar's ingenuity and the courage of his men who are willing to wade out into a stream in flood. This scene is another display of Caesar's abilities and the loyalty of his men for the enemy to see (*hostibus primo aspectu perturbatis*), and for the reader to view. For the Haedui, it is a display of the prowess of their enemy. Nothing seems to stop the Romans. The Haedui may have destroyed the Romans' food supply and set up guards along a river in flood, but the Romans manage to cross the river despite the high water, to find food easily, and none of the guards can hinder their crossing. Unlike the previous instance, the reader sees what the Haedui see; the difference is in their reaction to what is seen.

Caesar is not the only one to put on such displays. When Labienus is attempting to besiege the town of Lutecia, he moves upstream to Metiosedum where he seizes 50 ships, ties them together to serve as a bridge, and takes his men across the river. The townspeople are terrified by this unusual action and capitulate. With his men on the other bank and Metiosedum under his control, he sets out for Lutecia. Here is a show that is not described as such, but it follows the pattern of the preceding episode where Gauls see Romans crossing a river and are thrown into a state of fear by the sight of it. Labienus, by lashing together boats, does something unusual and frightening to the Gauls: *rei novitate perterritis oppidanis*. Again, we see Roman ingenuity and perseverance. Obstacles do not stop the invading army.

Just as Julius Caesar writes Caesar so too does he write Labienus. To take Lutecia, Labienus sends part of the army upstream, having them make a great uproar. He sends boats upstream as well, making a great deal of noise with their oars so that he can ferry men across the river downstream. The Gauls believe the Romans are retreating because they fear the treachery of the Haedui:

quibus rebus auditis, quod existimabant tribus locis transire legiones atque omnes pertubatos defectione Haeduorum fugam parare, suas quoque copias in tres partes distribuerunt.

(7.61.4)

when they heard this commotion, they also separated their forces into three parts because they thought the legions were crossing in three places and the whole army, being upset by the revolt of the Haedui, was preparing to flee.

Labienus' trick is not new; Caesar has effectively used it in the past: reveal one part of the army engaged in a noisy retreat so that other parts can silently set up an ambush. This is a classic case of revealing to conceal and concealing to reveal. It works because those sent out to stand watch for the Romans are taken unawares. Labienus works as a surrogate Caesar here,¹⁸ employing a tactic Caesar himself has used. Yet he is not willing to be a complete stand in for his commander because he exhorts his men before their early morning attack to fight as if Caesar himself were present and watching them: *ipsum Caesarem, cuius ductu saepenumero hostes superassent, praesentem adesse existimarent* (they should think that Caesar himself, by whose leadership they had defeated the enemy on numerous occasions, were present among them [7.62.2]).¹⁹ Labienus invokes an old

¹⁸ Welch (1998) catalogs the increasing prominence of Labienus throughout *BG* and notes "Caesar's presence hangs over the account of Labienus' success as if to suggest complete unity of spirit between Emperor and Legatus *pro praetore*" (99).

¹⁹ cf. '*habetis*' inquit '*milites, quam petistis facultatem; hostem impedito atque iniquo loco tenetis: praestate eandem nobis ducibus virtutem, quam saepenumero imperatori praestitistis, atque illum adesse et haec coram cernere existimate.*' (6.8.4)

trope that the presence of the commander can instill greater courage in the men: fight like your commander is present.²⁰ It is an imaginary display, almost creating an *eidolon* of Caesar meant to persuade the men into thinking that since Caesar watches they must fight all the more bravely. This is a variation on the revealing/concealing theme because Labienus asks the men to conjure up a sight that is not there. When Caesar appears before the Gauls, he often causes perturbation or immediate capitulation. Here the image of Caesar is meant to cause greater valor in the soldiers. The idea that the men fight more bravely when they are being watched by their commander harkens to the idea which the text puts forward that words can conceal, but actions always reveal. A man can boast about his courage, but he does not prove he is courageous until he acts on the battle field, and until that action is seen by one who can judge it.

When Labienus attacks, the Gauls are routed by means of another display: *post tergum hostium legionem ostenderunt signaque intulerunt* (they showed the legion at the rear of the enemy and brought in the standards [7.62.7]). The tribunes reveal their legion, put it on display for the Gauls. They also bring in the standards, the signs of the Roman army, themselves a display. This is a battle won through revealing the might of the Roman army. These are not imaginary displays such as Labienus advocated to his men earlier, but the real thing, bringing about real results: *sic cum suis fugientibus permixti, quos non silvae montesque texerunt, ab equitatu sunt interfecti* (thus they were thoroughly mixed in with their own fleeing men, and those who could not take cover in the woods and mountains were killed by the cavalry [7.62.9]).

The Romans are not the only ones to create displays. When the Vercingetorix and his troops are besieged inside the town of Alesia, they almost give up hope of relief

²⁰ cf. Herodotus: “[Xerxes] thought that his men had not fought as well as they should off Euboea because, as he saw it, he had not been there, whereas now he was all prepared to watch them fighting” (8.69; Grene).

arriving. But when it does, the new Gallic force displays itself both for the benefit of the Romans and the Gauls inside the town:

postero die equitatu ex castris educto omnem eam planitiem, quam in longitudinem milia passuum III patere demonstravimus, complent pedestresque copias paulum ab eo loco abditas in locis superioribus constituunt. erat ex oppido Alesia despectus in campum. concurritur his auxiliis visis. fit gratulatio inter eos atque omnium animi ad laetitiam excitantur.

(7.79.2-3)

The next day, the cavalry was led out from camp and filled up the whole plain which was three miles wide as we have shown, and they established their infantry, drawn off a little from this place on a higher spot. There was a view from Alesia into the camp. There was a stirring when the relief troops were spotted; the men congratulated themselves and every mind was roused to joy.

The display of the cavalry and the infantry further up brings joy to those inside, who then make a display themselves for the benefit of the Romans by making preparations outside the walls which include covering up the trenches the Romans have dug: *itaque productis copiis ante oppidum considunt et proximam fossam cratibus integunt atque aggere explent seque ad eruptionem atque omnes casus comparant* (after the troops were brought out, those inside take up a position in front of the town and cover the nearest trench with wicker work and fill it in with a mound of dirt; they prepare themselves for a sortie and every contingency [7.79.4]). Here, the Gauls make a display of covering up the work of the Romans as if this expresses their prowess; they can undo what the Romans have done.

Some of the more stunning displays of spectacle comes from the speeches delivered by Vercingetorix and the Haeduan Litaviccus. Speeches in Book 7 by and large are delivered in indirect speech, but these two Gauls speak directly to their audiences, and

each becomes a performance designed to conceal truth. Romans, on the other hand, tend to use indirect speech, with the exception of the centurion, Marcus Petronius, who implores his men to refrain from trying to save him. He sacrifices his life so that the other men might escape. The use of indirect speech for many of the speeches in the commentaries is usually seen as the author's attempt to create an illusion of objectivity as a means to manipulate the reader.²¹ But when considering who speaks directly and what the circumstances are, I am more inclined to think that Julius Caesar used direct speech sparingly because he saved it for moments of high drama. In the case of Marcus Petronius, he is about to be attacked by a swarm of Gauls whom he fends off to save the other men. When Vercingetorix speaks directly, he dissimulates. Likewise, Litaviccus perpetrates a dastardly lie. Each of these speeches is dramatic and filled with pathos.

Vercingetorix delivers a speech following a night raid of the Romans upon the Gallic camp near Avaricum. Vercingetorix has been away with his cavalry when Caesar appears in the woods nearby with some cohorts. The Gauls find themselves in a vulnerable position, and could have been attacked and severely defeated if the ground had been more suitable to Caesar's purposes. He declines engagement because, while his men are capable of fighting and defeating the enemy, he knows that victory would come only at the cost of high casualties for his men, so after showing himself to the enemy, he retreats. When Vercingetorix returns, he is charged by his camp with duplicity. They say that he betrayed them to Caesar as a means to become king of the Gauls. Vercingetorix rebuts these charges, then puts on a show for the men in which he makes a revelation that is actually a concealment. In answer to the charge that he has leaked information to the Romans, Vercingetorix replies that if someone did leak such information, they should be pleased, because the news forced Caesar to show himself to the Gauls so that they could

²¹ See Lohmann, "Caesars indirekte Reden als Instrument der Leserbeeinflussung."

see how weak in number he truly was, a statement that is false. Then, in order to verify this fact, he produces two captives who tell the men of the dire conditions in the Roman camp:

‘haec ut intellegatis’ inquit ‘a me sincere pronuntiari, audite Romanos milites.’ producit servos, quos in pabulatione paucis ante diebus exceperat et fame vinculisque excruciaverat. hi iam ante edocti, quae interrogati pronuntiarent, milites se esse legionarios dicunt. fame et inopia adductos clam ex castris exisse, si quid frumenti aut pecoris in agris reperire possent. simili omnem exercitum inopia premi nec iam vires sufficere cuiusquam nec ferre operis laborem posse. itaque statuisset imperatorem, si nihil in oppugnatione oppidi profecisset, triduo exercitum deducere. ‘haec’ inquit ‘a me’ Vercingetorix ‘beneficia habetis, quem prodicionis insimulatis. cuius opera sine vestro sanguine tantum exercitum victorem fame p<a>ene consumptum videtis. quem turpiter se ex fuga recipientem, ne qua civitas suis finibus recipiat, a me provisum est.’

(7.20.8-12)

“So that you understand the things honestly declared by me,” Vercingetorix said, “listen to these Roman soldiers.” He brought some slaves forward who had been captured out foraging a few days before. Vercingetorix had tortured them and kept them in hunger and chains. Already before they had been coached in what to declare upon being interrogated, and they said that they were legionary soldiers. Because they were hungry and lacking food they were led to sneak out of camp to see if they could find any grain or cattle in the fields. The whole army was pressed by a similar dearth and no one had sufficient strength to endure the toil of the work. And so, their commander had decided that unless they should gain some ground in the siege of the town, he would lead the army away in three days. “You possess these advantages because of me,” Vercingetorix said, “whom you accuse of betraying you. At no cost to you, you see so great and victorious an army almost consumed with hunger. It has been seen to by me that no state receive them withdrawing in shameful flight within their borders.”

This speech is peculiar for a couple of reasons. First, there is the rare use of direct speech, which mingles with indirect. And while there are no words indicating concealment or revealing, the speech itself practices both. Vercingetorix produces two

captured slaves which he reveals to be Roman soldiers, but these “soldiers” are a far cry from the real thing, as described in 7.19, who become riled when they see the Gauls and are eager to engage. Vercingetorix’s lie, then, conceals the truth. Furthermore, the slaves have been coached in what to say, perpetuating the lie that the Romans are hard pressed and in dire straits. Vercingetorix reveals a fabrication to conceal the truth to convince his army that they are superior to the Romans. This speech perpetuates the illusion mentioned in the preceding paragraph that the Gauls are *paratos prope aequo Marte*. Yet this so-called victory of the Gauls is merely an *eidolon* of victory since the proof of Gallic superiority comes from bogus witnesses, cheap copies of Roman soldiers. Vercingetorix spins a lie based upon a lie, and just as the slaves are cheap copies of Roman soldiers, the text reveals that Vercingetorix is a cheap imitation of an *imperator*.

The speech itself is also a case of revealing on the part of the text. We see a dramatization of an event taking place in the enemy camp, an event that the author did not witness. Instead, it is a fabrication of its own to reveal a truth of the narrative, that Vercingetorix is a double dealing commander, not above lying to his men.²² But this leads to the question of what the is narrative concealing. Are all acts of revealing simultaneously an act of concealing?

After the Romans successfully take Avaricum, Vercingetorix again speaks to his army, trying to cheer them up, saying that the Romans did not succeed from skill or courage but by means of tricks and knowledge of siege warfare (*artificio quodam et scientia oppugnationis*). He continues to tell them that he had opposed sparing and keeping Avaricum, and now they all saw why it was inadvisable. Nonetheless, he would

²² That is not to say that it is a true statement that Vercingetorix was double dealing and a liar. The truth that the text puts forward is the truth of its creation.

work tirelessly to bring about changes, and to bring those states outside the alliance into it. The Gauls respond favorably to this speech:

Fuit haec oratio non ingrata Gallis, et maxime quod ipse animo non defecerat tanto accepto incommodo neque <se> *in occultum* abdiderat et *conspectum* multitudinis fugerat, plusque animo providere et praesentire existimabatur, quod re integra primo incendendum Avaricum, post deserendum censuerat. Itaque ut reliquorum imperatorum res adversae auctoritatem minuunt, sic huius ex contrario dignitas incommodo accepto in dies augebatur. simul in spem veniebant eius adfirmatione de reliquis adiungendis civitatibus. primumque eo tempore Galli castra munire instituerunt, et sic sunt animo consternati homines insueti laboris, ut omnia, quae imperarentur, sibi patienda existimarent.

(7.30.1-4)

This speech was not unpleasant to the Gauls, and especially since Vercingetorix had not lost heart after having received so great a setback and since he had not gone into hiding and fled the sight of the people; and he was considered to have more foresight and forethought because at first in this entire business he had resolved to burn Avaricum, and later to abandon it. Thus, despite this setback, his position increased daily as much as the adverse circumstances reduced the authority of the other commanders. At the same time they were becoming hopeful from his assurance about the remaining states joining with them. And for the first time, the Gauls decided to fortify their camp, and the men, unaccustomed to the work, were so alarmed that they thought they needed to endure everything that was commanded.

This paragraph is the first occurrence of *in occultum* paired with *conspectum*. Moreover, the word that separates them is itself a word denoting concealing, *abdiderat*.

Vercingetorix gains authority and prominence by putting himself in view of the people.

He creates a new image of himself by revealing himself as someone who has the foresight (*providere et praesentire*) to know what the outcome of circumstances will be.²³

However, Avaricum was spared because he permitted it to be. At the earlier moment he

²³ Polybius identifies foresight and foreknowledge as hallmarks of the superior commander.

lacked the foresight that he boasts of himself at 7.29. Yet he can portray himself as a true commander possessing foresight despite being a sham. The Gallic audience accepts this image of Vercingetorix that he projects while the reading audience sees it as a falsehood, perpetrated to conceal his true nature.

During the siege of Alesia, German cavalry attack the Gauls. After this battle, Vercingetorix sees that he is in trouble and sends part of his cavalry out at night under the protection of darkness to bring in reinforcements before the Romans can complete their siege works. He gives a speech to those going out warning them to be diligent and not to neglect him who had done so much for them. His speech is another display, a show of words: *milia hominum delecta LXXX una secum interitura demonstrat* (he shows that 80,000 picked men would perish with him [7.71.3]). He follows with a threat to all those who do not comply by sending food supplies, ordering his men to kill those who refuse. This is another display of Vercingetorix's cruelty opposed to Caesar's mercy. There is also a hint that the only way he can get the Gauls to comply is through violence, and not through their loyalty. There is a strong contrast between the commander of the Gauls and Caesar. At 7.19, we see Roman soldiers prepared to go into battle for Caesar, who begs him saying that they have never failed him. Their words are a demonstration of the loyalty they have for their general, a loyalty that has not been created through fear and violence.

Another Gaul heard from in *BG 7* is Litaviccus, who is one of the 10,000 Haedui sent to help Caesar. Before they reach the Roman camp near Gergovia, he stops and delivers a teary speech that shares many similarities with the first speech of Vercingetorix:

‘quo proficiscimur,’ inquit, ‘milites? omnis noster equitatus, omnis nobilitas interiit. principes civitatis, Eporedorix et Viridomarus, insimulati

proditionis ab Romanis indicta causa interfecti sunt. haec ab his cognoscite, qui ex ipsa caede fugerunt. nam ego fratribus atque omnibus meis propinquis interfectis dolore prohibeor, quae gesta sunt, pronuntiare.’ producuntur ii, quos ille edocuerat, quae dici vellet, atque eadem, quae Litaviccus pronuntiaverat, multitudini exponunt: multos equites Haeduum interfectos, quod conlocuti cum Arvernīs dicerentur; ipsos se inter multitudinem militum occultasse atque ex media caede fugisse.

(7.38.1-5)

“Where are we heading, men? All of our cavalry, all of our nobility are dead; the leaders of the state, Eporedorix and Viridomarus, have been killed without a hearing by the Romans, charged with betraying them. Know these things from these men here, who escaped slaughter. I cannot speak from grief because my brothers and all my relatives were killed.” The men are led out whom he had coached in what he wanted them to say, and they make a show to the crowd of the same things that Litaviccus had announced, that many Haeduan cavalry were killed because they were said to have negotiated with the Arverni; they themselves had hidden among the crowd of soldiers and had escaped in the middle of the slaughter.

This speech shares a strong resemblance with that of Vercingetorix earlier. It is delivered in direct speech, the things claimed are false, and false witnesses are produced to give authenticity to the tale. These witnesses, like the slaves posing as soldiers, are coached in what to say, and deliver their lines well. Yet this speech goes further than that of Vercingetorix because it concerns the murder of people who are still alive whereas Vercingetorix paints a false picture of conditions in the Roman camp, but does not create a lie that can be proven false. In addition, Vercingetorix produces captured slaves who had been tortured prior to their coaching. These supposed survivors willfully enter into Litaviccus’s game. One other difference between the two speeches is that Litaviccus is highly dramatic to the point of melodrama, while Vercingetorix plays cool, offering subtle touches. Litaviccus continues:

‘quasi vero’ inquit ille ‘consili sit res ac non necesse sit nobis Gergoviam contendere et cum Arvernīs nosmet coniungere. an dubitamus, quin nefario

facinore admissio Romani iam ad nos interficiendos concurrant? proinde si quid in nobis animi est, persequamur eorum mortem, qui indignissime interierunt, atque hos latrones interficiamus.' ostendit cives Romanos, qui eius praesidi fiducia una erant. continuo magnum numerum frumenti commeatusque diripit, ipsos crudeliter excruciatos interficit. nuntios tota civitate Haeduorum dimittit, in eodem mendacio de caede equitum et principum permanet. hortatur, ut simili ratione atque ipse fecerit suas iniurias persequantur.

(7.38.6-10)

"But it's as if it were a matter of debate and not some necessary thing that we hurry off to Gergovia and join with the Arverni. Or are we in doubt that after committing so heinous a crime the Romans are not rushing now to kill us? Then if we have any spirit at all, let's follow up the death of those dishonorably murdered and kill these bandits here." He points to the Roman citizens who were with them, trusting in their protection. Straightaway he lays his hands on a great deal of grain and provisions, cruelly tortures the citizens, and then kills them. He sends messengers to the entire state of the Haedui, perpetrating this same lie about the slaughter of their cavalry and leaders. He urges the people to follow up their injuries in the same way he did.

The speech is designed to conceal the truth, and the lie is further strengthened by Litaviccus's display. He reveals the Romans in their midst (*ostendit*) and uses them for his show, ordering them to be tortured and killed. His act creates the illusion of 'real' since he says he is paying Romans in kind for the slaughter of Haedui among them. Yet the men he claims to be dead are at that moment safe with Caesar (7.39). This is a case when words that seem to be revealing are designed to conceal, which the text points to with the word *mendacium*.

Eporedorix, one of the men claimed to have been killed, informs Caesar of Litaviccus's plans as soon as he learns of them. Thus the secret of Litaviccus is revealed to Caesar, but this news comes too late to save the Romans among the Haedui who are murdered. Eporedorix passes on this information in an attempt to stop the Haeduan

revolt. Caesar then sets out to stop the Haedui. He has Eporedorix and Viridomarus join the cavalry and call out the men on the other side so that they can know that they are alive, despite what Litaviccus had said. *His cognitīs et Litavicci fraude perspecta Aedui manus tendere* (When these men were recognized and the deceit of Litaviccus was clearly seen, the Haedui held out their hands [7.40]). Displaying these men before the Haedui reveals the truth to them. The appearance of these two men do more than any words of Caesar could, demonstrating that words have the power to conceal, while action is more insouciant for revealing. Had Caesar told the Haedui that Eporedorix and Viridomarus were alive and safe among his army, they would not have believed him. He needs to put on as potent a display as Litaviccus had earlier. The deceit is undone by the presentation of the men said to be killed.

Shortly after this, Caesar receives a report that the Roman camp at Gergovia is under attack, which draws a contrast to Litaviccus's lie. The enemy has besieged the camp and are ceaselessly fighting, replacing the battle-weary with fresh men while the Romans are beleaguered and worn out, but have no hope of fresh replacements. Here is another catastrophe reported, but this time the event is taking place and is not a fabrication of the messenger. This report brings Litaviccus's into sharper relief: the true is set beside the false, further revealing the wickedness of his report.

The effects of Litaviccus's speech continue to be felt because his messengers reach the Haeduan people at home, who accept the report as true. Roman citizens among them are immediately attacked, robbed, and driven out. *Impellit alios avaritia, alios iracundia et temeritas, quae maxime illi hominum generi est innata, ut levem auditionem habeant pro re comperta* (Greed drove some on, while others were roused by anger and foolhardiness--which is especially an inborn trait of these people--resulting in their acceptance of

hearsay as substantiated report [7.42.2]). Here, the text points to a subtle concealment. The people act in the supposed spirit of patriotism, but their motivations are personal and hidden; only the text reveals the concealed motivations of those taking advantage of the emotions the false report of Litaviccus stirs up.

The speeches of these two men dramatize the concealing effects of words. They both perpetrate lies, and those lies lead men to act in particular ways. In contrast, actions reveal the true nature of their agents. The Haedui attack and rob the Romans among them because of the false report from Litaviccus; their actions reveal their innate character, which cannot be hidden. Facts, however, can be concealed through words, as the speeches reveal. The text stresses this point through the depiction of actions on the battle field.

Words can conceal truth, but actions reveal it. We see this plainly in the final battle at Alesia. Gallic relief has arrived and the spirits of those inside the town are renewed because what they see outside the Roman fortifications leads them to be confident in their own prowess and to doubt the abilities of the Romans:

cum suos pugna superiores esse Galli confiderent et nostros multitudine premi viderent, ex omnibus partibus et ii, qui munitionibus continebantur, et ii, qui ad auxilium convenerant, clamore et ululatu suorum animos confirmabant.

(7.80.4)

Since the Gauls were confident that their men were superior in the fighting and they were seeing our men pressed by their great force, and from all sides both those who were holding the fortifications and those who were coming up to aid them bolstered the spirits of their men with noises and shouts.

The Gauls become encouraged by what they see, what is revealed to them by the position the Romans find themselves in. Yet, immediately, we see a reversal in the situation

because this very condition of being watched instills greater valor in the Roman soldiers: *quod in conspectu omnium res gerebatur neque recte ac turpiter factum celari poterat, utrosque et laudis cupiditas et timor ignominiae ad virtutem excitabant* (Because the actions of all were carried out in full view, it was impossible to hide any act, whether upright or cowardly; both the desire for praise and the fear of disgrace drove men on each side to valor [7.80.5]). A variation on the theme of fighting as if Caesar is watching, he actually does see, along with everyone else, what each man is doing. The image of the arena, invoked just prior to this statement, returns because the actors act because they know they have spectators. The spectators then influence the action. Everything is exposed and nothing can be concealed. This is a moment of action, of *factum*, not of words which can hide truth. Battle, on the contrary, exposes all truth. Either a man has courage and skill to survive the fray or he does not. There is no dissimulation. At first the Gauls see the appearance of their larger force as a sign of superior ability, but in the end they return to the city *maesti* and *prope victoria desperata*. The Gauls in this episode are dejected and hopeless. The Romans press them from all sides, making their larger number ineffective. Thus, the Gauls are fooled by the appearance of greater strength which does not really exist. Once again, the Gauls trust in an appearance of what is true when that appearance conceals truth. The appearance of superior numbers equaling superior skills deceives them. But once the battle begins, men must act and actions do not conceal truth, but reveal it.

In the text, Caesar is the ultimate spectator as well as the ultimate actor. The entire production is a showcase for his talents. When he acts as spectator he sees all, which is to say he knows all. For Caesar, seeing always equals knowing. He is not deceived by appearances. In the final battle, Caesar takes a position from which all is

revealed: *Caesar idoneum locum nactus, quid quaque in parte geratur, cognoscit* (Caesar takes up a suitable position and learns what is happening in every quarter [7.85.1]). His is the best seat in the house. Like one of the gods watching the battlefield of Troy, Caesar stands where he can see all and direct everything. As a witness, Caesar learns what is happening and how each man acts. All is revealed to him, and revelation brings knowledge. This is true revelation that leads to *cognoscere*. What he sees is what the reader sees, the Gauls covering up the deathtraps that the Romans had earlier concealed: *ea, quae in terra occultaverant Romani, contegit* (he covers the things that the Romans had hidden in the earth [7.85.6]), thereby making the concealed traps of the Romans useless. Concealing conceals the concealed, making the ground safe to cross. The Gauls know what these pitfalls are because earlier, their nature was revealed when men rushing the fortifications fell into them. The concealed was revealed although it remains hidden. Just as there are layers of concealment in this scene there are layers of revealing. Caesar watches the Gauls cover up the pitfalls as the reader sees Caesar seeing the Gauls act.

Caesar is not only a spectator, but an acting director of this production. He sends off lieutenants and cohorts where they are needed. Then he himself leads fresh troops into the fighting. When Labienus finds that the mounds and ditches cannot stand up to the enemy, he sends word to Caesar who comes to help (7.87). Caesar is no longer an observer of the action but one of the actors. Although the text does not use any words here denoting revealing/concealment, the actions described do reveal the truth about Caesar as savior because the reader sees Caesar entering the fray to relieve and save his men. The nature of his actions is revealed to the reader, just as earlier the nature of each soldier was put on display before the eyes of all. When the situation looks bad for the Romans, Caesar goes among them, urging them to fight harder: *ipse adit reliquos*,

cohortatur, ne labori succumbant. omnium superiorum dimicationum fructum in eo die atque hora docet consistere (Caesar himself goes to the rest of the men and exhorts them not to give up their efforts. He tells them that the fruit of all their previous fighting depended on that day and hour [7.86.3]). Earlier, Labienus urged his men to fight nobly imagining that Caesar himself were present and watching them. Here, Caesar reminds the men of his presence, reminds them that he is indeed a witness to their actions, and that nothing, whether bold or cowardly, will go undetected.

When Caesar charges into the fray, he moves from spectator to actor, from observer to spectacle. The sight of Caesar turns the fortune of the Gauls, who, upon seeing him, are undone and soon routed. The description of him riding into battle is a flash of color, a sign to all who see of his presence:

Eius adventu ex colore vestitus cognito, quo insigni in proeliis uti
conseruat, turmisque equitum et cohortibus visis, quas se sequi iusserat,
ut de locis superioribus haec declivia et devexa cernebantur, hostes
proelium committunt.

(7.88.1)

By the color of his cloak, which he was accustomed to wear in battle, his arrival was known. When the enemy saw the squadron of cavalry and the cohorts which he had ordered to follow--the sloping of the hill made them easily spotted from above--they joined battle.

Caesar is conspicuous because of his clothing. He reveals himself as taking part in the action; the Gauls know that he is coming upon them. This knowledge leads to Roman success. When the Gauls know that Caesar has arrived, they give up hope and flee. Caesar's presence is revealed and the Gauls are conquered. The Gauls know what is about to happen because they have a clear line of sight since the Romans are approaching from below up a steep slope. Thus, the landscape and the color of the cloak reveal Caesar

and his troops coming upon them. At first they rise to the challenge, but when they see the cavalry, the troops, and Caesar, they give up and flee. The sight of Caesar reveals the truth that they are unable to defeat this enemy.

The surrender of Gaul exemplifies the power of Caesar:

iubet arma tradi, princeps produci. ipse in munitione pro castris consedit.
eo duces produncuntur. Vercingetorix deditur, arma proiciuntur.

(7.89.4)

Caesar orders the weapons to be handed over, the leaders to be brought out. He himself is seated in the fortification in front of the camp. The leaders are brought out to him. Vercingetorix is surrendered, the weapons thrown down.

Here we see the culmination of the entire *BG*: Caesar victorious and enthroned awaiting the surrender of Gaul, which is given to him in the person of Vercingetorix. Caesar's anti-Caesar is led out as a symbol of Gaul's abject defeat. The final scene of Caesar, campaigner in Gaul displays the regal power of Roman imperialism. He comes to be the embodiment of Roman *imperium* while at the same time he exhibits the *potestas Caesaris*. Vercingetorix and Gaul must bow down to Roman power, a power exerted over them by the very person of Caesar. When read against the *BC* this scene takes on a frightening quality. Roma herself could be substituted for Vercingetorix. Indeed, Suetonius describes a scene very similar to this one: Julius Caesar seated in front of the temple of Venus Genetrix to receive the senate (*DI* 78). Caesar then becomes a potent force that all must eventually submit to.

The text of *BG* 7 is a performance staging Caesar as master of Gaul. Julius Caesar creates this drama through the theme of revealing and concealing seen in the displays of speeches delivered by Caesar, Labienus, Vercingetorix, and Litaviccus, the disguising of

soldiers and slaves, and the use of feigned departures and massacres. *BG 7* constructs Vercingetorix as an anti-Caesar whom Caesar defeats, which in turn constructs Caesar as a superior commander and supreme leader. The final scene of Caesar enthroned to accept the surrendered arms of the Gauls hints at a regal pretension, something Julius Caesar's biographers later pick up on. The figure we see at the conclusion of Julius Caesar's Gallic commentaries basks in his success and displays his *potestas*. He has extended his *imperium* over Gaul and now is sitting perched on the edge of crossing the boundary that will push Rome to civil war in his bid to exert his power over Italy. As the *Bellum Civile* displays, Caesar is justified in bringing war upon his country. Julius Caesar supports this justification by constructing Caesar as savior of Rome, the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

CONSTRUCTING CAESAR AS SAVIOR

Over time Julius Caesar began to formulate his own notions about how Rome could be effectively ruled. These ideas he put forth in his commentaries; for both the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Bellum Civile* construct Caesar as savior. Already from “the middle of the second century, thoughtful senators had no doubt that beneath the surface of the Empire a crisis was festering” (Gelzer 6). Various men tried to address some of these problems. Some met with violent resistance, such as the Gracchi and Cataline, while others used their personal armies to win control of Rome, like Marius and Sulla. This internecine political climate persisted throughout Julius Caesar’s formative years, and by the mid-50s, the Senate had become severely limited in its ability to manage a world empire effectively. Caesar, on the other hand, had the qualities necessary for effective rule. In *BG* 5, Julius Caesar depicts three camps under siege and three types of leaders. The failure of Sabinus demonstrates the ill effects of unqualified leaders. The siege of Q. Cicero’s camp shows that a competent leader can face a crisis, but with only limited success. Only the truly superior leader can ensure the security of those he leads and only Caesar is this type of leader. When read as an extended metaphor, these three narratives point to problems in Rome’s governance and offer Caesar as the solution to its ills. The opening of the *BC* sets up a similar circumstance to that in the narrative of *BG* 5;

however, instead of Gauls attacking Roman camps, the faction of Caesar's *inimici* are besieging the senate, the city, the state, and finally the gods. The text positions Caesar against the faction in order to preserve his personal *dignitas* and the *libertas* of his fellow citizens. The *inimici* are placing the state in jeopardy for personal gain and only Caesar can rescue Rome from these detrimental men. Whereas *BG* 5 establishes Caesar as savior as a hypothetical circumstance, *BC* 1 attempts to emplot events to show Caesar as acting on behalf of the state, putting into practice what the *BG* depicted, that is, Caesar as solution to the political turmoil that afflicts the republic.²⁴

The year 54 B.C.E. was rich in accomplishments for Julius Caesar. On his northwestern campaign, he had invaded Britain a second time; in Rome his agents were acquiring land near the *Forum Romanum* to build his extension to the city's political and judicial center. The winter of 54/53 B.C.E., however, brought a serious blow to Caesar and his army. The Eburones rose against one of the Romans' winter camps and annihilated it. Encouraged by their victory, other tribes joined their cause and besieged a second winter camp. Not only did Caesar suffer a setback as a general suddenly bereft of a division, he also faced a crisis as a writer: how could he relate these events without impugning himself?²⁵ In Book 5 of the *BG*, he emplots the narrative of the three Roman camps so as to present himself as the savior and not the cause of the disaster. By using the theme of division and unity to narrate the events, he provides his audience with contemporary exempla of the problems a divided people face. In doing so, he implicitly criticizes the deficiencies of the current government.

²⁴ Much has been said about Caesar's *tendence* and propaganda. Collins (1972) emphasizes that Caesar is not writing for justification of his actions, but for self-promotion, whereas Gardner (1983) claims that the text justifies Caesar's actions by explicating the Gallic and Germanic threats to the stability of Rome and Italy. Batstone (1991) argues that Caesar's narrative technique is his means of promoting propaganda. Adcock (1956), however, downplays its effect: "There is in Caesar's writing an element of propaganda, but it is not predominant, and it is not what matters most" (19).

²⁵ See Powell (1998) for discussion of Caesar's "pre-emptive writing" in respect to the massacre of the Roman camp under Sabinus and Cotta, especially 115-124.

In military terms, a unified army is strong; a divided one is vulnerable. The same can be said of a state. Caesar knows well the dangers division can bring upon an army and he uses it when he can to gain the advantage over his enemies. The first part of Book 5 provides excellent examples of how Caesar overcomes his opponents by using division as a strategic tactic. For instance, when Cingetorix and Indutiomarus vie for control of their tribe, Caesar hastens to the Treveri to settle the affair, and Cingetorix immediately pledges his loyalty, and that of his people, to Caesar. Here we see that Caesar can subdue his opponents simply by appearing on the scene. The dispute between the two rivals threatens the stability and peace of Gaul which Caesar has bestowed through his unification of the tribes under Roman rule. Cingetorix affirms his loyalty to the Romans, and thus, is united with them. His action sways other chiefs of the tribe to come over to Caesar:

sed posteaquam nonnulli principes ex ea civitate, et auctoritate Cingetorigis adducti et adventu nostri exercitus perterriti, ad Caesarem venerunt et de suis privatis rebus ab eo petere coeperunt, quoniam civitati consulere non posse<n>t.

(5.3.5)

But afterwards some of the chieftains from this state--they were both persuaded by the authority of Cingetorix and they were terrified by the arrival of our army--came to Caesar and they began to make requests of him concerning their own private affairs since they were not able to look out for the state.

Their own inability to tend to the matters of their state, as well as their own fears of being quashed, compel the Treveri to seek protection from Caesar and his army; that is, they seek to be unified under the auspices of Rome.

Caesar's presence also has the power to divide. His arrival forces Indutiomarus to send envoys to him to petition on Indutiomarus's behalf because he fears *ne ab omnibus*

desereretur (lest he be deserted by all [5.3.5]). This fear of desertion indicates that Caesar's presence has brought into effect his strategy of dividing to conquer. He has the power to draw off the various chiefs from the rebel cause: *hos singillatim Cingetorigi conciliavit* (he won them over to Cingetorix one by one [5.4.3]). By depriving Indutiomarus of supporters, Caesar can force him to submit to the authority of Rome, which is really Caesar's authority. However, this submission is only temporary. In the last episode of Book 5, Indutiomarus returns²⁶ raising a revolt against Labienus. Of all Caesar's legates, Labienus is the most trusted; he functions almost as a surrogate Caesar.²⁷ When Caesar sails for Britain, he leaves Labienus in charge of the forces on the continent (5.8.1). When Caesar sends for him to help in relieving Q. Cicero, Labienus sends word that he thinks it risky to lead his men out because the Treveri have settled within a few miles of his camp and pose a threat (5.47.5), and Caesar approves of his decision: *Caesar consilio eius probato* (5.48.1).²⁸ Labienus, then, acts with care and forethought as Caesar would.²⁹ Thus, when the narrative relates the final segment of Book 5, although the star is Labienus, the legate behaves in a fashion that is very much like Caesar.

Labienus carefully prepares for an assault on Indutiomarus, much as Caesar would, bringing together in his camp the cavalries of the surrounding states. Thus Labienus unites individual states to stand against an enemy. When he sends his forces out against Indutiomarus, he orders them to concentrate on killing this man, before attacking anyone else. Upon the death of Indutiomarus the unified rebel force dissolves: *hac re*

²⁶ The return of Indutiomarus at the end creates the effect of a ring composition that unites both parts of Book 5, thus, further underscoring the thematic construction.

²⁷ Labienus as surrogate Caesar is also discussed in chapter 2.

²⁸ Evidence for Labienus's special status is found in Caesar's syntax. He orders (*iubet*) Crassus and Fabius to join him with their troops, but *scribit Labieno, si reip. commodo facere possit, cum legione ad fines Nerviorum veniat* (5.46.4). He does not command Labienus, but asks for his help.

²⁹ Goldsworthy (1998) stresses Caesar's care, saying that his actions in relieving Cicero were "very bold, but it was boldness based on as much careful preparation as was possible, and certainly not simple recklessness" (197).

cognita omnes Eburonum et Nerviorum, quae convenerant, copiae discedunt (When this matter was known, all the forces of the Eburones and Nervii, who had come together, departed [5.58.7]) and Labienus overcomes his opponents.³⁰ Caesar then is able to reign over his conquered realm: *pauloque habuit post id factum Caesar Galliam quietiorem* (and a little after this was accomplished, Caesar held a quieter Gaul [5.58.7]). Thus, division serves Caesar's purpose of conquering the Gauls. In order to unify them under his governance, he must first instill division between them to make them weaker and less able to resist his mastery.

Caesar is not the master of all events, however. With the episodes discussed above, Caesar shows that division is a good strategy for overpowering an enemy. However, when circumstances of drought and grain shortage compel him to divide his army up into separate winter camps, he puts his army into the same vulnerable position he seeks to put the Gauls in, and the Gauls take advantage of the Romans' weakened state. In narrating the episodes that detail the Gallic attacks on Roman camps, Caesar follows a similar narrative structure which Batstone, in his study of Caesar's narrative technique in the *Bellum Civile*, identifies as a narrative gestalt.³¹ In each episode, a small force of Romans are sequestered in a camp. The Gauls surround the camp, then offer those inside the opportunity to leave. Despite the Romans' response to the offer, the Gauls attack. The outcome of each attack differs, but the pattern remains the same. With each episode, Caesar points to flaws in different types of leadership, building to a

³⁰ cf. the scene of Dumnorix escaping from the Romans prior to the launch of the second invasion of Britain. Dumnorix is ringleader of the defecting Aedui, and once he is killed, the mini-revolt is quashed and the others return to Caesar's camp.

³¹ Batstone (1991) defines a narrative gestalt as "a specifiable pattern which, when it recurs, suggests connections between events. Furthermore, as a gestalt, that is, as a whole form which can be recognized even if some of its features are absent, it may both suggest events left out in any given rendition and import general impact of the whole gestalt in any given partial rendition. The gestalt, then, serves an argumentative purpose, suggesting parallels and resonances and building a cumulative effect, even when not overtly specifying the implied argument. In fact, the effect may be subliminal in that a general impression can be sensed rather than made explicitly apparent to the reader in a conscious or articulate way" (127).

conclusion that Caesar is the one true leader who can successfully lead the state through peril. The massacre of the camp under Sabinus and Cotta demonstrates the dangers of rule by two men, especially when one is unfit to lead. The attack on Q. Cicero's camp points to more efficacious rule under one man, but reveals that that man must be exceptional in order to lead successfully. The mission to rescue Cicero portrays Caesar as the superior leader who has the skills not only to be effective but also to save those whom he commands. What I offer, then, is a reading of these events to reveal a still wider message: what Rome itself requires to be saved from the ills that afflict it is an autocratic ruler, and that only the most skillful leader can be a good autocrat. The best man for that job is none other than Caesar/Julius Caesar himself.³²

First, the text challenges the institution of the two consuls, which is a revolutionary position as the dual consulship is the backbone of Republican government. The massacre of Cotta and Sabinus to illustrate the adverse affects of a poor leader on the state, even when his colleague is competent. Of the eight different camps into which Caesar must divide his army, only the camp of Sabinus and Cotta is commanded by two legates (5.24).³³ Disorder and chaos plague this particular camp because the two captains are at odds as to how to face an attack of the Eburones. 5.27 relates the treachery of Ambiorix, leader to the Eburones, who dupes Sabinus by claiming that the whole of Gaul is united to attack the Romans now that they are split up in their winter quarters.³⁴

Sabinus believes Ambiorix's promise that he will give the Romans safe conduct to the

³² Mensching concludes that the intended readership was probably not the senatorial elite since Julius Caesar writes for the non-specialist. Instead, he probably had the Italian nobility in mind (31-35). Whoever Julius Caesar wrote for would have belonged to a small minority. "The classical world, even at its most advanced, was so lacking in the characteristics which produce extensive literacy that we must suppose that the majority of people were always illiterate" (Harris 13).

³³ This is not the first time Sabinus and Cotta pair up. At 4.22 they are put in charge of troops going against the Menapii while Caesar goes to Britain for the first time.

³⁴ *esse Galliae commune consilium: omnibus hibernis Caesaris oppugnandis hunc esse dictum diem, ne qua legio alterae legioni subsidio venire posset* (there is a common plan of the Gauls: that all of Caesar's winter camps were to be attacked on this specified day so that no legion would be able to go to the aid of another [5.27.5])

nearest Roman camp; he proposes to his colleague that they accept the offer. However, Cotta disagrees and a debate arises, splitting the camp. Ambiorix, then, creates a virtual reality of unified Gaul in revolt which in turn divides the Romans. By relating in detail the disaster arising from Sabinus' and Cotta's inability to work together, the text not only criticizes the institution of the two consuls, but also the divisiveness of the Roman senate.

Such divisiveness is shown in the meeting held to discuss Ambiorix's offer. This camp is the only one to hold such a debate.³⁵ As the two commanders suggest the two consuls, so the council recalls senatorial debate. Caesar reports the meeting in a highly dramatic narrative that presents the two commanding officers as opposing characters. Cotta is rational and always has his eye turned toward the good of his men. Sabinus is self-serving, concerned mostly with his own security. Caesar lays out the arguments both men make, narrating the manner in which they deliver them. Cotta catalogs the camp's assets: they have already fought off the first attack, they have a good food supply, and help is not that far away. He concludes his speech by asking *quid esse levius et turpius quam auctore hoste de summis rebus capere consilium?* (5.28.6). The rhetorical flourish with which the speech ends demonstrates the difference between the two commanders. Cotta, in rejecting Ambiorix's offer, represents one who is the opposite of *levior* and *turpior*. Sabinus, on the other hand, in his willingness to accept the advice of an enemy fully demonstrates his folly and shame. The tale that unfolds shows the jeopardy in which a foolish leader places the state, even when he is partnered with a good leader.

³⁵ Of the three camp narratives in Book 5, this is the only one in which such a debate arises. When Quintus Cicero is faced by the same dangers, he dismisses the enemy envoys with a curt statement: *non esse consuetudinem p. R. ullam accipere ab hoste armato condicionem* (5.41.7). There is no debate, no option to consider. Retreat under the protection of an enemy is not the Roman custom. Quintus Cicero, the sole commander of this camp, can make his decision and his men stand united behind him. The personal desires of an inferior colleague do not undermine him.

Cotta sensibly faces the danger but cannot avert it because his colleague lacks necessary leadership skills. Sabinus's folly brings down the whole camp.

Sabinus is characterized as *levior* and *turpior*; he raises his voice (*clamitabat*) and argues not from reason, but from emotion. Caesar has left for Italy, he says; no help will come from the other camps because all are under attack; the only safety is in flight. He uses his own fears to instill fear in others. When he cannot sway the rational Cotta, he resorts to demagoguery, shouting loudly: *clariore voce, ut magna pars militum exaudiret* (with a louder voice so that a great part of the soldiers would hear [5.30.1]).³⁶ He knows these tricks work well, and in this episode, he projects them onto Sabinus, who, by appealing to the ranks, creates a false image of Cotta as a man unconcerned with the well being of his soldiers, undermining his rational arguments. Sabinus then makes a plea for unity: *si modo unum omnes sentiant ac probent; contra in dissensione nullam se salutem perspicere* (if only all thought one thing and approved of it; on the contrary, they would see no safety in dissension [5.31.2]). The word *dissensio* echoes *sentire* which in turn suggests *sententia*, bringing to mind even more strongly senatorial debate. The purpose of voicing one's *sententia* in the senate is to build consensus, unifying the members in their resolutions. However, Sabinus' *sententia* is not sound so that the unity that arises from the leaders' disagreement does not create a secure situation. In addition, the unity is false because the leaders still remain divided by their unmatched skills, further threatening unity.

³⁶ Julius Caesar is not above condemning others for practices that are his own, however. As consul he often turned to the assembly disregarding the senate, in order to get his legislation passed. Plutarch describes his turning to the people: ἐν δὲ τῇ βουλῇ τῶν καλῶν τε καὶ ἀγαθῶν ἀντικρουσάντων πάλαι δεόμενος προφάσεως ἀνακραγῶν καὶ μαρτυράμενος, ὥς εἰς τὸν δῆμον ἄκων ἐξελαύνοιτο, θεραπεύσων ἐκείνον ἐξ ἀνάγκης ὕβρει καὶ χαλεπότητι τῆς βουλῆς, πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐξεπῆδησε (*Caesar* 14.3). Appian similarly reports ἐνισταμένων δὲ τῇ γνώμῃ πολλῶν, ὑποκρινάμενος δυσχεραίνειν, ὥς οὐ δίκαια ποιοῦντων, ἐξέδραμε καὶ βουλήν μὲν οὐκέτι συνῆγεν ἐπὶ τὸ ἔτος ὅλον, ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἐμβόλων ἐδημηγόρει (*BC* 2.36). See also Powell (125).

With this scene, Caesar points to the flaws of rule by two men, raising implicit criticism of the Republican system of government. Two consuls and senatorial debate lead to disaster. Such rule is inefficient. It allows men who are *levior* and *turpior* to lead by making illegitimate emotional appeals to the masses. Cotta is a good subordinate officer. He does not question the command of his general. Quintus Cicero likewise obeys the commands of Caesar and *consuetudo* of the Roman people. Sabinus, on the other hand, presumes to think for himself instead of relying on the commands of one more fit to lead. He is driven by desires to protect his own well being, and he selfishly brings about the destruction of his men. Sabinus represents that element which ails the Republican government. He resorts to emotional arguments and demagoguery to prevail in debate. He is a stand-in for the contrary consul who impedes his colleague, the better leader, from effectively leading.

The attack of the Eburones illustrates effective leadership. Sabinus's inability to lead becomes apparent once the assault begins: *tum demum Titurius, ut qui nihil ante providisset, trepidare et concursare cohortesque disponere, haec tamen ipsa timide atque ut eum omnia deficere viderentur* (Then at length Sabinus, as one who had foreseen nothing, was confused and rushed about arranging the cohorts. Nevertheless, these things appeared to be done timidly and as if everything failed him [5.33.1]). Sabinus runs about in a panic, mentally unprepared for any mishap. Julius Caesar interjects that such panic happens to men who are compelled to make plans in the midst of difficulties.³⁷ Preparedness and foresight, then, are hallmarks of good leaders for the author, who contrasts the panicked and ill-prepared Sabinus with the rational Cotta:

at Cotta, qui cogitasset haec posse in itinere accidere atque ob eam causam

³⁷ *quod plerumque iis accidere consuevit, qui in ipso negotio consilium capere coguntur* (5.33.1).

profectionis auctor non fuisset, nulla in re communi salutis deerat, et in appellandis cohortandisque militibus imperatoris et in pugna militis officia praestabat.

(5.33.2)

But Cotta, who had thought this could happen en route and for this reason had not been a promoter of setting out, lacked nothing in terms of the common safety and kept exhibiting his duty both as a leader in the calling to and encouraging of the soldiers and his duty as a soldier in the fighting.

Here, Cotta is an emblem of stability. Not only is he concerned about the communal safety, he acts as commander and soldier at the same time. Like any good leader, he looks ahead to possible trouble so that when a crisis arises he does not fall apart. Yet, despite his leadership skills and his rationale, Cotta can do very little for his doomed men. He provides a paradigm for how a good soldier should behave, but Sabinus's panic ill-effects the ranks,³⁸ which are scattered out along the road.

The physical dispersion of the legion reflects the divisiveness of its leaders. The *agmen* is long and strung out, the commanders cannot easily see where problems arise, and all commands must be passed down through the long line of men. The circumstances of this battle increase the disunity of the Romans, and the soldiers lose heart. They abandon their standards and concern themselves with the baggage. Their behavior reflects that of Sabinus, who opts for retreat for the sake of self-preservation. An army, then, is divided when its individual members do not think of themselves as parts of a unit, but as wholes unto themselves.

In contrast, the Gauls remain unified and maintain their *consilium*. Order prevails in their ranks. Despite the temptation of Roman spoils, the *barbari* continue to fight in

³⁸ Sherwin (1979) agrees: "Without direct statement Caesar has indicted Sabinus. He describes a commander who did not command, a leader who had not anticipated an enemy attack, a soldier who would not fight. His actions were contrasted with those of Cotta. Cotta's judgment was proven correct. He fought bravely, and in staunch old-Roman fashion refused to deal with an armed enemy. He died in battle. Sabinus died ignominiously, unarmed, pleading for mercy" (462-463).

formation. Whereas in the earlier part of Book 5, the barbarians lacked unity or became scattered early on in an assault by the Romans, here, the Gauls remain unified while the Romans degenerate into a frenzied, strung out mass. In this scene, the Gauls fight like Romans, while the Romans act like Gauls. When the Romans abandon their customary valor and are divided among themselves, they become easier to defeat. When the Romans preserve their *consuetudo* and remain united (as in the case of Cicero's camp), they prevail. Julius Caesar sounds a warning to his fellow Romans, then, that disaster lies in their path as long as division prevails at Rome.

The proposal that a single leader is more effective than two still requires a man of superior talents, which the second episode demonstrates. Here Q. Cicero meets with a similar attack as Sabinus and Cotta but his actions do not lead his men to slaughter, although he cannot deliver them from danger. The text shows that Cicero is a better leader than Sabinus, but he still lacks superior skills.³⁹ Instead of creating situations that he can manipulate, as Caesar does, Cicero reacts to the crises. As with the earlier scene, the Gauls attack the camp then offer Cicero safe conduct to the nearest camp because the Nervii have kindly feelings towards Cicero (5.41). Here Caesar reports Cicero's refusal with his claim *non esse consuetudinem p. R. ullam accipere ab hoste armato condicionem* (it is not the custom of the Roman people to receive stipulation from an armed enemy [5.41.7]).⁴⁰ Cicero's response is the correct one. He maintains the proper Roman

position, and his men fight as Romans should, unlike those soldiers under Sabinus and

³⁹ This is not to say that Caesar thought ill of Q. Cicero. On the contrary, M. Cicero responds in a letter to his brother that *Quod scribis te a Caesare quotidie plus dilige, immortaliter gaudeo* (ad Quint. 3.1.9). In a letter to Atticus, Cicero reports that Caesar thought highly of his brother and even offered him his choice of camps that ill-fated winter: *qui quidem Quintum meum tuumque, di boni! quem ad modum tractat honore, dignitate, gratia! non secus ac si ego essem imperator. hiberna legionis eligendi optio delata commodum, ut ad me Quintus scribit. hunc tu non ames? quem igitur istorum?* (ad Att. 4.19.2)

⁴⁰ Sherwin (1979) "This heroic response, the same reply of Cotta, clashes with the disgraceful attitude and activities of Sabinus. The successful result of Cicero's actions contrast with the defeat and death of Sabinus." Sherwin does not explain what the successful result was. Julius Caesar certainly allows Cicero only so much success. Though Cicero's response is correct, he lacks the wherewithal to deliver himself and his men.

Cotta. However, we also see Gauls adopting Roman fighting techniques, which makes them more formidable. Cicero and his men are unable to prevail against their enemy and are saved only through the intervention of Caesar.

Nonetheless, Julius Caesar takes pains to demonstrate Cicero's abilities as leader, placing this camp in strong contrast to that of Sabinus and Cotta. Like Cotta, Cicero works as hard as his men to set an example for the soldiers. Although, he becomes physically drained and ill through his efforts, he continues to work along side his men until they compel him to rest (5.40.7). Similarly, Cotta continues to fight even after he is seriously wounded in the face by a slinger's stone (5.35.8) and falls fighting along with a great many of the soldiers (5.37.4). As we have seen, Cotta was a competent commander who perhaps could have brought his men through the ambush on their camp had Sabinus not sabotaged Cotta's efforts with his self-serving behavior. Cicero, too, is a competent leader. He knows how to conduct himself among his men and in respect to the enemy. Despite his competence, however, Cicero has limitations as a leader. He has the skill to lead his men during the siege, but he lacks the ability to deliver them from the situation.

Not only is the command of this camp better compared to the previous, so are the men. The text narrates a rivalry between two centurions, Pullo and Vorenus, setting up a contrast to the rivalry between Sabinus and Cotta; the two centurions subordinate their contest to the task at hand in order to deal with the extended threat, submitting to their commanding officer, a higher unified authority. Here are two soldiers who compete with one another to prove which is the more valiant. During the fighting, Pullo challenges Vorenus, saying that that day will reveal which is the better soldier. He then charges into the fighting, with Vorenus following. Soon, Pullo is hemmed in and he would be killed if Vorenus did not come to his rescue. But almost as soon as he frees Pullo, Vorenus is

surrounded and Pullo must rescue him, and both return to the camp. Caesar concludes the narrative by saying that fortune changed for each and each enemy came to the aid of the other so that it could not be determined which one prevailed in valor: *sic fortuna in contentione et certamine utrumque versavit, ut alter alteri inimicus auxilio salutique esset neque diiudicari posset, uter utri virtute antefendus videretur* (thus, fortune twisted and turned for each in their striving and struggle so that one rival was an aid and salvation to the other, and it could not be determined which one seemed to be ranked above the other in valor [5.44.14]). There is something laudable about these two men which casts an even darker shadow on Sabinus and Cotta: theirs is an example of bad rivalry, like that which exists between members of the ruling elite whose struggle for political supremacy and power puts the state in jeopardy; they strive for personal success to the detriment of the state. Pullo and Vorenus, on the other hand, exemplify good rivalry, the kind that invigorates the camp because they seek personal glory through achievements on the battlefield, and when one of them falls into severe danger, the other comes to his rescue despite their being *inimici*.⁴¹ For Pullo and Vorenus, the good of their fellow soldiers is more important than their personal glory. Not so with men like Sabinus.

Throughout this narrative, Caesar demonstrates the valor of which Roman soldiers are capable, the valor that is the *mos maiorum*. Pullo and Vorenus are not the only soldiers who fight well, although Caesar singles them out. Still, the soldiers of this camp fight as Romans should even under dire circumstances. On the seventh day of the attack, the Gauls pitch burning acorns and spears onto the thatched roofs of the buildings in the camp. The flames spread quickly because of a strong wind, then the Gauls rush the walls.

The Romans do not abandon their posts but defend their walls and ward off the Gallic

⁴¹ In the context of the *BC*, this word becomes charged since Caesar's *inimici* become Rome's and the contest between *inimici* is civil war. Here, however, the two *inimici* compete against one another, but work as allies in the face of the *hostes*, setting aside their personal conflicts. For these men, an *inimicus* does not become a *hostis*.

attack. Despite their baggage being destroyed by the fire, the Romans keep their attention on the fighting (5.43.4). Again, the men in Cicero's one-general camp appear all the more valiant when compared with the soldiers of the previous camp who abandon their standards to retrieve their belongings from the baggage *vulgo milites ab signis discederent, quaeque quisque eorum carissima haberet, ab impedimentis petere* (the soldiers openly abandoned their standards to look for those items from the baggage which each man held dearest [5.33.6]). To abandon the standard is a mark of shame. That these men do so to save their personal affects portrays them as behaving in a thoroughly non-Roman manner.⁴² Not only do they desert their standards but they abandon their *consuetudo*. The men under Cicero, however, stand their ground and disregard the destruction of their personal belongings, thereby withstanding the enemy's attack.

Thus far, we have seen that one man is better than two for effective leadership. The next step is to demonstrate that the superior man makes one man rule the best option. Julius Caesar offers Caesar's superiority both as a general and as a leader in all circumstances; Caesar comes to stand as the savior of the state, presented as being concerned for the safety of his men. His actions are thought out with an eye toward claiming all advantages for his small army and denying any to the large Gallic force. The text uses the word *periculum* six times in this episode; most of its occurrences pertain to others than Caesar and his small force. He begins the expedition with safety as a main concern: *unum communis salutis auxilium in celeritate ponebat* (he placed one source of assistance to the common safety in speed [5.48.1]). He slows down only when he learns that the Gauls besieging Cicero's camp have abandoned their attack to come to face him

⁴² In general, blame for any defeat in action would fall upon the soldiers if they failed to do their duty and hold their ground; they were expected to remain even when the battle had already been lost and staying put would mean death. To abandon their duty to preserve the baggage would certainly bring censure. For a detailed discussion of what soldiers and generals were held responsible for, see Rosenstein, especially 92-113.

(5.49.1). He then carefully selects the location for camp so that it is on favorable ground for battle: *consedit et, quam aequissimo loco potest, castra* (he set up camp in the most level place possible [5.49.7]). He formulates a twofold plan, either to lure the enemy into battle there, since they would think his force small and incapable of withstanding their assault, an illusion Caesar helps to create by means of a small camp and by making the roadways even narrower (*angustiis viarum quam maxime potest contrahit*, he reduced the narrowness of the roads as much as possible [5.49.7]), or to find the safest route across the valley to Cicero's camp (*interim speculatoribus in omnes partes dimissis explorat quo commodissime itinere vallem transire possit*, meanwhile by sending out scouts into all regions, he seeks out a place where he could cross the valley by the most advantageous route [5.49.8]).⁴³ Caesar's skills stand out. Thus far we have seen the debacle of Sabinus, whose errors were so grave that the competent skills of Cotta were ineffective, and we have seen Cicero's abilities to stave off attack, but he could not overcome the enemy. Caesar now offers evidence for his superiority as a leader. He keeps the safety of his men to the forefront of his plans, and he provides himself with alternatives should one plan not work.

Caesar further heightens his skills as a leader by showing that others are in peril, not himself. For instance, Caesar learns from captured Gauls what danger Cicero is in: *quae apud Ciceronem gerantur, quantoque in periculo res sit* (what Cicero endures, and in how much danger the matter stands [5.48.2]). The Gaul whom Caesar sends with a message to Cicero, informing him that he has come, prematurely throws the spear on which the message is wrapped because he fears being caught: *Gallus periculum veritus* (the Gaul feared danger [5.48.8]). Caesar on the other hand can avoid danger because he

⁴³ note that even when Caesar delegates jobs he remains the agent of the action, working through his men. Here, Caesar searches for the safest route, though he remains with the army. cf. the pairing of Caesar with various entities of Roman life such as *populi Romani* and the tribunes.

can foresee it. He knows that great peril faces his small force (*Erat magni periculi res tantulis copiis iniquo loco dimicare*, there was a great deal of danger for so small a force to fight on unfavorable ground [5.49.6]) unless he can lure the enemy onto unfavorable ground. To do so, he creates the illusion that his army is in danger (*Caesar, si forte timoris simulatione hostes in suum locum elicere posset, ut citra vallem pro castris proelio contenderet*, Caesar, if by chance he could draw the enemy to him by pretending to be afraid so that he could fight the battle before his own camp on this side of the valley [5.50.3]), keeping in mind that if he is unsuccessful he has an escape route planned that will allow him to cross the valley as safely as possible.

Danger, then, serves Caesar's purposes. He creates an atmosphere like that of the preceding two camps: a small force that is hemmed in by the enemy and that has no hope of help arriving from distant camps. The Gauls regard the circumstances as being the same and even offer a similar proposal to the men in Caesar's camp as they offered to Sabinus and Cicero; anyone wanting to leave the camp may do so in safety (*seu quis Gallus seu Romanus velit ante horam tertiam ad se transire, sine periculo licere*, if any Gaul or Roman wants to come over to their side before the third hour, he could do so without any danger [5.51.3]) However, the enemy Gauls are the ones who are truly in jeopardy. Caesar, placing his trust for safety in surprise and speed, launches a lightning attack that routs the enemy, bringing a great number of casualties to the enemy while his own men seemingly survive the battle unscathed. Despite facing an enemy force ten times the size of his own army, Caesar has the skills as a leader to bring his own men through the situation safely, and in the process he liberates Cicero's men from the danger that afflicted them.

When compared to Sabinus, Cicero shines. He manages to hold out against the enemy, and despite a large number of wounded, he inflicts severe harm on the enemy (5.43.5). Yet when compared to Caesar, Cicero's skills and efforts pale. Caesar arrives at Cicero's camp with his forces intact: *omnibus suis incolumibus copiis eodem die ad Ciceronem pervenit* (with all of his forces uninjured he came to Cicero on that same day [5.52.1]); Cicero's men, on the other hand, are in sorry shape: *legione producta cognoscit non decimum quemque esse reliquum militem sine vulnere* (when the legion was led out, he saw that there was not one in ten of the remaining soldiers who was not wounded [5.52.3]). Both camps faced the same enemy, both camps were in similar positions, yet Caesar comes through unscathed and victorious while Cicero suffers greatly. Nonetheless, Caesar praises Cicero for his efforts *Ciceronem pro eius merito legionemque collaudat* (he praised Cicero for his actions as well as the legion [5.52.4]), and lays blame upon Sabinus for his failures: *quod detrimentum culpa et temeritate legati sit acceptum* (since the defeat came from the blame and recklessness of his legate [5.52.6]). If there were any question that Caesar is asking his audience to compare these three generals, chapter 52 resolves all doubt since he draws attention to Sabinus, Cicero, and himself. Thus from these three episodes we see a progression from bad leadership to excellent. Yet the author is not asking his audience merely to recognize Caesar's superiority as a general, but his superiority as a leader in all circumstances, that he indeed is the savior of the state just as he saved Cicero and his men. Indeed, Julius Caesar leads his reader to this conclusion.

The characteristics that make Sabinus a bad leader are magnified in Caesar's *inimici* at the beginning of *Bellum Civile*, and he is not the only resonance with Gallic commentaries. In fact, all Rome is divided into three parts: enemies, the cowed, and

friends. These echoes invite us to read the *Bellum Gallicum* as a predecessor to *Bellum Civile* which trains the reader, that is, it draws upon what has already been constructed, not only “Caesar,” but the model reader as well. In *BG* 5, Julius Caesar constructs Caesar as savior, as superior leader. My reading of the text has illuminated a hypothetical situation of Caesar as the solution for the problems of the state. In the *Bellum Civile*, Julius Caesar has the opportunity to offer Caesar not as a theoretical, but as an actual leader of the Republic. Again, the theme of division and unity occurs in the *BC*, here with a quite different effect. The state of civil war is one that creates division within the state. In the opening pages of the text, Julius Caesar works to show that division is caused by the faction of his *inimici* while he ardently works to create unity within the state. This unity he stresses by the recurrence of the phrase *tota Italia*. Indeed, he gives the impression that *tota Italia* is united behind Caesar and his cause.

Historically speaking, Julius Caesar’s account of the causes for war is slanted. The assembly of his troops at the borders of Italy created a public crisis, one that was all too familiar to those who recollected the civil war of Sulla and Marius. In the text, Julius Caesar presents Caesar as working to safeguard his own *dignitas*, the power of the plebeian tribunes, and the rights of the *populi Romani*. He depicts Caesar’s *inimici* as going to great lengths to destroy his *dignitas*, to deprive the tribunes of their traditional powers, and to thwart the will of the people. In reality, Julius Caesar threatened to disrupt the traditional balance of power. The Republican government was controlled by a small circle of prominent families who shared the chief magistracies among themselves.⁴⁴ They had succeeded in maintaining their control because of a tacit agreement that no one individual would gain prominence over the others, and all players competing against everyone else hindered any one player from getting too powerful. This agreement, then,

⁴⁴ Syme 10-27.

put a control on personal glory. The individual could celebrate his achievements and *dignitas*, but only within the terms of the system itself, which fostered the sense that when the individual won, the game also won. Julius Caesar gained his political prominence by opposing this circle of families and by appealing to the people in the assembly for support. He threatened their hold on power. As he lays out Caesar's complaints in *BC*, the author always puts stress on Caesar's personal ambition. Though Syme points out that history is not made by individuals but large groups, Julius Caesar's charismatic appeal to his contemporaries and subsequent generations marks him as someone who affected the course of history through the force of his will. Laying stress on Caesar the individual then established a precedent that was to be followed by the subsequent autocrats who would rule over Rome. Caesar is throughout both texts paired with subsets of Roman political life, for example, Caesar and the *populi Romani* or Caesar and the tribunes. Later emperors would use a similar formulation to connect themselves with the various elements of Roman society, indicating that the emperor was Rome, or, in another formulation, Rome was the sum of itself plus the emperor, that he became the necessary supplement to all the key divisions of the city/empire. Julius Caesar accomplishes a similar effect in the texts, equating Caesar and his *dignitas* with Rome itself. This line of thinking then becomes played out in the programmatic architecture of the Forum Iulium. In Julius Caesar's scheme, in order for divided Rome to be united, it would have to come together with the figure of Caesar.

As an author, Julius Caesar has a delicate task in *BC*. He must present Caesar as the champion of the people and of the just cause. He came to see this as simply

impossible, so he abandoned the project.⁴⁵ That being said, we can turn to the *BC* and see that many of the concerns introduced in *BG* 5 appear in the early chapters of the *Civil War*. The text works to construct Caesar as savior of the state besieged by self-serving, corrupt men. Instead of hostile barbarians employing deceit and tricks to defeat Roman legions, we see hostile consuls inflicting tyrannical rule upon their fellow senators, using insults and threats to bend all to their will.

The text, as we have it,⁴⁶ opens with Caesar under attack. His letter is read out to the senate only after the tribunes override the will of the consuls: *aegre ab his impetratum est summa tribunorum plebis contentione, ut senatu recitarentur* (reluctantly after the great effort of the plebeian tribunes the consuls ordered that the letter be read to the senate [1.1.1]). Even then, the consuls do not allow any discussion of its contents. We are not told what this letter contained,⁴⁷ but most likely, Caesar sets forth in it his conditions, which are iterated several times in subsequent chapters, namely, that he will not dismiss his armies until Pompey leaves for Spain and then he should be allowed to stand for the consulship *in absentia* as had already been granted. Instead, the consuls allow only a discussion on general public business: *ut vero ex litteris ad senatum referretur, impetrari non potuit. referunt consules de re publica [in civitate]* (it was not possible to get the contents of the letter brought before the senate; the consuls present public matters [1.1.1]). This hostility toward Caesar expands to include those senators

⁴⁵ Boatwright explores Julius Caesar's emphasis in *BC* on his legal claim to a second consulship, concluding that "Caesar must have composed the work in the first two and a half years of the civil struggle, before the accumulation of powers through his second dictatorship and subsequent victories and honors made the legalistic Republican emphasis of the *Bellum Civile* obsolete for Caesar himself, as well as for presentation to others" (40). Caesar as Republican and supporter of the just cause, then, was no longer tenable by the time he had gained supreme power, and the text could not serve his propaganda. Thus, he most likely set the work aside, not bothering to complete it.

⁴⁶ Some scholars argue that the beginning of the text is missing. See Carter 28; Gelzer 190 n. 5; Brunt 18; Radista 439.

⁴⁷ "Readers are never to have this letter from Caesar to the Senate read out to them. One had to be there. Some editors cannot believe this is not the chance injustice of scribal accident. They cannot believe how unlucky Caesar's *Bellum civile* has been, to be deprived of its opening paragraph or so....The majority view, however, has been to accept this abrupt opening as Caesar's, to the letter" (Henderson 39-40)

who support any opinion that seems to support Caesar's cause. When M. Calidius gives his opinion that Pompey should leave for his province since his presence near Rome, with two of Caesar's legions under his control, is causing Caesar some consternation,⁴⁸ he is supported by M. Rufus. Both are castigated by Lentulus. The consul, along with Scipio, continue to browbeat the senators until the majority agree with them.

Julius Caesar depicts the senate as being under siege. In the opening paragraphs, we see Caesar's enemies working to divide the senate from Caesar. The senators come under attack as well. The opinion that Calidius gives is not only reasonable, it expresses a wish for a condition that should already have been met. Pompey remains near Rome with a large number of troops, an army that is to be used for the Parthian war. Pompey holds *imperium* as governor of his province, but he does not go there. He remains near Rome and continues to influence public business. Lentulus's response to Calidius and Rufus stymies the free atmosphere of senatorial debate. Like Sabinus, he exerts his will through forceful tactics. The extent to which the senate is under attack by the faction of the *inimici* is made clear by Julius Caesar's word choice. Lentulus uses insults (*conviciis*) to attack and harass (*correpti, exagitabantur*) those senators whose opinions favor Calidius's *sententia* (1.2.4). Lentulus's insults cause Marcellus to be *perterritus* and he abandons his opinion. Lentulus instills terror in the senators and forces them to follow Scipio's *sententia*: *sic vocibus consules, compulsi inviti et coacti Scipionis sententiam sequuntur* (by such words of the consul, several who were unwilling and coerced were compelled by fear of the nearby armies and by the threats of Pompey's friends to follow Scipio's opinion [1.2.6]).

⁴⁸ We learn later that the presence of these forces near Rome induces fear among many of the senators, compelling them to acquiesce to the wishes of the faction of Caesar's *inimici*.

In the first two paragraphs, we see that Caesar is under attack. This hostility is turned on any senator not supporting the consul's position. These men are not necessarily supporters of Caesar, but they do not support the consul who perceives any position against him as supporting Caesar's cause. Lentulus's stance, then, is divisive. He is presented as unreasonable and vindictive. He broadens his attack from Caesar to any one who will not support him in his endeavors to thwart Caesar.

After the meeting of the senate, Pompey summons its members to meet him outside the city. Here the intimidation of senators who do not side with the faction continues: *laudat <promptos> Pompeius atque in posterum confirmat, segniores castigat atque incitat* (Pompey praises those who were ready and encourages them for what lay in front of them; he castigates/assails and urges those who were dragging their feet somewhat [1.3.1]). Words are not the only means of harassing people, however. Julius Caesar describes the city as almost being occupied by Pompey's forces: *conpletur urbs et ipsum comitium tribunis, centurionibus, evocatis* (the city, and the comitium itself, was full of military tribunes, centurions, and men who had been called up [1.3.3]). With the latter statement Julius Caesar gives the impression of Rome under siege. The very comitium is filled with soldiers of various ranks, not with private citizens discharging the business of the state. He creates an atmosphere of martial law. Soldiers overrun and control the government; it is no longer in the hands of the people. The faction, then, uses force to compel the *segniores* to come over to their side. There is no place for the disinterested in this crisis. Either men side with the Pompeians or they stand against them.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ cf. when Caesar later attempts to form a delegation of senators to meet with Pompey; he can find no volunteers since those who stayed behind in Rome are fearful of Pompey: *Pompeius enim discends ab urbe in senatu dixerat eodem se habiturum loco, qui Romae remansissent, et qui in castris Caesaris fuissent* (1.33.2).

Those men who align themselves with the consuls, Pompey, and Caesar's *inimici* control all debate in the senate: *quorum vocibus et concursu terrentur infirmiores, dubii confirmantur, plerisque vero libere decernendi potestas eripitur* (the more timorous were frightened by the words and (violent) encounter of these men, the hesitant were encouraged, and the power of freely deciding was ripped away from several [1.3.5]).⁵⁰

The conjunction of this sentence with the previous statement that the city is overrun with soldiers brings out its military connotation. The timid are manipulated by violence.

Those who are hesitating (*dubii*) receive encouragement. Yet, the violent quashing of freedom stands out most strongly. Free born Romans of the highest rank are denied their rights as citizens;⁵¹ their authority to decide for themselves is ripped away from them.

The violence that is directed at the senators is turned toward the tribunes:

nec tribunis plebis sui periculi deprecandi neque etiam extremi iuris
intercessione retinendi, quod L. Sulla reliquerat, facultas tribuitur, sed de
sua salute septimo die cogitare coguntur, quod illi trubulentissimi
superioribus temporibus tribuni plebis <post> octo denique menses
variarum actionum respicere ac timere consueverant.

(1.5.1-2)

No opportunity was given to the tribunes of the people to make an appeal about the danger they were in nor even for them to hold on to their last right of veto power, which L. Sulla had left intact, but on the seventh day they were forced to think about their own safety, something which the most disrupting tribunes in earlier times were finally accustomed to consider and fear after eight months of various activities.

The treatment of the tribunes further points to the violence the faction is inflicting on fellow citizens. Their treatment of these magistrates is unduly harsh. They deny them veto power, something even Sulla did not touch, despite his curbing of all other

⁵⁰ The use of the word *concursus* here is loaded. It can be read neutrally simply to mean "meeting" or "encounter," but it also carries the sense of attack either in a military context or in the situation of a collision. OLD 2 and 4.

⁵¹ cf. the assault on Caesar's own *dignitas*.

tribunician powers. Roman *consuetudo* comes under attack. The invoking of Sulla here creates a stronger image of violence against citizens, recalling the proscriptions that terrorized citizens for several years. Indeed, this is the second occurrence of the name. In the preceding paragraph, Julius Caesar says that Lentulus boasts of being a second Sulla (*seque alterum fore Sullam inter suos gloriatur* [1.4.2]). Not only does Lentulus claim to be like Sulla, he proves himself to be even harsher to the tribunes by denying them the power Sulla left alone. The allusion to the earlier tribunes who caused trouble throws the contemporary tribunes into greater relief. They have done nothing to compare to the Gracchi, Saturninus, or P. Sulpicius. Yet they are treated even more harshly than the infamous revolutionaries. Finally, that magistrates who were held to be sacrosanct in the carrying out of their duties are compelled to think of their safety highlights the abusive nature of this new consul.

The cumulation of this excessive and abusive use of power by the faction is the passing of the *senatus consultum ultimum*, the same measure first brought against Gaius Gracchus leading to his murder. The text underscores the excessiveness of this decree, stating that it was invoked only in times of great danger to the city:

quo nisi paene in ipso urbis incendio atque in desperatione omnium slautis
paucorum audacia numquam ante descensum est.

(1.5.3)

which was never before stooped to except when the city was almost in
flames and the general safety was in a state of hopelessness brought about
by the audacity of a few.

The observation is ironic because it points to an inversion: the senate sets out to represent Caesar as being like the Gracchi and other revolutionaries while the text points to the passing of the SCU as an uncalled-for act since the city is not under threat, in spite

of the earlier depiction of the tribunes being oppressed and the senators as being intimidated. In fact, the crisis facing the city does not stem from the activities of the tribunes. Rather, the audacity of the faction is creating a situation that threatens the general safety of the citizens. Thus, Julius Caesar draws a connection between the activities of the consul with that of such renegades as Saturninus and Cataline, whose actions put the city in danger. The hostility that was first directed at Caesar spreads to threaten senators, then the tribunes, finally the city at large. The tribunes are able to flee to Ravenna where Caesar is and to receive his protection. The whole of Rome cannot so easily escape the danger the faction is inflicting upon it. Caesar, then, must move to rescue Rome from the abuses and excesses of the consul, his own *inimici*, and finally Pompey.

In contrast to the fierceness of the faction members, in Ravenna Caesar is patiently awaiting a peaceful, equitable resolution to the crisis:

exspectabatque suis lenissimis postulatis responsa, siqua hominum
aequitate res ad otium deduci posset

(1.5.5)

Caesar was waiting for a response to his extremely moderate demands to see whether the crisis could be resolved in peace by means of humane justice.

Caesar has been the model of reasonableness. His demands have been very modest, although we have yet to learn what those demands are. His chief concerns are *otium* and *aequitas*, and not just Roman justice but a wider justice for humanity. He welcomes the harassed tribunes into his protection. This is a man who respects his fellow citizens and seeks to preserve the state, unlike the faction members who revile their peers in the senate and abuse the powers entrusted to them by the people. They levy troops for war; Caesar

seeks peace. This dichotomy of they want war/Caesar wants peace becomes the governing trope throughout the narrative until Pompey's departure for Greece when Caesar accepts the inevitability of war.

While Caesar waits patiently, his enemies increase the scope of their attacks. They prepare for war and violate laws and precedents. They express their confidence that they can take on Caesar. Pompey speaks of the size of his troops (1.6.1) and suggests that Caesar's men are not loyal to him (1.6.2). The faction levies troops from *tota Italia*, involving the whole of Italy in what is essentially a personal quarrel; they allot public money to Pompey to finance a campaign; they make Faustus Sulla propretor for Mauretania and declare Juba a friend and ally (1.6.3). These last two moves are opposed. The tribune Philippus prevents Sulla's appointment and Marcellus refuses to pass the measure concerning Juba (1.6.4). These opposition are only minor hindrances and do not stop further outrageous behavior. Provinces are assigned to men who do not hold offices (1.6.5) and these appointees leave for their provinces without the approval of the assembly (1.6.6). The consuls leave the city in an unprecedented manner: *consules -- quod ante id tempus accidit nunquam -- **** ex urbe proficiscuntur* (1.6.7). Exactly what they do or do not do is lost in the lacuna, but it is clear from the statement that they act without precedent and from the context of the paragraph that this action is hardly to be tolerated. Further abuse of power is the accompaniment of non-magistrates by lictors; the action becomes all the more outrageous when these men enter the precinct of Capitoline Jupiter: *lictorsque habent in urbe et Capitolio privati contra omnia vetustatis exempla* (1.6.7). This is a violation of tradition and an offense to a god. Finally troops are levied from all over Italy. The faction requisitions weapons and exacts money from towns and shrines. Those who come under attack increase now to include the people, the

whole of Italy, and finally the gods. While Caesar seeks *aequitas* the faction commits unjust acts against citizens and gods. By the conclusion of chapter 6, Julius Caesar has carefully created an image of the state in severe jeopardy, under attack by a small group of men bent on making war. If the republic is to survive, it needs to be rescued and united. The stage is now set for the entrance of its savior.

Thus far, Caesar has been primarily an object of discussion. We have been told he is waiting in Ravenna for news, but as of yet he has not functioned as the agent of any action. In chapter 7 we see him step forward and speak. His address to his troops is an address to the readers. So far, Caesar has been silenced. His letter was read out to the senate, but not to the reader. We only know that Caesar has made demands and these are *lenissimi*. Yet the response of his *inimici* has been extreme and hostile. Now, Caesar is heard, however be it indirectly. His speech reiterates the points already made in the preceding chapters. Caesar is under attack by his personal enemies who have influenced Pompey and perverted his judgment causing him to become estranged, a man Caesar had long supported and promoted. Tribunician power is being forcibly suppressed--what Sulla left intact is now stripped from the tribunes. Pompey, who had restored their powers, now takes them away. The *senatus consultum ultimum* has been invoked, although there is no cause for it. His speech concludes with an appeal to his troops to defend his *dignitas* against his enemies, reminding them that he has been their *imperator* for nine years, leading them to victory and glory for the sake of Rome:

hortatur, cuius imperatoris ductu viiii annis rem publicam felicissime
gesserint plurimaque proelia secunda fecerint, omnem Galliam
Germaniamque pacaverint, ut eius existimationem dignitatemque ab inimicis
defendant

(1.7.7)

He urged them to defend his reputation and position from his enemies; under his leadership as *imperator* for nine years they had most happily carried out their duty for the republic and had had several successful battles, pacifying the whole of Gaul and Germany.

In this final appeal, Caesar mingles his personal reputation with the welfare of the state, inviting his soldiers to join in on his glory. Together they have made Gaul and Germany peaceful regions. Their work has benefitted Rome. Now Rome and Caesar are in trouble. They can do for their *imperator* and their *patria* what they did for the barbarians, that is, bring peace.

The first seven chapters have created an image of Caesar and Rome besieged by self-serving men. They have created a hostile situation from which Caesar must defend himself and the state. His soldiers avow their loyalty to him and agree to support him. He then moves to Ariminum: *cognita militum voluntate Ariminum cum ea legione proficiscitur* (When he knew his soldiers' disposition, he set out for Ariminum with this legion [1.8.1]). It is a simple statement concealing the fact of Caesar's revolutionary maneuver. Caesar crosses the boundary of his province and enters Italy under arms. Plutarch speaks of the consternation Caesar went through before deciding to cross the Rubicon,⁵² but Julius Caesar gives no indication of Caesar hesitating. There is no deliberation, no dramatic statement. There is not even a mention of an attack on Ariminum. Caesar simply moves his troops from one town to the next as he continues his efforts to find a peaceful resolution.

⁵² καὶ τὴν πορείαν ἐπιστήσας, πολλὰ μὲν αὐτὸς ἐν ἑαυτῷ διήνεγκε σιγῇ τὴν γνώμην ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρω μεταλαμβάνων, καὶ τροπὰς ἔσχεν αὐτῷ τότε τὸ βούλευμα πλείστας· πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τῶν φίλων τοῖς παροῦσιν, ὧν ἦν καὶ Πολλίων Ἀσίνιος, συνδιηπόρησεν, ἀναλογιζόμενος ἡλίκων κακῶν ἄρξει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἢ διάβασις, ὅσον τε λόγον αὐτῆς τοῖς αὐθις ἀπολείψουσι. τέλος δὲ μετὰ θυμοῦ τινος ὥσπερ ἀφείς ἑαυτὸν ἐκ τοῦ λογισμοῦ πρὸς τὸ μέλλον, καὶ τοῦτο δὴ τὸ κοινὸν τοῖς εἰς τύχας ἐμβαίνουσιν ἀπόρους καὶ τόλμας προοίμιον ὑπειπὼν «ἀνερρίφω κύβος», ὥρμησε πρὸς τὴν διάβασιν, καὶ δρόμῳ τὸ λοιπὸν ἤδη χρώμενος, εἰσέπεσε πρὸ ἡμέρας εἰς τὸ Ἀρίμινον, καὶ κατέσχε. (32.6-8)

At Ariminum the war of words, as Henderson calls it, begins in earnest. Caesar receives messengers from Pompey who report that Pompey's actions were intended for the public good and that he was setting aside personal obligations. Caesar responds by explaining that his *dignitas* is more important to him than his life: *sibi semper primam fuisse dignitatem vitaeque potiore* (always *dignitas* was primary for him and more than life [1.9.2]). Caesar's statement accords with Cicero, who wrote in *Partitiones Oratoriae* 90 that "there are two kinds of men, one uneducated and rustic [indoctum et agreste] because he always puts profit before honor, the other is educated and refined [humanum atque expolitum] because he places dignity above everything else."⁵³ Caesar endeavors to appeal to Pompey's sense of propriety, enumerating the various affronts to his dignity, that the condition granted to him by the people that he could stand for the consulship *in absentia* had been insultingly taken from him, that the last six months of his term as governor were being stolen from him. He could accept losing his office if for the public good, but that his proposal that all sides should disband their armies was rejected was too much. Now armies were being levied all over Italy and his two legions taken for the Parthian war were being held in Italy, all for his destruction. Caesar offers to do what would be right for the republic, even if that meant giving up public office, but certain conditions must be met, namely, that Pompey should go to Spain, that all sides should disband their armies, that everyone throughout Italy should lay down their arms, that the commonwealth should be freed from fear, and that the people and senate should be allowed free control of the government. To accomplish these ends, Caesar proposes he and Pompey should meet face to face.

⁵³ hominum duo esse genera, alterum indoctum et agreste, quod anteferat semper utilitatem honestati, alterum humanum et politum, quod rebus omnibus dignitatem anteponat.

Caesar's position is detailed and logically laid out. While he is seeking redress for personal complaints, he presents his complaints as stemming from both personal affront and public threat. Here again we see the joining of the private and the public. One effect of this mingling is to shift some of the emphasis from Caesar to the public welfare. His statement to prize *dignitas* more than life casts Caesar as a good and cultured Roman. His claim to be willing to set aside his public office for the benefit of the republic lends him an air of dutifulness and service to the *patria*. In contrast, the *inimici* have been shown to be using public money and citizens to bring destruction upon him to serve their own desires. They are appropriating public funds and power for personal ends. For Caesar, the protection of his political position is presented as a public concern. His personal affront becomes a public grievance since he is always presented as the first of a two part series involving himself and the *res publica*.

His request to meet with Pompey is refused, and not for the last time. Instead, the faction demands that Caesar return to his province and disband his armies. Meanwhile the faction will continue to levy troops and Pompey agrees to leave for Spain only after Caesar meets their demands. Caesar takes Pompey's refusal to meet as a sign that there is little chance for peace. He then begins to take towns (1.10-11).

Julius Caesar's depiction of Caesar's southward march gives the impression that Caesar is the chosen man of the people. Each town falls, not by force from a long siege, but because the townspeople open their gates to him, driving out the corrupt Pompeians in charge of the garrisons in those places. In each case, Caesar rescues the townspeople from the Pompeians. The town leaders of Auximum suggest to the Pompeian commander Attius Varus that he should take himself elsewhere because they could not refuse to admit Caesar.

neque se neque reliquos municipales pati posse C. Caesarem imperatorem,
bene de re publica meritum, tantis rebus gestis oppido moenibusque
prohiberi: proinde habeat rationem posteritatis et periculi sui

(1.13.1)

neither they nor the rest of the townspeople could allow C. Caesar
imperator, who was well deserving of the republic, to be kept from the
town and the walls since he had done such great things [for his country].
Therefore he should have some thought to his future and the danger he was
in.

The Italians recognize that Caesar's *dignitas* is deserving of respect. To prohibit him
from entering their town would be a slight to him as a great *imperator* and citizen of his
country. Caesar is welcome at Auximum; Attius Varus is not.

The story of Auximum is repeated again and again. The consuls flee Rome when a
general panic sets in after rumors begin to spread that Caesar's arrival is imminent. The
men charged with ensuring no harm come to the city flee to Capua where they feel they
are safe, abandoning the city. They fail in their duty. Meanwhile, Italians are turning to
Caesar. Eventually, the Pompeians abandon Italy altogether. As Caesar's troops enter
Brundisium while Pompey's escape by ship for Greece, the townspeople come to their
aid, pointing out the booby traps laid by Pompey's forces and leading the soldiers safely
to the harbor. The men who call up soldiers from *tota Italia* in the end forsake it. Instead,
Italy unites behind Caesar. When he enters Rome, he does so as the savior who has
driven the corrupt and abusive from Italian shores. Caesar has lifted the fear that has
gripped the commonwealth.

A political reading of *BG* 5 reveals a subtext arguing for Caesar as the solution to
the conflicts that plague Rome. The state needs one leader and that leader must possess
superior talents for leadership if the the state is to be secure. Only Caesar possesses the

necessary skill, and as he comes to the rescue of Q. Cicero, so too can he come to the rescue of Rome. The *BC* sets out to show how Caesar does for Rome what he did for Q. Cicero; he comes to the aid of all those who are under attack by the small faction of senators who deny their fellow citizens of their *libertas* and who offend and plunder the gods. The text constructs the *inimici* as bloodthirsty and greedy, eager for war and assured of their success. Caesar, on the other hand, strives to avert war, but accepts its necessity as a means to save the state from those who are intent on destroying it. Both commentaries offer a powerful message that Caesar brings the salvation and unity that only a great individual can provide.

CHAPTER 4

CONSTRUCTING *POTESTAS CAESARIS*

In both *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile*, Julius Caesar devotes a good deal of attention to two building projects, the bridge across the Rhine at *BG* 4.17 and the siege tower at Massilia at *BC* 2.9. Each of these structures is described in great detail, explaining how each project was carried out. The constructing Caesar is shown as master over space and peoples by displaying him as master builder.⁵⁴ In his 1980 dissertation *The Function of the References to Engineering in Caesar's "Commentaries,"* Peter Dodington concludes that "the function of the references to engineering in Caesar's *Commentaries* is to demonstrate both that Caesar himself has a unique amount of intelligence and industry, and that his success and that of the Roman people in general is based on the possession of these qualities" (73). However, these projects do more than make Caesar look intelligent and industrious; they work to establish the *potestas Caesaris*. In *BG* 4, Caesar establishes the Rhine as the northern boundary of the empire by building a bridge across it. The bridge becomes a display of Caesar's and Rome's power; through this display Caesar overcomes the fiercest tribe of Germans who flee into the forest at the sight of the Romans' technological prowess. By means of a construction project at the siege of Massilia in *BC* 2, Caesar's army forces the besieged townspeople

⁵⁴ Similarly, Julius Caesar used construction projects at Rome as a means to state his power as dictator and supreme ruler.

to capitulate. A massive siege tower rises up to challenge the walled city, asserting the *potestas Caesaris* by displaying Caesar's phallic authority.

Bridging the Rhine: Constructing Boundaries through Transgression

In his book *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, Claude Nicolet considers how Augustus used the representation of space for political purposes. The *Res Gestae* asserts that Augustus extended and fixed the boundaries of the empire and pacified all those peoples the empire bounded. Nicolet points out that many of the places and peoples Augustus speaks of would have been unfamiliar to the average Roman; thus, he would need to provide some sort of map. Agrippa's map, which was displayed in a portico not far from the mausoleum where the *RG* was set up, served this purpose. The map was a representation of the space Augustus speaks of in his text. Julius Caesar creates a similar representation of space in the *Bellum Gallicum*. The opening of Book 1, *Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres*, provides the reader with a map of sorts, a described/descriptive one. This is a world outside of the average Roman's understanding, and Julius Caesar is at pains to create that world in words. With the excursions into the world beyond that realm, Julius Caesar more firmly establishes the boundaries he sets.

The difference between Augustus's and Julius Caesar's use of space is that the former consolidated his power long before he wrote while the latter was still in the process of constructing Caesar in the commentaries. Yet each author's text serves a similar purpose of providing a picture of the man for posterity. Both texts assert the extraordinary qualities of their respective Caesar. What makes a Caesar is his ability to control space and to represent that space for others. It is this extraordinary quality that

contributes to his ability to hold supreme power and to administer the empire. Thus space is far flung and unwieldy, requiring exceptional abilities to manage it. The representation of space both in *BG* and in the *RG* attests to their writers' abilities to hold power for managing that very space.

In *BG* 4, Julius Caesar represents Roman space as bounded by the Rhine. The campaign he describes against the Tencteri and Usipetes demonstrates the extent Caesar goes to to keep Gallic territory free of Germans. When the Germans cross the river into Roman space, Caesar decides to build a bridge across the Rhine, thereby transgressing the boundary to demonstrate to the Germans the extent of Roman power and military might. This act of crossing the boundary works to strengthen it. Finally, the text provides a detailed ethnography of the Suebi, a powerful German tribe dwelling on the other side of the Rhine. The ethnography constructs the Germans as distinct from Gauls working to create an ethnic boundary that appears to be as firm as the text makes the river out to be. Establishing the Rhine as the boundary of Roman *imperium* demonstrates Caesar's *potestas*⁵⁵ not only over territory he claims for Rome, but over regions outside that space. The power Caesar exerts in the text over the German tribes is mirrored by the author as he describes and names these fierce barbarians for his Roman reader.

At *BG* 4.16, Julius Caesar defines the Rhine as the boundary for Roman *imperium*, yet he puts this declaration into the mouths of German envoys. Despite its origin in the text, the claim is Julius Caesar's, put forth in Latin for a Roman reader. Thus, though the statement is textually attributed to another, Julius Caesar is the one who establishes the Rhine as the boundary between the two spheres.⁵⁶ The implication of this

⁵⁵ The *BG* is concerned throughout with the expansion of Roman *imperium* as well as with Caesar's personal *potestas*. Each supports the other, yet they are distinct types of power.

⁵⁶ cf. statements made in Book 1 about Germans living on the other side of the Rhine. Throughout the text thus far, Julius Caesar had already made the river a distinct divider of Gauls and Germans, although he does not make any overt statements until 4.16.

statement is twofold: 1) Julius Caesar has the *potestas* to set the boundary; and 2) the Germans recognize both Roman *imperium* and its *limes*.

ad quos cum Caesar nuntios mississet, qui postularent eos, qui sibi
Galiaeque bellum intulissent, sibi dederent, responderunt: p. R. imperium
Rhenum finire; si se invito Germanos in Galliam transire non aequum
existimaret, cur sui quicquam esse imprii, aut potestatis trans Rhenum
postularet?⁵⁷

(4.16.3-4)

When Caesar had sent messengers to the Sugambri demanding that they hand over the Tencteri and Usipetes [*eos*] who had brought war upon himself and Gaul, they replied that the Rhine bounds the empire of the Roman people; if he thought it not right for the Germans to cross into Gaul against his will, why would he claim that he had any imperium or power across the Rhine?

The question posed here is one Julius Caesar does not answer. Instead of responding with an explanation, he demonstrates both the boundary of the *p. R. imperium* as well as the boundlessness of Roman *potestas*. The only claim that the Rhine delimits Roman imperium from German in the whole of *BG* 4 is this statement of the Sugambri: *p. R. imperium Rhenum finire*.

The language of the Sugambri is replete with Roman political jargon. Not only are these Germans presented as speaking Latin, but they speak the Latin of the Forum. Their concern is *imperium* and its jurisdiction. Two things must strike us in the phrase *p. R. imperium Rhenum finire*. That the Sugambri say these words suggests that the Other acknowledges where the bounds of Roman power lie. The river, then, not only serves as a natural obstacle for traveling from one bank to the other, but as an imaginary wall that

⁵⁷ Holmes argues for a different reading saying that “*imperii* and *potestatis* depend upon *esse*, not upon *quicquam*, which is to be taken with *trans Rhenum*. In other words, the literal meaning is ‘Why should he claim that anything beyond the Rhine should be in his power?’ This seems a more satisfactory explanation than ‘Why should he claim that any of his power...should exist beyond the Rhine?’” (143). He gives no account for why the first reading is “more satisfactory” than the second, however. Hering’s punctuation as cited here suggested he finds the second reading the more satisfying.

marks the place where one sphere of influence begins and the other ends. Yet the recognition of the river's power to delimit power comes from the non-Roman Other, as Julius Caesar constructs him. By stating that the Rhine bounds Roman power, the barbarian German recognizes the legitimacy of Roman power to claim hegemony over Gallic space but not German. Secondly, the use of the word *imperium* raises questions. In his study of the phrase *imperium Romanum*, Richardson argues that the concrete sense of *imperium*, being similar to the English 'empire', developed late, occurring first in this sense in Sallust. Prior to Sallust, authors use the word in its abstract sense of 'power.' Julius Caesar's use of the word at this moment, however, suggest that the spatial connotation was already inherent in the term. The Sugambri's statement could be translated either as "the Rhine bounds the power of the Roman people" or as "the Rhine bounds the empire of the Roman people." Since they use both the word *imperium* and *potestas*, this suggests that *imperium* is to be understood spatially.⁵⁸ Here the Sugambri acknowledge that the power belongs to the *populi Romani*, but Caesar, by virtue of his office, is the one who is invested with *imperium*. Throughout both commentaries, Julius Caesar is at pains to make Caesar and *p. R.* equivalents. Thus, by recognizing that the Rhine bounds the Roman empire/power, the Sugambri acknowledge Caesar's power as being legitimate over the Gauls but not themselves. The text as a whole indicates that the Gauls do not agree with this thinking since they are continuously striking to throw off that power.

This brings us back to the first point. Why does Julius Caesar give these words to the Sugambri? The answer can be seen as twofold. First, Julius Caesar is saying that while he had an interest in exerting his personal *imperium*, and by extension Rome's, over

⁵⁸ Holmes' reading (n. 57 above) disregards any distinction in meaning between these two words, translating both as "power."

the Gauls, he sees no value in extending it beyond the Rhine to include the Germanic peoples. His ethnography of the Suebii suggests that he saw little hope in converting these people from independent barbarians to loyal subjects of Roman power. Secondly, by giving the words to the Other, he removed the onus from Caesar. Instead of casting Caesar as the person to exert power in establishing the outer boundary of the empire, he constructs the situation to show Caesar responding to a natural reality, that the Rhine is the physical boundary of Roman power. When he chooses to transgress that boundary, Julius Caesar demonstrates to the reader that while *imperium p. R.* may have a border--that is, a physically spatial quality--Caesar's *imperium* is not restricted but is boundless.

The Sugambri continue by posing a conditional question: *si se invito Germanos in Galliam transire non aequum existimaret, cur sui quicquam esse imperii, aut potestatis trans Rhenum postulare*. The ablative absolute *se invito*, against Caesar's will, frames the question about to be posed. All that is transpiring concerning the northern expansion of *imperium p. R.* comes about because of Caesar's will, and the Germans imply that it is Caesar's will as much as the river that works to mark the end of Roman dominion. The river can then be seen as a natural and logical end to Roman expansion and Roman space. It becomes a boundary precisely because Caesar wills it so. The Germans are outside the bounds of Roman *imperium* and are not welcome within it because Caesar desires that they remain outsiders. Julius Caesar effects the will of Caesar by constructing the Germans as an ethnic race distinct from Gauls and totally irreformable. Yet, the Sugambri make a bid for some form of parity when they invoke the word *aequus*,⁵⁹ which suggests fairness and equity. Their statement conjures some kind of equality between Romans and

⁵⁹ *aequus* is part of the political rhetoric of Rome found in such phrases as *aequa libertas*, *aequum ius*, and *aequae leges*, all meaning "the same thing, namely a law equally binding on patricians and plebeians, and the equality of fundamental political rights which alone would ensure the Plebs an equal share in the common weal" (Wirszubski 11). Although the context of the word here differs from its political use at Rome, its occurrence with other politically charged words harkens to its political meaning of equality. However, the narrative goes on to expose the Germans as inferior to Roman *potestas*.

Germans, but already the ethnography of the Suebi points out that the two groups are not equals. The condition the envoys set up, “if it is not a matter of equity for the Germans to cross into Gaul” is one that Caesar disregards and therefore dismisses. Germans entering Gallic territory is a violation of Caesar’s will, but his will is not bound by the same restraints as his enemies’. The Germans are asking for a *quid pro quo* that each side recognize and honor the sovereignty of the other. However, there is no parity between Roman and German.

The apodosis invokes two words for power *imperium* and *potestas*. The former takes on a concrete meaning referring to territory over which one holds power, the latter refers to the very power one holds. It also takes on a sense of potentiality. The Sugambri, who have made a claim of equality and have marked out territory on one side of the river as part of German domain are asking Caesar to respect that dominion. The question they pose--why should Caesar claim that he has any jurisdiction or power on the German side of the river--Caesar does not answer with words, but with action, that is, he invades German territory and terrorizes those tribes living near the river. This act establishes that the Rhine will stand as a boundary between what is Roman and what is not because Caesar has willed it so, not because of any claim made by Germans. He makes a claim that his *potestas* can and will extend across the river because it is the nature of the *potestas Caesaris* not to be contained by boundaries. The whole of the *BG* has demonstrated that. Caesar crossed the border of his province to involve himself in the affairs of the Gallic states, and he continued to campaign in extra-provincial territory for nine years. No boundary stops the *potestas Caesaris* from going wherever Caesar wills it. The text demonstrates this fact twice in *BG* 4, when the Romans bridge the Rhine and when they sail across the Channel to invade Britain.

By the time the Sugambri speak, the text has already established the Rhine as a remarkable river at 4.10:

Rhenus autem oritur ex Lepontiis, qui Alpes incolunt, et longo spatio per fines Nantuatum, Helvetiorum, Sequanorum, Mediomatricorum, Tribocorum, Treverorum citatus fertur, et ubi Oceano adpropinquavit, in plures diffluit partes multis ingentibusque insulis effectis, quarum pars magna a feris barbarisque nationibus incolitur. ex quibus sunt, qui piscibus atque ovis avium vivere existimantur, multisque captibus in Oceanu influit.

(4.10.1-5)

The Rhine, moreover, originates among the Lepontii, who dwell in the Alps, and for a long distance is borne swiftly through territories of the Nantuates, the Helvetii, the Sequani, the Medomatrici, the Triboci, and the Treveri, and where it nears Ocean it flows into several different channels, producing many large islands, a large part of which is inhabited by wild and barbaric nations (one of these is thought to live on fish and the eggs of birds) and it flows into Ocean in many mouths.

The Rhine is a long river, then, flowing through the territories of a variety of peoples, mostly Gauls.⁶⁰ These are peoples already encountered and identified in the text. Invoking their names here recalls the geography already laid out, mapping the territory through which the river flows. Yet the river flows out of the known territory into the unknown, specifically at its mouths where wild and barbaric peoples live, peoples without name or description beyond what they eat. The text is ambiguous about who these people are. What is clear is that they inhabit the hinterland, and deserve little attention. Thus the river flows from recognized and known nations to the wild places of sub-human people who survive on fish and eggs alone.⁶¹ The Rhine, then, takes on a mythic quality the farther north it flows until it joins the vast expanse of Ocean, forming

⁶⁰ The Nantuates are possibly Gauls, the Triboci are Germans, while the Treveri are considered Gauls of German origin.

⁶¹ Dietary customs are a key element of ethnographical descriptions as is seen in regards to the Suebi (4.1.). cf. also Britons at 5.14.2 and Germans 6.22.

a natural boundary. Ocean represents the greatest of impenetrable boundaries, the river that encircles the world. Sailing into this body of water was traditionally regarded as hazardous and almost impossible.⁶² That the Rhine joins up with the mightiest of rivers increases its mystique for being at the edge of the world.

The Rhine also has a divisive power. Yet, as the text works to present the river as dividing Gauls from Germans it belies this impression. We learn at 4.4.2 that the Menapii, a Gallic tribe, occupies both banks: *hi ad utramque ripam fluminis agros, aedificia vicosque habebant* (they had fields, buildings, and settlements on both banks of the river). The Menapii are not the only peoples to occupy both banks. 2.3 informs us that Germans held territory on the western shore of the river: *reliquos omnes Belgas in armis esse Germanosque, qui eis Rhenum incolant, sese cum his coniunxisse* (all the remaining Belgians were up in arms and the Germans who dwell on this side of the Rhine had joined them). The river, then, does not demarcate Gauls from Germans so neatly. In addition, the river is not so great an obstacle. Ariovistus crosses the river with his people in Book 1. Likewise, the Menapii use boats to cross from one bank to the other. Even the Ubii, the Germans who turn to Caesar for help against the Suebi, have boats which they offer Caesar to transport his army across the river.⁶³

The river is an impenetrable barrier, however, for those lacking the wherewithal to cross. When the Tencteri and Usipetes first invade the Menapii, those living on the

⁶² see Romm, esp. 12-17: "Ocean presents itself to the early Greeks as a terrifying and unapproachable entity....The prospect of sailing in waters so wide that no land could be seen was regarded with great apprehension, and open-sea voyages were attempted only under extreme duress" (16). This attitude to Ocean remained prominent throughout antiquity, even though there was some exploration of the Atlantic region. See Hodge (130-134) for a discussion of the late 4C BCE explorer Pytheas of Massalia who "has well been called the Columbus of the North" (133) for his intrepid journeys to the Hebrides and Orkneys. He also seems to have traveled along the west coast of Africa as far south as Senegal and Dakar. cf. O'Gorman 138.

⁶³ Julius Caesar stresses the divisive nature of rivers here and elsewhere (cf. *BG* 1.1). However, rivers can also be viewed as connecting to banks, especially if one has means of crossing. The archeological data supports a continuity of culture on both sides of the Rhine, a culture that stretched far eastward beyond Prague. See Wells. (in Rigsby)

eastern bank cross over in their boats depriving the Germans, who have no boats, the means to cross. The Menapii then set up garrisons to protect the western shore from invasion. The Tencteri and Usipetes are unable to proceed any further than the river. The river, then, functions as a defensive wall might. The Tencteri and Usipetes are able to cross over only after they lure the Menapii back across the river, take them by surprise and use their boats to cross; then they take control of the rest of the Menapii's territory. Without the technological means, the Tencteri and Usipetes are stymied by the width and swiftness of the river. The river acts as an impenetrable boundary.

Likewise, the Rhine has served as a physical boundary for the Romans. Unlike the Tencteri and Usipetes, however, the Romans possess the technological skills to cross the river, but thus far have had no inclination to do so. In Book 1, we read that the Romans pursued the Germans as far as the Rhine. Those strong enough to swim or who are able to find boats manage to escape. The Romans kill everyone else (1.53), but they pursue them no further than the river's edge. Caesar is content as long as he can keep the Germans on the other side of the Rhine, outside of what he describes as Gallic territory. When Germans cross the river, he moves quickly to repel them. He does so, the narrator tells us, because the German presence destabilizes Roman control of Gaul (4.6). Caesar's interest in crossing the Rhine is for defensive purposes: *quarum illa fuit iustissima quod, cum videret Germanos tam facile impelli, ut in Galliam venirent, suis quoque rebus eos timere voluit, cum intellegerent et posse et audere p.R. exercitum Rhenum transire* (the chiefest of these reasons was that when he saw that the Germans were so easily motivated to come into Gaul, he wanted them to fear for their own interests when they understood that the army of the Romans both could and dared to cross the Rhine [4.16.1]). His reason to cross into German territory, then, is to inflict fear and to teach

the Germans a lesson. If he is to maintain the integrity of the Rhine as a boundary, Caesar must demonstrate to all transgressors that he too can go beyond the border and cause harm.

Crossing the river, then, becomes an important part of establishing the Rhine as boundary. Caesar must go beyond it to show the Germans that he can. Carlin Barton speaks of something similar in her discussion of Roman honor. A man was acknowledged as honorable, she argues, only when he was known to be capable of transgression. If someone had not demonstrated a capacity to violate social restraints, then not violating them could be seen not as an act of honor, but of cowardice.⁶⁴ For example, Pompey was praised in later life for his restraint in battle only because of his penchant for slaughter in his youth. Until Caesar tests the boundary by overstepping it, he risks appearing as too weak to keep the boundary secure. Thus, he must cross the Rhine and demonstrate Roman *potestas*.

Roman power is displayed in two ways, by building the bridge of which I'll say more later, and by the 18 day campaign of terror conducted upon completing the bridge. The Romans do very little on the other side beyond burning villages and ransacking fields. However, because of these activities, various states approach Caesar suing for peace and friendship (4.18.3). After putting the Sugambri to flight and laying ruin to their territory, Caesar withdraws to the land of the Ubii where he offers his help should they be harassed by the Suebi. From the Ubii, he learns that the Suebi are gathering at the center of their territory, preparing for war with the Romans and awaiting their arrival. Caesar has no interest in pursuing them: he aims to demonstrate his *potestas* not to extend his *imperium*

⁶⁴ "The man or woman who never broke the rules was despised. The mildness of a mild man, like the poverty of the poor man, met with little respect. Modesty unbroken, Plutarch observes in his essay "On Bashfulness," prevented people from setting and defending any limits; it made them unable to say no. Persons with too great a sense of inhibiting shame were easy marks; out of fear of offending others they could be cowed into acting against their own will and judgment. In other words, they could be shamed into acting shamefully (*De vitioso pudore* [*Moralia* 530A])" (220).

into the trans-Rhine region. Through the display of his power he secures his claim on Gaul by driving away any German influence. At 4.19.4 we learn that Caesar has accomplished his aims, namely terrorizing the Germans, punishing the Sugambri, and liberating the Ubii. Once these objectives are met, he crosses back over and destroys the bridge.

The text sets up what is to be Roman space and what is to be seen as outside it. The Rhine is established as a firm boundary between the two and for a brief while, the bridge connects “outside” and “inside.” When Julius Caesar describes the construction of the bridge across the Rhine, he goes into great detail, more so than he does for any construction project prior to *BG* 4.⁶⁵ He offers no suggestion to explain why its construction deserved so much attention, although he does say that it was a great undertaking due to the width, depth, and current of the river. The amount of detail and the challenge of translation have led scholars to suggest that Julius Caesar relied heavily on engineer reports to write the passage.⁶⁶ However, nothing in the language suggests another author;⁶⁷ the vocabulary accords with the rest of the text. If Julius Caesar had to rely on an engineer’s report for the details, he expressed them in his own style. The word choice shows that the author adhered to his own dictum to avoid arcane or technical language.⁶⁸ To suggest that the description is a whole sale borrowing would be a slight to the author who demonstrates that he is an adept writer. That this passage is difficult to

⁶⁵ All in all, there are 51 references in the *BG* to construction projects. See Dodington, 80-85.

⁶⁶ Balsdon: “If it is notoriously difficult to translate Caesar’s description of the bridge over the Rhine, that no doubt is because he simply borrowed his engineer’s description of it. No engineer, of course, is mentioned; we are simply told that ‘Caesar had a bridge built on the following plan’” (107). Meier: “Caesar states that he himself devised a way to solve this quite exceptional technical problem, but his account is too brief to be comprehensible” (280). P. Thielscher suggests the passage was either formulated beforehand by Julius Caesar’s *magister fabrum* L. Mamurra or was taken from this engineer’s report (451ff).

⁶⁷ cf. Dodington: “The passages are so carefully integrated with what is said in the rest of the volumes that it is most unlikely that two different people wrote them” (75).

⁶⁸ *tamquam scopulum sic fugias in auditum atque insolens verbum* (Gell. 1.10.4); *tamquam scopulum sic fugiam infrequens atque insolens verbum* (Macr. 1.5.2).

read while much of Julius Caesar's prose is clear and accessible is no reason to look to a different hand. The bridge is a complex structure, and its description reflects this fact⁶⁹ with its piles and beams driven in perpendicular and slantwise to the river bed. It requires defensive structures to protect its aperture. While the description may not give one a precise mental picture of what the bridge looked like, it does convey a sense that the bridge was a technical marvel.⁷⁰ Julius Caesar stresses this fact in his narrative because the building of the bridge demonstrates Roman power to the troublesome Sugambri and Suebi who abandon their homes to hide deep in the forest because of the Roman's ability to build the bridge.

Building the bridge serves to exert Caesar's *potestas* and to preserve his *dignitas*, both contribute to his *auctoritas*. Caesar decides to cross into Germany ostensibly to help out the Ubii who are being harassed by the Suebi. The Ubii persuade him that he can impress upon the German tribes the greatness of his army should he invade their territory. They then offer to ferry the Romans across in their boats. Caesar rejects this offer and decides upon building a bridge:

Caesar his de causis, quas commemoravi, Rhenum transire decreverat. sed navibus transire neque satis tutum esse arbitrabatur neque suae neque p. R. dignitatis esse statuebat. itaque etsi summa difficultas faciendi pontis proponebatur propter latitudinem rapiditatem altitudinemque fluminis,

⁶⁹ See Holmes 145-148 for the controversies concerning how scholars have read the bridge description.

⁷⁰ J. A. Bungård, too, asked why this passage is so difficult to read, and he concluded that the fault lies with the modern reader, not with the writer. Julius Caesar does not describe how the bridge looked, or how the entire structure was built. There would be no need for this information, Bungård argues, because Julius Caesar's readers would already have a sense about how Roman bridges were constructed. The typical reader would be a man with some military training, and although the reader may have belonged to a class of men which did not build things, they certainly belonged to the class that oversaw the work of laborers. Thus, some level of engineering knowledge would be common to them. What Julius Caesar describes, then, is not the structure built across the Rhine, but the innovations implemented in its construction to adapt to the width, depth, and swiftness of the river, relying on the reader's knowledge to fill in the gaps of his description. cf. Holland on the etymology of the title *pontifex* -- the office Julius Caesar held -- as being connected with *pons* and *facere* (332). She argues that knowledge of building the pons Sublicius, a wooden bridge of historical and religious significance that spanned the Tiber, was passed down through the college of pontifices who were charged with its maintenance.

tamen id sibi contendendum aut aliter non traducendum exercitum existimabat.

(BG 4.17.1-2)

For the reasons I have recalled, Caesar decided to cross the Rhine. But he didn't think that crossing by boats was safe enough and he determined that doing so was not worthy of his nor the Roman people's *dignitas*. Therefore, although the extreme difficulty of building a bridge was put forth on account of the width, swiftness, and depth of the river, he decided to take on the project nonetheless; in no other way could the army have crossed the river.

Caesar's purpose in building the bridge is twofold: to get his men to the other side, and to preserve his and the Romans' *dignitas*,⁷¹ and the invasion should proceed only in a manner that will preserve Roman dignity.⁷² The pairing of Caesar and the *populi Romani* here is important because the text asserts that Caesar's standing is as important as the collective standing of all Roman people. Here, as in other places in the text, Caesar serves as a subset of the whole of the populace. He becomes a representative of the entire populace, foreshadowing the stance of later emperors. Caesar's decision to bridge the Rhine demonstrates that wherever Romans go, they forge paths and build roads. The bridge becomes an extension of this activity; for the army builds a *via* over the water. Using small boats is *indignus* and Caesar must always maintain his dignity.⁷³ Building the

⁷¹ Balsdon (1960) argues that *auctoritas* and *dignitas* "were closely linked, the one static, the other dynamic. *Auctoritas* was the expression of a man's *dignitas*....In politics a man's *dignitas* was his good name--that 'bona aestimatio' on which Gaius Gracchus laid such stress" (45). cf. Wirszubski: "Gloria and honos are the chief constituents of *dignitas*. Honos, in the sense of public office, engenders *auctoritas*" (15, n. 3). Barton: "For the Romans, *dignitas* involved one actively and aggressively in a system of social reciprocities. Deserving crossed easily into demanding. As Cicero says, 'dignity demands (*dignitas* *poscit* [*Pro Quinctio* 7.28]). And so *dignitas* was both containment and a title to expand (and so infringe on another's territory)" (218).

⁷² cf. the beginning of the *BC*, which is shaped by Caesar's personal *dignitas*.

⁷³ Part of his motivation probably stems from the manner in which Gauls and Germans cross rivers using crude boats; see Walter (1952) who sees Caesar placing more emphasis on his concern for safety than on his own *dignitas*; however, Julius Caesar's syntax suggests that he sees both safety and dignity as equal concerns. Using these crude boats are beneath Romans. cf. Meier: "What would it look like if divisions of the Roman army were to cross the Rhine in German fishing boats?" This lack of dignity is yet one other way in which the text separates Romans from northern peoples.

bridge, however, does more than merely preserve Roman *dignitas*, the bridge increases it, because Caesar undertakes a project that has not yet been done.

The Tencteri and Usipetes are the Germans who initially cause Caesar trouble: they have crossed the Rhine into the territory of the Gallic Menapii because they have been driven out of their homeland by the fierce Suebii. The opening paragraph of *BG* 4 suggests that Caesar will have to deal with the migration of the Tencteri and Usipetes, yet the narrative breaks off for an ethnographical digression not of these Germans, but of the Suebi. A few explanations can account for this. First, the Suebi are the cause of the Tencteri and Usipetes's migration. Second, once the narrative resumes we see that the Tencteri and Usipetes are all but wiped out. Third, as the text points out, these Germans are the greatest and most warlike of all (*Sueborum gens est longe maxima et bellicosissima Germanorum omnium* [4.1.3]); therefore, they are worthy of a detailed description to explain their position of eminence.

The bridge comes to represent to the Germans the Romans as powerful, technologically advanced, and capable of going wherever they will. In order to demonstrate the force of Roman power, the text first establishes the enemy the Romans must face on the other side as the most powerful tribe among the Germans, a people that none of its neighbors are able to stand up against. With the ethnography of the Suebi, Julius Caesar demonstrates his power over a conquered people that he can describe for his Roman audience. He can create these people to be what he wants them to be, mighty and fierce, but when faced with the power of Caesar and his army, they flee into the forest. With the first ethnography of the text, Julius Caesar begins to construct the country of *Germania*.⁷⁴ *BG* 4 is concerned with establishing boundaries and with securing those

⁷⁴ This is a project that will be continued in *BG* 6 as well as in authors such as Pliny the Elder and Tacitus. cf. O'Gorman on Tacitus: "*Germania*...is a creation of the Roman writer, through which the vestiges of Rome are traced" (135).

boundaries. Ethnic difference is one aspect of creating a division between Gauls and Germans, which in turn is played out spatially by separating Gallic territory -- space already claimed as Roman -- and German. The Rhine functions as a physical divider of that space while the ethnography works to create a division of ethnicity. The continuous crossing and recrossing of the river confounds both spatial and ethnic boundaries, something the text works against as it attempts to establish these boundaries as hard and impenetrable. It is precisely this intermingling that Caesar seeks to control so that Germans will not be able to exert influence over those he has subjected to Roman *imperium*.

The Suebi receive special treatment in another respect; this is the first ethnographical digression in the text.⁷⁵ First the text sets out to explain why these people are *maxima et bellicosissima* saying that they divide their fighting men into two groups, those who campaign and those who stay home to secure the food supply. Each year those who have been campaigning return home and take the place of those who have been cultivating. The latter group then goes out on campaign (4.1.1-6). This system is of great benefit to them: *sic neque agri cultura nec ratio atque usus belli intermittuntur* (in this way neither agriculture nor the planning and practice of war are interrupted [4.1.7]). These people fight continuously, creating a specialized work force of either warriors or farmers. They are like the Romans, then, who can have standing armies in the field. The implied comparison sets the Suebi up as a formidable and worthy opponent.

The ethnography continues, listing noteworthy German customs:

- They do not own private property or have permanent settlements (*sed privati ac*

⁷⁵ German scholars have traditionally been eager to excise the various ethnographical excursus, but now, even among the Germans, these passages are accepted as being Caesarian. Richter states that “[d]as Buch IV hat also zwei ‘echte’ und zwei ‘unechte’ Exkurse” (65). The two digressions that qualify as ‘unechte’ are 4.1-3, the ethnography of the Suebi, and 4.10, the description of the Rhine. cf. Mensching; see also Nicolet.

separati agri apud eos nihil est [4.1.7]);

- They eat little grain but a lot of milk and meat, much of the latter they acquire through hunting (*neque multum frumento, sed maximam partem lacte atque pecore vivunt multumque sunt inventionibus* [4.1.8]);
- Their strength and large bodies are the result of their diet and daily exercise as well as the *libertas* of their lives (*quae res et cibi genere et cotidiana exercitatione et libertate vitae, quod a pueris nullo officio aut disciplina adsuefacti nihil omnino contra voluntatem faciunt, et vires alit et inmani corporum magnitudine homines efficit* [4.1.9]);
- To inure themselves to their cold climate, they wear only small pelts, exposing much of their bodies, and they bathe in rivers (*atque in eam se consuetudinem adduxerunt, ut locis frigidissimis neque vestitus praeter pelles habeant quicquam, quarum propter exiguitatem magna est corporis pars aperta, et laventur in fluminibus* [4.1.10]).

These details present the fabulous nature of these people who live a simple and somewhat idyllic life, one the text describes as a *libertas vitae*. Yet this version of liberty -- *quod a pueris nullo officio aut disciplina adsuefacti nihil omnino contra voluntatem faciunt* -- clashes with the Roman sense of *libertas*, which Wirszubski describes as

the sum of civic rights granted by the laws of Rome; it consequently rests on those positive laws which determine its scope. This fundamental idea implies that *libertas* contains the notion of restraint which is inherent in every law. In fact, it is the notion of restraint and moderation that distinguishes *libertas* from *licentia*, whose salient feature is arbitrariness; and *libertas* untempered by moderation degenerates into *licentia*. True *libertas*, therefore, is by no means the unqualified power to do whatever one likes; such power--whether conceded or assumed--is *licentia*, not *libertas*. (7)

Though nothing in the description of the Suebi suggests licentiousness, the claim that their freedom permits them to do nothing that goes counter to their own wills suggests a propensity for lack of restraint.

The *libertas vitae* of the Suebi is defined as having no duty (*officium*) or training (*disciplina*). German liberty, then, is produced by the absence of the very things that grant *libertas* to the Roman. Yet this is not a freedom to be envied. The word *officium* denotes respect in addition to duty. Not only are the Suebi free from obligations of duty they have none of the esteem that comes with it. Without respect there is no civilization. Further, the word *disciplina* suggests a lack of education and for the Roman reader, that would mean training in Greek and Roman literature, oratory, and philosophy. The very products of a Roman's *otium* are absent from this version of *libertas*. *Disciplina* could also be applied to the training of a slave, and the Suebi lack that too: they are slaves neither to another nor to social constraint: they do nothing that they do not want to. This kind of liberty is foreign to the Roman whose world is governed by the strictures of his honor code⁷⁶ and social protocol. There is a sense of fierceness, almost savagery, about these people, but also a hint of a lack of discipline, the first indication that they may not be so formidable, as they indeed are later shown in the text.

The description continues with a discussion of the Suebi's commercial habits. They permit merchants, but not to import goods. Rather, they sell their war spoils, although there is no indication what they trade these goods for (4.2.1). In fact, later we are told that they ban the importation of wine because they believe it causes men to become soft and effeminate (4.2.5). Merchants,⁷⁷ in part, make up the vanguard of

⁷⁶ Barton: "The honorable man or woman in ancient Rome, was, then, neither simple nor at peace. The Roman with a sense of shame was never free from the painful emotions of shame" (241).

⁷⁷ All in all, there are eleven references to *mercatores* in *BG*, seven of which occur in Book 4; in addition, the phrase *negotiandi causa* occurs three times in *BG* 7. It is not surprising that *mercatores* play a role in Book 4 since this is a book about transgressing borders.

civilization.⁷⁸ *Commercium*⁷⁹ imparts culture to those lacking it by the importation of luxuries and necessities from more civilized regions. The text sets apart the Suebi, who reject mercantilism except as an outlet for their own goods, from the Gauls, who have a steady system of trade.⁸⁰ The Gauls are also keen importers of wine from the south.⁸¹ This paragraph even directly compares the Suebi with the Gauls: the Germans do not import the kind of pack animals (*iumentis*) that the Gauls delight in. Instead they use their native animals which are small and deformed, but through daily exercise they train them to be able to work extremely hard (4.2.2). Here we see the Germans preferring to use their native animals (*quae sunt apud eos nata*) over expensive foreign animals as the Gauls do (*quibus maxime Galli delectantur quaeque in penso parant pretio*). They do not want imported luxuries, and indeed they fear the emasculating affect of such things. Banning imports allows for maintaining distinction. In this way, the Suebi work to maintain cultural boundaries, which they see as a means to safeguard their own virtue. Already in the text we see the effects of Romanization on the Gauls. When ethnic boundaries are not strictly maintained, they begin to blur,⁸² and once that happens autonomy becomes jeopardized. The narrative that unfolds demonstrates that while the Suebi may be *maxima* among the Germans and the Gauls, they still are inferior to Roman military might. When the Romans begin to build the bridge, the Suebi withdraw deep into their territory and assemble for war. However, they wait there for Caesar to come to

⁷⁸ cf. *horum omnium fortissimi sunt Belgae, propterea quod a cultu atque humanitate provinciae longissime absunt minimeque ad eos mercatores saepe commeant atque ea, quae ad effeminandos animos pertinent, important poxomique sunt Germanis, qui trans Rhenum incolunt, quibuscum continenter bellum gerunt* (1.1.3). The theme of Germanic fierceness and the emasculating effect of culture and civilization is introduced immediately into the work and is revisited in *BG* 4.

⁷⁹ The importance of mercantilism in Roman imperial expansion is played down by Badian who maintains that “there is surprisingly little evidence that at this time [the late republic] trade preceded the flag” (70). Morris, however, demonstrates that Julius Caesar provides ample evidence of thriving Roman trade in Gaul at the time of his campaigns, a trade that precedes the army and is not in place to serve the legions but to transact business with the locals (83-85).

⁸⁰ cf. 4.20. Merchants are the only Gauls to know about Britain.

⁸¹ On Gallic trade, see Hodge 117-124.

⁸² See O’Gorman “transgression blurs the boundaries of ethnic distinction” (137).

them. They are unwilling to face him where he is. Though there is no military encounter, their departure suggests cowardliness. At the mere sight of the Romans building their bridge, they flee.

The Suebi's inferiority to Roman military power then asks that we look back at this ethnography. Through exercise and diet they become large and possess *vires* but they lack *potestas*. Thus, these are a people without the good things of civilization, goods they consciously refuse. The Ubii, who are the next great tribe of Germans, are described as being more civilized because they live near the Rhine, engage in commerce with merchants, and have adapted some Gallic customs (4.3.3).⁸³ They are also the only tribe on the eastern bank of the Rhine to turn to Caesar for help and agree to live in peace with the Romans. The Ubii, while perhaps being too barbaric to be included within Roman space, will make good neighbors because they respond to the civilization that Roman presence brings. Thus, the ethnography of the Suebi sets up a paradigm: Romans are the superior representatives of the civilized world, a world they control; the Gauls show much promise of becoming civilized, and thus can become a part of the ecumenical Roman empire; Germans, however, are, for the most part, beyond reach. They exhibit few civilized traits and few civilizing tendencies. That the Rhine should demarcate the empire from the barbaric world is borne out by the wild peoples inhabiting that region who reject civilization and, thus, are unworthy to be part of the Roman world.

The Tower at Massilia: Constructing manliness

The siege tower at Massilia, in addition to making Caesar look good, asserts his masculinity. Craig Williams describes Roman masculinity, which he calls "a very serious

⁸³ This conforms to Julius Caesar's tripartite division of the north. The Romans represent civilization, the Gauls, especially the ones of the province, have had the civilizing effect of Rome and are less barbaric. The further north one travels the less the people are civilized until one meets the wild folk mentioned at 4.10.5.

game,” in the following terms:

“The Roman conceptualization of masculinity as being embodied in restraint and control, over others and oneself, informs two concepts basic to Roman masculinity: *virtus* and *imperium*. The first of these two words displays a significantly gendered quality. Derived from *vir* and thus etymologically meaning “manliness,” *virtus* came to be used of a variety of moral traits considered admirable in men--concepts that might be translated as “valor” or “virtue.: Effeminate men, of course, failed to live up to this standard” (132).

For those who could claim the label *vir*, there was a need to conduct themselves according to the social protocol of manly behavior. The serious game in this protocol that Williams points to is that members of the ruling class would act in such a way as to advertise their masculinity while at the same time call into question the manliness of anyone they wished to denigrate. These attacks on others would take the form of mocking a man for his dress or grooming habits, or accusing him of committing some act of *stuprum*. *Stuprum* was an act of sexual impropriety and could take many forms; one of the most serious forms was adultery. A male citizen who submitted to being penetrated by another man, also engaged in *stuprum*. However, Williams argues, and he assembles a mountain of evidence to support his claims, that a male citizen who penetrates other men does not commit an act of sexual impropriety unless his partner is another citizen or the son of a citizen. *Stuprum* was not committed if a male citizen had sex with a male slave or prostitute. Actually, penetrating other men could give a man bragging rights of manliness. For instance, Tacitus reports a charge laid on Decimus Valerius Asiaticus by Publius Suillius Rufus that he had corrupted his troops:

Sullio corruptionem militum, quos pecunia et stupro in omne flagitium obstrictos arguebat, exim adulterium Poppaeae, postremum mollitiam

corporis obiectante. ad quod victo silentio prorupit reus et ‘interroga’ inquit, ‘Suilli, filios tuos: virum esse me fatebuntur.’

(Tac. *Ann.* 11.2)

Suillius accused Valerius of corrupting the soldiers, asserting that with money and *stuprum* he had bound them to himself for the purpose of committing every crime; of adultery with Poppaea; and finally of softness of body. At this the defendant broke his silence and burst out: “Suillius, cross-examine your sons: they will confess that I am a man.

The word *mollitia*, Williams argues, is encoded to convey notions of a man compromising his *pudicitia*. Valerius does confess to an act of *stuprum* when he cries out because he claims to have penetrated the sons of a citizen, but the implications against Suillius’ sons is far more damning for them than for himself. His claim asserts that his *pudicitia* is intact and that he is not at all soft, but the sons of Suillius are. In this exchange, the man who was being unmanned by Suillius’s charge preserves his manliness by unmanning others.

Suetonius, in his biography of the Divine Julius, likewise calls into question the *virtus* of Julius Caesar. He does this in paragraphs 47 through 52 in which he first describes Caesar’s excessive attention to his grooming, commenting that Caesar took great care of his appearance, not only shaving, but plucking out his body hair. He was upset about his baldness and combed his hair forward to cover it up. He was most pleased when the Senate allowed him to wear his triumphal wreath all the time since it would likewise cover his balding head. His dress was unusual since he wore a long sleeved tunic with fringed sleeves. The tunic was always loosely belted. Excessive grooming was also a sign of effeminacy. It was suitable for a man to have the hair removed from his face and his underarms, but not from his chest, arms, and legs. Suetonius by not specifying what body parts were depilated, implies that Caesar engaged in unacceptable hair removal.

Likewise, wearing long sleeves could bring censure. That Suetonius' Caesar goes so far as to have his sleeves fringed suggests a flouting of the social protocol.

A short while later, in an extended *praeteritio*, Suetonius discusses the rumors of Caesar's affair with King Nicomedes of Bithynia when he traveled to the east as a young man on government business. Suetonius goes on to quote several of Caesar's contemporaries who were in the habit of bringing up this affair. He concludes the paragraph with a chant that the soldiers used during Caesar's triumph.

Gallias Caesar subegit, Nicomedes Caesarem: ecce Caesar nunc triumphat
qui subegit Gallias, Nicomedes non triumphat qui subegit Caesarem.

(49.7)

Caesar subdued the Gauls, Nicomedes Caesar: behold Caesar now
triumphing who subdued the Gauls; Nicomedes is not triumphing who
subdued Caesar.

According to Adams in *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*, "*subigo* was used of the active role in homosexual or heterosexual intercourse" (155), and then he quotes this passage as an example. He explains, "in the soldiers' song in Suetonius it is clear from the context (note *triumphat* in the same line) that the metaphor is military, = 'master, subdue'" (155-56). Thus Suetonius equates a sexual with a military conquest. We will return to this notion later.

While at no point in these paragraphs does Suetonius lay a charge of unmanliness on Caesar, the description of his appearance and the "passing over" of Caesar's alleged affair clearly point to the possibility and actuality of an effeminate reading of Caesar in antiquity. But then he gives a long catalog of the women Caesar supposedly slept with, many the wives of prominent citizens. This catalog would seem to exonerate him of that charge of effeminacy that Suetonius has built, but Williams argues that excessive

womanizing was also regarded as being “soft” because the man so charged clearly could not control his passions. Thus a man could be labeled as effeminate for being penetrated, but he was just as likely to receive the label for being unrestrained in his pursuit of female lovers, either having too many or pursuing the wrong sort of woman (143). Williams explains:

According to the conceptualizations of masculinity prevalent in the Roman textual tradition, a real man is in control of his own desires, fears, passions, and he exercises dominion over others and their bodies. An effeminate man cedes control and is dominated whether by his own desires and fears or by others’ bodies--and those bodies may be male or female. (153)

Suetonius’ Caesar is someone who lacks *virtus* because he does not have dominion over himself.

Julius Caesar’s Caesar, however, exhibits a great deal of *virtus*. He controls his own passions as well as he commands his forces. At every turn, the two texts, *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile*, pronounce the message that Caesar is a highly skillful soldier and general. Indeed, the commentaries almost stand as a rebuttal to any charge his contemporaries might have leveled against his *virtus*. One way in which the texts work to construct his manliness is through the descriptions of building projects. With the building of the siege tower in the battle of Massilia from Book 2 of *BC*, Julius Caesar explicitly links to the notion of *virtus*.

There are two striking features about the battle of Massilia. First, it is a successful operation undertaken almost entirely by Caesar’s lieutenants. Often, such endeavors end in disaster⁸⁴ but the Caesarians have great success against the Massilians.

Secondly, this is the first detailed siege in the text. Caesar has taken several towns

⁸⁴ cf. Curius in Africa in the latter half of *BC* Book 2 or Sabinus and Cotta *BG* Book 5. Labienus had independent success, but often he invokes the image of Caesar in his prebattle speeches.

throughout Italy, but these towns are depicted as willingly opening their gates to him. The whole of Italy (*tota Italia*) welcomes Caesar with open arms and open walls. Massilia sides with Pompey; in addition, it is not an Italian city, but a Greek one. Thus, Massilia is an advisory in political terms and an Other in social terms. Depicting the siege in detail does not harm the image Julius Caesar has constructed in Book 1 that shows Caesar as the chosen party on the part of the Italians and as savior of those beleaguered by the faction of his *inimici*. Caesar has won over Italy quickly and bloodlessly. The Italians want Caesar, not Pompey, and when Pompey is driven to the edge of the peninsula, he has no choice but to turn to Greece. The attack on Massilia, a western Greek city, foreshadows the success that Caesar will eventually have in Greece. This siege becomes a double victory over Pompey and over already conquered Greece. Furthermore, Massilia is a hold out. Caesar has already taken control of Gaul, and while Massilia is under siege, he is off in Spain securing his hold over that region as well. Massilia becomes an island of Pompeians in a sea of Caesar. Not only are these regions under Caesar's control, they are rough and tumble territories, populated with fierce barbarians whom Caesar has pacified. Massilia is a civilized representative of the East, a region that is as yet outside Caesar's grasp. Thus, it is an important city to subdue, and bring under Caesar's mastery.⁸⁵ The taking of Massilia points to the eventual control that Caesar will have over the East. Because this is a city of Greeks, Julius Caesar can treat its siege in detail without damaging his public relations. Greeks are foreigners, like the Gauls, and to take them by force if they will not submit does no harm at all to Caesar's image as the granter of *beneficia* at Rome.

⁸⁵ Control of the city also has important military advantages since it controls the route between Italy and Spain.

Massilia, though a city of Greeks, shared much with Rome. It was a conservative city-state run by a council populated with the city's richest citizens, the *timouchoi*. Since the Second Punic War, Massilia had been a staunch ally to Rome and a major trading partner, bringing slaves from Gaul to Italy and conveying Italian wine to Gallic slave traders. The city may even have supplied some of the gold that ransomed Rome from the Gauls during the invasion 390 BCE.⁸⁶ These were Greeks who shared much with the Romans; this was a city that was similar to Rome in many ways. Why, then, did Caesar expend so much energy to take this city? Very quickly, his fleet blockades the harbor and the Massilians are unable to break the blockade in two different battles. Also, Caesar's troops have cut off any access by land. Caesar could have simply left his sea and land blockades in place and then gone on about his affairs. Yet he does not do this. He has already taken control of Gaul, and is in the process of taking Spain. Massilia is rendered ineffective the moment Caesar arrives with his troops so there is no threat of his lines of communication from Italy being cut off. The effort expended to take the city suggests a strong desire to have every last piece of the west under his control. He can not abide one hold out.

Throughout the texts, Caesar's aim is mastery over others, first the Gauls, then the Romans themselves. *Bellum Civile* asserts that mastery, but it must do so with care so as not to upset the audience. Thus control over Massilia improves Caesar's claim over Rome; to master Rome is to master the World. And the Greek east is an important part of the world to control with its wealth and population. The siege of Massilia plays out that mastery allowing Julius Caesar to construct Caesar as master of Massilia, the barbaric west, the Greek east, and finally Rome? Massilia is won by means of a

⁸⁶ Hodge (1998): "Moreover this [the possible financial assistance from Massalia with the ransom paid to Gauls in 390 BCE] well marks what was to develop as the keystone of Massalia's foreign policy, a close and enduring alliance with Rome, and it is almost irrelevant whether the story is true or false: it is so closely indicative of the reality that, if it is not true, then it ought to be" (96).

construction project. The soldiers, in building extensive siege works, come to realize that they can accomplish their ends by means of a tower. The tower becomes a claim of phallic authority over Massilia on the part of the Caesarians, and by extension of Caesar over Rome.

The phallus as weapon works well in a society in which people are categorized by whether they are penetrators or the penetrated.⁸⁷ The distinction would at first glance seem to be one of gender, but the penetrated included both male and female. Male slaves could be used by their male masters as sexual objects, just as making use of male prostitutes was an accepted practice. Social restrictions on sexual behavior seems not to have been placed upon the gender of one's sexual partner, but rather on who he or she was. Male citizens were theoretically free to engage in sexual activity with their wives, their slaves, foreigners, or prostitutes. Male citizens were protected by law from the sexual advances of other male citizens as were female citizens with the exception of a man's wife. However, as Walters shows, these restrictions were designed to protect citizens of high rank, and not necessarily all citizens.⁸⁸ To maintain respectability in terms of one's sexual behavior, a male citizen needed to

give the appearance of playing the insertive role in penetrative acts, and not the receptive role....This can justly be called the prime directive of masculine sexual behavior for Romans, and it has an obvious relationship to broader structures of hierarchical male power. For according to this scheme, penetration is subjugation (in the sense that the act is held simultaneously to be a figure for and to effect, subjugation), and masculinity is domination. (Williams, 18)

⁸⁷ Walters (1997) 30.

⁸⁸ Walters argues "that the Roman sexual protocol that defined men as impenetrable penetrators can most usefully be seen in the context of a wider conceptual pattern that characterized those of high social status as being able to defend the boundaries of their body from invasive assaults of all kinds" (30).

Thus the phallus comes to be a weapon of subjugation. The tower at Massilia subjugates the city and thereby asserts both a literal and a metaphorical domination over the city. It inverts, then, the Nicomedes verses.

The tower arises from necessity. The men are working in the open and are exposed to attacks by the Massilians. Thus they need protection:

est animadversum ab legionariis, qui dextram partem operis administrabant, ex crebris hostium eruptionibus magno sibi esse praesidio posse, si ibi pro castello ac receptaculo turrim ex latere sub muro fecissent. quam primo ad repentinos incursus humilem parvamque fecerunt. huc se referebant; hinc, si qua maior opprimerat vis, propugnabant; hinc ad repellendum et prosequendum hostem procurrebant. patebat haec quoquoque pedes XXX, sed parietum crassitudo pedes V. postea vero, ut est rerum omnium magister usus, hominum adhibita sollertia inventum est magno esse usui posse, si haec esset in altitudinem turris elata. id hac ratione perfectum est.

(2.8.1-3)

The soldiers in charge of the right-hand side of the works noticed that they could protect themselves from frequent attacks from the enemy if they built a tower there off to the side below the wall to be a fort and shelter. At first they made it low and small for sudden attacks. They would withdraw there; and from there, if some greater force pressed upon them, they would fight, or they would rush out to drive back and pursue the enemy. The tower lay open thirty feet in every direction, but the wall was five feet thick. Later, since experience is the master of everything, when the men applied their skill/cleverness, they found that it would be greatly useful if the height of the tower were raised. For this reason, the project was completed.

The soldiers are in a vulnerable position. Their inviolability as Romans is under a threat by the attacks from the Massilians. This dangerous situation leads them to develop a new construction to protect themselves. The thickness of the wall (*parietum crassitudo pedes V*) ensures their impenetrability. Their *sollertia* works to preserve their safety and

bodily integrity. Thus their skill becomes an indicator of their *virtus*. They combine strength and skill to master a situation that initially caused them to be exposed. To be sure, the tower increases their abilities to work unmolested as well as signaling to their enemy the strength of their manliness. They build a tower that challenges the barrier of the city wall.

The description of the tower's construction suggests a swelling phallus; the roof is raised first and each new story is added under its protection:

ubi vero ea pars turris, quae erat perfecta, tecta atque munita est ab omni ictu hostium, pluteos ad alia opera abduxerunt; turris tectum per se ipsum pressionibus ex contignatione prima suspendere ac tollere coeperunt. ubi quantum storiarum demissio patiebatur, tantum elevarant, intra haec tegimenta abditi atque muniti parietes lateribus exstruebant, rursusque alia pressione ad aedificandum sibi locum expediebant. ubi tempus alterius contabulationis videbatur, tigna item ut primo tecta extremis lateribus instruebant, exque ea contignatione rursus summam contabulationem storiasque elevabant. ita tuto ac sine ullo vulnere ac periculo VI tabulata extruxerunt fenestrasque, quibus in locis visum est, ad tormenta mittenda in struendo reliquerunt.

(2.8.1-3)

When that part of the tower which had been finished was roofed and protected from every missile of the enemy, they took the parapets away for other works; they began to support and raise the roof of the tower by itself from the first floor with levers. When they had raised the first story as far as the lowering of the mats allowed, they built up walls on the sides, covered and protected under this roofing, and by jacking it up again they made room [below] for building. When it seemed time for another story, as with the first floor they nailed boards onto the far sides, and from this floor they raised up another story along with protective mats. Thus they built six floors safely and without receiving any wounds or being in danger, and in building the tower they left windows from which they could see in places to shoot their *tormenta*.

The structure rises out of the ground fully roofed; each successive floor is built up, forcing the roof higher and higher. Openings are left through which the Romans shoot missiles. Thus, this tower is like a massive ejaculating penis.

The phallus in many contexts was seen by Romans as a weapon of male dominance. The figure of the fertility god Priapus is a fine example. Statues of this little god with an enormous penis, an overly aroused gnome serving as protector of the garden, warding off would be thieves and was very popular.⁸⁹ Poems abound in which the god addresses violators of the garden, making quite clear that his overly large penis was a weapon for violation; one example will suffice:

Ne prendare, cave. Prenso nec fuste nocebo
saeva nec incurva vulnera falce dabō:
Traiectus conto sic extendere pedali,
ut culum rugas non habuisse putes.⁹⁰

Take care that you are not caught. I will not harm you with my cudgel taken in hand nor will I give you savage wounds with my curved scythe: though once penetrated by my foot long pole, you'll be so stretched out that you'll think that your asshole didn't have wrinkles.

The first two items mentioned, the *fustis* and the *falx*, each seem to be referring to the phallus, yet could be meant to be taken at face value since the third line introduces *contus*, which is definitely the penis. Nonetheless, both *fustis* and *falx* clearly are meant to confuse the issue. Does Priapus mean his club or his penis? The answer seems to be both. Each item is capable of inflicting damage, but only the last line makes clear what kind of damage the speaker has in mind; he seeks to inflict both physical pain and humiliation. This poem nicely conflates phallic imagery and weaponry.

⁸⁹ Williams (1999) 18.

⁹⁰ Hooper (1999) no. 11.

This tower is being built first of all to protect the men as they build their siege works. As it rises higher and higher it comes to represent the engineering prowess of the Roman army.⁹¹ Their tower can rise up and challenge the walls of the city. It comes to symbolize the virility of the Roman over the effeminate Greek.⁹² Later, when the Massilians attempt to burn down the tower, they are only partially successful because, while they destroy the first structure, they cannot stop the Romans from building another. Thus, the Greeks cannot overcome the manliness of the Romans, and in the end must submit to being penetrated. This kind of imagery works in this setting, because this battle, although involving Roman Pompeians, is talked of as being waged against the people of Massilia, against Greeks. This battle is part of the civil war being fought, but does not pit citizens against one another as the other battles do. The tower, then, rears up over the besieged, who in the end are literally and figuratively unmanned.⁹³

Brice Erickson's reading of the battle of the Venetii in *BG* 3 reveals the limits of technological manliness. The Venetii have boats that are well designed to withstand the harsh winds and waters of the Atlantic. However, they rely upon their technology for their *virtus* because they do not possess it themselves. In the end their technology cannot save them because the Romans, using their own technological skills to adapt their grappling hooks to tear down the masts on the Venetii's ships possess fighting *virtus*. Technological *virtus* paired with the manliness of the warriors gives an army the upper hand. At Massilia, as against the Venetii, Caesar's army demonstrates its *virtus*, both

⁹¹ Erickson (2002) similarly shows a correlation between Roman technology and *virtus*.

⁹² Hodge (1998) "the citizens of Massalia were notoriously effeminate: they wore floor-length tunics, which proved it." (4). Note: "Effeminacy, Athen. Deipn. 12,523, c. Tunics: *ibid.*: the Massaliots are compared with the Iberians, who also indulged in this deplorable perversion. It is also mentioned by Ps. Plutarch Proverb. Alex. 60 (Corpus Paroimiograph. Graec. 1,330), quoting a proverb in current use at Alexandria ('*stolais poikilais kai poderesi chromenoi, kai dia tauten ten malakian aschemonountes*') (226) [they wear ankle length garish garments and on account of this softness are put to shame]

⁹³ Gelzer (1968): "The conquered state had to surrender all its military and naval equipment as well as its treasury; it also lost a great part of its territory together with the revenue derived therefrom" (218).

through its technological abilities -- the mighty towering phallus -- and through its fighting ability. In the end, the Romans take the city, just as an assailant takes his victim in a rape.

The flaunting of the phallus sends a signal to both the besieged and to the reader, signifying that the Massilians are a subjugated people, under the control of Caesar and his army.⁹⁴ The phallus puts the townspeople in the position of the subjugated recipients. They are dominated not only militarily, but sexually by the masculine Caesar. That Caesar is not present during the construction of the tower does not detract from his phallic authority over Massilia since his surrogates construct the tower, demonstrating to the townspeople that they are relegated to the passive role in this encounter. This tower provides protection for the Caesarians as they build their siege works. Caesar's phallus, then, protects his own men, but threatens the enemy. The men are able to construct a gallery right up to the wall of the town and under the protection of the tower, they undermine the wall. The part that collapses supports a tower of its own. Thus, the Caesarian phallus battles the Massilian phallus, and wins.

A sexual reading of this siege is not out of keeping with practices of Roman warfare. During Octavian's siege of Perugia in the winter of 41/40 BCE, the enemy made use of sling-bullets, the so-called *glandes Perusinae*, that were inscribed with rude messages, including "I seek Octavian's asshole"; "Loose Octavius, sit on this"; "Greetings, Octavius: you suck dick."⁹⁵ These inscribed bullets assert a claim of phallic authority, placing Octavian, and his army, in the position of the subjugated recipient of anal intercourse and fellator. The messages claim a superiority of manliness over

Octavian. Likewise, the tower at Massilia asserts the manliness of Caesar and his troops

⁹⁴ Here we see something like the dominance a master has over his slaves: should he choose to, he is permitted to use his slaves sexually.

⁹⁵ Williams (1999) 21. *CIL* 11.6721.7: "pet[o] Octavia[ni] culum" ; 11: "laxe Octavi, sede" ; 9: "[s]alv[e] Octavi felas"

over the besieged, a manliness that gains prominence upon deflating the tower of the Massilians.

Quo malo perterriti subito oppidani saxa, quam maxima possunt, vectibus promovent, praecipitataque muro in musculum devolvunt. ictum firmitas materiae sustinet, et quidquid incidit, fastigio musculi elabitur. id ubi vident, mutant consilium; cupas taeda ac pice refertas incendunt easque de muro in musculum devolvunt. involutae labuntur, delapsae ab lateribus longuriis furcisque ab opere moventur. interim sub musculo milites vectibus infima saxa turris hostium, quibus fundamenta continebantur, convellunt. musculus ex turri latericia a nostris telis tormentisque defenditur; hostes ex muro ac turribus submoventur; non datur libera muri defendendi facultas. conpluribus iam lapidibus ex illa quae suberat turri subductis repentina ruina pars eius turris concidit, pars reliqua consequens procumbebat, cum hostes urbis direptione perterriti inermes cum infulis se porta foras universi proripiunt, ad legatos atque exercitum supplices manus tendunt.

(2.11.1-4)

The townspeople, terrified by this sudden evil, removed as many stones as possible with crowbars and pushed them down from the wall onto the gallery. The firmness of the timbers withstood the impact and anything that fell rolled off the pitched roof of the gallery. When they saw this, they changed their tactic and threw down pitch filled barrels they had lit on fire. The burning barrels rolled off and those that fell were removed from the works by long poles and hooks. Meanwhile the soldiers working under the gallery used crowbars to pull out the bottommost stones of the enemy's tower that supported the foundation. The gallery was defended by our spears and *tormenta* fired from the brickwork of the tower; the enemy was driven away from the wall and the towers; no easy opportunity was given them to defend their wall. First, when several stones were removed from the base supporting the tower, a part of it fell suddenly into ruins, followed by another part toppling forward. Since the enemy feared the taking of the town, they all rushed out of the gates unarmed, carrying only fillets, holding out their hands as suppliants to the lieutenants of the army.

The tower and the extensive works induce fear. This fear arises partly from the innovation of the building process since they watch the tower rise up from the ground. As a giant phallus, the tower asserts its power over the townspeople signifying their subjugation as a conquered and enslaved people, subject to the shame and degradation of penetration. This fear is so great that they begin to tear up their own wall, their greatest defense against the invasion in order to ward off the assault. Despite their efforts, they are powerless to destroy the structure that has spread to the base of the wall. The stones hurled from above slip off the roof of the gallery, leaving it unharmed. The Roman structure remains impenetrable but the integrity of their own structure is compromised both from above and below. Two words in the final sentence also carry sexual overtones. *Procumbere* can mean “to fall into moral degradation.” In this situation, the tower of the wall topples forward, and the city becomes unmanned. The collapse suggests that the Romans have perpetrated an act of *stuprum* upon the Massilians and they have lost their *pudicitia*. They rush out of the city *inermes* after their tower, their own claim to phallic authority, comes down. *Inermis*, in addition to the meaning “unarmed,” can also mean to be sexually impotent, as it does in Ovid’s *Amores* 3.7, a poem about a man unable to become sexually aroused despite the assistance of his lover. The Massilians likewise have a useless phallus, deflated by the Romans. They can no longer give the appearance of playing the insertive role since they find themselves unarmed. This is a battle for both military and sexual supremacy, and the one that survives will be on top, subjugating the one that loses to a position of the penetrated party. When the tower and part of the wall collapse, the Massilians know that the sanctity of their town has been compromised, that their protective barrier has been penetrated and nothing will now keep out the invader.

The Massilians surrender, and the Caesarians become lax. The townspeople take advantage of this laxness, and make a sortie out of the town, setting the tower and the siege works on fire. They are aided by a strong wind, and shortly, everything is lost to the fire. The Massilians try to make a second attack the next day, but this time the Caesarians are prepared and keep them in the town. Then they set about repairing the damage, having to build a mound using new techniques because of the paucity of building materials. The damage done by the sudden attack is greater than the loss of their constructions. The Caesarians suffer a blow to their manliness: “They saw that all their efforts and preparations had fallen and they were very saddened that their manliness had become a laughing stock by the violation of the truce through wickedness” (*nam ubi tantos suos labores et apparatus male cecidisse viderunt, indutiisque per scelus violatis*⁹⁶ *suam virtutem inrisui fore perdolerunt* [2.15.1]). Here is a serious situation; the *virtus* of the soldiers has been called into question with the destruction of their tower. Suddenly, the army finds itself in the same situation as the Massilians: both sides have destroyed the other’s tower; both phalluses have been deflated, and without that phallus, the Romans fear their manliness will be called into question. The common invective to call the *virtus* of a *vir* into question is to accuse him of lacking impenetrability. In this account, neither phallus remains standing. The Romans, no longer able to penetrate are in danger of being subjugated to the role of penetrated because they are unmanned. They quickly rectify the situation by means of another construction project.

Since all the trees in the vicinity had already been felled and used for the previous building, the Romans are forced to adopt innovative methods yet again:

⁹⁶ *Violo* can also be used to mean “to rape.” See Adams 198-199.

aggerem novi generis atque inauditum ex latericiis duobus muris senem
pedum crassitudine atque eorum murorum contignatione facere instituerunt
aequa fere altitudine, atque ille congesticius ex materia fuerat agger.

(2.15.1)

They decided to make a new kind of ramp and one unheard of before from
two brick walls each six feet thick and almost as wide as the former ramp
roofed with beams and the ramp was heaped up from the available
materials as well.

Again, the Romans demonstrate that they can turn adversity to their advantage, adopting
new and unheard of practices, refusing to be so easily beaten. While this ramp is roughly
the same size as the former, it is different in its composition. In places prone to
weakness (*imbecillitas materiae postulare*) they shore up with timbers and poles
flooring/roofing is added, and the sides are covered with plastered wicker work. The
newly roofed ramp allows the soldiers to work under protection, and the proximity to the
town walls renders the enemy *tormenta* useless.

The construction project permits the soldiers to recover what they have lost,
security, protection, the upper hand, but most importantly, their manliness: *celeriter res
administratur; diuturni laboris detrimentum sollerita et virtute militum brevi reconciliatur*
(the project was quickly completed; the set back to their long time efforts was quickly
rectified by the skill and manliness of the soldiers [2.15.4]). While this ramp is by no
means phallic in nature, it restores phallic authority to Caesar's army. His soldiers once
again become *viri*. The Massilians have no choice but to surrender to the Romans again.

Caesar's power is constructed and staged through construction projects in both
commentaries. The bridge over the Rhine transgresses the boundary of the river,
establishing it as a firm border. Caesar demonstrates to the Germans that his army can
and will cross the boundary should he consider it necessary. The siege tower at Massilia

demonstrates Caesar's phallic authority over the enemy, forcing them to submit to that authority. Both projects construct the *potestas Caesaris*. At Rome, Julius Caesar engaged in extensive building projects that began to transform the city, remaking the cityscape. Through this building he laid claim to his power by drawing upon his divine ancestry. In the next chapter, I will explore how Julius Caesar constructed Caesar on a grand scale, using a medium that all could read.

CHAPTER 5

THE CONSTRUCTING CAESAR

Constructing Caesar, as we have seen, is an aim of the two commentaries which present Caesar either as general *sans pareil* or as an exemplary republican. With his building projects, Julius Caesar was able to reach a wider audience than with his literary endeavors; for his architectural program was on display for all to see, not just the literate elite. Whereas the texts construct Caesar as an extraordinary man and savior of the state, the building projects advertise his magnanimity and his divine ancestry. The period of Julius Caesar's dictatorship became a time to celebrate his achievements. The buildings ensured that Julius Caesar's name would remain prominently before the public eye.

Julius Caesar was not unusual for engaging in public building. In fact, such building became an important activity of the ruling class as its members vied with one another for the public's attention. Competition among these men ran rampant in the Late Republic, having a profound effect on society. As Zanker comments, "It appears to be symptomatic of the disintegration of Roman society that individual rivalries and insecurity led to exaggerated forms of self-promotion, even among people who had nothing to gain by it. What began as a traditional agonistic spirit among the aristocracy degenerated into frantic displays of wealth and success" (15). Julius Caesar was at the forefront of self-promotion and his building program advertised his wealth and celebrated

his achievements as a general, and his forum became the centerpiece with its impressive temple to Venus Genetrix, the founder of both Rome and the Julian clan.

That Julius Caesar's forum celebrated his divine ancestry was not unusual in its claim, but in its scope. In fact, claiming descent from a god or legendary hero had become somewhat commonplace. Genealogical pretensions while widespread in the Late Republic can be traced back to an earlier time.⁹⁷ Using coinage for the purpose of spreading familial propaganda arose in the second century. For example, the Marcii claimed descent from Ancus Marcius, both the Memmii of the Galerian tribe and the Julii Caesares claimed Trojan and divine ancestry, and the Mamilii claimed to be descended from Odysseus. Families with such pretensions usually lacked illustrious forebears or their ancestors were under represented in the historical record.⁹⁸ Although Julius Caesar's claim had become a family tradition, the degree to which he celebrated his divine origins most likely facilitated the view that Caesar was semi-divine.⁹⁹

Competing with his peers to appear peerless, then, does not so much set Julius Caesar apart. His success, however, does. In the realm of public building, Julius Caesar began to formulate plans shortly after Pompey dedicated his theater complex. As early as 54 BCE, Julius Caesar had employed his agents (Cicero being one) to buy up land for his

⁹⁷ Evans: "generalized propaganda on Roman coins from the third century onwards is clear. Most scholars date the practice of including familial propaganda in coin types to some point during the second century" (23). Originally, familial propaganda was rare. In the third century there is evidence for only three families making such claims but by the 40's, twenty to thirty more families were claiming heroic or divine ancestry.

⁹⁸ Evans refers to the families mentioned here as "upstart families" (32) who used their claims to aggrandize their ancestry. For a complete discussion of the many families engaging in this activity through coinage, see 25-30.

⁹⁹ Dio speaks of a statue set up on the Capitoline Hill of Caesar with a globe representing the *oikoumene* at his feet with an inscription reading ἡμίθεος on the base (43.14.6). He later says that when Caesar saw the inscription he ordered it removed (43.21.2). Weinstock calls the placement of the statue "an unusual action" (40) because such honors were usually reserved for men after their deaths. Dio's account of Julius Caesar ordering the inscription's removal suggests that the statue was so inscribed without his approval. If so, then whoever put it there was responding to circumstances that suggested Caesar would be pleased to be hailed as a demigod. Such unsolicited recognition could have arisen from Julius Caesar's own claims to divine descent.

extension of the Forum Romanum.¹⁰⁰ In the last years of his rule and life, he had begun the Basilica Julia,¹⁰¹ as well as several new temples,¹⁰² and he is credited with plans to rebuild the Curia¹⁰³ on a new site as the old location became the site of the Temple of Felicitas. He also had plans for refurbishing the voting house¹⁰⁴ and Greek and Latin libraries open to the public.¹⁰⁵ Outside of the city, he is said to have planned a new road connecting the east coast of Italy with Rome,¹⁰⁶ to build a straight canal for the Tiber running 70 km south to its mouth at Terracina.¹⁰⁷ There were also plans to build a safer port at Ostia and breakwaters along the coast closest to Rome.¹⁰⁸ To satisfy the need for arable land for distribution to soldiers, Julius Caesar planned to drain the Pomptine Marshes and Lake Fucino.¹⁰⁹ He even planned to cut the long proposed canal across the Isthmus of Greece.¹¹⁰

All of these projects served to improve the appearance of the city and the usability of land around Rome, in Italy and Greece. They also contributed to Julius Caesar's personal glory. The building projects can be divided into two categories, those actually begun and those which I will call proposed. Evidence for the proposed projects comes down to us from later authors, namely Suetonius, Plutarch, and Dio. These projects need to be read carefully because they tell us more about how these authors construct Caesar; however, their view of Caesar is a response to how Julius Caesar used architecture to construct his persona. For this reason, I will first consider how Julius

¹⁰⁰ Cicero *ad Att.* 4.16.8.

¹⁰¹ Cicero *ad Att.* 4.16.8.

¹⁰² Suet. *DI* 44.1.

¹⁰³ Dio 44.5.1-2. Ulrich argues that Julius Caesar in fact had nothing to do with the new senate house: "Both archaeological and literary evidence suggest in fact that the Curia was one of the last components of the new forum to be built, finished long after the death of Julius Caesar" (71).

¹⁰⁴ Cicero *ad Att.* 4.16.8.

¹⁰⁵ Suet. *DI* 44.

¹⁰⁶ Suet. *DI* 44.2.

¹⁰⁷ Plut. *Caes.* 58.8.

¹⁰⁸ Plut. *Caes.* 58.9.

¹⁰⁹ Suet. *DI* 44.3; Plut. *Caes.* 58.9.

¹¹⁰ Suet. *DI* 44.3; Plut. *Caes.* 58.8; Dio 44.5.1.

Caesar's biographers used these proposed projects to shape their characterization of Caesar. Then I will turn to those projects for which either we have contemporary evidence or which we know were actually undertaken.

Julius Caesar's plan to build a canal across the Isthmus of Corinth is mentioned by Plutarch (*Caes.* 58.4), Suetonius (*DI* 44) and Cassius Dio (44.5.1). Plutarch says that Julius Caesar intended to build the canal during his expedition against the Parthians. Dio says that the Senate charged Julius Caesar with the task of digging the canal.¹¹¹ Plutarch and Suetonius, however, assign the plan to Julius Caesar. All three sources are late and no contemporary evidence exists. That Julius Caesar would plan such an undertaking is not improbable. After all, he planned to move the channel of the Tiber.¹¹² When one looks at the history of the Isthmus canal, it becomes evident that this was a pet project of autocrats, many of them tyrannical. Assigning the task to Caesar, then, could be a symptom of later authors regarding him as being like so many other tyrants. Having said that, it is also worth noting that despite the motivation for building the canal, that is, the aggrandizement of the builder or the desire to improve shipping between Italy and Asia or whatever it might be, like all public works the project would have brought benefit to those who would have used it.

Originally, Greek tyrants were eager to build the canal. Diogenes Laertius assigns the first plan to Periander, tyrant of Corinth, circa 600 BCE: ἤθελε δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἰσθμὸν διορύξαι (he also wanted to dig through the Isthmus [1.99]). We know that he did not fulfill this desire but instead had the *diolkos* built, the stone track used for portaging ships

¹¹¹ Dio's purpose is to show that Caesar worked with the Senate's approval and that the senators themselves were responsible for much of Caesar's excessive behavior because of their own excesses. οὐ γὰρ δὴ καὶ ἀναίτιον πάντῃ τὸ ἐπίφθονον ἐκτίσαστο, πλὴν καθ' ὅσον αὐτοὶ οἱ βουλευταὶ ταῖς τε καινότησι καὶ ταῖς ὑπερβολαῖς τῶν τιμῶν ἐξάραντές τε αὐτὸν καὶ φυσήσαντες ἔπειτα ἐπ' αὐταῖς ἐκείναις καὶ ἐμέμφοντο καὶ διέβαλλον ὥς ἡδέως τε σφας λαμβάνοντα καὶ ὀγκηρότερον ἀπ' αὐτῶν ζῶντα (44.3.1).

¹¹² Cicero *ad Att.* 13.33a.1.

from one gulf to the other. The *diolkos* was an imperfect means of conveyance as boats had to be unladen before transporting. Still, Thucydides tells us that it was used in the Peloponnesian war (8.7ff). According to Strabo, quoting Eratosthenes (1.54), the plan to dig a canal was revived nearly 300 years later by Demetrios Polioketes, but he abandoned the project when engineers told him that since the Corinthian Gulf was higher than the Saronic, a canal would precipitate an inundation that would cover Aegina, the Straits, and the neighboring islands. Thus, a canal would be useless (καὶ μηδὲ τὸν διάπλουν ἂν γενέσθαι χρήσιμον (1.3.11). Strabo makes no reference to Julius Caesar's recent plans to attempt the canal, and although his silence does not prove that Julius Caesar had no such plans, his lack of comment is curious if Julius Caesar had formulated any real plans for digging the canal. For Julius Caesar is the next person the sources credit for having plans to undertake its building.

Suetonius reports that Caligula also had plans to dig the canal, implying that this was chief among his proposed projects: *sed ante omnia Isthmum in Achaia perfodere, miseratque iam ad dimentendum opus primipilarem* (but above all he planned to dig through the Isthmus of Greece and he had already sent his chief centurion to make measurements for the work [*Calig.* 21]). Suetonius mentions this plan just before he launches into an account of Caligula's egregious deeds (*reliqua ut de monstro narranda sunt* [the remainder to be told concerns Caligula the monster (22)]). While Suetonius does not include the canal as an act of Caligula the monster, the juxtaposition of his plans to dig the canal with the monstrosities of his rule could indicate Suetonius's one ambiguous response to the project. Is this a project of a monomaniacal ruler or the act of a responsible leader bringing benefit to civilization?

The only ruler who actually began to dig, however, was Nero. Pliny tells us about those who made the attempt, but says that they were doomed to fail because digging the canal was an act of sacrilege, which Pliny associates with their downfalls. For Pliny the project is a violation of the gods:

quam ob causam perfodere navigabili alveo angustias eas temptarere
Demetrius rex, dictator Caesar, Gaius princeps, Domitius Nero, nefasto, ut
omnium exitu patuit, incepto.

(NH 4.10)

Thus, king Demeterius, Caesar the dictator, prince Gaius, and Domitius Nero all attempted to dig through the narrow neck of the land for a shipping canal--an unholy undertaking as it revealed by the end of all of them.

Dio, too, comments on Nero's attempt, saying that the workers became frightened "because when the first workers touched the ground, blood spouted out, groans and wailing were heard, and a lot of ghosts appeared" (62.16). Nero, though, would not be put off, but grabbed a hoe and started digging. The workers then followed his example. Despite Dio's fantastic account, Nero did make considerable headway in the work which was only abandoned because of the political crisis of the following year that brought an end to his rule. In fact, Pausanias reports that the traces of the Neronian project were quite visible in his day (2.1.5).

Each of these rulers, from Periander to Nero, were autocrats and the undertaking of a major project is a standard feature of autocratic rule. We know of other famous autocrats who built canals, most importantly, Xerxes, who ordered a canal to be dug at the foot of Mt. Athos. Herodotus says that the king's intention was to turn the cities on the isthmus into island cities (7.22). Moreover, this was an act of *hybris*, rather than a

necessity because, Herodotus says, Xerxes desired to build the canal so that he could display his extensive power and leave behind a memorial for posterity:

ὥς μὲν ἐμὲ συμβαλλόμενον εὐρίσκειν, μεγαλοφροσύνης εἵνεκεν
αὐτὸ Ζέρξης ορύσσειν ἐκέλευε, ἐθέλων τε δύναμιν ἀποδείκνυσθαι
καὶ μνημόσυνα λιπέσθαι. παρεὼν γὰρ μηδένα πόνον λαβόντας
τὸν ἰσθμὸν τὰς νέας διειρύσαι, ορύσσειν ἐκέλευε διώρυχα τῇ
θαλάσσει εὖρος ὥς δύο τριήρεας πλέειν ὁμοῦ ἐλαστρομένης.

(7.24.1)

As far as I can make out, Xerxes ordered the canal dug on account of pride, wanting both to demonstrate his power and to leave behind a memorial to himself. I say this because it was possible for the ships to pass through the isthmus without any trouble. He ordered a canal to be dug to the sea, wide enough for two triremes, rowing, to sail at the same time.

Xerxes certainly stands as the archetype of the outrageous autocrat, and in some respects, Julius Caesar's biographers recall him in the catalog of projects. Dio's account of Nero summoning up prodigies points to the digging of the canal as being a violent act against the gods. Likewise, we have seen Pliny call this project a sacrilege. Pausanias makes the point explicitly: οὕτω χαλεπὸν ἀνθρώπῳ τὰ θεῖα βιασάσθαι (so difficult is it for a man to force divine things [1.15]). This comment comes after Pausanias lists others who have attempted to dig a similar canal. Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τε τῷ Φιλίππου διασκάψαι Μίμαντα ἐθελήσαντι μόνον τοῦτο οὐ προεχώρησε τὸ ἔργον (this was the one unsuccessful task for Alexander, son of Philip, who wanted to dig through Mimas [1.5]). Such an undertaking, then, is viewed by the sources as doomed to failure. Even Alexander the Great could not successfully complete a channel.

The sources indicate that the Isthmus canal, then, was a project of tyrannical autocrats. This project can be viewed as similar to Xerxes' canal at Mt. Athos, and the undertaking of it was probably motivated by a similar pride that Herodotus assigns to

Xerxes. Plutarch makes an implicit nod in Herodotus's direction when speaking about Julius Caesar's plans to build the Isthmus canal as part of the preparations for the Parthian campaign. Whereas Xerxes was preparing for an invasion of Europe, Julius Caesar was planning to attack Asia. This campaign also conjures images of Alexander, which Plutarch remarks on. That Pausanias mentions Alexander's attempt to build a canal is of further interest. Of course, none of these sources serves as hard evidence that Julius Caesar intended to attempt the canal or that had he done so he was acting hubristically. It is a project, however, that befits a powerful ruler.

The road across the Apennine ridge, on the other hand, is a thoroughly Roman project. While digging a canal may be indicative of a tyrannical rule, road building was the concern of good Roman magistrates. For Rome, road building "came in the wake of the conquest and the subsequent political unification and economic development of the peninsula" (Chevalier 132). The earliest roads were most likely tracks made by travelers.¹¹³ For instance, the via Appia running east to the colony of Alba Fucens was probably at first the path shepherds took into the Apennines to graze sheep. Eventually, the track was widened, perhaps under the censor of 307 BCE, M. Valerius Maximus, to accommodate traffic to the colony. The road was paved under the consul M. Valerius Messalla (154 BCE).¹¹⁴ Many of the major roadways connecting Rome with various parts of Italy were constructed during the second century BCE. The highways usually take their names from the magistrate, either consul or censor, who authorized the project. These were *viae publicae* and built and maintained at public expense.¹¹⁵

Suetonius is the only source to credit Julius Caesar with a plan to build a road, and other than stating that the proposed road would begin on the Adriatic coast, cross the

¹¹³ Chevalier 131.

¹¹⁴ OCD 1596.

¹¹⁵ Chevalier 65.

Apennines, and run all the way to the Tiber,¹¹⁶ he gives few details. Precisely where the road was to run across the peninsula is left unstated. We do not know, for instance, which towns were to be serviced by this road. The via Valeria already followed much of this route up into the mountains. However, it would not connect with the Adriatic coast until the emperor Claudius extended it from Cerfennia to Aternum.¹¹⁷ It is possible that this is the route that Suetonius has in mind. It really matters little since it was a project that did not come to fruition. What is important about including it in the catalog of projects is that it balances the canal, which, incidentally, Suetonius mentions immediately after. Thus, road building is the hallmark of Roman public works and a project with a noble tradition, the work of good republican magistrates. This image of Caesar aspiring to do the work of a good Roman is immediately perverted by associating him with the despotic undertaking to “turn the Peloponnese into an island,” which would violate the gods and nature.

Both the canal and the road function to join unconnected regions. The road is of particular interest because it would have been a project to benefit Italy as well as Rome. Other projects that would have brought benefit to Italy were the draining of marshes and lakes for claiming new farm land and the work at Ostia, to build a safe harbor and to construct seawalls. But if Nero’s attempt to dig a channel across the Isthmus was viewed as a sacrilege, what would have these projects been seen as that attempt to alter nature on a grand scale. These would have been major undertakings requiring years of work, but would have also attested to the technological prowess of Romans had they been able to accomplish them.

¹¹⁶ *viam munire a mari Supero per Appennini dorsum ad Tiberim usque* (Suet. *DI* 44.2).

¹¹⁷ OCD 1596.

Both Suetonius and Plutarch mention projects to reclaim land; Plutarch gives considerably more details:¹¹⁸

πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τὰ μὲν ἔλη τὰ περὶ Πωμεντῖνον καὶ Σετίαν
ἐκτρέψας πεδίον ἀποδείξαι πολλαῖς ἐνεργὸν ἀνθρώπων μυριάσι
τῇδὲ ἔγγιστα τῆς Ῥώμης θαλάσση κλεῖθρα διὰ χωμάτων
ἐπαγαγών, καὶ τὰ τυφλὰ καὶ δύσορμα τῆς Ὤστιανῆς ἡϊόνος
ἀνακαθηράμενος, λιμένας ἐμποιήσασθαι καὶ ναύλοχα πρὸς
τοσαύτην ἀξιόπιστα ναυτιλίαν.

(*Caes.* 58.4-5)

In addition to these projects, he planned to change the marshes surrounding Pomentinum and Setia into an arable plain for many thousands of men, and he proposed to build walls (κλεῖθρα διὰ χωμάτων) on the sea nearest Rome, and to clear away the choked and rough places of anchorage on the shore of Ostia, as well as to introduce a harbor that afforded a safe anchorage for such trustworthy sailing.

The Pomptine marshes were malarial swamps southeast of Rome between the Volscian mountains and the Tyrrhenian sea. Pliny dubiously mentions the one-time presence of twenty-four cities in the region: *aliud miraculum a Cerceis palus Pomptina est, quem locum xxiv urbium fuisse Mucianus ter consul prodidit* (another wonder near Cerceii is the Pomptine swamp which Mucianus, who, as consul three times, reported the location of 24 cities [NH 3.5.59]). The context of Pliny's statement is a description of Latium. Preceding this statement is a report concerning Cerceii, which, Pliny says, Homer says was an island, but is now a plain, and that Theophrastus reports that the island measures eighty stades. Since his writing, land has been added to Italy. The cities of the Pomptine swamp area, then, are an additional marvel to the increase in land. Pliny might also find this fact marvelous because swamps are not ideal locations for cities. Vitruvius says that when choosing a site for a town, areas with marshes should be avoided:

¹¹⁸ Suetonius simply says *siccare Pomptinas paludes; emittere Fucinum lacum* (DI 44.2-3)

*cum enim aurae matutinae cum sole oriente ad oppidum et his ortae
nebulae adiungentur spiritusque bestiarum palustrium veneatos cum
nebula mixtos in habitatorum corpora flatu spargent efficient locum
pestilentem.*

(1.4.1)

for when the morning breezes blow toward the town at sunrise, if they bring with them mists from marshes and, mingled with the mist, the poisonous breath of the creatures of the marshes to be wafted into the bodies of the inhabitants, they will make the site unhealthy. (Morgen, trans.).

Vitruvius recognizes the unwholesomeness of swamps, although he ascribes the source of disease to vapors. Draining the marshes would have made the area more inhabitable because it would have removed the breeding ground favorable to the mosquitos which spread malaria. Thus, this project would have had healthful benefits to the inhabitants.

Plutarch's comment that the purpose for the undertaking was to provide land to many thousands is more detail than Suetonius gives, but his comment is still vague. Plutarch does not specify who these πολλὰὶ μυρίαὶ were. If one constructs *Caesar* along the lines of Mommsen and Carcopino, then Plutarch could be interpreted to be speaking of the same sorts of people that Ti. Gracchus sought to provide with land, i.e., the Roman peasant who had become the burden of the city. However, like other generals of the Late Republic, Caesar was at pains to provide land to his veterans. Land for this purpose was limited in Italy. Thus, Julius Caesar had to create *coloniae* in provincial districts.¹¹⁹ The land that could be claimed by draining the lakes and marshes would have provided a good number of acreage for discharged soldiers.

¹¹⁹ Founding of colonies is another aspect of the control of physical space. E. G. Hardy in *Roman Laws and Charters*, states that "Caesar undoubtedly had a general scheme for dealing with land at his disposal both in Italy and the provinces" (8) which can be gleaned from the charter of the Spanish colony Genetiva Julia.

Like the road and canal, there is no indication that any work was begun to realize these projects. Again, this project was not new to Julius Caesar. Around 160 BCE or perhaps earlier, attempts were made to drain the marshes but it was a task that would not be successfully accomplished until the 20th century.¹²⁰ M. Cornelius Cathegus (*cos.* 160 BCE) renewed an older drainage ditch that led to more available farm land (Livy per. 46) and no doubt reduced the threat of malaria in the region. This successful undertaking most likely would have served as a model for Julius Caesar had he begun the project. An unreliable source, Pseudo-Acron, claims that Augustus completed this project, yet such a claim is unfounded. However, Pseudo-Acron's interpretation of Horace's *Ars poetica* sheds light on the view of later Romans toward such monumental projects: *Nam regis opus est admittere terrae mare, paludes derivare, in terra <condere> portus....Hoc est regium opus, quod nullus facere potest nisi rex* (For it's the work of kings to let the sea in to the land, to divert swamps, <to build> ports....A royal work is what no one except a king can do [Ps.Acron *Horatium Vetustiora de Arte Poetica* § 65]). The context of Horace's poem is a discussion of a poet's ability to infuse the existing vocabulary with new meaning. The *opus regis* Horace speaks of is Neptune protecting a fleet from strong winds, but then he speaks of land once covered by a lake or a river whose channel has been changed to protect agricultural yields as also being kingly work. In Horace's formulation, the *opus regis* is at first divine, but then he shifts focus to activities undertaken by Roman engineers, namely, projects planned by Julius Caesar, projects that were ignored until Nero, who commissioned his engineers, Servus and Celer, to consider draining the swamps as part of a project to build a canal from Lake Avernus to the mouth of the Tiber (Tac. *Ann.* 15.42.2; Suet. *Nero* 31.3). Nonetheless, Horace assigns such undertakings to regal power, illiciting with the word *rex* connotations of abusive power.

¹²⁰ *OCD* 1219.

Lake Fucino, a large lake in central Italy, was not drained by Julius Caesar, but Claudius attempted to carry out the plan with 30,000 men working for eleven years, having only limited success. To drain the lake, he had an *emissarium* built 5.6 km long to carry the water from the lake to the river Liris (Suet. *Claud.* 20f., 32). Both Trajan and Hadrian had the *emissarium* repaired, but to little avail. Another attempt was made in 1240, but the lake was not successfully drained until the 19th century.¹²¹ Like the swamp and the Isthmus canal, Lake Fucino was a grand scheme beyond the technological abilities of the Romans. That such plans were ascribed to Julius Caesar indicates the perspective of later authors towards the persona *Caesar*. If these tasks are *opera regum* along the order of what Neptune could accomplish, then later generations clearly imbued *Caesar* with superhuman aspirations. That Julius Caesar died before any such undertakings could be begun only adds to the power of this superhuman image, especially when later emperors attempted to fulfill these plans with only limited success.

The final two projects to discuss here can be dealt with together because they concern sea works at Ostia. The period of the Late Republic saw an increase in shipping through Ostia, and the natural harbor of the Tiber's mouth began to prove insufficient.¹²² Small cargo ships had little difficulty entering the river's mouth and maneuvering in it.¹²³ A considerable amount of traffic was able to proceed up river to the docks in Rome.¹²⁴ However, the large grain transports could not enter the river, and had to be unloaded while at anchor off the coast.¹²⁵ The increase in shipping would have made an improved harbor quite attractive.

¹²¹ *OCD* 613.

¹²² Meiggs 52.

¹²³ The river at Ostia was about 100 m wide. Meiggs 52.

¹²⁴ *LTUR* III (1993) 71-72.

¹²⁵ Meiggs 52.

Plutarch speaks of some type of enclosure to be constructed with moles κλεῖθρα διὰ χωμάτων. Meiggs says that if we literally interpret what Plutarch says, then what Caesar was intending was to dredge the river and “to provide a series of sheltered anchorages along the coast near the rivers mouth where ships could lie until conditions were favorable for their entry” (53). But Meiggs rejects this reading and turns to Suetonius, who speaks of a plan to build a *portus* at Ostia; he concludes that the “natural interpretation is a single new harbour, anticipating that of Claudius” (53).¹²⁶

All of these projects can be described as extremely ambitious. They also would have altered drastically the natural environment. As we have seen, the digging of the canal across the Isthmus was regarded as a sacrilege by Pliny and Dio. No doubt, these other projects could have been regarded as equally sacrilegious. But then again, they may not have been. Neither Suetonius nor Plutarch suggests any such view among Julius Caesar’s contemporaries. Perhaps Pliny and Dio are responding to ill feelings toward Nero when they describe the canal project. Nonetheless, projects that would create canals, turn lakes and swamps into arable land, and hold back the sea could only have been impressive had they come to fruition. That Plutarch and Suetonius mention these proposals hints at a superhuman quality to the “Caesar” that they are projecting. His ambitions were not only for political power, but to reshape the physical landscape to control rivers and the

¹²⁶ Meiggs’ interpretations are interesting. Why should his reading be “natural”? Later he concludes “Whatever the precise nature of his schemes Caesar had a shrewd insight into the nature of the problem and realized that radical measures and not mere palliatives were needed. As in so many of his social and economic conceptions he anticipated the work and plans of later emperors” (53-54). Meiggs gleans so much from what is not said by either Suetonius or Plutarch. There is nothing in either that hints that Julius Caesar had any particular insight to any problems. Meiggs constructs a condition for the harbor and the shipping needs at the time, then makes a leap that Julius Caesar saw the same problems that he himself has articulated. Likewise, his statement that the proposed canal from Rome to Terracina would have been wide enough and deep enough to accommodate the largest ships seems to come from nowhere. The evidence that Caesar anticipates “the work and plans of later emperors” comes from biographies that post date the work of those later rulers.

sea. These *opera regis*¹²⁷ imbue the figure of “Caesar” with an aura of great and perhaps excessive capabilities.

(RE)CONSTRUCTING ROME

Julius Caesar’s building projects were extensive, at least in scope.¹²⁸ His plans aimed at creating civic space and temples. More so than any Roman before him, Julius Caesar sought to transform the overall look of the city. Giglinoni goes so far as to say that it was Julius Caesar and not Augustus who left Rome a city of marble.¹²⁹ Hers is most probably an overstatement, especially since most of Julius Caesar’s projects that were completed were done so by Augustus.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, Julius Caesar did more building than anyone else before him and pointed the way for the emperors who would follow him. He had acquired a level of power that momentarily at least, stifled political competition among the members of the ruling class, and, by and large, this competition is what fueled public works in Late Republican Rome. Now that Julius Caesar held supreme power that was not open to contest, he alone could dominate the cityscape. He set out to transform the city in ways not yet dreamed of.

Cicero is the only contemporary literary evidence for these grand schemes. In a letter to his brother Quintus, he mentions Caesar’s plans for enlarging the city, but admits that he does not know the details: *a Caesare litteras accepi conslatorias datas pridie Kal. Maias Hispali. de urbe augenda quid sit promulgatum non intellexi. id scire sane velim* (I

¹²⁷ cf. Cicero speaking about Caesar: *ecce tibi, qui rex populi Romani dominusque omnium gentium esse concupiverit idque perfecerit!* (*de Officiis* 3.83).

¹²⁸ cf. Favro: “Large scale signified great status and *auctoritas*. Caesar conceived works of a size equivalent to his perceived stature and power” (67). She points out elsewhere that these projects are described in superlatives, the largest theater, the biggest temple of Mars in the world, and so on.

¹²⁹ “E fu Cesare in realtà, e non Augusto, a trovare una città di matroni crudi e a trasformarla in una città di marmo” (133).

¹³⁰ Augustus *RG* Curia Julia 19.1; Forum Iulia 20.3; Theater 21.1.

received a letter from Caesar which he sent on the day before the Kalends of May from Hispalus. Concerning the increasing of the city I was not aware of what was suggested. To be sure, I'd like to know [*ad Att.* 13.20.1]). Cicero's reference to a promulgation for enlarging the city suggests that there may have been a law proposed or passed permitting extensive building. However, we know as little as Cicero. Yavetz points out that a law would not have been necessary (159-160), and perhaps Cicero is merely referring to a general announcement of building plans. The question, however, is what is exactly meant by *de urbe augenda*. Does this mean Caesar intended to increase the physical size of the city or does it refer to a plan to embellish the city with new public works? Quite possibly, the phrase indicates both.¹³¹ One project that would have reshaped the physical appearance of the city was shifting the Tiber from its channel to a new one dug at the foot of the Vatican and Janiculum hills. Flood control could have been the impetus for this plan as the Campus Martius and Forum were often inundated. Cicero speaks of an increase in the physical size of the city and says that the right bank region would be transformed into a new Campus Martius, although he does not explain what would have become of the existing district. Like the proposed canal across the Isthmus and the one from south of the city to Terracina, the new channel of the Tiber would have been an engineering feat on a grand scale. Julius Caesar would have demonstrated his potential to overcome natural obstacles that could only contribute to the larger than life image he had skillfully crafted in his commentaries.

The project possibly would also have carried negative effects. The costs alone would have been great as the river had an extensive buildup of docks and warehouses

¹³¹ The OLD's fifth definition for *augeo* is "To advance in dignity or position, promote; to glorify, enhance." Julius Caesar's building plans would have done much to enhance the glory of Rome bringing its architectural landscape to a standard more commonly associated with its position as capital of the world.

serving the commercial traffic of the city.¹³² No doubt, had the canal plans been carried through the new economic benefits would have possibly off-set the costs of rebuilding the infrastructure along the new channel, but who would have borne that cost remains a question. Other adverse effects would have concerned religion. Two things associated with the river carried important religious significance, the *pons Sublicius* and Tiber Island, sacred to Asclepius. It is possible that a replica of the bridge could have been constructed over the new channel, but such a move would be unlikely given the significance Romans placed on the *genius loci*. The bridge in a new location would not have borne the same significance since the bridge's importance resided in its marking the site of the legendary Horatio Cocles' noble stand against the invading Etruscans. Had this site become filled in and covered over, Romans would have lost an important monument to their history. The island would have likewise disappeared, although the district could conceivably have remained a sacred precinct.¹³³

The second reading of *de urbe augenda* concerns enhancing the glory of the city by improving its physical appearance. Rome was not a beautiful city at this time. The streets were narrow, crowded, and winding. Rome did not exemplify at all the orderliness of her colonies and army camps built on a grid plan with broad main streets and wide, rectangular fora. Rome, Livy said, looked like an occupied city rather than one planned¹³⁴ because after its sack by Gauls in 390 BCE, the people built in such haste that they did

¹³² *LTUR* 5:71 .

¹³³ Another question arising from this plan to shift the river bed concerns the *pomerium*, the religious boundary of the city. The *pomerium* marked the area in which auspices could be taken and was not commensurate with the actual boundaries of the city. Over time, the boundaries of the *pomerium* had been enlarged. Sulla had moved them during his dictatorship. There is, however, no indication that Julius Caesar would have altered the sacred boundaries as he planned to do with the physical boundary, but doing so was certainly within his purview.

¹³⁴ *Antiquata deinde lege, promisce urbs aedificari coepta. Tegula publice praebita est; saxi materiaeque caedendae unde quisque uellet ius factum, praedibus acceptis eo anno aedificia perfecturos. Festinatio curam exemit uicos dirigendi, dum omisso sui alienique discrimine in uacuo aedificant. Ea est causa ut ueteres cloacae, primo per publicum ductae, nunc priuata passim subeant tecta, formaeque urbis sit occupatae magis quam diuisae similis.* (5.55.2-5).

not lay out the streets with care. The result was a city that did not reflect Rome's status as premiere city of the Mediterranean. However, the city's unsightly and dangerous streets, its crumbling buildings, and its stuccoed edifices did not stop its authors from praising its beauty, but they were not responding to its physical appearance, but rather to the *idea* of Rome: "Blessed by the gods, Rome had innate beauty" (Favro 45).

Julius Caesar, however, recognized that Rome's physical appearance did not suit its idea. Other important cities around the Mediterranean reflected the glory of their states and rulers in the beauty and unity of their architecture. Since public works were carried out primarily by private donation and buildings were meant to reflect the glory of individual families or men, Rome's cityscape vied for attention of the passerby just as its politicians competed for recognition. Now that Julius Caesar had firm control of state power, he could imitate eastern rulers and develop architectural projects that would reflect his and Rome's glory. As he did in his commentaries, so he does in his public works, that is, he joins his glory with that of the city; the public and private fuse.¹³⁵ By promoting the preeminence of Rome, he promotes his own.

The list of projects preserved by Suetonius, Plutarch, and Dio give the impression that Julius Caesar's scope of vision was broad and ambitious. Zanker describes his vision as being "utopian": "He wanted to change the course of the Tiber, build a huge theater stretching from the slope of the Capitol to the Campus Martius, and create a new Hellenistic city. Apparently he considered the old one beyond redemption" (19-20). For Zanker, Julius Caesar's aim at building a new city modeled after Hellenistic capitals is the logical conclusion of decades of rapid Hellenization among the elite classes at Rome. The cultural ethos that developed in the Late Republic was an agonistic one and there is

¹³⁵ Favro notes that through many of Julius Caesar's activities, such as building vast monuments and having himself depicted on coins, "Romans began to consider Caesar as not only their representative, but as equivalent to the State" (65). She does not mention, however, that Julius Caesar made this equation explicit in his commentaries. See Chapter 3 above.

perhaps no better emblem of this competitive spirit than Julius Caesar himself. Public building is only one arena in which the Roman elite competed. The preferred construction project was victory temples, shrines dedicated to a particular deity before a battle, then built by the victorious general as a testament to his victory. Some fine examples of these temples are found in the remains of four Late Republican structures located in the Largo Argentina. Pompey's stone theater, however, outshone all of his competition, and spurred Julius Caesar onto his own construction projects.

The Theater of Pompey was the first stone theater constructed at Rome. For generations, the senate had opposed any permanent structure, permitting the building only of temporary wooden theaters. Not only was Pompey's theater permanent, it was immense, accommodating roughly 17,500 spectators.¹³⁶ The complex served many purposes. At the back of the *cavea* stood the temple to Venus Victrix, and possibly four or five more.¹³⁷ According to the ancient sources, Pompey used the presence of the temple Venus Victrix to pass off the tiers of the *cavea* as steps to the temple to get around any senatorial prohibition on the building of the theater.¹³⁸ Although modern scholars tend to follow this point of view,¹³⁹ Gros notes that it is no longer universally accepted. Traditionally, there was a strong correlation between temples and theatrical performances, and Pompey's Theater draws upon that tradition.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Gros (LTUR 36). Pliny claims that the *cavea* held 40,000 people (NH 36.115), but Gros calls this "estimation sans aucun doute excessive."

¹³⁷ Gros (LTUR 36): "Nous savons, d'après les indications calendaires, que plusieurs temples couronnaient la *cavea*: *Venus Victrix*, mais aussi *Honos et Virtus*, *Felicitas* et peut-être un 4^{me}, *V[---]*. On notera que Richardson (1987, 123) propose même cinq temples en dissociant l'*aedes* d'Honos de l'*aedes* de *Virtus*."

¹³⁸ Gell. AN 10.17; Pliny NH 8.20; Tert. Spect. 10.

¹³⁹ cf. Zanker: "Despite [Pompey's] tremendous prestige at the time he found it necessary to pretend that the huge auditorium was merely an accessory to the little temple to his patroness Venus Victrix that stood above it" (21).

¹⁴⁰ Gros (LTUR 36): "Il y a là, comme le note E. Frézouls (361) une véritable inversion de l'ordre de facteurs, qui ne pouvait tromper personne, mais cherchait à établir une continuité avec les complexes religieux du type de ceux de Gabii ou de Tibur; à Rome même les spectacles théâtraux avaient traditionnellement lieu devant les temples de Cybèle au Palatin ou d'Apollon in *Circo*."

The complex also had a *porticus* attached to it that enclosed a public garden which housed a variety of art work. In one corner of the *porticus* was the *Curia Pompeia*, an inaugurated chamber that served as a meeting place for the senate and was the site of Julius Caesar's assassination. Nearby the complex, Pompey built a house and large gardens in the Hellenistic style. As Favro points out, these gardens were "strategically sited. Near the voting place of the tribal assemblies, these gardens provided the manipulative general with an excellent location for bribery" (59). Pompey's building project was designed to honor himself as an individual much like Hellenistic building propaganda.¹⁴¹ A key element of the message that the complex broadcast was Pompey's military prowess. The artwork on display was looted from the fourteen nations the general had subdued for Rome.¹⁴² These statues, then, became permanent displays of triumphal captives. Unlike their human counterparts, they were not dispatched with at the conclusion of the parade but were placed before the public eye as a constant reminder of what Pompey had done for Rome.

Pompey inaugurated his theater during his second consulate in 55 BCE.¹⁴³ Not long after Julius Caesar commissioned Cicero and Oppius to buy up land *ut forum laxeremus et usque ad atrium Libertatis*¹⁴⁴ *explicaremus* (*ad Att.* 4.6.10). Cicero states that they spent sixty million sestreces on the land but later sources put the cost at 100 million sestreces.¹⁴⁵ Whatever the final cost, it was a large outlay of money to acquire prime real estate in the center of the city. In addition, Cicero mentions the plan to

¹⁴¹ "the loose grouping of the *horti*, grand theater, portico, and residence of Pompey evoked memories of Hellenistic palace complexes with their pleasure gardens, opulent residences, sculpture-laden porticos, and nearby theaters all honoring one individual or, rather, one family" (Favro 59).

¹⁴² Pliny *NH* 7.34.

¹⁴³ Cicero *ad Fam.* 15.1; Gros (*LTUR* 35).

¹⁴⁴ exactly where this stood is unknown. See Ulrich (57-58).

¹⁴⁵ Pliny *NH* 36.103; Suet. *DI* 26.2. Ulrich (66) hypothesizes that the disparity in figures arises because over time the size of the forum was increased requiring the purchase of more land. Westall (85) rejects this notion and argues that Cicero may have been speaking euphemistically, that is, he may not have meant an exact number by saying *sescenti*, rather implying they spent "a heap of cash" to acquire the land, much as we use the word 'million' to mean 'an excessive amount.'

reconstruct the voting hall of the tribal assemblies: *iam in campo Martio saepta tributis comitiis marmorea sumus et tecta facturi eaque cingemus excelsa porticu ut mille passuum conficiatur* (*ad Att.* 4.6.11). The large amount of marble the project required also indicates lavish expenditures, especially since there were not native quarries for the stone at this time.¹⁴⁶ Scholars are quick to point out that both projects seem to be a response to Pompey's complex.¹⁴⁷ Although the impetus for this activity seems to come from his rivalry with Pompey, it also grew out of a rivalry with the dead Sulla, especially projects from those years of his dictatorship. But unlike the former dictator, Julius Caesar, in Favro's words, "had a far clearer idea of himself and the propagandistic possibilities of architectural patronage" (60). In the initial years of his building program, Julius Caesar was laying the groundwork for his reelection bid for the consulate. At the same time, while Pompey worked to demonstrate himself as Magnus, Julius Caesar strove to show that he was Maior. The construction of the new voting hall and the extension of the forum were serving this purpose.

The *Saepta* or *Ovile* (the Sheepfold) and the forum share other similarities. Both projects made use of colonnades and expensive building materials.¹⁴⁸ Both would provide space for public gathering to carry out necessary business, allowing Julius Caesar to impress his name upon the public as a means to influence policy. As scholars have pointed out, the extensive rebuilding using expensive marble columns¹⁴⁹ would have brought Julius Caesar's name prominently before voters, influencing them to support his initiatives and candidates. The irony of its reconstruction is that when Julius Caesar seized power he essentially rendered its function obsolete, the people no longer chose the

¹⁴⁶ Ulrich (71 n. 109).

¹⁴⁷ Giglioni (123); Zanker (24); Ulrich (53); Favro (63); Westall (89-90)

¹⁴⁸ Westall claims an "extensive use of white marble" throughout the forum (87), but Ulrich, following Amici, argues for the use of mostly travertine (71).

¹⁴⁹ Cicero (*ad Att.* 4.16.8): *iam in campo Martio saepta tributis comitiis marmorea sumus et tecta facturi eaque cingemus excelsa porticu ut mille passuum conficiatur.*

top magistrates. Julius Caesar's "Sheepfold" would become a place where the voters would have been herded by the dictator to support his candidates and the grandeur of the place would have been a reminder to them of the man they were to support. Thus, the building became a showpiece, not only for his contemporaries whom he could herd, but for posterity. Like the Basilica Julia, the *Saepta Julia* would carry Julius Caesar's name on for future generations. That he built a civic space dedicated to voting suggests that he did not intend to eliminate this important republican practice, though he probably sought to control its outcome as much as possible.¹⁵⁰ The choice to carry out a twofold building project seems to be designed to attack Pompey's theater on two fronts, the *Saepta* to the north and the forum to the south. If Favro is correct that Pompey's aim in placing his complex close to the voting hall was to influence voters, Julius Caesar's rebuilding of that space would undercut much of that influence. Likewise, the forum situated near the *comitium* and *curia* placed "Julius Caesar" prominently before the public as it carried out the business of the courts and the senate and rivaled the Curia Pompeia. After Julius Caesar seized supreme power, the nature of his forum changed. He no longer needed to concern himself with influencing public policy now that he molded it. Instead, he turned to constructing "Caesar" for posterity. His forum played on his Trojan ancestry and divine origins.

As we have seen, the commentaries are performative texts. The forum, too, functioned much the same way. It was a display of Caesar's divine ancestry and preeminence as a general. As the commentaries directed the reader's attention always back to Caesar, so too the forum blocked out all extraneous sights from view. The

¹⁵⁰ It is important to consider his use of power: he hand picked the consuls for several years in advance, and even after his death, his selections were honored, primarily because the actions of a dictator had legal force which the government was obliged to submit to.

colonnade that ran around its perimeter shut out the city beyond the forum¹⁵¹ so that Julius Caesar's architectural program did not have to compete with its neighbors as victory temples did in the Campus Martius. Once inside the square, the visitor's gaze would be drawn to the temple dedicated to Venus Genetrix, the equestrian statue by Lysippus originally of Alexander on his legendary horse Bucephalus, now sporting the head of Julius Caesar, and the paintings of Timomachos of Medea contemplating killing her children and Ajax committing suicide.¹⁵² According to Cicero, the Forum Iulium was to be an extension of the existing Forum, a civic space for conducting government and court business. No doubt, what the space became ultimately disappointed the great advocate. Dio would later describe the Forum as a *heroon*.¹⁵³ It was a space to celebrate the *gens Julia* and the victory of Julius Caesar in particular.¹⁵⁴ It also became the model for all subsequent imperial fora, but as scholars point out, it was also unique.¹⁵⁵

Very little of the forum remains today, only the temple podium and a line of so-called *tabernae*. These were never used as shops, but what their purpose was is not entirely certain, although Ulrich puts forth reasonable hypotheses that they had varying purposes from storing senatorial records to temple furniture.¹⁵⁶ In front of these rooms was a colonnade, now partially reconstructed. Much of what does remain dates not from

¹⁵¹ Favro: "Fully self-contained, Caesar's new forum was largely invisible from the Forum Romanum....Only from an elevated vantage point before the Temple of Juno Moneta on the eastern mound of the Capitoline hill could observers see the introverted complex in a single glance" (71). While Favro's perspective is from outside of the forum, the obverse of what she suggests would also have been true. From the inside one would only be able to view the interior of the forum and have views only of the hill tops that surrounded the forum valley.

¹⁵² For an interpretation of the significance of the paintings and artist, see Westall, 94-97.

¹⁵³ Dio (51.22.3); cf. Ulrich: "There is little doubt that the Forum Iulium was a complex that glorified its patron as a military hero...and celebrated the dictator as divinely favored" (51); see also Favro.

¹⁵⁴ Westall: the Forum Iulium was a monument that "stressed the military pre-eminence of the *gens Julia*" (107) as well as presenting "its creator as the *imperator sans pareil*" begging comparison with other republican generals and demonstrating that Julius Caesar was the *princeps* (117).

¹⁵⁵ Ulrich (80) in particular says that the Forum Iulium was space dedicated for transacting public business, which none of the subsequent fora share. Julius Caesar, still a republican, created civic space for public use, but as an autocrat began to alter how space was used. Later fora had not such need for using space in this way.

¹⁵⁶ See 77-79.

the initial building, but from the Trajanic rebuilding. When Trajan built his forum, the saddle of land that ran between the Capitoline and Quirinal hills was excavated. At the time of the original building of the Forum Iulium, this saddle was left and the temple built into it. When the saddle was removed, the back end of the temple was destroyed. Thus, the restoration of the Forum Iulium became necessary. While we have few physical remains, scholars have still been able to reconstruct the space. We know the general layout of the original design. The forum is laid out on a northeast-southwest axis following the same orientation of much of Sulla's rebuilding of the Forum Romanum,¹⁵⁷ but slightly at odds with the north-south axis of the existing Curia Hostilia and Republican *comitium*. At the northeast end, stood the Temple of Venus Genetrix, dedicated to Julius Caesar's divine ancestress. The piazza was surrounded on the remaining three sides by a colonnade. The *tabernae* ran along the eastern side.

Ulrich speaks at length about the evolution of the project, arguing that the original plan was most likely different from the final project. When Julius Caesar began purchasing land in 54 BCE, the Curia Hostilia as rebuilt by Sulla still stood as well as the Basilica Porcia, and his new space would have been designed to work architecturally with these structures. After their destruction in 52 BCE during the impromptu cremation of the fallen Clodius, Julius Caesar could have altered his plans for the space, even though the senate commissioned Sulla's son to rebuild the senate house on the same site. This building was completed within two years, but was razed sometime a few years later and replaced by the Temple of Felicitas.¹⁵⁸ The senate then commissioned Julius Caesar to construct another senate house, which then was integrated into the design of the Forum

¹⁵⁷ For a detailed discussion of Sulla's contribution to the architectural landscape of the city center, see Favro 55-57.

¹⁵⁸ Exactly why the new building was taken down is unknown. Both Westall and Favro speculate that Julius Caesar orchestrated its destruction in order to expunge Sulla's name from the Forum complex. Julius Caesar attempted to have Sulla's name removed from the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus; such a move was a violation of accepted protocol, but was also a precedent for imperial era *damnatio*.

Iulium. If the site chosen for this new curia is the same as the Diocletianic structure that still stands, then the building served to anchor the southeast corner of the forum.¹⁵⁹

The project Ulrich envisions that Julius Caesar began with was a monumental corridor connecting the Forum Romanum with the Campus Martius.¹⁶⁰ These plans changed with the destruction of the old curia and with Julius Caesar's successful conclusion of the civil war. On the eve of the battle of Pharsalus, Julius Caesar vowed a temple to Venus¹⁶¹ should he be successful. Once he held supreme power, he was able to do things not allowable to citizens under normal circumstances. He thus turned this civic space into a memorial to his family and to himself. Julius Caesar's concerns seem to be to preserve his personal and family *dignitas* for future generations, and although he claimed supreme power and ruled as dictator, he was not concerned with establishing a dynasty as Augustus would later be. Instead, he worked to construct the figure "Caesar" as an offering to posterity.

Favro describes this space as one that would have enclosed the visitor, blocking the view of any part of the city outside its colonnades.¹⁶² Thus, the visitor would have had only Julius Caesar and the *gens Julia* within sight. What he would have seen was an imposing temple, whose podium served as a speaker's platform. Access to this platform was from side stairways.¹⁶³ The design was similar to that of the Temple of Castor,¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Julius Caesar was not responsible for its construction, but Augustus (*RG* 19.1). However, it is likely that the initial plans for the building were begun before the dictator's assassination.

¹⁶⁰ Ulrich, 56-57.

¹⁶¹ Appian reports that he vowed the temple to Venus Victrix, to whom Pompey dedicated the temple that stood at the top of the cavea of his theater. Appian has subsequently perplexed scholars. Westall argues that Appian, who is prone to mistakes, confuses the epithet. Ulrich points out that dedicating two temples to a deity with the same epithet is rare.

¹⁶² See especially 69-71; she describes this space as an "introverted complex" that was "largely invisible from the Forum Romanum."

¹⁶³ Excavation has only revealed one side, while the other lies under the Via dei Fori Imperiali. However, Ulrich argues that the Roman penchant for symmetry makes an identical stairway on the other side most likely.

¹⁶⁴ Ulrich: "Pompey put, the Temple of Venus Genetrix was eventually built by Julius Caesar to imitate the major architectural features of the Metellan phase of the Temple of Castor in the Forum Romanum" (74). The temple was rebuilt by L. Caecilius Metellus in 117 BCE.

however, access by side stairs was unique to Venus Genetrix. Scholars see this innovative design as a purposeful hindrance to the temple so that the speaker would not be rushed by the crowd. The platform thus became a stage, primarily for the staging of “Caesar.”¹⁶⁵ Suetonius provides an example of such a performance. In 44, the senate approached Julius Caesar while seated on the platform to present him with honors. When Julius Caesar failed to rise, but received the senators as an enthroned monarch, the senators were outraged (78). Suetonius reports that Caesar did nothing to assuage the senators and even gave Gaius Trabatius a hostile look when the latter suggested that he rise. Plutarch says that he claimed a sudden illness as the reason for not rising, and that he outraged both senators and the common people (60).¹⁶⁶ This scene recalls the final scene of *BG 7* in which the seated Caesar receives the surrender of Vercingetorix.

When Julius Caesar placed the Lyssipus statue in his forum,¹⁶⁷ he drew an explicit comparison between himself and Alexander.¹⁶⁸ Yet such a comparison was tricky because while there was one image of Alexander “as the great general endowed with all the high qualities that made him conqueror of the East” (Isager 73), the other image was that of the despotic ruler who demanded *proskynesis*. The former image is the one Julius Caesar was playing on since the forum served to promote his superiority as a victorious general.¹⁶⁹

Using Alexander was also problematic because of Pompey’s imitation, most notable in his

¹⁶⁵ cf. Favro: “Carefully contrived, the enclosure [of the Forum Iulium] assumed the characteristics of a theatrical set, with every component interrelated. Throughout, artistic embellishments promoted Caesar and his achievements....The elevated podium was more than a mere speakers’ platform, it was a Caesarian stage” (72-73).

¹⁶⁶ Plutarch also places Caesar on the rostra, not in the Forum Iulium.

¹⁶⁷ Here was also a gold statue of Cleopatra which Appian says Julius Caesar erected, but Dio says that Octavian dedicated the statue to Venus Genetrix as part of his triumph over Egypt. Westall argues that Appian is again confused in his facts because the Forum Iulium was a monument to victory, which the statue represents. It was not an emblem of Julius Caesar’s love for the foreign queen, an idea Westall regards as “monstrous” (92).

¹⁶⁸ Green, who argues that there is scant evidence for any type of *imitatio* or even *aemulatio* of Alexander on Julius Caesar’s part, says that placing his head on the statue of Alexander does not necessarily indicate Julius Caesar was imitating Alexander, but may simply indicate an admiration for Lysippus (206).

¹⁶⁹ Westall. The items Julius Caesar placed in the forum were spoils brought back from his campaigns like the cuirass encrusted with British pearls.

hairstyle which acquired the anastole associated with Alexander, and his cognomen Magnus. Yet once Pompey was dead “Caesar could take tentative steps towards manifesting himself as the true heir of Alexander, exceeding both model and previous emulators” (Spencer 170). Green claims that Julius Caesar makes no reference “direct or indirect” to Alexander in his commentaries (195), yet the story he tells of his northern conquests of going to the outland and discovering new and strange places and peoples does make indirect allusion to Alexander, one his audience would have been familiar with.¹⁷⁰ The Lyssipus statue would have been familiar to Romans as well. A. Caecilius Metellus brought it to Rome in 146 BCE to display in his portico.¹⁷¹ Replacing the head would have not been unusual; Romans often placed their own portraits on Greek statues.¹⁷² However, Julius Caesar’s use of Alexander grouping as an equestrian statue of himself sent an implicit message that not only was Caesar a great general surpassing the great Macedonian, but he was also conqueror of the world. By replacing Alexander’s head with his own he demonstrated that he replaced Alexander as the great *imperator*. One can even read his actions as a joke at Pompey’s expense, who sought to make himself the Roman Alexander, but instead of his head sitting atop Alexander’s torso, his was savagely torn from his body in Egypt.

The Alexander motif is actually not the major theme of the forum. The legend that Julius Caesar overtly drew upon was Aeneas. An important coin links Julius Caesar with Aeneas and Venus. Minted in 47/46 BCE in Africa,¹⁷³ the denarius of Caesar has the head

¹⁷⁰ Spencer: “From Alexander’s popularity in first century BCE Roman narratives, we can deduce that a ready-primed audience for his inclusion existed” (31).

¹⁷¹ Zanker 23.

¹⁷² For example, the statue of the third century BCE Greek comic poet Poseidippos has been reworked so that its hair and face became the portrait of a Roman of the first century BCE. Even though the appearance of the statue is Greek, the Roman had Senatorial shoes added to the feet, by means of bronze laces, to indicate his social standing (Zanker 30).

¹⁷³ Crawford 471. Both Galinsky (5) and Evans (41) date the coin to 48 BCE, just after Pharsalus.

of Venus on one side and a nude Aeneas¹⁷⁴ carrying the Palladium in his right hand and Anchises on his left shoulder. The name “Caesar” runs down the left side, making the link between goddess, hero, and Caesar explicit. Galinsky comments that Aeneas is “[B]rimming with strength” and that the Palladium serves as a military symbol: “a more martial emblem of Troy’s survival than the sacred chest with the peaceful household gods” (5). Evans suggests that in addition to the martial aspects of Aeneas, the Palladium could represent “Caesar’s role as Pontifex Maximus, in whose care the Palladium resided” (41). Such a reading personalizes the iconography even further since the coin comes to represent not only Julius Caesar’s divine and heroic ancestry, but also his rightful claim to priestly office and the care of artifacts that ensured Rome’s security. Evans continues to explain how we might be expected to view this coin:

Caesar’s emphasis on Aenean propaganda can easily make us suspect that he wanted to create an image of legitimacy for his rule over Rome, claiming that it was sanctioned by the very gods themselves. The stress upon the legitimacy of his rule would be necessary to explain that his role in the Civil War was justified, especially if the coins were minted just after Pharsalus. Although Aeneas’ pietas was emphasized after Octavian began to use the image of Aeneas as propaganda, Caesar nonetheless set the stage for it in his coin: his choice was to portray the flight of Aeneas, not only because this was the way that Romans identified the Trojan hero (which made Aeneas instantly recognizable on the coin), but also because he could link Aeneas’ pietas to his own. (41)

Octavian’s use of Aeneas’ pietas was connected with his avenging the murder of his adoptive father. Julius Caesar’s use is much more subtle. As Evans notes, Aeneas was useful for his claim for power, but it also helped to advertise Julius Caesar’s claim that Caesar and Rome were commensurate. As has been noted, throughout the commentaries Julius Caesar links Caesar and Rome. With this coin and the temple to Venus Genetrix, Julius Caesar could display to a wide audience that Caesar and Rome were one and the

¹⁷⁴ Galinsky points out that “[t]he representation of Aeneas as a nude warrior follows the Greek tradition and is a further instance of Caesar’s preference for Greek models--a preference that is known especially from the architecture commissioned by him” (5).

same. Evans notes that such propaganda could only have worked because of the force of Julius Caesar's personality and the Roman people's readiness "to accept this personalized version of their national foundation story" (40).

In the forum, then, these two images of Caesar are celebrated, descent from the goddess and the hero, and inheritor of the legendary great general and empire builder. Both images construct Caesar as someone who was above the average citizen. Despite his claim at *BC* 1.32.3 that he sought office open to every citizen, his claim after Pharsalus was for power that was only within the grasp of the truly extraordinary. The Forum Iulium celebrates Julius Caesar's extraordinary status. He competed fiercely with his peers and proved himself peerless, a position he would hold only as long as his fellow aristocrats could endure it. Yet, the conspirators could only assassinate Julius Caesar. Caesar, on the other hand, would prove to be immortal.

Much of the evidence for Julius Caesar's building projects comes from later authors whose purposes were to present their own construction of "Caesar" for their readers. Thus, much of what we know of Julius Caesar's plans do not help to understand how Julius Caesar used his building projects to construct "Caesar." However, those projects in the city, namely the shifting of the Tiber, the rebuilding of the Saepta, and the construction of the Basilica Julia and the Forum Iulium do tell us much about the image Julius Caesar sought to put forth to the inhabitants of the city. Refashioning the cityscape had a more immediate and broader effect than his commentaries, which would have had a small, select audience. With massive public building Julius Caesar could reach Romans of all classes, not merely the literate elite. The image he puts forth is of a man capable of monumental activity, of regal and divine descent, and on equal footing with legendary figures such as Aeneas and Alexander.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The texts of Julius Caesar, as we have seen, perform and construct the figure of Caesar. I have looked at both the commentaries and the building projects, demonstrating how Julius Caesar used these media to create a mythic character that ensured his place in history. But more than that, Caesar helped him to gain power and then to legitimize that power. The commentaries serve a performative role, just as the Forum Iulium was simultaneously performing Caesar as it provided space for Caesar to perform. The texts create an arena for spectacle that displays the *potestas Caesaris* while the Forum celebrates that power.

I began by considering the performative aspect of the texts in *Bellum Gallicum* 7, a book that performs “Caesar” as it constructs the persona, as well as constructing Vercingetorix as the anti-Caesar. The performative quality of Book 7 can be seen throughout both commentaries and the building projects that present Caesar first as master of Gaul and later master of Rome. In the final scene we see a potent image of the mingling of Roman *imperium* and Caesarian *potestas* as Caesar sits enthroned to receive the surrender of abject Gaul.

Furthermore, the texts construct Caesar as savior of Rome. In *Bellum Gallicum* 5, Julius Caesar emplotted the disasters of the winter of 54/53 BCE in such a way that not only does Caesar not appear to be responsible for what occurred, but Caesar is shown as

saving the day. My reading of this narrative as an extended metaphor highlighted a subtext of political criticism and a subtle suggestion on the part of the author that Caesar was the solution to Rome's political troubles. What Julius Caesar presented as a hypothetical situation in *Bellum Gallicum* 5, he carries to a logical conclusion in *Bellum Civile* 1. Caesar was shown to be the leader of superior skills in the first commentary who was capable of facing a crisis and rescuing the besieged Q. Cicero. In *Bellum Civile*, Julius Caesar depicts Rome, Italy, and the gods under attack by his *inimici* and only Caesar can save the beleaguered nation. Thus, the texts construct Caesar as solution to the political troubles of Rome.

The commentaries also construct Caesar as master builder who masters space and peoples. Through the description of construction projects, the text constructs the *potestas Caesaris*. The bridge over the Rhine displays the power of Caesar and of the Roman army. The siege tower at Massilia asserts Caesar's power and phallic authority. In both cases, Caesar's army defeats the enemy by means of construction projects that perform Caesar's potency. Furthermore, the texts demonstrate that Caesar has the ability and potential to establish boundaries, thereby constructing the empire. Moreover, Caesar has the ability to transgress the very boundaries he himself establishes, demonstrating that while Roman *imperium* may have bounds, the *potestas Caesaris* is boundless. Caesar makes the Rhine a firm boundary by demonstrating his ability to cross it; he asserts his *virtus* by taking Massilia, a feat carried out by the siege tower. The Massilians have no choice other than to submit to Caesar's authority. The people of Rome are in the same circumstance, finding they must submit to the rule of the dictator.

Just as engineering projects within the commentaries work to construct Caesar as master builder capable of building the empire and establishing its boundaries, so too the

building projects at Rome work to bring tangible evidence of Caesar's power to the Roman people. The extent and scale of these projects advertised Caesar's magnanimity and divine ancestry. These public works connected Caesar's ambitions with the empire's and the city's. The far reaching and ambitious projects show Caesar to be a man capable of monumental activity. The *Bellum Gallicum* casts Caesar in a legendary role, rivaling the feats of Alexander; the Forum Iulium celebrates this new legend, the *imperator* without equal. The equestrian statue of Alexander now sported Caesar's head. The Roman surmounted the Greek, displaying that he was the mightier. Caesar could transgress boundaries, shift rivers, and bring prestige to his city.

While Julius Caesar had big plans for transforming the physical city, he began very few of them. Much of our evidence comes from later authors, and therein lies a problem for determining how the building projects work to construct the figure of Caesar. What we have is the Caesar of later authors. The project that Julius Caesar began with his commentaries and furthered with his building at Rome, that is, the construction of "Caesar," his biographers carried on. Yet the figure of Caesar becomes something new in Suetonius and Plutarch; the figure becomes their construct, ceasing to be Julius Caesar's. Indeed, Julius Caesar was not alone in constructing Caesar in his own day. Cicero constructs him in varying guises in his speeches and letters. Sallust, too, becomes an important early reconstructor of the figure. Each of these perspectives have contributed greatly to how we perceive Caesar two thousand years later. The work of constructing "Caesar" continues to this day, meriting further study into how the figure is created and altered through time and by various authors working to construct "Caesar."

Finally, I have contended that by conflating "Caesar" with Julius Caesar, whether his construct or another's, we misread the Caesarian texts, leading many readers to be

concerned about the veracity of the reports. Only by understanding the fiction of Julius Caesar's literary output can we understand how Julius Caesar constructed his persona and how that persona affected his audience, both at Rome in the 40s BCE, and today.

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