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From Obscurity to Fame and Back Again: The Caecili Metelli in the Roman Republic

Dustin Wade Simmons

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Cecilia M. Peek, chair
Eric D. Huntsman
Roger T. Macfarlane

Department of Humanities, Classics, Comparative Literature

Brigham Young University

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ABSTRACT

From Obscurity to Fame and Back Again: The Caecilii Metelli in the Roman Republic

Dustin Wade Simmons

Department of Humanities, Classics, Comparative Literature, BYU
Master of Arts

The house of the Caecilii Metelli was one of ancient Rome's most prestigious yet overshadowed plebeian families. Replete with dynamic orators, successful generals, and charismatic women, the Caecilii Metelli lived during the period of Rome's great expansion. Having participated in its transformation into the principal power in the Mediterranean, they survived until the fall of the Republic. By contemporary Roman standards they were a powerful and respected family. Seventeen consulships, nine triumphs, nine members of priestly colleges—including three who became *pontifex maximus*—and five censors are evidence of their high position in Rome. The trappings of magisterial office and military decorations notwithstanding, the Caecilii Metelli were nevertheless often overshadowed on the stage of Roman politics by stronger personalities and did not receive substantial attention in the ancient sources.

This study seeks to understand the political connections and activities of the Caecilii Metelli in Republican Rome. While attention must be given to the appropriate social and historical contexts, the focus must always remain on the individuals and their interactions with each other. Each generation of the Metellan family was involved in varying degrees in the political processes of the time. A deeper understanding of the role of the Metelli in these processes shows that the Metelli can be understood as a family of outsiders who successfully attempted to make their presence felt in Roman politics, but were ultimately doomed to fail in the collapse of the Republic. They can serve as a paradigm for understanding the struggles of aristocratic families to maintain power and influence throughout the Roman Republic.

Keywords: Caecilius Metellus, prosopography, Republican Rome, Roman politics

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis began in the fall of 2007 in a senior seminar on piracy in the ancient Mediterranean taught by Dr. Stephen Bay, when I was randomly assigned to give a report on Metellus Creticus. Almost immediately I was intrigued by the Caecilii Metelli and that interest has continued to this day. I must thank Brigham Young University for the financial support I have received, particularly in the form of an undergraduate Office of Research and Creative Activities grant and a Graduate Research Fellowship Award.

Thanks are due to my committee chair, Dr. Cecilia M. Peek for her efforts to read this work in its various stages. Few will truly know of her sacrifices, and I am grateful. Dr. Roger Macfarlane's confidence in me throughout this process was encouraging and most welcome. Special thanks must go to my friend and mentor Dr. Eric Hunstman, who has taught me more than anyone about ancient history and how to study it effectively and apply its lessons. I count myself lucky to have been his student and now his friend.

My parents and siblings have been enthusiastically supportive of my efforts and no amount of thanks is sufficient for the time they spent listening to me excitedly recount things they cared nothing about. My wife Rachelle and three children Aidan, Matty, and Cami have been the most supportive of all, but are happier than anyone that this project has reached its end. Now there will be even more time for sword-fights, wrestling, and other adventures. They are a continual reminder of what is most important and have taught me how to appreciate the finer things in life, which are usually quiet and fleeting moments together. Finally, I must give thanks to Almighty God, who has sustained and blessed me and my family far beyond what we have merited.

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ABBREVIATIONS

References to Classical sources are those used in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* and the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, revised third edition. Scholarly journals are referenced in accordance with *l'Année Philologique*; book titles are given in full in the bibliography. Other standard abbreviations are as follows:

- AHRW* Scullard, H.H. *A History of the Roman World, 753–146 B.C.* 4th ed. New York: Routledge, 1980.
- CIL* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Edited by T. Mommsen et al. Berlin, 1863–.
- FC* Badian, E. *Foreign Clientelae, 264–70 B.C.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984.
- FS* Rüpke, Jörg. *Fasti Sacerdotum: A Prosopography of Pagan, Jewish, and Christian Religious Official in the City of Rome, 300 B.C. to A.D. 499*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- GN* Scullard, H.H. *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome, 133 BC–AD 68*. 5th ed. New York: Routledge, 1996.
- IG* *Inscriptiones Graecae*. Berlin, 1873–.
- IGRR* R. Cagnat et al. *Inscriptiones Graecae ad re Romanas pertinentes*. 4 volumes. Paris, 1911–27.
- ILLRP* A. Degrassi. *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae*. 2 volumes. Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1957–63.
- ILS* *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. 3 volumes in 5 parts. Berlin, 1892–1916.

- LGRR* Gruen, E.S. *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.
- ORF* *Oratorum Romanorum Fragmenta Liberae Rei Publicae*. Edited by Enrica Malcovati. Aug. Taurinorum: In Aedibus I.B. Paraviae, 1967.
- PPAC* Taylor, L.R. *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949.
- RAPF* Münzer, Friedrich. *Roman Aristocratic Parties and Families*. Trans. Thérèse Ridley. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- RE* Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll. *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart, 1893–.
- RP* Scullard, H.H. *Roman Politics, 220–150 B.C.* 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973
- RPCC* Gruen, E.S. *Roman Politics and the Criminal Courts, 149–78 B.C.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- RR* Syme, Ronald. *The Roman Revolution*. Revised ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- SIG* W. Dittenberger. *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*. Leipzig, 1915–1924.
- VDRR* Taylor, L.R. *The Voting Districts of the Roman Republic*. Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1960.

Preface

RECONSTRUCTING ROMAN REPUBLICAN POLITICS

Between the consular bookends (284–46) of the family’s history, Rome’s power and empire expanded greatly to include all of Italy, a vast portion of Europe, and a large portion of North Africa and the Near East.¹ The Caecilii Metelli, as part of Rome’s governing class, played a role in the decisions of empire that facilitated this growth and the ensuing issues and problems. The family appears in the historical record suddenly in the generation before the First Punic War, rose to prominence in the aftermath of the political turmoil centered on the Gracchi, and then died out during the bloodshed of the civil wars that finally destroyed the Republic. Several members of the Metellan family held the most important and influential religious posts and civic magistracies in Rome and exercised their authority to their advantage. While modern scholars acknowledge the impressive credentials of the Metelli generally,² this has rarely resulted in a systematic treatment of the family. Instead most modern studies treat them as relatively minor characters, and often cast them in supporting or secondary roles. Those works that do focus on the Metellan family are either very difficult to obtain or in a language other than English, providing significant roadblocks to the beginning and even intermediate student.³ A more comprehensive understanding of the family’s

¹ All dates are B.C. unless specified otherwise.

²Friedrich Münzer, *Roman Aristocratic Parties and Families*, trans. Thérèse Ridley (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 279–280 (the Metelli were members of “the highest Roman aristocracy” and had “raised themselves above all other plebeian families”). Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Revised edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 12 (an “age of the Metelli”), 20 (“The core and heart of Sulla’s party and Sulla’s oligarchy was the powerful house of the Caecilii Metelli”). E.S. Gruen, “Politics and the Criminal Courts in 104 B.C.” *TAPhA*, 95 (1964): 99 (“the Caecilii Metelli controlled the most powerful senatorial faction of this period”); Gruen, *Roman Politics and the Criminal Courts, 149–78 B.C.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 117. Outside of a single chapter in Gruen’s book, there is little discussion of the Metelli themselves and their direct role in the Roman political landscape.

³ M. Gwyn Morgan, “The Rise and Fall of the Caecilii Metelli, 284–46 B.C.” (PhD diss., Exeter University, 1961), is largely unavailable. I was only able to procure a copy of it after extended communication and negotiation with Exeter University. J. Ooteghem, *Les Caecilii Metelli de la République* (Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1967), is basically biographical in nature and does not treat the family as a whole or analyze their

political involvement in Republican Rome can serve as a paradigm for understanding aristocratic families in Rome and how these families sought to preserve their position. The Metellan family serves this purpose well, as there is evidence for them and their political activities over a relatively long period of Republican history.

Important questions, however, remain unanswered about the Caecilii Metelli: Where did they come from? How did they become involved in the public life of the capital city? Were they introduced to Roman politics by someone else, and if so, who was this patron? What was the nature of their political connections and associations? Did the members of the family function effectively and consistently as a unified political faction or did they at times pursue their own individual interests? These and other related questions require thoughtful responses. The present study will seek to uncover the origins of the Caecilii Metelli, determine how they were introduced to the political scene at Rome and how this may have affected their subsequent political decisions, associations, and affiliations. Additionally, by tracing the growth of the family itself, the military and political achievements of its members, and their connections to other Roman politicians, this thesis will demonstrate the role the Caecilii Metelli played in Roman politics over several generations.⁴ Lastly, this study will demonstrate how the Metellan family, like many other aristocratic families in the Republican period, failed to grasp the changing nature of politics as the traditional role and power of the great political families gave way to the dominating force of individual personalities.

political connections or leanings. These two are the most recent works on the Metelli and before their publication the treatments were German works from the early nineteenth century, supplemented and superceded by Münzer's prosopographical entries in Pauly-Wissowa. I am thankful to Dr. Gruen for bringing Morgan's dissertation to my attention. Although made aware of it at a very late stage, it was nevertheless very helpful. Specific debts to Dr. Morgan's dissertation are referenced when they occur.

⁴ Because the *gens Caecilia* is rather large, this study will concern itself only with the Metellan branch of the family, which was the most famous and successful.

The Problem and Methodology

A major methodological concern that must be dealt with in this study concerns the reconstruction of Roman politics. How to understand the nature of Roman Republican politics and interpret the corresponding ancient evidence has continued to be a source of debate among scholars of ancient Rome, but a brief discussion of the various approaches and the particular ideas that will guide this study is necessary.

The modern understanding of how Rome was governed, who really held the reins of power, and how those reins were exercised depends largely upon varied reconstructions and interpretations of the surviving ancient evidence. This evidence, likewise characterized by interpretation and reconstruction, provides little secure footing. Notwithstanding the many holes in the existing picture of Roman history and government, "a few pieces of a jigsaw puzzle can often be fitted together to form a coherent, and possibly revealing part of the whole."⁵

A useful tool for interpreting the surviving evidence is prosopography, which can help to uncover and analyze implicit political and personal relationships of Rome's politicians and powerful families when used appropriately, particularly when explicit evidence about those relationships may be lacking. According to Stone, "Prosopography is the investigation of common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives" and is a tool to "attack two of the most basic problems in history," namely the roots of political action and the underlying social structure and social mobility of a given society.⁶

⁵ H.H. Scullard, *Roman Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), xviii.

⁶ Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," *Daedalus* 100 (1971): 46.

Because prosopography is most appropriate when used on a small group like a family to ask specific questions,⁷ it is especially well-suited to a study of the Caecilii Metelli and their social and political connections. While one must avoid relying on unsubstantiated theories or ideas that are not supported by the evidence, this caution should not prevent reasonable constructions that explain, interpret, or otherwise illuminate what little evidence is available. An attempt must be made to better understand the Metelli and their role in the politics of the Roman Republic, and “as for the prosopographical method, its use as a tool remains indispensable for any understanding of the Roman Republic.”⁸

Collegiality and succession in office may be useful, but should not be used as the sole evidence of political relationships unless a positive connection or cooperation in a given shared magistracy or religious college is explicitly mentioned in the sources. If such evidence exists, care must be used in its interpretation lest too much weight be given to it. While it is possible that sharing a consulship may have been the pinnacle and climactic result of a political alliance, it could just as easily be the case that a shared consulship was the beginning of a future relationship, or that there was in fact no effectual relationship before or after. It is also possible that a relationship could have been hostile.

Likewise succession in office is only useful to ascertain political connections if a connection mentioned in the sources or if there is some kind of special circumstance, as happened in 206 when Q. Metellus was elected consul after having been appointed as *magister equitum* to the dictator (and consul) Livius. In these cases personal relationships at least, and probably political ones as well, can be deduced. Mere succession in office does not indicate political cooperation, although in cases of iteration where a candidate succeeds the

⁷ Stone, “Prosopography,” 69.

⁸ Gruen, *RPCC*, 3.

same person, closer attention should be paid to the possibility of a connection existing between the two. Additionally, membership lists of the religious colleges can be examined for political connections. Since admission to the colleges was initially by cooptation, sitting members of the college most likely would have selected men with whom they had common views and shared interests.

Familial ties are often used as the basis for understanding political groupings. When dealing with family relationships, political cooperation can very likely be assumed between close family members like fathers and sons, or brothers, unless there is some mention to the contrary in the sources.⁹ However, for those family relationships that are somewhat more distant, positive evidence of political association and cooperation is needed. Obviously, the more connections that can be found or deduced from the evidence increase the likelihood of political cooperation between individuals and the formation of political alliances.¹⁰ Likewise, the opposite is true and can be just as useful when studying Roman Republican politics. Political enemies can often be discerned from among those known to compete for office, those who disagree on policy or legislation, or are known to be personal enemies.¹¹

Brief Overview of Contents

The subsequent chapters deal with the Metellan family in chronological order. Obviously any divisions are artificial and imposed, but these divisions have been made at times that roughly mark generational breaks that also coincide with important events in Roman history.

⁹ See again Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 449; Astin, "Politics and Policies," 8; Càssola, 20.

¹⁰ Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 457

¹¹ Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 457.

Chapter One (Origins–200 B.C.) discusses the supposed Praenestine origins of the first senator of the Metellan family, focusing on the family’s introduction to the political scene at Rome and what possible connections they had to other powerful families. Lucius Metellus (cos. 251) is the greatest member of the family in this period, rising to the consulship twice in five years. He was the first Roman to capture Carthaginian elephants and march them in a triumph. Additionally, he was the first Metellus to hold the important office of *pontifex maximus*. This chapter treats the family during the First and Second Punic War and its immediate aftermath, during which time the family gained a great deal of respect and prestige among the Roman nobility and laid the necessary foundations for the family’s future success.

Chapter two (200–121 B.C.) deals with the family during the period that set the stage for the height of their power and influence. Metellus Macedonicus is the great leader of the family during this period and largely because of his military exploits and political exertions against Scipio Aemilianus and then Tiberius Gracchus. Macedonicus greatest contribution to the family may have been his four sons, who all achieved Rome’s highest office. Macedonicus did more for the future fortunes of the Metellan family than anyone else. Covering a period of roughly eighty years, this chapter treats the later careers of the Metelli who were involved in the Hannibalic War and then those of the brothers Metellus Macedonicus and Metellus Calvus.

The third chapter (120–100 B.C.) covers the family during the supposed height of their power and influence. This “age of the Metelli,”¹² when Metellan sons sat in a curule chair nearly every other year for more than a decade is when the family appears to reach the

¹² Syme, *RR*, 12.

apex of power, at least in the outward view of magistracies and political accolades. After reaching these political heights, the family began to decline under pressure from their old adherent and supporter Marius. The largest Metellan personality in this generation was the youngest, Q. Metellus Numidicus. His falling out with Marius in the Jugurthine War had disastrous results for the Metellan family, as he, the leader and figurehead, was exiled.

The fourth and final chapter (99–46 B.C.) traces the decline of the family's fortunes during the time of Marius' extreme popularity and then their resurgence first as supporters, and then as family of L. Cornelius Sulla. Q. Metellus Pius became the family's standard bearer at the beginning of this period and guided the family through the difficult and dangerous times of the civil war between Marius and Sulla. It is during this period that the family finally appears to be divided against itself in the years when Sulla's young lieutenant, Pompey the Great, becomes Rome's most polarizing figure. The last consul of the family, Metellus Scipio, failed to live up to his prestigious pedigree and was unsuccessful in two battles against Julius Caesar. In many ways the fortunes of the Caecilii Metelli in this period mirror those of the Roman Republic itself.

The five appendices which conclude this work represent the raw data collected over the last four years. Appendix 1 includes a *cursus honorum* for each member of the Caecilii Metelli and is designed to provide easy reference to the various offices and magistracies held by members of the family. Appendix 2 illustrates the magistracies and offices of the Metelli and provides a chronological framework into which the offices of the Metelli are placed. Appendix 3 contains family stemmata for the Metelli that can be used to understand their connections to other Roman families and politicians. Appendix 4 is a chronology of Roman history that highlights Metellan involvement and is not limited to the holding of a particular

political magistracy or religious office. Appendix 5 concludes this study with a discussion of the merits and drawbacks of prosopography, and which aspects of prosopography were ultimately most useful for examining the Caecilii Metelli throughout their history.

Chapter 1: Origins–200 B.C.

LUCIUS METELLUS & THE FOUNDATIONS OF GREATNESS

During the time period discussed in this chapter Rome saw herself develop from being the dominant power in the Italian peninsula to expanding for the first time outside overseas into Sicily, Spain, and North Africa. The fortunes of the Caecilii Metelli paralleled this Roman expansion in many ways, and within fifty years of the family's first appearance in the historical record, Lucius Metellus (cos. 251) had solidified his family's position among the Roman nobility. He reached the consulship not only once, but twice, and was a successful general in Rome's first conflict with Carthage. He was the first Roman commander to march elephants in his triumph, elephants he had captured in a brilliant Roman victory. He was a religious man as well as a military man, and held Rome's highest religious office for over twenty years. In many ways, it was Lucius Metellus who laid the foundations for the future greatness of the Caecilii Metelli.¹

The Latin War (340–338) had solidified Roman power in central Italy and marked the first Roman attempts to develop a concrete policy for dealing with a conquered enemy. The novel way in which Rome dealt with the defeated Latins by granting them citizenship contributed in a very real way to her future success in the Mediterranean world.² While it is true that the common people probably saw very little benefit to their new citizenship—

¹ The full *cursus honorum* for this Lucius Metellus can be found in Appendix 1 (p. 188).

² H.H. Scullard, *A History of the Roman World 753 to 146 BC*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 131–153; T.J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 345–398. After the final defeat of Praeneste in 338 Rome abolished the Latin League and instead of dealing with the numerous Latin cities and towns collectively, established separate treaties with each city. By dealing with each conquered enemy individually, Rome was able to eliminate effectively any feeling of collective identity among the subdued Latins, which had contributed to the initial hostility and conflict. Instead, Rome joined these cities to herself individually and attempted to strengthen the new connection by ties of mutual interest. Conquered people were given various forms of the Roman citizenship in an attempt to entice obedience and encourage cooperation.

largely because they had to shoulder the burdens of citizenship, like being subject to Roman magistrate and serving in the Roman legions, without any of the benefits of citizenship like voting—the aristocrats and ruling elites of these communities were often given full citizenship and even brought into the political scene at Rome. The appearance of the Caecilii Metelli in this early period of Republican history is helpful for understanding how these municipal aristocrats from throughout the Italian peninsula were able to establish themselves politically in Rome.

Indeed, many families that would eventually become known for their role in Roman history like the Plautii, Marcii, Fulvii, and Mamiliii came from these conquered territories. As an example, the large number of consuls that came from Tusculum, which was only fifteen miles from Rome, was later emphasized by Cicero when he said that ex-consuls practically rub elbows on the streets of Tusculum.³ As these families came to Rome and sought to establish themselves in the political realm, it is probable that an established Roman family introduced them into politics in the capital. The Fabii were known for acting as patrons for these new families from the Italian municipal aristocracies.⁴ It was during this period of influx from the municipal aristocracies to Rome after the end of the Latin War that the first member of the Caecilii Metelli, L. Caecilius Metellus Denter, made an appearance in the records of the capital city.

Discovering Metellan Origins

Festus records that the Caecilii, a *nobilis familia apud Romanos*, came from Praeneste.⁵ There are three kinds of evidence available that aid in identifying the origins of

³ Cic., *Planc.* 19.

⁴ See Münzer's discussion about municipal aristocrats' involvement in early Roman politics in *RAPF*, 48–93.

⁵ Festus, 38L.

the Caecilii Metelli, with a fourth that can act as a corroborating witness. These types of evidence are—in the order they will be treated—epigraphic, onomastic, literary, and numismatic.

Epigraphy

Epigraphic evidence—that is, surviving writing or inscriptions on durable material—is helpful in trying to discover the geographic origins of the Caecilii Metelli. Epigraphy is useful because the family's name may appear in high concentrations in a city that is associated with the family in other sources. An inscription may even record a person's place of origin. Certain names are more common and ubiquitous than others and can appear throughout Italy and even other parts of the empire. This is especially the case with the names of slaves and freedmen, who often assumed the *nomen* of their former master. Likewise, an inscription from a particular city may only be commemorating some great deed or benefaction done by a particular person without indicating that the subject had his place of origin there. Additionally, dating many inscriptions can be difficult, as can the positive identification of the inscription's subject, given the incomplete nature of so many surviving inscriptions.

The *nomen* Caecilius occurs in inscriptions throughout Italy, but there does seem to be a concentration of inscriptions bearing the name in Latium with a particular concentration around Tibur, Praeneste and Tusculum. The inscriptions in these cities are significant, because it is mainly here that the *nomen* Caecilius is augmented by the *cognomen* Metellus. An inscription found in Tusculum reads *Q. CAECILIVS/METELLUS/COS.*⁶ While it is unknown to which Metellan consul this inscription refers, the more important fact is the

⁶ *CIL* 14.2600.

preservation of the name and its location.⁷ There are only a handful of inscriptions that record the full name of the family, and many of those can safely be set aside when discussing origins because they either occur in Rome—on the *Fasti* or the famous tomb of Caecilia Metella—or in other areas associated with Metellan military campaigns or road building.⁸ There is another inscription, this one in Tibur, which names Metellus Pius who was co-consul with Sulla in 80,⁹ but the most useful inscription for determining the origins of the Metelli is a Greek one, which firmly places the Caecili Metelli in the region of *Latium Vetus*.

The *consilium de agro Pergameno*, dated to approximately 129, preserves the tribal affiliations of the senators involved in the Pergamene bequest, and the first senator listed is Quintus Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus, consul of 143. At the time of the inscription he would have been one of the most senior members of the senatorial aristocracy.¹⁰ His geographic tribe is listed as Aniensis, which was established in 299 and contained land south of the Anio River that had been seized from the Aequi and “in it the communities, Afilae and Treba, as well as Trebula Suffenas, developed, perhaps originally as *civitates sine suffragio*, but eventually with the vote in the Aniensis.”¹¹ This voting tribe is firmly situated in Latium and is in close geographic proximity to other inscriptions that mention the Metelli, suggesting that they originally came from this particular area of Latium.

⁷ Possible identifications include consuls for the following years: 206, 143, 123, 109, 98, 80, 69, 60, 57, 52.

⁸ There are inscriptions that mention L. Caecilius Metellus, consul 117, along the Via Salaria (*CIL* 9.5953) and another that may refer to Metellus Creticus in Sardinia (*CIL* 10.7581).

⁹ *CIL* 14.3588

¹⁰ *IGRRP* 4.262. See the discussion in Taylor, *The Voting Districts of the Roman Republic*, (Rome: American Academy, 1960), 170–176 and Mattingly, “The Dating of the Senatus Consultum De Agro Pergameno,” *AJP* 93 (1972): 412–423 for more details about the inscription itself and its the probable date, which bears directly on the identity of the Metellus mentioned.

¹¹ Taylor, *VDRR*, 57.

Onomastics

When investigating origins, at times when analyzing the personal and family names may shed light on an otherwise darkened subject. Since Schulze's pioneering work in onomastics, the discussion has continued regarding validity and proper application of the study of names to Roman history. Early on, analysis of *nomina* and *cognomina* had suggested that names could be used to uncover geographic and even ethnic origins, but onomastics is the least secure method for discovering these origins. Badian notes that, "vague regional *cognomina* (freely adopted for various reasons) are useless even as a basis for conjecture, while more definite local names (e.g. Calenus or Cumanus) are a useful basis for conjecture, but should not normally be called certain."¹² Caution must be exercised when using onomastics, as linguistic similarities can lead to insufficiently supported conclusions. For instance, Schulze has proposed that the Caecilii Metelli may have been Etruscan or had Etruscan roots based on their name.¹³ He does this by linking the Etruscan name *Caecina* with *Caeculus*, the mythical founder of Praeneste and eponymous ancestor of the Caecilian clan.¹⁴ However, there does not necessarily appear to be any Etruscan connection to either Caeculus or the Latin gentilicial *Caecilius*. The *-ilius* ending is not Etruscan, and the initial and formal similarities between the *Caecina* and *Caecilius* should not be pressed too far.

Additionally, while it is tempting to see an Etruscan linguistic connection between the name *Metellus*, as evidenced by the famous *Arringatore* statue whose Etruscan inscription names an Aule Meteli—normally Latinized as Aulus Metellus. It should be noted that in the case of the *Arringatore* statue the name Metellus is used as a *nomen gentilicium* and not as a

¹² Ernst Badian, "Notes on Roman Senators of the Republic," *Historia* 12 (1963): 130.

¹³ Schulze, *Zur Geschichte Lateinischer Eigennamen* (Berlin, 1904), 75, 293.

¹⁴ Schulze, 75.

cognomen, as it always is with the Caecilii Metelli. Also, the Etruscan ending *-i* is the Etruscan equivalent of the Latin *-ius*, which would change the name to *Metellius*—not Metellus.¹⁵

The Metelli, however, may have arisen from humble origins. In his *Annali*, Accius mentions *Calones famulique metellique caculaeque a quo genere hominum Caeciliae familiae cognomen putant ductum*.¹⁶ If Accius was correct then the Metelli may have been servants or camp attendants of some kind. Thus, while it may be appealing at first glance to see the Caecilii Metelli as Etruscan, it does not seem likely from the linguistic evidence.

Literature

Written literature can often provide good evidence for a family's origins, but caution must still be exercised. Aristocratic families, from whose family traditions and histories many later historians drew for their own works, were interested in connecting themselves to great warriors and heroes from the past as a way of increasing their prestige and as a form of political propaganda that could be exploited in elections.¹⁷ Even without the issue of aristocratic molding or tampering not all ancient literature should be uncritically accepted without trying to identify the known purposes and biases of the author. False etymologies are common, especially among poets looking to aggrandize friends or patrons by connecting

¹⁵ Ernst Pulgram, "The Origin of the Latin *Nomen Gentilicium*," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 58 (1948): 182; Helmut Rix, *Das Etrusche Cognomen* (Wiesbaden, 1965): 165–171; J. Kaimio, "The Ousting of Etruscan by Latin," *Studies in the Romanization of Etruria* (Roma: Aziende tipografiche eredi G. Bardi, 1972): 177–179.

¹⁶ *Annales*, 27.

¹⁷ The best treatment of this phenomenon is T.P. Wiseman, "Legendary Genealogies in the Late-Republican Rome," *G&R* 21 (1974): 153–164.

them to great people of the past, or grammarians who are interested in obscure or interesting words and potential linguistic connections and similarities.¹⁸

The earliest and only ancient source that reports the place of origin for the Caecilii Metelli is Festus, a grammarian from the second century A.D. who composed an epitome of Verrius Flaccus' work *De Significatu Verborum*, which was originally written in the reign of Augustus. It may be the case that Festus was merely repeating an earlier statement of Flaccus when he said, discussing Caeculus the mythical founder of Praeneste, that *unde putant Caecilios ortos, quorum erat nobilis familiae apud Romanos*. He also mentions that *alii appellatos eos dicunt a Caecade Troiano, Aeneae comite*.¹⁹ Even if Festus was merely passing along a tradition that started before him, interestingly the first literary mention we have of the family comes from the Augustan Age when the family had died out. It begs the question of whether Flaccus was creating a connection between Praeneste, whose founder was Caeculus, and the Caecilii merely because of linguistic similarities. This suggestion should not be discounted, especially since the original work was interested in the meanings of words. A name like Caecilius would have been easy to connect with Caeculus, which is the heading in Festus under which the above quotations are taken.

Another possible explanation could be that Flaccus was merely stating the conventional wisdom of the time, which suggested that the Caecilii came from Praeneste. Indeed, this may have been the real reason behind his account, since evidence exists that the

¹⁸ The most obvious examples are those found in the *Aeneid* 5.115–124, when Aeneas' companions are said to be the founders of several "great" Roman houses.

¹⁹ Festus 38L.

Caecilii Metelli looked to connect themselves to Praeneste and Caeculus. Other authors also connect Caeculus with Praeneste, but they do not connect the Caecilii to Caeculus.²⁰

Pliny records an interesting shred of evidence that provides an Etruscan connection for the Caecilii. He mentions that Tanaquil, the wife of Tarquinius Priscus, was also called Gaia Caecilia, but it is impossible to know whether the connection is a true one, or a mere coincidence. It would seem that Pliny, who was very interested in the Caecilii Metelli judging from his treatment of them earlier in his work, would have made some sort of connection between the wife of Tarquinius Priscus and the famous family if he had been aware of it.²¹ Pliny does not appear to connect the Caecilii Metelli to the wife of Rome's first Etruscan king, nor does he make any mention of the Metelli being connected to Caeculus.

Finally, in connection with the rescuing of the Palladium by L. Metellus (cos. 251), Valerius Maximus records that this Metellus had originally been on his way to Tusculum when he turned back after witnessing a portent and was thus in Rome when the fire broke out.²² What Valerius Maximus does not say is what Metellus was doing or why he was heading to Tusculum. While he could possibly have been traveling to one of the family's estates, this is speculative. From the literary evidence alone it would appear that there may be an Etruscan connection, given the Etruscan influence at Praeneste in the early period and the possibility that the Etruscan queen Gaia Caecilia was a distant ancestor

Numismatics

The study of coins provides another opportunity to gather evidence for the origin of the Caecilii Metelli. Taylor has noted that coin types can be used as “confirmatory evidence

²⁰ Cato fr.59P; Virg. *Aen.* 7.668–684; Festus 38L; Serv. *Aen.* 7.678.

²¹ Plin., *NH* 8.194.

²² Val. Max. 1.4.5.

for the origin and tribe of certain senators.”²³ Because coins were so ubiquitous, they were often used as a form of propaganda by those men responsible for the mint. While the traditional emblems of Rome and Rome’s power often appear, it is also the case that a coin will often contain more personalized information about the man responsible for minting it. These men could, and often did, use their position to portray family connections or other things they wished to emphasize and impress upon the minds of the public. A coin could be used to reinforce an already believed idea or connection, or they could just as easily be in use to consciously craft a new connection to some great hero of the past.

Most of the coins minted by members of the Metellan family incorporate elephants in memory of the great victory of Lucius Metellus (cos. 251, 247) over Hasdrubal and his capture of Carthaginian elephants, which were brought to Rome and used in his triumph.²⁴ Others deal with the victories of Metellus Macedonicus (cos. 143) in Greece. Still others contain religious symbols.²⁵ However, only one coin provides insight into the way that the Caecilii Metelli wanted to portray their origins, and what origins they wanted publicized. M. Metellus (cos. 115) issued a coin that had a representation of a Macedonian shield on the reverse, commemorating his father’s victories in Greece. On the obverse is a portrait of Vulcan, the father of Caeculus.²⁶ This may suggest that during this period, which was the apex of their influence and power, the Metelli associated themselves with Vulcan, and by extension Caeculus and Praeneste, which had been a powerful and formidable city in the early days of Rome’s history.

²³ Taylor, *VDRR*, 182.

²⁴ Crawford 269/1.

²⁵ Greece: Crawford 263/1a; for a discussion of the religious symbols on coins of the Metelli see Taylor, “Symbols of the Augurate on the Coins of the Caecilii Metelli,” *AJA* 48 (1944): 352–356.

²⁶ For the coin: Crawford 263/2; for the story of Vulcan and Caeculus: Cato fr.59P; Serv. *Aen.* 7.678.

None of these types of evidence can be used on its own to determine the origins of the Caecilii Metelli. However, taken together a fairly coherent picture appears. Epigraphic evidence suggests that the family is associated with the general area of Latium, with the Greek inscription *de agro Pergameno* linking the family to the voting tribe Aniensis. This places them geographically in an area south of the Anio River but north and west of Praeneste. While it is possible that the family simply owned land in this area and were able to claim membership in that tribe, Taylor states, “The senators who claimed Rome as their place of origin...might be registered in any tribe where they held property, but the senators from citizen communities of Italy were usually in the tribe of their place of origin.”²⁷ This may have been the case with the Metelli. As a plebeian family who arrived in Rome relatively late, they were most likely enrolled in the tribe from which they originated. The fact that they wanted to connect themselves to Caeculus and Praeneste can be easily explained by the relative importance and status of Praeneste in the early days of the Republic and their desire to appear on the same level as other aristocratic clans who could claim descent from famous men or heroes. If the Caecilii Metelli were men of humble origins who came to be municipal aristocrats in a smaller city and eventually rose to prominence in Roman politics, they would have looked for a suitably honorable place of origin to claim as their own. Praeneste was a suitable option, being close to the area where they originally came from but also being an important city with a powerful and proud history.²⁸

²⁷ Taylor, *VDRR*, 178-179.

²⁸ It is interesting that the family claimed origin from a place not in their geographic tribe. This would suggest either that Taylor’s geographical boundaries of the tribes are incorrect or that this discrepancy was not understood by the Romans to be a major issue.

Early Metelli

The first Caecilius Metellus in the historical record appears in 284 as consul of Rome.²⁹ That he is the first member of the family to be mentioned and that he held the consulship strongly suggests that the family had some level of influence before that time. The end of the fourth century and beginning of the third century was a period of consolidation for Rome as her power expanded out into Latium and Campania. In the aftermath of the Great Latin War that was concluded in 338 with the final defeat of Praeneste and Tibur, Rome became the dominant influence and power in central Italy. The way that the Romans chose to deal with their vanquished foes set the precedent and established the pattern that they would follow in their expansion throughout the peninsula. By dealing with each city or town individually and severing any ties connecting the various cities to each other, Rome effectively ended the Latin League. Creating a system of relationships that allowed her to create a new kind of commonwealth or federation also allowed Rome to emerge this commonwealth's undisputed leader.³⁰

One of the chief ways that Rome was able to increase her influence with these former enemies was through the integration of their leaders. The introduction of municipal aristocrats into Roman politics gave Roman politics a distinct Latin and Campanian flavor and these men were often sought as political allies. Münzer notes that, "The leading aristocratic clans took the lead in this, gave them their own daughters and sought wives among them, concluded guest treaties and alliances of friendship with them."³¹ As opposed to later Republican history when senators were extremely jealous of their positions, "Far

²⁹ Broughton, *MRR* 1.187. See the family stemma in Appendix 3.1.

³⁰ Livy 8.14 details the final settlement and modern discussions can be found in Scullard, *AHRW*, 131–153 and Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome*, 347–352.

³¹ Münzer, *RAPF*, 51.

more frequently in earlier times Rome itself must have attracted such prominent men from foreign states and, even from hostile states, have taken them into its service and retained them permanently by distinguishing them with honors and magistracies and treating them as equal in birth and standing with its own aristocracy.”³² Forsythe agrees when he says that, “Elite families from outlying communities newly incorporated into the Roman state could and often did become active participants in the Roman political system”, which participation “was crucial to the ongoing vitality of the Roman ruling class.”³³

Several families that would become influential in Roman politics can be categorized as municipal aristocrats that gained access to Rome’s halls of power. The Fulvii and the Mamilii both came from Tusculum, as did the first plebeian *pontifex maximus* Ti. Coruncanius. The Plautii, who had numerous consuls in the fourth century were from Praeneste. The Atilii came from Campania, as did the Decii Mures. The great general Manius Curius Dentatus was a Sabine. To these municipal aristocrats can be added the Caecilii Metelli, who most likely came from a smaller outlying town of Latium near Praeneste.³⁴

The First Metellus at Rome

The first Caecilius mentioned in Roman history was Tribune of the Plebs in 439, but whether he should be considered a real historical character is doubtful since it seems strange to have the Caecilii in Rome so early. When the family finally does appear in force almost two centuries later, it is as consuls and generals and they have a continuous presence among

³² Münzer, *RAPF*, 49.

³³ Gary Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome: From Prehistory to the First Punic War*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 276.

³⁴ The considerable presence and influence of those municipal aristocrats from Etruria has been documented by John Hall in “The Municipal Aristocracy of Etruria and Their Participation in Politics at Rome, B.C. 91–A.D. 14” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984).

Rome's ruling elite.³⁵ The most that may be said about this Caecilius is that he may be a distant ancestor or collateral member of the family, and his existence may even have been advocated and propagated by the Metelli as a way to increase their antiquity in Rome.

On the other hand, the first member of the Caecilii Metelli whose existence is secure is L. Caecilius Metellus Denter (cos. 284). It is possible and even likely, given the contemporary political situation at Rome and the aforementioned penchant for integrating important municipal aristocrats, that the Caecilii Metelli had come to Rome in the aftermath of the Latin War and the defeat of Praeneste and surrounding territories. If the family did in fact come from the hilly regions of Latium around Praeneste east of Rome, it is possible that a member of the family was given a *viritate*—or specific and individual—grant of citizenship for services rendered during the conflict, providing the citizenship to his descendants.³⁶ If this is the case, as seems likely, then a member of the family reached the consulship only 54 years after the defeat of Praeneste. This is not altogether out of the ordinary, for the town of Tusculum was known not only for how many consuls came from there but also for how quickly after enfranchisement a Tusculan obtained the consulship.³⁷ The example of Tusculum shows that the Romans were not shy in this period about electing a person with whom they were unfamiliar, as can be seen in the example of L. Fulvius Curvus'

³⁵ Suolahti, *Roman Censors*, 404.

³⁶ The tribe Aniensis was composed largely of "viritate assignments to citizens on the south side of the Anio" (Taylor, *VDRR*, 57). Gary D. Farney, *Ethnic Identity and Aristocratic Competition in Republican Rome*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 43 also notes: "In the years after the Latin War, the *domi nobiles* from the rest of Latium began to find their place in the Roman Senate, following, of course, a grant of citizenship for those from communities not wholly enfranchised already." Since it is not possible to firmly determine the origins of the Caecilii Metelli and thus discover whether they received their citizenship along with the rest of their city or town, it should be remembered that, "In addition to communal grants, exceptional personal grants of citizenship to worthy municipal aristocrats probably introduced several Latin families to the Roman aristocracy" (Farney, *Ethnic Identity*, 44). See also T.P. Wiseman, *New Men in the Roman Senate 139 B.C.–A.D. 14*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 17, 24.

³⁷ Cic., *Plancio* 19. It was some sixty from the time Tusculum was brought under Roman control until the city produced a consul.

colleague in office, the patrician Q. Fabius Maximus Rullianus. Cornell has persuasively argued that in this period following the Licinian-Sextian laws, “patricians and plebeians were able to form alliances for their mutual benefit, to pool their resources in electoral campaigns” and that, “the consuls of a given year were often political allies who had stood as joint candidates on an electoral ticket.”³⁸

A similar situation to the one just mentioned may have resulted in the election of Metellus Denter. Not much is recorded about his year in office other than his disastrous defeat and unfortunate death in battle against the Gauls, and absolutely nothing is recorded about how he came to office. This is not entirely abnormal for this period, considering that often the only aspects of a politician’s career that survive are the events of his consulship and any subsequent offices or actions that warranted mention in the sources. Metellus Denter’s colleague in office was the patrician C. Servilius Tucca who only appears in the historical record for this year and nothing is known about his actions.³⁹ There is no way to discern if they were connected at all before their consulship, but it appears that their year in office provided fruit for further interactions between the two families in succeeding generations, as the Metelli and Servilii were sometimes linked. Although it is not possible due to the nature of the surviving evidence to ascertain which branch of the Servilii this consul came from, it is a fact that some time later the Metelli and the Servilii were connected in marriage and probably politics. Scullard asserts that Servilius Tucca could have been the uncle to the Servilii cousins who were consuls in 253 and 252.⁴⁰ Although the Servilii are traditionally linked to the Aemilii and both families are later connected to the Metelli, there is only slight

³⁸ Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome*, 343

³⁹ It is also interesting to note that the *cognomen* Tucca and the *agnomen* Denter only appear in their respective families this one time.

⁴⁰ Scullard, *RP*, 36.

evidence linking the Metelli to the Aemilii in this period.⁴¹ Another of these municipal aristocrats, who was from Praeneste and was linked to the Aemilii, may also have been connected to the Metelli. C. Fabricius Luscinus was associated with the Aemilii and there may have been a marriage tie to the Metelli.⁴² This would provide a tenuous political connection to the Aemilii during this early period. Metellus Denter became consul and, if the suspect Caecilius of two hundred years earlier is discarded, he did so as a *novus homo*, only ten years after the first recorded new man.⁴³ Metellus Denter was the fourth new man to obtain Rome's highest magistracy since 293, and may have done so with the help of the Servilii and Aemilii.⁴⁴ Whatever his political affiliations might have been, this Metellus is part of that "interesting but elusive class of Italian senators who achieved that rank before the enfranchisement of their home towns."⁴⁵

What is known about Metellus Denter is that his political career was cut short by his death in battle at Arretium. The surviving accounts in Polybius and Livy, which are either expanded upon or redacted by later authors, recount that Metellus Denter was killed while fighting the Gauls at Arretium. The accounts diverge from here, and discussion among modern scholars revolves around two closely related points: when did the battle actually occur and what office did Metellus Denter hold at the time? A third question arises out of the answer to the previous two that centers on the status of M'. Curius Dentatus, who was sent to

⁴¹ Some time later Metellus Macedonicus served as a legate to Aemilius Paullus, the victor of Pydna. The Metelli had many political connections with the Servilii and Aemilii. They often followed each other in magistracies and often served together in various positions. See appendix 2.1 and 2.3.

⁴² For his Aemilian connections see Cic. *Lael.* 39.

⁴³ "The first consul to be named in our sources as a new man was Sp. Carvilius in 293" (Wiseman, *New Men*, 1).

⁴⁴ The other *novi homines* were Sp. Carvilius (cos. 293), M'. Curius Dentatus (cos. 290), Q. Caedicius (cos. 289).

⁴⁵ Wiseman, *New Men*, 17.

replace the fallen Metellus.⁴⁶ Morgan suggests that Metellus was consul in 284 and that his command was prorogued for 283 and so it was as proconsul early in that year that he met his death along with a great number of men.⁴⁷ Brennan takes a very different approach to the issue, but arrives at a broadly similar conclusion differing only in the details of office, namely that Metellus Dentatus was consul in 284 and then elected praetor for 283 *in absentia* in order to allow him the appropriate *imperium* to command troops against the Gauls in that year.⁴⁸ It may at first seem odd for a senator to hold the office of consul and subsequently that of praetor, but in this period it was “a device used in extraordinary circumstances to give an outgoing consul *imperium* (ableit ‘minus’) for a full year” and was “an alternative to prorogation *pro consule*.”⁴⁹ Ultimately, the official status of L. Caecilius Metellus Dentatus when he was killed is not as important as the fact that he sat at one point in the curule chair and thus ennobled his family and eased the path to future success for his sons and grandsons.

Conditor Famae Familiae

Many Italian senators who achieved a modicum of success in the political arena during this period were unable to pass that success on to their descendants. “Only if his sons

⁴⁶ Brennan, “M’. Curius Dentatus and the Praetor’s Right to Triumph,” *Historia* 43 (1994): 423–439. Although not central to the issue being dealt with here, Dentatus’ victory and subsequent precedent is important for the Metelli because Metellus Macedonicus, the great-grandson of Metellus Dentatus, was awarded a triumph as a praetor.

⁴⁷ M. Gwyn Morgan, “The Defeat of L. Metellus Dentatus at Arretium,” *CQ* 22 (1972) 309–325, n.b. 324–325. The number of Roman casualties is reported as seven military tribunes and thirteen thousand soldiers by Oros. 3.22.12–14; August., *CD* 3.17. For other modern accounts and discussions regarding this battle at Arretium and its consequences see also E.T. Salmon, “Rome’s Battles with Etruscans and Gauls in 284–282 BC,” *CPh* 30 (1935): 23–31; F.W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, 3 vols (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957) 1:188f.; J.H. Corbett, “Rome and the Gauls 285–280 BC,” *Historia* 20 (1971): 656–664.

⁴⁸ Brennan, “M’. Curius Dentatus and the Praetor’s Right to Triumph”, 431, 438. Brennan also cites the precedent set by Ap. Claudius Pulcher who was consul in 296 and then elected praetor for 295 *in absentia*. See also Brennan, *The Praetorship in the Roman Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 277: “L. Caecilius Metellus Dentatus was almost certainly praetor in the year immediately following his consulship.”

⁴⁹ Brennan, *Praetorship*, 76 and note.

succeeded in obtaining the same honor or a higher one was its prestige established.”⁵⁰ Thus, it was the son of the fallen Metellus Dentor who secured the place of the Caecilii Metelli among the highest nobility of the capital city through his political involvement, religious piety and military success. L. Caecilius Metellus burst onto the historical scene when he was assigned to Sicily as consul in 251, in the middle years of the First Punic War. Rome had taken to the sea with mixed success, but had scored a victory in 254 by capturing Panormus, but had done little since then. The war had been dragging on for more than ten years when Lucius Metellus was elected consul in 251. Rome was fatigued, had suffered numerous defeats at sea and had decided to refocus her efforts in winning land engagements. However, the Carthaginians had put their famous and feared elephants to effective use and the Roman troops had shown themselves to be less than enthusiastic about the prospect of facing these strange weapons.⁵¹ Both consuls were in Sicily at this time and when Metellus’ colleague Furius Pacilius returned to Rome in order to hold the elections, Metellus was left alone in the recently captured city of Panormus, which had by this time been in Roman hands for three years.⁵² While he was alone defending Panormus, the Carthaginian general Hasdrubal decided to attack and show Rome’s Sicilian allies that Rome was unable to offer significant and effective protection and thus encourage defections to Carthage.

There is discussion about the specific date for the battle of Panormus and whether the actual fighting occurred in 251 or 250. The sources that derive from Livy have Metellus fighting Hasdrubal as consul in the year 251, but this must not be taken firmly since Livy

⁵⁰ Münzer, *RAPF*, 167.

⁵¹ Polyb. 1.39.7–10.

⁵² Polyb. 1.40.1–2.

often fails to distinguish between consuls and proconsuls.⁵³ Part of the confusion results from the fact that Metellus had his *imperium* extended into 250, which provides an alternative date for the actual battle. It must be recalled that Metellus' consular colleague returned to Rome to hold the elections, suggesting that the end of the consular year, if not the calendar year, was drawing to a close. Hence, the remaining time in the campaign season would have been short. Since Polybius records that Hasdrubal attacked at the height of the grain harvest, which surely would have already passed for the year 251, the battle must have been fought in 250.⁵⁴

Once Pacilius had left for Rome and Metellus was on his own in the city of Panormus, Hasdrubal seized the opportunity and boldly attempted to draw Metellus out of his stronghold. However Metellus, realizing that his men were not enthusiastic about engaging Hasdrubal's troops and especially his elephants on the open plain outside the city, kept his men inside the walls in an attempt to place the Carthaginians in an unfavorable position close to the walls of the city. Hasdrubal mistook this as a sign of weakness and reluctance to fight.⁵⁵ Metellus' plan was to lure the elephants in close to the walls of the city and near to a trench located just under the walls. This trench had been built to provide cover for the lightly armed skirmishers that were to be sent out as bait. Hasdrubal moved forward quickly across a river and engaged the Roman skirmishers, who had been given orders to focus their attacks on the elephants and then to retire to the relative safety of the trench. Their tactics drew the elephants, whose drivers sought to outperform each other, closer and closer to the walls. Once the Carthaginian elephants were in range, the Roman soldiers stationed on the wall began to pelt them with missiles until they turned on their own troops and created a great

⁵³ The sources derived from Livy are Frontin., *Strat.* 2.5.4.; Flor. 1.18.27; Eutrop. 2.24; Oros. 4.9.14.

⁵⁴ M.G. Morgan, "Polybius and the Date of the Battle of Panormus," *CQ* 22 (1972): 121–129, which seems to have as its main goal the vindication of Polybius as much as the correct date of the battle. See also Walbank, *Polybius* 1:102–103.

⁵⁵ Polyb. 1.40.3–4.

deal of confusion. At this point Metellus led his fresh and organized troops out of a gate on the enemy's left flank in a devastating counter-attack and caused a severe rout.⁵⁶ The ancient sources disagree on exactly how many elephants were captured, but they all agree that a great number were brought to Metellus.⁵⁷ Even more important than the number of elephants captured and taken to Rome for Metellus' eventual triumph was the immediate improvement in Roman confidence and morale. Just prior to Metellus' victory the senate had decided to change strategies again and focus their efforts on a naval campaign. The two consuls elected for 250 were both men with naval experience, but when news reached Rome of the great victory at Panormus it was decided to continue the land struggle. Roman courage had been restored and her troops had realized that they could fight against and defeat the dreaded Carthaginian elephants. Unfortunately in the next year, the failed siege of Lilybaeum robbed "Metellus' victory of long-term significance on a par with the unquestionable importance it possessed in 250."⁵⁸

Metellus returned to Rome and celebrated a triumph *de Poenis* in September and hosted a feast for the people of Rome.⁵⁹ His triumph was noted for the captured elephants, which were apparently brought across the Straits of Messina on rafts constructed by lashing casks together and laying planks over the top of them. This was the first time the beasts had ever been led through the streets of Rome, and they subsequently became a major part of the

⁵⁶ Polyb. 1.40.5–16; cf. Zon. 8.14–15.

⁵⁷ Polybius says that ten elephants were captured with their mahouts and that all the rest who had already thrown their drivers were also captured (1.40.16); Livy records thirteen enemy generals and 120 elephants were captured (*Per.* 19); Dionysius reports 138 captured elephants (2.66.3–4), and Florus says about one hundred elephants were captured (1.18.27–28).

⁵⁸ Morgan, "Polybius and the Date of the Battle of Panormus", 128.

⁵⁹ *Act. Tr.*; for the feast see Dio 11.29b

family's iconography.⁶⁰ Verrius Flaccus reported that they were killed in the Circus because the Romans were unsure what to do with them, but Piso records that they were merely prodded around the Circus to increase the Romans' contempt for them—perhaps as a way for Roman troops to get used to being around them.⁶¹

It was most likely around the time of his triumphant return in 250 that Metellus was also co-opted into the college of pontiffs.⁶² The only *pontifex* known for sure at this time was the *pontifex maximus* Ti. Coruncanius, who had achieved the office in 254 and was the first plebeian to hold the position, although Rüpke suggests that C. Papirius Maso could have also been a member of the college at this time.⁶³ The evidence regarding the colleges of priests and augurs is scanty for this period, but in the next generation most men who were chosen for these religious positions were relatively young and were chosen less as a reward for deeds done and more because of their family's position. Their religious appointment often served as a springboard to political careers and success.⁶⁴ Because most priests and augurs were chosen for inclusion when they were young men on account of their father's position or their family's prestige,⁶⁵ Metellus' admission into the pontifical college is somewhat irregular and perhaps should be seen as a reward for his recent and exceptional service to Rome. He had to have already been a priest when he was elected *pontifex maximus* in 243, but previous to his

⁶⁰ Plin., *NH* 7.139; for elephants as Metellan iconography see Taylor, "Symbols of the Augurate on the Coins of the Caecilii Metelli", 352–356; for the transportation of the elephants see Plin., *NH* 8.16–17.

⁶¹ Plin., *NH* 8.16–17.

⁶² Jörg Rüpke, *Fasti Sacerdotum: A Prosopography of Pagan, Jewish, and Christian Religious Officials in the City of Rome, 300 B.C. to A.D. 499* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 75 lists L. Caecilius Metellus as a possible *pontifex* beginning in 250.

⁶³ Rüpke, *FS*, 75 under the appropriate years

⁶⁴ David E. Hahm, "Roman Nobility and the Three Major Priesthoods, 218–167 B.C.," *TAPhA* 94 (1963): 73–85. Note especially pp. 82–83 where Hahm suggests that the priesthoods were "primarily a means of assistance for political advancement" (82) and that "a priesthood may well have been a form of political patronage" (82). He notes that 80% of augurs and 70% of priests who were co-opted before reaching the consulship ended up achieving that office (83 n.32).

⁶⁵ Hahm, "Roman Nobility and the Three Major Priesthoods," 73–85.

consulship there is no record of him having done anything to merit inclusion in the pontifical college and he certainly would not have been appointed on account of his family's history or reputation. The most likely scenario would seem to be that he was co-opted sometime shortly after his triumph and since he was older and the circumstances somewhat special, his appointment was made as a sign of honor and appreciation. He was the first of the Metelli to hold a priesthood, and until his victory over Hasdrubal the Caecili Metelli did not have a significant presence in Rome. After Lucius Metellus however, the Metelli would remain an important family in the city of Rome for several generations and it was as a priest that Lucius Metellus would garner even more prestige and respect for his family.

In the very next year after his triumph he was appointed as *magister equitum* to the dictator Atilius Caiatinus, who was the first dictator to lead an army outside of Italy.⁶⁶ In the aftermath of several Roman defeats, the most infamous being that of Claudius Pulcher at Drepanum when he tossed the sacred chickens into the sea because they would not give favorable omens, the Romans appointed a *dictator rei gerundae causa*.⁶⁷ When Claudius appointed one of his own subordinates to be dictator, the man was forced to resign the office almost immediately, in order to make way for someone more suitable.⁶⁸ The new dictator was A. Atilius Caiatinus, sometimes referred to as Calatinus.⁶⁹ Atilius was the grandson of the great Fabius Rullianus through his mother and may thus be supposed to have been sympathetic to the Fabii.⁷⁰ This does not necessarily mean that his *magister equitum* L. Metellus shared these political loyalties, although it seems unlikely that a dictator would

⁶⁶ Liv., *Per.* 19; Dio 36.34.3.

⁶⁷ The story of Claudius is recounted in Polyb. 1.49-51; Livy, *Per.* 19; Cic. *ND* 2.7; Liv. 22.42.9. The evidence for the appointment of a dictator is found in *ILLRP*, 42f., 436.

⁶⁸ *Fast. Cap.*; Liv., *Per.* 19

⁶⁹ Münzer, *RAPF*, 58

⁷⁰ Münzer, *RAPF*, 58. Scullard, *RP*, 32 seems merely to use succession in office as evidence of clear connection between the Atilii and the Fabii, even though they appear to be from different branches of the family.

choose someone who was not politically amicable. The appointment of a *magister equitum* was not always a free and unencumbered choice for the dictator—especially in a militarily important situation. Perhaps it was merely the expedient thing for Atilius to appoint as his second-in-command someone who had previously been successful in Sicily and who was popular among the people. Rome’s recent and disastrous defeats would have everyone in a sour mood.⁷¹ The people, who were surely tired of the war which was now in its fifteenth year, were likely clamoring for someone who could defeat the Carthaginians. The victor of Panormus was the only recent military commander who had faced the Carthaginians with success. Unfortunately, the historical record reports that they accomplished little and returned to Italy.⁷²

L. Metellus was elected consul a second time in 247, notwithstanding the *lex Genucia* of 342 prohibiting iteration within ten years, and this time with N. Fabius Buteo as colleague.⁷³ His earlier appointment as *magister equitum* to the son-in-law of the respected Fabius Rullianus and then his consulship with Fabius Buteo could suggest that Metellus was politically friendly with the Fabii, but the evidence is not convincing. Additionally, it appears that during this time a connection existed between L. Metellus and the Servilii and Aurelii Cottae. Lucius Metellus follows Servilius Geminus and Aurelius Cotta, who were consuls together in 252 and again in 248, in both his consulships.⁷⁴ While the idea of succession in office must be treated with extreme caution, the same pattern of iteration in such a short period of time suggests something is afoot. Concerning this exact period Badian insightfully notes,

⁷¹ Claudius had lost most of his fleet of Drepanum and Iunius lost his fleet in a storm (Claudius: Polyb. 1.49–51; Liv. *Per.* 19; Flor. 1.18.29; Iunius: Polyb. 1.52.5–55; Zon. 8.15; Oros. 4.10.3).

⁷² Zon. 8.15; cf. Dio 36.34.3

⁷³ The law seems rarely to have been followed, especially in time of internal and external crisis.

⁷⁴ Geminus’ cousin, Servilius Caepio, was consul in 253

It is admittedly dangerous to deduce political associations from association or succession in office... but this precise repetition of both collegiality and succession within the space of four years is too striking to be conceivably accidental.⁷⁵

The fact that in the next generation Lucius Metellus' son is also connected to the Servilii and that in the period of the Metelli's greatest influence these same families are again united supports the idea that this particular grouping was not coincidence.⁷⁶ This evidence may lend additional force to the suggestion that Metellus Denther and Servilius Tuca formed a political relationship and friendship during their consulship that endured for many generations.

The former dictator Atilius Caiatinus was elected censor in the year of Metellus' second consulship, but it was not Metellus' popularity that helped Atilius. Atilius was one of the best men of the period and was well-respected.⁷⁷ Münzer says that the Metelli are connected to the Fabii through the Atilii in this period, but he may be stretching the evidence too much. He notes that in the three years 247–245 all three patrician consuls are Fabii and that two of the three plebeian consuls can be linked to them.⁷⁸ Even though there is only slight evidence connecting L. Metellus to the Fabii, Münzer states that, “Metellus was surely on good terms with the Fabian circle; for in 249 he was chosen *magister equitum* by A. Atilius Calatinus, that son of a Fabia and the first and last dictator outside Italy to receive the

⁷⁵ E. Badian, *Studies in Greek and Roman History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1964), 36.

⁷⁶ Badian, *Studies*, 36.

⁷⁷ Cic. *Pis.* 14; *Planc.* 60; *Tusc.* 1.110; *Nat. Deor.* 2.165; *Rep.* 1.1.

⁷⁸ Münzer, *RAPF*, 57–61. Scullard is less enthusiastic about the Fabian connection to the Metelli in this period (*RP*, 33). The three Fabian consuls were N. Fabius Buteo (cos. 247), M. Fabius Licinus (cos. 246), and M. Fabius Buteo (cos. 245). The plebeian consuls were respectively L. Caecilius Metellus, M. Otacilius Crassus, and C. Atilius Bulbus.

supreme command.”⁷⁹ The only evidence offered by Münzer for his suggestion that Metellus was politically friendly to the Fabii is the fact that he had been subordinate to Atilius and was now co-consul with a Fabius. However, as has already been shown, it is more likely that Atilius chose Metellus for military reasons, although political and personal motivations need not be excluded. Metellus most likely iterated in 247 because of his immense popularity as a military commander and his affiliations with the powerful Servilii, but this does not mean that Metellus and the Fabii were unfriendly or political enemies. Later in his career and toward the end of his life Metellus chose his former colleague Fabius Buteo as his own *magister equitum* when he was appointed dictator for holding elections. This suggests that there was a long term, friendly relationship between the two men.

The year of Metellus’ second consulship is the most likely year for his dedication of a Temple to Ops Opifera, which he had almost certainly vowed during his time in Sicily against Hasdrubal.⁸⁰ While the temple is generally attributed to Metellus Delmaticus (cos. 119), Morgan lucidly points out that it is unlikely that Delmaticus could have built this temple and restored the Temple of Castor, which he is known to have done, from the spoils of his victories.⁸¹ Lucius Metellus, on the other hand, was extremely wealthy and would have had the motive, means, and opportunity to do so. If Metellus was in fact a priest by this period, his desires to fulfill a religious obligation may well have been heightened. If L. Metellus was the Metellus who financed the construction of this temple and dedicated it, an

⁷⁹ Münzer, *RAPF*, 60.

⁸⁰ M.G. Morgan, “‘Metellus Pontifex’ and Ops Opifera: A Note on Pliny ‘Naturalis Historia’ 11.174,” *Phoenix* 27 (1973): 35–41.

⁸¹ Morgan, “Metellus Pontifex”, 36.

idea of the man's religiosity begins to emerge that only becomes sharper as his later religious career is examined.⁸²

In 243 Ti. Coruncanius died and L. Metellus was elected to replace him as *pontifex maximus*.⁸³ Thus, by the time Metellus died in 221, seventy-nine years after Rome's priesthoods had been opened to plebeians, plebeians had held the chief religious office in Rome for thirty-two continuous years, and Metellus filled that role for twenty-two of them. Two episodes from his religious tenure are recorded in the sources and both show his devotion to the gods of Rome. In 242, the year after his election as *pontifex maximus* he forbade the consul Postumius Albinus from leaving Rome.⁸⁴ The war with Carthage was winding down and surely Postumius was hoping to play a role in the defeat of Rome's enemy. However, Postumius was also the *flamen Martialis* and Metellus kept him in Rome in order to perform his religious duties.⁸⁵ While technically the priesthood of Postumius was higher than that of Metellus, being one of the *flamines maiores*, the *flamen Martialis* was still considered a part of the college of pontiffs and consequently subordinate to Metellus.⁸⁶ Tacitus, writing almost three centuries later, saw this altercation as a personal feud, which it may have been, but there is another explanation.⁸⁷ In this confrontation between the new *pontifex maximus* and the *flamen Martialis* can be seen lingering effects of the struggle

⁸² See Morgan's discussion in "Metellus Pontifex", 36–37 for his arguments refuting the supposed stammering problem of the Metellus who dedicated this temple.

⁸³ Szemler, *The Priests of the Roman Republic* (Brussels: Latomus, 1972), 30 says: "It is certain, however, that during the third century the *pontifex maximus* was elected from members of the pontifical college by a special assembly of 17 tribes." cf. L.R. Taylor, "The Election of the Pontifex Maximus in the Late Republic," *CP* 37 (1942): 421–424.

⁸⁴ The story is recounted in Liv., *Per.* 19, 37.51.1–2; Val. Max. 1.1.2; Tac. *Ann.* 3.71.

⁸⁵ Liv. 37.51.1–2.

⁸⁶ Jens H. Vangaard, *The Flamen: A Study in the History and Sociology of Roman Religion* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 1988), 56–57. The interlocking authority of the priesthoods is interesting and brings to mind the balance of powers in the Roman governmental system, namely the power of veto as exercised by magistrates and the tribunes.

⁸⁷ Tac., *Ann.* 3.58.

between the patricians and plebeians, played out in the religious arena. The *lex Ogulnia*, passed in 300 and opening religious offices to plebeians, was still in the relatively recent past and it is possible that the patricians had hoped to regain the office of *pontifex maximus* after the brief plebeian intrusion of Ti. Cornuncanius. When Metellus was chosen and their hopes were not realized the patrician members of the college may have vented their frustrations in various ways. Metellus' decision to forbid Postumius from leaving Rome on religious grounds can be seen as an attempt by the new plebeian chief priest to assert his authority and by extension that of plebeians in administering the state religion.

The following year a fire broke out in Rome and the Temple of Vesta caught fire. Housed inside the temple was the Palladium, the sacred image of Athena that had once protected Troy and had been brought to Rome. Metellus courageously entered the burning precinct when the Vestals had refused out of fear for their personal safety, and saved the statue from the flames. Because men were forbidden to enter the sanctuary, later authors embellished the account to say that the *pontifex maximus* lost his sight as a result of his deed.⁸⁸ The earliest sources mention nothing of any divine retribution, but on the contrary say that Metellus was honored.⁸⁹ The first mention of Metellus' blindness is found in Seneca's *Controversiae*, which were composed at the beginning of the first century A.D. Because this work was designed as an exercise for students to practice their rhetorical skills by arguing difficult cases, the notion of Metellus' blindness becomes immediately suspect. The other sources that mention his blindness are all later. Pliny the Elder discusses Metellus in his work in context of the mutability of human fortune and records that the blinding of

⁸⁸Ov., *Fasti* 6.437–454; Lucan 1.598.

⁸⁹Liv., *Per.* 19; Dion. Hal. 2.66; Ovid, *Fasti* 6.437–454.

Metellus prevented him from being considered *felix*.⁹⁰ It is excusable if later authors, who were far removed from the event, felt that the high priest had committed a sacrilege by invading a space forbidden to men and that an appropriate divine punishment, especially for someone named Caecilius—with its linguistic connections to *caecus*—was to be deprived of his eyesight.⁹¹ The sources all agree that the fire was large and out of control, and a later source notes that he was injured in the rescue,⁹² but nothing is mentioned about his blindness until Seneca's writings. Finally, the fact that he was appointed dictator in 224—nearly twenty years after this event— and that he was not removed from his religious post, since priests had to be without physical blemish, strongly suggests that he was not blinded or permanently injured in the fire.⁹³

Two interesting pieces of information illuminate how Metellus' act of piety was perceived by his countrymen. Dionysius of Halicarnassus records that, in connection with this event, Metellus received great honors from the State and that a statue of Metellus was set up on the Capitol recording these honors. Apparently the statue was still standing in Dionysius' time.⁹⁴ Additionally, Pliny records that the nation voted to allow Metellus to ride in a chariot on his way to senate meetings, but that this was in recompense for having lost his sight. However, it is just as likely that Pliny is recording the true historical memory of an honor given to Metellus by a grateful nation and mixing it with the more fanciful perception

⁹⁰ Plin., *NH* 7.141

⁹¹ Most of the scholarship regarding Metellus and his blindness has been done by Italians. See for example, C. Pellegrino, "La cecità del pontefice Massimo L. Cecilio Metello," *Latomus* 277 (2003): 503–512.

⁹² August., *CD* 3.18.2.

⁹³ Dion. Hal. 2.21.3; Sen., *Contr.* 4.2; Gell., *NA* 1.12.3; Szemler, *The Priests of the Roman Republic*, 30–31. It is also possible that his blindness was real. If this was the case, the circumstances surrounding his blindness could still be used to make a moral point by later authors.

⁹⁴ Dion. Hal. 2.66.

of his blindness.⁹⁵ When taken together with the statue of him that was erected, it is possible that his right to ride to senate meetings in a chariot was an honor given to a national hero. If he was indeed injured in his act of religious devotion, then the issue of the chariot may have been a practical concession to allow Rome's presiding *pontifex* access to his necessary meetings. Either way, Metellus' rescue of the Palladium combined with his attention to religious detail in retaining the *flamen Martialis* and his construction and dedication of the Temple of Ops Opifera illustrate his deep and personal feelings of religious conviction. After the fact, both of these events would have been exploited in order to gain as much political effect as possible.

There is no secure mention of Metellus in the sources again until 224 when he is appointed dictator for holding elections. However, in his funeral speech for his father, Q. Metellus (cos. 206) records the *cursus* for L. Metellus and mentions that he was *xv viri agris dandis*.⁹⁶ This has apparently not been noticed by Broughton and has not been much discussed by scholars.⁹⁷ If Metellus really was a member of a land commission, the most likely instance would have been the commission probably formed under a *lex Flaminia* in 232. If he were a part of this commission he would have been one of the more senior members on it because of his long career and sterling reputation. The only other possible commission would have been during the distribution of Sabine territory championed by Curius Dentatus, and Metellus would have been a junior member of that commission. His position on the land commission of Flaminius is made more plausible because Flaminius was elected consul at the elections presided over by Metellus when he was dictator in 224.

⁹⁵ Mattingly, "Naevius and the Metelli," 431 note 77 suggests that it is possible that this was the situation that led to Lucius Caecilius receiving the *cognomen* Metellus.

⁹⁶ Plin., *NH* 7.139.

⁹⁷ The exception is the short article by J.H. Corbett, "L. Metellus (Cos. 251, 247), Agrarian Commissioner," *CR* 20 (1970): 7–8.

The only secure evidence from the second half of Metellus' career is from his appointment as *dictator comitiorum habendorum causa* in 224.⁹⁸ Both consuls for the year were away on campaigns across the Po River and Metellus was appointed to hold the elections. His standing as one of the most prestigious men alive in Rome at the time undoubtedly led to his appointment. He chose as his *magister equitum* his old colleague in the consulship N. Fabius Buteo. To have a plebeian dictator appoint a patrician *magister equitum* was highly irregular and the only other time it happened, according to Münzer, was when Metellus' own son likewise chose a patrician, his friend Veturius Philo, as his *magister equitum* in 205.⁹⁹ The position of *magister equitum* in a situation like this, when the dictator's sole responsibility was to oversee the elections, must have been largely formal and honorific. The *magister equitum* was the dictator's second-in-command during military campaigns, but had no real authority when it came to conducting elections. Metellus was likely honoring an old friend with an official position, which could be added to Fabius' *cursus*.

There is another piece of evidence from Seneca that can shed light on another early political connections of Metellus. Seneca records that *Fabriciorum imagines Metellis patuerunt*.¹⁰⁰ While there is no mention in any other of the extant sources about any kind of connection between the Fabricii and the Metelli, the possibility exists that there may have been a marriage connection between the two houses. The Fabricii supposedly came from Praeneste, which is in the area of Latium where the Caecilii Metelli originated.¹⁰¹ The only significant figure to come from the Fabricii was C. Fabricius Luscinus, consul in 282, 278

⁹⁸ *ILLRP*, 44f.

⁹⁹ Münzer, *RAPF*, 403 n.62.

¹⁰⁰ Sen., *Controv.*, 2.1.17.

¹⁰¹ For the Fabricii being from Praeneste see, Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome*, 343; Münzer, s.v. "Fabricius", *RE* 6.1930.

and censor in 275. He triumphed twice and it was in his censorship that one of the first recorded expulsions from the senate was conducted. He became a symbol of rustic frugality and austerity.¹⁰² If Metellus Denter and Fabricius, who were both municipal aristocrats from the same area of Latium and may have known each other, had arranged a marriage between their children, this would go a long way in explaining the career of L. Metellus.

Metellus Denter was killed in his year as consul, and many first generation politicians in Rome, particularly if they came from the cities of Latium or Campania, rarely were able to transfer their political success to succeeding generations.¹⁰³ This would have been the case with Metellus Denter, since he was unable to enjoy the political or social benefits of his position later in life and exploit them for his son's benefit. However, if L. Metellus was the son-in-law of one of Rome's successful generals and statesmen then his political prospects would have a much greater chance. The Fabricii are only important in Roman politics in the generation before the First Punic War and if it was they who made room for the Metelli and not the other way around, as surely would have been the case if the marriage happened at any later time, then it makes sense that a marriage connection would have been formed at this time, opening and smoothing the path to the consulship for Lucius Metellus.

Both Valerius Maximus and Pliny say that Lucius Metellus was one hundred years old when he died, but this is surely an exaggeration. If he had lived to be a centenarian in 221, meaning he had been born in 321, he would have been seventy years old in his first consulship and eighty when he rushed into the burning Temple of Vesta. If that were the case, surely some other memory of his age would have been preserved, especially regarding

¹⁰² Val. Max. 1.8.6.

¹⁰³ Münzer, *RAPF*, 50, 167.

his age on campaign in Sicily.¹⁰⁴ The political, military and religious career of L. Caecilius Metellus was remembered in the funeral oration delivered by his son in 221.¹⁰⁵

His father had achieved the ten greatest and highest objects in the pursuit of which wise men pass their lives: for he had made it his aim to be a first-class warrior, a supreme orator and a very brave commander, to have the direction of operations of the highest importance, to enjoy the greatest honor, to be supremely wise, to be deemed the most eminent member of the senate, to obtain great wealth in an honorable way, to leave many children, and to achieve supreme distinction in the state.¹⁰⁶

This is the earliest surviving example of a *laudatio funebris* and served its purpose well. Metellus' own sons came to political maturity in the Second Punic War and several generations of the Caecilii Metelli owed their positions in Rome to him. Because Lucius Metellus had been *pontifex maximus*, dictator, *magister equitum*, *triumphator*, and twice consul, the Metelli of future generations were able to maximize their abilities and opportunities in a society that placed a premium on a person's heritage and reputation.

The Metelli in the Second Punic War & Its Aftermath

Three years after the death of L. Caecilius Metellus in 221, Rome faced the greatest threat she had ever yet confronted in the person of Hannibal. His march across the Alps and into Italy surprised the Romans, who had become accustomed to dictating terms to their opponents. The Romans' seizure of Sardinia and Corsica in the aftermath of the First Punic

¹⁰⁴ Fabius Maximus Cunctator was sixty-three when he was appointed dictator in 217 after the Roman disaster at Lake Trasimene and a point is made about the fact that Lucius Aemilius Paullus was over sixty when he left to fight Perseus in the Third Macedonian War.

¹⁰⁵ For the entire text, see Plin., *NH* 7.139–140.

¹⁰⁶ Plin., *NH* 7.140, translation from the Loeb edition.

War had only served to strengthen this perception.¹⁰⁷ However, when Hannibal appeared in the plains of Northern Italy, the Romans were quick to try and assert themselves. The Romans' eagerness to expel Hannibal and his army was met with defeat after demoralizing defeat. Roman losses at the Trebia (218), Trasimene (217), and Cannae (216) were horrific, and it was only the delaying tactics of Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus Cunctator that preserved the Republic long enough for Rome to develop a general that was Hannibal's equal. The period of the Second Punic War (218–201), or Hannibalic War, was dominated by the powerful houses of the Fabii and the Cornелии, with their soon to be most famous branch, the Scipiones. The role of the Metelli in these years is largely a supporting one, as the sons of the former *pontifex maximus* struggled to make names for themselves in a period when more senior statesmen iterated in the consulship and other important positions.¹⁰⁸ While not achieving the same level of political power and influence as their father, the sons of the former *pontifex maximus* L. Metellus were active in politics during the Second Punic War and managed to survive—a not insignificant or minor achievement in this period considering senatorial losses in battles like Cannae—and to keep their family among the ranks of Rome's more powerful noble families.

When L. Metellus died in 221, his son Quintus delivered his funeral oration.¹⁰⁹ The high standing of the family is evidenced not only by the reputation of L. Metellus but also by the fact that Quintus was co-opted into the pontifical college at a fairly young age, having been admitted in 216. This would suggest that he was admitted to the college as an acknowledgment of his father's former position in the state, since the young Metellus had not

¹⁰⁷ Scullard, *AHRW*, 179–185.

¹⁰⁸ Ti. Sempronius Gracchus was consul in 215 and 213, M. Claudius Marcellus was consul in 215 (suffect), 214, 210 and 208; Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus was consul in 215 (suffect), 214 and 209

¹⁰⁹ Plin., *NH* 7.139-141.

embarked on any sort of career yet.¹¹⁰ The political connections of the Metelli at the outbreak of the Hannibalic War are difficult to ascertain, but there is no reason to doubt that the connection with the Servilii and Aurelii Cottae was maintained.¹¹¹ The Metellan connection to the Fabii may have continued as well, but there is no evidence either way. On the other hand, a strong political bond with the Fabii may have given way to a different political alliance. By the end of the war, the Cornelii Scipiones were the most powerful family in Rome, and Quintus Metellus was an ardent supporter of Cornelius Scipio Africanus.

Outbreak of the War & Metellan Involvement

The earliest mention of the next generation of the Metellan family, the sons of L. Metellus, occurs in 216 in the aftermath of the destruction of the Roman army at Cannae. According to Livy, after the battle was over and some of the Roman survivors had escaped to Canusium where they came under the leadership of the young Scipio, a group of young Roman nobles were discussing and advocating the abandonment of Italy. Livy records that the name of the ringleader of this conspiracy as Lucius Metellus, but the issue is somewhat clouded.¹¹² Livy himself names the *princeps* and *auctor* of the conspiracy as Lucius, but later calls him Marcus; Valerius Maximus calls him Quintus, although this is probably a mistake on Valerius' part, as Quintus went on to achieve the consulship and it is highly unlikely that he would have reached this office had he been involved in such an event.¹¹³ In his account of the actual episode Livy uses the name Lucius, but the same man is mentioned later in the

¹¹⁰ Hahn, "The Roman Nobility and the Three Major Priesthoods, 218–167 BC", 82. Cf. Szemler, *The Priests of the Roman Republic*, 31. It is interesting that he did not replace his father in the pontifical college, which often happened, but the fact that he was co-opted at the next available opportunity, which was some five years later, would suggest that he was too young to be considered in 221 when his father died and there was no opening in the intervening years.

¹¹¹ Badian, *Studies*, 36–37. The Metelli and the Servilii remained connected until the middle of the 90's, when the young Servilius Caepio abandoned his family's traditional allies.

¹¹² Livy's record of the confrontation between Scipio and Metellus is found at 22.53.1–13.

¹¹³ *Principes* at 22.53.5 and 24.18.3; *auctor* at 27.11.12; Val. Max. 5.6.7.

narrative and is given different names. When the conspirator of Canusium was accused before the censors of 214, and then expelled from the senate by the censors of 209, he is called Marcus, but when the same man attacked the censors as tribune in 213 he is simply called Metellus.¹¹⁴ The correct identification of this man is important not only because it sheds light on the progeny of L. Caecilius Metellus the *pontifex maximus*, but also because of the implications of a later political career for an accused traitor.

The strongest argument against the *praenomen* of this Metellus being Marcus is that the only known Marcus Metellus at this time was plebeian aedile in 208 and praetor in 206. It would have been odd, if not downright outrageous, for a man who had only the year before been expelled from the senate to be elected to office and then to celebrate the Plebeian Games and, as part of those games, to dedicate statues at the Temple of Ceres.¹¹⁵ It is even less likely that a politician disgraced in such a way could have been elected to the praetorship and not have this mentioned by Livy, especially given Livy's moralizing tendencies. When Livy records the men elected to the praetorship he calls this man Marcus, but says nothing in connection with Canusium, suggesting either that Livy was muddling his sources or that he no longer felt the past needed to be brought up.¹¹⁶ Morgan has suggested, somewhat unconvincingly, that in addition to his expulsion from the senate in 209 that this Metellus was also previously expelled in 214. Morgan suggests that his election to the tribunate occurred before his initial expulsion, which apparently gave him membership in that body anew, which was why the censors of 209 repeated the punishment. If this was indeed the case, it would be even harder to accept that a man who had been twice expelled from the

¹¹⁴ Liv. 24.18.2–4 (Marcus) ; 27.11.12 (Marcus); 24.43.2–3 (Metellus).

¹¹⁵ Liv. 27.36.8–9.

¹¹⁶ Richard Evans, "Was M. Caecilius Metellus a Renegade? A Note on Livy 22.53.5," *AClass* 32 (1989), 118. I find it hard to believe that Livy, with his interest in moral *exempla*, would not discuss the consequences and implications more if the praetor of 206 were really the *auctor* of the conspiracy to depart Italy.

senate could achieve such a high office within only three years.¹¹⁷ The influence of the Metelli in this period had waned since the death of the *pontifex maximus* in 221, and Quintus does not seem to have been able to effectively exert his influence for another couple of years.

The implications of the identity of the Metellus involved in the aftermath of Cannae are important. If the correct *praenomen* was Marcus, he was punished—and possibly expelled from the senate—in 214;¹¹⁸ in 213 he attacked the censors as tribune of the plebs;¹¹⁹ he was ultimately expelled from the senate in 209; elected plebeian aedile for 208 and celebrated Plebeian Games; and elected praetor for 206, when he assumed the role of *praetor urbanus*. This subsequent career, which was astounding considering the circumstances, could be explained in a few ways. First, either the people had forgiven him for his role in the conspiracy or had forgotten all about it and felt comfortable electing him to public office, maybe because of the popularity of his brother Quintus during this time and any other help that his friends may have offered. This would have been nothing short of a miraculous political recovery and resurrection. The second possibility is that the story of what happened at Canusium has been exaggerated to enlarge the persona of Scipio and damage that of Metellus, which is more plausible regardless of the identity of the man involved. Richard Evans has suggested that the entire plan to desert Italy, and consequently the altercations between Metellus and the censors of 214 and 209, may have been, at the worst fabricated and at best exaggerated, by a source Livy used for this portion of his history. He rightly notes that there is no mention of any “conspiracy” by Polybius, who would surely have included any account of such a story that glorified Scipio. Given the existing connections between Q.

¹¹⁷ Morgan, “The Rise and Fall of the Caecilii Metelli, 284–46 B.C.” PhD diss. (University of Exeter, 1961), 63.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Liv. 24.43.1–3.

Metellus, Cornelius Cethegus, Sempronius Tuditanus, and Scipio the awkwardness such a severe reaction would have generated between them, Evans' supposition may be accurate.¹²⁰

The *praenomen* Lucius was very popular among the Metelli, following only Quintus in terms of frequency. If the conspirator's name was in fact Marcus, and unless there was a son who was not involved in politics or died at a young age—which is probably not the case, given the standing and reputation of Lucius Metellus who was consul twice and a hero of the First Punic War—this would be the first generation in which the *praenomen* Lucius is absent from the family, an unlikely event considering the Metellan practice of naming the firstborn son after the father. Additionally, while the *praenomina* Lucius and Quintus were somewhat in flux as regards birth order—largely due to whether the father's name was Lucius or Quintus—Marcus always seems to have been the name of the third son.¹²¹

Conversely, if the man mixed up with Scipio was Lucius, then the situation is much simpler. Whether he was expelled by the censors of 214 or not, he sought election to the tribunate, possibly as a means of protecting himself against hostile actions and his successful election would have ensured his continued presence in the senate. There is no record of him after his final expulsion from the senate in 209 as the people were most likely genuinely bitter about his cowardly role after Cannae and probably did not respond well to his attacks on the censors. Lucius Metellus, the oldest son of the *pontifex maximus* of the same name, had disgraced himself after the Roman defeat at Cannae and the people refused to reward him for his actions there and against the censors. The political effects and ramifications on the Metellan family as a whole, on the other hand, seem almost entirely negligible, as

¹²⁰ Evans, "Was M. Caecilius Metellus a Renegade?," 119.

¹²¹ The three known instances of men named Marcus were the praetor 206, consul 115, and praetor 69.

Quintus went on to achieve the consulship in 206 and the Metelli maintained a dignified position in the state.

Whatever the case may be, many brave Romans died at Cannae, and a great number of senators and leading men were among the fallen. Q. Metellus was selected by the remaining pontiffs to take the place of P. Scantinius, who had died that year, but not at Cannae.¹²² Even though his infamous role in the aftermath of the battle was probably inflated after the fact in order to glorify Scipio, it would not have been appropriate to make Lucius a *pontifex*, so his younger brother Quintus took his place. During this period many of the men chosen for priesthoods were young and had yet to embark on any kind of significant political career, so appointment to a religious post served as a way for young aristocrats to develop useful relationships with the older priests and begin establishing powerful ties.¹²³ An additional reason for Metellus' co-optation may have been his father's doing as a former *pontifex maximus*. After the battle of Cannae, the neglect of proper religious ritual was seen as a key factor in the defeat and the religious devotion and piety of the former *pontifex maximus* may have suggested the name of his son to the remaining priests, who were familiar with the senior L. Metellus and had served as *pontifices* with him.¹²⁴

The honor that accrued to the family as a result of this new priesthood was overshadowed shortly thereafter when the censors of 214 punished L. Metellus and those who had sought to flee Italy after Cannae. In the aftermath of Cannae M. Fabius Buteo was appointed as dictator for 216. This man was the brother of L. Metellus' *magister equitum* in 224 was entrusted with revising the rolls of the senate in effort to replace the senatorial losses

¹²² Rüpke, *FS*, 81. The two priests who died at Cannae were L. Aemilius Paullus and Q. Aelius Paetus, who were replaced by Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus and Q. Fulvius Flaccus respectively.

¹²³ Münzer, *RAPF*, 131; Hahn, "The Roman Nobility and the Three Major Priesthoods, 218–167 BC", 82

¹²⁴ Livy mentions the neglect of the auspices and other religious duties at 22.1.6; 21.63.8–13; 22.9.9–11.

in the battle. This Fabius did not remove anyone from the rolls of the senate, and despite the diplomatic reason he gave, that he did not want the reputation of any Roman to be entrusted to the judgment of a single man, he may have been relieved not have taken action on account of the friendly association between his brother and the father of Metellus.¹²⁵ The censors elected for 214, M. Atilius Regulus and P. Furius Philus, were not as forgiving and punished Metellus and others who had shirked military duties and even advocated abandoning Italy.¹²⁶ Although he was a quaestor in that year, he was summoned before the censors, who took away his public horse, removed him from his tribe—most likely meaning he was transferred to one of the four urban tribes, which would practically negate his vote—and reduced him to the rank of an *aerarius*, which meant he had an increased level of taxation and was still eligible for enrollment in the legions.¹²⁷ Livy mentions that the man who informed Scipio of what was happening in the tent of Metellus was a Furius, the son of the censor, making it more likely that Furius Philus was the one who initiated proceedings against Metellus. While it may appear attractive to search for additional political reasons lurking behind the censors' actions, these punishments were handed out to all the weaker hearts at Canusium as well as those who had attempted to get out of the oaths they had sworn to return to Hannibal's camp. Consequently, the punishment should be viewed as the censors' zealous desire to restore military discipline and punish cowardice rather than a politically motivated attack on the Metelli.

¹²⁵ See Livy 23.22.10–23.8 for the dictatorship of M. Fabius Buteo and his speech. It is unlikely that he would have expelled anyone anyway since he was more concerned with filling the senate rather than upholding its image.

¹²⁶ The judgments of the censors of 214: Liv. 24.18.1–9; Val. Max. 2.9.8.

¹²⁷ Liv. 24.18.6–7. The fact that he was elected quaestor in 214 suggests that he was in his mid-twenties and may have been a military tribune at Cannae. His purported role in the plan to flee Italy after Canusium does not appear to have been widely known or cared about by the Roman voters. For further discussion of the penalties he incurred see R.M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy, Books 1–5* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 573; cf. Fraccaro, “Tribules ed Aerarii,” *Athenaeum* 11 (1933): 150–172 and Evans, “Was M. Caecilius Metellus a Renegade?,” 120 note 3.

Lucius Metellus was elected tribune of the plebs for the very next year (213) and used his position to mount an attack on the censors who had punished him in the previous year.¹²⁸ His attempt at prosecuting and embarrassing the censors was stopped by the intervention of his fellow tribunes, although he may have been grimly satisfied when Furius Philus died later in the year and Atilius Regulus, now the lone censor, was unable to complete the *lustrum*.¹²⁹ It was not until five years later in 209 that Metellus' humiliation was complete. The censors for the year were P. Sempronius Tuditanus and M. Cornelius Cethegus, who carried on the severity of their predecessors. In addition to taking away the public horses of equestrians who had fought at Cannae and were now in Sicily, and not counting the time of their cavalry service toward their compulsory service requirement, they also made *aerarii* all those young men who had avoided their military service. The fate of Metellus and eight others was worse, as they were expelled from the senate entirely.¹³⁰ M. Cornelius Cethegus had been in the priestly college with Quintus Metellus since 213 when he had replaced his relative and the most recent *pontifex maximus* L. Cornelius Lentulus Caudinus, and may have been connected to Quintus Metellus.¹³¹ If, as Morgan has suggested, the punishments handed down by the

¹²⁸ Liv. 24.43.1–4. While not extremely common, attacks against censors were not unheard of. C. Claudius Pulcher and M. Livius Salinator were charged by the tribune Cn. Baebius in 204 (Liv. 29.37.17), and C. Claudius Pulcher and Ti. Sempronius Gracchus were accused by P. Rutilius, also a tribune, in 169 (Liv. 43.16.11). In an ironic twist of fate, Metellus Macedonicus was carried off to the Tarpeian Rock by C. Atinius Labeo Macerio, whom Metellus had expelled from the senate. Macedonicus was saved only by the timely intervention of another tribune of the plebs (Plin., *NH* 7.143). It seems that the office of tribune of the plebs was especially suited for the prosecution of personal grudges.

¹²⁹ Because the *lustrum* was never completed, it is possible that the new citizen rolls were invalid and Metellus had in effect, received no punishment. The fact that Metellus was originally punished by P. Furius Philus is interesting. Metellus' father had been consul in 251 with a member of that *gens* (C. Furius Pacilus) and presided over the elections at which Furius Philus was elected consul together with Flaminius. Given that the consulship between Flaminius and Philus was somewhat turbulent and their relationship may have been rocky, and that Flaminius may have had political connections with the Metelli—Lucius Metellus (cos. 251, 247) may have served on the land commission proposed by Flaminius in 232, and Flaminius was consul in 217 with Cn. Servilius Geminus, the father of the Servilius Geminus who was allied with Quintus Metellus—Furius may have taken advantage of the opportunity to harm Metellus in retribution for perceived slights.

¹³⁰ Liv. 27.11.12–15.

¹³¹ Scullard asserts that Quintus Metellus and Cornelius Cethegus were both connected to the *pontifex maximus* Licinius Crassus on “family grounds”, but offers no evidence in support of his claims (*RP*, 87 note 3).

previous censors against Lucius Metellus went unrealized—either because the *lustrum* had not been accomplished or because his election to the tribunate secured him a seat in the senate—then perhaps this new pair of censors was merely upholding the *dignitas* and *auctoritas* of their office and continuing on in the moralistic zeal for which censors were known.¹³²

The Last Decade of the War

During all of this, there is hardly any mention of Quintus Metellus, the man whose progeny would become consuls practically by birthright. The first mention of him is back in 221, when he delivered the funeral oration for his father. In 216 he was co-opted into the college of pontiffs, but the first recorded political office of Quintus Metellus is that of plebeian aedile in 209, and then in 208 he held the curule aedileship. He shared both of these offices with Servilius Geminus, suggesting that the Metelli were still cooperating politically with the Servilii at this time.¹³³ If Quintus had previously been known only on account of his father, it was during his curule aedileship that he began to make a name for himself. Together with Servilius Geminus he sponsored the Roman Games, which had not been celebrated since Hannibal crossed the Alps ten years before. His brother Marcus, who had been elected plebeian aedile in the same year, sponsored the Plebeian Games with his colleague C. Mamilius. These games lasted for two days, and at their conclusion the plebeian aediles dedicated three statues at the temple of Ceres.¹³⁴ The Romans were feeling much better about themselves and their prospects against Hannibal. Due to the delaying tactics of Fabius Cunctator, Rome had not had another catastrophic defeat like Cannae, and Hannibal

¹³² Morgan, “Rise and Fall,” 66–67.

¹³³ Even Develin (*The Practice of Politics at Rome*, 85) admits that Servilius Geminus and Q. Metellus may have been friends.

¹³⁴ Liv. 27.36.8–9.

remained cornered in southern Italy. The Metelli were able to use their political positions to advertise their names to the Roman voters by sponsoring the respective games, which would have been a welcome distraction for the tired people of the capital. Quintus sought to make a name for himself with symbolically important games and his brother Marcus was also trying to overcome the recent family setbacks incurred by the oldest Metellan brother.

If the games of 208 provided an escape from the horrors of the war, 207 saw an increased hope that the Romans might finally expel the Carthaginian invaders once and for all. The consuls for 207 were M. Livius Salinator and C. Claudius Nero. They had been elected under the presidency of T. Manlius Torquatus, who was a priest along with Livius Salinator's son.¹³⁵ Hannibal's brother Hasdrubal had invaded Italy and was bringing much needed reinforcements and supplies to his brother. Claudius Nero quickly made his way north to join forces with his colleague and together they defeated the Carthaginians and killed Hasdrubal.¹³⁶ The significance of the Roman victory can be understood by the joyous reaction to the news back in Rome. The anxiety and excitement of the people in Rome made it nearly impossible for a letter to be read describing the outcome, and when the legates themselves approached the city a throng of people stretched all the way to the Milvian Bridge.¹³⁷ The three legates were Lucius Veturius Philo, Publius Licinius Varus, and Quintus Caecilius Metellus. When the consuls themselves returned to Rome they shared a triumph and amid the rejoicing the *equites* urged the people to elect Veturius Philo and Metellus as

¹³⁵ This was the same T. Manlius Torquatus who had appointed Lucius Metellus dictator in 224. There may be a tentative link here between the Manlii Torquatii, Metelli and Livii.

¹³⁶ Polyb. 11.1–3; Liv. 27.43–51; cf. Broughton, *MRR* 1.294 for other references.

¹³⁷ Liv. 27.50–51.

consuls for the next year. The following day the consuls recounted the valuable services these men had provided and added their own endorsement to that of the *equites*.¹³⁸

Livius was appointed dictator by his colleague for the purpose of holding the elections. Veturius almost certainly would have been elected anyway, because of the popularity won from his recent role in the battle against Hasdrubal. He had been praetor in 209 and was thus qualified for the post, but Metellus was a different story. While he was also popular with the people on account of his role at the Metaurus and the endorsement of the *equites* and the consuls, not to mention the games that he had sponsored just the year before, he nevertheless had not been praetor yet. He was appointed *magister equitum* by the now dictator Livius, and this may have been a calculated move to further endorse Metellus' credentials. The endorsement worked and Metellus was returned, along with Veturius, as consul for 206. It is interesting that Livius was appointed dictator when there was no pressing need for one. Both consuls were presumably still in Rome after their triumph and could have presided over the upcoming elections. Livy's language is interesting: *per dictatorem comitia haberi placuisset*.¹³⁹ It suggests that perhaps there was some politicking going on behind closed doors in the senate. Develin has argued that, "the best explanation of the peculiar events of 207 would seem to be that Livius was made dictator in order to elevate Caecilius, who had not held the praetorship at the time, and thus make him a more respectable candidate for the consulship."¹⁴⁰ The suggestion that Metellus was appointed *magister equitum* as a way to endorse him and offer him as a preferred candidate to the voters makes sense, and there was a precedent. In the years 213–202 there were seven instances in which

¹³⁸ Liv. 28.9.19–20.

¹³⁹ Liv. 28.10.1.

¹⁴⁰ R. Develin, "The Elections of 207 B.C.," *Athenaeum* 55 (1977), 425.

dictators were appointed and all of them were appointed *comitiorum habendorum causa*.¹⁴¹ Out of those seven years in which a dictator and his *magister equitum* presided over the elections, four times the *magister equitum* was elected to the consulship.¹⁴² In a fifth, the dictator secured the consulship for himself. These occurred during the later stages of the war, when many of the older senators and generals were disappearing because of age or combat. The appointment of younger men as *magistri equitum* may have been an attempt to promote younger talent as the older generation was passing away.¹⁴³

In the year of Quintus Metellus' consulship Italy was fairly quiet as far as the war against Hannibal was concerned, but numerous portents were recorded.¹⁴⁴ After having propitiated the gods and decreed an entire day of prayer, Metellus worked to restore the people to their farms.¹⁴⁵ It was only after all this had been accomplished that he was able to take over command of the army, but Hannibal did not campaign actively that year because of the recent crushing defeat and the death of his brother.¹⁴⁶ Metellus and Veturius were consequently left to ravage the territory of Consentia, whose allegiance to Rome had wavered.¹⁴⁷ In the same year that Q. Metellus had been elected consul, his brother Marcus had been elected praetor. His election may have been a result of the games that he had thrown when plebeian aedile, but it is also possible that he benefited from his brother's

¹⁴¹ The years when a dictator was appointed to hold elections were 213, 210, 208, 207, 205, 203, 202. See Degrassi 47–48.

¹⁴² They are Q. Fulvius Flaccus (cos. 212), Q. Metellus (cos. 206), M. Servilius Pulex Geminus (cos. 202), P. Aelius Paetus (cos. 201).

¹⁴³ Q. Fulvius Flaccus, who was *magister equitum* in 213 is the notable exception. He had at that point already been consul in 237 and 224. He was elected consul again for 212, the year after he was *magister equitum*. In 210 when he was appointed dictator for the elections and named Licinius Crassus Dives, a young man who had not yet been praetor but was already well-respected, Fulvius himself was returned as consul for the fourth time. For the utilization of the office of *magister equitum* as a political springboard for younger politicians during this period, see Develin, "The Elections of 207 B.C.," 424.

¹⁴⁴ Liv. 28.11.1–11.

¹⁴⁵ Liv. 28.11.8–9. This would have been no small task after Hannibal's devastating campaigns in Italy.

¹⁴⁶ Liv. 28.12.1.

¹⁴⁷ Liv. 28.11.12–15.

popularity with the voters. When the lots were drawn among the praetors, M. Metellus was appointed *praetor urbanus*, but when the *praetor peregrinus* left the city to command troops his responsibilities fell to M. Metellus as well.

In 206 a now notorious interaction supposedly occurred between the Metelli and the poet Naevius. There has been much discussion surrounding this event, in which Naevius is reported to have insulted the Metelli with the line *fato Metelli Romae fiunt consules*, to which the Metelli replied *dabunt malum Metelli Naevio poetae* and promptly imprisoned the poet.¹⁴⁸ While much of the discussion has centered on linguistic issues regarding the various meanings of *fato* or the historical setting of the exchange, a synthesis of the most prevalent theories provides the best solution. Frank argues that Naevius' remarks have double meaning, referring both to the fortuitous election of Q. Metellus in 206 and the misfortune that had befallen Rome as a result of his election.¹⁴⁹ At first glance, it would seem strange to say that Metellus was consul by fate, since he was only the third member of the family to reach that high office, and it was only in the previous generation that the family had become well known and respected.

However, it ought to be remembered that Metellus had been chosen as one of the three legates who carried the news of the Roman victory at Metaurus back to Rome and was subsequently supported by the *equites* and both consuls for the consulship, an office for which he was less qualified than the other two legates.¹⁵⁰ The discussion above about

¹⁴⁸ Psuedo-Asconius on Cic. *Verr.* 1.28; The Metellan response is found in Caes. Bass. (*G.L.* 6, p. 265 K). The most useful discussions are T. Frank, "Naevius and Free Speech," *AJP* 48 (1927) 105–110; Mattingly, "Naevius and the Metelli," 414–43; Laura Robinson, "Censorship in Republican Drama," *CJ* 42 (1946), 147–150.

¹⁴⁹ Frank, "Naevius and Free Speech," 108.

¹⁵⁰ Metellus is listed last of the three legates in Livy's account (27.51.3–6) and both L. Veturius Philo and P. Licinius Varus had previously been praetor, in 209 and 208 respectively. They were both presumably a few years older as well, since Metellus would probably have been praetor in 206 if he had not been elected to the consulship. His friend C. Servilius Geminus, with whom he had shared both the plebeian and curule aedileship, was praetor in 206.

Metellus' appointment as *magister equitum* and subsequent election to the consulship has shown that there was some political manipulation going on, and it was probably this manipulation at which Naevius was hinting. Quintus Metellus did nothing noteworthy in his consulship or the following year as proconsul, and was most known for his later support of Scipio Africanus. Also, Metellus' consular year was filled with various prodigies and bad omens. It may have been to this inaction, combined with these negative portents that Naevius was alluding to in his verbal sparring with the Metelli.

Mattingly disagrees that the original line of Naevius was libelous, arguing instead that the original use of *Metelli* was as an adjective with connotations of humble origins like craftsmen, working citizens or merchants.¹⁵¹ Thus, the original meaning of the line may have meant something like, "It is fateful for Rome when humble plebeians reach the consulship."¹⁵² According to Mattingly, the line became popular and libelous during a revival of Naevius' work in the post-Gracchan period when the Metelli gained repeated consulships.¹⁵³ While his argument is sound, it is possible that *both* Frank and Mattingly are correct and that Naevius originally composed the line as a jab—but one that could be defended by using the double meaning, not of *fato*, but of *Metelli*—against Q. Metellus in 206. Later, the line later became an embarrassment to the Metelli during a period of Naevian revival around 115, when the family dominated the consulship.

Quintus was in southern Italy in 205 as proconsul when he was summoned back to Rome to act as dictator to preside over the upcoming elections. Scipio was preparing for his invasion of Africa and Licinius Crassus was campaigning in southern Italy alongside Metellus. A plague had descended on the Roman camp and Crassus suggested appointing

¹⁵¹ Mattingly, "Naevius and the Metelli," 431. Cf. Accius, *Annales*, 27.

¹⁵² Mattingly, "Naevius and the Metelli," 432.

¹⁵³ Mattingly, "Naevius and the Metelli," 427.

Metellus dictator to hold the elections in a letter he sent to the senate.¹⁵⁴ The senate agreed and once Metellus was nominated he appointed his former co-consul Veturius Philo as his *magister equitum*, becoming only the second plebeian dictator to name a patrician *magister equitum*.¹⁵⁵ The men elected to the consulship at this time were M. Cornelius Cethegus and P. Sempronius Tuditanus, none other than the men who had expelled Lucius Metellus from the senate during their censorship five years previously. There is no evidence that Q. Metellus attempted to stop the election of these two and in fact Metellus and Cornelius were both members of the pontifical college.¹⁵⁶ On the other hand, it is possible that Cethegus and Metellus worked together for the interests of Scipio, along with Livius Salinator, Veturius Philo and Licinius Crassus.¹⁵⁷ It seems that Quintus either bore no hard feelings against the men who had expelled his brother from the senate—possibly because he realized his brother’s error and condemned his mistake—or he swallowed his family pride for a larger purpose, whether it was factional or national makes no difference.

The prodigies continued in the year that Q. Metellus was appointed dictator and so the senate decreed that ambassadors should go to Pergamum to retrieve Cybele from King Attalus and escort her back to Rome in order to ensure that the Carthaginian enemy would be expelled from Italy.¹⁵⁸ The ambassadors sent included a consular, a former praetor, a former aedile and two former quaestors. M. Caecilius Metellus had just finished his year as praetor and was selected to participate, apparently as one of the senior members of the delegation. The appointment of M. Metellus for this important mission, when taken together with his

¹⁵⁴ Liv. 29.10.1–3.

¹⁵⁵ The first was his own father L. Caecilius Metellus when, as dictator in 224, he appointed N. Fabius Buteo *magister equitum*.

¹⁵⁶ Rüpke, *FS*, 85 suggests that Sempronius Tuditanus could also have been a priest in 204.

¹⁵⁷ Haywood, *Studies on Scipio Africanus* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1973), 53; Scullard, *RP* 82–87, especially 82 note 2.

¹⁵⁸ Liv. 29.10.4–11.8, 14.5–14.

brother's co-optation over a decade before and his father's tenure as chief priest, illustrates the religiosity that appears to enliven the Metelli of this period. Metellus may have been chosen as a result of his brother's sway in the senate and college of pontiffs, but it is also probable that the Romans remembered the heroic actions of his father, who had saved the Palladium—another religious relic from the east—from the burning Temple of Vesta. The father had saved the city by preserving one religious relic, and now the son would ensure its continued survival and victory by bringing another one to Rome.

Upon abdicating his dictatorship after the elections were completed, the role of Q. Metellus in the senate was as an ardent supporter of Scipio. In 204 he defended Scipio from the attacks of Fabius and his enemies when the plight of the Locrians at the hands of Pleminius came to light.¹⁵⁹ He made a rousing speech in the senate wherein he disagreed with Fabius Maximus, the *princeps senatus*, and advocated sending a senatorial commission to discover the truth. Metellus himself was appointed, along with nine other senators and a praetor, two tribunes and a plebeian aedile, to travel to southern Italy to ascertain the truthfulness of the Locrians account and to judge Scipio's behavior, which had recently come under fire.¹⁶⁰ This is the first positive evidence that we have of cooperation or support between Q. Metellus and Scipio, although Metellus was connected to other politicians who appear to have been working with Scipio.¹⁶¹ Metellus' opposition to Fabius is also the first

¹⁵⁹ Liv. 29. 8.6–9.12, 29.16.4–20.11. A group of Locrians had offered to betray the citadel of the city to the Romans, so Scipio sent a detachment of 3,000 men under the command of Q. Pleminius to take control of the city. Once the Romans dominated the city, the behavior of the Roman garrison and its commander was extremely severe and fighting eventually broke about among the Roman troops themselves. The entire affair continued to escalate until Scipio was forced to personally intervene, but much damage had already been done to the city itself and to the reputation of Rome. For modern discussions of this event see Scullard, *Scipio Africanus: Soldier and Statesman* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), 113–115 and Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *The Punic Wars* (London: Cassell, 2000), 289–290.

¹⁶⁰ Liv. 29.20–22.

¹⁶¹ Scipio left for Spain in 210, the year before Quintus began his political career, and returns to Italy while Metellus was one of the chief officers of the state. No doubt Scipio had friends back home looking out for his

concrete evidence of political antagonism between the Metelli and the Fabii. There had been a loose political connection between the families in earlier generations, as the senior L. Metellus had been *magister equitum* in 249 to A. Atilius, who was the son-in-law to Fabius Rullianus. This Fabius was an ancestor of the Fabius opposed by Q. Metellus in 204. The same L. Metellus had shared the consulship in 247 with N. Fabius Buteo and had made the same man his own *magister equitum* in 224. Political associations and loyalties certainly changed over time, and the disagreement in the senate of Q. Metellus and Fabius Maximus can be an example of what could trigger such changes.

The next year, after Scipio had defeated the Carthaginians at the Great Plains (203), and the Carthaginian Senate sued for peace, Q. Metellus was again the one who championed Scipio's interests in the senate by arguing that the general who was in command and was present on the ground was the most qualified to make decisions in this regard.¹⁶² The discussions in the senate and the actions of the consuls in these years have given some the impression that former loyalties to Scipio were beginning to fade as a result of envy and political greed. Livius Salinator suggested that the discussion be postponed until one of the consuls could be summoned, whereas Q. Metellus, as already mentioned, advocated giving Scipio the authority as the man on the scene to draw up an appropriate treaty. Instead of questioning Livius' political loyalties and then extrapolating what this might mean for Metellus, this episode should be understood for what it really was, a disagreement about what course of action was best. Livius, possibly out of a sense of constitutional propriety, suggested that such an important matter be discussed under the presidency and care of the

interests and establishing ties with other important individuals and it may have been in this way that Metellus came to be associated with Scipio.

¹⁶² Liv. 30.23.3–4.

sitting consuls, who were both in their respective provinces at the time.¹⁶³ Metellus differed and simply voiced that Scipio should be the one to make the initial decision since he was the most well-informed on the situation. Ultimately it did not matter, since the Carthaginians had recalled Hannibal and as soon as he returned to Africa they resumed hostilities.

The consuls for the year were C. Servilius Geminus, the old friend and colleague of Q. Metellus, and his distant relation Cn. Servilius Caepio.¹⁶⁴ Caepio had been assigned southern Italy as his province for the year and when Hannibal returned to Italy Caepio followed him, stopping over in Sicily in preparation to cross to Africa. He no doubt felt that it was his prerogative as consul to follow Hannibal and attempt to finish the war. He naturally would have been driven on by his desire to share in the glory of Hannibal's defeat. It can also be argued that he was seeking to thwart—or at least insert himself into—the plans of Scipio and steal the credit for ending the war. This is the view of Scullard, and while he supposes on grounds of family ties and collegiality in office that Servilius Caepio and Servilius Geminus were in league together in opposition of Scipio, the evidence for his assumption is weak.¹⁶⁵ As has already been mentioned, the family relationship between the two consuls was not close and should not be considered as evidence of political cooperation. Likewise, Livy records that a dictator was appointed (*creatus*) to force Caepio to return by virtue of his *imperium maius*.¹⁶⁶ The only person who could have appointed a dictator at this time was the other consul Servilius Geminus, and his actions in appointing a dictator specifically to recall his fellow consul hardly suggest that the two were cooperating and acting as political allies. Further, “none of Geminus’ actions during the year indicate a

¹⁶³ Haywood, *Studies on Scipio Africanus*, 57.

¹⁶⁴ Their grandfathers were cousins.

¹⁶⁵ See Scullard's discussion in *RP*, 82–88, 277–279.

¹⁶⁶ Liv. 30.24.3.

political position of any sort.”¹⁶⁷ If anything, the actions of Caepio can be understood as an attempt by an ambitious consul to not be left out of the action in Africa, and there is no reason to suspect a change in the political feelings of Geminus, who was probably a close friend to Quintus Metellus, one of Scipio’s greatest supporters.¹⁶⁸

It was in the final year of the war that Metellus again took up the cause of the absent Scipio. The consuls for that year were eager to be assigned their provinces, each hoping for a command in Africa, which would allow them to finish the war, stealing credit and glory from Scipio. Largely due to the efforts of Metellus, the question of the African command was referred to the people and they voted unanimously to let Scipio finish the war.¹⁶⁹ Finally, Metellus appears on the land commission that handled the distribution of land to Scipio’s African veterans.¹⁷⁰ Scipio’s loyal veterans were to be given two *iugera* of *ager publicus* for every year they had served in Spain or Africa. The job of making these assignments was given to a board of ten men.¹⁷¹ The composition of this commission and its political leanings are difficult to reconstruct. Several of the members seem to be connected with the Servilii, and if the theory of Servilian opposition to Scipio is accepted, then the commission takes on a decidedly anti-Scipionic character. On the other hand, as has been demonstrated above, there is no reason to suspect Servilian opposition to Scipio, at least from the Gemini. The first several members listed were possibly connected to each other. P. Servilius is listed first, and Münzer claims he was a brother or cousin of the Gaius and Marcus Servilius Geminus

¹⁶⁷ Develin, *The Practice of Politics at Rome*, 85.

¹⁶⁸ By the time Geminus reached the consulship in 203 he and Metellus had been plebeian aediles together in 209, curule aediles in 208, and since 210 they had both been members of the pontifical college. It is interesting that the Servilii Caepiones are political allies of the Metelli in following generations.

¹⁶⁹ Liv. 30.27.1–4.

¹⁷⁰ Liv. 31.4.1–3, 49.5

¹⁷¹ Scullard, *Scipio Africanus*, 179. It is important to note that unlike the practice in the late Republic, the distributions of land at this period, of which Scipio’s seems to be the first, was left to the senate and not the individual general.

who were also on the commission.¹⁷² Q. Metellus also participated, and the connections between Metellus and Gaius Servilius have already been demonstrated. P. Aelius Paetus appears to have had some connection to both Servilii, as he had been elected consulship in 201 when Gaius was dictator and was an augur with Marcus since at least 208. Aelius also was the praetor who had announced the *supplicatio* for Scipio's victory at the Great Plains and then announced another one when Hannibal left Italy to return to Africa.¹⁷³ This evidence suggests that he was friendly with Scipio and supportive of him. The other members of the commission are harder to pin down and, as the focus should remain on the Metelli and their connections, is outside the scope of the present work.¹⁷⁴

The Metelli in the period of the Second Punic War seem to have suffered initially, along with much of Rome, after the disaster at Cannae. Their misfortune was somewhat mitigated by the the younger brother's of the coward who was expelled from the senate. The career of Q. Metellus was important in this regard, as he maintained the family's religious position as *pontifex*, and he continued to be the family's standard bearer throughout this tumultuous period. The Metelli had connections with Livius Salinator, who in turn was friendly with Scipio, but there is no solid evidence of cooperation or sympathy between Scipio and the Metelli until 204. This should not be surprising since Scipio was in Spain as a *privatus cum imperio* while Metellus was back in Rome making his way through the various political offices. It was not until the aftermath of the Roman victory at Metaurus that

¹⁷² Münzer, *RAPF*, 137–138.

¹⁷³ Liv. 30.17.3–6, 21.10.

¹⁷⁴ The members of the commission are (as listed by Broughton) P. Servilius, Q. Caecilius Metellus, C. Servilius Geminus, M. Servilius Pulex Geminus, L. Hostilius Cato, A. Hostilius Cato, P. Villius Tappulus, M. Fulvius Flaccus, P. Aelius Paetus, T. Quinctius Flaminius. For further discussion of the political affinities of the land commission see Münzer, *RAPF*, 137–138; Haywood, *Studies on Scipio Africanus*, 71–72; Scullard, *RP*, 83.

Metellus and the fortunes of his family began to change drastically for the better.¹⁷⁵ Aided by the games he had thrown the previous year, acclaimed by the *equites* as a man suitable for Rome's highest magistracy, and Quintus Metellus won the consulship for 206 and was named dictator in the next year. Within the space of five years Metellus "was catapulted from a position among the *pedarii* to that of a senior senator."¹⁷⁶ The quick political ascent of Quintus was incredibly helpful in maintaining the family's status, especially considering the precarious political position into which his older brother's cowardice had placed the family's fortunes.

It was not until the final years of the war that the Metelli are shown to be firmly in league with Scipio, as Quintus Metellus almost annually used his influence in the senate to protect Scipio's interests. The Metelli also appear to have been allied with the Servilii Gemini during this period. Several magistracies and official posts were held by Q. Metellus and C. Servilius Geminus, and it is likely that if Metellus' rise to prominence had not happened so quickly then even more magistracies would have seen these two friends working together, in addition to their associations in the college of pontiffs.¹⁷⁷ The span of sixteen years from the defeat of Rome at Cannae and the supposed conspiracy of L. Metellus to abandon Italy until the destruction of Hannibal's army at Zama did not see the standing of the Metellan family increase among the senatorial aristocracy, but they rather maintained their status among Rome's elite. The fact that a family could politically survive at all in the aftermath of the conspiracy at Cannae, much less maintain their position, is a testament to the

¹⁷⁵ The family had not slid into ignominy in the aftermath of Lucius' actions at Cannae and subsequent expulsions, but the back-to-back aedileships in 209 and 208 can hardly be considered a return to preeminence.

¹⁷⁶ Morgan, "Q. Metellus (Cos. 206), *Dictatorii* in the Pre-Sullan Senate and the End of the Dictatorship," *Athenaeum* 79 (1991), 369.

¹⁷⁷ They were likely close in age and would have been praetors in the same year (206) and potentially could have been consuls together in 203.

powerful personalities of the Caecilii Metelli. One wonders how high the Metelli would have risen if they had not been hampered by allegations of cowardice in the beginning of the war, and if other men like Fabius Maximus Cunctator or Scipio Africanus had not completely overshadowed the Roman state.

Chapter 2: 200–121 BC

METELLUS MACEDONICUS AND THE RISE TO PROMINENCE

After the horrors of the Second Punic War the Metelli assumed a more relaxed role in Roman politics. A much needed rest was hoped for by many after the devastation inflicted by Hannibal, but such a rest would not be realized. By now Quintus Metellus was a senior senator and had become comfortable with his role and position in the senate. Metellan family members were sent to deal with problems in Greece that had arisen out of Rome's involvement there with Philip V, but the Metelli were much more effective and influential in the Roman *forum* than the Greek *agora*.

Other families had come to Rome in the aftermath of the Latin War, but only a few had left their mark on Roman history. Since the ill-fated consul of 284 the Caecilii Metelli had risen to become senior members of the senate, even if they were not the most famous or powerful among that group. In the space of just over a century the family had held four consulships, placed members in the most influential religious offices of the state, and overcome political difficulties and national tragedies to firmly establish themselves among the Roman elite and were poised to become even greater.

Halfway through the period discussed in this chapter, the man responsible for this rise to even greater prominence, eventually known as Metellus Macedonicus (cos. 143), appears. As praetor he added Macedonia and large portions of Greece to Rome's empire, and for a significant part of his political career he stood as a fierce political enemy of Rome's most dynamic politician of the time, Scipio Aemilianus. Macedonicus' career, which included winning a triumphal *agnomen* as a praetor, the consulship, and later a censorship, increased

the political influence of his family.¹ His reputation was well-known, and by the time he died he had solidified his own reputation as one of the most fortunate men in Rome.

The Metelli in the Aftermath of Hannibal

The evidence for the actions and behavior of the Metelli in the decades immediately following the Second Punic War is sporadic, but an image can be coaxed from the fragmentary sources. This picture is one of active involvement in Rome's new eastern theaters and leadership in the senate. Rome had had dealings with the Greeks during the Second Punic War, when Philip V of Macedon and Hannibal had forged an uneasy alliance against Rome that instigated the First Macedonian War.² While Philip's attempts in Greece to distract the Romans from Hannibal in Italy were ultimately ineffective, they did alert the Romans to potential problems with Philip in the future. Almost immediately after peace was achieved after the battle of Zama, the senate made an unsuccessful attempt to war declared on Philip. However, that powerful aristocratic body eventually got its way and launched the Second Macedonian War, ensuring Roman involvement in Greek affairs throughout the second century.³

The first mention of a Metellus in the second century is an inscription honoring Marcus Metellus, who accompanied T. Quinctius Flaminius in 196 to make the final peace with Philip and administer the settlement of Greece.⁴ Since Marcus Metellus had gone to Thessaly and was honored, his brother Quintus' later involvement as a mediator between

¹ See Appendix 1 (p. 192) for his complete *cursus honorum*.

² Scullard, *AHRW*, 214–216; Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 286–311.

³ Scullard, *AHRW*, 243–273.

⁴ *Eph. Arch.* (1910), 374f; Broughton, *MRR* 1.337. There is some question whether M. Metellus was actually a member of the commission, since the date and identification of the man honored by the *koinon* of Thessaly is not entirely certain. Assuming it is the same Metellus who was praetor in 206, he was the only Roman other than Flaminius to receive such an honor at this early period. Cf. E.S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 170 n.79; John Briscoe, *A Commentary on Livy, Books XXXI–XXXIII* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 35.

Philip and the Thessalians may have been suggested because of this pre-existing connection. Quintus was one of Rome's most senior statesmen, but the fact that his brother had been well-received certainly would have been helpful.

The political atmosphere in Rome became somewhat tense only three years later in 193 when the senate denied Cornelius Merula's request for a *supplicatio* and triumph, largely due to the intervention of Quintus Metellus.⁵ Cornelius had returned to Rome claiming success deserving of a triumph, but Metellus produced letters of Merula's legate Marcus Claudius Marcellus and that differed from Merula's recounting of events. Metellus alleged that Merula, who had left his army in the care of Marcellus, had done so to preclude Marcellus' coming to Rome to contest the issue. Briscoe asserts that this episode represents a change in Metellus' political sympathies, but he provides no evidence other than the shared *nomen* between Cornelius Scipio and Cornelius Merula.⁶ Metellan support should not be assumed for different branches of the Corneli based solely on the former's support of Scipio. Metellus and Merula's subordinate Marcellus were both priests and Metellus may have supported his younger colleague. Alternately, perhaps he recognized that Merula was truly undeserving of a triumph, and he used his influence as a senior statesman to scuttle the proposition.⁷

Nearly a decade passed before the Metelli are mentioned again in the sources. In 185 Quintus Metellus was the senior member of a senatorial commission that dealt with disputes between Philip and the Thessalians and other Greeks.⁸ Eleven years earlier, Quintus' older brother had served on a similar commission, and at this time Quintus Metellus would

⁵ Liv. 35.8.1–9.

⁶ John Briscoe, "Flaminius and Roman Politics, 200–189 B.C.," *Latomus* 31 (1972): 48.

⁷ Marcellus was co-opted in 196, the year of his consulship. On the weak case of Cornelius Merula see Scullard, *RP*, 122. For the position of Quintus Metellus in the senate at this time see Scullard, *RP*, 280.

⁸ Polyb. 22.6.6, 22.10; Liv. 39.24.13–29.2.

definitely have been one of the most senior and influential senators in Rome. Nevertheless, nothing suggests that he had any experience with the Greek world. The other two members of the delegation, however, had had experience in Greece. M. Baebius Tamphilus had been propraetor in Greece and Macedonia in 191 and Ti. Sempronius Gracchus had been sent to Philip by Scipio in 190 to ensure Roman passage through to the Hellespont.⁹ Metellus thus was probably included to give the delegation some political clout and impress upon the Greeks Rome's attitude in the matter. The diplomatic mission did not go as well as the Roman envoys had hoped, so on their way back to Rome the delegates detoured through Achaia to discuss, hopefully with a better result, the Achaeans' recent treatment of the Lacedaimonians.¹⁰ However, this detour served only to frustrate Metellus and his companions further. Metellus berated the Achaeans in their own assembly and was neither received nor treated very well. When he tried to have the Achaeans summon the entire popular assembly so he might address them, he was rebuffed since, said the Achaeans, he had no official letter from the senate calling for such action. Metellus returned to Rome and complained bitterly of the treatment he had received, but Rome took no action other than to ask that her envoys be treated more kindly in the future.¹¹

Only a few years later in 183 Metellus was appointed as a special envoy to hear the arguments and complaints of the Lacedaimonians.¹² Polybius mentions that the three men chosen on this occasion were chosen on account of their former experience in Greek affairs. While all three of the men had served in Greece in the past, only T. Quinctius Flaminius—the liberator of Greece—and Ap. Claudius Pulcher had any tangible experience. Metellus'

⁹ Liv. 37.7.11–14.

¹⁰ Polyb. 22.10.

¹¹ Polyb. 22.10, 23.4.7; Diod. 29.17; Pausan. 7.8.6, 7.9.1.

¹² Polyb. 23.4.1–15; Liv. 39.48.2–4.

Greek experience was more form than substance.¹³ Indeed, he was most likely chosen both because he had taken up the cause of the Lacedaimonians two years previously and because of his prestigious position within the senate. Nothing came of this assignment, and Metellus is never again mentioned going to Greece or having any other interactions with the East. Instead, he remained in Rome from then on, where his position and prestige were firm and went unchallenged.

While Quintus Metellus may have been frustrated and out of his element when dealing with Greeks, he was still an effective statesman in Rome. In 179 Quintus acted as a catalyst for the reconciliation between the censors of that year, M. Aemilius Lepidus and M. Fulvius Nobilior.¹⁴ After the election of the censors, who were hostile to one another, Metellus presented himself, along with the *principes senatorum* and a number of citizens, to publicly encourage the censors to set aside their differences and personal quarrels for the benefit of the state. His rousing speech was met with enthusiastic support from the crowd and the censors were reconciled. Scullard suggests that the circumstances are best understood as a planned public display of reconciliation, while the real reconciliation occurred previous to their election to office.¹⁵ However, as Morgan has rightly noted, “there is no evidence that Lepidus and Fulvius Nobilior reached any kind of agreement prior to the public reconciliation Livy records, and no cogent reason to posit any secret compact.”¹⁶ If the situation really was as Scullard asserts, then it would follow that Metellus played a willing part in the public reconciliation, but there is no evidence of political support or personal kindness between Aemilius Lepidus and Quintus Metellus.

¹³ Gruen, *Hellenistic World*, 233–235, where Metellus’ experience is called a “chimera”.

¹⁴ Liv. 40.45.8–46.10.

¹⁵ Scullard, *RP*, 180–181.

¹⁶ M.G. Morgan, “Q. Metellus (Cos. 206), Dictatorii in the Pre-Sullan Senate and the End of the Dictatorship,” *Athenaeum* 79 (1991): 366.

The evidence, however, does not suggest that Metellus gained anything in return for his purported cooperation.¹⁷ On the contrary, there is some evidence that the two may not have been friendly. In 180 the *pontifex maximus* C. Servilius Geminus died and an election was held, and Metellus certainly desired the position, and as the senior *pontifex* he may have been the favorite candidate—he certainly would have viewed himself that way. Nevertheless, Aemilius Lepidus won the election, and according to Scullard, he did so in league with the Fulvii.¹⁸ Following Scullard’s reconstruction, it makes no sense that Metellus would help the man who had just defeated him in the election for *pontifex maximus*—an office which Metellus surely felt he deserved.¹⁹ It is probable that Metellus was merely assuming the role that his senior position within the senate required of him. Metellus was the most senior member of the senate at this time by virtue of being the oldest living ex-dictator, and “*dictatorii* were indeed regarded as a distinct category of ex-magistrate, superior to ex-censors and to consulars until the disappearance of the last of their number, Q. Metellus himself.”²⁰ Because there was no *princeps senatus* at this time, as the most senior member of the senate the responsibility for mediating this dispute fell to Metellus.²¹ This most senior member of the senate is not mentioned again in the sources and he may have died shortly after his intervention with the censors in 179. However, because there is no mention of his

¹⁷ Briscoe, “Flamininus and Roman Politics,” 46 esp. note 5 where he uses this episode as evidence that Metellus’ Scipionic sympathies had changed. Scullard seems to base his argument on the assumption that Metellus was part-and-parcel of the so-called Aemilian–Servilian faction.

¹⁸ Scullard, *RP*, 180.

¹⁹ There were two opportunities for Quintus to follow in his father’s footsteps as *pontifex maximus*. The first in 213/212, when L. Cornelius Lentulus Caudinus died, would have seen Metellus as too young and inexperienced, and most likely still somewhat tainted by his brother’s fiasco with the censors. The second opening came in 183 when Licinius Crassus Dives died, but Metellus may have graciously stepped out of the way to allow his longtime friend Servilius Geminus to have the honor in his last years. Servilius only served in the position for three years before dying in 180.

²⁰ Morgan, “*Dictatorii*,” 367–368.

²¹ Morgan, “*Dictatorii*,” 367. Aemilius Lepidus would be appointed to that position later in the year by his colleague Fulvius.

death in the surviving text of Livy, it is possible that he died sometime after 167, when the text of Livy breaks off.

Metellus Macedonicus—*Romanus Fortunatus*—and His Brother

According to his filiation, Quintus Caecilius Metellus—eventually known as Macedonicus—was the son of a Quintus Metellus. However, because of the chronological gap between his consulship in 143 and the consulship of the only other known previous Quintus in 206, it has been suggested that Macedonicus was not the son of Scipio Africanus' supporter, but rather of an unknown Quintus in the intervening generation.²² Only epigraphic evidence, which only records Q.f. and nothing else,²³ supports this alternative. However, seeing the future Macedonicus and founder of the great Metellan *dominatio* as the son of the consul of 206 is not difficult. Metellus Macedonicus would have been born around 188 because he first stood for the consulship in 145, likely making his father in his late forties at the time of his birth.²⁴ Also, Pliny directly states that Macedonicus was the son of the Quintus who delivered the funeral oration for Lucius Metellus the *pontifex maximus*.²⁵ There is thus no problem with the traditional assumption that Metellus Macedonicus (cos. 143) was the son of Quintus Metellus (cos. 206).

Members of the next generation of the Metelli make their first appearance in the historical record in a similar fashion as the previous one. Macedonicus served as a legate to L. Aemilius Paullus during the Third Macedonian War (171–168) and was sent back to

²² Suolahti, *Roman Censors*, 404.

²³ *SIG* 3.680; *IG* 9.2.37; *IG* 7.3490. His filiation is entirely missing from the *Fasti* and the Greek inscriptions record only his father's name.

²⁴ Q. Metellus (cos. 206) may have been in his mid teens when he delivered the *laudatio funebris* at his father's funeral in 221. Five years later he was co-opted into the pontifical college and then seven years after that became plebeian aedile, probably around the age of twenty-five to twenty-seven. His consulship in 206 came earlier than it normally would have because of the exigencies of the Hannibalic War. He was active in politics as late as 179. See also, Richard Evans, "Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus," *Acta Classica*, 29 (1986), 99–103.

²⁵ Plin., *NH* 7.142.

Rome to report news of the Roman victory at Pydna, just as his father had reported the news of the Roman triumph at Metaurus.²⁶ There is no secure mention in the sources of Macedonicus again until his praetorship in 148, though he probably would have been busy in the traditional role of a young Roman politician, not to mention his fatherly responsibilities. Macedonicus was renowned for his large family and the joy it brought to him. He had four sons, born between 166 and 155 and all of them would eventually obtain the consulship. He also had daughters, though whether he had two or three is uncertain.²⁷ Nevertheless, the precise number of daughters is not as important as the perception of fertility and good fortune that arose around Metellus.²⁸

Metellus in Macedonia and Greece

Before his extraordinarily successful term as praetor in Macedonia and Greece (148–146), Metellus may have been involved in the prosecution of L. Cornelius Lentulus Lupus (cos. 156), who was convicted by a *lex Caecilia* in 154. Since Metellus was praetor in 148, a date around this time may be posited for his tribunate.²⁹ However, Metellus did not make a name for himself during his tribunate. In 149 Rome was making final preparations for the last campaign against Carthage in the Third Punic War (149–146). It was then that a young man pretending to be Perseus' son rose up in rebellion against Rome. This pretender, named Andriscus, was initially unsuccessful in garnering support for his actions, but when Andriscus defeated and killed the Roman praetor P. Iuventius Thalna whom Rome had sent

²⁶ Liv. 44.45.3, 45.1–2.

²⁷ Pliny says that Macedonicus had six children, i.e. two daughters in addition to his four consular sons (*NH* 7.59), but both Cicero and Valerius Maximus record that he had three daughters (Cic. *Fin.* 5.82; Val. Max. 7.1.1). The number of daughters appears to be a minor point since there is no mention of any husband for the supposed third daughter. Badian (*Studies*, 66 n.100) has suggested a union with C. Servilius Caepio, the consul of 106, which he admits is attractive yet unprovable. See also Münzer, *RAPF*, 232–233.

²⁸ Vell. Pat. 1.11.5–7; Val. Max. 7.1.1–2.

²⁹ Broughton, *MRR* 1.450, 451 note 2; Gruen, *RPCC* 11 note 8.

to put down the Macedonian revolt, support for Andriscus grew.³⁰ By the time word reached Rome of this significant setback, the consuls for the year had already been sent to Africa to continue the war against Carthage, so praetor needed to be sent east to deal with Andriscus.³¹ Quintus Metellus was praetor in 148 and he was sent east to quell the revolt. The senate sent him with *imperium pro consule* and an enlarged army, not wanting to take the chance of risking a large and drawn-out war in Macedonia and Greece while Rome was in the middle of her third war with Carthage.³²

When Metellus arrived, supported at sea by Attalus of Pergamum, he moved to against Andriscus at Pydna.³³ After defeating the Romans in a small cavalry engagement, Andriscus divided his forces, remaining with a part of his army at Pydna while sending the other portion of his fighting force to Thessaly. Metellus immediately moved against and easily routed both segments of the enemy army. When Andriscus escaped to raise another army, Metellus defeated that one as well. Andriscus escaped a second time, but, after finding temporary refuge in Thrace, was eventually handed over to Metellus, who kept him for a future triumph.³⁴ Perhaps about this time an honorary inscription was set up to Metellus in Thessalonica proclaiming him as savior and benefactor.³⁵ His victory was all the more significant because of the failure and death of the praetor Iuventius the year before.

³⁰ Zon. 9.28. Scullard, *History of the Roman World*, 289–291; Green, *Alexander to Actium*, 447–449

³¹ Even if the consuls had not already left, it is unlikely that they would have wanted to pass up the opportunity to garner fame and wealth by destroying Rome's mortal enemy in order to go to Macedonia. Cf. Brennan, *Praetorship*, 223–224.

³² See the discussions in Morgan, "Metellus Macedonicus and the Province Macedonia," *Historia* 18 (1969): 423–424; Brennan, *Praetorship*, 224.

³³ Zon. 9.28 is the only complete account of Metellus' actions against Andriscus. Pergamene naval support is mentioned in Zon. 9.28 and Strabo 13.4.2. Other sources include Livy, *Per.* 50; Vell. Pat. 1.11.2; Val. Max. 7.5.4; Flor. 1.30.5

³⁴ Cic. *Mur.* 31; *Fin.* 5.82; *Liv.*, *Per.* 52; Vell. 1.11.6; Val. Max. 7.1.1, 8.5.1

³⁵ *IG* 10.2.134; cf. *RE* Suppl. 1.267.

After defeating Andriscus, Metellus seems to have begun the work of organizing Macedonia as a Roman province, at least according to many scholars.³⁶ Nevertheless, Gruen and Morgan both maintain that Macedonia was not organized as an official Roman province at this time. Morgan notes that “there is no evidence to indicate when precisely the senate decided to make Macedonia a province,”³⁷ and that “it may not be altogether without significance that every other settlement of a comparable nature carried out in the second century was supervised by a commander who himself was holding or had held the consulship.”³⁸ Gruen adds:

What steps the Romans took to organize the land after the fall of Andriscus remain strangely obscure. Scholarly unanimity asserts without discussion or argument that a *lex provinciae* followed, that Macedonia became a Roman province, that annual governors were appointed by the senate to supervise and administer its affairs from 148 or 146 on. Yet we need to be reminded how thin the evidence is for such a superstructure. No source anywhere makes reference to a *lex provinciae* for Macedonia. Nor even to any organization of the land as a province...It is not certain even that the senate appointed 'governors' annually to the area, let alone that any regular administrative machinery was erected...It does not appear that the senate made any major organizational changes after the elimination of Andriscus.³⁹

Whether or not Metellus was entrusted with the organization of Macedonia as a Roman province, he surely attempted to ensure Roman interests in the area. Thus when trouble

³⁶ See the sources listed in Morgan, “Macedonicus and the Province Macedonia,” 422, note 1.

³⁷ Morgan, “Macedonicus and the Province Macedonia,” 425.

³⁸ Morgan, “Macedonicus and the Province Macedonia,” 425.

³⁹ Gruen, *Hellenistic World*, 433–435.

within the Achaean League necessitated a strong hand, Metellus stepped in on behalf of the Spartans, who were being forced back into the League by the Achaeans.⁴⁰ When the Achaeans declared war on Sparta, and by extension on Rome, the senate sent L. Mummius (cos. 146) to contain the situation. As soon as Metellus was aware that he was being replaced, he set out to finish the war before Mummius could arrive. After a final attempt at diplomacy failed, Metellus marched south and defeated the Achaeans at Scarpheia, whence he continued south to Thebes, Megara, and, finally, the Isthmus. As he moved Metellus won over the hearts and minds of the people, as evidenced by numerous favorable inscriptions.⁴¹ Mummius arrived in Greece as Metellus was finishing preparations for an assault on Corinth and sent the victorious praetor home. This upset Metellus, who had been tantalizingly close to capturing a major city and great glory, only to have all of his preparatory work go toward someone else's victory. Whatever anger or indignation Metellus may have felt at being replaced, he nevertheless returned to Rome in high spirits. He was granted a triumph and awarded the *agnomen* Macedonicus for his exploits, singular accomplishments given his praetorian rank—the first and only time a praetor was so honored.⁴²

Repulsae and Victory

Macedonicus would be eligible for the upcoming year's consulship and doubtless felt that his chances of success were good. In addition to his anticipated consulship, his younger brother Metellus Calvus was apparently praetor in 145, the latest year possible under the *lex*

⁴⁰ Polyb. 38.9.1; Liv., *Per.* 51; Paus. 7.13.1–14.37; Flor. 1.32.2–3. His decision to help the Spartans may have also been motivated by a remembrance of his father's poor treatment at the hands of the Achaeans when he had tried to help the Lacedaimonians.

⁴¹ *IG* 7.3490 (Megara); *IG* 9.2.37 (Hypata); *IG* 10.2.134 (Thessalonika); *IG* 10.2.1031 (Olympia); *SEG* 3.414 (Hyampolis).

⁴² For the awarding of *cognomina ex victis gentibus* see Linderski, "The Surname of M. Antonius Creticus and the *cognomina ex victis gentibus*," *Roman Questions: Selected Papers 1958–1993* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1995), 437–440. For the unique honor this was for the praetor Macedonicus see Brennan, *Praetorship*, 224.

Villia.⁴³ It seemed as though the family's fortunes were on their way to new heights, but the elections for 145 did not go as planned, nor did the elections for the next year.

Notwithstanding his military success and the triumph that would have been fresh in the voters' minds, Metellus Macedonicus was rejected—not once, but twice!—in the elections for consul. The sources that treat this double rejection indicate that it was largely because of Macedonicus' reputation for *severitas*.⁴⁴

Even though the stories illustrating Macedonicus' strictness all occur in the context of his fighting in Spain, it is possible that he had already garnered the reputation for a stern demeanor and command style. Because whoever was elected to the supreme office would probably end up fighting a difficult war in Spain, the voters—who were the soldiers—would have been hesitant to elect someone under whom they did not want to serve.⁴⁵ Another reason, however, may have been more responsible. At the same time Macedonicus was returning from his campaigns in Macedonia and Greece, Scipio Aemilianus was preparing to return from Carthage, the city having been completely destroyed and a new African province having been formed in 146. Scipio's natural brother Q. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus, along with the relatively unknown L. Hostilius Mancinus, were the ones who won election to the consulship for 145. Both men had served in the army during the most recent war with Carthage, and Fabius Maximus Aemilianus enjoyed added advantage of being the brother of Carthage's conqueror. Mancinus, on the other hand, had no such luxury and in fact had been treated roughly by Scipio on account of his behavior in Africa. Although sent home by his commanding officer, Scipio's political enemies looked more kindly on Mancinus' exploits at Carthage, even suggesting that it was Mancinus who was the first to breach the walls and not

⁴³ Broughton, *MRR* 1.469.

⁴⁴ Liv., *Per.* 52; *De viris ill.* 61.1

⁴⁵ A.E. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), 100.

Scipio.⁴⁶ The ability of these two men to draw on their family connections and recent successes against Rome's oldest enemy, combined with Macedonicus' reputation with the voters, was enough for Metellus to be rejected. Again in 144 Metellus was unsuccessful, probably still suffering from his unpopular reputation, although at least one of the consuls, Ser. Sulpicius Galba, had already seen action in Farther Spain and may have been elected to provide some much needed expertise in that difficult theater of war.⁴⁷

Finally in 143 Metellus Macedonicus achieved his goal, and importantly so, because a third rejection in elections would probably have been seen as final, destroying any chances for future glory of the Metellan family to have been realized. Macedonicus was probably forced to use all of his connections to secure his election. The family had ties with the Aurelii Cottae, and even though it was L. Aurelius Cotta who had defeated Macedonicus for the consulship in 144, Metellus may have sought his help. Macedonicus also may have appealed for aid to Ap. Claudius Pulcher, with whom he eventually shared the consulship. Both men are mentioned later as opponents of Scipio Aemilianus and it was perhaps Macedonicus' connection to Claudius that explains the former's initial support of Tiberius Gracchus in the next decade.⁴⁸

It was during his consulship that the contracts for Metellus' portico and the temples of Juno Regina and Jupiter Stator were let. Velleius Paterculus mentions that Metellus was the first to build a temple *ex marmore*, but is suspicious of the effects this ostentatious construction would have on the morals of Rome.⁴⁹ The portico of Metellus enclosed the

⁴⁶ For the discussion of Mancinus' actions at Carthage and its political repercussions, see Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 70–71.

⁴⁷ Neither consul in 144 was sent to Spain. Scipio Aemilianus exerted his considerable influence to have his natural brother's command extended through 144.

⁴⁸ Ap. Claudius Pulcher and Macedonicus as opponents of Scipio is recorded in Cic., *De Rep.* 1.31.

⁴⁹ Vell. Pat. 1.11.5.

temples of Juno Regina and Jupiter Stator, at least one of which was built at Metellus' direction.⁵⁰ Metellus also included in this complex an equestrian statue group which was supposedly sculpted by Lysippas at the behest of Alexander the Great.⁵¹ It is plausible that Metellus would have begun construction on these buildings during the earliest stages of his consulship, before he left for Spain, in an attempt to garner popular support to counteract the negative perceptions held by the people about him.⁵²

Satisfied that his public projects would proceed, Macedonicus left in 143 for the province of Hispania Citerior to continue Rome's involvement in the latter part of the Second Celtiberian War, also known as the Numantine War (143–133). When Macedonicus returned to Rome two years later his reputation for good generalship had increased, being one of only a handful of Roman commanders in Spain who did not experience serious setbacks. During his campaign in Iberia, he had attacked the city of Nertobriga, with roughly 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry.⁵³ When Macedonicus began the siege and brought up battering rams to the only penetrable portion of the city walls, the inhabitants placed the young sons of Rhoetogenes, a man who had deserted to the Romans, in front of the battering ram. Despite Rhoetogenes' assurances that he would sacrifice his own sons, Macedonicus lifted the siege because *humanitatem propinquaе victoriae praetulit*.⁵⁴ Besides the immediate political and strategic implications of his decision, which won him the sympathy of many Celtiberian cities,⁵⁵ Metellus may also have experienced a moment of humanity himself, as thoughts of his own young children back in Rome came to his mind.

⁵⁰ Morgan, "The Portico of Metellus: A Reconsideration," *Hermes* 99 (1971): 482–490.

⁵¹ Vell. Pat. 1.11.4.

⁵² Morgan, "The Portico of Metellus," 501.

⁵³ This was, at any rate, the army that Metellus turned over to his successor according to App., *Ib.* 76.

⁵⁴ Val. Max. 5.1.5; cf. Flor. 1.33.10.

⁵⁵ Val. Max. 5.1.5.

After successfully winning over Nertobriga he made his way south to Contrebia, where he spent a great deal of time and energy in a lengthy siege. It was possibly during this siege that Macedonicus forced a cohort of legionaries, who had been pushed down a hill and back into their camp, to immediately go out and retake the hill. He encouraged them by promising that any man who returned to the Roman camp in flight would be killed.⁵⁶ The Roman troops deliberately set themselves to the task and, after recapturing the hill, were welcomed back into the camp and hailed as victors by Metellus.⁵⁷ Notwithstanding these exertions Contrebia held out. Metellus finally was able to take the city after he made several marches in the area and terrorized Contrebia's neighbors. Then he wheeled about and took the stronghold by surprise. This strategy may have provided the context for his remark that he would have burned his own shirt had he thought it was aware of his plans.⁵⁸

All of the time Metellus had spent in the attack on Contrebia prevented him from engaging the main stronghold of Numantia, so after ravaging the territory of the Vaccaei he went into winter camp and awaited his replacement. When the consul of 141, Q. Pompeius, finally appeared, Macedonicus handed the army over and returned to Rome. Valerius Maximus says that Metellus handed over the army in disarray and in poor shape, thus *magnifice gestarum rerum gloriam corruptit*.⁵⁹ On the other hand, Appian claims that the soldiers were admirably trained.⁶⁰ Apparently, a tradition hostile to Metellus seems to have

⁵⁶ Val. Max. 2.7.10.

⁵⁷ Vell. Pat. 2.5.2–3. Velleius also adds that Metellus won renown for the bravery of this exploit, explicitly contrasting him with Fabius Aemilianus, whom he notes for his severe discipline. This seems to contradict the notion that Metellus had a reputation for *severitas*.

⁵⁸ Plut., *Apophth. Caec. Met.* 2.

⁵⁹ Val. Max. 9.3.7. He records that Metellus allowed all soldiers who wanted to terminate their service to be discharged, granted leave to anyone who desired, removed the guards of the storehouses, broke the bows and arrows of the Cretan auxiliaries, and prohibited rations to the elephants.

⁶⁰ App., *Ib.* 76.

tried to lessen the prestige Metellus had gained in Spain, offering an excuse for Pompeius' lackluster performance during his governorship.

Macedonicus served in Spain during his consular year of 143 and his command was prorogued for 142, when his younger brother Metellus Calvus was elected to the consulship with Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus.⁶¹ Servilianus took over from Pompeius in Spain after a year of mostly unsuccessful campaigning.⁶² Much less is known about Servilianus' colleague Metellus Calvus. There is no certainty regarding his activities during his year in office. He may have remained in Italy, much like his brother's colleague Ap. Claudius Pulcher had done in the previous year. If so, he may be the consul Lucius mentioned in 1 Maccabees as being sympathetic to the Jewish cause.⁶³ It may also be to Metellus Calvus that an inscription refers concerning a boundary dispute between Patavium and Ateste.⁶⁴ To complicate the picture further, the discovery of the Oxyrhynchus Epitome of Livy, which records Calvus as fighting in Spain in 142, has caused some to wonder whether brother succeeded brother in the Second Celtiberian war, but since "the evidence for the command of Calvus rests not on the direct testimony of Livy but on that of a damaged and carelessly written copy of an extremely brief epitome of Livy," it is best to keep Macedonicus in Spain and Calvus in Italy during 142.⁶⁵

Macedonicus returned to Rome in 141 and may have sought a triumph. However, although Florus asserts that he could have claimed the *agnomen* Celtibericus for his exploits,

⁶¹ While Servilianus was the adoptive brother of Fabius Aemilianus, who was in turn the real brother of Scipio Aemilianus, he also may have been linked to his natural brothers—Gnaeus and Quintus Servilius Caepio. The close relations of these men definitely indicates cooperation between the families in the previous generation, and there is evidence that Servilianus was also connected with Scipio Aemilianus, but the fact that he and his natural brothers were consuls in three successive years strongly suggests political cooperation between them.

⁶² Broughton, *MRR* 1.477,–478. He promptly broke the treaty of his predecessor, reopened hostilities and paid for the assassination of Viriathus.

⁶³ I Macc. 15:16; cf. Jonathan Goldstein, *The Anchor Bible Commentary: I Maccabees* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), 492.

⁶⁴ *CIL* 1².633. The inscription refers only to "L. Caecilius Q.f. procos." and could also refer to L. Metellus Diadematus (cos. 117).

⁶⁵ A.E. Astin, "The Roman Commander in Hispania Ulterior in 142 BC," *Historia* 13 (1964): 249.

none of the surviving sources explicitly mention a triumph for his Spanish campaigns.⁶⁶

Upon his return Macedonicus is listed for the first time as an *augur*, the first member of the family to be a part of this particular religious college.⁶⁷ His father and grandfather had both been *pontifices*, so it seems odd that Macedonicus would not also be co-opted as a *pontifex*. Since Livy's history breaks off in 167 the exact date of his co-optation is unknown. His return from Spain provided a reasonable opportunity to induct him to the college, because his reputation would have been high on account of his previous victories in Macedonia and Greece, in addition to his most recent conquests in Spain and the public works he was financing. Rüpke, however, has suggested that he may have been an *augur* as early as 155, around the time of his supposed tribunate, which coordinates better with the custom of co-opting men at the beginning of their political careers. Even in 155 however, Macedonicus would have been somewhat older than the norm.⁶⁸ It is more likely that he was made an *augur* at an early stage of his career, possibly in the aftermath of the battle of Pydna when he had returned to Rome with news of the victory. Perhaps more important than his specific age when admitted into the college is that the quarrel and *dissensio* between Metellus Macedonicus and Scipio Aemilianus—who were both *augures*—must have begun after Macedonicus' or Aemilianus' inclusion in the group.⁶⁹ A known *inimicus* of another member of the college was not permitted to be co-opted, for fear that they “would put their private

⁶⁶ Liv., *Epit.* 53; Vell. Pat. 2.5.2–3; Frontin., *Strat.* 3.7.3, 4.1.23; Val. Max. 2.7.10, 3.2.21, 5.1.5, 7.4.5; Flor. 1.33.10. All the sources are favorable to Macedonicus, but none of them say anything about a triumph.

⁶⁷ Cic., *Fin.* 5.83; cf. Broughton, *MRR* 1.478–479.

⁶⁸ Rüpke, *FS*, 102, 580–581. If he had been made an *augur* only upon his return from Spain, he would have been in his late forties—approximately forty-seven. Even if he were co-opted as a tribune, giving the approximate date of 154 assigned by Broughton, he still would have been thirty-four. Augurs were traditionally co-opted at an even younger age than priests (Hahn, “The Roman Nobility and the Three Major Priesthoods,” 75–76), and so it more likely that, due to his family's notability and his early promise, that he was co-opted at a young age—probably in his late teens or early twenties. His father was likely in his late-teens when he had been made a *pontifex*.

⁶⁹ If Metellus was indeed made an *augur* upon his victorious return from Spain, the instigation of the quarrel must be placed after 141. This agrees with Astin's hypothesis that the falling out happened sometime between 143 and 138. For further discussion of Macedonicus and Scipio Aemilianus see below, page 78f.

quarrels before their religious duties and paralyse the college's ability to fulfil its functions."⁷⁰

Shortly after Macedonicus returned home from Spain, his brother set out for the East as an ambassador with Sp. Mummius and Scipio Aemilianus in 140. This embassy toured throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, probably for more than a year.⁷¹ Spurius seems to have been more in line with Scipio's political and social sentiments than his older brother who had destroyed Corinth and sparred with Scipio during their recent censorship in 142.⁷² The inclusion of L. Metellus Calvus strengthens the argument that he had some form of correspondence with the Jewish people during his consulship. It also suggests that relations were still good between Scipio Aemilianus and Metellus Macedonicus—if Calvus and Macedonicus are assumed to be politically close.⁷³

Calvus' next appearance in the historical record is as a witness in a politically motivated trial. Q. Pompeius (cos. 141), the *novus homo* who had replaced Macedonicus in Spain, returned home, where the treaty he had recently signed in his province was repudiated and a serious discussion arose about whether to send Pompeius back to the Numantines in shackles. Scipio Aemilianus had supported Pompeius during the early part of the latter's career, but the relationship became strained during Pompeius' consulship. Pompeius was able to extricate himself from these political troubles, unlike the unlucky Hostilius Mancinus a

⁷⁰ David E. Epstein, *Personal Enmity in Roman Politics, 218–43 BC* (New York: Croom Helm, 1987), 70.

⁷¹ For in-depth discussions of the embassy, see Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 127 and note. A.E. Astin, "Diodorus and the Date of the Embassy to the East of Scipio Aemilianus," *CP* 54 (1959): 221–227; Harold B. Mattingly, "Scipio Aemilianus' Eastern Embassy," *CQ* 36 (1986): 491–496. Mattingly takes a different view of the chronology, placing the embassy in 144/143; H.H. Scullard, "Scipio Aemilianus and Roman Politics," *JRS* 50 (1960): 69.

⁷² Broughton, *MRR* 1.474 and sources listed there.

⁷³ The idea that Calvus' inclusion was due to his supposed "experience" is unreliable, even if his correspondence with the Jews is genuine. It is difficult to see how Calvus' one-letter experience would have made him especially qualified for the embassy. On the other hand, nothing is known about his career previous to his consulship so it is possible that he had other experience. Still, his standing as an ex-consul and powerful ally of Scipio would be more useful.

few years later.⁷⁴ His troubles were far from over, however, as his administration in Spain came under attack in the extortion court. The trial is generally assigned to the year 138, and although Gruen's suggestion that it occurred in 139 is possible, that the proceedings happened early in 138 is more plausible. Metellus Calvus, who had accompanied Scipio to the East in 140 and would have recently returned and was a witness for the prosecution. The prosecution had four very powerful witnesses to speak against Pompeius, but "clearly they were not acting as champions of Rome's honor and *dignitas*."⁷⁵ Rather, they seem to have been trying to settle political scores or damage a rival. Metellus Macedonicus and Calvus were joined by their political allies Q. Servilius Caepio and Cn. Servilius Caepio, but even the combined weight of these four consulars was not enough to bring down Pompeius.⁷⁶

Valerius Maximus says that Pompeius was acquitted not because he was innocent, but because the jurors did not want to give the impression that Pompeius had been crushed solely on account of his accusers' reputations.⁷⁷ This is the last attested reference to L. Metellus Calvus, and he likely died sometime shortly after the trial, since there is no mention of him participating in the uproar during Tiberius Gracchus' tribunate only five years later. In the larger scheme of Roman politics, as Gruen has noted, the fact that Pompeius escaped this prosecution is not nearly as important as what this trial initiated. "For the first time, to our knowledge, the *quaestio de repetundis*, originally designed to protect the interests of the senate against encroachment by tribunes and assembly, was employed as an instrument by a particular senatorial faction."⁷⁸ Scipio Aemilianus, a quick learner, utilized the courts and

⁷⁴ Gruen, *RPCC*, 35.

⁷⁵ Gruen, *RPCC*, 36.

⁷⁶ The four witnesses were all recent consuls. Macedonicus and Calvus had been consuls in 143 and 142 respectively, and Gnaeus and Quintus Caepio obtained the consul's chair in 141 and 140. This group, apparently centered on Macedonicus, was probably at the height of its power.

⁷⁷ Cic., *Font.* 23; Val. Max. 8.5.1.

⁷⁸ Gruen, *RPCC*, 36.

brought charges against L. Aurelius Cotta (cos. 144) in the extortion court. The courts were to be the new battleground where personal and political feuds would be played out.

Metellus Macedonicus himself entered the lists to take up the role of defending Cotta from the attacks of Scipio and it is here that another possibility presents itself as the reason for their strained relationship. This is the first evidence of direct confrontation between the two men and a great deal of personal pride and popular support may have been at stake. Again the jury was concerned about the negative impact of the accuser's prestige and Cotta was acquitted, amid accusations of bribery, after the trial adjourned seven times.⁷⁹ There is doubtless a connection between the cases of Pompeius and Cotta, and, this relationship may have been the instigation for political hostilities between Aemilianus and Macedonicus.⁸⁰

Macedonicus and Aemilianus

When Macedonicus received the news about Scipio's death in 129, he instructed his sons to carry the bier of Scipio to the funeral, telling them that they would never render such a service to a greater man, thereby illustrating his profound respect for his *inimicus* and showing that, while he may have disagreed with Scipio, he recognized the man's great worth to Rome.⁸¹ But what is to be made of their relationship? Cicero's uninformative comment that it was a political dispute that broke their friendship is all that is known,⁸² but it must have been something significant in order to break the strong bond that seems to have existed

⁷⁹ Cic., *Brut.* 81, *Mur.* 58; App., *BC* 1.22; Val. Max. 8.1, abs. 11. Cf. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 258; Gruen, *RPCC*, 36–38. Despite the accusations of bribery and the juror's feelings about the *auctoritas* of Scipio, it is certain that Macedonicus' oratorical skills, which were not negligible, had produced some effect.

⁸⁰ If there is a connection between the two trials and Pompeius was prosecuted as a way to get to Scipio, then it would make sense that there had been no great breach between Pompeius and Scipio as a result of Pompeius' campaigning for the consulship of 141. It is possible that Metellus and his friends attacked Pompeius because of the existing *inimicitiae* between Macedonicus and Pompeius. Scipio's "retaliation" is then seen not as retaliation or vindication of Pompeius at all, but rather as an adoption and adaptation of Macedonicus' tactics to suit his own purposes.

⁸¹ Val. Max. 4.1.12.

⁸² Cic., *Amic.* 21.77

between the Metelli and the Scipiones, judging from past experiences.⁸³ That is all that is said about the issue that severed the friendship between these two men. Their relationship, even in its poor state, was extolled by Cicero as an example of what should happen between two men who once were friends and became enemies, saying that theirs was a *dissensio sine acerbitate*.⁸⁴

While it is impossible to know the precise nature of the dispute, there are a few events that certainly contributed to their mutual animosity. The earliest possible event that may have initiated the negative feelings was back in 146 when Metellus was replaced by Lucius Mummius in Greece. Metellus no doubt felt that he and his army were the best men for the job, and “there must be a strong suspicion that this decision was prompted more by political than by military considerations.”⁸⁵ Astin intimates that the quarrel between Metellus and Aemilianus may have already begun when he suggests that the military aspirations of Mummius were combined with and aggravated by Scipio’s political associations with Metellus and that these factors all played a role in Mummius getting the command in Greece. On the other hand, Scipio was in Africa at the time of Mummius’ appointment, and while he could have exerted his influence from a distance, there is no surviving evidence of any conniving on the part of a “Scipionic party” to get the command transferred to Mummius. It is possible that Mummius, a *novus homo* who was eager for an opportunity to make a name for himself, successfully argued that such an endeavor should be undertaken by a full-fledged

⁸³ Macedonicus’ father, Quintus Metellus (cos. 206) had been a staunch supporter of Aemilianus’ adopted grandfather Scipio Africanus and Macedonicus himself seems to have had connections with Scipio Aemilianus’ birth family, the Aemilii Paulli, having served as a legate to Lucius Aemilius Paullus in the Third Macedonian War.

⁸⁴ Cic., *Off.* 1.87. Valerius Maximus says they had a true *inimicitiae*, but may have embellished for effect, as noted by E.S. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 289 n. 92.

⁸⁵ Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 75.

consul of the Republic instead of a praetor—even if that praetor was acting *cum imperio pro consule*.

A more definitive date for the break is offered by the prosecution of L. Aurelius Cotta by Scipio himself in 138. Cotta was defended by Metellus Macedonicus and the charges against Cotta, who had been consul in 144, were largely felt to be connected to the earlier prosecution of Quintus Pompeius. Cotta was acquitted, but the squaring off between two of Rome's largest personalities during his trial provides a definite *terminus post quem* for the beginning of hostilities. Astin proposes that the break happened sometime after the consulship of Metellus in 143 and before the trials of Pompeius and Cotta in 139/138.⁸⁶ If the mention of Metellus, Scipio and Laelius as *augures* in 141 is actually the date when they were co-opted into the college, the timeframe becomes smaller since the religious colleges attempted to keep political *inimici* excluded if at all possible. And since Scipio left in 140 on an embassy to the east with Macedonicus' younger brother and successor in the consulship, the window of time in which a falling out could occur shrinks even further.

In 136 both Macedonicus and Pompeius were forced by the consul L. Furius Philus to accompany him to Hither Spain as witnesses to his hoped-for victories. Furius was to be sorely disappointed, for, after having delivered Hostilius Mancinus to the Numantines in chains, he was largely ineffective and unsuccessful. Dio records that the consul brought the two former consuls along, notwithstanding their hatred for each other and their mutual dislike of Furius himself, so that he could relish his successes and force them to acknowledge his abilities.⁸⁷ Valerius Maximus adds that the consul obliged them to accompany him as legates when they were pushing for his departure from Rome. He also records the story as

⁸⁶ Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 314–315.

⁸⁷ Dio, fr. 82.

one of courage since he sought help from enemies.⁸⁸ The sources do not indicate why Metellus and Pompeius disliked Furius, but it is possible that there was some old family animosity still brewing. It had been a Furius Philus who as censor in 214 had gone after the uncle of Macedonicus in the aftermath of the Roman disaster at Cannae, and the consul of 136 may have been that censor's grandson.

It is, however, just as likely that Pompeius, and Metellus especially, were sent to Spain under the pretense of assisting Furius, but in reality it was a move to get them out of Rome and make them unable to run for the censorship of 136. It is possible, but not entirely likely, that Ap. Claudius Pulcher was still harboring some jealousy over Metellus' exploits during their consulship in 143.⁸⁹ Any ill-feelings Claudius Pulcher harbored towards Metellus were set aside when the two men were early supporters of Tiberius Gracchus. The more likely scenario was that while Pulcher was the most qualified patrician for the censorship, his plebeian colleague Q. Fulvius Nobilior (cos. 153) had a better reputation than Metellus and was his senior, having been consul ten years earlier than he. Metellus' absence in Spain may have prevented another potential *repulsa* for Metellus.

Whatever the cause of the political break between Macedonicus and Scipio Aemilianus, the nature of their relationship was strange and no doubt difficult to maneuver. One of the daughters of Metellus had married P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Serapio (cos. 111), and unless Nasica's father was not cooperating with the most powerful member of the *gens*, it would be strange to see such a union occurring between the two opposing families. If the marriage can be dated earlier than 135 and placed instead around 140/139, then perhaps the

⁸⁸ Val. Max. 3.7.5.

⁸⁹ Pulcher's jealousy of Macedonicus is apparent in his actions during his consulship. Upset about not getting Spain as his province, Pulcher started a war in northern Italy and stole a triumph for it (sources in *MRR* 1.471).

marriage predated the animosity.⁹⁰ Metellus' daughter may have been one of his older children and would have been in her mid-twenties in 140. If the marriage did occur around 135 or even later, then it may be seen as a kind of conciliatory move, if only a temporary one between the two great houses working in combination against Tiberius Gracchus and his powerful allies.⁹¹

The censorship of Metellus and Pompeius also presents an interesting dilemma because, if Pompeius had reconciled with Scipio by this time, as Münzer asserts, then it becomes possible to see Pompeius and Metellus working together as a sign—albeit a faint one—that Metellus and Scipio's relationship was not hostile at the time. However, Cicero's account, which is put into the mouth of Scipio's best friend Laelius, says that Scipio removed himself from the friendship of Pompeius on account of Laelius.⁹² It is surely the canvassing of Pompeius during the elections for the consulship of 141 that is referred to here, which forced Laelius to wait another year before obtaining his prize. Any reconciliation between Pompeius and Scipio seems not to have happened, unless it occurred after 136 when Pompeius went to Spain with Furius Philus, an associate of Scipio whom he hated. There is no evidence in the surviving sources about any kind of reconciliation between Pompeius and Scipio and indeed Pompeius appears to defy all attempts to be forced into any particular group. The censorship of 131 ought not to be understood in terms of Metellan-Scipionic factional politics. It seems that Pompeius and Metellus put away their animosity for one

⁹⁰ Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 313–314. Münzer, *RAPF*, 232 assumes the marriage occurred about 135 based on the age of the fruit of this union who was praetor about 99, but his assumptions are not unassailable.

⁹¹ The Gracchan group had been built with similar marriage connections. Tiberius was married to the daughter of Ap. Claudius Pulcher (cos. 143) and his younger brother Gaius was married to Licinia Crassa, daughter of P. Licinius Crassus Mucianus (cos. 131), who was also a brother-in-law to Ap. Claudius Pulcher.

⁹² Cic., *Amic.* 77: *Ab amicitia Q. Pompei meo nomine se removerat Scipio.*

another after having combined forces against Tiberius Gracchus in the previous year, and carried out their magisterial responsibilities.⁹³

The only significant piece of evidence that points toward some kind of reconciliation between Metellus and Scipio is the statement of Metellus when he heard the news of Scipio's death. His reaction to Scipio's death in 129 shows that, while engaged in aristocratic competition against him, Metellus understood the role that Scipio had played in Rome and mourned the loss of such an exceptional man. His mournful statements should not be taken to mean more than that, as right up to the end of Scipio's life he and Metellus were going at each other. It was probably in 134 or 133 that Scipio poked fun at the youngest of Metellus' sons and in 131 that Lucilius satirized Metellus' speech on marriage.⁹⁴

Additionally, Cicero mentions explicitly that in 129 Metellus was the leader of the *obtrectatores et invidi Scipionis*.⁹⁵ It thus seems most likely that Metellus and Scipio had a falling out over some political issue, probably around 139, and that this political *dissensio* exhibited itself in the trial of Aurelius Cotta in 138 and lasted until Scipio's death in 129. Metellus Macedonicus appears to have steered a middle course between the followers of Scipio and the supporters of Tiberius Gracchus. His only testified connection to the Gracchi is a shared consulship with Tiberius' father-in-law and no tender feelings seem to have existed between the two. On the other hand, his only known connection to the Scipiones is a marriage with Scipio Nasica that cannot be securely dated. Metellus Macedonicus, from the existing evidence, appears to have been a powerful and independent agent.

⁹³ If both censors had been reconciled to Scipio at this time they would most likely have chosen Scipio as *princeps senatus*. Even if Lentulus was senior to Scipio in both his consulship and censorship, Scipio had become accustomed to holding high office, even if not the most traditional choice.

⁹⁴ Scipio's jest at Metellus Caprarius is found in Cic., *De Orat.* 2.267. Lucil. 676–687M is generally taken to refer to Metellus' speech as censor in 131.

⁹⁵ Cic., *Rep.* 1.31.

The Metelli and the Gracchi

Moving into the twilight of his political life and activity in Rome Metellus Macedonicus continued to play an important role in the activities of the capital city. During the last decade and a half of his life he saw the rise of demagogic politics and the turbulence created by the Gracchi brothers. He may not have initially opposed the young Tiberius Gracchus, perhaps because of shared beliefs regarding Rome's future as much as a mutual dislike of Scipio Aemilianus, although he later turned on Tiberius.⁹⁶ Tiberius was related to Scipio through his sister and the rejection of the Numantine treaty, had been a direct insult to Tiberius, who had been largely responsible for salvaging the Roman situation by negotiating it. That his *adfinis* Scipio had been the one largely responsible for its repudiation was an unacceptable affront.⁹⁷

Tiberius' subsequent marriage to the daughter of Ap. Claudius Pulcher unquestionably illustrated the broken relationship between the two. Claudius Pulcher was arguably the most influential and respected man in Rome. He was a *consularis*, *ensorius*, and, since 136, *princeps senatus*. His new connection to Tiberius Gracchus would have made him even more popular and powerful in the eyes of those senators who disliked Scipio Aemilianus, and Metellus Macedonicus was perhaps foremost among that group. Because of the probable connections between Pulcher and Metellus, namely that they shared the consulship and would later become the leaders of a senatorial group opposed to Scipio,⁹⁸ it would be easy to suggest that at this point Metellus supported the actions of Tiberius against

⁹⁶ When censor in 131 Metellus would give a speech about the need to augment the citizen body by means of increased procreation. There are echoes of Tiberius' thoughts on the security of Rome's future well-being. The shared consulship with Ap. Claudius Pulcher in 143 provides no evidence of cooperation or friendly feelings in anything other than opposition to Scipio Aemilianus.

⁹⁷ Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 131–133; H.H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome from 133 B.C. to A.D. 68* (New York: Methuen, 1982), 22–41; D.L. Stockton, *The Gracchi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 23–39.

⁹⁸ Cic., *Rep.* 1.31.

Scipio. However, while there is never explicit mention of Metellus supporting Tiberius—only that he opposed Scipio and that he was associated with the men who did, in fact, support Tiberius—all of the actual remaining evidence illustrates his opposition to Tiberius.

There is no evidence that Macedonicus initially worked against Tiberius and he may have realized the young tribune's usefulness. He may even have agreed with some of his ideas, but as soon as it became clear that Tiberius was looking to weaken the power of the senate, a direction most notably brought to light with the Pergamene affair, and that he was willing to use revolutionary and dangerous tactics to do so, Metellus could hold his peace no longer.⁹⁹ He made a speech denouncing Tiberius and contrasting the popular rabble that accompanied him with the respect and devotion the people had paid to his father.¹⁰⁰

Further evidence supports the idea that Metellus opposed Tiberius. One of the daughters of Metellus Macedonicus was married to the son of P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Serapio (cos. 138), who ultimately was the man to lead a senatorial mob against Tiberius. Astin places this marriage back in 139 or 138, before, he suggests, the estrangement between Scipio Aemilianus and Macedonicus. However, a wedding between these two families around the time of Tiberius' tribunate in 133, after a rift developed, may have served as a way to reconcile the two families together—at least in the face of the contemporary political situation.¹⁰¹

The bitter feelings between the two great men may have eased over time and if a marriage was contracted around 133 it would serve as further evidence of Macedonicus' opposition to Tiberius and possibly point to a reconciliation with Aemilianus in the face of

⁹⁹ Stockton, *Gracchi*, 81.

¹⁰⁰ Cic., *Brut.* 81; Plut., *Ti. Gracch.* 14.4.

¹⁰¹ Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 132. The son of this marriage was praetor about 93, placing his birth sometime around 132, meaning a marriage could have been contracted in 133. His birth date does not, however, preclude his being born earlier and thus moving the marriage back to agree with Astin's suggestion.

this new threat. Aemilianus himself was in Spain at the time and Nasica probably stepped into the vacuum to lead the family in Rome for the time being.¹⁰² Even if Metellus did support Tiberius, it is unclear how much tangible assistance he could have offered since he was sent, along with Cn. Servilius Caepio, to put down a slave revolt in southern Italy. This uprising was probably a result of the First Slave War that had broken out in Sicily in 135. Orosius states that Metellus and Caepio brutally put down the revolt, crucifying 450 slaves at Minturnae and killing another four thousand at Sinuessa.¹⁰³ The revolt having been put down, Metellus returned, probably in the middle of 132, to stand for the censorship.

Shortly after the death of Tiberius Gracchus, Macedonicus was elected to the censorship along with his old *inimicus* Q. Pompeius. It is difficult to see this, the first censorship in Roman history to have two plebeians, as Suolahti does, as a revolt away from patrician power in the aftermath of Tiberius Gracchus' murder.¹⁰⁴ Macedonicus was, at this point, one of the capital city's most respected politicians. In the aftermath of the Gracchan murders and the attending political upheaval, someone who was known for his *severitas* would be the obvious choice to restore order to Rome. If Metellus had successfully steered a middle course between the supporters of Tiberius and those centered on Scipio Aemilianus, he may have been the most prudent choice under the circumstances. Additionally, in 132 the consuls conducted an investigation into the supporters of Tiberius Gracchus, severely

¹⁰² Münzer, *RAPF*, 237.

¹⁰³ Oros. 9.5.4.

¹⁰⁴ Suolahti, *Roman Censors*, 403. He further entrenches his view of patrician (i.e. *optimates*) and plebeian (i.e. *populares*) politics by saying, "This election, which was against the old tradition, is obviously related to the reaction against the optimates, caused by the reform activities of Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, which again is apparent in the fact that in 133 and 132 plebeians held both consulships in each year. When a patrician succeeded in occupying one of the consulships for the following year, it was understandable that the people counterbalanced it by electing two plebeian censors." On the contrary, the plebeian consuls of 132 were charged with the senatorial inquest into the supporters of Tiberius (Broughton, *MRR* 1.497–498) and the plebeian censors, who, according to Suolahti's line of reasoning, ought to have been supporters of Tiberius and his cause, were in fact some of his most outspoken opponents.

dampening the ambition of any of his former colleagues and friends. The time was right for Macedonicus to come back into the forefront of the political scene. He had been unable to run for office in 136 because he was in Spain, but now for the first time a member of the Metellan family reached the censorship. There would be more Metellan *censores* in the future.

The censorship of Pompeius and Macedonicus passed without any animosity between them; at least there was nothing that kept them from completing their duties. It was not uncommon for *inimici* to be elected censors together, but often their *inimicitiae* would bubble over and prevent them from carrying out their responsibilities.¹⁰⁵ Either they had reconciled during or immediately after the Gracchan affair, or they were able to put aside their differences. Given the polarizing nature of Gracchus' political actions, it is more likely that former enemies became hesitant allies in order to stand against what they perceived as a greater evil. Morgan has argued that the censorship of Metellus and Pompeius is evidence of reconciliation between Metellus and Aemilianus. But as Astin has shown, there is nothing to support the claim that Pompeius and Scipio ever reconciled after Pompeius' betrayal to win the consulship in 141. Suggesting that Metellus was reconciled with Scipio based on his collegiality with Pompeius in the censorship is patently problematic, especially since the relationship of Scipio and Pompeius is far from clear.¹⁰⁶ Both Pompeius and Metellus had opposed Tiberius, but this need not signify a partnership with Scipio.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Livius Salinator and Claudius Nero were censors in 204 and struggled (sources in Suolahti, *The Roman Censors*, 329). More recently, Scipio Aemilianus and L. Mummius, who were on good terms, struggled during their censorship in 142 (sources in Suolahti, *Roman Censors*, 393–397).

¹⁰⁶ Morgan, *Rise and Fall*, 132; Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus*, 311–312. Astin maintains that the feud between Scipio and Metellus lasted until Scipio's death (*Scipio Aemilianus*, 313). See also, Gruen, *RPCC*, 34 n.59, 55.

¹⁰⁷ Metellus' speech against Tiberius is found in Cic., *Brut.* 81 and Plut., *Ti. Gracch.* 14.4. Pompeius threatened to prosecute Tiberius as soon as he became a private citizen (App., *BC* 1.13; Oros. 5.8.4).

Not much is remembered from their censorship, but Metellus' speech to the senate about the importance of marriage and raising children survives and was recited by Augustus to his senate almost a century later.¹⁰⁸ The speech seems to have been a contemporary hit, as well as being satirized by the father and master of Latin satire Lucilius. Because Lucilius was a close friend of Scipio, Lucilius' attacks on the censor Metellus may have come at the urging of Scipio. Just as probably the sharp intellect of the satirist was pricked by the topic and themes of the censor's stern admonitions. Metellus set himself up and Lucilius needed no urging from his friend.

Metellus also appears to have been the one who, while drawing up anew list of citizen rolls, was largely responsible for the expulsion of a certain Atinius Labeo from the senate. The enraged Atinius, who was tribune, accosted Metellus and was preparing to hurl the aged senator from the Tarpeian Rock until other, less hostile, tribunes could be found to aid the censor. Atinius also tried, probably unsuccessfully, to confiscate all of Macedonicus' property.¹⁰⁹ Nothing in the sources suggests that the tribune Atinius had been a supporter of Tiberius Gracchus, although the idea is tempting. This Atinius may have been the tribune who had sponsored a law that automatically gave the Tribunes of the Plebs a seat in the senate.¹¹⁰ If so, his reaction to Macedonicus removing him from the senate list during the *lectio* is somewhat clearer.

During his censorship Metellus finally dedicated the buildings that he had begun at the beginning of his consulship twelve years earlier. He was disappointed at not being able to

¹⁰⁸ Liv., *Epit.* 59; Suet., *Aug.* 89.2; Gell. 1.6.1, 7.

¹⁰⁹ Cic., *Dom.* 123; Liv., *Per.* 59; Plin., *NH* 7.143–146. Broughton says that Atinius' confiscation was successful, but it would seem strange for such a man to lose all of his possessions and live off the charity of others, as Pliny says, and still be able to finance the campaigns of four sons who would all become consul and provide for his daughters. Pliny also seems set on portraying the mutability of human fortunes and consequently may have embellished the details of Metellus' story to better fit his purposes.

¹¹⁰ Broughton, *MRR* 1.458–459.

dedicate them in 136, when he probably had hoped to be censor, but the delay was not entirely without benefit as his sons were now somewhat older and beginning to come into the public spotlight and consciousness. The sons would have been the beneficiaries of their father's munificence and spending.¹¹¹

There is no explicit mention of Metellus from the death of Scipio in 129 until the commotion surrounding the death of Gaius Gracchus in 121, but it is almost certain that he would have helped his son campaign for and win the consulship of 123. With the death of P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus Africanus, Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus was one of the most senior and powerful senators in Rome. This makes his absence from the historical sources in this period all the more puzzling. He undoubtedly came to the aid of his in-law Serapio in the aftermath of Tiberius' death, and probably used his *auctoritas* to ensure that Serapio only endured exile for his actions.

Metellus may have been lying low during this period, although the more powerful senators seem to have maintained their influence in the aftermath of Tiberius' death and so it would not necessarily have been dangerous for him. It is more likely that he decided to withdraw after his brush with death during his censorship at the hands of the tribune Atinius Labeo. There is a chance that Pliny was correct in recounting that Labeo confiscated all of Metellus' property, forcing him to live off the generosity of others, but it may simply have been the case that, after having achieved everything he had set out to do politically, he realized his mortality that day on the Tarpeian Rock and decided to retire from public life.

¹¹¹ Morgan, "The Portico of Metellus," 504. Assuming that each son achieved the consulship *in suo anno*, their ages in 131 when Macedonicus dedicated his portico and temple complex would have been: Quintus (cos. 123), 35; Lucius (cos. 117), 29; Marcus (cos. 115), 27; Gaius (cos. 113), 25. The spacing between the children would suggest that at least one of Macedonicus' daughters was born between the sons Quintus and Lucius. The older sons would soon be embarking on their political careers and the dedication of the portico would have provided some political capital.

Regardless, he surely came out of retirement in 124 to help his son obtain the consulship in 123, which the younger Quintus duly won. The new consul was quickly removed from Rome to subdue the Balearic Islands. Whether there was a real threat of piracy or he was simply removed from a toxic political situation in Rome—either for his safety or to make sure he would not oppose the actions of Tiberius’ younger brother—will be discussed later. The final recorded act of Metellus Macedonicus took place in 121, when he participated in the political lynching of C. Gracchus, thus coming out of his retirement at nearly seventy years of age to assert his *dignitas* and *auctoritas* by chasing the young revolutionary to his death.¹¹²

Founder of a “Dynasty”

Under the direction of Metellus Macedonicus the Metellan family rose to its greatest heights yet in the Roman aristocracy. The grandson of Lucius Metellus, who had first brought elephants to Rome, introduced into Rome a new novelty—and a new vice, *luxuria*—when he constructed his portico and the temples to Juno Regina and Jupiter Stator out of marble. He was also the first member—but definitely not the last—of the Metellan clan to be awarded a triumphal *agnomen* after defeating Andriscus in Macedonia and subduing large portions of a rebellious Greece. While Macedonicus’ father had been an influential man in his generation, that influence had been used primarily to bolster the career and ambitions of another man, namely Scipio Africanus. Metellus Macedonicus used his talents to further his own ambitions.

The Metellan family’s close connection to the Scipiones and Aemilii suffered a crushing blow when the relationship between Macedonicus and Aemilianus soured,

¹¹² Cic., *Phil.* 8.14.

notwithstanding a marriage connection between them. Macedonicus' younger brother, Metellus Calvus, is an enigmatic figure during this time, reaching the consulship, accompanying Scipio and Sp. Mummius on an embassy to the east, and participating in the prosecution of Q. Pompeius. Other than that, he remains a mystery, but his sons would also rise to Rome's highest offices and gain great glory and notoriety. But it was ultimately Quintus Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus who charted the course for future generations of Metelli to rise to positions of power. Building on the superb foundation established down by his grandfather, the victor of Panormus, and no doubt learning from his politically astute father, Macedonicus earned the respect of his peers and the admiration of later generations. He was an example of good fortune and prosperity to Velleius Paterculus, who said, "One will scarcely find a man of any race, of any age, or any rank, whose happy fortune is comparable to that of Metellus."¹¹³ His sons and nephews would combine to occupy much space in the *Fasti* of the Roman Republic for the next two decades and solidify the position of the Metelli in the annals of Roman history.

¹¹³ Vell. Pat. 1.11.5–7.

Chapter 3: 120–100 BC

DOMINANCE AND METELLUS NUMIDICUS

When Metellus Macedonicus left his private life of peaceful retirement to take part in the final movements against Gaius Gracchus, he joined with others in the senatorial aristocracy who had temporarily put aside their factional disputes in order to come together against the assault on their power that was led by the younger and more revolutionary of the two Gracchi brothers. In the aftermath of his death, C. Gracchus' enemies seem to have gained the upper hand for a period of time, but once this threat against the aristocracy was removed, aristocratic competition among those who had fleetingly combined against a common foe fired up again. This aristocratic competition had a crushing result for the Metelli when Metellus Numidicus was forced into exile in 100.

Metellus Numidicus, the youngest nephew of Macedonicus, was the most dynamic member of the Metellan family during this period of apparent Metellan dominance. First as consul, then as censor, he stood as the figurehead of the traditional aristocracy against the popular machinations of men like Gaius Marius.¹ The rivalry and animosity between Marius and the Metelli in this period was a sharp blow that effectively and painfully illustrated the waning power of traditional, familial based politics. The Metelli, under the leadership of Numidicus, were unable to provide a man who could impose his will on the Roman political situation. The Metellan family in this period provides a valuable example of how a Roman aristocratic family sought to extend its influence, but their failure illustrates how difficult it could be for aristocratic families to maintain that influence in the face of charismatic and powerful individual politicians.

¹ Numidicus' *cursus honorum* can be found in Appendix 1 (p. 199).

The evidence for this period, especially the decade immediately following the death of Gaius Gracchus, is sporadic and provides only a partial picture of Roman history, and even less of the political machinations in the capital city. This is partly because, “ancient commentators and historians tended to lose interest after the death of C. Gracchus.”² The ancients’ lack of interest in this period is perhaps understandable, given that the great internal upheavals of the Gracchi had generated so much interest and provided so much juicy material for historians. The intrigues with Jugurtha, the subsequent rise of Gaius Marius and the chaos caused by his volatile associate Saturninus were perceived, and continue to be, as more interesting and exciting to the student of Roman history than the relatively quiet intervening decade. However, the decade of the 110’s saw a new generation of the Metelli seeking to place their mark on the Roman political landscape. They are, like much else in this period, given short shrift in the literary sources with the one notable exception—Macedonicus’ nephew Metellus Numidicus, who is a major character in Sallust’s *Bellum Jugurthinum*, which is often referenced by Cicero.³ Information on the other members of the clan comes largely from the consular *Fasti* and random snippets in various authors, none of which are particularly lengthy. An attempt to trace and analyze the political movements of the Metelli—and indeed whether they even functioned as a single political machine or presented a united front is debatable—must take into account the larger social, military and political currents of the period. It will be important however, to focus on the role of the various Metelli within these larger contexts.

² Gruen, *RPCC*, 106.

³ Cicero seems to have felt a strong affinity with Numidicus, probably arising out of a sense of shared experiences.

Because of the scarcity of source material, it is extremely difficult to discern who is cooperating or allied with the Metelli in this period. The perils of prosopography immediately become apparent in this period when tenuous or distant relationships can be misconstrued as affirmation of cooperation with or membership in the Metellan *factio*. Additionally, as previously mentioned it is also difficult to tell whether the Metelli acted as a unified group and followed a set or established policy, as is frequently assumed in modern treatments.⁴ In reality any policy that they followed would have been at its heart very simple: do what was needed to maintain themselves in positions of power.

Aftermath of C. Gracchus and the Period of Metellan “Dominance”

L. Opimius (cos. 121) was viewed by many as the main agitator for the death of C. Gracchus and many of his followers. At his trial, however, he was defended by Papirius Carbo (cos. 120) and acquitted, pointing to the powerful position of those who had led the senatorial charge against the Gracchi at this time. With the acquittal of Opimius and the recall of Popillius Laenas, those who had supported Gracchus and his schemes were silenced, while his opponents, who had come together in a moment of crisis, were now free to resume their political competition with each other.

The *equites* are often credited with a major role in the events of this period, and the Metelli are frequently portrayed as courting the favor of the business classes.⁵ While this may have been the case, it ought to be kept in mind that many of the presumed Metellan connections to the *equites* are through their supposed connections to Marius and M. Aemilius Scaurus. Marius, although he may have been a hereditary adherent of the Metelli,⁶ his

⁴ Gruen, *RPCC*, 111 note 21 and sources therein.

⁵ See sources cited in Gruen, *RPCC* 111, especially note 21.

⁶ Plut., *Mar.* 4.2–3.

relationship with them was strained. Even if Marius' business connections began at an early stage of his public career, all positive connections between him and the Metelli may have been severed as early as 119. Likewise Aemilius Scaurus, consul of 115 and *princeps senatus* for more than two decades, is often placed firmly in the camp of the Metellan coalition, but his affiliation with the Metelli should not be assumed so easily. Indeed, his only secure connection with the Metelli, other than a shared consulship, is a fairly late marriage tie. Gruen rightly says, "to assume that the Metellan group had captured the *equester ordo* goes well beyond the evidence."⁷ This is not to say that the Metelli and their friends did not seek to gain supporters from among this powerful and influential group, only that the equestrians should not be considered a single monolithic group with unified goals. Closer attention should be paid to the actions of the Metelli first and to their supposed allies only secondarily. Closer attention will be paid to the Metellan connections to both Marius and Scaurus in due time.

Metellus Balearicus and the Next Generation

The dominance of the Metelli during this period actually began in 123, when the eldest son of Metellus Macedonicus reached the consulship and was sent to pacify the Balearic Islands. Upon his return and triumph, when he received the honorific *agnomen* Balearicus, the way was open for his younger brothers and cousins to follow in his footsteps. Not much is known of this Metellus until his consulship, as the sources are relatively silent. Assuming that he obtained the consulship *suo anno*, as he surely did given his father's incredible reputation, he must have been born around 166/165. His son, Metellus Nepos, was consul in 98 and probably suffered a *repulsa* in 100, suggesting that Balearicus had married

⁷ Gruen, *RPCC*, 111.

no later than 143/142. This is a relatively young age, but Macedonicus himself had married young, and it is not improbable that his son was following his father's example.

The future Balearicus may have gone to Spain with his father and thereafter was probably aedile around 130 when he secured grain from the Thessalians during a food shortage.⁸ Around the same time or shortly thereafter he was probably also a *monetalis*.⁹ In 123 he assumed the consulship and was absent from Rome during the tumult of the Gracchan situation. He campaigned in the Balearic Islands from 123–121, successfully fighting pirates and establishing two Roman colonies, Palma and Pollentia, on the islands.¹⁰ He returned home in 121 to celebrate a triumph, but it is unknown whether his arrival preceded the demise of the revolutionary tribune. The year after his triumph he was censor, no doubt aided by his own recent exploits, but again the sources fail to record anything of value regarding his tenure in the office other than that the *lustrum* was completed.¹¹ Nothing else is recorded of this oldest son of the great Macedonicus until 115, when together with his brothers he carried the funeral bier of his father. Thus it seems that Balearicus played no significant role whatsoever in the political situation at Rome despite his conquering of two small islands and obtaining a triumphal *agnomen*. The next Metellan generation was off to a lackluster start.

⁸ Front., *Strat.* 4.1.11 mentions that a consul Quintus Metellus preferred to have his son serve in the ranks rather than as his *contubernalis*. Given the context, it is likely that the son was Quintus Caecilius Metellus, later Balearicus. For his identification as the aedile and the grain shortage see *ArchEph* (1910): 374–375=ISE, no. 101; cf. Peter Garnsey, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 187; Gruen, *Hellenistic World*, 165 note 44.

⁹ Crawford 256.

¹⁰ Badian has shown that in the Balearic Islands in general, and Palma and Pollentia in particular, there is a substantial number of inscriptions bearing the name Caecilius, illustrating the family's prominence and popularity there (*FC*, 309, 312).

¹¹ Suolahti's assertion (*Censors*, 413) that he was also supported in his bid for the censorship by his brothers-in-law C. Servilius Vatia (pr. 114) and P. Scipio Nasica (cos. 111), while true, overstates the importance their support would have played in his canvass for the consulship. In 124, when Balearicus would have been canvassing, neither Servilius nor Scipio would have had much to offer politically. It is true that Scipio came from an important family, but he would not reach the consulship himself until a decade later, and Servilius never would. Better to give Balearicus his due (cf. Cic., *Brut.* 211–212; *Verr.* 3.211; *Dom.* 123).

The year after Balearicus' censorship, his cousin Lucius attained the consulship together with L. Aurelius Cotta, whose family had strong ties with the Metelli.¹² Lucius Metellus was the oldest son of Macedonicus' younger brother Metellus Calvus and was born most likely around 162/161. Again, not much is known about his career until his consulship in 119 when he joined with his colleague Cotta in opposing Marius' controversial voting law. This shared consulship with Cotta, doubtless the son of Macedonicus' old friend and ally in the previous generation, suggests that the relationship between the Aurelii Cottae and the Metelli continued.¹³ Before leaving for their provinces, Marius proposed a *lex tabellaria*, which sought to narrow the passages between the voting pens.¹⁴ This law seems to have been an attempt to reduce the influence of patrons and powerful senators during voting procedures by narrowing the bridges that voters crossed over to cast their ballot.¹⁵ At this time Marius was an adherent of the Metelli, having been helped to the tribunate by the powerful family, but the events of his tribunate may have damaged their relationship.¹⁶ When Marius came before the senate to discuss his law, he threatened to throw the consul Cotta into prison unless he withdrew his opposition. When Cotta asked his colleague for his thoughts, Metellus responded with comments similar to his co-consul. Marius then threatened to have his patron Metellus also thrown into prison. No sympathetic tribunes could be found to interpose their

¹² Badian, *Studies*, 36f. See also Appendix 2.1 and 2.2.

¹³ Badian, *Studies*, 37; Gruen, *RPCC*, 119.

¹⁴ Plut., *Mar.* 4.2–4; Cic., *Leg.* 3.38; Lily Ross Taylor, *Roman Voting Assemblies from the Hannibalic War to the Dictatorship of Caesar* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1990), 39, 76.

¹⁵ Cic., *Leg.* 3.38–39.

¹⁶ Plut., *Mar.* 4.2–3. Münzer says that Balearicus may have helped Marius reach the tribunate (*RE* s.v. "Caecilius" 82, col. 1207), but it could be that Marius was connected to L. Metellus (cos. 119) and that it was this Metellus who helped him become tribune in the same year Metellus was elected consul. A later reconciliation, no matter how short-lived, with Numidicus could perhaps have been carried through more easily since Numidicus was the younger brother of the consul of 119.

veto on behalf of the unlucky consuls, so the senate withdrew its opposition and the law was passed.¹⁷

This incident provokes thought and deserves to be looked at more closely, if only to dispel the arguments of others who would see this as a covert attempt by the Metelli to secure more power with the *equites* by using their young client in a backdoor political maneuver.¹⁸ While the idea that the entire scenario was concocted to remove any suspicion from the role of the Metelli in the design and passing of the bill, the theory seems to have been devised as a way to explain Marius' later position under Metellus Numidicus during the Jugurthine War. If the Metelli were interested in such a law that was designed to undermine the patron-client relationship in elections and allow for more electoral freedom—or bribery—this could be seen as a play for equestrian support. However, the Metelli doubtlessly had a considerable number of clients and adherents and stood to lose as well if their authority over clients was impinged upon.

Even more telling against this theory are Marius' electoral failures in the years immediately following, which are difficult to explain if he was merely playing a part when he attacked his patron. Bicknell's argument that, "It is nowhere stated or implied that the Metelli intrigued against Marius' candidacy for the aedileships, nor that they were responsible for his poor showing in the praetorian elections of 116" holds no water.¹⁹ First, in a period as poorly documented as this, the fact that there is no explicit mention of backroom political conniving against Marius is not surprising, especially concerning elections for the lower magistracies. Second, his failure in subsequent elections can be seen as stemming directly from the actions

¹⁷ Plut., *Mar.* 4.2–3.

¹⁸ The latest manifestation of which is P. Bicknell, "Marius, the Metelli, and the *lex Maria Tabellaria*," *Latomus* 28 (1969): 327–348.

¹⁹ Bicknell, "Marius," 333.

of his tribunate. Voters may have been somewhat skeptical of a man who brazenly attempted to throw not one but both consuls into prison. The fact that he had traditional family ties to one of the consuls would have soured voters even more against the upstart from Arpinum. Another action of Marius during his time as tribune was to oppose a *lex frumentaria*,²⁰ which may have won him points with the *equites*,²¹ but it probably cost him some support among the populace. Lastly, if the entire situation had actually been setup by the Metelli, they surely would have rewarded their client who had taken such bold moves and played his role so well. The Metelli were at the height of their power in this period and would have had no problem securing an aedileship or even a praetorship for Marius.²²

Once the drama over Marius' voting law was concluded, the consul Metellus set out to campaign in Illyria, driven on, Appian says, by his desires for a triumph.²³ The northern borders of the empire appear to have been of major interest and concern during the period of the mid-120's down until the defeat of the Cimbri and Teutones by Marius at the close of the century. There were several campaigns fought in those areas of the empire during this time: M. Fulvius Flaccus (cos. 125) celebrated a triumph over the Ligures, Vocontii, and Salluvii; Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus (cos. 122) fought in Gaul against the Allobroges and Arverni; Q. Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus (cos. 121) campaigned in Gaul; L. Aurelius Cotta (cos. 119) fought in Macedonia and Thrace, probably with Metellus Diadematus as a legate; Q. Marcius Rex (cos. 118) was in hostile Liguria; M. Aemilius Scaurus (cos. 115) triumphed *de Galleis Karneis*; C. Porcius Cato (cos. 114) was defeated in Macedonia; Metellus Caprarius (cos. 113) campaigned in Thrace while his colleague Cn. Papius Carbo (cos. 113) was defeated

²⁰ Plut. *Mar.* 4.4.

²¹ Gruen, *RPCC*, 119.

²² Marius' voting law had been passed in the face of staunch senatorial opposition and by using legally questionable means and threats of violence.

²³ App., *Illyr.* 11.33.

near Noreia; M. Livius Drusus (cos. 112) also campaigned in Macedonia and Thrace. As is evident, all of these magistrates were assigned to fight an enemy in the north, and more than one of them was defeated.²⁴ The suggestion has been offered that the Metelli were particularly interested in the north as part of a concerted, larger “policy” which drove their decisions, but the surviving evidence does not bear this out.²⁵

Not everyone in this period, not even all the Metelli, campaigned in the north. Balearicus saw action off the coast of Spain, M. Metellus (cos. 115) fought in Sardinia for a number of years, and Marius was sent to Spain. Simply because there was a great deal of military action in the north during a period when the Metelli were influential does not make it a matter of “Metellan policy,” especially since only two Metelli campaigned there and the others cannot be conclusively taken as part of a larger Metellan group. Even Gruen’s very generous list of families with *possible* connections to the Metellan *factio* only includes M. Aemilius Scaurus and *maybe* C. Porcius Cato and M. Livius Drusus.²⁶ Only L. Aurelius Cotta’s connection is firm. Thus only three of the ten commanders listed in this period may be termed “Metellan.” In actuality, the lack of “Metellan” commanders in the north, combined with the establishment of the colony at Narbo Martius in 118 shows that the concern felt regarding the northern borders was more than just a Metellan concern and was probably shared by many at Rome—and rightly so.²⁷

The year 117 again saw a Metellus at the head of the state. L. Caecilius Metellus Diadematus was the second son of Metellus Macedonicus and was consul with Q. Mucius Scaevola. It is difficult to determine with any certainty, but Scaevola may have been

²⁴ L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi (pr. 112) was even killed, but he was fighting in Spain.

²⁵ Morgan, “Rise and Fall,” 169.

²⁶ Gruen, *RPCC*, 134.

²⁷ Germanic tribes would come from the north just over a decade later than the establishment of Narbo Martius.

connected to the Metelli at this time.²⁸ He reached the consulship at an older age and may have received some help from the Metelli in getting elected. Also, there seems to have been a later marriage connection between the Metelli and the Mucii. Additionally, Q. Scaevola's cousin had opposed Scipio Aemilianus over twenty years ago together with Macedonicus.²⁹ The Scaevolae certainly appear connected to the Metelli in later activities and the relationship may have begun as early as 121,³⁰ but there is no concrete evidence suggesting that Diadematus' colleague in the consulship considered himself politically allied with the Metelli. The possibility is enticing, but certainty is impossible.

Due to the scarcity of the sources for this period, nothing concrete is known about Diadematus' early career, and only slightly more is known for his later career. He was born 160/159 at the latest, and it is possible that he was a moneyer around 128.³¹ He also probably campaigned in the north as a legate to his cousin's colleague L. Aurelius Cotta (cos. 119).³² His *agnomen*, unlike those of his brother or cousin, was not earned for exploits in battle; rather it was given to him because of a seeping head wound that required him to wear a bandage as a child. Plutarch says explicitly that it was given in mockery.³³ During his consulship it seems that Diadematus stayed in Italy and built or rebuilt the *Via Caecilia*,³⁴ and it may have been during this year or the next that he mediated a boundary dispute

²⁸ Gruen, *RPCC*, 114–116

²⁹ Cic., *De Rep.* 1.31.

³⁰ Gruen, *RPCC*, 115.

³¹ Crawford 262

³² M.G. Morgan, "Lucius Cotta and Metellus: Roman Campaigns in Ilyria During the Late Second Century," *Athenaeum* 49 (1971): 271–301.

³³ Plut., *Coriol.* 11.4.

³⁴ *CIL* 1².2.661; 6.31603; *ILS* 5799, but see T.P. Wiseman, "Roman Republican Road-Building," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 38 (1970): 122–152, who believes that the road was built by L. Caecilius Metellus Denter (cos. 284), although he never suggests when the road would have been built since Metellus Denter was extremely busy during his consulship and died in battle the following year. The road probably ran from Reate through Amiternum until it ended at Castrum Novum.

between Ateste and Patavium.³⁵ The most notable event of his consulship was the triumph of his cousin, the consul of 119 who had returned and been awarded the *agnomen* Delmaticus.³⁶ Diadematus must have been painfully aware of his lack of military laurels, as his cousin returned to celebrate a triumph and receive an honorific *agnomen* instead of a derisive one. Upon his return Delmaticus restored the temple of Castor and Pollux with the spoils of his recent conquests, which probably gained him some support among the business classes, to whom the temple was an important place for conducting business transactions.³⁷

While Delmaticus had been subduing barbarians in the north and Diadematus had been building roads, events began to unfold in Africa that would eventually lead to the eclipse of Metellan power by the end of the second century. In 118 the Numidian king Micipsa died, leaving the kingdom of Numidia split between his two sons Hiempsal and Adherbal, and his adopted bastard son Jugurtha. After Jugurtha had Hiempsal killed, Adherbal fled to Rome seeking redress where, according to Sallust, a few senators who preferred *pretium aut gratiam* to the truth prevailed: instead of rebuking Jugurtha, a commission of ten men was assigned to divide the Numidian kingdom between Micipsa's surviving heirs.³⁸ Aemilius Scaurus, who was to become consul the very next year, was on the side of justice—surprisingly so according to Sallust—and at this time he shared no connections whatsoever to the Metelli.³⁹ The situation in Numidia was left as it was, festering until Rome's hand was forced with the capture of Cirta in 112.

³⁵ *CIL* 1².2.633, 634, 2501

³⁶ Liv., *Per.* 62.

³⁷ Cic., *Scaur.* 46; *Verr.* 2.1.154; *Ascon.* 28C; Tenney Frank, "The First and Second Temples of Castor at Rome," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 5 (1925), 79–102.

³⁸ Sall., *Iug.* 16.1–5.

³⁹ Sallust's view of M. Aemilius Scaurus is evident in *Iug.* 15.4–5

The Year of the Metelli

The year after the senatorial commission was sent to divide Numidia, another Metellus reached the consulship and he was joined by a man of unique talents and charisma. Marcus Metellus was the third son of the conqueror of Andriscus and was born around 158/157 at the latest. Like his brothers and cousins, nothing is known of his earlier career, except that he was mint-master around 127 when he issued a coin with the head of Vulcan, providing the first explicit evidence that the Metelli were interested in portraying themselves as descendants of Vulcan, most likely through his offspring Caeculus.⁴⁰ It appears that this Metellus had canvassed with the *novus homo* P. Rutilius Rufus for the consulship of 115. Rufus, who was defeated by M. Aemilius Scaurus, would later accompany Numidicus to Africa and prove to be a valuable lieutenant, but his connections with the Metelli may have gone back even further. He was married to a Livia, who was probably the sister of M. Livius Drusus (cos. 112) and his sister was married to an Aurelius Cotta. After his defeat in the elections, Rutilius immediately brought charges of *ambitus* against Scaurus, who, when he was acquitted, quickly filed counter-charges against Rufus.⁴¹ Rufus was likewise acquitted, but was forced to wait another ten years before he could sit in the consul's chair. M. Aemilius Scaurus and his own relationship to the Metelli deserves closer attention, for he had risen practically as a *novus homo* from the depths of obscurity to become the most powerful man in the Roman senate for over two decades.

M. Aemilius Scaurus is often thought to be a part of the Metellan *factio* and even to be the most powerful member of the group, but this assertion can be shown to rest on sandy

⁴⁰ Crawford, 263. For discussions of this kind of family promotion see Wiseman, "Legendary Genealogies in Late-Republican Rome," *G&R*, 153–164; Farney, *Ethnic Identity*, 53–64, 144–145.

⁴¹ Cic., *Brut.* 11.3.

foundations. If Rutilius Rufus was a protégé of the Metelli when he was defeated by Scaurus for the consulship of 115, it makes no sense that Scaurus would also have been associated with them at this point. He may have been associated with the Metelli after the elections, but there is no positive evidence for Metellan connections until the end of the century, and if the presiding magistrate at elections had any influence, it would seem that Scaurus was, at the least, not supported by the consul of 117, Metellus Diadematus, when Scaurus was defeated. Likewise Scaurus presided at the elections for 114, when Metellus Caprarius suffered a setback in seeking the consulship. Shatzman has registered this cautionary note, “That after his success certain Metelli may have wished to come to closer relationship with him is likely enough. Scaurus may have welcomed such an approach. But we are not entitled to assume that he severed his former ties to become Metellan.”⁴² One of the evidences most cited in support of Scaurus being connected to the Metelli at this point is the fact that he was nominated *princeps senatus* by the censors in the year of his consulship. Because one of the censors was Metellus Diadematus, it is assumed that it was Diadematus who appointed Scaurus, indicating Metellan support for the newly elected consul. The fact that he was made *princeps senatus* is strange since he was the first who was “not at least a patrician ex-consul.”⁴³ However, because it is unknown which of the two censors had the task of appointing the *princeps senatus*, it is possible that the Diadematus’ colleague Domitius Ahenobarbus made the appointment.⁴⁴ The later relationship between the sons of Domitius and Metellus Numidicus should not be reckoned back fifteen years to affirm that Domitius and Diadematus were political allies and that regardless of which censor appointed him it

⁴² I. Shatzman, “Scaurus, Marius and the Metelli,” *Ancient Society* 5 (1974), 208.

⁴³ Gruen, *RPCC*, 121.

⁴⁴ Liv. 27.19.9–12 for the role of the censors in appointing the *princeps senatus*. See the examples cited in Shatzman, “Scaurus, Marius and the Metelli,” 209–213.

was a Metellan move.⁴⁵ Lastly, the marriage between Scaurus and the daughter of Metellus Delmaticus is rightly seen as evidence of some connection. While the marriage is placed after 102 by Münzer,⁴⁶ Gruen emphasizes that the marriage “may be the fruit of an association not the inception of it.”⁴⁷ This may in fact be the case, but it could just as easily have been the instigation of a relationship between Scaurus and the Metelli, although admittedly it does seem odd that such a powerful politician would ally himself with a family that was clearly reeling at that late date from the effects of Marius’ incredible popularity.⁴⁸ Scaurus’ defense of Servilius Caepio in 103 may point to a slightly earlier connection.⁴⁹ It is enough to say that Scaurus does seem to be connected to the Metelli, and that the relationship probably began shortly after Scaurus’ consulship in 115. A marriage connection came some time later and served to solidify the connection between the Metelli and Scaurus.⁵⁰

Aemilius Scaurus went north and fought the Gauls, returning to celebrate a triumph *de Galleis Karneis* at the end of his consular year, while his colleague M. Metellus was sent to Sardinia toward the end of his consular year. It is curious that he spent so much time in Sardinia—he would return only in 111—but it may be understandable given the general instability of the island. L. Aurelius Orestes (cos. 126) had also fought on the island and been granted a triumph, but within ten years the situation had deteriorated so much that Metellus

⁴⁵ Evidence for the relationship between Numidicus and the Domitii is found in Gell. 15.13.5–6.

⁴⁶ Münzer, *RAPF*, 258.

⁴⁷ Gruen, *RPCC*, 121.

⁴⁸ Morgan, “Rise and Fall,” 177–178, neglects to provide a reason why an alliance begun in 115 with Scaurus’ appointment as *princeps senatus* was “cemented” nearly fifteen years later!

⁴⁹ Badian, *Studies*, 36.

⁵⁰ It seems that it is convenient, rather than born out of direct evidence to have Scaurus, “the most powerful figure in the senate during the Jugurthine War and the following two decades” connected to the most powerful family (Gruen, *RPCC*, 122).

was sent to pacify the province. While in Sardinia he established boundaries between two cities,⁵¹ and apparently did enough to earn a triumph.

As has already been mentioned, in 115 one of the censors was Metellus Diadematus, who filled the office with Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus (cos. 122). Their censorship was noted for its harshness and severity, as thirty-two senators were removed during the *lectio senatus*, among them the previous year's consul Licinius Geta and an unsavory associate of Marius named Cassius Sabaco.⁵² Licinius recovered from his humiliation to become censor himself in 108, but Sabaco had no such luck. He had supposedly aided Marius in his election to the praetorship, but had used illegal means in doing so.⁵³ The censors also banished the *ars ludicra* and other entertainments.⁵⁴ The cracking down on theatrical performances may have been the result of a revival of the plays of Naevius. The famous Naevian line *fato Metelli Romae fiunt consules* may not have originally been pejorative, although it may have been understood so considering the political situation at the time it was originally delivered, it certainly would have been an unwelcome jab to the Metelli in 115. The Caecilii Metelli were a proud family and did not take kindly to others mocking their accomplishments. By 115 the Metelli of this generation had already supplied Rome with four consuls and two censors, and they would add two more of each before they were done. Indeed it appears that the mere name Metellus was enough to secure election to the highest magistracies in Rome. However, their success in numbers does not appear to have translated into any real achievements for Rome. Since Macedonicus, the men of the Metellan family had garnered two triumphs, and

⁵¹ *CIL* 10.7852, lines 7–8.

⁵² Cic., *Cluent.* 119; Liv., *Per.* 62; Syme, “Missing Senators,” *Historia* 4 (1955): 59.

⁵³ Plut. *Mar.* 5.3–4. The assertion that Diadematus was using his station to lash out at Marius for his attack on Delmaticus is appealing, but must be set aside. Sabaco was a nobody and Marius would not have been especially hurt or influenced by his expulsion from the senate given Sabaco's poor reputation.

⁵⁴ Cassiod. *Chr.*

by 115 were in many powerful positions.⁵⁵ However, the members of the family may have been acutely aware of their shortcomings and sensitive to any real or perceived slights, which could have led to the banishment of theatrical performances in Rome.⁵⁶

115 also saw Metellus Delmaticus become *pontifex maximus*, replacing P. Mucius Scaevola who had held the office since 130. Scaevola may have been affiliated with the Metelli, since he had opposed Scipio Aemilianus together with Metellus Macedonicus.⁵⁷ However, just because the two men had a similar enemy they need not necessarily have been friends. Q. Servilius Caepio (cos. 106) and Q. Mucius Scaevola (cos. 95) were also members of the pontifical college at this time and Servilius was definitely associated with the Metelli while Mucius may have been.⁵⁸

The most important event for the Metellan family in this busy year was the death and funeral of Metellus Macedonicus. He had served Rome for a long time and had done a great deal for the empire. Metellus Macedonicus glorified those two things which were most important to a Roman noble: his country and his family. His military campaigns saw Macedonia and large parts of Greece proper come under permanent Roman control and his fighting in Spain was not unfruitful. He was personally responsible for bringing his family to the forefront of Roman politics. Before Macedonicus' exploits on the battlefield and in the political arena the Metellan family had established themselves firmly within the Roman aristocracy, but they were merely one aristocratic family among many. Metellus was able to elevate his family to the upper echelons of Roman politics. The Metellan family continued to

⁵⁵ See Appendix 2.3 and 3.9 for Metelli in 115.

⁵⁶ For the banishment of the *ars ludicra* and what this entailed, see Tenney Frank, "The Status of Actors in Rome," *CP* 26 (1931): 11–20. For the Naevian revival during the great period of the Metelli see Harold B. Mattingly, "Naevius and the Metelli," *Historia* 9 (1960): 414–439, esp. 427–429.

⁵⁷ Cic., *Rep.* 1.31.

⁵⁸ Gruen, *RPCC*, 114–116.

hold a significant amount of power even after Macedonicus was gone, but within a decade of his death they had again sunk back into the sea of Roman aristocratic families looking to distinguish and separate themselves from their peers. When he was carried to the funeral pyre by his sons, he embodied for contemporary and later Romans the concept of *felicitas*. He was *maximum patriae ornamentum*⁵⁹ and his *felicitas* was famous⁶⁰ and *inter rara felicitates humanae exempla numeratur*.⁶¹ Perhaps the eulogy of Velleius Paterculus describes best his standing among later generations:

One will scarcely find a man of any race, or any age, or any rank, whose happy fortune is comparable with that of Metellus. For, not to mention his surpassing triumphs, the great honours which he held, his supreme position in the state, the length of his life, and the bitter struggles on behalf of the state which he waged with his enemies without damage to his reputation, he reared four sons, saw them all reach man's estate, left them all surviving him and held in the highest honor... This is assuredly not to die, but rather to pass happily out of life.⁶²

When Macedonicus died he was likely succeeded in the college of augurs by his nephew, the future Numidicus,⁶³ and the Metelli were again in the spotlight. Others have posited various dates for the apex of Metellan power,⁶⁴ but an attractive option is offered in

⁵⁹ Val. Max. 4.1.12.

⁶⁰ Val. Max. 7.1.2.

⁶¹ Plin., *NH* 7.142.

⁶² Vell. Pat. 1.11.5–7. Loeb translation.

⁶³ Taylor, "Symbols of the Augurate," 354–355.

⁶⁴ Münzer suggested 102 (*RAPF*, 258) because both censors were Metelli (Numidicus and Caprarius). However, they did not cooperate and it is difficult to see the Metelli at their height of power when the censorships of 102 were the first magistracies held by the family since the consulship of Numidicus in 109. Additionally, the cousins did not agree in the fulfillment of their duties. Gruen offered 111 as an alternative (*RPCC*, 134) because the consul P. Scipio Nasica was consul and two Metellan brothers (Diadematus and Marcus) celebrated

the year of Macedonicus' death. If the tenure of magisterial offices and other positions was any indication of power, then the Metelli practically had a strangle-hold on the political scene in this year. Diadematus was censor, M. Metellus was consul,⁶⁵ Delmaticus was *pontifex maximus* by the close of the year, Numidicus had replaced his uncle as an augur, and Caprarius was running for the consulship.⁶⁶ However, the family may have contented themselves with the symbols and trappings of power,⁶⁷ which rested on unsure foundations that quickly began to crumble.

The Beginning of Troubles for the Metelli

Almost immediately after the death of Macedonicus, the great head of the Metellan family, a major setback occurred. Metellus Caprarius, the youngest son of Macedonicus, was repulsed in the consular elections for 115. Velleius Paterculus, Valerius Maximus and Pliny all state that of the sons of Macedonicus at the time of his death, one was of praetorian rank.⁶⁸ This is undoubtedly his youngest son, Metellus Caprarius. According to Pliny he was actually praetor at this time, but he must be in error since Caprarius was consul only two years later in 113.⁶⁹ Valerius Maximus simply mentions that Macedonicus' youngest son was an ex-praetor in 115.⁷⁰ Velleius Paterculus preserves the most useful piece of information, saying that Caprarius was standing for the consulship in the year that his father died.⁷¹ If the youngest Metellus was actually standing for the consulship at this time, it begs the question

triumphs on the same day. This is unconvincing since Nasica died in office and the triumphs, while surely splendid, were for shallow victories.

⁶⁵ If Aemilius Scaurus could be conclusively linked to the Metelli at this time his holding of the other consulship would only add to the prestige of the family.

⁶⁶ See Appendix 3.9.

⁶⁷ The Metelli in this period appear to have been unable to turn their success in elections into real and lasting power. The sons of Macedonicus did not place their stamp on Roman history like their father had. Although they obtained the consulship and fought victorious wars, those victories were often minor and unimpressive.

⁶⁸ Vell. Pat. 1.11.7; Val. Max. 7.1.1; Plin., *NH* 7.142.

⁶⁹ Plin., *NH* 7.142.

⁷⁰ Val. Max. 7.1.1.

⁷¹ Vell. Pat. 1.11.7.

why he was not elected, especially given that at least one of the consuls was his own brother. It speaks against the opinion that Scaurus was connected to the Metelli at this time, otherwise why would he not help his political ally?⁷² On the other hand, if Scaurus was connected to the Metelli and was unable to exert enough pressure or influence to get Caprarius elected, then perhaps the theory that the presiding magistrate held undue influence over elections needs to be re-evaluated. While Caprarius may have been thought to have been unworthy for the post for some reason, or the voters were retaliating against the harshness of the censors of 115, there is nothing in the sources to indicate why Caprarius was not elected.⁷³

Toward the end of 114 a storm that had been building against the nobility finally broke with the famous trial of the Vestals. C. Porcius Cato had suffered a defeat earlier in the year at the hands of the Scordisci in Thrace which had scared the Roman people badly, so much so that they were in fear that Rome had been abandoned by the gods.⁷⁴ With the recent military defeat and resultant anxiety, the Roman people were ready to pay careful attention to strange occurrences and omens. In the same year a *prodigium obscenum ac triste*⁷⁵ struck when the *equus* L. Helvius was on the road with his unmarried daughter and they were overtaken by a violent storm. His virgin daughter was struck by lightning and her nakedness completely exposed.⁷⁶ It was determined that the Vestal Virgins had broken their vow of chastity and a trial was quickly set up under the jurisdiction of the new *pontifex maximus* Metellus Delmaticus. The Vestals who were brought to trial were from the highest families of the aristocracy, an Aemilia, a Licinia and a Marcia. By all accounts Aemilia was the main

⁷² Scaurus was the presiding magistrate at the elections because Marcus Metellus was fighting in Sardinia.

⁷³ Caprarius had been the object of one of Lucilius' satirical remarks during his praetorship (Lucilius 1130M = 232W = 1146K).

⁷⁴ Flor. 1.39.4.

⁷⁵ Oros. 5.15.21.

⁷⁶ Plut. *Quaest. Rom.*, 83 ; Obseq. 37; Oros. 5.15.20–21.

offender.⁷⁷ She may have been the daughter of M. Aemilius Lepidus Porcina (pr. 143), who had been an ally of Macedonicus' colleague in the consulship Ap. Claudius Pulcher (cos. 143). Licinia was the daughter of a Gaius, who is almost certainly the C. Licinius Crassus (tr. 145) who had tried to pass a law requiring priests to be elected by the people.⁷⁸ She was defended by her kinsman L. Licinius Crassus, who was at this time the son-in-law of Q. Mucius Scaevola (cos. 95), who recently had been co-opted into the college.⁷⁹ The third Vestal Marcia was probably the daughter of Q. Marcius Rex (pr. 144), who had once cooperated with Lepidus Porcina on a public works project.⁸⁰ Solid connections to the Metellan family are difficult to see, but affiliations with the high nobility at Rome are explicit.

As a newly appointed *pontifex maximus*, Metellus may not have wanted to upset his fellow colleagues by handing down too stern a judgment, but in playing it safe he actually opened the door for harsher penalties and a greater loss of face. When it was announced that only one Vestal had been found guilty the public outcry was so great that a new trial was established at the instigation of the tribune Sex. Peducaeus and was presided over by L. Cassius Ravilla.⁸¹ There is an outside chance that two of the Vestals had connections to the Metelli, but all three of them were from families who had previously clashed with the religious establishment or with Cassius Ravilla himself and despite the religious nature of this particular trial, “no trials involving members of the noblest houses in Rome could remain

⁷⁷ Liv., *Epit.* 63; Oros. 5.15.22.

⁷⁸ Cic., *Domo*, 136.

⁷⁹ Broughton, *MRR* 1.532.

⁸⁰ For the family connections and possible political ramifications of those connections, see Münzer, *RAPF*, 223–224.

⁸¹ Cic., *Nat. Deor.* 3.74; Liv., *Per.* 63 ; Obseq. 37 ; Dio, 26, fr. 87; Val. Max. 6.8.1; Ascon. 45–46 Clark.

divorced from politics.”⁸² Politics definitely came into play and political loyalties and betrayals were surely not forgotten during the trial, but genuine religious concern should probably be seen as the motivating and decisive factors in the outcomes. While some saw the tribunal of Ravilla as too harsh,⁸³ it nevertheless served as a kind of repudiation of Delmaticus and an indictment of the entire college of pontiffs. Attempts at interpreting the sensational trial of 114—and its continuation under Ravilla in 113—as politically motivated miss the mark.⁸⁴ Genuine religious fervor and superstition played a major role, especially in the aftermath of Cato’s defeat in 114. There may have been a fear that the ancestral gods were deserting Rome, and the people were only pacified once a pair of Gauls and Greeks had been buried alive.⁸⁵

When the trial was over, the youngest son of Macedonicus obtained his consulship in 113 after a *repulsa* the previous year. Caprarius had been born around 156/155 and may have received his *agnomen*, much like his older brother Diadematus, in derision—possibly for a bad personal odor.⁸⁶ The date of his marriage is not known, but his oldest son was consul in 69, putting Caprarius in his mid-forties when he was born. If he was married later, perhaps around the time of his consulship, he presents a contrast this with his brother Balearicus who was married quite young. The youngest Metellus had served in Spain under Scipio Aemilianus, which is interesting given the latter’s relationship to Caprarius’ father.⁸⁷ While in Spain he was mocked, seemingly for his stupidity, by Scipio when he quipped that if

⁸² Gruen, *RPCC*, 128.

⁸³ Val. Max. 3.7.9; Ascon. 45–46, Clark.

⁸⁴ Münzer, *RAPF*, 223–224.

⁸⁵ Plut., *Quaest. Rom.*, 83.

⁸⁶ Ooteghem, *Metelli*, 102 note 3.

⁸⁷ Cic., *Orat.* 2.267; Gruen, *RPCC*, 51n.30.

Metellus' mother had born a fifth son, it would have been an ass.⁸⁸ Around 125 he appears to have been a moneyer,⁸⁹ and was praetor probably in 117.⁹⁰ It was during his praetorship, or during his campaign for the office, that he was lampooned by Lucilius for being *rusticus*.⁹¹

With the recent defeat of Cato in Thrace, the senate was concerned about barbarians descending from the north—always a scary prospect for the Romans—so Caprarius was sent to Thrace while his colleague Cn. Papirius Carbo was also sent north, where he was promptly defeated near Noreia.⁹² During his campaigns Caprarius was occupied fighting unknown tribes in Thrace, whence he returned victorious having been awarded the title *imperator*.⁹³ By the time he returned to celebrate a triumph in 111 on the same day as his brother, the environment in Rome had changed dramatically.

Jugurtha and the Rise of Marius

It will be remembered that Rome had been actively involved in the dynastic affairs of Numidia since 116, having sent a senatorial commission to divide the kingdom between Micipsa's son Adherbal and Jugurtha. Almost immediately after the delegation returned to Rome, Jugurtha resumed hostilities against Adherbal and in 112 finally contained him in the city of Cirta. Upon receiving the city's surrender, Jugurtha tortured his half-brother to death and slaughtered the inhabitants of the city, a great number of whom were Italian traders and businessmen.⁹⁴ Rome was now compelled to step in with armed force in order to avenge her

⁸⁸ Cic., *Orat.* 2.267. The joke may also refer to his *agnomen*, see Gruen, *Culture and National Identity*, 287 note 81 and sources therein. Cf. Astin, *Scipio*, 263

⁸⁹ Crawford 269.

⁹⁰ If he had indeed suffered a defeat in the consular elections for 114. Otherwise he was praetor 116. Cf. Broughton, *MRR* 1.529.

⁹¹ Lucilius 1130M = 232W = 1146K. cf. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*, 287.

⁹² Liv., *Per.* 63; Vell. Pat. 2.12.2; Strabo, 5.1.8; Plut., *Mar.* 16.5; App., *Celt.* 13.

⁹³ *ILLRP*, 13.3, no. 73: C. Caecilius Q.f. Metellus Imp.

⁹⁴ Sall., *Iug.* 25–26.

fallen citizens.⁹⁵ By this time this generation of the Metelli had gained four consulships, two censorships, and had celebrated two triumphs. However, when the Jugurthine War began in earnest, the stage was set for a conflict that the Metelli would eventually lose.

Nothing is heard during these tumultuous years regarding Balearicus, Delmaticus or Diadematus, who all would have been senior statesmen and should have taken an active role in the situation. Part of the issue may rest with the sources, as Sallust is the main authority for this period and is interested in the factional politics between the people and the aristocracy—and the latter's corruptibility. However, if this is true, it would be plausible that these senior members of the Metellan family, if they were active at all, would have made a good target for Sallust's judgments—like Numidicus did. On the other hand, these oldest members of the Metellan group may have died already or simply not cared enough to get involved.⁹⁶ They were not the only Metelli apparently missing from the senatorial debates that were raging about this time. Caprarius would not return until 111 and Marcus Metellus was still fighting bandits in Sardinia. Numidicus was praetor in 112 and may have been absent from the capital. While Aemilius Scaurus is often portrayed as the head of the Metellan coalition during this period,⁹⁷ it has been shown that Scaurus cannot be definitively placed within the Metellan camp at this time.

The delaying tactics of the senate since 116 were viewed by the people as symptomatic of aristocratic greed and incompetence, but they may have been rooted in a genuine worry about opening up another military front in Africa when there was so much

⁹⁵ Sall., *Iug.* 27.

⁹⁶ At the outbreak of the war in 112 Balearicus would have been fifty-four, Delmaticus fifty, and Diadematus forty-eight. While not considered advanced old age, it is certainly a possibility that they may have died soon after Macedonicus.

⁹⁷ Badian, *Studies*, 39; Gruen, *RPCC*, 126–127.

going on in the north. The fall of Cirta forced the hand of the senate, but it also distracted the Romans from the northern threat—a distraction that would cost Rome dearly and usher in a new era in Roman politics and history. At least one of the consuls of 111 was connected to the Metelli. P. Scipio Nasica was married to the daughter of Delmaticus and remained in Italy, but died only a short time into his consulship.⁹⁸ This daughter had married Nasica sometime in the early 130's and given the space between the births of Balearicus and Diadematus, it is possible that this daughter was born around 163/162.

The other consul, L. Calpurnius Bestia, had definite connections to Aemilius Scaurus, whom he took as a legate to Africa. Together these two men secured a peace, complete with a formal *deditio* from Jugurtha, but were widely believed to have accepted bribes from the Numidian ruler.⁹⁹ While the consul and his legate may have been enticed by the wealth of Jugurtha, they may also have been interested instead in avoiding a long and drawn out war in Africa, especially considering Carbo's defeat two years earlier. Later that year the tribune C. Memmius demanded an enquiry into the conduct of nobles who had had contact with Jugurtha. He also summoned Jugurtha to Rome to provide incriminating testimony against those who had received bribes.¹⁰⁰ Unfortunately for Memmius' plans, Jugurtha's testimony was silenced before he was able to testify due to the veto of another tribune.¹⁰¹

The Metelli themselves seem to have escaped indictment, which is not surprising since they were not in Italy nor were they directly involved in the negotiations with Jugurtha. This year did provide some bright spots for the Metelli, which were hugely important to the

⁹⁸ Cic., *Brut.* 128; Diod. 34–35.33.1, 8.

⁹⁹ Sall., *Iug.* 27–29, 32.2, 85.16; Liv., *Per.* 64; Plut., *Mar.* 9.3; Flor. 1.36.7.

¹⁰⁰ Sall., *Iug.* 32.5; Gruen, *RPCC*, 140–142.

¹⁰¹ Sall., *Iug.* 34.1.

family and increased their reputation.¹⁰² The two brothers Marcus Metellus and Caprarius celebrated a triumph on the same day, which must have been a joyous and unique experience.¹⁰³ After the celebrations Caprarius rebuilt the temple of Magna Mater, which had been destroyed in a recent fire.¹⁰⁴ Ovid mentions that the temple was rebuilt by a Caecilius Metellus,¹⁰⁵ and Morgan has argued convincingly that Caprarius should be considered the member of the family who paid for the reconstruction.¹⁰⁶ The temple had significance for the Metellan family, as it had been a Metellus who had brought the cult statue of Magna Mater to Rome back in 205, but Caprarius may also have seized the opportunity to garner a measure of support from the equestrians and lower classes, who were devoted followers of the Great Goddess and may have been supporting the political foes of the Metelli.¹⁰⁷ That this was a motivating factor in his actions can be inferred from his later position as censor. Reminding voters of the rebuilding of this important temple could have provided a boost to his candidature.¹⁰⁸

The gloom and scandal of the Memmian inquest must have pervaded much of the city during this time. Since there is no conclusive evidence linking Scaurus to the Metelli at this time, and Bestia is only linked to them indirectly through his connection to Scaurus, there is nothing to say that the Metelli were involved in the scandal. As has been mentioned already, the sources are silent on Balearicus, Delmaticus and Diadematus, and Marcus and Caprarius had been in their provinces for the past few years, while Numidicus was also in his province.

¹⁰² The benefit the Metelli received from these “bright spots” was compounded by the fact that they had not been directly involved in the scandals with Jugurtha.

¹⁰³ Vell. Pat. 2.8.2.

¹⁰⁴ Val. Max. 1.8.11.

¹⁰⁵ *Fasti Cap.* 4.347–348.

¹⁰⁶ Morgan, “Villa Publica and Magna Mater,” *Klio* 55 (1973): 215–245.

¹⁰⁷ Morgan, “Villa Publica,” 235.

¹⁰⁸ Morgan, “Villa Publica,” 239, 245.

The double triumph of the Metellan brothers on July 15, 111 provided what must have been one of the most exciting events in the capital that year, but surely the triumphs of two of the great Macedonicus' sons, over Thracian tribes and Sardinian bandits should not be considered the height of Metellan supremacy.¹⁰⁹

Metellus Numidicus, the Shining Star of the Aristocracy

It was in the volatile political atmosphere of the Mamilian Commission that the youngest son of Metellus Calvus reached the consulship.¹¹⁰ Eventually to be awarded the *agnomen* Numidicus for his actions in Africa against Jugurtha, this Metellus showed the most talent, both in military strategy and political astuteness, of all the men in generation. In fact, the election of Numidicus to the consulship for 109 should probably be seen more as a personal victory and endorsement rather than a nod of approval or appreciation for the entire Metellan family. An impression of aristocrats as greedy, corrupt, and incapable made Numidicus an attractive candidate for the consulship. He was universally acclaimed as a man of the highest integrity.¹¹¹ Evidence of his standing among his peers is found in the refusal of the jurors to even examine his account books during an extortion trial because they did not want to cast the slightest doubt on his character.¹¹²

Metellus Numidicus was born around 152/151 and his marriage to an unknown woman must have been 130/129 at the latest. As mentioned previously, he almost certainly became augur in 115, when he took his uncle's place in the college.¹¹³ He was praetor in 112,

¹⁰⁹ *Contra* Gruen, *RPCC*, 134.

¹¹⁰ C. Mamilius Limetanus was Tribune of the Plebs in 109 and established a commission to try those who were suspected of taking bribes from Jugurtha and other improprieties (cf. Broughton, *MRR* 1.546).

¹¹¹ Sall. *Iug.* 43.1, 4–5.

¹¹² Cic., *Att.* 1.16.4; *Balbo* 11; Val. Max. 2.10.1. The exact date of this trial is in question.

¹¹³ Taylor, "Symbols of the Augurate," 354–355.

and he may have served in Sicily or another grain province, but this is uncertain.¹¹⁴

Numidicus was known for his aristocratic attitudes,¹¹⁵ but this may have developed out of frustration with his immediate and extended family, who, in his eyes, were not living up to their noble responsibilities. Anger and frustration would have begun to fester as he watched the Roman aristocracy—his family at the forefront—begin to crumble under the strain of power and neglect to live up to their responsibilities. He was surely regaled in his youth with stories of bravery and nobility by his father and famous uncle, which would now only serve to highlight the tremendous achievement gap between his ancestors and his siblings and cousins. Certainly the meager successes of this Metellan generation, only highlighted by the *agnomina* assumed in triumph or assigned in derision, would have urged him on to more memorable deeds.¹¹⁶

Metellus set out for Numidia in 109, shortly after his election as consul, and, after a quick delay to restore discipline among the army, he began his campaign.¹¹⁷ He refused an offer of surrender from Jugurtha, justifiably not trusting the word of the treacherous king, gained a victory at Muthul, received the surrender of numerous towns, and captured the cities of Thala and Cirta.¹¹⁸ Accompanying the consul and proving very capable in these early engagements was none other than the old client of the family Gaius Marius. Marius had recently been praetor and had spent his propraetorship in Spain. He had also contracted a

¹¹⁴ Münzer, *RE* s.v. “Caecilius” no. 97; cf. Broughton, *MRR* 1.539 note 3.

¹¹⁵ Sall., *Iug.* 43.1–2.

¹¹⁶ The triumphal *agnomina* of the Metelli in this generation are a testament to the desire of Roman aristocrats to display their actions. Of the six sons of Macedonicus and Calvus, all but one, the consul of 115, received an *agnomen*. Of these five, all but one of the *agnomina* were given for military victories. However, those victories were not overly impressive. Balearicus (cos. 123) conquered a pirate-ridden island. Delmaticus (cos. 119) fought the Delmatians and Illyrians and arguably had the most significant campaign. Caprarius (cos. 113) fought a minor campaign in Thrace. Numidicus (cos. 109) fought in Africa, and it could be argued that he did not even deserve a triumph since he did not finish the war.

¹¹⁷ Sall., *Iug.* 44.3–5.

¹¹⁸ Sall., *Iug.* 43–72, 77.3; Liv., *Per.* 65; Vell. Pat. 2.11.2; Val. Max. 2.7.2, 9.1.5; Frontin. *Strat.* 1.8.8, 4.1.2; Flor. 1.36.11.

marriage with Julia in the last year or so, and these things may have made a reconciliation with him attractive to the Metelli.¹¹⁹ Surely Numidicus would have remembered the slight that his older brother had suffered at the hands of Marius ten years before, but Marius had proven himself an able commander in the intervening years and it may be that Numidicus was willing to forget, at least temporarily, the slight to his family's *dignitas* in order to bring along a man with considerable military talent. Metellus would soon regret his decision.

It was this decision to bring Marius, more than anything else, which led directly to the decline of the Metellan family in the last decade of the first century. Morgan passes sound judgment when he says that Numidicus is responsible for the eclipse of the Metelli by Marius, "and his fault lay not so much in his military shortcomings as in his taking Marius as his legate in the first place."¹²⁰ Presumably at an early point in 108 Marius expressed a desire to return to Rome in order to stand for the consulship.¹²¹ Metellus did not take the request seriously, replying that Marius should wait until Metellus' own son could stand for the consulship.¹²² Marius was already nearly fifty years old and Metellus' son was only twenty, meaning that Marius would be closer to seventy when he ran for the consulship if Numidicus were to have his way! Sallust says that it was from this point that Marius began to actively work against Metellus, driven by an increased desire to obtain the consulship.¹²³

Marius began a smear campaign against Numidicus which lasted through 108, claiming that the latter was deliberately dragging out the conduct of the war, and began

¹¹⁹ It is unsure how much the Metelli would have cared about the marriage with Julia, even though she was a patrician. The Julii had not been important in Rome for some time, and only became well-known through the exploits of Caesar.

¹²⁰ Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 195.

¹²¹ Sall., *Iug.* 64.

¹²² Sall., *Iug.* 64.4.

¹²³ Sall., *Iug.* 64.5.

canvassing the *equites* for their support of his candidacy.¹²⁴ During this time the case of T. Turpilius Silanus came to the fore, which only fed the growing embers of hatred and resentment between the two. Turpilius, who was a client of Numidicus, had been placed in charge of the Roman garrison at Vaga, but when the inhabitants of the city betrayed the garrison all the Romans were killed except the unfortunate Turpilius.¹²⁵ During the investigation that followed Turpilius was punished in accordance with Roman military discipline and executed.¹²⁶ Plutarch adds that Marius was included in the *consilium* that heard the case and energetically pushed for a conviction.¹²⁷ Marius was then able to use the uncomfortable fact that Numidicus had put to death one of his own clients against him, and after that point the rift between Marius and Numidicus could never be healed.

Eventually Numidicus allowed Marius to travel to Rome so that he could stand for the consulship, which Marius duly won. After a *lex Manlia* transferred command of the war to Marius, Metellus returned to Rome by an alternate route and left the army in the command of P. Rutilius Rufus with orders for Rufus to hand the army over to Marius—his anger and grief at being replaced were too great.¹²⁸ The next time Marius had a foreign command transferred to him by a decree of the people, the replaced commander did not return to Rome so quietly. Nevertheless, when Numidicus returned to Rome in 106 he was honored with a triumph and was loved by both the senate and the people, somewhat to his surprise.¹²⁹ It is curious that Numidicus received the honor of a triumph since the war was still going and Jugurtha had not been captured, but surely Numidicus and his allies would have argued that most of the

¹²⁴ Sall., *Iug.* 64.5–6.

¹²⁵ Sall., *Iug.* 66–67.3; Plut., *Mar.* 8.1.

¹²⁶ Sall., *Iug.* 69; App., *Num.* 3.

¹²⁷ Plut., *Mar.* 8.1–2.

¹²⁸ Sall., *Iug.* 82.2–3, 86.4–5.

¹²⁹ Sall., *Iug.* 88.1.

fighting had already been done and Marius was simply cleaning up the remnants of Jugurtha's army.¹³⁰ Regardless of the truth, Metellus Numidicus seems to have made it through his career to this point with his reputation largely intact and still remained one of the most influential senators in Rome.

Troubled Years for the Metelli

The year after Numidicus returned home from Africa the German threat from the north broke like a wave over Rome. Q. Servilius Caepio (cos. 106) and Cn. Mallius Maximus (cos. 105) were defeated at Aurasio, largely due to their inability and unwillingness to cooperate. Servilius was angry with Mallius, who had defeated his brother-in-law Lutatius Catulus for the consulship of that year and so refused to join his army with that of Mallius in the face of the Cimbric threat. Aristocratic haughtiness and indignation had been allowed to express itself on a field of battle, and 80,000 Roman soldiers paid the ultimate price for it. Caepio, whose family had been close to the Metelli for years, had his *imperium* revoked by decree of the people and he was forced to return to Rome as a private citizen.¹³¹ The very next year a hostile tribune named L. Cassius Longinus saw through a law removing from the senate anyone who had had his *imperium* taken away by the people. The move was intended for Caepio.¹³² The very next year, in the third consulship of Marius, Servilius Caepio was brought to trial on a charge of *perduellio* and in the melee that broke out during the proceedings Aemilius Scaurus was hit in the head by a rock. Caepio was convicted and

¹³⁰ For the opposite, and probably correct, view see M. Holroyd, "The Jugurthine War: Was Marius or Metellus the Real Victor?" *JRS* 18 (1928): 1–20.

¹³¹ Ascon. 78C.

¹³² Ascon. 78C.

imprisoned but was later released and went into exile.¹³³ Thus a powerful and longtime ally of the Metelli was removed.

In 103 Metellus Delmaticus died and was replaced as *pontifex maximus* by Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus. This Domitius was later on friendly terms with Numidicus, but it is difficult to tell how far back this friendship went.¹³⁴ It may be significant that when Delmaticus died he was not replaced by a member of the Metellan *gens* or another descendant. If the law passed by the new *pontifex maximus* requiring admission to the pontifical college through vote of the people had anything to do with it, it may be that the Metelli were not looked on favorably during these last years of the century, Numidicus' reputation notwithstanding. However, it may be the case that members of the Metellan family regained admission to the college of pontiffs quickly after Delmaticus' death. P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus (cos. 79)¹³⁵ may have been co-opted as early as 103 and Metellus Pius could have been a priest as early as 100.¹³⁶

The censorship of 102 would have provided a bright spot for the Metelli if the two cousins who had achieved the post, Numidicus and Caprarius, had seen eye-to-eye. Numidicus wanted to expel the revolutionary and reactionary tribune L. Appuleius Saturninus and his associate Servilius Glaucia from the senate, but Caprarius refused to go along, possibly to ensure the necessary support so that he could dedicate the temple of Magna Mater.¹³⁷ Numidicus' desire to expel these two may have come from their associations with

¹³³ Cic., *Balbo* 28; *Orat.* 2.197–198; Val. Max. 4.7.3, 6.9.13.

¹³⁴ Gell. 15.13.6.

¹³⁵ P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus (cos. 79) was the son of one of Macedonicus' daughters. See Appendix 3.3 and 3.5.

¹³⁶ Rüpke, *FS*, s.v. "P. Servilius C.f.M.n. Vatia Isauricus" no. 3072; s.v. "Q. Caecilius Q.f.L.n. Metellus Pius" no. 985.

¹³⁷ Morgan, "Villa Publica and Magna Mater," 239–240.

Marius, whom Numidicus now loathed, but Servilius and Numidicus also seem to have engaged in a verbal sparring match in the context of Numidicus' censorial duties. Numidicus was the subject of Glaucia's taunt about Numidicus having a Villa at Tibur and cattle-pen on the Palatine.¹³⁸ Glaucia's remarks may have been in response to Numidicus claiming that the former was the *stercus curiae* and thus deserved to be thrown out.¹³⁹ Also during their censorship these Metelli deprived a certain Furius of his public horse and refused to allow L. Equitius, who claimed to be a son of Gaius Gracchus, on the equestrian lists.¹⁴⁰ This last action resulted in a riot, in which Numidicus was attacked by the supporters of Saturninus, and was barely rescued by a band of *equites*.¹⁴¹ This was definitely not the year of Metellan ascendancy in Rome. Cousins, one of whom was obviously inferior in personality, prestige—and probably intelligence—did not agree. A close friend and ally had been driven into exile, and Numidicus, “the standard bearer and symbol of the aristocracy”¹⁴² had been roughed up by a gang of ruffians. The tremendous victories of Marius over the Teutones in 102 and the Cimbri in 101 only served to enhance his prestige and secure his predominance.

In 100 Marius became consul for the sixth time and the Metelli tried to have one of their own elected as a countermeasure. Plutarch mentions that Marius defeated a Metellus through extensive bribery in the elections for 100, but in the context of the passage he seems to be talking about Metellus Numidicus.¹⁴³ It seems strange that a man of such standing as Numidicus suffered a defeat in a consular election and the event is notably absent from other sources, including Cicero, who enjoyed using Numidicus as an example. The Metellus in

¹³⁸ Cic., *Orat.* 2.263.

¹³⁹ Cic., *Orat.* 3.164. See Morgan, “Glaucia and Metellus: A Note on Cicero, *De Oratore* 2.263 and 3.164,” *Athenaeum* 52 (1974): 314–319.

¹⁴⁰ Dio 28, fr. 95.2; Cic., *Sest.* 101; Val. Max. 9.7.1; *Vir. Ill.* 62.1.

¹⁴¹ See references immediately above and Oros. 5.17.3.

¹⁴² Gruen, *RPCC*, 181.

¹⁴³ Plut., *Mar.* 28.4–5.

question was more likely Q. Caecilius Metellus Nepos, the son of Balearicus. Such a defeat would not have been unpredictable, as the Metelli were at an ebb and Marius' power was at high tide. In any case, Nepos did become consul in 98, placing him within a workable time frame.¹⁴⁴

The fortunes of the Metellan family reached a new low after the defeat of Nepos in the consular elections. Saturninus and Glaucia had proposed numerous reforms that would be beneficial to Marius and his soldiers and supporters. The agrarian law of Saturninus included a provision that all senators swear an oath to uphold it, but the only senator to refuse was Metellus Numidicus. As an augur, he had religious grounds for challenging the legality of any law passed *per vim* and he refused to back down.¹⁴⁵ Marius still had his old reasons for hating Metellus; Saturninus and Glaucia's rage was more recent. Numidicus was evicted from the senate for refusing to swear the oath and then was tried before the people on a capital charge.¹⁴⁶ Metellus Numidicus, the youngest of his family's generation and great bulwark of the aristocracy withdrew into exile, which was seen by many as a disaster for Rome.¹⁴⁷ He was formally interdicted from fire and water and it was several years before he was able to return to Rome.

A Family in Exile

The space of twenty short years saw the Metellan family hold a virtual monopoly on the highest offices of the Roman state and seemingly rise above the accomplishments—or at least the titles—of any other family, and then plummet from those heights into political eclipse. The sons of Macedonicus had proven largely unworthy of their noble heritage. Their

¹⁴⁴ Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 217–218.

¹⁴⁵ Cic., *Sest.* 37.

¹⁴⁶ E.S. Gruen, "The Exile of Metellus Numidicus," *Latomus* 24 (1965): 587–579.

¹⁴⁷ Cic. *Red. Sen.* 10.25.

triumphs were over pirates and small barbarian tribes and while their *agnomina* were sometimes given in jest. At least one son had the sense to avoid taking one for his victories in Sardinia. It is interesting that the sons of Calvus fared somewhat better. Perhaps they felt a sense of familial duty to show that they were the equals of their more famous cousins. Delmaticus added to the beauty of the city with the spoils of his conquests and Numidicus held a high place in the opinions of others. Nevertheless, the Metelli of the two decades after the Gracchi did not possess—Numidicus being the only exception—the political savvy of their forebears and seemed content to reap the benefits from their fathers' associations and exertions. The Metelli of this generation were unable to exert any real influence in the senate or with the people, and the family's prestige had suffered for it. The Metellan family would rise to new heights once again, but it would take a fresh and ambitious generation to make it happen.

Chapter 4: 100–46 B.C.

RESURGENCE AND FINAL DESCENT—PIUS AND SCIPIO

The political fortunes of the Caecilii Metelli went into exile with Numidicus at the close of the second century. When the first century opened, the power of the Metelli and their allies was ebbing, and without the dynamic—and polarizing—personality of Numidicus, the family struggled to keep from falling out of the ranks of senatorial power. In the decade of the 90's the Metelli were able to maintain their position, but just barely. Like many politicians during this tumultuous period, they were forced to make constant political adjustments.

The son of Numidicus, Metellus Pius, was one of the greatest personalities in Roman politics during the first half of this period. It was Pius who finally understood that, in order to survive as a political family, the Metelli needed a strong and charismatic leader. Thus it was Metellus Pius who took an active part in the civil war between Marius and Sulla, and then became an important ally to the latter.¹ Because of this relationship, the Metellan family experienced a great resurgence during the time of Sulla, but began to fall into relative obscurity after Pius died. His adopted son, known as Metellus Scipio,² failed to establish himself as a significant force in the politics of his time, while men like Pompeius Magnus and Julius Caesar—together with their legions—crowded the stage during the Republic's dramatic final act.

¹ See Appendix 1 (p. 202) for the very impressive *cursus honorum* of this man.

² The *cursus honorum* for this adopted Metellan son can be found in Appendix 1 (p. 208). See also Appendix 3.6 for his family connections to the Metelli.

The Metelli in the 90's

The 90's is a difficult decade to study, because the extant sources seem to lose interest after the violent upheavals of Marius' sixth consulship, only to pick up again when Lucius Cornelius Sulla broke with all tradition and turned his standards towards Rome. The lack of abundant source material has caused some to remark that this was, "an interval of calm, or rather of stagnation."³ However, the surviving evidence, much of it fragmentary and piecemeal, allows for another view. Gruen has shown that "tension and internal conflict marked the 90's. Bitter struggles were fought primarily in the criminal courts, splitting the Roman aristocracy and bringing into the open the issues which were ultimately to explode into the Social War."⁴ An interval of calm indeed! In addition to the scarcity of material for Roman history in general, there is a dearth of involvement when it comes to the Metelli, specifically Metellan leadership in any real, meaningful way.

When Metellus Numidicus went into exile, his destination was Rhodes and he was accompanied by his close friend L. Aelius Stilo Praeconinus, an incredibly literate man and well-known speech writer who composed speeches for numerous politicians.⁵ Attempts were made to recall Numidicus almost immediately after he left Rome. The tribunes Q. Pompeius Rufus and Porcius Cato introduced a bill for his recall in 99,⁶ but it was opposed by Marius and defeated by the tribune P. Furius. Furius had personal motives for seeing Numidicus suffer, as the latter had taken away his horse during the censorship in 102.⁷ Furius' dislike of Numidicus may have had even deeper roots, as the Metelli had suffered at the hands of the

³ M. Cary, *A History of Rome Down to the Reign of Constantine*, 2nd ed. (London, 1954), 316–317.

⁴ E.S. Gruen, "Political Prosecutions in the 90's B.C.," *Historia* 15 (1966), 32.

⁵ Suet., *Gramm.* 3.

⁶ App., *BC* 1.33; Oros. 5.17.11; cf. Dio 28 fr. 95.1–3; Plut., *Mar.* 31.1.

⁷ Dio 28 fr. 95.2.

Furii in years past.⁸ In the aftermath of Cannae, it was a Furius who had brought accusations against a member of the Metellan clan in an attempt to get him removed from the senate. There is an even older connection between the two families: L. Metellus (cos. 251) had shared the consulship with C. Furius Pacilus. It is possible that the tribune of 99 was motivated by familial as well as personal feelings, which speaks to the intense emotions and feelings that were cultivated by these proud Roman families. Whatever his family connections or personal feelings, one thing is certain: Furius' action in blocking the recall of Numidicus did not endear him to the people and ultimately sealed his fate. When he was brought to trial in the next year, an angry mob took justice into its own hands and killed him.⁹

One of the tribunes who initially proposed the bill also had family connections to the Metelli. Metellus Macedonicus had shared the censorship with Q. Pompeius in 131 when they formed the first all-plebeian censorship. They had traditionally been less-than-friendly rivals, but now it would appear that this son—or more likely grandson—of Macedonicus' old nemesis was breaking down the walls between the two families. Perhaps the actions of his tribunate should be understood as the first evidence of cooperation between the Pompeii and Metelli, who would both come to be important supporters of Sulla.¹⁰

But Marius' power was waning and in the next year two men friendly to Numidicus were elected consuls and before the year was out Numidicus was home and Marius had retreated to Asia on a religious pretext. The year of Numidicus' return from exile saw a brief

⁸ See above, chapter 1. It is impossible to determine with certainty if there is a family connection between these Furii, but that would not necessarily have prevented a supposed connection from being exploited.

⁹ App., *BC* 1.33; Dio 28 fr. 95.1–3.

¹⁰ Although it is also possible that the feud was carried on with the descendants of Macedonicus and not with those of Calvus.

flash of Metellan resurgence after the low point reached in the final years of the second century. While Gruen's statement that, "the Metellan *factio*, as so often in the past, reasserted control when men tired of demagogic excesses"¹¹ may be going too far, it does appear that yet again the Metelli emerged after a brief period in the shadows to exercise some leadership and influence in Rome.¹² The elections for 98 saw the return of Q. Caecilius Metellus Nepos and T. Didius. Didius had probably received some help to this position from the Metelli since he had defended the longtime Metellan friend Servilius Caepio in 103, and it may have been for this help that the family was willing to lend what support it could to this aspiring politician.¹³

Metellus Nepos would have needed no help in achieving the consul's seat. His filiation reveals him to be the son of Balearicus and grandson of the great Macedonicus. His *agnomen* was given to him, not as Valerius Maximus mistakenly suggests from his *mores*, but from the fact that he was the first grandson of Metellus Macedonicus.¹⁴ Not much else is known about him or his earlier career, but by this time there had been eleven consulships held by the Metelli so he would have had little trouble gaining the consulship, especially considering public opinion regarding the fate of Numidicus.¹⁵ This year saw the passage of the *lex Caecilia Didia*, a law sponsored by the two consuls which established that three *nundina* must pass between the proposal of a law and voting on it. It also prevented multiple laws from being combined as a way to bypass discussion and debate.¹⁶

¹¹ Gruen, *RPCC*, 189.

¹² A consulship or two in a decade can hardly be understood as controlling affairs in the capital.

¹³ Cic. *Orat.* 2.197; Gruen, *RPCC*, 189.

¹⁴ Val. Max. 9.14.4 The story is told about the younger Metellus Nepos (cos. 57), but the point is the same.

¹⁵ App., *BC* 1.33.

¹⁶ Cic., *Dom.* 41, 53; *Sest.* 135; *Phil.* 5.8; *Att.* 2.9.1; *Leg.* 3.11, 43.

The most exciting event of 98, for Rome and for the Metelli, was the recall and return of Metellus Numidicus from exile. The tribune Q. Calidius proposed a law recalling him from exile and it was duly approved as the *lex Calidia*.¹⁷ Calidius was repaid for his efforts when he was supported by Metellus Pius in his canvass for the praetorship.¹⁸ Supposedly at the theater when he received the joyous news of his recall, Numidicus refused to leave until the performance was finished, and even then did not display any outward signs of his inner jubilation.¹⁹ When he returned to Rome so many people came out to greet him that an entire day was not sufficient for him to meet them all.²⁰ As an added consolation, the tribune Furius who had opposed the recall in the previous year was charged by the tribunes, but he was torn to pieces by an angry populace before a verdict could be delivered.²¹ The circumstances surrounding his exile and repatriation brought Numidicus more fame than all his other previous exploits: *nec triumphis honoribusque quam aut causa exilii aut exilio aut reditu clarior fuit Numidicus*.²² This excitement notwithstanding, when he returned to Rome he appears to have been a broken man and he played no further role in politics.²³

The recall of Numidicus was a tremendous blow to Marius, that aristocrat's most implacable enemy. When Marius went to Asia on religious pretexts he was seeking an opportunity to remove himself from the embarrassing situation in which he now found himself. It had only been three years since he had enjoyed incredible power and unprecedented influence and prestige among his fellow Romans and only two years since his

¹⁷ Cic., *Planc.* 69; *Dom.* 87; Val. Max. 5.2.7; cf. Diod. 36.16; Liv., *Per.* 69; Val. Max. 4.1.13; Vell. Pat. 2.15.4, 2.45.3; Plut., *Mar.* 31.1; App., *BC* 1.33; Dio 28 fr. 95.1–3.

¹⁸ Cic. *Planc.* 69; Val. Max. 5.2.7; Cic., *Verr.* 1.38, 2.3.63.

¹⁹ Val. Max. 4.1.13; *Vir Ill.* 62.2–3.

²⁰ App., *BC* 1.33.

²¹ App., *BC* 1.33; Dio 28 fr. 95.1–3; Michael C. Alexander, "Trials in the Late Roman Republic, 149–50 BC," *Phoenix* 26 (1990): 41–42.

²² Vell. Pat. 2.15.4.

²³ Val. Max. 4.1.13.

sixth and most recent consulship. Now to have his worst enemy brought back with such adulation to Rome—Marius’ staunch opposition notwithstanding—after an exile of only two years was a personal blow that Marius could not endure. “Of whatever inconsistencies Marius might be accused, his hostility toward Metellus Numidicus had remained constant and fervent. To no man was the restoration of Numidicus a more bitter blow.”²⁴

As symbolically important as the recall of Numidicus was to the Metelli and the senatorial oligarchy, the fact that he did not participate in the political developments of this period would suggest that he died shortly after his return.²⁵ Additionally, the fact that Marius was admitted into the augural college while he was in Asia, probably around 97, suggests that Numidicus had died by that date, since Cicero says that no man could be brought into the college who was an *inimicus* of another member.²⁶ It is harder to think of a more illustrative example of *inimicitia* than what existed between these two opposing pillars of Rome.

This Metellan “resurgence” was extremely short-lived. Numidicus probably died within a year of his return from Rhodes, and Metellus Nepos the consul of 98 disappears from the historical record. With that the Metelli lapse into obscurity until the rise to prominence of Metellus Pius in the next decade. Nepos himself is most likely the man that, according to Cicero, used prepared speeches of Aelius Stilo, who had accompanied Numidicus into exile.²⁷ Immediately after his consulship, Nepos was prosecuted by C.

²⁴ Gruen, *RPCC*, 190.; cf. Plut., *Mar.* 30–31. Indeed, the return of Numidicus is the final example, and perhaps the most profound of all, of Marius’ free fall from the dizzying heights of political power he had so recently enjoyed. That he was unable to muster enough support to keep his *inimicus* in exile—a man whom he had replaced so easily in the Jugurthine War and sidelined so effectively in the aftermath of the Cimbric Wars—must have pained Marius more than anything else.

²⁵ E.S. Gruen, “Political Prosecutions in the 90’s B.C.,” *Historia* 15 (1966): 36 note 46; cf. Cic., *Fam.* 1.9.16; *De Nat. Deor.* 3.81.

²⁶ Cic., *Fam.* 3.10.9; cf. Hahn, “Roman Nobility and the Three Major Priesthoods,” 80. For Numidicus’ position as an augur see Taylor, “Symbols of the Augurate,” 352–356.

²⁷ Cic., *Brut.* 206; cf. *ORF* 74.1.

Scribonius Curio for personal reasons.²⁸ Since Nepos is not mentioned again, perhaps he was convicted and withdrew from public life or was exiled. It is even possible that he died. More immediately important for the Metelli, his disappearance or death left the family without a leader.

At this time that leadership of the family likely fell upon Metellus Pius, who was probably entering into his first political offices. He would not have had the political wherewithal at the time, however, to lead an entire group or *factio*, and it is during this period that it becomes especially dangerous to talk of a “Metellan group” or “Metellan *factio*”. If a larger grouping of politicians existed that was loosely based on the Metellan family, then surely leadership of such a group would have fallen to Aemilius Scaurus, the *princeps senatus* from 115 who was married to the daughter of Metellus Delmaticus. But even in this case, Scaurus was beginning to age and was often beleaguered by politically-motivated criminal trials.²⁹

Certain events of this decade can be connected to the Metelli through various personal or political associations, but these need not necessarily be seen as part of a consistent Metellan policy or, on the other hand, an attack upon supposed Metellan supremacy. Again, it is difficult and even inappropriate to use the term Metellan *factio* or Metellan group during this period since there was no actual Metellus who could lead such a group. Granted, Scaurus was married to a Metella and was an almost larger than life figure, but the role of the Metelli themselves was practically non-existent until the praetorship of

²⁸ Ascon. 63–65C; Apul. *Apol.* 66. The sources do not elaborate further on the reasons for the prosecution.

²⁹ For the most forceful attempt at reconstructing a Metellan *factio* during the decade of the 90’s, the lack of Metelli themselves notwithstanding, see Gruen, *RPCC*, 185–214.

Metellus Pius.³⁰ And even if it is permissible to use such a term to describe a group of senators, who had been associated with the Metelli in the past, this group should not be viewed as a cohesive bloc of senatorial aristocrats. It is always dangerous to understand Roman politics as the interactions of monolithic groups. Overarching principles may guide senators, *equites* and others, but individuals would have acted in their own interests regardless of their class or larger political connections. Perhaps no other group exemplifies this concept as much as the following men. M. Antonius had established connections with Marius in 97, if not earlier.³¹ L. Crassus was a close friend of M. Antonius and his daughter was betrothed to Marius' son around 95.³² Even Aemilius Scaurus seems to have cooperated with Marius in some kind of business venture in the 90's.³³ Q. Servilius Caepio, son of the consul of 105, broke away from his father's political alliances when he got into a bitter dispute with his friend and brother-in-law M. Livius Drusus (tr. 91).³⁴ All of these men had strong connections to the Metelli, and their subsequent drifting away illustrates two important points. First, with the death of Metellus Numidicus—or possibly going back to his exile—there was a feeling of considerable freedom of movement in the political sphere among the former associates of the Metelli. These men had no quarrels with Marius, but, as long as Numidicus was alive working with him was unthinkable. Second, Roman politicians were casting about for new political allies during this decade. The fact that the men seeking

³⁰ Even Gruen (*RPCC*, 185) himself acknowledges that the “decade began with a wholesale reassessment of political postures.” Perhaps part of this posturing was due to the noticeable lack of Metellan leadership?

³¹ Cic., *Brut.* 168; cf. Gruen, *RPCC*, 192–193; Badian, *Studies*, 47.

³² Cic., *Balb.* 49; *Orat.* 1.66, 3.8; *Att.* 12.49.1, 14.8.1; cf. Gruen, *RPCC*, 193.

³³ Plin., *NH* 36.116; cf. Gruen, “Political Prosecutions in the 90's B.C.,” 58; Gruen, *RPCC*, 193. While Scaurus' possible connections with Marius does not necessarily mean they were political allies, it is curious that the man in large part the figure head of an important senatorial family would associate with the man who had caused so much damage to the family.

³⁴ Gruen, *RPCC*, 195.

these new alliances were men who had former associations with the Metelli suggests the severe lack of Metellan leadership.

One of the events that can be shown a tenuous link to the Metelli is the trial of Caepio and the related prosecution of Norbanus. The Servilii Caepiones had been connected with the Metelli in the past. They had been associated, together with the Aurelii Cottae, with the Metelli for nearly one hundred and sixty years, since the days of the First Punic War. The relationship between Servilius Caepio, son of the consul of 106, and the Metelli was strained and within a few short years he would actively oppose his family's ancient ally.³⁵

The passage of the *lex Licinia Mucia* in 95, which removed from citizenship lists any who had been enrolled illegally, and was part of the building tension that would ultimately lead to the Social War, may have been at least in part the brain child of Scaurus, "an aristocrat with nothing but contempt for new citizens."³⁶ Additionally, the reforms advocated by Drusus in 91 seem to be, at least in part, in line with the principles espoused by Scaurus and others of his political stripe. Drusus had been connected with the Servilii Caepiones on account of his marriage to the sister of his best friend Q. Caepio, but their relationship fell apart because of a personal feud that saw Caepio become antagonistic to the group to which his family had traditionally been aligned. While Caepio abandoned his former friends, Drusus remained connected. That connection was strengthened by his relationship to Rutilius Rufus (cos. 105) who had been a protégé of the Metelli. He was, in fact, Rutilius' nephew.³⁷

³⁵ For the related trials of Caepio and Norbanus in 95 see Badian, *Studies*, 34–70; Badian, "Caepio and Norbanus: Notes on the Decade 100–90 B.C.," *Historia* 6 (1957): 318–346; Gruen, "The Quaestorship of Norbanus," *CP* 61 (1966): 105–107. In 92 Caepio would prosecute Aemilius Scaurus for extortion.

³⁶ Gruen, *RPCC*, 202.

³⁷ Plin., *NH* 7.158; Val. Max. 8.13.6.

Lastly, the *lex Varia*, which was passed in 90 and was directed against those who had encouraged the Latin allies to revolt, and its fallout in the courts may have seen some Metellan involvement.³⁸ Q. Metellus Celer (tr. 90) probably voiced his veto, but his lack of rhetorical skills kept him out of the middle of things.³⁹ Several people with known ties to the Metelli were prosecuted under this law. Scaurus himself was prosecuted but was acquitted. Pompeius Rufus, who had earlier unsuccessfully proposed the recall of Numidicus, was also tried and acquitted. Aurelius Cotta, however, was convicted.⁴⁰ Both Pompeius Rufus and Cotta had used speeches written for them by Aelius Stilo when they were brought before the *quaestio*, but their delivery had different results.⁴¹ All of these events happened in the 90's and there is circumstantial evidence that politicians with some Metellan connections were involved. However, it is more than tenuous to try and reconstitute these events as a cohesive and practically planned attack on the Metelli and their allies.

Of the few events that survive in the historical record of the 90's, there is one that directly involves the Metelli—more specifically one of the women of the clan. Julius Obsequens preserves an interesting account of how in 90 the daughter of Balearicus had a dream in which Juno Sospita was deserting her temple and it was only through the vigorous protestations of Caecilia Metella that she was persuaded to stay.⁴² The episode is interesting in its own right, but somewhat more important as it relates to the role of women in the

³⁸ The standard treatment is, as is so often the case in this period, Gruen, "The Lex Varia," *JRS* 55 (1965): 59–73.

³⁹ Cic., *Brut.* 305; cf. Gruen, *RPCC*, 217.

⁴⁰ App., *BC* 1.37; Cic., *Brut.* 305–306; *De Orat.* 3.11. Aurelius Cotta was not the only one convicted. L. Memmius and L. Calpurnius Bestia were also convicted, but from the standpoint of connections to the Metelli, is the most notable.

⁴¹ Cic., *Brut.* 169, 205–207.

⁴² Obseq. 55.

religion of Rome.⁴³ But the dream of Caecilia Metella is also important for an understanding of the Metellan family during this period. Metella was able to not only have her dream heard by the senate, but also able to persuade the senate to rebuild the temple of Juno Sospita as a result of her dream. This speaks to the position of this woman in powerful circles. Only slightly more is known about her than other aristocratic women, but as a daughter of Balearicus she would have been proud of her noble heritage. In this way her dream, “may be seen as part of the policy of the family and its aspirations to preserve and renew its power and prestige.”⁴⁴ This view is enhanced when the timing of the dream is recalled. The Metelli had played practically no role in Roman politics during the past decade. It is entirely possible that, without any men of appropriate age or ability to lead the family, this woman took it upon herself (or maybe at the suggestion of one of her relatives) to try and assert a claim to Metellan importance yet again. It must not be forgotten that the Metelli had developed something of a reputation for religiosity and she capitalized on this reputation during a low period in the family’s history. Her great-great grandfather had been *pontifex maximus* and saved the sacred Palladium from the burning temple of Vesta. Her great grandfather was chosen to participate in the delegation that was responsible for bringing the Magna Mater to Rome at the end of the Second Punic War. Her grandfather Macedonicus had been an *augur* and had constructed a portico and temple with the spoils of his conquests.⁴⁵ Her attempt to maintain the family’s religious standing seems to have worked, and Juno Sospita did not abandon her temple.

⁴³ For these larger socio-religious issues see M. Hänninen, “The Dream of Caecilia Metella,” *Female Networks and the Public Sphere in Roman Society*, eds. Päivi Setälä and Liisa Savunen (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 1999), 29–38 and Kragelund, “Dreams, Religion, and Politics in Republican Rome,” *Historia* 50 (2001): 53–95.

⁴⁴ Hänninen, “Dream of Caecilia Metella,” 31.

⁴⁵ Though there is no reference to it, it would be odd if Balearicus had not held some sort of religious post, being the eldest son of such a popular and powerful man such as Macedonicus.

The last year of the decade saw the tribunate of Q. Metellus Celer, although he appears to have been less effective than other politicians. He received his nickname *Celer* for the rapidity with which he celebrated his father's funeral games.⁴⁶ His identity is something of a mystery, compounded by the confusing nature of the relationship between this generation's Nepos and Celer and the Nepos and Celer in the next generation. He could have been a son of any of Macedonicus' sons, but given his age and when he held the tribunate, it is perhaps most likely that he was the oldest son of Diadematus. Additional deduction supports this hypothesis: M. Metellus (cos. 115) is not known to have had any children, Delmaticus only had a single daughter who would eventually marry Aemilius Scaurus and Sulla, Balearicus had a son and a daughter, the consul of 98 and dreamer of 90, and Numidicus' only child was Metellus Pius. It therefore seems safest to agree with Münzer's suggestion that this Metellus Celer was the son of Diadematus,⁴⁷ and that he was a political non-entity and died shortly after his aedileship in 88. Fortunately for the Metelli, events in Rome changed dramatically in the next decade and the family would enjoy renewed respect as a result.

The Metelli in the Age of Sulla

The Metellan family as a whole probably looked upon the opening of the next decade with high hopes, and history would justify those hopes. The year 89 closed and the year 88 opened auspiciously for the Metellan *gens*. Metellus Celer successfully prosecuted Sergius Silus for improper proposals to a Roman matron, and Metellus Pius was praetor.⁴⁸ While the sun was beginning to rise again on the Metelli, dark storm clouds were beginning to threaten

⁴⁶ Plut., *Coriol.* 11.3; *Rom.* 10.2. There is a reference by Valerius Maximus (6.1.8) to a Metellus Celer who prosecuted Sergius Silus as an aedile and this seems to refer to the consul of 60, but as Broughton points out, it is this "earlier" Celer who is a better candidate (*MRR* 2.41, 45n.5, 144, 539, 3.37).

⁴⁷ Münzer, *RE* s.v. "Caecilius" no. 85.

⁴⁸ Val. Max. 6.1.8.

Rome in a way not seen since the Second Punic War. The relationship within the Metellan clan itself, not to mention with other politicians, is likewise cloudy during this period. The ancient sources become enthralled with the great conflict between Rome and her allies, and then with the even greater conflict between Marius and Sulla. The actions of other Romans are seen and interpreted through the lens of this conflict. As a result, tracing political relationships becomes ever more difficult as the colored hindsight of those recording events of this period portray an oligarchy pitted against itself and beginning to collapse. Fortunately, the relationships that were cultivated by the Metelli in this period were with the power brokers who ultimately rose to positions of supremacy in the Roman state. This proximity allows for more exposure in the sources, but it also means that the portrayals are more likely to be colored in accordance with the historian's individual biases. These problems are magnified by the multifaceted and complicated nature of these relationships.

During this period a new generation of politicians emerges, comprised of the sons of Metellan women who had been married off in dynastic marriages in the previous generation, during the family's political apex. A Metellan daughter was married to Ap. Claudius Pulcher (cos. 79)—a match that would have repercussions for the Metelli and for Rome, as the notorious Clodius Pulcher and Clodia were the unripe fruit of the union—that brought that astute politician into the circle of the Metelli.⁴⁹ Claudius' colleague in the consulship was Servilius Vatia Isauricus, offspring of the praetor of 114 and the daughter of Macedonicus. Delmaticus' daughter had been married to the *princeps senatus* Aemilius Scaurus and would soon be used in another dynastic marriage to Sulla himself. Licinius Lucullus (cos. 74) was

⁴⁹ See Appendix 3.8 for the connections between the Claudii Pulchri and the Caecilii Metelli.

the son of Numidicus' sister. All of these men would play an important role in the politics of the next two decades, especially in Sulla's government.

Of all the political maneuvers the Metelli made in the first century BC, the most important by far was to contract a marriage alliance with Lucius Cornelius Sulla. When M. Aemilius Scaurus died, his widow was married to Sulla sometime late in 89 or early in 88. This marriage connected the Metelli to one of Rome's rising stars and to a man destined for greatness. In this the Metelli were simply continuing in the tradition of forming alliances with other politicians through marriages. Sulla had earned a good military reputation, beginning in the war against Jugurtha and then more recently in the Social War, and probably became consul on the coattails of those recent victories. Keaveney suggests that this marriage can be understood in two ways:

It could be argued that Sulla, once a despised outcast, was now in such a powerful position as to demand and receive her hand from these haughty nobles. On the other hand, we could suggest that, to judge from their recent absence from the *Fasti*, the Metelli had been partially eclipsed and were therefore glad to be associated with the most brilliant figure of the day.⁵⁰

Both of these suggestions hint at the strength of Sulla's position. However, it seems unlikely that the Metelli were doing anything other than what they had always done—and what they would continue to do—namely bringing a powerful and promising ally into their family. One should not mistake Sulla's revolutionary position and power of 82 with his very traditional one in 88; not even Sulla had an inkling of what was to come. In 88 Sulla was in no position

⁵⁰ Keaveney, *Sulla: The Last Republican*, 2nd ed. London, Routledge (2004), 45.

to demand anything from anybody. The son of an impoverished and unimportant patrician family, Sulla had risen above his humble beginnings to the consulship, but even that consulship had come relatively late in life. As consul he was powerful, as any consul was, but he definitely would have been the junior partner in any alliance with the proud Metelli.⁵¹ The second reason mentioned above, that the Metelli were “eclipsed” and thus seeking any connection with a powerful politician, gives the Metelli considerably less than their due. The reason for their absence from the *Fasti*, which Keaveney apparently sees as the reason why the Metelli sought out an alliance with Sulla, was that the next generation of Metelli had not reached the age of political maturity. It had happened before in the 120’s and was happening again in the 90’s.

The first Metellus to emerge from this generation, the pious son of Numidicus, became one of Rome’s most prestigious senators. Absence from the *Fasti* due to normal generational fluctuations did not mean the Metelli were completely powerless and without standing. There is a third possibility: that Sulla was looking to legitimize his position in and among the nobility. His family had been obscured for a long time and had only very recently emerged from that darkness. What better way to complete his rise to power than to seek a marriage alliance with one of Rome’s most influential plebeian houses? Sulla therefore cast about for a suitable ally and the Metelli happened to have a recently widowed wife. It is quite the coincidence that the same woman was connected with both Scaurus and Sulla, who were both from impoverished patrician families and saw their fortunes rise as a result of their marriages with the Metelli.⁵² Their marriage was something of a sensation, since Sulla had

⁵¹ Sulla’s family had not risen above the praetorship for several generations. The Metelli could count eight consuls in the last one hundred years.

⁵² The daughter of Delmaticus was undoubtedly a special woman.

recently divorced his previous wife and the nobility scoffed that Sulla considered himself worthy to marry such an illustrious family. Massive nuptial celebrations were held and the marriage proved a fruitful one.⁵³

The wedding and how subsequent events played out show that it is inaccurate at the least—misleading at the worst—to talk about the Metelli of this period as a coherent group of politicians with a specific agenda.⁵⁴ Undoubtedly all members of the family sought an increase in the family's *dignitas*, but political cooperation was not necessarily always present between different members of the *gens*. The descendants of Metellus Calvus did not always work in tandem and the progeny of Macedonicus are practically non-existent, especially after the elder Nepos and Celer quietly disappeared from the scene after their ineffective careers.⁵⁵

The fortunes of the Metellan family as a whole began to rise with the political maturation of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius, whose praetorship fell in either 89 or 88. Pius was most likely born around 129, given the date of his praetorship. He saw some action as a young man during his father's campaigns in Africa against Jugurtha and was probably admitted into the sacerdotal college at an early age.⁵⁶ His praetorship was in 88 rather than 89, and his position in 88 became exponentially more important since he was one of the only men to command an army during the tense time of Sulla's march on Rome and the later *Cinnae dominatio*, since he was busy mopping up the remnants of the Social War all the way

⁵³ Plut., *Sull.* 6.10–12. The reaction of the nobility is telling of Sulla's position and reputation at the time of the marriage. It is doubtful whether the nobility would have had a similar reaction if Sulla were as powerful in 88 as he was in 82.

⁵⁴ This is not to say that they all were concerned with the position and power of the family. At a later time Metellus Celer could discuss the *dignitas* of his family, while being on opposite sides of political issues (Cic. *Fam.* 5.1).

⁵⁵ Metellus Pius was a cousin of Metella Delmatici, but his actions in 88 show he was not overly influenced by this family connection to support Sulla.

⁵⁶ *Vir Ill.* 63.3; Cic., *Ad Quir.* 6; Cic. *Red. Sen.* 37; Broughton, *MRR* 2.39n.28, 2.540.

into 87.⁵⁷ It may be the case that Pius' bid for the praetorship had been bolstered by his successes as a *legatus* in the Social War.⁵⁸ At the beginning of his praetorship Metellus Pius was engaged in registering new citizens in accordance with the *lex Plautia Papiria*, and then left the city to campaign against the Samnites.⁵⁹ During these campaigns he was generally successful, even killing the Marsic general Q. Pompeidius Silo in Apulia.⁶⁰ It may have been during these actions that Metellus was first hailed as *imperator*.⁶¹

Pius was in Apulia when Sulla marched his legions into Rome. When the tribune Sulpicius Rufus, with the support of Sulla's old commander Marius, passed a law in the assembly that transferred the command of the Mithridatic War from Sulla to Marius, Sulla would not stand for it. Returning to Rome he drove Marius away while Sulpicius was killed. After taking quick steps to try to guarantee order while he was away fighting Mithridates, Sulla left for Asia.⁶² When Sulla turned his standards towards Rome he was deserted by all of his officers except for one lowly quaestor named Licinius Lucullus, tellingly a son of a Metella and therefore related to Sulla.⁶³ However, when Sulla marched on Rome, another *adfinis* was either too busy with his own campaigns to come show his support or, more likely, Metellus Pius realized the dangerous gamble Sulla had just taken and the precarious position in which it had placed him. As one of the few men in control of an army, Pius was in the unique position of being able to wait and observe how things were to play out before

⁵⁷ Broughton, *MRR* 2.33 gives 89 as the date; however, see Brennan, *Praetorship*, 379. For his actions during the Social War see App., *BC* 1.68; Dio 30–35 fr. 102.6–7.

⁵⁸ Brennan, *Praetorship*, 378.

⁵⁹ Cic., *Arch.* 6–7, 9, 31; *Vir. Ill.* 63.3; Diod. 37.2.10–11; App., *BC* 1.53. One of those who was registered with the help of Pius was the poet Archias, who was later defended by Cicero.

⁶⁰ Diod. 37.2.10–11; App. *BC* 1.53.

⁶¹ He was *imperator* before he went to Spain in 79 and it is unlikely he earned the distinction in Africa.

⁶² See the treatments in Gruen, *RPCC*, 215–247 and Keaveney, *Sulla*, 45–63. His lack of absolute power and control is manifested in nothing else so much as in the elections for 87, when he was unable to secure election for men who would assuredly protect his interests.

⁶³ Cf. Broughton, *MRR* 2.52 note 5. Lucullus would prove to be one of Sulla's most valuable assets and supporters.

throwing his support behind either side—although it is difficult to imagine him supporting Marius, the man who had done so much to hurt his father. By not doing anything, Metellus was able to witness, and undoubtedly enjoy, the discomfiture of Marius while at the same time avoiding any real commitment to Sulla.

Once Sulla had restored order to the city, he presided at the elections where his candidate was defeated.⁶⁴ Nothing daunted, he forced the incoming consuls Octavius and Cinna to swear an oath to uphold his measures and then quickly departed for his eastern campaigns. Almost immediately things began to change. Cinna either conveniently forgot his oath or simply set it aside. Those supporters of Marius who had been exiled meekly approached Sulla's wife Metella to act as an intermediary in asking to have their exile lifted. The irony of exiled Marians asking for help from a member of the Metellan family appears not to have registered. It was scarcely more than ten years since Marius had vigorously opposed the return of Numidicus from exile. While Metella did have the ear of her husband, it is likely that she happily relayed their request while reminding Sulla of the troubles Marius had caused not just for him, but for her family as well. The exiles' request was curtly denied.⁶⁵ When Marius returned to the city in his fury later in 87, Metella was forced to take her children and join her husband, and it was she who personally delivered the message that Sulla had been declared a *hostis* and that his personal property had been burned.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ This illustrates the point that the presiding magistrate at elections was not able to manipulate elections as he desired.

⁶⁵ App., *BC* 1.63; Plut., *Sull.* 6.12.

⁶⁶ App., *BC* 1.73; Plut. *Sull.* 13.1 Sulla was a proud man and cared deeply for his wife. These emotions are the reason why, according to Plutarch, Sulla treated Athens so badly. It was revenge for how the Athenians had disrespected his wife (Plut., *Sull.* 6.12).

As Marius and Cinna tightened their grasp around Rome and conflict was inevitable, it was to Metellus Pius that the consuls appealed for aid.⁶⁷ Metellus was the only man in Italy who commanded an army still loyal to the senate. He was charged by the consuls Octavius and Merula to make peace with the Samnites and hurry to Rome to negotiate with Cinna and his Marian supporters.⁶⁸ Metellus dutifully came to Rome, although without concluding a treaty with the Samnites, whose terms were too much for the proud Metellus to accept. He was taken aback when the soldiers of the consul Octavius asked him to take over all military affairs, because they lacked confidence in their own commander.⁶⁹ His negotiations with Cinna, if recorded accurately, show Metellus to be an astute, if somewhat compromising, politician. These negotiations are only recorded by Diodorus, and he is the only source who mentions Metellus meeting with Cinna at all, as both Appian and Plutarch merely mention envoys or a meeting in broad terms. All the sources agree that Metellus was summoned from Apulia to help Rome against Cinna and the Marians, but that is the extent of the detail included in most of them. While the details of Diodorus account seem suspect, his account may provide some insight into the situation at Rome in 87. It appears from Diodorus that Cinna was most interested in reestablishing himself legitimately in the office that had been taken from him, and it was for this reason that Metellus agreed to recognize Cinna as consul, for which he was roundly criticized by Octavius.⁷⁰ Metellus may have realized that the actions of Octavius in deposing a sitting consul were of sketchy constitutionality, or he may have astutely sized up the situation and decided that it was better to compromise on this point

⁶⁷ App., *BC* 1.68; Dio 31 fr. 102.6; Diod. 38.2; Plut., *Mar.* 42.3.

⁶⁸ Ap. Claudius Pulcher (cos. 79) had been left in charge of an army at Nola by Sulla, but lost it to Cinna. Pompeius Strabo, commanding an army in northern Italy, fell in and a replacement was sent out (Broughton, *MRR* 2.47–48). When Cinna was stripped of his office, Merula was elected *consul suffectus* (sources in Broughton, *MRR* 2.45–47). For the orders of Metellus see App. *BC* 1.68; Dio 31 fr. 102.6; Diod. 38.2; Plut., *Mar.* 42.3.

⁶⁹ App., *BC* 1.68; Plut., *Mar.* 42.3

⁷⁰ Diod. 38.2. Scullard, *GN*, 70–72.

rather than risk upsetting Cinna and his powerful and menacing supporters even more. Regardless, Metellus did not stay in Rome long enough to witness the consequences of his negotiations. Perhaps realizing that his chances of survival were very slim while Marius was in power, Pius fled to Africa and took control of the province from the governor P. Sextilius, although he does not appear to have been given permission to do so.⁷¹ He may have done so by virtue of his greater *imperium*, for when he returned to Rome in 83 he is termed *pro consule*. The enhancement of his *imperium* could have occurred during his praetorship in 88 for his responsibilities against the Samnites, at the time of his prorogation in the following year, or possibly as a reward—or incentive—for aiding the consuls against Cinna and the Marians in 87.⁷² In any event, Africa was a natural destination considering his father's campaigns there, in which Pius had participated. The praetorian governor P. Sextilius had refused Marius asylum when he had fled from Sulla, so it is even possible that he supported Pius and freely handed over command of the province.⁷³

Metellus Pius remained in Africa until 84, when the Marian praetor C. Fabius Hadrianus arrived and drove him from the province. Metellus retreated to Libya to wait and watch.⁷⁴ Apparently Metellus' time in Africa had not been as productive as he would have liked. Perhaps he was unable to recruit as effectively as he wished or maybe he did not actively prepare, not believing that Cinna would send anyone to oust him from the province. On the contrary, the last thing Cinna and his supporters wanted, concerned as they were with the impending return of Sulla from the east, was for a potential ally of Sulla to be in Africa,

⁷¹ App., *BC* 1.80; Plut., *Mar.* 42.3; Plut., *Crass.* 6.2 ; Liv., *Per.* 84.

⁷² App., *BC* 1.80–81; Brennan, *Praetorship*, 379. Since Metellus' *imperium* was never officially terminated, at least in the eyes of those who supported him, it could be argued that he was acting as an officer of the Republic, thus maintaining the moral high ground in an otherwise very morally ambiguous situation. It is doubtful whether his opponents shared this view.

⁷³ Plut., *Mar.* 40.3–4; App., *BC* 1.62; cf. Varro, *RR* 1.10.

⁷⁴ Liv., *Per.* 84; App., *BC* 1.80.

waiting for just the right moment to pounce as they were preoccupied with Sulla's veteran legions. Metellus had not joined with Sulla immediately in 88, but still had a family connection with him and shared some political sympathies as well. Perhaps even more importantly, Metellus would have been opposed to anyone working with Marius and although the latter had died early in 86, the memory of his father's exile and his cousin's more recent flight from Rome to Sulla's side surely soured Pius on the idea of reconciling with the Cinnans.⁷⁵ Removing Metellus from Africa thus became a high priority for Cinna, but nevertheless Metellus was able to join with Sulla in 83.

Sulla and his army left for Italy in 83 and by the time they arrived and began making their way north towards Rome, Sulla was beginning to attract powerful supporters. One of the most important of these supporters was Q. Metellus Pius, who finally joined with Sulla in 83 and brought army along with him. Because of Pius' high reputation, many other nobles joined themselves to Sulla, despite any personal qualms or misgivings about his motives and methods. Pius had a reputation for justice and filial piety—hence his *agnomen*—and many believed that Metellus was doing what was more just and advantageous to the country and followed him because of it.⁷⁶ His decision was not universally popular, and Pius was immediately declared a public enemy by the consul Cn. Carbo on account of his supporting Sulla.⁷⁷

No doubt that when Metellus joined Sulla he felt that he was coming to Sulla as an equal. When Keaveney says, “the Metelli...were to prove valuable, if somewhat difficult

⁷⁵ Metellus Pius and the wife of Sulla were cousins.

⁷⁶ Dio 32 fr. 106.

⁷⁷ App., *BC* 1.86.

supporters, in the last years of Sulla's life"⁷⁸ this judgment fails to take into account an important factor. Surely the Metelli did not view themselves as Sulla's subordinate allies and pawns.⁷⁹ At the time Sulla returned to Rome in 83 he was in a much more powerful position than when he left, but his position was not unassailable. The nobility had scoffed at this outsider's marriage into one of the most aristocratic families of the time, and his actions on returning from the war with Mithridates did not endear him to those same nobles. In many ways Sulla could still be considered an outsider and he still needed legitimization. The Metelli and other aristocratic politicians saw themselves as Sulla's equals—and in many ways his betters. Metellus Pius was able to assert himself as an equal even more forcefully than others because of his familial connection to Sulla and the all-important fact that he had been in continuous command of an army since his praetorship—just as long as Sulla.⁸⁰

These considerations notwithstanding, Sulla and Metellus seem to have gotten along just fine. Sulla himself reported that Metellus was a man equal in rank, and despite Sulla's misgivings about being able to get along with his relative, the two worked almost amicably together—thanks to the intervention of Fortune in the views of some.⁸¹ Pius was quickly sent to Picenum and from there he continued north and won Cisalpine Gaul for Sulla.⁸² At this point it becomes apparent that if Metellus had a mind to, he could have sought to establish

⁷⁸ Keaveney, *Sulla*, 45.

⁷⁹ The marriage had been arranged well before Sulla returned to Rome in 83. The Metelli were simply doing what they had always done by arranging a profitable marriage with a powerful and promising politician. They had no inklings or premonitions about the actions Sulla would take in the following years. Additionally, Sulla himself was gone from Italy for a large portion of the decade of the 80's and there were no Metelli, other than Pius himself, who were old enough to be involved in any real way in politics, and Metellus Pius was busy finishing off the last remnants of Rome's most intractable domestic enemy the Samnites.

⁸⁰ Sulla had commanded troops during the Social War, while Metellus was merely a *legatus*. However, Metellus had been in constant command since his praetorship in 88, the year of Sulla's first consulship and command against Mithridates. To be sure, the troops of Sulla were of a higher quality after a long hard campaign.

⁸¹ Plut., *Sull.* 6.6–7.

⁸² Picenum: App., *BC* 1.87; Oros. 5.20.5; Cisalpine Gaul: App., *BC* 1.89, 91; Plut., *Sull.* 28.8 ; Vell. Pat. 2.28.1 ; Liv., *Per.* 88.

himself as the head of another faction and made an attempt to establish himself as the most powerful man in Rome. He had a large army, increased by desertions from the enemy, and held important cities.⁸³ He may have had more aristocratic backing than Sulla, and there would have been those who wanted to use Metellus as a check on Sulla. At the same time, his aristocratic tendencies and traditional Roman sympathies would have restrained him from such a venture. That he did not seek to establish himself as a rival to Sulla may also speak to the mindset of many politicians during this period of the Republic. The next generation saw men with more imagination and fewer scruples.

Sulla and his allies made relatively short work of their opponents, and he felt that his position was solid enough to celebrate his triumph over Mithridates in 81. In the midst of these preparations his wife fell ill. From all accounts Sulla was a religiously minded man, sentiments that were surely heightened since he was an augur.⁸⁴ These feelings of religious piety combined with the advice he received from the priests led Sulla to divorce Metella, much to the dismay of the people and her family.⁸⁵ Although he divorced her abruptly and had her removed from his house while practically on her deathbed, Sulla spared no expense on her funeral and provided lavish banquets and celebrations in her honor.⁸⁶

Also in 81 Metellus Pius was appointed *pontifex maximus* to replace Q. Scaevola, who had been impiously killed by the Marians in the previous year.⁸⁷ Metellus Pius would be the last of the Metelli to hold this office, a post which he duly magnified for nearly twenty years. Sulla may have maneuvered to get Metellus the post as a way to mollify the proud

⁸³ App., *BC* 1.88–91.

⁸⁴ Broughton, *MRR* 2.44. He was an *augur* since at least 88.

⁸⁵ Plut., *Sull.* 34.3; 35.2–3; 37.2, 4. She apparently was a restraining influence on him.

⁸⁶ Plut., *Sull.* 35.1–3.

⁸⁷ Plut., *Caes.* 7.1; Dio 37.37.1.

soldier in the aftermath of Sulla's heartless divorce from his devoted cousin. As an additional way of keeping up his alliance with the Metelli, which was surely strained given the divorce—and the seemingly tactless manner in which it was effected—Sulla chose Metellus Pius as his colleague in the consulship for 80. The former family connection notwithstanding, Metellus was due. The disturbances in the city had disrupted the timetable of the *cursus honorum* for many aspiring politicians. Pius had been praetor eight years before and was a prudent choice. He brought respectability to the office which had lately been tossed around and occupied by revolutionaries and ruffians. Sulla could once again bask in the legitimizing light of the Metelli. Metellus Pius had seen his fortunes increase rapidly due to his associations with Sulla. He had been forced to wait for a consulship due to the recent unpleasantness, but it was ultimately his well-deserved reward. Pius may have had to wait, but the wait seems to have been worth it.

During the consulship of Sulla and Metellus the important trial of Sex. Roscius took place.⁸⁸ Roscius' father had been a client of the Metelli and after his death his name had been inserted onto the proscription lists by Sulla's freedman Chrysogonus, who consequently bought up his estates at an incredibly low price.⁸⁹ When Roscius attempted to right this wrong attempts were made on his life and he consequently sought refuge in the house of Caecilia Metella, the daughter of Metellus Balearicus (cos. 123). The defense of Roscius, together with the necessary but dangerous attacks on Chrysogonus, was entrusted to the young Marcus Tullius Cicero. For the Metellan relevance only two points will be mentioned. First, two young men connected with the Metellan family are mentioned by Cicero as aiding

⁸⁸ Gell. 15.28.

⁸⁹ Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 15, 27, 147. Sulla's wife Caecilia Metella had also profited from the proscriptions (Pliny, *NH* 36.116).

Roscus. P. Scipio could be the grandson of the consul of 111 and would eventually become Q. Metellus Scipio Nasica.⁹⁰ The M. Metellus who is also mentioned by Cicero was probably the praetor of 69 and may have been the young Metellus who first suggested the idea of the proscription lists to Sulla.⁹¹ Secondly, the portrayal of Caecilia Metella is somewhat unique. Granted that it was during a criminal trial and Cicero undoubtedly put the best possible face on the situation, but the words used to describe Caecilia are powerful: *virtute, diligentia, fide, spectatissima femina*.⁹² This is the same Caecilia who was responsible for persuading Juno Sospita to remain in her temple in 90. Now, ten years later, she was being praised by Cicero as one who not only received honor from her illustrious family members, but actually conferred honor on them by her actions.⁹³

It was around this time that the Metelli, perhaps in an effort to find another prudent political match, formed a marriage alliance with the young Gn. Pompeius—known to history as Pompey the Great. He had made quite a name for himself by raising a private army and using it to serve Sulla's interests. He was a young and upcoming star in the Roman world and the Metelli allowed him to marry one of their daughters. This was Pompey's third marriage and the girl's name was Mucia, the daughter of a Metella and a Mucius. Mucia was the uterine sister of the young Metellus Celer (cos. 60) and Metellus Nepos (cos. 57) and her

⁹⁰ Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 77. Although it may be more likely that he is Metellus Scipio's natural father. The son would have been only in his mid-teens at the time of the trial.

⁹¹ Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 77; Münzer, *RE* s.v. "Caecilius" no. 78; cf. Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 276.

⁹² Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 27, 147.

⁹³ Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 147.

marriage to Pompey was the longest lasting of all of Pompey's unions, and the only fruitful one in terms of children.⁹⁴

After his consulship Metellus Pius went to Spain to combat Sertorius. Sertorius had been a supporter of Cinna and been proscribed by Sulla. Now in Spain, Sertorius had become a kind of rallying point and raised a rebellion that would take the better part of a decade to put down. Metellus spent most of the 70's fighting in the rough terrain of the Iberian Peninsula, much of it spent working in tandem with another of Sulla's allies, the recent Metellan *adfinis* Pompey. Metellus Pius was, after the dictator himself, perhaps the most powerful man in Rome when he left for Spain, and it may have been under his influence that men like Ap. Claudius Pulcher and Servilius Vatia Isauricus, the future consuls of 79, had joined the Sullan cause.⁹⁵

The Aftermath of Sulla until the First Triumvirate

Metellus went to Spain to fight against the proscribed Sertorius and did not return to Rome until 71. He was, therefore, absent for much of the political maneuvering that took place in Rome in the aftermath of Sulla's death. Metellus was sent because he was the most experienced and trustworthy general allied with Sulla, but it may also have been a convenient way for Sulla to neatly and politely get Metellus out of Rome. Their relationship was not strained, but these two proud aristocrats probably functioned best when not in close quarters.

⁹⁴ The children were Gnaeus, Pompeia, and Sextus. The ramifications and repercussions of their divorce will be discussed later. A full discussion of all of Pompey's wives and the political angles of those marriages can be found in Shelley P. Haley, "The Five Wives of Pompey the Great," *G&R*, second series, 32 (1985): 49–59.

⁹⁵ Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 276. There was also a family connection between these three men. Isauricus was the son of Macedonicus' daughter and Claudius may have been married to the daughter of Balearicus. Plutarch (*Sert.* 12.4) calls him the greatest Roman the time and that he is held in the highest esteem.

If Metellus had any delusions that his campaign in Spain would be quick and relatively painless, he was sorely mistaken. He was initially checked by Sertorius, and his legate Domitius Calvinus was defeated and killed by Sertorius' lieutenant L. Hirtuleius.⁹⁶ By the end of 79 Metellus had established a base at Metellinum and moved deeper into Lusitania, establishing camps along the way called *Castra Caecilia* and *Caecilius Vicus*; he was looking to force a pitched battle but was unable to do so this year or the next. His troops were well trained—it is possible that some of them had served with him since the Social War—but their training had not prepared them for the guerilla tactics that Sertorius had perfected in the rough Spanish terrain. Some of the sources mention that Metellus was aging and may have begun to show signs of indolence about this time. There is an obvious Pompeian bias in these accounts that sought to portray Metellus negatively, and thus cast Pompey in a favorable light. But if there is some truth to the accounts it would only speak to the commander's inability or lack of desire to chase Sertorius through the mountains of Spain.⁹⁷ In 78 the Roman governor of Hispania Citerior was none other than Q. Calidius, the same man who had been elected praetor with the help of Metellus and who had sponsored the bill recalling Numidicus from exile.⁹⁸ He does not seem to have been of much use in the campaigns and was prosecuted on his return to Rome the next year.⁹⁹ Metellus surely lost many smaller engagements, Sertorius taking full advantage of the terrain and Metellus' inability to wage a guerilla campaign. The defeat of Metellus and his armies at Lacobriga in 78 was on a much larger scale. In an attempt to besiege the city Metellus was outwitted and

⁹⁶ Sall., *Hist.* 1.111M; Plut., *Sert.* 12.3; Liv., *Per.* 90; Flor. 2.10.6–7; Eutrop. 6.1.2; Oros. 5.23.3.

⁹⁷ Plut., *Sert.* 12.5–13.4, 18.1; Plut., *Pomp.* 17.1–2.

⁹⁸ Cic., *Verr.* 138, 2.3.63; for his connections with Metellus see Cic. *Planc.* 69; Val. Max. 5.2.7.

⁹⁹ Cic., *Verr.* 1.38, 2.3.63.

ultimately defeated.¹⁰⁰ He seems to have spent much of 77 licking his wounds and looking for an opportunity to draw Sertorius into an open battle. In the meantime Sertorius was reinforced by the remnants of Lepidus' army from Italy and by the end of the year Pompey was dispatched to Spain to aid in the effort against the Republic's enemies.

At this point it will be beneficial to discuss the relationship between Metellus Pius and Pompeius Magnus. For a long time it has been almost the standard line to see Pompey as agitating for this command as a way to garner more popular support and as a way to consciously reduce the power and glory of Metellus Pius—and by extension that of Sulla as well.¹⁰¹ While it is true that the ancient accounts do show Pompey as agitating for the command in Spain,¹⁰² the military effort there should not be looked at as creating a rift between the Metelli and Pompey. Pompey was, after all, an *adfinis* since his marriage to Mucia in 80. Supposed later clashes between the family and Pompey, such as the trial of Verres in 70, should be dismissed. When Pompey finally did break with the Metelli it was not until he divorced Mucia upon his return from the Mithridatic War. In fact, “the notion that rival Pompeian and Metellan factions in Rome promoted dissension between the commanders is devoid of evidence.”¹⁰³ On the other hand, it is possible that the consul L. Marcius Philippus may have suggested that Pompey be sent to Spain to help Metellus. Since Philippus was no friend to Sulla, this would remove yet another important supporter of Sulla from Rome. Regardless of why Pompey came to Spain, once he got there he and Metellus appear to have worked separately yet in support of each other.

¹⁰⁰ Sall., *Hist.* 1.110–112M; Plut., *Sert.* 12.4, 13.2–6; App., *BC* 1.108, *Ib.* 101; Flor. 2.10.6; Eutrop. 6.1.2; Oros. 5.23.5.

¹⁰¹ See references in Thomas P. Hillman, “Pompeius and the Senate, 77–71,” *Hermes* 118 (1990), 444–454; Briggs Twyman, “The Metelli, Pompeius and Prosopography,” *ANRW* 1.1 (1972), 816–874; Morgan, “Rise and Fall,” 296, where he seemingly follows Badian, *FC*, 278.

¹⁰² Sources in Broughton, *MRR* 2.90–91.

¹⁰³ Gruen, “Pompey, Metellus Pius, and the Trials of 70–69 BC: The Perils of Schematism,” *AJPh* 92 (1971): 8.

When Pompey finally arrived, a new phase in the war against Sertorius began, but again any optimism about bringing things to a swift resolution was quickly put down when Pompey was defeated at Lauro.¹⁰⁴ While Pompey's reversal was disappointing, Metellus used the opening created to move to Italica, where he was finally able to fight a pitched battle, in which Sertorius' lieutenant Hirtuleius was defeated.¹⁰⁵ Metellus and Pompey did not immediately link up, and it could be argued that this is evidence for a personal rift between them, but their reasons for remaining separated were strategic. The Romans had received several reminders of the disasters that could occur when generals allowed their aristocratic pride and political ambitions to guide their strategic actions in the field.¹⁰⁶ Both Metellus and Pompey were good enough soldiers not to allow that to happen, even had there been some animosity between them. It is simpler and more correct to assume that joining their two armies would have placed undue strain on their supplies, which were already running low at the end of the campaigning season.

The next year Metellus moved again into Lusitania, while Pompey attempted to gain control of the plain of Valencia. Metellus fought another victorious set battle against Hirtuleius, killing both Hirtuleius and his brother. His death must have consoled Metellus somewhat for the death of his own legate at the outset of the war.¹⁰⁷ Metellus and Pompey finally joined up near the River Sucro, where Pompey's attitude towards Metellus is further evidence against any kind of animosity between the two great men. Although holding rank similar to Metellus, Pompey ordered his lictors to lower their *fasces* out of respect to

¹⁰⁴ Sall. *Hist.* 2.29–33M, 98.5M; Livy, *Per.* 91; Frontin. *Strat.* 2.5.31; Plut. *Sert.* 18; Plut. *Pomp.* 18; App. *BC* 1.108–110 ; Flor. 2.10.7 ; Oros. 5.23.6–10.

¹⁰⁵ See references immediately above.

¹⁰⁶ The most notable instances were in the Second Punic War and in the Cimbric Wars.

¹⁰⁷ Sall., *Hist.* 2.67M; Liv., *Per.* 91; Frontin., *Strat.* 2.7.5; Flor. 2.10.7; Oros. 5.23.11; cf. App., *BC* 1.110; Zon. 10.2.

Metellus.¹⁰⁸ It may have been around this time that Sertorius complained about “that old woman” Metellus, murmuring that if he could get rid of Metellus, then he could teach the “schoolboy” Pompey a lesson.¹⁰⁹ Sertorius’ animosity towards Metellus had even resulted in a challenge to single combat, but Metellus wisely refused, asserting that the general’s role was to command his troops.¹¹⁰

Metellus got better at provoking Sertorius, or at least his subordinates, into fighting pitched battles. In a battle near Saguntum, Metellus fought with great personal bravery and suffered wounds, but played a pivotal role in the victory.¹¹¹ After the battle Metellus was hailed as *imperator* by his men, this being the second time he had earned that honor. After the battle Metellus and Pompey tried to blockade Sertorius and the remnants of his army in the city of Saguntum, but were unsuccessful and had to withdraw. The combination of their own supply problems and a bold counter-attack by Sertorius proved too much for them.¹¹²

Having been unable to pacify the region, in the following campaign season Metellus and Pompey began focusing their efforts on Sertorius’ main recruiting ground in the Celtiberian plateau. Initially they conducted separate campaigns, but joined forces by the end of 74 in the ultimately unsuccessful siege of Calagurris. The campaigns of that year had been difficult for both Metellus and Pompey, and it was in 74 that Pompey wrote a harsh letter to the senate in Rome demanding supplies and money. Through the campaigning seasons of 76 and 75 they had largely supported themselves, Metellus from Gaul and Pompey from his own

¹⁰⁸ Plut., *Sert.* 19.2–6; Plut., *Pomp.* 19.1–5, 29.5; Sall., *Hist.* 2.60–61M ; Liv., *Per.* 92 ; Front., *Strat.* 2.7.5; Flor. 2.10.7; Oros. 5.23.11; App., *BC* 1.10; Zon. 10.2.

¹⁰⁹ Plut., *Sert.* 19.6.

¹¹⁰ Plut., *Sert.* 13.3–4.

¹¹¹ Plut., *Sert.* 21.3; Plut., *Pomp.* 19.6; Sall., *Hist.* 2.64–67M ; App., *BC* 1.110; Liv., *Per.* 92; cf. Cic., *Balb.* 5; Oros. 5.23.12.

¹¹² Plut., *Sert.* 22.2. Pius had apparently received the title *imperator* before coming to Spain, most likely during the Social War. Coins minted almost certainly before his Spanish campaigns bear the title (Grueber, *CRRBM* 2.357f.). See also Brennan, *Praetorship*, 54, 379.

pocket and credit.¹¹³ Obviously they felt now it was appropriate that they receive further help from the state. During one of these winters some sources recount an event which places Pius in a very unfavorable light. According to Plutarch, Metellus visited numerous cities and was crowned with wreaths and attended lavish banquets where he wore a triumphal robe, while statues of Victory operated by machines, descended with gold wreaths and trophies, all accompanied by youthful choirs singing his praises.¹¹⁴ If true, this story is perhaps a sad commentary on a man otherwise respected and revered. It is more likely that the account exaggerates some kind of victory celebration sponsored by Metellus. At this point he and his men had been engaged in a difficult campaign for five years and some relaxation and light-hearted revelry was needed by all. The story developed and grew and was later utilized by other sources that were sympathetic to Pompey and sought to portray Metellus as a degenerate and corrupt aristocrat. In the campaigning years of 73 and 72 Metellus and Pompey began having more and more success, but it took the assassination of Sertorius at the hands of his own men to finally end the war.¹¹⁵ Metellus undertook the task of pacifying and settling Hispania Ulterior, while Pompey did the same in Citerior.¹¹⁶

Metellus and Pompey both returned to Italy in 71, but their behavior on arrival could not have been more different. Pompey returned first and used the Spartacus War as another opportunity to enhance his military prestige by crushing the last remnants of Spartacus' forces after they had already been soundly defeated by Crassus.¹¹⁷ This was the beginning of what seemed to become a less-than-endearing habit of Pompey: swooping in at the last minute to snatch the glory for finishing a war that had in reality been all but won by

¹¹³ Hillman, "Pompeius and the Senate: 77–71," 446.

¹¹⁴ Plut., *Sert.* 22.2; cf. Sall., *Hist.* 2.70M, 3.45M; Val. Max. 9.1.5; Cic., *Arch.* 26.

¹¹⁵ Konrad, "Metellus and the Head of Sertorius," *Gerión* 6 (1988): 253–261.

¹¹⁶ Plut., *Sert.* 27.1; App., *BC* 1.115.

¹¹⁷ Cic., *Leg. Man.* 30; Plut., *Crass.* 11.2–5, 7–8; Plut., *Pomp.* 21.1–5; App., *BC* 1.120; Oros. 5.24.8.

others.¹¹⁸ Metellus' slower return and the fact that he immediately disbanded his army provide a stark contrast to the actions of his younger relative.¹¹⁹ Perhaps his actions provide some insight into his state of mind as well. Metellus was surely happy to be back in Rome and among civilization again. He had been fighting against one enemy or another—Italian allies, Cinnan and Marian enemies, Sertorian rebels—for nearly two decades. He had received hardly any respite and had been away from Rome for twelve of the last fifteen years. In all likelihood he was tired. Metellus, as the senior statesman, had less to prove and less motivation for pursuing additional campaigning opportunities. He triumphed later in the year and then seems to have retired from public life, possibly stung by the lack of attention and credit he received for his role in the wars against Sertorius.¹²⁰ His slower pace back to Rome had probably allowed Pompey to garner more accolades and this should not be held against him, since it cannot be expected that any Roman aristocrat in his right mind would deflect praise or popularity that could bring him more recognition and power. Also, the human factor should not be discounted. Metellus was an old man at this point compared to the young and dashing Pompey, and he cannot be blamed for feeling somewhat swindled by his younger and more ambitious contemporary. His emotions were perhaps like those of his father Numidicus when Marius gained so much popularity from successfully concluding the Jugurthine War.¹²¹

In any event, Metellus Pius removed himself from the intrigues of life in the capital, and Pompey and Crassus held the consulship together in 70. Others in the Metellan family

¹¹⁸ His Spanish campaigns do not fit the bill, but in addition to “finishing” the Spartacus War, he caused problems for Metellus Creticus in Crete in 67 and L. Lucullus in Asia in 66. Lucullus compared him to a carrion bird (Plut., *Pomp.* 31.6).

¹¹⁹ Sall., *Hist.* 4.49M; App., *BC* 1.121; Dio 52.13.2, 56.39.2.

¹²⁰ Sall., *Hist.* 4.49M; Vell. Pat. 2.30.2; App., *BC* 1.118–121; Flor. 2.8.12–14; Eutrop. 6.5.2; *CIL* 1².2.733; cf. Degrassi, 565.

¹²¹ Although the feelings of stinging betrayal were probably not present in Pius' case.

had grown into political maturity while Pius was in Spain. Leadership of the family fell to Q. Metellus Creticus and his two brothers while Pius was away.

Q. Metellus, the son of Caprarius (cos. 113) and who would eventually take the *agnomen* Creticus,¹²² was probably born around the time of his father's consulship and was co-opted into the pontifical college some time before Caesar's co-optation in 73.¹²³ He is mentioned as canvassing for the praetorship of 74 with the support of L. Octavius and C. Aurelius Cotta, both of whom were consuls in 75.¹²⁴ This support did not garner Creticus the hoped for result, and he likely suffered a *repulsa* since he did not achieve the consulship until 69. Cicero almost certainly would have mentioned such an office during the trial of Verres, a close associate of the Metelli and also praetor in 74. It is interesting to note that Creticus' father had himself suffered a *repulsa* in his bid for the consulship in 114. On the other hand the date of Creticus' consulship should be used with caution. The consulship of Pompey and Crassus undoubtedly upset the carefully laid plans of more than a few Roman politicians. Creticus was praetor in 74 or, more likely, in 73 and would have been consul in 70 if not for the coup of Pompey and Crassus.

Caprarius' second son Lucius was probably born around 111 based on the date of his consulship in 68.¹²⁵ L. Metellus was *monetalis* during the Social War (90–88) or immediately after, and was probably married around this time, since he appears to have taken his young

¹²² Although he would not assume the *agnomen* until his triumph in 62, for purpose of simplicity and clarity it will be used anachronistically.

¹²³ *CIL* 1².2.746; *IG* 3.565; Taylor, "Caesar's Colleagues in the Pontifical College," *AJP*, 63 (1942), 385–412. The *lex Domitia* had been abolished and replaced by the *lex Cornelia de sacerdotiis* (Liv., *Epit.* 89; Dio 37.37).

¹²⁴ This provides yet another example of the cooperation that existed between the Metelli and the Aurelii Cottae.

¹²⁵ Assessing the age of Roman politicians becomes increasingly tricky with the state of politics in the late Republic. While specific age requirements were solidified by Sulla, men like Pompey broke the mold and forced others to adapt. Calculating birth dates from the year of a consulship is the only option available, unless specific reference is given in the sources.

son Lucius with him to Sicily during his governorship there in 70.¹²⁶ According to Cicero, when he first arrived in Sicily he set about to correct many of the wrongs and injustices done by Verres. This makes sense considering his family's connections with Sicily.¹²⁷ His attitude abruptly changed when he reportedly received a letter from Verres and immediately began to stonewall Cicero's attempts to collect evidence.¹²⁸ It is especially interesting that Cicero records Metellus reversing judgments in Lilybaeum, Agrigentum, and Panormus. These were all cities with which L. Metellus (cos. 251) had to do in the First Punic War. Perhaps guilt about his behavior sapped his strength, since it is recorded that he died early in his consulship in 68.¹²⁹ His role in Roman politics was negligible.

The youngest of these three Metelli brothers was M. Metellus and he is the least well known of Caprarius' sons. He was probably born around 108 and it is just possible that this young senator notoriously suggested to Sulla the idea that would become the dreaded proscription lists.¹³⁰ As mentioned above, this is also probably the Metellus who supported Sex. Roscius during his trial in 80.¹³¹

All these men were young and so could not play more than a minor role in politics until the trial of Verres in 70. The only other recorded actions of members of the family in Rome during the 70's were two aborted trials involving the brothers Celer and Nepos. These brothers prosecuted Lepidus in 79 at the instigation of their Sicilian clients when he returned

¹²⁶ Grueber, *RCBBM*, 2.310f.; Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.15.

¹²⁷ L. Metellus (cos. 251) had campaigned in Sicily during the First Punic War.

¹²⁸ Cic., *Verr.* 2.2.63–64, 2.2.138–140, 2.3.144, 2.3.152–153

¹²⁹ Dio 36.4.1.

¹³⁰ Plut., *Sull.* 31.1–3; cf. Oros. 5.21.2; Flor. 2.9.25.

¹³¹ Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 77; *RE* s.v. "Caecilius" no. 78.

from his governorship in Sicily.¹³² They suddenly withdrew their case, due to Lepidus' popularity, according to the sources.¹³³ There was likely another factor. Pompey had just recently married the half-sister of Celer and Nepos, and he may have suggested that they drop the case.¹³⁴ Later in the decade Metellus Nepos brought charges against C. Scribonius Curio (cos. 76) who had charged Nepos' father some years before. When Curio threatened a counter-prosecution, the issue was dropped.¹³⁵ Not all criminal trials in which the Metelli were involved were dropped so quickly.

The trial of Gaius Verres in 70 was a significant one in the history and development of the late Republic, but perhaps not as important as Cicero would have one believe.¹³⁶ Verres had been the provincial governor in Sicily since 73 and was the perfect example of Roman provincial rapacity. When he returned to Rome and the inevitable *repetundae* charges were leveled against him, the sons of Caprarius stood in his defense. In fact, they unsuccessfully attempted to get the trial postponed until the next year when Quintus Metellus, the future Creticus, would be consul and the youngest of the brothers would be the praetor overseeing the *repetundae* courts.¹³⁷ Badian has argued that the trial of Verres was a contest of strength between the Metelli and Pompey, and, as this theory is applied to the politics of the Metelli, the family suffered an irreparable split as a result of conflicting political associations and connections.¹³⁸ Metellus Creticus had a later marriage alliance with

¹³² The Metellan connection with Sicily went all the way back to the First Punic War, when L. Metellus (cos. 251, 247) had campaigned there against Hasdrubal and the Carthaginians.

¹³³ Cic. *Verr.* 2.3.212; Ps.-Ascon. 187, 259 Stangl.

¹³⁴ Pompey's support of Lepidus is mentioned by Plutarch (*Pomp.* 15.1–2 and *Sull.* 34.4–5), but Pompey had no idea the course that Lepidus was to take the following year and Pompey was even commissioned with *imperium* to combat Lepidus in 77. Pompey's earlier support of Lepidus probably contributed to the idea that Pompey was a revolutionary from his earliest days.

¹³⁵ Ascon. 63–64C; Gruen, *LGRR*, 42. Gruen dates this event to 72.

¹³⁶ Gruen, *LGRR*, 33, 35.

¹³⁷ Cic., *Verr.* 1.21, 23, 26–31.

¹³⁸ Badian, *FC*, 283f.

Crassus—no eager supporter of Pompey—and this marriage most likely took place sometime between 68–63, preferably even earlier than 68 if one is searching for evidence of Metellan backlash against Pompey.¹³⁹ Combined with the later bitter feelings between Creticus and Pompey as a result of Pompey’s pirate campaigns, it is easy to assert harsh feelings between the optimate Creticus and the *popularis* Pompey. However, at the time of the trial there is no positive evidence for any kind of animosity between the Metelli and Pompey.¹⁴⁰ After all, Pompey still shared a marriage connection with the Metelli and had recently campaigned in Spain for several years with the head of the clan without any tangible signs of strain.

It must here be acknowledged that there does appear to be something of a split in the family, but it can be dated from the available sources no earlier than 67 when Creticus and Pompey sparred over the pirate issue on Crete. Creticus became a staunch opponent of Pompey from this point on, while his cousins Celer and Nepos were Pompey’s legates in his eastern campaigns. But caution must be exercised not to cast these relationships back onto the events of the trial in 70. In addition, if the marriage between Creticus’ daughter and the son of Crassus should be seen as a kind of retaliatory act against Pompey, it makes more sense to date the marriage just a year or two later, after Creticus and Pompey had their falling out. On the other hand, it is not necessary to see this marriage as a strike against Pompey at all, but instead as a savvy political move by the Metelli, who were perhaps realizing their own shrinking political influence and sought to connect themselves to as many powerful

¹³⁹ The son of this marriage was consul in 30 BC.

¹⁴⁰ Gruen: “The notion of a political quarrel between Pompeian and Metellan factions in this period does not meet the facts, and should now be banished from the standard accounts.” And again: “Verres’ trial has been used in the reconstruction...but not a scrap of evidence attests Pompey’s involvement or interest in the case” (*LGRR*, 45n.137). Cf. Gruen, “Pompey, Metellus Pius, and the Trials of 70–69 B.C.,” 9–12 with citations and bibliography.

politicians as possible. At the beginning of the 60's, the most powerful senators in Rome were Pompey and Crassus, and the Metelli had successfully connected themselves to both.¹⁴¹

At any rate Verres went into exile practically before the trial even got started in earnest. It could be argued that the reputation of the Metelli did not suffer because of their association with the guilty Verres, since Creticus and Lucius were able to secure the consulship in 69 and 68 respectively, their somewhat rough treatment by Cicero notwithstanding. On the other hand, Creticus was already consul-elect when the trial commenced. His brother Lucius died early in his consulship and the youngest brother never obtained the highest office. While it cannot be stated firmly that this was the result of their connection to Verres, it may suggest some voter backlash.¹⁴²

When the provinces for 69 were allotted, Creticus' colleague Hortensius Hortalus—who had been Verres' primary defense counsel—was appointed Crete and the war against the pirates there, but he allowed the command to go to Metellus.¹⁴³ Five years earlier the senate had given a special command to M. Antonius (pr. 74) to deal with the pirate problem, but he was soundly defeated in 71 and died before he could return to Rome.¹⁴⁴ After defeating the Roman forces under Antonius, the Cretans attempted a peaceful reconciliation. This attempt at diplomacy was blocked by an unknown tribune. The name or political associations of the tribune are not recorded, but he may have been acting under the direction and influence of Creticus who was surely aching for a chance to earn a triumph. Morgan has offered the ingenious suggestion that the tribune was Lentulus Spinther, who was later the colleague of

¹⁴¹ Cf. Gruen, *LGRR*, 61.

¹⁴² Although one wonders exactly how much Roman voters would care about what had happened in Sicily and who was connected to whom, especially if one of the candidates had an aristocratic pedigree like the Metelli.

¹⁴³ Plut., *Pomp.* 29.2; Dio 36.1a; cf. Cic., *Verr.* 2.2.76; Diod. 40.1; App., *Sic.* 6.1–2.

¹⁴⁴ Cic., *Verr.* 2.2.8, 3.213; Liv., *Per.* 97; Vell. Pat. 2.31.3–4; App., *Sic.* 6.1; Sall., *Hist.* 3.8–9M; Diod. 40.1.

Metellus Nepos in the consulship of 57 and whose son later married a Caecilia Metella.¹⁴⁵ If so, this would have been an early act of political cooperation, as Creticus would have wished to avoid any kind of peaceful end to the Cretan situation. And if not, the tribune was undoubtedly sympathetic to Creticus' desire to wage a successful campaign in an attempt to restore some of the family's lost dignity and respect.¹⁴⁶ If Creticus had engineered the conflict, his later response to Pompey's interference is somewhat more understandable. Perhaps in Creticus' mind Pompey had already robbed one Metellus of glory, and Creticus was determined not to let it happen again.

Creticus initially travelled to Greece in order to prepare for his campaign against pirates.¹⁴⁷ Crete was the base of operations for a large pirate force, numbered by Velleius Paterculus at twenty-four thousand, which functioned under the direction of two pirate chiefs, Lasthenes and Panares.¹⁴⁸ They must have had some semblance of organization, since they moved swiftly while on campaign, were known for their skill in archery, and were responsible for the defeat of the praetor M. Antonius.¹⁴⁹ While Antonius and then Creticus were fighting pirates, Rome was already engaged in a war against Mithridates, who had been largely left with his holdings intact after Sulla had been forced to make a quick settlement with him in order to return to Rome after Marius and Cinna had retaken the city in his absence. L. Licinius Lucullus (cos. 74) had resumed the war against Mithridates, and the Cretans apparently had lent Mithridates some sort of aid, probably by privateering and

¹⁴⁵ Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 314–315. Caecilia Metella's reputation: Cic., *Att.* 11.23.3, 12.52.2, 13.7.1; Hor., *Sat.* 2.3.239. She may have been the woman celebrated by the Caesarian poet Ticiada, who was killed when he fell into the hands of Metellus Scipio in 46 (Ov., *Trist.* 2.433, 437f.; Apul., *Apol.* 10; *RE* Suppl. 3.223; *Bell. Afr.* 44.1, 46.3.

¹⁴⁶ Metellus Pius had not received his fair portion of praise for his work in Spain, and the recent Verrine debacle had perhaps tarnished the family's reputation.

¹⁴⁷ Cic., *Flacc.* 30, 63, 100; *CIL* 1².2.746; *IG* 3.565.

¹⁴⁸ Vell. Pat. 2.34; the term used is *duces*.

¹⁴⁹ Flor. 1.42.

wreaking havoc with Roman allies and shipping.¹⁵⁰ After M. Antonius had failed to subdue the island, Metellus was appointed and began his task with singular determination and savagery. He subdued *totam insulam igni ferroque populatus intra castella et urbes redegit*.¹⁵¹ He took many cities by storm, and in one account drove the besieged to such extremes that they drank their own urine.¹⁵²

Not only did Metellus have to combat pirates, but he also had to fight fellow Romans. In 67 Pompey was awarded a special grant of *imperium*, which he used to sweep the seas clear of pirates. Believing his own commission superceded all others' he sent a legate to Crete with orders for Metellus to stand down and hand over operations to the legate, L. Octavius. Metellus was understandably upset and refused to relinquish his command. Due to the brutality of the war that Metellus was waging and perhaps not entirely ignorant of the current political situation in Rome, some pirates appealed to Pompey for help, and Octavius was more than willing to oblige them. He used the army of Cornelius Sisenna, the governor of Greece who had recently died, to aid the Cretans in any way that he could. He even joined with a presumed pirate, Aristion, in capturing Hierapydna, but together they were finally defeated by Metellus' forces.¹⁵³ In this way Metellus earned his *agnomen* Creticus, and organized the island of Crete as a Roman province, removing the autonomy and freedom to which Crete had been accustomed.¹⁵⁴ Notwithstanding this achievement, Pompey was able to spoil some of the grandeur of Metellus' accomplishment. When Metellus finally returned to Rome sometime before 63 (possibly late in 65), Pompey was able to hold up his triumph until 62. When Metellus finally did triumph it was without the two pirate chiefs Lasthenes

¹⁵⁰ Flor. 1.42.

¹⁵¹ Flor. 1.42.

¹⁵² Val. Max. 7.6.ext.1. This disturbing story is not found in other sources.

¹⁵³ Dio 36.18-19.

¹⁵⁴ Dio 36.19; Vell. Pat. 2.38.

and Panares, whom Pompey said had actually surrendered to him and were thus not allowed to walk in Metellus' triumph.¹⁵⁵ The literary sources report Metellus' campaign as being very efficient, if brutal. This view ought to be tempered by the fact that there were several inscriptions set up to Creticus in Crete, Athens, and Argos, although these latter inscriptions were probably set up in thanks to Creticus for ridding these cities of a major inconvenience and making their lives easier.¹⁵⁶ However, there must be at least some truth to these reports of brutality since it is recorded that once the Cretans heard of Pompey's more lenient treatment of the pirates he was dealing with, many of them offered to surrender themselves to Pompey instead.¹⁵⁷ Pompey's interest in Crete seemed to dissipate once he received the command of the Mithridatic War in accordance with the *lex Manilia* and Creticus was left alone to finish the subjugation of the island and its organization as a Roman province.¹⁵⁸

When Creticus returned to Italy he waited outside the *pomerium* in anticipation of his triumph. He was kept in anticipation until 62, but was utilized by the state in the meantime against the uprising of Catiline. L. Sergius Catilina had been assigned to the province of Africa and was prosecuted for extortion when he returned in 66.¹⁵⁹ The aged *pontifex maximus* Metellus Pius was a chief witness for the prosecution. The Metelli had hereditary clients in Africa as a result of Numidicus' campaigns fifty years before, and Pius may have gathered even more during his time there during the *Cinnae dominatio*. The Metellan connection to Africa was strong, and Pius was the only Metellus still in Rome. Creticus was on campaign in Crete, L. Metellus had died early in his consulship two years previous, and

¹⁵⁵ Liv., *Per.* 99; Dio 36.19; Vell. Pat. 2.40.

¹⁵⁶ Crete: *IGRR* 1.955, 4.4108; Athens: *IG* 3.565; Argos: *CIL* 1².2.746.

¹⁵⁷ Cic., *Leg. Man.* 35, 46; Plut., *Pomp.* 29.2; App., *Sic.* 6.2; Flor. 1.42.5–6; Vell. Pat. 2.34.2.

¹⁵⁸ Pompey took over command of the war against Mithridates from Licinius Lucullus (cos. 74), who was the son of a Metella.

¹⁵⁹ Ascon. 85, 89C; Cic., *Cael.* 10; Cic., *Att.* 1.1.1, 2.1–2; Sall., *Cat.* 18.3.

M. Metellus was a non-entity or dead—the result is the same—and both Celer and Nepos were in the east as *legati* of Pompey.¹⁶⁰ The testimony of one of Rome’s most revered men was not enough to secure a conviction, and Catiline was acquitted.¹⁶¹ His acquittal and continued presence in Rome would have grave repercussions for the Republic. However, because he was under prosecution, Catiline’s candidacy for the consulship of 65 was disallowed by L. Volacatius Tullus, setting the backdrop for Catiline’s conspiracy in 63.¹⁶²

The last mention of Metellus Pius is in another criminal trial when C. Cornelius was charged with *maiestas* and Pius was one of the chief witnesses against him. Notwithstanding the testimony of Metellus Pius, Hortensius Hortalus, Lutatius Catulus, M. Lucullus, and M. Lepidus, Cornelius was not convicted.¹⁶³ It was probably shortly after this trial, at some time in 64, that Metellus Pius died. He had been the successful standard-bearer for the family—and in some estimations even the entire Sullan regime—for a long time.¹⁶⁴ He had helped navigate the family through a volatile time in Rome’s history and had guided the family through this period and negotiated a “new lease of power and prestige.”¹⁶⁵ Perhaps Münzer stated it most eloquently:

Metellus Pius had been chosen in 80 by Sulla, as the worthiest participant in government, to be his colleague in the consulship, and shortly before, also with Sulla’s consent, was raised to Rome’s highest priestly post as successor to Q. Scaevola...Metellus Pius, consular and chief pontiff from the high

¹⁶⁰ It should be noted also that the prosecutor was the young P. Clodius Pulcher, the son of Ap. Claudius Pulcher (cos. 79) and Caecilia Metella. Had Clodius been charged with prosecuting Catiline on behalf of Metellan clients?

¹⁶¹ At the time of this trial Pius was a *consularis*, *triumphator*, *pontifex maximus* and twice *imperator*.

¹⁶² Ascon. 89C.

¹⁶³ Ascon. 69, 70C; Val. Max. 8.5.4.

¹⁶⁴ “The core and heart of Sulla’s party and Sulla’s oligarchy was the powerful house of the Caecilii Metelli” (Syme, *RR*, 20).

¹⁶⁵ Morgan, “Rise and Fall,” 323.

aristocracy, was, therefore, at his death the most distinguished man in Rome.¹⁶⁶

When Metellus Pius died, his relatives Celer and Nepos were working with Pompey in the east. In some ways these brothers seem to have separated themselves from the rest of the Metellan family, supporting their *adfinis* Pompey in the earlier stages of their careers when he was opposed to Creticus, and then turning against him when he divorced their half-sister Mucia, and continuing to oppose him even though some in the family supported him.

These brothers both have the same *praenomen*, which has created some confusion for ancient historians. Wiseman has sorted through the possibilities and arrived at the very simple conclusion that Q. Celer (tr. 90) had two sons, named Celer and Nepos. The older cousin of this older Celer was Q. Metellus Nepos (cos. 98) and was without male issue and so he adopted the younger of these sons and gave him his name.¹⁶⁷ This adoption kept the senior line of the family from dying out.

In any event, Q. Metellus Celer was the older of the two and was probably born around 103, but he is first mentioned shortly before 78 when he and his younger brother indicted M. Aemilius Lepidus for extortion in Sicily. The sources indicate that they dropped their case because of Lepidus' popularity, but the recent marriage of Pompey to their half-sister may have provided some additional motivation. Celer served as a military tribune at some point, but when or where is not known.¹⁶⁸ The next concrete reference to him is in 68 when he is tribune, but again there is no additional information.¹⁶⁹ He did serve under

¹⁶⁶ Münzer, *RAPF*, 290.

¹⁶⁷ T.P. Wiseman, "Celer and Nepos," *CQ*, n.s. 21 (1971): 180–182.

¹⁶⁸ Sall., *Hist.* 1.135M.

¹⁶⁹ *CIL* 1².2.744.

Pompey, and his service must have begun after his tribunate in 68, although it was probably not until Pompey was actually granted *imperium maius* by the *lex Gabinia* in 67. Celer was back in Rome in 64 in time to run for the praetorship, which he duly held in 63. Of the time he spent in the east the only reference to Celer's actual involvement in Pompey's campaigns occurs in the winter of 66/65 when he fought against the Albani. Celer was placed in charge of the camp where king Tigranes was being held, suggesting that Pompey had some respect for his military capabilities.¹⁷⁰ In the year of his praetorship he is mentioned as an *augur* and a fuller picture of his involvement in politics begins to emerge.¹⁷¹ Celer played a minor yet important role in the trial of Rabirius and was the one who lowered the red flag on the Janiculum Hill that forced the dismissal of the Centuriate Assembly and ended the trial.¹⁷² Also in 63 Celer played a not insignificant role during the Catilinarian conspiracy. In order to allay the mounting suspicion and fear surrounding him and his actions, Catiline appealed to four senators to allow him to stay with them until his trial. The third senator he approached was Metellus Celer, who wisely refused.¹⁷³ His cousin Creticus, who was still waiting outside Rome for his triumph, was sent to Apulia while Celer was ordered to the *Ager Picenus* and *Ager Gallicus* with permission to raise troops *pro tempore atque periculo*.¹⁷⁴ When Catiline attempted to send emissaries to the Apennine district Celer apprehended and arrested them,¹⁷⁵ and when Catiline finally made an attempt to break out into Gaul, it was Celer who, apprised of the situation and Catiline's plans, blocked the pass from Pistoria to

¹⁷⁰ Dio 36.54.

¹⁷¹ Dio 37.27.3; cf. Cic., *Vat.* 19; Cic., *Att.* 2.9.2.

¹⁷² Dio 37.26–28, 37.2; Quintil. 5.13.20; Suet., *Iul.* 12; cf. Cic., *Pis.* 4; Cic., *Att.* 2.1.3. See Adrian K. Goldsworthy. *Caesar: Life of a Colossus* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006): 123f.

¹⁷³ Cic., *Cat.* 1.19; Sall., *Cat.* 31.4; Dio 37.31.3–37.32.2.

¹⁷⁴ Cic., *Cat.* 2.5–6, 26; Cic., *Fam.* 5.2.1; Sall., *Cat.* 30.3–5; Plut., *Cic.* 16.1.

¹⁷⁵ Sall., *Cat.* 42.3.

Bononia, thus preventing his escape and forcing Catiline to engage with the forces from the south.¹⁷⁶

In 62 Celer was appointed proconsul of Cisalpine Gaul, which had been Cicero's allocated province after he refused to go to his assigned province of Macedonia.¹⁷⁷ It is possible, and from his correspondence it seems likely, that Cicero used his province as a bargaining tool to garner Celer's support.¹⁷⁸ Celer's brother Nepos was in Rome during the Catilinarian conspiracy and had been actively campaigning to have Pompey recalled from the east with his armies to bring the issue to a close; Cicero's offer of Cisalpine Gaul may have been enough to entice Celer away from at least actively supporting his brother's attempts to recall the powerful general.

Very little is recorded about his time as governor, but there are two interesting references. He wrote a letter to Cicero which survives, in which he complains of Cicero's treatment of his younger brother.¹⁷⁹ The tone of the letter is one of indignation and if there had been any arrangement made between Celer and Cicero, Celer seems to have conveniently forgotten it when he implies that the return of Pompey will be unpleasant for those who mock his family. The other instance is much stranger. Apparently some Indians were carried off to Germany by storms and were made a present to Celer.¹⁸⁰

Celer was married to one of the most notorious women in Roman history, namely Clodia the sister of the infamous tribune. Clodia was herself the daughter of a Metella, and the marriage can be dated to sometime after her father's death in 76, but before Celer's

¹⁷⁶ Sall., *Cat.* 57.2–5; Dio 37.33.4, 37.39–40.

¹⁷⁷ Cic., *Fam.* 5.1, 2; Sall., *Cat.* 57.2, 58.6; Dio 37.39.

¹⁷⁸ Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 350.

¹⁷⁹ Cic., *Fam.* 5.1 and Cicero's response in 5.2.

¹⁸⁰ Pomponius Mela 3.45; Plin., *NH* 2.170.

praetorship in 63.¹⁸¹ She was the granddaughter of Metellus Balearicus, but did not enjoy the same respect as her mother.¹⁸² Their relationship was an interesting one, and after his death it was rumored that she had poisoned him.¹⁸³

Metellus Nepos was the younger of the two brothers, having been born about 100. From his later actions he also seems to have been the more impetuous and dangerous of the two. He inherited his *agnomen* from his adoptive father, to whom he had sworn an oath to prosecute C. Scribonius Curio (cos. 76), but he dropped the case when threatened with a counter-prosecution. He also participated with his older brother in the aborted prosecution of Lepidus in 78, and is not mentioned again until 67, when he is a *legatus* under Pompey with praetorian *imperium* in the war against the pirates.¹⁸⁴ With this delegated authority he went into Syria and captured Damascus for Pompey, justifying his brother-in-law's trust in him.¹⁸⁵ He was back in Rome in time to successfully canvass for one of the open slots for Tribune of the Plebs for 62, no doubt with the endorsement of his commanding officer, and at the beginning of his tribunate he joined forces with Julius Caesar, the newly elected *pontifex maximus*. They worked to further their own interests and those of their political allies.¹⁸⁶ At the end of Cicero's consulship and when he attempted to deliver the traditional speech, Nepos interposed his veto and would not allow it. Cicero was only permitted to swear an oath, but in true Ciceronian style it was *verissimum pulcherrimumque*.¹⁸⁷ The next day Cicero protested in the senate of his treatment and on 3 January 62 Nepos gave a violent

¹⁸¹ Varro, *RR*, 3.16.2; Cic., *Fam.* 5.2.6; Plut., *Cic.* 29.2.

¹⁸² She was the daughter of Metella Balarici, the woman who had the dream of Juno Sospita (Münzer, *RAPF*, 435 note 135).

¹⁸³ Cic., *Att.* 2.1.5; Catullus 83; cf. Cic., *Cael.* 34, 59–60.

¹⁸⁴ App., *Mith.* 95; Flor. 1.41.10.

¹⁸⁵ Joseph., *AJ* 14.29; *BJ* 1.127.

¹⁸⁶ Cic. *Mur.* 81; Cic., *Fam.* 5.2.6.

¹⁸⁷ Cic., *Fam.* 5.2.7.

speech of his own.¹⁸⁸ The situation escalated when Cicero retaliated with a speech *contra contionem Q. Metelli*,¹⁸⁹ and the senate was finally forced to intervene and decreed that anyone seeking to impeach Cicero or anyone else associated with the suppression of Catiline would be seen as a public enemy.¹⁹⁰ Cicero received a letter almost immediately from Nepos' older brother in Cisalpine Gaul, in which Celer is upset at the treatment his younger brother has received at the hands of Cicero and others in the senate.¹⁹¹ He no doubt had received a very one-sided report of what had transpired at the beginning of the year, but Cicero was nevertheless tactful, if somewhat forceful, in his attempt to soothe the wounded egos of the Metelli.¹⁹²

Later in the month Nepos was still upset at Cicero's handling of the situation with Catiline—especially the execution of Roman citizens without a trial—and proposed two bills. The first called for the recall of Pompey from the east with an army to take command against Catiline and the other sought permission to allow Pompey to stand for the consulship *in absentia*.¹⁹³ These measures were vigorously opposed by Cato, who had sought election as a tribune at the same time as Nepos in order to act as his counterweight.¹⁹⁴ When Cato and a fellow tribune interposed their vetoes and the clerk stopped reading the law to the assembly, Nepos took it and began to read it himself. Cato then snatched the document from Nepos' hands and when Nepos began speaking *ex tempore*, his opponents clapped their hands over his mouth.¹⁹⁵ Nepos then had recourse to violence and Cato was driven from the forum, but

¹⁸⁸ Cic., *Fam.* 5.2.8; Plut. *Cic.* 26.4, 7.

¹⁸⁹ Cic., *Att.* 1.13.5; Gell. 18.7.7; Quintil. 9.3.50; Plut., *Apophth. Cic.* 5–6.

¹⁹⁰ Dio 37.42.2–3.

¹⁹¹ Cic., *Fam.* 5.1.

¹⁹² Cic., *Fam.* 5.2 is Cicero's response to Celer's letter.

¹⁹³ Plut., *Cato Min.* 26.2–4; Plut., *Cic.* 23.2 ; Dio 37.43.1.

¹⁹⁴ Plut., *Cato Min.* 20–21.

¹⁹⁵ Dio 37.43.2–3.

he quickly returned with a large number of supporters and drove Nepos away. Martial law was declared and Nepos and Caesar—who had been aiding him—were suspended from their offices. Caesar made his peace with the senate; Nepos fled to Pompey.¹⁹⁶ It is uncertain whether Nepos had been acting under Pompey’s direction when he proposed his laws, but it is almost certain that Pompey was not pleased with Nepos’ behavior and the way events unfolded. Nepos’ departure anticipates the later flight of Antony to Caesar, and he may even have fled to Pompey in an effort to give Pompey an acceptable pretext for coming back to Rome even without the passage of Nepos’ legislation.

Pompey’s feelings about this are not difficult to discern. He returned to Italy at the end of 62 with a bitter and angry Nepos in tow and Rome waited with baited breath to see what his next move would be.¹⁹⁷ Unlike his earlier ally Sulla, Pompey disbanded his army and sought to legitimize himself once again with the senatorial aristocracy. To this end he divorced Mucia and sought a marriage alliance with Cato, who rebuffed the offer, leaving Pompey in an awkward position.¹⁹⁸ Pompey’s attempt to ally himself with Cato, and the requisite divorce of Mucia, illuminate his feelings regarding the actions of his over-zealous tribune in the year before. The later sources offer Mucia’s rumored infidelity as the cause of the divorce, but political expediency was a greater motivator.¹⁹⁹ The divorce probably stung all the more since Mucia had given Pompey three children and her half-brothers, especially Nepos, had supported him vigorously and championed his interests in Rome while he was

¹⁹⁶ Cic., *Sest.* 62; Plut., *Cato Min.* 27.1–19; Plut., *Cic.* 23.2–3 ; Dio 37.43.2–4 ; Suet., *Iul.* 15. It may have been at this time that Caesar delivered or composed a speech for a certain Q. Metellus (Suet. *Iul.* 55.2; cf. *RE* s.v. “Caecilius” no. 96.

¹⁹⁷ Plut., *Cic.* 26.7; Cic., *Prov. Cons.* 27 ; *Fam.* 5.7 ; Vell. Pat. 2.40.3.

¹⁹⁸ Plut., *Pomp.* 44.2–3; *Cato Min.* 30.2–4.

¹⁹⁹ Mucia’s infidelity has been largely accepted by modern accounts. See for example Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 155. However, as Hailey, “The Five Wives of Pompey the Great,” 50–53 has shown, this is questionable. Her supposed lack of morals are notably absent from the earliest sources.

busy stealing credit for a victory that, it could be argued, belonged to another.²⁰⁰ What's more, the Metelli had brought Pompey into the Roman aristocracy and given him a measure of respectability and credibility with the ruling class. Now that he had reached a new level of political power he was simply discarding them. He would come to regret his misstep. The two men who had been such staunch supporters now became some of his most vocal and dangerous political enemies. In fact, they almost seemed to relish the role, as "the Metelli as a family were never slow to respond to real or apparent slights."²⁰¹

Nepos held office in 60, but the only action recorded of his praetorship was a bill abolishing customs dues in Italian ports that was widely popular—outside equestrian circles.²⁰² His brother, however, was elected consul for 60, although he need not have done so by swallowing family pride and personal injury to keep the support of Pompey. If he was supported by Pompey it should be seen as an attempt by Pompey to maintain some kind of relationship with the Metelli who, although somewhat waning in power, were still a political force to be reckoned with. On the other hand, Celer came from a family with a long history of reaching the consulship and it is almost certain that he could have gained Rome's highest office without Pompey's support.

Celer's year as consul was an important one for the Republic. As Syme has noted, the historian Pollio began his history with the consulship of Metellus and Afranius. Not because of who occupied the consuls' chairs, but because it was in that year that the First Triumvirate was formed.²⁰³ Celer's colleague in the consulship was one L. Afranius, who had been put

²⁰⁰ Pompey replaced Lucullus, the son of a Metella, in the war against Mithridates.

²⁰¹ Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 156.

²⁰² Cic., *Att.* 2.16.1; Dio 37.51.3–4.

²⁰³ Syme, *RR*, 5.

forward by Pompey but whose only talent was for dancing.²⁰⁴ Metellus was not idle, speaking out against revising the tax contracts for Asia before he even took office and continuing his opposition once he was consul.²⁰⁵ When Pompey sought to ratify his eastern settlements *en masse* he was blocked by a senatorial coalition that included Lucullus, Cato, Metellus Creticus, and Celer, that demanded they be debated individually in the senate.²⁰⁶ Concerned, Pompey had a sympathetic tribune add to the agrarian measure giving land to his veterans a clause stipulating that regular citizens would also be entitled to land. This bill too was vehemently opposed by Celer.²⁰⁷ Celer's refusal to back down prompted the tribune L. Flavius (pr. 58) to imprison the consul. When Celer then summoned the senate to the prison for discussion, Flavius placed his tribunician bench across the entryway so as to effectively block access. With the door barred, Celer ordered a wall of the prison to be torn down so that the senators could enter by an alternate route. When Pompey learned how far the situation had gone—with its almost farcical attention to constitutional detail and propriety—he had his tribune back off.²⁰⁸

For 59 Celer was assigned one of the Gauls, probably Transalpine,²⁰⁹ and probably would have had some opportunity for military exploits and glory if not for the diplomatic skills of his cousin Creticus, who was sent to various Gallic tribes to try and persuade them

²⁰⁴ Cic., *Att.* 1.18–20; Dio 37.49.3.

²⁰⁵ Cic., *Att.* 1.17.9

²⁰⁶ Dio 37.49.2–37.50.1; Vell. Pat. 2.40.5; Flor. 2.13.9; cf. App. *BC* 2.9; Plut. *Cato Min.* 31.1; Plut. *Pomp.* 46.3; Plut. *Luc.* 42.5–6.

²⁰⁷ Cic., *Att.* 1.17–20; Dio 37.49–50.

²⁰⁸ Cic. *Ad Att.* 1.19.2; Dio 37.50. Celer not only opposed Pompey, but also stood in the way of his own relative, the soon-to-be notorious P. Clodius Pulcher. Most notably, he would not allow his request for a *transitio ad plebem* and Clodius would have to wait until the next year when Julius Caesar would allow it (Cic., *Att.* 2.1.4–5, 1.18.5; *Har. Resp.* 45; *Cael.* 60; Dio 37.51.1–2).

²⁰⁹ Cic., *Att.* 1.19.2, 1.20.5; Dio 37.50.4.

not to join the Helvetii in an uprising against Rome.²¹⁰ Creticus' powers of diplomatic persuasion had apparently improved since his days on Crete, and there was no Gallic uprising that year. In any event, Celer had been threatened by the tribune Flavius that he would take away his province, which he may actually have done, since Celer was still in Rome when he died sometime before April of the next year having never left the city.²¹¹

The Metelli in the Age of Caesar

Creticus returned from Gaul in 60 after successfully forestalling a Gallic revolt, but he does not seem to have resumed his role in politics. He is only mentioned three times after his return to the capital city and was probably dead well before Caesar crossed the Rubicon. In September of 57 he was one of the *pontifices* who heard Cicero's *de domo sua*,²¹² he was present for Cicero's speech against L. Piso (cos. 58) in 55,²¹³ and was also present at Cicero's defense of Cn. Plancius in 54.²¹⁴ He probably died sometime in 54 or 53, but certainly before 49.²¹⁵ With Creticus largely removed from the political scene and Celer dead since 59 it is difficult to discern who stood at the head of the family. Metellus Nepos was the oldest surviving male, but the adopted son of Metellus Pius, Q. Metellus Scipio was the more prestigious. Nepos initially played an important role in the most important political situation of the period, the recall of Cicero, but died before the final contest between Caesar and Pompey, leaving the reins of the family in the haughty hands of Metellus Scipio.

²¹⁰ Cic., *Att.* 1.19.2–3, 1.20.5. This embassy should be born in mind when thinking of Caesar's justification for attacking the Helvetii.

²¹¹ Cic., *Cael.* 59; *Sest.* 130–131; *Vat.* 19; *Att.* 2.5.2; Dio 37.50.4; cf. T.R.S. Broughton, "More Notes on Roman Magistrates," *TAPA* 79 (1948), 73–76. It is possible, and perhaps more likely, that he merely died before being able to leave the city for his province.

²¹² Cic., *Dom.* 123; *Har. Resp.* 12.

²¹³ Cic., *Pis.* 58.

²¹⁴ Cic., *Planc.* 27.

²¹⁵ Vell. *Pat.* 2.48.6.

Upon Celer's death Nepos unsuccessfully tried to obtain his brother's position in the college of augurs.²¹⁶ After this failure, he is not mentioned again until 57. It is possible that he received a praetorian province, and if so and was probably in Hispania Ulterior or Sardinia et Corsica since these provinces were regularly given to praetors.²¹⁷ When he appears again in the sources it is as consul for the year 57. Metellus Nepos was thus the fifth member of the family in twenty-four years to hold the office, and he would be the last true Metellus to do so. The main political issue during Nepos' consulship was the recall of the exiled Cicero. He was originally opposed to Cicero's return, probably as a result of his negative interactions with Cicero during the Catilinarian crisis and exacerbated by his more recent animosity towards Pompey. Combined with the fact that Cicero had gone into exile as a result of the actions of P. Clodius Pulcher, a relative of Nepos, Cicero's friends had good reason to fear that Nepos might try to obstruct the effort.²¹⁸ However, Nepos announced shortly after taking office that he would not oppose Cicero's recall and in fact presided at the meeting of the senate where the bill calling for his return was introduced.²¹⁹ This apparent about face is puzzling, but it may have been as simple as Nepos realizing the way the winds were blowing. The Metelli, after all, "were never ones to struggle against the tides of history."²²⁰

After his consulship Nepos went to his province before April 56, since it is known that he came east to attend the conference at Luca.²²¹ His province was Nearer Spain, and he

²¹⁶ Cic., *Att.* 2.5.2, 2.12.2.

²¹⁷ Cic., *Att.* 2.5.2; cf. Broughton, *MRR* 3.10; Morgan, "Rise and Fall," 382 note 113.

²¹⁸ Cic., *Att.* 3.12.1; *Fam.* 5.4.2; Dio 39.6.3. Of these considerations his support of Clodius perhaps caused the most consternation. When Nepos was restrained by a certain P. Sestius who was an associate of Clodius' enemy Milo, Nepos called upon Clodius and Sestius barely escaped with his life (Cic. *Sest.* 79; *Dom.* 13). Later, when Milo tried to indict Clodius under the *lex Plautia de vi*, Nepos prevented the trial (Cic. *Sest.* 89; Dio 29.7.4).

²¹⁹ Cic., *Sest.* 72, 87, 130; *Red. Sen.* 5, 9, 25; *Ad Quir.* 10, 15; *Dom.* 7, 10; *Att.* 3.24.2; *Prov. Cons.* 22; *Pis.* 35; *Fam.* 5.4; Dio 39.8.2.

²²⁰ Gruen, *RPCC*, 272.

²²¹ Plut., *Caes.* 21.2; Dio 39.54.1.

struggled in an uprising against the Vaccaei. After some initial successes he was “glad to remain quiet and not run any risks.”²²² He returned from his disappointing term as governor by the last half of 54, when he was one of the witnesses for the younger Aemilius Scaurus on charges of electoral bribery.²²³ This case was something special, since the young Scaurus could count among those who came to his defense many men who were inimical to each other: Pompey, Servilius Isauricus, Aemilius Paullus Lepidus, Lentulus Niger, Clodius, M. Cicero and Milo. “It was a remarkable assemblage.”²²⁴ After his participation in the trial of Scaurus, Nepos is not mentioned again. He appears to have died childless, probably sometime in 54. Additionally, there is evidence that his relationship with the remaining members of the family was not on solid footing. He left them and all other relatives out of his will and made C. Carrinas his sole heir.²²⁵

With the death of Nepos the leadership of what was left of the family fell by default to the man known as Metellus Scipio. By birth he was P. Cornelius Scipio and when he was adopted by the will of Metellus Pius he became Q. Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica. This man was the heir of many of Rome’s most illustrious families, such as the Cornelii Scipiones, Licinii Crassi, Mucii Scaevolae, and now the Caecilii Metelli. Münzer calls him the “most aristocratic man in Rome”²²⁶ and Taylor has admiringly noted that, “his atrium, with the wax masks of two long lines of consular ancestors and with many more added from the female side, must have been a showplace of Rome.”²²⁷ While his ancestry was impeccable, “the quality of the pedigree did not correspond with the character of its possessor. Metellus Scipio

²²² Dio 39.54.2.

²²³ Ascon. 28C.

²²⁴ Gruen, *LGRR*, 334. For an in-depth discussion of the trial and its ramifications see Gruen, *LGRR*, 331–337. Cf. L.R. Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), 35.

²²⁵ Val. Max. 7.8.3.

²²⁶ Münzer, *RAPF*, 290.

²²⁷ Taylor, *PPAC*, 35. Cf. Cic., *Pis.* 1; *Planc.* 51.

was dull and uninspired, lacking in ability, possessed of a fondness for pornographic displays.”²²⁸ This was the man who would decide the fate of the family in the approaching civil war and ultimately be responsible for the family’s final descent into oblivion.

The first reference to Scipio is in 78, but he was born around 95.²²⁹ He next appears allied with the Metelli in their defense of Verres together with his two brothers.²³⁰ Also at an early point in his life he was engaged to Aemilia Lepida but broke off the engagement only to win her back when he found out that his enemy Cato was interested in her.²³¹ This rejection stung Cato and the two men traded barbs back and forth. They remained serious enemies until “fate brought them together on African soil for the last battle against Caesar.”²³² Scipio’s relationship with Cato stands in contrast to the relationship between Cato, Creticus, and Celer, who all worked together to oppose Pompey’s measures. Admittedly, political cooperation against a shared enemy does not mean they were political allies, but Scipio’s feelings towards Cato are more in line with those of Nepos.²³³

The first mention of this man as a Metellus is in 63 when he had gone with M. Crassus and M. Marcellus to warn Cicero of the plot against his life.²³⁴ The association with Crassus may indicate that Metellus Scipio, like Creticus, had formed a connection with Crassus. Sometime around 55 Scipio’s daughter Cornelia, described as *femina tantorum*

²²⁸ Gruen, *LGRR*, 151. Cf. Cic., *Pro Corn. Apud Ascon.* 74C: *summa nobilitate, eximia virtute praedito*; Cic., *Att.* 6.1.17; Val. Max. 9.1.8.

²²⁹ His being mentioned in 78 is found in Ascon. 74C. It is possible, but not likely, that he is the young man mentioned in Cic., *Rosc. Am.* 77.

²³⁰ Cic., *Verr.* 2.4.79.

²³¹ Plut., *Cato Min.* 7.1–2; Münzer, *RAPF*, 290.

²³² Münzer, *RAPF*, 289. For their relationship see Plut., *Cato Min.* 57.2; Plin., *NH* 8.196, 29.96.

²³³ It is only in this sense that a “split” can be discerned in the Metellan family. Individual members of the family developed rivalries or hatred with other politicians, but they largely seem to have been in reaction to personal affronts.

²³⁴ Plut., *Cic.* 15.1; Plut., *Crass.* 13.3.

titulis insignis avorum,²³⁵ married P. Crassus, the younger son of the triumvir.²³⁶ The Metelli thus became double connected to Crassus. Unfortunately, any potential these connections had to be exploited by the Metelli evaporated when the triumvir and his son died in the sands of Parthia at Carrhae in 53.

When he was adopted by Metellus Pius he became a plebeian and used the opportunity to run for the office of Tribune of the Plebs in 59. Charges, probably for electoral bribery, were brought against him by M. Favonius—a friend of Cato. Cicero’s help ensured his acquittal.²³⁷ No actions are recorded for his time as tribune, but it is generally assumed that he held the office of aedile in 57, because in this year he gave lavish games in honor of his adoptive father.²³⁸ 57 is also the first mention of him as a *pontifex*, but it is highly unlikely that a man with his pedigree had not been made a priest earlier, possibly at the time of his adoption by Metellus Pius or even earlier.²³⁹

Although not mentioned explicitly in any sources, it is possible to partially reconstruct a praetorship for Metellus Scipio sometime in 56 or 55.²⁴⁰ There is mention of a triumph in Varro. Modern scholars have debated the point, but there is no consensus.²⁴¹ More importantly, with the death of Metellus Nepos in 54, Metellus Scipio was now the only Metellus with any substantial political standing. His political influence and connections suffered a setback in 53 when Crassus the triumvir was killed along with his son and Scipio’s

²³⁵ Luc. *Phar.* 8.73.

²³⁶ Münzer, *RAPF*, 291 for the date of the marriage.

²³⁷ Cic., *Att.* 2.1.9; cf. Alexander, *Trials*, 117–118. See the discussion in Ryan, “The Quaestorship of Favonius and the Tribunate of Metellus Scipio,” *Athenaeum* 82 (1994), 505–521.

²³⁸ Cic., *Sest.* 124; *Schol Bob.* 137 Stangl.

²³⁹ Cic., *Dom.* 123; *Har. Resp.* 12.

²⁴⁰ 55 would have been the latest year under the *lex Cornelia*. Cf. Broughton, *MRR* 2.215.

²⁴¹ Shatzman, “Four Notes on Roman Magistrates,” *Athenaeum*, n.s. 46 (1968), 350–353; Badian, “Additional Notes on Roman Magistrates,” *Athenaeum*, n.s. 48 (1970), 4–6; Richardson, “The Triumph of Metellus Scipio and the Dramatic Date of Varro, RR 3,” *CQ*, 33 (1983), 456–463 and the implications for his supposed aedileship of 57.

son-in-law at Carrhae.²⁴² Metellus Scipio was now forced to cast about for a new suitable ally. In June of the same year he was chosen to fill the position of *interrex*, notwithstanding his plebeian status.²⁴³ In 52 he stood for the consulship, but due to violence in the capital and other electoral irregularities—some of it perpetuated by Clodius—he was prosecuted instead. It was at this crucial juncture that a suitable marriage match was found and his daughter Cornelia was married to none other than Pompeius Magnus. Pompeius then exercised his considerable influence to have Metellus Scipio made his colleague in the consulship for the remainder of the year, thus scuttling any criminal proceedings against him.²⁴⁴ Scipio was undoubtedly grateful for Pompey's maneuvering on his behalf, but does not seem to have done much with his time in the consul's chair. He did pass a law restoring censorial powers that had been taken away by Clodius in 58, but little else.²⁴⁵ In light of this apparent inactivity the spirit of Gruen's earlier assessment seems to have hit the mark. This man who had so many consular ancestors and for all intents and purposes had been given every essential preparation for greatness had only been able to pass one meager and relatively unimportant law. Granted he was only consul for part of the year, but lesser man had done more. He would never get a chance to hold the office again, and it was only by the timely intervention of his recent son-in-law that Q. Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica had held the consulship at all.

After his consulship he played a more visible role in the senatorial debates and discussions about Julius Caesar, which began to take on increasing urgency as his provincial

²⁴² Sources in Broughton, *MRR* 2. 230, 231.

²⁴³ *CIL* 1².2.2663c; cf. Münzer, *Hermes* 71 (1936), 222f on the opening of the office to a plebeian.

²⁴⁴ *Ascon.* 30–31, 33–34, 43C; *Plut., Pomp.* 55; *Cato Min.* 47–48 ; *App., BC* 2.224 ; *Dio* 40.51, 53 ; cf. *Liv., Per.* 107; *Vell. Pat.* 2.54.2; *Val. Max.* 9.5.3. and Gruen, *LGRR*, 345 esp. note 166. His position as consul would have made it impossible to bring charges against him.

²⁴⁵ *Dio* 40.57.

command in Gaul came to an end.²⁴⁶ When Marcellus (cos. 51) suggested that Caesar lay down his command on March 1, 50, it was Metellus Scipio who proposed—and passed—a resolution that discussion regarding Caesar’s command would be taken up on that date. Together with Domitius Ahenobarbus, Scipio passed another resolution stating that any magistrate who hindered the settlement of the question regarding Caesar’s situation should be regarded as guilty of treason.²⁴⁷ Scipio may have been working independently of Pompey at this time, which would have upset Pompey, and there is also the possibility that Scipio and Cato had temporarily set aside their differences since Domitius was the son-in-law of Cato.

In another senate meeting, this time on January 1, 49, Scipio proposed that Caesar give up his command by a specific date and that his refusal to do so should be treated as an act of open rebellion.²⁴⁸ According to Caesar’s later account, Scipio acted as he did for several reasons, some more valid than others: he wanted a province and an army, fear of prosecution, flattery of other aristocrats, and his own character.²⁴⁹ It is probably true that Scipio wanted a province and an army and that Scipio was looking for an opportunity to thrust his family back into the spotlight. A chance to go to another province with an army and enhance the family’s fortunes, in every sense of the word, would have been hard to pass up. This can be seen as one of the reasons for his actions in the senate after his consulship.

Once negotiations finally broke down, Metellus was given *imperium pro consule* and assigned the province of Syria where he spent the winter collecting ships, troops and money,

²⁴⁶ The standard account of this pivotal period is Gruen, *LGRR*, 460–490.

²⁴⁷ *Cael.*, *Ad Fam.* 8.8.5–8 lists the resolutions carried at this time. cf. Gruen, *LGRR*, 463 note 50 and 464 note 51.

²⁴⁸ *Caes.*, *BC* 1.1–2, 6.1; *Plut.*, *Caes.* 30. The motion was vetoed by Antony and Cassius.

²⁴⁹ *Caes.*, *BC* 1.4.2; cf. *Cic.*, *Att.* 9.11.4.

often by oppressive means.²⁵⁰ While he was busy raising forces against Caesar, the governor of Gaul had returned to Rome and asked the senate to allow him to use the funds that had been left in the state treasury when Pompey and his supporters fled the city. He was opposed in this by L. Metellus, surely the son of the consul of 68.²⁵¹ When Caesar menacingly retorted that it was easier to kill him than to threaten, him Metellus yielded.²⁵² This young Metellus probably fled to Pompey, since there is evidence that he wanted to return to Italy in 48.²⁵³

Metellus Scipio lost no time in attempting to gather support and prestige while he was in the east. In a small campaign he had received the title of *imperator*, which appears on some coins and some statues that he set up *for himself* at Pergamum.²⁵⁴ But when news reached Scipio that Caesar had invaded Epirus he set out for Europe with his two legions before the former was able to plunder the temple of Artemis at Ephesus.²⁵⁵ Scipio made it as far as Macedonia before Cn. Domitius Calvinus and two of Caesar's legions blocked his march, forcing him to turn back some distance to keep his legate Favonius from falling into their hands along with Scipio's baggage train.²⁵⁶ They continued to harass Scipio until they were forced to retire because of their own lack of supplies.²⁵⁷ With this slight reprieve Scipio marched south into Thessaly on Pompey's orders and was then joined by Pompey at the start

²⁵⁰ Caes., *BC* 1.4.3, 1.6.5, 3.31.1, 3.33.1; Cic., *Att.* 8.15.3, 9.1.4, 9.11.4; Plut. *Pomp.* 62.2. He also put Alexander of Judea to death (Joseph., *AJ* 14.123–125; *BJ* 1.183–185, 195; Dio 41.18.1.

²⁵¹ Cic., *Att.* 9.6.3.

²⁵² Cic., *Att.* 10.4.8, 10.8.6; Plut., *Pomp.* 62.12; Plut., *Caes.* 35.3–4; Plut., *Apophth. Caes.* 8; App., *BC* 2.41; Dio 41.17.2; Luc., *Phars.* 3.112–153; Zon. 10.8; Flor. 2.13.21. Caesar practically suppressed the entire story: *BC* 1.33.3.

²⁵³ Cic., *Att.* 11.7.2.

²⁵⁴ Caes., *BC* 3.31.1; *SIG*³.757=*IGRR* 4.409.

²⁵⁵ Caes., *BC* 3.4.3, 3.31.2–3.33.2, 3.105.2

²⁵⁶ Caes., *BC* 3.36.1–7.

²⁵⁷ Caes., *BC* 3.36.8–3.38.4, 3.79.3; App. *BC* 2.60 Dio 41.51.2–3.

of August 48. When the two generals met Pompey treated Scipio with a degree of deference because of the latter's political position.²⁵⁸

In the aftermath of Dyrrhachium Metellus Scipio was involved in a dispute with L. Domitius Ahenobarbus and L. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther over who was to be Caesar's replacement as *pontifex maximus*.²⁵⁹ All three of these men had hereditary claims to the position: Lentulus' ancestor had been chief priest at the outbreak of the Second Punic War, while Domitius was a descendant of the *pontifex maximus* of 103. However,

the most eminent candidate was Metellus Scipio, the most aristocratic man in Rome; for in belonging by birth to the family of the Scipiones Nasicae and by adoption to that of the Metelli, he could show among his immediate ancestors no fewer than *five pontifices maximi*, almost half of all who had held the high office between Ti. Coruncanius and Caesar; there had been only twelve in these two hundred years.²⁶⁰

At the great battle of Pharsalus Metellus Scipio held the center of the Pompeian line against Cn. Calvinus and was defeated along with the rest of Pompey's forces.²⁶¹ Together with L. Afranius (cos. 60) and Caesar's former lieutenant T. Labienus, he fled to Africa, where Metellus could lay claim to hereditary clients from both sides of his family. He immediately got into a dispute with the Pompeian governor P. Attius Varus, probably over who should have the ultimate command, and the two were only reconciled when Cato arrived and secured the appointment of Scipio as the commander-in-chief of Pompeian forces in

²⁵⁸ Caes., *BC* 3.80.4, 3.81.2–3.82.1.

²⁵⁹ Caes., *BC* 3.82.2–3.83.4; Plut., *Pomp.* 67.5; Plut., *Caes.* 42.1–2.

²⁶⁰ Münzer, *RAPF*, 330.

²⁶¹ Caes., *BC* 3.88.3; App., *BC* 2.76; Plut., *Pomp.* 69.1 ; Plut., *Caes.* 44.2.

Africa.²⁶² In hindsight Scipio was the logical choice for the supreme command. His family heritage—both his natural and adoptive lines—practically demanded the position, combined with the higher rank, for he still held *imperium pro consule*. In addition, only Metellus Scipio was able to call upon the massive hereditary clients that had been cultivated by the Corneli Scipiones since the Hannibalic War and the Metelli since the Jugurthine War. Scipio was supposedly complicit in the destruction of Utica, but the fact that he had patronage ties there, along with the numerous Italian businessmen that would have been vital to their efforts to outfit their soldiers makes its destruction unlikely. The story seems to have been embellished as a way to make Cato look good, since according to one account the city was only saved by the intervention of Cato.

Cato and Scipio seem to have been able to set aside their personal quarrels in the face of Caesar's legions, but there certainly would have been tense moments and strained emotions between these two powerful and proud men. Scipio's pride knew no bounds, even after the defeat at Pharsalus, declaring that he was *unus imperator populi Romani* and placing *imperator* on coins minted while he was in Africa.²⁶³ By the time Caesar invaded Africa Metellus Scipio had every reason to be optimistic. He stood in command of fourteen legions, 18,000 cavalry and 64 elephants.²⁶⁴ Despite his obvious numerical advantage and probably recognizing that his hastily levied troops were no match for Caesar's seasoned veterans, Scipio refused to engage. His refusal to fight lowered the morale of his troops and desertions to Caesar increased, while Caesar continued to receive reinforcements.²⁶⁵ Battle was finally undertaken when Scipio attempted to relieve the city of Thapsus, but his forces were

²⁶² Liv., *Per.* 113; Vell. Pat. 2.54.2–3; Plut., *Cato Min.* 57.1–3; cf. App., *BC* 2.87; Dio 42.57.

²⁶³ *Bell. Afr.* 4.4; Grueber, *CRRBM* 2.570–574, nos. 1–14.

²⁶⁴ Gelzer, *Caesar*, 253 and sources therein.

²⁶⁵ *Bell. Afr.* 28.44.1–28.46.3, although these accounts may be suspect. Cf. Val. Max. 3.8.7; Syme, *RR*, 63.

defeated. Scipio committed suicide when the small group of refugees he was traveling with was attacked.²⁶⁶

In many ways this last significant member of the Metellan family did not live up to the great expectations heaped upon him by his contemporaries or later historians. His reputation has suffered in both the ancient and the modern sources, who portray him as more interested in leisurely pursuits than politics and warfare. According to Varro and Pliny, Scipio had the dubious distinction of having invented *foie gras* and given his penchant for foods, it may have been after him that a vegetable was named.²⁶⁷ He was known for his vices and extravagance,²⁶⁸ but he sought to honor his family as well.²⁶⁹ His behavior in the civil war, combined with his lackluster performance as consul, paints a picture of this son of nobility and inheritor of greatness as a rather spoiled incompetent.

In the analysis of this final period, the Metelli enjoyed a flash of importance in the 90's after the recall of Metellus Numidicus, but it would be his son Metellus Pius who lifted the fortunes of the family once more during the time of Sulla. During this time the Metelli could be said to be the most powerful family in Rome, but within fifteen years of Sulla's death in 78 their power was again ebbing.²⁷⁰ They were able to stay connected to the real conduits of power by using that tried-and-true method of contracting marriage alliances with Pompey and Crassus. However, instead of strengthening their position, these connections to

²⁶⁶ *Bell. Afr.* 75–86, 96; *Cic. Ad Fam.* 9.18.2; *Livy, Per.* 114; *Vell. Pat.* 2.54.; *Val. Max.* 3.2.13; *Flor.* 2.13.65–68. For a discussion of Caesar's African campaigns see Matthias Gelzer, *Caesar: Politician and Statesman*. Trans. Peter Nordham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 264–271; Christian Meier, *Caesar: A Biography*. Trans. David McLintock (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 420–429; Goldsworthy, *Caesar*, 454–467.

²⁶⁷ *Varro, RR* 3.10.1; *Plin., NH* 10.52; *Columella* 1.182.

²⁶⁸ *Plut., Cato Min.* 7.1–2; *Val. Max.* 9.1.8.

²⁶⁹ *Cic., Att.* 6.1.17. He set up a gilded equestrian statue group to his family on the Capitol.

²⁷⁰ *Syme, RR*, 23.

powerful and ambitious men diluted their influence.²⁷¹ As the numbers of Metelli dwindled, so did their power and influence, until, in the final generation, the last truly great Metellus was forced to adopt a man from another family. Metellus Scipio, with so much unrealized promise, was unsuccessful in maneuvering the Metelli through the treacherous rapids of the last years before Caesar crossed the Rubicon, and once civil war washed over Italy and the Roman world, it was too late.

²⁷¹ While the Metelli had successfully forged an alliance with Sulla that proved useful in the first civil war, their political alliances with Pompey and Crassus left them on the losing side in the civil war between Pompey and Caesar.

Conclusion

THE METELLI AFTER THAPSUS

Understanding the political involvements of the Caecilii Metelli can provide a paradigm for understanding how Roman aristocratic families struggled to maintain their position during the Republican period. The Metelli are also an example of how these proud families could fail. The Metelli were accustomed to acting politically in the traditional methods of contracting marriage alliances and political associations with other powerful families. However, as time progressed, it became more and more difficult for families like the Metelli to maintain their position and influence without having a strong and charismatic politician at the head. A man like Sulla, Marius, Pompey, or Julius Caesar could pull their families from relative obscurity into the political spotlight by their impressive actions and forceful personalities. The Metelli struggled to provide a leader capable of such actions. Men like the *pontifex maximus* Lucius Metellus or the great Macedonicus had provided strong family leadership, but Numidicus and his cousins were unable to follow in his illustrious footsteps. Metellus Pius was the last member of the family who was able to successfully lead the family through dangerous times. His adopted son Metellus Scipio failed to turn his pedigree, which was more prestigious than any of his contemporaries, into any kind of tangible political advantage. His ineptitude ultimately resulted in the eclipse and practical extinction of the family, as well as his own death. With the death of Metellus Scipio in 46, for all intents and purposes, the Metelli disappear from the historical record. There are only fleeting and unimportant glimpses of other Metelli in subsequent years. His daughter Cornelia was widowed when Pompey was murdered on a beach in Egypt, but she was

pardoned and even given the ashes of her dead husband for burial.¹ She is not heard of again. Cornelia seems to have been the only child of Scipio who survived into adulthood, but it is possible that a fragmentary funerary inscription at Tibur was made in honor of a son who died in adolescence.²

One Metellan woman of the still lingered after this. She had been married to P. Lentulus Spinther (cos. 57), and after being divorced by him—because of allegations of an affair with P. Dolabella—she married the son of the tragic actor Aesopus.³ She seems to have played a role similar to that which Clodia had played a generation earlier.⁴

In the final battle for what was left of the Republic in 31, two Metelli—a father and son—are mentioned as fighting on opposite sides at Actium, the father for Antony and the son for Octavian. The father had been captured and was recognized by his son, who successfully petitioned Octavian to spare him.⁵ This seemingly unimportant notice serves to illustrate two important points. First, the nature of the conflict between Antony and Octavian was more divisive than previous civil wars. While larger families had often supported different sides in political conflicts, it was rare in the extreme to see those divisions continue into armed conflict, especially with fathers and sons fighting on opposing sides. Second, the political nature of the Metellan family was basically unchanged. The family was still trying to keep afloat by allying with both sides in the conflict, perhaps not unlike what the family had done during the heyday of Pompey and Crassus. Firm identification of this father and son is impossible, but Wiseman has suggested that the son may have been the urban praetor and

¹ Dio 42.5.7; Plut., *Pomp.* 80.6.

² *CIL* 14.3589.

³ Hor., *Sat.* 2.3.239. Münzer (*RAPF*, 313, 447 note 46) is sure of her identity.

⁴ Münzer (*RAPF*, 447 note 46) wonders if she could be Clodia's daughter.

⁵ App., *BC* 4.42; Broughton, *MRR* 2.463, but importantly see *MRR* 3.10

proconsul of Sardinia in AD 6.⁶ He may also have been the adoptive father of the consul in the next year, Q. Metellus Creticus Silanus. Judging from the *agnomen* Creticus, it is apparent that Silanus' adoptive father was a descendant of Metellus Creticus (cos. 69), but it is possible that the *agnomen* had been usurped.⁷ Silanus would go on to govern Syria from September AD 12 until September AD 16, when he was recalled by the emperor Tiberius shortly before Germanicus' mission to the east.⁸ His daughter, Caecilia Iunia, was betrothed to the future emperor Nero, but she died before the marriage took place.⁹ An interesting indicator of the lasting reputation of the Caecilii Metelli was the emperor Severus Alexander claimed descent from the Metelli.¹⁰

The Caecilii Metelli were proud and they fiercely defended their family's position and status in Rome. Sights to the family were not quickly or easily forgotten, as Pompey could attest. In many ways the Caecilii Metelli can be seen as a paradigm of the potential and the limitation of Roman noble families in the Republican period. After an inauspicious beginning the family had risen quickly from obscurity, thanks to the victories of L. Metellus (cos. 251, 247) in the First Punic Wars and his religious devotion. Metellus Macedonicus raised the family even higher by obtaining the consulship within three generations of the family's political appearance at Rome. His greatest contribution to the family's legacy was his children: each son would go on to preside over the senate as consul.

It was precisely this next generation of Metelli, however, who were unable to increase the family's fortunes or expand its influence. The Caecilii Metelli were by no means able to

⁶ Wiseman, "The Last of the Metelli," *Latomus* 24 (1965): 55.

⁷ Wiseman, "The Last of the Metelli," 55.

⁸ *PIR*².C.664.

⁹ Tac., *Ann.* 2.43.3, 3.29.4; *CIL* 6.914=*ILS* 184. See Appendix 3.11 for a reconstruction of the last Metelli.

¹⁰ *SHA*, *Sev. Alex.* 44.3

impose their will on the political scene at Rome at that or any period of their history. Macedonicus himself had suffered two *repulsae* at the polls, as had his son Caprarius, and they were unable to get one of their young protégés elected to the consulship until a decade after the initial attempt. The rise of Gaius Marius, once a client and supporter but later an intractable enemy, saw the family's fortunes decline and almost disappear. It was only with the civil war between Marius and Sulla, to whom the Metelli were related by marriage, that the Metellan family moved back into the inner circles of political power at Rome. With the death of Sulla and the retirement of his noblest general Metellus Pius, the family was once again relegated, permanently this time, to acting in supporting roles in the unfolding drama between Pompey and Julius Caesar that culminated in the destruction of the Roman Republic. Occasionally they had been able to step into the spotlight themselves, but they were never able to remain for long. As Rome transitioned into an empire, many of the traditional aristocratic families were unable to maintain their position, and they sank into political obscurity and historical oblivion. The Caecilii Metelli had shown the way.

APPENDIX 1: *CURSUS HONORUM* FOR MEMBERS OF THE METELLAN FAMILY

Included in this appendix are the individual *cursus honorum* for each member of the Metellan family who held office in Rome. The information has been gathered from Broughton's *Magistrates of the Roman Republic* and the various and full entries in *RE*. Each *cursus* includes the date, office held, any pertinent notes to their time in that office, and the relevant sources that discuss the particular office. The filiation of each family member is included, along with his number in *RE*. Family members are listed chronologically by the date of their consulship or, if they did not reach the consulship, by their highest office.

L. CAECILIUS METELLUS DENTER

(RE 92)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
284	Consul		<i>Fast. Cap.</i> ; Chr. 354; Degrassi 40f., 112, 428f.
283	Praetor	Defeated and killed at Arretium	Polyb. 2.19.8; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 12; Oros. 3.22.1314; August. <i>CD</i> 3.17; cf. <i>MRR</i> 1.188 n.2

L. CAECILIUS L.F.C.N. METELLUS

(RE 72)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
251	Consul	Sicily; victory, captured elephants	Polyb. 1.39-40; Plin. 7.139; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 19; Zon. 8.14
250	Proconsul	Triumph <i>De Poenis</i>	Dion. Hal. 2.66.4; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 19; Flor. 1.18.27
250?-221	Pontifex	Listed as possible beginning in 250 by Rüpke	Cic. <i>Sen.</i> 30; Val. Max. 8.13.2; Plin. <i>NH</i> 7.139; Rüpke, <i>FS</i> , 75
249	Magister Equituum		Zon. 8:15; cf. Degrassi 42f., 116, 436f.
247	Consul II	Besieged Lilybaeum	Plin. <i>NH</i> 7.139; Zon. 8.16
243-221	Pontifex Maximus	Rescued Palladium from fire	Liv. <i>Per.</i> 19; Val. Max. 8.13.2; Oros. 4.11.6-9; Aug. <i>CD</i> 3.18; cf. <i>RE</i> no.72
232?	Land Commissioner		Cf. <i>MRR</i> 3.36
224	Dictator	appointed to hold elections	Plin. <i>NH</i> 7.139; cf. Degrassi 44f., 118, 440f.

L. CAECILIUS METELLUS

(RE 73)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
216	Military Tribune	He is present at battle of Cannae	Liv. 22.53.5-13; Val. Max. 5.6.7
214	Quaestor	reduced to <i>aerarius</i> after Cannae	Liv. 24.18.1-9, 43.2-4; Val. Max. 2.9.8
213	Tribune of the Plebs	indicted the Censors	Liv. 24.43.1-4

M. METELLUS

(RE 76)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
208	Plebeian Aedile	Plebeian Games for 2 days; Statues at temple of Ceres	Liv. 27.36.9
206	Praetor Urb. & Pereg.		Liv. 28.10.3, 28.10.9-16, 45.8
205	Legate/Ambassador	Sent to Attalus of Pergamum	Liv. 29.10.4-11.8, 14.5-14; Ovid <i>Fast.</i> 4.247-348
196?	Legate/Ambassador	Honored- Koinon of Thessalians	<i>Eph. Arch.</i> 1910, 374f.; maybe <i>RE</i> 73

Q. CAECILIUS L.F.L.N. METELLUS

(RE 81)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
216-?	Pontifex		Liv. 23.21.7
209	Plebeian Aedile		Liv. 27.21.9
208	Curule Aedile	Roman Games held for first time since invasion of Hannibal	Liv. 27.36.9, cf. 33.7
207	Legate/Envoy	Brought news of Metaurus	Liv. 27.51.3-6, cf. 28.9.19-20
207	Magister Equituum	Helped hold elections	Liv. 28.10.1-5
206	Consul	In Bruttium & Lucania	Liv. 28.9.18-10, 28.10.8, 11.8-11.15; Dio fr. 56.59
206/205		Some kind of malady in his camp	Liv. 29.10.3
205	Dictator	Appointed to hold elections	Liv. 29.10.2-3, 11.9-11; 30.23.3; 35.8.4
204	Legate/Envoy	Senatorial investigation of Scipio	Liv. 29.20-22; Diod. 27.4
201-200	X vir agr. dand. assig.	Assigned land to Scipio's veterans	Liv. 31.4.1-3, 49.5
185-184	Legate/Ambassador		Polyb. 22.6, 10; 23.4.7; Diod.29.17; Paus. 7.8.6, 7.9.1
183	Special Envoy		Polyb. 23.4.1-15; cf. Liv. 39.48.2-4

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.L.N. METELLUS MACEDONICUS

(RE 94)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
168	Legate	Sent to Rome to report Pydna	Liv. 44.45.3; 45.1-2
154	(?)Tribune of the Plebs		Val. Max. 6.9.10; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 47
c.150	Mint Master		Crawford, <i>RRC</i> , 211.
148	Praetor	Macedonia; captured Andriscus	Polyb. 36.10.1-7; Vell. 1.11.2; Flor. 1.30.5
147	Promagistrate		Polyb. 38.12.1-3
146	Promagistrate	Defeated Achaeans; triumphed	Cic. <i>Mur.</i> 31; <i>Fin.</i> 5.82; Liv., <i>Per.</i> 52; Vell. 1.11.6; Val. Max. 7.1.1
143	Consul	Hither Spain	Val. Max. 7.1.1; 8.5.1; App. <i>Ib.</i> 76
142	Proconsul	Hither Spain; attacked Numantia	Vell. 2.5.2-3; Flor. 1.33.10; App. <i>Ib.</i> 76
141	Augur	mentioned as augur before 140; as early as 155	Cic. <i>Fin.</i> 5.83; Rüpke, <i>FS</i>
136	Legate	w/Q. Pompeius to Consul Philus	Val. Max. 3.7.5; Dio fr. 82
133	Augur Not mentioned	mentioned as plebeian sent to crush slave revolt	Plut. <i>Ti. Gracch.</i> 4.1 Oros. 5.9.4
131	Censor	famous speech about marriage	Cic. <i>Fin.</i> 5.82; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 59; Suet. <i>Aug.</i> 89

L. CAECILIUS Q.F.L.N. METELLUS CALVUS

(RE 83)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
145	Praetor	latest possible date	
142	Consul		Cic. <i>Att.</i> 12.5b; Val. Max. 8.5.1
141	Promagistrate		<i>CIL</i> 1.2.633, 634, 2501
140	Legate	observed Eastern allies	Diod. 33.18.1-4; Val. Max. 4.3.13
136	Legate		App. <i>Ib.</i> 81

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS BALEARICUS

(*RE* 82)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
c. 130	Aedile	Secured grain from Thessalians	cf. Gruen, <i>Hellenistic World</i> , 165 n.44
130	Moneyer		Crawford 256
126	Praetor	latest possible <i>lex Villia</i>	
123	Consul	command vs. Balearic pirates	Cic. <i>Fin.</i> 5.82; Vell. 1.11.7; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 60; Strabo 3.5.1
122	Promagistrate	Balearic Islands	cf. <i>Act. Tr.</i> For 121; Strabo 3.5.1; Flor. 1.43; Oros.5.13.1
121	Promagistrate	Triumphed over Baleares	Cic. <i>Fin.</i> 5.82; Val. Max. 7.1.1; Plin. <i>NH</i> 7.142
120	Censor		Vell. 1.11.7; Plin. <i>NH</i> 7.142; Degrassi 126, 472f.

L. CAECILIUS L.F.Q.N. METELLUS DELMATICUS

(RE 91)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
122	Praetor	latest possible date under <i>lex Villia</i>	
119	Consul	opposed Marius' election law campaigned vs. Illyrians & Dalmatians	App. <i>Illyr.</i> 11; Plut. <i>Mar.</i> 4.2-3; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 62 App. <i>Illyr.</i> 10–11; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 62; Eutrop. 4.23.2
118	Promagistrate	Dalmatia	
117	Promagistrate	Triumph <i>de Dalmateis</i>	Liv. <i>Per.</i> 62; App. <i>Illyr.</i> 11; Eutrop. 4.23.2
114	Pontifex Maximus	Presided over trials of Vestal Virgins	Ascon. 45–46C; cf. <i>MRR</i> 1.536
103	Pontifex Maximus	succeeded by Domitius Ahenobarbus	Liv. <i>Per.</i> 67; Val. Max. 6.5.5.

L. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS DIADEMATUS

(RE 93)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
120	Praetor	latest possible under <i>lex Villia</i>	
117	Consul	probably built <i>Via Caecilia</i>	<i>CIL</i> 1.2.661; <i>ILS</i> 5799; Vell. 1.11.7; Val. Max. 7.1.1
117	Promagistrate	maybe marked boundaries	<i>CIL</i> 1.2.633, 634, 2501
115	Censor	removed 32 senators	Liv. <i>Per.</i> 62-63; Val. Max. 2.9.9

M. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS

(*RE 77*)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
118	Praetor	latest possible under <i>lex Villia</i>	
115	Consul	Sardinia and Corsica	Vell. 1.11.7; Val. Max. 7.1.1; <i>CIL</i> 10.7852, lines 7-8
114	Promagistrate	Proconsul in Sardinia	cf. <i>Act. Tr.</i> For 111
113	Promagistrate	Proconsul in Sardinia	cf. <i>Act. Tr.</i> For 111
112	Promagistrate	Proconsul in Sardinia	cf. <i>Act. Tr.</i> For 111
111	Promagistrate	Triumphed <i>ex Sardinia</i>	Vell. 2.8.2; Eutrop. 4.25.1

C. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS CAPRARIUS

(RE 84)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
117	Praetor	latest year under <i>lex Villia</i>	
113	Consul	defeated for Consul in 114	cf. <i>Act. Tr.</i> for 111
112	Promagistrate	Macedonia and Thrace	
111	Promagistrate	Triumph over Thrace	Vell. 2.8.2; Eutrop. 4.25.1
102	Censor	w/Numidicus	Cic. <i>Sest.</i> 101; App. <i>BC</i> 1.28; Val. Max. 9.7.1

Q. CAECILIUS L.F.Q.N. METELLUS NUMIDICUS

(*RE 97*)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
115	Augur		Taylor, <i>AJA</i> 48 (1944): 352–356
112	Praetor	latest date under <i>lex Villia</i>	Cic. <i>Verr.</i> 2.3.209; Val. Max. 2.10.1
111	Promagistrate		
109	Consul	in Numidia	Plut. <i>Mar.</i> 7.1; Sall. <i>Iug.</i> 43-72; Vell. 2.11.2
108	Promagistrate	continued in Numidia	Sall. <i>Iug.</i> 62.10; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 65; Vell. 2.11.2
107	Promagistrate	replaced by Marius	Sall. <i>Iug.</i> 83.2-3; 86.5; 81.1; Plut. <i>Mar.</i> 10.1
106	Promagistrate	Triumph over Numidia	Vell. 2.11.2; Cic. <i>Brut.</i> 135; Eutrop. 4.27.6
102	Censor	tried to expel Saturninus & Glaucia	App. <i>BC</i> 1.28; Val. Max. 9.7.1

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS NEPOS

(RE 95)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
101	Praetor	latest possible under <i>lex Villia</i>	
98	Consul		<i>CIL</i> 1.2.681; Cic. <i>Dom.</i> 41;

Q. CAECILIUS METELLUS CELER

(RE 85)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
90	Tribune of the Plebs		<i>Cic. Brut.</i> 305
88	Aedile	tried & condemned Sergius Silus	<i>Val. Max.</i> 6.1.8

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.L.N. METELLUS PIUS

(*RE 98*)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
89	Praetor		<i>Cic. Arch.</i> 6-7, 9, 31
	Pontifex	mentioned	<i>Auct. Vir. Ill.</i> 63.3
88	Promagistrate	supported Sulla	<i>Diod.</i> 37.2.10-11; <i>App. BC</i> 1.53
87	Promagistrate	continued in command in Samnium	<i>App. BC</i> 1.68; <i>Dio</i> 30-35; <i>Plut. Mar.</i> 42.3
	Legate	negotiate w/Marius & Cinna	<i>Diod.</i> 38.2
86	Promagistrate	withdrew to Africa	<i>Liv. Per.</i> 84; <i>Plut. Crass.</i> 6.2
83	Promagistrate	w/Sulla in Campania	<i>App. BC</i> 1.80-81; <i>Dio</i> 30-35
82	Promagistrate	won Cisalpine Gaul for Sulla	<i>App. BC</i> 1.80-81, 87-88; <i>Vell.</i> 2.28.1
81	Pontifex Maximus	replaced Q. Mucius Scaevola	<i>Plut. Caes.</i> 7.1; <i>Dio</i> 37.37.1
80	Consul	at same time as Sulla	<i>Cic. Verr.</i> 2.1.130; <i>Val. Max.</i> 5.2.7
79	Promagistrate	Farther Spain vs. Sertorius	<i>Plut. Sert.</i> 12.3; <i>App. BC</i> 1.108; <i>Flor.</i> 2.10.6
78	Promagistrate	Farther Spain vs. Sertorius	
77	Promagistrate	Farther Spain vs. Sertorius	
76	Promagistrate	Farther Spain, defeated Hirtuleius	<i>Oros.</i> 5.23.10; <i>Sall. Hist.</i> 2.28M
75	Promagistrate	acclaimed Emperor	<i>Sall. Hist.</i> 2.59; <i>App. BC</i> 1.110; <i>Vell.</i> 2.29.5
74	Promagistrate		<i>Liv. Per.</i> 93; <i>Plut. Sert.</i> 22.1; <i>App. BC</i> 1.111-112
73	Pontifex Maximus	mentioned again	
72	Promagistrate		<i>Plut. Sert.</i> 27.1; <i>App. BC</i> 1.115
71	Promagistrate	Triumph	<i>Vell.</i> 2.30.2; <i>App. BC</i> 1.121; <i>Flor.</i> 2.10.9
63	Died	Succeeded by C. Julius Caesar	

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS CELER

(RE 86)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
78	Tribune of the Soldiers		Sall. <i>Hist.</i> 1.135M
68	Tribune of the Plebs		
67	Plebeian Aedile (?)		Val. Max. 6.1.8
66	Legate	For Pompey, in Albania	Dio 36.54.2-4
63	Praetor	Refused custody of Catiline	Cic. <i>Sull.</i> 65; Cic. <i>Cat.</i> 1.19 Val. Max. 7.7.7; Dio 37.27.3
	Augur	mentioned	Dio 37.27.3
62	Promagistrate	Proconsul in Cisalpine Gaul	Cic. <i>Fam.</i> 5.1-2; Sall. <i>Cat.</i> 57.2; 58.6; Dio 37.39.2-3
60	Consul	opposed Pompey's measures	Cic. <i>Att.</i> 1.17-20; 2.1.8; Dio 37.49-50; 37.50.4
?-59	Augur	Successor unknown	Cic. <i>Att.</i> 2.5.2; 9.2

Q. CAECILIUS C.F.Q.N. METELLUS CRETICUS

(*RE 87*)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
73	Pontifex		L.R. Taylor, <i>AJ Ph</i> 63 [1942] 391ff.
69	Consul	supported Verres w/Hortensius	<i>CIL</i> 1.2.904, 955; Cic. <i>Verr.</i> 1.26- 29
68	Promagistrate	Fought in Crete vs. Pirates	<i>Liv. Per.</i> 98; Cic. <i>Flacc.</i> 30; Vell. 2.34.1; Flor. 1.42.4
66	Promagistrate	quarrel with Pompey	<i>Liv. Per.</i> 99-100; App. <i>Sic.</i> 6
65	Promagistrate		<i>Liv. Per.</i> 99
62	Promagistrate	assisted vs. Catiline; triumphed	<i>Liv. Per.</i> 99; Vell. 2.34.2; Flor. 1.42.6; 2.13.9
60	Legate		
57	Pontifex		Cic. <i>Dom.</i> 123

L. CAECILIUS C.F.Q.N. METELLUS

(RE 74)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
71	Praetor		Cic. Tull. 39
70	Promagistrate	Sicily; improved administration	Cic. Verr. 1.27; 2.3.152; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 98
68	Consul	Died early in year of office	<i>CIL</i> 1.2.905, 956; Dio 36.4.1

M. CAECILIUS METELLUS

(RE 78)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
69	Praetor	<i>de repetundis</i>	Cic. <i>Verr.</i> 1.21, 23, 26-31

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS NEPOS

(RE 96)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
68	Tribune of the Plebs	(Celer or Nepos)?	
67	Legate	under Pompey in pirate war	App.; Flor.
64	Legate	entered Syria & captured Damascus	Joseph. <i>AJ</i> 14.29; <i>BJ</i> 1.127
63	Legate	released by Pompey & came to Rome	Plut. <i>Cat. Min.</i> 20.1-21.2; Cic. <i>Mur.</i> 81
62	Tribune of the Plebs	attacked Cicero over Catiline	Plut. <i>Cic.</i> 23.1-2; Dio 37.38.2
60	Praetor	law to abolish custom dues in Italy	Dio 37.51.3-4; Cic. <i>Att.</i> 2.16.1
57	Consul	supported Clodius vs. Milo	<i>CIL</i> 1.2.757, 758; Val. Max. 9.14.4; Dio 39.7.4
56	Promagistrate	Nearer Spain	Plut. <i>Caes.</i> 21.2; Dio. 39.54.1-2
55	Promagistrate	Nearer Spain	Plut. <i>Caes.</i> 21.2; Dio. 39.54.1-2

Q. CAECILIUS Q.F.Q.N. METELLUS PIUS SCIPIO NASICA

(RE 99)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>
59	Tribune of the Plebs		Cic. <i>Att.</i> 2.1.9; Val. Max. 9.1.8
57	Curule Aedile	Gave games for adoptive father	Cic. <i>Sest.</i> 124
	Pontifex		Cic. <i>Dom.</i> 123
55	Praetor	latest possible under <i>lex Cornelia</i>	
53	Interrex		<i>CIL</i> 1.2.2663c
52	Consul	prosecuted after elections	<i>CIL</i> 1.2.933; Val. Max. 9.1.8; App. <i>BC</i> 2.24
49	Promagistrate	Syria; killed Alexander of Judea	Caes. <i>BC</i> 1.6.5; Joseph. <i>AJ</i> 14.123-125
48	Promagistrate	commanded center at Pharsalus	Caes. <i>BC</i> 3.4.3; App. <i>BC</i> 2.60; Vell. 2.54.2-3
47	Promagistrate		Dio 42.56-57; Val. Max. 8.14.5
46	Pontifex	ca. 63-46	
	Promagistrate	defeated at Thapsus; suicide	<i>Bell. Afr.</i> 75-86; Liv. <i>Per.</i> 114; Vell. <i>Pat.</i> 2.54.2

APPENDIX 2: MAGISTRACIES AND OFFICES OF THE METELLI

The sharing of magistracies or the succession of office does not necessarily indicate political alliance, but it is possible to notice patterns from such office holding to extrapolate possible political cooperation. The following charts provide an opportunity to study who held political and religious offices around the same time as members of the Metellan *gens*. Information was mostly gathered from the always useful *Magistrates of the Roman Republic*, together with Pauly-Wissowa and Rüpke's *Fasti Sacerdotum*. More information about each member of the Metellan family can be found by consulting their individual *cursus* in Appendix 1. The numbers in parentheses that follow the names of other men are their *RE* numbers. The charts are numbered below for easy reference.

- 2.1: Consular Colleagues, Predecessors, Successors of the Metelli
- 2.2: Metellan Colleagues in Office
- 2.3: Chronological Listing of all Metellan Magistracies & Offices
- 2.4: Metellan Triumphs
- 2.5: Priesthoods Held by the Metelli

2.1: CONSULAR COLLEAGUES, PREDECESSORS, AND SUCCESSORS OF THE METELLI

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>METELLAN CONSUL</u>	<u>COLLEAGUE</u>	<u>PREDECESSORS</u>	<u>SUCCESSORS</u>
284	L. Caecilius Metellus Denter (92)	C. Servilius Tucca (88)	C. Claudius Canina (98) & M. Aemilius Lepidus (65)	P. Cornelius Dolabella (139) & Cn. Domitius Calvinus Maximus (45)
251	L. Caecilius Metellus (72)	C. Furius Pacilus (75)	C. Aurelius Cotta (94) & P. Servilius Geminus (62)	C. Atilius Regulus (47) & L. Manlius Vulso (101)
247	L. Caecilius Metellus (72)	N. Fabius Buteo (55)	C. Aurelius Cotta (94) & P. Servilius Geminus (62)	M. Otacilius Crassus (10) & M. Fabius Licinus (94)
206	Q. Metellus (81)	L. Veturius Philo (*15)	C. Claudius Nero (246) & M. Livius Salinator (33)	P. Cornelius Scipio (Africanus) (336) & P. Licinius Crassus Dives (69)
143	Q. Metellus Macedonicus (94)	Ap. Claudius Pulcher (295)	Ser. Sulpicius Galba (58) & L. Aurelius Cotta (98)	L. Metellus Calvus (83) & Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus (115)
142	L. Metellus Calvus (82)	Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus (115)	Q. Metellus Macedonicus (94) & Ap. Claudius Pulcher (295)	Cn. Servilius Caepio (46) & Q. Pompeius (*2)
123	Q. Metellus Balearicus (82)	T. Quinctius Flamininus (*7)	C. Cassius Longinus (56) & C. Sextius Calvinus (20)	Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus (20) & C. Fannius (7)
119	L. Metellus Delmaticus (91)	L. Aurelius Cotta (99)	P. Manilius (14) & C. Papirius Carbo (33)	M. Porcius Cato (*13) & Q. Marcius Rex (91)
117	L. Metellus Diadematus (93)	Q. Mucius Scaevola (21)	M. Porcius Cato (*13) & Q. Marcius Rex (91)	C. Licinius Geta (88) & Q. Fabius Maximus Eburnus (111)
115	M. Caecilius Metellus (77)	M. Aemilius Scaurus (140)	C. Licinius Geta (88) & Q. Fabius Maximus Eburnus (111)	M. Acilius Balbus (26) & C. Porcius Cato (*15)

113	Q. Metellus Caprarius (84)	Cn. Papirius Carbo (37)	M'. Acilius Balbus (26) & C. Porcius Cato (*15)	M. Livius Drusus (17) & L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus (88)
109	Q. Metellus Numidicus (97)	M. Iunius Silanus (169)	M. Minucius Rufus (54) & Sp. Postumius Albinus (*35)	Ser. Sulpicius Galba (59) & (L. or Q.?) Hortensius (2)
98	Q. Metellus Nepos (95)	T. Didius (5)	M. Antonius (28) & A. Postumius Albinus (*36)	Cn. Cornelius Lentulus (178) & P. Licinius Crassus (61)
80	Q. Metellus Pius (98)	L. Cornelius Sulla Felix (392)	M. Tullius Decula (34) & Cn. Cornelius Dolabella (134)	P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus (93) & Ap. Claudius Pulcher (296)
69	Q. Metellus Creticus (87)	Q. Hortensius Hortalus (13)	Cn. Pompeius Magnus (*15) & M. Licinius Crassus (68)	L. Caecilius Metellus (74) & Q. Marcius Rex (92)
68	L. Caecilius Metellus (74)	Q. Marcius Rex (92)	Q. Metellus Creticus (87) & Q. Hortensius Hortalus (13)	C. Calpurnius Piso (63) & M'. Acilius Glabrio (38)
60	Q. Metellus Celer (86)	L. Afranius (6)	M. Pupius Piso Frugi Calpurnianus (2) & M. Valerius Messala Niger (*76)	C. Iulius Caesar (131) & M. Calpurnius Bibulus (28)
57	Q. Metellus Nepos (96)	P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther (238)	L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus (90) & A. Gabinus (11)	Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus (228) & L. Marcus Philippus (76)
52	Q. Metellus Scipio Nasica (99)	Cn. Pompeius Magnus (*15)	Cn. Domitius Calvinus (43) & M. Valerius Messala Rufus (*77)	Ser. Sulpicius Rufus (95) & M. Claudius Marcellus (229)

2.2: METELLAN COLLEAGUES IN OFFICE

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PERSON</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>COLLEAGUE(S) IN OFFICE</u>
284	L. Metellus Denter	Consul	C. Servilius Tucca (88)
283	L. Metellus Denter	Praetor	N/A
251	L. Metellus (72)	Consul	C. Furius Pacilus (75)
250	L. Metellus (72)	Proconsul	N/A
	L. Metellus (72)	Pontifex?	C. Papirius Maso(?)
249	L. Metellus (72)	Master of Horse	A. Atilius Caiatinus (36); Dictator
247	L. Metellus (72)	Consul	N. Fabius Buteo (55)
243-221	L. Metellus (72)	Pontifex Maximus	Replaced Ti. Coruncanius (3)
224	L. Metellus (72)	Dictator	N. Fabius Buteo (55); Magister Equitum
216	Q. Metellus (81)	Pontifex	L. Cornelius Lentulus Caudinus (PM), T. Manlius Torquatus(?), M'. Pomponius Matho(?), Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus, Q Fulvius Flaccus, T. Otacilius Crassus(?)
214	L. Metellus (73)	Quaestor	Unknown
213	L. Metellus (73)	Tribune of the Plebs	Unknown
209	Q. Metellus (81)	Plebeian Aedile	C. Servilius Geminus (60)
208	Q. Metellus (81)	Curule Aedile	C. Servilius Geminus (60)
	M. Metellus (76)	Plebeian Aedile	C. Mamilius Atellus (5)
207	Q. Metellus (81)	Legate/Envoy	L. Veturius Philo (*15), P. Licinius Varus (175)
	Q. Metellus (81)	Master of Horse	M. Livius Salinator (33); Dictator
206	Q. Metellus (81)	Consul	L. Veturius Philo (*15)
	M. Metellus (76)	Praetor	Ti. Claudius Asellus (62, cf. 61), Q. Mamilius Turrinus (13), C. Servilius Geminus (60)
205	Q. Metellus (81)	Promagistrate	N/A
	Q. Metellus (81)	Dictator	L. Veturius Philo (*15); Magister Equitum
	M. Metellus (76)	Legate/Ambassador	M. Valerius Laevinus (211), Ser. Sulpicius Galba (56), Cn. Tremellius Flaccus (4), M. Valerius Falto (153)
204	Q. Metellus (81)	Legate/Envoy	Unknown

201	Q. Metellus (81)	Xvir agr. dand. assig.	P. Servilius (23), C. Servilius Geminus (60), M. Servilius Pulex Geminus (78), L. Hostilius Cato (12), A. Hostilius Cato (10), P. Villius Tappulus (*3), M. Fulvius Flaccus (56), P. Aelius Paetus (101), T. Quinctius Flaminius (*3)
196	M. Metellus (76) ?	Legate/Ambassador	P. Aelius Paetus (101), Cn. Cornelius Lentulus (21, 176), P. Cornelius Lentulus Caudinus (214), L. Stertinius (5), P. Sulpicius Galba Maximus (64), L. Terentius Massaliota (58), P. Villius Tappulus (*3), rest unknown
185	Q. Metellus (81)	Legate/Ambassador	M. Baebius Tamphilus (44), Ti. Sempronius (53) OR Ti. Claudius Nero (250)
183	Q. Metellus (81)	Special Envoy	T. Quinctius Flaminius (*3), Ap. Claudius Pulcher (294)
168	Macedonicus	Legate	Q. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus (109), L. Cornelius Lentulus (190, 191?)
154	Macedonicus	Tribune of the Plebs?	L. Aurelius Cotta (98)
143	Macedonicus	Consul	Ap. Claudius Pulcher (295)
142	Calvus	Consul	Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus (115)
	Macedonicus	Promagistrate	N/A
141	Calvus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Macedonicus	Augur	P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Aemilianus, M. Aemilius Lepidus Porcina, Ser. Sulpicius Galba, C. Laelius, Ap. Claudius Pulcher, Ti. Sempronius Gracchus
140	Calvus	Legate	P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Aemilianus (335), Sp. Mummius (13)
136	Macedonicus	Legate	Q. Pompeius (*2)
	Calvus	Legate	L. Cornelius Cinna (cf. 105)

133	Macedonicus	Augur	P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Aemilianus, M. Aemilius Lepidus Porcina, Ser. Sulpicius Galba, C. Laelius, Ap. Claudius Pulcher, C. Fannius, D. Iunius Brutus Callaicus, Q. Mucius Scaevola
131	Macedonicus	Censor	Q. Pompeius (*2)
126	Balearicus	Praetor	T. Quinctius Flamininus (*7), C. Fannius (7), M. Licinius Crassus Agelastus (57)
123	Balearicus	Consul	T. Quinctius Flamininus (*7)
122	Balearicus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Delmaticus	Praetor	L. Aurelius Cotta (99)
121	Balearicus	Promagistrate	N/A
120	Balearicus	Censor	L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi (96)
	Diadematus	Praetor	Q. Mucius Scaevola (21)
119	Delmaticus	Consul	L. Aurelius Cotta (99)
118	M. Metellus	Praetor	P. Rutilius Rufus (34)
	Delmaticus	Promagistrate	N/A
117	Diadematus	Consul	Q. Mucius Scaevola (21)
	Caprarius	Praetor	M. Acilius Balbus (26), C. Porcius Cato (*15)
	Delmaticus	Promagistrate	N/A
116	Diadematus	Promagistrate	N/A
115	M. Metellus	Consul	M. Aemilius Scaurus (140)
	Numidicus	Augur	Q. Mucius Scaevola, C. Fannius(?), M. Aemilius Scaurus, C. Servilus Vatia(?), C. Sulpicius Galba(?)
	Diadematus	Censor	Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus (20)
114	M. Metellus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Delmaticus	Pontifex Maximus	Replaced P. Mucius Scaevola
113	M. Metellus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Caprarius	Consul	Cn. Papirius Carbo (37)
112	M. Metellus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Caprarius	Promagistrate	N/A
	Numidicus	Praetor	L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi (97), M. Iunius Silanus (169)
111	M. Metellus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Caprarius	Promagistrate	N/A
	Numidicus	Promagistrate	N/A

109	Numidicus	Consul	M. Iunius Silanus (169)
108	Numidicus	Promagistrate	N/A
107	Numidicus	Promagistrate	N/A
106	Numidicus	Promagistrate	N/A
103	Delmaticus	Pontifex Maximus	Replaced Q. Servilius Caepio
102	Caprarius	Censor	Q. Metellus Numidicus (97)
	Numidicus	Censor	C. Metellus Caprarius (84)
101	Nepos (95)	Praetor	T. Didius (5), L. Licinius Murena (121)
98	Nepos (95)	Consul	T. Didius (5)
90	Celer (85)	Trib. Plebs	C. Papirius Carbo Arvina (40), Cn. Pomponius (not in RE), C. Scribonius Curio (10), Q. Varius Severus Hibrida (*1)
89	Metellus Pius	Praetor	Ap. Claudius Pulcher (296), C. Cosconius (3), P. Gabinius (13), Q. Oppius (20), Cn. Papirius Carbo (38), A. Sempronius Asellio (17), P. Sextilius (12)
	Metellus Pius	Pontifex	Q. Mucius Scaevola (?), C. Iulius Caesar Strabo, P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus(?), Q. Lutatius Catulus(?)
88	Celer (85)	Aedile	Unknown
	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
87	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
	Metellus Pius	Legate	Unknown
86	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
85	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
84	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
83	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
82	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
81	Metellus Pius	Pontifex Maximus	Replaced Q. Mucius Scaevola
80	Metellus Pius	Consul	L. Cornelius Sulla (392)
79	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
78	Celer (86)	Trib.Soldiers (?)	C. Memmius (7), L. Valerius Flaccus (*69, 179)
	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
77	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
76	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
75	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A

74	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
73	Creticus	Pontifex	P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus(?), Q. Lutatius Catulus(?), Mam. Aemilius Lepidus Livianus, M. Terentius Varro Lucullus(?), M'. Acilius Glabrio(?), M. Valerius Messalla(?), D. Iunius Silanus(?), C. Aurelius Cotta (?)
	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	N/A
72	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	N/A
71	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	N/A
	L. Metellus	Praetor	L. Afranius (6), Q. Marcius Rex (92)
70	L. Metellus	Propraetor	N/A
69	Creticus	Consul	Q. Hortensius Hortalus (13)
	M. Metellus	Praetor	M'. Aemilius Lepidus (62), P. Cornelius Dolabella (140), M. Lollius Palicanus (21), L. Volcatius Tullus (*6)
68	Celer (86) or Nepos (96)	Trib. Plebs	C. Antius (4), C. Antonius Hibrida (19), Cn. Cornelius (24), C. Fundanius (1), L. Hostilius (13), Q. Marcius (31), C. Popilius (15?), M. Valerius (69), L. Volcatius
	L. Metellus	Consul	Q. Marcius Rex (92)
	Creticus	Promagistrate	N/A
67	Nepos (96)	Legate	Under Pompey: P. Atilius (23), Ti. Claudius Nero (253), Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Clodianus (216), Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus (228), L. Cornelius Sisenna (374), L. Gellius Publicola (17), L. Lollius (6), A. Manlius Torquatus (76), L. Manlius Torquatus (79), L. Octavius (27), A. Plotius (*4), M. Pomponius (*21), M. Pupius Piso Frugi Calpurnianus (*2.100), M. Terentius Varro (84)
	Creticus	Promagistrate	N/A

	Celer (86)	Plebeian Aedile	Q. Gallius (6), Q. Voconius Naso (*3)
66	Celer (86)	Legate	L. Afranius (6), A. Gabinius (11), L. Valerius Flaccus (179); others from the Pirate War probably remained the same
	Creticus	Promagistrate	N/A
65	Creticus	Promagistrate	N/A
64	Nepos (96)	Legate	L. Afranius (6), A. Gabinius (11), L. Lollius (6), A. Plautius (8)
63	Celer (86)	Praetor	P. Cornelius Lentulus Sura (240), C. Cosconius (4), Q. Pompeius Rufus (*8), C. Pomptinus (Pontinius *1), L. Roscius Otho (22), C. Sulpicius (10), L. Valerius Flaccus (*69, 179)
	Celer (86)	<i>Augur</i>	L. Iulius Caesar, L. Licinius Lucullus(?), C. Claudius Marcellus(?), M. Valerius Messalla Rufus(?), M. Aurelius Cotta(?), Cn. Pompeius Magnus, Q. Hortensius Hortalus, Ap. Claudius Pulcher, P. Servilius Isauricus(?)
	Nepos (96)	Legate	Refer to year 64, Nepos
62	Celer (86)	Promagistrate	N/A
	Creticus	Promagistrate	N/A
	Nepos (96)	Trib. Plebs	L. Calpurnius Bestia (24), L. Fabricius (4), L. Marius (19), Q. Minucius Thermus (67), M. Porcius Cato (*20)
60	Celer (86)	Consul	L. Afranius (6)
	Creticus	Leg./Amb.	L. Valerius Flaccus (*69, 179), Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Clodianus (217)
	Nepos (96)	Praetor	M. Attius Balbus (11), Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Marcellinus (228), P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther (238), L. Culleolus (1)

59	Metellus Scipio	Trib. Plebs	C. Alfius Flavus (7), Q. Ancharius (3), C. Cosconius (5), Cn. Domitius Calvinus (43), C. Fannius (9), P. Nigidius Figulus (3), P. Vatinius (*2)
57	Creticus	Pontifex	P. Servilius Vatia Isauricus, M. Terentius Varro Lucullus, M'. Acilius Glabrio, M. Valerius Messalla, P. Sulpicius Galba, Metellus Scipio, C. Fannius, M. Aemilius Lepidus, P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther, M. Aemilius Scaurus, M. Licinius Crassus, C. Scribonius Curio. L. Pinarius Natta
	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Curule Aedile	Q. Fabius Maximus (108)
	Metellus Scipio (Nasica) Nepos (96)	Pontifex	Refer to Creticus above
		Consul	P. Cornelius Lentulus Spinther (238)
56	Nepos (96)	Promagistrate	N/A
55	Nepos (96)	Promagistrate	N/A
	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Praetor	T. Annius Milo (67), Gutta (not in RE), P. Plautius Hypsaeus (23), P. Vatinius (*2)
53	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Interrex	N/A
52	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Consul	Cn. Pompeius Magnus (*15)
49	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Promagistrate	N/A
48	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Promagistrate	N/A
47	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Promagistrate	N/A
46	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Promagistrate	N/A

2.3: CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF ALL METELLAN MAGISTRACIES & OFFICES

The following includes all magistracies and offices held by members of the Metellan family from 284–46 B.C. For ease of reference, consulships are in bold-face type, censorships are underlined, and religious offices are italicized.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PERSON</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
284	L. Metellus Denter	Consul	
283	L. Metellus Denter	Praetor	Defeated and killed at Arretium; some debate whether he was praetor or consul, cf. <i>MRR</i> 1.188, n.2
251	L. Metellus (72)	Consul	Won a victory at Panormus and captured ~100 elephants
250	L. Metellus (72)	Proconsul	Celebrated a triumph <i>De Poenis</i> , which was noted for the captured elephants
249	L. Metellus (72)	Master of Horse	The Dictator, A. Atilius Caiatinus, was the first Dictator to lead an army outside of Italy
247	L. Metellus (72)	Consul	Besieged Lilybaeum; together with other consul captured the island of Pelias
243-221	L. Metellus (72)	<i>Pontifex Maximus</i>	Rescued the Palladium from the burning temple of Vesta
224	L. Metellus (72)	Dictator	Not in <i>MRR</i> , cf. Pliny, <i>NH</i> 7.139; appointed to hold elections; Master of Horse: N. Fabius Buteo (RE 55)
?-221	L. Metellus (72)	<i>Pontifex</i>	
216	Q. Metellus (81)	<i>Pontifex</i>	Succeeded P. Scantinius; Metellus died after 179
214	L. Metellus (73)	Quaestor	Reduced to an <i>aerarius</i> by the Censors for wishing to abandon Italy after Cannae
213	L. Metellus (73)	Tribune of the Plebs	Indicted the Censors for making him an <i>aerarius</i> during his quaestorship
209	Q. Metellus (81)	Plebeian Aedile	
208	Q. Metellus (81)	Curule Aedile	
	M. Metellus (76)	Plebeian Aedile	

207	Q. Metellus (81) Q. Metellus (81)	Legate/Envoy Master of Horse	Brought news to Rome of Hasdrubal's defeat at Metaurus Aided Dictator in holding elections: Dictator: M. Livius Salinator (RE 33)
206	Q. Metellus (81)	Consul	Both consuls were assigned to face Hannibal in Bruttium and Lucania
205	M. Metellus (76) Q. Metellus (81)	Praetor Dictator	Praetor Urbanus and then later also Peregrinus Appointed to hold elections; Master of Horse: L. Veturius Philo (RE *15)
204	M. Metellus (76)	Legate/Ambassador	Sent to king Attalus of Pergamum to bring the Magna Mater from Pessinus
201	Q. Metellus (81) Q. Metellus (81)	Legate/Envoy Xvir agr. dand. assig.	Sent to investigate charges against Scipio and Pleminius Appointed to assign land to Scipio's veterans
196	M. Metellus (76) ?	Legate/Ambassador	Honored by the Koinon of the Thessalians
185	Q. Metellus (81)	Legate/Ambassador	Sent to deal with disputes between Philip of Macedon and his neighbors in Greece
183	Q. Metellus (81)	Special Envoy	Appointed by Senate to hear arguments of four groups of Lacedaimonian envoys
168	Macedonicus	Legate	Reported news of the Roman victory at Pydna
154 (?)	Macedonicus	Trib. Plebs	
c. 150	Macedonicus	Mint-master	
148	Macedonicus	Praetor	Campaigned in Macedonia; captured Andriscus
147	Macedonicus	Promagistrate	Continued in Macedonia and Greece
146	Macedonicus	Promagistrate	Defeated Achaiaans; returned to Rome & celebrated triumph
143	Macedonicus	Consul	
142	Calvus	Consul	
	Macedonicus	Proconsul	Hither Spain
141	Calvus	Promagistrate	
	Macedonicus	<i>Augur</i>	

140	Calvus	Legate	Together with Scipio Africanus Aemilianus & Sp. Mummius, observed Eastern Allies
136	Macedonicus Calvus	Legate	With Q. Pompeius on staff of Consul Philus
133	Macedonicus	Legate	Sent to restrain Lepidus Porcina from attacking Vaccaei mentioned
131	Macedonicus	<u>Augur</u>	With Q. Pompeius
126	Balearicus	<u>Censor</u>	
123	Balearicus	Praetor	
122	Balearicus	Consul	Received command against pirates in Balearic Islands
	Balearicus	Proconsul	Baleares
	Delmaticus	Praetor	
121	Balearicus	Proconsul	Celebrated Triumph
120	Balearicus	<u>Censor</u>	
	Diadematus	Praetor	
119	Delmaticus	Consul	Opposed Marius' laws; campaigned vs. Illyrians & Dalmatians
118	M. Metellus	Praetor	
	Delmaticus	Proconsul	Fought vs. Dalmatians
117	Diadematus	Consul	Probably builder of <i>Via Caecilia</i>
	Caprarius	Praetor	
	Delmaticus	Proconsul	Triumph <i>de Delmateis</i> ; restored temple of Castor & Pollux
116	Diadematus	Promagistrate	Maybe proconsul who marked boundaries between Patavium & Ateste
115	M. Metellus	Consul	Command in Sardinia & Corsica
	Numidicus	<u>Augur</u>	Probably succeeded Macedonicus; Explains refusal to take oath re: Saturninus' legislation
	Diadematus	<u>Censor</u>	Removed 32 persons from Senate
114	M. Metellus	Proconsul	Sardinia
	Delmaticus	<i>Pontifex Maximus</i>	Presided over first trial of Vestal Virgins in 114
113	M. Metellus	Proconsul	Sardinia

	Caprarius	Consul	Defeated for consulship in 114
112	M. Metellus	Proconsul	Sardinia
	Caprarius	Proconsul	Macedonia & Thrace
	Numidicus	Praetor	
111	M. Metellus	Proconsul	Triumph <i>ex Sardinia</i>
	Caprarius	Proconsul	Triumph over Thrace
	Numidicus	Promagistrate	
109	Numidicus	Consul	Mostly successful in Numidia
108	Numidicus	Promagistrate	Continued in Numidia
107	Numidicus	Promagistrate	Replaced by Marius in Numidia; handed over army through legate
	Numidicus	Promagistrate	Triumph over Numidia & King Jugurtha (?)
106	Numidicus	Promagistrate	
103	Delmaticus	<i>Pontifex Maximus</i>	
102	Caprarius	<u>Censor</u>	With cousin Numidicus; problems with Saturninus & Glaucia
	Numidicus	<u>Censor</u>	
101	Nepos (95)	Praetor	
98	Nepos (95)	Consul	
90	Celer (85)	Trib. Plebs	
89	Metellus Pius	Praetor	
	Metellus Pius	<i>Pontifex</i>	mentioned
88	Celer (85)	Aedile	Tried & condemned Cn. Sergius Silus for improper proposals to a matron
	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Successful general
87	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	Continued in Samnium
	Metellus Pius	Legate	Headed delegation from Senate to negotiate with Marius & Cinna
86	Metellus Pius	Promagistrate	Withdrew to Africa; later joined Sulla in Italy
83	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	With Sulla in Campania
82	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Fought together with Pompey; won Cisalpine Gaul for Sulla
81	Metellus Pius	<i>Pontifex Maximus</i>	Replaced Q. Mucius Scaevola

80	Metellus Pius	Consul	Together with Sulla
79	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain; met with some defeats at hands of Sertorius
78	Celer (86)	Trib.Soldiers (?)	Unsure
77	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain; met with some defeats at hands of Sertorius
76	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain; met with some defeats at hands of Sertorius
75	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain; defeated Hirtuleius at Italica
74	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain; killed Sertorius' subordinate Hirtuleius; acclaimed Imperator
73	Creticus	Proconsul	Further Spain
72	Metellus Pius	<i>Pontifex Maximus</i>	mentioned
71	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain
70	L. Metellus	Praetor	Further Spain; returned to Rome & celebrated Triumph
69	Creticus	Propraetor	Sicily; improved provincial administration; fought pirates
68	M. Metellus	Consul	Assigned to Crete when Hortensius declined to take the province
67	Celer (86) or Nepos (96)	Praetor	Brother of Creticus and L. Metellus; was assigned praetor of <i>quaestio de repetundis</i>
66	L. Metellus	Trib. Plebs	
65	Creticus	Consul	Died early in the year while in office; Suffect Consul who replaced him also died in office
64	Nepos (96)	Proconsul	Crete; fought pirates; also assigned proconsul of Achaea
63	Creticus	Legate	Under Pompey; in charge of coasts from Lycia to Phoenicia
62	Celer (86)	Proconsul	Still in Crete
61	Celer (86)	Plebeian Aedile	
60	Celer (86)	Legate	Under Pompey; in Albania

	Creticus	Proconsul	Quarrel with Pompey; conflict avoided when Pompey was diverted by <i>lex Manilia</i>
65	Creticus	Proconsul	
64	Nepos (96)	Legate	Under Pompey; entered Syria & captured Damascus
63	Celer (86)	Praetor	Refused custody of Catiline
	Celer (86)	<i>Augur</i>	mentioned
	Nepos (96)	Legate	Released by Pompey; came to Rome to further Pompey's interests
62	Celer (86)	Proconsul	Cisalpine Gaul
	Creticus	Promagistrate	Celebrated Triumph after a delay, probably on the account of Pompey
60	Nepos (96)	Trib. Plebs	Attacked Cicero over executing Catilinarian conspirators
	Celer (86)	Consul	Opposed Pompey's measures & demands of tax-farmers in Asia for remission of contracts
	Creticus	Leg./Amb.	
	Nepos (96)	Praetor	Passed law to abolish custom dues in Italian ports
59	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Trib. Plebs	
57	Creticus	<i>Pontifex</i>	mentioned
	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Curule Aedile	Gave gladiatorial games in honor of adoptive father
	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	<i>Pontifex</i>	
	Nepos (96)	Consul	Softened towards Cicero; supported law to give control of grain supply to Pompey
56	Nepos (96)	Proconsul	Nearer Spain
55	Nepos (96)	Proconsul	Nearer Spain
	Metellus Scipio (Nasica)	Praetor	
53	Metellus Scipio	Interrex	

52	(Nasica) Metellus Scipio	Consul	Prosecuted as a result of elections
49	(Nasica) Metellus Scipio	Proconsul	Syria; killed Alexander of Judeae; acclaimed Imperator
48	(Nasica) Metellus Scipio	Proconsul	Took his forces to Greece; commanded the center at Pharsalus
47	(Nasica) Metellus Scipio	Promagistrate	
46	(Nasica) Metellus Scipio	Promagistrate	Command of Pompeian forces in Africa; defeated at Thapsus; committed suicide

2.4: METELLAN TRIUMPHS

A triumph signified acknowledgment of great military achievement and was an opportunity for a Roman general to provide tangible evidence of his martial prowess, but it also allowed him to publicize and enshrine his achievements for posterity. The Metelli could count seven *triumphatores* among their family, and in 111 two brothers even celebrated their triumphs on the same day.

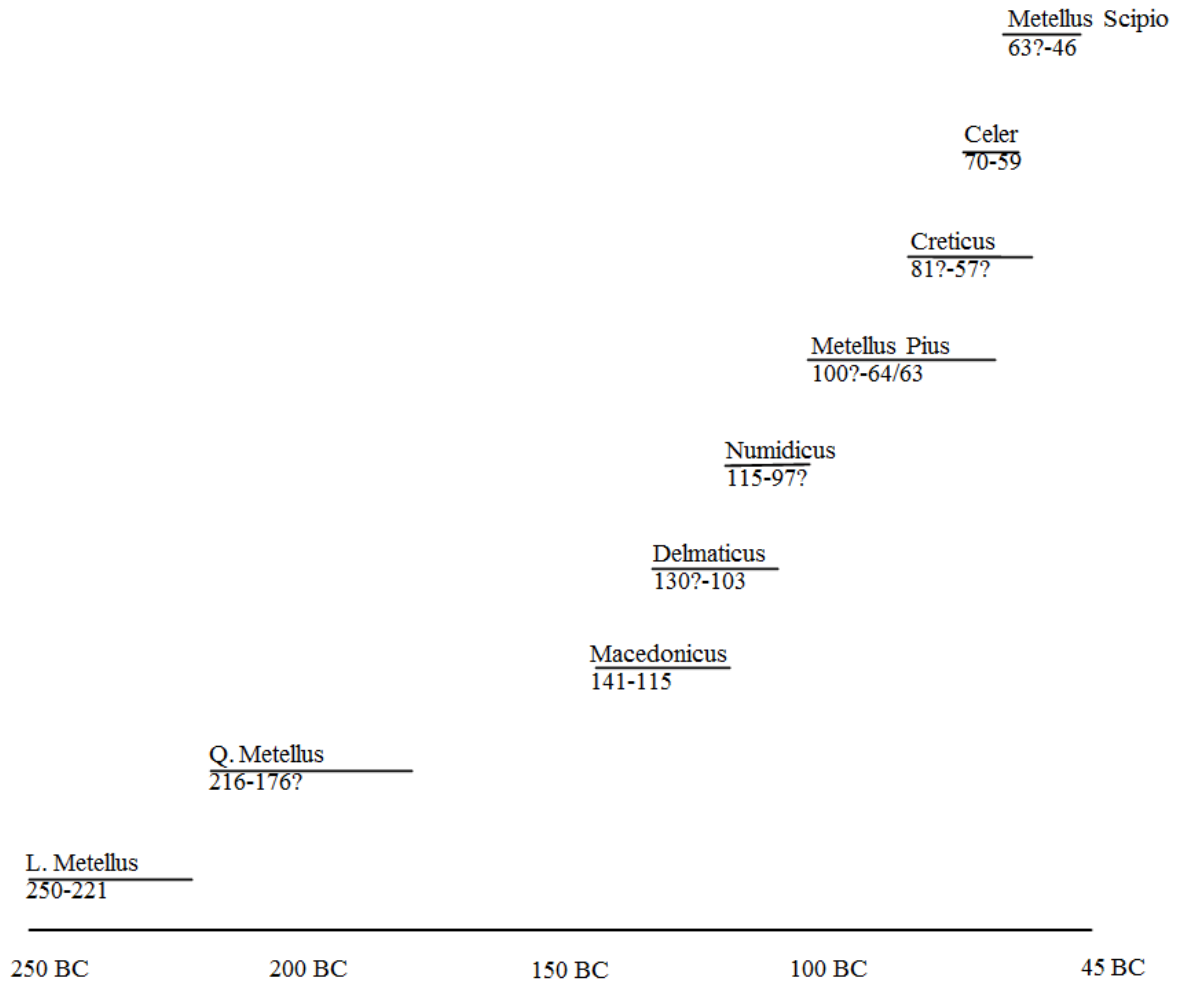
<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PERSON</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>REFERENCE (CF. INDIVIDUAL CURSUS)</u>
250	L. Metellus	Proconsul	Triumph <i>De Poenis</i> (noted for elephants)
146	Macedonicus	Propraetor	Triumph over Macedonia & Andriscus
121	Balearicus	Proconsul	Celebrated Triumph
117	Delmaticus	Proconsul	Triumph <i>de Delmateis</i> ; restored temple of Castor & Pollux
111	M. Metellus	Proconsul	Triumph <i>ex Sardinia</i>
111	Caprarius	Proconsul	Triumph over Thrace
106	Numidicus	Proconsul	Triumph over Numidia & King Jugurtha
71	Metellus Pius	Proconsul	Further Spain; returned to Rome & celebrated Triumph
62	Creticus	Proconsul	Celebrated after a delay, probably on the account of Pompey

2.5: PRIESTHOODS HELD BY THE METELLI

Religion played a vital role in Roman politics and society. The men who held religious offices exercised tremendous moral influence in the state. Throughout their history, the Metelli occupied many of these positions. The numbers in parentheses are those of *RE*.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
250?-221	L. Metellus (72)	Pontifex	Liv. <i>Per.</i> 19; Val. Max. 8.13.2; cf. <i>RE</i> no.72	Listed as possible beginning in 250 by Rüpke
243-221	L. Metellus (72)	Pontifex Maximus	Cic. <i>Sen.</i> 30; Val. Max. 8.13.2; Plin. <i>NH</i> 7.139	Rescued Palladium from burning Temple of Vesta
216-176?	Q. Metellus (81)	Pontifex	Liv. 40.45.8-46.10	Listed as possible after 179 by Rüpke
141-115?	Macedonicus (94)	Augur	Cic. <i>Fin.</i> 5.83	mentioned as augur before 140
130?-106?	Delmaticus (91)	Pontifex		Listed as possible beginning in 130 by Rüpke
115?-103?	Delmaticus (91)	Pontifex Maximus	Liv. <i>Per.</i> 67; Val. Max. 6.5.5	Beginning date disputed; listed as possible after 108 by Rüpke
115-96?	Numidicus (97)	Augur		replaced Macedonicus; listed as possible for his entire career by Rüpke
100?-64?	Metellus Pius (98)	Pontifex		Beginning date disputed
81-64?	Metellus Pius (98)	Pontifex Maximus	Plut. <i>Caes.</i> 7.1; Dio 37.37.1	Succeeded by Julius Caesar
81?-51?	Creticus (87)	Pontifex	L.R. Taylor, <i>AJ Ph</i> 63 (1942): 391ff.; Cic., <i>Dom.</i> 123	Listed as possible after 54 by Rüpke
70?-59	Celer (86)	Augur	mentioned in Dio 37.27.3	Listed as possible until 63 by Rüpke
63?-46	Metellus Scipio (99)	Pontifex	Cic. <i>Dom.</i> 123	Listed as possible until 57 by Rüpke

This graphic illustrates the times when members of the Metellan family held priesthoods. During their period of the Republic there were only a few brief time spans when the Metelli were not officially involved in the religious rituals of Rome.

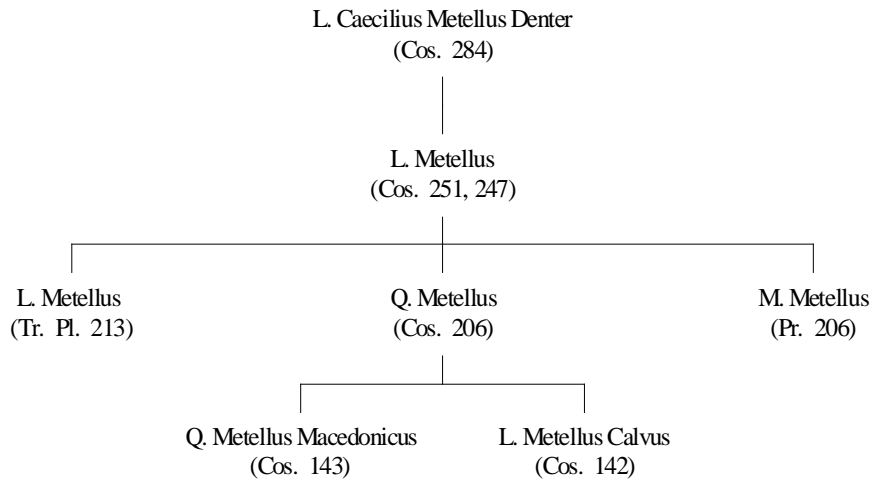


APPENDIX 3: FAMILY STEMMATA

While caution must be exercised when trying to determine political associations through family affiliations, it is nevertheless useful to see how members of the Roman aristocracy were connected to each other. This appendix includes various stemmata showing the family relationships of the Metelli, especially their familial connections to the Claudii Pulchri, Servilii Vataiae, Licinii Luculli, and Scipiones Nasicae. Many of the stemmata are taken or adapted from Pauly-Wissowa, *Real Encyclopädie*. Marriages are signified by an equal (=) sign and adoptions by dotted lines (...). Below is a table of the stemmata included:

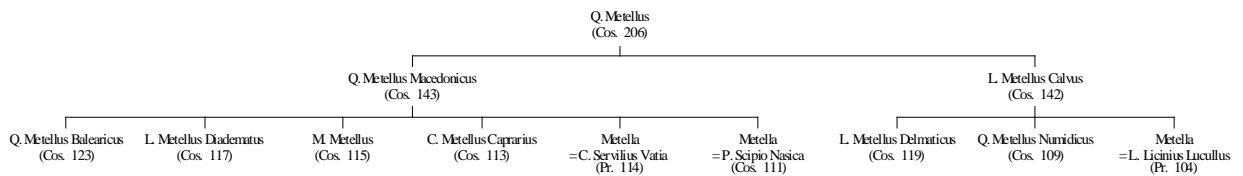
- 3.1: Early Metelli
- 3.2: The Great Age of the Metelli
- 3.3: Descendants of Metellus Macedonicus
- 3.4: Descendants of Metellus Calvus
- 3.5: Metellan Family Connections to the Servilii Vataiae
- 3.6: Metellan Family Connections to the Scipiones Nasicae
- 3.7: Metellan Family Connections to the Licinii Luculli
- 3.8: Metellan Family Connections to the Claudii Pulchri
- 3.9: The Metelli in 115
- 3.10: Marriages of Metella Delmatici
- 3.11: The Last of the Metelli

3.1: EARLY METELLI

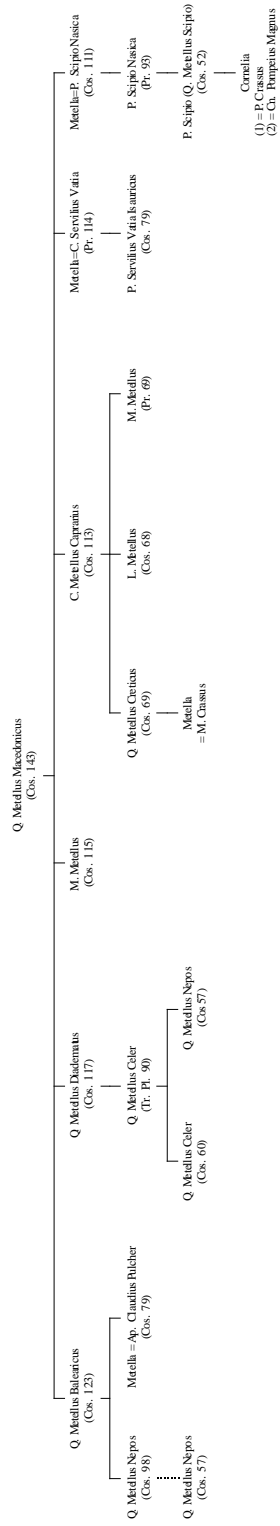


3.2: THE GREAT AGE OF THE METELLI

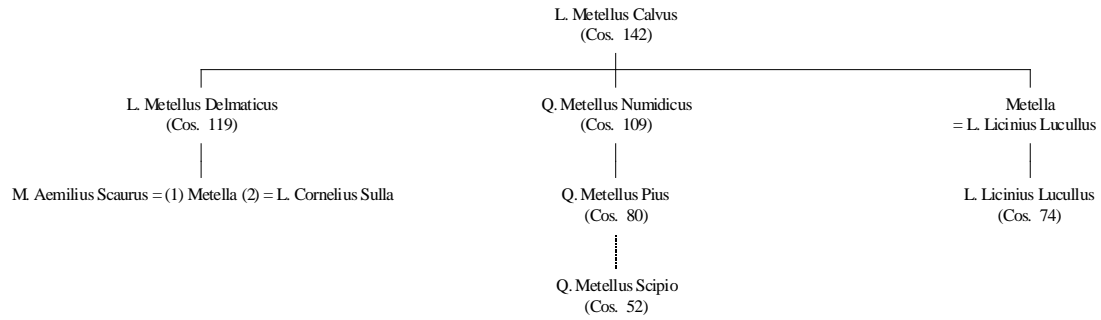
The decade after the death of C. Gracchus saw the Metelli rise to astonishing heights of power and prestige in Rome. The sons of Macedonicus and Calvus held one of the consulships nearly every other year.



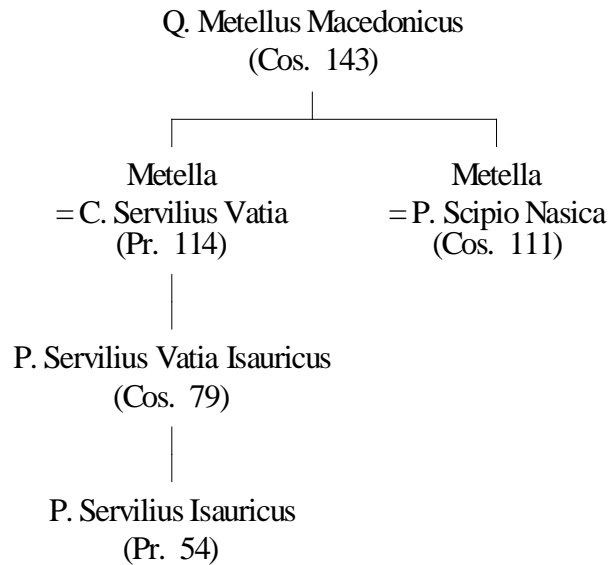
3.3: DESCENDANTS OF METELLUS MACEDONICUS



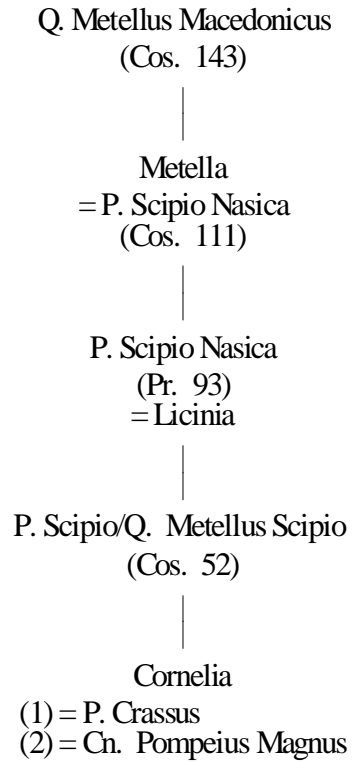
3.4: DESCENDANTS OF METELLUS CALVUS



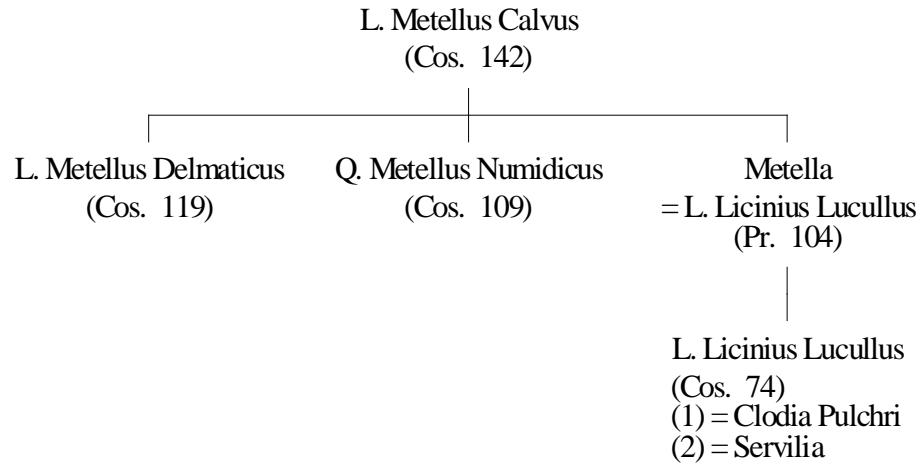
3.5: METELLAN FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO THE SERVILII VATIAE



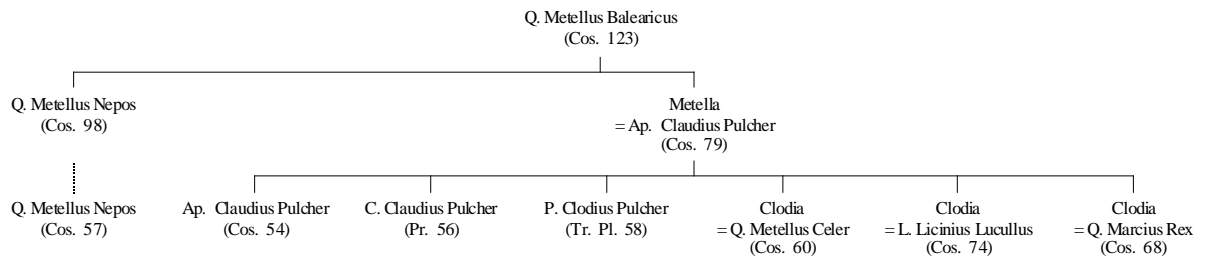
3.6: METELLAN FAMILY CONNECTIONS WITH THE SCIPIONES NASICAE



3.7: METELLAN FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO THE LICINII LUCULLI

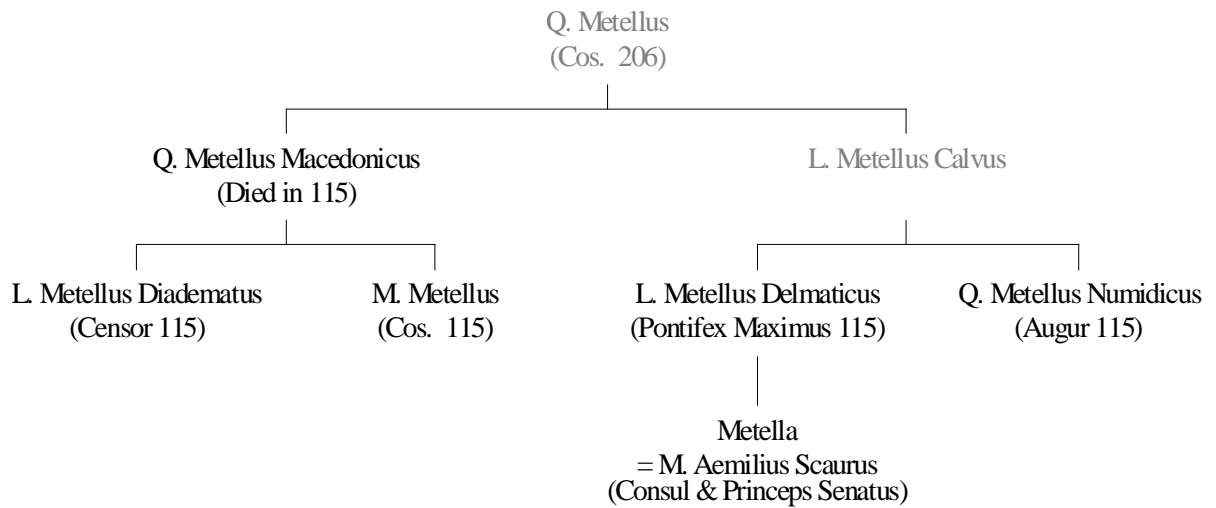


3.8: METELLAN FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO THE CLAUDII PULCHRI



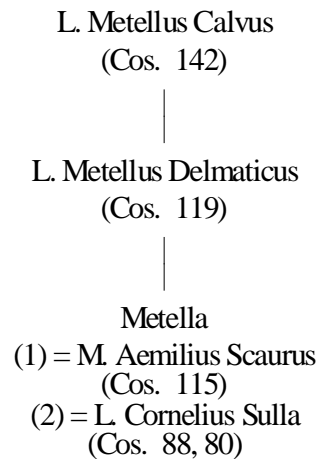
3.9: THE METELLI IN 115

The year 115 saw many members of the Metellan family in positions of power at Rome. This stemma highlights those Metelli who held office or were otherwise known in 115. Names in grayscale did not hold offices, and indeed were not alive, but are shown merely for reference.



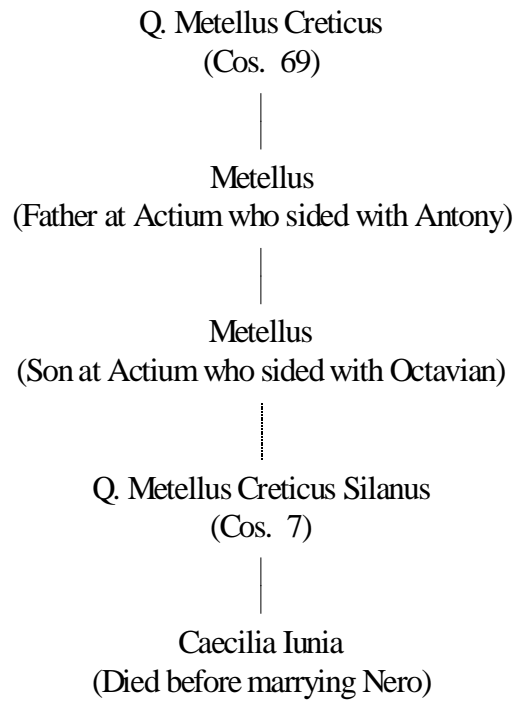
3.10: MARRIAGES OF METELLA DELMATICI

The daughter of Metellus Delmaticus proved most useful to her father as they sought political alliances with powerful politicians. She was married first to the *princeps senatus* M. Aemilius Scaurus, to whom she bore a daughter who became Pompey the Great's second wife. When Scaurus died, she was almost immediately married to L. Cornelius Sulla, to whom she bore two children. In a very real way, the Metelli owed their high position in the tumultuous times of Marius and Sulla to this matron.



3.11: THE LAST OF THE METELLI

This is a proposed stemma for the last few generations of the Metellan family. It is impossible to construct these relationships with any real confidence, but the following stemma is plausible.



APPENDIX 4: CHRONOLOGY OF ROMAN HISTORY SHOWING METELLAN INVOLVEMENT

The following chronology has been freely adapted from M. Cary & H.H. Scullard, *A History of Rome Down to the Reign of Constantine*, 3rd edition and David Matz, *An Ancient Roman Chronology, 264–27 B.C.* This chronology is meant to be neither comprehensive nor exhaustive, but rather to provide a useful framework in which the lives and careers of the members of the Metellan family can be viewed and understood. Events in Roman history in which members of the Metellan family played an important role are included, as are the various magistracies held by members of the family. The date for the events concerning the Metelli are in bold-face.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
287	<i>lex Hortensia</i> gives plebiscites the force of law
284	Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus Denter (92)
283	Metellus Denter killed in battle at Arretium
280-275	War with Pyrrhus
264-241	First Punic War
251	Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus (72) L. Metellus' victory at Panormus
250	Triumph of L. Caecilius Metellus (72) <i>de Poenis</i>
249	L. Metellus (72) <i>magister equitum</i> to dictator A. Atilius Caiatinus
247	Second Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus (72)
243	L. Metellus (72) elected <i>pontifex maximus</i> Roman fleets built from voluntary loans
242	Dispute of <i>pontifex maximus</i> L. Metellus (72) and <i>flamen Dialis</i> Albinus L. Metellus (72) rescues the Palladium from the burning Temple of Vesta
241	Two new tribes created in Picenum, bringing the total thirty-five
238	Roman seizure of Sardinia
232(?)	L. Metellus (72) possibly on land commission
229-228	First Illyrian War
227	Number of praetorships increased to four
224	Dictatorship of L. Caecilius Metellus (72) for holding elections
221	Death of L. Caecilius Metellus (72)
220	Construction of the <i>Via Flaminia</i>
218-201	Second Punic War

- 217 Roman defeat at Lake Trasimene
- 216** Roman defeat at Cannae; "Conspiracy at Canusium" led by Lucius Metellus (73)
Q. Caecilius Metellus (81) co-opted as *pontifex*
- 214-205 First Macedonian War
- 214** L. Metellus (73) reduced to *aerarius* by censors in aftermath of Cannae
- 213** L. Metellus (73), as Tribune of the Plebs, indicted the Censors
- 212 Introduction of the *ludi Apollinares*
- 210 Scipio lands in Spain
- 209** L. Metellus (73) expelled from the senate along with eight others
Capture of New Carthage
Q. Metellus (81) Plebeian Aedile
- 208** M. Metellus (76) holds the Plebeian Games as Plebeian Aedile
ludi Romani held by Q. Caecilius Metellus (81) as Curule Aedile
- 207** Q. Caecilius Metellus (81) brings news of Roman victory at Metaurus
Q. Metellus (81) made *magister equitum* to M. Livius Salinator
- 206** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus (81); he campaigns in Bruttium & Lucania
M. Metellus (76) praetor urbanus and peregrinus
- 205** Scipio in Sicily
Peace of Phoenice
M. Metellus (76) sent to Attalus of Pergamum to retrieve the Magna Mater
Q. Metellus (81) appointed *dictator comitia habendorum causa*
- 204** Q. Metellus (81) suggests and is part of the senatorial commission that investigates Scipio and the Pleminius affair
- 203** Q. Metellus (81) supports Scipio's proposals for peace
Scipio wins the Battle of Great Plains; Hannibal recalled to Carthage
- 202** Q. Metellus (81) supports leaving Scipio in command in Africa
Scipio's victory at Zama
- 201/0** Q. Metellus (81) serves on land commission for Scipio's veterans
- 200-196 Second Macedonian War
- 197 Roman victory over Philip at Cynoscephalae
- 196(?)** M. Metellus (76) honored by the Koinon of the Thessalians
- 193** Q. Metellus (81) plays a central role in mediating a dispute in the senate regarding Cornelius Merula's request for a triumph
- 192-189 War with Antiochus
- 191 Roman victory over Antiochus at Thermopylae
- 189 Latin colony established at Bononia
- 188 Treaty of Apamea
- 186 *Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus*

- 185/4** Q. Metellus (81) serves as an ambassador to the East, unsuccessfully mediating between the Achaean League & the Lacedaimonians
- 183** Q. Metellus (81) is a special envoy for a group of Lacedaimonian ambassadors
- 181-179 First Celtiberian War
- 180 *Lex Villia Annalis*
- 179** Q. Metellus (81) is instrumental in reconciling the censors M. Aemilius Lepidus and M. Fulvius Nobilior
- 172-167 Third Macedonian War
- 172 Two plebeian consuls for the first time: C. Popilius Laenas & P. Aelius Ligus
- 168** Q. Metellus (eventually Macedonicus-94) is sent to Rome to report the Roman victory at Pydna
- 154-138 Lusitanian War
- 154? Proposed tribunate of Q. Metellus (94)
- 153-151 Second Celtiberian War
- c. **150** Q. Metellus (94) is mint master
- 149-146 Third Punic War
- 149 *lex Calpurnia de repetundis* establishes a standing court for extortion
- 148** Praetorship of Q. Metellus (94) & his campaign against and capture of Andruscus
- 147** Q. Metellus (94) as promagistrate in Macedonia & Greece defeats Achaeans
- 146** Roman destruction of Carthage & sack of Corinth
Q. Metellus (94) returns to Rome, triumphs, and receives *agnomen* Macedonicus
- 143-133 Third Celtiberian (Numantine) War
- 143** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus (94); his campaigns in Hispania Citerior
- 142** Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus Calvus (83)
Macedonicus continues his campaigns in Spain
Censorship of Scipio Aemilianus
- 141** Macedonicus (94) is first mentioned as *augur*
- 140** Calvus accompanies Scipio Aemilianus and Sp. Mummius on a tour of the East
- 139/8** Q. Pompeius is attacked in the extortion court by Metellus Macedonicus, Metellus Calvus, and the Servilii Caepiones
- 138** Trial of Aurelius Cotta, who is prosecuted by Scipio Aemilianus and defended by Macedonicus
- 136** Macedonicus (94) is forced to go to Spain with the consul L. Furius Philus and his *inimicus* Q. Pompeius
- 135-132 Slave war in Sicily
- 133** Tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus
Macedonicus (94) is sent with Cn. Servilius Caepio to quash a slave revolt in

southern Italy

Macedonicus speaks out against Tiberius Gracchus

Destruction of Numantia by Scipio Aemilianus

131 Censorship of Macedonicus and Q. Pompeius

c. **130** Q. Caecilius Metellus (later Balearicus-82) as aedile secures grain from Thessalians during food shortage

Q. Metellus (82) is moneyer

129 Macedonicus is mentioned as leader of opposition to Scipio Aemilianus

Death of Scipio Aemilianus; Macedonicus tells his sons to carry Scipio's bier

c. **128** Q. Metellus (82) is moneyer

c. **127** M. Metellus (77) is moneyer

125 Consulship of M. Fulvius Flaccus and his proposal to enfranchise the Latins

123 Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus (82); he campaigns in the Balearic Islands

First tribunate of Gaius Gracchus

121 Q. Metellus (82) returns to Rome, triumphs *de Balearis*, is awarded the *agnomen* Balearicus

Macedonicus joins the senators who chase after C. Gracchus

First use of *senatus consultum ultimum*; death of C. Gracchus and his supporters

120 Censorship of Balearicus and L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi

119 Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus (eventually Delmaticus-91); he opposed Marius' law & campaigned Illyrians and Dalmatians

118 L. Metellus (91) is proconsul in Dalmatia

Death of Micipsa in Numidia: Adherbal, Hiempsal and Jugurtha are all joint rulers

117 Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus Diadematus (93); he builds the *Via Caecilia*

L. Metellus (91) returns to Rome, triumphs *de Dalmateis*, receives *agnomen* Delmaticus for his exploits

116 Senatorial commission sent to Numidia

115 Censorship of Diadematus and Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus; they remove 32 senators

Consulship of M. Caecilius Metellus (77) & M. Aemilius Scaurus; Metellus campaigns in Sardinia and Corsica

Delmaticus (91) elected *pontifex maximus*

Q. Metellus (eventually Numidicus-97) mentioned as *augur*

Death of Q. Caecilius Metellus Macedonicus (81)

114 M. Metellus (77) is proconsul in Sardinia

C. Caecilius Metellus (84) is defeated for the consulship

Delmaticus (91) presides over the trial of Vestal Virgins; retrial and conviction under L. Cassius Longinus Ravilla

- 113** Consulship of C. Caecilius Metellus (84); he campaigns in Macedonia and Thrace
M. Metellus (77) is proconsul in Sardinia
Cn. Carbo is defeated by the Cimbri at Noreia
- 112** M. Metellus (77) is proconsul in Sardinia
C. Metellus (84) is proconsul in Macedonia and Thrace
Jugurtha sacks Circa and slaughters Roman citizens, prompting a declaration of war
- 111** M. Metellus (77) returns to Rome, triumphs *ex Sardinia*
C. Metellus (84) returns to Rome, triumphs on same day as his brother Marcus
Aulus Albinus is defeated by Jugurtha and his army is sent under the yoke
Memmian inquisition
- (?) Q. Metellus (Numidicus-97) prosecuted for extortion and immediately acquitted
- 109** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus (Numidicus-97); he campaigns in Numidia with some success
Mamilian Commission
- 107** Q. Metellus (Numidicus-97) is replaced by C. Marius as commander in Numidia
- 106** Q. Metellus Numidicus (97) returns to Rome, triumphs, is awarded *agnomen* Numidicus
Jugurtha is betrayed to Sulla by Bocchus of Mauretania
lex Servilia changes composition of the juries to 1/2 senators and 1/2 equites
- 105 Roman defeat under Q. Servilius Caepio & Cn. Mallius Maximus at Aurasio by Cimbri and Teutones
- 104 *lex Domitia* requires that members of the priestly colleges be elected by the people instead of being co-opted
- 103** Death of L. Caecilius Metellus Delmaticus (91)
Tribunate of L. Appuleius Saturninus; his *lex de maiestate*
- 102** Censorship of the cousins Metellus Caprarius and Metellus Numidicus; Numidicus attempts to expel Saturninus & Glaucia
Roman victory, under Marius (consul IV), over the Teutones at Aquae Sextiae
- 101 Roman victory, under Marius (consul V), over the Cimbri
- 100** *Repulsa* of a Metellus (Numidicus or Nepos) for consul
Exile of Metellus Numidicus
Senatus Consultum Ultimum forces Marius to take action against Saturninus and Glaucia; they are "arrested" and killed
- 99** Tribunician law to recall Numidicus is vetoed
- 98** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Nepos (95)
Recall and return of Metellus Numidicus
Marius leaves Rome and goes to Asia

- 95 Trials of Caepio & Norbanus
lex Licinia Mucia
- 92 Censors suppress Latin *rhetores*
- 91 Tribune of M. Livius Drusus
Outbreak of the Social War
- 90** Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer (85) is Tribune of the Plebs
lex Iulia
- 89** Metellus Pius is Praetor
lex Plautia Papiria
Metellus Pius is mentioned as *pontifex*
- 88-82** Metellus Pius is promagistrate
- 88** Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer (85) is Aedile; he prosecutes Sergius Silus
lex Sulpicia transfers command of Mithridatic War from Marius to Sulla;
Sulla marches on Rome
- 87** Metellus Pius heads senatorial delegation to negotiate with Marius & Cinna
Sulla besieges Athens
Cinnae Dominatio
- 86 Marius dies shortly after assuming the consulship for the 7th time
- 83** Sulla lands in Italy and is supported by Pompey; He is joined by Metellus Pius
- 82 Sulla's second march on Rome; proscriptions
- 81** Metellus Pius replaces Mucius Scaevola as *pontifex maximus*
Sulla is dictator and introduces his reforms
- 80** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius (98); he is consul with L. Cornelius Sulla
Cicero's Pro Roscio Amerino
- 79-71** Metellus Pius is proconsul in Further Spain and campaigns against Sertorius
- 78 Death of Sulla
Revolt of Lepidus
- 75 *lex Aurelia* allows tribunes to run for other offices
- 74 M. Antonius sent to Crete to deal with pirates but he is eventually defeated
- 73** Q. Metellus Creticus (87) is mentioned as *pontifex*
Beginning of Spartacus' slave revolt
- 72 Assassination of Sertorius and end of Sertorian War
- 71** Crassus defeats Spartacus; Pompey wipes out last remnants of Spartacus' army & claims victory
Metellus Pius returns to Rome, celebrates Triumph
- 70** L. Metellus (74) is promagistrate in Sicily and improves administration
Trial of C. Verres
Consulship of Pompey & Crassus
- 69** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Creticus (87); he supports Verres

- M. Metellus (78) is praetor *de repetundis*
- 68-62** Q. Metellus Creticus (87) is promagistrate in Crete; he fights pirates
- 68** Consulship of L. Caecilius Metellus (74); he died early in his year of office
- 67** *lex Gabinia* gives Pompey command against pirates
Metellus Nepos (96) is a legate for Pompey in the pirate war
- 66** *lex Manilia* gives command of the Mithridatic War to Pompey
Metellus Celer (86) is legate for Pompey in Albania
Quarrel between Q. Metellus Creticus and Pompey over the pirate campaign
- 64** Metellus Nepos (96) enters Syria and captures Damascus for Pompey
- 63** Consulship of M. Tullius Cicero
Metellus Celer (86) is praetor; he refused custody of Catiline
Metellus Celer (86) is mentioned as *augur*
Metellus Nepos (96) is released by Pompey and returns to Rome
Death of Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius (98)
Caesar is elected *pontifex maximus*
Catilinarian Conspiracy
- 62** Metellus Celer (86) is promagistrate in Cisalpine Gaul
Metellus Nepos (96) is Tribune of the Plebs and refuses to allow Cicero to give the customary speech as he leaves office
Q. Metellus Creticus (87) outside Rome, assists against Catiline, triumphs and is awarded *agnomen* Creticus
Bona Dea scandal
- 60** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer (86); he opposed Pompey's measures
Metellus Creticus is a legate
Metellus Nepos (96) is praetor and makes a law to abolish customs dues in Italy
Formation of the First Triumvirate
- 59** Consulship of C. Julius Caesar
Death of Metellus Celer before April
- 58-49 Caesar in Gaul
- 58** Tumultuous tribunate of Clodius
Exile of Cicero
- 57** Consulship of Q. Caecilius Metellus Nepos (96); he supports Clodius against Milo
Metellus Creticus is mentioned again as a *pontifex*
Metellus Scipio (99) gives games for his adoptive father as Curule Aedile
Metellus Scipio (99) is mentioned as *pontifex*
Return of Cicero
- 56** Metellus Nepos (96) is promagistrate in Nearer Spain
Conference at Luca

- 55** Metellus Nepos (96) is promagistrate in Nearer Spain
Consulship (II) of Pompey & Crassus
- 53** Metellus Scipio (99) is *interrex*
Defeat and death of Crassus at Carrhae
- 52** Pompey elected sole consul; he appoints Metellus Scipio his co-consul
Clodius is murdered by Milo
Law of the 10 tribunes regarding Caesar's command
- 50** Caesar crosses the Rubicon
- 49** Metellus Scipio (99) is promagistrate in Syria; he killed Alexander of Judea
- 48** Campaign at Dyrrhachium
Metellus Scipio (99) commands the center at Pharsalus
Pompey killed in Egypt
- 46** Metellus Scipio is defeated at Thapsus and commits suicide

APPENDIX 5: PROSOPOGRAPHY AND THE CAECILII METELLI

Prosopography really began with a series of articles by Friedrich Münzer in the *Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. These biographical articles laid the foundation for his *Römische Adelsparteien und Adelsfamilien*.¹ Ever since this monumental and controversial work, scholars have debated the merits of prosopography and how, if at all, it should be applied to an understanding of Roman politics.² Münzer marshaled two major points in his reconstruction of Roman politics, which later became the focus (or target) of scholarly contention: collegiality in office and ties of kinship.³

Collegiality in Office

The first, collegiality in office—especially the office of consul—and by extension succession in political offices, revolves around the notion of the elections and how those elections might have been manipulated by the presiding magistrate. If the presiding magistrate was able to exercise a great deal of influence on the outcome of the elections for the succeeding year, he could attempt to secure the election of his friends and associates to high office. Thus, if the presiding magistrate at any given election could practically ensure the election of friendly politicians then, as traditional reasoning goes, the two (or more) must be political allies and working together. The reasoning is similar for men who share a political office. Obviously if the theory of collegiality and succession in office were taken to

¹ Friedrich Münzer, *Römische Adelsparteien und Adelsfamilien* (Stuttgart, 1920). For the non-German speaking student see, Münzer, *Roman Aristocratic Parties and Families*, translated by Thérèse Ridley, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999). For a discussion of the history of prosopography in general see Stone, “Prosopography”, 46–57. For how prosopography has developed in the field of Roman history in particular and the varying theories of Roman politics see A.E. Astin, “Roman Government and Politics, 200–134 B.C.,” *Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 8.

² Most critics of the method actually respond to those who followed and elaborated Münzer’s concept like Sir Ronald Syme, H.H. Scullard, and occasionally L.R. Taylor. See Karl-J. Hölkeskamp, “Fact(ions) or Fiction? Friedrich Münzer and the Aristocracy of the Roman Republic—then and now,” *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* (2001), 93–95.

³ Münzer, *RAPF*, xxxiv, 5–7; Hölkeskamp, “Fact(ions)” 93.

its most extreme implications, everyone would be political allies with everyone else, since they would be political allies with the politicians who oversaw their election, their colleagues in office, and the men who succeeded them in office. Those who support the notion that the presiding magistrate was able to manipulate elections, while realizing the obvious shortcomings and pitfalls, are the same scholars who generally use prosopography in the study of Roman political history, just as those who reject the notion of electoral manipulation generally oppose its use.⁴ Cases of animosity between colleagues demonstrate that sharing a political office did not always entail political cooperation or friendship.⁵ Evidence can be found in support of either position and it is thus unwise to *solely* use connections in public office when trying to determine whether political connections existed—and if they did, what they were—between leading Roman politicians. Evidence from the *Fasti* and other annalistic sources for office-holding, must be used in conjunction with other information in order to more firmly recreate political associations between Rome’s elite.⁶

Ties of Kinship

The second type of evidence exploited by Münzer and others are the various ties of kinship that appear to have linked many of Rome’s most powerful individuals and families.

⁴ Those supporting include: T.R.S. Broughton, “Senate and Senators of the Roman Republic: The Prosopographical Approach,” *ANRW* 1.1, 255; H.H. Scullard, *RP*, 20; J. Suolahti, *The Roman Censors: A Study on Social Structure* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1963), 247, 401, 517. Those opposing: P.A. Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 454–455; R. Develin, *The Practice of Politics at Rome, 366–167 B.C.* (Brussels: Latomus, 1985), 30, 44. An example often used to bolster an argument in favor of the influence of the presiding authority at consular elections is the case of 207. In 207 M. Livius Salinator was consul and was later in the year appointed dictator. Salinator oversaw the elections for 206 in which his own *magister equitum* and former legate Q. Metellus was returned as consul, largely because of Livius’ influence (Liv. 28.9.18–20, 28.10.8, 28.11.8–12.9). However, the consuls of 207 (before a dictator was appointed) were Salinator and C. Claudius Nero, who did not get along well in their joint consulship or in their joint censorship in 204 (Liv. 27.35, 29.37). Additionally, the story of Fabius Maximus’ manipulation and interruption of an election, going so far as to send the centuries back to vote again, supports the proposition (Liv. 24.7–9).

⁵ The most obvious example example that collegiality in office did not necessarily entail political cooperation, much less political friendship, is the consulship of Julius Caesar and M. Calpurnius Bibulus in 59 (Vell. Pat., 44.4; Suet., *Iul.* 19–20; Plut., *Caes.*, 14; Dio, 38.1–8).

⁶ Consult Appendix 2.1 and 2.2 for tables showing politicians who held office contemporary with the Metelli.

One of the difficulties with this approach is determining exactly how much emphasis to place on a person's connection to his larger *gens*,⁷ and precisely how much influence family connections had in the political arena. A main issue concerns how much consideration should be given to family connections, and even those scholars who oppose liberal use of prosopography agree that ties of kinship *can* be used to reconstruct political alliances between Roman politicians, but they are stricter in their application and interpretation of the evidence.⁸ Develin has suggested that an entire *gens* would work together in order to succeed to high office, but this seems more and more unlikely as a *gens* continued to grow and split into multiple branches.⁹ How so many families and individuals would almost altruistically put aside their own political goals and ambitions for the good of a larger group—even a familial group—is difficult to understand, especially when they may not have felt any particular attachment and which may have been of less importance than the immediate family subgroup.¹⁰

Likewise marriage and adoptive connections can be difficult to ascertain and dangerous to use in attempting to reconstruct potential political connections between families. Brunt admits that a timely marriage “might unite men whose relations had been simply distant in the past,” but he goes on to add “they might equally fail to preserve

⁷ Filippo Càssola, *I Gruppi Politici Romani nel III Secolo a.C.* (Roma: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 1968), 13–21 for an in-depth discussion of the subject, which goes against Develin, *Practice*, 54, 96–101, where Develin seems to say that the larger *gens* was the most important family connection for Romans.

⁸ Much of the debate about prosopography, factions and Roman politics arises because different scholars place more weight and influence on different types of evidence. See Broughton, “Senate and Senators”, 256.

⁹ Develin, *Practice*, 54. His idea is refuted by Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 451 and Càssola, *Gruppi*, 20. The various and often opposing *stirpes* of the Claudii provide an illustration, as the Pulchri and Neroni were often opposed to each other.

¹⁰ Membership in a well-known *gens* perhaps would be able to benefit all members of the *gens*, but political cooperation between the numerous branches of the *gens* would not be guaranteed.

harmony, and even cause discord.”¹¹ A son-in-law or adopted son may not be as friendly to the political leanings or dealings of his new family, although it must be admitted that political tendencies most likely played a part in the selection process of a suitable marriage partner or adoption.¹²

An additional danger when casting about for evidence of political groupings is overemphasizing the available evidence. Distant family members need not necessarily share similar political tendencies. While there was a strong sense of family identity, at least for the immediate family and direct ancestral line, this does not mean that cousins or more distant relatives necessarily had the same political sympathies.¹³ Family identity and political cooperation were not always convenient bedfellows. An instance from the Metellan family will serve to illustrate the point. In the last decades of the Republic Pompey the Great was a powerful and polarizing figure who attracted as many people as he repelled. One of those who detested Pompey and sought every chance to do him political harm was Metellus Creticus, who had been given the command against the pirates on the island of Crete in 67. Before the island could be completely subdued, Pompey sent one of his lieutenants to take over the campaign as a result of the *lex Gabinia*, which had commissioned Pompey to rid the Mediterranean of pirates. Pompey’s lieutenant then proceeded to actively thwart the campaign of Metellus. In fact, the two main pirates turned themselves over to Pompey’s

¹¹ Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 453–454. Also, Hölkeskamp, “Fact(ions) or Fiction?”, 100. The untimely or ugly dissolution of a marriage could have negative consequences. Pompey’s divorce of Mucia created enemies out of Metellus Celer and Nepos, who had previously been vigorous supporters.

¹² Marriages may have been contracted for other reasons too, namely, in order to improve financial standing by means of a large dowry or to enhance standing in social circles. Both of these reasons however, can have political ramifications. Because Roman girls were married—for the first time—at a young age, it is most likely that romance or love played a role in a woman’s later or subsequent marriages when she was significantly older.

¹³ Brunt, *Fall of the Roman Republic*, 449; A.E. Astin, “Politics and Policies in the Roman Republic” (an inaugural lecture delivered before the Queen’s University of Belfast, 1 May 1968), 8, where he cites the “*ius imaginum, patria potestas*, the aristocratic funeral, and the perpetuation of families by means of adoption” as evidence for strong family ties. Cf. also Càssola, *Gruppi*, 20.

lieutenant, thus robbing Metellus of having them march in his triumph—for which he had to wait four years because of Pompey’s continued opposition.¹⁴

On the other hand, two of Metellus Creticus’ relatives—the sons of Metellus Creticus’ cousin—worked closely with Pompey. Metellus Celer and Metellus Nepos both served as legates under Pompey during his Mediterranean and Mithridatic campaigns and actively supported Pompey’s interests in Rome.¹⁵ This case from the history of the Metellan family serves as a warning that the mere sharing of a common name or ancestor need not imply political cooperation, especially in the later years of the Republic.¹⁶

Prosopography can be an effective and useful tool for studying Roman Republican politics, but should be utilized to illuminate the available evidence. The danger of prosopography is in recreating connections between politicians solely on the basis of collegiality or succession in office or familial ties. Often, these recreations are suggested because there is a scarcity of positive evidence, and prosopography is exploited inappropriately to stand in for the missing evidence.

¹⁴ Liv., *Per.* 99; Vell. 2.34.2; Flor. 1.42.6, 2.13.9.

¹⁵ Eventually, Celer and Nepos turned on Pompey after he divorced their half-sister Mucia.

¹⁶ Family ties appear to have broken down in the last years of the Republic. Cf. Broughton, “Senate and Senators”, 259.

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